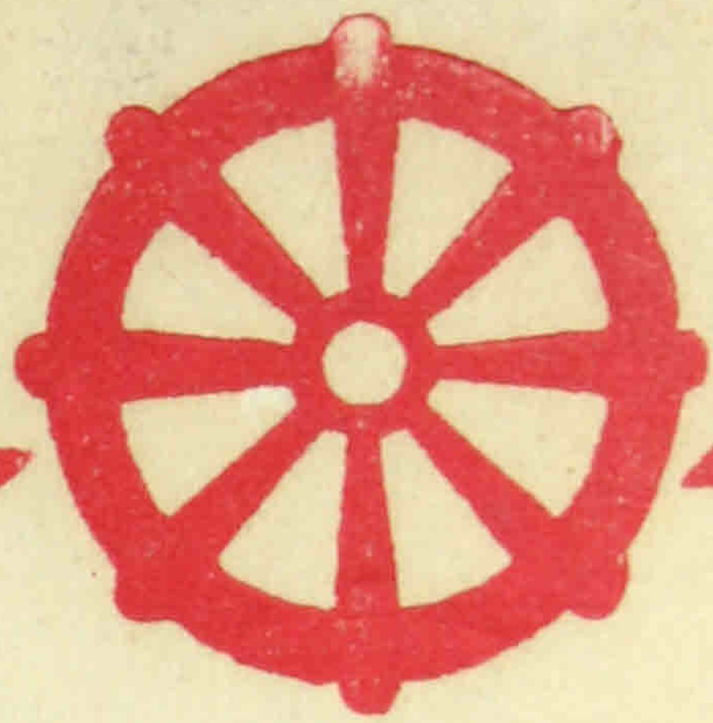

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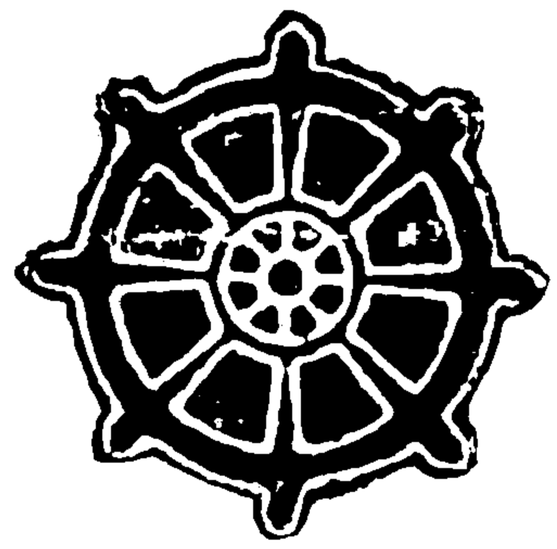

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FACETS OF BUDDHIST THOUGHT

Six Essays

by

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THE BUDDHIST CONCEPTION OF THE UNIVERSE

The early Indians and Greeks speculated about the nature, origin, and extent of the universe. Anaximander, a Greek thinker of the 6th century B.C. is supposed to have contemplated the possibility of "innumerable worlds" successively coming out of (and passing away) into an indefinite substance. About a century later, the Greek atomists, Leucippus and Democritus, who postulated the existence of innumerable atoms and an infinite void, conceived of worlds coming-to-be and passing away throughout the void. These speculations were the product of imagination and reason and the "worlds" they talked of were mere reproductions of the earth and the heavenly bodies such as the sun, moon and the stars.

The contemporary Indian speculations prior to Buddhism were on the same lines, except for the fact that some of them were claimed to be based on extra-sensory perception as well. Here there appears to have been even a wider variety of views than to be found among the Greeks.

The early Buddhist texts summarise their views according to the Buddhist logic of four alternatives. With regard to the extent of the universe, the following four types of views were current: (1) Those who held that the universe was finite in all dimensions, (2) those who held that the universe was infinite in all dimensions,

(3) those who held that the universe was finite in some dimensions and infinite in others, and (4) those who rejected all the above three views and held that the universe was neither finite nor infinite.

This last view was held by thinkers who argued that the universe or space was unreal. If so, spatial epithets like 'finite' or 'infinite' cannot be applied to the universe. So the universe is neither finite nor infinite.

Similarly, with regard to the origin of the universe, there were thinkers who put forward all four possible views, viz. (1) Some held that the universe had a beginning or origin in time; (2) others that it had no beginning in time; (3) still others that the universe had in one sense a beginning in time and in another sense no beginning in time. This would be so if the universe had relative origins, its substance being eternal while it came into being and passed away from time to time; (4) finally, there were those who put forward the theory that since time was unreal it did not make sense to say that the universe had an origin in time or no origin in time. For this last group of thinkers the universe was "neither eternal nor not eternal".

It is with original Buddhism that we get for the first time in the history of thought a conception of the universe, which can in any way be meaningfully compared with the modern picture of the universe as we know it in contemporary astronomy. This is all the more remarkable when we find no other such conception, which foreshadowed or forestalled modern discoveries in ancient or medieval thought of the East or West.

"The Universe"

Before we describe the essential features of the Buddhist account of the universe or cosmos, it is necessary to clarify what we today mean by the term "universe" for it did not mean what it means today at all times.

The conception of the universe in the West until the end of the medieval period was geocentric. It was mainly Aristotelian in origin. The earth was deemed to be the fixed centre of the universe and the moon, the planets, the sun and the stars were believed to move with uniform circular velocity in crystalline spheres around it. The universe was also finite in spatial extent. Apollonius and Ptolemy made some minor adjustments in an attempt to account for some of the movements of the planets but the basic conceptions remained the same.

This finite geocentric universe was later considered to be the orthodox theological view of the cosmos and attempts on the part of thinkers to change it were clamped down as heresy. A change came with Copernicus who was led by observational findings and the suggestions of early Greek thinkers like the Pythagorean Philolaus and Aristarchus of Samos to conceive of the sun as the centre of the universe. The "universe" was now the solar system (i. e. the sun with the planets going round it), encircled by the stars.

With the construction of larger telescopes since the time of Galileo, the next advance was made by Herschel in the late eighteenth century. His observations convinced him and others that the unit of the universe was not the solar system but the galaxy or galactic system composed of clusters of stars, the blazing sun that we

see being only one among such stars. On the basis of his observations of stars and the calculation of their distances, he was the first to make a map of our galactic system or "island universe" (as he called it), known the Milky Way.

He too placed our sun at the centre of the disc, though today we know that the Sun is about halfway between the centre and the edge of this huge galaxy. Astronomical distances are so large that they are measured not in terms of miles but in light-years. Light travels at the rate of about 186,000 miles per second. It is held that light, travelling at this speed would take about 100,000 years to travel across the diameter of the Milky Way. In other words, our galactic system has a diameter of 100,000 years.

It was left to modern astronomy with its more powerful telescopes, aided by radio telescopes, to delve deeper into space and to make more accurate observations of relative locations and shapes of these galaxies.

In the light of these findings we know that the ten billion galaxies found in space are not found in isolation but in clusters. So when we survey the universe the units we have to deal with are the galaxies. They are now classified as regular and irregular galaxies on the grounds of shape, the regular galaxies being elliptical, round or spiral. The commonest of all galaxies (i. e. about three-fourths of them) are spiral. The majority of these galaxies are called 'dwarf galaxies' because they contain about a million stars.

The progress of astronomy has thus resulted in a gradual development of the concept of the "universe".

The earliest conception was the geocentric, the "universe" being the earth and the celestial bodies around it. Next, the heliocentric conception concentrated on the solar system. The real advance was made in the next stage when the solar system was conceived as one of many such systems in an "island universe" or galaxy. Following this there was the concept of the cluster of galaxies and the present conception of the universe as consisting of a number of such clusters of galaxies.

Buddhist Conception

In the Buddhist texts the word used to denote the "world" or "cosmos" or the "universe" is *loka*. Its uses are as various as the English word "world". It would be tedious to enumerate them here since we are concerned only with the sense in which it is used to denote "the world in space". This is called okāsa-loka or the "space-world" (i. e. the world in space) in the Commentaries, which illustrates this sense by reference to a relevant passage in the texts. In the Visuddhimagga (204), it is said that in the passage, "As far as these suns and moons revolve, shining and shedding their light in space, so far extends the thousand-fold universe" (*sahassadhā-loko*)—the word 'loka' is used to denote "the world in space".

In one context of this passage, the universe is described in three tiers or stages. The smallest unit of the universe is here called *sahassī culaṇikā loka.dhātu*, i. e. the Thousand-fold Minor World-System. This is defined as follows: As far as these suns and moons revolve, shining and shedding their light in space, so far extends the thousand-fold universe. In it are thousands of suns, thousands of moons . . . . , thousands of Jambudīpas,

thousands of Aparagoyānas, thousands of Uttarakurus, thousands of Pubbavidehas . . . . . " (A. I. 227, V. 59). Jambudīpa, Aparagoyāna, Uttarakuru and Pubbavideha are the four inhabited regions or the continents known to the people of North India at the time. From descriptions given about them, it appears to have been believed that these peoples had different temperaments and ways of living.

So it is as if one were to say today that there were "thousands of Indias, thousands of Arabias, thousands of Russias and thousands of Chinas". Its significance is that there were thousands of inhabited places or planets since the earth was associated with one sun and one moon.

This *Cūḷaṇikā Loka-dhātu* or Minor World-System, which is the smallest unit in the universe though it contains thousands of suns, moons and inhabited planets, can only be compared with the modern conception of a galaxy, the majority of which have about a million suns.

Most modern astonomers believe that the chances are that there could be life of the form to be found on earth in planets of other solar systems in this as well as other galaxies. Professor Harlow Shapley says, after making a most conservative estimate: "We would still have after all that elimination, ten billion planets suitable for organic life something like that on earth" (*The View from a Distant Star*, New York, London, 1963, p. 64). Another well-known astronomer, Dr. Ernst J. Opik, states: "Many planets may carry life on their surface. Even if there were only one inhabited system in every million, there would be 10,000 million million abodes of life in the universe. What a variety of forms and conditions

this implies!" (*The Oscillating Universe*, New York, 1960, p. 114).

Clusters of Galaxies

The next unit in the universe according to the early Buddhist texts is described as consisting of thousands of Minor World-Systems. This is called a "Twice-a-thousand Middling World-System" (*Dvisahassī Majjhimikā Loka-(dhātu)*. It would correspond to a cluster of galaxies according to modern conceptions.

This notion of a cluster of galaxies is a fairly recent one in modern astronomy. As Professor A. C. B. Lovell, the Director of the Jodrell Bank Experimental Station, said in his B. B. C. Reith Lectures in 1958: "Some years ago we thought that these galaxies were isolated units in space, but now we believe that the galaxies exist in great groups or clusters. In the same way that the earth and planets are bound to the sun and move as a unit through space, so on an inconceivably vaster scale we think that the galaxies are contained in clusters as connected physical systems. The local group contains the Milky Way system, the Andromeda Nebula, and perhaps two dozen others. It is not very populated, compared, for example, with the Virgo cluster of galaxies, which contains at least a thousand visible galaxies, although occupying only about twice the space of the local group" (*The Individual and the Universe*, Oxford University Press, London, 1958, pp. 6, 7).

In the opinion of Professor Bonnor: "The Milky Way is one of a small cluster of galaxies called the Local Group, which includes all galaxies within about two million light-years from the Earth, and contains about

twenty members. Beyond this distance one would have to travel about ten million light years before coming across another galaxy. Other galaxies, too, show a distinct tendency to cluster. The clusters may be small, like the Local Group, or may contain several hundreds or even thousands of galaxies" (William Bonnor, *The Mystery of the Expanding Universe*, New York, 1964, p. 32).

We find that here "thousand" is practically the upper limit since many of the clusters of galaxies contain less. On the other hand, with reference to the "Thousand-fold Minor World-System", "thousand" appeared to be too little. Since the Dhamma is summed up in stereoyped formulas (which recur in the Pali Canonical texts) for easy memorisation, it is possible that 'thousand' was selected as a convenient common number to describe the hierarchy of units. However, elsewhere in the Canon smaller numbers of such "Thousand-fold Minor World-Systems" to be found in clusters are referred to.

In the Sankhāruppati Sutta of the Majjhima Nikāya, the basic unit is again the Thousand-fold World-System (sahassī lokadhātu, M. III. 101). But there is a reference to two, three, four . . . up to hundred such world-systems grouped together (e. g. sata-sahassī-loka-dhātu, ibid.).

Of frequent occurrence is the *dasa sahassī-loka-dhātu*, which should be translated as "the ten of thousand-fold world-systems". It is used with reference to the Local Group of galaxies, which consists of about 20 in all, of which about 10 cluster relatively close together. One text in fact refers to "the ten nearest island universes" (Rudolf Thiel, *And There Was Light*, New York 1957, p. 355).

Cosmos

While the Middling World-Systems consisted of a few up to a hundred or even thousand galaxies, the next unit is the whole cluster of Middling World-Systems. For it is said that thousands of Middling World Systems (i. e. clusters of galaxies) go to form the vast universe or the Major World-System (Mahā Lokadhātu), which some texts on astronomy refer to as the Metagalaxy.

Although some astronomers wonder whether there is a hierarchy of clusters of clusters of galaxies within the universe, the general opinion is against this. As Professor Bonnor points out: "One may ask whether clusters of galaxies are the last in the hierarchy. As stars aggregate into galaxies, and galaxies into clusters, do clusters aggregate into superclusters, and so on? Although astronomers are not quite unanimous, it seems that the clusters are the largest individual entities, and we should not be justified in speaking of clusters of clusters. Thus we have at last reached the unit of cosmology—the cluster of galaxies. In practice the galaxy is usually taken as the unit because galaxies can be recognised more easily than clusters" (op cit , p. 32).

The modern astronomical descriptions of the universe as well as those of the early Buddhist texts stop here. The modern accounts stop because there is a limit to observability on the part of the telescopes. If, as is inferred to be the case, the galaxies further and further away are receding at greater and greater speeds from us, then as they approach the speed of light, they would pass beyond the range of theoretical observability. So the theoretically observable universe is also limited and

what happens beyond this would have to be pure speculation even according to science.

The early Buddhist texts too do not state that the Major World-System is all there is in the universe for the question as to whether the world is finite or infinite (ananto) in extent is left unanswered (avyākata)

The later commentarial tradition, however, goes a step further. One of the synonyms for a "World-System" or Loka-Dhātu is *Cakkavāḷa*, a word of uncertain etymology meaning a 'wheel', 'circle' or 'sphere'. The Pali Society Dictionary commenting on Loka-dhātu (s. v) says that it means "constituent or unit of the Universe", "a world, sphere" and adds that Loka-Dhātu is another name for Cakkavāla.

Calling a galaxy a "sphere" or a "wheel" is certainly appropriate for as we know from modern astronomy a galaxy is like a huge catharine wheel revolving round a centre or hub. But the commentary states that these galaxies or spheres (cakkavāla) are infinite in number (*anantāni cakkavālāni*, Manorathapūraṇi, II. 342). This is certainly going beyond the standpoint of the early Buddhist texts, which is uncommitted on the question of the origin or extent of the universe. While the later tradition of the Sarvāstivāda and Theravāda suggest that the number of galaxies or world-systems is infinite in extent, the Mahāyāna texts hold that the universe is infinite in time, stating that "the universe is without beginning or end" (*anavarāgra*).

Here again the standpoint of original Buddhism was merely to state that the universe was "without a known beginning" (*anamatagga*). The Buddha, it is said, could

see worlds without limit "as far as he liked" (*yāvatā ākaṇkheyya*, Nid. I, Vol. II, 356). He could also probe into the past without limit for the further back that he looked into the past, there was the possibility of going back still further. But to say that the world or universe is infinite in time and space is to go beyond the stand of early Buddhism and give an answer to an "unanswered question" (avyākata).

While all schools of Buddhism retained the general picture of the universe as given in the early Buddhist texts, their detailed accounts and elaborations are not always to be trusted. The Sarvāstivāda accounts given in the Abhidharmakoṣa differ from those of the Theravādins The reason for this is that the simple but stupendous conceptions of the early Buddhist view of the universe got mixed up with popular mythological geography and cosmogony in the commentarial traditions of the schools.

The Mahāyāna texts, for the most part, retain the early view of the galactic systems spread out through space. We only notice that "thousand" is replaced by "million". The Vajracchedikā, for example, refers to the universe as "this sphere of a million millions of world-systems" (XIX, XXIV, XXX).

Myth and Fact

While the early Buddhist texts are therefore, more reliable, we must not forget that the account given of the extent of the material universe exhausts the early Buddhist conception of the cosmos. The passage quoted above from the Anguttara Nikāya goes on to speak of the subtle-material worlds (*rūpa-loka*) or the worlds of higher

spirits or gods (*devā*) as being associated with the material worlds or galaxies. They cannot, however, be observed by human vision.

Are we going to dismiss this aspect of the universe as belonging to the realm of mythology? Did the Buddha have grounds for belief in the existence of devas or was this only a popular belief at the time, which he did not subscribe to? We can see the real attitude of the Buddha by the answers he gives to the Brahmin youth Sangārava who questions him on this subject :

Sangārava: "Tell me, Gotama, are there gods (*devā*)" ?

Buddha : "I know on good grounds (*ṭhānaso*) that there are gods."

Sangārava: "Why do you say when asked 'whether there are gods' that you know on good grounds that there are gods. Does this not imply that your statement is utterly false?"

Buddha : "When one is questioned as to whether there are gods, whether one replies that 'there are gods' or that 'one knows on good grounds that there are gods', then surely the deduction to be made by an intelligent person is indubitable, namely that there are gods".

Sangārava: "Then, why did not venerable Gotama, plainly say so from the very start?"

Buddha : "Because it is commonly taken for granted in the world that there are gods."

The significance of this reply is that the Buddha holds that there are devas not because of a popular or traditional belief, which he took for granted, but because he was personally convinced of their existence on good grounds.

On the other hand, the Buddha had to make use of some of the traditional terms and coin others to describe the different types of worlds of these devas. There is other evidence to suggest that the Buddha did not take popular conceptions for granted. In one place he says that ignorant people believe that there is a "hell" (*pātāla*) but asserts that this belief was false. "Hell (*pātāla*)", the Buddha says, is a term for painful bodily sensations (Samyutta Nikāya, IV. 206). "Heavens" are better than human forms of existence, where everything one experiences is pleasant (S. IV. 124) while "hells" are sub-human forms of existence where everything one experiences is unpleasant. The Buddha claims to "see" both these kinds of worlds (S. N. ibid) The danger of being born in these subhuman states of downfall (*vinipāta*) is that it is difficult to emerge to human level after that. The reason is given: "Because there prevails no practice of the good life, no righteous living, no doing of good works, but just cannibalism: the stronger preying on weaker creatures" (S. N. V. 455).

Clairvoyance

It is stated that the Buddha's ability to see these World-Systems and the beings in them is due to his clairvoyance. It is said: "The Blessed One with his clairvoyant paranormal vision can see one world-system, two, three . . . . . fifty world-systems, the thousand-fold Minor World-System, the Twice-a-Thousand Middling

World-System and the Thrice-a-Thousand Major World System. He could see as far out into space as he likes. So clear is the clairvoyant vision of the Blessed One. In this way is the Blessed One with his clairvoyant vision one who has his eyes open (*vivaṭacakkhu*, Niddesa I, Vol. II, 355).

The clairvoyant power of the disciples both according to texts and the commentaries is not unlimited like that of the Buddha. Anuruddha who was considered the foremost of those who had attained the faculty of clairvoyant vision could see only as far as the "Thousand-fold World-System": "It is by the fact of cultivating and developing these four arisings of mindfulness that I have acquired the ability to see the Thousand-fold World-System" (S. N. V. 302).

Cosmic Phenomena

Some of the casual statements made by the Buddha appear to come from on who has in fact observed aspects of cosmic space. In one place, the Buddha says: "Monks, there is a darkness of intergalactic space (Woodward has 'interstellar space'), an impenetrable gloom, such a murk of darkness as cannot enjoy the splendour of this sun and moon" (S. N. V. 455). Modern astronomy would agree with this verdict. We see so much light because we are fortunate enough to be close to a sun

The uncertainty of life in some of these worlds is sometimes stressed with graphic descriptions of cosmic phenomena. The Buddha says that there comes a time after a lapse of hundreds of thousands of years, when it would cease to rain and vegetable and animal life in the

planet would be destroyed (A. N. V. 102). He also speaks of times when seven suns would appear and the earth including the biggest of mountains which appears so stable would go up in smoke without leaving any ashes at all. He speaks as though he has witnessed some of these phenomena. He says: "Who would think or believe that this earth or Sineru, the highest of mountains would burn up and be destroyed except on the evidence of sight" (A.V. 103). Today we know that suns or stars could become cosmic hydrogen bombs, flare up and explode, burning up its planets, if any, and even affecting neighbouring solar systems. A student of astronomy commenting on this possibility says: "Humanity would at any rate enjoy a solemn and dramatic doom as the entire planet went up in a puff of smoke" (Rudolf Thiel, *And There Was Light*, p. 329). These phenomena are called *novae* and *supernovae*, which are observed from time to time in galaxies including our own. Colliding galaxies of which there is some evidence could also spell such disasters.

Time and Relativity

The destruction of the worlds, however, which will cause such phenomena to be manifested in all the world-systems comes only at the end of an epoch or eon, called a *kappa*. Several similes are given to illustrate what an immensely long period an eon is. One such passage reads as follows: "Suppose there were a city of iron walls one yojana in length, one in width, one yojana high, filled up with mustard seed. Therefrom a man were to take out at the end of every hundred years a mustard seed. That pile of mustard seed would in this way be sooner done away with and ended than an eon.

So very long is an eon. And of eons thus long more than one has passed, more than a hundred, more than a thousand, more than a hundred thousand" (S. N. II. 182).

The cosmos undergoes two major periods of change in time called the eons of expansion and contraction. The eon of expansion is the period in which the universe unfolds itself or opens out (*vivaṭṭa-kappa*). The other is the one in which the universe closes in and is destroyed (*saṃvaṭṭa-kappa*). Elsewhere they are described as the four stages of the universe: (1) the period of expansion (2) the period in which the universe remains in a state of expansion, (3) the period of contraction and (4) the period in which the universe stays contracted.

There are several models according to which astronomers try to explain the movement within the universe in time. One of them is the cycloidal oscillating model according to which the universe expands and contracts until as Professor Bonnor says "the contraction slows down, ceases and changes to expansion" again. The theory is currently favoured by many astronomers in the light of recent findings.

There is also a reference to the relativity of time in different parts of the universe. But this is a comparison of time on earth with time in the heavenly worlds. One day in one of these different worlds is equated with 50 years, 100 years, 200 years, 400 years and 1600 years respectively on earth. Such in brief outline is the early Buddhist conception of the universe.

THE BUDDHIST ATTITUDE TO GOD

The word 'God' is used in so many different ways and so many different senses that it is not possible to define the Buddhist attitude to God without clarifying the meaning of this term. The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines its sense in a theistic context as: "Supreme being, Creator and Ruler of the Universe." A theistic text (The Book of Common Prayer) gives the following description: "There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts or passions; of infinite power, wisdom and goodness, the Maker and Preserver of all things both visible and invisible . . .". I have left out the rest of the quotation since it concerns the specific dogmas of this particular school of theism.

In this form it would be a definition of the concept of a personal God, common to monotheistic belief with the proviso that the idea of creation varies according to different traditions. According to one tradition God's creation consists in fashioning co-existent chaotic matter and making an ordered cosmos out of chaos. According to another tradition God's matter in creation is an emanation or emission (srṣṭi) from the being of God, while according to yet another tradition God creates matter out of nothing (ex nihilo).

Using the word in the above sense of a Personal Creator God, who is a Supreme Being possessed of the characteristics of omniscience, omnipotence and infinite goodness, if we ask the question, 'Does God exist?', there are four possible answers. They are: (1) those of Theists who say 'yes' and affirm God's existence, (2) those of Atheists who say 'no' and deny God's existence, (3) those of Sceptics or Agnostics who say 'we do not know' or 'we cannot know', and

(4) those of Positivists who say that the question is meaningless since the meaning of the term 'God' is not clear.

Atheism

What is the Buddhist answer to this question? Was the Buddha a Theist, an Atheist, an Agnostic or Positivist. The answer is fairly clear. Given the above definition of God in its usual interpretation the Buddha is an atheist and Buddhism in both its Theravāda and Mahāyāna forms is atheism.

Some Western scholars have tried to make out that Mahāyāna Buddhism came into being about the beginning of the Christian era and that in it the Buddha is deified. Both these conclusions are false. Mahāyāna Buddhism came into being with the Mahāsaṅghika Council when a group of liberals broke away from the conservative elders or the Theravādins about a hundred years after the death of the Buddha and in none of the Mahāyāna schools is the Buddha conceived of as a Creator God.

This does not mean that the Buddha was a mere human being in either the Theravāda or Mahāyāna schools of thought. Some local Buddhist scholars following nineteenth century Western rationalists have said so but according to the early Buddhist texts, when the Buddha was asked whether he was a human being, his answer was that he was not a human being but a Buddha, although he was a human being who became a Buddha. The Buddha as the Tathāgata or the Transcendent One is "deep, immeasurable and unfathomable". His body passes away at death and he becomes invisible

to gods and men and it is incorrect to say that he ceases to exist.

In denying that the universe is a product of a Personal God, who creates it in time and plans a consummation at the end of time, Buddhism is a form of atheism.

Gosala's Theism

That Buddhism is atheistic is also clear from its denunciation of the religion and philosophy of Theism put forward by Makkhali Gosāla, one of the six senior contemporaries of the Buddha. It is a remarkable fact that these six teachers put forward prototypes of religious or philosophical theories, which have become widely prevalent in the world. Makkhali was a theist or an issara-karana-vādin, i. e. one who posited the theory that the ultimate cause was God. The others consisted of a Materialist, an Agnostic, a Categorialist (who explained the universe in terms of discrete categories), a Natural Determinist and an Eclectic.

According to the Jain Bhagavatī Sūtra and the Commentary to the Dīgha Nikāya, Makkhali is called Gosāla because he was born in a cow-shed (go-sālā). In his teaching he denied moral causation and urged that human beings become corrupted or doomed or became purified or saved miraculously, presumably by the will or grace of God. Human beings lacked initiative or freedom and their future was entirely planned out by the will of the creator. All beings evolved in various states of existence under the impact of destiny, circumstance or nature. Eventually fools and the wise

alike completed their samsāric evolution and attained salvation, making an end of suffering.

It is called the theory of salvation through saṁsaric evolution (saṁsāra-suddhi) and in one place in the Buddhist texts it is described as follows: "There is no short-cut to Heaven. Await thy destiny. Whether a man experiences joy or sorrow is due to his destiny. All beings will attain salvation through saṁsaric evolution, so do not be eager for that which is to come" (J. VI, 229). The same idea is expressed as follows in a theistic text: "Beings originate in the Unmanifest, they evolve in a manifest condition and eventually come to rest in the Unmanifest. So why worry"

Makkhali explicity states that "there is no question of a person attaining maturity of character by good deeds, vows, penances or a religious life" (D. I. 54). Man is merely a product of the creation and will of God and his future is laid out. As Makkhali says, "just as much as a ball of thread when flung on the ground unravels itself until it comes to an end, so the wise and the fools alike fare on in saṁsāra and eventually attain salvation".

Makkhali's theism has several attractive features. First, it is logically consistent. As philosophers have pointed out, God's omniscience and omnipotence strictly imply a rigged deterministic universe. God being omniscient sees the entire future in all its aspects and details. It is unlike human foreknowledge, which is only probable. So the future of the creature is strictly mapped out and God can see it as in the reel of a film. God being omnipotent is entirely responsible for

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it as well, so that a belief in freewill on the part of his creatures is merely illusory. Secondly, God is impartial in that he treats all beings alike for as Makkhali says, "there are no high and the low" (natthi ukkaṁsāvakaṁse) since all go through the same course of evolution in various stages of existence. Thirdly, there are no eternal hells and beings do not have to burn in an everlasting hell-fire for they all attain salvation. There are three hundred hells (tiṁse nirayasate) or other purgatories along with seven human worlds (satta-mānuse) and several heavens to pass through before attaining eventual release.

His theism relieves human beings of the burdens of responsibility, gives them security, solace and the joys of the heavens (mixed with the sorrows of purgatories) before assuring salvation. In this sense, it may be compared with many modern forms of theism, which try to equalise opportunities for all and are very apologetic about eternal hell-fires.

Puppet Argument

Yet the theism of Makkhali is severely criticised by the Buddha since it gave a false sense of security to the people and encouraged complacency denying freewill and the value of human effort. The Buddha says that he knows of no other person than Makkhali born for the detriment and disadvantage of so many people and compares him to a fisherman casting his net at the mouth of a river for the destruction of many fish (A. I. 33). Similarly in the Sandaka Sutta, the Buddha (as reported by Ananda) says that there are four types of religion which are false in this world and four types which are

unsatisfactory though not necessarily totally false, distinguishing Buddhism from all eight of them.

Two of the types condemned as false refer to two forms of theism. One is the doctrine that salvation is not due to human effort or the moral causation effected by good or evil deeds but that people are miraculously saved or doomed presumably because of the grace or will of God. The other is the doctrine of predestinarian theistic evolutionism.

It would be interesting to see the reasons given for this stand taken against certain forms of theism. There are two main arguments against theism presented in the early Canonical texts. The first may be called the Puppet Argument and is stated as follows: "If God designs the life of the entire world—the glory and the misery, the good and the evil acts, man is but an instrument of his will (niddesa-kāri) and God (alone) is responsible" (J., V. 238).

Theists who do not take a predestinarian stand (which is logically consisten) try to evade this conclusion by saying that God has endowed man with freewill. But it can be shown that the concept of divine providence is not compatible with a notion of human freedom. To be consistent, one has either to give up the belief in theism or the belief in freedom or confess that this is a mystery that one cannot understand, which is a departure from reason.

Professor Antony Flew who has made the most recent and most comprehensive analysis of the concept of theism, including the case for and against theism, states one of his conclusions with regard to this matter as

follows: "The stock image is that of a Supreme Father showing longsuffering tolerance towards his often rebellious children : he has given us, it is said, our freedom; and we—wretched unworthy creatures that we are—to often take advantage to flout his wishes. If this image fitted there would be no problem. Obviously, it is possible for children to act against their parents' wishes. It is also possible for parents to grant to their children freedoms, which may be abused, by refusing to exercise powers of control which they do possess. But the case of Creator and creature must be utterly different. Here the appropriate images, in so far as any images could be appropriate, would be that of the Creator: either as the Supreme Puppetmaster with creatures whose every thought and move he arranges; or as the Great Hypnotist with subjects who always act out his irresistible suggestions. What makes the first image entirely inept and the other two much less so is crucially that God is supposed to be, not a manufacturer or a parent who may make or rear his product and then let it be, but the Creator. This precisely means that absolutely nothing happens save by his ultimate undetermined determination and with his consenting ontological support. Everything means everything; and that includes every human thought, every human action, and every human choice. For we too are indisputably parts of the universe, we are among the "all things both visible and invisible" of which he is supposed to be "the Maker, and Preserver" (*God and Philosophy*, Hutchinson & Co. Ltd., 1966, p. 44).

His final conclusion is the same as what I mentioned above. In his own words: "For it is, as we have argued already, entirely inconsistent to maintain: both that there is a Creator; and that there are other authentically

autonomous beings" (*Ibid.*, p. 54). A careful study of the theistic texts of any tradition will show that often this is directly admitted in certain contexts, despite the contradictions in other places.

According to the Buddhist theory of causation man's actions are not strictly determined. The Buddhist theory steers clear of both Natural and Theistic Determinism on the one hand and total Indeterminism on the other. Man has an element of freewill although his actions are conditioned but not determined by external and internal stimuli. By the exercise of this freedom along the right lines man can change his own condition from one of anxiety, unrest and suffering to one of serenity and happiness. This is effected not by invoking the grace of God but by human effort and the comprehension of human psychology. In the Devadaha Sutta, the Buddha uses the arguments of the theists against them, saying that if theists are suffering psychologically, then according to their own theories it must be because God has withheld his grace from them whereas in his own case (if theism were true) "he must have been created by a a good God" (bhaddakena issarena nimmito, M. II 227).

Argument from Evil

The second argument against theism found in the Canonical texts is the argument from evil. It proceeds on the presumption that if the world is created by God, then certain evils are inexplicable. It has several variants but if we take some of them together: "If God (Brahmā) is Lord of the whole world and creator of the multitude of beings, then why (i) has he ordained misfortune in the world without making the whole world happy, or (ii) for what purpose has he made the world full of

injustice, deceit, falsehood and conceit, or (iii) the Lord of creation is evil in that he ordained injustice when there could have been justice" (J. VI. 208).

Here again, leading modern philosophers endorse the argument after showing that all the attempts to explain away evil are unsatisfactory. It will not do to say that evil is negative or unreal; for suffering, ignorance, poverty and ugliness are as real as their opposites. It will not do to say that evils (like, wilful injury) are necessary for the existence of higher-order goods (like, forgiveness) for there are still many evils unaccounted for in this fashion. Nor will it do to say that the evils in the world are due to the grant of freewill to human beings (quite apart from the difficulty of reconciling this with divine providence, as indicated above). For as Professor Flew has shown, "there are many evils which it scarcely seems either are or could be redeemed in this way: a. imal suffering, for instance, especially that occurring before—or after—the human period" (*Ibid.*, p. 54).

Here again the inability to give a rational explanation leads the theist to a confession that it is a mystery : "The origin of moral evil lies forever concealed within the mystery of human freedom" (J. R. Hick, *Philosophy of Religion*, Prentice-Hall, 1963, p. 43). So there is the mystery or the incompatibility between divine providence and human freedom as well as the mystery or the contradiction between belief in divine goodness and the existence of certain evils.

The result is that while some of the Upaniṣads hold that "the world is enveloped by God" (Īsāvasyam idam

sarvam), Buddhism held that "the world was without a refuge and without God" (attāṇo loko anabhissaro).

Other Arguments

I have stated only the two main arguments to be found in the Canonical texts, which may be attributed to the Buddha himself. But the later literature both of Theravāda and Mahāyāna provide an abundance of arguments against the concept of a Personal Creator God (Isvara). While positive arguments are adduced to show the truth of atheism, there are others which show the fallacies of the theistic arguments for the existence of God.

Even when we take the arguments for theism in a modern context we find that the Ontological argument was a mere definition, which mistakenly regarded existence as an attribute. The Cosmological argument contradicted its own premise by speaking of an uncaused cause or using the word 'cause' in a non-significant sense. The argument from Design, which is superficially the most appealing flounders when we consider the waste and cruelty of evolution, with nature 'red in tooth and claw'. It is impossible to contemplate that a loving God could have created and watched the spectacle of dinosaurs tearing each other to pieces for millions of years on earth.

Inconceivable or Meaningless ?

In order to reconcile divine love with the apparent cruelty of nature, a move that is often made by theists is to say that God's love is inscrutable or is another mystery. A human parent would do whatever he could to relieve the suffering of his child who is in great pain.

Would an omnipotent and omniscient being look on without intervention? To say that such a being exists is to equate his love with callousness or cruelty. In such a situation we would not know what meaning to attach to the concept of 'love' considered as an attribute of God. This has led theists to say that God's attributes as well as his nature are inconceivable. The Bodhicaryāvatāra makes a *reductio ad absurdum* of this contention arguing that in such a case the concept of a God or creator is meaningless: "If, as theists say, God is too great for man to be able to comprehend him, then it follows that his qualities also surpass our range of thought, and that we neither know him nor attribute to him the quality of a creator". It follows that if normal meanings are given to the words, all-knowing, all-powerful and infinitely good (or analogous meanings), the evidence points against God's existence whereas if this is not done, the concept becomes meaningless.

Fruit Test

Another test that Buddhism applies in gauging the validity of a belief is the 'fruit test' or the attempt to see what consequences a belief or set of beliefs, when acted upon, has led to. With regard to theism it may be held that it has given people a sense of security and inspired them to various kinds of activity. This does not prove that the belief is true but suggests that it may be useful. A realistic survey would show that while beliefs in theism have done some good, they have brought much evil in their train as well.

Wars have been fought between the main warring creeds of theism and also among the sects within, each in the name of God. In contrast we may quote the words

of Dr. Edward Conze about Buddhism: "All those who dwell in Asia can take pride in a religion which is not only five centuries older than that of the West, but has spread and maintained itself without recourse to violence, and has remained unstained by religious wars and crusades" (*A Short History of Buddhism*, p. III). In addition, a careful study of the literature of theism will show that there is hardly a crime or vice which has not been committed or recommended in the name of God.

Hitler thought that he was merely carrying out the will of God and that he and his party were the instruments of Providence. The references are too many to quote and may be found in his "Speeches" (Norman H. Paynes, *The Speeches of Adolf Hiter*, Oxford University Press, 1942, s. v. *God* in Index). For example in 1938, Hitler says: "I believe that it was God's will to send a boy from here into the Reich, to let him grow up, to raise him to be the leader of the nation so as to enable him to lead back his homeland into the Reich. There is a higher ordering and we all are nothing else than its agents" (p. 1458). In 1939, he says: "The National Socialist Movement has wrought this miracle. If Almighty God granted success to his work, then the Party was His instrument" (p. 426). In his *Mein Kampf* (*My Struggle*) he says: "Thus did I now believe that I must act in the sense of the Almighty Creator. By defending myself against the Jews, I am doing the Lord's work" (London, 1938, p. 36). These thoughts may have greatly relieved his conscience when he ordered the extermination of six million Jews from the face of the earth.

Some have argued that the concept of the fatherhood of God leads to the idea of the brotherhood of man.

At the same time, human inequalities have also been sanctioned in God's name. Such are the concepts of chosen castes, chosen races, chosen nations, chosen classes, chosen creeds, a chosen sex or a chosen individual. As the Buddhist texts say, if God created the world, he would be responsible for the crime and suffering no less than the acts of goodness and self-sacrifice.

Buddhist Atheism

While Buddhism is atheistic, we must not forget that Buddhist atheism has at the same time to be distinguished from materialistic atheism. Buddhism asserted the falsity of a materialistic philosophy which denied survival, recompense and responsibility as well as moral and spiritual values and obligations, no less than certain forms of theistic beliefs. In its thoroughly objective search for truth it was prepared to accept what was true and good in "the personal immortality view" (bhava-diṭṭhi) of theism as well as "the annihilationist view" (vibhava-diṭṭhi) of atheistic materialism: "Those thinkers who do not see how these two views arise and cease to be, their good points as well as their defects and how one transcends them in accordance with the truth are under the grip of greed, hate and ignorance . . . and will not attain final deliverance" (M. I. 65).

The Divine Life

Buddhism recognises all that is true, good and valuable in certain forms of theistic doctrine. Among the four types of religions which were unsatisfactory but

not necessarily false were those based on a revelational tradition (anussava). A religion which granted the truth of an element of freewill, of moral causation, of survival and responsibility and the non-inevitability of salvation had value in it.

Although there is no Personal God with the characteristics of omniscience, omnipotence and infinite goodness, there is the concept of a Mahā Brahmā (Mighty God) who is morally perfect and has very great knowledge and power but is not omniscient and omnipotent. Certain forms of theism, it is said, are put forward by teachers who are born on earth after dying from the world of such a being. Born here they lead a homeless life of renunciation and meditation, see the heaven that they came from and teach a religion of fellowship with Brahmā (God). They believe that such a Brahmā is omnipotent (abhibhū anabhibhūto), omniscient (aññadatthudaso), the Mighty Lord (vasavatti issaro), Maker (kattā), Creator (nimmātā), the Most Perfect (seṭṭho), the Designer (sañjitā) and the Almighty Father of beings that are and are to be (vasī pitā bhūta-bhavayānaṁ), whose creatures we are.

The Buddha does not deny the existence of such a being; he is morally perfect but not omniscient and omnipotent. He is the chief of the hierarchy of Brahmās who rule over galactic systems and clusters of galactic systems. He is regent of the cosmos who requests the Buddha to preach the pure and perfect Dhamma to the world, which will otherwise be destroyed. But he too is subject to the judgment of karma. According to the Buddha as reported in the Brahmanimantanika Sutta and elsewhere,

Buddhahood is a state far exceeding the knowledge and power of any Brahmā. As the Tevijja Sutta points out, fellowship with Brahmā is not to be attained by petitionary prayers but by cultivating the divine life: "That those Brahmins versed in the Vedas and yet bearing anger and malice in their hearts, sinful and uncontrolled should after death with the dissolution of the body attain fellowship with God who is free from anger and malice, pure in heart and has self-mastery—such a state of things can in no wise be" (D. I. 248).

It is said that the cultivation of compassion in its purest form is "called the divine life in this world" (Brahmam etaṁ vihāram idhamāhu). It is also said that when one lives the moral and spiritual life with faith in the Buddha, then "one dwells with God" (Brahmunā saddhiṁ saṁvasati). The Buddha came to establish "the rule of righteousness" or "the kingdom of righteousness" (Dhamma-cakkaṁ pavattetuṁ) in this world, which is elsewhere called "the kingdom of God" (Brahma-cakkaṁ). The Buddha and his disciples who have attained Nirvana are said "to abide with self-become-God" (Brahma-bhūtena attanā viharati). One who has attained Nirvāna, it is said, "may justifiably employ theological terminology" (dhammena so Brahma-vādaṁ vadeyya). The old theological terms are given a new meaning and significance in what is comparable to the modern death-of-God theology, which is currently gaining ground in the West where seekers after truth can no longer with honesty and sincerety accept the old theology and the old dogmas.

Superfluous

Yet it is unnecessay and to some extent misleading to put Buddhism into a theological cast. Whatever we may mean by 'God' and whether we say "God exists" or "God does not exist", it is a fact that there is physical and mental illness. The right approach is to understand the nature of these illnesses, their causes, their cure and to apply the right remedies. Buddhism provides not palliatives but the right remedies for the gradual and complete eradication of all anxiety, insecurity and the mental illnesses we suffer from until we attain the completely healthy Nirvanic mind. If Nirvāna is God in the sense of being the Transcendent Reality, then those who are using these remedies cannot still comprehend it, while those who attain it do not need to.

See also 'The Wheel' No. 47: Buddhism and the God Idea, ed. by Nyanaponika Thera; 'The Wheel' No. 57/58: The Tevijja Sutta. A Discourse of the Buddha on the Path to God; 'Bodhi Leaves' B. 4: Of Gods and Men, by Francis Story.

THE BUDDHIST ATTITUDE TO REVELATION

In the Saṇgārava Sutta, the Buddha states that there are three types of religious and philosophical teachers, considering the basis of their knowledge, who prescribe divergent ways of life. First, there are the Revelationists (anussavikā) who claim final knowledge on the basis of revelation, such as, for instance, the brahmins of the Vedic tradition. Secondly, there are the rational metaphysicians (takkī vimamsī) who claim final knowledge on the basis of their faith in reason and speculation. Thirdly, there are those who claim final knowledge of things not found in the traditional revealed scriptures (ananussutesu dhammesu), based on a personal understanding derived from their extra-sensory powers of perception.

It is significant that the Buddha classifies himself as a member of the third group. Referring to this class of religious and philosophical teachers the Buddha says, "I am one of them" (tesāhaṁ asmi, M. II, 211). It would surely be of interest to Buddhists to know something about this last class of religious and philosophical teachers with whom the Buddha identifies himself. It would also be important to note the difference bteween the Buddha and the other members of this class. But in order to do this, it would be necessary on the one hand to identify the Buddha's contemporaries and predecessors, who were presumed to belong to this class. On the other hand, it is vital to examine the Buddhist attitude to the other two classes of religious and philosophical thinkers.

This would involve an analysis of the means of knowledge recognised in pre-Buddhistic thought.

For this purpose it would be necessary to look into both the Vedic and the non-Vedic traditions that preceded Buddhism. The pre-Buddhistic Vedic tradition comprises the thinkers who paid some sort of allegiance to the Vedas. From the evidence of the Buddhist scriptures and the Vedic texts, they consisted of the thinkers responsible for the literature from the Rgveda downwards up to about the Maitrāyaṇi Upaniṣad. The pre-Buddhistic non-Vedic tradition would comprise the Materialists, the Sceptics who are called amarā-vikkhepikā (i. e. eel-wrigglers) in the Buddhist texts and ajñānavādins or agnostics in the Jain texts, the Ājīvikas who propounded theories about time and change and the Jains who had Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta as their leader.

A careful study of the relevant texts of the Vedic and non-vedic traditions shows that the thinkers who claimed a final knowledge of things not found in the traditional revealed scriptures, based on a personal understanding derived from their extra-sensory powers of perception are to be found in both the Vedic and the non-Vedic traditions prior to Buddhism. They were none other than those who practised yoga and claimed to have acquired certain extra-sensory faculties of perception and expansions of consciousness. We shall examine in a later talk of this series the respects in which the Buddha may be compared and contrasted with them.

Before we do this it would be relevant to examine the claims of the authoritarian thinkers, who regarded the Vedas as revealed scriptures as well as the claims of the Rationalists, who put forward metaphysical theories about the nature and destiny of man in the universe based on speculative reasoning. It is worth remembering

at the same time that the authoritarian thinkers and the rationalists were by no means confined to the Vedic tradition. They are to found in the pre-Buddhistic non-Vedic tradition as well. The Sutta Nipāta refers to "the Vedas of the Samaṇas or recluses as well as to the Vedas of the brahmins" (Vedāni viceyya kevalāni samaṇānaṃ yāni p'atthi brāhmanānaṁ, Sn. 529) and there is evidence to show that some of the Ajīvikas had their own authoritative religious and philosophical texts handed down by tradition. Besides, there were Rationalists, perhaps the majority of them, in the non-Vedic tradition. The Materialists, Sceptics and many of the Ājīvikas were rationalists who based their findings on reasoning. So we find the authoritarian thinkers, the Rationalists as well as the Empiricists or Experientialists whose knowledge was derived from experience, represented in both the Vedic and the non-Vedic traditions prior to Buddhism.

We shall here examine the authoritarian thinkers of the Vedic tradition and the Buddhist attitude to then. For this attitude illustrates the Buddhist attitude to revelation. It was the belief of the majority of the thinkers of the Vedic tradition that the whole of it was the word uttered or breathed forth by the Great Being, who is the ground of existence. A passage in the Bṛhad Āraṇyaka Upaniṣad reads as follows: "It is—as from a a fire laid with damp fuel, clouds of smoke separately issue forth, so, lo, verily, from this Great Being has been breathed forth that which is Rgveda, Yajurveda, Sāmaveda, (Hymns) of the Atharvans and Angirases, Legend, Ancient Lore, Sciences, Upaniṣads, Stanzas, Sūtras, explanations and commentaries. From it, indeed, are all these breathed forth" (2.4.10). Since this Great

Being (Mahad Bhūtam) is conceived as the source of all knowledge and power, these scriptures were an infallible divine revelation. In a later passage in the same Upaniṣad, which adds to this list, the entire cosmos is said to be breathed forth by the Great Being. Both passages occur in a context in which the highest reality is said to be non-dual (advaitam). This impersonal conception is to be found in other works of this period, where the Vedas are said to be a product of the basic structure of the world (Skambha), Time (Kāla) or Logos (Vāk).

Very much earlier in tha Rgveda itself, though in a late hymn (RV. 10.90), the origin of the Vedas is traced to the sacrifice of the Cosmic Person (Puruṣa). This led in the Brāhmaṇas to the theory that the Vedas are due to the creation of Prajāpati, the Lord of all creatures. This Prajāpati is often identified in the Brāhmaṇas with Brahmā, who according to the Buddhist texts is considered by the theistic brahmins to be the creator of the cosmos. In the Upaniṣads, Prajāpati or the Lord of creation sometimes continues in his role as the creator of the Vedas (Ch. 4.17.1.2). But Brahmā often gains prominence as the creator of the Vedas, although they are actually revealed to mankind by Prajāpati. The Chāndogya says: "This did Brahmā tell to Prajāpati, Prajāpati to Manu and Manu to human beings" (8.15). Very much later in the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad, Brahmā is still "the first of the gods and the maker of all", who eventually reveals both the higher and lower forms of Vedic knowledge to mankind.

On the internal evidence of the Vedic tradition itself, we therefore, find that the claim was made at a

certain stage in its history that the texts of the Vedic tradition were divinely revealed. The later Vedic tradition, therefore, considers the ṛṣis who composed the Vedic hymns as 'seers' in the literal sense of the term, who 'see the Vedas by means of extra-sensory perception' (atīdriyārṯhadraṣṭārah ṛṣayah . . . . .). Radhakrishnan gives expression to this traditional point of view when he says that "the ṛṣi of the Vedic hymn calls himself not so much the composer of the hymns as the seer of them" but it is a theory that was put forward as early as the Brahmaṇas.

It is because the Vedic thinkers believed their texts to have been divinely revealed that they looked down with scorn at the claims of certain religious and philosophical teachers to have personally verified the truths of their doctrines by developing their extra-sensory powers of perception. In the Subha Sutta, the Buddha criticises some of the ethical recommendations of the Upaniṣads on the ground that neither the brahmins at the time nor their teachers up to several generations nor even the original seers claimed to know the consequences of practising the virtues referred to by verifying the fact with their paranormal perception. Subha, the brahmin student, is enraged at this and quotes the views of one of the senior brahmins, who treated such claims to verify these facts in the light of paranormal perception with contempt, considering them ridiculous (hassakaṁ) for it is impossible for *a mere human being* (manussabhūto) to claim such knowledge. The point here is that Vedic knowledge is divinely revealed in contrast with the knowledge of the Buddha, which was merely human and therefore of lesser worth.

It is the same criticism that is sometimes levelled against Buddhism by some of its theistic critics on the basis of the theistic presuppositions. It is said that the knowledge of the Buddha was merely human, whereas the knowledge allegedly contained in their respective theistic traditions is divine, implying thereby that it was more reliable.

We may examine the value of this criticism. But let us first assess the value of the Buddhist criticisms of the Vedic tradition in their historical contexts. In the above context, the Buddha criticises the acceptance of certain statements merely on the ground that they are contained in an allegedly revealed text without their being verified as true. It may be stated here that verifiability in the light of experience is one of the central characteristics of truth according to Buddhist conceptions.

In the Sandaka Sutta, Buddhism is contrasted with four types of false religions and four types of religions, which are unsatisfactory though not necessarily false by claiming that the statements of Buddhism have been verified by the Buddha and many of his disciples and were, therefore, verifiable in principle by anyone with the requisite competence. A statement can be reliably accepted as true only when it is repeatedly verified and not because it is dogmatically declared to be the truth on the grounds of revelation. In the Cankī Sutta, the Buddha says: "There are five things which have a twofold result in this life. What five? A belief based on faith (saddhā), one's likes (ruci), on *revelation* (anussava), superficial reflection (ākāra-parivitakka) and agreement with one's preconceptions (diṭṭhi-nijjhāna-kkhanti) . . . For even what I learn to be the truth on

ground of it being a profound revelation may turn out to be empty, hollow and false, while what I do not hear to be a truth on the ground of it being a profound revelation may turn out to be factual, true and sound" (M. II, 170-1) The Buddha goes on to say that one safeguards the truth by accepting a statement from revelation as such a statement without dogmatically claiming it to be true, which is unwarranted. This means that it is spurious to claim as knowledge the truth of a statement in a revealed text. It is different with a statement, which has been reliably verified in the light of one's personal experience. It is noteworthy that the Buddha says that beliefs held on the grounds of faith, one's likes, revelation etc. are likely to have a dual result, namely to be verified as either true or false in this life itself.

In the Sandaka Sutta, a similar conclusion is drawn. One of the reasons why a religion based on revelation is unconsoling or unsatisfactory (anassāsikaṁ) is that it may prove to be either true or false and one cannot say what it is for certain. It is said: "Herein a certain religious teacher is a Revelationist, who holds to the truth of revelation and preaches a doctrine according to revelation, according to what is traditionally handed down, according to the authority of scripture. Now a teacher who is a revelationist may have well-heard it or ill-heard it and it may be true or false. At this, an intelligent person reflects thus: this venerable teacher is a revelationist etc. . . . . so seeing that his religion is unsatisfactory he loses interest and leaves it." So even the fact that it has been clearly apprehended as a revelation is no guarantee of its truth for revelation is

no criterion of truth. For the statements of revealed scripture may turn out to be true or false.

This is one of the central criticisms of revealed religion as found in the Buddhist texts, which reappears in the context under discussion in the Subha Sutta. The second criticism that is made is that neither the brahmins living at that period nor their teachers up to several generations nor even the original seers claimed to know the consequences of practising these virtues after realising the fact with their higher knowledge, although the Buddha himself could do so.

While the Vedic tradition from the time of the Brāhmaṇas onwards, claimed that the composers of the Vedic hymns were in fact seers, who intuited the truths or saw the statements, which were revealed to them by their extrasensory perception, the Buddhists not only denied any higer insight on the part of the seers but quite emphatically asserted that the hymns were in fact *composed* by them. The original seers (pubbakā isayo) are constantly described as "the makers and the utterers of the hymns" (mantānaṁ kattāro, mantānaṁ pavattāro, D. I. 242). The internal evidence of the Rgvedic texts proves this for in these texts, the Vedic poets merely claim to make (√kṛ), compose (√tak), produce (√jan) and utter (avadannṛtāni) the hymns. The Vedic Anukramaṇī merely defines a ṛṣi as 'an author of a hymn' (yasya vakyaṁ sa ṛṣih). So there is no historical justification for the claim that the original authors of the Rgveda had any extra-sensory vision. The Buddhist criticisms were, therefore, realistic and made in the light of objective facts as they saw them. What is true of the origins of the Vedic tradition is true of other revelational

traditions, when their historical origins are objectively examined.

The idea that the Buddha was a "mere human being" is also mistaken. For when the Buddha was asked whether he was a human being, a Brahmā (God) or Māra (Satan), he denied that he was any of them and claimed that he was Buddha, i. e. an Enlightened Being who had attained the Transcendent. This does not, however, make the Buddha unique for it is a status that any human being can aspire to attain. The significance of this claim is brought out in the Brahma-nimantanika Sutta, where it is shown that even a Brahmā eventually passes away while the Buddha being one with the Transcendent reality beyond space, time and causation is not subject to such vicissitudes.

At the same time, the Buddhist criticism of revelation does not imply that revelations are impossible. According to the Buddhist conception of things, it is possible for beings more developed than human beings to exist in the cosmos and communicate their views about the nature and destiny of man in the universe through human beings. All that is said is that the fact that something is deemed to be a revelation is no criterion of its truth and revelation, therefore, cannot be considered an independent and valid means of knowledge. No book on scientific method today regards it as such and even theologians have begun to doubt the validity of such claims. According to Buddhist conceptions, revelations may come from different grades of higher beings with varying degrees of goodness and intelligence. They cannot all be true. This does not mean that they are all necessarily false. For they may contain aspects of truth although

we cannot say what these are by merely giving ear to them. This is why Buddhism classifies religions based on revelation as unsatisfactory though not necessarily false

It is a notorious fact that different revelational traditions and individual revelations contradict each other. If "truth is one" (ekaṁ hi saccaṁ) as Buddhism believes to be the case, they cannot all be true though all may be false. There are diverse views on crucial matters even within the same revelational tradition. The Brāhmaṇas and the Upaniṣads, for instance, contain several creation-myths and divergent accounts as to how life came into existence on earth. The ideas they contain differ from those of the Babylonian myths with which the Western world is familiar.

One such creation myth, for instance, states that in the beginning the world was Soul (Ātman) alone in the form of a Person. Human beings are the offspring of Ātman, who first creates a wife to escape from anxiety and loneliness. Later the wife assumes the forms of various animals, while Ātman assumes their male forms in order to make love to her. It is thus that the various species of animals come into being. This account of creation is in a section of the Bṛhad Āraṇyaka Upaniṣad. The creation-myth in the Aitareya Upaniṣad is quite different although this too starts with the story that in the beginning Soul or Ātman alone existed and there was no other blinking thing whatsoever. Ātman creates the worlds by an act of will and then thinks of creating people to look after them. Then, it is said that "right from the waters he drew forth and shaped a person" (I. 3). Here man is created not by an act of procreation

nor out of clay but out of the waters. The evolutionary account of the origin of life found in a section of the Taittiriya Upaniṣad is still different. It says that from Ātman or the Soul there progressively emerged space, wind, fire, water, earth, plants, food, seed and then man.

If we compare and contrast the Materialist criticism of the Vedas with the Buddhist one we see the difference in approach. The Materialists condemned outright the entirety of the Vedic tradition and saw no good in it at all. According to them, the Vedas were the work of "fools and knaves" or in their own words, bhaṇḍa-dhurta-nisacarah, i. e. buffoons, knaves and demons. On the other hand the Buddhists, while holding that the original seers who were the authors of the Vedas merely lacked a special insight with which they were later credited, in keeping with historical fact, praised them for their virtue and rectitude. The Materialists categorically repudiated the Vedas as false, self-contradictory and repetitious (anṛta-vyaghata-punarukta-doṣa). The Buddhists, while pointing out the contradictions and falsities and repudiating the claims to revelation did not consider all the traditional beliefs in the Vedic tradition to be wholly false. Among the false beliefs the Materialists would point to the belief in sacrifices, in a soul, in survival, in moral values and moral retribution. The Buddhists, however, criticised the Vedic conception of the sacrifice and denied the necessity for a concept of a soul, but agreed with the Vedas in asserting survival, moral values and moral recompense and retribution, which are among the beliefs which formed part of the right philosophy of life or sammā diṭṭhi in Buddhism.

Even with regard to the sacrifice, the Materialists saw nothing but deception and fraud in it. The Buddhists, while condemning sacrifices as involving a waste of resources and the needless destruction of animals, were not averse to the simple sacrificial offerings made in good faith by the earliest brahmins who killed no animals for the occasion. Just as much as some of the Upaniṣads reinterpret sacrifice or *yajña* as the religious life, Buddhism conceives of *yaññña* at its best to be the highest religious life as advocated in Buddhism.

The difference between the attitude of the Upaniṣads and Buddhism towards sacrifices, despite the similarities indicated, may be described as follows. The Upaniṣads as the Jnāna-mārga or 'the way of knowledge' tended to regard the earlier Vedic tradition in the Brahmanas, advocating the karma-mārga or 'the way of ritual' and the associated learning as a lower form of knowledge (aparāvidyā), while the thought of the Upaniṣads was a a higher forms of knowledge (parāvidyā). But even as a lower form of knowledge, it was not discarded For to do so would be to deny the authority of the injunctive assertions of the Vedas, which advocated sacrifices, and thereby question and undermine the belief in Vedic revelation. So even where the Upaniṣads urge the cultivation of compassion, an exception is made with regard to the sacrifice. Paradoxically, it is said that one should not harm any creatures except at the sacrificial altars (ahimsan sarvabhūtāny anyatra tīrthebyyah, Ch. 8.15.1). So it was the belief in revelation, which is ultimately the basis for the belief in animal sacrifices.

The Materialists, likewise, saw no basis for a belief in revelation since they counted as real only the

observable material world. Buddhism on the other hand, did not question the basis of the belief in revelation except for its denial of a personal creator God. It criticised particular claims to revelation and the attempt to regard revelation as a separate valid means of knowledge. In the Tevijjā Sutta,* the brahmins claim to have a diversity of paths for attaining fellowship with Brahmā or God. The Buddha criticises these claims on the ground that not one of them have "seen Brahmā face to face" (Brahmā sakkhidiṭṭho, D. I. 238). This was true of the brahmins present at the time right up to the original composers of the Vedas. So the claim to revelation is without basis. Although Brahmā is believed to be the creator of the cosmos, he is none other than a temporary regent of the cosmos, an office to which any being within the cosmos could aspire. The knowledge of the Buddha, who has attained the Transcendent excels that of Brahmā, who is morally perfect (asankiliṭṭha-citto) but is neither omniscient nor omnipotent. The Buddha who has held this office in the past and has verified in the light of his extra-sensory powers of perception the conditions required for attaining fellowship with God or Brahmā could state that there is no diversity of paths all leading to such a state but the one and only path consisting in acquiring purity of mind, cultivating compassion and being selfless or without possessions. What is verifiably true is more reliable than a blind belief in a claim to revelation.

The Buddhist attitude to any such revelation would be that of accepting what is true, good and sound and rejecting what is false, evil and unsound after a dispassionate analysis of its contents without giving way to

* Translated in 'The Wheel' No. 57/58.

prejudice, hatred, fear or ignorance. The Buddhist criticism of religions based on authoritarian claims is not limited to a criticism of a claim to revelation. An analysis of the sermon addressed to the Kālāmas shows that it is only the first of the grounds for an authoritarian claim, although it was undoubtedly the most important and, therefore, the one to be examined and criticised in detail. The different kinds of claims to knowledge based on authority are seen in the classification of such claims in the Kālāmā Sutta, which mentions besides revelation claims made on the grounds of tradition (paramparā), commonsense, wide acceptance or hear-say (itikirā), conformity with scripture (piṭaka-sampadā) and on the ground of something being a testimony of an expert (bhavyarūpatā) or the view of a revered teacher (samaṇo me garū). They could not be deemed to be valid means of knowledge and the requirement of safeguarding the truth (saccānurakkhanā) demands that beliefs held on such a basis be admitted as such instead of dogmatically claiming them to be true. Such dogmatism leads to undesirable consequences for oneself and society—to intolerance, conflict and violence and is a departure from sincerety and truth.

THE BUDDHIST CONCEPTION OF TRUTH

One of the five precepts that a Buddhist has to undertake to observe is that of "refraining from saying what is false". Stated in its negative as well as positive form he has to "refrain from saying what is false, assert what is true (sacca-vādī), be devoted to the truth (sacca-sandha), be reliable (theta), trustworthy (paccayika) and not be one who deceives the world (avisaṁvādako lokassa)" (A. II. 209).

The necessity for speaking the truth is one of the Ten Virtues (dasa kusala kamma) that one has to practise for one's own good as well as for the good of society. For it is held that a just social order requires that, among other things, the people in it be honest and speak the truth: "Herein, a certain layman rejects falsehood and refraining from saying what is false, asserts the truth whether he be in a formal assembly of people or in a crowd or at home among his relatives or in his office or when he is called to witness in a court of law—disclaiming to have known or seen what he did not know or see and claiming to have known or seen what he has known or seen. Thus, neither for his own sake nor for the sake of others, nor again for some material gain would he state a deliberate falsehood" (Sāleyyaka Sutta, M. I. 288).

Right speech, however, is not limited to the requirement of speaking the truth. It is also necessary that (a) one avoids slander which causes divisions and dissensions among people and confines oneself to statements which bring about social harmony and understanding, (b) one refrains from harsh or foul language and

be civil and courteous in one's speech, saying what is pleasant and (c) avoid gossip and vain speech and speak at the right occasion and in accordance with the law what is profitable, righteous and true.

An exception is sometimes made in the case of (b), where it is held that our statements even when true, may be either pleasant or unpleasant. It is sometimes necessary to say what is true but unpleasant when it is useful, just as much as it is necessary to put one's finger in the throat of a child even when it causes a little pain in order to pull out something that has got stuck in the child's throat. Thus in the Abhayarājakumāra Sutta, it is pointed out that statements may be true or false, useful or useless and pleasant or unpleasant. This results in eight possibilities as follows.

1.	True	useful	pleasant
2.	,,	,,	unpleasant
3.	,,	useless	pleasant
4.	,,	,,	unpleasant
5.	False	useful	pleasant
6.	,,	,,	unpleasant
7.	,,	useless	pleasant
8.	,,	,,	unpleasant

Of the eight possibilities, it is said, that the Transcendent One asserts 1 and 2 at the proper time. The text reads: "He would assert at the proper time a statement which he knows to be true, factual, useful, agreeable and pleasant to others (i. e., 1) . . . . He would assert at the proper time a statement which he knows to be true, factual, useful, disagreeable and unpleasant to others (i. e., 2)." Lying is prohibited and the necessity to seek and speak the truth is emphasised because such

action promotes one's personal happiness as well as social progress and harmony. Yet, one incurs moral blame only if there is an intention to deceive and cause disharmony but negligence is also to be avoided so that a Buddhist must act with a high sense of responsibility with regard to what he says, considering its possible social repercussions.

The Nature of Truth

The statements of Buddhism or the Dhamma are claimed to be true. The central truths of Buddhism, pertaining to its theory of reality and ethics are asserted in the form of "the Four Noble Truths" (cattāri ariya-saccāni). Nirvana is claimed to be "The Truth" (Sacca), being the supreme truth (parama-sacca). It is also interesting to note that the two things which are claimed to be "eternal values" (sanātana Dhamma) are Truth and Love. With regard to the former it is stated: "Truth, indeed, is immortal speech—this is an eternal value" (saccaṁ ve amatā vācā—esa Dhammo sanātano). There is a tendency today to regard what is old as antiquated. This is a mistaken view for all that is verified and established as true is forever modern, irrespective of the age in which these truths were discovered. That the earth was more or less round is a modern view although this was discovered in the past by a Greek thinker in the pre-Christian era, who was ridiculed for holding this view on the part of people who for a long time after that continued to maintain that the earth was flat.

What is the nature of truth? We use the words 'true' or 'false' normally of statements. We say that the statement 'there is a harbour in Colombo' is true while

the statement, 'there is a harbour in Hambantota' is false. But we also speak of believing, conceiving of and knowing the truth and as such we have experience of truth. Knowledge of truth or even belief in truth helps us to act efficiently in our environment without causing trouble to others. When we know the road to Kandy, it helps us to get there without difficulty and without the necessity for troubling others. Knowledge of causal laws operating in us or in nature helps us to control ourselves or nature for our own good as well as that of others.

When we continue to think of some evil that somebody has done to us, we tend to hate him but if we continue to think of even some good that he has done to us, our hatred tends to disappear. So by understanding the psychology of mental phenomena, we can gradually get rid of our hatred and, thereby, make ourselves as well as others happy. This is why knowledge of the truth both with regard to ourselves as well as the environment is important for us, since it helps us to control ourselves as well as the environment for our own good as well as that of others. When we are aware of the truth, we have knowledge (or true beliefs). Knowledge gives us control or power and this can help us develop our personal and social freedom and happiness.

What are the characteristics or criteria of truth? Philosophers have put forward about four main theories regarding this. Some hold that truth is what accords or corresponds with fact. This is called the Correspondence theory. Others hold that truth is what is consistent. This is called the Coherence theory. Yet others hold that what is true is useful and what is useful is true. This is called the Pragmatic theory. Others, again, hold

that truth is verifiable in the light of experience. This is called the Verifiability theory of truth.

Correspondence and Coherence

What is the Buddhist theory? Quite clearly, Buddhism maintains that truth is to be defined in terms of correspondence with fact. A theory or statement is true when it is "in accordance with fact" (yathābhūtaṁ). It is the object of knowledge—"one knows what is in accordance with fact" (yathābhūtaṁ pajānāti, D. I. 84). In contrast, a statement, theory, belief or conception would be false when it does not accord with fact. As the Apaṇṇaka Sutta states: "When in fact there is a next world, the belief occurs to me that there is no next world, that would be a false belief. When in fact there is a next world, if one thinks that there is no next world, that would be a false conception. When in fact there is a next world, one asserts the statement that there is no next world, that would be a false statement . . ." (M. I. 402). On the other hand, true beliefs, conceptions or statements correspond with fact: "When in fact there is a next world, the belief occurs to me that there is a next world, that would be a true belief . . ." (M. I. 403).

Although correspondence with fact is considered to be the essential characteristic of truth, consistency or coherence is also held to be a criterion. In contrast, inconsistency is a criterion of falsehood. In arguing with his opponents, the Buddha often shows that their theories lead to inconsistencies or contradictions, thereby demonstrating that they are false, using what is known as the Socratic method. In the debate with

Saccaka, the Buddha points out at a certain stage in the discussion that "his later statement is not compatible with a former statemen nor the former with the later" (M. I. 232). Citta, one of the disciples of the Buddha arguing with Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta, the founder of Jainism, says :" If your former statement is true, your latter statement is false and if your latter statement is true, your former statement is false" (S. IV. 298).

This means that truth must be consistent. Therefore, when a number of theories with regard to the nature of man and his destiny in the universe contradict each other, they cannot all be true though they could all be false. So at a time when a number of different religious teachers and philosophers put forward a variety of theories about man and the universe, the Sutta Nipāta asks: "Claiming to be experts, why do they put forward diverse theories—are truths many and various?". The answer given is: "Truths, indeed, are not many and various . . . . Truth is one without a second (ekaṁ hi saccaṁ na dutīyam atthi, Sn. 884). Consistency or the lack of contradiction is, therefore, a criterion of truth. It is evident from this that if we take different theories such as Materialism, Theism, Scepticism, Buddhism etc., not all can be true though all may be false.

We must, however, distinguish consistency between divergent theories and consistency within each theory. Two theories may be each internally consistent though mutually contradictory. So consistency is a necessary but not a sufficient criterion of truth. In other words, if a theory is internally consistent but is false, then the fact that it is consistent is not sufficient for us to accept it as true. From the same shreds of evidence, two

lawyers may concoct two mutually contradictory theories. as to what happened. Each of these theories may be internally consistent but this alone is no criterion of their truth. This was why the Buddha rejected theories based on mere reasoning as unsatisfactory since the reasoning may be valid or invalid and even if valid (in the sense of being internally consistent), it may or may not correspond with fact" (Sandaka Sutta, M. I. 520).

While internal theoretical consistency is a necessary but not a sufficient criterion of truth, Buddhism also holds that with regard to theories which concern human behaviour, there must also be consistency between theory and practice. The Buddha claimed that "he practised what he preached and preached what he practised" (It. 122). He expected his disciples also to follow his example. If I preach against the evils of taking liquor but take it myself, it may imply that I am not fully convinced of the truth of what I say. So if someone asserts a certain theory and acts as if he believes that at least part of it is false, his practice would be inconsistent with the theory he puts forward.

Pragmatism

What does Buddhism have to say about Pragmatism? Does it uphold a pragmatic theory of truth ? Evidently, it does not, since it does not maintain that all true statements are useful or that all useful statements are true As we have seen above, there are useless truths and useful falsehoods according to Buddhism. The pragmatic theory of truth was put forward to accomodate theistic beliefs but Buddhism does not hold that a theory is true

because people like to believe it and it is, therefore, of some use to them.

At the same time we have to stress the fact that the Buddha confined himself to asserting statements, which were true and *useful*, though pleasant or unpleasant, so that the Dhamma is pragmatic although it does not subscribe to a pragmatic theory of truth. This fact is well illustrated by two parables—the parable of the arrow and the parable of the raft. The parable of the arrow states that a man struck with a poisoned arrow must be concerned with removing the arrow and getting well rather than in purely theoretical questions (about the nature of the arrow, who shot it etc.), which have no practical utility. Certain questions concerning matters beyond empirical verification were not categorically answered by the Buddha because this was "not *useful*, not related to the fundamentals of religion, not conducive to dispassion, peace, higher knowledge, realisation and Nirvana" (M. I. 431).

Even the true statements in the Dhamma are not to be be clung to. They are to be used for understanding the world and overcoming it. One should not identify oneself with it by forming a sentiment of attachment (upādāna) towards it and make it a basis for mere disputation. The parable of the raft states that a person intending to cross a river and get to the other bank, where it is safe and secure, makes a raft and with its help safely reaches the other bank but however useful the raft may have been, he would throw it aside and go his way without carrying it on his shoulder. In the same way it is said "those who realise the Dhamma to be like a raft should be prepared to discard even the Dhamma, not to

speak of what is not Dhamma" (M. I. 135). The value of the Dhamma lies in its utility for gaining salvation. It ceases to have value to each individual though it does not cease to be true, when one's aims have been realised.

Verifiability

The statements of the Dhamma are meaningful (sappāṭihāriyaṁ) and are supported by reason and experience (sanidānaṁ) and are hence verifiable (ehipassika). It is the duty of each Buddhist to try and verify their truth in practice. The Buddhist starts with right beliefs (sammā diṭṭhi) in his endeavour gradually to eliminate greed and hatred and ends his quest for truth with right knowledge (sammā ñāṇa) and emancipation of mind (sammā vimutti). In the process, each person has to verify the truths of Buddhism for himself. Verifiability in the light of reason and experience is thus a characteristic of the truths of Buddhism.

Middle Path

Another characteristic of many of the important truths of Buddhism is that they happen to lie midway between two extreme points of view. Extreme realism, which says that 'everything exists' (sabbaṁ atthi) because everything comes into existence, is one extreme, while extreme nihilism which asserts that 'nothing exists' (sabbaṁ natthi) since everything passes away, is the other extreme—the truth is that everything is becoming. Similarly false extreme theories are the doctrine of the eternity of the soul and the doctrine of annihilationism, the doctrine of the identity of the body and mind and the doctrine of the duality of the body and mind, Strict

Determinism (whether theistic or natural) and Indeterminism, the doctrine that we are entirely responsible personally for our own unhappiness, and the doctrine that we are not at all responsible for our own unhappiness, extreme hedonism (kāmasukhallikānuyoga) and extreme asceticism (attakilamathānuyoga). In all these instances, it is said that the Buddha "without falling into any of these two extremes, preaches the Dhamma *in the middle* (majjhena)". The truth lies in the mean between two extreme views. The middle way (majjhimā paṭipadā) is thus a mean, both in the matter of *belief* as well as conduct.

We have shown so far that in the Buddhist texts, truth is defined as correspondence with fact, consistency is a necessary but not a sufficient criterion of truth, while the truths of Buddhism are pragmatic and verifiable.

Partial Truths

As a result of the Correspondence theory, statements which strictly correspond with fact are considered to be 'true' and those which do not are considered to be 'false'. All statements would thus be true or false. Aristotelian logic is based on this assumption alone but modern logicians as well as ancient Indian thinkers have discovered that without prejudice to our definition of truth, we can adopt other conventions.

We can consider statements which strictly correspond with fact (as the statements of the Dhamma are claimed to be) as absolutely true, while those which do not at all correspond with fact would be absolutely false. In that case, those which correspond to some extent with facts would be 'partially true' (or partially false). According

to this convention, all statements will be either true, false or partially true. Modern logicians have shown that a system of logic could be constructed on the basis of this fundamental assumption as well—namely that every statement is either true, false or partially true.

It is on the basis of this convention that the Buddha characterised certain theories held by individuals, religious teachers and philosophers as being 'partial truths' (pacceka sacca). It is in this connection that we have the parable of the blind men and the elephant (Ud. 68). The men who are born blind touch various parts of the elephant such as the tusks, ears, forehead etc. and each reports, *mistaking the part for the whole*, that the elephant was like that part of the elephant which was felt by him. In the same way, the various religious and philosophical theories contain aspects of truth and are based on the misdescribed experiences of the individuals who propounded them, while the Buddha was able to understand how these theories arose as well as their limitations since he had a total vision of reality with an unconditioned mind.

The Catuskoti

When a statement is characterised as 'true' or 'false', these characteristics (true, false) are called 'values' in logic. So a system of logic which is based on the fundamental assumption that all statements are either true or false is called a two-valued logic. Such a system of logic may have two logical alternatives. We may illustrate this with an example:

First Alternative	1. This person is happy.
Second Alternative	2. This person is *not* happy.

We notice that in this two-valued logic of two alternatives, when the first alternative is true, the second alternative has to be counted as necessarily false, while if the second alternative is true, the first alternative would be false. But this system of logic would not do justice to the facts, if the person concerned was partly happy and partly unhappy.

In such a situation we cannot dogmatically assert that the first alternative was true because the person is partly unhappy and therefore not wholly happy. Nor can we say that the second alternative is true because the person is partly happy and therefore not wholly unhappy. But according to the laws of logic applicable within this system—namely the law of excluded middle—either the first alternative or the second alternative must necessarily be true.

In order to have a better classification of the facts in situations such as this, the Buddhists adopted the logic of four alternatives, known as the catuṣkoṭi. This is a two-valued logic of four alternatives. According to it statements can be made in the form of four logical alternatives of which only one will be necessarily true. Thus, speaking of the happiness or unhappiness of a person, we can say:

First Alternative	1. This person is (wholly) happy.
Second Alternative	2. This person is (wholly) unhappy.
Third Alternative	3. This person is (partly) happy and (partly) unhappy.

Fourth Alternative 4. This person is neither happy nor unhappy (e. g. if he experiences only neutral sensations of hedonic tone).

This is one of the examples given in the texts. If we take another historical example, we may state the following four logically alternative possibilities with regard to the extent of the universe :

1. The universe is finite (in all dimensions).
2. The universe is infinite (in all dimensions).
3. The universe is finite (in some dimensions) and infinite (in other dimensions).
4. The universe is neither finite nor infinite (in any dimension). (This last alternative would be the case if space or the universe was unreal. In such an eventuality, the universe cannot properly be described as either 'finite' or 'infinite').

Now according to Aristotelian logic or the two-valued logic of two alternatives, the logical alternatives would have to be:

1. The universe is finite.
2. The universe is not finite.

Now if we explain, 'the universe is finite' as 'the universe is finite (in all dimensions), the other alternative, 'the universe is not finite', can mean one of three things (as above).

The logical alternatives according to this system of logic, therefore, become vague, ambiguous and not clearly defined and distinguished. The logic of four alternatives or the catuṣkoṭi is thus employed in the Buddhist texts for purposes of classification or discussion, where the subject-matter requires it. Scholars like Poussin, who believed that Aristotelian logic represented the one and only system of logic, failed to understand its significance and thought that the Buddhists or the Indians did not know any logic. But the modern developments in logic have shown that there could be different conventions and that they may be employed according to the needs of the subject-matter to be discussed. Thus the early Buddhist conception of logic was far in advance of its time.

Conventional and Absolute Truth

Another distinction that is made in the Buddhist texts is that of absolute (paramattha) and conventional (sammuti) truth. This is because appearances are sometimes deceptive and reality is different from what appearances seem to suggest. In the everyday world of common sense, we not only observe hard objects like stones and tables which do not seem to change their form and structure but also different persons who seem to continue as self-identical entities being reckoned the 'same' persons at different times of their existence. But this appearance and the reasoning based on it, is deceptive and is due partly to the failure to see reality as it is and partly to the failure to understand the limitations of language, which employs static concepts to describe dynamic processes.

Once we see reality for what it is and the limitations of language, we can still employ the conventional without being misled by the erroneous implications of language and the assumptions we make because of our distorted view of reality. So we realise that from a conventional point of view we may speak of persons, who in reality are dynamic processes which change constantly owing to the impact of the physical, social and ideological environment and the internal changes which take place. But from an absolute point of view, there are no such persons, who are self-identical entities or souls which persist without change.

In the same way, modern science finds it necessary to distinguish between the conventional conception of stones and tables as hard, inert objects, which undergo no change, with the scientific conception of them as composed of atoms and molecules, whose inner content consists largely of empty space and whose fundamental elements have such a tenuous existence that they may be regarded as particles in some respects and waves in other respects, if at all it is possible to conceptualise their existence. Still if from a conventional standpoint we need to talk of stones and tables, there is no harm in doing so, provided we are aware of the false assumptions and misleading implications. As the Buddha would say, "they are expressions turns of speech, designations in common use in the world which the Tāthāgata (the Transcendent One) makes use of without being led astray by them" (D. I. 202).

THE BUDDHIST CONCEPTION OF MATTER AND THE MATERIAL WORLD

We are all familiar with the visible and tangible world around us which we call the material world. We contrast it with what is mental and consider it to exist independently of our thoughts. We have learnt much about it from science during the last few decades but hope to learn much more about it in the future. A knowledgeable scientist [1] who sums up the modern conception of matter in the light of the recent findings of science, says: Matter *is* the world around us; it is everything we see and feel and touch. It seems thoroughly familiar—until we read in the following pages what the scientists have discovered about it within the last fifty years, the last twenty, the last two. The diamond, for example, seems on the face of it resplendently substantial. But as we read on, we find that the diamond is a patterned arrangement of atoms which are themselves mainly empty space, with infinitesimal dabs of electrons whirling around infinitesimal dabs of protons and neutrons. All this we now know to be matter, but we are by no means sure the picture is complete. Within the minuscule heart of the atom—the nucleus—have been found no fewer than thirty kinds of elementary particles, and no one can say what more will emerge under nuclear bombardment. The further scientists analyse, the less obvious the answers become".

Buddhist View

The conception of matter that is generally found in the Buddhist tradition, except in the extreme idealist

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1. See *Matter*, LIFE Science Library, Time-Life International, 1963, p. 7.

schools of thought (Vijñāna-vāda), is essentially the same. The objectivity of the material world is affirmed. It is said that Rūpa or Matter is not mental (acetasikaṁ) and is independent of thought (citta-vippayuttaṁ).

Such matter is classified into three categories. First, there is the category of matter or material qualities, which are visible (sanidassanaṁ) and can be apprehended by the senses (sappaṭighaṁ)—such as colours and shapes. Secondly, there is matter which is not visible (anidassana) but reacts to stimuli (such as the five senses) as well as the objects of sense which can come into contact with the appropriate sense organs (excluding the visual objects which fall into the first category). Thirdly, there is matter which is neither visible to the naked eye nor apprehensible by the senses but whose existence can either be inferred or observed by paranormal vision. Such, for example, are the essences (ojā) of edible food (kabalinkārāhāra), which are absorbed by our bodies and sustain it. Today we call them proteins, carbohydrates, vitamins etc., but in the Dhammasangani the essence (ojā) of edible food is classified as subtle (sukhuma) matter, which is not directly observed or apprehended by the sense-organs. The subtle matter of 'the realm of of attenuated matter' (rūpa-dhātu) would also fall into this last category.

In this same category one would also have to include the atom (paramāṇu), which is said to be so small that it occupies only a minute portion of space (ākāsa-koṭṭhāsika) as the Commentary to the Vibhanga (p. 343) states. The Sub-commentary to the Visuddhimagga observes that the atom "cannot be observed by the naked eye but only comes within the range of clairvoyant vision" (maṁsa-

cakkhussa āpātham nāgacchati, dibba-cakkhuss'eva āgacchati, p. 286). If this is so, then the Buddhist and some of the Indian atomic theories are not the product of pure rational speculation (like those of the Greeks) but are partly the result of extra-sensory perception as well.

Yet what is remarkable about the Buddhist atomic theories as against the other Indian and Western classical atomic theories, is that they were able to conceive of the atom as existing in a dynamic state. As one scholar (Professor A. L. Basham) puts it, "the atom of Buddhism is not eternal as in the other three systems since Buddhism dogmatically asserts the impermanence of all things"[2]. Another scholar (Professor Arthur Berriedale Keith) brings out the essentially dynamic conception of the Buddhist theory of the atom when he says that the atom is conceived as "flashing into being; its essential feature is action or function and, therefore, it may be compared to a focus of energy".[3] We may compare with it what a modern physicist says of the atom: "The old view of its simple discrete particles and precise planetary orbits is gone. The physicist now prefers to view the atom as a ball of energetic and uncertain fluff".[4] We may recall that even the early Buddhist texts compared matter to a 'lump of foam' (phena-piṇḍa).

Atomic Theory

The atomic theories developed only in the schools of Buddhism which, apart from the general notions that

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2. *History and Doctrines of the Ajtvikas*, Luzac & Co., London, 1951, p. 267.
3. *Buddhist Phiiosophy*, Oxford, 1923, p. 161.
4. *Matter*, LIFE Science Library, p. 158.

they shared, did not always agree among themselves about the nature of atoms. For example, one school (Sautrāntikas) held that atoms have spatial dimensions (dig-bhāga-bheda) while their opponents (Vaibhāṣikas) denied this, arguing that the atom has no parts and no extension. This dialectical opposition led to a situation in which the Idealists argued that the conception of the atom leads to contradictions. If the atom has some finite dimension, however small this may be, it is further divisible and therefore it is not an indivisible unit or an atom. On the other hand if the atom had no spatial dimension at all, it is a non-entity and material objects having a spatial dimension cannot be composed of them. So the Idealists argued that the atom was a self-contradictory concept and as such atoms could not exist. Since atoms did not exist, there was no material world. So they concluded that the material world was an appearance created by our own minds, like some of the objects in the mind of a hypnotised subject.

The mistake that all these schools committed was to try and prove or disprove the existence of atoms by pure reasoning. As the Buddha pointed out in the Kālāma Sutta, we cannot discover or discern the nature of things as they are by pure speculative reasoning (takka). It is only when reasoning is closely tied up with experience that there is a discovery of facts in the objective world. For this reason we have either to follow the method of experimental science which is a matter of controlled observation guided by reasoning or of developing our our extra-sensory powers of perception by meditation if we are to understand things as they are.

Judging by results the Theravādins seem to have kept their speculations close to the findings of jhānic or extra-sensory observation. The Vaibhāṣikas spoke of the ultimate element of matter as the dravya-paramāṇu or the 'unitary atom' and contrasted with this the sanghāta-paramāṇu or the aggregate atom, which we today call a 'molecule'. It is significant that the Thera-vādins conceived of even the atom (dravya-paramāṇu) as a complex (rūpa-kalāpa) and spoke even of 'the constituents of this complex atom' (kalāpanga) at the same time considering such an atom to be in a dynamic state of continuous flux.

A table given in the Commentary to the Vibhanga makes it possible to compare the size of an atom as conceived of in medieval Buddhism with modern conceptions. If we follow this table an average of 36 paramāṇus equal one aṇu, 36 aṇus equal one tajjāri and 36 tajjāris equal one ratha-reṇu. A ratha-reṇu is a minute speck of dust, which we can barely appreciate with the human eye. According to this calculation there are 46,656 atoms in such a minute speck of dust. Now modern scientists think that an average of about 100,000,000 atoms placed side by side in a row would amount to about an inch in length. If so, there would be ten million atoms in a tenth of an inch and a two hundredth portion of this would have 50,000 atoms. Although the comparison is to some extent arbitrary, the figures given in the Vibhaṅgaṭṭhakathā do not appear to be far divorced from reality.

Original Buddhism

At the same time we must not forget that it was not the intention of the Buddha to give a detailed account

of the physical world. As the Buddha pointed out in the Simsapa forest taking a few leaves into his hand, what he taught amounted to the leaves in his hand while what he knew but did not teach was comparable in extent to the leaves in the forest.

If there are priorities in the accumulation of knowledge, man should first and foremost learn more about his own nature and his destiny in the universe rather than about the nature and origin of the universe. A man who is struck with an arrow should try to remove the arrow first before endeavouring to discover the nature of the arrow and who shot it.

Nevertheless, a general understanding of the nature of the physical world is also useful in that it helps us in knowing the nature of things as they are.

The Buddha himself did not disclose any details of an atomic theory but there are passages in which he points out unmistakeably that the minutest portion of matter in the world is in a state of constant flux. On one occasion a monk asks the Buddha as to whether there was any form or kind of matter (rūpa) which was eternal, stable, lasting, not subject to constant change and everlasting. The Buddha replies that there is no such matter. He then takes a speck of sand on to the tip of his nail and says "Even such a minute bit of matter is not eternal, stable or lasting, is subject to constant change and is not everlasting".

What we claim to know with regard to the physical world would not amount to knowledge if it does not reflect the state of things as they are, but such knowledge, once acquired, is to be made use of for one's moral and

spiritual development. The significance of the above statement is that even existence in a subtle-material world (rūpaloka) is not everlasting and that we cannot hope to attain final salvation by attachment even to such an ethereal body. So while early Buddhism gives a realistic account of the essential nature of the physical world, this is done mindful of the psychological and ethical impact of these teachings.

Definition

The totality of matter is classified in the Buddhist texts with reference to time as past, present and future; with reference to the individual as internal and external; with reference to the nature of matter as gross and subtle, with reference to the value of matter as base and ethereal and with reference to space as near and distant (M. III. 16).

At the same time the Matter spoken of is not just dead matter but living matter as well. The concept includes both the organic as well as the inorganic realms of matter. In this respect, we must not forget that according to Buddhist conceptions, life (jīvitendriya) is a by-product of matter (upādārūpa).

In the Abhidhamma too, we notice in the Dhamma-sangani that when describing the nature of the totality of matter we find references to the psychological and ethical aspects of its impact. Matter is causally conditioned (sappaccayaṁ), impermanent and subject to decay (aniccam eva jarābhibhūtaṁ). It is to be found in the gross world of sensuous gratification (kāmāvacara) as well as the subtle-material world (rūpāvacara). In itself it is morally neutral being neither good nor evil

(avyākata). But it can be cognised by the six kinds of cognition (i. e. by means of the senses and the understanding) and it is the kind of thing around which sentiments can be formed (upādāniya). It is also the kind of thing that can act as a fetter (saññojaniya) although the fetter does not lie in matter as such but in the attachment to matter.

In the earliest texts *rūpa* in its widest sense of 'matter' as including the organic body as well as the external physical world is defined as 'what undergoes change' (ruppati) under the impact of temperature (such as heat and cold), atmospheric changes (such as wind and heat), organic affections such as hunger which is defined as 'heat inside the belly' (udaraggisantāpa) as well as thirst and the changes affected by the bite and sting of gnats and snakes etc. The general definition that is adopted in the commentaries is that matter (rūpa) is so called because "it undergoes change, i. e. becomes subject to modifications under the impact of cold and heat etc." (ruppatīti sīta-uṇhādīhi vikāraṁ āpajjati).

Primary Material Forces

If we apply the definition at the level of sense-observation or the empirically observable world, matter is what undergoes change under the impact of temperature, i. e. heat or cold. Since there is no metaphysical substance called 'matter' apart from the observable objective states, the primary forms of matter would be the states of matter themselves manifested under the impact of temperature changes.

Water when cooled would eventually become frozen and solid. If the frozen ice is heated, it turns into

water and the water, if heated, boils and turns into steam or a gaseous state. All elements or forms of matter subjected to changes of temperature are to be found in the solid, liquid or gaseous states. Until the third decade of the twentieth century, physicists concerned themselves only with these three states of matter. But it was realised that with the further application of heat to matter in the gaseous state a further state of matter can be brought into being. This is today called the plasma state. If very great heat is applied to steam, the movement of the water molecules becomes so violent that they start smashing themselves into electrically charged ions. This ionisation is the passage to to the fourth state of matter or plasma described as a "swarming mass of hot electrically charged particles". The blazing mass of the sun is considered to be in this plasma state.

The conception of matter as what undergoes changes of state under the impact of temperature is therefore logically and empirically sound. Although there is no mention of the plasma state as such in the Buddhist texts, the primary forms of matter are held to be the solid (paṭhavī), the liquid (āpo), the gaseous (vāyo) and the fiery (tejo) such as lightning.

We can make use of these notions to classify the material of the body as well as the external world. There are solid states of matter in our own body such as the teeth, the nails, the hair, the flesh etc. The blood, sweat, tears, bile, pus etc. would be in a liquid state. The air we breathe in inhaling and exhaling, the wind in the abdomen etc. would be in a gaseous state The

heat in the body which transmutes food and drink in digestion comes under the fiery state of matter.

While in a general sense the four states are referred to in the above manner, it was observed that the specific characteristic of each state was to be found in some degree in the other states. Thus the specific characteristic of what is solid is *extension*. It is solid in the sense that it extends or spreads out (pattharatīti paṭhavi). The characteristic of the liquid state is that of *cohesiveness* (bandhanatta, saṁgaha), while that of the gaseous state is vibration or *mobility* (samudīraṇa, chambhitatta, thambhitatta). The fiery state is said to have the characteristic of causing changes of temperature or *maturation* (paripācana).

These characteristics, it is argued, are not exclusive characteristics of the different states of matter but are their most prominent characteristics. As general characteristics they are to be found in all the states of matter. What is solid is most obviously extended but liquids, gases and fires do not lack extension, or occupancy of space. Similarly, the matter of what is solid has a certain degree of cohesiveness. It has also a certain degree of dynamism or mobility and has a certain temperature. Extension, cohesiveness, mobility and temperature are thus held to be inseparable but distinguishable characteristics of all material things right down to atoms.

Different kinds of material objects therefore all have these several characteristics in varying degrees. When it comes to atomic theory, Buddhism would have to say that atoms differ from each other according to the presence of these characteristics in varying degrees.

Derivatives

The four characteristic qualities of extension, cohesiveness, mobility and temperature, which co-exist (aññamaññña-sahajāta) are the four great material forces or forms of energy. In a gross state the qualities of extension, mobility and temperature can be directly appreciated by the sense of touch but cohesiveness has to be inferred. When we put our hand in water, we can apprehend its resistance or extension, its pressure or mobility as well its temperature but its characteristic of cohesiveness eludes us and the most prominent characteristic of water has therefore to be inferred from observation.

All material things, whether organic or inorganic and certain material concepts like space are said to be dependent on or derived from these primary material forces. But the sense in which they are derived are different. In the case of 'space' the derivation is purely logical in the sense that ākāsa or vacuous space (not ether) is untouched by the four material forces and is in fact to be apprehended as the locus in which they are absent. In the case of jīvitendriya or life, however, it is derivation in the sense of being a by-product of the primary material forces. Other characteristics of matter such as weight, plasticity, wieldiness, growth, continuity, decay and impermanence are also by-products of the primary manifestations of energy.

Realism

The sense-organs as well as the objects of sense are also made up of them. The matter forming the sensitive

parts of the eye (pasāda), which react to stimuli (sappaṭigha) is intimately bound up with our entire psycho-physical personality (attabhāva-pariyāpanna) and is again a by-product of the primary material forces.

The sense of sight, for example, is defined in various ways: (1) It is itself invisible though reacting to stimuli but it is the means by which what is visible and impinges on the eye has been seen, is being seen, will be seen or would be seen; (2) it is the organ on which visible objects which are capable of stimulating it have impinged, are impinging, will impinge or would impinge; (3) it is the organ which has been focussed, is being focussed, will be focussed or would be focussed on visible objects capable of stimulating it; (4) it is the organ on account of which visual impressions as well as ideas, feelings, conative and cognitive activities aroused by these impressions have arisen, are arising, will arise or would arise. The accounts given in some respects forestall and in other respects are not in conflict with the modern findings regarding the psychology or physiology of perception.

In some respects one feels that the modern accounts need to be re-examined in the light of observations made in these texts. For example, textbooks in modern psychology tell us that the primary tastes are the sweet, sour, salt and bitter. But the Dhammasangani, while mentioning the tastes sweet (sādu), sour (ambila), salt (lonika) and bitter (tittaka) also refer to other tastes such as the astringent (kasāva) and pungent (kaṭuka). Although what we identify as taste is partly due to what we appreciate through the skin senses as well as

taste in the interior of the mouth and also partly to odour, it is a moot point as to whether the astringent taste (kahaṭa raha) is a by-product of these or is a separate taste altogether.

It is quite evident from the descriptions given of the objects of sense as well as the general theory of matter that original Buddhism upheld the reality of the physical world. What we apprehend through the senses by way of colours or shapes, sounds, smells, tastes etc. are all by-products of the four primary material forces, which exist in the objective physical world independently of our perceiving them.

The physical movements of our bodies (kāyaviññatti) and our verbal activity (vacīviññatti), which are due to our volitional actions are also due to the operations of material factors, though they are concurrently occasioned and accompanied (citta-samuṭṭhāna, citta-sahabhū) by mental activity. It is also significant that none of the books of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka included in the Canon mentions the heart as the physical basis of mental activity. The Paṭṭhāna, while recounting the role of the organ of vision in generating visual cognition, makes specific mentions of "the physical basis of perceptual and conceptual activity" (yaṁ rūpaṁ nissāya manodhātu ca manoviññāṇadhātu ca vattati) and ignores the cardiac theory of the seat of mental activity, which was widely prevalent at this time.[5]

Physical and Social Environment

While conscious mental activity has a physical basis, what we call a person's mind is also conditioned by the

5. Anuruddha, *Compendium of Philosophy*, P. T. S. London, 1963, v. pp. 277—279.

physical environment, according to Buddhist conceptions. The physical objects of the external world among other factors stimulate the senses, generate mental activity, feed the mind and motivate one's behaviour. The mind continues to be conditioned by these impacts, which form part and parcel of one's accumulated mental experiences.

It is also the teaching of Buddhism that the economic and social environment also conditions our behaviour. In the Cakkavattisīhanāda Sutta, it is stated that the maldistribution of goods in society produces poverty. This eventually leads to the growth of crime and loss of faith in moral values, which along with a sound economic basis, are necessary to sustain a well-ordered society. However, Buddhism does not teach a theory of physical or economic determinism, for despite the fact that man is conditioned by these factors, they do not totally determine his behaviour. Man has an element of freedom, which when exercised with understanding makes it possible for him to change his own nature as well as his physical, economic and social environment for the good and happiness of himself as well as of society.

THE BUDDHIST ANALYSIS OF MIND

In this talk I merely propose to give a concise account of the Buddhist theory of mind as presented in the early Buddhist texts, leaving out for the most part the elaborations to be found in the later books of the Theravāda tradition such as the *Abhidhammattha-sangaha*. The main reason for doing so is that otherwise there is a danger of losing sight of the wood for the trees.

Another reason for this is that some of the later traditions of Buddhism developed only certain aspects of the original teaching, exaggerating their importance to such an extent as to distort other aspects, Such seems to have been the case with the Idealist (Vijñāna-vāda) schools of Buddhism, which spoke of an universal mind as a vast reservoir in which the individual minds were waves or ripples. In such an universe both the individual minds of various beings as well as the external material world were illusions created by the mind. The entire universe is a creation of the mind (sarvaṁ buddhimayaṁ jagat) and physical objects do not exist outside our perceptions of them. In some of the Mahāyāna schools of thought this universal mind was conceived as the ultimate reality or the eternal Buddha, though never as a creator God.

Realism

Some Western scholars also tried to give an idealistic interpretation to early Buddhism by translating the first verse of the Dhammapada to mean "All things are preceded by mind, governed by mind and are the creations of the mind" (mano-pubbangamā dhammā

mano-seṭṭhā mano-mayā). But the correct interpretation of this stanza, which is also supported by the commentary (*Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā*) would be "Conscious states of mind are led by will, are governed by will and are the products of will; so if one speaks or acts with an evil will suffering comes after one like the wheel that follows the beast of burden who draws the cart".

Besides, it is clear from the early Buddhist texts that original Buddhism was realistic and held that the world matter existed independent of our mind (citta-vippa-yuttaṁ) and was not an illusion produced by it. Though our perceptions and our language distorted the nature of reality, this was only to the extent that a dynamic material world in a continual state of flux was perceived as permanent, solid and substantial.

Attitude to Tradition

The Theravāda tradition, in my opinion, has on the other hand to some extent ignored the conception of the transcendent mind to be found in the early Buddhist texts. This has led to misconceptions on the part of scholars and, perhaps, some Buddhists that Nirvana was a state of oblivion or annihilation. It is, I think, important that Buddhists who have been asked by the Buddha not to accept things merely because they are to be found in tradition (mā paramparāya) should be prepared to examine their own traditions.

We must not forget that even in the time of the Buddha, some concise statements made by the Buddha regarding matters of doctrine were elaborated and developed by monks and nuns. The Buddha very often commended these expositions of the Dhamma. On the

other hand, there were others who made erroneous expositions and came to false conclusions in interpreting the statements of the Buddha. There was Sāti, for instance, who thought that "the consciousness of a person ran along and fared on without change of identity" (viññāṇaṁ . . . . . sandhāvati saṁsarati anaññaṁ) like a permanent soul whereas the Buddha points out that consciousness is causally conditioned (paṭicca-samuppanna) and changes under the impact of environment etc.

Then there is the case of the monk who argued that the doctrine of anattā (no-soul) implies the denial of personal responsibility. It is said that "a certain monk entertained the thought that since body, feelings, strivings (conative acts) and intellect are without self, what self can be affected by deeds not done by a self" (M. III. 19). The Buddha thought that this was an unwarranted corollary of his teaching since there was the continuity of the "stream of consciousness" (viññāṇa). Individuality continues though the person is "neither the same" (na ca so) "nor another" (na ca añño).

Characteristics

One of the main features of the Buddhist theory of mind is that barring the mind in the Nirvanic state, all mental phenomena are causally conditioned (paṭicca-samuppanna). According to Buddhist tradition causal laws operate not only in the physical realm (utu-niyāma) or biological realm (bīja-niyāma) but in the psychological realm (citta-niāyma) as well. Likewise, mental events are more fleeting than the material events of the body although as a stream of events they outlast the body, whereas the body disintegrates at death. Yet while past phenomena continue to influence and condition

the ever-changing present, there is no substratum which can be called a permanent soul. Nor does it make sense to say that the phenomena are in any way associated with or related to such a soul.

The present is conditoned not merely by the past but also by the factors of heredity and environment. Also, conscious mental phenomena have a physical basis. The Paṭṭhāna speaks of "the physical basis of perceptual and conceptual activity". There is mutual interaction between the physical basis and the mental activity. The mental phenomena are not mere accompaniments of neural or brain phenomena. The nature of the causal relations that hold among mental phenomena and their relations to the body, the physical, social and ideological environment are also analysed and the correlations explained in terms of them. In short, we have the earliest historical account of a naturalistic view of the mind.

This knowledge with regard to the mind is to be had by observation and introspection. Introspection is considered to be an unreliable instrument for the study of mental phenomena according to Western psychologists. This is partly because introspection can only tell us about our private mental experiences and since these cannot be checked by others, they cannot be trusted. The Buddhist theory is that introspection can be refined and developed by the culture of the mind. Besides, such mental development results in the emergence of extra-sensory powers of perception such as telepathy, clairvoyance etc. This development of the mind is said to sharpen our observation and widen its range since with the development of telepathy, direct and indirect, the minds of others become amenable to public observation like physical

objects. The elimination of personal bias makes one's observations objective. Jhanic introspection is described as follows : "Just as one person should objectively observe another, a person standing should observe a person seated or a person seated or lying down, even so, should one's object of introspection be well-apprehended, well-reflected upon, well-contemplated and well-penetrated with one's knowledge" (A. III. 27).

Modern Western Psychology

With regard to one's own person, it is true that with the growth of objectivity one's emotions tend to evaporate under the scrutiny of objective observation. As a modern textbook of psychology says : "If affective states are immediately at hand to be observed, their description and interpretation are not easy to come by, for they prove to be remarkably elusive. Try to observe in yourself the turbulent feelings aroused in anger. Ask yourself, 'What does anger consist of?' If you are able, in the midst of an anger episode, to get yourself in the frame of mind to ask this question, you are also in a fair way toward dispelling the anger".[1] It is true that watchfulness (sati) regarding one's own emotions tends to dissipate them but this too is an important psychological fact. It is a fact that can be made use of to make our minds more stable and serene.

Many modern textbooks of psychology with a behavioral bias have not only completely discarded the concept of a soul but regard psychology as "the science of human behaviour". This is because human behaviour can be publicly observed and measured while human

1 Frank A. Geldarad, *Fundamentals of Psychology*, John Wiley & Sons, New York, London, 1963, p. 38.

experience cannot. This orientation has its uses. We have learnt a lot about the physiological, biochemical and neural basis of what we call psychological behaviour. As a result we have learnt to some extent to control such behaviour by surgical or biochemical means. But despite these advances in psychology mental tensions and anxiety have been on the increase in societies in which the tempo and the philosophies of life give no room for intelligent self-restraint, relaxation, self-analysis and meditation as a means to achieving a healthier mind.

Buddhist psychology, on the other hand, while giving a comprehensive account of the nature of human experience and behaviour also provides the means by which we can understand, control and develop ourselves by a process of self-analysis and meditation, which changes our nature and makes it possible to live happily ourselves and with others.

Psychophysical Unit

Man, according to Buddhism, is a psychophysical unit (nāmarūpa). This in its nascent state, is made up of three components—the sperm and the ovum which go to make up the fertilised ovum or zygote along with the impact of the stream of consciousness of a discarnate spirit (gandhabba) or what is called the re-linking consciousness (paṭisandhi-viññāṇa).

The psychic and organic physical components grow and mature in a state of mutual interaction. There is reliable evidence that certain children are born with memories of a previous life, which correspond to those of a real life of a dead person and that they could not have acquired these memories by any social contact with

the dead person's friends or relatives in this life.[2] There is also evidence that hypnotised subjects regressed to a prenatal period give accounts of prior lives which they claimed to have lived and which have been partly historically verified as factual.[3] The above theory can also be experimentally verified if identical twins brought up in the same environment show some marked differences of character. All the available evidence cannot be more plausibly accounted for than on the above theory, although it has not merited the attention of psychologists as a whole as yet.

The belief that the Buddhist doctrine of anattā implies a denial of any kind of survival after death rests on a misunderstanding of this doctrine. The doctrine denies a permanent entity or soul which runs through different existences without change of identity but does not deny the continuity of an evolving consciousness. Although the emotionally charged experiences are more fleeting than the changes in the body, their memories registered in the unconscious mind outlast the body and determine its state of re-becoming in different forms of cosmic existence. As the Saṁyutta Nikāya says in one place: "Though this material body of his is devoured by crows and other animals. yet his mind (citta) if long-practised in faith, virtue, learning and renunciation moves upward and goes to distinction" (S. V. 370).

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2. Ian Stevenson, *Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation*, New York, 1966.

3. Morey Bernstein, *The Search for Bridey Murphy*, New Edition, 1965; also, Doctor Jonathan Rodney, *Explorations of a Hypnotist*, Elek Books, London, 1959 etc.

Mental Factors

The components of the mind are classified into four branches (khandhā) or groups (kāyā) namely, (i) feeling or hedonic tone (vedanā), (ii) sense-impressions, images or ideas and concepts (saññā), (iii) conative activities and their concomitants (sankhārā) and (iv) intellectual activity (viññāṇa).

Vedanā is the feeling-component, which accompanies our impressions and ideas. They would range from the pleasant to the unpleasant through the neutral. Its source may be physical or psychological. When we cut our finger we feel physical pain. When we hear that a close friend or relative has died suddenly the anguish we experience has a psychological origin. These feelings are classified as six according as they originate in the five senses or in the mind with an idea or concept. Since these may be pleasant, unpleasant or neutral, there would be eighteen in all. As associated with one's family life or with a life of renunciation, there would be thirty six, and as past, present or future one hundred and eight in all. Likewise, pleasure may be material (āmisa) as being associated with the satisfaction of needs or wants, or spiritual (nirāmisa) as being associated with a life of selflessness, compassion and understanding. The pleasures experienced in the mystical states of consciousness, personal or impersonal (i. e. rūpa or arūpa jhānas) are classified in an ascending scale each one being "higher and more exquisite" (uttaritaraṁ) than the lower. Nirvana is the "highest happiness" (paramaṁ sukhaṁ) but the happiness in it is not conditioned. It is not subject to the presence of any conditioned *vedanā*

although the happiness can be positively experienced (vimuttisukhapaṭisaṁvedī).

The experience of conditioned pleasant, unpleasant and neutral hedonic tone is associated with the impressions and ideas we have as a result of sense-contacts or the conceptual activity of the mind in imagining, remembering, reasoning, listening to others, reading books etc. These impressions, ideas and concepts constitute *saññā*.

The last on the list of mental factors is *viññāṇa* which covers knowledge and belief. Knowledge of moral and spiritual matters constitutes *paññā*. This involves greater depth of understanding regarding the nature of reality. The difference between saññā, viññāṇa and paññā is well illustrated in the *Visuddhimagga* by the simile of the coin. When a child sees a coin it is only the colour and shape that interests him. A peasant knows its value as a means of exchange. A master of the mint knows its exact value and nature since he can distinguish between a counterfeit coin and a genuine one. There is a wider sense in which the word viññāna is used but we shall examine that below.

Sankhara

We have left out the word *sankhārā*, which in a psychological context is used in three senses. First, in the sense of volitions. This is the sense in which it is used in the sentence, *avijjā paccayā sankhārā*, which means that our volitions are conditioned by our true or false beliefs, which constitute ignorance. We sometimes think rightly and do good or think wrongly and commit evil. We tread in saṁsāra like a blind man with a stick,

who sometimes goes on the right track and sometimes on the wrong track in trying to reach his destination.

In the second sense, sankhārā is used to denote our conative or purposive activities. They may be bodily processes and may include reflex actions such as breathing (assāsa-passāsa) as well as conditioned behaviour such as habits. They may be verbal activities involving cogitative and discursive thinking in waking life or even in dreams. Finally, they may be purposive thinking or ideation involving impressions, ideas or concepts associated with feelings. These are called kāya-sankhārā, vacī-sankhārā and citta-sankhārā respectively.

We may perform these actions or indulge in these activities aware that we are doing so (sampajāna) or unaware that we are doing so (asampajāna). We can walk, aware or unaware that we are walking. We can talk aware that we are talking or as in sleep unaware that we are talking. We can think or have trains of thought aware of what we are doing or unaware of what we are doing. The latter would constitute unconscious mental processes.

Likewise. we perform these activities with varying degrees of control. Normally we have no control over our reflexes but it is said that the yogin who has attained the fourth jhāna has them under control. Lastly these activities may be initiated by an internal stimulus (sayaṁ-kataṁ) or an external stimulus (paraṁ-kataṁ).

The third sense of sankhārā denotes all those factors which accompany conscious volitional activity. If, for example, we are bent on doing a good deed these may be right beliefs (sammā diṭṭhi) some degree of awareness (satindriya), a quantum of selflessness etc.

Relations

All these psychological states are causally conditioned. They may be conditioned by contact with one's physical, social or ideological environment, by the physiological state of the body which is itself a product of heredity and by our psychological past consisting of our experiences and upbringing in this life or even by the potentialities of prior lives. At the same time we can decide our goals and ideals and direct our courses of action since despite the conditioning we have an element of free will which we can exercise in our decisions and effort.

The various relations holding between different types of psychological and physical states have also been analysed. Thus, as we have already stated, there is mutual interaction (aññamaññā-paccaya) between body and mind. The relation between an appropriate stimulus and a sense-organ it can activate is called the object-condition (ārammaṇa-paccaya). A dominant purpose that we intend to achieve governs and controls all the subsidiary activity it involves; so the relation between such a purpose and the activity it governs becomes a dominant-condition (adhipati-paccaya). A gradual development of awareness (sati) about our own activity of body, speech or mind reveals to us these intricate relations.

The Conscious and the Unconscious

While, as we have stated above, viññāna was used in the sense of intellectual activity in a specific sense, in the general sense it denoted the entirety of our mental activity, conscious or unconscious.

We already came across the concept of unconscious mental processes' in speaking of ideational activity (citta-sankhārā), of which we are not aware. In one place it is said that a yogin by observing directly with his mind how "the mental sankhārā are disposed in the mind of a particular individual" presumably in his unconscious mind, can predict what he will think at the next moment (A. I. 171).* It is also said of a living person that part of his "stream of consciousness" (viññāṇa-sota) is present in this world (idhaloke-patiṭṭhitaṁ) and part in the world beyond (paraloke patiṭṭhitaṁ) without a sharp division into two parts (ubhayato abbocchinnaṁ) (D. III. 105). This means that a man's stream of consciousncss has a conscious and unconscious component. Our conscious mental activity gradually gets into this unconscious and accumulates in it, continuing to influence our conscious behaviour.

In the Unconscious are also the latent tendencies of the mind, called the *anusaya*—the desire to satisfy our senses and sex (kāmarāgānusaya), our egoistic impulses (bhavarāgānusaya), or aggression (paṭighānusaya) as well as the belief we cling to in the unconscious mind (diṭṭhānusaya), doubt (vicikiccbhānusaya), conceit (mānānusaya) and ignorance (avijjānusaya) (A. I, 9). The goal of the religious life, it is said, is not attained until they are completely eradicated.

There are also several levels of consciousness and the Nirvanic state is distinguished from all of them. There is the level of normal consciousness (saññā-saññī) of the average person. Then, it is possible that one is insane

* See Anguttara Nikāya. An Anthology, Part I, p. 41. (The Wheel No. 155-158).

being either a neurotic (khitta-citta) or a psychotic (ummattaka) and if so one has an abnormal "disjointed consciousness" (visaññña-saññī). There is also the "developed consciousness" (vibhūta-saññī) of a person who has cultivated the personal or impersonal forms of mystical co: sciousness. The Nirvanic mind is distinguished from all of them as well as from a state of coma or oblivion (asaññī). It is attained with the cessation of all conditioned forms of ideation.

Dreams

Dreams occur when the mind is not relatively quiescent in a state of deep sleep nor fully awake. The mind is in a dynamic state and the Buddha compares it to a fire which smokes by night and flares up during the day. According to the *Milindapañha*, dreams are of four types, (i) those due to physiological disturbances in the body, (ii) those due to mental indulgence, i. e. wish-fulfilment (samudāciṇṇa), (iii) those due to intervention of a discarnate angelic spirit (devatā) and (iv) prophetic dreams.

The Ideal

The Nirvanic state is the ideal to be attained by all, being one of supreme perfection and happiness. Being a state beyond space, time and causation it cannot be conceptually apprehended since all our concepts are derived from the framework of the space-time-cause world.

Yet in an analogical sense it is often described as a state of transcendent consciousness. In one place it is said that the conditioned saṁsāric consciousness ceases to be in a state of "infinite omni-luminous consciousness

without distinguishing mark" (viññāṇaṁ anidassanṁa anantaṁ sabbato-pabhaṁ) (D, I. 223; M. I. 329). It is this "luminous mind" which is said to be in the case of each one of us "tainted by adventitious defilements" (pabhassaram idaṁ cittaṁ tañca āgantukehi upakkilesehi upakkiliṭṭhaṁ; A. I. 10).

Man is, therefore, compared to a piece of gold ore and just as when the defilements of gold ore (upakkilesā) are got rid of, it shines with its natural lustre, the mind, it is said, becomes resplendent (pabhassara) when its defilements are eliminated. In the case of the mind, the primary "defilements of the mind which weaken intuitive insight" (cetaso upakkilese paññāya dubbalī-karaṇe; M. I. 181) are passion and various forms of greed, ill-will, sloth and torpor, excitement and perplexity, and doubt. It is when these and other more subtle defilements are got rid of that the mind becomes relatively perfect and pure (citte parisuddhe pariyodāte, D. I. 76) and acquires its extrasensory powers of perception and activity. It is the culmination of this process which results in the attainment of Nirvana, a state "beyond measure" (atthaṁ gatassa na pamāṇaṁ atthi, Sn. 1076), "deep, immeasurable and unfathomable" (M. I. 487). This transcendent mind is not a soul because it is not personal and is not a self-identical entity. Nor is it a Creator God.

Theory of Motivation

The ideal state is one in which "the mind is divested of its strivings and has attained the destruction of all desires" (Dh. 153). It is also a state of perfect mental

health. Man suffers from mental disease until he has attained Nirvana.

The goal of Buddhism is, therefore, therapeutic. We have to start with our present condition in which we are impelled to act out of greed, hatred and ignorance. Greed consists of the desire to gratify our senses and sex (kāma-taṇhā) as well as the desires to satisfy our egoistic impulses (bhava-taṇhā) such as our desire for possessions, for power, for fame, for personal immortality etc. Hatred consists of our aggressive tendencies (vibhava-taṇhā) or the desire to eliminate and get rid of what we dislike. Both greed and hatred are fed by ignorance (i. e. erroneous beliefs, illusions, rationalisations) and *vice versa*. Indulgence in these desires gives temporary satisfaction but there is a law of diminishing returns which operates in our attempt to find satisfaction through gratification. The process eventually makes us slaves of our desires as in the case of alcoholics, misers, sex-addicts etc.

Our endeavour should be to gradually change the basis of our motivation from greed, hatred and ignorance to selflessness (cāga, alobha), compassion (mettā, adosa) and understanding (paññā, amoha).

Psychological Types

To do this effectively, we must know what psychological types we are. The earliest historical classification of individuals into different types is in the book called *Puggala-Paññatti* (Human Types) of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka. In the later tradition classifications were based mainly on the degree to which people possessed the traits of greed, hatred and ignorance as well as their

opposites. Different meditational exercises are recommended for them to get rid of the evil trains and develop the good trains they have.

There could, of course, be various sub-types. Some greed-types (rāga-carita) may have strong sex desires, others the desire for power etc. The general formula applicable to all would be to sublimate greed by desiring to develop restraint and selflessness, compassion and understanding, to sublimate hate by endeavouring to remove greed, hatred and ignorance and to aid this process to adopt right-beliefs (sammā-diṭṭhi) in place of erroneous beliefs about the nature and destiny of man in the universe.

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THE BUDDHIST DOCTRINE OF NIBBANA

Venerable Dr. Parawahera Vajirañāṇa Thera

THE Buddha has given to the world a profound Doctrine, unprecedented in the history of mankind. His was a universal and eternal rule of virtue and wisdom. His was the system flowing upward, the way out of this painful Saṅsāra, one progressive adventure leading to the Supreme Goal of Nibbāna. The world has inherited the teaching of the Sakyamuni as his unique contribution to the commonwealth of spiritual treasure, in which all the wills of his converted were gathered together into one multifarious activity of human civilization to save the history of mankind from being a dull and painful record of human folly and bloodshed.

The real value of the Buddha's teaching lies in his unique Doctrine of Nibbāna, the most refulgent flower of the Aryan culture. Its teaching is irrefutable and self-evident. That life teems with suffering, is its teaching. It is not a myth, but it is the fact. There is happiness also to be found, and it is within, not without. Find the cause of suffering and remove it. Happiness then will be the reward. The cause of suffering lies also within life itself, and it is egoism and craving that are responsible for the disturbed harmony of life, but not the anger of any invisible power, or a forbidden fruit, or Pandora's casket.

According to this simple teaching all forms of craving must be extinguished to make life serene. The very idea of Nibbāna is the state of mind co-extensive with this serenity. Here surely we have the most complete analysis of the motive and meaning of the universe. The universe

is not the issue of a cosmic giant hidden somewhere in the sky, nor is it of primordial germ like a cosmic egg. To admit a universal first principle is scientifically an impossibility as well as a philosophical absurdity.

To begin with, the craving for individuality is the cause of all turmoil and greed. The craving for life results in three possible manifestations which are all evil. First comes the craving for sensuousness, the desire to gratify the senses. The second is the desire to prolong the cycle of life. Third is the desire for personal immortality. All this means the worldliness which is the cause of all commotion and unrest. There can be no happiness, no righteousness, nor social order, if man is not free from selfish desire and egoism caused by this threefold craving. It is the way out of this craving and the attainment of eternal Peace that is taught by the Buddhist doctrine of Nibbāna as the Supreme God of all humanity.

To understand the full significance of the Buddhist Doctrine of Nibbāna it is necessary to have some knowledge of other systems of thought with regard to the final goal of life. The immortality of the soul as the final destiny of man is the most persistent idea in all other religions, and this belief appears earliest in its crudest beginnings in the savage mind of primitive man. From the time of primitive man, many people have believed in it, in some form or other, very earnestly and seriously. When the Buddha made his appearance in India, it was current not only there but also in other parts of the world. Later, the great bulk of the human race, became so absolutely certain of the truth of their belief in the soul's immortality that they did not dare to entertain any other thought, however rational and scientific it might have been.

But to understand the objective validity or the futility of this belief it will be useful to review the original ideas and

the outstanding points in their development. There is a bewildering variety of views on the belief in the soul's immortality held by different schools, and the beliefs in (1) the life of the dead, (2) the resurrection of the body, (3) transmigration of the soul, and (4) the final return of the soul to its divine origin, are the most prominent among them.

Animism: (1) The conception of the life of the dead is probably the earliest thing to appear in religion, for it was the only religion of the early men, both of the East and West, before they had come to believe in gods. It is as old as that early savage level of thought in which no distinction was made between the animate and inanimate and the ideas of life and death themselves were but very ill demarcated. With the rise of crude hylozoism, the oldest primitive conception of the all-pervading life of matter, a vague adumbration of the existence of a soul began to pervade humanity. "All matter is alive, and all living beings have souls. Nothing perishes which has once existed, and things which appear destroyed only change their natures and pass into another form," is a simple statement of this belief.

The earliest Egyptian as well as Indian records attest this belief, and it is only an appropriation from the primitive men who used to derive their hypothesis mainly from the generic images of impressive phenomena. The concurrent suggestions of such phenomena as sleep, dreams, insanity and death would easily induce the primitive mind to believe that there is something in the bodies of the living, something that is an impalpable counterpart of the body, a distinct entity which could go away from the body at will and return to it again. For the savage mind, proof of this would lie in the fact that it is this inert body or soul of the sleeper that awakes him to report dream adventures in

some remote regions where he seemed to have been hunting or fighting, making love or feasting, meeting or consorting with people already dead.

This soul or life of the body was regarded as something bound up with the breath, which at death finally departed from the body to live independently as a ghost in an etherical state. In point of fact, it is this primitive conception of the independent existence of a soul that has given birth to the idea of immortality.

During those early stages of primitive speculation the dead were regarded as bodily living. A dead person is the one whose soul or breath has left him, as if it were to roam about freely, but may return again to the body when it wants to be fed or tended. At this stage men kept the corpses of their dead relatives at home or in caves until they decayed, and this probably gave rise to the custom of mummifying dead bodies as was practised among the Egyptians as well as among some savage tribes.

This simple faith in survival after death, presupposed by the care shown by primitive man towards his dead, thus waxed into a definite belief in human immortality. In this first stage of its development immortality is conceived as the existence of the soul in an ethereal form more or less invisible. This belief was probably held by some Egyptians, Greek and Romans, and later by most of the Jews, as it was believed by Pre-Buddhistic Indians. It was simply a continuation of life under conditions more or less favourable, a creed appropriate to the animistic cult.

Brahmanism: (2) In the second stage of thought the fear of the dead became more obviously apparent in the savage mind; men dreaded the return of the ghost or the moving corpse, and strove to keep it away from the sight of the living. Burial was introduced as a simple mode of disposing of the remains of the dead, and from the practice

of the funeral rites arose the idea of Resurrection. Men did not forget their dead and buried relatives, especially when they were in need, and thought that the dead would rise from their graves incarnated with a fresh body and life. In the Vedic funeral hymns we find the idea of re-incarnation or resurrection of the dead coming to hold a definite position in Indian belief. The son or a close relative of the departed (preta) is instructed to make periodical offerings at the grave and invoke the deities supposed to be guardians and rulers of the dead; and the dead person is thus addressed :—

" Go forth, go forth, along the paths where fathers
Of ours before have travelled on aforetime;
Both kings exulting in their own oblations
God Varuna shalt thou behold and Yama."

" Come with the fathers, come along with Yama,
With gifts and offerings in the highest heaven;
Come home again, leaving behind all evil,
Come with thy body, full of life and vigour."[1]

The resurrection which appears at first as a revival of the dead in bodily existence is afterwards regarded in Semitic religions as the last stage of the world, a redemptive purpose of God. It assumes the moral distinction of the righteous and the wicked in a vague administration of divine judgment. Its deepest motive, however, is religious. A blissful heaven is promised for the pious, as a reward for the good, and the lot of the ungodly is decided in a hell as the punishment for misconduct. Its tenets are included in "(i) the manifestation of God; (ii) the universal judgment; (iii) the perfect kingdom of Heaven coming after the judgment; (iv.) the resurrection of the righteous to the

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1 Brihad, Up. 1-4-14; 4-4-5, trans, by E. J, Thomas.

everlasting bliss in the presence of God; (v.) the damnation of the wicked to eternal shame and misery." In this doctrine of resurrection we find a belief in the immortality of both happiness and misery, and it is one of the most remarkable curiosities in the history of religion that such an idea has been developed into a definite doctrine of the final condition of man and the world.

(3) As a modification of this entirely mythical idea of individual immortality, there arose in the third stage of development the belief in the Transmigration of souls. It has come as a solace to those who were in despair about the unfair judgment passed on the wicked souls, and sought for a fair justice according to the merits of their crimes.

The belief in transmigration was always extensively held in many different parts of the world.[1] According to this belief the judgment of the soul was conducted by some powerful gods assisted by minor deities by assessors, supposed to represent each of the various crimes from which the dead person was expected to be free. In Egypt it was conducted by Osiris, and in India by Yama, the king of the dead. The general belief was that the souls of men are emanations from the Divine Soul, and each is supposed to return to its divine origin when it is accepted as sufficiently pure at the judgment. But those found guilty of sin are doomed to pass through a series of lower bodies in order to become sufficiently purified. The Egyptians thought that the sinful souls would be purified by a lengthened sojourn in the bodies of unclean animals such as the hippopotamus, crocodile, pig or serpent. Pythagoras, who introduced the doctrine of transmigration to Greece, thought that the soul assumes the form of a bird, like that of a wild fowl or a wood-cock, the idea which Shakespeare has ironically ridiculed.

1 See "The Case for Rebirth,", The Wheel No, 12/13.

The special characteristic feature of Indian belief in this doctrine is that the soul transmigrates from one mode of life to another, and the physical condition of each is determined by the moral and religious life of the preceeding. Here we find the Indian doctrine of Karma coming to the field to form the various schools of ontological and eschatological thought which held the Indian population in a net of views[1] for centuries.

Karma originally was a mythical conception attributed to Varuna, lord of the physical and moral order of the Universe. When mythical conceptions entered into the Vedic pantheon the early Indian mind was completely emancipated from connections with natural phenomena, whereby the cosmic changes were formerly explained, and new tendencies began to develop. The Universe was introduced as a sacrifice performed by Varuna, the lord of *rta*. *Rta* refers to the law of the Universe, the order of sacrifice and the moral law of the world. On account of *rta* everything in the Universe has a prescribed course; the sun and the moon pursue their course day and night respectively across the sky; the seasons move regularly in light and shadow across the earth; each individual performs his duties according to his own caste. The Karma is the duty, and it is the ritual of sacrifice.[2] The welfare of human beings depends on the sacrifice to deities. Thus developed the belief in Sacrificial Karma, and belief in gods.

The gods were personal beings who were responsible for everything beyond human control. The happiness of man was to be attained through divine mercy, which could be

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1 *Micchā-diṭṭhi*; false assumptions.

2 Thus the concept of Karma in the Bhagavad Gita differs from the Karma (kamma) of Buddhism, which is an ethical concept.

won by placating deities with offerings that serve them as food. This may have a connection with the idea that food (*annaṁ*) is the vital element by which everything is sustained. To gain the desired happiness the sacrifice had to be performed according to the injunction of Prajāpati, the lord of the Universe, and it was to be conducted by the Brahmins who were supposed to be holy men born from the mouth of Brahma. When the idea of the moral law entered into Karma the knowledge of God was essential for the moral life of the individual. When moral striving ends in religious practice the individual is said to be freed from all bonds of earthly existence, and to have attained immortality in a blissful heaven. But those who have not reached the highest perfection in knowledge and Karma will have other chances for perfection in the course of transmigration or *saṅsāra*. Thus in Vedic Brahmanism the sacrifice is considered as Karma, as the binding principle.[1] When it is performed for worldly gain it becomes the bondage to the sensuous existence in saṅsāra or transmigration, and when it is performed with the knowledge of God without selfish ego, it tends to release (*Moksha*).

Jainism : When the mythical conceptions proved wearisome to the intellect and men were harassed by doubts about God and sacrifice, Karma together with the theory of knowledge and the belief in transmigration, took a new turn to evolve a definite system of thought called Jainism. This godless (*Anisvara*) system, like the scepticism of the Sophists assumes that all truth is relative to the observer; there is no objective truth. Knowledge is only personal belief; everything is equally false. Every statement of a thing gives us only a *Syāt* or 'may-be'; we cannot affirm or

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1 Yoga.

deny anything. But this system of scepticism has a great significance for the doctrine of transmigration of the soul. It draws attention to the physical elements of knowledge and Karma, and gives an interpretation of the problem of the Universe by its seven principles of analysis (*sapta-bhangi*), which are as follows:

(1) All substances (*dravya*) are divided into two: (2) lifeless matter or body (*sarīra*), and (3) soul or life (*jīva*). Dravya is again divided into (4) space (*ākāsa*), and two subtle substances (5) *dharma* or *sukha*, happiness, and (6) *adharma* or *dukkha*, unhappiness, and (7) *pudgala*, living matter. Ākāsa, dharma and adharma are the necessary conditions for the souls and material aggregations which are the substance of all other things. Ākāsa, space, gives them room to exist; dharma sets them in motion; and adharma makes rest possible to them. Matter assumes forms eternal and imperishable. It exists in two forms of atoms (*anu* or *sukshma*) and aggregates (*skandha*). Atoms change and develop, and assume forms in aggregation as earth, water, fire and air. The individual existence is evolved from these elements bound up with Karma, and transmigrates in the process of evolution and devolution, atomic aggregation and disintegration, until Karma becomes nullified.

Just as the Ionian School of Greek philosophy, Jainism asserts a material substance as the universal first principle from which the infinite multiplicity of phenomena has been evolved. In addition to the animistic conception that all matter is alive and all living things have a soul, Jainism has its own doctrine of Karma to replace the idea of a divine Intelligence conceived in Greek philosophy as the harmony which constitutes the law of the Universe. Karma in Jainism is recognized as quasi-substance ready to be transformed into the different degrees of individual action. This kind of subtle matter fills all space, and pours into

the mundane soul. Combining chemically with the soul it forms a subtle body which determines the fate of the individual. Karma leaves the mark of every change on the individual organism. Fresh Karma always replaces that eliminated, and serves as the foundation of future existence. The soul must enter a new body until all Karma is neutralized by the practice of austerities (*tapas*) and Yoga. The soul, though a substance, is not matter, but it is co-extensive with the body. It is characterized by intelligence (*cetanā*), which is indestructible and can never be annihilated. When every Karma is purged off from the soul it attains liberation (*moksha*) and ascends to the abode of the liberated souls on the top of the Universe. Jainism thus believes in the transmigration of the soul as a necessary sequence to the law of Karma which is entirely physical and independent of any divine authority, and in the separation of the soul from its material connection as the attainment of immortality.

Sānkhya: As an antithesis between the pantheistic theology of the Vedic Brahmins and the animistic pluralism of the Jains there developed an even more advanced system of philosophy called Sānkhya, expounded by a sage named Kapila. It is probably the oldest system of advanced thought and it explains cosmic change on the basis of mathematical relations. It systematically enumerates twenty-five principles (*tatvas*) of phenomena, consisting of twenty-four material and an independent immaterial principle. It views the undeveloped and the developed state of one and the same substance as the cause of the Universe, and also believes in an infinite plurality of individual souls independent of the idea of a world-soul or an intelligent creator. Its dualism is that there is the eternal co-existence of a material first cause which is called *Prakriti* (nature), undifferentiated originant, and the

purusha, the permanent *ātman* or soul, which continually interact on one another. When the constituent factors of *Prakriti* are not in a state of equipoise (*samyavastha*) it becomes developed, in a gradual process of evolution, into all forms of the phenomenal Universe, under the influence of Purusha, the soul which stands behind, passive and unmoved. Prakriti has three constituents (*guṇas*) in perfect equilibrium, which appear in matter as lightness, movement and heaviness, and are cited, in mental phenomena as *sattva*, goodness or potential energy; *rājas*, passion or activity; and *tamas*, dulness or rigidity. *Mahāt*, the great, or *Buddhi*, intelligence, is the first evolute of prakriti. *Ahankāra*, the egoity, consciousness or the principle of individuation comes next. From egoity, in its *sattva* aspect, arise the *manas* or the inner sense, the ten indriyas, the five sense organs and the five organs of action, hands, feet, speech, excretory organs, organ of generation: from them in the *tamas* aspect the five *Tammatras*, subtle elements (smell, flavour, form, touch and sound) arise. From these evolve the five *mahābhūta*, the gross elements (earth, water, fire, air and space).

The souls being connected with matter become invested with a subtle body (*sukshma sarīra*) consisting of eighteen principles, namely, intelligence, consciousness, five subtle matters, and the organs of sense and action iucluding the mind. The soul characterized by purity and intelligence accompanies its subtle frame through the circle of transmigration, connecting itself ever anew with matter as the fruition of dulness, *tamas* or non-discrimination. It is only by cutting off its bondage of worldly existence by attaining perfect knowledge of the absolute distinction between itself and the other twenty-four *tatvas* that the *purusha* is liberated from the miseries of transmigration and continues to exist in eternal separation from matter.

Sānkhya's method of gaining this knowledge of salvation was Yoga, the mental discipline to suppress the observing activities of mind, conscious or unconscious. According to the Sānkhya's theory of evolution, Prakriti, which is unconscious, itself evolves into all forms of phenomenal consciousness under the influence of *purusha*, the pure intelligence, the ultimate basis of all things. No cause is given for the origin of prakriti or purusha. But the free spirit (*purusha*) entering into the bonds of ignorance in the process of mechanical evolution of Nature, experiences the miseries of transmigration. Freedom is the result of Yoga; and it is regarded as the path to the *nirguṇa ātman*, the Self, devoid of constituent qualities. Yoga is the twenty-sixth principle thus added to the system. It is the path of the supreme God (Isvara-pada) to the theistic Sānkhyas, and has developed a complete system of mortification of the senses by means of austerity.

Vedānta: (4) Those who were not satisfied with these theories followed the old teachings of the Upanishads, and believed that this universe is "*māyā*", illusory, and without substance. But it is governed by an invisible agency called "Brahman", and that omni-presence is all-pervading and the knowledge of it is the path of salvation; the union with that supreme principle through Yoga is Nirvāṇa.

This doctrine of pantheistic conception has developed into Vedānta, a system of non-dualism (*advaita*), and it believes in Brahman as the sole reality, and the Universe emanated by that supreme principle as non-real, *māyā*. The individual soul is different from its divine origin. Its divine nature is obscured by being entangled under the influence of māyā in the external adjuncts (*upādhis*) of the senses and vital air (breath). These, together with Karma, the law of action, accompany the soul in its transmigration. When the insight into Brahman is attained, the delusive veil

of ignorance is removed, and the truth that the soul is divine and has always been with Brahman is revealed. The realization of this unity through Yoga results in Moksha or liberation.

Materialism: There is one more system worth mentioning. It is the materialism called *Lokāyata,* which is confined to the physical law of the world. It holds that only this world is real, and denies all theories of spiritual substance and future existence. The soul is identified with the body, or the sense or breath or thought formed by the elements, earth, fire, water and air. When the body is destroyed the soul disappears. The world is born of itself from the elements. God is a myth; virtue and vice are conventional; pain and pleasure are the natural facts of life. Those who followed this system were extreme materialists and believed in no religion. "All life, from the noblest human beings to the primordial animated germ is the result of the inter-action of material atoms, is governed by certain measurable physical forces. All yearning of man for immortality is futile." They had no reason to believe that there is anything beyond the visible universe, and in consequence they declined entering into any argument upon the subject. Their idea of Nirvāna was a sensuous enjoyment to the heart's satisfaction. So they were call "Cārvaka" or sensuous gluttons.

This is a brief survey of some Indian systems of thought which indicate the main ideas of the soul's immortality and the final goal of man. These systems have given rise to a variety of pre-Buddhistic conceptions, and when Buddhism was advancing as a new revelation of thought, the mental life of India was an everlasting intricacy. an entanglement within and without twisted together, as it were, in a net of views. The whole power of human reasoning was displaying a new boldness to solve the ultimate problems of

life and the universe. There were six famous philosophers by the names Pūraṇa Kassapa, Makkhali Gosāla, Ajita Kesakambala, Pakudha Kaccāna, Nigantha Nāṭaputta and Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta; all lived in Magadha in Buddha's time. Apart from them there were Sānkhyas and many orthodox Brahmins.

Regarding the soul and its immortality all possible hypotheses were taught by them. Sixty-two views are enumerated in the Buddha's discourse on views called Brahmajāla, the Net of Views. Their details are confusing, and the following is just an abstract to show their fantastic implications. They all fall into ten groups :—

1. Four views on the eternity of the individual soul and the external world—were held to assert that both the soul and the world as a whole are eternal.

2. Four views were entertained to say that the soul and the universe are in some respects eternal and in some not. They assert that God is immortal, but not individual souls.

3. Some held that the universe is finite, or infinite, or finite and infinite, or neither finite nor infinite.

4. Some entangled themselves in four ways in endless and equivocal arguments, wriggling like eels, refusing to accept any one doctrine, negative or positive.

5. Some asserted in two ways that the universe and the soul sprang up from nothing, and denied all possibility of any cause.

These eighteen views are held concerning the beginning of the world and belong to *pubbanta*, to the past. They all concern points of ontology.

The following are the eschatological views held in fourty-four ways about the future of the soul and the universe, and they belong to *aparanta*, the future.

6. They (like early Vedic theologians) held sixteen phases of hypothesis of a conscious existence of the human soul after death.

7. To others the soul was unconscious in eight ways.

8. Some (like the Sānkhyas) held in eight ways that the soul is neither conscious nor non-conscious after death.

9. Others (like Pakudha Kaccāna) held in seven ways the annihilation of the soul after death, saying that it is dissolved into seven permanent uncreated substances (earth, water, fire, air, happiness, pain and life).

10. Some (like the Cārvakas or materialists) held that souls attain the bliss of Nirvāṇa in the present life in five ways; either in the full enjoyment of the pleasures of sense or in one of the four Jhānic trances.

It is based on one or other of these views that almost all forms of religion and philosophy have come to exist, and all of them have their origin in the speculative thought of primitive men. As the means of the soul's salvation people engaged themselves in various religious practices, some killing animals, even human beings, by way of sacrifice to their various gods, and praying them to grant them immortal happiness; some seeing the futility and wickedness of those practices, left their home-life and became wandering ascetics; and some were musing under trees and in caves.

Others naked, sleepless and exposing themselves to cold and heat, tortured themselves as the punishment for their previous bad karma, or tried to burn out their passions by sitting in the midday sun with fires all round them. Some, in relation to the idea that water is the first element of the universe as conceived by the Upanishads, and also by Thales of the Ionian school, thought that it is the purifying element, and used to go to holy rivers daily to cleanse themselves of their sins. Others worshipped the sun and thought that the world where the sun resides is immortal. Some worshipped fire with the idea that it was the primordial principle. It was their belief that out of fire all things have emerged and into it all must return.

When the Buddha appeared in the sixth century B.C., the world was teeming with such fantastic thoughts and beliefs. The sixth century B.C. was the most remarkable in all history. Everywhere there was an intellectual and religious awakening, and men's reasoning was displaying in a new field of thought. It was about the same time that Western civilization, inaugurated by the teaching of the Ionian school and Heraclitus, was giving a new turn to the early Greek thought by introducing his principle of universal flux that explained everything in terms of force, movement, dynamic energy. It was at the same time that Jeremiah was giving a new message among the Jews in Babylon, and Confucius was animating the national life of China by his teaching of social ethics.

In the Enlightenment of the Buddha, the world of the sixth century B.C. was given a new vision, a new evaluation of life, a final solution of the riddle of the universe. His facts were simple, yet fundamental. He saw that there is suffering in life. What is the cause? Taṇhā or craving, egoism and ignorance. It is found within life. If this is so, surely there must be an escape, and it should be sought.

But it cannot be gained by killing animals and burning them in the name of a sky god. Nor did he think it is possible by asceticism and self-torture, to escape from life's sufferings. Having discerned that life is bound up with suffering, he went forth, leaving his princely comforts for a greater and more worthy cause; namely, to find the way of escape.

Seeking after the supreme happiness of release and making inquiries in others systems, he went from one teacher to another, then practised the most severe austerities until he became exhausted. Having realized the futility of those methods from personal experience, he took to the middle course, avoiding excess in either direction. He pursued the same path which he was practising as Bodhisatta through immensities of time.

Meditation was his path, the analysis of that inexorable law of cause and effect. One day he attained Supreme Enlightenment with the realization of the Truth of Saṅsāra, the wheel of birth and death. His mind was emancipated as the glorious consummation of his long course of practice, and experiencing the bliss of emancipation he breathed the solemn utterance:

"How sweet is the solitude of the peaceful, of him who
has seen and perceived the Truth.
Happy to be without malice and to be kind to all;
Happy is the passion-free,
Happy he who has no desire;
To have removed the notion 'I am'—that is the supreme
bliss." (Udāna.)

Reflecting upon the profundity of his Dhamma and seeing the mental life of the people, he thought his doctrine could not be understood by them. For they were intent on worldly pleasure and their minds were so clouded with views and opinions that they would not give him a hearing.

But finding that there were some seeking the truth, whose minds could be easily purified from worldly taints and religious illusions, he proceeded to Benares to teach the Doctrine of Nibbāna to his first five disciples who were seeking after life's release. There He proclaimed, declared and expounded the law of Dhamma and set turning the Wheel of Truth with the following words :—

> " Monks, one who has left the worldly life (for seeking Truth and happiness) should not follow these two extremes; indulgence of sense gratification on one hand and self-mortification in religious practice on the other. Avoiding these two extremes the Tathagata has gained Enlightenment through the Middle Path, which tends to produce insight and knowledge, tends to calm, to higher insight and to Enlightenment, to Nibbāna".

Then He explained the Four Noble Truths—the Truth of suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the path leading to the cessation of suffering—wherein the Doctrine of Nibbāna is embodied. At the end of his sermon Kondañña, the head of the five disciples, attained the knowledge that "everything that is subject to origin is also subject to cessation".

All the five disciples became Arahants in the course of instruction. Thereafter the Master, the Teacher of Nibbāna, continued to teach the Dhamma for forty-five years, and those who attained the Happiness of Nibbāna during their life testified to the efficacy of the system of the Master by such utterances as :

> " Nibbāna have I realized, and gazed into the mirror of the Dhamma, the Noble Truth.
> I am healed of my wound;
> Down is my burden laid; My task is done;
> My heart is utterly set free." (Thera gāthā.)

Such, in brief, is the history of the doctrine of Nibbāna, taught by the Buddha, and it is flatly opposite to the idea of the soul's immortality taught in all other religions.

Now, let us see what Nibbāna really means. The Pāli word Nibbāna is the name given to the Supreme Goal of Buddhism, and it must be understood in its Buddhistic sense. It implies the peaceful state of emancipated mind of a person who has attained self-enlightenment, taking that state as his goal. It is to express this meaning that the Venerable Anuruddha has explained it in his Compendium of Philosophy in the following words (as translated by U Shwe Zan Aung):—

> "Now Nibbāna which is reckoned as beyond these worlds,[1] is to be realized through the knowledge belonging to the Four Paths. It is the object of these Paths and their Fruits. It is called Nibbāna, in that it is a departure from that craving which is called *'Vāna'*, Lusting."

This is to show that Nibbāna is not a thing that a mundane mind can comprehend. It is a matter of understanding, not of dialectical ability, but of the inner illumination that comes of a spiritual growth which transcends the mind from its lowly condition of mundane existence to the Supernatural wisdom. Here Nibbāna is shown as an object (Ārammaṇa), but that is not an ordinary object perceptible to the senses. It is the object that is uppermost in the mind upon its entry into the Path of Transcendence. The Path-knowledge does not rise without that object, therefore, it is called the Ārammaṇa of the Path consciousness. It should be noted that according to the laws of psychology if there is no such thing as Nibbāna, the Path-knowledge

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1 *Lokuttara*, transcending all saṁsāric states, including the heavens of Form and Formlessness.

will not present itself. This suggests the possibility of Nibbāna, and it is an answer to those who say that the Buddhist idea of Nibbāna is a negative one. This object is the freedom of Taṇhā, craving, which is the cause of saṅsāric existence. Hence it is 'Ni–Vāna', departure from Vāna, lusting or craving.

Taṇhā is called Vāna in the sense that it operates (as if it were a thread or cord) to conjoin one life with another. Thus the Pāli word Nibbāna is composed of 'Ni–Vāna.' Here 'Ni' is a negative particle meaning "absence," Vāna is a metaphorical expression of taṇhā. Nibbāna therefore means *Taṇhak-khaya*, absence of craving or extinction of thirst.

Translators have let Nibbāna be freely rendered by the Sanskrit term Nirvāṇa. The word was probably originally Buddhist. But it has now been associated with the plan-theistic eschatology of Vedānta to express the absorption of soul into Brahma or the Supreme Principle, and this idea is radically opposed by Buddhism.

The Oxford Dictionary does a wrong to Buddhism when it defines Nirvāṇa as "blowing out, extinction; in Buddhist theology, the extinction of individual existence and absorption into the supreme spirit as the Buddhist highest good, or the extinction of all desire and passions and attainment of perfect beatitude." Here the Buddhist idea of Nibbāna is confused with the Vedāntic conception, which is essentially non–Buddhist.

Pāli grammarians take Nibbāna as composed of "Ni–Vā–Na." Here the negative particle "Ni" means "out." The root "Va" is "to go" or "to blow," and "Na" is the suffix used to give an auxiliary sense; and the word is defined thus: "Nibbāti-Etenā'ti = Nibbānaṁ — the aspirant goes out or becomes cool or extinct by the aid of this object.

Hence it tends to the state of Release, and therefore it is called Nibbāna.

In reference to the essential meaning of Nibbāna the Venerable Sāriputta replied to the question of Jambukhādaka in the following words :—

> " Nibbāna, Nibbāna, they say. But what, friend, is this Nibbāna? Extinction of desires, extinction of hatred, extinction of delusion—that, friend, is called Nibbāna." (S. iv. 251.)

There is the full meaning of extinction explained as "blowing out," the blowing out of the fire of lust, hatred and illusion, and this Nibbāna consists of the Fruit of the Path, the actual attainment of the blowing out of the fire from the heart that was burning with it.

"The world is aflame" says the Buddha; (S. i. 31.), and according to the Commentator, it is aflame with the fire kindled by lust, hatred and delusion, and also by birth, decay and death, pain, lamentation, sorrow, grief and despair. (A. i. 15.)

Hence the saying: "*Aggiṅ anāharo nibbuto*"—the fire having no more fuel is blown out. (M. 1. 1. 187). "*Nibbuto gini*"—My fire is out. (Sn. Verse 19). "*Sīti bhuto'smi, nibbuto*"—cool I have become, tranquil I am. (Thera gāthā 79).

These are the utterances of those who had attained Nibbāna during their life, and they have been the living examples to convey the meaning of Nibbāna in its full significance, the attribute of which is "Santi"—peace, tranquility or coolness. This is called *Sopādisesa-nibbāna dhātu*—the element of Nibbāna wherewith yet remains life's substratum, and this refers to Arahatship. It is called Sopadisesa[1] because it is experienced in life.

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1 *Sa-upādisesa*. Its correlate is *Anupādisesa-nibbāna-dhātu;* Nibbāna without personality-aggregates remaining.

Nibbāna as "Asankhata-dhātu," the unformed element, is singular and has no limitation. Here Nibbāna is called a Dhātu, an Element. The word *Dhātu* is the term used by the Buddha in opposition to the idea of Soul-theory. Dhātu means "Nissatta nijjīva"—"non-being, non-soul." The Upanishads and the Jains use "Jīva" in the sense of Soul (Ātman) as in "Jīva-atmā—living-soul," *Taṁ jivaṁ, taṁ sarīraṁ*—What is soul, that is matter or body." Using dhātu with Nibbāna the Buddha means that there is not even a purified soul in Nibbāna. It is also the complete denial of the idea of Unity with Brahma or Isvara-Pada, Godhead, as held by the Yoga Philosophy of mystics. Nibbāna is also called *Dhamma* to show it is no soul: "*Sabbe dhammā anattā.*"

Nibbāna is the bliss of emancipation which supersedes the complete annihilation of passions which are the bases of all the commotion and unrest of Saṁsāric existence. This is the visible fruit actually realized by the training in the Middle Path, avoiding all extremes in all directions. This path runs through the eight principles, viz., Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration.

The disciple who treads this Path achieves moral purity in the first stage i.e., in the practice of the three principles: right speech, action and living, and thus he purifies his thoughts, words and deeds. Consequently he gains an unimpaired happiness of inward serenity (*Sīlavisuddhi*).

He then proceeds with the aid of right effort, mindfulness and concentration to meditate on a given subject of salutary nature and purifies his mind from lower tendencies, the five hindrances[1] that impede the growth of knowledge. When he is free from sensuous passions, malice, sloth and

1 *Panca-nivaraṇa*; see The Wheel No. 26.

torpor, distraction and agitation, and also from perplexity, he is like a man absolved from a debt, or recovered from a long sickness or released from a prison (*Chittavisuddhi*).

Being emancipated from these human weaknesses in each stage of the Jhānas by the gradual waning away of mental defilements, he determines to develop right insight in accordance with right view and intention (*Ditthivisuddhi*).

Discerning the three characteristics of phenomenal existence, impermanence, suffering and not-self, he develops full knowledge by the process of insight, in order to eradicate the roots of evil, the tendencies to attachment, hostility and delusion. Overcoming all doubts he is not puzzled by such quibbles as: "Am I? Am I not? What am I? How am I? Whence have I come? Whither shall I go?" (*Kankhāvitaraṇa Visuddhi.*)

On the way of his progress in pursuit of Vipassanā, insight-knowledge, all the principles of enlightenment and all purifying elements become more and more intense. Then there arises in him a mental movement which raises the mind to the stage wherein he is assured of emancipation and is known as "Culla Sotāpanna," a "junior stream-winner." Proceeding further he experiences psychic illumination, higher knowledge, zest, serenity, bliss, resolve, exaltation, mindfulness, balance and desire to proceed further. Sometime these Super-normal psychic phenomena may deceive the meditator in regard to his attainment, and therefore they are called *Vipassanupakkilesa* impurities of Vipassanā, or Vipassanā fictions, whereby the aspirant may be under the impression that he is an Arahant, like the Elder Mahānāga.

Elder Mahānāga, who was living in Māgama, Ceylon, and attained these psychic powers, was deluded by the thought that he was an Arahant. Dhammadinna, his disciple, who was an Arahant, knowing his teacher was not

yet Arahant, went to him and asked a number of questions, which Mahānāga answered correctly. When Dhammadinna said: Rev. Sir, your knowledge is very keen, when did you attain this Dhamm?" "Sixty years ago," was the reply. "Could you practise your psychic powers?" asked Dhammadinna. "That is not difficult." "Then create an elephant," said Dhammadinna. Thereupon the Elder created a white elephant. "Now, Sir, make this elephant chase you with ears rigid, trunk thrust into the mouth, trumpeting furiously," said Dhammadinna. The Thera did so, and seeing the terrible form of the created elephant approaching him, rose from his seat and took to flight. Dhammadinna caught him by his robe and asked: "Sir, is there such a thing as fear in one who is an Arahant?" The Thera, thereby knowing himself to be still a Puthujjana, an ordinary person, said to Dhammadinna: "Friend, be my preceptor," and sat at his feet. "Sir, do not be anxious" said Dhammadinna, and gave him a subject for meditation. Mahānāga practised it and immediately attained Arahantship. Such is the strange irony of spiritual pride: Dhammuddhacca.

The skilful aspirant will class these psychic powers with the other phenomena, as possessing the characteristic of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and not-self. Knowing them thus he realizes that "this is the Path, and that is not the path" (*Magga-amagga Ñāṇa-visuddhi*).

The meditator then goes through a series of contemplations realizing the rising and falling nature of phenomenal manifestations and their constant decay, and he understands them as being fearful and dangerous. Realizing them as not-self he feels a disgust for them. Contemplating an escape from them he comes to the sign-post of his objective goal. There he gains the knowledge of adaptation (Anuloma-ñāṇa.) It is this adaptive knowledge that raises

him from his worldly condition to a transcendental state, that is, to the Path of Nibbāna. This knowledge leading to emergence is also called "Atammayatā," "not made of that." It means that it is not made of Taṇhā, craving, and does not depend on sankhāra, saṁsāric elements. This knowledge cannot be found in any other system of thought. In the Saḷāyatana Sutta, (M. iii. 220) the Buddha said: "Monks, depending on Atammayatā, attending to Atammayatā, you should reject, should transcend that indifference which has one state, which rests on one state." This means that even when one attains Arūpa Jhāna leading to the formless state of existence his knowledge is not free from Taṇhā, because that Jhāna is attained with Vibhava-tanhā, craving "to be more, or to become more." Hence it is called "Tammaya" made of taṇhā. It is depending on this knowledge that Āḷāra and Uddaka did not realize any further attainment, and that is why the Buddha rejected them while he was mastering himself in their methods of seeking after Nibbāna. The Arūpa-plane is a state of existence. Although it is free from physical matter, yet the mind exists there in a passive form. The Jains may have regarded this passive state of existence as immortal when they admitted that the souls, free from transmigration, ascend to the top of the world.

Now, the aspirant purifying his knowledge through nine stages of Vipassanā, insight, comes to the threshold of the Noble Path (Gotrabhu) and leaving his mundane personality, enters into that of the supramundane (—Ariya-bhumi) (*Paṭipadā-Ñāṇa-Visuddhi*).

There he comes to the first stage of *Ñāṇadassana-Visuddhi*, to the Path of Stream-winning (Sotāpatti), and eliminating three of the ten fetters, self-view, doubts, and the belief in religious rites and ceremonies, sees Nibbāna for the first time as the visible fruit of his practice. If he does not

proceed further in the same life time, within seven births he will complete his course.

When he does proceed further he comes to the second path that of Once-returning, Sakadāgāmi-magga; attenuating two more of the fetters, of sensuous passion and ill-will, he sees Nibbāna as the Fruit. If he does not make further effort, he will have one more birth in the plane of sensuous experience. Hence this Path is called Sakadāgāmi.

In the third path, called Anāgāmi, Non-returning, with the complete elimination of sensuous desire and ill-will he experiences Nibbāna as the fruit of the path. If then he does not reach the final attainment, Arahantship, in his present life, he is said to be reborn in one of the four Pure-abodes, Suddhāvāsa of the Brahma-world, when he does not return to the plane of the senses, but in due time attains Parinibbāna, final release, on passing away from Suddhāvāsa.

The aspirant applies himself to the complete elimination of the remaining five fetters, attachment to life in the material and the immaterial realms, pride, restlessness and delusion. In the next movement he becomes an Arahant, a Worthy and Perfect One, who is free from all impurities, released from the burden, one who has attained the final deliverance and won the Supreme Goal, the Bliss of Nibbāna.

This final emancipation, attained through the systematic development of the knowledge of the Four Noble Paths marks the culmination of the threefold training of virtue (*Sīla*), concentration (*Samādhi*) and wisdom (*Paññā*); and it is the consummation of the extensive course of holy life expounded by the Buddha in the Middle Path, as the means of self-enlightenment, the only way to the supreme destiny of man.

This Nibbāna is called Kilesa-Parinibbāna, the extinction of impure dhammas, and it is Sopādisesa, Nibbāna experienced in life. The Arahant during his life experiences the Bliss of Nibbāna with perception and feeling while attending to his duties for the happiness of others, or he will be in the entire ecstasy of Nibbāna, nullifying feeling and perception in *Nirodhasamāpatti*, complete cessation of his mental flow. When the Arahant dies his Nibbāna is Anupādisesa, Nibbāna without life-substratum.

Thus Nibbāna is one as Asankhatadhātu, the Uncompounded Element: it is twofold as Sopādisesa and Anupādisesa; threefold according to the three entrances (*Vimokkha-mukha*), that is, one of the three contemplations, Anicca, Dukkha, and Anattā. It is fourfold in accordance with the four Paths. It is fivefold with reference to the elimination of the fivefold attachment to the five senses, and sixfold as it is attained by extinction of the sixfold craving pertaining to the six sense objects.

It is the question of what happens to the Arahant at death that has given rise to most discussion. At the death of an Arahant all his physical and mental aggregates cease together with all attributes relating to phenomenal existence. Hence the Arahant's death is called Khandhaparinibbāna, the extinction of aggregates in the Asankhatadhātu, the Unborn, Unformed, purified Element, and it is the release from Sankhata, that which is born and formed. Referring to this, the Buddha said: "Monks, there is an unborn, unmade, unoriginated, and unformed. Were there not such a state there would be no escape from that which is born, made, originated and formed. Since, Monks, there is this state of the unborn ....,.. there is an escape from the born, made, originated and formed" (Udana, 80).

It was to find out and to proclaim this unborn state that the Bodhisatta endeavoured to attain enlightenment. "It is for the sake of attaining the unconditioned state of Nibbāna that the religious life in the Buddha Dhamma is lived," and this was the reply of that great Arahant Punna to the question of the Great Arahant Sāriputta, the Captain of the Faith, who questioned him about the purpose of living the holy life in the Buddha.

The argument hinges upon such expression as "extinction" or "blown out as a lamp," which are frequent in the Scriptures, as is seen in the following:

" The old craving exhausted, no fresh craving rises,
Freed from thought of future becoming
They like barren seeds do not spring again,
But are blown out just as a lamp." (Sn. ver. 235)

A logically minded critic may venture to ask: "Whether the Arahant exists after death, whether he does not exist, or whether he is both in existence and non-existence." The Buddha has answered this kind of topsy-turvy argument by noble silence, knowing that it does not tend to any profit, but to more confusion.

There is neither an existent, nor non-existent object, called Nibbāna, which we have to enter for the destruction of suffering. If there were a phenomenal object called Nibbāna then it must be subject to destruction, and none could have attained the eternal and immutable state. On the other hand, Nibbāna cannot be explained as being the annihilation of the individual and the world, for if we judge by the standard of absolute truth (Paramattha), we find that the self and the world are mere illusions in so far as they have no existence apart from our consciousness. Here, an idealist may conceive that there is something like that what Schopenhauer called "Will" or "Mastermind',

standing between the self and the world. We should leave him to study the formula of Nāma-rūpa, mind-and-matter, in the Buddha's doctrine of Paṭicca-Samuppāda, the law of *dependent origination*. The idea of self (atta-diṭṭhi) and its connection with the world does not cease until ignorance (avijjā) ceases. The evil resulting from ignorance being withdrawn, the twelve links that constitute Paṭicca Samuppāda, the chain of existence, are loosened. The fabric of the world and the 'self' break up, leaving only the infinite, the element uncreated and unformed. This is the state of Nibbāna that the finite mind cannot grasp.

The question is: "If the self and the world are mere illusions having no real existence, how is it possible to say that they undergo destruction"? Just as a man who has no head cannot be afflicted by a headache, so also the world and self which never had any independent existence cannot in any sense lose it. In fact, it is a mere contradiction in terms to say that the world and self undergo annihilation when it is asserted that they have no real existence.

Nibbāna is not existence, and it cannot be non-existence. It lies totally beyond both existence and non-existence. Existence and non-existence are both conditional and relative to each other. Nibbāna which is "Absolute" cannot be designated as being either existence or non-existence. Nibbāna which is incomprehensible and profound can only be realized by those who have attained it and have thus passed beyond both limitations, existence and non-existence.

"But where does this Nibbāna exist?" was the question raised by King Milinda. The Venerable Nāgasena replied: "There is no place in the East, the West, the South, the North, above, below or beyond, where Nibbāna is situated.

Yet there is Nibbāna, for he who is pure in virtue and possesses right insight, realizes it, whether he is in Greece, Alexandria, Kosala or China." (Mil. pp. 323–26).

Just as the fire is not stored up in a particular place but rises when the necessary conditions are present, so Nibbāna is not said to exist in a particular place, but it is attained when and wherever the necessary qualities are fulfilled. Nibbāna therefore, is not a heavenly place like the Egyptian "Amenti", *i.e.*, the West, or the Greek Elysium, or the Hebrew Paradise, or the Christian Heaven, or the Vedic svarga.

When the deity Rohitassa asked "Where does the world's end exist?" the Buddha said: "It is in this fathom-long body with consciousness that I declare the existence of the world, its origin, its cessation and the path leading to its cessation." Thus Nibbāna does not exist as a locality in space: it is to be realized as that which transcends the world.

Let us turn to our friends of the Mahāyāna School to see what they think about this Asankhatadhātu. Nāgārjuna, who was supposed to be a saint and the founder of the Mādhyamika school explained Nibbāna as "Sunyatā", Voidness. He condemned all the degrees of Realism of the Sarvasti-vādins and asserted the 'māyāvic' nature of existence. He denied the existence of the self and the world, and proclaimed the essential oneness of Saṅsāra and Nirvāṇa. In the Visuddhimagga Buddhaghosa Thera says: 'The Third Truth, the cessation of suffering, *i.e.*, Nibbāna, is void of attā, self or soul, but is full of the essence of durability, goodness, and its essential characteristic is "Santi," peace. This shows how he has opposed the idea that Nirvāṇa and Saṁsāra are one, for these characteristics are not to be found in Saṁsāra.

The Sarvasti-vādins, discriminating between samsāric manifestation and the essence of pure Dhammas or elements, assert that Asankhatadhātu, Nibbāna, is an entity but without consciousness or rebirth.

In the Theravāda Canon there are references which assert that Nibbāna is the consciousness liberated from all worldly objects and thoughts, as is stated in the Dīghanikāya. "Nibbānaṁ-Viññāṇaṁ anantaṁ sabbato pabhaṁ". Nibbāna is the consciousness that has no sign perceptible to the senses and it is immeasurable, the purest and a state wherein all connection with the elements ceases, leaving no trace (asesaṁ uparujjhati). (D. i. 223)

In the Three-kāya Doctrine of Mahāyāna, which was systematized later by Asvaghosha, Nibbāna is identified with the Buddha's Sambhoga-kāya, the "Bliss-body" as distinct from the Dharmakāya and Nirmānakāya. That Doctrine teaches that each and all of us have three kāya, our individualities constituting the Nirmāna Kāya, and that our existence as part of the universal whole is our Dharmakāya, while the influence we exert on those around us is our Sambhogakāya.

Endless are these opinions. They are for an ardent student to study. When we have attained Nibbāna and have realized the truth for ourselves all the quibbles of human thoughts will be vanished once and for ever, as it is said :

" When in deep, silent hours of thought,
To the Truth the holy sage attains;
Then is he free from joy and pain,
From form and formless states alike.
Where water, earth, heat, air no footing find,
There burn no lighting stars, nor shines the sun,
The moon sheds not her radiant beams,
But the home of darkness is not there." (Udāna)

It is this final emancipation and eternal Peace, unruffled by the illusion of phenomenal existence, that Nibbāna means to us Buddhists. The very word Nibbāna is sacred to us, it is our last aspiration at the end of all our good action. Nibbāna is not to be discussed, committing it to dead words, but to be realized for oneself by oneself. Words are but imperfect manifestations of the thoughts of mundane minds, and Nibbāna cannot be touched by them. Hence it is well said: "What is to be heard, what is to be said about a Dharma, a State of Supreme Bliss that has no letters of the alphabet!"

In conclusion let me quote from "The Light of Asia" of that illustrious poet, Sir Edwin Arnold:

" If any teach Nirvāṇa is to cease,
Say unto such they lie.

If any teach Nirvāṇa is to live,
Say unto them they err; not knowing this,
Nor what light shines beyond their broken lamps,
Nor lifeless, timeless, bliss.

Enter the path! there is no grief like hate!
No pains like passion, no deceit like sense!
Enter the path! far hath he gone whose foot
Treads down one fond offence.

Enter the path! There spring the healing streams
Quenching all thirst! there bloom th' immortal flowers,
Carpeting all the way with joy! there throng
Swiftest and sweetest hours."

NIBBĀNA

by

Francis Story

Author's Note :

There is only one Nibbāna (Skr.: *Nirvāṇa*) and it is the same for a Supreme Buddha, a Silent Buddha and an Arahat. It is the extinction of the fires of Greed, Ill-will and Delusion; the attainment of Realisation-by-Insight which destroys craving and so brings rebirth in conditioned existence to an end.

But two aspects of Nirvāna are distinguished. The first is *Sa-upādisesa-nibbāna*, the Nirvāna that is experienced in Samādhi while the Arahat is still living. This establishes the state of unchanging mental equanimity and bliss that can come about only when all forms of craving have ceased and the anxieties, fears and hatreds engendered by desire no longer trouble the mind.

The second is *Anupādisesa-nibbāna* or *Parinibbāna*, the final Nibbāna reached at the end of the Arahat's life, from which no further process of contingent 'becoming' can arise.

It is the second of these which I have chiefly discussed in the following pages.

F. S.

NIBBĀNA

THE ultimate goal of the Buddhist life is the attainment of Nibbāna, but many people do not feel certain as to what Nibbāna really is.

One view, for which there is no support whatever in Buddhist doctrine, is that it is eternal life. The opposite is that it is annihilation. There is more reason for holding the latter view, but nevertheless it conveys a false idea.

It is not surprising that there should be such misunderstandings, because by what we are accustomed to call 'common sense' reasoning it must be either the one or the other.

But it is precisely these two pitfalls that the Buddha took great care that we should avoid. That is why most of the references to Nibbāna are in negative terms. Wherever the Buddha used terms with a positive meaning, such as *Amata*, the deathless, and *Dhuva*, the Permanent, to describe Nibbāna He did so in a more or less metaphorical sense. As descriptions the words are true, but they must not be taken in exactly the same sense as that in which we ordinarily use them. Nibbāna is without death because it is without birth; it is permanent because it is not subject to time and conditionality.

In order to form an idea of what Nibbāna really means we must first of all understand what is meant by the words 'life' and 'living'; and that, to begin with, is not so easy as it may appear. We may have a ready-made definition, but find that it does not apply in all circumstances, or that it does not cover everything we mean. What exactly are the characteristics of a living being, and what is the nature of the characteristics themselves?

By 'living' we normally mean being conscious, being aware of our own identity, of our surroundings and of events taking place around us. It is that which makes the difference between a living person and a dead body; the one is conscious, the other is not. This does not mean that an unconscious person or thing is always dead; but a dead body is always unconscious. There are many ways of being alive yet not conscious, as in the cause of plants, but that is not what we usually mean by living; it is little more than existing, as a lifeless object does. Life of this kind consists simply of organic growth and decay. To be exact, a living organism is any aggregation of cells that sustain themselves, grow and multiply, by drawing nourishment from their environment. But this, at its simplest, is merely vegetable existence. Usually, when we speak of 'life' we think of it in terms of consciousness. the awreness of selfhood that may be ascribed even to an insect, but which is lacking in a plant. Thus we instinctively connect the idea of life with the experience of pleasure and pain. Sensations that emerge into consciousness are an inseparable part of our idea of living, and they contribute, also, to our sense of identity and separateness. We may tell ourselves incessantly that all life is one; but so long as we have not experienced the liberation from a body that feels sensations which others do not feel, and a mind that thinks as others do not, we cannot experience the idea of oneness as a reality. It amounts to claiming a transcendent position with regard to the world, without having had a transcendental experience, on the mere basis of an intellectual attitude. At the beginning, the notion that one can attain realisation by repeating formulas is a charming one; but repeated collision with the brute facts of a life in which every being is distinct from all others makes the attitude difficult to hold. This is perhaps the commonest cause of

disappointment to those who have not understood that Nibbāna is something for which we have to strive, and that if we only try to persuade ourselves that we have already reached it, we are leading ourselves up a spiritual cul-de-sac.

When we say 'life' we mean in general the quality of being conscious and aware of what is going on. Having this kind of awareness means that the living being is also conscious of time, because events cannot occur without a time-sequence. For anything to happen there must be the past, before it happened; the time of its happening, which we may call the present, and the time after it happened, which is the future. Thus we see that if life is consciousness it must be consciousness of something that is existing or happening in time. It is only in contrast to being conscious of 'something' that we can be conscious of 'nothing', so that the 'something', whatever it may be, is always present in consciousness, either in the past, present or future.

Now that 'something', when everything is brought down to a single fact, is *change*. The future does not exist until it becomes the present; then on the instant it becomes the past, and again does not exist, except in memory. Even our knowledge of the difference between one thing and another, as between trees and houses, comes from our awareness of a change in our consciousness when we turn our attention from one to the other. The differences between light and dark, heat and cold, are also based on change, the change that takes place in our sensations when light gives place to darkness, heat to cold. And so it is with everything we associate with 'life'.

There is continual change going on in our bodies as well as in our minds, just as there is in the organic life of plants. Nothing ever remains the same for very long, but

one state is continually moving into another in a ceaseless flow. So we see that change is one of the essential characteristics of life; without change, or impermanence, there is no life as we understand it. Death itself is only another kind of change, in which the body ceases to function and breaks down into its chemical elements, while the craving-force (*Bhava-taṇhā*, the will to live) and the Karma of the past produce a new being from the mental life of the former one. Death and rebirth are both part of the process of incessant change.

This continual flux of transformations consists, really, of the perishing of the old and the arising of the new; it is not the changing of *things*, but rather an unbroken succession of *events*, that constitutes *anicca*, the impermanence of Samsara. And whether it be the changing modes of our consciousness, or the unconscious changes going on in our bodies, it never finds any permanent point of rest. It seems to indicate a chronic state of dissatisfaction; the body and the mind both seem to be always wanting to become something other than what they are from moment to moment. It is like a journey to nowhere in particular. If the mind is satisfied at any point it cannot remain so for long. When we are feeling extremely happy we should like that state of mind to remain with us for ever, but we find that after a time the happiness passes and some other mental sensation takes its place. Everybody knows that we cannot cling to happiness; its fleeting nature has been a subject for poets to lament over ever since poets first began stringing words together.

If we make a serious attempt to find out why this is, we come to see that it is due to that essential condition of life by which nothing can remain static for long; and also to another law which always accompanies the law of change, namely that we can experience one thing only by contrast

with its opposite. We should never know what happiness was if we could not also experience misery. And if we experienced happiness unchanging for an extremely long time, without anxieties or painful sensations of any kind, we should finally forget what unhappiness was like. Then our happiness would cease to exist because we should be taking that state for granted, and should no ionger be aware that we were happy. So it is obvious that a living being can be happy only if it is also capable of being unhappy. Happiness and misery, like heat and cold, light and dark, are things that exist only by way of contrast, and the contrast is an indispensable part of this process we call living.

Now most thoughtful people, especially those who are capable of feeling the pain and unhappiness of others in a sympathetic way, are agreed that on the average there is more suffering than happiness in life. The great mass of living beings in the world are experiencing a life that is on the whole more painful than pleasurable. They are sustained chiefly by the hope, which is another feature of life and an indispensable one, that their condition will improve and that they will be happy at some future time. But the element of change which they rely upon to bring them happiness is also bound to destroy that happiness after a time, even if at last it comes, as we have already noticed.

So, taking everything together, we see that life, which is perpetual change, is on the whole unsatisfactory. When we are happy we may feel that life is good, like Robert Browning with his nonsensical 'God's in his heaven; all's right with the world'; but when we are suffering either mental or physical pain we are inclined to take the view that 'life is not worth living'! Our feeling about life is therefore entirely subjective unless we can get away from

our personal feelings for a time and look at it in a larger context. Then if we review our own total experience, and add it to what we can see of the total experience of other people, to say nothing of animals — which after all are living beings as well — we must admit that on the whole life is a very sorry business indeed. Not for nothing is it said that man lives by hope. And it has been observed often enough that in many instances the hope is better than the realisation. If we could be happy long enough to get thoroughly accustomed to it, we should no longer be happy. The heaven of delight would become a hell of boredom.

In this connection we may recall that the early Christian Fathers held that the happiness of the blessed in Paradise would be greatly enhanced by the sight of the damned, eternally burning in the nether regions. Their authority for this was the parable of Dives and Lazarus in Luke 16; 20–31. It was before it had become fashionable to dismiss everything we do not like in ancient scriptures as being symbolic, and not to be taken literally; and in more recent times the good Fathers have been reproached with an excessive zeal for revenge. But they may also have had it in mind that Lazarus, in the bosom of Abraham, would be in need of some distraction to relieve the appalling monotony of his eternal life. Heaven, they may have recognised, was woefully deficient in the element of contrast which man requires for a full appreciation of his happiness. Either he must suffer himself at times, to make his happiness known to him, or he must see someone else suffering. It is a condition imposed by his own nature. Eternal, unchanging bliss requires for its maintenance a state utterly unlike any that can be associated with ordinary human consciousness.

* * *

Consciousness, as we have been discussing it, includes sensations and perception, but personality to be complete needs another factor, that of willing. We are not only conscious of the outside world, but also feel an urge to act on it in some way, and this will to act comes from the desire to achieve some particular object. The manner in which we tend to act constitutes our character, and it is formed by habits of thinking and acting in the past. There is nothing stable or fixed about this part of human personality, either; it is merely a tendency. So we notice that the man whom we have labelled 'selfish' because he is selfish in general, is not invariably so. Neither is the 'honest' man invariably honest. Human character is as fluid as any other part of the life-process. A good man may act badly at times, while a bad man may be capable of some very good impulses; and often these conflicting trends are so mixed up that it is impossible to decide what the predominant characteristics are. To labour this point may seem unnecessary, but it has an important bearing on our inquiry, because we are trying to find something in life that is not subject to change.

So far we have not found anything that does not alter. Looking at the overall picture of life we see that it has these features of impermanence or changeableness, by which it flows on from one state to another, and of unsatisfactoriness which can range from mild displeasure to acute misery. We see that there is nothing constant and abiding in it; therefore there is no essence to which we can point and say 'This is my Self', because the personality changes at different stages from infancy to old age, and indeed from one moment to another. The only connection that can be found between one state of the personality (or consciousness) and another is the fact that each one is caused by the one that existed prior to it, and that there is

a connecting link of memory between them. There is also the general proneness to think and act as we have been accustomed to do in the past; and this as we have seen, is no more than a tendency. It is a mistake to regard it as an unalterable part of oneself, or as the Self with a capital letter.

Now it is just this that Buddhism means when it says that life has three characteristics: impermanence, liability to suffering and lack of "selfness". And the striking truth becomes clear to us that every kind of life as we know it must have these same characteristics. If there were no change there would be no life. If there were no suffering there could be no happiness, and if there were a permanent self that never alters it would be equivalent to a state of no change—and therefore no life. In mathematical terms we may say that these three characteristics give us the co-ordinates which add up to what we understand by 'life'.

So eternal life, which could be nothing but eternal change, could never produce any lasting satisfaction. With continual birth and death following upon one another we already have 'eternal life', in fact, though not personal immortality. The question we should ask ourselves is: Is it desirable?

We may answer 'Yes' or 'No' according to our circumstances at the time. But whether the answer is yes or no, the fact that we have to face is that eternal life could not be in any conditions very much better than the life we are experiencing at present with its contrasts and alternations. If it were without these features it would not be 'life'.

A state which is without change and contrasts must be in all respects different from anything we can imagine from our own experience. We have nothing with which to

compare it and no framework of ideas to fit it into. For one thing, it would be timeless, because time exists only where there is change. It could also contain no distinctions, for the differences which make us conscious of 'myself' and 'others' could not exist without these conditions of contrast and transition. For the same reason, space as we conceive it could not exist, either. Unless, of course, we can visualise a space of one dimension, or a non-dimensional space. In any case, it is clear that the world of 'things' and of people simply could not come into being where there was no possibility of change. Therefore a personal immortality of eternal duration is out of the question.

At the same time, we have already seen that the idea of 'nothing' itself cannot exist without the opposite idea of 'something' being present, if only as a possibility. If Nibbāna were nothingness it would also be 'somethingness' by implication. Every affirmation depends upon the existence of a negation which is its opposite.

Our whole difficulty in conceiving Nibbāna lies in the fact that our thinking is bounded by opposites of this kind. We imagine that since Nibbāna is not eternal life it must be eternal death—the annihilation of 'something'. But death itself is only a part of the life-process, as we have seen; it is just one of the many different kinds of changes that are going on all the time, and which are inseparable from life. Eternal existence and eternal non-existence are opposites of the same kind as light and darkness, heat and cold; neither of them has any real or absolute meaning. They are concepts which depend upon one another: they are aspects of merely relative truth.

It is the same with 'beginning' and 'ending'. We know that there cannot be an ending of anything unless there has been a beginning. What is more difficult for us to grasp

Is that there equally cannot be a beginning unless there has also previously been an ending. Yet such is the fact. If we ask, How did the life-process begin? we can choose between two answers, both of equal truth. One is that it had no beginning; the other is that it has its beginning with every fresh moment of conscious existence. But try as we may, we cannot find any point at which life started from nothing, or was created out of nothing. If it was created at any stage, its creator must have been in existence before it, which leaves us still no nearer to finding the absolute beginning of life. It only pushes the inquiry further back, to no purpose.

In this situation we have to fall back upon the second answer as being the more manageable one for our discussion. If life begins at every new moment of conscious experience we see that its beginnings are dependent upon its previous endings, and this agrees with our already-formed picture of life as a flowing process, a flux of 'becoming' which never quite reaches the goal of 'being'. This helps us considerably, because it opens up the possibility of the life-process coming to an end. In other words it means that there can be a point at which, after ending, it can be prevented from beginning again. And since life is propagated by desire, the way to accomplish this is to eradicate the mental impulse of craving. So Nibbāna is the annihilation of craving, the extinction of the fires of Greed, Ill-will and Delusion.

This, then, is cessation of the life-process, which is not the same as the annihilation of a being. Where there has never been any real being there cannot be annihilation; but where only a process is concerned we can quite properly speak of its cessation. This is not a mere verbal quibble, but a distinction which points to something of tremendous importance.

With the attainment of Nibbāna it is a process of change that comes to an end, and with its ending there cease to arise all the other things which we have seen to be a consequence of that process, including suffering and the illusion of personality. So the Nibbāna that is entered into at the last passing away of a Buddha or Arahat is a state absolutely devoid of all the features of life as we have seen it to be. To try to describe it in terms of what we have experienced in our life of change and of opposites would give a false and misleading conception of it. It is outside all of these categories; or, alternatively we may say that the categories have no basis for arising in it. If we choose to class all the categories of things, events and experiences of life as passing phases, and therefore unreal—or only temporarily and relatively real—then Nibbāna becomes the sole eternal (*Dhuva*) reality. If they are considered negative, Nibbāna must be the only true positive.

To put the case in another way: Nibbāna is not just another opposite in all the categories of opposites that make up our thinking. It is itself the absolute opposite of those opposites, the state in which they cannot possibly arise.

* * *

Here it is pertinent to stop and consider two prepositions which have been put forward regarding Nibbāna. The first is that 'Nirvāna and Saṁsāra (the round of births and deaths) are one.'

To get this statement into perspective, it is necessary to distinguish between the experience of Nibbāna known to the Arahant while he is still living, and the Nibbāna after death. The first is called in Pāli, *Sa-upādisesa-nibbāna:* Nirvāna with all the components of individualized personality still present. The second is called *Anupādisesa-nibbāna.* It is Nirvāna without any substratum of

personality in the present, and without the possibility of its arising in the future. This is the Nibbāna in which present and future do not exist, since it is free from all conditionality.

It is clear, from the descriptions given of the lives of disciples subsequent to their attainment of Arahantship, that although they could induce the Nirvānic consciousness whenever they wished, they were not, in their ordinary state, exempt from the pains of the flesh. Only their minds remained unaffected. Physically, they suffered from sickness and injury, as all mortals must do. Even the Buddha himself endured much in this way, towards the end of his life. He told Ananda that it was only when he withdrew his consciousness from the physical plane that he could obtain bodily ease.*

Sa-upādisesa-nibbāna, therefore, is only intermittent release from suffering; as a continual state of consciousness for a living being it would be incompatible with the maintenance of life. Remaining in it constantly, the physical organism would perish. Far from being 'one with Saṁsāra', it is the state in which all saṁsāric experience is suspended, so long as the Arahant remains in it. If he intends to live out his course, he has to emerge from the contemplation of Nirvāna so that he can again function within the modes, and according to the laws, of conditionality.

The Nibbāna after death is the same as that which the Arahant is capable of experiencing in life, but it is the absolute and final withdrawal from saṁsāric conditions. It is in this sense that it becomes 'permanent'. As the Buddha taught it, Nibbāna is desirable *because* it is the

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* Mahā Parinibbāna Sutta; 'Last Days of the Buddha'; THE WHEEL No. 67/69.

cessation of births and deaths, and all the suffering they entail. One may live with the intellectual understanding that all existence is *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anattā*, and one may reach the full interior experience of it while still living; but neither of these is equivalent to that Nibbāna which is the total release from conditioned existence and its necessary suffering. A Bodhisatta is able to continue the round of rebirths while he qualifies himself to become a Supreme Buddha, but only by stopping short of the attainment of Arahantship. He does not experience Nibbāna and Saṁsāra as identical. To him, Nibbāna is certainty because he has confidence; but it is a certainty belonging to the future, not to his present condition and daily activities. It may indeed be said that Saṁsāra contains the potentiality of Nibbāna; but potential states and actual ones should not be confused. Nibbāna in its fullest sense means the complete extinction of Craving, not in one form only, but in all its manifold guises; and where Craving is extinguished, there can be no re-arising of saṁsāric existence. This is the whole point and essence of the Buddha's doctrine.

The second theory that has been advanced about Nibbāna—though never by instructed Asian Buddhists—is that it is in some way equivalent to God. Not, of course, to the personal God of Western tradition, but rather to something resembling the Paramātman or Nirguṇa Brahman of Vedānta. That is to say, an impersonal God devoid of attributes, but from whom (or rather, which) all things have emanated.

It is certain that this idea of God arose after the time of the Buddha.* It was in fact a rather desperate expedient to preserve the idea of a Supreme Power on a higher level

* L. M. Joshi *Brahmanism, Buddhism and Hinduism*: THE WHEEL No. 150/151.

than the mythical Creator whom Buddhism had shown to be unnecessary. It is difficult to see why, if this is what the Buddha meant by Nibbāna, he did not say so, instead of leaving it to others. But actually, the authors of the Upanishads themselves did not say that Nibbāna was equivalent to the Nirguṇa Brahman. Their intention seems to have been only to free God from the limitations of personality which the Buddha had shown to be defects.

The chief objection to the theory is that, by definition, Nibbāna is the cessation of the world, whereas the Nirguṇa Brahman, at one remove, is still its origin and the cause of its perpetual re-creation. Because of this, he, or it, is responsible for all the obvious evils of the world, just as much as for whatever is good. The will to create, itself, implies desire on the part of the Supreme Power; and desire for anything argues a state of imperfection. If the Nirguṇa Brahman were complete unity and bliss, as it is represented, the emanation of the universe from it could only be a step down from perfection to imperfection. The idea that God created Saṁsāra, with all its ills, as a plaything, from the emanations of his own divine essence, is inherently repulsive.

Apart from these considerations, Nibbāna, as we have seen, is described as the state of ultimate peace and security from ill. But the supposed Supreme Self is eternally agitated, being perpetually engaged in the creation, absorption and re-creation of the universe. In these circumstances there can be no release or unchanging peace for the individual self that becomes united with it. In this system of thought the term Moksha is used, rather than Nibbāna: but it seems to denote an exaltation of the self, rather than a release from its limitations. And here again we find the tendency to confuse potential states with existing ones, for the disciple is assured 'Thou art That', meaning the

Paramātman. But while every being has the possibility of making himself divine, a 'Deva by purification', as Buddhism has it, it is surely very unsafe to imagine oneself God while still subject to human cravings and moral imperfection.

Whatever meaning one may give to the word God, any attempt to make it inter-changeable with Nibbāna is totally unacceptable. One of the strongest points of Buddha Dhamma is that it has no need of theistic myths that create problems without really solving any. The central doctrine of a Creator who is responsible for the world has become a sore embarrassment to theistic religion today; so much so that in some quarters serious attempts are being made to discard it. On this account there is some envy of Buddhism, which has never been marred by such relics of primitive thinking and has remained uncontaminated by them through the centuries. If there were in fact such a Creator, or if he were necessary to explain the existence of the world, the unique Buddhist concept of Nibbāna would still stand above and beyond him, as something he has not yet attained.

When He was asked whether the Arahat (one who has attained Nibbāna) exists or does not exist after death, the Buddha refused to answer the question. He said that it was wrongly put. And if we have followed the arguments just given we shall see that it was indeed wrongly put, because neither statement is applicable. When it was carried further, with the question whether the Arahat neither existed nor did not exist after death, the Buddha still maintained the same silence.

And, rather than misrepresent the truth, He preserved His silence even when some people concluded that because He did not answer He did not know. But He gave an answer that was of a different order, and more convincing

than any fanciful description could be. He said: 'Practise the method of attaining Nibbāna that I have given in the Noble Eightfold Path. Then you will come to realise the truth for yourself.'

That is the only way in which we can really come to understand what Nirvāna is—by realising it ourselves and so seeing the truth face to face. We will then understand why it is that all questions relating to it, so long as they are couched in terms of opposites and alternatives, are wrongly put. Such questions puzzle us only because of the limitations of the mind bound by *Avijjā* (Ignorance) and the peculiar nature of life as we experience it.

But while the Buddha refused to describe or define Nibbāna, He never hesitated when asked to make a positive affirmation. The reply then was always "NIBBĀNA IS".

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REBIRTH EXPLAINED

By

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FOREWORD

Vajirarama,
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The Buddhist Doctrine of Rebirth which should be differentiated from the Hindu view of Reincarnation is the favourite subject of Mr. V. F. Gunaratna, the learned writer of this small but profound treatise.

As an ideal and practising Buddhist he writes and talks on this important subject with firm conviction.

He has explained in these few pages very clearly almost all the intricate points connected with the subject.

In this book the writer solves all difficult problems from a Buddhist standpoint and satisfactorily answers many other relevant questions.

Sgd.

Narada.

29.4.70.

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CHAPTER I.

THE LAW OF CHANGE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this book is not so much to prove rebirth as to place before the reader certain facts, certain serious consideraticns and certain reasonable lines of thought which will help him to appreciate the Buddhist point of view regarding the doctrine of rebirth and also to understand how the phenomenon of rebirth works. "This huge world of life and motion which is always becoming, always changing, has yet a law at the centre of it" says Radakrishnan. This central law is Dharma and to the Buddhist it manifests itself in many ways as certain fundamental universal laws on the operation of which the phenomenon of rebirth works. It is therefore fitting to start with an examination of some of these laws. When these are referred to as laws it must not be taken to mean that they are promulgated by some governing body or that they are a man-made code. They are natural laws or principles in the sense that they indicate a constant way of action regarding men and matters as well as events and things of this world. The Buddha did not make them but only discovered them and proclaimed them to the world.

LAW OF CHANGE

The first fundamental law or principle that should be examined in order to appreciate rebirth is the **Law of Change (Anicca)**. It postulates that **nothing in this world is**

permanent or static. In other words, everything is subject to change. Trees and creepers, flowers and fruits, goods and other belongings, buildings and lands, men and animals—in short everything imaginable is subject to this ceaseless universal Law of Change. In some cases this change takes place visibly and within a short space of time, while in other cases it takes place so gradually and slowly that the process of change is not visible at all. To this latter category belong not only rivers and mountains but even the sun, moon and stars where the process of change, as science avers, extends through millions of years. Indeed the various operations of the cosmos in their totality is one continuous change.

What is this change? It has various aspects and manifests itself in various ways. Growth and decay, rise and fall, increase and decrease, integration and disintegration, extension and contraction, unification and diversification, modification and amplification, progression and retrogression are some common aspects of change. Whatever the aspect of change, the changing from one condition or state to another is the essence of all changes and this changing is an unfailing feature of all things. Change rules the world. There is no stability or permanency anywhere. Time moves everything. Time moves us also whether we like it or not. We live in a changing world while we ourselves are all the while changing, This is the relentless law. "Sabbe sankharā aniccā"— "all compounded things are impermanent"

An important feature about this Law of Change is that **though everything is subject to change, nothing is ever lost or destroyed. Only its form is changed.** Thus solids may change into liquids and liquids into gases but none of them is ever completely lost. Matter is an expression of energy, and as such it can never be lost or destroyed according to a

principle of Science also called a law-the law of conservation of energy. The student of physiology knows that the human body is constantly undergoing a change and that at the end of every seven years it becomes a new body with every part, skin and bone, hair and nails, completely renewed.

Even at death no part of the body is destroyed. Again only the form is changed. Fluids and gases, minerals and salts are some of the forms into which the various parts of the dead body change according to the nature of the part concerned. While physiology teaches that the human body changes every seven years, the Buddha goes further and states that the human body is undergoing an invisible change every moment of its existence. This particular process of change is known as "*khanika Marana*" (momentary death). Consider seriously the great marvel of a child changing into a young man and the equally great marvel of a young man changing into an old man. How different the young man is from the child and yet the young man can recall his childhood. So also the old man can recall his youth. The seeming identity of this individual is the continuity of an ever-changing process.

Another important feature of the Law of Change is that **there is no distinct and separate line of demarcation between one condition or state and the succeeding condition or state.** These conditions or states are not in water-tight compartments. Each merges into the next. Consider the waves of the ocean with their rise and fall. Each rising wave falls to give rise to another wave which also rises and falls to give rise to yet another such wave. Can anyone point his finger to any one point or position in any one wave and say that there ends one wave and there begins another ? Each wave merges into the next. There is no boundary line between

one wave and the next. So is it with all changing conditions in this world. As Professor Rhys Davids in his American lectures has said. "In every case, as soon as there is a beginning there begins also at the same moment to be an ending". Thus this changing is a continuous process, a flux or a flow — an idea which is in perfect accord with modern scientific thought. This leads us to two other fundamental laws which will be examined in the next chapter.

CHAPTER II.

THE LAWS OF BECOMING AND CONTINUITY

Two other fundamental laws or principles that should be examined in order to appreciate rebirth are the laws of Becoming and Continuity. We have just considered that the Law of Change indicates a changing process in all things. A changing process would mean that **everything is in the process of becomig something else.** This in short is the Law of Becoming (Bhava). While the Law of Change states that nothing is permanent but is always changing, the Law of Becoming states that everything is every moment in the process of becoming another thing. The Law of Becoming is thus a corollary to the Law of Change.

A seed is every moment in the process of becoming a plant and a plant is every moment in the process of becoming a tree. A bud is every moment in the process of becoming a flower while an infant is every moment in the process of becoming a youth and then an old man. **At no point of time is anything not in the process of becoming something else.** A ceaseless becoming is the feature of all things. It is the ever present feature underlying all changes.

In a sense becoming is the only process in the world since everything is in the process of becoming another thing. Nothing is static. Everything is dynamic. The Law of Becoming can therefore be stated in another way - **Nothing is, everything is becoming.** One may ask - "Suppose a seed is not planted or a plant is uprooted can you still maintain that the seed is in the process of becoming a plant and a plant is in the process of becoming a tree?" By no means, but the process of changing does not end. It continues, but in another direction—in the direction of decay and disintegration. Both seed and plant gradually change and decay and are absorbed into the elements, and as such they too are not destroyed or lost. They too continue to exist. This leads us to a consideration of the idea of continuity which is another law.

LAW OF CONTINUITY

Dependent on the Law of Becoming is the Law of Continuity. Becoming leads to Continuity and therefore the Law of Continuity is a corollary to the Law of Becoming. We have already considered that the Law of Change can only change matter but not destroy it, and had remarked that solids may change into liquids, and liquids into gases but that none of them is ever completely destroyed. The particular energies of which they are an expression continue while their forms alone are changed. Viewed in this light, continuity is also an unfailing feature of all things. **It is because there is continuity that one does not see an exact line of demarcation between one condition or state and the next.**

There is also no time-gap between the two.

Even time is continuous. The grammarian may speak

of the past tense, present tense and the future tense as if they exist in water-tight compartments, but in reality there are no sharp dividing lines between present past and future. The moment you think of the present it has glided into the past. Your friend asks you what the time is. You look at your wrislet. It points to 9 a.m. and you tell your friend "It is 9 a.m." But quite strictly and accurately is it so ? It is not 9 a.m. when you answer him. It will be even a fraction of a second past 9 a.m. Time never stays. The present is always gliding into the past. The future is always advancing to the present. Time also is governed by the Law of Continuity.

If within our knowledge most things have had a present a past and a future showing a continuous process, can man alone stand amid these moving processes without a past and without a future? Why should the fundamental universal all-powerful Laws of Change, Becoming, and Continuity suddenly stop operating and come to a dead halt in respect of man only, when he dies? Cannot man also be a part of a continous process and death be the temporary end of a temporary phenomenon? Cannot Death be just another instance of change and open the door to another condition or state for the dying man? These are matters that have to be seriously considered, before rejecting the doctrine of rebirth hastily and without much thought.

CHAPTER III.

THE LAW OF ACTION AND REACTION

The Law of Action and Reaction is another fundamental law or principle that should be examined in order to appreciate rebirth. This law postulates that for every

action there must be a result or reaction. This principle of a result flowing from an action applies to every field of action whether that action is caused by nature or by man. It is an universal law and applies to the physical world as well as the mental world. This law is also called the Law of Cause and Effect. When this law has reference to the actions of human beings it is called the Law of Kamma and it is in this sense that we have to consider it here. The word "*Kamma*" literally means "*actions*" but is very often used to denote the result of an action for which the more correct word would be "*Kamma Vipāka*".

It is the Law of Kamma that governs the results of actions performed by man and the principle underlying the nature of the results that follow, is indicated by the following words: "Yādisaṁ vapate bījaṁ tādisaṁ harate phalaṁ" "as he sows, so does he reap". Thus the Law of Kamma sees to it that good deeds beget good results and that bad deeds beget bad results. Its operations are characterized by perfect justice, since Kamma is a strict accountant. Therefore each man gets his exact deserts, not more not less.

If Kamma operates with such unerring precision the question can rightly be asked why some doers of good deeds die without reaping the good results they are entitled to and why some doers of bad deeds die without suffering for their bad deeds. Such situations can make one loose faith in the justice of the Law of Kamma. There are many other anomalies in life that similarly need an explanation. The unequal distribution of joy and sorrow, of wealth and poverty, of health and disease among men in this world are some of them. It is only when we imagine that the time of operation of this law is confined within the narrow limits of this one life that these situations appear to be anomalies. If on the other-hand we postulate a past life and a future

life, then there are complete explanations for all these situations. The actions of a past life can produce results in this life and the actions of this life can similarly produce results in the next. This accounts for the inequalities among men in the present life. In the Majjhima Nikāya (Sutta No. 135) the Buddha has said:—"Actions (Kamma) are one's very own; actions are one's inheritance; actions are one's source of origin; actions are one's kith and kin; actions are one's support; actions divide beings, that is to say, into lowness and excellence."

As regards variations in the time of materialization of results, it is common knowledge that in all fields of action there are immediate results and delayed results. **Results do not always arise in the order in which their causative actions have taken place.** Many extraneous factors can arise to disturb that order. Similarly in the field of human actions, results do not always follow a principle of "first come first serve" for very good reasons. The Law of Kamma operates in so many ways and the varieties of Kamma are so many that the process of Kammic operations becomes intricate and only a very brief reference to it is possible here.

Although it is popularly supposed that by the Law of Kamma an action is followed by its result, it should be known that other causative factors also come into play and often it is their combined effect that determines the result. **A single cause cannot produce a result, much less many results nor can many causes produce just one result.** This theory of multiple causes and multiple results has been referred to in the Visuddhi Magga (Chapter XVII):— "Not from a single cause will arise one fruit or many, nor from many causes will arise a single fruit". (Ven. Ñāṇamoli Thero's translation). Thus several causes must combine to produce a result. Some of these combining causes can

strengthen and expedite the result (Upatthambaka Kamma) while some can obstruct and delay it (Upapīlaka Kamma) and yet others can completely nullify it (Ahosi Kamma). When there is an interaction and interplay of opposing Kamma sometimes the resulting balance of Kamma determines the nature of the result, Sometimes the superior Kamma takes precedence. The order of precedence is as follows.—

1. Garuka Kamma (*Weighty Kamma*)
2. Āsanna Kamma (*Death-proximate Kamma or Terminal Kamma*)
3. Āciṇṇa Kamma (*Habitual Kamma*)
4. Kaṭattā Kamma (*Miscellaneous Reserve Kamma*)

(This last refers to Kamma which does not fall within any of the foregoing categories.)

It is by having recourse to the presumption of rebirth that all the seeming anomalies and inequalities of life can be explained. Attempts have been made by those who do not subscribe to the belief in rebirth to explain these anomalies in other ways. These attempts either do not bear logical analysis or are based on a much more difficult presumption than rebirth. The presumption of rebirth is the most reasonable and justifiable presumption that the finite human mind can make to explain the seeming anomalies and inequalities of life.

CHAPTER IV

THE LAW OF ATTRACTION

One other fundamental Law or principle that should be examined in order to appreciate rebirth is the Law of

Attraction. The operation of this law is based on the principle of "like attracts like". There is a tendency for forces of the same type to be attracted to each other. Hence this Law is also called the Law of Affinity. It is known that an atom of a particular strength and quality of vibration will attract to itself another atom whose vibrations harmonize with its own. Two wireless telegraphic instruments will receive and transmit messages from one another only if they are similarly attuned.

This law operates not only in the world of inanimate forces but even in the world of animate life. The saying "birds of a feather flock together" indicates this tendency. Not only birds but even other types of animals are seen to congregate with those of their own special type. When we come to human beings it is common knowledge that men of similar leanings and tendencies are attracted to each other. The many clubs and associations whose members are interested in the same type of study or hobby or games is evidence of this tendency. The Buddha has referred to this tendency thus :— "Beings of low states flow together, meet together with those of low states. Beings of virtuous states flow together, meet together with those of virtuous states. So have they done in the past. So will they do in the future. So do they now in the present" (Samyutta Nikāya-Nidāna Vagga). Mental telepathy is yet another instance of the operation of the Law of Attraction.

In regard to the world of human beings, there is a very special aspect of this Law of Attraction which does not operate in any other field. Man not only attracts to himself others of similar leanings and tendencies but is often able to attract to himself the very things he strongly likes or the very conditions and situations he strongly desires. This special power

to attract material things and conditions is peculiar to man only. Does it not sometimes happen that just when we are longing and urgently needing to find the address of a friend which we have lost years ago, we unexpectedly come across it in a place where we least expect to find it? Does it not sometimes happen that a student urgently needing a book which is out of print and not easily procurable suddenly comes across it in a wayside bookstall ? One may say this is chance. May be, but can it not also happen otherwise ? Is chance the only explanation? Is chance an explanation after all? There is a cause for everything and when the cause is unknown or unknowable this convenient word is trotted out.

The examples just mentioned may also be due to the fact that there is some strong attractive force or power in our desire-vibrations which makes it possible for those desires to materialize and find their objectives. Strong and persistent desires are able to radiate vibrations far and wide and reach the very thing or the very conditions desired. Distance is no bar as this is not a case of physical travelling. It is not physical things only that travel. All this is possible because of the tremendous power of the mind. The very first stanza of the Dhammapada declares :— "Manō pubbangamā dhammā manō settha mano maya — mind is the forerunner of all conditions, mind is supreme, mind-made is everything". Further in the Sagātha Vagga (Devatā Samyutta) of the Samyutta Nikaya the Buddha has said:—

"Tis by the mind the world is led. 'Tis by the mind the world is drawn. The mind it is, above all other things that bringeth everything within its sway". The reason why more often than not desires fail to materialize is either because more often than not they do not reach that very high degree of intensity and persistence necessary for their

materialization or because more powerful counter-vibrations emanating from other sources are at work. Powerful and persistent concentration on the same desire generates an overwhelmingly attractive force and apart from its cumulative effect it has also the further effect of influencing the subconscious mind where this power of attraction can develop in strength and exert its influence over the conscious mind. One can desire consciously as well as subconsciously. The subconscious motivations springing from desire are more powerful than the conscious motivations.

W. W. Atkinson, that inspiring writer, uses the expression "thought-magnet" precisely because thoughts possess this great power of attractions. He says:—

"Each idea, desire and feeling exerts its attractive power in the direction of drawing to itself other things to serve itself. All this refers to the inner workings of thought - attraction ..... This attractive power operates gradually and more or less slowly at first, but like the snowball or the growing crystal its rate of growth increases with its size."

(*"Thoughts are Things"*)

The reader may wonder what all this has to do with rebirth. The relevance will presently be seen. Buddhism teaches that the most powerful motivating force in the world of beings is desire or craving. It is called **Taṇhā**, Many and varied desires spring from this basic **Taṇhā**. However there are three special aspects of this Taṇhā or craving one of which is **Bhava Taṇhā** or **craving for existence**. It is not generally realized how comprehensive and widespread this type of craving is in regard to the life and actions of man. It underlies almost all the manifold activities of man who is nearly every moment of his life moved by it consciously and, more often than not, subconsciously. The desire to be,

the desire to live on, is the fountain source of all other desires. It is the unseen undercurrent driving man to action whatever the nature of that action may be.

How can it be otherwise? Just consider. We earn, we eat, we dress not because we desire to die, but, fundamentally, because we desire to live. We love, we hate, not because we desire to die, but, fundamentally, because we desire to live. We struggle, we plot, we plan for precisely the same reason. We utter falsehoods, we commit crimes not because we desire to die but, fundamentally, because we desire to live. Even the act of suicide, paradoxical as it may seem, springs fundamentally from a desire to live - to live a life free from difficulties and troubles, free from obstacles and disappointments.

It should now be obvious that this craving for existence looms large in the mind of man consciously as well as unconsciously. Craving, like any other thought is an expression of energy and as such it cannot be lost or destroyed. This powerful and persistent craving is a powerful and persistent expression of energy and cannot die with the dying man. On the contrary, at the moment of death, by reason of the operation of the Law of Attraction (life being more or less a series of conscious and unconscious cravings for existence) the accumulated energies resulting from this powerful and persistent desire or craving for existence, will be the means of attracting to this dying man the very conditions necessary for another existence. Thus the craving for existence makes him re-exist. **The will-to-live makes him re-live. He then mentally grasps another existence.** This grasping has been dealt with much force by a Western writer M.O.C. Walshe in a book entitled "Buddhism for today":—

"At the moment of death the higher mental functions

cease, and the unconscious patterns caused by past Kamma come to the surface. Chief of them is the force of craving. **Taṇhā**.....Dependent on the enormous force of this Taṇhā, there is an instinctive **grasping** at a new physical base, a new conception takes place and a fresh life is started..... Is this in principle so difficult to understand? A dying person normaly fights for his life as long as his existing body is able to stand the strain. How could this terribly strong urge be simply dissipated at death? We know that in the faculty of telepathy the mind seems to "leap" from one body to another in some sense. If we accept that that is possible, as we must, then we can perhaps form an idea of how the "mental leap" at death takes place."

In this connection it should be mentioned that the Buddha on one occasion while answering a question put to him by a wondering ascetic called Vaccha as to what exactly causes one life to link with the next at the moment of death, referred to that powerful force called **Upādana** which means "**grasping**", and explained that **at the moment of death Taṇhā or Craving becomes this grasping force (upādāna).** The Buddha has stated this very succinctly but emphatically:— "At the time, Vaccha, when a being lays aside this body, and rises up again in another body, for that I declare Taṇhā (craving) to be the grasping force (Upādāna). Indeed, Vaccha, on that occasion Taṇhā (craving) becomes the grasping force (Upādāna)" (Samyutta Nikāya IV. 398).

Here then is a pointed reference to what happens at the moment of death. Thus the craving for existence (Taṇhā) which is most powerful at the moment of death (even though the dying man may be consciously inactive) becomes a powerful grasping force (Upādāna) and it is this grasping force that grasps the opportunity for re-existence which his

craving has attracted. Upādāna is an intensified form of Taṇhā. Its grasping and clinging power is overwhelming.

Consider the case of a man who has fallen from the deck of a ship on the high seas at midnight unknown to others. He struggles with the devouring waves. Frantically he would clutch at anything, even a passing straw. However by reason of his powerful and persistent cries, he attracts to himself a rope that has been flung towards him by the men in the ship. How tenaciously will not this drowning man struggling for his breath and his life, **grasp** that rope and eventually reach the ship for a further lease of life? Greater, far greater, is the tenacity of that **mental grasp** (Upādāna of any dying man struggling for his last breath when the powerful and persistent energies resulting from the totality of his powerful and persistent cravings for existence have attracted to him the opportunity for further existence which he most tenaciously grasps. This opportunity and this grasping are purely mental phenomena. They will be discussed in a subsequent chapter.

Indeed life is a series of cravings. The accumulated cravings for existence added to the powerful craving at the moment of death attract to the dying man a further existence. Indeed, the will-to-live makes man re-live.

Hence it is that a part of the all-comprehensive formula of the chain of Dependent Origination or casual connections (Paticca samuppāda) runs as follows:—

Taṇhā paccayā Upādānaṁ
(Dependent on Craving, arises Grasping)

Upādāna pāccayā Bhavo
(Dependent on Grasping, arises Becoming
Bhava paccayā Jāti
(Dependent on Becoming arises Rebirth)

CHAPTER V

MIND AND THE LAW OF CHANGE

In the very first chaper we considered how the body is subject to the Law of Change. It is necessary now to consider how mind also like the body is subject to the same Law. Mind is not something physical. It is not something located in the brain as was erroneously supposed by certain schools of thought in the past. The mind is not in the brain nor is the brain in the mind. According to Buddhist psychology **mind is nothing but a constant stream or flow of thoughts.** Thought is just mind in operation or mind in motion just as wind is air in motion. Thought is an expression of energy and therefore the mind like thought cannot be lost or destroyed but is subject to change. The mind changes from moment to moment. One moment it is one thought that engages the mind and the next moment it is another. This process of thought following thought is continually taking place. The mind is thus nothing but an endless succession of thoughts. It is not a unity but a continuity. It is not permanent or static. It is a series (santati). It is a flux or flow (sota). It is a stream of successive thoughts which are continually arising and passing away from moment to moment. Each thought is succeeded by another with such a rapidity as to give the mind a semblance of something stable and permanent. A stick burning at one end and turned rapidly round and round in the dark creates the illusion of ring or circle of fire to onlookers at a distance who do not know what is actually happening. In reality however there is no such permanent ring or circle.

It is just the picture of successive burning sticks following each other closely in a rapid circular movement.

So it is with the mind where thoughts succeed each other with a much greater rapidity. Mind has therefore been compared to the flow of water in a river- (nadī soto viya), where sheets or currents of water follow each other with such closeness or rapidity that we seem to see a permanent thing called river and are tempted to regard it as such whereas it is clearly not so. The Kelani River of yesterday is not the Kelani River of today. The river you have to cross in the morning to get to your place of work is not the river you recross in the evening after your work is over. It is a different set of waters each day, each hour each moment. So also with the mind. It is a different thought each moment. one thought following the other with such a rapidity of succession that the illusion of a permanent thing called mind is created.

This rapidity of succession of thoughts has been the subject of pointed comment by the Buddha in the Anguttara Nikaya (i.v.):- "Monks, I have not heard of any other single thing so quick to change as the mind in so much that it is no easy thing to illustrate how quick to change it is". In the commentary Atthasalini it is said:- "While a unit of matter which has arisen persists, sixteen thought-moments arise and break up, and no illustration can convey the shortness of the time they occupy" (P.T.S. Translation pt I, p 81). In this connection it is important to remember that not only is there a rapidity of succession of thoughts but that there is no boundary line between one thought and another. One thought merges into the other so that the expression "Succession of thoughts" does not quite accurately describe the position. Hence the description by reference

to a river where there is not so much a succession of waters as a flow of waters. That eminent psychologist Professor William James in his "Psychology: Briefer Course" has a whole chapter entitled. "The stream of consciousness." Here he says:- "Consciousness then does not appear to itself chopped up in bits. Such words as "chain" or "train" do not describe it fitly as it presents itself in the first instance. It is nothing jointed, it flows. A "river" or "stream" are the metaphors by which it is most naturally described. *In talking of it hereafter let us call it the stream of thoughts, of consciousness or of subjective life.*" (The italics are his).

The rapidity of this process whereby continually one thought merges into another not only invests the mind with a seeming identity and a semblance of stability but it also leads one to imagine that there is a mysterious permanent something residing within the mind which performs the mental function of thinking. It requires a little hard thinking to appreciate the view expressed by Professor William James in his "Principles of Psychology" that "the thoughts themselves are the thinkers". In the same chapter referred to above he says:- "If we could say in English "It thinks" as we say "it rains" or "it blows" we should be stating the fact most simply."

This view of the mind as being not a unity but a series of thoughts is held by almost all psychologists of note. For instance, Bertrand Russel in "Religion and Science" says:—

"Until recently scientists believed in an indivisible and indestructible atom I or sufficient reasons physicists have reduced this atom to a series of events; for equally good reasons psychologists find that mind has not the identity of a single continuing thing but is a series of occurrences bound together by certain intimate relations". He also adds —"The question

of immortality therefore has become the question whether these intimitate relations exist between occurrences connected with a living body and other occurrences which take place after that body is dead".

As each thought passes away from the conscious mind it transmits to the subconscious or unconscious all its characteristic energies, impressions and tendencies though one is not aware of this transmission. It is not every mental process that comes within the awareness of the conscious mind. There are many mental processes of which we are not aware. This leads us to a consideration of the sub-conscious and unconscious aspect of the mind together regarded in Buddhist psychology as Bhavanga Citta. As this will be specially dealt with in the next chapter no further reference to it will be made here than to remark that if the impressions of our thoughts are not retained somewhere, it is impossible to explain the very existence of that marvellous faculty of memory whereby one is able to retain and recall at will many events of the past as well as passages of poetry and even prose that one has learnt by heart.

In Chapter 1 we had learnt that the body is a changing process. In this Chapter we have just learned that the mind is also a changing process. Man is a psycho-physical combination, a combination of mind and body. Now we know that it is a combination of a changing mind and a changing body. Mind and body thus viewed as changing processes help us to appreciate the view, rather difficult to comprehend, that **we actually live for one moment only,** and that the next moment it is another life. Thus the duration of life, in the ultimate sense, is for one moment only. This is sometimes referred to as "the instantaneousness of life". As vividly pointed out in the Visuddhi Magga (Chapter VIII) a revolving wheel touches the ground at one point only at

any given moment. At the very next moment, the very next point in the wheel touches the very next point in the ground. Similarly we live for one thought-moment only, and the very next moment is really another life because what then functions is another mind with another body, just like another point in the wheel touching another point in the ground. That it is another body that functions at the next moment was explained in the course of Chapter J on the Law of Change where it was stated that the body changes every moment and that there is a living and a dying every moment (Khanika marana).

Continuity of life, however, is maintained in spite of this momentary living and dying because there is not only momentary living and dying, there is also momentary re-living and the re-living is related to the living of the preceding moment by reason of the transmission of impressions and tendencies earlier referred to. This process of one thought or consciousness giving rise to another continues without a break. Even at the end of the present span of life, as will be discussed in another chapter, the dying consciousness will give rise to another consciousness (obviously not in the same body nor in the same place or plane of existence) which succeeding consciousness along with two fresh physical factors (the parental sperm and ovum cells) will combine in some appropriate maternal womb to which it is drawn to form the neucleus of a fresh being. That the succeeding consciousness can arise immeasurable distances away can be regarded as not impossible because in the first place it is not a case of travelling in the physical sense and secondly because the Law of Attraction works in the psychic plane as well where time and distance do not count.

Thus it comes to pass that the change of life from one moment to another in this existence is in essence no different

rom the ch ange of life from one existence to another, the difference between death and life being only a thought moment. **The first thought-moment in the subsequent life does not originate on its own. It is a sequel to the last thought-moment of the preceding life.** It is therefore a continuity in the series of successive thought-moments that constitute the preceding life although in a different plane with a different body. The last conscious thought-moment of the preceding life conditions the first thought-moment of the succeeding life. Both these thoughts take the same "arammana" or object of thought. This will be explained in a subsequent Chapter. Death of the body thus is no bar or hindrance to the continuation of this process of one thought giving rise to another.

CHAPTER VI

THE CONSCIOUS MIND AND THE UNCONSCIOUS MIND

(Vithi Citta and Bhavanga Citta)

In the last Chapter it was shown that the mind is a changing process. This process manifests itself in two levels or streams - the Vithi Citta or conscious mind and Bhavanga Citta the unconscious or subconscious mind. Western psychologists postulate three streams or levels of mind- the conscious, the sub-conscious, and the unconscious. At the conscious level there is awareness of what one does or says. At the deeper subconscious level, lie concealed all the impressions and memories of thoughts which have left the conscious mind. Many of these impressions can be recalled at will. Some of them on their own can re-enter the

conscious mind. The deepest level is the unconscious. where also there lie concealed past impressions and memories of thoughts which passed through the conscious mind but they can never be recalled at will. On their own they may sometimes reappear in the conscious mind. They can however be drawn out by special methods such as hypnosis.

In Buddhist psychology these three levels are considered under two heads - Vīthi Citta and Bhavanga Citta. The conscious level is recognized and referred to as Vīthi Citta. The other two levels are together recognized and referred to by one name - Bhavanga Citta. They are not considered as two distinct and separate compartments. Even Western psychology admits that there are no well defined boundaries between the subconscious mind and the unconscious mind. since each merges into the other. Bhavanga Citta is the hidden repository of all impressions and memories of thoughts that pass through the Vīthi Citta or conscious mind. All experiences and tendencies are stored up there but from there they sometimes can exert an influence over the conscious mind without the conscious mind being aware of the source of this influence. The Buddhist Bhavanga Citta is not identical with the unconscious of Western Psychology although in very many respects they are similar. Bhavanga Citta is wider in scope than the Western unconscious nor do the Vīthi Citta and Bhavanga Citta operate together at the same time, these two states of mind being conditioned by each other.

The state of active consciousness and awareness is generally present during the day when one is awake. It is then conscious of all impacts or impressions continually received from outside through the five senses or of impressions received from within by way of ideas and thoughts or recollections of former thoughts. Therefore when one is awake

the conscious mind is never doing nothing since to be conscious is to be conscious of something whether external or internal. When this Vithi Citta which is thus constantly receiving impressions from within or without subsides into inactivity as for instance during sleep, the other stream, the passive process of the unconscious or subconscious Bhavanga manifests itself. This Bhavanga Citta is also called Vīthi Mutta in the sense that it is freed or released (mutta) from all conscious thought-processes (Vīthi). This passive process then begins to flow on like an undisturbed stream so long as the conscious Vīthi Citta does not arise to disturb it. Such a disturbance will occur whenever sleep is disturbed through any of the five sense-channels.

It is not only during sleep that the unconscious Bhavanga Citta manifests itself. When one is awake, every time an arisen thought of the conscious Vithi Citta subsides and before the next thought could arise, within that infinitesimally minute fraction of time, the Bhavanga Citta intervenes. Then when the next thought of the conscious level arises, the unconscious Bhavanga subsides into inactivity. Since innumerable thoughts arise and fall one after another during the day, as innumerable are these momentary interruptions to the flow of the unconscious Bhavanga during the day.

Importance of Bhavanga Citta - Its basic position

In a sense the passive Bhavanga Citta is more important than the conscious Vīthi Citta. Though the Bhavanga Citta is not consciously active, it is sub-consciously active. It is referred to as a state of subliminal activity viz. an activity that takes place below the threshold of the conscious mind, an activity of which therefore there is no awareness to the conscious mind. The conscious Vithi Citta holds only one thought or idea at a time whereas the subconscious or unconscious Bhavanga Citta holds all the impressions

of all the thoughts, ideas and experiences that enter and leave the conscious Vithi Citta. The Bhavanga Citta thus functions as a valuable mental storehouse or reservoir of impressions. Professor William James speaking about the subconscious mind (which is one aspect of the Bhavanga Citta) says "that it is obviously the larger part of us. for it is the abode of everything that is latent and the reservoir of everything that passes recorded and unobserved". (Varieties of Religious Experience).

Another feature of the Bhavanga Citta is that from time to time some of the thoughts, ideas and impressions that lie concealed in it can influence the conscious mind. They can also be drawn out or tapped by the method of hypnosis which will be explained in a later chapter.

The significance of Bhavanga is very necessary for understanding such mental phenomena as memory which is otherwise unintelligible and becomes a complete mystery. In this connection it is useful to consider what Ven. Nyanatiloka Maha Thero has said in "Karma and Rebirth" (Wheel Publication No. 9):- "The existence of the subconscious life-stream or Bhavangasota is a necessary postulate of our thinking. If whatever we have seen, heard, felt, perceived. thought, externally or internally experienced, and done, if all this without exception, were not registered somewhere and in some way, be it in the extremely complex nervous - system, or in the subconscious or unconscious, then we would not even be able to remember what we were thinking the previous moment, and we would not know anything of the existence of other beings and things, would not know our parents, teachers, friends and so on, would even not be able to think at all as thinking is conditioned by the remembrance of former experiences and our mind would be a complete *tabula rasa* and emptier than the actual of an

infant just born nay even of the embryo in the mother's womb."

Apart from its function as a mental storehouse of impressions, the unconscious Bhavanga Citta performs a very important function as its etymology connotes. The word "Bhavanga" made up as it is of "Bhava" (existence) and "anga"(factor) indicates that the Bhavanga Citta is the factor or indispensable basis of existence. The commentary Vibhāvini Tīkā defines it thus:- "Avicchēdappavatti hētu-bhāvena bhavassa angabhāvō bhavangan" - "the factor of life by means of which the flow of existence or being is maintained without a break." This then is the most important function of the Bhavanga Citta. It functions as an indispensable and continuing basis or undercurrent of existence. In this sense, it is called Bhavanga Sota (stream or flow of Bhavanga). It has also been called "the function of being" and as such it keeps life going. Western writers have aptly called it "Life-continuum".

The Ven. Nyanatilaka Maha Thero in his "Buddhist Dictionary" states:-"This so called subconscious life-stream or under current of life which certain modern psychologists call the Unconscious or the Soul is that by which might be explained the faculty of memory, the problem of telekinesis, mental and physical growth, Karma and rebirth etc."

Shwe Zan Aung in his Introduction to the"Compendium of Philosophy"gives this helpful description of the Bhavanga Citta or stream of being in respect of its higher function:-

"The stream of being then is an indispensable condition or factor, the sine qua non of present conscious existence; it is the raison d'etre of individual life; it is the life continuum. It is as it were the background on which thought-pictures are drawn. It is comparable to the current of a river when it flows calmly on, unhindered by any obstacle, unruffled by

any wind, unrippled by any wave and neither receiving any tributary waters nor parting with its contents to the world. And when that current is opposed by any obstacle of thought from the world within or perturbed by tributary streams of the senses from the world without then thoughts (Vīthi Citta) arise. But it must not be supposed that the stream of being is a subplane from which thoughts rise to the surface. There is a juxtaposition of momentary states of consciousness subliminal and supraliminal, throughout a lifetime and from existence to existence. But there is no superposition of such states."

CHAPTER VII

THOUGHTS, THOUGHT–PROCESSES AND THOUGHT–MOMENTS

In any language certain words and expressions are loosely used more for the sake of convention than precision. Thus we speak of the sun rising and setting though in reality it does not do so. In Chapter V we learnt that the "mind" is not anything permanent and stable whereas that word is loosely used to denote such a state. In this Chapter we shall be learning that the word "thought" like "mind" is also loosely used. As McDougall says in his book on "Psychology" :– "When we come to describe the facts of consciousness we find that the notions and the words in popular use are very inadequate to the work of analytic description."

What is a thought?

Thought is the consciousness or awareness of anything. The object of thought may be external or internal. There is never a moment when a man is without a thought either

in the conscious or unconscious state. In Buddhist psychology one does not speak of a thought but of a thought-process since thought is not a unity. **So what is loosely called a thought is really a thought-process.** As Joseph Jestrow the author of "Effective Thinking" says - "Thinking is just a convenient name for a complex group of mental processes."

What is a thought-process ?

We have already learnt that the mind is an endless succession of thoughts each following the next with such a rapidity of succession as to give it the semblance of something permanent and stable, whereas in reality it is not a unity but a process with this difference that it is a limited process - a process of 17 thought-moments each following the other. So that, what we loosely call a thought is a thought-process. When a man sees a tree and instantly recognizes it as a tree, it means that there arose in him an awareness or consciousness of the tree, but this does not arise by one single mental operation. Before this awareness or consciousness or thought of the tree completely arose, 17 stages or thought-moments would have occurred. The man may not be conscious of all these 17 stages or thought-moment, since some of these mental processes especially the earlier processes occur in the Bhavanga or unconscious state of the mind. Although as many as 17 stages or thought-moments are necessary to conclude and complete one single thought-process, it is wrong to imagine that much time is involved in the process. On the contrary in trying to emphasize the extreme shortness of time taken, commentators resort to a comparison with a flash of lightning or a twinkling of the eye. So infinitesimally brief is the period of time involved. What these 17 stages or thought-moments are will be explained in the next-chapter.

What is a thought-moment?

The unit of measure for the duration of a thought-process is a thought-moment, (Cittakhana) which is also an infinitesimally small division of time. All thought-moments, rise up in the conscious Vīthi Citta remain there for just a fleeting moment and then sink down to the unconscious Bhavanga Citta, just as waves of the ocean rise up, remain there for a fleeting moment and then subside. Thought-moments therefore have the following three stages: 1) The genetic stage or nascent stage (Uppāda). 2) the continuing stage (Tithi) 3) the cessant stage (Bhanga). These three stages also occur within the shortest possible time. A Thought-moment does not persist by itself but runs most rapidly from the first to the second stage and from the second to third.

Thought-moments and Thought-Processes.

As stated earlier, a thought-process is made up of 17 thought-moments, and a thought-moment is made up of 3 stages. **17 thought-moment must arise, remain and pass away to conclude and complete one single thought-process.** When the cessant stage of the 17th thought-moment passes away and before the genetic or nascent stage of the first thought-moment in the next thought-process arises, at this particular juncture, since one thought-process has completed itself, the conscious Vithi Citta subsides and the unconscious Bhavanga Citta re-appears into activity. This unconscious Bhavanga Citta also does not remain long. It too remains for just a fleeting moment and then subsides to enable the next thought-process to arise in the conscious Vithi Citta. This too then runs its course of 17 stages or thought-moments and then the Bhavanga Citta again appears. In this manner the unending stream of mental processes flows on and on.

It is a mistake to think that these various mental states are joined together like carriages of a train to form a somewhat jagged combination. Each mental stage merges completely into the next. There are no sharp dividing lines between one mental stage and the next. Hence there is no sharp dividing line between the nascent stage of one thought-moment and its continuing stage or between its continuing stage and its cessant stage. Similarly there is no sharp dividing line between one thought-process and another. Although the Bhavanga Citta is said to appear when one conscious thought-process is over and before another begins here too there is no sharp dividing line since, as stated in an earlier chapter, Vithi Citta merges into the unconscious Bhavanga there being no sharp dividing lines between the two. Everywhere and under all circumstances each mental stage merges into the next. **So also the last conscious mental stage of the dying man merges into the first mental stage of the prenatal child in the life hereafter, distance being no bar since these are psychic phenomena and not physical phenomena.** To be more precise, the resultant of the last conscious mental state of the dying man along with certain physical factors go to form the mind-body of the embryo in the life hereafter. This will be explained in a later chapter.

CHAPTER VIII

HOW A NORMAL THOUGHT-PROCESS WORKS

In the last Chapter we learnt that what we loosely call a thought is a thought-process and that it consists of 17 stages or thought-moments. In the present chapter it will be shown how a normal thought-process works. The two subsequent

chapters will explain respectively how the thought-process at death works and how the thought-process at birth works.

Let us now trace the interesting course of a single normal thought-process through the 17 stages or thought-moments that constitute it as explained in the commentaries. Here is the order of their occurrence in the normal case.

ORDER OF A NORMAL THOUGHT-PROCESS

1. Bhavanga atīta (*past Unconscious*)
2. Bhavanga caiana (*vibration of Bhavanga*)
3. Bhavanga upaccheda (*arrest of Bhavanga*)
4. Pañcadvārā vajjana (*five-door adverience*)
5. Pañca-Viññana (*five fold consciousness*)
6. Sampaṭicchana (*reception*)
7. Santīrana (*investigation*)
8. Votthapana (*decision*)
9 - 15. Javana (*thought-impulsions*)
16 & 17. Tadālambana (*Registration of the experience*)

1st Thought-Moment: Past Unconscious (Bhavanga Atīta)

We must commence tracing from the stage immediately prior to the running of the conscious process. That is the stage when the conscious Vīthi Citta is in abeyance and the stream of the unconscious Bhavanga Citta is flowing undisturbed. Such a state is present for instance, in a man who is enjoying deep sleep, when the mind does not respond to external objects or stimuli. This then is regarded as the first-stage for the purpose of investigation though actually the process has not yet begun. (This first stage is also

present during that brief interval of time when one conscious thought has subsided and before the next arises.)

2nd Thought-Moment: Vibration of the Bhavanga (Bhavanga Calana)

Suppose now an external object or stimulus by way of a sight or sound or other sense-impression (any stimulus that attracts any of the senses) is received by the sleeping man, the flow of the unconscious Bhavanga Citta is disturbed. This is the second thought-moment or stage. It can also arise in the waking state after one conscious thought has subsided and before the next arises. The mind is then in the Bhavanga state for a very short while (**Calana** means shaking or vibrating). The Bhavanga flow now begins to vibrate. This vibration lasts for one thought moment before it subsides and is compared by Shwe Zen Aung the translator of the Abhidhammattha Sangaha (in his Introduction) to the vibration of a spinning top whose velocity is falling. This is the result of the stimulus or object trying to force its attention on the conscious mind by impeding the flow of the Bhavanga stream of unconsciousness.

3rd Thought-Moment: Arrest of the Bhavanga (Bhavanga Upaccheds)

This is the stage when the stream of the Bhavanga Citta is arrested or cut off. (Upaccheda, means cutting off). As a result, the Vīthi Citta or the conscious process arises and begins to flow but this stimulus or object is not yet cognized by it.

4th Thought-Moment: Five-door Apprehending Consciousness (Pañc^{a}dvārāvajjana)

This is the stage when a start is made by the conscious Vīthi Citta to cognize the object which has arrested the flow

of the unconscious Bhavanga. This stage is called Pañcadvārāvajjana because there is a turning round to find out through which of the five sense-doors the stimulus is coming ("Pañcadvāra" means five doors and "āvajjana" means turning towards) There is thus an adverting towards the stimulus or object through one of the five sense-channels of sight hearing, smelling, tasting and touching. At this stage the sleeping man just awakened is turning towards scmethin which calls for attention but knows nothing more about i This is sometimes compared to the action of the spider t find out the cause that disturbed his web. The smooth flowing of the Bhavanga undisturbed by any activity of the Vīthi Citta, is compared to the stillness of the spider resting motionlessly at the centre of his web. When an insect enters the web and is entangled in one of its threads, the web begins to vibrate and thereafter the spider turns to see in which thread something lies entangled. This is exactly the function of this thought-moment of Pañcadvārāvajjana. The sleeping man just awakened from his sleep is trying to find out through which of the five sense-doors the stimulus came. Is it a sight or sound or other sense-impression? He continues to watch. It is still a dim awareness of something. If attention is aroused not externally through the five senses but internally through a thought, the stage is known as Manodvārāvajjana (Mind-Door advertence.) This is alternative to the Five Sense-Door advertence. The course of such a thought-process is slightly different from the process now described since the thought-moments 5th to 8th do not occur.

5th Thought-Moment: Five-fold Consciousness (Pañca Viññāṇa)

Now follows a consciousness of the kind that apprehends the particular sense-impression caused by the stimulus

("Pañca" means five and "Viññāṇa" means consciousness) If it is a sight it is Cakkhu-Viññāṇa or Visual Consciousness that works. If it is a sound it is Sota-Viññāṇa or Auditory Consciousness that works. In this way in respect of every one of the sense-organs there is a particular sense-consciousness and this sense-consciousness begins to work. Yet there is no full comprehension of the stimulus. **What appears hrough one of the sensedoors is merely sensed.**

6th Thought-Moment: Sampaṭicchana (Reception)

This is the thought-moment which occurs when the sense impression caused by the stimulus is properly received. **What is sensed is now received.** ("Sampaṭicchana" means receiving)

7th Thought-Moment: Investigation (Santīrana)

After the function of receiving, there arises the function of investigation. This thought-process performs the function of investigating with discrimination the stimulus or object which caused the sense-impression. **What is received is investigated.** ("Santīrana" means investigation).

8th Thought-Moment: Decision (Votthapana)

This is the thought-moment when a decision is made regarding the stimulus which caused the sense-impression ("Votthapana" means decision). **What is investigated is decided on or determined.**

9th to 15th Thought Moments: Thought-impulsions (Javana)

Now follows the psychologically important stage of Javana or apperception or impulsion which lasts for seven thought-moments (at the time of death, only five such moments occur). It is a stage of introspection followed by

action. The psychological importance of these thoughts cannot be over-emphasized. Javana is derived from the Pali verb **Javati** which means to run and also to impel or incite. Hence these mental states unlike the previous mental states run for several thought-moments and their one function is to impel. These are impulsions which flash forth at the climax of a process of consciousness of the Vīthi Citta. Hence one is now fully conscious of the object or stimulus in all its relations, this being the stage of maximum cognition. **It is at this stage that Kamma begins to operate for good or bad, for this is the stage when the element of free-will is present.** All other stages of the Vīthi-process are like reflex actions. They must occur. Javana is the only stage where man is relatively free to think and to decide. There is the element of choice in this important thought-moment and it has the power to affect one's future according to the nature of the volition. If the sense object that entered the mind had been rightly comprehended (yoniso manasikara), free from the impurities of lust, hatred and delusion, harmonious results will follow. If it had been wrongly comprehended (ayoniso manasikara), disharmonious results will follow. Javana in this context is a difficult word to be rendered into English. Professor Rhys Davids in his Pali Dictionary says that as the 12th stage in the course of an act of the Vīthi Citta, Javana means, "going" not by way of swiftness but as intellectual movement. It is the stage of full perception or apperception.

Mrs. Rhys Davids refers to Javana as "the mental aspect or parallel of that moment in the nerve-process when central function is about to become efferent activity or innervation." Innervation being a reference to the nervous influences necessary for the maintenance of life and the functions of the various organs the comparison is not inappropriate.

But she herself has stated that she spent hours on this word and finding no appropriate rendering was content to use the word untranslated. Shew Zan Aung's Introduction to the "Compendium of Philosophy" refers to the Javana stage as follows:- "Now intervenes the apperceptive stage of full cognition, wherein the object, determined or integrated by the foregoing activity is apperceived or properly cognized. This is held to occupy ordinarily seven thought moments or none at all, except in cases of death, stuperaction, creation of phenomena and other special cases when a less number of moments than seven obtains. At this stage of apperception, the subject interprets the sensory impression and fully appreciates the objective significance of his experience".

16th and 17th Thought-moments: registration of the experience: (Tadālambana)

These are the two resultant thought-moments following immediately after the Javana thought-moments. Their only function is to register the impression made by the Javana thought-moments. They are not an integral part of the conscious Vīthi process. They are merely a recall of an experience that is passing away. If the impression made is not strong, they do not occur at all. "Tadalanbana", derived from "Tadārammaṇa" means "that object". It is so called because it takes the same object as that of the foregoing Javana impulsions and has been compared in the Visuddhimagga to the current of water that follows for a short while the boat which is going upstream. (Chapter XIV)

The 17 Thought-Moments in General

It must not be forgotten that **these seemingly long 17 thought-moments constitute just one single thought-process**

which takes place within an infinitesimally small fraction of time. The progress of this process varies with the intensity of the stimulus. If the intensity is very great (atimahanta), the complete process takes place. If it is great (mahanta), the 16th and 17th moments of registration do not occur. If it is small (paritta) or very small (atiparitta) the process works functionally only, without full cognition.

The classic simile of a falling mango

These 17 thought-moments are compared by commentators to the 17 stages that occur between a man sleeping and the selfsame man eating a mango that falls by his side. A man is found sleeping soundly at the foot of a mango tree with his head covered. A wind blows and moves the branches of the tree causing a ripe mango to fall by his side. He is aroused from his sleep by this sound. He sees the fallen mango. He picks it up and examines it. Finding it to be desirable fruit he eats it, and after swallowing the last morsels, he replaces his head covering and resumes his sleep.

The sleep of the man represents the unconscious Bhavanga stream flowing undisturbed. The striking of the wind against the tree represents Atīta Bhavanga or past unconscious. The sleeper is not disturbed. The sleep continues. So does the Bhavanga. The moving of the branches represents the vibration of the Bhavanga. The sleep is disturbed. So is the Bhavanga. The falling of the mango represents the arrest of the Bhavanga. The awakening of the man represents Pañcadvārāvajjana or the arousing of attention through the Five-Door channels of sense. The removal of the head covering and the use of his eyes to observe the mango is Cakkhu Viññāṇa or visual consciousness which is one of the five types of consciousness together known as Pañca

Viññaṇa. The picking up of the fruit represents Sampa-Sicchana or reception and the examination of it represents tantirana or investigation. The finding of the fruit as a desirable mango is Votthapana or decision. The eating of the fruit represents the apperceptive acts of the seven Javana thought moments. The swallowing of the last morsels left in the mouth represents Tadālambana or registration of the impression. The man's resumption of his sleep after replacing his head covering represents the Bhavanga Citta resuming to flow smoothly and undisturbed.

CHAPTER IX

HOW A THOUGHT–PROCESS AT DEATH WORKS.

Now that we have studied how thought-processes work in normal circumstances during life, we should be able to follow without difficulty the next study, namely, the manner in which thought-processes work at the moment of death. Only this understanding will help us to appreciate what follows death in the psychic plane. In no other way can rebirth be understood.

Effect of Death on Body

Man is a psycho-physical unit, a mind-body combination (nāma-rūpa). The body and the mind co-exist in a close association with each other like the flower and its scent. The body is like the flower and the mind is like the scent, and death is merely the separation of these two co-existing items. When a man is on the point of dying, his body and mind (nāma-rūpa) are weak. It may be that right up to the point of death he was strong in every way, but at the very

point of death he is weak. This is because from the seventeenth thought-moment reckoned backwards from the point of death no renewed physical functioning occurs. This is just like a motorist releasing the accelerator before stopping, so that no more pulling power is given to the engine. Similarly no more material qualities born of Kamma (Kammaja rūpa) arise while those which have already come into being before the stage of that thought-moment will persist till the time of death-consciousness (cuti citta), and then they will cease. As there is no more renewal of material qualities the whole process becomes weaker and weaker. It is like the fading light of an oil lamp when no more oil is found. When the mind-body combination ceases to exist as a combination neither body nor mind is destroyed or annihilated. These combining parts continue separately without a break their respective processes of changing from one condition or state to another, from moment to moment, although the two processes have now parted company. The bodily part (like old clothes once worn but now discarded by the owner) will start a separate process of change—a process of gradual decay (rupam Jirati - the body decays) but there is no annihilation. Matter is energy and cannot be lost or destroyed. The constituents of the body, as mentioned in an earlier chapter will change into the elements that composed it, some into air as gases, some into water as fluids and others into earth as minerals. The elements too cannot be destroyed or lost but only their form will change. In this manner the process of change will persist so far as the bodily counterpart of man is concerned.

Effect of Death on Mind.

Now what of the mental counterpart (nāma)? The mental counterpart also like the physical counterpart continues without interruption its process of changing from one

condition or state to another though no more in association. with its physical counterpart. Thought like matter is energy and cannot be destroyed or annihilated. We have learnt that the mind is not anything permanent or fixed, that it is not a unity but is a series (santati) of thoughts one following the other which such a rapidity that it gives the illusion of permanency and fixity. **Death is no interruption to the progress of this series, and no bar to the continuity of this process.**

This principle of thought following thought does not end with death because in the last thought-process before death, the terminal thought-moment known as Maraṇasanna Javana Citta (Death-proximate mind) though weak by itself and unable to originate a thought, derives a great potency by reason of the appearance of one of three powerful thought-objects that enter the threshold of the dying mind.

Appearance of Three powerful Thought-objects or Death Signs

These thought-objects the dying man is powerless to resist. These powerful thought-objects are certain Death signs and will be later explained. **Thus the dying mind although it lacks the power to originate a thought gets a powerful push or drive by reason of the appearance of one of these three powerful thought-objects or Death signs and is thereby able to cause another thought to arise. This succeeding thought is Paṭisandhi Viññāṇa - (rebirth consciousness or relinking consciousness).** Where it arises and how, will be considered later.

Dying thought-process is unfailing

However unconscious a dying man may appear to be to by-standers, it does not mean that this last mental process is not operating within him. This process will always arise

at the dying moment whatever the circumstances of the death may be or however sudden and unexpected the death may be. It is said in the commentaries that even if a man is suddenly thrown into the water and is immediately drowned there is yet time before his death for this terminal thought-process to work. So also it is said that even in the case of a fly who is crushed to death on an anvil by the stroke of a hammer, there is yet time before its death for the terminal thought-process to work.

Thought is energy. It is also creative energy. Apart from the fact that any thought if sufficiently intense can under certain circumstances be a causative and creative agent, the terminal Maraṇasanna a Javana thought deriving as it does its strength from one of the powerful thought-objects or Death-signs mentioned earlier (and which will be fully explained later) can find no difficulty in causing the Paṭisandhi Viññāṇa (rebirth-consciousness or relinking consciousness) to arise in an appropriate place. Where that appropriate place is, will be explained later.

Reproductive Kamma.

It may also be mentioned here that the appearance of any one of these three powerful thought-objects or Death signs is conditioned by no other circumstances than the actions of the dying man himself during his lifetime. The particular type of Kamma which operates at this juncture is the so-called Janaka Kamma (reproductive Kamma) since it is the past actions of the dying man that conduce to his being born again, the thought-objects being a reflex of his own actions.

It will now be easy to trace the course of this last thought-process of the dying man. This thought-process does not

contain so many stages as in the normal thought-process that was earlier examined. The order of this process is as follows:

ORDER OF A DYING THOUGHT-PROCESS

1. Bhavanga Atīta - Past unconsciousness.
2. Bhavanga Calana - Vibration of the Bhavanga.
3. Bhavanga upaccheda - arrest of the Bhavanga.
4. Manodvārāvajjana - Advertence through mind-door
5. Maraṇasanna Javana Citta - Death-proximate Javana impulsions or terminal Javana thought-moments.
6. Tadālambana - Registration of the experience.
7. Cuti Citta - Death consciousness.
8. Paṭisandhi-Viññāṇa Relinking consciousness or rebirth consciousness occurring in the subsequent life.

1. Bhavanga Atīta (Past unconscious)

The same remarks that were made about Bhavanga Atīta when a normal thought-process was being traced, are applicable here also. Here too we commence tracing from the stage immediately prior to the running of the death-process in the conscious Vīthi Citta. This would be when the mind is in the Bhavanga state which occurs either at sleep or immediately after one conscious thought-process of the Vīthi Citta has ceased and before another commences. This then is regarded as the first stage for the purpose of investigation though actually the process has not yet started.

2. Bhavanga Calana - Vibration of Bhavanga

3. Bhavanga Upaccheda - Arrest of the Bhavanga

The remarks made about these two stages when a normal

thought-process was being examined are applicable here also. Here too a stimulus first causes only a disturbance or vibration of the Bhavanga stream of unconsciousness that is flowing through the mind of the dying man. Later, as the stimulus is persisting the flow of the Bhavanga is completely arrested. The dying man is still not able to recognize or comprehend the stimulus that is at work. This stimulus now is none other than one of those three powerful thought-objects or Death signs which will be fully explained later.

4. Manodvāravajjana - Advertence through the mind-door

When the normal thought-process was being examined, reference was made to a stage called 'advertence through the Five Sense-doors'. This occurs when the stimulus is capable of being recognized through one or other of the five sense-channels of sight, hearing, smelling, tasting and touching. In the case of a dying thought-process this stage of sense-door advertence does not generally occur since the stimulus that arises to disturb the Bhavanga of the dying man is not an external stimulus but is internal in nature being a thought or memory and is capable of being recognized only through the mind-channel. Hence the stage that arises is called 'advertence through the mind-door'.

5. Maraṇasanna Javana Citta. Death-proximate Javana impulsions or terminal Javana thought-moments.

Now comes the psychologically important stage of impulsions known as Javana. Everything thathas been said about this stage when the normal thought-process was being examined is applicable here except that since death is imminent this mental state of Javana runs for five thought-moments and not seven. It must also be remembered as

stated before, that the dying man being weak cannot originate a thought on his own. One of three powerful thought-objects or Death signs will present itself to him, disturb the smooth flow of his Bhavanga, cause it to subside and induce the Vīthi Citta or conscious mind to arise. After the conscious process has passed through the stages of Bhavanga-vibration, Bhavanga-arrest and Mind-door advertence just described, the present important stage of Javana-impulsions is reached. **It is now that the conscious mind or Vīthi Citta is fully able to comprehend the stimulus that awakened it.**

THE POWERFUL THOUGHT - OBJECTS OR DEATH - SIGNS EXPLAINED

The three stimuli one of which is said to present itself before the threshold of the dying mind are equally powerful. Not only does this thought-object become the thought-object of the Maraṇasanna Javana thought (the thought-impulsions at death), it also becomes the thought-object of the Paṭisandhi Citta (Rebirth - consciousness) of the next life and of the Bhavanga Citta of the next life. These last two mental states just mentioned are not of the conscious type but of the unconscious (Bhavanga) type. They too though not conscious, require a thought-object for their existence. They take for their thought-object the particular thought-object entertained in the terminal Javana thought, viz: one of the three Death-Signs. **Thus the thought-object of the last conscious thought before death becomes the thought-object of the first thought in the new life.** Thus the process of life goes on, each thought giving rise to another, each life giving rise to another. Thought, it must be remembered, is energy. It cannot be lost or destroyed. It goes on, producing its results and they in turn produce theirs, though not necessarily in the

same plane or sphere. Thus the continuity of the being is maintained.

It is not any random thought-object that appears at this terminal stage to disturb the Bhavanga of the dying man nor is it a thought-object of the dying man's choice as he is unable to originate a thought on his own at this terminal stage. It is, as stated before, conditioned by no other circumstances than the actions of the dying man himself during his lifetime. By the operation of Janaka Kanna (reproductive Kamma) the memory of certain powerful actions of the past performed by the dying man thrusts itself before his mind and constitutes the thought-object of the terminal thought-the Maraṇasanna Javana Citta. The subsequent thought is determined by the nature of this terminal thought. No thought can function without an object of thought (arammaṇa) either in the conscious or in the unconscious state. The three powerful objects of thought or Death Signs, one of which arises at the terminal stage, are as follows :-

(*i*) **Kamma**

The memory of a very important and weighty act, good or bad, performed shortly before his death will come to him however sudden be his death or however unconscious he may be to his surroundings. Such an act is known as **āsanna Kamma,** *i.e.* an act done when death is nearby. In the large majority of cases no such good act is done just before the advent of death, the time of which is not known beforehand. In the absence of such an act good or bad, then the memory of any act habitually performed by him will present itself to the dying man. This act is called **āciṇṇa Kamma** *i.e.* the practised act or habitual act. The moral or immoral consciousness experienced at the time of the commission of the death proximate act or the habitual act now arises as a fresh consciousness at the dying moment.

(*ii*) Kamma nimitta

To the dying man a memory may sometimes present itself not of any act done good or bad, recent or habitual, but of something symbolic of the act done by him ("Kamma" means action, and "nimitta" means sign or symbol). Thus a butcher may see a knife or a drunkard may see a bottle, or a pilgrim may see a shrine. These are seen through the mind's eye, *i.e.* through the mind-avenue and not through the physical eye.

(*iii*) Gati Nimitta

The object of a dying man's last thought may also be some indication or anticipation of the place where he is to be reborn. Thus fire may present itself to the mind's eye of the person destined to be reborn in hell and one whose destiny is the world of gods may see beautiful flowers and beautiful mansions. Dr. W. T. Evana Wentz in "The Tibetan Book of the Dead" has referred to certain cases of persons who have had at the time of death premonitory visions of their future destiny. It is also fairly well known both in Ceylon and elsewhere that some dying persons have given utterance to such visions experienced by them. There was a genuine case at Kalutara (Ceylon) where a dying girl of twelve cheerfully told her parents standing sorrowfully by her bedside that a beautiful carriage decked with garlands of beautiful flowers was waiting to take her away.

(6) Tadālambana - Registration of the experience

After the stage of Maraṇasanna Javana Citta there arises in the death-process the stage of Tadālambana which has also been earlier commented on. It merely registers the experience of the impression received and is not of much importance psychologically. There are no effects resulting from it.

(7) Cuti citta - Death-Consciousness

This is the last thought to be experienced in the present life. (**Cuti** means disappearance or death). There is now to the dying mind an awareness of death. It is not the concious Vithi Citta that experiences this awareness. It is experienced by the Bhavanga Citta. Being the last Bhavanga thought of the present life, it takes for its object the object of the first Bhavanga thought of the present life, *i.e.* the Paṭisandhi Viññāṇa of the present life. Cuti Citta is also not of much importance psychologically. It does not produce any results. It is merely a consciousness of death. Hence what is regarded as the terminal thought is not the Cuti Citta but the Maraṇasanna Javana Citta.

(8) Paṭisandhi Vinnaṇa - Relinking consciousness

The next stage in the process though not arising in the mind of the dying man, is the highly important stage of Paṭisandhi Viññāṇa, Relinking Consciousness or Rebirth consciousness. The process of one thought leading to another though not in the same personality, can be appreciated if we desist from regarding the mind as some permanent unchanging unit. If on the other hand we regard the mind (as in reality it is) as a series or succession of mental states, it is not difficult to imagine how one mental state in one life can give rise to another mental state in another life. It is the mental state known as Maraṇasanna Javana Citta, the terminal mental state of the dyirg man that gives rise to the Paṭisandhi Citta or Relinking Consciousness in another life. Paṭisandhi Citta is aptly rendered as Re-linking Consciousness ("Paṭisandhi" literally means "rejoining", since it links up the present life with the next). That is why the thought objects of both mental states are the same. In other words the thought-object of the terminal dying thought becomes the thought-object of the resultant Paṭisandhi Citta. A thorough comprehension of Paṭisandhi Viññāṇa is absolutely

essential for an understanding of the mechanism of rebirth. In the first instance, it must be understood that it is not the Cuti Citta but the preceding Maraṇasanna Javana Citta that gives rise to the Paṭisandhi Viññaṇa. Cuti Citta is an unconscious thought of the Bhavanga Citta whereas the terminal Maraṇasanna Javana Citta is a thought of the conscious Vīthi Citta. There is a belief that the Cuti Citta gives rise to the Paṭisandhi Viññāṇa. This is not correct since, as stated earlier the Cuti Citta (Death-consciousness) is merely a registering agent and performs no active function which can give rise to any result. Though it is the last thought in the dying process it is an unconscious thought. It merely registers the awareness of death. In conformity with the Law of Change, the Law of Becoming, the Law of Continuity, the Law of Action and Reaction and the Law of Attraction, the terminal Maraṇasanna Javana Citta (Death-proximate Javana Thought) receives one of those three powerful terminal thought objects or Death Signs referred to earlier as its thought-object and then by reason of the operation of the same laws just mentioned gives rise to the Paṭisandhi Viññāṇa - a thought of the unconscious type (Bhavanga) which forms the nucleus of the next life.

When it is said that the Marāṇasanna Javana Citta of the dying man gives rise to the Paṭisandhi Viññāṇa we must realize that the former mental state **causes** the latter mental state to arise, it being the causative factor. For such a highly important result to arise, the causative factor must necessarily be just as powerful. Let us examine the source of its potency.

Potency of the Terminal Maraṇasanna Thought

We know that there is creative power in thought if it is sufficiently intense. The very first stanza of the Dhammapada which was earlier cited, refers to the supremacy of the

mind (mano-setṭha) and to the fact that everything is mind-born (mano-maya). In his book "Thoughts are Thirgs", W. W. Atkinson has one full chapter entitled "Creative Thought". He says:- "Science perceives the constant effort of the inner to express itself in the outer - the invisible trying to be visible - the unmanifest trying to be manifest..... Thoughts strive to take form in action. Thoughts strive ever to materialize themselves in objective material form".

A part from this inherent creative power of thought, the terminal thought is the last active thought of the dying man. We can therefore justifiably expect the last thought to be the most forceful. The last spurt of a runner in a race often discloses his greatest strength. At its last fruit-bearing season a dying tree is said to yield its largest produce. Often the highest and greatest manifestation of any force or power is a type of swan song preceding its own disruption or dissolution. Since the desire for existence (Taṇha) is the predominating motive underlying well nigh all the activities of man, at the moment of death it grows so formidable that it adopts a grasping attitude (mentally). As the Buddha himself has said (and this too was cited earlier), at the dying moment this predominating Taṇha becomes a Grasping Force (Upādāna) that attracts to itself another existence. **It is the last thought-process that carries with it this Grasping Force.**

Psychology tells us that the last thought prior to sleep is very powerful and influences the first thought in the morning at the time of awakening. It is a common experience that if one wishes to catch an early morning train and if he retires to bed suggesting to himself that he should awake in time for the train, then he is certain to awake in good time for the train however much a late riser he may

habitually be. The success of the auto-suggestive affirmations prescribed by the famous healer Emile Coue of Nancy are due to the fact that they are practised by his patients just before they retire to sleep. Anything suggested to the mind at this time tends to produce a powerful effect. The mind is highly receptive to suggestion at this time. As stated in "Psychology and Practical Life" by Collins and Drever (the former is a Lecturer and the latter a Professor of Psychology at the University of Edinburgh):- "Natural suggestibility is enhanced by certain conditions. In the states grouped together as "hypnoidal" — the state between sleep and waking, sleep itself, hypnosis — suggestibility is very high". These same authors refer to the employment within recent times of hypnosis in order to obtain anaesthesia for surgical operations.

There is thus a recognition of the great creative value and potency of the last thought prior to sleep coming as it does so close to the time of activity of the powerful sub-conscious mind, for hardly anything else intervenes between this last thought and the arising of the sub-conscious mind which sleep induces. Hence since the last conscious thought prior to sleep, becomes the first thought when one awakes from his sleep, by a parity of reasoning is it too much to assume that his last conscious thought before the sleep of death—the terminal Maraṇásanna Javana thought—becomes the first thought, the Paṭisandhi Citta of the next life to which he awakens ?

The terminal thought is all concentrated energy, and as such it cannot die down although the man has died. Being creative energy it must manifest itself somewhere. As stated by Dr. E. R. Rost:- "**Therefore when a being dies, all the forces locked up in the brain and represented by consciousness, are not lost or dissipated in space,** but, just as in this

life there is the continuity of the sequence of consciousnesse in the life-stream, so is there the continuity of the same life-stream at death. And as this life stream requires for its functioning a nidus in the evolutionary scale of beings so is it the same, on its subjective side, of the formation of an objective basis".

("*Nature of Consciousness*").

So according to Buddhism, this potent terminal thought, receiving as its object one of those three powerful thought-objects or Death Signs referred to earlier, must be deemed to be possessed of great creative power. Its function is referred to as "**Abhīnavakārana**" *i.e.* **the preapring of a new existence**". It is for this purpose that one of the powerful thought-objects or Death Signs appears before the mind of the dying man. Then, when the terminal thought receives this special thought-object and thereafter subsides, there will simultaneously arise in the next life the Paṭisandhi Citta carrying with it the same thought- object as that of the terminal thought. This Paṭisandhi Citta being something mental it can normally arise only in association with a physical counterpart. It therefore arises in a maternal womb—not haphazardly in any mother's womb—but in an appropriate mother's womb in an appropriate environment, appropriate to the type of life led in the present existence. Man being a psycho-physical combination, a nāma-rūpa or mind body combination, the reborn man too is a mind-body combination. There is however nothing to prevent a man being reborn in the spirit world where he will have only mind but no body. Here too the Paṭisandhi Citta does arise.

It will thus be seen that it is the combined operation of all the fundamental laws or principles dealt with earlier in separate chapters that results in the phenomenon of rebirth.

Those principles deal with Change, Becoming, Continuity, Cause and Effect and Attraction. The German Philosopher Schopenhauer most of whose views are very Buddhistic, as stated by Ven. Nyanajivako Thero in "Schopenhauer and Buddhism" (Wheel Publication No. 139-141) has said: "**At the hour of death all the mysterious forces (although really rooted in ourselves (which determine man's fate crowd together and come into action.**" These mysterious forces are none other than the fundamental laws just referred to. They are natural laws. mysterious only when we do not understand them. It is their combined operation that results in rebirth. Rebirth therefore is just a natural result of the operation of these natural laws.

CHAPTER X

HOW A THOUGHT-PROCESS AT BIRTH WORKS

Now that we have studied the thought-process at death according to Buddhist psychology, we should turn our attention to the thought-process at birth. In the light of what had already been said about various mental states in Chapters V and VI entitled respectively "How a normal thought-process works" and "How a thought-process at death works", the thought-process at birth can easily be followed without much comment since the mental states that occur in this process have already been studied in the earlier chapters. The order of the thought-process at birth which involves 5 stages is as follows:-

1. Relinking consciousness (*Paṭisandhi Viññāṇa*)
2. Bhavanga Citta (*The unconscious*)

3. Mind-door advertence (*Manodvārāvajjana*)

4. Javana (*thought-impulsions*)

5. Bhavanga Citta (*The unconscious*)

1. Paṭisandhi Viññāṇa (*Relinking Consciousness*)

In the list of mental states enumerated in the last chapter indicating the thought-process at death, the last mental state mentioned, viz. Paṭisandhi Viññāṇa or Relinking consciousness is not a state occurring in the mind of the dying man but it was nevertheless mentioned in that list because the other mental states in that list along with this Relinking consciousness *form part of one continuous process*. This Paṭisandhi Viññāṇa occurs in the mind of the reborn being or to be more precise, it occurs in the mind of the pre-natal being viz. the embryo. In fact it is this Paṭisandhi Viññāṇa type of mental energy-which along with the parental sperm cells and ovum cells combine to create an embryo in an appropriate mother's womb. Thus it is this relinking consciousness (or rebirth consciousness) that starts the nucleus of new mind-body combination, a new nāma-rūpa, in an appropriate mother's womb. This embryo then is a mixture of mind and matter. The parental sperm and ovum cells provide the material part of the embryo while the Paṭisandhi Viññāṇa or relinking consciousness provides the mental part. It is this Paṭisandhi Viññāṇa which links the dying life with the new life. It becomes a link because it is a resultant of the terminal Maraṇāsanna Javana thought of the dying man and takes the same thought-object viz. one of the three Death Signs, The process of one thought giving rise to another never ends. The last conscious thought at the moment of death is no exception to this process. It too gives rise to another thought though not in the same body. That other thought is the Patisandhi

Viññaṇa. It lasts for just one moment to be followed by the Bhavanga Citta or the Unconscious.

2. **Bhavanga Citta (The unconscious)**

The initial Patisandhi Citta is thereafter succeeded by the Bhavanga Citta which is said to last for 16 thought-moments. In this pre-natal stage as the unborn being is still part of the body of the mother, it does not normally contact the external world. It is therefore the stream of Bhavanga that keeps on flowing smoothly without an interruption in the pre-natal child-mind. As life has just commenced this mental state is not full grown. This is how Shwe Zan Aung describes it in his Appendix to "The Compendium of Philosophy":- "When a being is conceived, Buddhist belief gives him a congenital mind simultaneously with the inception of a physical growth as the result of the past Janaka (generative) Kamma. That mind at the moment of conception is but a bare state of sub-consciousness identical with the more adult Bhavanga - consciousness during dreamless sleep."

3. **Mind-door advertence (Manōdwārāvajjana)**

As stated earlier, the Bhavanga Citta lasts for 16 thought-moments and then subsides. This is followed by the mental state known as Mind-door Advertence (Manōdwārāvajjana). The Bhavanga nature of the mental state of the embryo gives way to the conscious Vīthi Citta on account of the desire that arises in the mind of the embryo for its new existence.

4. **Javana (thought-impulsions)**

Immediately after the mental state known as Manōdvārāvajjana (mind-door adverterce) has subsided, the state of Javana or thought-impulsions arises. It carries further the thought that arose through the mind-door channel,

viz. the desire for its new existence. These Javana thought-impulsions develop this desire in the new being for its new existence. (Bhava-nikanti Javana). They run for seven thought-moments.

5. Bhavanga Citta (The unconscious)

When the seven Javana thought-moments have arisen and subsided the smooth flow of the unconscious Bhavanga again arises. It will flow on smoothly until something occurs to interrupt it but this is hardly likely. When the pre-natal embryo is born and assumes a separate existence, it begins to contact the external world. The normal thought-process will then follow.

CHAPTER XI

THE BIOLOGICAL EXPLANATION OF BIRTH AND THE BUDDHIST EXPLANATION

Material sciences seek to explain birth only on a material basis on the premises of what can be seen, viz. the present life. Hence the biologist would say that the union of the sperm cells of the father and ovum cells of the mother result in the birth of a child and that the physical and mental characteristics of the child's parents and its ancestors influence the characteristics of the child. Biology being silent on any mental or psychic factor, knows of only two influencing and causative factors—heredity and environment. But is this a completely satisfying explanation? Take the case of two children of the same parents and of the same environment. How is it that one child from birth may be well-built, strong

and healthy while the other child from birth may be a weakling? An explanation may be offered by reference to the differing health conditions of the mother at the time of the two different births. Consider then the case of twins having the same heredity and same environment. How can the physical and mental differences that are often seen to exist between twin-children be explained? Take the case of the well-known Siamese twins Chang and Eng who were conjoined to each other at the navel from birth. Here is a case of identically the same heredity and the same environment. Specialists who have studied their behaviour when they arrived in London are reported to have said that they differ widely in temperament and that while Chang is addicted to liquor, Eng is a teetotaller. Can heredity and environment explain those startling cases of child prodigies so well known in the East as well as in the West, when not only the child's parents but even its ancestors on both sides have never exhibited such tendencies? These circumstances urge the thinking mind to consider whether there is not some other factor at work besides heredity and environment. It is wrong to expect a highly complex psycho-physical organism like man to arise from the combination of two purely physical factors like the sperm cells and the ovum cells of the parents. It is only the intervention of the third factor a psychic factor that can bring about the birth of a child. Wick and oil can never produce a flame. Not until a bright light comes from elsewhere will the action of wick and oil result in a flame. A plant is not the product of seed and soil only. From an extraneous source must come another factor, viz. light. Similarly the combination of two purely physical factors - the parental sperm and ovum cannot provide the opportunity for the formation of an embryo which is a mixture of both mind and matter. A psychic factor must combine with the two physical factors, to produce the

psycho-physical organism that an embryo is.

Then again how does biology explain the determination of sex in an embryo? The embryo is supposed to derive its characteristics from what are known as the genes of the parents. The embryo is said to consist of the chromosomes of the female parent and the male parent in equal proportions and sex is determined by the way in which the chromosomes combine. The male cell is said always to contain one X chromosome and one Y chromosome. On the other hand the female cell is said to contain always two X chromosomes. At the time of conception the male sperm cell uniting with the female ovum cell a complete new cell is formed which later beccmes the embryo. Sometimes the X and Y chromosomes combine to form a male cell while at other times they combine to form a female cell. Biology does not seem to be able to explain these differences in combination. So long as only the physical causes are reckoned with, no suitable explanation can ever be made.

In the "Encyclopedia of the Biological Sciences" edited by Peter Gray, Professor of Biology University of Pitsburgh (6th Edition 1968) the concluding paragraph of the long article under the head "Genetics" contains the following significant sentence:- "Much of the picture of gene action is of course hypothetical and remains to be worked out in detail".

In "Biology for the modern world" by C. H. Waddington, Professor of Animal Genetics, University of Edinburgh, in the chapter on "Sex and Reproduction" the following passage is found:- "These chromosomes influence the type of hormone produced in the developing organism. An organism with an XX constitution, produces female hormones. The presence of XY chromosomes on the other

hand induces male hormones. In this system the differential which decides which of the basic potentialities shall be realized depends on the operation of one of the most reliable mechanisms in the body, namely the separation of pairs of chromosomes into single chromosomes at the time when the germ cells are formed. **Very occasionally however the mechanism goes wrong** .....It is only in the last few years that the technique of examining human chromosomes has become refined to the point when abnormalities of the sex chromosomes can be reliably determined. **We are therefore only at the beginning of the exploration** of such abnormalities".

Although Professor Waddington refers to the separation of pairs of chromosomes into single chromosomes at the time when germ cells are formed, as one of the most reliable mechanisms in the body, yet it is most significant, that in almost the same breath he is constrained to admit that very occasionally the mechanism goes wrong. It has been found that sometimes although the correct proportions of the correct type of chromosomes are present which should result in the arising of a male embryo, yet it is not a male embryo that arises. Similarly sometimes with regard to a female embryo, although the chromosomal proportions are correct, genetically the results are different. Hence it is that in "Physician's Handbook", a book written by four Professors of Medicine (Professors Krupp, Swertz, Jawetsz and Biglieri, 15th Edition) under the chapter entitled "Chromosomal Sex Determination", this most significant sentence appears:- "It is not yet possible to equate chromosomal sex with genetic sex".

In a foreword to Professor Waddington's book earlier referred to, Sir Sarvapalli Radakrishnan one-time Professor

of Philosophy writes as follows:- "The scientist is a dedicated servant of Truth. Because he deals with the world of nature, he is likely to overlook the role of the human spirit in scientific endeavour. If he believes that there is nothing more than the world of nature to which we are tied, we will suffer from an inner emptiness, anxiety, split consciousness. Man is essentially a subject and not a mere object, a thing among things. When this subjectivity is recognised, the distance between science and humanity is diminished".

In this connection, the words of Mrs. Annie Besant are worth quoting-: "Modern science is proving more and more clearly that heredity plays an ever decreasing part in the evolution of the higher creatures, that all mental and moral qualities are not transmitted from parents to offspring and the higher the qualities the more patent is this fact. The child of a genius is of times a colt. Commonplace parents give birth to a genius". (Ancient Wisdom).

Further in this connection, what Dahlke has to say, is equally worth quoting:- 'When science teaches that I am descended wholly and entirely from my parents, it teaches that the I-process is not kindled at all but propels itself hither from parents, grandparents and so forth - does not burn but rolls - so making necessary the question as to the first beginning of this motion; for everything set in motion urged outward - in short every reaction must have a first moment of beginning. In contradistinction to science the Buddha teaches: The parents provide the material, the groundwork, but **the I-energy of some disintegrated I-process corresponding uniquely to these potentialities sets all alight.** Here I take rise in my parents as the fountain takes its rise in the hill. That the fountain does so is beyond all cavil, is patent to everyone, **yet it is but an alien guest** - Thus the Buddha is

the only one to abide by actuality, the only one with whom the entire miracle of propagation takes its place among mundane events conforming likewise to the laws of mundane occurrence".

In his "The Buddha and his Teachings", Ven. Narada Maha Thero while strongly expressing his view that heredity cannot account for the birth of a criminal in a long line of honcurable ancestors or for the birth of a saint in a family of evil repute quotes the following passage from Dr. Th. Pascal's book "Reincarnation":-

"To return to the role played by the germ in the question of heredity, we repeat that the physical germ, of itself alone, explains only a portion of man; it throws light on the physical side of heredity but leaves in as great a darkness as ever the problem of moral and intellectual faculty. If it represented the whole man one would expect to find in any individual the qualities manifested in his progenitors and parents - never any other; these qualities could not exceed the amount possessed by the parents, whereas we find criminals from birth in the most respectable families and saints born to parents who are the very scum of society".

According to the Buddhist explanation of birth, as stated earlier, purely physical causative factors like the parental sperm and ovum, cannot result in the arising of an embryo which is a combination of both mind and matter. Man is a psycho-physical organism and as such the causative factors must be both physical and psychical. In the Mahatanha Sankhaya Sutta, Majjhima Nikaya 38, the Buddha has said that apart from the union of father and mother, and the mother's proper time, there must also be the presence of, what the Buddha calls, the **gandhabba**. The word **gandhabba** literally means "a stranger" or "one came from afar".

As a variation of "Gantabba" gerund of the verb "gacchati" (to go), it means "one who has to go". These meanings have reference to one who has died elsewhere and have no reference to the parental factor. It refers to the mental content of the terminal thought of a dying person which results in that psychically important Paṭisandhi Viññāṇa or relinking consciousness which combining with the parental sperm and ovum helps to form the embryo. **It is the energy-potential released from a dying man.** It is metaphorically "one come from afar" or "one who has to go" *i.e.* to go from the place where he was. "Paṭisandhi" means "re-linking". It is called relinking consciousness because it links the last consciousness of the dying mind with the first consciousness of the embryo. Both types of consciousness therefore have the same "arammana" or object of thought, viz: one or other of the three powerful Death-Signs.

This then is the new mental counterpart, the new "nama" which in a new mother's womb in association with the new "rupa"—the new mental counter part, viz. the new parental sperm cells and ovum cells, will cause the arising of a fresh embryo - the nucleus of a new human life. This new human life cannot but be regarded as the resultant of the past human life. The thoughts, words and deeds (sankhārā) of the past life produced certain energies or Kammic forces which at the end of that past life were potent enough to attract the necessary conditions for a new life in an appropriate place according to the strength and quality of those forces on the principle of "like attracts like" (Law of Attraction) and also by virtue of that other great law - the law of Action and Reaction. It is these forces that constitute the third causative factor of birth. It is a psychic factor and in the psychic plane time and distance do not count. It will thus be seen that these potential Kammic energies work in conjunction with the biological laws to condition the formation of an

embryo is an appropriate mother's womb. The Ven. Nyanatiloka Maha Thero's explanatory comments on this point are worth readings:-

"With regard to the characteristic features, the tendencies and faculties lying latent in the embryo, the Buddha's teaching may be explained in the following way - The dying individual with his whole being convulsively clinging to life, at the very moment of his death, sends forth karmic energies which like a flash of lightening, hit at a new mother's womb ready for conception" (*Karma and Rebirth* - Wheel publication No. 9)

Thus the process of a changing consciousness continues without interruption although in a different place or plane and **the change of consciousness which takes place at the end of one life is no different in essence from the change of consciousness which takes place from moment to moment within one life.**

CHAPTER XII

RECALL OF PAST LIVES THROUGH HYPNOSIS

The theory that all thoughts of incidents and events, of all feelings and desires that enter the conscious mind make their impressions in the unconscious before they fade away from the conscious mind, has been established beyond doubt by the researches of psychologists who study and practise the science of hypnosis. These impressions are all stored up in the great reservoir of the unconscious Bhavanga Citta. It has been found that by the method known as hypnotic age-regression the

memory not only of forgotten important events but even of trivial incidents long since forgotten can be recalled from the unconscious mind. What the hypnotist does, is first to induce sleep in the subject. In this sleep - state the subject will answer truthfully any question put to him. The hypnotist by means of his voice keeps in touch with the subject and prevents normal sleep supervening. The hypnotically induced sleep is different from normal sleep. This is known as the hypnotic sleep or trance. The subject, when in this state, is asked questions relating to incidents starting from the time the subject came to the hypnotist who then gradually regresses him backwards to his earliest infancy about which also the subject will be questioned. All these questions he will answer truthfully. On awaking to consciousness he will not remember anything of what he said or did. He will not even remember the fact of having been questioned. This is because it was not the conscious mind that answered. During the induced sleep the conscious mind was in abeyance and it was the unconscious mind that answered.

All the events of early childhood can thus be vividly recalled and, what is most interesting, they can also be vividly re-lived. Vivid re-living of forgotten experiences can take place in the hypnotic sleep, for in that condition, the conscious mind not being active, the unconscious is free to release memories of the forgotten incidents along with any very strong reactions to them that had been experienced at that time. This condition is technically called **hypermnesia.** For instance if the forgotten incident is one of terror and fright, the hypnotised individual while recalling the incident may exhibit that same terror and fright. If it is an incident of intense sorrow which made him weep, then the hypnotised individual while recalling that incident may exhibit the same intense sorrow and may also weep. Such cases are quite

common. Once a man of sixty was under hypnosis regressed to his childhood and was asked whether he had written in copy-books. He said he did. On being asked whether he can remember any particular line that he copied out, he said, "I can remember copying out the line - a stitch in time saves nine". Given pencil and paper and asked to write out that line, he - still in the unconscious state-wrote out that line not in the firm handwriting of an adult but in the unpractised shaky handwriting of a child. The hypnotised subject, however, on awaking to consciousness could not remember anything that he said or did as nothing was done with the conscious mind. There is thus this two-fold nature of the human mind - the conscious and the unconsicous - the truth of which has been amply established by these hypnotic methods. As stated by Troward in the Edinburgh lectures on Mental Science:- "The great truth which the science of hypnotism has brought to light is the dual nature of the human mind". It must also be mentioned that it is not everyone who responds to the method of hypnosis. There are cases of inherent natural resistance to hypnotic suggestion.

This method is not confined to recalling past memories of this life only. Psychologists have been able to recall memories of past-lives in numerous recorded cases. Hypnotised persons on being asked to go back in time and to mention their very earliest memories have recalled incidents in their past lives which after an exhaustive and impartial examination have been found to be correct. There is room to mention one such case only. It is one of the earliest recorded cases.

Professor Theodore Flournoy of Geneva University hypnotised a Swiss girl who after answering questions regarding her past in this life, was thereafter requested to recall

her earliest time of living. She said she could remember her life as an Arab chief's daughter. She said she could remember her name at that time. It was Simandanee. She was able to speak Arabic as she did then. She remembered having married A Hindu Raja called Sivruka. She was able to show her intimate knowledge about Indian dancing. She remembered her husband constructing a fortress called Chandragiri. Professor Flourncy wrote a book about this case after having verified these details from ancient documents and Professor McDougall has referred to this case in his "An Outline of Abnormal Psychology". This is just one of several hundreds of similar cases.

In this connection reference must be made to a book which was published in 1950 and created a great sensation. Within seven years it reached its 10th edition. The book is entitled "Many Mansions" and the authoress is Gina Cerminara. It deals with wonderful cures effected by one Edgar Cayce. His technique is to get himself hypnotised and in that state he would be able to discover the previous lives of his patients and find out the root cause if such there is, of the illnesses from which they were in this life suffering. In that hypnotic state he would prescribe the cure but on his awaking he will not remember what he had said. The patient or someone on his behalf must question Elgar Cayce and then he would answer and prescribe the cure. These answers are typed in duplicate, one is given to the patient and the other is filed of record. They are called "Readings" and there at present over 20,000 such readings preserved at the Cayce institute in Virginia Beach (U. S. A.).

CHAPTER XIII

SPONTANEOUS RECALL OF PAST LIVES

There are numbers of cases of children who spontaneously come out with recollections of their past lives without the intervention of hypnosis.

Dr. Ian Stevenson, Professor of Psychiatry, University of Virginia U. S. A., in his booklet entitled "The evidence of survival from claimed memories of former incarnations", has dealt with several cases of spontaneous recall of past lives. This book was the winning essay of the contest in honour of Professor William James, the well known psychologist. These cases of which he gives a full description, are from various countries such as Havana, India, France and Sicily. In part II of this booklet he analyzes the evidence in order to consider whether there are other possible explanations for this recall of past lives, such as fraud, racial memory, extra-sensory perception, retrocognition and precognition. He also deals with reincarnation which he considers to be the most plausible explanation for these cases. In a later book entitled "Twenty cases suggestive of Reincarnation" he deals with further cases of spontaneous recall. Three of these cases are from Ceylon.

It is not everyone who is able to recall spontaneously the memory of a past existence. Such a recall is possible only in exceptional cases and that too in children only. Investigations have not yet reached the stage when it is possible to say in what cases such a recall can take place but it has been observed that in nearly all the cases of spontaneous recall the previous lives were cut off in early childhood by some form of violent death such as an accident or serious illness.

It has also been observed that the child's memory of the previous life fades away as the child advances in age. There can be other reasons for the inability to recall past lives. For instance, if an individual's previous life was that of an animal, it is just possible that the animal mind not being so developed as the human mind, may not be able to register impressions with the clarity and accuracy of the human mind, with the result that such a reborn individual may not be able to recall his past at all. Hypnotic regression then cannot help in these cases.

By a process of meditation on certain lines it is possible for anyone to reach a state when his mind is so purified that its range of mental vision is no more obstructed. In that event one can develop the memory of past lives. This is called "pubbe nivāsānussati ñana". This of course postulates such a high degree of purity that not until one attains the state of the fourth "Jhana" is this knowledge available. Thus have the Buddhas and Arahants been able to view the past lives not only of their own but also of others as well.

The next Chapter contains an account of four cases of spontaneous recall of previous lives the details of which have been checked up and found to be correct.

CHAPTER XIV

SOME INVESTIGATED CASES OF REBIRTH

Case of Pramod

Pramod the second son of Professor Bankey Lal Shaima of Bissauli in Uttar Pradesh, India was born on October 11th

1944. When he was about two and a half years old he told his mother not to cook because he had a wife in Moradabad who could cook. Moradabad is a town about ninety miles away from Bissauli. The boy took an extraordinary interest in biscuits. Whenever he saw anyone purchasing biscuits he would tell him that he owned a large biscuit factory in Moradabad. Whenever he was taken to a big shop he would say that his shop at Moradabad was much bigger. He also said that he had a large soda-water factory there. Later he said that his name was Paramanand and had a brother called Mohanlal and that the two together owned this biscuit factory and soda factory which were run under the name of Mohan Brothers. He also said that he died of a stomach ailment resulting from eating too much curd.

Pramod's parents took no notice of these references to a previous life. Pramod however continued to repeat these references and often insisted that he should be taken to Moradabad. Those references reached the ears of a family in Moradabad who owned a soda and biscuit factory under the name of Mohan Brothers. One of the brothers, Parmanand had died on 9th May 1943. He had suffered from a chronic gastro-intestinal ailment as a result of excessive eating of curd. He died of appendicitis and peritonitis. As the story the family had heard, tallied with the events and circumstances of the life of the deceased Paramanand, the other brother Mohan Lal with some of his relatives came to Bissauli to see this Pramod who claimed to be the dead Paramanand. They missed him as he had left for a distant village to meet a relative, but the boy's father Professor Sharma promised to bring the boy to Moradabad. Shortly thereafter the father kept his word by bringing the boy to Moradabad. The boy was then about five years old.

Father and son travelled by train and on alighting from the train at Moradabad Railway Station Parmond at once recognised Mohan Lal as his former brother and running upto him embraced him fondly. From the Raiiway Station they were driven in a tonga to Mohan Lal's house.

On the way Pramod recognised a building which he said was the Town Hall and then remarked that their shop should not be very far off. It is significant that Pramod used the English expression "Town Hall" although that expression is not at all known in his native Bissauli. The tonga on purpose was being driven past the correct shop without stopping there, in order to watch Pramod's reactions. Pramod at once called out for the tonga to halt remarking that this was the shop. When the vehicle stopped, this boy led the way to the house where he claimed to have lived. He then entered the room set apart for reiigious devotions and stood there for a moment in reverential worship.

Inside the house he recognised his former mother He recognised his former wife and enquired why she was not wearing the "bindu" mark on her forehead. He recognised his former daughter and two sons of his and some relatives but he could not recognise his eldest son who had greatly changed in appearance after the father's death.

On entering the soda-factory he found that the machine there would not work. The water connection had been deliberately stopped in order to see what Pramod would do. He detected at once that the machine would not operate because the water connection was not working and immediately set it right explaining to the workmen there how this could be done. He was only five years old when he thus instructed the workmen.

Pramod spent two happy days at Moradabad where

he was able to reveal his familiarity with many places, many buildings and many persons including even a Muslim debtor to whom he remarked "I have to get some money back from you". The boy was so fond of Moradabad that it was very difficult to induce him to return to his home in Bissauli. Eventually he was carried away in his sleep by his father. Subsequently, one day wishing again to revisit Moradabad he ran away from home unnoticed and went as far as the Railway Station in Bissauli when he was brought back much to his discomfiture.

This case was first investigated within a few weeks of Parmod's first visit to Moradabad by Profeessor B.L. Attrcya of Benares University. A few years later the case was further investigated by Professor Ian Stevenson of Virginia University, who later made another visit to recheck the case. His account of this case with his analysis of the recorded evidence and his comments appears in his book "Twenty cases suggestive of reincarnation."

The case of Shanti Devi

Shanti Devi was born in 1926 in Delhi. From about her third year she began to refer to her former life in Muttra, a town sixty miles away from Delhi. She said that her former name was Lugdi and that she was married to a cloth merchant called Kadar Nath Chaubey. She also stated that ten days after giving birth to a male child she died. As Shanti Devi was repeatedly making these references to her former life, her parents wrote to Kadar Nath Chaubey who to their surprise answered the letter. In his reply be confirmed the correctness of Shanti Devi's references which were conveyed to him. Later he sent a relative of his to visit the girl and followed this up with his own visit which was unannounced. The girl identified him. Shortly thereafter

enquiries were made and it was established that the girl had never been out of her native Delhi. A committee was then appointed to witness her visit to Delhi and to watch her reaction .

On alighting at the Railway Station of Muttra, out of a large crowd of persons she recognised another relative of Chaubey. When she entered the horse-carriage that was made ready for her. she was asked to give instructions to the driver. She then directed the way right upto the house of Chaubey which. having been repainted, bore a different appearance in spite of which she was able to recognise it. She was also able to identify Chaubey's old father.

A number of questions were put to her before she entered the house. regarding the accommodation there and the arrangement of furniture there, all of which she correctly answered. She also identified about fifty persons out of a crowd that had gathered there. On going to the house of Chaubey's parents she pointed to a corner in a particular room where she said she had buried some money. The place was dug up but no money was found. Thereupon Chaubey confessed that after her death he had removed the money.

This case was investigated in 1936 by the International Aryan League, Delhi, and is referred to by Professor Ian Stevenson in his book "The evidence for survival from claimed memories of former incarnations".

The case of Gnanatillake.

Gnanatillake was born on 14th February 1956 at an insignificant village sixteen miles away from Talawakelle. Ceylon. When she was about two years old, she began making references to a previous life. Later when she heard

that some persons from her village had returned from a visit to Talawakelle she promptly remarked that Talawakelle was the place where her former parents had lived and began to give details of her former home and even mentioned the names of her family members. The credit of discovering this case goes to Mr. H. S. Nissanka of Kandy. Equal credit goes to Ven. Piyadassi Maha Thero of Vajiraramaya, Colombo, who along with Mr. Nissanka pursued this case with the greatest interest and enthusiasm. They visited the girl's home and tactfully questioning the shy girl elicited much valuable information regarding details of her former life and home.

It was ascertained that her previous home was near a tea-factory in Talawakelle, that she was then a boy and went to school with her sister by train which passed through a long tunnel. (Everything points to the school being Sri Pada College, Hatton). She said that one day standing by the road, she and her sister watched the Queen travelling by train (The present Queen Elizabeth visited Ceylon in 1954 and travelling by train passed through Talawakelle.)

Both Ven. Piyadassi and Mr. Nissanka were determined to find out the house in Talawakelle where Gnanatillake had claimed she had lived as a boy and died. They went to several places and questioned several persons. They spent several hours at the office of the Registrar of Deaths but without success. With several others also assisting in the search, Gnanatillake was taken to Talawakelle where she identified several buildings in the town but could not locate her former house as it had been demolished since her death. Ultimately they managed to contact the parents of a boy who had attended Sri Pada College Hatton and had died on 9th November 1954 at the age of twelve. When

the parents were questioned and details of the boy's life were ascertained, it become apparent that this information tallied with what Gnanatillake had said about her previous life.

A board of enquiry with Ven. Piyadassi Maha Thero as President was then held at the Talawakelle Rest House where many witnesses were examined among them being the members of Tillekeratna's family, a teacher who had taught Tillekeratna, and the principal of Sri Pada College, Hatton. At this meeting which was hled in the presence of a large public gathering, Gnanatillake was for the first time confronted with Tillekeratna's mother whom she identified with an earnest look remarking softly "That is my Talawakelle mother".

Professor Ian Stevenson visited Talawakelle in 1961 and conducted an independent investigation of this case. His account along with his analysis of the recorded evidence and his comments appear in his book "Twenty cases suggestive of reincarnation". Mr. Nissanka has given a full account of this case in a book written in Sinhalese, entitled "Newatha upan deriya" (The Reborn Girl).

The case of H. A. Wijeyratne.

H. A. Wiieyratne the youngest son of H. A. Tillekeratna Hamy was born on 17th January 1947 at Kaltota a small village not many miles away from the town of Balangoda. From his birth there appears a marked hollcw on the right side of his chest below the right collar bone and the right armpit. His right hand is thin and emaciated and the fingers in that hand are half the normal length. From about his third year, whenever he was by himself, he had a habit of walking round his house and muttering to himself. This

peculiar behaviour was first noticed by his mother who overheard him saying that the deformity in his hand was due to his having stabbed his wife in his former life. He used to make these remarks looking at his right hand. The father. Tillekeratna Hamy. tried to dissuade the boy from referring to this incident but without success. Curiously a younger brother of Tillekeratna Hamy called Ratran Hamy, had been sentenced to death and executed in 1928 for the murder of his wife. The further details given by Wijeyratne regarding the circumstances of his previous life and regarding the charge of murder brought against him tally with the circumstances of Ratranhamy's life and the charge of murder Ratranhamy had to face.

Ven. Ananda Maitreya Maha Thero of Balangoda. was the first person of consequence who heard about Wijeyratna's claims to have had a former existence. He questioned the boy and his parents. The boy even described some preliminary details regarding his execution. He is also supposed to have said in his previous life that after his execution he will come back to his brother (*i. e.* Tillekeratna Hamy). Tillekeratna Hamy did not wish this to be known as he feared the relations of the murdered woman would wreck vengence on the boy. Later Mr. Francis Story made more detailed enquiries Professor Ian Stevenson pursued the matter on his arrival in Ceylon. He found that the Supreme Court proceedings of the trial of Ratranhamy corroborates to some extent the story as told by Wijeyratna regarding the cause of his displeasure with his former wife. The medical evidence in the Supreme Court case shows that the murdered woman had, among other injuries, a gaping incised wound 2 1/2" long 1 1/2" broad, just below the left armpit involving the lung. Curiously, Wijeyratne has a prominent hollow in his chest but it is on his right

side under the right armpit. Could this however, be a standing reminder to him of the injury he inflicted on the wife of his previous existence or is it just chance? The fell deed was perpetrated with his right hand. Could the present condition of his right hand and aim be an instance of retributive Karma or is it also just chance? Nevertheless the account the boy gave of his past life to Ven. Ananda Maitreya Maha Thero tallies with what the boy's father had told the Maha Thero and what the local residents are aware of. It may also be mentioned that the present writer himself had made an independent investigation of this case.

An account of this case with his analysis of the recorded evidence and with his comments appears in Professor Ian Stevenson's book "Twenty cases suggestive of reincarnation".

CHAPTER XV

SOME QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Now that we have studied the subject of rebirth from many aspects, let us deal with certain questions that usually arise in an attempt to understand rebirth, and which have been asked from the writer at the conclusion of many lectures given by him on this subject.

Question 1.

Can you deny the possibility that some of these supposed cases of spontaneous recall of past lives are deliberate fabrications where collected information is put into the mouths of unsuspecting children who are made to repeat such information on being questioned by any one.

Answer.

As a bare theoretical possibility the answer is, "I cannot deny such a possibility". But, as a practical proposition, to coach up successfully a child with a prepared story of a past life is scarcely possible. In the first instance, the child, for the very reason that it is an unsuspecting child, is easily liable to trip under the skilful cross-examination of trained scientific investigators. Further, in order to give the false rebirth story the appearance of truth, the perpetrator of this fraud must first acquaint himself with numerous details of the life of a person who has actually died elsewhere. This search will have to cover a wide area of events and circumstances connected with the activities of the dead person. If the place of death of this person is in a far off country the task of collecting these numerous details becomes difficult in the extreme, if not almost impossible. Thereafter this vast fund of information has to be imparted into the child-mind without confusing it and, what is more difficult, is to see to it that these details are retained in the child-mind in their proper sequence. If it is the parents of the child who would perpetrate this fraud, many others will have to join in it such as the servants and the neighbours, the relations and associates of the child who are most likely to be aware or to be made aware of the child's references to its past life. The range of cross-examination being wide and varied, the person who fabricates a false story cannot possibly know beforehand all the questions that will be asked and unless all the witnesses are consistent and do not contradict each other, the whole story falls to the ground. The maker of the false story has not only to stage this difficult drama without tell-tale flaws but has also to keep it alive as trained investigators are never satisfied with just one single investigation. Indeed this would be in the nature of a gigantic

conspiracy involving the co-operation of several others and the expenditure of much time, money and energy - and to what purpose? Some might say that the parents would relish some publicity for their child but it must remembered that the doubtful advantage of such publicity hardly compensates for the stupendous effort involved in staging a false drama which may any moment break down under the keen vigilance of investigators who may any moment re-visit and re-examine the child as well as all the witnesses.

Question 2.

Can rebirth ever take place without anything travelling or passing over from one life to the next?

Answer.

This question assumes that there is already in us something which is capable of travelling or passing over from us at the moment of death. There is the further assumption that this something is stable and unchanging for it has to persist through life if it is to continue on to the next life. The rigid analysis of body and mind as appearing in the Buddhist Texts and briefly indicated in an earlier chapter, shows that every moment every part of the body and mind is undergoing a change leaving no room whatsoever for anything to remain stable and static in view of the relentless Law of Change. As stated in the first chapter, at no point of time is anything not in the process of becoming something else, in view of the Law of Becoming. Something unchanging and stable within the human system is therefore unthinkable.

A question such as the one under consideration arises from the failure to appreciate the silent and imperceptible working of the Law of Cause and Effect. **Effect need not**

be physically associated with the cause. Effect is merely the result of the cause. When the photograph of a man is taken, has anything travelled from the man to the photograph? When a man stands before the mirror and his image appears in the mirror, has anything travelled from the man to the mirror? It is just a case of effect succeeding cause. Sir William Crooks in his Edinburgh lectures on Mental Science, has said "It has also been proved by experiments that by an act of the will the mind can cause objects such as metal levers to move." Such is the nature of thought-power. Further, when the causative factor is something mental or psychic, distance is no bar to the operation of the Law of Cause and Effect. In the psychic plane time and distance do not count.

Even consciousness does not travel. The Buddha is reported to have strongly reprimanded a monk called Sāti for saying that the Buddha had declared that consciousness travels from one life to the next (Mahā Taṇhā Sankhaya Sutta, Majjhima Nikāya). It is therefore abundantly clear that nothing need pass from one life to the next to cause that next life to arise. One often does say loosely that a man after death has gone to the Deva-world or to Hell. This is said conventionally for mere convenience of expression just as one would say that the sun rises from the east whereas in reality the sun never rises from the east, nor does a dead man go anywhere. It is only a metaphorical way of expression. Present life is the effect of which past life is the cause. The thoughts, words and deeds of the past life create powerful energies which can condition the arising of the present life.

As stated by Ven. Nyanatiloka in "Karma and Rebirth" (Wheel Publication No. 9) "Thus nothing transmigrates from one life to the next. And what we call our Ego is in reality only this process of continual change, of continual

arising and passing away, moment after moment, day after day, year after year, life after life. Just as a wave that apparently hastens over the surface of the ocean is in reality nothing but a continuous rising and falling of ever new masses of water, each time called forth through the transmission of energy, even so, closely considered, is there in the ultimate sense no permanent ego entity that passes through the ocean of Samsara, but merely a process of physical and mental phenomena takes place ever and anon, being whipped up by the impulse and will for life." Energy does not travel from place to place but can cease to manifest in one place and commence to manifest itself in another place.

Question 3.

If nothing passes from one life to the next, is the reborn individual identical with the individual who had died? Is he the same as the one who died or is he someone else?

Answer

There is no identity of personality between the two individuals, in the sense that neither the body (rūpa) nor the mind (nāma) of the dying individual is present in the reborn individual. There is however this important fact not to be overlooked which makes it difficult entirely to disconnect the dying individual from the reborn individual. We have learnt that the mind (nāma) is not a permanent unchanging entity. It is not something fixed or static. It is dynamic. It is a process, a series (santati) or flow of mental states each following the other with such rapidity that it appears or seems to be something permanent whereas in reality it is not. We have studied how this process of changing from one mental state to another does not end with death. As a result of the cessation of the terminal mental state at the moment of death another mental state arises (Paṭisandhi Viññāṇa) though in a different plane or place. This is possible because thoughts

are forces or energies and cannot perish with the body on account of the principle of conversation of energy. Thus the process of change continues. Thus there is a continuity of the mental part (nama) of the dying individual. **The terminal mental state of the dying individual and the initial mental state of the individual reborn belong to the same current of cause and effect.** Hence it would not be accurate to say that there is no identity whatsoever between the two individuals. At the same time, merely to state that there is identity, can lead to a number of misconceptions.

The best answer to this question as to whether the two individuals are the same is the answer given by Nagasena Thera to King Milinda in respect of this same question - "na ca sō na ca aññō" - "Not the same, yet not another". There are some who remark that this answer is no answer but an elusive quibbling with words. Such a remark is inconsiderate and undeserved. It is not every question that can be satisfactorily answered with a categorical "yes" or "no". As Nagasena Thera on that occasion asked, "Is the flame of the lighted candle in the second watch of the night identical with the flame in the third watch of the night"? Neither "yes" nor "no" will explain the situation. When a child becomes in the course of time an old man, would you say that the old man is identical with the child? Can you explain the situation by a mere "yes" or "no"? Here too is it not more satisfactory to say, "na ca sō na ca aññō" - "Not the same, yet not another"? There is however sufficient identity between the child and the old man to fix moral responsibility on the old man for the acts of the child. Similarly there is sufficient identity between the dying individual and the reborn individual to establish the latter's responsibility for the acts of the former. As stated in the Visuddhi Magga (Ch. 17) — "with a stream of continuity there is neither identity nor otherness. For if there were

absolute identity in a stream of continuity, there would be no forming of curd from milk. And yet if there were absolute otherness the curd would not be derived from the milk. And so too with all causally arisen things. So neither absolute identity nor absolute otherness should be assumed here" (Ven Ñāṇamoli Thero's translation).

Question 4.

If every death is followed by a birth, the world's population should be constant, but how is it that, as everyone knows, the world's population is fast increasing year by year.?

Answer.

It is perfectly true that the world's population is fast increasing. It is also perfectly true that every death is followed by a birth. There is however nothing inconsistent between these two statements, when we consider the following:

1. Rebirth can take place not only in this world (whose population only we can count) but in countless other world systems of which the Buddhist texts speak.

2. Rebirth does not necessarily mean that the preceeding death was in a human plane. An animal or a celestial-being dying can be reborn as a human being.

3. Similarly a death does not necessarily mean that the succeeding rebirth is in a human plane. A man dying can be reborn as an animal or a god.

Question 5.

If it is the nature of the last conscious thought of the dying man that determines the place and conditions of his next life, it can so happen that a man who is generally good

may happen to entertain a very bad thought at the dying moment as a result of which he is reborn under very bad circumstances. Has all the earlier good he had done, passed for nought?

Answer.

Although the nature of the last thought generally speaking, determines the nature of the next birth it does not mean that all the earlier thoughts and deeds do not exert their influence on the reborn individual. The last thought before death, being the very last must necessarily exert the first influence on the being-to-be. This does not prevent the earlier thoughts and deeds from exerting their influence later on the new life. The illustration is usually given of an enclosure full of cattle. An old and weary bull happens to be just by the gate of the enclosure which is locked, while younger and stronger bulls are found at the rear of the enclosure. As soon as the gate is opened, the old bull will come out first and will walk away ahead of the younger ones but in the long run the younger bulls will overtake the old bull. Similarly the good or bad thoughts that occupy the mind when one is at death's door (Asanna Kamma) will have immediate effect but the earlier thoughts and deeds will in due course produce their effects. At the same time it must be remembered as indicated earlier that the effects of Garuka Kamma (Weighty Kamma) take precedence over Asanna Kamma (Death-proximate Kamma or Terminal Kamma).

Question 6.

Is there such a close and immediate connection between death and rebirth that there is no time-lapse between the two? If that be so, then the position would be that death is birth and birth is death. Is that correct?

Answer.

Certain schools of thought believe that there is an intermediate state (antarabhava) but according to Theravāda Buddhism there is no such state at all because death and birth are part of one process. Immediately after the cessation of Cuti Citta (Death consciousness) the Paṭisandhi Citta (Relinking Consciousness) arises. The cessation of the Maraṇāsanna Javana Citta and the Cuti Citta is necessarily followed by the arising of the Paṭisandhi Viññāṇa. A death here means a birth elsewhere. What disappears here, appears elsewhere. A gate is both an exit gate and an entrance gate according to the standpoint of the observer. If he sees anyone coming out of it he regards it as an exit gate. But if some other observer sees the same man entering through that gate, to that observer it is an entrance gate, yet in both cases it was the same gate that was made use of. According to Buddhism birth and death are merely communicating doors from one life to another, the continuous process of consciousness being the medium uniting the different lives of man. As Dahlke says:- "Dying is nothing but a back-ward view of birth, and birth is nothing but a forward view of death. In truth, both are the same, a phase of unbroken grasping." Dahlke takes up the case of the caterpillar changing into a butterfly and says:- "In the face of the miracles of birth and death, science strongly resembles a boy making his first observations in natural history. Finding in his glass-case the caterpillar dead and the butterfly born, he will say, "Two miracles!" . The old has died and something new has made its appearance". Instead of both facts merging into one another in a true conception of what has taken place, to his mistaken notion they fall apart from one another and become problems defying solution. Even so is it with science. Through her failure to recognize that

the facts of death here and birth there are forms of one and the same experience instead of a single comprehension of both under the one aspect, two miracles are found by her to be present. On this point the physicist has already left the stage of childhood behind. Today he no longer says, - "Two miracles! Heat is gone and motion is present". He has found the clue albeit it is true, only in the form of reaction. The biologist however still remains incapable of replacing two miracles with a true and genuine conception. He is still unaware that it is with dying that being born must be purchased. Hence he treats birth as a fact by itself and death as a fact by itself and so remains confronting both problems internally insoluble" ("Buddhism and Science")

Question 7

Why are we unable to recall our past lives if indeed we had past lives? If we had past lives, we surely ought to be able to recall them ?

Answer

The general rule seems to be that death, being an obliterating agent, a reborn person is mentally incapable of recalling his past life. This is nature's protection for it certainly is confusing if past memories keep crowding into a reborn person's present mind when he has to keep abreast of present-life conditions. There is a case of a younger brother who had died and was reborn as his elder brother's son who persisted in addressing his present father as brother, much to the father's embarrassment and despite severe scoldings and warnings from relations not to address a father as a brother. Even his mental attitude towards his father may not be the same as that of a normal son towards his father.

But why is our inability to recall our past lives taken to mean that we never had past lives? To those who argue thus, one would like to pose the question - "Which of us can remember the facts of our earliest infancy, let alone a previous life"? Which of us can remember being born ? Does this mean that there was no early infancy for us, or that we were not born at all? The fact is that at the time of birth and also in early infancy our minds for the most part were exsting in the Bhavanga or unconscious state and not in the fully conscious state. Even during day a new-born infant is for the most part sleeping. Human memory is not a perfect faculty. Even adults may forget an incident within a few days of its occurrence, but this does not mean that that incident did not occur. All incidents and events if they once made their impressions on the conscious Vithi Citta are never lost even if the impressions have faded from the conscious Vithi Citta because they have sunk into the unconscious Bhavanga from where under certain circumstance with the proper technique they can be recalled. These are the cases discussed in Ch. XII. Then there are cases of spontaneous recall of past lives without the intervention of hypnosis. These are discussed in Ch. XIII. When a recall is possible and when it is not, is not yet known.

Question 8

The doctrine of rebirth postulates not one previous birth but innumerable previous births. That being so, where is the start of this series of successive births? Why is the Doctrine of Dependent Origination represented as a round of births and deaths and not as a straight line of successive births and deaths in which case we would be able to see the starting point of this line of births and deaths? In other words is there no First Cause?

Answer;

When the Buddha promulgated his Dhamma, it was not his purpose to explain the origin of life or the beginning of the world. His one purpose was to explain to suffering mankind the universal malady of Dukkha (disharmony) and to prescribe a remedy thereto. This he felt was the most pressing need for all time. He sought to show a way of escape from the bondage of suffering. Anything outside this was irrelevant for his purpose as can be judged from this statement of his :—

"Dukkhañ c'eva paññāpemi
Dukkhassa ca nirodham"
"One thing only do I teach
Sorrow and its End to reach".

(*Majjhima Nikaya Part I Sutta* 22)

In conformity with this limited purpose he chose not to indulge in metaphysical theories and abstractions about the origin of life and the beginning of the world—matters which have no bearing on the aim and object of life as shown by him. According to him, the one purpose of life is to develop ourselves morally (sīla), develop the mental powers of concentration (samādhi) and by such aid obtain that higher vision (paññā) whereby one will be able to see things as they actually are (yathā bhutanana - Reality) and so be released from this life of suffering. Therefore, of all the facts that comprise life's entirety, he brought out only such as are necessary for the realization of this goal.

Why the doctrine of Rebirth has no reference to a First Cause. When the Buddha spoke on Rebirth it was only for the purpose of showing that the consequences of our deeds in this life will follow us to a life hereafter and that we should therefore be careful and selective in regard to what

we think or say or do. In the same way when he spoke of previous births he was only seeking to explain that our condition in this life, our joys and our sorrows, our opportunities and our impediments are often the results of our deeds in our previous lives. His was essentially a practical purpose and therefore he was not in the least interested to pursue further the process of rebirth and enter into philosophical abstractions.

Why the Doctrine of Dependent Origination has no reference to a First Cause. As with the Doctrine of Rebirth, so is it with the Doctrine of Dependent Origination (Paṭicca Sammuppāda). This doctrine profound in its significance and difficult of comprehension sets out a series of 12 conditions or states or factors existing in various modes of dependence on each other and forming as it were a round or cycle of conditioning (paccaya) and conditioned (paccuppana) factors and showing a great and important process that is in existence. These 12 factors are ceaselessly in operation and since this is a process of dependent origination, every condition arises as a result of some other condition and proceeds on into yet another condition. The factors that constitute the process are related to each other not so much through the medium of cause as through the medium of conditionality or dependence. Conditionality then is the pattern of this process. (Paṭicca means conditional on or dependent on; Samuppāda means arising together). This is hardly the place to expound the profound doctrine of Dependent Origination but for the purpose of giving a full answer to the question propounded it is relevant to state that by this doctrine the Buddha sought to point out the twofold manner in which this process works - the forward manner which leads to repeated births and suffering and the reverse manner which leads to the cessation of repeated births and suffering and which finally leads to the cessation of

existence with all its suffering and sorrow. He was keen on pointing out to us that it is left to us to choose the direction in which the process should work in us.

The principle underlying this doctrine can be expressed thus in very simple and general terms without reference to the particular 12 factors :— **"Imasmiṁ sati, idaṁ hōti** - when this exists that exists. **Imassa uppādā idaṁ uppajjati** - when this arises that arises". In the reverse order this principle works thus—**"Imasmiṁ asati idaṁ na hōti**—when this is not that is not. **Imassa nirodhā idaṁ nirujjhati** — When this ceases that ceases". (Cūla Sakaludāyi Sutta. Majjhima Nikāya 79). We thus have a principle of conditionality, relativity and interdependence. This principle is of universal applicability but the Buddha was concerned with applying this principle to explain the process of life and also to show how the process can be made to cease. The twelve factors which arise each dependent on the preceding factor are—

Avijjā - Ignorance

Sankhārā - Volitional activities.

Viññāṇa or Paṭisandhiviññāṇa - Rebirth consciousness or relinking - consciousness

Nāma-rūpa - Mind-body combination.

Salāyatna - Six spheres or avenues of sense.

Phassa - Contact

Vedanā - Feeling

Taṇhā - Craving

Upādāna - Grasping or Clinging

Bhava or Kamma Bhava - The process of Becoming or Activities

Jāti - Birth

Jarā - Maraṇa - Decay and death.

These are the factors that are ceaselessly in operation in the long course of man's existence in Samsara showing the endless rounds of births and deaths. This is the process that goes on and on. The first two factors refer to the causative conditions in the past life (atīta hetu). The next five factors refer to effects in the present life (vattamāna phala). The next two refer to the causative conditions in the present life (vattamāna hètu) and the last two refer to effects in the future life (anāgata phala).

Since Ignorance (Avijjā) is the root cause of all Sorrows, sufferings and disharmonies prevailing in the life-process and is a continuing cause, the Buddha in outlining the process made a start with ignorance (avijjā) but it must not be taken to mean that Ignorance (avijjā) is the primary origin of life or of the world. Buddha considered Avijja (Ignorance) to be a sufficient starting point to understand the process of life and to find a way out of it. Since Avijja itself is conditioned by Sānkhāra and since Saankha is in turn conditioned by Avijja, since birth follows death and death follows birth, the process can best be represented by a circle and not by a straight line. The twelve factors of the process are like twelve spokes in a wheel. You can start considering the process from any one spoke in a wheel, regarding each spoke as a factor but you will come back to that spoke again. The process works in cyclic order. It is like a revolving wheel.

Buddha's View about a First Cause.

When a monk called Mālunkyaputta had criticized the Buddha for his failure to elucidate these metaphysical problems as to whether the world is enternal or not eternal, or whether the world is finite or infinite, and declared that he will not lead the Holy Life until these matters were clarified, the Buddha calmly questioned this monk and obtained his reply

that his adoption of the Holy Life was not conditional on the Buddha's clarification of these problems. The Buddha then admonished this foolish monk in the following manner. "It is as if Mālunkyaputta, a person were pierced by an arrow thickly smeared with poison and his friends and relatives were to procure a surgeon and then this person were to say - I will not have this arrow taken out until I have the details of the person by whom I was wounded, the nature of the arrow with which I was pierced etc. That person would die, Mālunkyaputta, before this would ever be known to him", Then the Buddha went on to explain why these metaphysical problems were not dealt with by him. "Mālunkyaputta, I have not revealed whether the world is eternal or not eternal, whether the world is finite or infinite, **because these are not profitable, do not concern the bases of holiness, are not conducive to aversion to dispassion to cessation, to tranquility, to intuitive wisdom, to enlightenment or to Nibbana.** Therefore I have not revealed them" (Cūla Mālunkaya Sutta. Majjhima Nikāya 63).

In the Anamatagga Sutta of the Samyutta Nikāya, the Buddha has maintained that the primary origin of life is something inconceivable. "Anamataggō'yam Bhikkabavè samsāro, pubbakōti napannāyati avijjānīvaranānam sattānam taṇhānam vōjanānam sandhāvatam". "Inconceivable, bretheren, is the origin of this faring on. The earliest point of this faring on of beings cloaked in Ignorance and bound by craving is not to be perceived".

According to the Buddhist view referred to earlier, nothing arises from a single cause. This is because all things, all states, are both conditioning and also conditioned and are therefore inter-dependent. **No single event in this universe can remain isolated and unconnected with some other event in some respect or other. Therefore a cause by**

itself cannot stand. it must arise from other causes and conditions and not from one isolated and unconnected cause, there being always a complexity of inter-related and inter-dependent causes and conditions. Hence a First Cause originating by itself is unthinkable. It can be a concept. It can be accepted on blind faith but it can never be recognised through the channels of reason and experience.

Views of great thinkers about a First-Cause.

The well-known philosopher Joad in "The Meaning of Life" says:- "The universe, we say, is not and cannot be interpreted in terms of one fundamental principle and one only. Two principles at least are required to account for the phenomena of plurality and diversity".

Another well-known thinker, Aldous Huxley, in "Ends and Means" says:- "To refer phenomena back to a First Cause has ceased to be fashionable at least in the west..... we shall never succeed in changing our age of iron into an age of gold until we give up our ambition to find a single cause for all our ills and instead admit the existence of many causes acting simultaneously or intricate correlations and reduplicated actions and reactions".

Yet another well known thinker Bertrand Russel in "Why I am not a Christian" says:—"There is no reason to suppose that the world had a beginning at all. **The idea that things must have a beginning is due to the poverty of our imagination".**

From the earliest dawn of civilization thinking man has struggled ceaselessly to discover a first beginning of all things but without success. Whatever First Cause is assumed, there will immediately arise the very pertinent question, "What is the Cause of that cause?"

Question 9

Is the belief in life after death confined to Buddhists only? Did such a belief exist prior to the advent of Buddhism?

The belief in a life after death is by no means confined to Buddhists only. This belief is one of great antiquity and existed among the Egyptians and later among the Greeks. the Romans and the Brahmins, long prior to the advent of Buddhism. There is however an important difference between the beliefs of non-Buddhists and the belief of Buddhists on this matter. The non-Buddhist belief is based on the assumed existence of a soul within man which is said to be able to travel or transmigrate from one life to another, and the word used in this connection is not rebirth but reincarnation. The Buddhist belief is that nothing travels from one life to another nor is there any such unchanging stable static thing as soul. Hence the Pali word to denote rebirth is "Punabbhava" which literally means "an existence again". It is not difficult to comprehend rebirth if the existence of a soul is accepted, whereas the Buddhist theory of rebirth is difficult of comprehension since Buddhism admits of no soul and strongly denies that anything travels from one life to another. People of various religious systems and creeds have shared the belief in a life after death. The ancient Egyptians believed in it and it is said that the reason why they embalmed a dead body and placed on it some of the food and clothing the dead man was fond of during his lifetime, was to prevent his "Ka" or soul from taking another body. The reason no doubt is absurd but this custom indicates the prevalence of a belief in a life after death. In the 6th Century B. C. this belief found expression in the writings of the Greek

Pherecydes, Empedocles and Pythagoras. Later Plato expressed the same view in his "De Republica". The Roman poet Ovid in his "Metamorphoses" has given an account of reincarnation. Julius Ceasar in his "De Bello Gallico" Book VI while giving an account of the customs and manners of Gallia (ancient France) which he had conquered, refers to the prevalence of this belief.

The religion in India before the advent of Buddhism was Brahamanism which in its later Upanishadic stage also taught the reincarnation of beings.

In early Christianity the idea of reincarnation appears to have existed altough Jesus Christ never directly taught it nor repudiated it. In the Old Testament here and there are passages where the idea of reincarnation is dimly referred to (e.g. The Psalms 126), while in the New Testament (St. Mark 9 and St. Matthews 17), there is a reference to John the Baptist being a reincarnation of Elijah. That the belief in reincarnation was prevalent during time of Jesus Christ is seen from a question put to Jesus Chirst and referred to in St. John 9. It is also seen from the answers given by his disciples to certain questions put to them by Jesus Christ (St. Matthew 16 and St. Luke 9).

St Augustine in his 'Confessions" has strongly upheld this doctrine. So did his pupil Origen in "De Principiis" and "Contra Celsus" Origen used to preach this doctrine wherever he went While the early Christian church accepted this doctrine, the later church fathers so strongly disapproved of it that at a meeting of the Council of Constantinople specially convened in A.D. 553, the doctrine was formally rejected as no more being a part of the Christian religion. (Vide Catholic Encyclopedia, 1909 Edition pages 236 and 237.)

As a result of this decision, Christian belief in Reincarnation died down, but from about the 19th Century the belief steadily gained ground. W. E. Atkinson and several others began to write about Reincarnation. Poets of the eminence of Wordsworth, Tennyson, Longfellow and Masefield have expressed this belief and in the present century an English clergyman of note, Rev. Leslie Weatherhead delivered a lecture which was published in book form entitled "The case for Reincarnation".

Question 10.

Beyond an intellectual satisfaction that certain truths hitherto accepted on faith have been established beyond doubt, of what benefit are the researches of rebirth — investigators to those who are not so interested.

Answer

That is a narrow view of the matter. The truth of rebirth is of great consequence to all. There is hardly a man in whom there is no yearning to know whence he came and whither he is bound. The yearning is no doubt more marked in those who are educated but even in the untutored mind at least occasionally and dimly this yearning makes its presence felt, especially on occasions like the sudden death of a near and dear relative. This is not an intellectual quest. It is a natural urge. It is a natural prompting of the heart to look for something that can explain the mystery of life and death. When it is satisfactorily understood that life did not for the first time commence here in this existence, that this present life with its sorrows and joys, its anxieties and hopes, its losses and gains is the logical outcome of a previous life in accordance with the great principle of action and reaction, then life is no more an enigma or a puzzle

Life is then seen to have a meaning and a purpose Life then assumes a serious importance not hitherto recognzied. Life no more appears to be a dreary round of events and circumstances. New hopes are felt. New visions are opened up. There will be a complete reorientation of his views on life as he begins to awaken to the realization that it is he who steers the ship of his destiny and that it is he who is the builder of his future life. When he keenly realizes that every thought, word and deed of his contributes to the building up of his future life he will learn to be more and more selective regarding the thoughts he thinks, the words he utters and the actions he performs. If he has led a good life, death will have no fears for him. He can cheerfully and confidently look forward to a happy experience in the life hereafter. If he has led a bad life he will still have the consolation that Kamma is not a finished product but is something always in the making, and that the effects of bad actions can be modified and altered by present good actions. Indeed, he will be happy in the thought that he still has a chance to reconstruct his life and that any such attempt commenced in good earnest but left undone owing to the intervention of death will have a chance of being taken up again in the life hereafter.

An understanding of rebirth will, not only induce a refining influence on one's own life, it will also refine his attitude towards all sentient beings without a single exception since he will realize that all are his fellow-passengers in the great journey of life, subject to the same universal laws and fundamental principles to which he himself is subject. He will always be ready and willing to give a helping hand

to one who needs his help. He will always forgive his enemies. He may hate the sin but he will forgive the sinner. He will habitually wish all beings well.

SABBE SATTA BHAVANTU SUKHITATTĀ

MAY ALL BEINGS BE HAPPY.

MUDITA

The Buddha's Teaching on
Unselfish Joy

Essays by

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The Sublime State of Unselfish Joy (Muditā-Brahmavihāra)

THE AWAKENED ONE, THE BUDDHA, SAID :

Here, o Monks, a disciple lets his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thoughts of Unselfish Joy, and so the second, and so the third, and so the fourth. And thus the whole wide world, above, below, around, everywhere and equally, he continues to pervade with a heart of Unselfish Joy, abundant, grown great, measureless, without hostility or ill-will.

Introduction

IS UNSELFISH JOY PRACTICABLE ?

Nyanaponika Thera

THE virtue of MUDITĀ *, i. e., finding joy in the happiness and success of others, has not received sufficient attention either in expositions of Buddhist ethics, or in the meditative development of the four Sublime States (brahma-vihāra), of which Muditā is one. It was, therefore, thought desirable to compile this little book of essays and texts and to mention in this introduction a few supplementary features of this rather neglected subject.

It has been rightly stated that it is relatively easier for man to feel compassion or friendliness in situations which demand them, than to cherish a spontaneous feeling of shared joy, outside a narrow circle of one's family and friends. It mostly requires a deliberate effort to identify oneself with the joys and success of others. Yet, the capacity of doing so has psychological roots in man's nature which may be even deeper than his compassionate responses. There is firstly the fact that people *do* like to feel happy (with—or without—good reason) and would prefer it to the shared sadness of compassion. Man's gregarious nature (his 'sociability') already gives him some familiarity with shared emotions and shared pleasure; though mostly on a much lower

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* Usually rendered by Unselfish, Sympathetic or Altruistic Joy.

level than that of our present concern. There is also in man (and in some animals) not only an aggressive impulse, but also a natural bent towards mutual aid and co-operative action. Furthermore, there is the fact that happiness is infectuous and an unselfish joy can easily grow out of it. Children readily respond by their own smiles and happy mood to smiling faces and happiness around them. Though children can be quite jealous and envious at times, they also can visibly enjoy it when they have made a play mate happy by a little gift and they are then quite pleased with themselves. Let parents and educators wisely encourage this potential in the child. Then this seed will quite naturally grow into a strong plant in the adolescent and the adult, maturing from impulsive and simple manifestations into the Sublime State of Unselfish Joy (muditā-brahmavihāra). Thus, here too, the child may become 'the father of man'. Such education towards joy with others should, of course, not be given in a dry didactic manner, but chiefly in a practical way by gently making the child observe, appreciate and enjoy the happiness and success of others, and by trying himself to create a little joy in others. This can be aided by acquainting the child with examples of selfless lives and actions for his joyful admiration of them (and these, of course, should not be limited to Buddhist history). This feature should not be absent in Buddhist youih literature and school books, throughout all age groups. And this theme should be continued in Buddhist magazines and literature for adults.

Admittedly, the negative impulses in man, like aggression, envy, jealousy etc., are much more in evidence than his positive tendencies towards communal

service, mutual aid, unselfish joy, generous appreciation of the good qualities of his fellow-men, etc. Yet, as all these positive features are definitely found in man (though rarely developed), it is quite realistic to appeal to them, and activate and develop that potential by whatever means we can, in our personal relationships, in education, etc. "If it were impossible to cultivate the Good, I would not tell you to do so," said the Buddha. This is, indeed, a positive, optimistic assurance.

If this potential for unselfish joy is widely and methodically encouraged and developed, starting with the Buddhist child (or: for that matter, with any child) and continued with adults (individuals and Buddhist groups, including the Sangha), the seed of Muditā can grow into a strong plant which will blossom forth and find fruition in many other virtues, as a kind of beneficial 'chain reaction': magnanimity, tolerance, generosity (of both heart and purse), friendliness and compassion. When unselfish joy grows, many noxious weeds in the human heart will die a natural death (or will, at least, shrink): jealousy and envy, ill-will in various degrees and manifestations, cold-heartedness, miserliness (also in one's cancern for others), and so forth. Unselfish joy can, indeed, act as a powerful agent in releasing dormant forces of the Good in the human heart.

We know very well how envy and jealousy (the chief opponents of unselfish joy) can poison a man's character as well as the social relationships on many levels of his life. They can paralyze the productivity of society, on governmental, professional, industrial and commercial levels. Should not, therefore, all effort be made to cultivate their antidote, that is Muditā?

Muditā will also vitalize and ennoble charitable and social work. While compassion (karuṇā) is, or should be, the inspiration for it, unselfish joy should be its boon companion. Muditā will prevent compassionate action from being marred by a condescending and patronizing attitude which often repels or hurts the recipient. Also, when active compassion and unselfish joy go together, it will be less likely that works of service turn into dead routine performed indifferently. Indifference, listlessness, boredom (all nuances of the Pāli term *arati)* are said to be the 'distant enemies' of Muditā. They can be vanquished by an alliance of compassion and unselfish joy.

In him who gives and helps, the joy he flnds in such action will enhance the blessings imparted by these wholesome deeds: unselfishness will become more and more natural to him, and such ethical unselfishness will help him towards a better appreciation and the final realization of the Buddha's central doctrine of No-self (Anattā). He will also find it confirmed that he who is joyful in his heart will gain easier the serenity of a concentrated mind. These are, indeed, great blessings wich the cultivation of joy with others' happiness can bestow !

Nowadays, moral exhortations fall increasingly on deaf ears, whether they are motivated theologically or otherwise. Preaching morals with an admonishing finger is now widely resented and rejected. This fact worries greatly the churches and educators in the West. But there are ample indications that this may, more or less, happen also in the Buddhist countries of the East where ethics is still taught and preached in the old hortatory

style and mostly in a rather stereotype and unimaginative way, with little reference to present-day moral and social problems. Hence modern youth will increasingly feel that such "moralizings" are not their concern. In fact, within the frame of the Buddhist teachings which do not rely on the authoritarian commandments of God and church, but on man's innate capacity for self-purification, such conventionalized presentation of ethics which chiefly relies on over-worked scriptural references, must appear quite incongruous and will prove increasingly ineffective for young and old alike. The need for reform in this field is urgent and of vital importance.

It was also with this situation in view, that the preceding observations have stressed the fact that a virtue like unselfish and altruistic joy has its natural roots in the human heart and can be of immediate benefit to the individual and society. In other words, the approach to a modern presentation of Buddhist ethics should be pragmatie and contemporary, enlivened by a genuine and warm-hearted human concern.

In this troubled world of ours, there are plenty of opportunities for thoughts and deeds of compassion; but there seem to be all too few for sharing in others' joy. Hence it is necessary for us to *create* new opportunities for *unselfish joy*, by the active practice of *loving-kindness* (*Mettā*) and *compassion* (*Karuṇā*), in deeds, words and meditative thought. Yet, in a world that can never be without disappointments and failures, we must also arm ourselves with the *equanimity* (*Upekkhā*) which will protect us from discouragement and feelings of frustration, should we encounter difficulties in our efforts to expand the realm of Unselfish Joy.

UNSELFISH JOY : A NEGLECTED VIRTUE

by

Natasha Jackson

Muditā, Unselfish or Sympathetic Joy is one of the most neglected topics within the whole range of the Buddha Dhamma, probably because of its subtlety and of the wealth of nuances latent within it. Besides getting honourable mention within the context of The Four Divine Abidings (Brahma Vihāras), few commentators have had much more to say about it apart from explaining that it means "sympathetic joy at the good fortune or success of others". Only one notable writer, Conze (in "Buddhist Thought in India"), has had the insight to suggest that Muditā, i. e. sympathy, is a pre-requisite of Mettā (loving-kindness) and of Karuṇā (compassion). He thus names appreciation as one of the components of Muditā. How right he is! For one cannot appreciate another person without seeing some good in him If one does not appreciate the other person in the slightest degree, one would be hard put to it to experience joy at any stroke of good fortune or success that may befall him. To simulate feelings of pleasure when, in fact, one feels none, would be the grossest of hypocrisy. Thus, Muditā tacitly implies looking for the good in others and learning to recognize and admire what good there is.

Likewise, if one has a misanthropic view of mankind, regarding people as essentially evil and not worth being concerned about, one cannot, on the face of it, make much headway with any of The Four Divine

Abidings. To have a sympathetic attitude towards human beings does not betoken an idealization of man, but rather a realistic appraisal: that, though often in error and grievously at fault, man has, nevertheless, the potential to rise above his darkness and ignorance into the light of knowledge and even to undreamed of heights of Nirvana. Unless one has that measure of faith and confidence in mankind which the Buddha himself had, the practice of Mettā and Karuṇā is impossible. Thus, the broadest and most simple aspect of Muditā as sympathy towards mankind, is also the most basic and important.

To regard Muditā as being relevant only on certain relatively rare occasions when our friends and acquaintances come into a bonanza of some kind, is to fragment it and render it trivial, thereby missing the essential matrix. It should not be regarded as a matter of turning on a tap from which Muditā will gush forth. There should be, in a certain sense, a quiet stream of sympathy and understanding flowing within the individual all the time. Though, to be sure, it does also mean developing the capacity to participate in another person's finest hour and doing so spontaneously and sincerely. It is indeed a depressing fact that people are much more ready to sympathize with the misfortunes of others than to rejoice with them, a psychological quirk in people which wrung from Montaigne the ironic statement :

> "There is something altogether not too displeasing in the misfortunes of our friends".

Turning back to the essential matrix of Muditā as sympathy towards mankind, faith in its potential for good and acceptance of its worthwhileness, this is precisely what is lacking in the world today. There is

abroad a kind of cosmic gloom and, among some large sections of people, a feeling of defeatism. Probably the scene is largely coloured by the shadow of the hydrogen bomb and the various other horrible weapons of destruction which we know the nations are so busy in manufacturing. All in all, too much has happened in too short a time. More scientific and technological discoveries have been telescoped into the last fifty (or is it thirty?) years than in the previous five hundred, and the total result is, at the moment, of dubious benefit to humanity as a whole, though of inestimable worth to the new millionaires who have managed to muscle in on the expanding economy. Electric and nuclear power, the spectacular forging ahead of communication, transport and industry have brought in their wake such negative by-products as over-population, more and more urbanization into collossal, concentrated centres, such as Tokyo, New York and London (and even Sydney and Melbourne), which, in turn, has given rise to other unfortunate results, both physical and psychological: pollution from industrial waste, destruction of natural resources; individual de-socialization, alienation, stress, as evidenced by the delinquency figures, the drift to drugs, character disorders, feelings of the meaninglessness of life, rise in crime, wanton destructiveness (a sure symptom of frustration and an unlived life), despair, suicide. We know that such ills have always existed in society, and that probably they always will to some degree, but the frightening thing about the present situation is that they are insidiously increasing, inspite of the fact that many people, and especially the youth, have never had it so good. As it is, man feels more insecure than ever, more uncertain and lost. Viewing these symptoms, many people throughout the world have

drawn the conclusion that man has arrived at the period of moral decline and disintegration and that humanity has become so depraved as to be hopelessly beyond redemption or recall. Such a view has always been characteristic of old age. We can, with a certain degree of amusement read the lines:

"To whom do I speak today?
Brothers are evil,
Friends today are not of love.
To whom do I speak today?
Hearts are thievish,
Every man seizes his neighbour's goods.
To whom do I speak today?
The gentle man perishes,
The bold-faced goes everywhere . . .
To whom do I speak today?
When a man should arouse wrath by his evil conduct,
He stirs all men to mirth, although his iniquity
is wicked . . ."

The above admonition was composed in Ancient Egypt during the Middle Kingdom, thousands of years ago, but the words are those which every generation hears.

There is a proneness in periods of crisis and transition, to conjure up in the mind a phantasy of a previous golden age, when people were of sterling worth and life was lived in accordance with the noble virtues. But, we may well ask, when was there such an age, and where? If people who harbour such quaint notions were to read history, they would realize that such a belief is just about as valid as that there ever was a time "when flowers bloomed for ever and sweethearts were

always true", in the words of the old song. Ancient history and the Middle Ages are definitely OUT as far as morality is concerned. Without going so far back, merely a couple of hundred years, Smollett wrote this of eighteenth century England :

"Commerce and manufacture flourished to such a degree of increase as has never been known in this island; but this advantage was attended with an irresistible tide of luxury and excess which flowed through all degrees of the people, breaking down all the bounds of civil policy, and opening a way for licentiousness and immorality. The highways were infested with rapine and assassination; the cities teemed with the brutal votaries of lewdness, intemporace and profligacy."

In the nineteenth century (relatively recently), Wordsworth wrote :

"The wealthiest man among us is the best :
No grandeur now in nature or in book
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
This is idolatry; and these we adore.

Plain living and high thinking are no more;
The homely beauty of the good old cause
Is gone, our fearful innocence,
And pure religion breathing household laws."

And James Hemming, a modern writer in his book "Individual Morality" :

"Nineteenth-century London was frequently shaken by the destructive antics of informally organized hooligan gangs of young aristocrats. Those young roughs,

having idled away their days, spent their nights beating people up, smashing up coffee stalls, alarming women and such like—the Bucks, the Corinthians, and all their imitators and hangers-on. Such bands were following, somewhat less cruelly, in the tradition of the nefarious Mohocks, who terrorized eighteenth-century London."

Sexual propriety? Quoting again from Hemming:

> "Brothels in the nineteenth century were big business, and laws to forbid living on the immoral earnings of women, after several rebuffs in Parliament, did not reach the statute books till 1885.".

But this was in England, the most progressive country in Europe. There is no evidence for believing that conditions were better on the Continent.

Understandably, twenty-five years after World War II, we are still appalled by the memory of the Nazi gas-chambers and the genocide which was their aim. This is by no means an isolated instance of genocide. History bears witness to similar incidents of destructive hate, culminating in mass murder. The Albigenses were wiped out to a man, and in 1572, at the Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Eve, thousands of Huguenots were slaughtered, Pope Gregory XIII commanding bonfires to be lit and a medal to be struck in celebration! The idea that the mass destruction of one's ideological enemies is justified was already old in the days of the Old Testament. Saul was commanded:

> "Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass,"

All of the foregoing is not intended as apologetics justifying violence, bloodbaths or individual or collective acts of immorality but merely to dispel the myth that there was ever a previous idyllic phase, when man could have said with some semblance of truth:

"God's in His Heaven
And all's right with the world."

So, let us lay to rest forever the belief that in the past men were truer, kinder, more upright and generally more worthy than they are today. Let us give that piece of romantic fiction the respectable funeral that it deserves. Our ancestors and predecessors were no better than we are, and we are certainly not worse than they were. In many respects we have improved considerably on the ways of our forbears. Actually, there has been a great deal of progress, considering that slavery hung on in England until 1772, in America till 1863, serfdom in Russia till 1861. And, inspite of the injustices and lack of moral scruples that still exist, there is more awareness, kindliness and sensitivity in many human societies than there has ever been before. Today when a national disaster of great magnitude occurs in a country, quite often the rest of the world rallies around and helps - perhaps not to the extent that it should, but none the less, to *some* extent. Such a broadening expansion of the human conscience would have been deemed a Utopian ideal in former times and impossible.

When acts of genocide were perpetrated in the past, people just accepted it: that was that, and there was nothing to be done about it. In our time, the whole world was revolted by the Nazi-gas-chambers, eventually

rose against the loathsome disease of Fascism and smashed it, even though if took the combined might of the Allied forces five years of bitter conflict to do so.

However, in the past, without exception, whatever was inflicted upon a people, they mostly took. Today they don't—they protest, they demonstrate, they kick up a fuss. They have become articulate because they have realized that the greatest evil of all is not poverty, racialism or war but powerlessness. Naturally, such an unexpected show of interest in public affairs is embarrassing to governments accustomed to an inert and docile population and there is some wistful talk by die-hards of "the silent majority", but the present indications are that "the silent majority" is likely to become a silent minority in the face of such urgent problems as over-population, and destruction of natural resources, which, if left unchecked, will make the earth uninhabitable within a foreseeable future. However, against this general tendency is the lamentable fact that nothing was done about the rape of Tibet, and even now there are no large-scale or forceful protests being made about the genocide that is being practised in that country by the Chinese.

So, far from feeling dejected and dispirited about mankind, we should be hopeful and buoyant. There would be infinitely more cause for alarm and despair if people were as easy to manipulate as sheep or merely apathetic. The arguing and the restlessness throughout the world is about the principles on which we should run our lives, a struggle for values other than the profit motive, for ways and means to make possible greater co-operation between individuals and nations, and for

moral maturity in coping with man's new powers and responsibilities. People discuss, argue, petition, protest, demonstrate because of their sympathy, compassion and love for mankind. It is very difficult to differentiate between the three or to recognize precisely the line of demarcation where one ends and the other begins, because they are Illimitables. There are, of course, others who see in these conflicts only hatred but this view is hardly tenable because it is much easier and much more comfortable to remain uninvolved, drifting with the current, not swimming against it.

The Ven. Nyanaponika has summed up the inter-dependence of the Four Divine Abidings in the following quotation :

"Love imparts to Equanimity its selflessness, its boundless nature and even its fervour . . .

Compassion guards Equanimity from falling into cold indifferrence and keeps it from indolent or selfish isolation. Until Equanimity has reached perfection, Compassion urges it to enter again and again into the battlefields of the world.

Sympathetic Joy gives to Equanimity the mild serenity that softens its stern appearance. It is the divine smile on the face of the Enlightened One."

From "The Four Sublime States" in "The Wheel" No. 6.

From METTA, The Journal of the Buddhist Federation of Australia, Vol. 12, No. 2.

MUDITA

C. F. Knight

A feature of the Buddha-Dhamma is cognizance of the pairs of opposites in the training to get beyond them. The Buddha's method of mental training and development was to teach by first defining unwholesome or unskilful thoughts, words, and deeds, or practices which characterize many of man's proclivities, and then to propound their opposites of a wholesome or skilful nature as an achievement to be sought after for the abolition of them both, eventually, when even the good must be left behind as well as the evil; when even the Raft of Dhamma is to be abandoned—*after* crossing the Flood of Samsara. The trouble with so many of the unwise is their desire to abandon the Raft of Dhamma *before* reaching the further shore. The Buddha's method of expounding the negative and the positive, the passive and the dynamic aspects of behaviour, in both abstract and concrete terms, is obviously to create awareness of what is to be sought after and nurtured.

The basic ignorance featured in Buddhism is not so much a rejection of the truth as it is a failure to perceive it. It is, as it were, a "blind spot" in our perception akin to the physical damage of a section of the brain or the nervous system which results in impaired vision or locomotion. In other words, the depth of our ignorance may be measured by our lack of consciousness of it.

This is why it is so necessary that we should see and recognise our failings and short-comings if we are to eradicate them. It is also important that we should be

mindful of "the good that has arisen", and to foster and develop it to the point of perfection. To realize our imperfections is the beginning of wisdom—the first light to shine on the darkness of our ignorance. While we are blissfully unaware of unwholesome states of mind within ourselves, such states will continue to flourish, and their roots will dig deeper into our very being. Just so too, in our relationships with our fellowmen, the unperceived evils will be repeated unconsciously and unrecognized, building up a cumulative unhappy future for us under the retributive causal law of karma.

In dealing with *muditā*, or altruistic joy, we are once more to some extent frustrated with the inadequacy of translations for "brahma-vihāra" or "appamaññā"—the former as "sublime or divine abode", and the latter as "boundless state". To reduce either of these terms to modern idiom is difficult. The four characteristics grouped under these terms are : loving-kindness, compassion, altruistic joy, and equanimity, extended to universal application. In their perfection they *are* "sublime" and "boundless", and to be "dwelt in" as one speaks of "dwelling in peace", so we will leave it at that.

As with all perfections, these four desirable characteristics are the antidotes to the poisons of their opposite imperfections, and here is where the recognition of their opposites is apposite. Less has been said or written of *muditā* than of the other three of these four characteristics, perhaps, again, because of its somewhat clumsy translation. While loving-kindness and compassion are objective, reaching out to all sentient beings, *muditā* and equanimity are subjective, or personal in their application.

It may seem strange at first, until we critically examine the source, to speak of either selfish or unselfish joy. Joy is an emotional ecstasy arising from pleasure. It is something intensely personal. While we can and do share our pleasures to some extent with others, the resultant impact of them on various personalities will vary as widely as the personalities. At times what may give rise to rapturous joy in us, when shared, may give rise to positive aversion in another.

A pertinent example of this would be the reactionary effect of certain music on people of differing tastes. While it is not uncommon for some of the modern generation to literally swoon in ecstasy under the influence of the combination of discordant and dissonant notes and chords, others find them anything but entertaining or pleasurable. Here we have what might be termed "selfish joy" on the part of the participants, by those who have to suffer most unwilling participation. For all that, within the group enjoying it, there is a reciprocity of delight, happiness, and rapture between the entertainers and the entertained. Superficially, then, we could say it is not the phenomenon of joy in itself, that is either selfish or altruistic by nature, but that time, place, and circumstance must all be considered in relation one to the others.

However, to bring *muditā* within the ambit of the Buddha-Dhamma we need to go deeper into the necessity for cultivating this perfection. What are the opposites to be eliminated by its cultivation?

We never tire of asserting the interdependence of every aspect of the Buddha-Dhamma, no matter which particular facet is being discussed. We have already

stated that ignorance is failure of perception, and it is true that greed and hatred do arise through the non-perception of their source and subsequent results; that basically craving born of ignorance is the culprit, and that the purpose of the Buddha-Dhamma is to eliminate craving. It is craving that gives rise to jealousy, envy, covetousness, avarice, and greed in all of its manifestations. Here it is that *muditā* when practised and developed becomes a "sublime" and "boundless" state of mind to be "dwelt in" as a corrective characteristic for their removal.

One of the most frequently used similes by the Buddha was that of fire. At times it was the destructive quality of fire that was likened to the destructive nature of the passions. At other times it was the ardent nature of fire that was to be emulated in the pursuance of the path to holiness. In its uncontrolled existence fire is a destructive danger. Under control it is one of man's greatest boons and blessings. In either case it was a motivating force to be reckoned with, at all times active, potent, and energetic.

The three roots of evil, greed, hatred, and delusion, are also known as "the three fires". On one occasion the Buddha and his band of monks were for the time staying on Gaya Head, a mountain near the city of Gaya. From their elevated position they watched one of the great fires that from time to time ravaged the countryside. This inspired what is known as "The Fire Sermon", which is the third recorded discourse delivered by the Buddha subsequent to his Enlightenment, and at the beginning of his long ministry. To the Buddha, the world of Samsara was like the flaming plains below.

"Everything is burning", said the Buddha, "burning with the fire of passion, with the fire of hatred, with the fire of stupidity." (Vin. 21).

It is these three fires that gives rise to jealousy, envy, covetousness, avarice and greed. The craving for possessions, the craving for sensual pleasures, the begrudged success of others, the hatred that is begotten by the gains of others, the odious comparison of greater status compared with our humble circumstances, these are the "fires" that burn within us to our undoing.

It is now evident why *muditā* is such an important characteristic to be cultivated. When we can view the success of others with the same equanimity, and to the same extent, as we would extend *mettā* and *karuṇā*—loving-kindness and compassion—to those who suffer grief and distress, sadness and tribulation, sorrow and mourning, then we are beginning to exercise *muditā*, and are in the process of eradicating greed and craving. Developed still further, we can reach the stage of sharing with others their joy of possession, their financial or social successes, their elevation to positions of civic or national importance, or their receipt of titles and honorifics. In such a manner *muditā* is counteractive to conceits of all kinds, and its growth and development checks craving's grip.

Until we have developed this subjective characteristic within ourselves how can we develop the objective characteristics of *mettā* and *karuṇā*? The accumulated possessions, results of our greed, may give us the pleasure and the happiness of the miser gloating over his hoard of gold. The happiness born of shared

pleasures, shared love, shared possessions, shared delights in another's success, will surpass the meagre selfish happiness of the miser.

Unselfish joy multiplies in ratio to the extention of its application, quite apart from its purifying effect on our own lives.

In Nyanamoli's translation of Buddhaghosa's Visuddhimagga he uses 'gladness' for *muditā*, with the footnote : "Muditā—gladness—as one of the divine abidings is always used in the sense of gladness at others' success". Buddhaghosa illustrates this by saying: "On seeing or hearing about a dear person being happy, cheerful and glad, gladness can be aroused thus: 'This being is indeed glad. How good! How excellent!' Just as he would be glad on seeing a dear and beloved person, so he pervades all beings with gladness."

In "The Analysis of the Sixfold Sense-field" (Maj-Nik. 137) the Buddha speaks of the six joys connected with renunciation. While such joys are subjective by nature, they are devoid of any taint of egoistic craving that could give rise to the cankers of jealousy, envy, covetousness, or greed. These joys arise on the realization of the impermanence of material shapes, sounds, smells, flavours, touches, and mental states, and the renunciation of attachment to them.

From METTA, Vol. 12, No. 2

THE NATURE AND IMPLICATIONS OF "MUDITA"

L. R. Oates

Altruistic joy is one of the four "sublime states" of mind—friendliness, compassion, altruistic joy, and equanimity—which together form one related group among the various spiritual or physical exercises generally described as meditation or contemplation. These all have as their common aim the attainment of mental calm or equanimity, which is intended in turn to foster the development of liberating insight. "A still mind, like still water, yields a clear reflection of what is before it" This is why this particular series ends with equanimity, but the route by which it is attained in this case is different from that traversed for the most of the other themes used as a focus for concentration.

The others, such a meditation on the breath, on death, on visual objects (kasiṇa) or on the Buddha, the Doctrine and Order of the Enlightened One, are entirely concerned with the self-cultivation of the meditator. Most of these themes are abstract or inanimate, while the Buddha and the Order (in the strict sense applicable here) have transcended any power of ours to help or hinder them. So the only person concerned or affected in these forms of training is the meditator. It was doubtless to encourage those wrestling by these means with their own inner weaknesses or conflicts that the following verse of the Dhammapada were uttered:

"Let no one neglect his own task for the sake of another's, however great; let him, after he has discerned his own task, devote himself to his task."

(verse 166.)

But if this were the whole story it would be difficult for such self-cultivation to serve in turn as a basis for the freedom from bondage to the self-concept, which is the main characteristic of the development of insight. Indeed, it was the recognition of the dangers of self-preoccupation, or self-righteousness, liable to arise in these often acute struggles for self-discipline, that impelled the more extreme exponents of the Pure Land school of Buddhism to abandon self-cultivation in favour of the less exacting path of reliance on the Buddha's transforming grace. But the cultivation of the "sublime states" represents a less radical form of compensation which, while compatible with other practices, can help to broaden the meditator's perspective in order to achieve a mode of equanimity which does not imply withdrawal into oneself or indifference to others.

The starting point here, of course, is on the ethical plane in the practice of generosity in practical ways (*dāna*) which, in order to become interiorized and thereby go beyond mere outward form, must be grounded in an attitude of friendliness (*mettā*) for all beings without distinction. Since this outlook implies the recognition that all beings are subject to joys and sorrows just as we are, it finds a natural development in sympathy, that is to say, compassion for their sorrows and joy in their blessings.

The former of these seems much the easier to achieve, since it is possible to feel compassion for suffering even in the absence of any positive friendliness for the sufferer, whereas it is only possible to share genuinely in another's joy if there is some element of true affection or friendliness present. This is perhaps why, on a much lower level of sensitivity, the reporting of news seems so heavily concentrated on the side of crimes and disasters, which are perhaps felt more likely to arouse interest than happier events and deeds. If the latter arouse any interest at all, it is likely to be spiced with envy or cynicism.

Not only does genuine joy in the prosperity of others require some element of affection—it requires this to be of a quite high order. A great deal of what passes for love is really aimed at mere emotional gratification on the part of the lover, for whom the "beloved" is little more than a prop for acting out some drama satisfying a purely subjective need—the beloved's own needs being treated less seriously. Indeed, even apart from outright commercialization, a certain habit of bargaining with affections seems remarkably widespread, when one begins to take notice of it.

In the light of this, the ability to feel a genuine joy in another's happiness, equal to one's satisfaction with one's own, represents a truly "sublime state". So it is not surprising that in the history of Buddhism, which cultivated this attitude systematically, there arose an aspiration to share with others not only one's material resources, but the spiritual resources described as merit. This aspiration follows naturally enough from the basic theory as to what merit is. Merit is the accumulation of

tendencies resulting from enlightened deeds which, according to the law of moral causation (the law of karma), conduce to the future happiness of the doer.

> "Here he is joyful, hereafter he is joyful, in both worlds the well-doer is joyful. 'I have done good' is the thought that makes him happy. Still greater is his joy when he goes to states of bliss."

If the doer is still in a state where only purely personal forms of satisfaction are possible, the fruits of merit can only take this form. But suppose he loves even one being so much that, if that being is in some state of deprivation, he can only be made happy by the improvement of that being's lot, then the merit which is due to him can only take effect by benefitting him through that other's welfare. The wider his altruism expands, so that purely personal gratifications no longer adequately satisfy him, the wider must be the range of the benefit which his own merit would need to bring to others if it is to fulfil its defined function of bringing happiness to him. At the same time, his altruistic tendencies will ensure that he will have vastly more merit due to him, so his resources will tend to become commensurate with the aspirations, for example, of Santideva, when he says :

> "May I be an alleviator of the sorrows of all beings and a divine medicine to those afflicted by disease. May I be the benefactor and bringer of peace to them until all their bodily ailments and mental tribulations are at the end."

The principle of the sharing or transference of merit, so much stressed in Mahayana Buddhism (though

not unknown in Theravadin practices) is sometimes objected to by Western Buddhists because of a superficial resemblance to the Christian doctrine of atonement, which they have rejected. But the principles entailed are not really identical, since the Christian doctrine is based on an essential distinction between the roles of the Creator and the created, while the Buddhist sharing of merit arises from a combination of the definition of merit and of the nature of altruistic joy.

It has a further importance too, in that it anticipates the emancipation to be derived from insight into the emptiness of the self-concept, that is to say, awakening to the emptiness of the concepts "I" and "mine" in terms of ultimate truth. On this level, the description "mine" as applied to merit will finally be seen to be as inapplicable as in the case of any other assumed possession. This was already explicitly set out in one of the Buddha's earliest discourses, "The Marks of the Not-self", in which he taught his first five disciples to contemplate each of the five components of personality in the terms: "This is not mine; this am I not; this is not my self." The fourth of these components is the aggregate of mental tendencies or activities, which include merit and demerit. Even on a lower plane than that of perfect insight, it can be seen that our deeds are not exclusively ours, because no one acts in absolute isolation, so that every act involves some stimulus or opportunity arising from activity of others. On the other hand, a too persistent insistence on the individual nature of merit can only impede the ultimate awakening to the Not-self.

This has some bearing, too, on the reason why friendliness, compassion, and altruistic joy are regarded

as leading to an equanimity which does not imply an indifference to the joys and sorrows of others. In the absence of such a conclusion, the alternate sharing of joys and sorrows, like these emotions arising on one's own account, would be as endless as the world-cycles which it is the Buddhist aspiration to transcend. The goal of the "divine states" is that the aspirant, who in process achieves the role of a Bodhisattva in a two-way empathy with others by his perfect sharing of their joys and sorrows, is in a position to radiate to them a stability which in turn will help them to be less subject to their own emotional vicissitudes. In this way, he and they are liberated together, each sustaining the other.

From METTA, Vol. 12, No. 2

THE MEDITATIVE DEVELOPMENT OF UNSELFISH JOY

From "The Path of Purification"

(*Visuddhi-Magga*)

One who begins the development of Unselfish Joy should not start with a dearly beloved person, a neutral person or a hostile person. For it is not the mere fact that a person is dearly beloved, which makes him an immediate cause of developing Unselfish Joy, and still less so a neutral or hostile person. Persons of the opposite sex and those who are dead are not suitable subjects for this meditation.

A very close friend, however, can be a suitable subject. One who is called in the commentaries an affectionate companion; for he is always in a joyous mood: he laughs first and speaks afterwards. He should be the first to be pervaded with Unselfish Joy. Or on seeing or hearing about a dear person being happy, cheerful and joyous, Unselfish Joy can be aroused thus: 'This being, verily, is happy! How good, how excellent!' For this is what is referred to in the Vibhanga: "And how does a bhikkhu dwell pervading one direction with his heart endued with unselfish joy? Just as he would be joyful on seeing a dear and beloved person, so he pervades all beings with unselfish joy" (Vibhanga 274).

But if his affectionate friend or the dear person was happy in the past but is now unlucky and unfortunate, then unselfish joy can still be aroused by remembering his past happiness; or by anticipating that he will be happy and successful again in the future.

Having thus aroused Unselfish Joy with respect to a dear person, the meditator can then direct it towards a neutral one, and after that towards a hostile one.

But if resentment towards the hostile one arises in him, he should make it subside in the same way as described under the exposition of Loving-kindness.

He should then break down the barriers by means of impartiality towards the four, that is, towards these three and himself. And by cultivating the sign (or after-image, obtained in concentration), developing and repeatedly practising it, he should increase the absorption to triple or (according to the Abhidhamma division) quadruple Jhāna.

Next, the versality (in this meditation) should be understood in the same way as stated under Loving-kindness. It consists in

(a) unspecified pervasion in these five ways:

"May all beings .... all breathing things .... all creatures ... all persons ... all those who have a personality be free from enmity, affliction and anxiety, and live happily!"

(b) specified pervasion in these seven ways:

"May all women ... all men ... all Noble Ones ... all not Noble Ones ... all deities ... all human beings ... all in states of misery (in lower worlds) be free from enmity, etc.

(c) directional pervasion in these ten ways:

"May all beings (all breathing things etc.; all women, etc.) in the eastern direction ..... in the western ... northern ... southern direction ... in the intermediate eastern, western, northern and southern direction ... in the downward direction ..... in the upward direction be free from enmity, etc."

This versatility is successful only in one whose mind has reached absorption (jhāna).

When this meditator develops the mind-deliverance of unselfish joy through any of these kinds of absorption he obtains these eleven advantages: he sleeps in comfort, wakes in comfort, and dreams no evil dreams, he is dear to human beings, dear to non-human beings, deities guard him, fire and poison and weapons do not

affect him, his mind is easily concentrated, the expression of his face is serene, he dies unconfused, if he penetrates no higher he will be reborn in the Brahmā World (Anguttara Nikāya V, 342).

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THE VENERABLE LEDI SAYADAW

EDITOR'S PREFACE

With the present volume we present to our readers another treatise by the eminent Burmese scholar-monk, the late Venerable Ledi Sayadaw, whose Life Sketch appears in a work of his, published earlier in this series, '*A Manual of Insight*' (Vipassanā Dīpanī) ('The Wheel' No. 31/32).

We believe that this present treatise is one of the most helpful expositions of Dhamma which we have been privileged to publish in 'The Wheel' series. It offers not only a wealth of information on many aspects of the Teaching, but is also a forcefully reasoned and stirring appeal to earnest endeavour towards the Goal. We therefore, wish to recommend this work to our readers' close and repeated study and reflection.

This treatise has been reproduced from the journal *The Light of the Dhamma* (Rangoon), which regrettably has ceased publication. For permission of reprint we are grateful to the publishers, The Union of Burma Buddha Sāsana Council, Rangoon.

In the present edition, many of the Pali terms used in the original translation have been supplemented or replaced, by the English equivalents, for facilitating the reading of the treatise. The last chapter has been condensed. Otherwise only minor changes have been made in the diction.

In the original publication, the term *bodhipakkhiya-dhamma* had been rendered by 'Factors leading to Enlightenment', which, however, resembles too closely the customary translation of the term *bojjhanga*, by 'Factors of Enlightenment' (see here Chapter VII). Therefore the title of the treatise in the original translation and the rendering of the

term in the body of the text have been changed into "Requisites of Enlightenment", being one of the connotations of *bodhipakkhiya-dhamma*, as given in Chapter I. This nuance of meaning was chosen in view of the fact that this treatise does not deal with perfected constituents of Enlightenment (*bodhi*) already achieved, but with the *approach* to that goal by earnest cultivation of those seven groups of qualities and practices which form the 37 *Bodhipakkhiya-dhammas.*

A detailed Table of Contents and a comprehensive Index have been added to this edition, for facilitating the use of this book.

Nyanaponika Mahathera
Editor, 'The Wheel'

Kandy, Ceylon
31 March, 1971

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

THE VENERABLE LEDI SAYADAW'S works are well known in Burma. They are widely known because they are clear expositions of the Buddha Dhamma couched in language easily intelligible to an ordinary educated Burman. Yet, the Venerable Sayadaw's works are not meant for an absolute beginner in Buddhist studies. There are many Buddhist technical terms which require a certain amount of previous foundation in Buddhist tradition and practice.

The Venerable Sayadaw's exposition contains many technical Pāli terms which are used by him as if they were ordinary Burmese words. Many of these terms have been incorporated into the Burmese language either in their original Pāli form or with slight variations to accord with Burmese euphony. These are words which Burmans have made no attempt to translate, but have preferred to absorb them into the normal usage of the Burmese language. I have similarly made no attempt to translate many of them into English in the present translation. I have used these words in their original Pāli form, though in all such cases an attempt has been made to append short explanatory footnotes in order to facilitate continuity in reading.

Though the translation is not *verbatim*, yet a careful attempt has been made to render as nearly a *verbatim* translation as is possible in the circumstances, having regard to differences in the construction of sentences between English and Burmese, to differences in the manner of presentation and to the Venerable Sayadaw's penchant for sometimes using extremely long sentences.

Many of the sub-headings are not in the original text, but have been introduced by the translator for assisting the English reader.

The Venerable Saydaw was a prolific writer. His works number over a hundred. Each of these works was written at the specific request of one or more of his numerous disciples, either as an answer to certain questions put to him, or, as in the present case, to expound certain important points or aspects of the Buddha-Dhamma.

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BODHIPAKKHIYA-DIPANI

A MANUAL OF
THE REQUISITES OF ENLIGHTENMENT

INTRODUCTION

In compliance with the request of the Pyinmana Myo-ok Maung Po Mya and Trader Maung Hla, during the month of Nayon, 1266 Burmese Era (June, 1904 C.E.), I shall state concisely the meaning and intent of the thirty-seven Bodhi-pakkhiya-dhammas, the Requisites of Enlightenment.

Four Types of Capacity for Path Attainment

It is stated in the Puggala-Paññatti (the 'Book of Classification of Individuals', 160; Abhidhamma Pitaka) and in the Anguttara Nikāya (The Fours, No. 133) that, of the beings who encounter the Sāsana, i.e. the Teaching of the Buddha, four classes can be distinguished, viz.:

1. *Ugghāṭitaññu*,
2. *Vipañcitaññu*,
3. *Neyya*, and
4. *Padaparama*.

Of these four classes of beings, an *Ugghāṭitaññū* (one who understands immediately) is an individual who encounters a Buddha in person,[1] and who is capable of attaining the

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1. This is not mentioned in the canonical texts referred to above, and their commentaries. (Ed.)

Paths and the Fruits through the mere hearing of a short concise discourse.

A *Vipañcitaññū* is an individual who has not the capability of attaining the Paths and the Fruits through the mere hearing of a short discourse, but who yet is capable of attaining the Paths and the Fruits when the short discourse is expounded to him at some length.

A *Neyya* is an individual who has not the capability of attaining the Paths and the Fruits through the hearing of a short discourse or when it is expounded to him at some length, but is one for whom it is necessary to study and take careful note of the sermon and the exposition, and then to practise the provisions contained therein for days, months, and years, in order that he may attain the Paths and the Fruits.

This *Neyya* class of individuals can again be sub-divided into many other classes according to the period of practice which each individual finds necessary before he can attain the Paths and the Fruits, and which further is dependent on the *pāramīs* (Perfections) which each of them has previously acquired, and the *kilesas* (defilements) which each has surmounted. These classes of individuals include on the one hand those for whom the necessary period of practice is seven days, and on the other, those for whom the necessary period of practice may extend to thirty or sixty years.

Further classes also arise as for example in the case of individuals whose necessary period of practice is seven days; the stage of an Arahant may be attained if effort is made in the first or second period of life,[2] while no more than the lower stages of the Paths and the Fruits can be attained if effort be made only in the third period of life.

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2. Three periods of life are usually distinguished, viz. youth, middle-age, and old-age. See 'Path of Purification' (Visuddhi Magga), tr. by Nāṇamoli, p. 721.

Then, again, putting forth effort for seven days means exerting as much as is in one's power to do so. If the effort is not of the highest order, the period of necessary effort becomes lengthened according to the laxity of the effort, and seven days may become seven years or longer.

If the effort during this life is not sufficiently intense as to enable one to attain the Paths and the Fruits, then release from worldly ills cannot be obtained during the present Buddha Sāsana (Dispensation of a Buddha's Teaching) while release during future Buddha Sāsanas can be obtained only if the individual encounters them. No release can be obtained if no Buddha Sāsana is encountered. It is only in the case of individuals who have secured *niyata vyākaraṇa* (sure prediction made by a Buddha), that an encounter with a Buddha Sāsana and release from worldly ills is certain. An individual who has not attained 'Sure prediction' (*niyata vyākaraṇa*) cannot be certain either of encountering a Buddha Sāsana or achieving release from worldly ills, even though he has accumulated sufficient *pāramīs* to make both these achievements possible.

These are considerations in respect of those individuals who possess the capabilities of attaining the Paths and the Fruits by putting forth effort for seven days, but who have not obtained 'sure prediction'.

Similar considerations apply to the cases of those individuals who have the potentiality of attaining the Paths and the Fruits by putting forth effort for fifteen days, or for longer periods.

A *Padaparama* is an individual who, though he encounters a Buddha Sāsana, and though he puts forth the utmost possible effort in both the study and practice of the Dhamma, cannot attain the Paths and the Fruits within this lifetime. All that he can do is to accumulate good habits and potentials (*vāsanā*).

Such a person cannot obtain release from worldly ills during this lifetime. If he dies while practising *samatha* (Tranquillity) or *vipassanā* (Insight), and attains rebirth either as a human being or a *deva* in his next existence, he can attain release from worldly ills in that existence within the present Buddha Sāsana.

Thus did the Buddha declare with respect to four classes of individuals.

Three Types of Patients

In the same sources referred to above, the Buddha gave another classification of beings, dividing them into three classes resembling three types of sick persons[3], namely:

(1) A person who is certain of regaining health in due time even though he does not take any medicine or treatment.
(2) A person who is certain of failing to make a recovery, and dying from the illness, no matter to what extent he may take medicines or treatment.
(3) A person who will recover if he takes the right medicine and treatment, but who will fail to recover and die if he fails to take the right medicine and treatment. These are the three kinds of sick persons.

Persons who obtained *niyata vyākaraṇa* (sure prediction made by a Buddha) from previous Buddhas, and who as such are certain of obtaining release from worldly ills in this life, resemble the first class of sick persons.

A *Padaparama* class of individual resembles the second class of sick persons. Just as this second class of sick person has no chance of recovery from his illness, a *Padaparama*

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3. Puggala-Paññatti §100f; Anguttara, Tika-nipāta (The Threes), No. 22 (see 'The Wheel' No. 155/158, p. 18).

class of individual has no chance of obtaining release from worldly ills during this life. In future lives, however, he can obtain release either within the present Buddha Sāsana or within future Buddha Sāsanas. The story of the youth Chatta-māṇava,[4] of the frog who became a *deva*,[4] and of the ascetic Saccaka[5] are illustrations of persons who obtained release from worldly ills in their next following existences within the present Buddha Sāsana.

A *Neyya* class of individual resembles the third class of sick persons. Just as a person of this third class is related to the two ways of either recovering or dying from the sickness, so is a *Neyya* individual related to the two eventualities of either obtaining release from worldly ills during the present life, or failing to obtain such release.

If such a *Neyya* individual, knowing what is good for him according to his age, discards what should be discarded, searches for the right teacher, and obtains the right guidance from him and puts forth sufficient effort, he can obtain release from worldly ills in this very life. If, however, he becomes addicted to wrong views and wrong ways of conduct; if he finds himself unable to discard sensual pleasures; if although able to discard sensual pleasures he does not obtain the guidance of a good teacher; if although obtaining the guidance of a good teacher, he is unable to evoke sufficient effort; if although inclined to put forth effort he is unable to do so through old age; if although young he is liable to sickness, he cannot obtain release from worldly ills in this present life. King Ajātasattu,[6] the millionaire Mahādhana's son,[7] Bhikkhu Sudinna,[8] are cases of persons who could not have release from worldly ills in this present existence.

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4. Vimāna Vatthu. 5. Majjhima Nikāya No. 36.
6. Digha Nikāya No. 2: Sāmaññaphala Sutta.
7. Dhammapada Commentary.—Peta Vatthu.
8. Vinaya Piṭaka, Pārājikā.

King Ajātasattu failed to obtain release because he had committed parricide. It is stated that he will drift in future *saṁsāra* (round of rebirths) for two *asaṅkheyyas* (unit followed by 140 ciphers) of world-cycles, after which he will become a *paccekabuddha* (Solitary Buddha).

The millionaire *Mahādhana*'s son indulged himself so excessively in sensual pleasures during his youth that he was unable to attain tranquillity of mind when he grew older. Far from obtaining release from worldly ills, he did not even get the opportunity of associating with the Ti-Ratana.[9] Seeing his plight at that stage, the Buddha said to Ananda: "Ananda, if this millionaire's son had become a *bhikkhu* in my *sāsana* during his youth or first period of his life, he would have become an Arahant and would have attained Parinibbāna[10] in this present life. If, otherwise, he had become a *bhikkhu* during the second period of his life, he would have become an Anāgāmi[11] and on death would have been reborn in the *Suddhāvāsa brahma loka*,[12] whence he would attain *parinibbāna*. In the next alternative, if he had become a *bhikkhu* in my *sāsana* at the beginning of the third period of life, he would have become either a Sakadāgāmi (Once-Returner) or a Sotāpanna (Stream-enterer) and would have attained permanent release from rebirth in the *apāya lokas*."[13] Thus said the Buddha to the Venerable

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9. Ti-ratana, 'The Triple Gem': Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha.
10. 'Full Nibbana'. The death of an Arahant is known as attaining *parinibbāna*.
11. i.e., a Non-Returner, the third of the four stages of sanctitude. He is no longer reborn in the world of sensuality (*kāma-loka*).
12. The 'Pure Abodes', are a group of 5 heavens belonging to the Form-Sphere, where only the Never-Returners are being reborn, and in which they attain Arahantship and Nibbana.
13. Apāya lokas: The four Lower Regions of Misery. They are: the animal world, the ghost-world, the demon-world and hell.

Ananda. Thus, although, he (the millionaire Mahādhana's son) possessed *pāramī* ripe enough to make his present life his last existence, not being a person who had secured 'sure prediction', *niyata vyākaraṇa*, he failed to obtain release from worldly ills in his present life because of the upheavals caused by the defilements within him, and this is despite the fact that he had the opportunity of encountering the Buddha Sāsana. If further his period of existence in the Lower Regions (*apāya loka*) is prolonged because of evil acts done in this existence, he would not be able to rise again and emerge out of those *apāya lokas* in time for the *sāsana* of the future Metteyya Buddha. And, after that, the large number of world-cycles that follow are world-cycles where no Buddhas appear,[14] there being no world-cycles within the vicinity of the present world where Buddhas are due to appear. Alas! far indeed is this millionaire's son from release from worldly ills even though he possessed *pāramī* (Perfections) ripe enough to make his present existence his last one.

The general opinion current at the present day is that if the *pāramīs* are complete, one cannot miss encountering a Buddha Sāsana even if one does not wish to do so, and that one's release from worldly ills is ensured even though one may not desire such release. These people fail to pay attention to the existence of *niyata* (i.e., one who has obtained a sure prediction made by a Buddha) and *aniyata* (one who has not obtained a sure prediction made by a Buddha). Considering the two texts from the Piṭakas mentioned above, and the story of the millionaire Mahādhanas' son, it should be remembered that *aniyata neyya* individuals can attain release from worldly ills in this life only if they put forth sufficient effort, even if they possess *pāramī* sufficient to enable them to obtain such release. If industry and effort are lacking, the

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14. Suñña-kappas: "Zero" world-cycles.

Paths and the Fruits cannot be attained within the present Buddha Sāsana.

Apart from these classes of persons, there are also an infinite number of other beings who, like the ascetics Aḷāra and Uddaka (Majjh. 28), possess sufficient *pārami* for release from worldly ills, but who do not get the opportunity because they happen to be in one or the other of the eight inopportune places (*aṭṭhakkhaṇas*)[15] where it is not possible to attain the Paths and the Fruits thereof.

Necessary Conditions of Practice for Neyya and Padaparama

Of the four classes of individuals mentioned, the *Ugghāṭitaññū* and the *Vipañcitaññū* classes can attain the Sotāpatti-magga (Path of a Stream-winner) and the other higher stages of wisdom—like Visākhā and Anāthapiṇḍika[16] — through the mere hearing of a discourse. It is not necessary for such individuals to practise the Dhamma according to the stages of Purification, such as Purification of Virtue (*sīla-visuddhi*), of Consciousness (*citta-visuddhi*) and so on. Be it remembered that this is also the case when *devas* and *brahmās* attain release from worldly ills.

Hence it should be noted that the courses of practice such as *sīla-visuddhi* and *citta-visuddhi*, laid down in the Pāli Canon, are only for the *Neyya* and *Padaparama* classes

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15. Digha Nikāya, Pāthika-vagga, Dasuttara Sutta; Anguttara Nikāya III Atthaka-nipāta, Akkhana Sutta, p. 60; — (i) *paccantaro*—a border district where the Buddha Sāsana does not flourish: (ii) *Arūpino* — the four Brahma planes of the Formless-sphere; (iii) *Vītalingo* — persons with congenital defects such as idiocy, etc.; (iv) *Asaññasatta* — a brahma plane of the Form-Sphere of non-consciousness.; (v) *Micchā-diṭṭhi*—birth among people holding wrong views; (vi) *Peta*—the Ghost world; (vii) *Tiracchāna* — the animal world; and (viii) *Niraya* — hell.
16. Dhammapada Commentary, stories relating to verses 1 and 18.

of individuals before their attainment of the Sotāpatti-magga. These courses of practice are also for the first three classes of individuals prior to the achievement of the higher stages of the Paths and the Fruits. In the period after the attainment of Arahantship also, these courses of practice are used for the purpose of *diṭṭha-dhamma-sukha-vihāra* (dwelling at ease in this present existence)[17], since Arahants have already gone through them.

After the passing of the first thousand years (of the present Buddha Sāsana), which constituted the times of the *Paṭisaṃbhidhā-patta* Arahant (Arahant possessing Analytical Knowledge), the period of the present Buddha Sāsana comprises the times of the *Neyya* and *Padaparama* classes of individuals alone. At the present day, only these two classes of individuals remain.

Neyya-puggala

Of these two classes of individuals, an individual of the *Neyya* class can become a Stream-winner (*Sotāpanna*) in this present life, if he faithfully practises the *bodhipakkhiya-dhamma* comprising *satipaṭṭhāna* (four Foundations of Mindfulness), *sammappadhāna* (Right Exertion), etc. If he is lax in his practice, he can become a *Sotāpanna* only in his next existence after being reborn in the *deva* planes. If he dies while still aloof from these (*bodhipakkhiya*) Dhammas, such as *satipaṭṭhāna*, etc., he will become a total loss so far as the present Buddha Sāsana is concerned, but he can still attain release from worldly ills if he encounters the Sāsana of the next Buddha.

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17. In an Arahant there arises the knowledge of his freedom, and he realises: "Rebirth is no more; I have lived the pure life; I have done what ought to be done; I have nothing more to do for the realisation of Arahantship." Thus he lives at ease in this existence.

Padaparama-puggala

An individual of the *Padaparama* class can attain release within the present Buddha Sāsana after rebirth in the *deva* planes in his next existence, if he can faithfully practice these (*bodhipakkhiya*) Dhammas in his present existence.

The Age of Ariyas (Noble Ones) still extant

The five thousand years of the present Buddha Sāsana constitute, all of them, the Age of Saints. This Age of Saints will continue to exist so long as the Tipitakas (canonical Scriptures) remain in the world. The *Padaparama* class of individuals have to utilise the opportunity afforded by the encountering of the present Buddha Sāsana to accumulate as much of the nuclii or seeds of *Pāramī* as they can within this lifetime. They have to accumulate the seeds of *sīla* (Morality). They have to accumulate the seeds of *samādhi* (Concentration).They have to accumulate the seeds of *paññā* (Wisdom).

Morality (*Sīla*)

Of these three kinds of accumulations, *sīla* (Morality), *samādhi* (Concentration), *Paññā* (Wisdom), the seeds of *sīla* mean: *Pañca Sīla*,[18] *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka Sīla*,[19] *Aṭṭhāṅga*

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18. The Five Precepts. They are basic and constitute the minimum which every man or woman must observe. They are: abstention from killing, stealing, improper sexual intercourse, telling lies, and taking intoxicants.
19. The three constituents of the Morality-group of the Eightfold Path when considered in detail, become *Ājivaṭṭhamaka sīla* (Morality ending with the practice of Right Livelihood) in the following way: 1. I will abstain from taking life. 2.I will abstain from stealing. 3. I will abstain from indulging in improper sexual intercourse and taking intoxicant drugs. 4. I will abstain from telling lies. 5. I will abstain from setting one person against another. 6. I will abstain from using rude and rough words. 7. I will abstain from frivolous talk. 8. I will abstain from improper livelihood.

Uposatha Sīla,[20] *Dasaṅga Sīla*,[21] in respect of ordinary laymen and women, and the *Bhikkhu Sīla*[22] in respect of the bhikkhus.

Concentration (*Samādhi*)

The seeds of *samādhi* (Concentration) mean the efforts to achieve *parikamma-samādhi* (Preparatory Concentration) through one or other of the forty objects of meditation, such as the ten *kasiṇas* (meditation devices), or, if further efforts can be evoked, the efforts to achieve *upacāra-samādhi* (Access Concentration), or, if still further efforts can be evoked, the efforts to achieve *appanā-samādhi* (Attainment Concentration).

Wisdom (*Paññā*)

The seeds of *paññā* mean the cultivation of the ability to analyse the characteristics and qualities of *rūpa* (Material Phenomena), *nāma* (Mental Phenomena), *khandhā* (Constituent groups of existence), *āyatana* (Bases), *dhātu* (Elements), *sacca* (Truths), and the *paṭiccasamuppāda* (Dependent Origination), as well as the cultivation of insight into the three characteristics of existence (*lakkhaṇa*), namely, *anicca* (Impermanence), *dukkha* (Suffering), *anattā* (Impersonality).

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20. The Eight Precepts are: Abstention from (1) killing, (2) stealing, (3) unchastity, (4) lying, (5) intoxicants, (6) eating after mid-day, (7) dancing, singing, music and shows, garlands, scent, cosmetics and adornment etc. (8) luxurious and high beds.
21. The Ten Precepts. This is the polished form of *Aṭṭha-Sila*. No. 7 of the Eight Precepts is split into two parts, and No. 10 is 'abstinence from accepting gold and silver.'
22. Bhikkhu Sila: the four kinds of the monk's Moral Purity (*catupārisuddhi-sila*) are:— (1) Restraint with regard to the 227 Vinaya Rules. (2) Restraint of the senses. (3) Restraint with regard to one's livelihood. (4) Morality with regard to the 4 requisites.

Of the three kinds of seeds of Path-Knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*) and Fruition-Knowledge (*phala-ñāṇa*),[23] *sīla* and *samādhi* are like ornaments that permanently adorn the world and exist even in the *suñña* (void) world-cycles, that is, world-cycles where no Buddhas arise. The seeds of *sīla* and *samādhi* can be obtained at will at any time. But the seeds of *paññā*, which are related to *rūpa*, *nāma*, *khandhā*, *āyatana*, *dhātu*, *sacca*, and *paṭiccasamuppāda* can be obtained only when one encounters a Buddha Sāsana. Outside of a Buddha Sāsana one does not get the opportunity of even hearing the mere mention of words associated with *paññā*, though an infinite number of '*suñña*' world-cycles (void of a Buddha) may have passed away. Hence, those persons of the present day who are fortunate enough to be born into this world while a Buddha Sāsana flourishes, if they intend to accumulate the seeds of Path and Fruition-Knowledge for the purpose of securing release from worldly ills in a future existence within a future Buddha Sāsana, should pay special attention to the knowledge of the *paramattha*[24] (ultimate realities), which is extremely difficult for one to come across, more than attempting the accumulation of the seeds of *sīla* and *samādhi*. At the least, they should attempt to obtain an insight into how the Four Great Primaries (*mahā-bhūta*) — *paṭhavī*, *āpo*, *tejo* and *vāyo*[25]—constitute one's body. If they acquire a good insight into the four great elements, they

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23. *Magga-ñāṇa:* Knowledge of the 4 Holy Paths, i.e. of Stream-entry, etc.:— *Phala-ñāṇa:* Knowledge of the Fruits thereof. *Paramattha:* Truth in the ultimate sense; absolute truth.

24. The Abhidhammattha Saṅgaha lists four *paramattha dhammas*, namely, *Citta* (Consciousness), *Cetasika* (Mental factors), *Rūpa* (Material qualities) and Nibbana.

25. *Paṭhavī* (Element of Extension,) *Āpo* (Element of Liquidity or Cohesion), *Tejo* (Element of Kinetic Energy), and *Vāyo* (Element of Motion or Support); popularly called: earth, water, fire and wind.

obtain a sound collection of the seeds of *paññā* which are most difficult of acquisition, and this is so even though they may not acquire any knowledge of the other portions of the Abhidhamma. It can then be said that the difficult attainment of rebirth within a Buddha Sāsana has been made worthwhile.

Vijjā (Knowledge), and Caraṇa (conduct)

Sīla and *samādhi* constitute *Caraṇa*, while *paññā* constitutes *Vijjā*. Thus are *vijjā-caraṇa* (Knowledge and Conduct) constituted. *Vijjā* resembles the eyes of a human being, while *caraṇa* resembles the limbs. *Vijjā* is like eyes in birds, while *caraṇa* is like wings. A person who is endowed with Morality and Concentration, but lacks Wisdom, is like one who possesses complete and whole limbs but is blind of both eyes. A person who is endowed with *vijjā* (Knowledge) but lacks *caraṇa* (Conduct), is like one who has good eye-sight but is defective in his limbs. A person who is endowed with both *vijjā* and *caraṇa* is like a normally whole person possessing both good eyesight and healthy limbs. A person who lacks both *vijjā* and *caraṇa* is like one defective in eyes and limbs, and is not worthy of being called a human being.

Consequences of having Caraṇa only

Amongst the persons living within the present Buddha Sāsana, there are some who are fully endowed with Morality and Concentration, but do not possess the seeds of *vijjā* (Knowledge) such as Insight into the nature of Material Qualities, Mental Qualities and Constituent Groups of Existence. Because they are strong in *caraṇa* they are likely to encounter the next Buddha Sāsana, but because they lack the seeds of *vijjā* they cannot attain Enlightenment, even though they hear the discourse of the next Buddha in person.

They are like Lāludāyi Thera,[26] Upananda Thera,[27] the Chabbaggiya bhikkhus,[28] and the King of Kosala[29] who all lived during the lifetime of the Omniscient Buddha. Because they were endowed with the previously accumulated Good Conduct (*caraṇa*) such as almsgiving and morality, they had the opportunity to associate with the Supreme Buddha, but since they lacked previously accumulated Knowledge (*vijjā*), the discourses of the Buddha which they often heard throughout their lives, fell, as it were, on deaf ears.

Of having Vijjā only

There are others who are endowed with *vijjā* such as Insight into the Material and Mental Qualities and the Constituent Groups of Existence, but who lack *caraṇa* such as *dāna* (Almsgiving), *nicca sīla* (Permanent Morality) and *uposatha sīla* (Precepts observed on Fasting days). Should these persons get the opportunity of meeting and hearing the discourses of the next Buddha they can attain Enlightenment because they possess *vijjā*, but since they lack *caraṇa* it would be extremely difficult for them to get the opportunity of meeting the next Buddha. This is so because there is an *antara-kappa* (intervening world-cycle) between the present Buddha Sāsana and the next.

In case these beings wander within the Sensuous Sphere during this period, it means a succession of an infinite number of existences and rebirths, and an opportunity to meet the next Buddha can be secured only if all these rebirths are confined to the Happy Course of Existence. If, in the interim,

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26. Dhammapada-Commentary, Story relating to Verse 64.
27. Dhammapada Commentary, Story relating to Verse 158 "The Greedy Monk."
28. Vinaya Piṭaka, Mahāvagga.
29. Dhammapada Commentary, Story relating to Verse 60.

a rebirth occurs in one of the Four Lower Regions, the opportunity to meet the next Buddha would be irretrievably lost, for one rebirth in one of the Four Lower Worlds is often followed by an infinite number of rebirths in one or other of them.

Those persons whose acts of *dāna* (Almsgiving) in this life are few, who are ill-guarded in their bodily acts, unrestrained in their speech, and unclean in their thoughts, and who thus are deficient in *caraṇa* (Conduct), possess a strong tendency to be reborn in the Four Lower Worlds when they die. If through some good fortune they manage to be reborn in the Happy Course of Existence, wherever they may be reborn they are, because of their previous lack of *caraṇa* such as *dāna*, likely to be deficient in riches, and likely to meet with hardships, trials, and tribulations in their means of livelihood, and thus encounter tendencies to rebirth in the *apāya lokas*. Because of their lack of the *caraṇa* of *nicca sīla* and *uposatha sīla*, they are likely to meet with disputes, quarrels, anger and hatred in their dealings with other persons, in addition to being susceptible to diseases and ailments, and thus encounter tendencies towards rebirth in the *apāya lokas*. Thus will they encounter painful experiences in every existence, gathering undesirable tendencies, leading to the curtailment of their period of existence in the Happy Course of Existence and causing rebirth in the Four Lower Worlds. In this way the chances of those who lack *caraṇa*, for meeting the next Buddha are very slight indeed.

The Essential Point

In short, the essential fact is, only when one is endowed with the seeds of both *vijjā* and *caraṇa* can one obtain release from worldly ills in one's next existence. If one possesses the seeds of *vijjā* alone, and lacks the seeds of *caraṇa* such as

dāna and *sīla*, one will fail to secure the opportunity of meeting the next Buddha Sāsana. If, on the other hand, one possesses the seeds of *caraṇa* but lacks the seeds of *vijjā*, one cannot attain release from worldly ills even though one encounters the next Buddha Sāsana. Hence, those *Padaparama* individuals of today, be they men or women, who look forward to meeting the next Buddha Sāsana, should attempt to accumulate within the present Buddha Sāsana the seeds of *caraṇa* by the practice of *dāna*, *sīla* and *samatha bhāvanā* (Practice of Tranquillity), and should also, at the least, with respect to *vijjā*, try to practise insight into the Four Great Primaries and thus ensure meeting the next Buddha Sāsana, and having met it, to attain release from worldly ills.

When it is said that *dāna* is *caraṇa*, it comes under the category of *saddhā* (Faith), which is one of the *saddhammas* or practical conduct of good people, which again come under the fifteen *caraṇa-dhammas*. The fifteen *caraṇa-dhammas* are:—

1. *Sīla* (Morality);
2. *Indriya-saṁvara* (Guarding the Sense-doors);
3. *Bhojane mattaññutā* (Moderation in eating);
4. *Jāgariyānuyoga* (Wakefulness);

5-11. *Saddhamma* (The seven attributes of good and virtuous men);

12-15. Four *Jhānas* (Meditative Absorptions).

These fifteen *dhammas* are the property of the highest *jhānalābhi* (Attainer of *Jhānas*). So far as *sukkhavipassaka* (practising Insight only) individuals are concerned, they should possess eleven of the *caraṇa dhammas*, *i.e.* without the four *Jhānas*.

For those persons who look forward to meeting the next Buddha Sāsana, *dāna*, *uposatha-sīla*, and the seven *saddhammas* are the essentials.

Those persons who wish to attain the Paths and the Fruits thereof in this very life must fulfil the first eleven *caraṇa-dhammas*, *i.e. sīla*, *indriyasaṁvara*, *bhojane mattaññutā*, *jāgariyānuyoga*, and the seven *saddhammas*. Herein, *sīla* means *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka nicca sīla* (Permanent practice of Morality ending with right livelihood), *Indriyasaṁvara* means guarding the six sense-doors— eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind. *Bhojane mattaññutā* means taking just sufficient food to preserve the balance of the corporeality group in the body and being satisfied therewith. *Jāgariyānuyogo* means not sleeping during the day, and sleeping only during one period (of the three periods) of the night, practising *bhāvanā* (Mental Concentration) during the other two periods.

Saddhamma means:

1. *Saddhā* (Faith),
2. *Sati* (Mindfulness),
3. *Hiri* (Moral Shame),
4. *Ottappa* (Moral Dread),
5. *Bāhusacca* (Great learning),
6. *Vīriya* (Energy; diligence),
7. *Paññā* (Wisdom).

For those who wish to become Sotāpannas during this life there is no special necessity to practise *dāna* (Almsgiving). But let those who find themselves unable to evoke sufficient effort towards acquiring the ability to obtain release from worldly ills during the present Buddha Sāsana make special attempts to practise *dāna* (Almsgiving) and *uposatha-sīla* (Precepts observed on Fasting Days).

Order of Practice and Those who await the next Buddha

Since the work in the case of those who depend on and await the next Buddha consists of no more than acquiring accumulation of *pāramī*, it is not strictly necessary for them to adhere to the order of the stages of practice laid down in the Pāli Texts, viz., *sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā*. They should not thus defer the practice of *samādhi* before the completion of the practice of *sīla*, or defer the practice of *paññā* before the completion of the practice of *samādhi*. In accordance with the order of the seven *visuddhis* (Purifications) such as (1) *Sīla-visuddhi* (Purification of Virtue), (2) *Citta-visuddhi* (Purification of Consciousness), (3) *Diṭṭhi-visuddhi* (Purification of View), (4) *Kaṅkhāvitaraṇa-visuddhi* (Purification by Overcoming Doubt), (5) *Maggāmaggañāṇadassana-visuddhi* (Purification by Knowledge and Vision of What is and What is Not Path), (6) *Paṭipadāñāṇadassana-visuddhi* (Purification by Knowledge and Vision of the Way), and (7) *Ñāṇadassana-visuddhi* (Purification by Knowledge and Vision), they should not postpone the practice of any course for a *visuddhi* until the completion of the respective previous course. Since they are persons engaged in the accumulation of as much of the seeds of *pāramī* as they can, they should contrive to accumulate the largest amount of *sīla*, *samādhi*, and *paññā*, that lies in their power.

When it is stated in the Pāli Texts that *citta-visuddhi* should be practised only after the completion of the practice of *sīla-visuddhi*, that *diṭṭhi-visuddhi* should be practised only after the completion of the practice of *citta-visuddhi*, that *kaṅkhāvitaraṇa-visuddhi* should be practised only after the completion of the practice of *diṭṭhi-visuddhi*, that the work of *anicca*, *dukkha*, and *anattā bhāvanā* (Contemplation of Impermanence, Suffering and Impersonality) should be undertaken only after the completion of the practice of

kaṅkhāvitaraṇa-visuddhi, — the order of practice prescribed is meant for those who attempt the speedy realisation of the Paths and the Fruits thereof in this very life. Since those who find themselves unable to call forth such effort and are engaged only in the accumulation of the seeds of *pāramī*, are persons occupied in grasping whatever they can, of good practices, it should not be said in their case that the work of *samatha manasikāra citta-visuddhi* (the practice of Purification of Consciousness consisting of advertence of mind to tranquillity) should not be undertaken before the fulfilment of *sīla-visuddhi*.

Even in the case of hunters and fishermen, it should not be said that they should not practise *samatha-vipassanā-manasikāra* (advertence of mind towards Tranquillity and Insight) unless they discard their avocations. One who says so causes *dhammantarāya* (Obstruction to the Dhamma). Hunters and fishermen should, on the other hand, be encouraged to contemplate the noble qualities of the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Saṅgha. They should be induced to contemplate as much as is in their power, the characteristic of loathsomeness in one's body. They should be urged to contemplate the liability of oneself and all creatures to death. I have come across the case of a leading fisherman who, as a result of such encouragement, could repeat fluently from memory the Pāli Text and '*nissaya*' (word for word translation) of the Abhidhammattha Saṅgaha, and the Paccaya Niddesa of the Patthāna (Book of Relations), while still following the profession of a fisherman. These accomplishments constitute very good foundations for the acquisition of *vijjā* (Knowledge).

At the present time, whenever I meet my *dāyaka upāsakās* (lay disciples who contribute to a Bhikkhu's upkeep), I tell them, in the true tradition of a Bhikkhu, that even though their are hunters and fishermen by profession, they should

be ever mindful of the noble qualities of Three Jewels and three characteristics of existence. To be mindful of the noble qualities of the *Ti-Ratana* (Triple Gem) constitutes the seed of *caraṇa*. To be mindful of the three characteristics of existence constitutes the seed of *vijjā*. Even hunters and fishermen should be encouraged to practise those advertences of mind. They should not be told that it is improper for hunters and fishermen to practise advertence of mind towards *samatha* (Tranquillity) and *vipassanā* (Insight). On the other hand, they should be helped towards better understanding, should they be in difficulties. They should be urged and encouraged to keep on trying. They are in that stage when even the work of accumulating *pāramis* and good tendencies is to be extolled.

Loss of Opportunity to attain the seed of Vijjā through Ignorance of the value of the present times

Some teachers who are aware only of the existence of direct and unequivocal statements in the Pāli Texts regarding the order of practice of the seven *visuddhis* (Purifications), but who take no account of the value of the present times, say that in the practices of *samatha* and *vipassanā* (Tranquillity and Insight) no results can be achieved unless *sīla-visuddhi* (Purification of Virtue) is first fulfilled, whatever be the intensity of the effort. Some of the uninformed ordinary folk are beguiled by such statements. Thus has the *dhammantarāya* (Obstruction to the Dhamma) occurred.

These persons, because they do not know the nature of the present times, will lose the opportunity to attain the seeds of *vijjā* which are attainable only when a Buddha Sāsana is encountered. In truth, they have not yet attained release from worldly ills and are still drifting in *saṁsāra* (round of rebirths) because, though they have occasionally encountered

Buddha Sāsanas in their past inconceivably long *saṁsāra* where Buddha Sāsanas more numerous than the grains of sands on the banks of the Ganges have appeared, they did not acquire the foundation of the seeds of *vijjā*.

When seeds are spoken of, there are seeds ripe or mature enough to sprout into healthy and strong seedlings, and there are many degrees of ripeness or maturity.

There are also seeds that are unripe or immature. People who do not know the meaning of the passages they recite or who do not know the right methods of practice even though they know the meaning, and who thus by custom or tradition read, recite, and count their beads while performing the work of contemplating the noble qualities of the Buddha, and *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anattā* possess seeds that are unripe and immature. These unripe seeds may be ripened and matured by the continuation of such work in the existences that follow, if opportunity for such continued work occurs.

The practice of *samatha* (Tranquillity) until the appearance of *parikamma nimitta*[30] and the practice of *vipassanā* (Insight) until insight is obtained into *rūpa* and *nāma* (Matter and Mind) even once, are mature seeds filled with pith and substance. The practice of *samatha* until the appearance of *uggaha-nimitta*[30] and the practice of *vipassanā* until the acqui-

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30. Nimitta is the mental *image* which arises in the mind by the successful practice of certain concentration exercises. The image physically perceived at the very beginning of concentration is called the Preparatory Image or *Parikamma Nimitta*.

The still unsteady and unclear image which arises after the mind has reached a certain degree of concentration is called Acquired Image or *Uggaha-Nimitta*. This is a mental image.

sition of *sammasana-ñāṇa*[31] even once, are seeds that are still more mature. The practice of *samatha* until the appearance of *paṭibhāga-nimitta*,[30] and the practise of *vipassanā* until the occurrence of *udayabbayañāṇa*[32] even once, are seeds that are yet more highly mature. If further higher efforts can be made in both *samatha* and *vipassanā*, still more mature seeds can be obtained bringing great success.

Adhikāra (Assiduous and successful practice)

When it is said in the Pāli Texts that only when there has been *adhikāra* in previous Buddha Sāsanas can relative *Jhānas*, the Paths and the Fruits be obtained in the following Buddha Sāsanas, the word "*adhikāra*" means "successful seeds." Nowadays, those who pass their lives with traditional practices that are but imitation *samatha* and imitation *vipassanā* do not come within the purview of persons who possess the seeds of *samatha* and *vijjā* which can be called *adhikāra*.

Of the two kinds of seeds, those people who encounter a Buddha Sāsana, but who fail to secure the seeds of *vijjā*, suffer great loss indeed. This is so because the seeds of *vijjā* which are related to *rūpa* and *nāma dhammā* (bodily and mental processes) can only be obtained within a Buddha Sāsana, and that only when one is sensible enough to secure

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30. The fully clear and immovable image that arises at a greater degree of concentration is called the Counter-image or *Paṭibhāganimitta*. This also is a mental image.
31. Observing, exploring, grasping, determining all phenomena of existence as impermanent, miserable, and impersonal, which precedes the flashing up of clear Insight.
32. Knowledge arising from the Contemplation of Arising and Vanishing. It is the 1st of the 9 Insight-knowledges constituting the Paṭipadā-ñānadassana-Visuddhi (Purification by Knowledge and Vision of the Way).

them. Hence, at the present time, those men and women who find themselves unable to contemplate and investigate at length into the nature of *rūpa* and *nāma dhamma*, should throughout their lives undertake the task of committing the four Great Primaries to memory, then of contemplating on their meaning and of discussing them, and lastly of seeking insight into how they are constituted in their bodies.

Here ends the part showing, by a discussion of four classes of individuals and three kinds of individuals as given in the Sutta and Abhidhamma Pitakas, that (1) those persons who within the Buddha Sāsana do not practise *Samatha* and *Vipassanā* but allow the time to pass with imitations, suffer great loss as they fail to utilize the unique opportunity arising from their existence as human beings within a Buddha Sāsana, (2) this being the time of *Padaparama* and *Neyya* classes of persons, if they heedfully put forth effort, they can secure ripe and mature seeds of *Samatha* and *Vipassanā*, and easily attain the supramundane benefit either within this life or in the *deva loka* (Deva abodes) in the next life — within this Buddha Sāsana or within the Sāsana of the next Buddha, (3) they can derive immense benefit from their existence as human beings during the Buddha Sāsana.

Here ends the exposition of the three kinds and the four kinds of individuals.

A word of advice and warning

If the Tipiṭaka which contains the discourses of the Buddha delivered during forty-five vassas (rainy seasons) be condensed, and the essentials extracted, the thirty-seven *bodhipakkhiya-dhamma* (Requisites of Enlightenment) are obtained. These thirty-seven *bodhipakkhiya-dhamma* constitute the essence of the Tipiṭaka. If these be further condensed, the seven *visuddhis* (Purifications) are obtained. If

again the seven *visuddhis* be condensed, they become *sīla* (Morality), *samādhi* (Concentration), and *paññā* (Wisdom). These are called *adhisīla sāsana* (The Teaching of Higher Morality), *adhicitta sāsana* (The Teaching of Higher Mentality), and *adhipaññā sāsana* (The Teaching of Higher Wisdom). They are also called the three *sikkhās* (Trainings).

When *sīla* is mentioned, the essential for laymen is *nicca sīla* (Permanent Morality). Those people who fulfil *nicca sīla* become endowed with *caraṇa* (Good Conduct) which, with *vijjā* (Knowledge), enables them to attain the Paths and the Fruits. If these persons can add the refinement of *uposatha sīla* over *nicca sīla*, it is much better. For laymen, *nicca sīla* means *ājīvaṭṭhamaka sīla*.[33] That *sīla* must be properly and faithfully kept. If because they are *puthujjanas* (worldlings) they break the *sīla*, it can be re-established immediately by renewing the undertaking to keep the *sīla* for the rest of their lives. If, on a future occasion, the *sīla* is again broken, it can again be similarly cleansed, and every time this cleansing occurs, the person concerned again becomes endowed with *sīla*. The effort is not difficult. Whenever *nicca sīla* is broken, it should be immediately re-established. In these days, persons endowed with *sīla* abound in large numbers.

But such persons are very rare who have attained perfect concentration in one or other of the *kasiṇa* exercises (meditation devices), or in the practice of *asubha-bhāvanā* (meditation of loathsomeness), etc., as also persons who have sometimes attained insight into physical and mental phenomena, the three characteristics, etc. Such persons are very rare because these are times when Wrong Teachings (*micchā-dhamma*) are ripe that are likely to cause *dhammantarāya*, (danger and obstruction to the Dhamma).

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33. See Note 19.

Wrong Teachings

By Wrong Teachings (*micchā-dhamma*) likely to cause Obstruction to Dhamma (*dhammantarāya*) are meant such views, practices, and limitations as the inability to see the dangers of *saṃsāra*, the belief that these are times when the Paths and the Fruits can no longer be attained, the tendency to defer effort until the *pāramīs* ripen, the belief that persons of the present day are *dvi-hetuka*,[34] the belief that the great teachers of the past were non-existent, etc.

Even though it does not reach the ultimate, no *kusala kamma* (wholesome volitional action) is ever rendered futile. If effort be made, a *kusala kamma* (wholesome volitional action) is instrumental in producing *pāramī* in those who do not possess *pāramī*. If no effort be made, the opportunity to acquire *pāramī* is lost. If those whose *pāramīs* are immature put forth effort, their *pāramīs* become ripe and mature. Such persons can attain the Paths and Fruits in their next existence within the present Sāsana. If no effort be made, the opportunity for the *pāramī* to ripen is lost. If those whose *pāramī* is ripe and mature put forth effort, the Paths and the Fruits can be attained within this life. If no effort be made the opportunity to attain the Paths and the Fruits is lost.

If persons who are *dvi-hetuka* put forth effort, they can become *ti-hetuka*[35] in their next existence. If they do not put forth effort, they cannot ascend from the stage of *dvi-hetuka* and will slide down to the stage of *ahetuka*.[36]

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34. *Dvi-hetuka-paṭisandhi*. This refers to a rebirth with only two good root-conditions, viz. Non-greed (*alobha*) and Non-hate (*adosa*). Beings so reborn cannot attain the Paths and Fruitions in their present life, as they lack the third root-condition, Non-delusion (*amoha*).
35. *Tihetuka-paṭisandhi:* rebirth with all three good root-conditions *alobha, adosa, amoha.*
36. *Ahetuka:* a being reborn without any of the good root-conditions.

Suppose, there is a certain person who plans to become a *bhikkhu*. If another person says to him, "Entertain the intention only if you can remain a monk all your life. Otherwise do not entertain the idea', — this would amount to *dhammantarāya*, an obstruction of Dhamma.

The Buddha said: "I declare that the mere arising of an intention of performing good deeds is productive of great benefit" (Majjh. No. 8).

To disparage either the act of *dāna* (alms-giving) or to discourage the performer of dāna, may invoke *puññantarāya* on such a person, i.e. he causes obstruction to the performance of meritorious actions. If acts of Morality, Concentration (meditation) and Wisdom, or those who perform them are disparaged, a *dhammantarāya* may be caused, i.e. an Obstruction to Dhamma. If Obstruction to Meritorious Actions is caused, one is liable to be bereft of power and influence, of property and riches, and be abjectly poor, in the lives that follow. If Obstruction to Dhamma is caused, one is liable to be defective in conduct and behaviour and defective of sense, and thus be utterly low and debased in the existences that follow. Hence, let all beware!

Here ends the section showing how the rare opportunity of rebirth as a human being can be made worthwhile, by ridding oneself of the wrong Dhammas mentioned above, and putting forth effort in this life so as to close the gates of the four Lower Worlds (*apāyu*) in one's future Saṃsāra (round of rebirths), or else to accumulate the seeds that will enable one to to attain release from wordly ills in the next following existence or within the next Buddha Sāsana, through the practice of Tranquillity (*samatha*) and Insight (*vipassanā*), with resolution, zeal and diligence.

CHAPTER I

The Requisites of Enlightenment

(*Bodhipakkhiya-dhamma*)

I shall now concisely show the thirty-seven Bodhi-pakkhiya-dhammas, the Requisites of Enlightenment,[37] which should be practised with energy and determination by those persons who wish to cultivate Tranquillity and Insight and thus make worthwhile the rare opportunity of rebirth as a human being within the present Buddha Sāsana.

The Bodhipakkhiya dhammas consist of seven groups, namely:

1. *Satipaṭṭhāna*, Foundations of Mindfulness (4 factors)
2. *Sammappadhāna*, Right Efforts (4 factors)
3. *Iddhipāda*, Bases of Success (4 factors)
4. *Indriya*, Controlling Faculties (5 factors)
5. *Bala*, Mental Powers (5 factors)
6. *Bojjhaṅga*, Factors of Enlightenment (7 factors)
7. *Maggaṅga*, Path Factors (8 factors)

(totalling 37 factors).

The *bodhipakkhiya-dhammā* are so called because they form part (*pakkhiya*) of Enlightenment or Awakening (*bodhi*) which here refers to the Knowledge of the Holy Paths (*magga-ñāṇa*). They are *dhammas* (mental phenomena) with

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37. On this rendering see Editor's Preface.

the function of being proximate causes (*padaṭṭhāna*), requisite ingredients (*sambhāra*) and bases, or sufficient conditions (*upanissaya*) of Path Knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*).

CHAPTER II

The Foundations of Mindfulness
(*satipaṭṭhāna*)

The word *satipaṭṭhāna* is defined as follows:

Bhusaṁ tiṭṭhatī'ti paṭṭhānaṃ; sati eva paṭṭhānaṃ satipaṭṭhānaṃ.

This means: What is firmly established is a 'foundation'; mindfulness itself is such a foundation.

There are four Foundations of Mindfulness:

1. *Kāyānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna* (Contemplation of the Body as a Foundation of Mindfulness).
2. *Vedanānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna* (Contemplation of Feelings as a Foundation of Mindfulness).
3. *Cittānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna* (Contemplation of the Mind as a Foundation of Mindfulness).
4. *Dhammānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna* (Contemplation of Mind-objects as a Foundation of Mindfulness).

1. *Kāyānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna* means mindfulness which is firmly established on bodily phenomena, such as inhalation and exhalation.

2. *Vedanānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna* means mindfulness which is firmly established on feelings (sensations).

3. *Cittānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna* means mindfulness which is firmly established on thoughts or mental processes, such as thoughts associated with passions or dissociated from passions.

4. *Dhammānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna* means mindfulness which is firmly established on phenomena such as the Hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*), etc.

Of the four, if mindfulness or attention is firmly established on a part of the body, such as on out-breath and in-breath, it is tantamount to attention being firmly established on all things. This is because the ability to place one's attention on any object at one's will has been acquired.

'Firmly established' means, if one desires to place the attention on out-breath and in-breath for an hour, one's attention remains firmly fixed on it for that period. If one wishes to do so for two hours, one's attention remains firmly fixed on it for two hours. There is no occasion when the attention becomes released from its object on account of the instability of thought-conception (*vitakka*).

For a detailed account of the *satipaṭṭhāna*, see the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta.[38]

Why is it incumbent on us to firmly establish the mind without fail on any object such as the out-breath and the in-breath? It is because it is necessary for us to gather and control the six types of consciousness (*viññāṇa*),[39] which have been drifting tempestuously and untrained throughout the past inconceivably long and beginningless *saṁsāra* (round of rebirths).

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38. Transl. in 'The Wheel' No. 18. — See also the Commentary to this Sutta in 'The Way of Mindfulness', tr. by Soma Thera (Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy).

39. Eye—consciousness, ear—, nose—, tongue—, body— and mind—consciousness.

I shall make it clearer. The mind is wont to flit about from one to another of the six objects of the senses which lie at the approaches of the six sense-doors.[40]

As an example, take the case of a mad-man who has no control over his mind. He does not even know the meal-time, and wanders about aimlessly from place to place. His parents look for him and give him his meal. After eating five or six morsels of food he overturns the dish and walks away. He thus fails to get a square meal. To this extent he has lost control of his mind. He cannot control his mind even to the extent of finishing the business of a meal. In talking, he cannot control his mind to the extent of finishing or completing a sentence. The beginning, the middle, and the end do not agree with one another. His talk has no meaning. He cannot be of use in any undertaking in this world. He is unable to perform any task. Such a person can no longer be classed as a human being, and he has to be ignored.

This mad-man becomes a sane and normal person again, if he meets a good doctor and the doctor applies stringent methods of cure. Thus cured he obtains control of his mind in the matter of taking his meals, and can now eat his fill. He has control over his mind in all other matters as well. He can perform his tasks till they are completed, just like others. Just like others, he can also complete his sentences. This is the example.

In this world, persons who are not insane but who are normal and have control over their minds, resemble such a mad person having no control over his mind, when it comes to the matter of *samatha* and *vipassanā*. Just as the mad-man upsets the food dish and walks away after five or six morsels of food although he attempts to eat his meal, these

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40. Eye–door, etc.

normally sane persons find their attention wandering because they have no control over their minds. Whenever they pay respects to the Buddha and contemplate His noble qualities, they do not succeed in keeping their minds fixed on those noble qualities, but find their attention being diverted many times on to other objects of thought, and thus they even fail to reach the end of '*Iti pi so*' (a devotional text, beginning with these words, i.e. 'Thus indeed is this Exalted One...').

It it as if a man suffering from hydrophobia who seeks water feverishly with parched lips, yet runs away from it with fear when he sees a lake of cool refreshing water. It is also like a diseased man who when given a diet of relishing food replete with medicinal qualities, finds the food bitter to his taste and unable to swallow it, is obliged to spit and vomit it out. In just the same way, these persons find themselves unable to approach the contemplation of the noble qualities of the Buddha effectively, and cannot keep on dwelling on them.

If in reciting the '*Iti pi so*' their recitation is interrupted every time their minds wander, and if they have to start afresh from the beginning every time such an interruption occurs, they will never reach the end of the text even though they keep on reciting a whole day, or a whole month, or a whole year. At present they manage to reach the end because they can keep on reciting from memory even though their minds wander elsewhere.

In the same way, those persons who, on *uposatha* days, plan to go to quiet places in order to contemplate the thirty-two parts of the body, such as *kesā* (hairs of the head), *lomā* (hairs of the body), etc. or the noble qualities of the Buddha, ultimately end up in the company of friends and associates, because they have no control over their minds, and because of the upheavals in their thoughts and intentions. When

they take part in congregational recitations, although they attempt to direct their minds to the *samatha* (Tranquillity) work of the *brahma-vihāras* (Sublime States),[41] such as reciting the formula for diffusing *mettā* (Loving-kindness), because they have no control over their minds, their thoughts are not concentrated but are scattered aimlessly, and they end up only with the external manifestation of the recitation.

These facts are sufficient to show how many persons resemble the insane while performing *kusala kammas* (merits).

'*Pāpasmiṃ ramate mano*' (The mind takes delight in evil, Dhp. 116).

Just as water naturally flows down from high places to low places, the minds of beings, if left uncontrolled, naturally approach evil. This is the tendency of the mind.

I shall now draw, with examples, a comparison between those who exercise no control over their minds and the insane person mentioned above.

There is a river with a swift current. A boatman not conversant with the control of the rudder, floats down the river with the current. His boat is loaded with valuable merchandise for trading and selling at the towns on the lower reaches of the river. As he floats down, he passes stretches of the river lined with mountains and forests where there are no harbours or anchorages for his boat. He thus continues to float down without stopping. When night descends, he passes towns and villages with harbours and anchorages, but he does not see them in the darkness of the night, and thus he continues to float without stopping. When daylight arrives, he comes to places with towns and

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41. The 4 Sublime States, namely, *mettā* (loving-kindness), *karuṇā* (compassion), *muditā* (altruistic joy), and *upekkhā* (equanimity). See The Wheel No. 6.

villages, but not having any control over the rudder of the boat, he cannot steer it to the harbours and anchorages, and thus perforce he continues to float down until he reaches the great wide ocean.

The infinitely lengthy *saṁsāra* (round of rebirths) is like the swift-flowing river. Beings having no control over their minds are like the boatman who is unable to steer his boat. The mind is like the boat. Beings who have drifted from one existence to another in the "*suñña*" world-cycles, where no Buddha Sāsanas appear, are like the boatman drifting down those stretches of the river lined by mountains and forests, where there are no harbours and anchorages. When at times these beings are born in world-cycles where Buddha Sāsanas flourish, but are in ignorance of them because they happen to be in one or other of the eight *aṭṭhak-khaṇas* (inopportune situations), they resemble the boatman who floats down stretches of the river lined by towns and villages with harbours and anchorages, but does not see them because it is night. When, at other times, they are born as human beings, *devas* or *Brahmas*, within a Buddha Sāsana, but fail to secure the Paths and the Fruits because they are unable to control their minds and put forth effort to practise *vipassanā* (Insight) exercises of the *satipaṭṭhānas* (the four Foundations of Mindfulness) thus continuing still to drift in *saṃsāra*, they resemble the boatman who sees the banks lined by towns and villages with harbours and anchorages, but is unable to steer towards them because of his inability to control the rudder, and thus continues perforce to drift down towards the ocean. In the infinitely lengthy *saṁsāra*, those beings who have obtained release from wordly ills within the Sāsanas of the Buddhas who have appeared, whose numbers exceed the grains of sand on the banks of the river Ganges, are beings who had control over their minds and who

possessed the ability of retaining their attention on any desired object at will through the practice of the *satipaṭṭhānas*.

This shows the trend of the wandering, or 'course of existence', of those beings who do not practise the *satipaṭṭhānas*, even though they are aware of the fact that they have no control over their minds when it comes to the practice of *samatha* and *vipassanā* (Tranquillity and Insight).

Comparisons may also be made with the taming and training of bullocks for the purpose of yoking to ploughs and carts, and to the taming and training of elephants for employment in the service of the king, or on battlefields.

In the case of the bullock, the young calf has to be regularly herded and kept in a cattle-pen, then a nose-rope is passed through its nostrils and it is tied to a post and trained to respond to the rope's control. It is then trained to submit to the yoke, and only when it becomes amenable to the yoke's burden is it put to use for ploughing and drawing carts and thus effectively employed to trade and profit. This is the example of the bullock.

In this example, just as the owner's profit and success depends on the employment of the bullock in the drawing of ploughs and carts after training it to become amenable to the yoke, so do the true benefit of lay persons and *bhikkhus* within the present Sāsana depends on training in *samatha* and *vipassanā* (Tranquillity and Insight).

In the present Buddha Sāsana, the practise of *sīla-visuddhi* (Purification of Virtue) resembles the training of the young calf by herding it and keeping it in cattle-pens. Just as, if the young calf is not so herded and kept in cattle-pens, it would damage and destroy the properties of others and thus bring liability on the owner, so, if a person lacks

sīla-visuddhi, the three *kammas*[42] would run riot, and the person concerned would become subject to worldly evils and to the evil results indicated in the Dhamma.

The effort to develop *kāyagatā satipaṭṭhāna*[43] resembles the passing of the nose-rope through the nostrils and training the calf to respond to the rope after tying it to a post. Just as when a calf is tied to a post it can be kept wherever the owner desires it to be, and it cannot run loose, so when the mind is tied to the body with the rope of *satipaṭṭhāna*, that mind cannot wander but is obliged to remain wherever the owner desires it to be. The habits of a disturbed and distracted mind acquired during the inconceivably long *saṁsāra*, become appeased.

A person who performs the practice of *samatha* and *vipassanā* without first attempting Body-Contemplation, resembles the owner who yokes the still untamed bullock to the cart or plough without the nose-rope. Such an owner would find himself unable to drive the bullock at his desire. Because the bullock is wild, and because it has no nose-rope, it will either try to run off the road, or try to break loose by breaking the yoke.

On the other hand, a person who first tranquillises and trains his mind with Body Contemplation before turning his mind to the practice of *samatha* and *vipassanā* (Tranquillity and Insight), his attention will remain steady and his work will be successful.

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42. The 10 fold unwholesome action:—
Kāyakamma — 3 fold bodily action: killing, stealing, improper sexual intercourse;
Vacikamma — 4 fold verbal action: lying, slandering, rude speech, foolish babble;
Manokamma — 3 fold mental action: avarice, ill-will, wrong views.
43. Mindfulness with regard to the Body.

In the case of the elephant, the wild elephant has first to be brought out from the forest into the field hitched on to a tame trained elephant. Thence it is taken to a stockade and tied up securely until it is tame. When it thus becomes absolutely tame and quiet, it is trained in the various kinds of work in which it will be employed in the service of the king. It is only then that it is used in state functions and on battle-fields.

The realm of sensual pleasures resemble the forest where the wild elephant enjoys himself. The Buddha Sāsana resembles the open field into which the wild elephant is first brought out. The mind resembles the wild elephant. Faith (*saddhā*) and desire (*chanda*) in the *sāsana-dhamma* resemble the tame elephant to which the wild elephant is hitched and brought out into the open. *Sīla-visuddhi* (Purification of Virtue) resembles the stockade. The body, or parts of the body, such as out-breath and in-breath resemble the post in the stockade to which the elephant is tied. *Kāyagatāsati*[44] resembles the rope by which the wild elephant is tied to the post. The preparatory work towards *samatha* and *vipassanā* resembles the preparatory training of the elephant. The work of *samatha* and *vipassanā* resembles the parade ground or battlefield of the king.

Other points of comparison can now be easily recognised.

Thus have I shown by the examples of the mad man, the boatman, the bullock, and the elephant, the main points of Body Contemplation, which is by ancient tradition the first step that has to be undertaken in the work of proceeding upwards from *sīla-visuddhi* within the Sāsanas of all the Buddhas who have appeared in the past inconceivably long *sa ṁsāra*.

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44. 'Mindful Contemplation directed on the Body.' In the following called, for short, 'Body Contemplation.'

The essential meaning is, whether it be by out-breathing and in-breathing, or by *iriyāpatha* (four postures — going, standing, sitting, lying) or by *sampajañña* (clear comprehension) or by *dhātu-manasikāra* (advertence of mind on the elements), or by *atthika-saññā* (contemplation of bones), one must put forth effort in order to acquire the ability of placing one's attention on one's body and its postures for as long as one wishes throughout the day and night at all waking hours. If one can keep one's attention fixed for as long as one wishes, then mastery has been obtained over one's mind. Thus does one attain release from the state of a mad man. One now resembles the boatman who has obtained mastery over his rudder, or the owner of the tamed and trained bullock, or the king who employs the tamed and trained elephant.

There are many kinds, and many grades, of mastery over the mind. The successful practice of Body Contemplation is, in the Buddha Sāsana, the first stage of mastery over one's mind.

Those who do not wish to follow the way of *samatha* (Tranquillity), but desire to pursue the path of pure *vipassanā* (Insight) which is the way of the *sukkha vipassaka*[45] individual, should proceed straight to *vipassanā* after the successful establishment of Body Contemplation.

If they do not want to practise Body Contemplation separately and if they mean to practise Insight with such industry that it may carry *kāyagatāsati* with it, they will succeed, provided that they really have the necessary wisdom and industry. The Body Contemplation (*kāyagatāsati*) that is associated with *udayabbaya-ñāṇa* (Knowledge arising from contemplation of the arisings and vanishings of mental and physical phenomena), which clearly sees their coming into existence and passing away, is very valuable indeed.

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45. One who practises Vipassanā (Insight) only.

In the *samatha* method, by practising the Body Contemplation of out-and in-breathing, one can attain up to *rūpāvacara catuttha jhāna* (the fourth *Jhāna* of the Form-Sphere); by practising *vaṇṇa manasikāra*[46] of the *kāyagatā-sati* of the thirty-two parts of the body, such as *kesā* (hair of the head), *lomā* (hair of the body), etc., one can attain all the eight *samāpattis;*[47] and by practising *paṭikkūla manasi-kāra*[48] of the same Body Contemplation one can attain the first Jhāna. If *vipassanā* (Insight) is attained in the process, one also can attain the Paths and the Fruits.

Even if completion is not arrived at in the practice of *samatha* and *vipassanā* (Tranquillity and Insight), if the stage is reached where one attains control over one's mind and the ability to keep one's attention fixed on wherever one wishes it to be, it was said by the Buddha that such a one can be said to be one who enjoys the savour of *amata nibbāna.*[49]

"*Amataṃ tesaṃ paribhuttaṃ, yesaṁ kāyagatā sati paribhuttā.*"[50]

"Those who enjoy mindful Body Contemplation (*kāya-gatāsati*), enjoy the Deathless (*Nibbāna*)."

Here, *amata* (Nibbāna) means great peacefulness or tranquillity of mind.[51]

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46. Attention to the colour or appearance, which is a part of the meditation of the 32 parts of the body.
47. The 4 meditative Absorptions (jhāna) of the Form Sphere and the 4 of the Formless Sphere.
48. Contemplation of Loathsomeness.
49. The Deathless — a term for Nibbana.
50. Anguttara-Nikāya, Ekaka-nipāta; tr. in 'The Wheel', No. 155/158, p. 6.
51. This refers to *kilesa-nibbāna*, the 'extinction of the defilements' during the life-time of the Arahant.

In its original natal state, the mind is highly unstable in its attentiveness, and thus is parched and hot in its nature. Just as the insects that live on capsicum are not aware of its heat, just as beings pursuing the realm of *taṇhā* (Craving) are not aware of *taṇhā's* heat, just as beings subject to anger and pride are not aware of the heat of pride and anger, so are beings unaware of the heat of unsettled minds. It is only when through *kāyagatā-sati*, the unsettled condition of their minds disappear, do they become aware of the heat of unsettled minds. Having attained the state of the disappearance of that heat, they develop a fear of a relapse to that heat. The case of those who have attained the first *jhāna*, or Knowledge of Rise and Fall (*udayabbaya ñāṇa*), through Body Contemplation (*kāyagatāsatipaṭṭhāna*), needs no elaboration.

Hence, the higher the attainments that one reaches, the more difficult does it become for one to be apart from *kāyagatāsati*. The *ariya puggalas* (Holy Ones) use the four *satipaṭṭhānas* as mental nutriment until they attain *parinibbāna*.

The ability to keep one's attention fixed on parts of the body, such as out-breath and in-breath, for one or two hours takes one to the culmination of one's work in 7 days, or 15 days, or a month, or 2 months, or 3 months, or 4 months, or 5 months, or 6 months or a year, or 2 years, or 4 years, according to the intensity of one's efforts.

For the method of practising out-breathing and in-breathing, see my "Ānāpāna Dīpanī".[52]

There are many books by past teachers on the method of the thirty-two parts of the body. In this method, *kesā* (hair of the head), *lomā* (hair of the body), *nakhā* (nails), *dantā* (teeth), *taco* (skin) are known as *taca pañcaka* (Group

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52. Not available in English. — See 'Mindfulness of Breathing', by Nanamoli Thera (Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy).

ending with *taco* as the fifth). If attention can be firmly fixed on these five, the work of *kāyagatāsati* (Body Contemplation) is accomplished.

For *catu dhātu vavatthāna* (Analysis of the Four Great Primaries), *rūpa vipassanā* (Contemplation of Physical Phenomena), and *nāma-vipassanā* (Contemplation of Mental Phenomena), see my "Lakkhaṇa Dīpanī", "Vijjā-magga Dīpanī", "Ahāra Dīpanī", and "Anattā Dīpanī".[52a]

Here ends a concise explanation of *kāyagatāsati bhāvanā*, which is one of the four *satipaṭṭhānas*, and which has to be established first in the work of *bhāvanā* (Mental Contemplation) by *Neyya* and *Padaparama* individuals for the purpose of attaining the Paths and the Fruits within a Buddha Sāsana.

CHAPTER III

THE FOUR RIGHT EFFORTS

(*sammappadhāna*)

The word *sammappadhāna* is defined as follows:

Bhusaṃ dahati vahatī'ti padhānaṁ sammadeva padhānaṁ sammappadhānaṁ.

This means: *padhāna* is an effort carried out strongly, intensively; if carried out properly, rightly, it is *sammappadhāna*, Right Effort.

It is an effort that has not in it any element of unwillingness. It is also called "zealous energy" (*ātāpa-vīriya*). It is an effort that has the four characteristics spoken of in the following text:

52a. Not available in English translation.

Kāmaṁ taco ca nahāru ca' aṭṭhi ca avasissatu, sarīre upasussatu maṁsalohitaṁ; yaṁ taṁ purisathāmena purisavīriyena purisaparakkamena pattabbaṁ, na taṁ apāpuṇitvā vīriyassa saṅṭhānaṁ bhavissati.

"Let only my skin, and sinews, and bones remain, and let my flesh and blood in the body dry up, I shall not permit the course of my effort to stop until I win that which may be won by human ability, human effort and human exertion."

(Anguttara Nikāya, Duka Nipāta; Wheel 155/158 p. 9)

These characteristics may be summed up as follows:—

1. Let the skin, remain,
2. Let the sinews remain,
3. Let the bones, remain,
4. Let the flesh and blood dry up.

It is the effort that calls forth the determination, "If the end is attainable by human effort, I shall not rest or relax until it is attained, until the end is grasped and reached." It is the effort of the kind put forth by the Venerable Bhikkhu Soṇa[53] and the Venerable Cakkhupāla.[54]

It is only when the Jhānas, the Paths, and the Fruits are not attained after effort is put forth on this scale, as prescribed by the Buddha, throughout one's life, can it be said that the cause (of the failure) lies in the nature of the present times, or in one being *dvihetuka* (born with two root conditions only), or in one's lack of sufficient previously accumulated *pāramī*.

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53. Vinaya Pitaka, Mahāvagga, V. 13. — Sammohavinodāni (Com. to Patisambhida Magga).
54. Dhammapada Commentary, story relating to Verse 1.

In this world, some persons, far from putting forth the full scale of the effort prescribed by the Buddha, do not even try to set up Body Contemplation effectively in order to cure their minds of aimless drifting, and yet they say that their failure to attain the Paths and the Fruits is due to the fact that these are times that preclude such attainment. There are others of the same class who say that men and women of the present day have not the necessary accumulation of *pāramī* (Perfections) to enable them to attain the Paths and the Fruits. There are yet others of the same class who say that men and women of the present day are *dvi-hetuka*. All these people say so because they do not know that these are times of the *Neyya* class of individuals who fail to attain the Paths and the Fruits because they are lacking in *sammappadhāna* effort.

If proper *sammappadhāna* effort be put forth with dedicated intention (*pahitatta*) where a thousand put forth effort, three, four, or five hundred of them can attain the supreme achievement; if a hundred put forth effort, thirty, forty, or fifty of them can attain the supreme achievement. Here, *pahitatta* intention means "determination to adhere to the effort throughout one's life and to die, if need be, while still making the effort."

The Venerable Soṇa Thera's effort consisted of keeping awake throughout the three months of the vassa (Rainy Season), the only body postures adopted being sitting and walking. The Venerable Cakkhupāla's effort was of the same order. The Venerable Phussadeva Thera[55] achieved the Paths and the Fruits only after twenty-five years of the same order of effort. In the case of the Venerable Mahāsiva[56] Thera, the effort lasted thirty years.

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55. See Com. to Satipatthāna Sutta (The Way of Mindfulness', p. 68).
56. See Com. to Sakkapañha Sutta (Digha Nik.).

At the present day, there is a great need for such kind of *sammappadhāna* effort. It happens that those who put forth the effort have not sufficient foundations in the *pariyatti* (Learning of the Doctrine), while those who possess sufficient *pariyatti* foundations live involved in the *palibodhas* (obstacles) of the business of Bhikkhus, according as they live in towns and villages, such as discussing the Dhamma, delivering sermons and discourses, and writing books on the Dhamma. They are persons who are unable to put forth *sammappadhāna* effort for lengthy periods without a break.

Some persons are wont to say that when their *pāramīs* become mature and the time becomes ripe for them to attain release from worldly ills, they can easily obtain that release and that as such, they cannot put forth effort now when they are not certain whether or not that effort will result in release. They do not appear to compare the suffering occasioned by thirty years' effort now with the suffering they will encounter if, in the interim before they attain release, they are cast in the hell regions for a hundred thousand years. They do not appear to remember that the suffering occasioned by thirty years' effort is not as bad as the suffering caused by just three hours in the hell regions.

They may say that the situation will be the same if no release is attained after thirty years effort. But if the person is sufficiently mature for release, he will attain that release through that effort. If he is not sufficiently mature, he will attain release in the next life. Even if he fails to attain release within the present Buddha Sāsana, his *kamma* of repeated efforts at mental development (*bhāvanā āciṇṇa kamma*)—is a powerful *kamma*. Through it he can avoid the *apāya* regions, and can meet the next Buddha after continuous rebirths in the *sugati* existence (Happy course of existence). In the case of those who do not

put forth the effort, they will miss the opportunity of release even though they are mature enough to obtain release through thirty years' effort. For lack of effort they have nothing to gain and everything to lose. Let all, therefore, acquire the Eye of Wisdom, and beware of the danger.

There are four kinds of *sammappadhāna*,[57] namely:—

1. *Uppannānaṁ akusalānaṁ dhammānaṁ pahānāya vayamo,*
2. *Anuppannānaṁ akusalānaṁ dhammānaṁ anuppādāya vāyāmo,*
3. *Anuppannānaṁ kusalānaṁ dhammānaṁ uppādāya vāyāmo,*
4. *Uppannānaṁ kusalānaṁ dhammānaṁ bhiyyobhāvāya vāyāmo.*

1. Effort to overcome or reject evil unwholesome acts that have arisen, or are in the course of arising;
2. Effort to avoid (not only in this life but also in the lives that follow) the arising of unwholesome acts that have not yet arisen;
3. Effort to arouse the arising of wholesome acts that have not yet arisen;
4. Effort to increase and to perpetuate the wholesome acts that have arisen or are in the course of arising.

Arisen and not arisen Unwholesome Acts (Uppanna and Anuppanna Akusala Kamma)

In the personality of every being wandering in *saṁsāra* (round of rebirths), there are two kinds of *akusala kammas* (unwholesome volitional actions), namely,

1. *Uppanna akusala kamma*, and
2. *Anuppanna akusala kamma.*

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57. See Anguttara Nik., The Fours, No. 13f. — 'The Book of Analysis' (Vibhanga), tr. by U Thittila (Pali Text Society, London), p. 271ff.

Uppanna akusala kamma (arisen unwholesome acts) means past and present *akusala kammas*. They comprise unwholesome volitional actions committed in the interminable series of past world-cycles and past lives. Among these *akusala kammas*, there are some that have spent themselves by having produced rebirths in the *apāya-lokas* (the four low and miserable regions of existence). There are others that await the opportunity of producing rebirths in the *apāya-lokas*, and thus constitute potentialities for rebirth in the *apāya-lokas* that accompany beings from world-cycle to world-cycle and from life to life.

Every being in whom *sakkāya-diṭṭhi* (Personality-belief) resides, be he a human being, or a *deva*, or *brahmā*, possesses an infinitely large store of such past debts, so to say, consisting of *akusala kammas* (unwholesome volitional actions) that have in them the potentiality of producing rebirths in the lowest *Avīci* Hell. Similarly, there are infinite stores of other *kammas* capable of producing rebirths in the other *apāya-lokas*. These past *kammas* which await a favourable opportunity for producing rebirth resultants and which accompany beings from life to life until they are expended, are called *uppanna* (arisen).

These past *uppanna akusala kammas* have their roots in *sakkāya-diṭṭhi* (Personality-belief). As long as *sakkāya-diṭṭhi* exists they are not expended without producing resultants. But when, with insight into the *Anatta lakkhāṇa* (Characteristic of Impersonality), one rids oneself of *sakkāya-diṭṭhi* (Personality-belief), from that instant all the *uppanna akusala kammas* lose their potentiality and disappear from the store of past *akusala kammas*. From that existence, one will no longer become subject to rebirth in the *apāya-lokas* in future *saṁsāra* even in one's dreams.

Anuppanna akusala kammas (not arisen unwholesome acts) means future *akusala kammas*. Beginning with the next instant in this life, all the new evil and unwholesome acts that one commits whenever opportunity occurs in the course of this present life and in the succession of lives that are to follow, are called *anuppanna*. These new *akusala duccarita kammas* (evil and unwholesome volitional actions) that one can commit even during a single lifetime can be infinite in number.

All these *anuppanna akusala kammas* have their origin in Personality Belief.

If at any time Personality Belief disappears, all the new *anuppanna akusala kammas* also disappear, even at that instant, from the personality of the beings concerned, leaving no residue. Here, 'disappear' means that there will be no occasion, starting from the next instant, in future succession of lives and future succession of world-cycles, when new *akusala kammas* are perpetrated. Throughout future *anamatagga saṁsāra* (beginningless round of rebirths), those beings will not commit, even in their dreams, any *akusala kamma* (unwholesome volitional action) such as *pāṇātipāta* (killing any living being).

If Personality Belief remains, even though the being is a Universal Monarch exercising sway over the whole universe, he is, as it were, sandwiched between hell-fires in front and hell-fires at the back, and is thus hedged in between the two *akusala kammas* of *uppanna* and *anuppanna* (arisen and not-arisen). He is thus purely a creature of hell-heat. Similarly, the kings of the *deva-lokas*, Sakka, the king of the *Tāvatiṁsa-deva-loka*, the Brahmās of the *Rūpa* and *Arūpa*[57A] *Brahma-worlds*, are all purely creatures of heli-heat. They are creatures that are hitched on to the chains of hell and the *apāya* regions. In the great whirlpool of *saṁsāra*, they are purely creatures who drift or sink.

57A Fine-material and immaterial.

In the infinitely long *saṁsāra*, beings have to cultivate the desire for encountering a Buddha Sāsana, which is an extremely difficult achievement. Hedged in as they are, from before and behind, by the hell-fires of *uppanna* and *anuppanna akusala kammas*, they have to cultivate earnestly the desire to extinguish those fires once and for all. Hence, those beings who do encounter Buddha Sāsanas have to make the extinguishing of the hell-fires of *uppanna* and *anuppanna* their sole task for their future welfare.

The task of extinguishing the unwholesome acts, arisen and not arisen (*akusala kammas* of *uppanna* and *anuppanna*) consists of ridding oneself of Personality-belief (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*) and no more. If *sakkāya-diṭṭhi* is uprooted, the two *akusala kammas* (unwholesome volitional actions) are entirely extinguished.

"Bon-sin-san" Sotāpannas[58], like Visākhā and Anāthapiṇḍika, who are infinitely numerous among humans, *devas*, and *brahmās*, are beings who have obtained release from the state of sinking and drifting in the great whirlpool of *saṃsāra* (round of rebirths) from the moment Personality-belief (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*) was uprooted. They are beings who have

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58. **Bon-sin-san** is a term in the Burmese language, signifying a type of Stream-winner (sotāpanna) that will reach final deliverance in Arahatship after numerous rebirths in successively higher stages of existences. This term has no equivalent in the Sutta texts where only those are called Sotapannas who have, at the utmost, seven rebirths before them, among men and deities. **Bon-sin-san** is a concept familiar in Burmese doctrinal tradition, for which reference is made to the following commentarial passages which are said to imply the sense of the term:

Comy. to Indriya-Samyutta, Chalindriya Vagga, Ekabiji Sutta, commenting on the word *sattakkhattuparamo.*

Comy. to Digha Nikaya, Sakkapañha Sutta (at the end), commenting on the words *so nivāso bhavissati.*

(Foot Note continued on page 48)

attained the first stage of Nibbāna called *sa-upādisesa nibbāna* (Nibbāna with the five constituent groups of existence remaining.)[58A] Although they are liable to wander in the round

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Comy. to Puggala-paññatti (Pañcappakarana Atthakatha), Ekaka-niddesa, commenting on the word *ekabiji*.

For these references, and the following comments, the Editor is obliged to the Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw, Agga-Maha-Pandita, of Rangoon.

"It may be noted that a **Bon-sin-san** is of two kinds:

(1) One becomes a Sotāpanna in the Kāmabhūmi (Sense-sphere) and achieves the higher three stages (Sakadāgāmi, etc.) in Suddhāvāsa (five planes) of Rūpa-loka (fine material worlds), after sojourn in the higher realms of Kāmaloka and Rūpaloka;

(2) one becomes a Sotāpanna, Sakadāgāmi and Anāgāmi in Kāmabhūmi, and an Arahant in Suddhāvāsa (five planes).

"Hence the word **Bon-sin-san,** which means that one goes up the stages of existence one after another.

"These two types are obviously different from those mentioned in the Suttas: (1) Sattakkhattuparama Sotāpanna ('One with 7 Births at the utmost'), (2) Kolankola Sotāpanna ('One passing from one Noble Family to another'), (3) Ekabiji Sotāpanna ('One germinating only once more').

"These three types become Sotāpannas in Kāmabhūmi and either in this very existence or later, not more than seven, become Arahat in the same Bhūmi (sphere)." —

See also Chapter VIII of this treatise, section on 'Stream-entry'. — (*Editor, The Wheel*)

58a. It is an individual usage of the author, the Ven. Ledi Sayadaw, to apply the term *sa-upādisesa-nibbāna* also to the Sotāpanna (and here to the 'Bon-sin-san' type). In the canonical and commentarial Pali texts, it is applied only to the Arhant who has destroyed all ten Fetters (*samyojana*), while the Sotāpanna has abandoned only the first three. This divergent usage may have been caused by the facts that the Sotāpanna is said to have the'first glimpse'(*paṭhama-dassana*) of Nibbana and that his supramundane Path-and Fruit-moments have Nibbana as object (and not conditioned phenomena as all mundane consciousness). Hence he can be said to have a first experience of Nibbana though still imperfect and temporary. — (*Editor, The Wheel*).

of rebirths for many more lives and many more world-cycles, they are no longer worldly beings. Having become "Bon-sin-san" Ariyas (Noble Ones), they are beings of the *lokuttara* (Supramundane Sphere).

Here ends the part showing *uppanna* and *anuppanna akusala kammas* from which Sotāpannas have obtained their release.

Arisen and not-arisen Wholesome Acts (Uppanna and Anuppanna Kusala Kamma)

I shall now show the division of *kusala kammas* (wholesome volitional actions) into *uppanna* and *anuppanna*, first with reference to the three qualities of *sīla* (Morality), *samādhi* (Concentration), and *paññā* (Wisdom), and second with reference to the seven Purifications (*satta visuddhi*); see p. 18).

Wrong View (*diṭṭhi*)

When it is said that Saṁsāra, the Round of Rebirths, is very terrifying, it is because of the Evil Deeds (*duccarita*), arisen (*uppanna;* past and present) and not-arisen (*anuppanna;* future, i.e. potential) which have Wrong Views (*diṭṭhi*) as their root. When it is said that there is no hiding place, no haven, on which one can depend, it is because of the selfsame Evil Deeds and Wrong Views.

When Wrong Views are extinguished, both old and new Evil Deeds (*duccarita*) are also extinguished. When old and new Evil Deeds are extinguished, release from (rebirth in) the lower worlds (*apāya;* see Note 13) is attained and only exalted states of humans, *devas* (celestials) and Brahmās (higher divinities) remain. Since beings have to cultivate a desire for an encounter with a Buddha-Sāsana, in order to secure release from rebirth in the Lower Worlds, together

with the old and new Evil Deeds (*duccarita*), now that they have encountered the Teaching of the Buddha (Buddha-Sāsana) in this very existence, it behoves them to make an attempt of extinguishing the great evil of Wrong Views (*diṭṭhi*).

Wrong View (*diṭṭhi*) is established in beings in three planes or layers, viz,

Vitikkama, Transgression (in deeds or speech),
Pariyuṭṭhāna, Obsession (of the mind by evil thoughts; mental involvement with the Stains or defilements, *kilesa*),
Anusaya, Proclivity, or latent disposition to the Stains[58B].

These layers are the realm of Personality Belief (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*). They may be called coarse, middling and fine aspects of Wrong View.

I shall now discuss how the offsprings of *diṭṭhi* (Wrong View), the ten Evil Deeds (*duccarita:* see Note 42), enter into these layers of *diṭṭhi*.

The coarse layer of Wrong View, 'Transgression' (*vītikkama*) comprises unwholesome kammic actions (*akusala kamma*), committed through overt deeds and speech. The middling layer of 'Obsession' (*pariyuṭṭhāna*) comprises the evils that occur in thoughts. The finest layer, 'Proclivity' (*anusaya*) is the evil that lies latent in the personalities of beings throughout the beginningless round of rebirths (*anamatagga-saṁsāra*). though it may not yet result in manifestations of act, speech or thoughts.

It may be said that there are three kinds of fire in a match-box. The first is the fire that lies latent in the whole box of matches. The second is the fire that ignites the match stick when it is struck. The third is the fire that is transferred

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58b. See 'Manual of Insight' (The Wheel' No. 31/32), p. 79ff.

to another object when it is brought in contact with the flame of the match stick. Such a fire is that which burns rubbish heaps, clothes, houses, monasteries and villages.

This fire, the fire that is transferred to another object, resembles the coarse *vītikkama diṭṭhi*, manifested in transgressions by acts and speech. The fire that burns the match stick resembles the middling *pariyuṭṭhāna diṭṭhi* which is manifested in the mind every time it comes in contact with objects of thought. The fire that is latent in the box of matches resembles the *anusaya diṭṭhi* that resides in the personalities of beings throughout the succession of lives in *anamatagga saṁsāra*, the unfathomable aeons of existence.

This fire that lies latent in the box of matches does not burst into flame so long as the match head is not rubbed with the nitrous surface of the match-box. It does not cause any harm even if it be kept in contact with highly inflammable articles such as gunpowder. In the same way, the *anusaya diṭṭhi* lies latent in the personality and does not manifest itself so long as it does not come into contact with evil objects of thought or other causes of evil. When, however, evil objects of thought or other causes impinge on the six sense-doors, the *anusaya diṭṭhi* is disturbed and begins to make itself manifest in the mind-door, or in the plane of the *pariyuṭṭhāna* through the function of volition. If at that time the manifestations can be suppressed by good doctrines, they disappear from the *pariyuṭṭhāna* plane and return to the *anusaya* plane and reside there as latent natural tendencies. If they cannot be suppressed, they continue to manifest themselves developing volitions. If they are further disturbed (in the *pariyuṭṭhāna* plane), they manifest themselves in the *vītikkama* plane in the form of evil speech or evil acts.

In this world, if a person can control himself in the *vītikkama* and *pariyuṭṭhāna* planes, and if thereby his acts,

speech, and thoughts are, so to say, clean and unsoiled, he is called a good, pious, or moral man. But such a person is not aware of the *anusaya* plane. If the *anusaya* plane is not destroyed, even if perfect control is exercised over the *vītikkama* and *pariyuṭṭhāna* planes, such control can only be of a temporary nature. If the person is strong in the observance of good principles, the control can last for the whole of this life. But there can be no certainty about the next life, when upheavals in these two planes may recur.

Lobha (Greed), *dosa* (Hatred), and *moha* (Delusion) also have each of them three planes.

In order to destroy these three planes of *diṭṭhi* completely, men have to put forth effort in the three *sikkhās* (Trainings) of *sīla* (Morality), *samādhi* (Concentration), and *paññā* (Wisdom). They have to practise the seven *visuddhis* (Purifications).

As far as layfolk are concerned, *sīla* means *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* which is *nicca-sīla* for them. The *Aṭṭhāṅga-uposatha-sīla* and *Dasaṅga-sīla* add refinement to *nicca-sīla*. It is a good thing to be able to observe them; but it does not matter much if they cannot be observed. For those people who assume the yellow garb of *Isis*,[59] the *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* and *Dasaṅga-sīla* constitute *sīla*. The *Aṭṭhaṅga-uposatha-sīla* is included in the *Dasaṅga-sīla*. For Bhikkhus, the *Catupārisuddhi-sīla* constitutes Morality (*sīla*).[60]

Preliminary-, Access-, and Full Concentration[61] which (e.g.) are obtained by mindful Body Contemplation (such as on out- and in-breath) or by meditating on the bones of the body (as one of the 32 Parts), these constitute Concentration (*samādhi*).

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59. Hermits, recluses, rishis.
60. The Pali terms occurring in this para are explained in the Notes 18-22.
61. *parikamma-*, *upacāra-*, *appanā-samādhi*, — See 'Path of Purification, (Visuddhi Magga), Ch. II, ?6, IV, 32.

The four mundane Purifications,[62] together with Supramundane Purification by Knowledge and Vision (*lokuttara-ñāṇadassana-visuddhi*) — these constitute Wisdom (*paññā*).

Among the three planes of Wrong View (*diṭṭhi*), Morality (*sīla*) destroys the plane of Transgression (*vītikkama*). This means that if one possesses the Purification of Morality (*sīla-visuddhi*), upheavals in deeds and speech cannot occur. Concentration (*samādhi*) can destroy Wrong View on the plane of mental involvement (*pariyuṭṭhāna*). This means that if attention to meditative practice (*bhāvanā-manasikāra*) is firmly established, upheavals in thought cannot occur. Wisdom (*paññā*) destroys Wrong View on the *anusaya* plane of Proclivity. This means that, if insight is obtained into the entire personality as a mere grouping of mental and bodily processes (*nāma* and *rūpa*) and as a grouping that is impermanent, painful and without a self, then the latent store of Wrong View that may manifest itself in the wrong notions of a person (*puggala*), living being (*satta*), permanency (*nicca*), pleasure (*sukha*) and self (*attā*), will disappear. So long as this Proclivity to Wrong Views (*diṭṭhi-anusaya*) exists, the destruction of the plane of Transgression (*vītikkama*) by Morality (*sīla*) and of the plane of mental Obsession (*pariyuṭṭhāna*) by Concentration, can be no more than temporary.

In the division of acts as 'arisen' and 'not arisen' (*uppanna, anuppanna*), there are two methods, viz.

(1) division based on this life as the starting point, and
(2) division based on the past infinite Saṁsāra as the starting point.

I shall now show the method based on this life as the starting point. In those who have never undertaken to keep moral precepts (*sīla*) in this life, there is no Arisen Morality

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62. These are the 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th Purification of the list on p. 18

(*uppanna-sīla*). In those who at one time or other in this life have undertaken to keep *sīla*, such Morality is 'arisen' (*uppanna-sīla*). The same applies to Concentration and Wisdom: what was attained in this life is 'arisen', and what was never attained in this life is 'not arisen'.

In the method based on the past Saṁsāra as the starting point, there are two kinds of Morality, mundane and supramundane (*lokiya* and *lokuttara-sīla*). Mundane Morality is 'arisen' (*uppanna*), because there is no being who at one time or other in the past Saṁsāra has not undertaken to keep the rules of Mundane Morality. But Supramundane Morality (*lokuttara-sīla*), as far as unliberated Worldlings (*puthujjana*) are concerned, is 'not arisen' (*anuppanna*).

Concentration (*samādhi*) is also of two kinds, mundane and supramundane. Since mundane concentration had been attained on many occasions by beings in the past Saṁsāra, it is 'arisen'. Supramundane Concentration, in the case of Worldlings, is 'not arisen'.

Wisdom (*paññā*) is likewise of these two kinds, mundane and supramundane. The four mundane Purifications (*lokiya-visuddhi*; see Note 62) are Mundane Wisdom and are 'arisen' (*uppanna*) for those who have encountered Buddha Sāsanas in the past and have practised these Purifications; they are 'not arisen' (*anuppanna*) for those who have never encountered any Buddha Sāsana in past Saṁsāra. — The Purification by Knowledge and Vision (*ñāṇadassana-visuddhi*) is Supramundane Wisdom (*lokuttara-paññā*). As far as Worldlings are concerned, it is for them 'not arisen' since it was never attained by them in the past Saṁsāra.

I shall now show the four modes of Effort (*padhāna*).

(1) The opportunity of ridding oneself completely of arisen, i.e. old unwholesome Kamma (*uppanna-akusalakamma*) obtains only when one encounters a Buddha Sāsana, (2) The opportunity of preventing the appearance of new unwholesome Kamma

(*anuppanna-akusalakamma*) in the series of existences that are to follow, is also one that can arise only through encountering a Buddha Sāsana. Even though one's journey through Saṃsāra be infinitely long, if one does not encounter a Buddha's Teaching, no opportunity of ridding oneself of these two classes of unwholesome Kamma can arise. This is because the task of ridding oneself of them is identical with the task of destroying the *anusaya* plane of Personality Belief (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*), i.e. the latent disposition for such a wrong view. And the destruction of that *anusaya* plane is the work of *anattā-bhāvanā*, i.e., the meditation on Not-self, which appears only at the time of a Buddha Sāsana.

Those beings who are destined to be Solitary Buddhas (Pacceka-Buddha) had first acquired the seeds of *anattā-bhāvanā* (meditation on Not-self) during their encounter with a Sāsana. When there is no Buddha Sāsana in the world, even the mere sound of *anattā* is not heard. And by 'the sound of *Anattā*' is meant the sound of such terms which formulate the impersonal nature of existence, as *rūpa*, *nāma*, *khaṇdha*, *dhātu*, *āyatana*, and *paṭiccasamuppāda*. The whole of the Abhidhamma-Piṭaka is replete with the sound of *Anattā*; and so is the whole of its Compendium, theAbhidhammattha-Sangaha.[63]

The work of *Anattā-bhāvanā* (the development of the thought of Egolessness) consists, first, of fulfilling Purification of Morality (*sīla-visuddhi*), then of setting up Body Contemplation (*kāyagatā-sati*), and after tranquillizing and controlling one's madly tempestuous and unstable mind, of putting forth effort in the work of *samatha* and *vipassanā* (Tranquillity and Insight meditation). It is only when the plane of Proclivity to Wrong Views (*diṭṭhi-anusaya*) is destroyed through such effort that all the Wrong Views, arisen

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63. Translated by Narada Thera, under the title '*A Manual of Abhidhamma*' (Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy).

and not arisen (*uppanna* and *anuppanna-micchā-diṭṭhi*) and the Evil Deeds (*duccarita*) disappear.

(3) The effort to cause the appearance in one's personality of wholesome actions (*kusala kamma*) which have not appeared before, and (4) the effort to preserve and maintain in one's personality the wholesome actions that have already appeared, — these efforts should be undertaken for a successful completion of *Anattā-bhāvanā*, after the establishment of Body Contemplation.

Arisen and not-arisen Morality
(*Uppanna-and Anuppanna-Sīla*)

Anuppanna-sīla, i.e. Morality which has never occurred in the life of Worldlings (*puthujjana*) throughout the past infinite Saṁsāra, consists of the three factors of the Supramundane Eightfold Path, Right Speech, Right Action and Right Livelihood, which are comprised in the Path of Stream-entry (*sotāpatti-magga*) and which have Nibbāna as their object. This Morality destroys the evil acts manifesting themselves in action, speech and wrong modes of earning a living. From the moment that this destruction has taken place, the evils appearing in those three forms, do not appear again even for an instant throughout the succession of many lives and many world cycles that follow.

This class of Supramundane Morality is achieved only when *Anattā-bhāvanā* is successfully practised. Beings must attempt to achieve this *anuppanna-sīla* while yet living at the time of a Buddha Sāsana. This means that from the moment of setting up Purification of Morality (*sīla-visuddhi*), together with Body Contemplation (*kāyagatā-sati*), up to the successful completion of *Anattā-bhāvanā*, beings must attempt without relaxation to practise the 37 *Bodhipakkhiya-dhammā*, the Requisites of Enlightenment.

Uppanna-sīla, which has often occurred in past infinite Saṁsāra, means Mundane Morality (*lokiya-sīla*) or Sense-sphere Morality (*kāmāvacara-sīla*). When it is said that attempts must be made to attain a fixation of that *Sīla* (i.e., its firm preservation, being the fourth Right Effort), it must be understood that there are two planes of Mundane Morality, viz. *niyāma* (stable, unchangeable) and *aniyāma* (unstable, changeable). The state of an Ariya (saint) is that of stability (*niyāma*), while the state of a Worldling (*puthujjana*) is that of unstability (*aniyāma*).

The Mundane Morality of the Sense-sphere attains to the plane of Stability in the personalities of Stream-winners (*sotāpanna*). Saints who are Sotāpannas do not transgress the *Ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* (the eightfold morality ending with Right Livelihood) even in their dreams throughout the series of lives and world-cycles that follow until the final attainment of Parinibbāna.

In the case of unliberated Worldlings (*puthujjana*), however, the Mundane Morality of the Sense-sphere is still on the plane of Unstability (*aniyāma*). These persons have been virtuous lay individuals on an infinite number of occasions in the past. They have also suffered in the Lower Worlds of Misery (*apāya-loka*) countless numbers of times. They have been virtuous hermits and Bhikkhus on other infinite occasions. In all their past existences, however, they have never been free from the danger of being liable to rebirth in the Lower Worlds of Misery. Even now, the number of beings in these Lower Worlds is countless, and so is the number of humans, devas and Brahmas who are on the brink of being born in the Lower Worlds of Misery.

Hence, those beings who possess Mundane Morality of the Sense-sphere (*kāmāvacara-lokiya-sīla*) which is still unstable (*aniyāma*), and which, so to say, resides in them for

just a temporary short moment, should attempt, while there is yet opportunity within a Buddha Sāsana, to transform it into the plane of stability (*niyāma*). They should set up Body Contemplation, and having done so, should practise the Bodhipakkhiya-dhammas until the function of Anattā-bhāvanā is successfully completed.

Arisen and not-Arisen Concentration
(*Uppanna and Anuppanna Samādhi*)

Concentration (*samādhi*) as well as Wisdom (*paññā*), have likewise two planes, i.e. Stability (*niyāma*) and Unstability (*aniyāma*).

The Full Concentration (of the Jhānas; *appanā-samādhi*), which is identical with the eight or nine Meditative Attainments (*samāpatti*),[64] becomes 'stable' only on attainment of the stage of a Non-returner (*Anāgāmi*). The Wisdom (*paññā*) that carries the *tādi* quality (of equability)[65] becomes 'stable' only at the stage of an Arahant.

I shall now show the Concentration and Wisdom that Sotāpannas achieve.

In accordance with the Cūla-Vedalla Sutta,[66] Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration which

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64. The **eight** Meditative Attainments (*aṭṭha-samāpatti*) are the 4 meditative Absorptions of the Form Sphere (*rūpajjhāna*) and the 4 of the Formless Sphere (*arūpajjhāna*). — The **nine** Attainments are these eight and *nirodha-samāpatti*, the temporary suspension of conscious mental activity.

65. *Tādi* (lit:. such-like, the same) is an equanimous state of mind that cannot be influenced by the ups and downs of life. It is also a designation of the Buddha and the Arahant.

66. *Yo ca Visākha sammā-vāyāmo yā ca sammā-sati yo ca sammā-samādhi, ime dhammā samādhikkhandhe sangahitā.* — "And whatever there is of Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration, these things are comprised in the category of Concentration" (Majjh. Nik., No. 44).

are comprised within Sotāpatti-magga (Path of Stream-entry), having Nibbāna as object, are called Supramundane Concentration (*lokuttara-samādhi*).

These three constituents of the Samādhi group (within the supramundane Eightfold Path) can extinguish, once and for all, that is through Overcoming by Eradication (*samuccheda-pahāna*),[67] the mental evils of Covetousness (*abhijjhā*) and Ill-Will (*vyāpāda*) which have *micchā-vāyāma* (wrong effort), *micchā-sati* (wrong attention) and *micchā-samādhi* (wrong concentration) as their roots. From the instance they are eradicated, those mental evils of Covetousness and Ill-will do not arise again throughout the many lives and world-cycles that may follow. It is the kind of Concentration that can be achieved only within a Buddha-Sāsana, when meditative cultivation of the Anattā doctrine (*anattā-bhāvanā*) appears. Hence, now that beings have encountered a Buddha Sāsana, they should endeavour to achieve that so far not arisen kind of Concentration (*anuppanna-samādhi*), before they become severed from the Sāsana by the vicissitudes of wandering in Saṁsāra. This means, that, beginning with Body Contemplation, they should practise the Bodhi-pakkhiya-dhammas until they attain the successful culmination of Anattā-bhāvanā.

Uppanna-samādhi, which has occurred a countless number of times in infinite past Saṁsāra, consists of Concentration of the Sense-sphere (*kāmāvacara-samādhi*), i.e. the Neighbourhood Concentration), of the fine-material (*rūpāvacara-s.*) and immaterial sphere (*arūpāvacara-s.*), When it was said that attempts must be made for the 'stability' (*niyāma*) of Arisen Concentration it must be understood that this mundane Concentration has likewise two planes, viz. stability and

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67. See 'Manual of Insight' ('The Wheel' No. 31/32), p. 79f.

unstability. The Mundane Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration, with which Ariyas (Noble Ones) are endowed, are on the plane of 'stability' (*niyāma*). The Evil Deeds (*duccarita*) of Covetousness and Ill-will do not arise in them even in dreams throughout the succession of lives and world-cycles that follow until the final attainment of Parinibbāna.

The triple (Path-) group of Mundane Concentration with which Worldlings are endowed, is on the plane of 'unstability' (*aniyāma*). In the infinite past Samsāra, these persons have been men of *samādhi*, hermits (isis) of *samādhi*, and Bhikkhus of *samādhi*, endowed with jhānas and super-normal powers (*iddhi*), during countless existences. In the life-period of every world-system, there are four world-cycles (*kappa*), each of unfathomable duration. In three of these world-cycles, these Worldlings have been Brahmās in the Brahma worlds. In every one of these world-systems there have also appeared Apāya-worlds of Misery. And these worlds of misery have been filled by these self-same Brahmas and no others. These Worldlings have been Brahmā Gods, Hungry Ghosts (*peta*), beings of hell, animals and Titans (*asura*). Compared with the infinitely long Saṁsāra, the life-period of each of these world-systems is just like the time of an eye-wink.

Thus it behoves us all to attempt the transformation on the instability of the three constituents of the Samādhi group (which we temporarily acquired in the past on many occasions) to the stage of stability (*niyāma*), while we still have the opportunity now in the midst of an age in which the Buddha Sāsana exists. Hence we should, after first setting up Body Contemplation, practise the Bodhipakkhiya-dhammas until successful completion of Anattā-bhāvanā.

Arisen and not-arisen Wisdom
(*Uppanna and Anuppanna-Paññā*)

In accordance with the Cūla Vedalla Sutta, Right Understanding (*sammā-diṭṭhi*) and Right Thought (*sammā-saṅkappa*), which are comprised in Sotāpatti-magga and have Nibbāna as their object, are called Supramundane Wisdom (*lokuttara-paññā*). This Wisdom destroys the *anusaya* plane of Personality Belief (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*) completely, and dispels, by way of an Eradicating Abandonment (*samuccheda-pahāna*), every vestige of Wrong Understanding (*micchā-diṭṭhi*) and Wrong Thought (*micchā-saṅkappa*), together with the Evil Deeds (*duccarita*) and Wrong Livelihood (*durājīva*), once and for all. The old store accumulated by past kamma (*duccarita kamma*) also disappears completely. Release is obtained from the Apāya-Saṁsāra, i.e. rebirth in the Lower Worlds of Misery. From this instant, the evils of Wrong Views and Evil Deeds do not make an appearance throughout the series of future existence and future world-cycles.

This kind of Wisdom appears only during a Buddha-Sāsana when Anattā-bhāvanā exists. Hence, as beings have now encountered a Buddha-Sāsana, they should endeavour to attain this Anuppanna-Paññā, a Wisdom so far not arisen to them, before they are bereft of this Sāsana (in future lives). This means that, starting with Body Contemplation, they should practise the Bodhipakkhiya-dhammā until they reach the successful culmination of Anattā-bhāvanā.

Those kinds of Wisdom that have often appeared (*uppanna*) in the past infinite Saṁsāra are: the Right Understanding that beings are owners of (or responsible for) their actions (*kammassakatā-sammā-diṭṭhi*); all kinds of (mundane) knowledge and wisdom on the level of the Sense-sphere

(*kāmāvacara*), and such Supernormal knowledges (*abhiññā*) as the Celestial Eye (*dibba-cakkhu*) and the Celestial Ear (*dibba-sota*) (i.e., Clairvoyance and Clair-audience).

When it was said that attempts must be made for the 'stability' (*niyāma*) of Wisdom it must be understood that this mundane Wisdom has likewise two planes, viz. stability and unstability. The mundane Right Understanding and Right Thoughts of Ariyas (Noble Ones) are established on the plane of stability (*niyāma*). From the moment they are thus established in that stable Wisdom, and throughout the series of lives that follow until they attain Parinibbāna, they will always be in the possession of the Right Understanding of Ownership of Kamma (*kammassakatā-sammā-diṭṭhi*), of Doctrinal Knowledge (*pariyatti-ñāṇa*), Knowledge of Dhamma-practice (*paṭipatti-ñāṇa*), and Knowledge of the Four Truths (*catu-sacca-ñāṇa*).

The two-fold Mundane Wisdom, however, with which Worldlings (*puthujjana*) are endowed, is on the plane of Unstability (*aniyāma*). In their wanderings through Saṁsāra, these Worldlings have sometimes been learned in the Dhamma, sometimes acquired fame through their learning, sometimes they were great Theras or great physicians, while at other times they have also been cockles, snails, worms, leeches, lice, bugs, maggots, ticks, etc. — creatures that could be said to be just alive.

Hence, while now the opportunity of an encounter with a Buddha-Sāsana offers itself, efforts must be made to trans-form unstable Wisdom (which is but a temporary acquisition) into stable Wisdom, in the way stated above.

This ends the exposition of the two types of Morality, Concentration and Wisdom, viz. as Arisen and Not-arisen.

Hence, those laymen, hermits and Bhikkhus who have encountered a Buddha-Sāsana in this life, who desire to rid themselves of evils in their future existences, and who wish to consolidate in themselves permanently such Dhammas as Purification of Virtue, etc., should practise appropriately the Foundations of Mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*), applying energy of the type of the Right Efforts (*sammappadhāna*; see above), in order thus to destroy the *anusaya* plane of Personality Belief.

If they desire to free themselves from the insane and wild mind such as is possessed by the madman, the incapable boatman, the man afflicted with hydrophobia, and the sick man who vomits his medicines (as described in Chapter II on Satipatthāna), and desire to consolidate their Concentration or transform it to a stable condition (*niyāma*), so as to enable them to keep their attention tranquil, steady and fixed at will on any subject of meditation (*kammaṭṭhāna*), they should practise appropriately the Foundations of Mindfulness, with *sammappadhāna* energy in order to destroy thereby the *anusaya* plane of Personality Belief.

If they desire to free themselves from doctrines and conditions of Delusion (*sammoha-dhamma*) which can cast them into the utter darkness of the absence of Wisdom; which can extirpate all feelings of respect and reverence that they have harboured towards the infinite and noble qualities of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Ariya Sangha, as also of the establishments of the Sāsana, leaving no trace in the existences that follow; if they desire to rid themselves of the great Wrong Doctrines (*micchā-dhamma*) that have led them in the past beginningless Saṃsāra to approach, respect and pay reverence to all manners of spurious Buddhas (or religious teachers), because as Worldlings (*puthujjana*) they were not in a position to know the true Buddha, the true Dhamma and the true Sangha; if they desire to attain, in the

series of existences and world-cycles beginning with the present, that faith known as Firmly Established Faith, (*adhigama-saddhā*) and that wisdom known as Firmly Established Wisdom (*adhigama-paññā*), by virtue of which they can continue to evoke within themselves, without let or hindrance, respect and reverence for the true Buddha, the true Dhamma and the true Sangha; and if they desire to transform them to the level of 'stability' (*niyāma*) — then they must practise appropriately the Foundations of Mindfulness, with *sammappadhāna* effort, with a view of destroying Personality Belief on its plane of latent dispositions (*anusaya-bhūmi*). Here, the appropriate practice of Right Effort (*sammappadhāna*) means that energy which is accompanied by the determination, "Let the skin remain; let the bones remain.....".

CHAPTER IV

THE BASES OF SUCCESS

(*iddhipāda*)

I shall now give a brief description of the *iddhipādas* the Bases of Success.

Iddhi

The word-explanation is: *ijjhanam iddhi*, which means that *iddhi* signifies the fact of having succeeded, completed or perfected.[67A]

67A. See further 'The Path of Purification' (Visuddhi Magga), tr. by Nanamoli Thera (2nd ed., Colombo 1964), Ch. XII, §§ 20-22, 44. — As will be seen from the following, the terms *iddhi* and *iddhipāda* do

(Foot note continued on page 65)

In the Buddha Sāsana there are five *iddhis*. They are.—

1. *Abhiññeyyesu dhammesu abhiññā-siddhi*,[68]
2. *Pariññeyyesu dhammesu pariññā-siddhi*,
3. *Pahātabbesu dhammesu pahāna-siddhi*,
4. *Sacchikātabbesu dhammesu sacchikiriya-siddhi*,
5. *Bhāvetabbesu dhammesu bhāvanā-siddhi*.

1. Completion of or success in acquiring special knowledge in those things in which special knowledge should be acquired, things such as *rūpa* (material phenomena), *nāma* (mental phenomena);

2. Completion of or success in acquiring full understanding in those things in which full understanding should be acquired, things such as *dukkha sacca* (the Noble Truth of Suffering);

3. Completion of or success attained in the task of abandonment of those things that should be abandoned, things such as *samudaya sacca* (the Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering);

4. Completion of or success attained in the task of realization of those things that should be realized, things such as *nirodha sacca* (the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering);

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not exclusively refer to Supernormal (Magical) Powers, as it is sometimes assumed. In the present context, they signify *success* in Dhamma-practice and the four basic conditions of such success. — In the following first part of this chapter, the Translator's rendering of *iddhi* by "completion" has been retained while, for purposes of nomenclature, the preferable translation by "success" has been used. — The PTS Dictionary suggests "potency". — (Editor)

68. *siddhi* is identical with *iddhi*.

5. Completion of or success attained in the task of development or cultivation of those things that should be developed or cultivated, things such as *magga sacca* (the Noble Truth of the Path leading to the Cessation of Suffering).

These are the five essential *iddhis* within a Buddha Sāsana.

Abhiññā-siddhi means: the completion of the task of knowing of the *paramattha dhammas* (ultimate truths) which one had no knowledge of while one was beyond the pale of a Buddha Sāsana. A thorough knowledge of the Abhidhammattha Saṅgaha (a resumé of all the essential doctrines of the Abhidhamma[69]) amounts to *Abhiññā-siddhi.*

Pariññā-siddhi means: the completion of acquiring full understanding of *dukkha sacca* (the Noble Truth of Suffering) either through a knowledge of their *lakkhaṇa* (characteristics), *rasa* (functions), *paccupaṭṭhāna* (manifestations), and *padaṭṭhāna* (proximate causes), or through a knowledge of the three characteristics of *anicca* (impermanence), *dukkha* (suffering), and *anattā* (impersonality), which they possess.

Pahāna-siddhi means: the completion of the task of abandoning (*pahāna*), i.e. destroying the *kilesas* (defilements) which are *samudaya sacca* (the Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering). In this book, since the main emphasis is placed on the attainment of the lowest class of Sotāpannas, namely the '*Bon-sin-san*' Sotāpannas, and not on the higher classes of *ariyas* (Noble Ones), the completion of the task of destroying *sakkāya-diṭṭhi* (Personality-belief) is *pahāna-siddhi.* The task of dispelling *vicikicchā* (sceptical doubt) is comprised within the task of destroying *sakkāya-diṭṭhi.*

Sacchikiriya-siddhi means: the completion of the task of realizing *nirodha sacca* (the Noble Truth of the Cessation

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69. See Note 63.

of Suffering) both bodily and mentally. This task consists of the suppression and destruction of the *kilesas* (defilements).

Bhāvanā-siddhi means: the development of the three *sikkhās* (Trainings) of *sīla* (Morality), *samādhi* (Mental Concentration) and *paññā* (Wisdom), until the attainment of *lokuttara magga sacca* (Supramundane Path leading to the Cessation of Suffering).

Also the seven Purifications, beginning with Morality, and their sub-divisions, constitute as many kinds of *iddhi*, in the sense of potencies in their respective fields.

Iddhipāda

The word-explanation is: *iddhiyā pādo iddhipādo*, i.e. root or basis of attaining completion or perfection (success or potency).[70]

There are four kinds of *iddhipādas*. They are:—

1. *Chandiddhipādo* (*chanda*)
2. *Vīriyiddhipādo* (*vīriya*)
3. *Cittiddhipādo* (*citta*)
4. *Vīmaṃsiddhipādo* (*vīmaṃsa* or *paññā*).

By *chanda* is meant (the zeal or) desire to obtain, desire to attain, desire to reach, desire to fulfil, desire to accomplish. The desire indicated here is extreme or excessive desire. There is nothing within or without one's personality that can obstruct that desire. It is the kind of desire that evokes the thought, "If I do not attain this accomplishment in this life, I shall not rest content. It is better that I die rather than that I shall not attain it."

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70. See 'The Path of Purification', ch. XII, 50-53; XXII, 36.

It is the kind of desire nurtured by King Dhammasoṇḍa[71] of Benares during the time of the Kassapa Buddha,[72] when the king said to himself, "What use is there in my being king of Benares if I do not get the opportunity of hearing a discourse of the Kassapa Buddha?" The king, therefore, relinquished his throne and went out in search of one who could repeat to him a discourse of the Kassapa Buddha, no matter though that discourse consisted of a short stanza only.

Such desire is appeased if it is fulfilled, as in the case of King Biṃbisāra[73] ,Visākhā, and Anāthapiṇḍika[73A] It is only when there are faint indications that the desire can be attained but is not fulfilled, that the mind becomes troubled, and thoughts arise that it is better to die than live without attaining the desire.

Examples of such desire existed also in King Temiya,[74] King Hatthipāla,[75] and kings, nobles, and rich men in the time of the Buddha who discarded their palaces, retinue and other luxuries to live the lives of Bhikkhus in the Buddha Sāsana.

Vīriya (Energy) means *sammappadhāna vīriya* together with its four characteristics (see Chapter II). A person with this *vīriya* is infused with the thought that the aim can be attained by energy and effort. He is not discouraged even though it is said to him that he must undergo great hardships. He is not discouraged even though he actually has to undergo great hardships. He is not discouraged even though it is said

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71. Rasavāhini (Jambudipuppatti-kathā).
72. A Buddha of a former age, preceding Gotama Buddha.
73. See Com. to Tirokuḍḍa Sutta, in "Minor Readings" (Khuddaka-patha), tr. by Nanamoli (PTS), p. 223ff.
73A. See Dhammapada Com., story relating to Verse 1.
74. Mūgapakkha Jātaka.
75. Hatthipāla Jātaka.

to him that he must put forth effort for many days, months, and years. He is not discouraged even though he actually has to put forth effort for such long periods.

Those who are weak in energy recoil from their task when confronted with work requiring great energy and effort. They shrink when told that they will have to stay apart from friends and associates. They shrink from the prospect of the necessity to be frugal in sleep and food. They shrink from the prospect of long periods of concentration.

Citta (lit.: consciousness) means: attachment to *iddhis* when one comes in contact with the Sāsana and hears the Dhamma. It is attachment that is extremely ardent and strong.

Although one lives amidst the beauties and luxuries of the world, amidst acquired powers and fortunes, amidst the sacred books and the study of them, one is not allured, but one's mind is always turned towards the *iddhis*. One attains satisfaction and tranquillity only when one's mind is absorbed in matters connected with the *iddhis*. It is like the absorption of the alchemist engaged in the transmutation of the baser metals into gold or silver. Such an alchemist has no interest in anything else but his alchemy. He forgets to sleep or eat, or whether he had slept or eaten. He does not notice anything when out walking. *Citta* is great absorption or attachment of this nature.

Vīmaṃsā (investigation) means: knowledge or wisdom that can clearly perceive the greatness of the sufferings of hell, and of the sufferings attendant on the round of rebirths. It is knowledge that can clearly perceive the advantages and benefits of the *iddhis*. It is knowledge that can dwell on the deep and difficult *dhammas*, and on their nature. A person who possesses such knowledge can no longer find pleasure in any worldly pursuit except the pursuit of the *iddhis*. He

finds gratification only in the acquisition of deep and profound *iddhis*. The deeper and more profound the *dhammas*, the greater is his desire to attain them.

Those who are endowed with any one of these four Bases of Success (*iddhipāda*) can no longer, during this life, admit or plead inability and remain without putting forth effort in the establishment of Body Contemplation (*kāya-gatāsati*) and the higher stages of the Sāsana such as the seven Purifications (*visuddhi*). It is only those who have never possessed any one of these Bases of Success, and who cannot differentiate between the shallowness and profoundness of life, between superficiality and depth of the *dhamma*, who admit or plead inability and remain without making any endeavour.

A person endowed with any one of these four *iddhipādas* can attain, according to his *pāramī*, the *iddhis* until he reaches *lokuttara* (supramundane) *iddhi*, either in this life or as a *deva* in the next life. The cases of those endowed with two, or three, or four *iddhipādas* need no lengthy explanation.

In the cases of those persons who (far from possessing any of the *iddhis*) do not even possess any of the *iddhipādas*, they should attempt to acquire one or other of these Bases. They admit or plead inability only because they have not the desire to acquire the higher benefits of the Sāsana, such as the *satipaṭṭhānas*. They should regard this very admission of inability as a highway to the Lower Worlds of Misery (*Apāyaloka*). Thus, they should study, think and ponder, over the Suttanta discourses that can arouse zeal (*chanda*). They should approach a teacher who can arouse zeal and rely on him.

Hence did the Buddha say:

Chandiddhipādaṁ bhāveti, Vīriyiddhipādaṁ bhāveti,
Cittiddhipādaṁ bhāveti, Vīmaṁsiddhipādaṁ bhāveti.

("He cultivates zeal, energy, consciousness and investigation as the Bases of Success.")

Some persons, far from attaining the *iddhis*, do not even try to attain the *iddhipādas*. If they do not possess *chanda*, they do not even know that it is necessary to acquire such Zeal (*chanda*). They are persons who admit and plead inability and defeat. The same is true in the cases of *vīriya*, *citta*, and *vīmaṃsa*.

Steady application of the mind to *kāyagatāsati* amounts to setting up *pāda*. Studying the anecdotes conveying a sense of urgency (*saṃvega*)[76], applying oneself to the strict ascetic observances (*dhutaṅga*) and such other practices of the *dhamma*, is setting up of energy (*vīriya*). Applying oneself to profound subjects of Dhamma, such as the Four Great Primaries (or Elements; *mahā-bhūta*) amounts to the setting up of *vīmaṃsa* (Investigation).

If any one of the four Bases of Success is established, then it is certain that the respective *iddhis*[77] will be attained according to one's Pāramī. Hence, it is stated in the Commentaries that persons who do not possess any of the Bases of Success, resemble the sons of a Caṇḍāla (a man of low class), while persons possessing one of the Bases of Success resemble the sons of an Emperor. The sons of a Caṇḍāla never even aim at becoming an Emperor because they have no basis, no *pāda*, for such an attainment. Sons of Emperors,

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76. *Saṁvega* is a stirring up of the mind, caused by contemplating the dangers and miseries of Samsāra.

77. i.e. one of the five *iddhis* or *siddhis*, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter.

however, always aim at becoming Emperors because they are endowed with the bases for attaining such an aim.

Hence, wise persons of the present day should attempt to acquire the four *Iddhipādas*, the Bases of Success, so that they can destroy the great realm of Personality Belief (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*), and acquire, within the Sāsana, the benefits of the higher attainments that can be obtained according to one's Pāramis.

CHAPTER V

The Five Controlling Faculties

(*indriya*)

The word-explanation of the term *indriya* is:

Indassa kammaṁ indriyaṁ.

which means that *indriya* signifies the act of ruling or of controlling, by rulers. 'The act of ruling by rulers' means that wherever the ruler rules, nobody can go against him.

In the present context, the control or rule that one exercises over one's mind is the essential point in these Controlling Faculties.

There are five such Faculties:[78]

1. *Saddhindriya* (faith),
2. *Viriyindriya* (energy),
3. *Satindriya* (mindfulness),
4. *Samādhindriya* (concentration),
5. *Paññindriya* (wisdom).

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78. On the Five Faculties, see 'The Way of Wisdom', by Edward Conze (The Wheel No. 65/66).

Faith

Saddhindriya is (to some extent,) synonymous with *saddhā*. But there are two kinds of *saddhā*, namely:

1. *Pakati-saddhā*, Ordinary Faith, and
2. *Bhāvanā-saddhā*, Faith Developed (or matured) by Meditation.[79]

The Faith and Confidence (*saddhā*) that leads ordinary men and women to perform acts of Almsgiving (*dāna*), Morality (*sīla*) and 'surrogate' (or rudimentary) Meditation (*bhāvanā*),[80] — is called Ordinary Faith (*pakati-saddhā*). Here, as was shown in the simile of the madman (Chapter II), although such *saddhā* is to some extent a Controlling Faculty, its control does not extend to the capacity of controlling the unstable minds of ordinary folk in the work of meditation (*bhāvanā*). Control is exercised over the instability only to the extent of leading to acts of Almsgiving, Morality and rudimentary Meditation.

Without Faith and Confidence (*saddhā*), the mind never inclines to *kusala-kamma* (wholesome volitional actions), for ordinarily it takes delight only in evil acts. This holds true also for the effort to attain to the Purification of Virtue

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79. In the following, called, for short, 'Developed Faith', similarly, 'Developed Energy'.

80. **'Surrogate' meditation.** — The original text of the translation has here '*imitation*' *bhāvanā*, which sounds more deprecatory than the Author may have intended in this context. What is probably meant is a kind of very rudimentary meditation or contemplation that is not much more than a devotional or pensive mood maintained for some time, which, being of a discursive nature, does not reach, by itself, any marked degree of concentration. Being, in this context, one of the three "items of merit-making"(*puñña-kiriya-vatthu*), it is nevertheless a beneficial practice that may well lead to concentration and meditation proper. — *Editor*.

(*sīla-visuddhi*) or to engage in the study of the sacred texts. This is how ordinary wholesome acts (*pakati-kusala-kamma*) are produced by the control of Ordinary Faith (*pakati-saddhā*), which is undeveloped (by genuine meditation: *abhāvita*).

In the work of attending to a subject of meditation (*kammaṭṭhāna*) for the practice of Tranquillity and Insight, Ordinary Faith has not sufficient control over the mind as the mind is apt to recoil and rebound from that Faith and to turn elsewhere. In meditative work, Ordinary Faith is not sufficient.

It is Developed Faith that prepares the seed bed, so to say, for the acquisition of great strength and power through the practice of meditation, such as Mindfulness of Breathing.

In the context of the 'Requisites of Enlightenment' (*bodhipakkhiya-dhamma*), it is Developed Faith (*bhāvanā-saddhā*) that is called *saddhindriya*, the Controlling Faculty of Faith. In the field of meditative exercises, it represents the disappearance of unstable and oscillating attention and the appearance of a clear and steady mind.[80A] The mind's attention can be steadily fixed only on those objects which it finds clear and unbefogged. The practice of Body Contemplation (*kāyagatā-sati*), such as Mindfulness of Breathing, is the preparation of the seed-bed for *bhāvanā-saddhā*, i.e. Faith and Confidence, developed and matured by meditation. If the mind is fixed on the Contemplation of the Body, such as the out-and in-breaths, it amounts to the attainment of Developed Faith. If then the work is continued in the fields of Tranquillity (*samatha*) and Insight (*vipassanā*), the ability to destroy the three planes of Personality Belief (*sakkāya-*

80A. The aspect of *saddhā* that is especially active here, is Confidence, i.e., confidence in the method (and the Dhamma in general) and self-confidence. — *Editor.*

diṭṭhi) can be acquired even within this life. The work of *samatha* and *vipassanā* needs for their proper performance, the reliance on a teacher who is very learned in the Dhamma.

Energy

Vīriyindriya is, to some extent, synonymous with *vīriya*. But there are two kinds, or degrees, of *vīriya*, namely:

1. *Pakati-vīriya*, Ordinary Energy, and
2. *Bhāvanā-vīriya*, Energy developed by meditation.

Another classification is:

1. *Kāyika-vīriya*, bodily energy, and
2. *Cetasika-vīriya*, mental energy.

Ordinary Energy (*pakati-vīriya*) can be easily recognized. Persons who possess much Ordinary Energy in worldly matters can easily attain Developed Energy (*bhāvanā-vīriya*). The strict ascetic observances (*dhutaṅga*) of a monk[80A] are instances of Bodily Energy of a developed nature (*kāyika-bhāvanā-vīriya*).

If, after setting up Developed Bodily Energy such as reducing sleep and being alert and energetic, there is still no Mental Energy (*cetasika-vīriya*), such as enthusiasm in keen attention to meditation (*bhāvanā-manasikāra*), steady application to, or concentration on the objects of meditation (*kammaṭṭhāna*), such as Mindfulness on Breathing, cannot be attained, and the period of work is unduly lengthened without achieving clarity of mind and perception.

Any kind of work will be properly and appropriately done only if the person performing it, obtains quick mastery over it. It will be improperly done if the work obtains mastery over the person. By "the work obtaining mastery over the person" is meant that the work is done without real energy, as a result of which no concrete results appear, and as days

and months drag on, distaste (in meditation) and tedium in body postures appear, leading to sloth. With the appearance of sloth, progress in the work slows down, and with the slowing down of progress, further sloth develops. The idea then appears that it would be better to change the form of the work. Thus constant changes in forms of work occur, and in that way the work obtains mastery over the person lacking energy.

In meditative work, quick success is obtained only by one endowed with both bodily and mental energy. From the moment when Body Contemplation is set up, the energy that develops day by day is *bhāvanā-vīriya*, energy developed by meditation, and it is this energy that, in the *bodhipakkhiya-dhammas*, is called the Faculty of Energy, *vīriyindriya*. It represents the disappearance of sloth and laziness in meditative work and the appearance of enthusiasm and vigor. The mind takes delight in dwelling on objects on which its attention is strong. Thence, the task of setting up Developed Energy, and graded development, is identical with that of the Faculty of Faith (*saddhindriya*).

The Faculty of Mindfulness (*satindriya*), in the context of the *bodhipakkhiya-dhamma*, means the setting up of mindful Body-Contemplation (*kāyagatā-sati*), e.g. on Out-and In-breath, and the development of *bhāvanā-sati* (meditative mindfulness), called Satipaṭṭhāna, until Supramundane Right Mindfulness (*lokuttara-sammā-sati*), as a supramundane Path-factor, is reached.

The Faculties of Concentration and Wisdom (*samā-dhindriya* and *paññindriya*) may be defined and described similarly.

The Faculty of Concentration dispels the distraction of mind when it is applied in the work of Satipaṭṭhāna on such an object as the Mindfulness on Breathing. The Faculty of Wisdom dispels confusion and haziness.

The Faculties of Faith, Energy and Mindfulness, which precede those of Concentration and Wisdom, are like those who raise a king to kingship. They raise the latter two Faculties until the topmost excellence is attained.

After the setting up of Body Contemplation and the attainment of mastery over one's mind, if the *Samatha* road is taken, the Faculty of Concentration becomes the eight meditative attainments (*samāpatti* or *jhāna*), while the Faculty of Wisdom becomes the five Higher Spiritual Knowledges (*abhiññā*)[81], such as the Supernormal Powers etc. If the *Vipassanā* road be taken, the Faculty of Concentration becomes the Voidness Concentration (*suññatā-samādhi*), Conditionless Concentration (*animitta-samādhi*) or Desireless Concentration (*appaṇihita-samādhi*), while the Faculty of Wisdom becomes the five Purifications (*visuddhi*) pertaining to Wisdom,[82] the Knowledge of the three Contemplations (*anupassanā-ñāṇa*),[83] the ten Insight knowledges (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*)[84] the Knowledges pertaining to the four Paths and the four Fruitions and the nineteen of Reviewing (*paccavekkhaṇa-ñāṇa*).[85]

This shows how the five Faculties occur together.

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81. The five Higher Spiritual Knowledges (*abhiññā*) are: 1. *Iddhividha*, Super-normal Powers, 2. *Dibba-sota*, Celestial Ear (clair-audience), 3. *parassa ceto-pariyañāna*, Knowledge of the minds of others, 4. *PubbeNivāsānussati*, Recollection of Former Lives. 5. *Dibba-cakkhu*, Celestial Eye (clairvoyance).

82. These are the last five of the seven Purifications: see list on p. 18.

83. These are the Contemplations on Impermanence, Suffering and Not-self.

84. These are: Comprehension knowledge (*sammasana-ñāna*), and the nine Insight-knowledges dealt with in Chapter XXI of 'The Path of Purification'.

85. These nineteen are enumerated in 'The Path of Purification', Chapter XXII, 20, 21.

The Predominance of the Faculties

It is now proposed to show where each of these Faculties forms a predominant factor.

The Sutta text says:

> *Kattha saddhindriyaṁ daṭṭhabbaṁ? Catūsu sotā-pattiyaṅgesu ettha saddhindriyaṁ daṭṭhabbaṁ.*
>
> "Where should one look for the Faculty of Faith? One should look for it in the four constituents of Stream-entry."[86]

This means that the Faculty of Faith predominates in the four constituents of Stream-entry. These four are:

1. Unshakeable faith in the noble qualities of the Buddha, such as *Arahaṁ*, *sammā-sambuddho*, etc.
2. Unshakeable faith in the noble qualities of the Dhamma, such as 'Well proclaimed' (*svākkhāto*), etc.
3. Unshakeable faith in the noble qualities of the Sangha, such as 'Of good conduct' (*supaṭipanno*), etc.
4. Completely or perfectly endowed with the Foundation (or proximate cause; *padaṭṭhāna*) of Supramundane Concentration (*lokuttara-samādhi*), which is 'Purification of Morality' (*sīla-visuddhi*).[87]

These are the four factors that ensure the attainment of *Sotāpatti-magga-ñāṇa* (Knowledge pertaining to the Path of Stream-entry), within the compass of this life.

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86. *Sotāpannassa angāni;* see Indriya Samyutta, Sutta 8, Datthabba-sutta.
87. In the Suttas, this fourth constituent of Stream-entry is usually formulated as "unbroken morality".

In the Sutta passage[88] "*Buddhe aveccappasādena samannāgato*", *aveccappasādo* means 'unshakeable faith'. It is the faith (*saddhā*) of those who have attained Access Concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*) while reflecting on the noble qualities of the Buddha. *Upacāra-samādhi* here means steady and fixed attention achieved while reflecting on the noble qualities of the Buddha. When one encounters such steady and fixed attention, one must know that the control by Faith is predominant. Such a person is one who attains mastery over his mind in the matter of Faith in the noble qualities of the Buddha. The same holds true in regard to the noble qualities of the Dhamma and Sangha.

"Foundation of Supramundane Concentration" (the fourth constituent; see above) means the "Permanent Morality ending with Right Livelihood as the Eighth Precept" (*ājīvaṭṭhamaka-niccasīla*) which can enable one to attain Supramundane Concentration in this very life. When that *sīla* is unbroken and pure, it is free from the defilements of *taṇhā* (craving), *māna* (conceit), and *diṭṭhi* (wrong view), and in such case one must understand that *saddhā* is prominent in that *sīla*. In ability to observe the requirements of the *sīla* is called "breaking" it. Although the *sīla* may be technically unbroken, but if it is observed amidst ordinary worldly conditions, it is said to be "impure." In accordance with the saying "the worth of a bull can be known only on the ascent from the bed of a stream to the banks," lay persons and Bhikkhus who profess to be followers of the Buddha can know whether or not the turbulance and distractions latent in their minds have disappeared, i.e. whether or not they have obtained mastery over their minds, only when they arrive at these four constituents.

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88. For instance, in Majjhima-Nikaya No. 9, The Discourse on Right Understanding.

Kattha vīriyindiryaṁ daṭṭhabbaṁ?
Catūsu sammappadhānesu ettha vīriyindriyaṁ daṭṭhabbaṁ.
(Where should one look for *vīriyindriya?* One should look for it in the four constituents of Right Effort (*sammappadhāna*).

Lay persons and Bhikkhus who profess to be followers of the Buddha can know whether or not the unsettledness and turbulence of their minds in the matter of *vīriya* have disappeared and whether or not they are thus persons who have obtained mastery over their minds, only when they come to the four constituents of *sammappadhāna.*

"Let my skin remain, let my sinews remain, let my bones remain, let my blood dry up, I shall not rest until the realm of Personality Belief (*sakkāyadiṭṭhi*), the realm of the *duccaritas*, and the *apāyasaṃsāra*, that are in my personality, are destroyed in this life." This is the singleness of determination and effort in *sammappadhāna.* It is the effort of the same order as the Venerable Cakkhupāla's[89]. When one encounters such determination and effort, one must recognise in it the predominating control of *vīriya* over the mind. In the matter of *vīriya*, the unsettledness and turbulence of the mind have disappeared in such a person, and he is one within the Buddha Sāsana who has obtained mastery over his mind.

Kattha satindriyaṁ daṭṭhabbaṁ?
Catūsu satipaṭṭhānesu ettha satiṅdriyaṁ daṭṭhabbaṁ.
(Where should one look for *satindriya?* One should look for it in the four Foundations of Mindfulness, *satipaṭṭhāna*).

Lay persons and Bhikkhus who profess to be followers of the Buddha can know whether or not the unsettledness and

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89. See Dhammapada Com., Story to verse 1.

turbulence of their minds in the matter of *sati* (mindfulness) have disappeared, and whether or not they are thus persons who have obtained mastery over their minds, only when they arrive at the four constituents of the *satipaṭṭhāna*. If the attention can be kept fixed on any part of the body, such as out-breath and in-breath, by the successful practice of mindful Body Contemplation (*kāyagatāsati*) for as long as is desired, then it must be recognised as the control exercised by Mindfulness (*sati*). The unsettledness and turbulence of the mind of such a person have disappeared. He is one who has obtained mastery over his mind.

Kattha samādhindriyaṁ daṭṭhabbaṁ?
Catūsu jhānesu ettha samādhindriyaṁ daṭṭhabbaṁ.
(Where should one look for *samādhindriya?*
One should look for it in the four *jhānas*).

If in the work of *samatha*, such as out-breath and in-breath, the successful accomplishment in the least of *upacāra samādhi bhāvanā* (contemplation of access-concentration) is attained, and if thereby the *nīvaraṇas* (Hindrances) such as *kāmacchanda* (Sensuous Desire), *byāpāda* (Ill-will), etc. which in the past *saṁsāra* have continuously been running riot in the mind, are removed, the attention of the mind on the objects of *samatha* becomes specially steady and tranquil. This must be recognised as arising out of the function of the predominant control exercised by *samādhi*. The unsettledness and disturbances of the mind in the matter of *samādhi* have disappeared from such an individual. He is one who has obtained mastery over his mind.

Kattha paññindriyaṁ daṭṭhabbaṁ?
Catūsu ariyasaccesu ettha paññindriyaṁ daṭṭhabbaṁ.
"(Where should one look for *paññindriya?* One should look for it in the Four Noble Truths.)"

Among persons who encounter a Buddha Sāsana, knowledge of the Four Noble Truths is of supreme value. Only when this knowledge is acquired can they obtain release from the realm of *sakkāyadiṭṭhi*, and that of the *duccaritas*, and from the *apāya saṃsāra*. Hence, in order to acquire a knowledge of the Four Noble Truths, they should attempt at least to obtain insight into the six *dhātus* (or basic constituent elements) of *paṭhavī*, *āpo*, *tejo*, *vāyo*, *ākāsa* and *viññāṇa*,[90] or insight into their fleeting and unstable nature — how they do not last for more than the twinkling of an eye at a time (so to say) and how they are continually being destroyed. They should attain to such insight through such methods of practice as studying, memorising, reciting, cogitating, listening, discussing, questioning, practising insight exercises, and contemplating. If a clear insight is obtained into these six elements, there is no necessity for special practice with regard to the remaining *dhammas*.[91] If the nature of *anicca*, (Impermanence) can be clearly realised, the realisation of *anattā* (Impersonality) follows as a matter of course.[92]

The realisation of the nature of *dukkha* (Suffering) can be accomplished in its entirety only when one attains the stage of *arahatta phala* (Fruition of Holiness).

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90. (1) Element of Extension, (2) Element of Liquidity or Cohesion (3) Element of Kinetic Energy (Fire), (4) Element of Motion or Support (Wind), (5) Element of Space, (6) Element of Consciousness. —On the meditation on the first four, see Ledi Sayadaw, *Magga Dipani*, in the section "How to establish the Wisdom Group".

91. Such classifications as Aggregates (*khandha*) or Sense-bases (*āyatana*).

92. See Udāna, Meghiya Vagga, Sutta 1: "In him who perceives impermanence the perception of Not-self manifests itself. And he who perceives Not-self obtains the elimination of the conceit 'I am' and reaches Nibbāna in this very life."

Thus, after putting forth effort for lengthy periods, when insight is obtained into the nature of the six elements both within and without oneself, as well as into the nature of their Impermanency, fixity of attention on them is achieved. This must be recognised as arising out of the predominant control exercised by *paññā*. The unreliability that had been a feature of one's mind throughout past infinite *saṃsāra* gradually disappears.

Here, "unreliability of one's mind" means the perception of permanency in things that are impermanent, of happiness in suffering, of pleasantness in loathsomeness, of self in non-self, of individuals in non-individuals, of beings in non-beings, of humans in non-humans, of *devas*, *Sakka* and *Brahmās* in *non-devas*, *non-Sakka*, and *non-Brahmās*, of women, men, bullocks, buffaloes, elephants, horses in non-women, non-men, non-bullocks, non-buffaloes, non-elephants, and non-horses. Freedom from unreliability means perceiving the true reality after having obtained mastery over the mind within the Buddha Sāsana.

If *dukkha-sacca*, or the Noble Truth of Suffering, be clearly perceived, it follows as a matter of course that the other three Truths can also be clearly perceived. In the perception of these four Truths, the way that Worldlings (*puthujjana*) perceive them is known as 'theoretical knowledge' (*anubodha*), while the way of the Noble (*ariya*, i.e. Stream-winners, etc.) is known as 'penetrative understanding' (*paṭivedha*). 'Theoretical knowledge' is like seeing a light at night but not the fire from which it originates. Although the fire cannot be directly seen, by seeing the reflected light one can know without doubt that there is a fire. Seeing the fire directly is like *paṭivedha*, the 'penetrative understainding'.

Saddhindriyaṃ bhāveti, Viriyindriyaṃ bhāveti, Satindriyaṃ bhāveti, Samādhindriyaṃ bhāveti, Paññindriyaṃ bhāveti.[93]

The meaning of this Pāli passage uttered by the Buddha, is that the five *indriyas* (mental faculties) should be practised and developed in order to facilitate the great work of *samatha* and *vipassanā.*

A person who has not developed these five *indriyas* is like a country without a ruler or king. It is like the forests and mountains inhabited by wild tribes where no administration exists. In a rulerless country there is no law. There the people are unrestrained. Like animals, the strong prey on the weak. In the same way, the mind of a person who has not developed the five *indriyas* is distracted and runs riot with defilements. Just as a person possessed by evil spirits cannot bear to hear the sound of such recitations as '*iti pi so*' or '*hetu paccayo*', when persons without developed *indriyas* hear talks connected with the cause of contentment (*paccaya santosa*) or with the practice of mental development (*bhāvanā-rambha*), they quickly discover antagonistic criticisms. In them, the desire to exert themselves in the work of *samatha* and *vipassanā* never arises.

On the other hand, a person who develops the five *indriyas* resembles a country ruled by a just and lawful king. It resembles the towns and hamlets of the *majjhima desa* (mid-country) where governmental administration exists. Such a person is not disturbed by the variegated theories of various persons. He is confirmed in the sole way of the Buddha's teachings. When such a person hears talk connected with the cause of contentment, or the practice of mental development, his mind is clear and cool. He is confirmed in the desire to exert himself in the work of *samatha* and *vipassnā.*

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93. Samyutta Nikāya, Mahā Vagga, Indriya Samy., Vagga 6, Sutta 8.

In this way, the arising of the two kinds of desires in this world is not the work of beings or individuals, but depends on the existence or otherwise of development of the five *indriyas*. If there is no development of the *indriyas*, one kind of desire arises. If there is development of the *indriyas*, that desire disappears and a new kind of desire invariably appears. The more the development of the *indriyas* proceeds, the more does this new desire increase and gather strength. When all the five *indriyas* are set up, the desire for the Paths and the Fruits will immediately appear. Thus must beings develop the five *indriyas* in order to raise them from their Ordinary level (*pakati-saddhā*, etc.) to the great heights of their Developed (or meditative) plane (*bhāvanā-saddhā*, etc.).

CHAPTER VI

THE FIVE MENTAL POWERS

(*bala*)

The Mental Powers (*balāni*) are thus called because "they overpower opposing mental states".[94] Or, as the commentaries explain: they are powerful in the sense of being unshaken (*akampanaṭṭhena*) by opposition.[95]

Parallel to the Faculties, there are five Powers (*bala*):

1. *Saddhā* (Faith)
2. *Vīriya* (Energy)
3. *Sati* (Mindfulness)
4. *Samādhi* (Concentration)
5. *Paññā* (Wisdom).

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94. Paramattha Dipani, by Ledi Sayadaw.
95. Com. to Anguttara-Nikaya, Ekaka-nipata.

They are like five generals or commanders engaged in destroying the hostile kingdom of Personality Belief. They are the fivefold strength on which Bhikkhus and layfolk can place their reliance.

As in the case of the Faculties, the Power of Faith (*saddhā-bala*) is of two kinds: 1. The Power of Ordinary Faith (*pakati-saddhā*), 2. the Power of Developed Faith (*bhāvanā-saddhā*).

'Ordinary Faith', which has no development through specific practice, associates with Craving (*taṇhā*) according to circumstances, and can thus produce only the ordinary good actions (*pakati-kusala-kamma*) of Almsgiving (Liberality; *dāna*), Morality (*sīla*), etc. The limited measure of strength it possesses, cannot overcome Craving. On the contrary, Craving (*taṅhā*) keeps 'Ordinary Faith' under its power.

This is how Craving keeps Ordinary Faith under its power:— The Pali texts mention, with the greatest clarity, four "Traditional Practices of the Noble Ones" (*ariya-vaṁsa*).[96] They are:

1. Being easily satisfied with food.
2. Being easily satisfied with clothing.
3. Being easily satisfied with any dwelling place,
4. Finding pleasure and enjoyment in the work of *bhāvanā* (meditation).

They constitute the realm of *saddhā*.[97] In the present-day world, this great kingdom of *saddhā* lies hidden and submerged. Today, beings take pleasure and enjoyment in material

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96. Anguttara-Nikaya, Catukka Nipata (The Fours), Ariyavamsa-Sutta. Translated in "With Robes and Bowl", by Bhikkhu Khantipalo (The Wheel No. 83/84), p. 70.
97. This in the sense of confidence in these traditional values of simple living and mental culture, which, in such a general formulation, apply also to lay followers. — *Editor.*

things (*paccayāmisa*): they take pleasure and enjoyment in worldly rank, dignity, and honour (*lokāmisa*); they take pleasure and enjoyment in the attainment of the pleasant life, in worldly riches, and in power and dominion (*vaṭṭāmisa*); and thus is the great kingdom of *taṇhā* established as clearly as the great ocean round the island. This shows the weakness of Ordinary Faith (*pakati-saddhā*) in this world.

It is Developed Faith which has its genesis in the successful practice of Body Contemplation (such as Mindfulness on Breathing) ← being pursued until disappearance of the distraction and unsettled condition of the mind — that can dispel Craving (*taṇhā*) which takes pleasure and enjoyment in the aforementioned three kinds of worldliness (*āmisa*). It is this Developed Faith (*bhāvanā saddhā*) that can save Bhikkhus and layfolk who are in the course of being drowned and submerged in the ocean of the three Cravings,[98] and that enables them to reach the island haven of the kingdom of *saddhā*, as manifested (e.g.) in the four Traditional Practices of the Noble (*ariya-vaṁsa-dhamma*). In the context of the Bodhipakkhiya-dhamma. it is this Developed Faith that should be acquired.

Of the two kinds of Energy (*vīriya*), Ordinary Energy, which is without development practice, associates with laziness (*kosajja*) according to the occasion and produces the ordinary good acts (*pakati-kusala-kamma*) of Liberality (Almsgiving), Morality, the study of the sacred texts, etc. This Ordinary Energy cannot dispel laziness. On the contrary, it is laziness which controls Ordinary Energy and keeps it under subjection.

When beings encounter a Buddha Sāsana, they acquire the knowledge that in the past unfathomable Saṃsāra they

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98. The 3 Cravings are: Sensual Craving, Craving for Existence and Craving for self-annihilation.

have been the kinsfolk of Personality Belief (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*), of Evil Deeds (*duccarita*) and the inhabitants of the Lower Worlds of Misery (*apāya-loka*). The Pali texts clearly prescribe the method of the Ariya-vaṁsa, the Traditional Practice of the Noble, as a way of dispelling laziness; and the fourth of them, delight in meditation, should be practised until release from such a state of laziness (being Faith's opposite) is attained.

The way of dispelling laziness may be thus described (in the case of a monk).[99] Having equipped himself with the *Sikkhās* (the Training Rules — which are the Buddha's heritage) and which the monk undertakes in the Ordination Hall at the time of his becoming a Bhikkhu, he, in accordance with these Training Rules,[100]

> makes the trees and bushes of the forest his dwelling-place,
> lives only on alms-food gathered on his alms-round,
> avoids company,
> observes the Dhutanga (strict ascetic practices),

and applies himself scrupulously to mindful Body Contemplation, — these are the acts of Energy that dispel the unwholesome volitional actions (*akusala kamma*) arising out of laziness (*kosajja*). They are acts comprised in the realm of *vīriya* (energy).

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99. In the case of layfolk, the principles underlying the four 'Traditional Practices' (*ariya -vamsa*) should be applied to their circumstances of life as strictly as possible. These principles may be summarized in a popular phrase as "simple living and high (meditative) thinking". — *Editor*.

100. For instance, the 'Four Supports' (*nissaya*) of a monk's life, among which is the undertaking to live "at the foot of a tree" (though, in the same formula, also monasteries, hermitages, etc., are said to be permissible, i.e. for those unable to live the stricter life). — (*Ed.*)

This realm of Energy remains obscure and is unknown in the present-day world. Today, although Bhikkhus are aware that they belong to that class of beings still possessed of Personality Belief and evil deeds and liable to rebirth in lower worlds of misery, yet they live permanently in dwellings constructed in towns and villages by their donors; they take pleasure in the receipt of large gifts and benefits, they are unable to dispense with the company of other people, etc., all of which acts are comprised within the realm of Laziness (*kosajja*) and this realm of Laziness is as conspicuous as the sea that inundates an island. This shows the weakness of Ordinary Energy (*pakati-vīriya*).

It is only Developed Energy (*bhāvanā-vīriya*) — such as being satisfied with a minimum of sleep, being always alert and active, being fearless, being bold and firm in living alone, being steadfast in meditative practice — that can dispel Laziness. In the context of the *Bodhipakkhiya-dhammā* (Requisites of Englihtenment) it is this Developed Energy that should be acquired.

The detailed meaning of the Powers of Mindfulness, Concentration and Wisdom may be known by following the lines of the explanation given above. Here I shall just give a concise explanation.

The antithesis of *Mindfulness* (*sati*) is *muṭṭhasacca*, confused mindfulness or absent-mindedness. It means inability to become absorbed in the work of Tranquillity Meditation (*samatha bhāvanā*) or of Insight Meditation (*vipassanā-bhāvanā*); inability to concentrate and to control one's mind; the wandering of thoughts to objects other than the object of concentration. Ordinary Mindfulness that one possesses in a rudimentary state from birth cannot dispel that absent-mindedness. Only Developed Mindfulness can do it.

The antithesis of Concentration (*samādhi*) is Distraction (*vikkhepa*) of mind (i.e. wandering thoughts and idle fancies).

It is the inability to concentrate, to control the mind and keep its attention fixed on one object. It is the arising of thoughts on objects other than the object of concentration. It is the unquiet and restless state of mind when applying itself to the work of meditation. Ordinary Concentration cannot dispel the unwholesome state of Distraction. Only Developed Concentration (*bhāvanā-samādhi*) can do it.

The antithesis of Wisdom (*paññā*) is Delusion (*sammoha*). It is ignorance, lack of clarity, mistiness and absence of lucidity of mind. It is the darkness shrouding the mind. This Delusion cannot be removed by Ordinary Wisdom (*pakati-paññā*), nor by erudition (*pariyatti-paññā*), which may comprise knowledge of the whole Ti-Pitaka. It is only Wisdom Developed by Meditation (*bhāvanā-paññā*) that has set up mindful Body Contemplation, which can gradually dispel Delusion.

This shows the meaning of the five unwholesome opposites (*paṭipakkha-akusala-dhamma*) coupled with the respective Powers (*bala*).

These five unwholesome opposing forces are: (1) Craving (*taṇhā*), (2) Laziness (*kosajja*), or inability to take pains (lassitude), or lack of fearlessness in Dhamma practice (*paṭipatti*), (3) Absent-mindedness (*muṭṭhasacca*), (4) Distraction (*vikkhepa*), and (5) Delusion (*sammoha*). The five things that can counteract and dispel them are called Powers (*bala*). If any one of these Powers is weak and unable to dispel the respective opposite, meditation, be it Tranquillity or Insight, cannot be very successful as far as *Neyya* individuals are concerned, i.e. those in need of guidance.

Hence, at the present day, some persons can emerge out of the realm of Craving (*taṇhā*) because of the strength of their Power of Faith (*saddhā-bala*). They are rid of attachment to material things and to worldly dignities and honours. But

as they are deficient in the other four Powers, they are unable to rise above the stage of contentment (*santuṭṭhi*) with their living conditions.

Some persons can emerge out of the realm of Craving and Laziness because they are strong in the Powers of Faith and Energy. They are constant in keeping to a life of contentment, and (if monks) firm in keeping to forest - and hill dwellings and in the observance of the strict ascetic practices (*dhutanga;* as exemplifying their energy). But as they are weak in the other three Powers, they are unable to practise mindful Body Contemplation, or do the work of Tranquillity - and Insight meditation.

Some persons, again, are strong in the first three Powers and thus can rise up to the work of mindful Body Contemplation (*kāyagatā sati*), achieving concentration, e.g., on out-and in-breath or in contemplating the bones of the body. But being deficient in the other two Powers, they cannot rise up to the task of *Jhāna* and Insight.

Other persons can achieve the attainment of Jhāna because they are strong in the first four Powers, but as the Power of Wisdom is weak in them, they cannot rise to the work of Insight (*vipassanā*).

Some persons are strong in the Power of Wisdom as far as their learning in Dhamma and Ti-Pitaka is concerned. They are also wise in understanding the teachings on the ultimate realities (*paramattha dhamma*). But because they lack the backing of the other four Powers they cannot emerge from the realm of Craving, Lassitude, Absent-mindedness and Distraction. They live and die within the confines of these unwholesome states. In this way, whenever one is deficient in anyone of the Powers, one cannot rise above the realm of the respective opposite force.

Of the five Powers, those of Energy and Wisdom are also *Iddhipādas*, 'Bases of (Spiritual) Success'. Hence, if these two Powers are strong and co-ordinated, it does not happen that one cannot rise up to the work of Insight (*vipassanā*) because of the weakness of the other three Powers.

People who do not know the functions of the Bases of Success (*iddhipāda*), the Controlling Faculties (*indriya*) and the Powers (*bala*), do not know why their zeal is weak and which are the opposing forces (*paṭipakkha*) that assail them. They do not know the qualities of mind which they have to cultivate, and, hence, the desire to cultivate them never arises. It is thus that the Traditional Practices of the Noble (*ariya-vaṁsa*) are on the verge of disappearing at the present day.

I shall give an illustration. There is a species of bull called *usabha*. It is a bull worth more than a thousand ordinary bulls. If the characteristics and distinctive signs of that bull be recognised, and it be reared and nurtured properly, its limbs and marks will develop, and its strength and powers will increase. It can then guard even a hundred cattle pens from the incursions of lions and leopards.

If the owner of such a bull is ignorant of all these, and if thus he does not rear and nurture it properly but keeps and tends it just as he would any other ordinary bull; if he employs it in ploughing and drawing carts in company with other bulls; its distinctive marks and limbs will fail to develop, and its strength and powers will remain dormant. It will thus live and die just like any other bull.

A knowing owner, however, will separate such a bull from the rest and keep it in a specially constructed shed. He will cover the floor of the shed with clean sand and will fix a ceiling to the roof. He will keep the shed clean and will feed the bull with paddy and pulses fit for human consumption.

He will wash and bathe it. In such a case, the distinctive marks and limbs will develop, and its strength and powers will increase enormously.

In this Buddha Sāsana, *Neyya* individuals (requiring guidance) resemble the owner of the bull. The five Powers of these *Neyya* individuals resemble the *Usabha* bull. The Satipatthāna Vibhaṅga, Sammappadhāna Vibhaṅga, Iddhipāda Vibhaṅga, Indriya Vibhaṅga, Bojjhaṅga Vibhaṅga, and Maggaṅga Vibhaṅga, of the Abhidhamma Pitaka, and the Mahāsatipatthāna Sutta, Satipaṭṭhāna Saṃyutta, Sammappadhāna Saṃyutta, Iddhipāda Saṃyutta, Indriya Saṃyutta, Bala Saṃyutta, and Bojjhaṅga Saṃyutta of the Sutta Pitaka, resemble the expository books which expound the distinctive signs, marks and characteristics, of *Usabha* bulls, the methods how such bulls are to be reared and taken care of, and the strength and powers that such bulls can attain if reared and nurtured properly.

Those *Neyya* individuals who through ignorance do not attempt to develop the five Powers through the work of meditation and who thus remain satisfied with the lower attainments within the Sāsana, such as *dāna*, *sīla*, and the study of scriptures, resemble the ignorant owner of an *Usabha* bull who does not rear and nurture it properly.

In this world, there are many kinds of worldly undertakings. There are undertakings that can be accomplished by the strength of wealth, and there are undertakings that can be accomplished by the strength of knowledge. Even in the case of the cultivation of land, several kinds of strength are needed for its accomplishment. Sometimes the strength of wealth has to be garnered first, and at other times the strength of knowledge. Preparatory education and study constitute the garnering of the strength of knowledge.

Similarly, in the Buddha Sāsana, there are five Powers needed for the work of *samatha*, *vipassanā*, and the attain-

ment of the Holy Paths and Fruits and Nibbāna. It is only when these Powers are first accumulated that the great works mentioned can be undertaken. Those persons who do not possess even one of the five Powers cannot evoke a desire to undertake these great tasks. It does not occur to them that those great tasks can be accomplished in this life. They live forgetfully and without determination. If it is pointed out to them that the tasks can be accomplished, they do not wish to hear it. They do not know that such untoward thoughts occur to them because they are utterly impoverished in their spiritual Powers. They lay the blame at the door of *pāramī*, or *dvihetuka*, or at the unfavourable times.[101]

If, however, these people set up work in one of the *satipaṭṭhāna*, such as in *ānāpāna sati*, and if thereby they set up the three Powers of *saddhā*, *vīriya*, and *sati*, such untoward thoughts will certainly disappear. It is inevitable that new wholesome thoughts must arise. This is because they have developed their strength.

This is how the strength is developed. Although such a person cannot as yet attain an insight into Body and Mind, the weak Faith grows through the control exercised over Craving (*taṇhā*) for material wants (*paccayāmisa*) and worldly achievements (*lokāmisa*). The weak Energy grows through control of lassitude. Weak Mindfulness grows through control of absent-mindedness. Concentration and Wisdom, too, gather strength through control of distraction and delusion. When these Powers grow, it is inevitable that there must be a change in the mind of the meditator.

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101. Some believe that these are times when the Holy Paths and the Fruits thereof can no longer be attained, and tend to defer effort till the *paramis* ripen. Some believe that persons of the present day are *dvi-hetuka* (i.e. beings reborn with two root-conditions, namely Detachment and Amity), and as such they cannot attain the Holy Paths and the Fruits thereof in the present life.

A person who is afflicted with a major disease has no desire to take an interest in the ordinary affairs and activities of the world. But if, after taking proper medicine and treatment, his grave illness is gradually cured and he is aroused from his apathy, it is inevitable that he will again take interest in normal activities. Here, the five unwholesome opposing forces, i.e. craving, lassitude, etc., resemble major diseases. The work of Tranquillity and Insight meditation resembles the affairs and activities of the world. Work in the field of Satipaṭṭhāna, such as Mindfulness of Breathing, resembles the proper medicines and treatment taken. The rest of this comparison can be easily understood.

Hence did the Buddha say: "He develops the Powers of Faith, Energy, Mindfulness, Concentration and Wisdom" (*saddhābalaṃ bhāveti* ...).

In this world, the strength of builders lies in good tools, such as awls, chisels, axes, knives, saws, etc. Only when equipped with such tools can they undertake to build. Similarly, in the Sāsana, the tools of Tranquillity and Insight meditation (*samatha* and *vipassanā*) for achieving the knowledge of the Paths and Fruitions of Sainthood (*magga*-and *phala-ñāṇa*) consist of Developed Faith, Developed Energy, Developed Mindfulness, Developed Concentration and Developed Wisdom (*bhāvanā-saddhā*, etc.), which are developed through one of the Satipaṭṭhānas, such as Mindfulness of Breathing. These five Powers are the strength of meditators (*yogāvacara*). Hence these five Powers must be developed in order to undertake successfully the work of Tranquillity-and Insight meditation within the Buddha Sāsana. This is the meaning of the word *bhāveti* (he develops) in the text quoted above.

CHAPTER VII

THE SEVEN FACTORS OF ENLIGHTENMENT

(*bojjhaṅga*)

Catusaccadhamme suṭṭhu bujjhatī'ti sambodhi; sambodhiyā aṅgo sambojjhaṅgo.

The word-explanation as above, means: because *sambodhi* fully awakens to the Four Truths, therefore it is called "Awakenment" (or Enlightenment). *Sambodhi* signifies here the Knowledge of the Supramundane Path (*lokuttara-magga-ñāṇa*). A constituent of such Path Knowledge is called a Factor of Enlightenment.

Birds are first delivered from their mothers' wombs in the form of eggs. By breaking through the eggs, they are then delivered for a second time. Finally, when they become fully fledged with feathers and wings, they are delivered from their nests and can fly wherever they please. Similarly in the case of meditators, they are first delivered from the distractions of mind which have accompanied them throughout the beginningless Samsāra, through successfully setting up mindful Body Contemplation or by accomplishing the work of Tranquillity meditation. Secondly, when they attain Insight (*vipassanā*) into Body, Mind, Aggregates (*rūpa, nāma, khandhā*) etc., they are free from coarse forms of ignorance. Finally, when the seven Factors of Enlightenment (*bojjhaṅga*) develop and mature, they become fully fledged by attaining the Knowledge of the Supramundane Path (*lokuttara-magga-ñāṇa*) called *sambodhi*, and thus they are delivered from the state of Worldlings (*puthujjana*), attaining the state of Noble Ones (*ariya*) — of the Supramundane (*lokuttara*) or Nibbāna.

There are seven Bojjhangas, viz. the Factors of Enlightenment:

1. Mindfulness (*sati-sambojjhaṅga*),
2. Investigation of Dhamma (*dhammavicaya-sambojjhaṅga*),
3. Energy (*vīriya-sambojjhaṅga*),
4. Joy (*pīti-sambojjhaṅga*),
5. Tranquillity (*passaddhi-sambojjhaṅga*),
6. Concentration (*samādhi-sambojjhaṅga*),
7. Equanimity (*upekkhā-sambojjhaṅga*).

The mental factor 'mindfulness' (*sati-cetasika*), called diversely *satipaṭṭhāna, satindriya, sati-bala, sammā-sati maggaṇga*, this is *Sati-sambojjhaṅga*, the Enlightenment-factor 'Mindfulness'.

The mental factor 'wisdom' (*paññā-cetasika*), diversely called *vīmaṁsiddhipāda, paññindriya, paññā-bala, sammā-diṭṭhi maggaṅga*, all are *dhammavicaya-sambojjhaṅga*, the Enlightenment-factor 'Investigation of Dhamma'. — Alternatively, the five Purifications pertaining to Wisdom, the Knowledge of the three Contemplations, the ten Insight knowledges,[102] are also called *dhammavicaya-sambojjhaṅga.* Just as cotton seeds are milled, carded, etc., so as to produce cotton wool, the process of repeatedly viewing the five Aggregates (*khandha*) in the light of *Vipassanā-ñāṇa* (Insight knowledge) is called *Dhammavicaya-sambojjhaṅga*, the Enlightenment-factor 'Dhamma-investigation'.

The mental factor 'energy' (*vīriya-cetasika*), called diversely *sammappadhāna, vīriyiddhipāda, vīriyindriya, vīriya-bala*, and *sammā-vāyāma maggaṅga*, these are *Vīriya-sambojjhaṅga*, the Enlightenment-factor 'Energy'.

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102. See foot notes 82, 83 and 84.

The joy and happiness that appears when the process of (truly) seeing and knowing increases by the practice of Satipaṭṭhāna, e.g., mindful Body Contemplation, is called *Pīti-sambojjhaṅga*, the Enlightenment-factor 'Joy'.

The process of becoming calm and tranquil in both body and mind when the mental distractions, reflections and thoughts abate, is called *Passaddhi-sambojjhaṅga*, the Enlightenment-factor 'Tranquillity'. It is the mental factor (*cetasika*) of Tranquillity of Body and of Mind (*kāya-passaddhi, citta-passadhi*).

The factors pertaining to Concentration, called *samādhindriya, samādhi-bala,* and *sammā-samādhi maggaṅga,* are *samādhi-sambojjhanga,* the Enlightenment-factor 'Concentration'. Alternatively, Preliminary, Access and Full Concentration, or the eight Jhānas, associated with the work of Tranquillity (*samatha*) and Purification of Mind (*citta-visuddhi*) and Voidness Concentration (*suññatā-samādhi*) etc., associated with the Purifications pertaining to Wisdom, are also called *samādhi-sambojjhaṅga.* The Concentration that accompanies Insight knowledge (*vipassanā ñāṇa*), or the knowledge of the Paths and Fruitions is called Voidness Concentration (*suññatā-samādhi*), Conditionless Concentration (*animitta-samādhi*) and Desireless Concentration (*appaṇihita-samādhi*).

When work on the subject of meditation (*kammaṭṭhāna*) is not yet methodical or systematic, much effort has to be exercised both bodily and mental. But when the work becomes methodical and systematic, one is freed from such effort. This freedom is called *tatramajjhattatā cetasika,* the mental factor of equipoise. And this is *upekkhā-sambojjhaṅga,* the Enlightenment-factor of Equanimity.

When a meditator becomes endowed with these seven characteristics of *sambodhi* equally, he enjoys the happiness and joy of a monk (*samaṇa*) in the Buddha Sāsana — a happiness and joy unequalled and unparallelled by any worldly pleasure.

Thus it is said in the Dhammapada:

"The Bhikkhu who has retired to a lonely abode and has calmed his mind, experiences joy transcending that of men, as he clearly perceives Dhamma.

"Whenever he reflects on the rise and fall of the Aggregates, he experiences joy and happiness. To 'those who know', that (reflection) is the Deathless."

Verses 373, 374.

There are texts and stories wherein it is related that ailments and major diseases have been cured by the mere listening to the recitation of these seven Factors of Enlightenment.[103] But these ailments and diseases can be cured only when the listeners are fully aware of the meaning of these factors, and great and clear Saddhā (Faith) arises in them.

When these seven Factors of Enlightenment are acquired in a balanced manner, the meditator can rest assured that there will be no deficiency in his Mindfulness directed to the Body (*kāyagatā sati*); no deficieny in his perception of Impermanence and Not-self (*anicca* and *anattā-saññā*), nor in his mental and bodily energy (*vīriya*). Because his mind is set at rest in regard to these three factors (*sati, dhammavicaya, vīriya*), he experiences joy (*pīti*) in the knowledge that he can now perceive the light of Nibbāna which had never appeared to him in the beginningless past Samsāra, not even in his dreams. Because of that joy and ease (*sukha*) of mind, his application to the Kammatthāna objects (*samādhi*) becomes calm and steady (*passaddhi*), and equanimity (*upekkhā*) arises, which is free from the anxieties and efforts for mindfulness (*sati*), perception of *anicca* and *anattā* (*dhammavicaya*) and the necessity to rouse energy (*vīriya*).

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103. See Bojjhanga Samyutta.

All the above statements are made with reference to the stage at which the Factors of Enlightenment are in unison with one another and their respective functions are well performed. But even at the stage of ordinary practice, from the moment 'Mindfulness directed to the Body' is set up qualities such as mindfulness are known as Bojjhangas (Factors of Enlightenment).

The Enlightened One has said (in the Bojjhanga Samyutta):

Satisambojjhangaṁ bhāveti, vivekanissitaṁ, virāganissitaṁ, nirodhanissitaṁ, vossaggapariṇāmiṁ; dhammavicayasambojjhangaṁ ..... upekkhā-sambojjhangaṁ bhāveti, vivekanissitaṁ virāganissitaṁ nirodhanissitaṁ vossaggapariṇāmiṁ.

"He develops the Enlightenment-factors 'Mindfulness' ..... 'Equanimity', dependent (based) on detachment, dependent on absence of lust, dependent on cessation, culminating in relinquishment."

This means that, in the ordinary course (referred to by the words "He develops....."), the process of setting up Mindful Body Contemplation amounts to the setting up of the seven Factors of Enlightenment. The distinctive and higher cultivation of them is indicated by the words 'dependent on detachment.....".[104]

The meaning of the Pāli passage quoted above, is: One should practice the Enlightenment-factor 'Mindfulness' (etc.), which is dependent on absence of all kinds of activities and anxieties, absence of lust and greed, of the suffering attendant upon the round of rebirths and on the relinquishment of the four substrata of existence (*upadhi*).[105]

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104. Explained in the Commentary to the Bojjhanga Vibhanga.
105. The 4 Substrata (*upadhi*) are: 1. Sense-pleasures (*Kāmūpadhi*), 2. mental defilements (*Kilesūpadhi*), 3. Kamma (*Kammūpadhi*), 4. the 5 Aggregates (*Khandhūpadhi*).

CHAPTER VIII

THE EIGHT PATH FACTORS

(*maggaṅga*)

The eight factors or constituents of the Path are:

1.	Right View (*sammā-diṭṭhi*)	Wisdom (*paññā*)
2.	Right Thought (*sammā-sankappa*)	
3.	Right Speech (*sammā-vācā*)	Morality (*sīla*)
4.	Right Action (*sammā-kammanta*)	
5.	Right Livelihood (*sammā-ājīva*)	
6.	Right Effort (*sammā-vāyāma*)	Concentration (*samādhi*)
7.	Right Mindfulness (*sammā-sati*)	
8.	Right Concentration (*sammā-samādhi*)	

All these eight Path Factors are present in the 'Supramundane Purification by Knowledge and Vision' (*lokuttara-ñāṇadassana-visuddhi*). In the preceding mundane Purifications, Right Speech, Right Action and Right Livelihood are present only in the Purification of Virtue (*sīla-visuddhi*). They are not present in Purification of Mind (*citta-visuddhi*) and the rest.

Hence, in the context of the Requisites of Enlightenment (*bodhipakkhiya-dhamma*), Purification of Virtue (*sīla-visuddhi*) is of the nature "dependent on detachment" (*viveka-nissita*), etc., in accordance with the following text (from the Maggaṅga Vibhanga):

"He develops Right Speech, dependent on detachment, dependent on absence of lust, dependent on cessation, culminating in relinquishment. He develops Right Action ... Right Livelihood, dependent on detachment .....".

It does not refer to virtue (*sīla*) that has leanings towards happy forms of existence (*bhava-sampatti*) and depends on the round of rebirths (*vaṭṭa-nissita*). The *sīla-visuddhi* of those who have consciously given up attempts at attaining the Holy Paths and Fruits in this life, is not genuine *ādibrahma-cariyaka-sīla*, 'Virtue belonging to the essence of the Holy Life', and thus is not of the genuine *bodhipakkhiya* class. If effort be made, however, towards the attainment of Nibbāna in the next life, it can be *pārami-sīla*, which is part of *vivaṭṭa-nissita sīla*, 'Virtue tending towards the ending of the round of rebirths'.

The Path factors of Right Speech, Right Action and Right Livelihood are purely of the class of Morality (*sīlak-khandha*) and hence constitute genuine Perfection of Virtue. They are also called the three *virati-cetasikā*, mental factors of (vocal and bodily) abstention.

Right Thought (*sammā-sankappa*) is the mental factor 'Thought-conception' (*vitakka cetasika*). As it is the harbinger of Wisdom, it is included in the Wisdom category (*paññā-kkhandha*) of the Eightfold Path. It is threefold, namely: thoughts of renunciation, of non-hate and non-harming (*nekkhamma-*, *abyāpāda-*, and *avihiṃsā-sankappa*). Just as a person incarcerated in prison or besieged by enemy troops or encircled by forest fire, or as a fish caught in a net, tank or trap, or a bird caught in a cage, will be absorbed (without being able to sleep or eat) in the one thought how to escape from these confinements, so are the attempts of persons who contrive with energy of the *sammappadhāna*-type to escape from the confinement of the old and infinitely numerous 'unwholesome kamma arisen in the past' (*uppanna akusala kamma*) and the new infinitely numerous 'unwholesome kamma not yet arisen, (*anuppanna akusala kamma*) that is bound to arise in the future. The thoughts of such a person

are the Path factor 'Thoughts of Renunciation' (*nekkhamma sankappa maggaṅga*). It is the sort of Thought (*sankappa*) which looks for the way to escape from the sufferings of the round of rebirths (*vaṭṭa-dukkha*).

The Thought that associates with Mettā Jhāna is called *abyāpāda-sankappa*, 'the thought of non-hate'; if associated with Karuṇā Jhāna it is called *avihiṃsā-sankappa*, 'the thought of non-harming'. The thought that associates with the remaining Jhānas is called 'Thought of Renunciation'.

The four Path Factors of Right View, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration have been dealt with in the Chapter on the Enlightenment Factors.

The *ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* (see Note 19) that is taken and observed with the purpose of destroying the great kingdom of *diṭṭhi anusaya* (proclivity to wrong views) belongs to the Path factors of the mundane Morality category (*lokiya sīlakkhandha maggaṅga*). It is also Purification of Virtue.

That eightfold virtue ending with Right Livelihood (*ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*) is twofold: for layfolk and for monks. Abstention from the threefold evil conduct in deeds (*kāya-duccarita*) and fourfold in words (*vacī-duccarita*) comprise that virtue for layfolk. The eight or ten Precepts (see Notes 21, 22) are refinements of that virtue.

For monks, that Virtue is constituted by the observance of the 227 Vinaya rules, which cover bodily and vocal Kamma. The remaining rules laid down in the Vinaya Pitaka are refinements of it.

Just as trees grow in the soil, so the last six Purifications beginning with Purification of Mind, develop in the soil of the first, the Purification of Virtue (*sīla-visuddhi*). In particular, the Purification of Virtue does not mix with the five middle (Mundane) Purifications, but supports them by securing antecedent purity. In the case of the seventh Purification, the

supramundane Purification of Knowledge and Vision, the Purification of Virtue operates in conjunction with it, being identical with the three constituents of the Morality Group (*sīlakkhandha*) of the (supramundane) Eightfold Path. The reason is that, in the case of the Purification of Virtue, the objects of attention are different from those of the five middle Purifications; but they are identical with those of the supramundane Purification, operating together with it as co-existent (*saha-jāta*).

This ends the explanation of the Sīla category of the Path Factors.

With reference to the Samādhi category of the Path, there are two courses of action. Firstly, the way of one who practises pure Insight only (*suddha-vipassanā-yānika*). He, after fulfilling Purity of Virtue and setting up mindful Body Contemplation, does not follow the way of Tranquillity (*samatha*) but the way of Pure Insight such as Purification of View, etc. Secondly, there is the course of one who practises both Tranquillity and Insight (*samatha-vipassanā-yānika*). He, after attaining the first Jhāna etc., takes up the practice of Insight, by way of Purification of View, etc.

Of these two, (1) in the practice of Pure Insight, the three Path Factors of the Concentration category (*samādhikkhandha*) fulfill the functions of Tranquillity and Purification of Mind (*citta-visuddhi*), through the three kinds of Concentration known as Emptiness Concentration, Conditionless and Desireless Concentration.

(2) In the practice of Tranquillity followed by Insight, the three Path Factors of the Concentration category fulfill the functions of Tranquillity and Purification of Mind, by way of the three stages of Concentration, namely Preparatory Concentration (*parikamma samādhi*), Access Concentration

(*upacāra-samādhi*) and Full Concentration (*appanā-samādhi*); and thereafter, at the Insight stage, the above two functions are fulfilled by Emptiness Concentration, etc.

During the period of the preceding practice of Purity of Virtue and of mindful Body Contemplation, however, the three constituents of the Concentration category fulfil the functions of Momentary Concentration (*khaṇika-samādhi*).

This ends the explanation of the Samādhi category.

The two constituents of the Wisdom category fulfil the functions of Wisdom in the ways of both the practice of Pure Insight and that preceded by Tranquillity, after the setting up of the Purification of Virtue and of mindful Body Contemplation. These remarks apply to both the mundane and the supramundane Path Factors.

Stream-entry (*sotāpatti*)

I shall now show the Path of Stream-entry (*sotāpatti-magga*) in the Supramundane Path Factors. It should be remembered that this book is aimed at the lowest of the stages of Sanctity, namely the '*Bon-sin-san*' *sukkhavipassaka sotāpanna* (see Note 58). At the present time there are countless numbers of beings such as Visākhā, Anāthapiṇḍika, Sakka the Ruler of Devas, the four Divine Great Kings (*cātum-mahārājika-deva*) etc., who still continue to derive pleasure and ease within the round of rebirths, inhabiting their respective celestial abodes. They are beings who have before them seven more rebirths in the Sense-desire worlds (including the lower celestial worlds of the Sense Sphere) and one rebirth each in the six worlds on the level of the Fourth Jhāna or the Vehapphala Brahma worlds. The number of births in the Brahma worlds of the first, second and third Jhāna is undetermined.

Why are they called Stream-enterers (*sotāpanna*)? The five great rivers and the five hundred lesser ones that have their source in the Himalayas, do not flow up, but flow continuously down to the great ocean. Hence they are called *sota* (stream or current). Similarly, Noble Ones (*ariya*) do not fall back to the state of Worldlings (*puthujjana*) but proceed continuously (as *ariyas*) until they attain Anupādisesa-Nibbāna (where there is no remainder of the Aggregates of existence). In the case of the *puthujjanas*, although they may attain rebirth in the highest celestial worlds, they possess still the liability to be reborn in the lowest *avīci* hell. But in the case of *Ariyas*, wherever they may be reborn, they do not fall into the lower worlds of misery, but possess a continuous tendency of being reborn in a higher world. Though Worldlings may attain the state of *tihetuka brahmas*[106] in the fine-material (*rūpa*) or non-material (*arūpa*) worlds, they still possess the liability of being reborn in an unhappy form of existence (*duggati*) as *ahetuka*[107] creatures such as dogs or pigs.

Whether it be the place of rebirth or the status attained in each rebirth, Noble Ones (*ariya*) do not regress, but proceed higher and higher from one world to the next, or from one status to another, until after many rebirths and many worlds have passed, they reach the highest worlds and the highest status, when they discard the five Aggregates entirely and attain to Anupādisesa-Nibbāna. The process by which this straight path of ascent is traversed is called *dhamma-sota*, the Stream of Dhamma. It comprises the Stream of Right View (*sammā-diṭṭhi-sota*), the Stream of Right Thought

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106. The term *tihetuka* refers to rebirth consciousness having all three wholesome root conditions (*hetu*), i.e. Non-greed, Non-hate, and Non-delusion.

107. *Ahetuka* refers to a rebirth consciousness without any of the three wholesome root conditions.

(*sammā-sankappa-sota*) and so forth up to the Stream of Right Concentration (*sammā-samādhi-sota*).

The 'Stream of Right View' means the establishment of the great realm of Right View (*sammā-diṭṭhi*)where the light of the Four Noble Truths can be clearly perceived. This great realm of Right View is established by replacing the great *anusaya* plane of *Sakkāya-diṭṭhi*, the proclivity for Personality-belief.

This resembles the rising of the sun after the night is over, when darkness is dispelled and light is established. In the same way the great kingdom of light of Right View remains established throughout many lives and many world-cycles until the attainment of Anupādisesa-Nibbāna. This light increases and becomes more and more firmly established from one rebirth to another.

It also resembles a person born blind due to cataracts covering both his eyes, who, on receiving good treatment, is cured of the cataract and gains sight. From the moment the cataract disappears, the view of the earth, the mountains, the sky with sun, moon and stars, etc., is opened to him and remains so throughout his life. Similarly, the Noble Stream-winners (*sotāpanna ariya*) gain the view of the three characteristics of existence (*ti-lakkhaṇa*) and of the Four Noble Truths (and do not lose it). This is how the Path Factor 'Right View' is firmly established.

The canonical text says:[108]

Sammā-diṭṭhassa sammā-sankappo pahoti.[109]

"In him who has Right View, Right Thought progresses."

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108. Magga Samyutta, 1. Vagga, 1. Sutta.
109. According to Commentary, the word *pahoti* has the meaning of *vaḍḍhati*, to grow, to increase.

According to this, if Right View is established, also Right Thought, which consists of intention and plan to escape from worldly ills (*nekkhamma*) and to protect others from harm and suffering, becomes established and thrives from one rebirth to another until the attainment of the final goal. This is how Right Thought is established.

Sammā-sankappassa sammā vācā pahoti.

If the intention and plan to escape from worldly ills and to see others happy and unharmed, is established, there will be Right Speech free from the four faults (the *vacī-duccarita*) and this will become progressively established. This is how Right Speech is established.

Sammā-vācassa sammā-kammanto pahoti.

If speech from verbal misconduct is established, the acts will be free form the threefold bodily misconduct (*kāya-duccarita*) and this will become progressively established. This is how Right Action is established.

Sammā-kammantassa sammā-ājīvo pahoti.

When views, intentions, speech and acts become pure, the forms of livelihood will also be pure and one will never resort to low and base forms of livelihood. This is how Right Livelihood is established.

Sammā-ājīvassa sammā-vāyāmo pahoti.

When views, intentions, speech, acts and livelihood become pure, energy and effort of a kind that is never devoted to misconduct or wrong livelihood becomes permanently established. This is how Right Effort is established.

Sammā-vāyāmassa sammā-sati pahoti.

Similarly, Right Mindfulness that has its root in the efforts for Morality, Concentration and Wisdom, becomes firmly established from one rebirth to another. This is how Right Mindfulness is established.

Sammā-satissa sammā-samādhi pahoti.

In the same way also Right Concentration becomes permanently established, which is rooted in mindful attention to the work of Morality, Concentration and Wisdom, and thus become endowed with a great control over the mind. This is how Right Concentration is established.

It is in this way that the eight Path Factors (*maggaṅga*), called Dhamma streams (*dhamma-sota*), become progressively established throughout many lives and many worlds, from the moment a being attains the stage of a Stream-winner (*sotāpanna*) until he finally attains Anupādisesa-Nibbāna.

Although from the moment when Body Contemplation is set up there is such progress as has been shown earlier, yet so long as the state of Stability (or constancy of progress; *niyāma*) is not reached, that being is not as yet a Noble One (*ariya*). It is the Path of Stream-entry (*sotāpatti magga*) that is the starting point of the *ariya-sota*, the Holy Stream. As soon as beings reach the Path of Stream-entry, they enter the domain of the Noble Ones. Hence it is said:

Sotam ādito pajjiṁsu pāpuṇiṁsū'ti sotāpannā.

"They are called Stream-enterers as they enter or reach the Holy Stream for the first time."

This ends our answer to the question, "Why are they called Sotāpannas?"

As soon as beings reach the stage of Noble Ones, they transcend the state of Worldlings (*puthujjana*). They are no longer beings of the "world", the Mundane, but have become

beings of the Supramundane (*lokuttara*). They are no longer committed to the sufferings of the round of rebirths (*vaṭṭa-dukkha*), having become "beings of Nibbāna". Throughout the series of many existences that may still be before them, they will never fall back from the first stage of their realization of Nibbāna, which they have achieved as Stream-winners. They are no longer liable to return to the *anusaya* plane of *Sakkāya-diṭṭhi*, the proclivity for Personality Belief, or to the state of Wordlings. They are firmly established on the first stage of Sa-upādisesa-Nibbāna, the Nibbāna realised during life-time, and will, during their remaining existences, enjoy at will the happiness of humans, devas and Brahmās.

These eight Path Factors occur **simultaneously** to these Noble Ones only at the instant of their attainment of a Path or a Fruition (i.e. in supramundane consciousness). Where, however, mundane wholesome volitional acts (*lokiya-kusala-kamma*) are concerned, the three constituents of the Sīla category associate only with *sīla-kusala-kamma*. But the three constituents of the Samādhi category and the two of the Paññā category associate with many kinds of *kusala kamma*.

Although the three Path Factors of the Sīla category associate only with *sīla-kusala-kamma*, they are firmly established in Noble Ones as "non-contravention" (*avitikkama*) throughout their remaining lives.

This ends the explanation of the eight Path Factors.[110]

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110. The "pure phenomena" (*sobhana cetasika*) involved in the 37 *Bodhi-pakkhiya-dhamma*, are 14, namely: 1. zeal (or desire: *chanda*), 2. consciousness (*citta*), 3. Equipoise (*tatramajjhattatā=upekkhā*), 4. faith (*saddhā*), 5. Tranquillity (*passaddhi*), 6. wisdom (*paññā*), 7. thought-conception (*vitakka=sankappa*), 8. effort (*viriya*), 9. right speech (*sammā-vācā*), 10. right action (*sammā-kammanta*), 11. right livelihood (*sammā-ājīva*), 12. mindfulness (*sati*), 13. joy (*pīti*), 14. one-pointedness of mind (*ekaggatā=samādhi*).

CHAPTER IX

HOW TO PRACTISE THE BODHIPAKKHIYA DHAMMAS

Beings who encounter a Buddha Sāsana have to set up Purification of Virtue (*sīla-visuddhi*) first and then strive to acquire the Requisites of Enlightenment (*bodhipakkhiya-dhamma*), in order to enter the Stream of the Noble Ones (*ariya-sota*).

I shall now give a brief description of how the practice should be undertaken.

The practice of the seven Purifications (*satta visuddhi*) amounts to practising the Bodhipakkhiya Dhammā.

In particular, the Purification of Mind (*citta-visuddhi*) concerns only persons who follow the way of Tranquillity practice (*samatha*).[111]

The 'Purification of Knowledge and Vision of What Is and What Is Not Path' (*maggāmagga-ñāṇadassana-visuddhi*) concerns only those highly conceited (or self-deceiving) persons (*adhimānika*)[112] who think that they have attained to the Holy Paths and the Fruits although they have no such attainment.

The Purification of Virtue, the Purification by Overcoming Doubt, the Purification by Knowledge and Vision of the Way, the supramundane Purification by Knowledge and Vision, — these apply to many different types of persons.

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111. According to the Visuddhi Magga, also Access Concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*) is included in *citta-visuddhi*. It is this quality of concentration that is required for Insight meditation. — (Ed.)

112. See the kindred term *abhimānika*, explained in The Wheel 61/62, page 43 (Note 3 to the Discourse on Effacement). — (Ed.)

Of these five Purifications, that of Virtue has been dealt with in the Chapter on the Path Factors, under the Sīla category. It consists of keeping the 'Precepts that have Right Livelihood as the eighth' (*ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*).

Purification of Mind (*citta-visuddhi*) may be undertaken by practicing mindful Body Contemplation (*kāyagatāsati*). For that purpose, some take up Mindfulness on Breathing (*ānāpāna sati*); and generally, it may be said that if attention can rest on the out-and-in-breath whenever one wishes and in whatever the bodily posture may be, then mindful Body Contemplation is established. Some persons practise that Contemplation by way of the four postures of the body (*iriyāpatha*), in accordance with the text (*Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*): "When going, he is aware 'I am going' ", etc. Others take up 'Clear Comprehension' (*sati-sampajañña*) of bodily activites (see Satipatthāna Sutta). Others, again practise Body Contemplation by attention to the 32 parts of the body. The first five are hair of the head, hair of the body, nails, teeth, skin, and are called *taca-pañcaka*, the skin-pentad. If attention can be firmly and steadily placed on these parts at will, in whatever bodily posture, Body Contemplation is established. Attention can also be directed to the bones of the body. Body Contemplation will be established if attention can be steadily and firmly placed on the bones of the head (skull). If, from the beginning, the physical and mental processes (*nāma-rūpa*) connected with the body (its functions and the attention given to all these processes) can be analytically discerned, and if attention to such work is firm and steady, the work of Body Contemplation is accomplished. This gives concisely the method of mindful Body Contemplation.

The work of Purification of View (*diṭṭhi-visuddhi*) can be considered accomplished if the six elements (*dhātu;* see Note 90) can be analytically perceived.

In the work of the Purification by Overcoming Doubt (*kaṅkhāvitaraṇa-visuddhi*), if the causes for the appearance of the six elements mentioned above, can be clearly perceived, it is accomplished. It must be clearly perceived that the causes for the appearance of *paṭhavi*, *āpo*, *tejo*, *vāyo* and *ākāsa* are Kamma, consciousness (*citta*), temperature (*utu*) and nutriment (*āhāra*),[113] and that the causes for the appearance of the six types of consciousness (*citta;* eye-consciousness, etc.) are the corresponding six objects of perception.

By the 'Purification by Knowledge and Vision of the Way' (*paṭipadā-ñāṇadassana-visuddhi*) is meant the three characteristics of Impermanence, Suffering and Not-self. If these three are clearly perceived in the six elements mentioned above, this Purification is attained.

The supramundane Purification by Knowledge and Vision (*lokuttara-ñāṇadassana-visuddhi*) consists of the knowledge pertaining to the four Holy Paths (of Stream-entry, etc.; *magga-ñāṇa*).

This shows concisely the five (middle) Purifications.

CHAPTER X

THE HERITAGE OF THE SASANA[114]

These thirty-seven Requisites of Enlightenment (*bodhi-pakkhiya-dhamma*) treated in the preceding chapters, are the heritage of the Buddha. They are the heritage of the Sāsana. They constitute gems of the Sāsana that are priceless and invaluable.

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113. See "Manual of Insight" (Wheel 31/32), p. 47.
114. This chapter has been abridged. (Ed.)

I shall now examine what constitutes this Heritage of the Sāsana (*sāsana-dāyajja*).

By "heritage" is meant property given as legacy by parents to their children who are fit to receive it as heirs (*dāyāda*). This applies also to the Heritage of the Sāsana (*sāsana-dāyajja*) which is the Buddha's heritage (*Buddha-dāyajja*).

As to the nature of that Heritage, there are two kinds of it: worldly (*āmisa*) and Dhamma heritage.

The worldly heritage consists of the four requisites of a Bhikkhu, namely, alms-food, robes, dwelling place, and medicines. The Dhamma heritage are the three Trainings (*sikkhā; sīla, samādhi, paññā*), the seven Purifications, and the thirty-seven Requisites of Enlightenment.

There are two kinds of Dhamma Heritage, namely mundane (*lokiya*) and supramundane (*lokuttara*). The mundane one consists of the above three Trainings on the mundane level, the six mundane Purifications and the Requisites of Enlightenment as far as associated with those mundane Purifications. — The supramundane Dhamma heritage consists of the three Trainings on the supramundane level, the supramundane seventh Purification, and the supramundane Requisites of Enlightenment.

Mundane Dhamma Heritage may be divided into

(1) that dependent on the round of rebirths (*vaṭṭa-nissita*), and

(2) that tending towards the ending of the Round of Rebirths (*vivaṭṭa-nissita*);

or into:

(1) stable Dhamma heritage (*niyata*)

(2) unstable Dhamma heritage (*aniyata*).

The practice of the three Trainings (Morality etc.,) if directed towards the attainment of worldly positions such as mentor or teacher of kings (or governments), or towards the acquisition of dignity (titles, degrees), power, retinue, and property, or towards the attainment of rebirth as noble and highly placed humans and devas, — this is called 'Dhamma heritage dependent on the round of rebirths'.

There are three forms of the Round of Rebirth: the Round of Defilements (*kilesa-vaṭṭa*), the Round of Karma (*kamma-vaṭṭa*), and the Round of Karma Resultants (*vipāka-vaṭṭa*). *Vivaṭṭa* means Nibbāna which is the end of these three Rounds of Rebirths. The practice of Morality, Concentration and Wisdom directed towards the ending of these Rounds of Rebirths is called 'Dhamma heritage tending towards the ending of the Round of Rebirths' (*vivaṭṭa-nissita-dhammadāyajja*).

With reference to the classification of 'stable' (*niyata*) and 'unstable' (*aniyata*), the great realm of 'proclivity towards Personality Belief' (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi anusaya*) in which Worldlings (*puthujjana*) are involved, is like a great and deep ocean of burning hot embers. The Morality, Concentration and Wisdom occasionally practised by Worldlings can be compared to droplets of rain falling into that great ocean of burning hot embers. Such utterances as "I fulfil *sīla*, I possess *sīla*. I practice *samādhi*. I know. I am wise and clever. I perceive Mind and Matter (*nāma-rūpa*). I contemplate Mind and Matter" are declarations about Morality, Concentration and Wisdom, which revolve around the Personality-Belief which is concerned with "I", and thus resemble the rain drops falling into the great ocean of red-hot embers. Just as the heat of those embers absorbs the rain drops and makes them disappear, so does the great kingdom of Personality-Belief absorb the Worldling's acts of Morality, Concentration and Wisdom and makes them disappear as they are 'unstable'

(*aniyata*). Though Worldlings may possess Morality, Concentration and Wisdom, their possession of them is temporary (*tadaṅga*).

In the case of Sotāpannas, their mundane Morality of keeping the mundane 'Precepts with Right Livelihood as the eighth' (*lokiya-ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*); their mundane Concentration firmly directed to the noble Qualities of the Triple Gem; and their mundane Wisdom perceiving the Four Noble Truths — all these are of the rank of stability (*niyata*). They are like rain drops falling into a great lake and never disappear even throughout many lives. This shows the nature of the mundane (*lokiya*) Dhamma heritage.

The supramundane states of Morality, Concentration and Wisdom, the supramundane seventh Purification and the 37 Requisites of Enlightenment (*bodhipakkhiya dhamma*) accompanying the eight kinds of supramundane consciousness are *vivaṭṭa-nissita* and are stable. Also the mundane Morality etc., in the case of Noble Ones (*ariya*) who also have attained their supramundane state, are likewise 'stable'. In such persons, there is no longer any possibility of their becoming *dussīla* (immoral), *asamāhita* (uncomposed), *duppaññā* (unwise) or *andhabāla* (foolish).

..... Persons who lack Faith (*saddhā*) and Zeal (*chanda*) do not even conceive the idea that the higher attainments of the Purifications are the heritage which they can acquire in this very life. Because they lack Energy (*vīriya*), they are reluctant to put forth effort that involves privations. They are liable to reject such effort as impossible. Because they are weak of will, their minds are not fixed on such kind of work. They change their mind whenever they listen to various theories and expositions. Because they lack knowledge and wisdom, they reject such work as being beyond their capabilities.

Therefore the Buddha has urged all beings to strengthen their weak *Iddhipādas* (Bases of Success), such as Zeal (*chanda*), etc. Then only can new desires and new thoughts arise.

Only those who possess one or other of the four Iddhipādas as foundation can enjoy the full benefits of the Buddha's heritage. Others who are without any of these Iddhipādas, will get the opportunity to enjoy only some of the superficial benefits, without the chance of enjoying the essence of the heritage. Some may not even have the opportunity to enjoy those superficial benefits because they have squandered their heritage and thus become severed from the Buddha's and the Sāsana's heritages.

The heirs of the Sāsana may be classified into

1. Stable or constant heirs (*niyata*)
2. Unstable or inconstant heirs (*aniyata*).

People who never obtained knowledge of Impermanence and Not-self within themselves, are called unstable heirs. They may be disciples or heirs of the Buddha today and may become disciples or heirs of another teacher to-morrow. They may scorn and harm the Buddha Sāsana. Even in the present world there are persons who have changed their faith from the Buddha Sāsana to other religions, and who scorn and undermine the Sāsana. How easily they can change, after death, in another birth, can be imagined.

One can be a disciple of the Buddha this month and the disciple of another teacher next month. One can be a disciple of the Buddha this year and the disciple of another teacher next year. One can be a disciple of the Buddha this life and the disciple of another teacher in the next.

Therefore it was said that Puthujjanas (Worldlings) are so called because they look up to the faces of various teachers.

This means that, in the unfathomable past Saṃsāra, Worldlings have never been constant in the choice of a teacher in whom they have taken refuge. The occasions on which they have approached a Buddha and taken refuge in him, are very few indeed. Sometimes they took refuge in Brahmā, sometimes in Sakka (Indra), sometimes in various deities, sometimes in planets, spirits and ogres, and they have done so as if these "refuges" were almighty. The number of false teachers is very numerous in the world, and so is the number of existences in which Worldlings have taken refuge in such false teachers. While worldlings continue to wander and drift in Saṃsāra, replete with false attachments to Personality-Belief, they will continue to change their teachers. How frightful, terrible and repellent is the state of a Worldling!

Whenever a Worldling changes his teacher and refuge, a change also occurs in the doctrines and principles on which he depends for his guidance. Sometimes Worldlings accept the purified morality (*adhisīla*) of a Buddha, but more often the moral practices of numerous other teachers. Also in the matter of views, the existences in which they accept Right View are extremely few, while the lives in which they depend on wrong views are extremely numerous. Of the countless errors and perversities possessed by Worldlings, that of seeking refuge in false teachers is one of the gravest errors causing them great harm. This is because taking refuge in wrong teachers leads to wrong moral principles and practices, and thus the precious and rare achievement of rebirth as a human being (*manussatta-dullabha*) becomes entirely like a tree producing the evil fruits of rebirth in the worlds of misery, instead of being like a great Wishing Tree bearing the fruits of good rebirths.

This shows the future path of unstable heirs of the Sāsana.

But those persons who perceive in themselves the characteristics of impermanence (*anicca*) and not-self (*anattā*), are freed from the realm of Personality Belief. They become stable heirs of the Sāsana. 'Stable' (*niyata*) means here that throughout their future lives in Saṃsāra they are no longer inclined to seek refuge in false teachers. They become true children and heirs of the Buddha throughout the future succession of their rebirths. They become members of the "*Bon-sin-san*" family (see Note 58). Their views of the incomparable qualities of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha become clearer and brighter from one rebirth to another. All the Dhamma heritages will prosper and increase in their minds, i.e. the three Path categories (Morality, etc.), the seven Purifications and the thirty-seven Requisites of Enlightenment. They are beings who will invariably ascend to *Anupādisesa-Nibbāna*, the Extinction of Defilements without any Groups of Existence remaining.

This shows the undeviating path of stable heirs of the Sāsana.

Good and virtuous persons did not put forth effort in past existences because they desired to become heirs of bad heritages of the Sāsana. They did not practice Morality, Concentration and Wisdom, because they desired to become heirs of the unstable temporary heritages, but because they wished to become heirs of the stable heritages.

Taking these facts into account, and taking heed of the fact that the Buddha disapproved of the bad heritages of the Sāsana, those persons who have now become disciples of the Buddha should not permit themselves to become bad heirs, nor to become temporary, unstable heirs. They should attempt to become heirs of the good heritages which are the Requisites of Enlightenment, the Bodhipakkhiya-dhammas. They should attempt to become stable heirs.

As regards persons deficient in wisdom, the mere performance of good and meritorious acts has to be encouraged as beneficial.

But as to those persons who possess wisdom, if they desire to become stable heirs either in this life or the next, then they should establish in themselves firmly *Âjīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla* (see Note 19), set up mindful Body Contemplation (*kāyagatā sati*) and try (for at least three hours a day) to achieve perception of the three Characteristics of Existence in the five aggregates of 'personality'. If they perceive any of the three Characteristics, they can become 'stable' (*niyata*) heirs and attain to the status of a "*Bon-sin-san*" - Stream-winner.

— THE END —

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ETHICS

in Buddhist Perspective

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I

THE BASIS OF BUDDHIST ETHICS

Ethics has to do with human conduct and is concerned with questions regarding what is good and evil, what is right and wrong, what is justice and what are our duties, obligations and rights.

Modern ethical philosophers belonging to the Analytic school of philosophy consider it their task merely to analyse and clarify the nature of ethical concepts or theories. For them, ethics constitutes a purely theoretical study of moral phenomena. They do not consider it their province to lay down codes of conduct, which they deem to be the function of a moral teacher, a religious leader or prophet.

However, there are some philosophers even in the modern world, as, for example, some of the Existentialists, who consider it the duty of the philosopher to recommend ways of life or modes of conduct, which they consider desirable for the purpose of achieving some end, which they regard as valuable. Kierkegaard, for instance, considers that there are three stages of life, namely, the aesthetical or sensualist, the ethical and the religious. He indirectly recommends in his philosophy that we pass from one stage to another. The aesthetical or sensualist way of life, according to him, leads to boredom, melancholy and despair, so it needs to be transfigured in the ethical stage and so on.

In the philosophy of the Buddha, we have an analytical study of ethical concepts and theories as well as positive recommendations to lead a way of life regarded as "the only way" (ekāyana magga; eso'va maggo natth' aññ̃o dassanassa visuddhiyā, Dh. 274) for the attainment of the Summum Bonum or the highest Good, which is one of supreme bliss, moral perfection as well as of ultimate knowledge or realisation. This way of life is considered both possible and desirable because man and the universe are just what they are. It is, therefore, justified in the light of a realistic account of the nature of the universe and of man's place in it.

While this way of life in its personal or cosmic dimension, as it were, helps us to attain the highest Good, if not in this very life, at least, in some subsequent life, it also has a social dimension insofar as it helps the achievement of "the well-being and happiness of the multitude or of mankind as a whole" (bahujana-hita-bahujana-sukha). The well-being and happiness of mankind is another end considered to be of supreme, though relative, value in the Buddhist texts and this well-being and happiness is conceived of as both material and spiritual welfare.

Buddhist ethics, therefore, has a close connection with a social philosophy as well. This social philosophy is also fully developed. We have in the Buddhist texts an account of the nature and origin of society and the causes of social change. There is also an account of the nature and functions of government, the form of the ideal social order and how it is likely to be brought about.

In dealing with the ethics and social philosophy of Buddhism, we are trying to give an answer to the question, 'what should we do?' In our previous talks of this series, we tried to give answers to the questions, 'How do we know?' and 'What do we know? The question, 'What should we do?' has a personal as well as a social dimension. In a Buddhist frame of reference, the question, 'What should we do?' concerns on the one hand what the goal of life should be or is and what we have to do for self-improvement, self-realisation and the attainment of the highest Good. On the other hand, the question has a social dimension and concerns what we have to do for the good of society or 'for the welfare and happiness of mankind'. The questions, 'What should we do for our own good?' and 'What should we do for the good of others or society?' are mutually related and what the relationship is, according to Buddhism, we shall examine later on.

At the same time, we must bear in mind that the questions, 'What should we do?', 'What do we know?' and 'How do we know?' are also interrelated.

The majority of the previous talks in this series concerned the question, 'What do we know?' The answer to this question constituted the Buddhist account of reality or the nature of man and the universe. It is a legitimate question to raise as to how we do know that reality was so and so. The answer to this was given in the earlier talks concerning the means of knowledge and the nature of truth.

Now when we ask the question, 'What should we do?', the answers we give presuppose a certain account of reality. Let us illustrate this. In one stanza in the

Dhammapada, the sum and substance of Buddhist ethics is summed up as follows: "Not to do any evil, to cultivate the good and to purify one's mind—this is the teaching of the Buddhas" (183). Now someone may raise the question as to how we can be without doing what is called 'evil' and cultivate what is called the 'good' unless human beings have the freedom to do so.

If all our present actions, choices and decisions were strictly determined by our psycho-physical constitution which is partly hereditary, by our environmental influences, by our psychological past or all these factors together how is it possible for us to refrain from evil or do good? The very possibility of our refraining from evil and doing good, therefore, depends on the fact that our choices and decisions are not strictly and wholly determined by such factors and in this sense are 'free'. So ethical statements become significant only if there is human freedom in this sense. But the question as to whether there is human freedom in this sense is a question pertaining to the nature of reality. Is man so constituted that he has the capacity for 'free' action in the above sense without his actions being strictly determined by external and internal causes?

If not, these ethical statements cease to be significant. It does not make sense to ask a human being to refrain from evil if considering his nature, he is incapable of doing so. If, however, man is 'free' in the above sense, it would be significant to ask him to exercise his choice in a certain way, which is what we do when we ask him to refrain from evil and do good. But whether he is 'free' or not in the above sense is not a question

concerning ethics but a factual question concerning human nature. The answer belongs to the theory of reality and not ethics. This is an instance as to how ethics is related to the theory of reality. Or, in other words, how the answer to the question, 'What should we do?' is related to the answer to the question, 'What do we know about man and the universe?'. . . . .

This question as to whether freedom in the above sense or free will is a fact is not the only question. There could be further questions. Even though one could to some degree refrain from evil and cultivate the good, despite all the influences external and internal which one is subject to, one may still ask what use it is for oneself to refrain from evil and do good.

One may maintain that if sporadic acts of evil or good do not change one's nature for the better or make one's lot happier and death is the end of life, what purpose does it serve to refrain from evil, to do good and to cleanse the mind Here again one of the answers would be that if this activity does not change our nature for the better or make our condition happier and death, in fact, is the end of life, there would not be much purpose in refraining from evil, doing good and cleansing the mind, even if we had the freedom or capacity to do so. So all this would be to some purpose, only if such activity changed one's nature for the better, made one's condition happier in the long run and death was not, in fact, the end of individuality.

But the question as to whether this was so is a factual question. Does refraining from evil and doing morally good acts tend to change one's nature for the better and make one's condition happier in the long run in a world

in which physical death is not the end of individuality? It is only if the answer to this question too is in the affirmative that it would seem worthwhile or desirable in a moral sense (as opposed to a merely social sense) of refraining from evil, doing what is good and purifying the mind.

Although it would appear to be worthwhile to do this if the answer is in the affirmative and there is human survival after death, and the refraining from evil the cultivation of the good and the purification of the mind result in a happier state for the individual, it may still be asked whether there is an end to such a process. Is there a highest Good or must the process of refraining from evil and cultivating the good, go on for ever with progression and regression. Here again the question as to whether there is an end, which is one of supreme bliss, perfection and realisation of an unconditioned state of ultimate reality is a purely factual question. It is only if there is such a state that an end to conditioned existence would be possible.

So an ethical statement, which recommends the attainment of a highest Good and lays down a way of life for such attainment. would be significant only if there is such a state which can be considered the highest Good for each and all to attain and the way of life does, in fact, lead to it. The question as to whether there is such a highest Good and the way of life recommended leads to it , is, however, a factual question, which has to be established independently of the ethical recommendations.

It would, therefore, be the case that the ethics of Buddhism would be significant only if certain facts are

true, viz. (1) there is freedom or free will in the sense enunciated, (2) there is human survival or the continuity of individuality, (3) this continuity is such that the avoidance of evil and the cultivation of the good along with the purification of mind tends to make our nature better and our condition happier, while the opposite course of action has the reverse effect and (4) there is a state, when the mind is pure and cleansed of all defilements—a state of bliss, perfection, realisation and ultimate freedom.

In examining the Buddhist account of reality, we have already shown the truth of (2), (3) and (4). We have shown that there is pre-existence and survival after death, constituting 'a "continued becoming" (punabbhava). We have shown that karma (in the Buddhist sense) is operative and that morally good, evil and mixed acts make a difference to one's nature and are followed by pleassant, unpleasant and mixed consequences, as the case may be. We have shown that there is "that realm" (atthi . . . tad āyatanaṁ, Ud. 80) of Nirvāṇa beyond space-time and causation, which is the ultimate Good that all should attain and without which it would not be possible to transcend conditioned existence.

It remains for us to examine more fully than we have done, whether or not the Buddha asserts the reality of freedom or free will in the sense explained. By 'free will' in a Buddhist context, it is not meant that there is a will, choice or decision which is unaffected by causal factors that affect it but that our volitional acts or will, choice or decision, while being *conditioned* by such factors, are not wholly shaped or *strictly determined* by

them, since there is in man 'an element of initiative' (ārabbha-dhātu) or 'personal action' (purisa-kāra) or 'individual action' (atta-kāra), which within limits can resist the factors that affect it. If not for this factor of human personality, 'moral responsibility' would be a farce and the forces that impel us to act would be responsible for our actions.

This is, in fact, what the Buddha says. On the one hand, the Buddha distinguishes the Buddhist theory of the 'causal genesis' (paṭicca-samuppāda) of events from all forms of Strict Determinism, whether theistic or natural. According to the theistic version of Strict Determinism, every outcome in the universe is fore-known and pre-determined by an omniscient and omnipotent Personal God. In such a situation all our experiences would be "due to the creation by God" (Issara-nimmāna-hetu). If so, argues the Buddha, God is ultimately responsible for the (good and) evil that human beings do.

Such theistic Determinists lived during the time of the Buddha. We must not forget that they are also found today. Dr. Hastings Rashdall, Fellow of New College, Oxford, whose two volumes on *The Theory of Good and Evil* (Oxford University Press, 1907) are widely recommended and read by students of ethics even today was such a theistic Determinist. He says in one place in his book: "And after all a doctrine of Free-will which involves a denial of God's Omniscience cannot claim any superiority over such a theistic Determinism as I have defended on the score of avoiding a limitation of the divine Omnipotence" (Vol. II. pp. 343, 344). He is led to believe in Determinism because of his total

distrust of Indeterminism at the time when scientists believed in deterministic causation, prior to the discoveries of quantum physics. Dr. Rashdall, however, gives this scientific doctrine of his times an idealistic twist and says: "When the theory of Determinism is held in connexion with a philosophy which finds the ultimate ground and source of all being in a rational will, it is impossible to escape the inference that the will of God ultimately causes everything in the Universe which has a beginning—including therefore souls and their acts, good and bad alike" (*Ibid.*, p. 339).

Having taken up this position, he finds the consequences not too palatable and difficult to explain away, for he says: "Yet from the metaphysical or theological point of view we must admit also that the soul is made or caused by God: and one cannot help asking oneself the question why God should make bad souls, and so cause bad acts to be done" (*Ibid.*, p. 340). He also admits the central difficulty of his position, which he tries to explain away unsatisfactorily, viz. "We have seen then that the only point at which a difficulty is created either for Morality or for Religion by the acceptance of Determinism lies in its tendency to make God in a sense the 'author of evil' . . ." (*Ibid.*, p. 345). So we see that the logic of theistic Determinism is no different from the Buddha's time to the present.

The Buddha also rejects different forms of natural Determinism. One such theory was that experiences of (the good or) evil we do is "due to our (hereditary) physiological constitution" (abhijāti-hetu). Another theory upheld psychic determinism (cp. Freud) and held that "all our present acts and experiences are entirely

due to our past actions" (pubbekata-hetu). In addition, there were at the time of the Buddha 'natural Determinists' (svabhāva-vādins), who held that all events were strictly determined by natural forces. Pūrāṇa Kassapa was a "Determinist" (niyativādi), who held such a theory. As a result of his natural Determinism, he was like the 19th century rationalists of Europe, an Amoralist who denied that there was good or evil as such, since man was not responsible for his so-called 'good' or 'evil' acts.

It is important to remember that the Buddhist theory of causation was opposed to all such Deterministic theories, both theistic and natural, as also to the theory of total Indeterminism (adhicca-samuppanna) or Tychism, which denied causal correlations in nature altogether. As such, the Buddhist theory of causation seems to accept an element of indeterminacy in nature, which in the case of human actions manifests itself as the free will of the individual, which is *conditioned* but *not totally determined* by the factors that affect it.

While the Buddha distinguished his causal theory from Determinism, he also faced the question of free will and asserted its reality in no uncertain terms. On one occasion, it is said, a certain brahmin (aññataro brāhmaṇo) approached the Buddha and told him that he was of the opinion that there was no free will on the part of himself (atta-kāra) or others (para-kāra). The Buddha admonished him and asked him how he could say such a thing when he himself of his own accord (sayaṁ) could walk up to the Buddha and walk away from him.

On this occasion, the Buddha says that there is such a thing as 'an element of initiative' (ārabbha-dhātu) and as a result one can observe beings acting with initiative and this, says the Buddha, is what is called "the free will of people" (sattānaṁ atta-kāro). He also goes on to say that there is "an element of origination" (nikkama-dhātu), an "element of endeavour" (parakkama-dhātu), an "element of strength" (thāma-dhātu), an "element of perseverance" (ṭhiti-dhātu) and an "element of volitional effort" (upakkama-dhātu), which makes beings of their own accord act in various ways and that this showed that there was such a thing as free will (A. III, 337, 338).

We notice on the other hand that Makkhali Gosāla, the theist, who held that the world was created by a divine fiat and continued to unfold itself like a ball of thread flung on the ground, held that beings were "devoid of free will" (natthi atta-kāro), "devoid of personal will" (natthi purisa-kāro), "devoid of power, effort, personal strength or personal endeavour" (natthi balaṁ, viriyaṁ, purisathāmo. purisapparakkamo) (D I.53) Those who denied the possibility and power of moral acts or in other words, free will and its consequences, were known at this time as akiriya-vādins. Thus, again, Makkhali Gosāla, the theist, is said to have held the doctrine that "there is no karma, there is no free action and no potentiality of action" (natthi kammaṇ, natthi kiriyaṁ, natthi viriyaṁ) (A. I. 286). It is well-known, however, that the Buddha was accepted even by his brahmin opponents as a kiriya-vādin, a teacher of the efficacy of action.

All this goes to prove that the Buddha faced the problem of free will at the time and reiterated the view that asserted the reality of human freedom or free will without denying at the same time that this free will was conditioned but not wholly shaped or determined by factors, which affected it. There are certain things beyond our powers but there are at the same time certain powers which one can exercise within limits. For example, I cannot, even if I tried my utmost, utter a thousand words a minute but I can certainly vary my speed of utterance within limits merely to show that I have the power to do this. It is this power that we all have within limits for refraining from evil and doing good. The more we exercise this power the more freedom and spontaneity we acquire.

Many scholars have failed to see that Buddhism upheld a theory of non-deterministic causal conditioning along with the doctrine of free will. As a result Buddhism has been represented by some Western scholars as a form of fatalism because of their misunderstanding of the doctrine of karma as well as the doctrine of causation.

This misunderstanding, however, is not limited to Western scholars. A local Buddhist scholar, a layman, has represented the Buddhist teaching on this matter as follows in a paper read before a Philosphers' Conference: "What does Buddhism have to say regarding free will? The question does not seem ever to have been asked of the Buddha, but, if he had been asked, he would probably have answered that the question does not arise or that it is inaccurately put. There can be no such thing as a free will outside the causal sequence which

constitutes the world process".[1] Another local Buddhist scholar, a monk, says the following: "The question of Free Will has occupied an important place in Western thought and philosophy. But according to Conditioned Genesis, this question does not and cannot arise in Buddhist philosophy . . . . . Not only is the so-called free will not free, but even the very idea of Free Will is not free from conditions".[2]

These three doctrines, namely upholding the reality of free will (kiriya-vāda) as opposed to the denial of free will (akiriya-vāda) in the sense specified, upholding the reality of survival after death (atthi paro loko) as opposed to the denial of survival (natthi paro loko) and upholding the reality of moral causation (hetu-vāda) as opposed to the denial of moral causation (ahetu-vāda) form the basis of Buddhist ethics. They are upheld because they are considered to be verifiably true.

It is these doctrines which make individual moral responsibility meaningful. Without them there is no sense in which we can be said to be morally responsible for our actions although we may be socially responsible. In the Apaṇṇaka Sutta,[3] where the Buddha addresses rational sceptics, he states that even if one is sceptical about free will, survival and moral causation, it would be pragmatic and rational to act on the basis that they are true rather than their opposites for in such a case

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1. G. P. Malalasekera, "The Status of the Individual in Theravāda Buddhist Philosophy" in *The Status of the Individual in East and West*, Ed. Charles A. Moore, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1968, p. 73.
2. Walpola Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught*, Gordon Fraser, 1959, pp. 54, 55.
3. Translated in 'The Wheel' No. 98/99.

whatever happens, we do not stand to lose. If we act on the basis that free will, survival and moral causation are true, then if they turn out to be true, we would be happy in the next life and if not true, praised by the wise in this life, whereas if we do not act on this basis, then if they are true, we would be unhappy in the next life and if they are not true, we would be condemned by the wise in this life for acting without a sense of moral responsibility.

While the ethics of good and evil (in a moral sense as opposed to what is merely socially good and evil) requires the above three postulates, which according to the Buddhist account of reality are facts, the ethics of salvation from conditioned existence requires the postulate of an Unconditioned Reality, which according to Buddhism is also a fact.

Man and the universe being what they are, the ethical and spiritual life (which in a sense is part of it) is both possible and the most desirable in our interests as well as of others.

II

THE BUDDHIST ETHICAL IDEAL OR THE ULTIMATE GOOD

Moral philosophers use the term 'good' in two important senses. There is the sense in which we speak of what is 'good as an end' or what is 'intrinsically good'. There is also the sense in which we speak of what is 'good as a means' or what is 'instrumentally good'. The two senses are inter-related. For, what is instrumentally good or good as a means is necessary to bring about what is intrinsically good or good as an end.

When the *Dhammapada* says that 'health is the greatest gain' (ārogyā paramā lābhā), it is, in a sense, treating the state of health as being what is good as an end. For whatever our gains may be, most people are prepared to lose them or use them in order to recover their health, if they fall ill. Besides, it is only if we are healthy that we can adopt the means to gain material or even spiritual riches. If health is a desirable end to achieve or is good as an end, then what is instrumental in achieving this state of health is good as a means. Since medicines, even when they are bitter, are often useful as a means to the cure of illnesses, they are deemed to be good as a means or instrumentally good.

Although some people would regard a state of physical health in the above sense as being good as an end, others may say that good health is only a relative

end since the ultimate end or goal that we should seek is happiness and good health is only a necessary condition for happiness. So while no one would say that bitter medicine is good as an end, many people would regard a state of health as being good as an end only in a relative sense, as contributing to one's well-being and happiness. One's well-being and happiness would, therefore, be for them an ultimate end in a sense in which even physical health is not. Besides, in the world in which we live, we can enjoy a state of physical health only in a relative sense since we may fall ill from time to time and even healthy men eventually die.

In this talk we shall be concerned only with what is ultimately good from the Buddhist point of view. Buddhism presents a clear conception of what is ultimately good and what is instrumentally good in order to achieve this. What is instrumentally good to achieve this end is regarded as good as a means. It consists mainly of right actions and the other factors that help in bringing about what is ultimately good.

These right actions may often be called good actions as opposed to evil actions. But we shall avoid the word 'good actions' and consistently use the word 'right actions' (as opposed to 'wrong actions) in speaking about what is primarily necessary in order to achieve what is good as an end.

In the Buddhist texts, the terms that are most often used to denote 'right actions' are *kusala* and *puñña*. *Kusala* means 'skilful' and denotes the fact that the performance of right actions requires both theoretical understanding as well as practice. The person who has attained the

ideal or the highest good is referred to as a person of "accomplished skill or the highest skill" (sampanna-kusalaṁ parama-kusalaṁ). *Akusala*, its opposite, means the 'unskilful'. *Puñña* as used of right action means what is 'meritorious' as opposed to *pāpa*, which means 'demeritorious'. It is not a term that is employed to denote the highest good. In fact, the person who has attained the highest good is said to have 'cast aside both meritorious and demeritorious actions' (*puñña-pāpa-pahīna*).

As we shall see in examining the nature of right actions, this does not imply that meritorious actions (as opposed to demeritorious actions) are not necessary for the attainment of the highest good nor that those who have attained are amoral. The path to salvation or the path leading to the highest good in Buddhism is a gradual path and although we may start with our egoistic or self-centred desires as a motive for self-advancement, they have progressively to be cast aside until eventually the goodness of the actions alone remains without the personal motivation for doing good.

If we acquaint ourselves with the nature of the ethical ideal or the conception of what is intrinsically good or good as an end, we would be in a better position to understand the Buddhist conception of right and wrong.

Moral philosophers have conceived of the ethical ideal in various ways. Some have thought of the ideal as pleasure and others as happiness. Yet others considered the notion of duty or obligation as central to

ethics, while others again think of the goal as perfection.

What is the Buddhist conception of the ideal? Buddhism conceives of the ethical ideal as one of Happiness, Perfection, Realisation and Freedom. These ethical goals, in fact, coincide and the highest good is at the same time one of ultimate Happiness, moral Perfection, final Realisation and perfect Freedom. This is the goal to be attained in the cosmic or personal dimension of existence.

This is a goal for one and all to attain each in his own interest as well as that of others. Besides, there is a social ideal, which is also desirable to bring into existence. This is broadly conceived of as "the well-being or happiness of the multitude or mankind" (bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya). Here "well-being and happiness" is conceived of both materially as well as spiritually. The ideal society in which this well-being and happiness will prevail in an optimum form is conceived of as both socialistic being founded on the principle of equality, and democratic as affording the best opportunities for the exercise of human freedom. Such a society is also just, being based on principles of righteousness.

We shall explore the nature of these conceptions in greater detail when examining the social philosophy of Buddhism. We shall also examine in a later talk the relationship that exists between its social ideal and the personal ideal. Although from an individualistic point of view "the path to the acquisiton of wealth is one, while the path to Nirvana is another" (aññā hi lābhupanisā aññā nibbāna-gāmini), even the social ideal can be

attained, it is said, only by people, who are motivated to act in accordance with the Ten Virtues (dasa kusala-kamma) in a society built on firm economic, political and moral foundations.

What is the role of pleasure and the performance of one's duties in relation to the Buddhist ethical ideal? Let us first take the role of pleasure. Buddhism recognises the importance of the hedonistic principle that man is predominantly motivated to act out of "his desire for happiness and the repulsion for unhappiness" (sukha-kāmā hi manussā dukkha-paṭikkūlā). In fact, the central truths of Buddhism "the four truths concerning unhappiness" (dukkha-sacca) are formulated in the manner set forth so as to appeal to man's intrinsic desire for happiness and the desire to escape from or transcend his unhappiness.

Pleasure is classified in the Buddhist texts according to its different grades and it is stated that "the most refined and sublimest form of pleasure" (uttaritaraṁ paṇītataraṁ) is the bliss of Nirvana. This "experience of the bliss of freedom" (vimutti-sukha-paṭisaṁvedī) is so different from the conditioned pleasure and happiness of worldly existence that there is a reluctance on the part of the texts to use the word *vedanā* (feeling of it) since *vedanā* as represented in the formula of conditionality is always conditioned.

The attitude to pleasure in the Buddhist texts is a realistic one. It does not deny the fact or value of pleasure. The limited good (assāda) as well as the evil consequences (ādīnava) of even the gross forms of pleasure are recognised. The Buddha did not advocate a form of asceticism, whereby we should shun all

pleasures by closing our eyes and ears (and becoming like the blind and the deaf) to objects which arouse sensuous pleasure. Instead the Buddha wanted those who were addicted to such pleasures to realise their limitations.

One form of pleasure that we experience is by the gratification of our desires. We get satisfaction from time to time by gratifying our desire for sensuous pleasures and sex (kāma-taṇhā). We get such temporary satisfaction, again, by gratifying our egoistic instincts (bhava-taṇhā) such as the desire for self-preservation (jīvitu-kāma), for security, for possessions, for fame, for personal immortality etc. We also get satisfaction by gratifying our desire for destruction (vibhava-taṇhā) or aggression (paṭigha) or the elimination of what we dislike. The enjoyment of these pleasures is often accompanied by rationalisations or erroneous beliefs, such as, for instance, that we have been created for such a life of enjoyment of this sort or that we should eat, drink and be merry today for tomorrow we die.

What is important is not to shun pleasure or torment the body but to realise for oneself the limitations of pleasures and the diminishing returns they afford, so that eventually we can transcend them by a life of temperance and restraint and enjoy the immaterial or spiritual forms of pleasure (nirāmisa-sukha), which accompany selfless and compassionate activity based on understanding. One must give up the gross forms of pleasure for the more refined and superior kinds of happiness. As the *Dhammapada* states, "if by renouncing a little pleasure we can find a great deal of happiness, then the prudent man should relinquish such trifling

pleasures on discovering an abundant happiness" (mattā sukha-pariccāgā passe ce vipulaṁ sukhaṁ, caje mattā sukhaṁ dhīro samphassaṁ vipulaṁ sukhaṁ, Dh. 290).

This is only an extension of the hedonistic principle that man has a tendency to seek pleasure and recoil from pain and, therefore, he ought to do what is both rational and possible by giving up the gross forms of pleasure for the more sublime forms until he eventually attains the supreme bliss of Nirvana.

These more sublime forms of pleasure are correlated with forms of activity, which are spiritually elevating and socially desirable. It is not always necessary that one should literally renounce the worldly life in order to cultivate them. Both laymen and monks can attain the first stage of spiritual progress (sotāpanna) as well as some of the later stages as well. A person who can perform the duties associated with his livelihood, provided it is a right mode of living (sammā ājīva), with a sense of selfless service to his fellow men out of concern, compassion and understanding can act without a narrowly selfish motivation and derive happiness from his work. The Buddha compared the spiritual gains to be had from the lay life and the life of the monk to agriculture and trade. Agriculture gives slow but steady returns, while trade gives quicker returns though it is more risky. According to the Buddha, nothing could be worse than the outward renunciation of the lay life in order to live a life of corruption and hypocrisy as a recluse. Such a person, apart from the disservice he would be doing to the community would be digging his own grave.

However, the ignorance that clouds the judgment of man is such that a man who enjoys the grosser forms

of pleasure cannot experience anything 'more refined or more sublime' since he is addicted to them. So what often happens is that he experiences less and less of both pleasure and happiness because of his reluctance to go against the current (paṭisota-gāmi) until eventually he becomes a slave to his passions losing both his freedom and happiness as well as every other quality, which can bring him closer to the ethical ideal.

While Buddhist ethics recognises, and appeals to, the hedonistic tendencies of man it does not fall into the error of hedonism by asserting that pleasure alone abstracted from everything else is what is worth achieving. The hedonistic ideal of supreme happiness, for example, is also identical with the therapeutic goal of perfect mental health.

So the path to happiness is also the path to mental stability, serenity, awareness, integration and purity of mind. The Buddha classified diseases as bodily (kāyika) and mental (cetasika) and it is said that while we have bodily diseases from time to time mental illness is almost continual until arahatship is attained so that only the saint or a person with a Nirvanic mind can be said to have a perfectly healthy mind.

While the four noble truths, as we have pointed out. on the one hand, indicate the path from unhappiness to perfect happiness they have also the form of a diagnosis of a physician. From this point of view, the truths give an account of (1) the nature of the illness, its history and prognosis, (2) the causes of the illness, (3) the nature of the state of health that we ought to achieve and (4) the remedial measures to be taken in order to achieve this.

This diseased state of the mind is due to the unsatisfied desires and the conflicts caused by the desires that rage within our minds both at the conscious and unconscious levels. Thus, the desire for sense pleasures and selfish pursuits is found as a subliminal or latent tendency as well (rāgānusaya; cp. kāma-rāga, bhava-rāga). So is our hatred or aggression (paṭighānusaya). Mental serenity, stability and sanity can be achieved neither by free indulgence in our desires (kāma-sukhallikānuyoga) nor by ascetic repression and self-torment (attakilamathānuyoga). When we become more aware of the way these desires operate in us by the exercise or practice of awareness (sati-paṭṭhāna) we gradually attain a level of consciousness, in which there is a greater degree of serenity and stability. The culmination of this development, when the mind is purged of all its defilements, is the perfect state of mental health, which coincides with the experience of the highest bliss.

Buddhism points to the sources of unhappiness or the causes of suffering not to make us unhappy or brood over our lot but in order that we may emerge from our condition with stronger, happier and healthier minds. Such people could say in the words of the *Dhammapada*:

"So happily we live, free from anger among
those who are angry"
(susukhaṁ vata jīvāma verinesu averino, Dh. 197)

"So happily we live in good health amongst the ailing"
(susukhaṁ vata jīvāma āturesu anāturā, Dh. 198)

"So happily we live relaxed among those who are tense"
(susukhaṁ vate jīvāma ussukesu anussukā. Dh. 199)

The person who has attained the ideal is said to have fulfilled all his obligations (kata-karaṇiya) since the greatest obligation of everyone, whatever else he may do, is the attainment of the goal of Nirvana. But till he does this, man has all his social duties to perform towards the various classes of people in society. The duties and obligations of parents and children, employers and employees, husbands and wives, religious men and their followers etc. are given in the Sigālovāda Sutta, while duties and rights of a king or state and its citizens are recorded in the Aggañña and Cakkavattti-sīhanāda Suttas. Even such duties and obligations are to be performed in a spirit of selfless service, love and understanding, so that we are treading the path to Nirvana in the exercise of these obligations.

So while the ultimate end is one of perfect happiness and mental health, it is not one in which one is obliged to perform one's duties for duty's sake. Likewise, when the arahant serves society as the several enlightened monks and nuns mentioned in the Thera-and Therigathā did, they did so out of a spontaneous spirit of selflessness, compassion and understanding.

It is, therefore, a mistaken notion to hold, as some scholars have held, that the arahant is amoral and could even do evil with impunity. It is true that an arahant "casts aside both meritorious and demeritorious actions" puñña-pāpa-pahīna). By this is meant only that he does not do any acts, whether they be good or evil with the expectation of reward nor do these acts have any efficacy for bringing about karmic consequences in the future. They are mere acts (kiriya-matta) of goodness, which flow spontaneously from a transcendent mind, which

shines with its natural lustre with the elimination of craving, hatred and delusion and is wholly filled with selflessness (cāga), loving-kindness (mettā) and wisdom (paññā).

The following passage would illustrate the process and nature of this attainment:

"In whatever monk who was covetous, covetousness is got rid of . . . . wrath, grudging, hypocrisy, spite, jealousy, stinginess, treachery, craftiness, . . . who was of evil desires, evil desires is got rid of, who was of wrong view, wrong view is got rid of . . . He beholds himself purified of all these unskilled states and sees himself freed (vimuttaṁ attānaṁ samanupassati) . . . . . When he beholds himself freed, delight is born; rapture is born from delight; when he is in rapture, the body is impassible; when the body is impassible he experiences joy; being joyful the mind is concentrated. He dwells suffusing one direction with a mind of loving-kindness (mettāsahagatena cetasā), likewise the second, third and fourth; just so, above, below, across; he dwells having suffused the whole world everywhere, in every way with a mind of friendliness that is far-reaching, wide-spread, immeasurable, without enmity, without malevolence. He abides with a mind full of pity (karuṇā) . . . . . sympathetic joy (muditā) . . . equanimity (upekkhā) . . . without enmity, without malevolence. It is as if there were a lovely lotus pond with clear water, sweet water, cool water, limpid, with beautiful banks; and a man were to come along from the east, west, north or south, overcome and over-powered by the heat, exhausted, parched and thirsty. On coming to that lotus pond he might quench his thirst with water and quench his feverish heat. Even so . . . one who has come into this

Dhamma and discipline taught by the Buddha, having thus developed loving-kindness, pity, sympathetic joy and equanimity attains inward calm" (M. I. 283)

We find it expressly stated of the saint that he is a "person of accomplished skill (sampanna-kusala), of the highest skill (paramakusala), who has attained the highest attainment, an invincible recluse", who is endowed with "right aspirations (sammā-sankappa) such as compassion (avihiṃsā vitakka), which do not require to be further disciplined (asekha)". The arahant's state is, therefore, one of moral perfection though it is not one of "conditioned morality but natural or spontaneous morality"; he is said to be "naturally virtuous and not virtuous through conditioning" (sīlavā hoti no ca sīlamayo).

This state of bliss or ultimate happiness, perfect mental health and moral perfection is also described as a state of supreme freedom (vimutta) and realisation (sambodhi, paññā). The mind is master of itself (vasī) and one has supreme control over it. The inflowing impulses (āsava) do not disturb it.

The criticism has been made that the quest for Nirvana is a form of escapism. But this criticism is without basis since the person who attains Nirvana does so with full understanding of the nature of the world as well as himself. If he ceases to be henceforth attracted by the pleasures of the world, it is because he can assess their worth and their limitations. The real escapists are the people who cannot, in fact, face reality as a whole and try to drown their fears, anxieties and sorrows by indulging in their passions. They are easily upset by their circumstances and find consolation in some form

of neurosis. But the person who has a Nirvanic mind or is anywhere near it is "unruffled by the ups and downs of the world, is happy, unstained and secure" (phuṭṭhassa lokadhammehi cittaṁ yassa na kampati, asokaṁ virajaṁ khemaṁ).

In such a state one has "no fear or anxiety" (abhaya) at all. The highest good or the ethical ideal for each person is, therefore, conceived of as a state of bliss, mental health, perfection, freedom and realisation. It is a state that is stable (dhuva) and ineffable (amosa-dhamma) as well.

These are the 'hells' of the Buddhist texts, apart from the experience of 'hell' in this life itself. We learn from history about the existence of cannibalistic tribes in the past and the inhuman ways of living among the head-hunters of South America or the aborigines of Australia, not to speak of life in the concentration camps set up not so long ago in the centres of twentieth century civilisation. As such, we need not necessarily look to other planets for the presence of sub-human forms of existence, which are "foul, repulsive and ugly". Yet none of these states are permanent even though they exist.

Problem of Evil

The Buddha squarely faces the existence of evil in the universe. He sees things "as they are" (yathābhūtaṁ) and wants his disciples, too, to look at things in this way through the eyes of a realist. There is no escape into a world of make-believe, no undue pessimism nor facile optimism. The Buddha says : "There are religious teachers, who because of their state of confusion, do not recognise the difference between night and day but I would treat night as night and day as day" (M. I. 21). Buddhism, therefore, frankly accepts the existence of both good and evil in the world of conditioned existence.

Evil becomes a problem only for a theist, who maintains that the world was created by a perfect being, omniscient, omnipotent and infinitely good. In such a situation, it would be possible to account for evil by denying the omniscience, omnipotence or goodness of God but then one would be denying that the world was

the creation of a perfect Belng. So the problem is—*Si Deus bonus, unde malum*? If God is good, whence cometh evil?

In order to account for evil with these presuppositions, some have denied outright the fact of evil, others have stated that evil is a privation or illusion or has only a relative existence, while still others have maintained that evil is necessary as a component in the best of all possible worlds, which God necessarily creates. This last solution has, on the whole, been favoured by modern theists but even this does not satisfactorily account for the suffering of animals, of little children and innocent people within the framework of orthodox theistic beliefs.

What is the Buddhist solution of this problem? The problem does not exist in the above form for the Buddhist since he does not start with the theistic presumption that the world was created by a perfect Being. Instead, he accepts the fact of evil and argues on its basis that the world with all its imperfections could not be the creation of a perfect Being.

The argument is briefly stated as follows: "If God (Brahmā) is lord of the whole world and creator of the multitude of beings, then why (i) has he ordained misfortune in the world without making the whole world happy or (ii) for what purpose has he made a world with injustice, deceit, falsehood and conceit or (iii) the lord of beings is evil in that he has ordained injustice where there could have been justice" (J. VI. 208).

The Buddhist is under no compunction to deny or explain away the fact of evil. If we deny the existence

of evil, there would be no reason nor even the possibility of getting rid of it. If we justify it, it would still be unnecessary to try and eliminate it. But evil is real for the Buddhist and must be removed as far as possible at all its levels of existence for the good and happiness of mankind, by examing its causal origins.

This does not mean that Buddhism holds that all existence is evil. The Buddha is often represented by Western scholars as having said this or assumed such a stand.

The *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* says that "existence . . . . seemed to the Buddha to be evil" (See Article on *Good and Evil*). Yet nowhere has the Buddha said that even finite conditioned existence is wholly evil. What he has often said is that such existence has its good side or pleasantnesses (assāda) as well as its evil consequences (ādīnava) and considering the possibility of transcending such finite conditioned existence, it was desirable to do so.

Primacy of the Good

Nor does Buddhism hold that evil predominates in nature. It is possible to take up different positions regarding the presence or primacy of good or evil.

We can say that (i) good predominates over evil although both exist, or that (ii) good alone exists but not evil or that (iii) evil predominates over good although both exist or that (iv) evil alone exists but not good or that (v) both good and evil exist with equal strength and vigour (dualism) and there is a perpetual battle in

the universe between the forces of good and evil or that (vi) neither good nor evil exist in any strict sense (e. g. relativism, amoralism, illusionism (māyāvāda)).

Buddhism seems to favour the first point of view. It accepts the reality of both good and evil and seems to uphold the view that good predominates over evil.

The presence of some forms of evil such as suffering, it is said, has a tendency to awaken us from our lethargic state of existence and induce belief in moral and spiritual values (dukkhūpanisā saddhā, S. II. I.).

We are attached to the world because of the joys and satisfactions it affords us by way of the gratification of our desires. But because of the disappointments, frustrations, anguish and suffering that we also experience in the process we seek to understand and transcend our finite conditioned existence.

So some forms of evil such as suffering have a tendency to make us seek the good. But, in general, the problem of evil for the Buddhist is to recognise evil as such, to look for its verifiable causes and by removing the causes, eliminate evil as far as possible at all its levels of existence.

To look for the metaphysical causes of evil is deemed to be intellectually stultifying and morally fruitless. If we are struck with an arrow, our immediate task should be to remove it rather than investigate the credentials of the person who shot it. We may be in a better position to do so after we have been healed. The Dhamma, as the Buddha pointed out, is comparable to a raft, which has to be thrown aside after we have attained Nirvana

with its help and acquired a more comprehensive picture of the totality of things. In the meantime, the presence of evil is a challenge to us and our task should be to get rid of it : "One should conquer evil with good" (asādhuṁ sadhunā jine .

The baseless charge has been brought against Buddhism, namely that it is pessimistic, but it is a curious fact that it has given a less pessimistic account of both man and nature than some forms of theism. We have already pointed out that there is no conception of an 'eternal hell' in nature according to Buddhist teachings. Even in respect of man, he has never been regarded as predominantly evil.

Man is fundamentally good by nature and the evil in him is an extraneous outcome of his saṁsāric conditioning. The mind of man is compared in the Buddhist texts to gold-ore, which is said to have the defilements of iron, copper, tin, lead and silver but when these impurities are removed, then the gold shines, with its natural lustre. So does the mind when the evil is got rid of.

The Buddha states that "the mind is naturally resplendent though it is corrupted by adventitious defilements" (pabhassaraṁ idaṁ cittaṁ taṁ ca kho āgantukehi upakkilesehi upakkiliṭṭhaṁ). Man, therefore, despite the fact that he has committed sin (pāpa) and is capable of sinning is not addressed as a 'sinner' but as 'meritorious being' (e. g. Sinhala, pinvatnī) because of his potentiality for good.

Even the evil that he commits is not due to his basic depravity or wickedness but to his ignorance. This ignorance can be got rid of and man himself is capable

of getting rid of it. Buddhism does not agree with the theist who holds that man in his present condition is so degenerate by nature that he is incapable of saving himself without the grace of an external power. The future of man is in his own hands; he is master of his fate. In denying an eternal hell, in not regarding man as a sinner who is incapable of attaining salvation by his own efforts, Buddhism gives a less pessimistic account of man and nature than is to be found in some forms of theism.

Although in this respect, it upholds the primacy of the good, Buddhism is not an easy-going optimism, which ignores the evil in man and nature. A realistic view of nature is partly pessimistic in that one has to take cognizance of the darker side of things as well.

Many people out of fear do not wish to contemplate the fact that we are all liable to suffer from decay, disease and death.. The Buddha, on the contrary, holds (like Socrates and Plato) that "the contemplation of death" (maraṇānussati) is of therapeutic value in making for mental stability and peace. To this extent, Buddhism recommends a partly "pessimistic outlook" (asubhānupassiṁ viharantaṁ, Dh. 8) insofar as it is realistic and is a factor necessary to promote and establish one's personal happiness on firm foundations.

Death (mṛtyuh) had been personified prior to Buddhism and the Sathapatha Brāhmaṇa refers to the legendary figure of "Death, the Evil One" (mṛtyuh pāpmā). This conception re-appears in the Buddhist scriptures as Māro Pāpimā, i. e. "Death, the Evil One", who signifies all the evil associated with or causally

related to the phenomenon of death. Since all conditioned existence is subject to death, Māra is said to hold sway over the entire universe.

The term Māra is formed of √mṛ, to kill (cp. Latin, mors) and means "killer or death". In the scholastic tradition, the term is said to have four meanings. It may signify physical death (maccu-māra), it may denote the constituents of one's personality, which are subject to change and, therefore, to 'death' in this wider sense (khandha-māra), it may mean 'moral evil' or the defilements, which are the cause of repeated (birth and) death (kilesa-māra) or it may refer to the Evil One as a person (devaputta-māra), who tempts and obstructs people who seek emancipation from conditioned existence by means of a life of moral and spiritual development.

In this last sense, Māra symbolises all the opposition and obstruction that spiritual seekers have to contend with, whether this be internal (psychological) or external (physical, social). It is difficult to say that there is no such opposition towards those who seek to do good, when we know that outstanding teachers in history who tried to preach or establish a new universal ethic had to face not only opposition but even death at the hands of their own people, which provoked the Shavian remark that "it is dangerous to be too good."

The question is often asked as to whether Buddhism recognises the existence of such an Evil One as a person (such as Satan or the Devil). The forces (senā) of Māra as depicted in the Buddhist texts constitute merely the symbolic representation of evil in various forms. For example, the Mahā Niddesa speaks of the forces of Māra

as consisting of lust (kāma), aversion (arati), hunger and thirst (khuppipāsā), desire (taṇhā), sloth and torpor (thīnamiddha), fear (bhīru), doubt regarding moral and spiritual truths and values (vicikicchā), hypocrisy (makkha), hardness of heart (thambha), the gain, praise, respect and fame obtained by false pretences (lābho siloko sakkāro micchāladdho ca yo yaso) as well as boasting about oneself while despising others (yo c'attānaṁ samukkaṁse pare ca avajānati," (Mahā Niddesa, I, 96).

There are, however situations in the Canon where Māra appears in person and criticises some of the teachings of the Buddha or propounds doctrines which are opposed to them. Does this not prove the personal existence of Māra? Even prior to Buddhism we find that the Kaṭha Upaniṣad employed the figure of Death or Mṛtyuh to impart an Ātman-doctrine. The entire teaching of the Kaṭha Upaniṣad is said to have been "declared by Death" (mṛtyu-proktāṁ, Kaṭha, 6.18), who does not appear in a derogatory role probably because the functions of death, control and creation are in the hands of the Supreme Being. It would, therefore, not be surprising if the legendary figure of Māra is utilised as a literary device by the compilers of the Canon to indicate the Buddha's comments and criticisms of doctrines, belief in which was likely to prolong one's conditioned existence. On the other hand, we cannot rule out the possibility of higher intelligences in the cosmos, who believe profoundly in and like to propagate some of the views attributed to Māra.

However, it is quite evident that the figure of Māra is often introduced in the Canon for purely didactic

purposes and no personal manifestation of evil is meant. In the Nivāpa Sutta (M. I. 151-60) it is said that a sower sows crops for the deer to come and eat. The first herd eat indulgently and fall an easy prey to the sower. The second herd observing this avoid the crops and repair to the forest close by, but weakened by hunger are forced to come and eat the crops and do so with avidity and thereby fall a prey to the sower. The third herd, observing what happened to the first two, partake of the crops without being infatuated and repair to a lair close by, which, however, is easily discovered by the sower, who is able to catch them. The fourth herd, observing the mistakes committed by the first three, repair to a lair to which the sower has no access and thereby escape.

Here, the sower is said to be Māra, the Evil One, and the crops constitute indulgence in the pleasures of the senses. The four herds constitute four types of religious sects. The first finds nothing wrong in free indulgence in the pleasures of sense and become easy victims of Māra. The second resorts to asceticism but eventually return to indulgence, the need for it being heightened by their repressions. The third exercises restraint in the enjoyment of sense-pleasures but their dogmatic beliefs about man and the world keep them within the realm and dominance of Māra. It is only the fourth, who follow a Buddhist way of life who are successful in going beyond the clutches of Māra. There is nothing to suggest that Māra, in actual fact, operates as a personal entity here. The parabls of the crops merely shows that ultimate salvation cannot be found within the realm of conditioned existence.

Destruction of Evil

The passage quoted from the Niddesa above, where various evils were figuratively referred to as "the forces of Māra" ends by saying that "it is only by conquering the forces of Māra that one attains happiness" (jetvā ca labhate sukhaṁ). The Buddha and the arahants, it is said, have conquered Māra and, therefore, can recognise him and do not fall a victim to his wiles. The Dhammapada recommends that we "should fight Māra with the weapon of wisdom" (yodhetha Māraṁ paññāvudhena, Dh. 40).

So the Buddhist attitude to evil is not deny its presence or try to reconcile its existence with the creation of the world by a good God but to observe its presence and by studying its nature and causes, to eliminate it.

As far as one's personal evolution is concerned, one must develop the awareness and "the will to prevent the arising of evil states of mind not arisen, the will to eliminate evil states of mind which have arisen, the will to make arise good states of mind which have not arisen and the will to preserve, develop, refine and perfect good states of mind which have arisen" (S. V. 268).

It is the same with social and political forms of evil. as we shall see when we examine the social and political philosophy of Buddhism. According to the Buddhist social contract theory of government, the people are ultimately responsible for the good government of the country. If the country is not properly governed it is up to the people to ensure such a government in order to promote the material and spiritual welfare of the people by the promotion of the good and the elimination of evil in the body politic.

Pirit

We have so far dealt with realistic forms of evil. But some of our fears (which are themselves evil) are based on irrational foundations such as the fear of the unknown. At the time of the Buddha such fears were allayed by magical and ritualistic means with the help of the chants and incantations of the Atharva Veda or the resort to demonological practices. Where the people were not mentally equipped to give up these beliefs and practices, what the Buddha did was to substitute Buddhist chants (paritta, safeguard) of a more meaningful character, which developed into the institution of pirit.

Instead of chanting in an unintelligible language, the Buddha used the language of the people. In doing so, he used it as a vehicle of instruction as well. For example, the Maṅgala Sutta (chanted as pirit) is an attempt to answer the question, "What are the auspicious things?". The word maṅgala could also be translated as 'superstitious observance' and in one place the Buddha referring to the lay people at the time says that they were "superstitious" (gihī maṅgalikā, Vin. II, 140). Now the list of "auspicious things or observances" given in the Maṅgala Sutta, far from being superstitions, were factors or practices which contributed to the social and personal advancement of people. To take but one stanza, the Buddha says: "a good education (bāhusaccaṁ), acquiring a technical skill (sippaṁ), a well-cultivated sense of discipline (vinayo ca susikkhito) and cultured speech (subhāsitā ca yā vācā)—these are the auspicious things" (S. 261). The practices recommended are of relevance to any civilised society.

So while the people derived a psychological satisfaction and a sense of security by listening to this chant, they also received an education in the Dhamma. Those who listened with rapt attention, appreciated what was said and tried to live in accordance with the teachings would also have the protection of the Dhamma, for it is said that "the Dhamma protects him who lives in accordance with the Dhamma" (Dhammo have rakkhati Dhamma-cārim̐).

IV

THE CRITERIA OF RIGHT AND WRONG

We normally use the words 'right' or 'wrong' to denote classes of acts and sometimes the specific acts of human beings. Thus, what we mean when we say that 'murder is wrong' is that the class of acts, which are classified as 'murder' are 'wrong'. But sometimes we may say that his action in the specific situation in which he was placed was 'right'. We do not use these words to denote the acts of animals though, perhaps, the acts of some animals in rare situations may seem to us to be 'right' or 'wrong', as the case may be.

Even with regard to human beings, we do not consider all their acts as being 'right' or 'wrong'. When a person eats bread instead of buns for his morning meal, when what he eats makes no difference to him or others, we do not consider this act of his 'right' or 'wrong'. We deem it to be 'morally neutral' along with many of his actions, including reflex actions. Likewise, some of his actions may be partially right and partially wrong and therefore of a 'mixed' character. So a man's actions may be classified as being morally right (kusala), morally wrong (akusala), morally neutral (avyākata) and morally 'mixed' (i, e. both right and wrong, vokiṇṇa) in character.

It makes sense to speak of some acts as being right and others as being wrong or 'mixed' in character, only if human beings were free to act within limits in a

causally conditioned world. If a man's actions were mere responses to stimuli or merely reflected the hereditary structure or constitution of his body or were strictly determined by his psychological past, then it would not make sense to say that his actions were right or wrong, since they are constrained and not free. So if his actions are deemed to be right or wrong, it is because although his decisions and acts are causally *conditioned* by circumstances, they are *not strictly determined* and man has the freedom (attakāra) to act within certain limits in the universe in which we live.

Besides, as we have shown in our previous talk, man and the universe is such that the moral and spiritual life is not only possible but is the most desirable. This is because in addition to the fact of freedom within a context of causal conditioning, there is ethico-psychological causation as well as survival after death. Our decisions, which result in right or wrong acts make a difference to our nature and future. They have their own personal reactions in this life as well as in lives to come. These three facts, as often emphasised by the Buddha (e. g. Apaṇṇaka Sutta), namely freedom (kiriyavādā), survival (atthi paro loko) and moral causation (hetuvāda) make moral responsibity a reality and self-development a practical possibility as well as a dire necessity. What we do by way of our mental, verbal and bodily acts makes a difference to our nature and regulates our future development.

This is what is often emphasised in the Dhammapada: "By oneself alone is evil done, by oneself is evil avoided and by oneself alone is one saved (lit purified). Salvation and damnation depend on oneself (paccattaṁ)

--no one can save another" (Dh. 165). We are what we are not because of evolutionary necessity, God's grace or accidental happinss but because of what we can make of ourselves by the exercise of our own freedom and effort. So the teaching of the Buddha can help us only if we decide to follow it: "You yourselves must make the effort" says the Buddha, "the Transcendent Ones are only teachers; those who follow the path and meditate are delivered from the bonds of Mārā" (Dh. 276).

This moral and spiritual development, as we have shown in one of our previous talks, is not an unending process for its goal is Nirvana, the ultimate good or the ethical ideal according to Buddhism, a goal which may be achieved by some in this life itself.

In this talk, we propose to examine the nature and the characteristics of these acts, which are designated 'right' or 'wrong'. What makes right, acts right and wrong acts wrong? What is the measure or what are the criteria, which enable us to recognise and distinguish right acts from wrong?

We may state at the outset that moral philosophers have expressed a variety of opinions on this subject. Few thinkers are, in fact, agreed about the nature of right or wrong acts or their analysis.

The *Objectivists* have held that acts are right or wrong, irrespective of the person by whom or the time and place at which they are performed. Among the objectivist theories are metaphysical theories such as those of the theists. They have held either that right actions are right because this is God's will or that God

has willed them because they are right or that God's will and what is right coincide. However, the conflicting accounts of God's will in the different theistic scriptures and the fact that some of the alleged divine commands do not appear to be right, apart from the objections from relativism, makes this a difficult theory to accept. Other objectivists have put forward naturalistic theories. Some are sociological and hold that right actions are actions which are conducive to the survival of mankind Still others, such as the Utilitarians assert that right actions are productive of a maximum amount of pleasure for human beings.

Among the objectivists many are intuitionists, who claim that the rightness or wrongness of actions can be directly apprehended by one's intuition like mathematical truths or can be perceived like perceiving the difference between the colours of objects, although the Utilitarians or the proponents of evolutionary ethics are empirical in their approach.

In direct opposition to them are the *Subjectivists* or *Emotivists*, who believe that the rightness or wrongness of actions depend on the thoughts and feelings of human beings. Right actions are actions which all or most people like or approve of whereas wrong actions are disliked or disapproved of.

The *Relativists* take a different stand and put forward the view that the notions of right and wrong have differed in different periods of history and in different societies, though they have a relative objectivity within their frames of reference. The *Sceptics* on the other hand claim that we cannot know anything regarding the

nature of right and wrong, while *Logical Positivists* have dismissed ethical concepts as pseudo-concepts.

A positivist who says that they "reject the subjectivist view" states his point of view as follows: "The propositions which describe the phenomena of moral experience, and their causes, must be assigned to the science of psychology, or sociology. The exhortations to moral virtue are not propositions at all, but ejaculations or commands which are designed to provoke the reader to action of a certain sort" (A.J. Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*, London, Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1958, pp. 103, 104).

Modern *Analytic Philosophers* are evolving a more satisfactory analysis of ethical propositions, although this is by no means perfect as yet.

What is the position of Buddhism regarding ethical propositions and the notions of right and wrong? Is the Buddhist account objective, subjective, relativist, sceptical, positivist or something totally different? Only a careful study of the analysis of right and wrong in the scriptures can reveal the Buddhist point of view, which appears to be different from all the above theories, although it may be compared with some of them in certain respects.

We have already stated that it is a necessary condition of right actions (or wrong actions) that they should be performed within a context of relative freedom, despite the causal conditioning. According to Buddhist conceptions, another necessary condition, which differentiates right actions from wrong ones is the

motive and intentions with which they are done. Suppose a person gets hold of a knife and cuts open another's body. Is this a right action or a wrong action? Some modern Western philosophers, who try to determine the rightness or wrongness of an action by virtue of the observable characteristics of the action itself or its consequences without reference to motive or intention, would find it difficult to answer this question. It is the motive and intention, which make a tremendous difference to the nature of the act.

If the intention of the person was to injure or kill the other man and he was motivated by personal animosity, we would regard it as a wrong act (akusala). If, however, the intention was to prolong the other person's life by performing a surgical operation and he was motivated by a desire to be of service to a fellow man, then we would regard it as a right action (kusala). It is primarily the motive and intention (cetanā), which determines whether the act was right or wrong.

According to the Buddha, it is the motive and intention, which ought to be a primary consideration in determining the rightness or wrongness of an action. But this is only a necessary condition and not a sufficient condition. Mere good intentions are not enough. The act must be performed as well before we can say whether a right action has been done. Besides, for the action to be a skilful (kusala) action, the act itself must be appropriate. Consider the case where a layman, who with the best of intentions gives his friend in an emergency a dose of medicine, which turns out to

be poisonous because he gave the wrong dosage. Here he acted with the best of intentions and motives but did not do a totally skilful (kusala) act.

So in considering the skilfulness or rightness of an action one has to take into account not only the motive and intention but the nature of the act, the manner in which it was carried out, its consequences, the people it affected etc. It is good to give but "one should give with discrimination" (viceyya dānaṁ dātabbaṁ), so that the most needy are benefited with the things that they most need. The motive and intention are, therefore, only a necessary condition in evaluating the rightness or wrongness of an action but there are other factors as well to be taken into account.

Prodominant among these other factors is the tendency on the part of these right actions to bring about the ultimate good of the individual as well as of society. So one of the main criteria of a right action concerns the question as to whether it constitutes the right means towards the realisation of the ultimate good. The ultimate good for each individual is the attainment of Nirvana, a state of highest happiness, moral perfection, supreme realisation, utter freedom and perfect mental health. The ideal for one is, in fact, the ideal for all.

The question may be raised as to whether the quest for such a goal is not narrowly egoistic. The answer is that it is not so, unless the goal is misconceived. The quest for Nirvana necessarily implies the practice of other-regarding virtues, such as selflessness (cāga) and benevolence (mettā). So although the personal quest for Nirvana may appear to be egoistic it is a form of

enlightened egoism, apart from the fact that the goal itself is permeated with selflessness. On the other hand, mere altruism may not be in the best interest of others. As the Buddha points out: "It is not possible for one who is stuck in the mud to help out another; it is only possible for one who is not stuck in the mud to help out another who is stuck in the mud. It is not possible for a man who has not saved himself to save another; it is only a man who has saved himself who can help save another" (M. I. 46). Such unenlightened altruism would be illustrated in the activity of a foolish person with good intentions, who wishes to help his friend without being able to do anything of value. So enlightened altruism necessarily involves self-regarding activity.

The *Dhammapada* therefore, firmly says:" One should first establish oneself in what is proper; then only should one instruct others. Such a wise man is not liable to be reproached. As he instructs others, so should he act himself" (Dh. 158, 159). What Buddhism recommends, therefore, is the ideal neither of ethical egoism nor of ethical altruism. It may be called the ideal of ethical universalism. As the Buddha says on one occasion : "There are these four persons in the world. What four? He who is bent neither on his own welfare nor on the welfare of others. He who is bent on the welfare of others but not his own. He who is bent on his own welfare but not of others, and he who is bent on the welfare of oneself as well as of others . . He who is bent on the welfare of oneself as well as of others, is of these four persons the chief and best, topmost, highest and supreme" (A. II. 95).

This is why right actions tend to benefit not only oneself but others as well. When we state the truth, for example, on certain occasions, it may not be of immediate benefit to us, though it would benefit the community. It is an action, therefore, which tends to bring about "the good and happiness of the multitude" (bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya) and indirectly benefits us. No doubt we directly experience the reward of good conscience even if we derive no immediate material benefit by such an action. So in this sense, speaking the truth serves in the long run one's own welfare as well as that of others.

Viewing the individual and the social goods separately a right action is, therefore, one which tends to bring about one's own ultimate good as well as contributes to the weal and welfare of society. The *ten right actions* (dasa kusala kamma), which have these characteristics are stated as follows: (1) He refrains from killing and abides full of mercy to all beings, (2) He refrains, from stealing and is honest and pure of heart, (3) He refrains from sexual misconduct and does not transgress the social mores (cāritta) with regard to sex, (4) He refrains from lying and is devoted to truth. On being summoned as a witness before an assembly or a court of law, he claims to know what he knows, he does not claim to know what he does not know, he claims to have seen what he saw and does not claim to have seen what he did not see; he does not utter a conscious lie for the sake of himself, for the sake of others or for some gain, (5) He refrains from slander and holds himself aloof from calumny. What he hears here, he repeats not there in order to cause factions among people. He is a peacemaker, who brings together those who are

divided, delights in social harmony and makes statements which promote harmony, (6) He refrains from harsh speech and uses language that is civil and pleasant to hear (7) He refrains from idle gossip and speaks at the right time in accordance with facts, what is meaningful, righteous and in accordance with the law, (8) He refrains from covetousness, does not covet another's property (and is generous at heart), (9) He refrains from ill-will (and is benevolent), (10) He refrains from holding false views and holds the right philosophy of life, believing in the reality of this world and the next, in moral recompense, moral obligations and values and in religious teachers who have led good lives and have proclaimed by their superior insight, the nature of this world and the next" (M. III. 47-52).

Right actions are, therefore, those which are instrumental in bringing about the ultimate good of one and all. Since happiness is one of the basic characteristics of this ultimate good, right actions are those which tend to promote the happiness of oneself as well as of others. But this happiness is not to be considered in isolation from moral perfection, realisation or knowledge regarding the nature of things, emancipation of mind, perfect mental health etc.

Another account of right actions from the standpoint of the individual ultimate good as the goal is the noble eight-fold path, consisting of right beliefs (sammā diṭṭhi) etc. Here again, as the Mahācattārīsaka Sutta (M. III. 71 ff.) points out right effort (sammā vāyāma) is involved in trying to give up false beliefs. In dispelling these wrong beliefs and consciously adopting right beliefs as a basis for action, one is led by right

awareness (sammā sati). These in turn, namely right beliefs, right effort and right awareness help in the cultivation of the other factors of the path. Thus, right beliefs help the cultivation of right aspirations, which in turn promote right speech and right action. Right action makes for a right mode of livelihood. This helps right effort, which in turn furthers right awareness or right mindfulness, which results in right meditation until eventually they culminate in right understanding (sammā ñāṇa) and right emancipation (sammā vimutti). So we see that right actions are right (sammā) in being the efficient means for the realisation of the good.

Wrong actions, on the other hand, constitute those that prevent or obstruct the realisation of the goal on the part of oneself and others (attavyābādhāya saṁvattati, paravyābādhāya saṁvattati).

Although we said that right motives were a necessary condition of right action, we may note that they are included in the eight-fold path as right aspirations (sammā saṅkappa), so that all right actions could be defined as what are instrumental in bringing about the ultimate good.

Since right actions constitute a middle path (majjhimā paṭipadā) between two extremes, these extremes constitute wrong means for the attainment of the goal. The actions constituting them are, therefore, wrong actions. One wrong means, constituting a set of wrong actions consists of causing pain to oneself (attantapa) or others (parantapa) or both. As the Buddha has shown in the Kandaraka Sutta (M. I. 539ff) ascetics who mortify the flesh, hunters, fowlers and robbers who cause pain and suffering to others, kings who practise penance and

burden their subjects with the performance of wasteful and cruel sacrifices, all fall into the category of people who do these wrong actions by causing pain to oneself, others or both.

In the other extreme are those who recommend free indulgence in one's desires, saying, for example, that "there is nothing wrong in indulgence in sensual pleasures" (natthi kāmesu doso, M. I. 305). Such persons, the Buddha says, enjoy limited pleasures in the present but because of their failure to see that indulgence gives diminishing returns by way of pleasure and results in our becoming slaves to our passions, undergo suffering later. The Buddha says in the Mahā Dhammasamādāna Sutta (M. I. 309) that those whose desires are strong are likely to achieve happiness in due course by restraining and curbing their desires in the present even at the cost of a little unhappiness. This exercise of restraint by the cultivation of one's emotions and meditative self-analysis is different from the mortification of the flesh. On the other hand, those whose desires are not strong, it is said, can easily achieve stable states of happiness by transforming themselves.

Right actions are right because they are based on a realistic understanding of man and nature, an awareness of the goal of human endeavour and of the correct means to realise it. Their rightness is to be judged by the nature of their motivation as well as the nature of their consequences. These consequences may be psychological or social and experiencable in this life or in future lives.

In my talks on "Survival and Karma", I gave instances of the verifiable and verified personal consequences of such actions in future lives. In stating the karmic consequences of some of these wrong actions, the Buddha says that they tend to bring one's status down to sub-human levels of existence in subsequent lives but that if we are born among human beings, then one is likely to experience certain consequences of these wrong actions For instance, a habitual liar is likely to become the object of false accusations (A. IV. 247). One who gossips is not likely to be accepted at his word. One who drinks heavily is likely to be born insane. Elsewhere, it is said that these consequences are to be expected in this life itself. The heavy drinker is said to end his days as an alcoholic and an insane person (Sn. 398). The *Dhammapada* says: "Speak not harshly to anyone for those thus addressed will in turn retort" (Dh. 133).

If right action is a means to the attainment of an end which is the ultimate good, the question arises as to whether the means must not themselves be good. Buddhism does not seem to hold that ends are means or means are ends or that the means to be adopted to attain a good end must themselves be wholly good. There is a definite goal to be achieved, which is called "the end of unhappiness" (dukkhass' anta) or the "supreme state of happiness" (parama sukha).

It may be argued that a good end can only be attained by means wholly good. But the fact is that we are not wholly good (if we were there would be no necessity to attain the end) and not being wholly good and not having a clear conception of the goal we cannot

perform actions, which are "perfectly right" (paramakusala). Our right actions are, therefore, only approximations to what is perfectly right. It is only gradually that we refine them and doing so acquire clearer conceptions of the goal.

The desire for fame or happiness in this life or the desire to be born in a better state in the next life could provide the initial incentive for betterment. Even if we are developed enough to have our eyes on the goal we must have "the desire to attain the ineffable" (chandajāto anakkhāte, Dh. 218). "Desire is to be given up depending on desire" (taṇhaṁ nissāya taṇhaṁ pahātabbaṁ), namely the desire to end our self-centred desires. "Conceit is to be given up depending on the conceited wish (mānaṁ nissāya mānaṁ pahātabbaṁ) that I would attain the goal". A minimum of imperfection is, therefore, involved in our initial and sustained efforts to reach the goal. As the Buddha points out in the Abhayarājakumāra Sutta, if a child has got something stuck in his throat, it may be necessary to cause a minimum of pain in order to get it out. Truth is not always pleasant and it is sometimes necessary to state unpleasant truths or remind ourselves of them in order to arouse others or emerge from our state of smug satisfaction.

The question may be raised as to how we may know that right actions are right and wrong actions wrong. One answer is that the Buddha and the arahants have personally verified the nature of these actions and their consequences and that, in principle, we ourselves are in a position to do so.

Another answer that is often suggested is that our conscience tells us what is right and wrong. Theists hold that conscience is the voice of God, while psychologists and sociologists claim that conscience and guilt feelings are a result of conditioning from our childhood through our parents and the society in which we are brought up. The Buddhist view of 'conscience' is something between the two. The Buddha says in one place that when we state a falsehood knowingly, then "our conscience knows whether what we say is true or false" (attā te purisa jānāti saccaṁ vā yadi vā musā, A. I. 149).

The mind, according to Buddhism, has a prior origin to our present human life. It has undergone a lot of samsāric conditioning and so its guilt feelings and its sense of uneasiness in certain situations is due to this conditioning, which extends beyond this life into the past. Its judgment, therefore, as to the rightness or wrongness of our actions is not to be ignored though it cannot always be trusted. Besides, the mind cleansed of its adventitious defilements, possesses certain extra-sensory intuitive powers, so that "when one's self is tamed it becomes a light to man" (attā sudanto purisassa joti).

There is another sense in which the "criterion of oneself" (attūpamā) may be employed in determining what is right and wrong. This is done extensively in the Anumāna Sutta. For example, if a person boasts about himself and declaims others, such a person would be disagreeable and repulsive to me. So if I behaved in this manner, I would likewise be disagreeable and repulsive to others. Such actions, which cause unpleasantness, would be generally disapproved of and be deemed wrong actions.

Sometimes we find the criteria for deciding what are wrong actions stated as follows : (I) My conscience reproaches me if I do it (attā pi maṁ upavadeyya), (2) the wise would disapprove of it after examination (anuvicca viññū garaheyyuṁ), (3) one would tend to be born in states of downfall as a result of doing it (parammaraṇā duggati pāṭikaṅkhā).

Therefore, while motives and consequences are the predominant factors, the dictates of our conscience and the approval and disapproval of the wise may also be taken into account. So in deciding what is right and wrong, we are ruled by our conscience (attādhipateyya), by what the world says (lokādhipateyya) and what the Dhamma states (Dhammādhipateyya).

In the light of these findings, we shall explore the nature of Buddhist ethical theory as a whole in our next talk.

V

THE ETHICAL THEORY OF BUDDHISM

Analytic Philosophy is the current fashion in the English-speaking world. When this school of philosophy uses the term "ethical theory", it means nothing more than an analysis of moral language as it is found today among English-speaking peoples. Says one scholar: "A fully adequate ethical theory would analyse and systematize the whole variety of linguistic performances and commitments that are embodied in the use of moral language" (George C. Kerner, *The Revolution in Ethical Theory*, Oxford University Press, 1966, p. 250).

Such an 'ethical theory' obviously would not satisfy people who wish to know whether the nature of man, society and the universe makes a moral life possible for human beings, whether there are ends worth attaining and, if so, the proper means to attain them.

We see an attempt to meet this demand on the part of some Existentialist philosophers, who speak of "authentic living" as an end worth achieving and sometimes of the means of achieving it.

Marxists outwardly reject ethics. Apart from it being an adjunct of 'bourgeois philosopy', the workings of dialectical materialism and economic determinism would make a moral life impossible or meaningless. The socialist state is a product of history and not of voluntary human action.

However, Marxists do make constant allusions and appeals to ethical values in their writings. The classless state is often considered an end worth attaining and as a means to it a proletarian revolution. So the proletarian revolution is also considered a relatively good end worth achieving and what is helpful for this purpose is deemed to be right or instrumentally good. The following paragraph from the Program of the Communist Party of Russia, adopted at the eighth party congress (March, 1919) indicates the relevance of certain ethical traits (printed here in Italics) in bringing about a certain desirable goal, thought of as a relatively good end: "To bring about the victory of the world-wide proletarian revolution it is essential that there should be absolute and *mutual trust*, the most intimate *brotherly alliance*, and the highest possible cohesion of the revolutionary activities of the working class in the more advanced lands" (Nikolai Bukharin and E. Preobrazhensky, *The ABC of Communism*, The University of Michigan Press 1966, p. 377).

Mao Tse-Tung's interpretations of Marxism-Leninism are also often deeply coloured by ethical values, which derive from the altruistic ethics of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Consider, for example, the following passage from the *Little Red Book*: "At no time and in no circumstances should a Communist place his personal interests first; he should subordinate them to the interests of the nation and of the masses. Hence, selfishness, slacking, corruptions, seeking the limelight, and so on, are most contemptible, while selflessness, working with all one's energy, whole-hearted devotion to public duty, and quiet hard work will command respect" (*Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-Tung*, Bantam Books, 1967,

pp. 153, 154). Here we may note that "selfishness, slacking, corruption, seeking the limelight" are condemned as vices and some basically Buddhist virtues such as "selflessness, working with all one's energy etc." are commended as virtues to be cultivated.

Even the theists cannot stricly speak of ethics. The history of a theistic universe (being a creation of God) is foreknown in all its ramifications, since God is held to be omniscient. At the same time, God is also entirely responsible for it, being omnipotent. Besides, if a man happens to be good, it is often claimed to be due to the grace of God. So. considering man's predicament in a theistic world, the performance of ethical actions on his part is strictly an impossibility since everything is due to God's will and real human freedom is incompatible with a theistic determinism.

However, theists, too, inconsistently with their theory, proclaim an ethic. They recommend virtues to be cultivated and condemn vices, which are to be eliminated under threat of divine punishment.

According to Buddhism, the events of history, including human actions, are not due to economic determinism or God's will. Economic factors, no doubt, affect and condition human behaviour and according to the Buddhist philosophy of society, the economic factor constitutes one of the predominant factors (along with the ideological factor) in bringing about social change. But it is not the only factor. Nor does it strictly determine human behaviour. Hereditary, environmental and psychological factors condition man's actions according to the Buddhist account of conditioned genesis (paṭicca-samuppāda), but still man has within himself an element of

initiative (ārabbha-dhātu) or free will (atta-kāra), by the exercise of which he can make decisions, which make the future (including his own) different from what it would otherwise be.

This factor of freedom, along with human survival after death and the correlation between moral acts and consequences (the good acts tending to bring about pleasant consequences and the evil acts unpleasant consequences) make individual moral responsibility a reality.

In fact, without survival and this correspondence between acts and consequences (which is know as *karma* in a Buddhist context) a religious ethic promoting moral and spiritual development would be impossible. Professor C. D. Broad, Knightbridge Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Cambridge, states this explicitly in one of his essays on science and religion. He says: "I will begin by remarking that, in my opinion, it is almost a *sine qua non* of any religious view of the world that some men at least should survive bodily death. I take it that one minimal demand of religion is that what we count to be the highest spiritual values shall not be merely ephemeral by-products of complicated material conditions which are fulfilled only occasionally in odd holes and corners of the universe, and are unstable and transitory when fulfilled. Another minimal demand is that there shall be at least rough justice, e. g. that evil deeds shall in the long run bring evil consequences on the doer of them, and not wholly or mainly on others. I do not see how either of these demands could be even approximately met if no man survives the death of his body . . . Therefore, if science does make human survival

impossible or very improbable, it does, in my opinion, deliver a fatal blow to *all* religion" (*Religion, Philosophy and Psychical Research*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1953, pp. 234, 235).

It was also Sigmund Freud's view that ethics would be disregarded if virtue was not rewarded. Since Freud disbelieved in survival he thought that if ethics was to serve any purpose at all, virtue should be rewarded in this life itself. He says in his work, *Civilisation and its Discontents:* "The variety of ethics that links itself with religion brings in at this point its promises of a better future life. I should imagine that as long as virtue is not rewarded in this life ethics will preach in vain" (The International Psycho-Analytic Library No. 17, The Hogarth Press, 1957, p. 140).

As we tried to show in our talk on "The Basis of Buddhist Ethics", the factors of freedom, survival, karma and the ultimate good of Nirvana makes the moral and spiritual life both possible and the most desirable in the world in which we live.

When we, therefore, speak of the ethical theory of Buddhism, we cannot confine ourselves to an analysis of psychological and linguistic problems in ethics. Such analyses are, no doubt, relevant. Early Buddhism itself was known as the "philosophy of analysis" (vibhajja-vāda). It has fore-stalled some of the techniques of modern linguistic analysis and it would be possible to give the Buddhist analysis of the propositions of ethics. But we must not lose sight of the fact that Buddhism gives a positive account of the ends, both social and psychological, worth attaining and of the means of attaining them. We have already considered

and given an account of the personal goal of the ultimate good. We shall examine the social goal of the ideal society and the conditions under which it is likely to be realised in our scrutiny of the social and political philosophy of Buddhism in our subsequent talks.

So an account of the ethical theory of Buddhism should indicate the ends to be achieved and the means of achieving them on the basis of the Buddhist theory of the nature and destiny of man in the universe. We have already done this in our previous talks of this series. It must also describe the general nature of this ethical theory. Is it egoistic or altruistic? Is it relativistic or absolutistic? Is it objective or subjective? Is it deotological or teleological? Is it naturalistic or non-naturalistic?

Before we do this, we may mention that the modern tradition of Analysis in philosophy started as a reaction against metaphysics and ethical theories, which were closely associated with such metaphysical theories. One such example would be the ethics of self-realisation taught by Professor F. H. Bradley of Oxford on the basis of his monistic metaphysics.

The Buddhist ethical theory is also based on its theory of reality but this theory of reality is not meta-physical in that it was, in principle, verifiable. It also does not commit the error of Kant, who tried to reconstruct his metaphysics on the basis of practical reason, when pure reason failed him. The Buddhist theory, for instance, does not say with Kant that 'ought' implies 'can', i. e. that human freedom somehow must be a fact because moral propositions are for all practical

purposes true and significant. What Buddhism says is that since human freedom is a fact, along with such other facts as survival, karma and Nirvana, moral propositions are significant. The ethical theory of Buddhism presupposes its theory of reality. But this theory of reality is independently established in the light of verifiable evidence. So obscure metaphysical presuppositions do not come into the picture, as in the case of the classical ethical theories based on metaphysical theories or assumptions.

We have already examined the question as to whether the Buddhist ethic was egoistic or altruistic. As we pointed out, it was a form of enlightened egoism or enlightened altruism, which could be best characterised as an ethical universalism. Of the four possible types—those who worked for their own good, for the good of others, neither or both—the Buddha held that the person who worked for the good of oneself as well as that of others was the best.

The Mahāyāna text, the Sikṣā-samuccaya also states that we should do good without distinction as to oneself or others: "When fear and pain are abhorrent to me as well as to others, what distinguishes my own self that I protect it and not others" (yadā mama paresāṁ ca bhayaṁ dukkhaṁ ca na priyaṁ, tadātmanah ko viṣeṣo yattaṁ rakṣāmi netaraṁ, I). However, the texts often state that one should first try to better oneself before working for the general good. The Dhammapada states: "One should not, on the whole, hinder one's own welfare at the cost of serving others; perceiving one's own welfare, one should devote oneself to the sake of the general good" (166). The reason for this is twofold.

One cannot help others morally and spiritually very much unless one knows the art by one's own experience. Besides, one is likely to be an object of reproach if one does not practise what one preaches. At the same time, moral betterment or promoting one's own welfare is not possible without cultivating other-regarding virtues such as selflessness and compassion. So the egoist must develop altruistic virtues for his own good, while the altruist must cultivate his own good before he can effectively help others.

Is the Buddhist ethical theory relativistic or absolutistic? The answer to this question is given in the Aggañña Sutta, where it is pointed out that society undergoes change from time to time and as a result "what is reckoned immoral at one time (adhammasammataṁ) may be reckoned to be moral at another time" (D. III. 89). The Buddha also recognised the fact that conventions differed in different countries or under different social systems. This was why he permitted that the minor rules of the Order may be changed to suit the different social and historical contexts.

So moral conventions may differ from time to time or from country to country. As long as the general principles of morality were not violated, these variations in *mores* do not seriously alter the basic values observed. To this extent, relativism is recognised and not considered as undermining the objectivity of values. But on the other hand, there could be 'unrighteous epochs' or 'unrighteous social orders' which in varying degrees violate the principles of morality, due to ignorance of the true nature and significance of moral values. In this

respect, we can speak of better or worse social orders as well as the best. Life in those social orders, which violate the principles of morality, would involve a greater degree of unhappiness according to the degree to which such principles have been violated. So while denying absolutism and recognising relativism, the objectivity of moral values is not denied.

If the objectivity of moral principles and values is recognised, the question may be raised as to the sense in which we may speak of their objectivity. Let us take an example. Buddhism holds, for instance, that drunkenness is an evil since it promotes one's own unhappiness as well as the unhappiness of others in due course. It also has its karmic consequence of making people insane or moronic in their subsequent lives. So a society in which drunkenness prevails is defective in this respect. The unpleasant psychological, social and karmic consequences of drunkenness would be there, irrespective of what the drunkard or his society may think of drunkenness or the habit of drinking. It may be that drunkenness is highly esteemed or approved of in such a society. But such opinions and attitudes would not in the least detract from the fact that drunkenness is objectively an evil. Its unpleasant consequences would be there whatever the people in that society or even the world at large may think or feel about drunkenness.

It is in this sense, namely that the consequences, psychological, social and karmic would be there in the case of moral and immoral actions, as the case may be, the values embodied in the moral judgments are

objective irrespective of the mental attitudes of people, including the agent.

This is not to deny the subjective element of morality, namely our own attitudes about ethical actions, including the reactions of our conscience. These attitudes and reactions may vary, though on the whole, right actions which tend to bring about pleasant consequences to the agent as well as to others in due course are commended or approved of, while wrong actions which tend to bring about unpleasant consequences psychologically and socially, are condemned or disapproved of. But there could be situations in which, as in the example about drunkenness cited above, when our commendation or approbation is misguided or mistaken. So while these subjective attitudes regarding morals are prevalent in society and, on the whole, give correct verdicts about the nature of moral values, they cannot always be trusted since the objective consequences determine the objectivity of the moral (or immoral) acts themselves.

We may next ask whether the ethical theory of Buddhism is deontological or teleological? A deontological theory of ethics is one in which the concepts of duty or obligation are of primary importance, while a teleological theory stresses the importance of motives and consequences.

The Buddhist theory appears to be teleological rather then deontological. It determines the nature of right and wrong actions in terms of motives and consequences rather than on the basis of their being done out of a sense of duty, regardless of consequences.

This does not, however, mean that it ignores duties and consequences. The Buddhist ethical theory considers it the fundamental duty of man to strive to attain the ultimate good and a person who has attained it is deemed to have discharged all his obligations (kata-karaṇīya).

In the meantime, man in society has various duties to perform towards the various classes of people, with whom he is involved. The state, likewise has certain duties to discharge towards its subjects, who are ultimately responsibe for it. But all these duties become duties by virtue of the fact that they are right actions, which promote the "welfare and happiness of the multitude" (bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya). Yet they, too, should be performed not out of a cold sense of duty but as far as possible out of a desire for selfless service, love (compassion) and understanding. This is not to deny that actions done with goodwill and with no expectation of reward are deemed to be better than those performed with the hope of egoistic rewards in this life or the life to come. Ultimately, the perfect person acts out of a spontaneous sense of selflessness, love and understanding and not out of any sense of duty or expectation of earthly reward or divine glory.

So the ethical theory of Buddhism is one of ethical universalism, which recognises the relativity of and the subjective reactions regarding moral values without denying their objectivity to be measured in terms of the motives with which the acts are done as well as their psychological, social and karmic consequences. It is teleological rather then deontological in character.

Lastly, we may briefly examine the Buddhist analysis of ethical propositions. Ethical propositions are of various sorts Let us take a few standard examples. Take the statements, "Nirvana is the ultimate good", "Puṇṇa was a good monk" and "It is right to refrain from slander which causes divisions, and make statements which promote harmony". According to the Buddhist analysis, such propositions would have two components, a factual component and an emotive-prescriptive component. The factual component would be of primary importance since the validity of ethical propositions would depend on the truth or falsity of the statements comprising this component. The emotive-prescriptive component would only have a secondary significance.

When we say that "Nirvana is the ultimate good", the factual component consists of a statement of the characteristics (such as supreme happiness, moral perfection, ultimate realisation, utter freedom etc), whose co-presence justifies the use of the epithet "the ultimate good" for Nirvana. It is, in fact, by virtue of the presence of these characteristics that we designate Nirvana as the ultimate good. It is a factual question as to whether characteristics are present or not. We cannot observe or verify the presence of "the ultimate good" apart from these characteristics.

The Buddhist, therefore, cannot agree with the Moorean analysis that "good" is an unique unanalysable non-natural quality. Hence the Buddhist ethical theory is not non-naturalistic. It is the same with the analysis of "good" in "Puṇṇa is a good monk". It is the

presence of certain observable and verifiable traits and qualities in Puṇṇa, which entitles us to describe him as "good" and not the presence of an unique natural quality, which we can intuit.

However, stating the factual component does not exhaust the meaning of the word "good". There is an emotive-prescriptive component as well in the analysis of "good". When I say that "Nirvana is the ultimate good" or that "Puṇṇa is a good monk", I do not merely refer to the characteristics. I also show my appreciation and approval of them and try to evoke a similar attitude in others. It is this, which makes the meaning of "good" not purely descriptive but emotive and prescriptive as well.

If we take the other statement, we would have to make a similar analysis in terms of factual as well as emotive-prescriptive components. Accordingly, the factual component of the other proposition is that "the class of actions which consist of refraining from slander, which causes divisions, and making statements, which promote harmony" (performed, no doubt, with a good motive) result in pleasant psychological, social and karmic consequences. Whether this is so or not, is a factual question. The emotive-prescriptive component consists of the fact that in calling such a pattern of behaviour a *right* action, I am, in addition to making certain factual claims, approving such an action and recommending the approval of such an action on the part of others. But the significance of this emotive-prescriptive component is dependent on the truth of the factual component.

It follows from the above that the Buddhist ethical theory gives a naturalistic analysis of ethical propositions, while asserting that such an analysis does not fully exhaust the meaning of ethical propositions, since they contain emotive-prescriptive components as well.

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The Girimananda Sutta

Ten Contemplations

with the Commentary

from the Sārattha Samuccaya

Translated from Pāli

by

Nanamoli Bhikkhu

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INTRODUCTION

"I seek only the science that treats of the knowledge of myself and that teaches me how to die well and how to live well" (*Montaigne*).

The Girimānanda Sutta is the 60th discourse in the "Tens" of the Anguttara Nikāya. But in the commentary to that Nikāya there will be found nothing about this discourse beyond some brief notes on one or two of the diseases mentioned in the fourth contemplation. The subjects dealt with in the discourse are, in fact, all explained either in the Visuddhi Magga (the keystone of the commentarial system) or elsewhere in the main Nikāya commentaries.

However, from a very early period the sutta has been popular as a "paritta" (protection) discourse for recitation, and it was included in an ancient anthology of such discourses called the "*Catubhāna-vāra*". In the 13th Century A. C., or thereabouts, a Ceylon thera, whose name is not known and who is referred to as "a pupil of Ānanda Vanaratna Thera", compiled a commentary to the *Catubhānavāra*, in order to save hunting up commentarial explanations scattered among many books. It is called the "*Sārattha samuccaya*" (Collection of Essential Meanings)". In it are collected and linked together the relevant passages, mostly taken verbatim from their sources. In the case of this discourse, the material comes mainly from the Visuddhi Magga with some additions from the sub-commentary to that work, the Paramattha mañjusā and from other main Nikāya commentaries.

In this translation one or two short passages have been left out, either because their sense has been incorporated in the translation of the discourse itself, or because they concern word derivations of such a kind as lose their point in translation. On the other hand one or two passages abbreviated in the *Sārattha samuccaya* have been restored, for the sake of clearness, to their original length by referring to the sources from which they were taken.

Bhikkhu Nanamoli

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Samma Sambuddhassa

THE GIRIMANANDA SUTTA

Anguttara Nikāya, Dasaka Nipāta 60

Thus I heard. At one time the Blessed One was living at Sāvatthi, in Jeta's grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's Park.

But on that occasion the Venerable Girimānanda was affiicted, suffering and gravely ill. Then the Venerable Ānanda went to the Blessed One and after paying homage to him sat down at one side. When he had done so, the Venerable Ānanda said to the Blessed One.

"Venerable Sir, the Venerable Girimānanda is afflicted, suffering and gravely ill. It would be good, Venerable Sir, if the Blessed One were to go to the Venerable Girimānanda, out of compassion."—

"If, Ānanda, you go to the bhikkhu Girimānanda and tell him the ten contemplations, it is possible that the bhikkhu Girimānanda's affliction may be immediately cured.

What are the ten?

They are contemplation of impermanence, contemplation of no-self, contemplation of foulness, contemplation of danger, contemplation of abandoning, contemplation of fading away, contemplation of cessation, contemplation of disenchantment with the whole world, contemplation of impermanence in all formations, mindfulness of in - and out - breathing.

(i) And what, Ānanda, is contemplation of impermanence?

Here, Ānanda, a bhikkhu, gone to the forest, or to the foot of a tree, or to an empty place, considers thus: Matter is impermanent, feeling is impermanent, perception is impermanent, formations are impermanent, consciousness is impermanent. Thus he dwells contemplating impermanence in these five aggregates as objects of clinging. This, Ānanda, is called contemplation of impermanence.

(ii) And what, Ānanda, is contemplation of no-self?

Here, Ānanda, a bhikkhu, gone to the forest or to the root of a tree, or to an empty place, considers thus: The eye is not self, visible objects are not-self; the ear is not-self, sounds are not-self, the nose is not-self, odours are not-self; tongue is not-self, flavours are not-self; the body is not-self, tangible objects are not-self; the mind is not-self, mental objects are not-self. Thus he dwells contemplating no self in these internal and external bases. This, Ānanda, is called contemplation of no-self.

(iii) And what, Ānanda, is contemplation of foulness?

Here, Ānanda, a bhikkhu reviews this body, up from the soles of the feet and down from the top of the hair and contained in the skin, as full of many kinds of filth: In this body there are head-hairs, body-hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, bone-marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, midriff, spleen, lights, bowels, entrails, dung, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, grease, spittle, snot, oil-of-the-joints, and urine. Thus he dwells contemplating foulness in this body. This, Ānanda, is called contemplation of foulness.

(iv) And what, Ānanda, is contemplation of danger?

Here, Ānanda, a bhikkhu, gone to the forest, or to the root of a tree, or to an empty place, considers thus: This body is the source of much pain and many dangers; for all sorts of afflictions arise in this body, that is to say, eye-disease, ear-disease, nose-disease, tongue-disease, body-disease; headache, mumps, mouth-disease, tooth-ache, coughs, asthma, colds, heart-burn, fever, stomach-ache, fainting, bloody-flux, gripes, cholera, leprosy, boils, plague, consumption, falling-sickness, itch, ringworm, small-pox, scab, pustule, jaundice, diabetes, piles, cancer, fistula; and afflictions due to bile, due to phlegm, due to wind, consisting in conflict of the humours, produced by change of climate, by unaccustomed activity, by violence, by Kamma-result; and cold, heat, hunger, thirst, excrement, and urine. Thus he dwells contemplating danger in this body. This, Ānanda, is called contemplation of danger.

(v) And what, Ānanda, is contemplation of abandoning?

Here, Ānanda, a bhikkhu does not tolerate a thought of lust when it arises, he abandons it, dispels it, makes an end of it, annihilates it. He does not tolerate a thought of ill-will when it arises, he abandons it, dispels it, makes an end of it, annihilates it. He does not tolerate a thought of cruelty when it arises, he abandons it, dispels it, makes an end of it, annihilates it. He does not tolerate evil, unprofitable states when they arise, he abandons them, dispels them, makes an end of them,

annihilates them. This, Ānanda, is called contemplation of abandoning.

(vi) And what, Ānanda, is contemplation of fading away?

Here, Ānanda, a bhikkhu, gone to the forest, or to the root of a tree, or to an empty place, considers thus: This is peaceful, this is sublime, that is to say the stilling of all formations, the relinquishing of every substratum of becoming, the destruction of craving, fading away, nibbāna. This, Ānanda, is called contemplation of fading away.

(vii) And what, Ānanda, is contemplation of cessation?

Here, Ānanda, a bhikkhu, gone to the forest, or to the root of a tree, or to an empty place, considers thus: This is peaceful, this is sublime, that is to say the stilling of all formations, the relinquishing of every substratum of existence, the destruction of craving, cessation, nibbāna. This, Ānanda, is called contemplation of cessation.

(viii) And what, Ānanda, is contemplation of disenchantment with the whole world?

Here, Ānanda, by abandoning any concern and clinging, any mental prejudices and beliefs, any inherent tendencies, regarding the world, by not clinging, he becomes disenchanted. This, Ānanda, is called contemplation of disenchantment with the whole world.

(ix) And what, Ānanda, is contemplation of impermanence in all formations?

Here, Ānanda, a bhikkhu is horrified, humiliated, and disgusted, by all formations. This, Ānanda, is called contemplation of impermanence in all formations.

(x) And what, Ānanda, is mindfulness of in-and out-breathing ?

Here, Ānanda, a bhikkhu, gone to the forest, or to the root of a tree, or to an empty place, sits down, having folded his legs crosswise, set his body erect, established mindfulness in front of him, just mindful he breathes in, mindful he breathes out.

Breathing in long, he knows, 'I breathe in long'; or breathing out long, he knows, 'I breathe out long'.

Breathing in short, he knows, 'I breathe in short'; or breathing out short, he knows, 'I breathe out short.'

'Experiencing the whole body, I shall breathe in,' he trains himself; 'experiencing the whole body, I shall breathe out,' he trains himself.

'Calming the bodily formation, I shall breathe in,' he trains himself; 'Calming the bodily formation, I shall breathe out,' he trains himself.

'Experiencing rapture, I shall breathe in,' he trains himself; 'experiencing rapture, I shall breathe out,' he trains himself.

'Experiencing the mental formation, I shall breathe in,' he trains himself; 'experiencing the mental formation, I shall breathe out,' he trains himself.

'Calming the mental formation, I shall breathe in,' he trains himself; 'calming the mental formation, I shall breathe out,' he trains himself.

'Experiencing the mind, I shall breathe in,' he trains himself; 'experiencing the mind, I shall breathe out,' he trains himself.

'Gladdening the mind, I shall breathe in,' he trains himself; 'gladdening the mind, I shall breathe out,' he trains himself.

'Concentrating the mind, I shall breathe in,' he trains himself; 'concentrating the mind, I shall breathe out,' he trains himself.

'Liberating the mind, I shall breathe in,' he trains himself; 'liberating the mind, I shall breathe out,' he trains himself.

'Contemplating impermanence, I shall breathe in,' he trains himself; 'contemplating impermanence, I shall breathe out,' he trains himself.

'Contemplating fading away, I shall breathe in,' he trains himself; 'Contemplating fading away, I shall breathe out,' he trains himself.

'Contemplating cessation, I shall breathe in,' he trains himself; 'Contemplating cessation, I shall breathe out,' he trains himself.

'Contemplating relinquishment, I shall breathe in,' he trains himself; 'Contemplating relinquishment, I shall breathe out,' he trains himself.

This, Ānanda, is called mindfulness of breathing.

If, Ānanda, you go to the bhikkhu Girimānanda and tell him these ten contemplations, it is possible that the bhikkhu Girimānanda's affliction may be immediately cured on hearing them."

Then, when the Venerable Ānanda had learnt these ten contemplations from the Blessed One, he went to the Venerable Girimānanda and told them to him. Then, when the Venerable Girimānanda had heard these ten contemplations, his affliction was immediately cured. The Venerable Girimānanda rose from that affliction, and that is how his affliction was cured.

COMMENTARY

(i) CONTEMPLATION OF IMPERMANENCE is the contemplation (perception) of impermanence in the five aggregates, which grasps rise and fall and alteration in them. "Rise" is their characteristic of being produced, "fall" is their characteristic of changing, "alteration" is ageing. For the characteristic of impermanence is seen by grasping rise and fall and alteration; and the five aggregates are called impermanent because of their arising and falling and altering. Again, the characteristic of impermanence is that, owing to the presence of which in the five aggregates, they are called impermanent; for it is owing to it that they are characterised as impermanent. And the characteristic of impermanence fails to be apparent because it is concealed by continuity owing to rise and fall not being kept in mind. But when continuity is disrupted by grasping rise and fall, then the characteristic of impermanence becomes apparent in its true nature. For when one is correctly observing rise and fall, and continuity has been exposed by observing the separateness of states, which occur in succession. then the characteristic of impermanence does not become apparent to him through the connectedness of states, but rather it becomes fully evident through their disconnectedness, as though they were iron darts.

Contemplation of suffering is implied, too, because the various aspects of the foul (No. 3) come under the characteristic of suffering, because the various aspects of danger (No. 4) are a cause of suffering, and because of the words, "what is impermanent is painful" (Saṁyutta xxxv, 4). So the aspect of perpetual oppression is the characteristic of suffering. The fact that formations are

unceasingly oppressed and afflicted by the rise and fall already grasped is what is called "oppression." And the characteristic of suffering fails to be apparent because it is concealed by the succession of postures owing to perpetual oppression not being kept in mind. But when the hiddenness of the suffering encountered in the postures is exposed by becoming aware of perpetual oppression, then the characteristic of suffering becomes apparent in its true nature. And it is owing to not keeping perpetual oppression in mind that the postures are able to conceal it. For when pain arises in one posture the next posture adopted shifts the pain, concealing it, as it were. And so from one posture to another. But once it is correctly known how the pain in each posture is shifted by changing that posture for another, then their concealment of the pain is exposed; because it has become evident that formations are all the time being overwhelmed by suffering. That is why suffering becomes apparent in its true nature, once the ability, encountered in the postures, to conceal pain is destroyed by one's becoming aware of perpetual oppression.

(ii) CONTEMPLATION OF NO SELF is the contemplation (perception) of no-self, which grasps the characteristic of no-self, called insusceptibility of mastery, in the five aggregates. These are shown in the form of the bases, and they are suffering in the sense of oppression. But the characteristic of no-self fails to be apparent because it is concealed by compactness owing to resolution of compactness not being kept in mind. But the resolution of compactness is effected by resolving it into its various elements and distinguishing each one thus: The earth (solidity) element is one, the water (cohesion)

element is another, and so on; and by recognising that there is compactness as a mass, compactness as a function, and compactness as an object. When this has been done, the characteristic of no-self becomes apparent in its true nature. But when material and immaterial states (states of mind and matter) have arisen mutually supporting each other, their *compactness as a mass* is assumed through failure to subject formations to compression owing to belief in their unity. And likewise *compactness of function* is assumed when, although differences in the functions of such states exist, they are taken as one. And likewise *compactness of object* is assumed when, although differences in the ways in which states that have objects make them their objects exist, they are taken as one. But when these compactnesses have been resolved by means of knowledge into their elements, they are seen to disintegrate, like foam subjected to pressure by the hand. They are mere phenomena that occur due to conditions, and are void. Thus it is that the characteristic of no-self becomes fully evident. (Visuddhi Magga p. 640 and Paramattha mañjūsā).

(iii) CONTEMPLATION OF FOULNESS is the contemplation (perception) that takes up the foul (unbeautiful, ugly) aspect in the parts of the body beginning with the head hairs.

(iv) CONTEMPLATION OF DANGER is the contemplation (perception) that takes up this disagreeable aspect in the body thus, "This body is liable to many dangers."

(v) CONTEMPLATION OF ABANDONING is the contemplation (perception) that makes the five kinds of abandoning, as given in the Sntta, its object.

(vi) CONTEMPLATION OF FADING AWAY is the contemplation (perception) that makes fading away its object.

(vii) CONTEMPLATION OF CESSATION is the contemplation (perception) that makes cessation its object.

(viii) CONTEMPLATION OF DISENCHANTMENT WITH THE WHOLE WORLD is the contemplation (perception) of dissatisfaction with all the world consisting of the three elements (i. e. the sense-desire world, the fine-material world and the immaterial world).

(ix) CONTEMPLATION OF IMPERMANENCE IN ALL FORMATIONS is the contemplation (perception) of all conditionally arisen things as impermanent.

(x) MINDFULNESS OF IN-AND OUT-BREATHING is the contemplation (perception) which grasps in-and out-breaths.

* * *

(i) In the description of the Contemplation of Impermanence, HERE, ĀNANDA means, "Ānanda, here in this dispensation." For this word "here" indicates the dispensation which is necessary for anyone to produce the contemplation of Impermanence, and it denies that any such state exists in other dispensations. For this is said, "Bhikkhus, only here is there a recluse, a second recluse, a third recluse, a fourth recluse; devoid of recluses are the teachings of other sectarians" (Majjhima sutta II, which refers to the four parts of saintship).

He said GONE TO THE FOREST and so on in order to show an abode suitable for mental development. Herein, GONE TO THE FOREST means any kind of forest offering the bliss of seclusion among the kinds of forests defined thus, "Having gone out beyond the boundary post, all that is forest" (Patisambhidā i, 176; Vibhanga 251), and "A forest abode is 500 bow-lengths distant" (Vinaya, iv, 183). TO THE ROOT OF A TREE: to the vicinity of a tree. TO AN EMPTY PLACE: to an empty, secluded space. And here it may be said that he has gone to an empty place if, instead of the forest or the root of a tree, he has gone to any of of the other seven, that is, a rock, a hill-cleft, a mountain cave, a charnel ground, a woodland solitude, an open space, a heap of straw (see Majjhima sutta 27). Thus he indicates an abode suitable to the three seasons, to humour, and to temperament, and one favourable to mental development (Visuddhi Ch. viii).

CONSIDERS THUS: reviews as follows.

MATTER: is any matter (*rūpa*) that has the characteristic of being molested (*ruppana*) because of the passage " It is molested (ruppati) that is why it is called matter (*rūpa*). By what is it molested? By cold, by heat, hunger, by thirst, by contact with gadflies, flies, wind, sun, and creeping things" (Saṁyutta xxii, 79). IS IMPERMANENT: is not permanent, not to be treated as permanent, because it has destruction and fall as its nature.

FEELING: Whatever has the characteristic of being felt as pleasant, painful, or neither-pleasant-nor-painful, is feeling. It is impermanent in the sense of its destruction.

PERCEPTION: Whatever has the characteristic of perceiving is perception. It is impermanent in the sense of its destruction.

FORMATIONS: Whatever have the characteristic of forming are formations. They are impermanent in the sense of their destruction.

CONSCIOUSNESS: Whatever has the characteristic of cognizing is consciousness. It is impermanent in the sense of its destruction.

THUS . . . IN THESE: in these as just stated; for the aggregate of matter is taught first in order, so that people may grasp it easily because, being the objective field of the eye etc., it is gross. Next is taught feeling, which feels matter as desirable or undesirable. Next the perception which grasps the aspects of the objective field of feeling, because of the words "what he feels, that he perceives" (Majjhima vol. i, 293). Next volitional formations which form volitions according to what is perceived. And lastly consciousness, on which feeling and so on depend, and which dominates them (Visuddhi-477).

FIVE: they are five because of the grouping together of all formed things, that resemble each other; and because that is the widest possible limit as the basis for the assumption of self and what belongs to self; and because they include all other kinds of so-called aggregates (Visuddhi 478).

AGGREGATES AS OBJECTS OF CLINGING: aggregates that are the resort of the several kinds of clinging.

HE DWELLS CONTEMPLATING IMPERMANENCE: he is one who observes the characteristic of impermanence as general characteristic Also the characteristics of suffering and no-self are included, too, according to the method of the Category of Characteristics (in the Nettippakarana).

The similes for these aggregates are as follows. The matter aggregate as object of clinging is like a sick-room because it is the dwelling place, as the physical basis, sense-door, and sense-object, of the sick man, namely consciousness. The feeling aggregate as object of clinging is like the sickness because it afflicts. The perception aggregate as object of clinging is like the provocation of the sickness because the presence of feeling associated with greed etc is due to perception of lust etc. The formations aggregate as object of clinging is like having recourse to what is unsuitable because it is the source of the feeling which is the sickness; for it is said, "Feeling as feeling is the formed that they form" (Samyutta xxii, 79), and likewise, "Because of unprofitable kamma having been done and stored up, resultant body-consciousness is arisen accompanied by pain" (Dhammasangaṇī § 556). The consciousness aggregate of clinging is like the sick man because it is not free from feeling, which is the sickness.

Also they are respectively like the prison, the punishment, the offence, he who inflicts the punishment and the offender. And they are respectively like the dish, the food, the curry sauce poured over the food, the server, and the eater.

Collectively they should be regarded as an enemy with drawn sword, as a burden, as a devourer, as

impermanent, as painful, as no-self, as formed as murderous.

Individually, matter should be regarded as a lump of froth because it will not stand squeezing; feeling as a bubble on water because it can only be enjoyed for an instant; perception as a mirage because it causes illusion; formations as a plantain trunk because they have no core; consciousness as a conjuring trick because it deceives.

And in particular, internal (corporeal) matter however sublime, should be regarded as foul; feeling should be regarded as painful because it is not free from the three kinds of suffering (i.e. suffering of pain, suffering of change and suffering of formations); perception and formations should be regarded as no-self because they are unmanageable; and consciousness should be regarded as impermanent because it is subject to rise and fall (Visuddhi 478-9).

One who regards the aggregates collectively thus, is not concerned for them. Regarding them individually thus he does not see a core in what has no core, and regarding them in particular thus he fully understands the different kinds of nutriment. Seeing internal materiality as foul he fully understands the body's nutriment that consists in solid food; seeing feeling as pain he fully understands feeling's nutriment that consists in contact; seeing perception and formations as no-self he fully understands their nutriment as consisting in volition; and seeing consciousness as impermanent he fully understands its nutriment as consisting in consciousness. He fully understands the four perversions of perception, that is the perception of the foul as beautiful, of the

painful as pleasant, of what is not-self as self, and the impermanent as permanent. He crosses the floods (see Visuddhi 480).

* * *

(ii) In the description of the Contemplation of no-self, THE EYE has as its characteristic the sensitivity of the primary elements of matter that is ready for the impact of visible objects; or its characteristic is sensitivity of primary elements originated by kamma sourcing from desire to see (Vis. 444); or the eye is what enjoys and makes manifest a visible object. IS NOT-SELF: it is not-self, nor is it possessed of a self. Why? Because it does not come from anywhere, nor does it go anywhere after its fall. But rather, before its rise it had no individual reality; and after its fall its individual reality is completely broken up. And it occurs without any creator since it occurs between the past and the future in dependence on conditions (Vis. 484). The reason for no-self in each case should understood in the same way.

VISIBLE OBJECTS have the characteristic of impinging on the eye (Vis. 446). It is the visible-object base that evidences the state of what is in the heart when that is undergoing a change of colour (Vis. 481). IS NOT-SELF: it is not-self, nor is it possessed of a self, because it is not susceptible of mastery and because of the absence of any core of self in it.

THE EAR has as its characteristic the sensitivity of primary elements that is ready for the impact of sounds; or its characteristic is sensitivity of primary elements originated by kamma sourcing from desire to hear (Vis. 444). IS NOT-SELF has the meaning given already.

SOUNDS have the characteristic of impinging on the ear (Vis. 446).

THE NOSE has as its characteristic the sensitivity of primary elements that is ready for the impact of odours; or its characteristic is sensitivity of primary elements originated by Kamma sourcing from desire to smell (Vis. 444). ODOURS have the characteristic of impinging on the nose (Vis. 447).

THE TONGUE has as its characteristic the sensitivity of primary elements that is ready for the impact of flavours; or its characteristic is sensitivity of primary elements originated by Kamma sourcing from desire to taste (Vis. 444). FLAVOURS have the characteristic of impinging on the tongue (Vis. 447).

THE BODY has as its characteristic the sensitivity of primary elements that is ready for the impact of tangible objects; or its characteristic is sensitivity of primary elements originated by kamma sourcing from desire to touch (Vis. 444). TANGIBLE OBJECTS are what can be touched that is reckoned as the three out of the four primary elements of matter (i. e. earth or solidity, fire or heat, air or mobility), excluding the water or cohesion element. They have the characteristic of impinging on the body.

THE MIND (*mano*) has the characteristic of measuring (*manana*). MENTAL OBJECTS (*dhamma*) bear (*dharati*) their own specific characteristics.

The bases are given as twelve in number because the six groups of consciousness each determine their own objects. In the order in which they are taught, the eye

comes first among the internal bases, being the most obvious since it has as its objective field what is visible and accompanied by impact. After that the ear base etc., which have as their objective fields what is invisible and accompanied by impact. Or alternatively, the eye base and ear base are taught first among the internal bases because they are specially helpful owing to their respective pre-eminence in seeing and hearing. After them, the three beginning with the nose base. And the mind base is taught last because it has the objective fields of the other five as its resort. But as regards the external bases, each one is taught next to its corresponding internal base because they are the respective resorts of the eye base and so on. Furthermore their order may be taken as defining the reasons for the arising of consciousness, for this is said, "Due to eye and visible objects eye consciousness arises . . . . . due to mind and mental objects mind consciousness arises" (Majjhima vol. i, 111).

Now the mind base and one part of the mental-object base are mentality; the remaining ten and a half bases are materiality (Vis. 483).

Here all formed things should be regarded as having no provenance and no destination, as inactive and unoccupied. Furthermore the internal bases should be regarded as an empty village, because they are destitute of lastingness, beauty, pleasure, and self; and the external bases as village-raiding robbers because they impinge on (attack) the internal bases (Vis. 484).

It is because of the vigour of the world's assumption that there is unbroken continuous occurrence of matter, feeling etc., that contemplation of impermanence is

taken in respect of the aggregates for the purpose of combatting that. And it is because of the vigour of its assumption that there is in the eye, ear etc., what belongs to a self, that contemplation of no-self is taken in respect of the bases. And here the character of no-self should be construed with those of impermanence and suffering according to the Netti method of the category of characteristics mentioned above.

IN THESE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL (literally, "in these bases which are in himself and external"). There being in conventional usage the assumption of a self (*attā*), they exist in that self; or belonging to that self of theirs they exist as its doors—is the meaning of "internal" (*ajjhatta* = "in himself"). The "external" ones are visible objects etc., whether living or not, which are external to that.

BASES (*āyatana*), each of the states of consciousness and conscious concomitants (i. e. contact, feeling etc.) belonging to such and such a door-cum-object (e. g. eye-cum-visible object), owing to its own function of experiencing etc., extends over (*āyatati*), is active in, exerts itself in, strives in, some one among the pairs of bases beginning with eye-cum-visible-object. What is said is that these doors-cum-objects provide the range for (*tanonti*), stretch out, those states which are origins (*āya*); and as long as this suffering of the round of re-births, which has been going on throughout the beginning-less round of becoming and is extended over (*āyata*) the past, does not recede, so long do they lead on (*nayanti*) and cause occurrence of states of consciousness etc.—that is why they are called "bases" (*āyatana*) (Vis. 481).

HE DWELLS CONTEMPLATING NO-SELF: he dwells continuously seeing the state of no-self, the characteristic of no-self.

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(iii) In the description of the contemplation of the foul, THERE ARE: there are presently existing. IN THIS: is this which is described by the words "up from the soles of the feet and down from the top of the hair and contained in the skin, as full of many kinds of filth" BODY: the physical body; for the physical body is called "body" (*kāya*) because it is a heap of filth, or because for such vile (*kucchita*) things as head hairs etc. it is the origin (*àya*). (By adding the brain as is done in the Patisambhidā these come to thirty-two parts beginning with head-hairs.) Herein, the construction is, "There are in this body head-hairs, there are in this body body-hairs." What is meant by this? It is that any one who reviews this "fathom-long carcase" in all its extent starting from the soles of the feet upwards, from the top of the hair downwards, from the skin which contains it all round never sees anything in the least beautiful in it such as a pearl, a gem, a beryl, aloes, saffron, camphor, scented powder, etc., but he sees only the many extremely ill-smelling, disgusting, drab-looking, kinds of filth consisting of the assortment of head-hairs, body-hairs, and so on (Vis. 240-1)

For the descriptions of the individual parts and the method of developing concentration by contemplation of them see Visuddhi Magga ch. viii.

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(iv) In the description of the contemplation of Danger, THIS BODY is this physical body. THE SOURCE OF MUCH PAIN: the reason for many sorts of pain. AND MANY DANGERS: many troubles; the aspect of being very unenjoyable. AFFLICTIONS: afflictions because of of bringing pain; that is why cold, heat, hunger, thirst, excrement, and urine, are included as afflictions. EYE-DISEASE should be understood as disease of the physical basis of sight, for sensitivity when produced is not subject to disease. So eye-disease is a disease arisen in the physical eye, So too with those that follow. DUE TO BILE is what has bile as its reason, condition, and cause; aroused by bile, is what is said. So also with DUE TO PHLEGM and so on. CONSISTING IN CONFLICT OF HUMOURS: aroused by the disturbance of the three humours, bile, phlegm, and wind. PRODUCED BY CHANGE OF CLIMATE is a disease arisen through change from a very hot to a very cold climate; for jungle dwellers who go to live on marshy lands, or marsh-land dwellers who go to live in jungles, find the climate unsuitable. Likewise with the contrast between the climates of the jungle and the sea coast. BY UNACCUSTOMED ACTIVITY, produced by bodily behaviour, such as standing, sitting, burden-carrying, etc., that is different from one's normal habit. BY VIOLENCE: produced by other's violence, by torture, etc. BY KAMMA RESULT: produced by kamma done in the past, without any of these other reasons. Those arisen owing to the first seven of these reasons can be warded off, but no medicine, no protection, suffices to keep away that produced by kamma result. CONTEMPLATING DANGER: seeing with knowledge of danger, or seeing the body as a danger.

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(v) In the contemplation of abandoning, DOES NOT TOLERATE A THOUGHT OF LUST: having wisely reviewed the danger in a thought of lust in the way beginning "This thought is unprofitable, this thought is reprehensible, this thought results in suffering" (see Majjhima Sutta 20), and "It leads to affliction for oneself" (see M. 19), he does not endure a thought of lust that has arisen, has come into being, has been produced, in regard to such and such an object; he does not let his mind reflect and dwell on it, or he does not let it dwell within, is the meaning. Not enduring it, what does he do? He ABANDONS IT, throws it out. What, with a basket like rubbish? No. Rather he DISPELS IT, prods it, pokes it, drives it out. What, with a goad like an ox? No. Rather he MAKES AN END OF IT, he causes it to be without any end remaining, he so acts that no end of it shall remain, not even in the life-continuum consciousness (subliminal consciousness). But how does he do so? HE ANNIHILATES IT; he so acts that it is completely arrested by the kind of abandoning consisting in arresting. So, too, with the other thoughts. WHEN THEY ARISE: as and when they arise; as soon as they arise, is what is said. When they have arisen once and have been dispelled, he does not look on with indifference when they arise a second time; he dispels them even though they arise a hundred times. EVIL, UNPROFITABLE STATES are those same thoughts beginning with the thought of lust; or they are all the nine principal worldly thoughts of which only these three are stated here, the rest being thoughts of relatives, country, immortality, ingratiating oneself with others, gain, honour and renown, avoiding other's contempt. (Papañca sūdanī i, 81-2)

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(vi) In the description of the contemplation of fading away, this FADING AWAY (*virāga*) is nibbana, for, on coming to that, greed (*rāga*) etc. fade away (virajjanti). The contemplation makes that its object. And here it is the element of complete extinction with the fundamental five aggregates remaining that is meant, because the words "fading away of greed" point to the complete extinction of defilements.

He said THIS IS PEACEFUL THIS IS SUBLIME, indicating nibbana; for nibbana is peaceful because of the pacification of the defilements. And when one sits even for a whole day absorbed in the attainment of the fruition of the path, experiencing nibbana as peaceful, he only has the thought "peaceful." But, besides "peaceful", nibbana is called "sublime" in the sense of non-excitement; and when one sits even for a whole day absorbed in the attainment of fruition, experiencing nibbana as sublime, he only has the thought "sublime"; so it is also called "sublime".

THE STILLING OF ALL FORMATIONS etc. are synonyms for that. For when one sits even for a whole day absorbed in the attainment of fruition, experiencing nibbana as the stilling of all formations, he has only the thought "stilling of all formations" . . . likewise when he sits absorbed in the attainment of fruition consisting in what has come to be called "nibbana" owing to the absence of craving for the three kinds of becoming that is called "*vaṇa*," he has only the thought "nibbana, nibbana (no craving, no craving)." So it has acquired these names beginning with "the stilling of all formations." The Text construes as follows: Not only is nibbana simply peaceful and sublime, but it is also the stilling etc.

The unformed state that has got the names "Stilling of all formations" and so on is to be treated as a state of fading away of greed. Where all formations are stilled, is the stilling of all formations.

There are four substrata for becoming; they are the substratum of sense-desire, that of the aggregates, that of defilements, and that of Kamma volitions. For sense-desires are called a "substratum" (*upadhi*) in the following word-sense: because of the fundamentalness of sense-desires either for pleasure that is described thus, "The pleasure and joy that arise owing to the five cords of sense desire is the satisfaction of sense desires", or for pain that has the lack of satisfaction of them as its sign, pleasure therefore, has sense desires as its foundation (*upadhī yati*) here. And the aggregates are a substratum because of their fundamentalness for the the pain that has them as its roots. And the defilements are a substratum because they are fundamental for the states of woe. And kamma volitions are a substratum because they are fundamental for the suffering of becoming. THE RELINQUISHMENT OF ALL SUBSTRATA is where there is the relinquishing of all such substrata. That, on coming to which, craving is entirely destroyed, is THE DESTRUCTION OF CRAVING.

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(vii) In the description of the contemplation of Cessation, CESSATION is that by means of which formations cease here. The contemplation makes cessation its object. And here the word "Cessation" points to the fact that there is cause for the cessation of the aggregates, even those that are resultant, and so the element of complete extinction without remainder of the

five fundamental aggregates is included. The rest is as already stated.

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(viii) In the description of Disenchantment with the whole world, as regards ANY CONCERN and so on, CONCERN (*upāya*) is reckoned as craving and views. For craving and views "are concerned with" (*upenti*—lit. "go towards") happy and unhappy destinies, thus they are called "concern", because of the passage, "for one of perverted views, bhikkhus, one of two destinies is to be expected: hell or the animal world" (Anguttara, Duka Nipāta), and because the Contemplation of Disenchantment with the Whole World arises through the abandoning of the perverted view that causes the differentiation of the kamma that leads to unhappy destinies, and of the craving that causes the differentiation of the kamma that leads to happy destinies. For, like a cow to be slaughtered, when she is in the grip of the torment due to being burnt with fire and belaboured with cudgels, and is sick with it, she starts drinking the hot water although it hurts her and brings about her ruin, so the ordinary man who has perverted views undertakes kamma of the various kinds beginning with killing living things. But just as that same cow, through her craving for cold water, starts drinking cold water, which is entirely pleasant and eases her tortures, so the ordinary man who has craving for becoming starts kamma of the various kinds beginning with abstention from killing, which leads to a happy destiny (Vis. 525). Or the various kinds of concern are concerned with, occur in respect of, all states accompanied by cankers, because they only arise in thoughts accompanied by

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greed. And the words, "In one, bhikkhus, who dwells seeing satisfaction in states productive of clinging, craving increases, and clinging with craving as its condition," indicate that they are included as conditions for the several kinds of clinging.

CLINGING: The four kinds of clinging are meant, that is clinging of sense-desire, of views, of rites and rituals, and of self theories. They firmly cling to, grasp, an object as a snake does a frog. They are given as four because of difference in mode of occurrence; but as craving and views they are two only. Owing to the abandoning of clinging, which is the condition for the various kinds of future becoming, there arises the Contemplation of Disenchantment with the Whole World.

As to the state consisting in mental prejudices (resorts) and beliefs, it is the beliefs in eternity and annihilation that are prejudices (resorts) of the mind. Just as where lions and so on, when they have been wandering elsewhere, return regularly to sleep, and places such as caves etc., are called their lairs (resorts), so too the eternity and annihilation views are called the resorts (prejudices) of the ordinary man's mind. For ordinary men mostly have eternity or annihilation as their prejudice (resort).

Or alternatively, MENTAL PREJUDICES only are the prejudices (resorts) of the mind as eternity and annihilation; BELIEFS are the view about self.

INHERENT TENDENCIES: (*anusaya*) continually inhere (*anu anu senti*), they occur, in a living being's continuity. This is the name for those defilements that have become firmly implanted and are ready to arise

when there is a reason.

ABANDONING is dispelling by substitution of opposite qualities etc. NOT CLINGING is not grasping with the mind. REGARDING THE WORLD.....HE BECOMES DISENCHANTED: as regards the whole world of the three elements, the sense-desire, fine-material, and immaterial, elements, he has no delight, is not enchanted, not attracted, nor attached, he does not hold to it; he seeks only nibbana, towards that he leans, tends, and inclines.

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(ix) In the description of the Contemplation of Impermanence in All Formations, BY ALL FORMATIONS means by all conditionally-arisen states, which are possessed of momentary dissolution. HORRIFIED: has horror, is oppressed. HUMILIATED: feels shame, is abashed. DISGUSTED: arouses disgust as though having seen something filthy.

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(x) In the description of Mindfulness of In- and and Out-Breathing, GONE TO THE FOREST refers to an abode suitable to the development of mindfulness of breathing. SITS DOWN points out a posture that favours quiet energy and tends neither to idleness nor to agitation. FOLDED HIS LEGS and so on shows a firm way of sitting and easy occurrence of breathing, as well as the means for grasping the object. Herein, CROSS-WISE means sitting with the thighs fully locked. FOLDED is fixed. SET HIS BODY ERECT: having placed the upper part of the body erect, the eighteen backbones resting end to end. For the skin, flesh, and sinews, of one so

seated are not twisted; then feelings that would arise at every moment if they were twisted do not arise and the mind becomes one-pointed; the meditation subject does not collapse but it attains to growth and increase.

ESTABLISHED MINDFULNESS IN FRONT OF HIM (*parimukhaṁ satiṁ uppaṭṭhapetvā*): having placed (*ṭhapayitvā*) mindfuness (*satiṁ*) facing (*abhimukham*) the meditation subject. Or alternatively, "'*pari*' has the sense of grasping, '*mukhaṁ*' has the sense of outlet from obstruction, '*sati*' has the sense of establishing; hence '*parimukhaṁ satiṁ*' is said" (Paṭisambhidā i, 176), which is the method in the Paṭisambhidā, to be understood here, too. Its meaning briefly is: "having made the outlet, which has been grasped, the establishment of mindfulness."

JUST MINDFUL HE BREATHES IN, MINDFUL HE BREATHES OUT: having thus seated himself and established mindfulness, without abandoning that mindfulness, just mindful he breathes in, mindful he breathes out, he is a mindful worker is what is said.

Now, in order to show the ways in which he is a mindful worker, "HE BREATHES IN LONG" and so on in said. For in the *Paṭisambhidā*, in the analysis of the clause, "mindful he breathes in mindful he breathe out," it is said, "He is a mindful worker in thirty-two ways. In one who knows one-pointedness of mind and non-distraction by means of long in-breathing mindfulness is established; owing to that mindfulness and that knowledge he is a mindful worker. In one who knows one-pointedness of mind and non-distraction by means of long out-breathing... by means of breathing in contemplating

relinquishment . . . . by means of breathing out contemplating relinquishment mindfulness is established; owing to that mindfulness and that knowledge he is a mindful worker" (Patisambhidā i, 176-7).

Herein, BREATHING IN LONG is producing a long in-breath. "*Assāsa*" is the breath issuing out; "*passāsa*" the breath entering in; so the Vinaya Commentary has it, but in the Suttanta commentaries it is the other way round. Herein, at the time when a child comes out from the womb, first the wind from within goes out and subsequently the wind from without enters in with fine dust, strikes the palate, and is extinguished. Thus firstly should "*assāsa*" and "*passāsa*" be understood.

But their length and shortness should be understood by way of extent. For just as water or sand spread over a spatial extent is called a "long water", a "long sand", a "short water" a "short sand," so, in the case of elephants' or snakes' bodies, in and out-breaths distributed in minute quantities slowly fill the long extent called their physical structures and slowly go out of them. That is why they are called long. They quickly fill the short extent called the physical structure of a dog, a hare, or such creatures, and quickly go out; that is why they are called short. And in the case of humans, some breathe in and out long by way of time and spatial extent like elephants and snakes; others short like dogs, hares, and so on. Of these, therefore, the breaths that come out and go in over a long extent of space are called long in time, and those that come out and go in over a brief extent of space short in time.

Herein, this bhikkhu knows "I breathe in, I breathe out long" while breathing in and breathing out long in

nine ways. And in him who knows thus it should be understood that the development of the foundation of mindfulness consisting in the Contemplation of Body is perfected in one aspect, according to what is said in the *Paṭisambhidā*: "How, breathing in long, does he know, 'I breathe in long,' breathing out long, does he know, 'I breathe out long'? He breathes in a long in-breath reckoned by extent; he breathes out a long out-breath reckoned by extent; he breathes in and breathes out long in-breaths and out-breaths reckoned by extent. As he breathes in and breathes out long in-breaths and out-breaths reckoned by extent, zeal arises. Through zeal he breathes in a long in-breath more subtle than before reckoned by extent; through zeal he breathes out a long out-breath . . . Through zeal he breathes in and breathes out long in-breaths and out-breaths more subtle than before reckoned by extent. As, through zeal, . . . reckoned by extent, joy arises. Through joy he breathes in a long in-breath more subtle than before reckoned by extent; Through joy he breathes out . . . . . Through joy he breathes in and breathes out . . . As, through joy, he breathes in and breathes out long in-breaths and out-breaths more subtle than before reckoned by extent, his mind turns away from the long in-breaths and out-breaths, and equanimity is established. Long in-breathings and out-breathings in these nine ways are the 'body;' the establishment (foundation) is mindfulness; the contemplation is Knowledge; the body is the establishment (foundation) but it is not the mindfulness; the mindfulness is both the establishment (foundation) and the mindfulness. By means of that mindfulness and that knowledge he contemplates that 'body.' Hence it is called 'the development of the foundation

(establishment) of mindfulness consisting in contemplation of the body in the body' " (Ps. i, 177).

So also in the case of SHORT breaths. But there is this difference: while in the former case "a long in-breath reckoned by extent" is said, here "a short in-breath reckoned by brevity" has been handed down. So it should be construed with the word 'short" as far as the phrase "Hence it is called 'the development of the foundation (establishment) of mindfulness consisting in Contemplation of the body in the body.' " So it should be understood that it is when he knows in-breaths and out-breaths in these nine ways by "extent" and by "brevity" that this bhikkhu, breathing in long, knows, "I breathe in long, . . . breathing out short, knows "I breathe out short".

The long kind and the short as well,
The in-breath and the out-breath, too—
Such are the four kinds that happen
At the nose-tip of the bhikkhu who knows thus.

"EXPERIENCING THE WHOLE BODY I SHALL BREATHE IN . . . . . SHALL BREATHE OUT," HE TRAINS HIMSELF: making known, making plain, the beginning, middle, and end, of the entire in-breath body, I shall breathe in, he trains himself; making known, making plain, the beginning, middle, and end, of the entire out-breath body, I shall breathe out, he trains himself. Making them thus known and plain, he both breathes in and breathes out with consciousness associated with knowledge. That is why "'I shall breathe in . . . . . I shall breathe out,' he trains himself" is said. For to one bhikkhu the beginning of the in-breath

body or the out-breath body distributed in minute quantities is plain but not the middle or the end; he is only able to grasp the beginning and is worried about the middle and the end. To another the middle is plain, not the beginning or the end; he is only able to grasp the middle and is worried about the beginning and the end. To another the end is plain, not the beginning or the middle; he is only able to grasp the end and is worried about the beginning and the middle. To yet another all stages are plain; he is able to grasp them all and is nowhere worried. Pointing out that one should be like the last-mentioned, he said "'experiencing the whole body, I shall breathe in . . . shall breathe out,' he trains himself."

Herein, HE TRAINS HIMSELF means that he strives, endeavours, thus. Restraint in one such as this is training in the Higher Virtue; his consciousness is training in the Higher Consciousness; his understanding is training in the Higher Understanding. So he trains in, cultivates, develops, repeatedly practises, these three courses of training in respect of that object, by means of that mindfulness, by means of that bringing-to-mind. Thus should the meaning be regarded here.

Herein, because he should, in the early stage, only breathe in and out, and should not do anything else at all, and after that should apply himself to the arousing at knowledge and so on, therefore only the present tense, "he *knows*, 'I breathe in,' . . . he *knows* 'I breathe out'" is used in the text here. But in what follows, the future tense, "'experiencing the whole body I *shall breathe in*'" and so on, is used in order to show the aspect of arousing knowledge etc. that has to be undertaken subsequently.

"'CALMING THE BODY FORMATION, ISHALL BREATHE IN . . . . . SHALL BREATHE OUT,' HE TRAINS HIMSELF." Calming, completely calming, causing to cease, quieting, the gross bodily formation, I shall breathe in, shall breathe out, he trains himself (The 'bodily formation' is a term for in - and out-breaths). And here both the gross and subtle state, and the progressive calming, should be understood. For previously, at the time when the bhikkhu has not grasped them, his body and his mind are disturbed and gross. And when the grossness of body and mind is not quieted the in-and out-breaths are gross; they occur so strongly that his nostrils are inadequate and he keeps breathing in and out through his mouth. But when the body and the mind have been grasped, then they become quite quiet. When they are quiet the in- and out-breaths eventually occur so subtly that he wonders whether they exist or not. Suppose a man stands still, after running, or descending from a hill, or putting down a large burden from his head, then his in- and out-breaths are gross, his nostrils are inadequate, and he keeps breathing in and out through his mouth. But when he has got rid of his fatigue and bathed and drunk and put a wet cloth on his heart, and he lies in the cool shade, then his in- and out-breaths eventually occur so subtly that he wonders whether they exist or not. So previously, at the time when the bhikkhu has not grasped them . . . that he wonders whether they exist or not. Why is that? Because previously, at the time when he has not grasped them, he has no such idea, consideration, awareness, or reflection, as "I am calming each bodily formation;" but when he has grasped them he has. So his body formation is subtle at the time when he has grasped them compared with the time when he has not. Hence the Ancients said :

"When mind and body are disturbed,
Then in excess it occurs;
When the body is undisturbed,
Then with subtlety it occurs."

When grasping them the bodily formation is gross, and it is subtle in the first jhāna access; also it is gross in that and subtle in the first jhāna; in the first jhāna and second jhāna access it is gross, and in the second jhāna subtle; in the second jhāna and third jhāna access it is gross and in the third jhāna subtle; in the third jhāna and fourth jhāna access it is gross, and in the fourth jhāna it is exceedingly subtle and even reaches suspension. This is the opinion of the Dīgha and Saṁyutta Reciters. But the Majjhima Reciters have it that it is more subtle in the access than in the jhāna immediately below, saying: in the first jhāna it is gross, and in the second jhāna access it is subtle, and so on. But it is the opinion of all that the bodily formation occurring at the time of not grasping becomes calmed at the time of grasping; the bodily formation occurring at the time of grasping becomes calmed in the access to the first jhāna . . . The bodily formation occurring in the access to the fourth jhāna becomes calmed in the fourth jhāna. This, firstly is the method in the case of serenity (concentration).

But as regards insight, the bodily formation occurring when not grasping the meditation subject is gross, and in grasping the four great primary elements of matter it is subtle; that too is gross, and in grasping derived materiality it is subtle; that too is gross, and in grasping the immaterial (i.e. consciousness and conscious concomitants) it is subtle; that too is gross, and in grasping the conditions of mind and matter it is subtle;

that too is gross, and in seeing mentality-materiality with its particular conditions it is subtle; that too is gross, and in insight that makes the three characteristics of impermanence, suffering, and no self its object it is subtle; that too is gross in weak insight, and in strong insight it is subtle. Herein, the calming of each subsequent one in comparison with the one preceding should be understood in the way already stated. Thus should both the gross and subtle state, and the progressive calming, be understood here.

But in the *Paṭisambhidā* its meaning is given as follows with objection and reply. "How, thinking 'calming the bodily formation, I shall breathe in . . . shall breathe out,' does he train himself? What are the bodily formations? They are long in-breaths . . . out-breaths; these things, belonging to the body, being bound up with the body, are bodily formations. Calming, tranquillizing, causing to cease, quieting those bodily formations, he trains himself . . . Such bodily formations whereby there is bending backwards, sideways, all ways, forwards and shaking, trembling, moving, of the body,—calming the bodily formation, I shall breathe in, he trains himself, calming the bodily formation I shall breathe out, he trains himself. Such bodily formations whereby there is no bending backwards, sideways, all ways, forwards, no shaking, trembling, moving of the body, peacefully, subtly, calming the bodily formation I shall breathe in . . . shall breathe out, he trains himself.

"If it is thus (it is objected) that calming the bodily formation, I shall breathe in, he trains himself, calming the bodily formation, I shall breathe out, he trains himself'—then this being so, there is no production of

awareness of wind, there is no production of in-and out-breathings, there is no production of mindfulness of breathing, and there is no production of concentration through mindfulness of breathing, and so the wise neither enter into, nor emerge from, that attainment.

"Yet since it is thus, (it is replied) that 'calming the bodily formation. I shall breathe in, he trains himself, calming the bodily formation, I shall breathe out, he trains himself'—then this being so, there is production of awareness of wind, there is production of in-and out breathings, there is production of mindfulness of breathing, and there is production of concentration through mindfulness of breathing, and so the wise enter into, and emerge from, that attainment.

"Like what? Just as when a metal gong is struck; at first gross sounds occur, and consciousness occurs because the sign of the gross sounds is well grasped, well-brought-to-mind, well considered; and when the gross sounds have ceased, then afterwards faint sounds occur, and consciousness occurs because the sign of the faint sounds is well-grasped, well-brought-to mind, well-considered; and when the faint sounds have ceased, then afterwards consciousness occurs, because is has the sign of the faint sounds as object; so indeed, if first gross in-breaths and out-breaths occur and consciousness does not become distracted because the sign of the gross in-and out-breaths is well-grasped, well-brought-to-mind, well-considered; and when the gross in-and out-breaths have ceased, then afterwards faint in-and out-breaths occur and consciousness does not become distracted because the sign of the faint in-and out-breaths is well-grasped, well-brought-to mind, well-considered; and

when the faint in-and out-breaths have ceased, then afterwards consciousness does not become distracted, because it has the sign of the faint in-and out-breaths as object.

"This being so, there is production of awareness of wind . . . and so the wise enter into, and emerge from, that attainment.

"Breathings in and out calming the bodily formation are the 'body'; the establishment (foundation) is 'mindfulness'; the contemplation is 'knowledge'; the body is establishment (foundation), but it is not mindfulness; the mindfulness is both establishment (foundation) and mindfulness. By means of that mindfulness and that knowledge he contemplates that 'body.' Hence it is called 'the development of the establishment (foundation) of mindfulness consisting in contemplation of the body in the body'" (Ps. i, 184-6).

This, in the first place, is the word-commentary here, following the order of the first tetrad, which is set forth as contemplation of the body. The first tetrad is given as a meditation subject for a beginner; but the other three tetrads are set forth respectively as contemplation of feeling, mind, and mental objects, for one who has attained the first jhāna. If, therefore, a meditator who is a beginner wants to develop this meditation subject and reach arahatship with the four kinds of discrimination through insight that has as its basis the fourth jhāna produced through mindfulness of breathing, he should undertake the practice as directed in the Visuddhi Magga (ch. viii).

But as regards the other three tetrads, EXPERIENCING RAPTURE means making rapture known, making it plain, I shall breathe in . . . shall breathe out, he trains himself. Herein, rapture is experienced in two ways, that is, as object and as non-delusion. How is it experienced as object? He attains the first two jhānas, in which rapture is present. At the moment of attainment rapture is then experienced by him as object through the obtaining of jhāna because the object is experienced. How as to non-delusion? Having attained the two jhānas in which rapture is present and emerged from them, he treats the rapture associated with the jhāna as destructible and subjet to fall. At the moment of insight rapture is then experienced by him as non-delusion by penetrating the characteristics. For this is said in the *Paṭisambhidā*, "In one who knows one-pointedness of mind and non-distraction through breathing in long, mindfulness is established; by means of that mindfulness and that knowledge that rapture is experienced. In one who knows one-pointedness of mind and non-distraction through breathing out long . . . breathing in short . . . breathing out short . . . breathing in experiencing the whole body . . . breathing out experiencing the whole body . . . breathing in calming the bodily formation . . . breathing out calming the bodily formation, mindfulness is established. By means of that mindfulness and that knowledge that rapture is experienced. It is experienced by one who adverts, knows, sees, reviews, directs the mind, resolves with faith, exerts energy, establishes mindfulness, concentrates the mind, understands with understanding, directly knows what is to be directly known, fully knows what is to be fully known, abandons what is to be abandoned,

develops what is to be developed, realizes what is to be realized. Thus is that rapture experienced" (Ps. i, 187).

The remaining clauses in this tetrad, that is EXPERIENCING BLISS, EXPERIENCING THE MENTAL FORMATION, and CALMING THE MENTAL FORMATION, should be understood as to their meaning in the same way. But this is the difference here. EXPERIENCING BLISS should be understood by way of three jhānas and EXPERIENCING THE MENTAL FORMATION by way of four. The mental formation consists in the two aggregates of feeling and perception. And here in order to show the plane of insight, it is said in the Paṭisambhidā regarding the clause "experiencing bliss" as follows, "bliss: there are two kinds of bliss, bodily bliss and mental bliss." (Ps. i, 188). CALMING THE MENTAL FORMATION means calming the gross mental formation, causing it to cease. And this should be understood in detail in the same way as for the bodily formation. Moreover here, in the "rapture" clause, feeling is stated under the heading of rapture; but in the "bliss" clause it is stated in its own form. In the two "mental-formation" clauses it is feeling associated with perception because of the passage "perception and feeling, these states belong to the mind, being bound up with the mind, they are the mental formation" (Ps. i, 188). So this tetrad should be understood stated by way of contemplation of feeling.

In the third tetrad, EXPERIENCING THE MIND should be understood by way of four jhānas.

GLADDENING THE MIND: heartening, gladdening, pleasing, delighting, the mind, I shall breathe in, shall breathe out, he trains himself. Herein, there is

gladdening in two ways: through concentration and through insight. How through concentration? He attains the two jhānas in which rapture is present. At the moment of attaining he pleases, gladdens, the mind with the associated rapture. How through insight? Having attained the two jhānas in which rapture is present and having emerged from them, he treats the rapture associated with the jhāna as destructible and subject to fall. Thus at the moment of insight he pleases, gladdens, the mind by making the rapture associated with the jhāna the object. So "'gladdening the mind, I shall breathe in . . . . . shall breathe out,' he trains himself" is said of one who practises thus.

CONCENTRATING THE MIND means centering the mind evenly, placing it evenly, on the object by means of the first jhāna etc. But in one who, having attained those jhānas and emerged from them, treats the consciousness associated with jhāna as destructible and subject to fall, there arises momentary one-pointedness of mind owing to penetration of these characteristics at the moment of insight. When he centers the mind evenly, places it evenly on the object too by means of the momentary one-pointedness of mind arisen thus, it is said of him "'concentrating the mind, I shall breathe in . . . shall breathe out."

LIBERATING THE MIND: setting free, releasing, the mind from the five hindrances by means of the first jhāna; from applied and sustained thought by means of the second jhāna; from rapture by means of the third jhāna; from pleasure and pain by means of the fourth jhāna. Or, having attained those jhānas and emerged from them, he treats the consciousness associated with

the jhāna as destructible and subject to fall. At the moment of insight he breathes in and breathes out setting free, releasing, the mind from the perception of permanence by means of the contemplation of impermanence, from the perception of pleasure by means of the contemplation of suffering, from the perception of self by means of the contemplation of no-self, from delight by means of the contemplation of revulsion, from greed by means of the contemplation of fading away of greed, from origination by means of the contemplation of cessation, from clinging by means of the contemplation or relinquishment. Hence it is said "liberating the mind, I shall breathe in . . . shall breathe out, he trains himself."

But in the fourth tetrad, as regards CONTEMPLATING IMPERMANENCE, firstly, here the impermanent should be understood, and impermanence, and the contemplation of impermanence, and one contemplating impermanence. Herein, the five aggregates are "*impermanent*." Why? Because of rise and fall and alteration. "*Impermanence*" is the state of the rise and fall and alteration in those same aggregates; or it is their absence after having been; it is the break-up of produced things owing to their continuous momentary dissolution consisting in their not remaining the same, is the meaning. "*Contemplation of impermanence*" is contemplation of matter etc. as impermanent owing to that impermanence. "*One contemplating impermanence*" is one possessed of that contemplation. So it is one such as this breathing in and breathing out who should here be understood thus "contemplating impermanence I shall breathe in . . . shall breathe out, he trains himself."

CONTEMPLATING FADING AWAY: but here there are two kinds of fading away, that is fading away as destruction, and absolute fading away. Herein, "*fading away as destruction*" is the continuous momentary dissolution of formations; "*absolute fading away*" is nibbāna. "*Contemplation of fading away*" is both insight and the path, occurring as seeing both kinds. And one who breathes in and breathes out possessed of that twofold contemplation should be understood thus, "contemplating fading away, I shall breathe in .... shall breathe out, he trains himself"

Likewise as regards the clause CONTEMPLATING CESSATION.

In the case of CONTEMPLATING RELINQUISHMENT, relinquishment is here of two kinds, that is, relinquishment as giving up and relinquishment as entering into. Relinquishment itself as contemplation is contemplation of relinquishment; this is a term for insight and the path. For it is by means of substitution of opposite qualities that insight gives up defilements together with aggregate-producing volitions, and through seeing the unsatisfactoriness of what is formed and through inclining towards the opposite of that, which is nibbāna, it enters into nibbāna; thus it is called both "relinquishment as giving up" and "relinquishment as entering into." It is by means of cutting off that the path gives up defilements together with aggregate-producing volitions, and it enters into nibbāna by making it its object; thus it too is called both "relinquishment as giving up" and "relinquishment as entering into." And both of these are called "contemplation" because of the continuous seeing of each preceding kind of knowledge.

And one who breathes in and breathes out possessed of that twofold contemplation of relinquishment should be understood thus, "contemplating relinquishment I shall breathe in . . . shall breathe out, he trains himself."

This tetrad is stated by way of pure insight only. But the preceding three are by way of concentration and insight. Thus should the development of mindfulness of breathing in and out with its sixteen clauses be understood according to the four tetrads (Visuddhi Magga Ch. viii).

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SIGNIFICANCE OF VESAK

by

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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF WESAK

Vesak is traditionally associated with the birth, enlightenment and Parinirvāna of the Buddha, who renounced a life of luxury to solve the riddle of the universe and bring happiness to mankind as well as to other beings. As in the case of other religious teachers of antiquity, his birth is enshrouded in myth and legend, the later accounts found in the *Lalitavistara*, for instance, containing descriptions of more miraculous happenings than in the earliest accounts in the Pali Canon. As Buddhists, who have to believe only in things as they are, and therefore in verifiable historical truths we are not obliged to believe in all these myths and legends. The truths of Buddhism stand or fall to the extent to which the Dhamma contains statements which can be verified as true and the veracity of Buddhism, therefore, does not depend on the historical accuracy of legendary beliefs about the birth or death of the Buddha. Besides, the Buddha encouraged self-criticism as well as a critical examination of his own iife on the part of his disciples. Even with regard to matters of doctrine or discipline, textual criticism was encouraged. For instance, a monk who claimed to have heard something from the Buddha himself was asked to examine its authenticity in the light of the *Sutta* and *Vinaya*, (a collection of texts regarding doctrinal and disciplinary matters made during the time of the Buddha himself), since his personal recollections and interpretations may not be altogether trustworthy.

2

Historical Facts

This does not mean that we need to dismiss all the statements associated with the birth, life and demise of the Buddha as mythical or legendary. Some of us may feel that if we were closer in time to the Buddha we would have had a better opportunity of apprehending the historical facts about him. But in a way we are better placed today for we can study the historical development and expansion of Buddhism and also compare the life of the Buddha and contrast it with that of other great religious teachers and philosophers of mankind. Some of the legends may have a kernal of historical truth. Human imagination seems to have worked in a very similar way with regard to some of the heroes of history. At least a hundred years after the death of the Buddha we find in the *Mahāvastu* the statement that "the Buddha's body was immaculately conceived" (*na ca maithuna-sambhūtaṁ Sugatasya samucchritaṁ*) or, in other words that the Buddha had a virgin birth, but if we trace the origin of this idea to the Pali Canonical texts, we find it stated that the mother of the Buddha had no thoughts of sex after the Buddha-child was conceived, which may quite possibly be historically true.

Some of the claims are certainly historically significant. Everyone would admit today that the Buddha was the first religious teacher in history with a universal message for all mankind and that he was the founder of the concept of a world-religion. Asita's prophecy that the Buddha was "born for the good and happiness of the human world" (*manussa-loke hita-sukhatāya jāto*) may be seen today in all probability to be true although at the time that it found its way into the text, it was a mere prophecy. It was also a historical fact that the birth of the Buddha was marked by a

spiritual awakening of the whole human race. In Greece, Pythagoras conceives of philosophy as a way of life and establishes a brotherhood. The prophet Isaiah in Israel dreams of the brotherhood of man and an era of universal peace. In Persia, Zoroaster, who conceives of the world as a battleground of the forces of good and evil, is convinced of the enventual victory of good over evil. In China, we find Confucius preaching a new ethic of human relationships and Lao Tse speaks of the necessity of living in conformity with eternal principles and values. In India itself from about 800 B. C., there was a persistent quest for truth, light and immortality :

From the unreal lead me to the real !
From darkness lead me to light !
From death lead me to immortality !

(*Brhad Āraṇyaka Upanisad*, I. 3. 28)

It is in answer to this quest that the Buddha declares: "Open for them are the doors to immortality" (*apārutā tesaṁ amatassa dvārā*). So when the Prophet Isaiah contemporaneously says that a people who walked in darkness have seen a great light and speaks of a child who shall be called the Wonderful, the Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father and the Prince of Peace, someone has only to point out that the Buddha claimed or it was claimed of the Buddha that he was the Wonderful Person (*Acchariya-puggala*), the Counsellor of gods and men (*Satthā-devamanussānaṁ*), the God among gods (*Brahmāti-brahma*), the Everlasting Father (*Ādhi Pitā*) and the Prince of Peace (*Sāntirāja*). Similarly, the Buddhists of China have seen in a text attributed to Confucious a prophetic utterance alluding to the Buddha, which reads: "Among the people of the West there is a Sage. He does not speak

and is yet spontaneously believed, he does not (consciously) convert people and yet (his doctrine) is spontaneoulsy realised. How vast he is!" Are these texts interpolations or do they support the historical varacity of the Buddhist legend that the world at this time was eagerly awaiting the birth of an Enlightened One!

Last Days

Let us now turn to the last days of the Buddha on earth, as reported in the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*. Here again we find fact with an occasional admixture of legend. Here again, it is difficult at times to distinguish the hard core of fact from legend. The Buddha, it is said, was transfigured just prior to his death. His robes, it is said, were aglow when touching the body. Is this fact or fiction? We do not know. But there are a number of significant statements about the Dhamma whose historicity is self-authenticated. It is said that the Buddha did not want to pass away until he had brought into existence a set of monks who were learned in the Dhamma, had realised its fruits and were competent to deal with any criticisms levelled against it.

When the sal flowers from the twin sal-trees, under which he lay, wafted over his body, it appeared as though nature was paying him homage. Today we Buddhist, worship the Buddha by offering flowers before his image. But the Buddha says that one does not really pay homage to the Transcendent One by such offerings. It is the disciple whether he be man or woman, who follows in the footsteps of the Dhamma and lives in accordance with it who truly reveres and pays the highest homage to the Transcendent One. When Ananda is worried as to how the funeral rites should be performed, the Buddha asks him not to worry

about these rituals but to "strive hard to attain the good goal" (*sadattha ghaṭatha*); for Ananda had not as yet become an Arahant.

Most instructive is Buddha's last sermon, which was to Subhadda the wandering ascetic. The question he asked was very interesting. Did all the six outstanding teachers who were contemporaries of the Buddha understand the the truth? Or is it the case that only some understood or none understood? In the order in which they are mentioned, there was Pūraṇa Kassapa, who was an Amoralist because he thought that everything was strictly determined by natural causes, Makkhali Gosāla who was a Thiest who believed that everything happened in accordance with God's will, Ajita Kesakambali the Materialist who denied survival, moral values and the good life. Pakudha Kaccāyana the Categorialist who tried to explain the world in terms of discrete categories, Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta the Agnostic Sceptic or Positivist who held that moral and religious propositions were unverifiable and Niganṭha Nātaputta who was a Relativist and an Eclectic. The significance of the question comes to this. Is Amoralism, Theism, Materialism, Categorialism, Agnosticism and Eclecticism all true? Or is none true? Or is one or some of these theories true?

The True Religion

Elsewhere, in the *Sandaka Sutta* there is a clear-cut answer to this question. There Ananda says that in the opinion of the Buddha there are four false religions in the world and four religions which are unsatisfactory though not necessarily totally false, while Bnddhism is distinguished from all of them. The word for religion here is used in a wide sense as in modern usage to denote theistic and non-theistic religions as well as pseudo-religions or relgions-surrogate, i. e. substitutes for religion such as, say, Marxism,

Existentialism, Humanism etc., The four false religions or philosophies inculcating a way of life are first, Materialism which denies survival, secondly Amoralism which denies good and evil, thirdly any religion which asserts that man is miraculously saved or doomed and lastly theistic envolutionism which holds that everything is preordained and everyone is destined to attain eventual salvation. The four unsatisfactory religions in some sense uphold survival, moral values, moral recompense as well as a relative freedom of the will. They are, first, any religion that claims that its teacher was omniscient all the time and knows the entirety of the future as well. Secondly, any religion based on mere reasoning and speculation, since the reasoning may be unsound and the conclusions false. Fourthly, a pragmatic religion based on purely sceptical foundations and is, therefore, uncertain. Buddhism is to be distinguished from all of them by virtue of the fact that it was realistic and verifiable. Its truths have been verified by the Buddha, verified by his disciples and open to verification (*ehipassika*) by anyone who wishes to do so.

The answer to Subhadda's question, however, is different. There is no examination of the relative claims of Materialism, Theism, Scepticism etc. Instead the Buddha says, leave aside the question as to whether these several religions and philosophies are all true, all false or that some are true. In whatever religion the noble eightfold path is not found, in that religion one would not get the first, second, third or fourth saints and in whatever religion the noble eightfold path is found, in that religion one would get the first, second, third and fourth saints. Finally, there is a very significant remark: "If these monks lead the right kind of life, the world would never be devoid of Arahants"

(*ime ca bhikkhu sammā vihareyyuṁ asuññño loko arahantehi assa*).

The Buddhist view is that any religion is true only to the extent to which it contains aspects of the noble eightfold path. Let us take one of the factors of the path—the the necessity for cultivating right aspiratiors instead of wrong aspirations. Right aspirations consist in the cultivation of thoughts free from lust and sensuous craving and the cultivation of creative and compassionate thoughts. Wrong aspirations consist of the cultivation of lustful thoughts and sensuous craving as well as the cultivation of destructive and malevolent thoughts. Now if any religion asserts that one may indulge in lustful, destructive and malevolent thoughts and yet be saved if one professes faith in the creed, then such a religion, according to the Buddha, is not to be trusted. It is the same with each of the other factors of the path. The net result is that there is no salvation outside the noble eightfold path. It is the one and only way for the salvation of beings and the overcoming of suffering.

First Saint (Sotapanna)

What kind of person is the 'first saint' spoken of here? It is none other than the person who attains the stream of of spiritual development (sotāpanna) as a result of which his eventual salvation is assured and he does not fall into an existence below that of a human being. Such a person, it is said, sheds three fetters on attaining his spiritual insight. They are (i) the fetter of believing in a substantial ego somehow related to aspects or the whole of one's psychophysical personality (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*), (ii) the fetter of doubting the veracity and validity of the Dhamma (*vicikicchā*) and (iii) the fetter of clinging to the external

forms of religion (*sīlabbata-parāmāsa*). The belief in an ego satisfies a deep-seated craving in us - the craving of our egoistic impulses (*bhava-taṇhā*). Misleading implications of language tend to make us believe that there is an 'I' and a 'me' (which is unchanging) when in fact there is only a constantly changing psychophisical process. We certainly exercise a certain degree of control over ourselves, which makes us believe that there is an 'I' which controls but such control is only an aspect of the conative functions of our conditioned psycho-physical process. A dispassionate analysis would ultimately expose the hollowness of this belief. Shedding our belief in such an ego does not however mean that we get rid of conceit (*māna*) altogether for the 'conceited' view 'I shall try to attain the goal', it is said, is necessary to spur us on up to a point. He gets rid of this 'conceit' (*māna*) only in a later stage of his spiritual evolution. Doubt has to be got rid of in Buddhism not by blind belief but by critical inquiry and by living the Dhamma. Such inquiry and the personal experience of verifying aspects of the Dhamma gives us the inner conviction that we are treading on the right path. Overcoming such doubt through conviction does not, again, mean that we have totally god rid of ignorance (*avijjā*), which we can do only at a later stage in our spiritual evolution. Religion, likewise, becomes for such a person not a matter of conforming to external ritual and forms of worship, not a form of obsessional neurosis (to use Freudian terminolcgy) but a matter of day to day living of the Dhamma. It is such a person who is said to have entered the stream of spiritual development, a state which is within the capacity of any of us to attain.

When we ponder over these admonitions of the Buddha in his last days on earth, we see how far modern Theravāda

tradition in Ceylon has strayed from the true path of the Dhamma. Are we not preserving the Dhamma in its pristine purity only in the books when we try to rationalise our belief in caste, for instance, with the help of opinions which go contrary to the teachings of the Buddha? Are we not rationalising our disinclination to live the Dhamma by fostering false beliefs that Arahantship is not possible today, when this is contrary to the assertions of the Buddha himself?

Enlightenment

If we turn from the birth and the last days of the Buddha to his enlightenment, it strikes us that it was not a a revelation from above but an illumination from within. Part of the realisation was of the nature of causal laws operative in nature and in us.

When we come to the first sermon, we are again confronted with the noble eightfold path as the right path leading to emancipation, happiness and realisation. It is the strait and narrow road between indulgence of our desires and ascetic deprivation. The most obvious way to happiness appears to lie in the gratification of desires but unfortunately there is a law of diminishing returns which operates here. Gratification gives temporary satisfaction but continued gratification gives less and less of it. Besides, we become slaves of our passions and lose our freedom and self-control while our minds become unclear and confused. Ascetic deprivation on the other hand results in repression and self-inflicted suffering It substitutes one kind of suffering for another. The way out or the way to transcend suffering is by a watchful self-control exercised by a person guided by the noble eightfold path.

Another significant fact about the first sermon is the claim of the Buddha that it was to set up the kingdom or rule of righteousness (*dhammacakkaṁ pavattetuṁ*), which shall in the fulness of time be established on earth and neither Brahmā (God) nor Māra (Satan) nor anyone else in the world could prevent this. In spite of many reverses, truth and justice shall win in the end. As one of the Upaniṣads puts it "truth alone shall conquer and never untruth" (*satyam eva jayate nānrtaṁ*).

It is not possible to measure the enlightenment of the Buddha. As he said in the Siṁsapa forest taking a few leaves into his hand—what he knew but did not teach us was like the leaves in the forest while what he taught amounted to the leaves in his hand. What he taught was only what pertained to man's emancipation, happiness and understanding.

Since the Buddha's ministry was spread over forty five years, this teaching in itself is vast as is evident from the Buddhist scriptures. If we take its essence we can see the immense worth of the Buddha's teaching and hence the true significance of Vesak, which mankind has yet to comprehend.

In these teachings we have a theory of knowledge, a theory of reality giving an account of the nature and destiny of man in the universe, an ethical system, a social and political philosophy and a philosophy of law.

Let us take the most significant teachings in each of these fields.

Theory of Knowledge

Take the theory of knowledge. Nature is conceived as a causal system in which there are to be found non-deter-

ministic causal correlations. The events of nature are not haphazard, nor are they due to the will of an omnipotent God nor again to rigid deterministic causal laws. The Buddhist theory of conditioned genesis (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) steers clear of the extremes of indeterminism (*adhicca-samuppanna*) on the one hand and of Strict Determinism (*niyati-vāda*), whether theistic or natural, on the other. Understanding, therefore, is the key to salvation and not blind belief in unverifiable dogmas. And for understanding we need an impartial outlook. We must not be influenced by our prejudices for or against (*chandā dosā*) by fear (*bhaya*) whether it be fear of nature or of the supernatural, nor by our erroneous beliefs (*mohā*). To gain personal knowledge, we must not rely on authority—whether it be revelation, tradition, hearsay, conformity with scripture, the views of experts or our revered teachers. We must not rely on pure reasoning alone, nor look at things from just one standpoint nor trust a superficial examination of things nor base our theories on preconceived opinions. Personal verification and realisation was the way to truth.

Here was man's charter of freedom, which makes Buddhism the most tolerant of religions and philosophies. It recommended an outlook, which we today call the scientific outlook. So there have been no inquisitions, heresy trials or witch-hunts in Buddhism as in the theistic traditions and positively there has been the recognition of human dignity and freedom. The Buddha, again, was the earliest thinker in history to recognise the fact that language tends to distort in certain respects the nature of reality and to stress the importance of not being misled by linguistic forms and conventions. In this respect, he forestalled the modern linguistic or analytic philosophers. He was the first to distinguish meaningless questions and

assertions from meaningful questions and assertions. As in science he recognised perception and inference as the twin sources of knowledge but there was one difference. For perception, according to Buddhism, included extra-sensory forms of perception as well, such as telepathy and clair-voyance. Science cannot ignore such phenomena and today there are Soviet as well as Western scientists, who have admitted the validity of exta-sensory peception in the light of experimental evidence.

Theory of Reality

If we turn to the theory of reality, the Buddha's achievements were equally outstanding. Buddhism recognises the reality of the material world and its impact on experience. Conscious mental phenomena has a physical basis in one's body. Life (*jīvitendriya*) is a by-product (*upādā-rūpa*) of matter. The economic environment conditions human relationships and affects morality. Like modern psychologists, the Buddha discards the concept of a substantial soul and analyses the human personality into aspects of experience such as, impressions and ideas (*saññā*) feelings or hedonic tone (*vedanā*), conative activities (*sankhārā*) as well as cognitive or quasicognitive activities (*viññāna*). There is a dynamic conception of the mind, and the stream of consciousness (*viññāna-sota*) is said to have two components, the conscious and the unconscious. The first explicit mention of unconscious mental processes and the unconscious (*anusaya*) motivation of human behaviour is in the Buddhist texts. The Buddhist theory of motivation may be compared with that of Freud although it is more adequate than the latter.

Man is motivated to act out of greed, which consists of the desire to gratify our senses and sex (*kāma-taṇhā*, comparable with the *libido* of Freud) as well as the desire to gratify our egoistic impulses (*bhava-taṇhā* comparable with the *ego-instincts* and *super-ego* of Freud). He is also motivated to act out of hatred, which consists of the desire to destroy or eliminate what we dislike (*vibhhva-taṇhā* comparable with the *thanatos* or *death-instinct* of Freud) and also out of erroneous beliefs.

Both man and nature are in a state of perpetual flux. As such personal existence is insecure and there is no permanent soul or substance that we can cling to despite our strong desire to entertain such beliefs.

Owing to the causal factors that are operative, man is in a state of becoming and there is a continuity of individuality (*bhava*). Morally good and evil acts are correlated with pleasant and unpleasant consequences, as the case may be. Man is conditioned by his psychological past, going back into prior lives, by heredity and by the impact of his environment. But since he is not a creature of God's will or a victim of economic determinism, he can change his own nature as well as his environment.

There is no evidence that the world was created in time by an omniscient, omnipotent and infinitely good and compassionate God. In fact, the evidence clearly tells against the existence of such a God and the Buddhist texts mention two arguments in this connection. Although evil is logically compatible with the existence of a good God, there are certain evils (such as the suffering of animals and of little children, for instance), which are inexplicable on the assumption of the existence of a merciful God, who is also omniscient and omnipotent. Besides, the universe

created by such a God would be a rigged universe in which human beings were mere puppets devoid of responsibility.

According to the Buddhist theory of the cosmos, it has no origin in time. This Buddhist conception of the cosmos, which is a product of clairvoyance, can only be compared with the modern theories of the universe. The smallest unit in it is said to be the minor world-system (*cūlanikā lokadhātu*), which contains thousands of suns, moons inhabited and uninhabited planets. Today we call this a galaxy. The next unit is the middling world - system (*majjhimikā lokadhātu*), which consists of thousands of such galaxies, as we find in Virgo, for instance. The vast cosmos (*mahālokadhātu*) consists of thousands of such clusters of galaxies. This cosmos is said to undergo periods of expansion (*vivaṭṭamāna-kappa*) and contraction (*saṁvaṭṭā-māna-kappa*). So the vniverse is in a state of oscillation, continually expanding and contracting without beginning or end in time (*anavarāgra*).

Recent findings based on observations made from radio-telescopes have shown that the 'big-bang' theory (fancied by theists) and the oscillating theory are preferable to the steady-state theory, which held the field until now. But of the 'big-bang' and oscillating theories, the latter is to be preferred on scientific and philosophical grounds. It does not involve the concept of the creation of the dense atom out of nothing and it does not have to face the problem of an infinitude of time prior to creation.

While the Buddhist conception of the cosmos forestalls the modern astronomer's conception of it, it goes beyond the latter in speaking of a subtle-material world (*rūpa-loka*) and a non-material world (*arūpa-loka*), which is not accessible to science.

Similarly, Buddhist atheism is not the same as materialistic atheism in that Buddhism speaks of the objectivity of moral and spiritual values and of a transcendent reality beyond space, time and causation. Neither the Buddha nor those who attain Nirvana cease to exist, according to Budddhist conceptions. When the Buddha was asked, whether the person who has attained Nirvana does not exist or exists eternally without defect, his answer was: "The person who has attained the goal is without measure; he does not have that, whereby one may speak about him".

Ethics

If we turn to Buddhist ethics and examine its ethical system, we find that according to Buddhist notions, the propositions of ethics are significant. There can be no ethics without a concept of moral responsibility. But there cannot be moral responsibility unless (i) some of our actions are free (though conditioned) and not constrained, (ii) morally good and evil actions are followed by pleasant and unpleasant consequences, as the case may be and (iii) there is human survival after death to make this possible with justice. Now the question as to whether these conditions are fulfilled or not, in a purely factual question. If there was no free will and human actions were strictly determined, there would be no sense in our talking about moral responsibility for our actions. According to Buddhist conceptions, nature is such that all these conditions are fulfilled and, therefore, moral responsibility is a fact.

Buddhism considers human perfection or the attainment of arahantship as a good in itself and likewise the material and spiritual welfare of mankind. Whatever is good as a means in bringing about these good ends are instrumentally

good and these are called right actions, defined as actions which promote one's welfare as well as those others. Right actions consist in refraining from evil, doing what is good and cleansing the mind. The goal of perfection is also therapeutic in that only a perfect person, it is said, has a perfectly healthy mind. Hence the necessity for cleansing the mind, which consists in changing the basis of our motivation from greed, hatred and ignorance to selfless service, compassion and understanding. The Buddha emphatically pointed out that what he showed was a way, a way to achieve this change in motivation by a process of self-analysis, meditation and self-development. Men and women are classified into different psychological types and different forms of meditation are prescribed for them to achieve this end. The aim of Buddhist ethics therefore is the attainment of personal happiness and social harmony.

The Buddhist theory of reality and its ethics are summed up in the four noble truths.

Society, Polity and Law

The social and political philosophy of Buddhism is equally relevant and enlightening. Again, the Buddha was the first thinker in history to preach the doctrine of equality. Man was one species and the division into social classes and castes was not a permanent or inevitable division of society, although it was given a divine sanction at the time. Historical and economic factors brought about, as the Buddha relates in the *Aggañña Sutta*, the division of people into occupational classes which later became castes. All men are capable of moral and spiritual development and should be afforded the opportunity for this The doctrine of equality does not imply that all men are physically and psychologically alike for they are obviously not, but that

there is sufficient degree of homogeneity amongst men in terms of their capacities and potentialities as to warrant their being treated equally and with human dignity (*samānattatā*). It is a corollary of the doctrine of equality that there should be equality before the law, equality in educational opportunities and in the enjoyment of other human rights such as the right to employment etc.

Society, according to Buddhism, like every other process in nature was liable to change from time to time. The factors that determined this change were economic and ideological for men were led to action by their desires and beliefs. It was the duty of the state to uphold justice and promote the material and spiritual welfare of its subjects. There is a social contract theory of society and government. Ultimate power, whether it be legislative, executive or judiciary is vested with the people but delegated to the king or body of people elected to govern. If the contract of upholding law and order and promoting the good of the people is seriously violated, the people have a right to revolt and overthrow such a tyrannical government (see, (*Padamānavakusala Jātaka*).

Sovereignty is subject to the necessity to conform to the rule of righteousness. The rule of power has to be dependent on the rule of righteousness (*Dharma-cakraṁ hi nisrāya balacakraṁ pravartate*). Punishment has to be reformatory and only secondarily deterrent and never retributive. In international relations the necessity for subjecting sovereignty to the rule of righteousness requires that no nation be a power unto itself, while in its dealings with other nations it always has the

good and happiness of mankind at heart. The ideal Just Society is both democratic and socialistic and ensures human rights as well as economic equity and the well-being of the people. It is likely to come into existence after a catastrophic world-war, when the remnant who would be saved will set up a new order based on a change of heart and a change of system.

Such in brief is the message of the glorious religion and philosophy of the Buddha, whose value and full significance the world has yet to realise. Such is the message of Vesak.

The Psychological
ASPECT OF BUDDHISM

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THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECT OF BUDDHISM

I am happy to be here in response to the invitation of the Colombo Young Men's Buddhist Association to deliver the fifth Sir Baron Jayatilaka Memorial Lecture. Let me, at the outset, speak a few words about Sir Baron Jayatilaka who was the President of the Y. M. B, A. for forty six years, that is from almost from its inception until his death in 1944.

A self-willed individual who toiled his way upwards from small beginnings, unaided by patronage and unsupported by the influence of friends, Sir Baron Jayatilaka is in every respect a self-made man. The story of his life richly illustrates the power of the human mind. It is appropriate, therefore, on an occasion like this when we recall the flights of his many-sided career, to devote an hour or so to what the Buddha, the Supremely Enlightened Master, has said about the power of the human mind. In other words let us dwell on "*The Psychological Aspect of Buddhism*".

A dispassionate student of Buddhism who carefully reads through the books of early Buddhism is confronted with a dynamic personality, a religious teacher, who had attained supreme enlightenment and security from bondage through moral, intellectual and spiritual perfection, a teacher with an indefatigable zeal and steel determination for propagating the truth he had realized. That dynamic personality is none other than Siddhattha Gotama (Sanskrit, Siddhārtha Gautama) popularly known as the Buddha. This teacher who did not claim to be other than a human being was not one more philosopher among many others, but a

teacher of a way of life, who set in motion the matchless "Wheel of Truth" (*dharma-cakra*) which was to revolutionize the thought and life of the human race. His self-sacrificing zeal, large love, kindliness and tolerance combined with his remarkable personality, aroused the Indians from their slumber of ignorance and inspired them.

The Buddha spoke to all men and for all time. His teaching, the Dhamma, is for all men, whatever language they speak, whatever clothes they wear, whatever country they call 'home'—the Buddha's language is truth. He was clothed in truth, and the whole world was his home; for truth is everywhere for all time to be realized by each one individually. This is what is meant by the universality of the Dhamma.

Truth is not conceptual, and therefore, cannot be passed on by means of words or other symbols. An Enlightened One could guide us by showing the way to truth, but we ourselves should pursue the method of self-inquiry called meditation in Buddhism so that the hidden workings of the mind could be revealed, truth realized, and power within contacted.

What the Buddha taught during a period of forty-five years is so vast, its aspects so varied and fascinating that scholars called Buddhism a religion; a philosophy; an ethical code; a religio-philosophical system; and ethical idealism. But one has still to find a religion where psychology looms so large as in Buddhism. The commonly called academical psychology—like other academical sciences—defined mind in static terms, whereas Buddhist psychology defines mental life in dynamic terms. However, after many struggles and persistent efforts modern psychology has left the dilapidated abode of orthodox schools, and is rediscovering the old

doctrine of a dynamic mind. There are some variations no doubt, but the basic principle is one. Today many a psychologist accepts the dynamic nature of the human mind, and modern text books of psychology have abandoned the concept of a soul, and are regarding psychology as the science of human behaviour. Let us hope that it will not deviate from its well-found track.

To the Buddhist even the question of religion and its origin is not a metaphysical one, but a psychological and intellectual one. To him religion is no mere creed or code of revelation or fear of the unknown, fear of a supernatural being who rewards and punishes the good deeds and ill deeds of his creatures. It is not a theological concern, but rather a psychological and intellectual concern resulting from the experience of *dukkha*, that is, suffering, conflicts, unsatisfactoriness of the empirical existence, of the nature of life.

When we consider the doctrinal contents of Buddhism we are necessarily compelled to regard the Buddha's teaching as distinguished and different from other systems of religion where the central feature is the concept of a creator God. It is correct to say that there is much religion in Buddhism, but it cannot be included among the many religions in existence today, at least in the sense in which anthropologists understand the word religion. Generally the concept of religion is associated with a system centred around God and supernatural forces. Buddhism, however, does not advocate any prescribed system of ritual and worship and supplication of deities, or gods. There is no recognition, on the part of man, of some higher unseen power as having control of his destiny. In Buddhism, man attributes all his attainments and achievements to

human effort and human understanding. Buddhism is anthropocentric and not theocentric. Thus to a Buddhist, religion is a way of life, in the sense of a way of moral, spiritual and intellectual training leading to complete freedom of the mind, highest attainment of Insight which puts an end to all sufferings and repeated existence.

Looked at from the point of view of philosophy, the Buddha was not concerned with the problems that have worried philosophere both of the East and West from the beginning of history. He was not concerned with metaphysical problems which only confused man and upset his mental equilibrium. Their solution, he knew, will not free mankind from suffering, from the unsatisfactory nature of life. That was why the Buddha hesitated to answer such questions, and at times, refrained from explaining those which were often wrongly formulated. He was not ready to answer such questions as : Is the world eternal or not? Is it finite or infinite? Has the world an end or not? What is the origin of the world? At times the Buddha was silent to such seemingly important but futile questions, because silence was the best answer to such speculations and meaningless questions. The only way to resolve these doubts and difficulties is by exploring the innermost recesses of the human mind which can only be effected by deep self-introspection based on purity of conduct and consequent meditation.

All the principal tenets of Buddhism like the doctrine of *kamma* (skt. karma), volitional activities or moral causation, and rebirth, meditation and the resultant mental attainments are best studied and investigated as workings of the human mind, and therefore, Buddhism can most fittingly be described as a study of the highest psychology.

The *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* of the Buddhist Canon gives a very comprehensive account of the mind and the mental factors in a manner so as to help the Buddhist way of life. However, a close study of the dialogues, or the discourses of the Buddha, tends to produce the conviction that psychology plays a significant role in the *Sutta Piṭaka*, too. What the Buddha had to say with regard to the nature of the human mind, the method of cleansing it and the art of becoming its master and not its slave, is clearly enunciated in the discourses of the Sutta Piṭaka. In this respect the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*,[1] the discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness, the *Vitakka Saṇṭhāna Sutta*,[2] the Removal of Distracting Thoughts, and such other cardinal discourses are glaring examples.

Buddhism is the most psychological of religions. It is significant that the intricate workings of the human mind are more fully dealt with in Buddhism rather than in any other religion, and therefore, psychology works hand in hand more with Buddhism than with any other religion.

Is Buddhism related to modern psychology? one may ask: Yes, but with some difference. Buddhism is more concerned with the curative rather than analysis. Buddhism helps us to get beyond the intellect to the actual experience of life itself. Through meditation the Buddha had discoverd the deeper universal maladies of the human heart and mind. The remarkable insight into the workings of the mind makes the Buddha a psychologist and scientist of the highest eminence. Admittedly his way of arriving at these truths

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1. Translated in the 'Wheel' series, No. 19, also read *The Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* and Its Application to Modern Life, V. F, Gunaratna, No. 60.

2. Wheel series, No. 21, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy.

of mental life is not that of an experimentalist, yet what the Buddha had discovered remains true, and in fact has been coroborated by the experimentalist. But the purpose in engaging in these inquiries is quite different from that of the scientist. The statements of the Buddha about the nature of the mind and matter are directed towards specific ends. They are simply the deliverance of man, supreme security from bondage. The Buddha places so much emphasis on mind and mental phenomena because of the crucial role that our inner life occupies in the genesis of human action. In theistic religions the basis is God. In Buddhism, which is non-theistic, the mind is the basis.

The Christian Bible begins by saying, "In the beginning God created heaven and earth" whereas in the Dhammapada, which may be regarded as the Buddhist Bible, the opening lines read : '*Manopubangamā dhammā mano setthā manomayā,*' 'Mind precedes things; mind dominates them; mind creates them'; The words of the Christian God, as a matter of fact, the words of Gods of all theistic religions point the way to God and heaven, to the Beyond. The Buddha gives the greatest importance to mind in the scheme of deliverance, directs man to the ways of discrimination and research, and urges him to get busy with the real task of developing the inner forces and qualities of the mind. The Buddha says: "You yourselves should put forth the necessary effort, and work out your deliverance; the Buddhas only show the way." [1]

In order to understand fully the ideal of freedom of the mind, it is necessary to appreciate the importance of the mind. If there is no proper understanding of the importance of the human mind, we cannot appreciate to its fullest

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1. *Dhammapada*, 276.

extent the reason why it is so necessary to develop and safeguard the freedom of the mind.

Of all forces the force of the mind is the most potent. It predominates every other force. It is a power by itself and within itself. Any attempt to thwart the growth of this force is a step in the wrong direction. No one has understood the power of the mind so clearly as the Buddha.

Buddhism, while not denying the world of matter and the great effect that the physical world has on mental life, emphasises the very great importance of the human mind. Once a monk asked the Buddha: 'Pray, Venerable Sir, by what is the world led? By what is the world drawn along? Under the sway of what one dhamma have all gone? The Buddha's answer is categorical: "*Well, monk, the world is led by mind (thought); by mind the world is drawn along; all have gone under the sway of the mind, the one dhamma*"[1] The Buddhist point of view is that the mind or consciousness is the core of our existence, All our psychological experiences, such as pain and pleasure, sorrow and happiness, good and evil, life and death are not attributed to any external agency. They are the results of our own thoughts and their resultant actions.

The Buddhist way of life is an intense process of cleansing one's speech, action and thought. It is self-development and self-purification resulting in self-realization. The emphasis is on practical results and not on mere philosophical speculation, logical abstraction or even mere cogitation. The Buddhist ethos and psychology is built on the eternal truth of *dukkha*, the unsatisfactoriness of all

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1. Anguttara Nikāya, II. p. 177

sentient beings, all emprirical existence. The Buddha said :

> "*One thing only do I teach*
> *Suffering and its end to reach*"[1]

To understand this unequivocal saying is to understand Buddhism; for the entire teaching of the Buddha is nothing else than the application of this one principle. It seems to me that what can be called the discovery of a Buddha, is just the Four Noble Truths: namely *dukkha*, the arising or the cause of *dukkha*, the cessation of *dukkha*, and the path leading to the cessation of dukkha. And the rest are logical developments and more detailed explanations of the four truths. 'This is the typical teaching of the Buddhas of all ages.'[2]

The Buddha was a practical teacher. He was more concerned with beings than with inanimate nature. His sole object was to unravel the mystery of existence, to solve the problem of becoming. This he did by comprehending in all their fullness the four truths, the eternal verities of life. To those who listened to him, he explained in its detail the problem of *dukkha*, the universal fact of life, and tried to make people feel its full force, and convince them of it. He had definitely told us what he explains and what he does not. To one who views the world, and all it holds, in its proper perspective, the primary concern of life is not mere speculation or vain voyaging into the imaginary regions of high fantasy, but the gaining of true happiness and freedom from *dukkha*, unsatisfactoriness. To him true knowledge depends on the central

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1. *Majjhima Nikāya*. I. 22.
2. *Vinaya Mahāvagga* i. 16, ii. 156; *Digha* N. i. 110; *Majjhima* N. i. 380; *Anguttara* N, iv. 186.

question: Can this learning be of use to us in the conquest of mental peace and tranquillity, of real happiness? The Buddha says: "*In this very body, a fathom long, with its consciousness and perception I declare are the world, its cessation and the path that leads to the cessation of the world.*" Here the word 'world' denotes *dukkha*.

According to his teaching, suffering cannot be separated from the five aggregates, from this fathom long body with a mind. The five aggreates and suffering are same, and not two different things. "What is suffering? The Buddha asks, and answers: "It should be said that it is the five aggregares of clinging. [1]

Now it becomes clear that to understand the first truth *dukkha* as well as the other three truths, it is essential to have a clear idea of the five aggreagates that comprise man. In ordinary parlance we speak of a "being," but in the ultimate sense there is no such "being" there is only a manifestation of ever-changing psycho-physical forces or energies. These forces or energies form the aggregates, and what we call a being is nothing but a combination of these everchanging five aggreagates. Now what are the five aggregates?

According to Buddhism man is a psycho-physcial combination of mind and body (*nāma-rūpa*). The compo-nents of the "mind" are classified into four groups, namely: feeling (*vedanā*); perceptions, that is sense-impressions, images or ideas and concepts (*saññā*); mental formations or conative ideas and their concomitants (*sankhāra*); and consciousness, (*viññāna*). These four mental groups which are the non-physical factors in man are collectively

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1. *Samyutta* N. iii. 158.

regarded as mind (*nāma*). With the physical factor body (*rūpa*), the so-called man comes to be known as the five aggregates (*pancakkhandha*) composing an individuality.

In our study of psychology, Buddhist or otherwise, we feel obliged to ask whether the mind and the brain are different from each other. It is true that there is a close connection between mind and brain. Mental actions are related to brain charges. Mind is not something that can be handled, that can be submitted to any chemical test. It is invisible, intangible and as such cannot be discerned by the five senses. It lies outside the realm of the physical world; we can however form some idea of its nature and structrue and how it works as a whole. But the brain is otherwise. We can speak of its actual position, its structure and also its function.

The mind, whilst not impervious to external influences, is not under the control of other factors, but it is the master of them. It is with a man's mind that he seeks truth, that he probes into the inner meaning of things, by which he learns their secret and significance.

In this talk I do not intend to go into details regarding the aggregate of material form or body as the subject is "The Psychological Aspect of Buddhism." In brief, matter, the physical body of man, contains and comprises the Four Great Primaries (*Cattāri mahābhūtāni*) which are traditionally known as solidity, fluidity, heat or temperature and motion or vibration (*paṭhavi, āpo, tejo, vāyo*). In this context, they are not simply earth, water, fire and wind, though conventionally they may be so called. In Buddhist thought, especially in the *Abhidhamma* teaching, they are more than that. Very briefly *paṭhavi* or solidity is the

element of expansion. *Āpo* or fluidity is the element of cohesion. *Tejo* is the element of heat or temperature. *Vāyo* is the element of motion, it is displacement. Every material object is made up of the four Great Primaries though one or other seems to preponderate.

As discussed earlier, the four non-physical factors of man, all his mental and emotional processes, are included in the word mind. Students of Buddhism are familiar with the three pāli terms; *mano citta, and viññāna.* These terms are often translated as mind in some context or other, although a more discriminating student will translate *viññāna* as consciousness or cognitive consciousness. The English word mind does not adequately convey the meaning of the pali words *mano* or *citta.* These three terms, *mano citta* and *viññāna,* however, are synonyms (*yaṁ ca kho bhikkhave vuccati cittam itipi mano, itipi viññānaṁ*),[1] but they have their distinct and special uses in certian contexts and with all their different shades of meaning they indicate the psychologial aspects of Buddhism.

The term viññāna, has a deeper connotation in Buddhist psychology. In western psychology mind is generally defined as: "The organised totality of psychical structures and processes, conscious, unconscious and endopsychic philosophically, rather than psychologically, the entity or substratum underlying these structures and processes."[2] According to philosophy: "Mind is used in two principal senses: (a) the individual mind is the self or subject which perceives, remembers, imagines, feels, conceives, reasons, wills, etc. and which is functionally related to an individual bodily organism. (b) Mind, generically considered, is a

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1. *Samyutta* N. ii, 94.
2. *A Dictionary of Psyehology*, James Drever, Penguin Books.

metaphysical substance which pervades all individual mind and which is contrasted with matter or material substance."[1]

Let us now discuss the four aggregates *vedanā*, *saññā*, *sankhāra* and *viññāna* which form the psychical parts of the mind.

Vedanā is the aggregate of feeling which accompanies our impressions and ideas. Feelings are threefold: pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral. They are dependent on contact. Seeing a form or visible object, hearing a sound, smelling an odour, tasting a flavour, touching some tangible thing, cognizing a mental object (an idea or thought) man experiences feeling. These six kinds of feelings are experienced through the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and the mind, respectively (the faculty of mind, *manindriya*, is regarded as the sixth faculty in Buddhist psychology). When for instance, eye, form, and visual consciousness (*cakkhu viññāṇa*) come together, it is their coincidence that is called contact. Contact means the combination of the organ of sense, the object of sense, and sense consciousness. When these are all present together there is no power or force that can prevent the arising of feeling.

Next comes the aggregate of Perception (*saññākkhandha*). The function of perception in Buddhist psychology is recognition (*saṁjānana*) of objects, both physical and mental. *Perception*, like feeling, also is six-fold: perception of forms, sounds, smells, tastes, bodily contacts and mental objects. Perception in Buddhism is not used in the sense that Western philosophers like Bacon, Descartes,

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1. *Dictionary of Philosophy* edited by Dagobert D. Runes, Littlefield, Adams & Co. New Jersey.

Spinoza and Liebnitz used the term, but as a mere sense perception. Extra-sensory forms of perception such as teiepathy and clairvoyance are also included in the aggregate of perception.

There is a certain affinity between awareness (*vijānana*), which is the function of consciouseness, and recognition (*samjānana*), the function of perception. While consciousness becomes aware of an object, simultaneously perception takes the distinctive mark of the object and thus distinguishes it from other objects. This distinctive mark is instrumental in cognizing the object a second and a third time, and in fact, every time we become aware of the object. Thus it is perception, *saññā* that brings about memory.

It is important to note that perceptions often deceive us. Then they become known as illusion or perversity of perceptions (*saññā vipallāsa*). It is always when we fail to see the true nature of things that our views become clouded; because of our preconceived nctions, our attachment and aversion, our likes and dislikes (*anurodha, virodha*)[1], we fail to see the sense organs and sense objects in their respective and objective natures, and go after mirages and deceptions. The sense organs delude and mislead us, and then we fail to see things in their true light, in their proper perspective, so our way of seeing things become perverted (*viparīta dassana*). Right understanding alone removes these illusions and helps man to cognize the real nature that underlies all appearances. It is only when man come out of this cloud of illusions and perversions that he shines with true wisdom like tha full moon that emerges brilliant from behind a black could.

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1. *Majjhima* N. i. 265.

When a particular perception, perverted or not, occurs frequently, it grows stronger and grips our mind. Then it becomes difficult to get rid of that perception, and the result is well explained in this verse of the *suttanipāta* (verse 847).

"Who is free from sense perceptions
In him no more bonds exist;
Who by Insight freedom gains
All delusions cease in him;
But who clings to sense perceptions
And to view-points wrong and false
He lives wrangling in this world."

Perception is followed by the Aggregate of Mental (volitional) Formations (*samkhārakkhandha*). It is good to keep in mind that volitional formations is the popular term for the word *saṁkhāra* in the list of the five aggregates. In other contexts *saṁkhāra* does signify anything conditioned and compounded. In the statement '*sabbe saṁkhārā aniccā*' or '*aniccā vata saṁkhārā*' (all compounded things are impermanent), the term *saṁkhāra* applies to all compounded and conditioned things, i. e., all things that come into being as the effect of causes and conditions and which, themselves act as causes and conditions in turn again to give rise to other effects.

In this group of mental formations (*saṁkhāra*) are included all mental factors except feeling (*vedanā*) and perception (*saññā*) mentioned earlier. The Abhidhamma speaks of fifty two mental concomitants or factors (*cetasika*). Feeling and perceptions are two of them, but they are not volitional formations. The remaining fifty are collectively

known as *saṁkhāra*, mental or volitional formations. Volition plays a vital role in the mental realm, and we shall discuss this when we deal with the psychology of *karma*.

The aggregate of consciousness (*viññānakkhandha*) is the most important of the five aggregates which comprise man. Now what is the function of consciousness? Like feeling, perception and volitional formations, consciousness also has six types and its function is varied. It has its basis and objects.

All our fellings are experienced through the contact of sense faculties with the external world. The faculty of mind which cognizes mental objects is not something tangible and perceptible like the other five faculties which cognize the external world. The eye cognizes the world of colours (*vaṇṇa*) or visible objects, the ear audible sounds, and so forth. The mind, however, cognizes the world of ideas and thoughts. When it comes to the world of thoughts and ideas, the faculty of the mind is lord over the mental realm. The eye cannot think thoughts, and collect ideas, but it is instrumental in seeing visible forms, the world of colours.

It is very important to understand the function of consciousness. Although there is this functional relationship between the faculties and their objects, for instance, eye with forms, ear with sounds, and so forth, awareness come through consciousness. In other words, sense objects cannot be experienced with the particular sensitivity without the appropriate kind of consciousness. When the three things: eye, form and visual consciousness come together, it is their coincidence that is called contact. From contact comes

feeling and so on as explained in the dependent origination or conditioned genesis (*paṭicca samuppāda*).[1]

When it is said that consciousness arises through the interaction of the sense organs and objects (*indriya* and *ārammana*), it does not mean that consciousness is something created by the sense organ and object which are purely physical. Otherwise we will be subscribing to the theory of the materialistic schools which believed that consciousness is a mere by-product of matter. The function of viññāna, consciousness, is to become aware of objects (*vijānana*). The human eye may come in contact with the visible object, but unless there is awareness we are not conscious of the object. Consciousness also is conditioned and subject to change, and so it is not a spirit or soul opposed to matter, nor a projection, an offspring of matter.

The concept of viññāna occupy a very high place in the teachings of the Buddha, but it is not studied or understood by many in all its aspects; it is the least understood. To many, viññāna is just one of the five aggregates, which becomes aware of sense objects. Its deeper interpretation, the broader aspects involved, are ignored. When we discuss the concept of viññāna in relation to the doctrine of survival or the rebirth process of beings, it becomes clear that consciousness plays an important role in the process of becoming (*punabbhava*).

This fact is clearly brought out in the *paṭicca samuppāda: sankhāra paccayā viññānaṁ*, dependent on the *kamma* or good and evil actions (*saṁkhāra*) of the past

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1. See *Dependent Origination*, Piyadassi Thera, Wheel No. 15, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, Ceylon.

births is conditioned the conscious life in this present birth. Consciousness, therefore, is the first factor (*nidāna*) or first of the conditioning links belonging to the present existence. As this consciousness or viññāna is the first of the stream of consciousness (*viññāna-sota*) belonging to one single existence (*bhava*), it is also known as *paṭisandhi viññāna*, relinking or rebirth consciousness. Samkhāra, in the form of kamma, is the 'motive farce' that causes rebirth. We must understand the dynamic importance of the two psychic factors, *samkhāra* and *viññāna*. *Saṁkhāra* means *karma*, good and evil actions, all actions, physical, verbal and mental (*kāya saṁkhāra, vacī saṁkhāra, citta saṁkhāra*) which will bring out reactions giving rise to rebirth. Thus saṁkhāra determines that part of consciousness in the next life influencing the new personality.

What we call life here is the functioning of the five aggregates which we have already discussed, or the functioning of mind and body (*nāma-rūpa*) which are only energies or forces. They are never the same for two consecutive moments, and in this confiux of mind and body we do not see anything permanent. The grown-up man is neither the child nor quite a different person; there is only a relationship of continuity. The conflux of mind and body, or mental and physical energy, is not lost at death, for no force or energy is ever lost. It undergoes change. It resets, reforms in new conditions. This is called rebirth, re-existence or rebecoming (*punabbhava*). Karmic process (*kammabhava*) is the energy that out of a present life conditions a future life in unending sequence. In this process there is nothing that passes or transmigrates from one life to another. It is only a movement that continues unbroken. The 'being' who passes away here and takes

birth elsewhere is neither the same person, nor a totally different one (*na ca so na ca añño*).[1]

There is the last moment of consciousness (*cuti viññāna* or *cuti citta*) belonging to the immediately previous life; immediately next, upon the cessation of that consciousness, but conditioned by it, there arises the first moment of consciousness of the present birth which is called (*paṭi-sandhi viññāna*) relinking or rebirth consciousness, the first stirring of mental life in the newly begun individual. Similarly the last thought moment in this life conditions the first thought moment in the next life. In this way consciousness comes into being and passes away yielding place to new consciousness. Thus the perpetual stream of conciousness (*viññāna sota*) goes on until existence ceases through the eradication of the root causes leading to becoming or existence (*bhava*). The root causes are: lust hate and delusion (*rāga, dosa, moha*).[2] Existence, in a way, is consciousness, the will to live.

The Pali word *paṭi-sandhi viññāna* is a term found only in the Abhidhamma literature, and a detail account of the term is found in the commentaries and treatises on the Abhidhamma *Paṭisandhi* or Sanskrit *pratisandhi* literally means re-linking, re-uniting, re-joining. It is called re-uniting through its being the thing which links one existence to another (the succeeding one). *Paṭisandhi-viññāna* is the resultant consciousness (*vipāka-viññāna*) present at rebirth, or owing to the presence of which at the moment of rebirth the new existence is connected with the immediately preceding existence, and through that with the entire past of the individual reborn. This resultant

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1. *Milinda Pañha*, P. T. S. p. 40
2. See below.

consciousness is due to previous re-birth producing mental factor *saṁkhāra*, volitional formations, or *kamma*.[1]

It is interesting to note that the counterpart of the Abhidhamma term '*Paṭi-sandhi Viññāna*' is found in the Sutta Pitaka. In the *Ānenjasappāya Sutta* (106) of the Majjhima Nikaya, this *vipāka viññāna* is referred to as the *samvattanikaṁ viññānaṁ*, the consciousness that goes on, that proceeds from one life to another as vipāka. The consciousness that evolves into the next iife. But be it noted that this consciousness, is not an unchanging entity. Dependent on consciousness arises mentality-materiality (*nāma-rūpa*), the psycho-physical personality. Consciousness, on the other hand, is conditioned by mentality-materiality (*nāma-rūpa paccayā viññānaṁ, viññāna paccayā nāma-rūpam*).[2] They are mutually dependent and the two together form a new being. In the *Maha Nidāna Sutta* of the Dīgha Nikāya the question was raised by the Buddha in the course of a discussion with his attendant disciple Ananda Thera as to whether the *nāma-rūpa* will develop, and grow into maturity if *viññāna* were not to descend into the mother's womb (*mātukucchiṁhi na okkamissatha*), or being entered into the mother's womb were to leave (*okkamitvā vokkamissatha*). Ananda Thera's reply was in the negative: 'Lord, the development of the embryo will not be successful'. The answer was approved by the Buddha.

According to modern biology, "A new human life begins in that miraculous instant when a sperm cell from the father merges with the egg shell or ovum within the mother" This is the moment of birth. Science speaks of

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1. Vide *Vibhāvinī Tīkā*.
2. *Samyutta Nikaya* ii. 104.

only these two physical common factors. Buddhism, however, speaks of a third factor which is purely psychic.

As the *Mahātanhāsankhaya Sutta* of the Majjhima Nikāya points out, a conception (*gabbhassa avakkanti*) of a being takes place by the conjunction of three factors. If the mother and father come together (there should be coitus of parents), and it is the mother's proper season (the mother should have her period), and the *gandhabba* is also present (*paccupaṭṭhito hoti*) then a germ of life is planted there.

The third factor *gandhabba* is simply a term for the *viññāna*, or *paṭisandhi viññāna*, or the *saṁvattanika viññāna*, rebirth consciousness. According to Ācariya Buddhaghosa, the Commentator, *gandhabba* means the being about to enter the womb (*paccupaṭṭhito hoti*). What is meant is that a *satta*, a being, about to be born in that situation, is being driven on by the mechanism of *kamma*. It should be clearly understood that this *gandhabba* is neither a "semi-god who presides over child-conception",[1] nor a 'discarnate spirit' as implied by the Vedic *gandharva*. It is quite clear from the early Buddhist texts that there is no spirit or soul, or ego-entity going from birth to birth. It is the *viññāna* conditioned by *saṁkhāras* or *kamma* formations, that brings about the rebirth of an individual after his death.

Consciousness which is the psychic factor that determines the rebirth of an individual or being, is not something permanent in the form of a self or soul or an ego-entity. Even consciousness is conditioned and subject to change. There were many during the time of the Buddha who

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1. Pali Text Society's *Pali-English Dictionary*, under the word *gandhabba*.

thought, and there are many who continue to think, that consciousness in the form of a permanent, enduring self or soul exists in man, continues through life, and at death transmigrates from one life to another, and binds life together. During the Buddha's time some metaphysicians held the view: "whatever there is to be called *citta* or *mano* or *viññāna*, that is the soul, permanent, constant, eternal, unchanging".[1]

We also see a glaring instance of this in the thirty-eight discourse of the Majjhima Nikaya. One of the Buddha's own disciples, Sāti by name, held the following view: "In so far as I understand the Dhamma taught by the Buddha, it is the same consciousness, *viññāṇa* that fares on and continues (*sandhāvati saṁsarati*) that transmigrates and wanders about (in rebirth)". When Sāti intimated his point of view to the Buddha, the Master questioned him: "What is this consciousness, Sāti?" "It is that which expresses, which feels and experiences (*vado vedeyyo*) the result of good and evil deeds now here now there". The Buddha, however, dispelled his erroneous belief by explaining to him that apart from conditions there is no arising of consciousness, that consciousness arises depending on conditions.

Sāti erred when he said that the same consciousness continues as speaker and experiencer thus regarding consciousness as an agent behind all mental activities.

Now this consciousness referred to as the stream of consciousness (*viññāna sota*)[2] is not a unity that abides

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1. *Dīgha Nikāya.*
2. Dīgha Nikāya, iii. 105, cp. *Sutta-nipāta*, 1055. Also stream of becoming (*bhava-sota*), *Samyutta Nikaya*, iv. 291.

unchanged, and continues in the same state withour perishing throughout the cycle of existence. Consciousness also is conditioned, and therefore, is not permanent. It does not, as Sāti thought, transmigrate from one life to another.

The eminent American psychologist, William James, only echoes the words of the Buddha when he writes refering to consciousness: "It is nothing jointed. It flows. A 'river' or 'stream' are the metaphors by which it is most naturally described . . . *Let us call it the stream of thoughts, the stream of consciousness or of subjective life*".[1] (the italics are his)

If I do not even make a passing reference to the Bhavanga aspect of Buddhist psychology I shall not be doing justice to the subject. *Bhavanga citta* or *Bhavanga sotu* plays an important role in the mental life of man.

Modern psychology postulates three levels of the mind: the Conscious, the Sub-conscious, the Unconscious. The Conscious level is one of awareness. During our waking life the conscious mind works through the five channeis known as the five sense faculties.

Sub-conscious stratum of the mind is the area which holds those memories that we can recall at will. It is said that the subconscious level of mental life which lies immediately below that of the conscious is a repository of memories which can be brought back into consciousness at will. The level of the unconscious is a store-house for all past experiencees that cannot be recalled at will, but can, at times, on its own, manifest itself in the conscious level without any external stimulation, or under such special methods as hypnosis.

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1. *Psychology*: Briefor Courae, see chapter on "The stream of Consciousness".

Sigmund Freud who was chiefly concerned with the unconscious mind as the store-house of mental causes for a nervous breakdown, gives in "*Psychopatholgy of Every Day Life*" numerous examples of the fact of unconscious activity. Though some local scholars identify the Bhavanga citta with the sub-conscious or unconscious mind, I do not see a complete parallel. In Buddhist psychology there are no such levels of consciousness. Abhidhamma speaks of two types of mind. The *Vīti-citta* and *Bhavaṇga-citta*, Vīthi-citta is a thought process which occurs always at conscious level, that is during waking life. It works through the five sense faculties. The Bhavanga-citta operates during waking life as well as in the dreamless state of deep sleep, and therefore, it may be said that it functions below the level of consciousness. It can also be called a sub-conscious or an unconscious mental process not identical with the full range of the western concept of the sub-conscious or unconscious mind. It does not cover the entire ground of the Western conception of the sub-conscious or unconscious mind.

The Bhavanga which is made up of '*bhava*' (becoming or existence) and '*anga*' (cause or instrumental, rather than factor) is an essential condition for continued existence. 'Life continuum' is the closest English equivalent for the pali word Bhavanga. By reason of the existence of the Bhavanga citta, the stream of consciousness is kept going without interruption.

If our present birth here is the beginning, and our death is the end of this life, there is hardly any need to worry, and try to understand from a psychological point of view the problem of *dukkha*, the unsatisfactoriness of all empirical existence. A moral order in the universe, the reality of right and wrong, may not be of any practical

significance to us. To enjoy and gratify the senses at any cost may seem to be the sensible thing to do during this brief span of life. This view, however, does not explain the inequality of mankind. An inquiring mind will always strive to seek the cause of this inequality.

There are two principal teaching of the Buddha which should be studied from a psychological point of view. They are *kamma* and *rebirth*. Kamma is the law of moral causation that shapes the destiny of beings and brings about rebirth. Basically it is volition (*cetanā*), action prompted by will. The Buddha says: "Volition, O monks, I declare is kamma, having willed man acts by deed, word and thought."[1] Volition whicch is will, is the deciding factor in all our activities, good or ill. *Kamma* is the action or seed. The reaction, the effect, or fruit is known as *kamma-vipāka*. Volition may be good or bad, so actions may be wholesome or unwholesome according to their results. This endless play of action and reaction, cause and effect, seed and fruit, continues in perpetual motion, and this is becoming (*bhava*), — a continually changing process of the psycho-physical phenomena of existence discussed earliar.

Man acts through body, speech and mind; actions bring about reactions. Craving (*tanhā* skt. *trishnā*), our thirst, which is a factor of the mind, gives rise to deeds, deeds produce results, results in turn bring about new desires, new craving and thirsting. The process of cause and effect, actions and reactions, is natural law. It is a law in itself with no need for a law giver. An external agency that rewards and punishes the good and evil deeds of man has no place in Buddhist thought. Man is always changing either for good or for ill. This changing is unavoidable and

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1. *Anguttara Nikāya*, iii. 415.

depends entirely on his own will and action. "This is merely the universal natural law of the conservation of energy extended to the moral domain."

It may be observed, from a psychological point of view, that Buddhism does not support the idea of repentance, for it will not do any good to oneself or others. According to Buddhism wrong doing is not regarded as a 'sin', for that word is foreign to the teaching of the Buddha. There is no such things as 'breaking the Buddha's law' because he was not a law-giver, an arbitrator or potentate who punished the bad and rewarded the good deeds of beings. The doer of the deed is responsible for his own actions; he suffers or enjoys the consequences of deeds, and it is his concern either to do good or to do bad. It must also be stated that all actions, good or ill, do not necessarily mature. One's good kamma may suppress the evil kamma and vice versa.

We must also understand that the Buddhist doctrine of kamma is not fatalism, is not a philosophical doctrine to the effect that human action is not free, but necessarily determined by motives which are regarded as external forces acting upon the will, or predetermined by God. The Buddha neither subscribed to the theory that all things are unalterably fixed; that all things happen by inevitable necessity, that is Strict Determinism (*niyati-vāda*) nor did he uphold the theory of Complete Inderminism (*adicca-samuppanna*).

According to Buddhism there is no life after death or life before birth independent of kamma or volitional actions. Kamma is the corollary of rebirth, rebirth, on the other hand, is the corollary of kamma. Birth precedes death, and death on the other hand, precedes birth, and the pair thus accompany each other in unbroken succession. Still there

is no permanent self or soul or fixed entity that passes from birth to birth. Though man comprises a psycho-physical unit of mind and matter, the 'psyche' or mind is not a soul or self, in the sense of an enduring entity, something ready made and permanent. It is a force, a dynamic continuum, capable of storing up memories not only of this life but also of past lives.

To the scientist matter is energy in a state of stress, change without real substance. To the psychologist the 'psyche' is no more a fixed entity. And when the Buddha emphatically stressed that the so called 'being' or 'individual' is but a combination of physical and mental forces or energies, a change with continuity, did he not antedate modern science and psychology by twenty five centuries?

An individual existence is thus a succession of change, something that comes into being and passes away not remaining the same for two consecutive moments. This psycho-physical organism though undergoes incessant changes creates new psycho-physical processes every instant, thus preserving the potentiality for future organic processes and leaving no gap between one moment and the other. We live and die every moment of our lives. It is merely a coming into being and passing away like the waves of the sea.

This change of continuity which is patent to us in this life does not cease at death. The mind flux continues incessantly. It is the dynamic mind-flux that is termed as kammic energy. This mighty force, this will to live, keeps life going. Thus this perpetual stream of consciousness (*viññāna-sota*) goes on without end so long as that myriad-face thirst (*tanhā*) in the company of ignorance (*avijjā*), the crowning corruption of all our madness, generate it.

All forms of apetite are included in tanhā: greed, thirst, lust, burning, yearning, longing, inclination, affection, household love are some of the many terms that denote tanhā which in the word of the Buddha, leads to becoming (*bhava-netti*). Becoming which manifests itself as *dukkha*, as suffering, frustration, conflicts, painful excitement, unsatisfactoriness, is our own experience. Beings in their intense thirst for either possession, or the satisfaction of desires, become bound to the wheel of existence, are twisted and torn between the spokes of agony, and securely close the door to final deliverance.

The enemy of the whole world is lust through which all evil come to living beings. It is not only greed for and attachment to pleasure caused by the senses, wealth and property, and by the wish to defeat others and conquer countries, but also attachment to ideas, views, opinions and beliefs (*dhamma-tanhā*) which often leads to calamity, and destruction and brings untold suffering to whole nations, in fact to the whole world. This tanhā, this craving of man, is three-fold, and the mind is urged to act under the influence of these three types of tanhā. Whenever craving for objects is connected with sense pleasures it is called Sensuous Craving (*kāma.tanhā*). When it is associated with the belief in eternal personal existence, then it is called Craving for Existence, for Becoming (*bhava-tanha*). It is the desire for continuing, to exist for ever, self-preservation (*jīvi.u-kāma*). When craving is associated with the belief in Self Annihilation it is called craving for non-existence, for destruction (*vibhava-tanhā*). The three-fold tanha or craving may be compared with that of the Freudian conception of the *eros*, *libido*, and *thanatoes*.

According to Buddhism many are the defilements (*kilesa*) of the mind, but the root causes of all evil are: lust or

craving; hatred or ill-will; delusion or ignorance (*lobha, dosa, moha*). They are the motive forces by which man acts. Actions performed through these defilements bring about repeated existence, for it is said "without abandoning lust hate and delusion one is not free from birth.[1] When a person totally eradicates the trio he is liberated from the shackles of *saṁsāra*, repeated existence. He is free in the full sense of the word. He no longer has any quality which will cause him to be reborn as a living being, because he has realized Nibbana, the entire cessation of becoming (*bhava-nirodha*); he has transcended common or worldly activities, and has raised himself to a state above the world while yet living in the world; his actions are issuless, are kammically ineffective; for they are not motivated by the trio, by mental defilements. He is immune to all evil, to all defilements of the heart. In him there are no motivating underlying tendencies (*anusaya*); he has given up both good and evil (*puñña pāpa pahīna*)[2]; he is not worried by the past, the future; nor even the present. He clings to nothing in the world, and so is not troubled. He is not perturbed by the vicissitudes of life. His mind is unshaken by contact with worldy contingencies; he is sorrowless, taintless and secure (*asokaṁ, virajaṁ, khemaṁ*)[3]. Thus Nibbana is a 'state' realizable in this very life (*diṭṭha-dhamma-nibbāna*). The thinker, the inquiring mind, will not find it difficult to understand this state which can be postulated only of the Arahat and not of any other being either in this world or in the realm of heavenly enjoyment.

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1. *Anguttara Nikaya.* ii. i. 6
2. *Dhammapada,* 39.
3. *Mangala sutta, Sutta-nipāta,* 270.

As the Buddha has so clearly pointed out: "*Whatever there is of evil, connected with evil, belonging to evil, all issue from mind* (literally, mind precedes them all : *mano-pubbangamā)*". "*Whatever there is of good, connected with good, belonging to good, all issue from mind*".[1]

Hence the need for man to scrutinize his own mind with a view to understanding how the human mind works, how thoughts arise and pass away. As sigmund Freud says: "Psychological changes only come about very slowly. If they occur quickly and suddenly it is a bad sign". Knowing good thoughts as good, and evil as evil an attempt should be made to prevent the arising of evil and unwholesome thoughts not yet arisen; to abandon the evil thoughts already arisen; to produce and develop good thoughts that have not yet arisen; and to maintain the good thoughts already arisen. This is the function of Right Effort (*sammā vāyāma*), a doing in the mind: to prevent, to abandon, to develop and maintain (*saṁvara, paḥāna, bhāvanā anurak-khana*).[2] Thus in Buddhism even ethics is studied from the psychological point of view. This emphasis on right effort by the Buddha explains in unmistakable language that Buddhism is not a philosophy of pessimism, a teaching for the feeble-minded who looks at things from the most unfavourable point of view, but that it is a true warrier's religion.

Hard it is to give up what lures, and holds us in thrall, and hard it is to exorcise the evil spirits that haunt the human heart in the shape of unwholesome thoughts. These evils are the manifestation of lust hate and delusion discussed earliar. Until one attains the very crest of purity by constant training of the mind, one cannot defeat these hosts

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1. *Anguttara Nikaya*. p. II
2. *Anguttara N*. ii. 15 *suttas* 13, 14.

completely. The mere abandoning of outward things, fasting and so forth, these do not tend to purify a man; these things do not make a man holy and harmless. Self-torture is one extreme which the Buddha in his first proclamation of the dhamma cast off as wrong, and so also did he reject sensual indulgence calling it ignoble. Avoiding these two extremes the Buddha revealed to the world the Middle Way, the Ancient Path, which still beckons the weary pilgrim to the haven of Nirvana's security and peace.

Virtue, Concentration and Wisdom or Insight (*sīla, samādhi paññā*) are the cardinal teaching which when fully cultivated raise man from lower to higher levels of mental life; lead him from darkness to light; from passion to dispassion; from turmoil to tranquillity. These three are not isolated reactions, but integral parts of the path. This idea is crystallized in that oft-quoted but ever fresh admonition of the Buddhas of all ages (Dhammapada, 183).

"*Sabba pāpassa akaranaṁ*
Kusalassa upasampadā
Sacitta pariyodapanaṁ
Etaṁ Buddhānasāsanaṁ"

"The giving up of all evil
The cultivation of the good
The cleansing of one's mind
This is the Buddhas' teaching."

I think we have now sufficiently dealt with "*The Psychological Aspect of Buddhism*". In conclusion I wish to take your minds back to the introductory paragraph in this talk where I stated that the life story of Sir Baron Jayatilaka richly illustrates the power of the human mind. The one lesson that we all can learn from his unique life is that we

can improve and develop our minds on the lines indicated in Buddhist psychology. Mere learning bereft of the elevating and purifying influence of a mind trained in the Buddhist way of life carries us no where. Let us hope that the life story of Sir Baron Jayatilaka, and this talk inspired by that life story, will help us to rise above the passions and prejudices, great and small, which beset us at every turn in life, and introduce us to those higher realms of noble living which the Buddha has been at pains to emphasize. May we all leading that higher life attain the bliss of nibbana.

Be loving and be pitiful
And well controlled in virtue's ways,
Strenuous, bent upon the goal,
And onward ever bravely press.

That danger doth in dalliance lie:-
That earnestness is sure and safe :-
This when you see, then cultivate
The Eightfold Path, so shall ye touch,[1]
So make your own, the Deathless Way.

—*Psalms of the Brethren*, 979, 980

1. 'Touch' — i. e. 'realize'.

By the same author :

Piyadassi Thera

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GODS AND THE UNIVERSE
IN BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVE

Essays on Buddhist Cosmology
and related subjects

Francis Story
The Anagarika Sugatananda

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GODS AND THEIR PLACE IN BUDDHISM

> Thus is He, the Blessed One, the Arahat, the Fully Enlightened, endowed with Knowledge and Conduct, the Happy One, Knower of the World, Peerless Charioteer of men to be tamed, Teacher of Gods and Men, the Buddha, the Blessed One.
>
> *The Meditation on the Recollection of the Buddha.*

One of the descriptive titles given to the Buddha is that of *Satthā-deva-manussānaṁ*, the Teacher of Gods and Men. It is found in the earliest texts of the Tripiṭaka and was accepted by the Buddha Himself. That the expression was no mere oriental hyperbole, but is to be taken in its literal sense, is borne out by the numerous incidents in which Devas figure in the Buddhist canonical literature, where like human beings they come to the Master for religious instruction. These beings, whose generic name of Deva means Shining Ones, appear so often that there is every justification for an enquiry into their nature and the precise place they occupy in the doctrines of Buddhism.

The Buddhist conception of the universe and of the laws of cause and effect that govern it leaves no room whatever for the idea of a supreme deity in the role of creator or ruler. It is not even necessary for Buddhism to deny the existence of a Creator-god; its philosophy automatically excludes the theory.

'No God, no Brahma can be found,
Creator of Saṁsāra's* round;
Empty phenomena roll on,
Subject to cause and condition.

Visuddhimagga XIX.

This being so, a Deva is not a God in the usual sense, and the word is apt to be misleading through its association with Western theism. If modern man could enter into the spirit of ancient Greek thought and understand the attitude of, say, Socrates** towards the Greek gods he would come closer to the Buddhist view of the Devas. The likeness is not perfect, for the Devas, unlike the Greek deities, are not immortal; but they resemble them in being neither omnipotent nor omniscient. They are not creators of the world, but are themselves subject to the law of causality in much the same way that the Greek gods were subject to *ananke*, the higher law of necessity. They exhibit many of the weaknesses of human beings, and often less than their wisdom. Their present relatively happy circumstances, as well as such power as they possess, are the result of previous merit acquired as human beings.

They are in fact simply beings of another order of existence, in some ways superior to men but in others at a disadvantage. But before going further into their nature it is necessary to distinguish between (1) Samutti Devas ("by convention"), (2) Upapatti Devas (through rebirth) and (3) Visuddhi Devas (by their purity).

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* Saṁsāra — the cycle of rebirths; the world.

** Who had his "daimon".

The first class are human beings of high worldly status; kings, ministers and the like. The second are beings living in the Deva-lokas, or higher spheres, while the third and greatest are human beings who have attained the final degree of self-liberation, and so are known as Devas by Purification while yet alive. These are the Supreme Buddhas, Silent Buddhas (Pacceka Buddhas) and Arahats.

In ordinary usage the word Deva nearly always denotes the non-human beings of the second order, and it is with them that we are now concerned. But while in the following pages the word Deva wherever it occurs is to be understood as meaning Upapatti Deva, it is well to note in passing that the term Deva in itself has a very wide connotation and makes no fundamental distinction between human and non-human beings where the former are of exalted position. It may be taken to signify nothing more than a superior personage of some kind. It is important that this should be remembered, for just as the superiority of a king lies only in his position and has no connection with his qualities of intellect or character, so the superiority of a deva rests in the fact of his occupying that position by virtue of his past merits. Like all other beings the Deva is revolving in the circle of Saṁsāra; he is characterised by the three signs of impermanence, suffering and lack of any essence of selfhood; when the good Karma of the past which sustains the current of his existence as a Deva becomes exhausted he must inevitably pass away from that state to be reborn elsewhere.

Another point to be remembered is that although, as has been said, the Devas hold an important place

In Buddhist thought they are in no wise necessary to Buddhist philosophy. Everything that Buddhism asserts concerning the nature of reality can be stated with equal truth and force without reference to Devas or any other class of non-human beings. Indeed, the view has been put forward that the frequent appearance of the Brahmanical deities as disciples of the Buddha in the canonical literature was intended only to emphasise the falsity of the Brahmanical belief in the power and omniscience of gods. However that may be, it is a fact that Buddhist philosophy is a complete and self-supporting system, requiring no intervention of super-natural agencies, and not capable of being affected by the presence or absence of beings of a non-human order. No matter what kind of sentient beings science may ultimately discover in the universe besides those on our own planet, it is certain that they will all be in their nature subject to the same laws which Buddhism reveals as governing the life of man. The living organisms on Jupiter, if there are any, must turn out to be different from those on earth in their physical construction, chemical composition and all other external aspects of their being; but even though they must breathe methane and ammonia instead of oxygen, and live in temperatures far below any endurable to organic life on our own planet, the fundamental and universal laws of cause and effect must obtain for them as they do for us. So the number and variety of beings in the cosmos may be multiplied to infinity, yet so long as they are subject to arising and passing away they belong unalterably to the Buddhist pattern of Saṁsāric existence. The only kind of being that could be correctly termed supernatural would be one that is eternal, unchanging and not limited by any

physical laws. It is the possibility of such a being as this that both Buddhism and modern science deny, but the denial does not go any further than that. As Bertrand Russell has somewhere observed, there is no reason whatever to suppose that man is the highest form of sentient life in the universe.

II

Even before the physicist demonstrated that our familiar world is not the substantial place it appears to be, but a system of dynamic processes that can be accurately described only in mathematical terms, and existing in an inconceivable four-dimensional complex wherein space is the time between objects and time is the space between events, there were bold scientific thinkers who were able to envisage the possibility of still other dimensions besides those with which we are still grappling in a not-yet-successful attempt to correlate them. It would have been easier for those pioneers to break away from the rigid system which took space and time for separate absolutes if they had lived to see the bewildering world the scientist has presented us with since the advent of nuclear physics and the general theory of relativity. Under the influence of these new — but by no means final — realisations, the once dominant ideas of space and time have faded into subjective conceptions, just as subjective as left and right, front and behind, are in ordinary experience. The only really objective factor ascertainable

to us at present is the space-time continuum, which may be thought of as containing an objective record of the motion of every particle in the universe, a history which is known as the world line of the particle concerned. In this way of looking at the universe objects have ceased to exist and their place has been taken by series of events, or causal continua, in the one fixed frame of reference, the four-dimensional space-time continuum,

It has long been known to certain persons, and strongly suspected by others, that there is not, nor can there be, a means of relating our subjective impressions of the external world to any objective reality existing outside our consciousness. In trying to discover the real nature of the world by sensory perception and intellection we are, as one writer has put it, in no better position than a fish which should strive to become clear as to what is water.

It is all the more strange, therefore, that there should be any lingering belief that the discoveries of science at any given point represent the totality of possibilities in that particular direction. To the philosopher who is engaged in relating all aspects of knowledge and arranging them into a comprehensive system, the contribution made by science is only one of many in the vast sum of data provided by human experience, and it is something that by itself is no more conclusive than are any of the others taken separately. The philosopher may, and should, correct his theories where established scientific fact requires it, but he is under no obligation to imprison his thought behind doors that science itself is fast breaking down.

Among the factors of experience which cannot be ignored is the testimony from innumerable sources all down the ages to the existence of certain beings who appear to belong to a different order of nature, and because of this have been regarded as supernatural. No study of anthropology is complete without them, for in the guise of nature spirits, tribal deities, angels, djinns and the fairies of folklore they are found at the centre of all primitive cults and the earliest forms of religion. If their appearance were confined to the history of man in pre-scientific ages they could be dismissed as fantasies of the dream-world which primitive man finds difficult to distinguish from reality, but this is far from being the case.

Apart from the phenomena of the modern seance room there have been remarkable instances from the remotest antiquity up to recent times of people finding themselves in communication with non-human entities of various kinds. One of the most impressive of such cases in Europe was that of Emanuel Swedenborg. It was outstanding by reason of the fact that Swedenborg was among the most distinguished scientists of his day, a man of penetrating intellect and unimpeachable integrity who could neither have been subject to delusions nor impelled by desire for notoriety. His possession of clairvoyant powers was demonstrated on more than one occasion, but further than this he claimed that he had received proof of the existence of a heavenly hierarchy, which he made to correspond roughly to the angels, archangels, cherubim and seraphim of Judeo-Christian tradition. He had seen and talked with radiant beings of different ranks and had passed freely from plane to plane of the extra-terrestrial system they inhabited. In many ways the experiences he described recall those of the mystics of all religions: but

aside from the necessarily Christian terminology Sweden borg used in accounting for them in accordance with his own religious ideas, they bear a most marked resemblance to the Buddhist conception of the conditions prevailing in the realms of the Devas.

Are we to suppose that these similarities of mystical or extra-sensory experience are coincidental? Or that they arise from a common infirmity of the human mind? Or, as a third alternative, may it not be more likely that they are all instances of the same kind of experience, a real experience which requires no further explanation than the possibility of an extension of consciousness to areas outside the particular space-time continuum in which our consciousness normally functions?

To ask where, in the world of material objects, these beings can exist is irrelevant. In a universe where space and time are fused into one concept, and where absolute points of reference have ceased to be and even the exact simultaneity of events is impossible to determine, it were as relevant to enquire *when* they can exist. It is clear that any such question is wrongly posed, because it is based on the assumption that the world we know is precisely as it appears to us, and further that our particular plane of experience is the only possible one, whereas not only is there no valid ground for that assumption but all the inferences are against it.

Considering that the world as we know it subjectively does not correspond to the actual objective world of physics, and that every attempt to bring them together results in a paradoxical situation, we must admit that we already have knowledge of two discrete and seemingly incompatible worlds, the subjective and the objective, in

which somehow we contrive to have made the subjective our natural habitat. In some way the subjective appears to derive from the objective; but since the latter itself becomes subjective when we examine it—or rather, since what we cognise is only another subjective version of it—the truth may well be the other way round. The plain fact is that no individual can establish philosophically the existence of any other being in the world outside his own consciousness. And this absurdity is the only result that formal logic can lead us to.

The model cosmology of Buddhism is not hampered by any such considerations. It is constructed on the assumption that the plane of human experience is only one out of many. The perfection of insight-wisdom is to abolish the artificial constructions of subjective and objective which are both equally void of reality. This being so, it is not important what view we choose to take, and one is as valid as another. For example, the world of an animal's sensory apperceptions is not the same as that of a human being, and this despite the fact that both animal and human being are living in the same objective world and gaining their information about it from much the same kind of sensory apparatus. The world of the fish is completely real and valid, so long as the fish does not strive to become clear as to what is water. Only then does the fish receive intimations of another kind of world outside the one it has always known, but what that world is like must remain an enigma to it unless it can develop a different kind of psycho-physical organism to enable it to live in the different conditions. The same kind of barriers exist between animals and human beings sharing the same environment; each interprets it differently,

according to his capacity and the selective processes of his consciousness. Only the points of contact between the various currents of consciousness of different beings sustain the apparent reality of a world common to all of them.

The Buddha's teaching was concerned with suffering, its cause and its eradication; it was, as He often emphasised, a pointer to the way of release from conditioned existence and was not to be entangled in any of the conflicting views that originate in man's misinterpretation of phenomena. The Buddha Himself did not erect any cosmological system, but only stipulated that any concepts that were held should be in conformity with the general principles of causality. As a consequence, the early Buddhists adopted the Vedic cosmology that was current at the time. It was a typical pre-scientific cosmology, and any attempt to reconcile its physical features with those of the earth as it actually is would be vain. It would also be a misguided effort, for in Buddhist hands the system was never intended to be an exact geophysical account of the world but a metaphorical description of cosmological processes, and the early Buddhists adapted it to that design when they took it over. For this reason its Buddhist form agrees in certain important respects with a hypothetical model of the universe based on scientific principles. Alone among pre-scientific cosmologies it has no need of a First Cause, but is self-existent and self-renewing by natural laws; it is cyclic, one universe disintegrating and vanishing, to be succeeded by another which consolidates from the atomic debris of the former; and it admits of a multiplicity of world-systems existing contemporaneously.

Such were some of the modifications which Buddhist thought, influenced by the Buddha's insights, produced in the earlier Vedic design, and it is these general principles which distinguish it from all other attempts on the part of pre-scientific man to visualize the kind of world in which he lived. The advance in thought which it represents must be immediately apparent to anyone who compares it with the primitive creation-myths of Egypt, Assyria and other ancient centres of world culture. It can justly claim to be the prototype of all models of the universe which have rational principles as their foundation.

With these facts in mind we are better able to approach the next stage of our enquiry, which concerns the nature of the celestial worlds (Deva Lokas) and their position in the Buddhist cosmological system.

THE THIRTY-ONE ABODES

31 Neva-saññā-nāsaññāyatanūpaga Devā
30 Ākiñcaññāyatanūpaga Devā
29 Viññāṇañcāyatanūpaga Devā
28 Ākāsāñcāyatanūpaga Devā

27 Akaniṭṭhā Brahmā
26 Sudassi Brahmā
25 Sudassā Brahmā
24 Atappa Brahmā
23 Avihā Brahmā

21 Vehapphala Brahmā 22 Asaññā-satta Brahmā

20 Subha Kiṇha Brahmā
19 Appamāṇa Subha Brahmā
18 Paritta Subha Brahmā

17 Ābhassara Brahmā
16 Appamāṇābha Brahmā
15 Parittābha Brahmā
14 Mahā Brahmā
13 Brahma-Purohita Brahmā
12 Brahma-Parisajja Brahmā

11 Paranimmita-vasavatti Devā
10 Nimmāna-rati Devā
9 Tusita Devā
8 Yāma Devā
7 Tāvatiṁsa Devā
6 Catumahārājika Devā

5 MANUSSA LOKA (Human beings)

3 Peta Loka 4 Tiracchāna Yoni
1 Niraya 2 Asura Nikāya

Translation of the Chart

31 Sphere of Neither-Perception-Nor-Non-perception
30 Sphere of the Knowledge of No-thingness
29 Sphere of the Infinity of Consciousness
28 Sphere of the Infinity of Space
27 World of Supreme Brahmas
26 World of Clear-Sighted Brahmas
25 World of Beautiful Brahmas
24 World of Serene Brahmas
23 World of Immobile Brahmas
22 World of Sensationless Brahmas
21 World of Greatly-Rewarded Brahmas
20 World of Brahmas of Steady Aura
19 World of Brahmas of Infinite Aura
18 World of Brahmas of Minor Aura
17 World of Radiant Brahmas
16 World of Brahmas of Infinite Lustre
15 World of Brahmas of Minor Lustre
14 World of Great Brahmas
13 Ministers of Brahma
12 Retinue of Brahma
11 Devas enjoying (or utilizing) the creations of others
10 Devas enjoying their own creations
9 Devas enjoying pleasure
8 Yāma Devas
7 Realm of the Thirty-three Devas
6 Realm of the Four Great Kings (of the Four Quarters)
5 THE HUMAN WORLD
4 The Animal World
3 World of Unhappy Spirits
2 World of Demons (Titans)
1 Realms of Inferno (Hells)

Key to the Chart

1 to 11 Sense-desire Sphere (Kāma Loka)
12 to 27 Fine-material Sphere (Rūpa Loka)
28 to 31 Immaterial Sphere (Arūpa Loka)

---

1 to 4 Sub-human worlds (including animals)
5 HUMAN WORLD
6 to 11 Worlds of Devas of the Sense-desire Sphere
12 to 22 Lower Brahma Worlds
23 to 27 Pure Brahma Worlds
(Inhabited by Non-returners and Arahats)
28 to 31 Brahma Worlds of Disembodied Consciousness
(Immaterial Sphere)

---

1 to 21, 23 to 27 } Beings having Material Body and Consciousness
22 Beings having Material Body without Consciousness
28 to 31 Beings having Consciousness without Material Body

Classification by way of Birth-cause in the respective worlds

1 to 4 Unwholesome Karma
5 Mixed Karma, predominantly good
6 to 11 Very good Karma
(in the field of worldly activity)
12 Weak experience of the First Jhāna
(Mental absorption)
13 Moderate experience of the First Jhāna

14	Full experience of the First Jhāna
15-16-17	Experience of the Second Jhāna (Weak, moderate and full)
18-19-20	Experience of the Third Jhāna (Weak, moderate and full)
21-22	Experience of the Fourth Jhāna (Weak and moderate)
23 to 27	Attainment of the Fruit of Non-returning (Anāgāmi-phala) with full experience of the Fourth Jhāna
28 to 31	Experience of the Four Arūpāyatana Jhānas (Concentration on the Formless).

III

For a better understanding of what follows the reader is recommended to refer to the Chart of the Thirty-one Abodes and its key.

There are three categories of existence in Saṁsāra, corresponding to three types of consciousness which are the result of past Karma. The three categories are: the Sense-desire Sphere, the Fine-material Sphere and the Immaterial (Formless) Sphere. Each category contains several different classes of beings; in one of them, the Asaññā-satta Brahma Loka of the Fine-material Sphere (22), consciousness is in a state of suspension and the Brahmas of this class consist only of material form, The reason for this will be seen later.

The world of human beings and animals is physically the same world, and forms part of the Sense-desire Sphere. Below it, but still in the same category, are the realms of beings in states of deeper misery, while above it are the realms of the Sense-desire Devas. The boundaries between the human world and those immediately above and below it are not always sharp, and there is the possibility of communication between them. In the case of human beings and animals, although the worlds they inhabit are distinct worlds, there is no physical difference between them; the boundary is purely psychological. This fact gives us the key to the truth that the reality of all the separate spheres of being lies in the realm of consciousness rather than in that of objectivity.

All the diverse classes of beings have been born in their respective worlds by reason of actions, good or bad, performed in the human sphere of worldly (i. e., sense-desire) activity. When the Karmic result-current of the deeds which caused their rebirth in these worlds is exhausted they pass away and are reborn elsewhere. The human world is the realm of moral choice and volitional activity where Karma is generated, so that it is possible for a human being to guide his destiny by his actions. But beings in the realms of misery (1 to 4) are merely the passive sufferers of the evil consequences of bad Karma performed in past lives as human beings; they have no moral sense and therefore no ability to produce good Karma while in their present state. When their bad Karmic result-current is exhausted they die and are reborn according to the nature of residual or 'stored up' Karma from previous lives, which has not hitherto had an opportunity of

fructifying. If that Karma is good they may be reborn as human beings, or even as Devas.

Here it is necessary to note that the statement that beings in the lower worlds are not capable of performing good actions is a broad generalisation; there are exceptions to it. The more intelligent species of animals are often capable of moral action, and although the mental impulse towards it (Kusala-citta) is much weaker than in human beings, still it can be present.

The position of Devas in the Sense-desire Sphere is also one of limited moral responsibility. For the most part they are passively enjoying the pleasurable results of good Karma performed in previous human lives and are not confronted with the necessity for moral choice that devolves upon human beings. Their pleasures are of an aesthetic nature, and the worlds they inhabit are those which have given rise to the belief in a happy after-death state in all religions. Any of the traditional descriptions of heavens, paradises or Isles of the Blest can be applied to them, with one important exception: they are not eternal.

The Devas of these realms are beings of varying degrees of intelligence, but as was mentioned earlier they are in some respects at a disadvantage as compared with human beings. Since they are in general unable to produce fresh wholesome Karma themselves, they are compelled to acquire further merit vicariously, by participating in the good activities of human beings. From this fact comes the 'sharing of merits with the Devas' which is a feature of Buddhist life. When a Buddhist gives charity or performs some other good deed, he invites the Devas to share the merit. Those

Devas who are aware of the moral law of causality are then able to produce in themselves good mental impulses (Kusala-citta) by approving the good action, and since intention is the basis of all activity the mental impulse thus produced constitutes good Karma. This practice of sharing merits is also extended to intelligent beings in the realms of suffering, on the same principle.

The Devas of the Sense-desire Sphere are not enlightened personalities, and many of them are more deeply immersed in delusion than are some human beings. Their birth as Devas was not in consequence of their having been Buddhists, for any human being, no matter what his faith, may be reborn as a Deva. It was the result simply of some good action, quite irrespective of creed. Therefore they carry with them into the Deva-life whatever beliefs, true or false, they may have held as human beings, and there is nothing in the conditions of the Deva worlds to disillusion them. On the contrary, the immensely long life-span of the Devas encourages the belief that they are immortal, and many imagine that they have attained the eternal heaven of the religion they followed as humans. Others believe that they are indeed Gods. Brahmas of the higher spheres are liable to the same delusion, for in the Dīgha Nikāya it is related that Mahā Brahma imagined himself to be 'Almighty Brahma, the Most High, the Invincible One, the Omniscient One, the Ruler, the Lord, the Creator, the Maker, the Perfect One, the Preserver, Controller and Father of all that was and will be'. Even when he realised that he was mistaken he continued to maintain the deception before the minor Brahmas of his retinue (12, 13, 14).* Elsewhere, in the

* In contrast to this we find Sakka, a king among the Sense-desire Devas, asking the Teacher of Gods and Men for religious instruction. Just so do worldly men occasionally show more good sense than some philosophers !

Aggañña Sutta (Digha 27), the Buddha explains how theistic religion originated as the result of this kind of error.

Those Devas who are subject to such delusions of grandeur see no need for acquiring fresh merit, and when they ultimately pass away from that state they are reborn in some other world on the strength of residual Karma, good or bad, in the same way as are the beings below the order of humans.

From this it will be understood that the nature of Devas in the Sense-desire Sphere varies enormously. Althougb they are Devas because of some good Karma of the past, their present nature is not necessarily good. An interesting example of this is the case of Māra, the Tempter who figured so largely in the life of the Buddha from the time of His Enlightenment until the final passing away.

Māra is the Kāma Deva of Hinduism, the beautiful young god of sensual desire who corresponds to the Greek Eros. Because of his sensual nature and his intense will to prevent other beings from gaining their release from Saṁsāra he is known to Buddhism as Māra and Namucci, the personification of suffering and death. The Buddha referred to him always as the Evil One. The connection between the God of Love and the God of Evil is not so difficult to trace as it may seem; even in the Hindu Puranas Kāma Deva appears in this role in the legend of his endeavour to tempt Siva from his asceticism. In some Buddhist texts Māra is the name given to a subdivision of Devas belonging to the Yāma realm (8), but more often it stands symolically for the passions and impurities of the mind. In a characteristic passage (Saṁyutta Nikāya XXIII, 35) the Buddha dismisses the Māras as nothing

more than a personification of the personality-groups that bind beings to the wheel of rebirth. In this we may see an illustration of the way in which subjective and objective cease to exist as separate concepts in the light of absolute knowledge and insight. But the Māra who is an objective being of the Sense-desire Sphere is himself destined ultimately to become a Silent Buddha.

IV

We have already noted that the existence of other realms of being, normally invisible to us, has been taken for granted from the earliest times, on the statements of those who claimed to have made contact with them through what is nowadays called extra-sensory perception. This faculty, or set of faculties, is a subject that is now engaging the serious attention of psychologists, among them Dr. J. B. Rhine who, to quote Prof. Thouless, has 'confirmed the findings of previous students of telepathy that the mind could acquire knowledge without the use of the senses and even make correct reports of events that lay in the future.'

The light that this may shed on the experiences of Swedenborg and others is not yet very clear. What is clear, however, is that we may no longer dismiss those experiences as hallucinations; they bear a relationship to the world of actual events which can be examined and tested by experiment.

The Buddhist view is that it was experiences such as those of Swedenborg and the mystics which gave rise to the universal belief in heavan, hell and after-death states in general, and so laid the foundations of the different religions by wrong interpretation. This view assumes the actual existence of worlds other than our own, but to determine what grounds, other than psychical experience, there may be for the assumption requires that we should first of all come to an understanding of what our world really is.

This is far from being a simple task. We know the world to be the outcome of natural processes which are rational and intelligible, and whose laws science has shown itself capable of explaining satisfactorily up to a point. But its complexity is such that there are still many principles unknown to us, besides others recently discovered which are hard to reconcile with principles formerly accepted. One example of this is the way in which Einstein's special theory of relativity has upset the principles of Euclidean geometry, and in doing so has outraged the 'common sense' thought-habits of centuries. Einstein's mathematics proved that space in the vicinity of matter was not like the space of Euclid's geometry at all. In effect this means that in such space the angles of a triangle would not add up to two right angles.

The statement that the three angles of every triangle together must equal two right angles is a basic proposition of Euclidean geometry. Almost every other proposition that Euclid proved subsequently depended upon it; but the initial proposition itself rested on another proposition which could not be proved. All attempts to prove it on the part of later geometricians were uusuccessful, and

although it was not self-evident it had to be treated as an axiom. When it was finally decided that no sound proof was possible, the experiment was tried of constructing a non-Euclidean geometry, in which it was assumed that the sum of the angles of a triangle was less or more than two right angles. The geometry that results from either of these assumptions is not that of the space we know, but it will be a complete geometry and one that is self-consistent. If it is not true of the space we know, it will be true of a possible space. Such a space might exist, and there is no physical reason why it should not.

Now the important point in this lies in the answer to the question of whether the angles of triangles merely *do* add up to two right angles, or whether they *must* do so. If the answer had been that they must, the Euclidean geometry would necessarily hold good for all possible kinds of space; but since there are logical and self-consistent geometries in which they need not, it becomes evident that our space, and the kind of universe we live in, is not the only possible one.

But besides the non-Euclidean nature of space in the neighbourhood of matter, our world contains many other phenomena which, because they are undetectable to our senses, have remained unknown up to the present. Sound waves of frequency above 15,000 cycles per second are inaudible to humans, but can be heard by some animals; large areas of the spectrum are invisible to us, and electromagnetic waves and cosmic radiations are imperceptible without special instruments. Our visible world, in fact, contains within itself another world which would forever have remained unknown and unsuspected had it not been for the development of highly specialised

scientific techniques. For countless ages man has lived side by side with this invisible, intangible world without feeling its presence or being conscious of anything lacking in his total picture of the universe. And yet the world he lived in was itself dependent upon this other world with its complementary physical laws.

These extra data do not help us very greatly in our effort to form a mental picture of the world we live in; there are too many seeming contradictions for all of them to be accommodated within the framework of a single logical system of the kind to which we have been accustomed. The only remedy for this situation is to seek a definition of the word 'world' which shall be free from unnecessary encumbrances, yet exact enough to preserve its meaning in all contexts. We speak of a 'dream world', a 'world of the mind' and a 'world of the senses', and in everyday speech we make a distinction between the world of one man and that of another, as when we say that a Chinese farmer lives in a different world from that of a society debutante. These common usages point to a basic psychological meaning of the word: a world is a realm of conscious experience irrespective of whatever reality it may have as its objective base. It is in this sense that Buddhism speaks of the realm of animals and that of human beings as two distinct worlds. If we take as our point of reference the sensible world of human consciousness we can describe that of animals and other sub-human beings as infra-sensible, and those of Devas as supra-sensible worlds.

Taking this standpoint, there is no question of the Deva worlds being supernatural; they can exist in a space-time complex different from our own, yet still subject to natural laws of causality, the laws appropriate

to the kind of geometrical space in which the Deva-consciousness functions. Buddhist relativity takes account of this when it deals with the life-span of the Deva worlds, which by human standards is enormous. In the Tāvatiṃsa Deva Loka one day and night are said to be equal to a hundred terrestrial years. Since the life span in that particular world is one thousand years it equals thirty-six million years of terrestrial time. In the higher Brahma worlds one life span covers several cycles of the disintegration and re-formation of the universe. These vast chronological stretches may appear fantastic, but we have only to consider the nature of time in relation to the light-years of interstellar space, and to remember that man himself is comparatively a newcomer on the vast stage of geological time, to realise how arbitrary are our conceptions of time as it is measured out for us by the movements of the earth. In certain circumstances our subjective experience of time is something that does not at all agree with the clock; but subjective time is so much stronger than its objective measurements that we speak of time dragging or speeding by, as though the universe slowed down when we were bored and accelerated when we were happy. And the mind's time in dreams can telescope hours into seconds.

The transition of consciousness from one time-scale to another would therefore appear to rest upon an adjustment in the sense of duration. So we find that in the forty-five years between the Buddha's Enlightenment and His passing away, which corresponds to something less than twelve hours in the life of a Tāvatiṁsa Deva, beings from the Deva and Brahma worlds came to Him repeatedly for religious teaching.

This could be possible only by an adaptation of the Deva time-consciousness to the time relations prevailing in our own world. Abhidhamma psychology, which explains the processes of consciousness in terms of a succession of inconceivably rapid thought-moments 'geared', as it were, to the vibrational frequencies of matter,* offers suggestive lines of speculation as to how such an adjustment could come about.

The whole question of contact between the human and the supra-sensible worlds is connected, though not in a very important sense, with the theory and practice of Buddhist meditation. The connection is not important because the object of meditation in Buddhism is not to obtain extra-sensory faculties such as claivoyance, clair-audience and the like, but to gain liberation from Saṁsāra; but meditation is a means of extending consciousness, and so these latent faculties are developed in it incidentally. On the other hand, there are yogic and mystical systems which have the cultivation of the psychic faculties as their chief, if not sole aim. It is in these that the 'gods' are seen as all-powerful entities, and all kinds of myths come to be attached to them.

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* Buddhism teaches that matter is composed of atoms (Paramanu) and is in a continuous state of flux. In modern terms we should say that it consists of waves or vibrations in the space-time continuum. The arising and passing away of the units of consciousness, which is also flux, bear a certain relation to the frequencies of the flow of matter which causes the impression that there is an enduring 'thing' where in fact there is only a process.

An analogy may be found in the seeming continuity of a film, which is made up of separate still pictures passing through the projector. In certain circumstances the illusion breaks down. When the revolutions of a wheel on the screen do not synchronise with the rate of the separate pictures of it, nor with the rate of visual perception, the wheel appears to be revolving backwards while the carriage is moving forward!

V

Ah! Happily do we dwell, owning nothing;
We shall live on joy itself, like the Radiant Gods.

Dhammapada 200.

So far we have discussed the Devas of the Sense-desire Sphere, but it is when we turn to a consideration of the Fine-material and Formless Spheres that we find the connection between the supra-sensible worlds and meditational practices becoming more intimate. All the beings in these worlds have been born there as the result of some degree of attainment in one or other of the Jānic practices, or states of trance characterised by mental absorption. Five of these states, corresponding to the five worlds, 23 to 27, in the Fine-material Sphere, are attainable only through meditation leading to insight into the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism. The beings who are reborn as Brahmas in these worlds are those who in their human life have practised the Buddhist meditation up to the attainment of the fourth stage of purification, that of Anāgāmi or Non-returner. For the Anāgāmi who dies before reaching the last stage, Arahatship, only one more birth is possible and it takes place in one of these worlds. From there, on the expiration of his life-span, he passes into final Nirvāna. These are the only realms in the Thirty One Abodes from which it is possible to pass straight into Pari-Nirvāna without being reborn as a human being.

All the other Brahma worlds, up to the Asaññā-satta Brahma Loka, are accessible through meditational practices found in other systems besides Buddhism, but those systems cannot give final release from the Saṁsāric

spheres of conditioned existence because they are lacking in the psychological elements which eradicate the grasping and rebirth-producing tendencies; so also they do not give rise to Insight-wisdom. When the Buddha attained Enlightenment His first thought was to impart the Doctrine to His former Teachers, the ascetics Ālāra Kālāma and Udaka Rāmaputta; but He found that they had both died, and in consequence of their Jhānic practices had been reborn in Brahma worlds where they were unable to profit by His discovery of the superior method.

Reference has already been made to one peculiar world in the Fine-material Sphere, the Asaññā-satta Brahma Loka, where existence is only in material form, with consciousness suspended. Rebirth on this plane comes about as the result of a type of meditation directed towards the suppression of consciousness, on the theory that escape from suffering lies in unconsciousness. Ascetics who are successful in this particular form of concentration achieve their objective, but it is not the final goal. When the Karmic effect they have produced is exhausted consciousness re-arises in them and they pass away from that state to be reborn into sentient existence again.

All the Brahma worlds from 12 to 22 are connected with various levels of attainment in the four Jhānas. To those who practise the Jhānas they are immediately accessible, for in the trance state the yogin is actually existing in those worlds although his physical body is on earth. When he returns to human world consciousness he retains the memory of his experiences in the Brahma worlds and this, as we have already noted, is how the various theories of a Creator-god, an

immortal soul and an eternal heaven have been propagated. It is probable that the more primitive religions originated from contact with the lower Devas, while the higher religions, or the higher forms that evolved from the primitive, owe their inspiration to yogic experiences of the Brahma worlds. Such experiences are open to anyone, no matter to what creed he may belong, so that the errors of interpretation are as many and various as the individual experiences. One who sees a Deva or Brahma will naturally identify what he sees with whatever god he happens to believe in. To complicate the situation still further, the being he sees may himself imagine, like maha Brahma, that he is the supreme deity! This accounts for the similarities, as well as the differences, between the great religions of the world.

The cult of a tribal god from the Sense-desire Sphere who demands burnt offerings may in time have born within its fold a man of superior nature who has cultivated meditation in a previous life. This man through trance experiences becomes aware of the existence of a higher type of being, or hierarchy of beings, which he takes to be God the Creator and his angels. He then teaches a higher creed, one in which the emphasis is on love rather than on crude power, but still in the name of the tribal god of his ancestors, which is the only god he knows. The nature of the god then appears to have altered, and the yogi-prophet's new teaching may be accepted or not, according to circumstances. What usually happens is that a new religion branches off from the old. So there comes about an organic growth in religious ideas, coupled with a maltiplicity of creeds. In several of His discourses the Buddha described the origin of religions in yogic trance experiences of this nature.

It is understandable that primitive man has contact more readily with beings of the infra-sensible worlds and the lower worlds of the Sense-desire Sphere, so that the cruder forms of religion, animism, shamanism and nature-worship, are the first to appear and continue to survive in very similar forms all over the world. For this reason it is not possible to mark any clear division between primitive religion and demon-worship.

The four worlds of the Immaterial Sphere belong to the types of consciousness developed in the Meditation on the Formless. In the highest of them, the realm of Neither-Perception-nor-Non-perception (31) the consciousness is so subtle that it cannot be said to be either perceptive or non-perceptive. The remaining three are connected with the meditations on the Infinity of Space, the Infinity of Consciousness and the Realisation of the Void respectively; these are known as the Arūpāyatana Jhānas and have as their base an abstract concept unrelated to forms.

The worlds in which consciousness exists without a physical base and without functioning as consciousness in the way we understand it, by discrimination and intellection, are the most difficult for us to visualize. Because the human mind is dependent on a physical organ, the brain, we have come to identify it with its material medium. When a particular area of the brain is damaged, consciousness is impaired correspondingly; if the damage is complete, consciousness is apparently destroyed. And even this is not the whole story; any damage to the neurological system in any part of the body may cause changes in the mental processes, a fact which seems to indicate at the same time that the mind cannot be exclusively identified with the brain,

but is associated with the total physical organism. Yet with all this it has not been proved that the material organism is absolutely indispensable to consciousness. Even if we grant that human consciousness cannot subsist apart from its physical base, which is by no means certain, it does not follow of necessity that all forms of consciousness are subject to the same rule. Far from eliminating the possibility of other dimensions of being, governed by laws distinct from those of our own world, science has shown that they are practically possible.

Whether we are willing to accept this in theory or not, two points are deserving of attention in order that we may avoid prejudiced thinking. They are (a) that the science that deals with our world cannot be expected to prove or disprove the existence of other kinds of universes where different scientific principles may prevail, and (b) that if science denies them, in the face of evidence from other sources, the onus lies on science to prove that they do not exist. Since science can do neither the one nor the other it must be considered neutral until further data are obtained.

At the present stage it is useless to appeal to science except in refutation of some belief which requires supernatural additions to the order of the physical universe. It is only then that science is competent to utter an emphatic No. We may for instance believe, as many responsible scientists now do, that our earth has been visited by inhabitants of other planets, without offending against scientific principles. We may go further, and credit these visitors with possessing faculties far superior to our own,, still without passing beyond the limits of scientific tolerance. But if we were to believe that they were capable of miraculously interfering with

the order of nature we should be overstepping the bounds of what science considers to be possible. Now that so many of the barriers between the possible and the impossible have crumbled away, this is the only kind of boundary that can still be recognised between a belief that is scientifically possible and one that is supernaturalistic and irrational. And even that may have to be enlarged in the near future to accommodate the results of the latest investigations in para-psychology.

VI

In view of these facts, should we not widen our conception of the universe? Have we not evidence that even the reality immediately surrounding us is much vaster than the limitations of our sense experience would lead us to suppose? And if so, are we not justified in seeking other modes of awareness that will expand the horizons still further?

There is only one way in which we can obtain real knowledge of other planes of being, and that is by the extension of our own consciousness through meditation. The experiences so gained will be purely personal ones, of course, and will not convince anyone else. Nor is it necessary that they should do so, for that kind of conviction is not required for an understanding of the truths taught by Buddhism. Those truths stand equally for one world or an infinite multiplicity of worlds. And they are to be tested not by speculation or theorising but by practical application.

From the standpoint of the Buddha, the Teacher of Gods and Men, all beings revolving in Saṁsāra are of the mundane order. They are impermanent, subject to sorrow and devoid of self-essence. From the most insignificant forms of life up to the highest Brahma worlds there is to be found the primal nescience and the craving that leads to repeated birth, old age and death. The delusions of divinity are no more important in the reckoning than are the instinctive urges of the animal seeking its food. To all beings with the capacity for understanding the compassion of the Buddha offered one gift—the Doctrine of Deliverance.

Are the worlds of Saṁsāra reality, symbol or dream? That is for each of us to find out for himself. Whatever answer we may find in our own minds, beyond it all there is the supreme reality of Nirvāna, transcending the world of both Gods and Men, and all that is conditioned.

"For, O Bhikkhus, if there were not the Unconditioned, in which there is neither arising nor passing away, there could be no release from the conditioned. But since there is that Unconditioned, there is also the release from the conditioned with its arising and its passing away."

If all the Saṁsāric worlds are in the ultimate sense unreal, transient phases of the unenlightened consciousness, it follows that Nirvāna, in which they cease to be, is the sole reality. As it was for the Teacher of Gods and Men, so it can be for us.

* * *

Cosmological Thought in Buddhism and Modern Science

AT the outset it must be realised that the Buddha did not profess to give any specific instruction regarding the formation of the universe. He laid down, as an essential part of His system of philosophy only such principles as were general and universal: because it is these alone which have a bearing on man's own nature, and must be understood in order to bring the mind out of delusion into the state of enlightenment.

At the time of the Buddha's ministry, certain ideas belonging to the schools of Vedic Brahmanism were current regarding the physical world, and, since the Teacher Himself did not categorically deny them, they passed into Buddhist thought with only such modification as was imposed by the central tenets of the philosophy. The view held by the compilers of the Upanishads was that the universe, which is essentially illusory (Māyā), is a projection of the eternal, self-existing Brahman: that is to say, of the *nirguṇa Brahman*, the neuter, or attributeless Brahman, as distinct from the personalised, or *sa-guṇa* Brahmā. It was supposed to come about by the interpenetration of Prakriti (matter) and Purusha (spirit). It was thus the play (*līlā*) of the divine principle which comprehended all things and permeated them, in a single unity. It is this view which is held today by the school of Advaita, or absolute monism. There is also a school of qualified monism, but since it shares the central concept of divine creation, or projection, what may be said of it in relation to Buddhism is the same as may be said of Advaita.

It was this theory of a primal moving spirit, which Buddhism discarded, substituting for the Brahman the universal law of inter-dependence and causality. If there were a creator, Buddhism argues, he would himself be subject to some law whereby he could perform the act of creation. His being itself requires laws, for to exist is to function, and there must be principles, anterior to and above the functioning, to make the functioning possible. To put it in another way, every action presupposes alternatives, and these alternatives must exist as potentials before the action can be possible. When we say that an action is *possible*, we postulate a law or principle of possibility, and that principle must exist prior to the action. Therefore there cannot be a First Cause in the absolute sense. There must be a prior condition to the existence of anything, including God. This principle was actually acknowledged in the earliest Upanishadic thought under the name of *Rta* – the law to which even God is subject. But the Upanishadic schools never pursued this concept of necessity to its logical conclusion. Buddhism does so, and the result is the rejection of a First Cause entirely. The intermediate agent, God as creator, being found unnecessary, Buddhist thought concerns itself solely with the laws of being, and there is no attempt to present them in anthropomorphic guise.

But Buddhism agrees with Vedantic ideas in accepting the concept of cyclic evolution and devolution of universes. In Hinduism a world period represents a day of Brahmā; it is a period during which a complete cycle of evolution and decline, leading up to the dissolution of the universe, takes place. This is followed by the period of quiescence, or night of Brahmā, between the collapse of one universe and the arising of the next. Leaving out the poetical

symbology of the days and nights of Brahmā, the Buddhist cyclic system follows the same pattern.

The measurement of cosmic time is the "great Kalpa" (Pāli: *Kappa*), which may be termed an aeon. Its duration is said to be incalculable: "Imagine a mountain consisting of a solid cube of rock, one league in length, in breadth and in height. If with a piece of cloth one were to rub it once at the end of every hundred years, the time that it would take to wear away such a mountain would not be so long as the duration of a Great Kalpa." The Great Kappa, according to Ledi Sayadaw, is not a period so much as a notion of time itself. It corresponds to the idea of an eternity.

The Great Kalpa is itself divided into four subsidiary Ralpas, each representing a cyclic period of a particular world-system. These periods which may be denoted as aeons, too, are not calculable, and may vary in length. And while there are four such aeons to an eternity, each of them in turn is subdivided into shorter Kalpas or ages, of more or less measurable duration. The third type of Kalpa is that which corresponds to the maximum life-span of any particular being.* The fourth and last Kalpa is the period that intervenes between the destruction of one universe and the formation of another.** During this

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* In the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta, where it is stated that the Buddha could, had he wished, have lived on to the end of the Kappa, the period there signified is said by some to be the normal duration of a human life, which is taken as being one hundred years. Others consider that it meahs until the end of a world-period, at which point all material things pass away.

** *Niyama Dipani*, by Ledi Sayadaw Mahathera, transl. by Beni Barua, D. Litt, M.A. and U Nyana Patamagyaw. Rangoon 1921, page 18ff.

vast period of time - or timelessness, for time exists only in relation to events – the substance of the entire cosmos is reduced to its primal elements and distributed throughout space in an undifferentiated mass. In terms of modern physics we would say that the sub-atomic forces are disintegrated and dispersed. This may come about in two ways: the universe may expand until it reaches the point at which the force of repulsion overcomes that of of attraction, and the particles of matter are scattered widely throughout space, or it may shrink until the opposite effect is brought about, and an intense condensation of matter occurs. If, on the other hand, the universe is a "steady-state" system, neither expanding nor shrinking, the breaking up of its constituents might occur through a disturbance of the interior forces of equilibrium. Anyone of these causes could bring about nuclear fission at some stage of the process. All that would then be left of the cosmos would be the released electronic nuclear energy, with which the whole of space, whether expanded, contracted or stable, would be uniformly filled.

In this condition the quiescence would not be altogether complete; so long as a residuum of energy remained, there would be the potentiality of renewed differentiation of matter and a reconstruction of the universe in accordance with natural law. Like the pendulum which swings to its greatest extremity and after a moment of equipoise swings back, or like a vast pulse beating to an unvarying rhythm, the cosmos repeats its past history. Movement within the distribution of matter begins to increase; clots of matter begin to form, and over immeasurable ages the island-universes begin to take shape once more. The process may commence with a tremendous cosmic explosion, or in the case of a "steady

state" system, with a number of minor individual explosions where the concentrations of matter are greatest. In either case the result is the same: the matter forms itself automatically into stellar clusters and nebulae, and in the course of time space again assumes the general aspect with which we are familiar. And life again begins to evolve.

The Cakkavāla

Each univĕrse is said to comprise a number of world-systems, or Cakkavālas, and the number of these world-systems contained in the whole cosmos is incalculable. The term universe denotes a particular system, having its own gravitational field and revolving about a centre. Such are the spiral and cloud nebulae and other groups which constitute the island-universes of outer space. The Cakkavālas are local world-systems embedded in these, as our own solar system is believed to be. According to the evidence available at present, our solar system is situated in one of the arms of a vast galaxy of the flattened disc type, resembling the great spiral nebulax in Andromeda. This galaxy is estimated to contain about 150,000 million stars, and the distance between them increases the further they are removed from the centre of concentration around which they all revolve. Our solar system, which is 30,000 light years away from the galactic centre, makes one full revolution around it in approximately 250 million years. This is known to present-day astromomers as one cosmic year. If we accept that the age of our earth is in the region of 3,500 million years, and that the entire planetary system is as old, the earth is about 15-16 cosmic years old. That is to say, our solar system since its

inception has made some 15 to 16 revolutions around the centre of the galaxy.*

Most of this is scientific conjecture at present, but it is based on reliable data and must be accepted until or unless future discoveries show it to be inaccurate. I quote it here for the bearing it has upon the older cosmological concepts of Buddhism.' Agreement between them is found in the common hypothesis of a cyclic breaking-up and restoration of the cosmos in accordance with natural law, and in the rejection of any word for a First Cause or creative agency. In both concepts the act of creation is perpetual, and is the outcome of natural necessity — it results from the nature of energy and the laws which govern it.

The second important point of contact is the agreement as to a multiplicity of world-systems, the Cakkavāḷas of Buddhism and the solar systems of present-day astronomy. "In our metagalactic system there are hundreds of millions of galaxies and each galaxy may be composed of hundreds of thousands of millions of stars. Even in our Galaxy which numbers approximately 150,000 million stars, there may be hundreds of thousands of planets on which life is likely to originate and develop. Our infinite Universe must also contain an infinite number of inhabited planets."**

There are in the texts of both Theravāda and Mahāyāna Buddhism innumerable reference to the multiplicity of worlds that bear sentient life. But it is only in the Commentaries, not in the words ascribed to the Buddha himself, that any detailed description of them is given.

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* *The Universe*, by A. Oparin and V. Fesenkov, p. 60.

** V. Fesenkov. Op. cit. p. 232.

And there, as we should expect, the picture presented has some features in common with other ancient cosmologies: the earth is by implication flat, with a great mountain, Meru, at its centre. There are seven great oceans encompassed by seven rings of mountains, and four great continents are situated respectively at the four cardinal points of the compass. The southern continent is Jambudīpa, the Land of the Rose Apple, or India. Between the four great land masses there are smaller islands. The sun, moon and planets were supposed to revolve around Mt. Meru, night occurring on Jambudīpa when the mountain obscured the sun, and it was day on the Northern continent, Uttarakuru.

There are two points to be noticed in connection with this peculiar view of the earth. The first is that, if it were indeed the picture currently accepted at the time of the Buddha — and some very ancient texts from the Tipitaka tend to show that it was — it would not have been to the purpose of the Buddha, who was a teacher of spiritual truths, to correct it. Had he attempted to do so, his time and efforts would have been wasted. Few would have understood, and the understanding would not have benefited them spiritually. The majority would have dismissed it as the theory of a lunatic. Furthermore, Pāli is an undeveloped language, in which a vocabulary of relatively few words had to be made to express all ideas. Lacking the necessary terminology, which modern languages have developed and expanded as the growth of thought required, the Buddha would have been handicapped by these limitations of language, even had he wished, to described the motions of the planets and the physical construction of the solar system. In Pali a word, the primitive

meaning of which is very simple, is made to serve for highly complicated ideas, owing to the absence of any borrowings from other sources, or the evolution of new verbal forms. Thus the word *khandha*, which philosophically stands for an aggregate of physical and psychological factors, means in its original sense merely a "lump" of something. It is even used physiologically to denote "shoulder". With such a restricted vocabulary ideas tend to remain rudimentary, or to be misunderstood. We therefore have no means of knowing whether the terms employed to describe a world-system are to be taken literally or as makeshift approximations, analogies or peotic fictions.

However that may be, it is a striking fact that the true picture of the solar system as we now have it, is actually in closer conformity with the Buddha's teaching of universal principles that is the traditional one held by the Buddhist commentators. It carries out the principle of uninterrupted revolution denoted by the wheel (cakka) and that of having no point of commencement, of which the physical symbol is the sphere. If, in fact, we would seek for a material illustration of the law of recurrence, of cyclic progression under the domination of incessant change, we should find its perfect expression in the revolving island-universes, the solar systems and the structure of the atom.

In the Saṁyutta Nikāya (II, 178), the Buddha speaks of the succession of Kalpas in the following words:

"Undetermined, Bhikkhus, is the beginning of this world. The past extremity (*pubba-koṭi*) of beings running on in birth after birth bound by ignorance and the bonds of craving is not manifest."

The Pāli word translated here by "undetermined" is *anamata* (= *a-mata*), meaning that which is unknown and unascertained. The sense, therefore, is that the past extremity or ultimate beginning of the cycles is not to be known by calculation. There is no limit by which it can be defined. "The past extremity . . . is not manifest" is equivalent to saying that it does not exist. A similar use of the phrase is found in the same collection of texts, the Samyutta Nikāya (II, 52), where the Buddha asks: "If, Ānanda, there be no birth, can old age and death be manifested?" To whieh Ānanda replies, Truly, they cannot, Lord." From this it is clear that "to be manifest" means to exist, and "not manifest" means not to exist.

The proposition contained in the words "The past extremity . . . is not manifest" can therefore only mean that, although each Kalpa has its beginning, middle and end, there is no beginning to the succession of Great Kalpas in general.* The cyclic successions have existed always, the reason being that they do not exist *in time*, but time, as a progression of events, exists *in them*. The time of Bergson, which is absolute duration, is not susceptible of measurement other than that which is brought about by cutting into the flow of specific events. It is these more or less arbitrary divisions that we commonly mean when we speak of time. A beginning of time in the state of timelessness is clearly an impossibility; it is only *periods* of time that can have a beginning and an end. We shall have occasion to deal further with the philosophical difference between time as a symbol of space and time which is absolute duration when we discuss the nature of the flux of becoming, later on.**

Ledi Sayadaw, *Niyāma Dipani*, p. 19.

** Henri Bergson, *Philosophy of Change*, p. 15 sq.

Stages of the Great Cycles

In the *Anguttara Nikāya* (Vol. II, p. 142; The Fours, No. 156), the Buddha says:

"There are four incalculable epochs, Bhikkhsus. The four are: the Enveloping Epoch; the Enveloped Epoch; the Developing Epoch; the Developed Epoch. The epoch, Bhikkhus, during which there is cosmic envelopment is not easy to reckon as so many years or centuries, or tens or hundreds of centuries."

The Enveloping Epoch is the period during which the world-system is in decline; the Enveloped Epoch is that in which it is in the state of dissolution. The Developing Epoch is the period of growth when life evolves from lower to higher stages; the Developed Epoch is that in which evolution has reached its highest peak. "Having once been reinstated, while the world-system continues to be in that state it is said to be Developed."* Each of these periods is a fourth part of a Great Kalpa, so it will be seen that every Great Kalpa involves the full development of sentient life followed by its total disappearance from a world-system.

It is perhaps of rueful interest to note that the ancient Buddhist ideas regarding the destruction of worlds tally in important respects with those held by other religious and philosophical systems. Three types of destruction are postulated: by thermo-dynamic action, by liquidation and by atmospheric disturbance. These causes correspond to three of the Great Primaries of which matter is (in philosophical terms) composed. Earth or solidity alone is excluded as a possible agent of destruction.

* Ledi Sayadaw, *Niyāma Dipani*, p. 20.

The idea is that from time to time there is a disturbance of balance between the primary constituents, and when one or other of them increases to such an extent that it passes the critical point, it gains ascendancy over the others. There are at present in the cosmos planets and stellar systems in a state of combustion, others in liquidation and others in a condition of atmospheric disturbance. All suns are fiery masses, whilsts some planets are in the molten stage, others have their surface covered by liquid, and some are enveloped in dense atmospheres of gases noxious to organic life. As one example of the latter we may take the planet Jupiter in our own system. This member of the solar family is known to be surrounded by dense clouds of ammonia and methane in a state of violent perturbation, with possibly a layer of ice or nothing more than a thick slushy layer, perhaps of ammonia particles, surrounding a rocky core. Saturn also has a stormy and unwholesome atmosphere composed of ammonia, methane and hydrogene.* They, like so many other bodies unknown to us, are not at present able to sustain highly organised life, but whether they will be able to do so at any future time must depend upon either a radical change in their condition or else a wider range of adaptability in living organisms than we are at present able to conceive. Despite its carbon dioxide and possible formal-dehyde clouds, Venus alone in our family of planets seems to offer possibilities of being the cradle of future life. But at present, if the theories of Menzel and Whipper are correct, its actual surface is covered completely by a liquid mantle, a large, continuous ocean.**

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* Fred L. Whipper, *Earth, Moon and Planets*, pp. 163, 181.

** V. Fesenkow, *The Universe*, p. 225.

I have described the ancient belief that worlds may end by combustion as a rueful one because of the possibility that man might eventually bring it about himself, a possibility which at the time of writing seems to be in the increase. There is, in any case, a clear connection in Buddhist thought between the total Kamma of beings taking birth in a given world-system and the fate of that system considered as a physical entity. While universes, like all other phenomena, are subject to the law of dissolution and must after the lapse of ages pass away, the manner of their destruction is in a certain sense determined by the accumulated Kamma of the beings inhabiting them. Perhaps there is a mythological shadowing forth of this truth in the almost world-wide tradition of a great deluge which brought a former epoch to an end.* In a universe subject to almost entirely to mechanical laws of growth and decay it is man who is the sole willing and independently acting agent, and as such he plays a unique and decisive role in the process of cause and effect. His actions are capable of disturbing the harmony of nature to a degree that can be catastrophic. This idea is found not only in Buddhism but in the Taoist conception of man's relation to the cosmos, where in fact it occupies a central place. It can be a contributing factor in the destruction of a world-system, either directly or indirectly; but whether it is or not, an end must come in accordance with natural law. On the other hand, the re-formation of the universe after a period of quiescence is brought about by unexpended residual Kamma of the beings who formerly lived in it. Thus we find it stated in the Digha Nikāya:

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* In Mesopotamian tradition, in the Bible, in the Hindu Puranas and even in ancient South American civilisation.

"Now there comes a time, brethren, when, sooner or later, after the lapse of a long long period, this world-system passes away. And when this happens beings have mostly been reborn in the World of Radiance, and there they dwell made of mind, feeding on joy, radiating light from themselves, traversing the air, continuing in glory; and thus they remain for a long long period of time.

"Now there comes also a time, brethren, when, sooner or later, this world-system begins to re-evolve. When this happens the Palace of Brahma appears, but it is empty. And some being or other, either because his span of years has passed or his merit is exhausted, falls from that World of Radiance, and comes to life in the Palace of Brahma. And there also he lives made of mind, feeding on joy, radiating light from himself traversing the air, continuing in glory; and thus does he remain for a long long period of time."

(*Brahmajāla Sutta, tr. by T. W. Rhys Davids*)

Every world-system in its complete state comprises thirty planes of existence in addition to that occupied by human life. These planes are spoken of in the popular cosmology of Buddhism as being ranged one above another, with Mt. Meru ascending in their midst, but as we have seen, they have no definite spatial location in reality, but interpenetrate one another on different vibrational frequencies. Nevertheless, it is necessary to map them in ascending order, to make their relationship to one another explicit, just as they are found in the Buddhist treatises on the subject. When this is done, the result is a chart of Saṁsāra, showing all the states comprised in what it known as the Three Worlds (*t-iloka*), namely the Realm of Sense-Desire (*kāma-loka*), the Fine-Material

Realm (*rūpa-loka*) and the Non-Material Realm (or World of Formlessness; *arūpa-loka*). (See the Chart on p. 14).

Of these thirty-one abodes, those that constitute the sphere of sense-desire (kāma-loka) are the numbers 1 - 11 in our chart, including the inferior states, the human world and the lower heavenly planes. Above these the numbers 12 - 27 are worlds of fine substance, but still having form (rūpa) and differentiation. In all of these worlds, the beings are equipped with both mind and body, with the sole exception of No. 22 where the Brahmas have form only. The reason for this peculiar sphere will be given later. The chart numbers 28 to 31 constitute the non-materials, or formless, worlds inhabited by a highly-developed class of beings that exist solely on the psychical level, as zones of mental energy.

The Fine-material Realm includes a group of five worlds (the Pure Abodes or Suddhāvāsa; Chart 23 - 27) which are accessible after death only to those who, before their death, have attained the third of the four stages of Holiness, i.e. that of an Anāgāmi, or Non-returner. On the expiration of the life-span in that sphere, the Anāgāmi passes straight into Parinibbāna, having attained to the state of Sainthood in these Pure Abodes, which belong to the Brahma-worlds. They are worlds of form because it is not possible to attain enlightenment without the realization of Impermanence, Suffering and Not-self in the physical as well as the mental constituents of personality.

The spheres above them (Nos. 28 to 31) are the four non-material, or formless worlds which correspond to the four formless Jhanas. They are the planes on which are reborn those who have obtained the mental absorption of the infinity of space, infinity of consciousness,

of no-thingness and of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, but who have not transcended them by ultimate realization and the complete destruction of the elements of attachments. These Brahmas at the end of their life-span are reborn in one of the lower planes.

It is these states that were conceived as being the ultimate goal by the Vedic teachers prior to the Buddha, and are so still by modern Hinduism. They represent the "union with Brahma" which was attained by Siddhattha Gotama's first teachers, Alara Kalama and Uddaka Ramaputta.

The sphere of the sensationless beings (asaññā-satta Brahmaloka) whose nature consists only of material form without any accompanying mental Aggregates (nāma-kkhandha), is where ascetics are reborn who on earth have attained in their meditations the temporary subsidence of mental activity, under the mistaken belief that suffering is solely a characteristic of the mental life. After exhaustion of the Kamma causing that form of existing, they are reborn again in a lower sphere both material form and mind exist.

Between some of these worlds of beings and others there is no great physical separation, and in some instances they occupy the same dimensional space, as in the case of the human and animal worlds. Others interpenetrate one another so closely, although their vibrational frequencies are different, that by an adjustment of their mental frequencies beings belonging to one plane are able to manifest on others. It is for this reason that the phenomena of spiritualism are so often confused and baffling. The entities that are contacted during spiritualist seances often belong to worlds lower than the human,

more particularly the world of Petas, or unhappy spirits, who by excessive attachment are "earthbound", until such time as their unwholesome Kamma is expended.

When it happens that psychic manifestations from the higher planes appear, it can only be from those worlds that are but very slightly above the human, that is to say, the lower planes of the Deva-loka. It is from these comparatively happy realms of existence that spiritualists derive the comfort that the psychic evidence for survival affords them; but the entities reborn on this level have no greater knowledge concerning the ultimate truths of existence than we have ourselves. Often, indeed, their knowledge is less. The only fact of which they are certain is that they are living in pleasant sourroundings and that their happiness is increased by their ability to communicate with the human world. For the most part they seem to be unaware that they must eventually pass away from their present condition to be reborn elsewhere. In psychic communications there is, however, the recurring theme of transitoriness: the entities are said to pass on to higher realms after a period of supposed preparation. In reality they are frequently reborn as human beings or in some still lower world. From other communications received by psychic mediums it is evident that the state between one human birth and another is not always the "Summerland" which spiritualism, for the consolation of the bereaved, emphasizes so strongly.

Communication with the higher realms of being in the fine-material plane is possible only to those who have strenuously cultivated the meditational practices, the "seers" or adepts of developed psychic power. In

the case of the formless worlds a specially high attainment is necessary. Only those who have cultivated the four Jhanas associated with the sphere of infinite space, infinite consciousness, no-thingness and neither-perception-nor non-perception (an indescribably subtle and refined state of consciousness) can make contact with the beings of those realms. To Hinduism this is known as "Union with Brahma"; and is believed to be the ultimate attainment. The Buddha who was a Knower of Brahma" in the sense that he had himself made contact with the Brahma-world, attributes to this faculty on the part of other sages, who had not gone beyond the realm of form, the belief in a Creator-god. The reference to this is to be found in the Brahmajāla- and Aggañña Suttas of the Digha Nikāya.*

It is written that at the destruction of a world-system, either by fire, water or wind, the realms of existence are demolished from the lowest plane up to the highest Brahma-world.

At the end of the cycle, the beings from the lower worlds, by attaining the Jhanic states, become reborn among the Radiant Gods of the Brahma-world. From there, after the lapse of the Enveloped Period, they again descend to be reborn in the human world, which has by then been reconstructed by the cyclic process of natural law and has become sufficiently evolved to manifest the higher forms of life once more. The faint

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In these two Discourses the Buddha describes how, after encountering in the trance state a Brahma of Radiant Form who himself believed that he was the creator of the universe. Sages of the past taught this theory as revealed religion.— See *Buddhism and God Idea* (The Wheel No. 47), p. 9.

memories they then carry with them of their forme state of being form the foundation of all the primitive cults of survival and are the starting-point of man's religious instinct.

" Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God who is our home",

as Wordsworth wrote in one of those inspirational flashes which relate poetry to the race-memories of mankind.

Evolution

When in the course of a Developing Epoch a world reaches the stage at which life becomes possible, inorganic matter, by a natural process which biochemists may now be on the point of being able to duplicate, becomes transformed into cellular structure which exhibits the characteristics of life; that is growth and the assimilation of nutriment from its surroundings.

Since doubt began to be felt about the theory of the supernatural creation of life on our planet, scientists have been seeking other explanations of its origin. According to a report of C. Meunier, Louis Pasteur had conducted a series of experiments to ascertain whether viable bacteria or their spores existed in carbonaceous meteorites, the object being to discover whether the germs of life had reached the earth in debris of a shattered planet of our system. His results were negative and remained unpublished; but even had the panspermic theory, as it is called, proved to be correct it would

still not have solved the problem of the ultimate beginning of life, but only shifted it a stage further back. At the time of writing it is generally believed by those who are studying this question that wherever life may have arisen in the universe it has done so independently.

The latest researches have revealed certain steps in the process of evolving living organisms which seems to give an outline of the necessary conditions and stages for life to appear. It has been known for a long time that some very rudimentary organisms, such as viruses, occupy a borderline position between the organic and inorganic, and these may well be the pattern of life in its initial stages. It now seems probable* that at some point of the earth's development a process of direct hydration of hydrocarbons occurred as the result of their combining with whole molecules of water. The organic compounds then by interaction with ammonia yielded nitrous derivatives of hydrocarbons together with derivatives of oxygen, The data furnished by organic chemistry show that low molecular hydrocarbons and their oxygen and nitrous derivatives when in a humid atmosphere or an aqueous solution go through a far-reaching polymerization and condensation, which eventually leads to the formation of very complex substances, very closely resembling those that are found in the composition of living organisms. In the earth's primary hydrosphere many types of sugars and other carbohydrates could have been formed, and recent experiments have shown that such complex and at the same time widespread substances in organisms as porphyrines, nucleotides, and others can be synthesized from the simplest carbon and nitrogen compounds.

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* See Oparin, *The Universe*, p. 34f.

The next stage, that of the formation of the protein molecule, depends only upon the formation of amino acids, which are its basis. This has been illustrated by the experiments of S. Miller, who after passing electrical sparks through a mixture of methane, hydrogen, ammonia and water vapours was able to detect by the method of paper chromatography the presence of glycine, alanine and other amino acids in the solution. From these and other experiments which have shown how amino acids may be polymerized into chains of amino acid particles to form the basis of the protein molecule, a general plan of the process whereby the primary synthesis of proteins and other complex organic compounds could have taken place on the liquid surface of our planet is now made clear. The problem, however, does not end there. To become living cells the protein bodies have to acquire the property of continually regenerating themselves from the substances that form their external environment. This process of self-regeneration and self-reproduction is not found anywhere in the inorganic world. It is metabolism which is the distinguishing characteristic of life. This involves a highly complicated series of co-ordinated activities in the organization of living bodies. Hundreds of thousands of chemical reactions must take place in a living body, and these not only combine harmoniously in a single sequence, but the entire order of events must be regulated to condition the self-preservation and reproduction of the vital systems, in conformity with the conditions of the external environment. Therefore the origin of life is essentially the origin of metabolism, the processes of assimilation and dissimilation of nutriment; and this, apparently, to a specific end. The stage at which it arose in the simplest living organisms represented the vital point of transition from inert substance to living cell structure.

Buddhism gives four modes by which living organisms come into existence, corresponding to four genetic types of beings, the oviparous (born of eggs), the viviparous (born alive), the moisture-generated and the abiogenic, or spontaneously arisen beings. It is said that in the Developing Epoch beings were first born abiogenically, through the action of their past Kamma operating on matter. Later on, this spontaneous arising of life gave place to sexual transmission of the seed, and beings became either oviparous or viviparous. Some commentators include fish and worms among the moisture-born, but there is no canonical authority for this; it was their own interpretation in the light of a belief which persisted even in England until the 18th century.

In the Aggañña Sutta (Digha Nikāya) we are told that there was a period in the early history of the earth when great downpours of water covered its surface. It was in this liquid world that the spontaneously-arisen beings first appeared. They then lived subsisting on the nutriment they extracted from the surface of the water. It is not difficult to see in this, when allowance is made for the nature of the Pali language and the ideas it was capable of expressing, a very close approximation to what science now supposes to have occurred. When solutions containing individual protein substances such as those we have been discussing are mixed together, the protein molecules which at first were evenly distributed throughout the solvent begin to unite in molecular piles. When one of these piles reaches a critical point in size, containing perhaps several millions of molecules. it separates into drops, which are called coacervates.

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* Ledi Sayadaw, *Niyāma Dipani*, p. 56.—Dr. Johnson believed that eels came into existence spontaneously in water.

All the proteins that were diffused in the solution now concentrate in these drops, while the surrounding liquid becomes deprived of any. Now these protein coacervate drops, despite their liquid consistence, evidently possess some kind of internal, very elementary organization. They have a marked ability to absorb different substances from the solution around them. The assimilated substances then begin to interact chemically with the substance of the drops themselves, chiefly with the proteins. In this way observation has shown that rudimentary processes of disintegration and synthesis of various substances are likely to take place in the drops. If by reason of their individual composition and structure, synthesis takes place more rapidly than disintegration under the given conditions of environment, the drops become dynamically stable formations so long as the given conditions exist, and they may not only persist for an indefinite time but can increase in bulk. They thus exhibit the two primary characteristics of life, assimilation and growth, although they have not yet attained the status of living organisms in the technical sense.

Just as in the laboratory tests which have demonstrated these facts, there must have been a time when the proteins or protein-like substances which originated in the water of the earth's primary hydrosphere, had to form these complex coacervates. This in turn had to lead to the origination of a "natural selection" of these individual systems. The present theory as to how this came about rests on the assumption that the primordial waters were a solution of various organic substances and inorganic salts. These materials were absorbed by the coacervate drops and entered into chemical reaction with the substances of the drops, giving rise to the processes of

synthesis and disintegration. The efficiency of these parallel processes was determined by the internal organisation of each individual drop. Consequently it was the drops which in the given circumstances of environment were endowed with a certain dynamic stability, on account of which the processes of assimilation and growth were faster than those of disintegration, which were able to exist for any length of time. Those which were not so suitably organized failed to survive for long, and contributed nothing to the future evolution of organic matter. They vanished from the scene, while the drops which had the most perfectly adjusted organisation, their power to absorb fresh elements being in excess of the process of decomposition, continued to grow. They would increase in size until they reached a critical point once more, and then they would divide, forming smaller drops which each went its way, inheriting the basic dynamic stability which had characterized the original drops.

Such appears in outline the manner whereby non-living matter became changed into rudimentary forms of life. It led ultimately to the origin of protein bodies with a fully organized metabolic system, the first truly living beings to appear on this planet.

Now this is all very well, but does the mechanistic view explain everything, when it has explained how life could originate abiogenically? Even when we grant that in the remote epoch we are discussing, there probably was an increase in the amount of organized substance and in the number of coacervate drops in the hydrosphere, and that the organisation of these drops was constantly changing to meet alterations in the environment, with these changes subject always to the rigid control

of natural selection, it still seems very doubtful whether life would have evolved beyond the stage of the most perfect adaptability for survival, if there had not been some other factor besides natural selection at work. Man has gone a long way beyond the point at which he became best fitted to survive; his directional trend now is, if anything, towards the acquirement of faculties more likely to lead to self-destruction than to further progress. And it would not be by any means the first time that natural selection had led a species to destruction. Using the case of mankind to illustrate the point it may be arguable that it is when natural selection has reached the stage of perfect adapatability to environment that its effect is to work in reverse, precisely because it is a mechanical, not a purposeful, process. But notwithstanding the powerful arguments in support of this view, the fact in the course of evolution nature produced beings which are not satisfied merely with coming to terms with their environment, but desire satisfactions that have nothing to do with survival — often, in fact, militating against it — introduces a disturbing element into the picture. To ignore it would be to deny the existence of factors in human life that are at least as important as those of growth and procreation. What need of evolution is served, it might be asked, by those qualities which most distinguish man from the lower forms of life? Such qualities as, for example, self-sacrifice, idealism, concern for the welfare of others? Even among certain animals these characteristics, or something approaching them, are not entirely lacking; yet neither in man nor beast do they conform to the pattern of an activity governed only by natural selection. From that point of view they appear as nothing but aberrant forms of behaviour.

More than that: in a world of mechanistic principles no cause can be assigned to them that would explain them away as sports of behaviour parallel to the sports of genetics. And a phenomenon without a cause is a fatal flaw in the system. If these are merely a superior form of conditional reflexes on the higher evolutionary rungs we are still under the obligation to discover by what they are conditioned and why these particular conditionings became effective in some individuals but not in others. So far as I am aware, there is no theory which plausibly accounts for them on the lines of evolutionary necessity.

Returning to the Buddhist view of evolution, we find it to be inseparable from the concept of moral order. But the moral order, instead of being imposed from without, as part of a preconceived plan, is something which is inherent in the law of causality. The evolutionary ascent is preceded by a descent of beings whose deterioration led them to birth in grosser material forms. Thus, before the advent of the first unicellular micro-organisms it is said in the Aggañña Sutta that beings from the Brahma-worlds came to spontaneous birth in planes adjacent to the terrestrial sphere, where they remained for a long time.

(*Here the Author's manuscript ends*)

Expanding Universe and Steady-States Universe

THE universe visualised by de Sitter is a pulsating system. In this view the entire universe comprising all the galactic systems scattered throughout space, expands during a period of many million years, and, having reached its extreme limit of expansion begins to contract at the same rate. The reason for this, as explained by Eddington, is that two principles operate throughout the universe: the accepted Newtonian attraction between the Milky Way systems, and a priciple of cosmological repulsion. The density of matter in the de Sitter universe is extremely low, so that the force of Newtonian attraction may be considered negligible. This being so, the cosmological repulsion operates without hindrance, and the universe expans. If more matter is somehow introduced into the system, the reciprocal gravitation-attraction tends to hold the mass together, and counter-acts the expansion. As the amount of matter is increased, so the rate of expansion is retarded. If such a process takes place it can reach a point at which the Newtonian attraction between the galaxies is just strong enough to equal the cosmological repulsion, with the result that there is no expansion. This is the world as conceived by Einstein, a balanced system. If still more material is added to the mass, the attraction becomes stronger than the repulsion and the result is a contracting universe. Eddington puts forward a further theory, to the effect that "at one time the system expanded itself to much greater size than it is now, that then it shrank and now again expands. Accordingly it was possible that great velocities were produced by a force directed inwards, whilst the inward velocities were converted to

outward velocities and in that way the system was forced to swing through a state of equilibrium." (Quoted by Dr. Anton Kropatsch (Vienna) in THE MAHA BODHI, Vol. 70, No. 5. 1962)

Tolman is one of those who favour the hypothesis of successive cycles of expansion and contraction of the universe. This state of things, in his view, is due to variations in the material masses in the universe. But it so happens that we are at present aware only of the passing away of matter, and Tolman's hypothesis seems to require at some stage a creation of fresh matter. It is possible, however, that the radiation dissipated in space somehow transforms itself again into material particles - that is, into electrons. atoms and molecules - and so matter is "reborn". Not the same matter, but a force-result (energy-resultant) of matter that has existed previously. These particles would then gather automatically into larger masses, which again through the effect of their own gravitation would become agglomerated into nebulae, suns and finally galactic systems, and in this way the cycles of the universe could go on repeating themselves endlessly. This view receives substantial support from Einstein's theory of the equilibrium of mass and energy, and in fact experiments have already shown that the photons of the higher radiation energy, such as *gamma*-rays, can under certain conditions be transformed into pairs of électrons and positrons. It may be that the law of entropy which we see in operation, whereby the final death of the world seems inevitable, is only a section of a much more comprehensive process-the process, in effect, of the death and rebirth of the universe. This view affords a striking correspondence to the doctrine

of the death and rebirth of sentient beings as it is understood in Buddhism, for in this model of the universe there is no abiding substance, but only the actual process, as it appears through the cyclic transformations of energy, of recurring situations.

Bertrand Russel, in "The Scientific Outlook" joins issue with Eddington and Jeans for professing to see in these theories ground for assuming the operation of a creative principle, and calling it God. In this conflict of scientiffc minds Buddhism takes a middle and unique course. It finds no reason for presuming an active and intelligent principle behind the process, but maintains that there is an impersonal law which in its manifestations appears to be intelligent because it is intelligible. Because we ourselves are formed in accordance with the laws of causality, and can become capable of understanding them, it must appear to us at a certain stage that there is a mind similar to our own at work in the processes of nature. Because we find much to approve in the orderly working of the universe, and much that appears to have been designed, we are ready to overlook the many ways in which, from the humanistic point of view, it could have been constructed better. And we overlook also the fact that our sense of its design derives from the fact that we ourselves are part of that design, and cannot see it in any other way than that in which it reflects our own nature. In the same way it appers to us that flowers must have been made beautiful for our satisfaction, whereas the truth is that we see flowers as beautiful only because we ourselves are conditioned to see them in that way. The flower's beauty is part of its functional design; if circumstances had forced it to be different in every way, our sense

of the beauty of flowers would be different also. Our aesthetic values are conditioned by the forms of nature, not the other way round. Similarly, when we see beauty in the mathematical laws of the cosmos, it is not because they emanate from a mind similar to our own, but because our minds are formed in accordance with the mathematics of our world.

The Magic Mountain

MAN has always thought of his gods as dwelling on the heights. 'Lift up thine eyes unto the hills, whence cometh thine aid,' sang the Old Testament psalmist; and in ancient times the holy places, the fanes and altars of sacrifice where the priests went to make their offerings and take counsel with the tribal deities were nearly always on some lofty eminence. In Buddhist countries, too, the stupa or pagoda is given a commanding situation, from whence it dominates the surrounding countryside and can be seen many miles away, the first object to be lit by the rays of dawn and the last to reflect the gold of the setting sun.

It is in the high places that the gods have their abode. Towering, inaccessible peaks seem always to have exercised an awesome fascination over the minds of men. It is little wonder, then, that the holy mountain has been an archetypal feature of mythology from the earliest times: it expresses man's wonder and fear in the presence of unknown powers veiled in cloud and swirling snow-invisible powers that presided over the

storm, hurling the shattering thunderbolt down into the trembling valley, or else calmly, silently contemplating the puny affairs of mankind from century to century in a timeless, brooding eternity.

The cosmography of ancient India had its sacred mountain, Meru, sometimes called Sineru, Sumeru, Hemameru or Mahāneru. It was thought to be situated in the exact centre of the Cakravāḷa, or world-system, and so north of the southern continent, Jambudvīpa. The fact that Meru was located in the north of the system suggests an identification with the Himālayas, and the name Hemameru gives support to this possibility. There can be little doubt that in early times the idea that an immense peak lay beyond the tall, mysterious boundaries of the Himālayan range, which cut off the horizon from the plain-dwellers below, took hold of the imagination, and it was in those high, remote solitudes that the gods of the storm and blizzard—the first nature gods—were believed to have their home. A memory of it may have been preserved by the branch of the Aryan race which travelled westward, giving rise to the Olympus of the Greeks, the abode of Zeus, wielder of the thunderbolt, and all his divine hierarchy. For Hindus, Mount Kailasa, a real Himālayan peak, has been a holy place revered for centuries as the seat of Siva and his consort Parvati. Even today it is the resort of sanyasis following the tradition of the Rishis of old who were said to practise their austerities on the lower slopes of Mount Meru. It was with the rise of the Saivite cult that Kailasa gardually came to take a more important place in legend than the Mount Meru of Vedic times. With the advent of Tantra later on, Meru was taken into the yogic systems as a sombol of the spinal column, and an elaborate connection was built up

between it and the various *chakras* to exemplify the principle of macrocosm and microcosm. The mystic formula of 'As above, so below,' familiar to Western occultism through the Kabbala was equally well known to the Tāntrikas, who saw the human body as the universe in miniature and made Meru its vital core. The principle is seen to be really logical when we consider that the atom is a universe on the microcosmic level.

The Buddha was not concerned with teaching geography, and the early Buddhists did nothing to change the ideas prevalent in Vedic India with regard to the conformation of the earth. The existence of Mount Meru was taken literally and a precise description of it was given together with other details of *cakravāḷa.* According to this cosmology there is an infinite number of *cakravāḷas,* and each is a closed system having the general features of all the rest. Each *cakravāḷa* has a Mount Meru as its centre, surrounded by four great continents. With the scruplous attention to satistics which distinguished the early Buddhists, exact dimensions are given. Mount Meru has its base 84,000 *yojanas* below sea-level and rises above it to the same height—again the principle of 'As above, so below.' On its summit is situated the Tāvatiṃsa Deva-loka, the heaven of the Thirty-three (gods) under the rulership of Sakka, the Buddhist equivalent of Indra. This is the lowest but one of the Kāma-loka heavens. At the base of the mountain lies the Asurabhavana, home of the Asuras or Titans, who are perpetually at war with the gods. The Asuras are the 'Fallen Angels' of Indian mythology. Just as Yahweh in Judaic tradition is supposed to have cast the archangel Lucifer and his rebellious cohorts out

of heaven, after which they became powers of evil, so Indra is said to have thrown the Asuras down from Tāvatiṃsa when they tried to usurp his authority. The two myths are so similar that it is difficult to believe that they had not a common origin or that one was not derived from the other, particularly in view of the fact that both have a parallel in the Greek myth of Zeus casting Prometheus, leader of the Titans, out of heaven for an offence of the same kind. This would seem to be another of the archetypal myths that have been preserved from prehistoric times. It may have originated in an attempt to explain what man, having a confused recollection of former happiness in a higher state of being, a Deva or Brahma-loka, felt forced to regard as his present fallen state, of which the Genesis legend of the Fall offers another example. On the other hand, the widespread legends of a war in heaven may have had their origin in an actual physical event, a cosmic disturbance such as that described by Immanuel Velikovsky in 'Worlds in Collision.'

To complete the geographical description of the earth as it appeared to Vedic Brahmanism and early Buddhism, Meru is surrounded by seven circular and concentric mountain ranges, between which lie the great oceans. Four great islands (*Mahādvīpā*) of continental size lie at the four cardinal points and midway between the base and summit of Mount Meru; and scattered between them are two thousand smaller islands. The outermost ring of mountains is the boundary of the *cakravāḷa* and the entire system is said to be supported by water (*āpo*) and ultimately by air (*vāyo*). Later Hindu myths introduced the idea that the earth was upheld by either a tortoise or an elephant, but it seems

clear that before the time of the Purāṇas it was not considered necessary that the earth should have any substantial support. The Purāṇas represent a decline of thought into pseudo-realism; they tried to give an account of the situation based upon common observation.

Precise measurements are given for all details of the world-system: the areas of the continents, the extent of the oceans and the respective heights of the encircling mountains are all set down with assurance. The *cakravāḷa* itself is represented as being flat and constructed on the principle of a layer-cake, with successive strata of soil, rock, iron etc., one above the other. On the underside is a layer of the nutritive essence (*oja*) which was the first food of material beings when the universe was reconstructed at the beginning of the world-cycle.*

Each *Cakravala* is a complete and self-contained unit, furnished with its own heavens and subhuman spheres of existence. It has its own Devas and Brahmas, and they even bear the same names as those of our own world, the names being not so much personal appellatives as the titles belonging to offices and functions. It follows therefore that each world-system also has its own Buddhas. More is made of this point in the Mahāyana Sūtras than in Theravāda. References to the infinity of worlds and of Buddhas are very frequent in the literature of Sanskrit Buddhism, and by the same token it contains more allusions to Mount Meru than are to be found in the Pāli Tipiṭaka. The composers of the Mahāyāna Sutras, some five or six centuries after the Parinirvāna of the Buddha, delighted in aggrandising their descriptions by the introduction of innumerable world-systems.

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* Referred to in the Vinaya, where Mahā Moggallāna Thera is said to have offered to turn the *cakravala* upside down so that the bhikkhus could obtain nourishment during a severe famine.

From the isolated condition of each distinct world-system it would seem that beings do not transmigrate from one to another in the course of rebirth. I have not found any text to support the idea that transmigration occurs between one *cakravala* and another. When a world-system is destroyed by natural forces at the end of an aeon (*kalpa*), all that remains of it is the formless Brahma-loka, and it is there that all beings are obliged to be reborn until a new cycle of the development of the universe (*samvatti*) takes place.* It appears that beings revolving in Saṃsāra are inseperably connected with one particular *cakravala*, the history of which is like that of an individual being: that is to say, it is the history of a causal continuum, not of an abiding entity. Just as the individual dies, leaving nothing behind but the potential of his Karma, which in the sequence of cause and effect produces another psycho-physical organism to carry on his identical world-line of conditioned phenomena, so a universe also comes to an end, but in due course another one comes into existence in the same line of cause and effect, through the Karma of the totality of beings belonging to it. Thus every being is in some sense identified with his world-system, and his world-system with him, until such time as he puts an end to the association by attaining Nirvāna.

The cosmography of which Mount Meru is the centre is a very detailed construction, and it is repeated in space and time to infinity. The pattern is unvarying and is known down to its minutest particular. Where and how all this information was obtained, must always remain a matter for conjecture. It is disturbing to the modern mind to find the imaginative creations of the past taken

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* Brahmajāla Sutta etc.

for sober truth; but ancient thinkers were not committed to factual accounts. Experience, for them, was something almost entirely subjective, and it is on the subjective and subliminal level that we have to seek out the meaning of this strange geography.

Its most characteristic and striking feature is that uniformity which I have stressed. It bears the marks of an attempt to achieve orderliness within the diversity of experience, to reduce to a comprehensible pattern the contradictions and irrelevancies that confront us and to draw an inferential picture of the laws that govern them. The same kind of striving for geometrical design shows itself in the stylized art of ancient Egypt, in the rigid formalism of the Japanese No play and the recurring motifs in primitive decorative art all over the world. These are all attempts to assert the continuity and harmony of life from its lowest to its highest aspects, to disclose an order of reality that is not apparent in the surface phenomena of nature. The need to reveal a structure, or where it seems to be absent to *impose* it upon the world of experience, is a universal one. Man is not secure in a chaotic world; he demands of the universe that it should make sense. At different times this deep unconscious need has expressed itself in art, mythology, philosophy and science, and often in all of them simultaneously. The Magic Mountain is a symbol, and we are entitled to ask of a symbol nothing more than that it should suggest something which cannot be expressed directly. Man is the image of all that is; he is himself the *cakravāḷa*, his body made up of the four great elements, his arterial blood the great oceans that course between his vital organs and the encircling bones. And just as Mount Meru stretches from the depths up to heaven, the bridge that makes it possible for every human being to strive

towards the highest, so the vital core of man's structure, the great column through which the nerve-impulses flow, unites his being, from the lowest organs up to the seat of consciousness, in one integrated whole. Indeed this fathom-long body contains the world, its origin and its cessation: not in any figurative sense but in literal truth. When the yogin sits in *padmāsana*, his spinal column straight 'like coins piled upon one another,' his form is that of the cosmos, supported and united by Mount Meru. And when man first adopted the upright posture which distinguishes him from all other animals, it was the outward sign of his power to discriminate and command his life. Mount Meru was set up between heaven and earth, and all things, good and bad, fell into place.

The universe as we know it today has no 'up' or 'down'. Nadir and Zenith have become relative and interchangeable terms, and man has suffered a vertical disorientation. Yet the symbolism of Mount Meru has not lost its validity, if we choose to accept the Values it stands for. And it is well that we should do so, for they are abiding values, with their justification in our own being, irrespective of the view we take of the external world. It does not matter that heaven is beneath as well as above us; the heaven of our own experience is situated outside of space and time and there is no direction where it is or is not. It does not matter that no modern Moses goes up into Mount Sinai to commune with his God, nor that no Zeus hurls his thunderbolts from the summit of Olympus nor Indra from his citadel above the snowline of Hemavant; Mount Meru, the Magic Mountain of legend, is always with us, the eternal challenge to seek, to toil upwards—the call to stand erect and forge our destiny out of the materials and with the tools within our reach.

Each of us has at the centre of his cosmos a mountain that he must eventually climb. The path is steep and rugged, and there is only one—conquest of the self. But when he reaches the summit he can take the final leap that will separate him forever from the world of sense-desires and of suffering. It is only from the loftiest height of human attainment that we can at last see Nirvāna face to face.

IS THERE A BEGINNING?

BUDDHISM does not so much deny the theory of a Creator-God as make the hypothesis not only unnecessary, but actually incompatible with the known facts. If, in order to exist, the world must have had a pre-existent Creator, how did this Creator himself come into existence. and by what laws was his own nature governed? If such a being was able to exist without a creator, the sole reason for assuming his own existence is removed, because the world itself can equally well exist without a prior cause. Can it indeed be said that the universe and the life process had any beginning, or are we constrained to think in the terms of beginnings only because of the limitations of our own mind?

A beginning is an event which has to take place at a specific point of space and time. It cannot occur in timeless void because the three conditions of time—past, present and future—which are necessary for the occurrence of any event, cannot obtain in a timeless state. For any

event to take place, there must be the time before its occurrence (past); the time of its occurrence (present) and the time after its occurrence (future). But time is an altogether relative concept: there must be events taking place to enable time to exist, and it is only by the regular occurrence of certain events, such as the diurnal rotation of the earth and the seasonal changes, that it can be known and measured.

The occurrence of events necessitates the existence of things. By things we mean objects that occupy space, and which by their movements in relation to one another mark, not only divisions in time, but also measurable areas in space. Space and time, therefore, are a unity; a qualitative whole with quantitative parts, or relationships. We may consider them separately, but we cannot make any statements concerning the one which do not in some way involve the other. This, stated broadly, is the basis of the theory of relativity. The knowledge of space and time depends upon consciousness and position without any fixed point of observation. Spatial and temporal movement is common to both the observer and the object observed, so that what can be known is not a "thing" but merely a relationship.

When this is understood it follows that there could never have been a beginning—an origin out of nothingness —of the universe or the life process. It is true that the universe as we know it evolved out of the dispersed matter of a previous universe, and when it passes away its reinains, in the form of active forces, will in time give rise to another universe in exactly the same way. The process is cyclic and continuous. The space-time complex is curved, and in a curved construction of inter-relationships there can be no point of origin or departure, so that in

this series of related causes it is useless to look for any First Cause. We tend to look for first causes and think them to be necessary only because our minds are conditioned to spatial and temporal relativity; the mind, by its very nature, must operate within the mechanism of which it is itself a part; it can deal only in relationships. This is why it is said in Buddhist texts—"the origin of phenomena is not discoverable, and the beginning of beings obstructed by ignorance and ensnared by craving is not to be found."

In the same way that one universe gives rise to another through the residual energy which is continually renewing itself—that is, through the principal of the indestructibility of matter—so the life of one being gives rise to another being which is not the same in identity and without involving an unchanging, permanent self. That which links them is called in Buddhism "kamma", or volitional activity; the continuation of the causal process is called "Samsara", or the cycles of rebirth; the actuality of rebirth and of existence without any unchanging principle of identity or self is called "anatta".

When it is said that world cycles or world periods, known in Buddhism as kappas, are of immeasurable duration, it must be remembered that all time concepts are relative; we measure them from our own standpoint. In an immeasurably vaster space context, the time context is correspondingly enlarged, so that events covering millions of years by our calculations can be measurable in terms of seconds. The brain may reel at the concept of an infinite of space-time constructions fitting into or impregnating one another endlessly in all directions, but it is not entirely outside the scope of human imagination. It figures quite largely in Buddhist thought;

there are an infinite number (conventionally expressed as "ten thousand", or "incalculable") world-systems and thirty-one planes of existence having vast differences in time measurement.

What is unthinkable is a state of non-causality where neither space, time nor events have any existence. This has to be understood by direct perception, which means bursting the bonds of relativity and its concepts and processes, and contacting within oneself the "asankhata" or unconditioned element. The thinking, reasoning and discursive mind, having exhausted its exploration of phenomena and discovered them to be all impermanent and void of essential reality, must transcend this mechanism, call a halt to the generative impulses, and thus bring about final liberation from all processes. This final liberation is called *Nibbana*.

Buddhism and the Origin of Life

THE Buddha did not give any specific teaching regarding the origin of the universe or of life. The question was said to be unanswerable from the level of ordinary mundane intelligence In the Aṅguttara Nikāya it is said: "The origin of beings revolving in Saṁsāra, being cloaked by Avijjā (Ignorance) is undiscoverable". At the same time it is laid down, as a natural consequence of the law of Dependent Origination (Paṭicca Samuppāda) that in the ceaseless cycle of cause and effect there cannot be any link in the sequence that can be designated a First Cause. Each effect in its turn becomes a cause, and the beginning is nowhere apparent; it is a closed circle of related conditions, each factor being dependent on the preceding ones.

The early Buddhists, because of this silence on the part of the Buddha, and His unwillingness to attempt the hopeless task of explaining the inexplicable, took their ideas concerning the nature of the universe from the Brahmanical teachings already current in India. These, because of their remarkable correspondence to modern scientific concepts, are well worth examination.

In the first place, it must be realised that the Vedic teachings, because of the lack of technical and scientific knowledge and the necessary vocabulary in which to express such modes of thought, used allegory and symbolism, much of it being of a primitive and animistic kind. The early Buddhists found the concepts of Brahman and Ātman unnecessary and, while adhering in outline to the Brahmanical idea of the universe, they considered it to be self-sustained by laws inherent

in its own nature, the whole group of laws being part of the universal law of Kamma, or cause and effect. The universe consists of innumerable Cakkavāḷas or World-systems. These come into being and pass away again in an endless cycle covering periods of millions of years, called Kappas and Yugas. The system of chronology is complicated and unthinkably immense, as is the number of inhabited World-systems in this cosmic mechanism. It is unnecessary to go into the divisions of time in detail, but a sufficient indication of their tremendous span can be gained from the fact that a Yuga is equivalent to several millennia, and that eight of these yugas, representing a cycle, makes one small or *antara* Kappa. Twenty small Kappas constitute a middle or Asankeyya Kappa, and a full cycle of four Middle Kappas is called a great or Mahā Kappa, which is the largest unit of calculation. Each great Kappa is the cyclic period of a world-system, during which the entire process of coming into being, existence, decay and destruction is brought into operation. After the destruction of a world-system another immense period of time elapses, at the end of which the process begins over again, the whole being repeated ceaselessly, without beginning or end.

Turning to the Brahmanic theory we find a similar general pattern of events. Vedanta teaches that the cycles of the universe are divided into the "Days and Nights of Brahma". In the beginning the whole of the basic material substance of the universe is evenly distributed throughout space. This material substance is called Prakriti (matter) and is to be considered as atomic units in a state of almost complete balance and almost complete inertia. Gradually, over unimaginable aeons of time, a slight movement in this vast ocean

of matter gathers impetus and gradually the mass comes to life. In Vedantic phraseology it is said that Prakriti is animated by Purusha or Spirit; the Brahman is manifesting through the material substance. This substance become differentiated into worlds, and living beings appear. Cosmic evolution then comes into play and the cycle of the universe runs its course, through development and degeneration to decay. When the period of the cycle is completed the universe disintegrates and returns to the same state of undifferentiated material elements as before. Again the process repeats itself, without beginning and without end.

The Buddhistic view is much the same, except that, as stated before, in place of the Brahman or any controlling deity Buddhism substitutes the law of cause and effect; one universe or world-system arises from the Kamma, or causal genesis, of the one preceding it.

The Visuddhimagga summarises the process thus:

" Na h'ettha devo brahmā vā
Saṁsārass'atthi kārako,
Suddhadhammā pavattanti
Hetusambhārapaccayāti "

"There is no god or Brahma who is the creator of this world. Empty phenomena roll on, all subject to causality."

The astronomers Jeans and Eddington are among those who have attempted some speculation regarding the origin of the universe. Eddington, calculating the recession of the spiral nebulae from the colour changes in the spectrum, has formed the theory that the entire universe is in process of expansion. The countless planets and solar systems comprising it are governed by the law of cosmic attraction and repulsion, which is a law

inherent in the nature of matter. It is this law which holds together all the material substance of which the universe is composed, from the smallest atomic units to the largest planet. It is believed that in the course of expansion of the universe one of two things will eventually happen; either it will reach its maximum point of expansion and the law of cosmic repulsion will cause the atomic elements to scatter throughout space, or else the law of cosmic attraction will gain the upper hand and the process will be reversed, causing the universe to shrink back on itself. In either case, the ultimate result will probably be the same; that is, the atomic elements will become uniformly distributed throughout space. Eddington has also hazarded the guess that this is the primal state from which the universe first took form, that is to say that his imaginative picture of it before "creation" is very similar to that of the Vedantic and Buddhistic conception. Again, we are to imagine the whole of space filled with atoms, electrons and neutrons in an almost perfect state of balance and homogeneity. In this undifferentiated mass there is only a slight movement or vibration, but over incalculable aeons the movement becomes more pronounced as the law of cosmic attraction and repulsion comes into play. Gradually the even distribution of substance forms clots, masses of electronic particles being drawn together, so that in time whirling masses of gaseous matter are formed, and from these emerge what astronomers call the "island universes"—that is to say, systems forming themselves round a central nucleus, like our own solar system. It is obvious that this process, as in the Buddhistic system, can be repeated over and over again.

In this way science does away with the need for a creator god, but still it has not explained the origin of the movement in the inert matter which carries the process forward. Buddhism explains it as being Kamma, that is, the principle of the indestructability of force or energy. The movement is the residuum of activity from the previous universe, which never entirely ceases, though that universe itself has ceased to exist. When we examine the operation of Kamma as it functions in the rebirth of living organisms it becomes possible to relate it to the cosmic process and trace the parallel between the Kamma of a sentient being and the Kamma of material phenomena.

From this comparison of modern scientific ideas and the teachings of over two thousand years ago it will be seen how strikingly they agree. The question then arises: How was it possible for the sages of that remote period to penetrate the illusion of material substance and find that it was composed of electronic forces, and to form so accurate an idea of the nature of the universe and its processes? The answer can only lie in the belief that they were able to raise their consciousness beyond the sphere of the mundane, through the practice of Jhāna or meditation. They had no laboratory equipment, no microscopes or telescopes and no mathematical formulae to guide them; and, when they had made their discovery they had no technical language or common basis of knowledge by which to impart their discoveries to others, It would indeed have been hopeless for the Buddha to attempt a description of the nature of the universe on these lines; no one of His time would have been capable of understanding Him. That is why He refused to answer questions concerning the origin of the world or whether it was eternal or not eternal. Had He given an affirmative

reply or a negative one to either question it would have been in a sense untrue. The Buddha's reply, in effect, was that such questions were not conducive to release from rebirth; but the implication always remained that the true knowledge could be gained by oneself, through insight, though it could not be imparted to others. The Iddhi, or so-called "supernatural powers" gained by the Arahats were simply the knowledge of hidden laws of the universe and how to make use of them, but by Buddha they were regarded as only another and greater obstacle to the attainment of freedom and the quenching of desire.

The law of causality is like an iceberg; only one-eighth of it or less is visible above the surface. We observe the effects while remaining ignorant of the causes, just as when we switch on the electric current and the light appears. The scientist Max Planck, wrote: "What sense, then, it may be asked, in talking of definite causal relations in regard to causes where nobody in the world is capable of tracing their function? The answer to that question is simple. As has been said again and again, the concept of causality is something transcendental—quite independent of the nature of the researches, and it would be valid if there were no perceiving subject at all.... We must distinguish between the validity of its application." This means that even the scientist has to admit causes beyond his comprehension. The Buddha stated: "Whether Buddhas arise or do not arise (to perceive and reveal the Law) the law of causality, the principle of the dependence of this upon that, the causal sequence of events, remains a fixed and unalterable law."

"The concept of causality is something transcendental." This is a significant phrase indeed, coming

from a scientist. It is just in this transcendental concept of the causal law that Buddhium establishes the moral principle of Kamma. The materialist rejects the idea of God and Soul; and because he sees no evidence of a spiritual or other purpose in life, he rejects all belief in the moral order of the universe as well. Buddhism also is independent of a theistic creator and of a soul or ego-principle, but Buddhism maintains the validity of the moral law. Buddhism admits the infinite multiplicity of worlds and the apparent insignificance of man—yet man is the most significant of all beings, according to Buddhism; man is of more significance than the gods. Why is this? Because the gods are merely enjoying temporarily the results of good actions in the past, but man is the master of his own destiny—on the battlefield of his own mind he can conquer the ten thousand world-systems and put an end to Saṁsāra, just as did the Buddha. But to do this he must understand the nature of Kamma. The principle that governs his internal and external world.

According to the Aṅguttaranikāya,* to believe that the cause of happiness or misery is God, Chance or Fate, leads to inaction. Our spiritual evolution depends upon ourselves and ourselves alone. If there is any force behind the moral laws, any exercise of free-will in the choice between good and evil, right and wrong, it stands to reason that there must be the possibility af advancing or degenerating, evolution. If progress upwards were a mechanical process and a foregone conclusion, there would be no point in any freedom of choice in a world of opposites.

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* The Threes, No. 61; translated in *Aṅguttara Nikāya, An Anthology.* Part I, (The Wheel No. 155/158), p. 43.

The nineteenth-century Darwinists believed that the course of biological evolution represented a steady upward progression from rudimentary to complex forms of life, and hence from primitive social structures to higher states of civilisation. On this too-facile assumption, with its essentially materialistic basis, they built up an edifice of optimistic belief in the destiny of mankind. It was thought that humanity itself would automatically improve with the increase of knowledge, and perhaps evolve into a yet higher species. Later knowledge showed that their supposition was fundamentally false; they did not at that time know enough about the processes of natural selection or the history of the various links in the biological chain. Evolution, we now know, does not move consistently upwards nor, as Karl Marx postulated, in an ascending spiral. It progresses in waves, and the currents produced by it are continually changing direction, often turning back to their point of origin. Some species improve, while others degenerate and disappear. Evolution may be depicted on a graph as a succession of ascending and descending curves, but its most representative form is that of a circle. Whatever steady upward movement there may be is more an individual movement than a collective one. It is essentially the individual that evolves, and the illusion of collective evolution follows upon the appearance of groups (*e.g.*, the human species) whose individual members have reached a certain level of being with sufficient uniformity to constitute a type. This comes about through the operation of incalculable factors in their past personal history, which science does not take into account because they are not normally open to scientific investigation. Those unknown factors are the Kammas, or activities, which relate man's being to the moral principles of the universe.

If it were true that evolution takes place solely on a physical basis and is consistently progressive, all human beings at any specific stage would display uniform characteristics; it is only by taking the individualist and spiritual view that we can explain the appearance of a Buddha, or, indeed of any lesser leader who has shown himself to be far in advance of his contemporaries.

The analogy of a wave or ripple, travelling in a circle, is perhaps the best symbol of the individual evolutionary current. Just as in biological evolution there are advances and recessions, successes and failures, so in spiritual evolution the individual sometimes rises and sometimes falls. There is no stability and no constant direction to his course. Because of his actions he may take birth as a human being, only to fall from that relatively high estate to become once more an animal. This is what the Buddha called "drifting in the ocean of Saṁsāra", and those who see the processes of biological evolution also as a purposeless, meaningless drifting, can trace a close correspondence between the manifested material laws and the invisible spiritual ones that motivate them. The materialist who declares that life has no ultimate purpose is making a safe deduction from the evidence available to him. In the material sense it has no purpose, and can never arrive at a state of perfection. But he is only considering the material aspect of life and ignoring its spiritual undercurrents; which are in reality the true determining factors behind phenomenal appearances. It is to those that we have to turn when we seek for a meaning and objective in our mundane existence. Knowledge—or rather, *paññā*—gives us sight of the goal and the means of attaining it. We do not find the meaning of life within the circle of evolutionary processes, but outside it.

The astronomer Jeans has voiced the spirit of modern scientific logic in his conclusion that the more we come to know of the universe and its workings, the more surely are we driven to the belief that it is in some way the manifestation of thought, or of some kind of mental process comparable to our own. Where other scientists quarrel with his view is on the ground that it appears to savour of a return to the discarded idea of a personal creator-god. It is precisely here that Buddhism bridges the gulf between religious and scientific thought. For Buddhism, while endorsing the view that the ultimate basis of the universe is mind, does not require a god, or any external agency, to provide that mind. The processes of the evolving (Sanvaṭṭa) and devolving (Vivaṭṭa) universe are carried on by the mental activities of the sentient beings that are a part of it. It is this mind-force, not that of any god, that causes the physical universe to materialise and go through the stages of growth, decay and dissolution.

The starting-point of all mental and bodily activities is craving—the Taṇhā of Buddhist philosophy. In the lowest grades of evolution this craving is supreme, and there it means cravings of purely sensual and material kind. The individual evolves spiritually by rising above these, but at any stage of his progress he is liable to become possessed once more by the lower forms of craving, and so may sink down again. As a human being he becomes a battle-ground in which the lower cravings struggle against higher ones, represented by cravings that we may class as intellectual, aesthetic or even spiritual. When the higher cravings triumph we call it in modern parlance "sublimation", but this sublimation is merely the replacement of grosser cravings by more intellectualised ones. To put an end to the aimless drifting in Saṁsāra,

even these sublimated cravings must be abandoned. They are called "Rūpa-rāga" and "Arūpa-rāga"—desire for life in the worlds of form and in the formless, purely intellectualised spheres. For example, the artist who has sublimated his lower instincts into an aesthetic appreciation of the beauty of nature and the human form, provided he has lived in accordance with moral laws (which sublimation enables him to do), is likely to re-manifest in the sphere of the Rūpa Deva-lokas, where beauty of form is the characteristic quality. But a philosopher, or ascetic who has sublimated his instincts into a love of abstract thought, meditation or any such activity divorced from material contexts, qualifies himself for rebirth in the Arūpa Brahma-lokas where existence is non-material and consists purely of zones of mental force. This is the highest type of evolutionary existence in Saṁsāra, in which craving is reduced to its lowest ebb and most etherealised from; yet, because craving is still present, the being who has attained this condition may still continue to drift in the currents of Saṃsāra. Complete release from the cycle of existence only comes with destruction of craving and the ego-delusion. This is Nibbāna.

From the foregoing account of the physical universe as it is viewed by Buddhism and modern science—that is, as a cyclic process extending over unimaginable aeons—we see that it is incorrect to equate the beginning of life with the beginning of the earth, the solar system or even this particular universe. The question still remains in what way did life originate, however far back in time its beginning may have been?

Science does not provide any solution. It puts forward a tentative theory that sentient life appeared on this earth through a technical process combined with the action of

cosmic rays and the heat of the sun. But this is only a theory, and may well be modified, though it is interesting to note in passing that the Buddhist doctrine that living beings appeard through the action of Tejo (kinetic energy) combined with Utu (*Utuja* meaning arisen from seasonable circumstances and physical law of causation), offers a similar explanation so far as mundane life is concerned. This, in any case, only carries speculation back to the beginning of life on this planet, but the actual origin we seek is the beginning of life from a point where there was no preceding cause, and this cannot be found.

Theistic religion also fails to answer the question. In ascribing the origin of living creatures to a Creator-god it still leaves unanswered the problem of how and why the god himself came into being. If a god can exist, though uncreated, there is no reason why the other phenomena of the universe should not exist without having been created also.

The actual truth is that the idea of the necessity for creation or, in other words, the search for a beginning of the causal process, springs from the limitations of the human mind, which can only conceive phenomenal things in their arising, decay and dissolution. In the circle of causal links there is no First Cause. The universe could not have been created out of nothingness because in a condition of void, empty of phenomena and events, there could be no pre-existence of Time. As a concept, Time can only exist in relation to physical bodies and their movements in space; this is the basis of Einstein's "space-time continuum". It is apparent, therefore, that Time could not have existed prior to the existence of the physical universe on which it depends. But, for an act of creation to take place there must be Time already in

existence because creation requires the three phases of time; *i. e.*, Past (before the thing created came into being), Present (the phase of its momentary existence) and Future (the time of its continued existence and ultimate cessation). Without the existence of Time in these three phases there could not be any point at which a thing not existing previously could come into being. And without the physical universe there cannot be any concept of Time unrelated to change, spatial movement or events. All human reasoning ends in a paradox because it follows the periphery of a circle, the sphere embracing time, space and phenomena. All that reason can do is to show that the process of Saṁsāra is without any discoverable beginning and that a First Cause, in the sense in which we understand it, is not only unnecessary but impossible. The truth can only be gained by Insight, in accordance with the teachings of the Exalted Buddha, which means rising above the realm of relative and conditioned factors. That point being gained, it will be found that there is no answer to the problem, but that the problem never existed, save as an illusory product of Ignorance (*avijjā*).

Editor's Note

The first three essays in this volume are unpublished material from the late Author's posthumous papers; while the last three had appeared before in the periodicals given in the Table of Contents.

The titles of the first and the second essay were chosen by the Editor. In the original manuscript, the first essay had the title "Of Gods and Men", which, however, the author had later used for a shorter and different article, published in the series 'Bodhi Leaves'. The second essay was left uncompleted by the author. Though it is not customary for this series to publish unfinished material, this essay on Buddhist cosmology was considered substantial and instructive enough for being included here.

For supplementary reading on the subject of this volume, we recommend:

Of Gods and Men, by Francis Story.
(Bodhi Leaves B. 4)

The Buddhist Conception of the Universe,
by Prof. K. N. Jayatilleke. (In 'Facets of Buddhist Thought', The Wheel 162/164).

Editor, *The Wheel*.

By the same author published by the

Buddhist Publication Society

FRANCIS STORY

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RAYS OF THE DHAMMA

Poems by

JOHN ANDREW STOREY

BUDDHIST PUBLICATION SOCIETY

Vesak
1973

Kandy Sri Lanka (Ceylon)

For my wife, Sylvia,
and for my children
Jonathan, Alison and
Jeremy.

Acknowledgements are made to The Inquirer; The Middle Way; World Faiths and The Bulletin of the Japan Society for poems already printed,

* * * * * *

Other works by the same author.

The Festival of Vesak.
Meditation – The Inward Journey.
Rebirth.

Published by
The Buddhist Publication Society.
P. O. Box 61,
Kandy, Sri Lanka.

INTRODUCTION.

The poems in this slim volume are of two basic kinds, haiku – a traditional Japanese verse form – and longer poems of a more familiar Western pattern. About the latter little need be said beyond commenting that a number of these were originally written to be sung and this has determined their shape and structure which some may now regard as rather old-fashioned. Poems however are vehicles to convey ideas, and the value of these poems – if any – should be looked for not in their structure but in the ideas and ideals they attempt to convey. The aim of these simple verses is to present in an easily assimilated form some of the basic principles and beliefs of Buddhism. Not all of the poems are specifically 'religious', though all have been inspired by the spirit of Buddhism.

About the haiku verses rather more needs to be said. These short poems – which originated in Japan – consist of only seventeen syllables, and should be arranged in three lines of five, seven and five syllables respectively. Wirhin this tiny structure the poet seeks to evoke a response so that the reader too participates in the poem and becomes aware of a certain mood or experience, As in all forms of Japanese art the aim is to arouse the active participation of the beholder. it is the source of haiku poetry, and though the subject of the poem often seems small and mundane – a frog jumping into a pond, a bird on a twig etc, – there is beyond the apparently trivial event a deep awareness of Life and of the nature of things, There should be an unforced naturalness about a haiku poem. As Alan Watts observed:

'The artificial haiku always feels like a piece of life which has been deliberately broken off or wrenched away from the universe, whereas the genuine haiku has dropped of all by itself, and has the whole universe inside it.' The haiku – as the Japanese would say – is like 'a finger pointing at the moon'; one should look not at the finger (poem) but at that to which it points. Thus does the haiku reflect the spirit of Zen from which it originated and from whence its inspiration comes.

Any work on a religion such as Buddhism which had its origins in an alien culture is bound to contain words which will be unfamiliar to the non–specialist reader. Where necessary foot–notes have been added to make the meaning of such words clear, and I have consulted Mr. Christmas Humphrey's standard work 'A Popular Dictionary of Buddhism' in an effort to be accurate in my definitions.

Finally I would like to place on record my grateful thanks to my wife for her encouragement and many helpful suggestions.

JOHN ANDREW STOREY
7 Byron Avenue,
Nettleham Road.
Lincoln, LN2 4DX.
England,
Vesak B. E. 2517
A. C. 1973

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DEDICATION.

(A poem to be read before Meditating.)

With earnest mind I venture now
My labours to review,
To high endeavour I will vow
To give myself anew.

For purity I cannot bring
May striving suffice,
For holiness my offering
Shall be self's sacrfice.

That wisdom that I connot claim
I will make haste to learn,
And this shall be my constant aim
All folly hence to spurn.

So may this hour testify
The earnest of my will,
My noblest yearnings gratify,
My inner needs fulfill.

"Noise is not in the market-place, nor quiet in the hills, but in the ever-changing hearts of men."

A Chinese Proverb.

"The Light is within thee, let the Light shine."

The Egyptian Hierophants.

MELANCHOLY.

On a sunless day
My sad body tries in vain
To make shadows play.

VANITY.

Seeking to be grand
The empty mirage mocks me
And I clutch at sand.

REAPING.

(Thoughts on karma suggested by the Harvest.)

The ancient cries of 'Harvest-Home'
Once more with gladness fill the air,
The fullness of the year has come
And brought rejoicing everywhere.

In hope the seeds were sown in Spring
And Nature does her promise keep
That what is sown at last shall bring
A harvest rich for us to reap.

Our lives are like an open field
Where day by day we sow our seeds,
And they in time shall bring their yield,
A harvest from our thoughts and deeds.

Then Nature's lesson let us learn,
Sow wisely for the days to come,
That we may reap the good we yearn
And bring a happy harvest home.

* * * * * *

KARMA: The law of cause and effect, through the operation of which a man "reaps what he sows", builds his character, makes his destiny, and works out his salvation.

NIRVANA.

A man born blind can never know
The beauty of the sunset glow,
No words can make him understand
The splendour of the vision grand.

Nirvana cannot be defined
Or comprehended by the mind,
For what is Ultimately Real
No creed is able to reveal.

The Teacher can but point ahead
Along the road that we must tread,
Who walks the Path at last shall see
With inward eyes, Reality.

NIRVANA : The supreme Goal of Buddhist endeavour; release from the limitations of existence. A state attainable in this life by right aspiration, purity of life, and the elimination of egoism.

SACRIFICE.

Self-forgetfully
The candle gives us its light
Sacrificially.

REBIRTH.

From the dying wick
A new candle takes the flame
And teaches rebirth.

LIBERATION.

The departing flame
Unfed by further fuel
Enters Nirvana.

THE WHEEL

Turning, ever turning,
the world, the seasons and the Wheel
to which I'm bound by chains of my own making.
Returning, ever returning,
again and yet again to wear out bodies
like suits of clothes and fill a thousand
graves with useless bones—
Is there no end to this,
no way to find the bliss of Liberation?
I will unyoke the chariot, make the stallions flee,
and from the halted Wheel at last break free—

"If both wife and husband wish to behold each other in this very life and the life to come, if both are matched in faith, in virtue, in generosity and in wisdom, then do they behold each other in this very life and in the life to come."

The Buddha: From the Anguttara Nikāya.

LOVE'S HOPE.

Another age, another shore,
Incarnate in another frame,
My heart's true love I've known before
Though called by now forgotten name,
Together we again shall be,
For ties that bind our hearts remain,
My true love shall return to me
And I will claim her once again.

* * * * * *

Since the so-called "soul" or "personality" is nothing more than a constantly changing "stream of consciousness" this poem, on the face of it. is a nonsense. However, even "streams of conciousness" can flow together again when a karmic link has been forged between them, and future lives and relationships will be no less "real" than the ones we know now. The romantic slant given to the doctrines of karma and rebirth in this poem will not appeal to the earnest Buddhist, whose aim — quite rightly — is nothing less than that of breaking free from the Wheel of Rebirth altogether. For the less advanced— still bound by attachments — it offers some comfort, and is in keeping with the practical approach of Buddhism which recognises that for most people Nirvana will remain, for a long time to come, a far distant Goal.

* * * * * *

FAR MEMORY.

(An haunting impression of something experienced long ago.)

Moonlight on watar,
Beauty's perfection left its reflection
Mirrored in my heart.
The stream flowed on
And yet,
I did not forget
That haunting scene which was to be
So lastingly a part of me.

A reference to the stream of consciousness which becomes incarnate in successive earth lives.

CAPTIVE.

Caught between branches
The bright moon chained to the tree
My heart entrances.

REFLECTION.

With introspection
Watching moonlight on water
Time for reflection.

ILLUMINATION.

Only the moonlight
Illuminating my path
Takes away the dark.

LOTUS BLOSSOM.

Mud, slime, and from the gloom
Triumphantly a perfect bloom
Breaks through to greet the sun.
And we are taught the Way that saves,
The Path to tread,
That we may raise above the waves
A lotus-head.

* * * * * *

THE LOTUS SYMBOL: The beauty and purity of the lotus flower contrasts strikingly with the mud and slime which is its habitat; and it is therefore taken by Buddhists as a symbol of how to live a pure life in spite of foul surroundings.

THE WAY: Short for 'The Middle Way' which avoids all extremes and leads ro Enlightenment.

THE PATH : Short for the 'Noble Eightfold Path' which means having Right Understanding, Right Thought or Motive, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Means of Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration or Meditation.

THE WAVES: Used here to symbolise hatred, ignorance and greed, and unwholesome craving for transient things.

CLOUDS.

Against the blue sky
Pink clouds are tossed by the wind.
The cherry blossom.

INTERACTION.

The falling raindrops
Help the sun to paint the sky
With rainbow colours.

BLACKBIRD.

Blackbird on a rock
Stands as still as a statue
Denying he lives.

VESAK.

'May peace be in the hearts of men',
Our Vesak hopes once more arise,
The wistful season brings again
Its yearly hopes of paradise.

The fabled stories still endear
And recollections call to mind
Of one who sought to banish fear
By preaching love for all mankind.

That timeless message still we spurn
And to his call no heed we pay,
This Vesak-time may all men turn
And tread at last the Middle Way.

* * * * * *

VESAK: The month corresponding to April-May, on the Full Moon Day of which is celebrated the Birth, Enlightenment and Parinibbana (passing away never again to be reborn on earth) of the Buddha. Vesak marks the beginning of the Buddhist year.

THE MIDDLE WAY: The Path between all extremes which leads to Enlightenment.

"Brethren, he who would wait on me, let him wait on the sick." *The Buddha*

"To live to benefit mankind is the first step on the way." *The Voice of the Silence.*

KARUNA.

The world is full of poverty,
The world is full care,
And people in extremity
Are driven to despair;
The poor are ever with us still
The hungry we must feed,
We cannot do the Master's will
Until we meet their need.

The lonely and companionless,
The prisoner in his cell,
The sick and dying in distress
With fears they can't dispell;
The homeless and the destitute
For whom our hearts should bleed,
We cannot do the Master's will
Until we meet their need.

* * * * * *

KARUNA: Active compassion.

The second of the four sublime states – See Wheel No. 6

THE YELLOW ROBE.

Not all can wear the Saffron Robe,
But each can share the truth he knows,
Though not a Bhikkhu, one may point
Towards the Goal which ends life's woes,
The layman too must play his part
By helping others to begin,
And thinking what it represents
The Yellow Robe should wear within.

* * * * * *

THE YELLOW ROBE: The Yellow or Saffron Robe has been worn by Bhikkhus (monks) since the time of the Buddha. The respect paid to monks in Buddhist lands– which has so often surprised Western observers – is given not so much to the man as to the Robe he wears and all that it represents.

"The best of all gifts is the gift of Truth."
The Dhammapada.

"There is no religion higher than Truth."
The Theosophist Motto.

TRUTH.

Than Truth no faith can higher be
Nor any creed more right.
It is our one authority.
Our only guiding light.

Its knowledge ever points the way
To freedom's larger shore,
For Truth does ever sweep away
All false confining lore.

To Truth, the golden heresy,
Our loyalty we'll give,
Its sacred flame guard zealously
So long as we shall live.

Than Truth there is no higher faith
There is no nobler way,
We'll follow ever in its path
And never from it stray.

* * * * * *

"The past is like a dream
The future as a mirage."

"Life is a bridge, pass over it, but build no house upon it."

The Buddha

THE ETERNAL NOW.

The ceaseless flow of endless time
No man can check or stay,
We'll view the past with no regret
Nor future with dismay.

The present slips into the past
And dream-like melts away,
The creaking of tomorow's dawn
Begins a new today.

The past and future ever meet
In the eternal now,
To make each day a thing complete
Shall be our constant vow.

DAWN.

Only a pink blush
On the sky-line's icy cheek
Tells me it is Dawn.

SPRING.

A bird on a twig
Pecking off the infant buds
Does not halt the Spring.

IMPERMANENCE.

Springtime renewal
Morning dew-drop in the sun
Transient jewel.

IMPARTIALITY

The wind – impartial
Flutters the flags of both sides
Mocking the martial.

AUTUMN.

The petals falling
An end of Autumn warning
Of Winter's coming.

DANCE.

Beneath the bare trees
The dry leaves dance in the breeze
Their Autumn farewell.

SILHOUETTES.

The distant horses
Nibble at the horizon
Making silhouettes.

NIGHTFALL.

Swallowing the sun
The horizon sucks down day
Nightfall has begun.

TRANSFORMATION.

It ventured too near
The snowflake kissing my cheek
Becoming a tear.

"Parents should restrain their
children from vice. Train them
in virtue." *From the 'Sigalovada Sutta'*

"A child's behaviour is a mirror
of the parent's character."
A Chinese Proverb.

MIRRORED LIVES.

The child will mirror how we live,
Reflect the lives we lead,
Of the example which we give
Our little ones take heed.

Reflected in the way they live
Our lives are clearly shown,
And by the things for which they strive
Our character is known.

* * * * * *

"Let a man . . . conquer the stingy by a gift, Let him give when asked, even from the little he has."

The Buddha

"He is truly generous who does not remember what he has given to others. He is truly grateful who does not forget what others have given him. To have true generosity and true gratitude is the mark of a virtuous man."

Li Shu Kung.

GIVE AND TAKE

True generosity is shown
When we forget the gifts we make,
Our charity must not be known
If exercised for other's sake.

Yet grateful hearts should never shrink
From showing thanks to those who gave,
But of their kindness often think
And take their memory to the grave.

The way we give, the way we get,
Reveals our character to all,
We truly give when we forget,
And nobly take when we recall.

* * * * * *

"As in the ancient torch-races, which seemed to Lucretius to be the symbol of all life, we press forward torch in hand along the course. Soon from behind comes the runner who will outpace us. All our skill lies in giving into his hands the living torch, . bright and unflickering, as we ourselves disappear in the darkness."

Havelock Ellis.

"Our daily work must be done for the glory of the dead and for the good of those who are to come after."

Joseph Conrad.

TORCH-BEARERS

The chain of history is long,
We link the past and future age,
Our generation must keep strong
The golden thread of heritage.

Into our hands the living flame
For our safe keeping now has come,
Like runners in the ancient game
We clutch the torch and hand it on.

We work for glory of the dead,
For children of the coming age,
Soon we shall pass, and in our stead
New men shall join life's pilgrimage.

The blazing torch we keep alive
In honoured tribute to the past,
Into their waiting hands we'll give
Bright and unflickering at last.

"The light of stars that were exstinguished ages ago still reaches us. So it is with great men who died centuries ago, but still reach us with the radiations of their personality."

Kahlil Gibran.

UNDYING ECHOES.

The lives which touch our own each day
Are influenced unconsciously
By views we hold, the things we say,
Our simple deeds of charity.

On Earth we still receive the light
Of stars burnt out in aeons past,
The lives of those whe serve the right
Shines with a lustre that will last.

This life of ours can never end,
Its infuence still perseveres,
And by our deeds we ever send
Undying echoes down the years.

* * * * * *

"He who knoweth the precepts by heart, but faileth to practice them, is like unto one who lighteth a lamp and then shutteth his eyes."

Tibetan Proverb.

GUIDING LIGHT.

Our Dharma study lit the lamp
Of precepts wise and true,
And we must never close our eyes
To shut it from our view;
Its radiance from other men
We must not cloak or hide,
But raise it high that it may then
Become their daily guide.

* * * * * *

DHARMA: A word with several meanings. Here used simply as indicating Buddhist Doctrine.

WORDLESSNESS.

(Upon contemplating the Buddha and his Teaching)

Words!
They cannot convey
Nor yet reveal
All that I feel.
What can I say?
Vain are my efforts to impart
The inner feelings of my heart.

INWARDNESS.

Seek not for quiet in the hills
Nor shun the market-place,
Tumult or peace are in the heart,
Their presence there we trace.

Return within, Buddha-wisdom
Is found within,
That inward centre in overselves
Where truth abides in full.

Who inwardly with patience delves
Shall find the spark divine,
The Light that is within overselves
May we let ever shine.

BUDDHIST PUBLICATION SOCIETY

(Founded 1958)

Report for the year 1972

As we look back on the year 1972, the fifteenth year of our service for the Dhamma, we are gratified to find a remarkable increase in the field of regular distribution both in the number of registered readers and the countries of distribution. B. P. S. publications are now regularly despatched every three months to 1563 readers in foreign lands and to 1243 readers in Sri Lanka, marking an increase of about 20% on the previous year. The field of this distribution which numbered 76 countries last year now covers 87 countries as the following schedule indicates:

Argentina	–	4	Czechoslovakia	–	2
Australia	–	50	Denmark	–	11
Austria	–	7	Finland	–	8
Bahrein	–	1	France	–	31
Bangladesh	–	11	Germany–West	–	63
Belgium	–	11	Germany–East (GDR)		2
Bhutan	–	1	Ghana	–	14
Borneo	–	1	Gibraltar	–	1
Brazil	–	12	Greece	–	3
Burma	–	23	Guyana	–	1
Cameroon	–	1	Holland	–	21
Cambodia	–	4	Honduras	–	1
Canada	–	60	Hongkong	–	12
Canal Zone	–	1	Hungary	–	6
Chile	–	3	Iceland	–	3
China	–	2	India	–	135
Columbia	–	1	Indonesia	–	40

Iran	-	1	South Africa -		
Ireland	-	3	Republic	-	16
Israel	-	10	Spain	-	4
Italy	-	12	Sweden	-	35
Japan	-	13	Switzerland	-	30
Kenya	-	2	Syria	-	1
Korea South	-	5	Tanzania	-	2
Laos	-	1	Taiwan	-	2
Liberia	-	1	Turkey	-	2
Malaysia	-	41	Thailand	-	65
Malawi	-	1	United Kingdom	-	202
Mauritius	-	1	U. S, A,	-	370
Mexico	-	4	U. S. S. R.	-	3
Monaco	-	1	Venezuela	-	6
Nepal	-	16	Vietnam South	-	18
New Zealand	-	24	**West Indian Islands**		
Netherlands--Antilles	-	1	Trinidad		1
Nigeria	-	6	Barbados		1
Norway	-	5	Bahamas		1
Papua and -			Jamaica		1
New Guinea	-	5	Grenada		1
Peru	-	2	**West Pacific Islands**		
Phillipines	-	3	Gilbert and		
Poland	-	6	Ellice Islands		1
Portugal	-	1	Tonga		1
Rhodesia	-	1	New Hebrides		1
Roumania	-	1	Fiji		2
Sikkhim	-	1	Yugoslavia	-	12
Singapore	-	65	Zambia	-	4
			TOTAL		1563

The foreign mail is a good index to our progress; and we continue to receive regularly warm appreciations from our readers. Such letters give much encouragement to our work and we gratefully acknowledge the help given both by such friendly letters as well as by subscriptions and donations. A friend in the U. S. A. writes:

"Each month from now on you will receive two checks. One from myself and one from my wife. We are government employees so our income is not large. We will send what we can each month. This is the very least we can do for you and your good work.

"You have changed our lives. You have opened our eyes for we have been blind. — There is no money, no gift, and no words to thank you for what you have done for us and thousands more like us.

"In this world of darkness — There is a light — and it comes from KANDY, CEYLON."

A member in West Germany, another generous benefactor, writes:

"I am very glad that I am still able on a very moderate scale to support your tremendous and most meritorious work of dispensing the teaching of our Great Lord Buddha, a work which is most important, considering the evermore decreasing moral state of this "best of all possible worlds."

"Thank you, thank you very much for the marvellous publications of which some are always at my bedside and often are subject to long conversations with my dear wife, who also is most grateful for the wonderful help you are giving to the suffering people of so many

countries, and she wishes me to thank you also on her behalf,"

A member in Northern Ireland says:

"I received to-day, with great joy, the books you sent me, and I would like to take this opportunity to tell you that your books on the Teachings of the Lord Buddha are a great source of strength and inspiration to my family and self, especially so here, in Northern Ireland, in the midst of a so-called 'Holy War' surely a contradiction in terms."

'Excellent series' 'consistently excellent standard' 'wonderful work', 'continued excellence of all your publications', 'well chosen', 'a true reflection of the Buddha Dhamma'; 'excellent value'. These comments were from the United Kingdom, United States and Australia, Germany etc.

Many are the appreciations received, but we cannot report any more here. Some of them have been included in a booklet, 'What Our Readers Say' which is available to members on request.

Free Distribution Scheme

There has been a marked increase in our free distribution; especially to countries where remittances were difficult or impossible owing to exchange control. We never hesitated to respond to requests for free publications. The free mailing register now contains 220 foreign addresses and 101 local addresses to which publications are mailed regularly.

The Buddhist Societies, all Ceylon Embassies abroad, continued to receive liberal supplies.

The Hospitals Service Branches of the All-Ceylon Buddhist Congress as before receive substantial supplies for distribution to the patients.

Kandy Hotels Co., Ltd., continued to get supplies of books for placing in the bed rooms of the hotels controlled by the Company. ***Buddhism in a Nutshell*** and ***Buddhism a Living Message*** are the two books left in a room. Replacements are made regularly.

Another avenue of free distribution was opened up last year with requests coming in from insurgent suspects in the Rehabilitation camps situated in different parts of the Island. The suspects were most grateful for the books sent to them. Here is an extract from a letter received from one of them.

" I paid special attention to your inspiring letter, and made up my mind to be equipped mentally and to be a loyal son of Mother Lanka. I suppose that we have been brought up to this situation, due to the lack of knowledge about the Dhamma. If it is not, we would have never got involved with this type of illusions. In those days we did not have a right understanding. That is why we had to come to a place like this.

"The books which you have sent me are very helpful to get a deep understanding. Here I have started lectures on Rebirth, Kamma and Meditation.

"You all are rendering a great service to our country as well as to other countries."

PUBLICATIONS:

The Following were issued in 1972.

WHEEL

171/174 Requisites of Enlightenment (Bodhipakkhia Dipani) Ledi Sayadaw.
Quadruple Number.

175/176 Ethics in Buddhist Perspective.
Prof. K. N. Jayatilleke. *Double Number.*

177 Girimānanda Sutta With Commentary.
Tr. by Nānamoli Thera.

178 Significance of Vesak.
Prof. K. N. Jayatilleke.

179 The Psychological Aspect of Buddhism.
Piyadassi Thera.

180/181 Gods and the Universe.
Francis Story, *Double Number.*

BODHI LEAVES

55 The Scientific Approach to Buddhism.
The Appeal of Buddhism. Francis Story.

56 Three Buddhist Tales.

57 The Story of Maha Mahinda, Sanghamitta, Sri Maha Bodhi. Piyadassi Thera.

58 An Actual Religion. Bhikkhu Silacara.

BOOK PUBLICATIONS

The Life of the Buddha – Nānamoli Thera.

A Thinker's Note Book – Nānamoli Thera.

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70 බණ දෙසුම් හා ඇසුම්. ධම් චිත්තා පැළැණෙන් වජිරඤාණ මහානායක හිමිපාණෝ.

71/73 පුනරුත්පත්තියට සාක්ෂ්‍යය - වෛද්‍ය විසාරද ඉයන් ස්ටීවන්සන්.

74/75 ගුණ ගඟ - මහාචාර්ය හම්මලව සද්ධානිස්ස මාහිමිපාණෝ.

76/77 බෞද්ධ දේව සංකල්පය - ඩබ්ලිව්. ජී. වීරරත්න

REPRINTS

WHEEL

6 The Four Sublime States (Brahma-vihāra) Nyanaponika Thera.

15a/b Dependent Origination (Paticca-samuppāda) Piyadassi Thera. *Double Number.*

17 Three Cardinal Discourses of the Buddha. ***The first Sermon. The Sermon on Not-self; The Fire Sermon.*** With Introduction and Notes. Transl. by Nānamoli Thera.

18 Devotion in Buddhism. Three Essays, by Nyānaponika Thera, Buddharakkhita Thera and Kassapa Thera.

21 The Removal of Distracting Thoughts (Majjhima-Nik. 20). With Commentary, Transl. by Soma Thera.

BODHI LEAVES

A 5 The Three Refuges. Nānamoli Thera.

A 7 The Master's Quest for Light. R. Abeyasekera.

A 11 Buddhism and Beauty. Dr. J. D. Dhirasekera.

B 17 Buddhism and Democracy.
Prof. Kurt F. Leidecker and
Dr. B. P. Kirthisinghe.

B 18 Buddhist Therapy. Ruth Walshe.

B 29 A Larger Rationalism. Francis Story.

The year's output was 102,500 copies made up as follows:-

30,000 copies of the Wheel-New Issues.
15,000 ,, ,, ,, ,, reprints.
20,000 ,, ,, ,, Bodhi Leaves.
23,000 ,, ,, ,, ,, reprints.
1,500 ,, ,, The Life of the Buddha
- Nānamoli Thera.
1,000 ,, ,, A Thinker's Note Book
- Nānamoli Thera.
12,000 ,, ,, දම්සක්.

The total production from 1958 to December 1972 was 1,475,000.

A Press in California with our permission brought out attractive editions of ***The Power of Mindfulness*** and ***Practical Insight Meditation.***

Texas University as in the previous years had the ***Word of the Buddha*** and eight ***Wheels*** printed by offset process by arrangement with the B. P. S. and had them bound in a book called "***The Yellow Text of Theravada Buddhism***" for the exclusive use of the students following the 1972 courses of Buddhist studies.

For the two outstanding special book publications Venerable Nānamoli's "Life hf the Buddha and The Ihinker's Notebook" we are deeply indebted to the Venerable Nyanaponika, who with dedicated labour

sorted out the material from a mass of manuscripts, edited them, attended to the proof reading and saw them through the press.

The President of the Maha Bodhi Society London Mrs. Irene Quittner writes .“I have just finished reading “The Life of the Buddha” by Nānamoli. It is difficult to find words with which to describe the majical beauty of the book – dramatic and yet so human and ALIVE! The voices and narrators linking together in a simple straightforward and dignified manner the various people and events”.

Bound Volumes

There was a continuous demand both from individual members and University libraries in the West for the *Wheel* bound volumes now numbering nine covering Nos. 1 to 180, the three volumes of the *Bodhi Leaves* and the two volumes of *Selected Buddhist Texts.*

Publicity

We have made no effort to publicise the Society; our books themselves brought in publicity. A visitor from New Zealand who had travelled through Australia, Indonesia, Thailand, Nepal and India had seen the “Wheels” at most of the places visited and remarked that if not for these there would hardly be any reading matter on Buddhism.

A Ceylonese writing from India says:

“One evening I was taking tea at a Tibetan Cafe where foreigners gather. A Swiss architect who was seated by me from where I came. I said from Ceylon. Then he remarked “Is it the country which produces the WHEEL books?”

We appreciate the interest shown by the Editors of the "Middle Way", Buddhist Society, London. "Metta" Buddhist Society of Australia. ',Voice of Buddhism", Buddhist Society of Kular Lumpur in the diffusion of the Dhamma in continuing to give free advertisement to the Society. Our warmest thanks to them.

Visitors

We have been privileged as in the past years to receive several foreign members and non-members and many local friends who visited us. A few of these who called at the Society in 1972 are: Dr. Ulrich Schwiedrick (West Germany), Elizabeth Oppenheim (Denmark), Prof. P. M. Pohare (India), Dr. Ernst G. Ticho (Menninger Foundation, U. S. A.), Dr. Gerando Chesta (Argentina), Ake Virgin (Sweden), Ven. Dr. Sobhita (Sorbornne, Paris), Rev. Gothfried-Rothermund (Heidelberg, West Germany), B. S. Chetty (Durban, South Africa), Vito Victor (Switzerland), Dr. Thomas Krambinger (Minesota, U. S. A.), Suzanne Vivario (Belgium), Madam Boyer (France), Michael B. Carrithers (Fullbright Research Scholar, U. S. A,), David Naylor (Lancaster, England), Ruth - Igne Hyne - (University of California), Prof. T. Houtart (Belgium), Mrs. Paula Wolf (Switzerland), Rev. Fr. N. Catalano S.J. (Italy), Prof. Zenno Ishigami (Taisho University, Japan). We welcome such visits.

Translations

'Cahiers, Buddhistes', 'The Swedish Buddhist Bulletin', 'Sinar Borabadur', 'Sinar Padumuttara' etc., continued to publish serially translations of the Wheels and Bodhi Leaves. In Saigon Mr. Pham Kin Khanh translated

into Vietnamese altogether twelve Wheels among which are 'Dependent Origination' 'The Wheel of Birth and Death', and seven Bodhi Leaves and had them published for free distribution. His industry and devotion to the Dhamma should inspire others.

Requests were made by a reader in Rome for translating 'Wheels' into Italian, from Mexico and Argentine for translation into Spanish, and from India for translation into Hindi. Permission was given to all applicants on condition that they translated without any additions or modifications to the text. We insisted upon this point because there is unfortunately a tendency today to manipulate the Dhamma according to the tastes and inclinations of those doing the translating. We also desired that acknowledgement be made to the Buddhist Publication Society.

Greater interest is created when reading in one's own national language. The Buddha himself has said that the Dhamma should as far as possible be peached in the language of the listeners. We welcome translations, and shall be happy to give permission.

Donations

We continued to receive the annual subsidy from the Department of Cultural Affairs, and we record our deep gratitude to the Government for co-operating with our work and giving this valuable financial support.

The Presidents of the Rural Courts of Kuliyapitiya, Panadura, Pilessa, Matugama, Pinwatte and Ruwanwella sent us occasionally as in the previous years, a share of court awards awardable for charities; we are grateful for their support. Our Dhamma books were sent in return for distribution to the accused parties.

Royalties from the Hutchinson Publishing Group Ltd. on the ***Heart of Buddhist Meditation*** so kindly turned to us by the Ven. Nyanaponika Thera came in regularly every half year. It may be mentioned that the ***Heart of Buddhist Meditation*** is now in its fourth edition and over 10,000 copies have been sold.

We missed the royalties on Venerable Piyadassi Thera's ***The Buddha's Ancient Path*** as the book had been sold out in 1971. As the Hutchinson Group is not republishing the book we have made arrangements for its publications here.

Half-yearly Royalties were also received from Messrs George Allen and Unwin Co., London who in 1971 published six of our Wheel publications namely, ***Pathways of Buddhist Thought***, ***Knowledge and Conduct***, ***Buddhism and Science***, ***The Power of Mindfulness***, ***Anatta and Nibbana***, ***Nirvana***, ***Nihilism and Satori*** under the title ***PATHWAYS OF BUDDHIST THOUGHT***. There has been a good demand for the book.

We acknowledge the generous donations of The N. D. S. Silva Trust and Mrs. Snehalata Amerasinghe towards the re-printing of ***Mindfulness of Breathing***.

The Public Trustee of Ceylon sent the 2nd annual contribution from the late Hector Dias Seneviratne Trust. May our departed friend's samsaric wanderings be happy.

Special donations continued to come in from friends. Among them may be mentioned M/s. N. Moonesingha, Lady Gimara Fernando, V. M. Abeysekera, T. M. Soysa, William Tennekoon, Ven. Kondaññño Bhikkhu, Dr. C. D. Amarasinghe, Albert Edirisinghe, Col. W. Rajapakse, Mrs. Leela Jayatillake and Mrs. Piyasoma Hewavitarana

(all of Sri Lanka) George and Ruth Yanney (U.S.A.) Mrs. Signe Huhtamaki (Finland), Mrs. Jean Sethia (England), Mrs Josephine K. Stanton (Thailand), Miss M. R. Sermsri Kasemsri (Thailand), Mrs. L. H. J. B. Van Gorkom (Netherland), Miss Patricia Marion Mouldey (Australia), Messrs W. E. Hasinger (U.S.A.), John L. Rhymes)U.S.A.), Lionel Hettihewa (Hong Kong), W. A. Koster (U. S. A.), G. Murawski (Canada), J. Bloemsma (Holland), Harold Schaper (Venezuela), U Thaung Lwin (UNO), G. Bex (Switzerland), Dr. Truong Nghia Hung (U.S.A.), Prasert Seniwong (Canada), Buddhist Society of New South Wales (Australia), Dr. Karl Senekovic (Austria).

To all these who have so generously helped the Society financially, we extend our warmest thanks and are happy to share the merit of our work with them.

Finance

The Society's finances are well established, thanks to the generous donations from our supporters supplemented by the receipts on the Foreign Exchange Entitlement Scheme and the increase on our foreign sales. The earnings totalled to Rs. 168,663/-. As in earlier years the main item of expenditure was on printing aud publishing which amounted to Rs. 79,628/-. The excess of income over expenditure was Rs. 54,036/-.

The Accumulated Funds are invested in the National Savings Bank and in Fixed Deposit at the Mercantile Bank Ltd., Kandy.

Messrs Thorton Panditaratne and Co. Chartered Accountants audited the 1972 accounts and prepared the Final Accounts. We much appreciate this work and offer our thanks to them. In recording the daily accounts

and maintaining these, we had efficient assistance of Mr. K. B. R. Ranaweera.

Mr. A. S. Karunaratne continued as Honorary Treasurer.

Executive

Though the Venerable Nyanaponika Thera officially ceased to be the editor of the Society's publications, he continued to give his full assistance in editorial work. His advice and help were always available to us; and we are most grateful to him.

The sole responsibility of editorial work and proof reading of the Sinhala serial the "*Damsak*" was on the Venerable Higgoda Khemananda Thera, during the absence of the Venerable Piyadassi Thera who was on a mission abroad for a year visiting the west European countries and the Americas. In several of the countries he visited, Iceland, Jamaica, Barbados, Venezuela, Ghana, Baharein, etc., he was the guest of our members; and according to the reports we had from them, his days were fully occupied with lectures, discussions, meditation classes, interviews on T. V. etc. We are happy that he had such a successful mission; and that our friends were able to contact a member of the Sangha.

Messrs P. B. Mudannayaka and T. B. Naranpanawa continued to function as Honorary Joint Secretaries. Mr. Mudannayaka had the responsibility of looking after the finances and sharing in the secretarial work. In spite of a new responsibility which required his daily attention Mr. Naranpanawa continued to give the Society his regular assistance.

The Society has had always good kamma. Simultaneously with Mr. Naranpanawa taking over his new assignment, we had the offer of services from Mr. H. R. de Tissera who retired from the Ceylon Administrative Service. Mr. de Tissera readily took on a share of the responsibilities of Mr. Naranpanawa. We are most thankful to him for sharing in our work.

To the faithful services of our clerical staff and to Mr. W. D. Jinadasa in our service for eleven years, whose parcelling of books received the appreciation of several foreign readers, we are deeply indebted. Our warmest thanks to them.

Board of Management

The members of the Board of Management for 1972 were the Ven. Nyanaponika Maha Thera, President, Messrs A. S. Karunaratne, E. Eramudugolla, Brindley Ratwatte, P. B. Mudannayake, T. B. Naranpanawe and Richard Abeyasekera.

Four meetings of the Board were held during the year. At the meeting held in June the Board resolved that a Bill for Incorporation of the Society be introduced to the National State Assembly. All preliminary steps necessary in regard to this have been taken.

Conclusion

And so at the end of the fifteenth year we look back with satisfaction on the substantial progress made by the Society, and offer our grateful thanks and gladly share the merit of this work with all who have directly or indirectly helped us with their time and service or assisting financially with regular subscriptions and donations.

May all beings be happy.

R. Abeyasekera.
Hony. General Secretary.

July 1973.

NOTE: *The numbers noted opposite the countries listed on pages 1 and 2 refer to the number of registered readres in 1972.*

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