

# A Manual of Insight

## Vipassanā Dīpanī

*written by the  
Venerable Ledi Sayādaw  
Aggamahāpaṇḍita, DLitt.*



*Translated by  
U Nāṇa Mahāthera  
Buddhist Publication Society  
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## Publisher’s Foreword to the Second BPS Edition

The Venerable Ledi Sayādaw’s *The Manual of Insight* was first published in book form by The Society for Promoting Buddhism in Foreign Countries, which was centred in Mandalay, Burma. It was later serialised in the journal *The Light of the Dhamma* (Rangoon), Vols. I and II. The full text appeared in a collection of Ledi Sayādaw’s treatises, *The Manuals of Buddhism*, (Rangoon: Union of Burma Buddha Sāsana Council.1965).

The first BPS edition of *The Manual of Insight* introduced a few minor changes in style and terminology, and replaced a large number of the abundant Pāli words by their English equivalents. This second edition carries through the same editorial policy that guided the work on the first edition. For the benefit of modern readers, the style has been simplified and streamlined, archaic and quaint expressions replaced by more contemporary ones, and the substitution of English for Pāli executed more thoroughly. It is hoped that these revisions will make this valuable and illuminating treatise easier reading, and a useful and practical guide in achieving the purpose for which it was originally written: the development of meditative insight.

## Foreword to the Current Edition

This derivative work of the BPS Edition has been reformatted for publication on [www.aimwell.org](http://www.aimwell.org), the website of the Association for Insight Meditation. I have made some minor edits to further modernise the English and to reduce the use of Pāli, e.g. replacing “Lord” with “Venerable Sir,” as a translation of the Pāli word *bhante*, and replacing “*bhikkhus*” with monks. A few minor style errors, such as using “which” before [restrictive clauses](#), have been fixed. Cross-references and notes have been added to help those students of Buddhism who are not fully conversant with the Pāli texts, or with other works by the same author.

Antonio Costanzo helped me a great deal by converting the PDF and proof-reading my initial drafts.

As it says in the conclusion, this work was completed by the author in February 1915 for the Buddhists of Europe. The late Venerable Ledi Sayādaw was an exemplary missionary monk, travelling all over Burma to teach the Dhamma, earnestly encouraging the listeners to practise meditation and gain genuine insight knowledge.

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# The Exposition of Insight

## The Three Hallucinations

**Vipallāsa** means hallucination, delusion, erroneous observation,<sup>1</sup> or taking that which is true as false and that which is false as true.

There are three kinds of hallucination:

1. **Saññā-vipallāsa**: hallucination of perception,
2. **Citta-vipallāsa**: hallucination of thought,
3. **Diṭṭhi-vipallāsa**: hallucination of views.

Of those three, hallucination of perception is fourfold. It erroneously perceives:

- i. Impermanence as permanence,
- ii. Impurity as purity,
- iii. Suffering as happiness,
- iv. No-soul as soul.

The same holds good with regard to the remaining two hallucinations, those of thinking and views.

All these classifications come under the category of “This is mine! This is my self or living soul!” and will be made clear later. The three hallucinations may be illustrated respectively by the similes of the wild deer, the magician, and a man who has lost his way.

## The Simile of the Wild Deer

This is the simile of the wild deer to illustrate the hallucination of perception.

In the middle of a great forest a certain husbandman cultivated a piece of paddy land. While the cultivator was away, wild deer were in the habit of coming to the field and eating the young sprouts of growing grain. So the cultivator put some straw together into the shape of a man and set it up in the middle of the field in order to frighten the deer away. He tied the straw together with fibres into the semblance of a body, with head, hands, and legs; and with white lime painting on a pot the lineaments of a human face, he set it on the top of the body. He also covered the artificial man with some old clothes such as a coat, and so forth, and put a bow and arrow into his hands. Now the deer came as usual to eat the young paddy; but approaching

<sup>1</sup> Another rendering, “illusion” may be proposed, which fits better for all three varieties, while “hallucination” strictly refers only to erroneous sense perception. — Editor.

it and catching sight of the artificial man, they took it for a real one, were frightened, and ran away.

In this illustration, the wild deer had seen men before and retained in their memory the perception of the shape and form of men. In accordance with their present perception, they took the straw man for a real man. Thus their perception was an erroneous perception. The hallucination of perception is as here shown in this allegory of the wild deer. It is very clear and easy to understand.

This particular hallucination is also illustrated by the case of a bewildered man who has lost his way and cannot make out the cardinal points, east and west, in the locality in which he is, although the rising and setting of the sun may be distinctly perceived by anyone with open eyes. If the error has once been made, it establishes itself very firmly, and can be removed only with great difficulty. There are many things within ourselves that we always apprehend erroneously and in a sense that is the reverse of the truth as regards impermanence and no-soul. Thus through the hallucination of perception we apprehend things erroneously in exactly the same way that the wild deer take the straw man to be a real man, even with their eyes wide open.

### **The Simile of the Magician**

This is the simile of the magician to illustrate the hallucination of thought.

There is a sham art called magic by means of which, when lumps of earth are exhibited in the presence of a crowd, all who look at them think they are lumps of gold and silver.

The power of the magical art takes from men their ordinary power of seeing and in its place puts an extraordinary kind of sight. It can thus for a time turn the mind upside down, so to speak. When persons are in command of themselves they see lumps of earth as they are. But under the influence of this magical art, they see the lumps of earth as lumps of gold and silver, with all their qualities of brightness, yellowness, whiteness, and so forth. Thus, their beliefs, observations, or ideas become erroneous. In the same way, our thoughts and ideas are in the habit of wrongly taking false things as true, and thus we delude ourselves. For instance, at night we are often deceived into thinking we see a man, when it is really the stump of a tree that we are looking at. Or, on seeing a bush, we imagine we are looking at a wild elephant; or, seeing a wild elephant, we take it to be a bush.



In this world all our mistaken ideas about things in our field of observation are due to the action of the hallucination of thought, which is deeper and more unfathomable than that of perception, since it deludes us by making false things seem true. However, as it is not so firmly rooted as the latter, it can easily be removed by investigation or by searching into the causes and conditions of things.

### The Simile of the Man Who Has Lost His Way

This is the simile of the man who has lost his way to illustrate the hallucination of views.

There was a large forest haunted by demons, who lived there, building towns and villages. Some travellers who were not acquainted with the roads came through the forest. The demons created their towns and villages as splendidly as those of the devas, or celestial beings, and assumed the forms of male and female devas. They also made the roads as pleasant and delightful as those of the devas. When the travellers saw these, they believed that these pleasant roads would lead them to large towns and villages, and so, turning aside from the right roads, they went astray following the wrong and misleading ones, arriving at the towns of the demons and suffering accordingly.

In this allegory, the large forest stands for the three worlds — of sense existence, fine-material, and immaterial existence. The travellers are all those who inhabit these worlds. The right road is right views; and the misleading road is wrong views. The right views here spoken of are of two kinds, namely, those that pertain to the world, and those pertaining to enlightenment. Of these two, the former connotes this right view: “All beings are the owners of their deeds; and every deed, both moral and immoral, committed by oneself, is one’s own property and follows one throughout the whole long course of life,” while the latter connotes the knowledge of the doctrine of causal genesis, of the aggregates, of the sense bases, and no-soul. Of these two views, the former is the right road to the round of existences. The worlds of the fortunate — the abodes of human beings, devas, and Brahmas — are like the towns of good people. The erroneous views that deny moral and immoral deeds and their results or effects are like the wrong, misleading roads. The worlds of the unfortunate — the abodes of the tortured, of animals, *petas*, and *asuras* — are like the towns of the demons.

The right view of knowledge, which is one of the factors of enlightenment, is like the right road that leads out of the round of existence. Nibbāna is like the town of good people.

The views “my body” and “my soul” are also like the wrong and misleading roads. Viewed in this light, the world comprising the abodes of human beings, devas, and Brahmas, or the ceaseless renewing of existences, is like the towns of the demons.

The aforesaid erroneous views belong likewise to the hallucinations, and are deeper and more firmly established than the hallucination of thought.

## The Three Fantasies

**Maññanā** means fantasy, egotistic estimation, high imagination, or feigning to oneself that one is what one is not. Through ignorance, hallucination arises, and through hallucination fantasy arises.

Fantasy is of three kinds:

1. **Taṇhā-maññanā**: fantasy caused by craving,
2. **Māna-maññanā**: fantasy caused by conceit,
3. **Diṭṭhi-maññanā**: fantasy caused by wrong views.

Of these, “fantasy caused by craving” means the high imagination: “This is mine! This is my own!” in clinging to what in reality is not “mine” and “my own.” In strict truth, there is no “I” and as there is no “I,” there can be no “mine” or “my own.” Both personal and impersonal (external) objects are highly imagined and discriminated as, “This is mine; that other thing is not mine”; and “This is my own; that other thing is not mine.” Such a state of imagination and fanciful discrimination is called “fantasy caused by craving.”

“Personal objects” means one’s own body and organs. “Impersonal (external) objects” means one’s own relations, such as father, mother, and so forth, and one’s own possessions.

“Fantasy caused by conceit” means high imagination of personal objects expressed as “I” or “I am.” When it is supported or encouraged, so to speak, by personal attributes and impersonal objects, it becomes aggressively haughty and fantastically conceited.

Here personal attributes means vigour of eyes, ears, hands, legs, virtue, intuition, knowledge, possession of power, and so forth. Impersonal objects means plenitude of family, relations, surroundings, dwellings, possessions, and so forth.

“Fantasy caused by wrong views” means over-estimation of personal objects as “my bodily frame; my principle; my soul; the core, substance or essence of my being.” In the expressions “earthen pots” and “earthen bowls,”

it is understood that earth is the substance of which these pots and bowls are made, and the very earth so made, so shaped, is again called pots and bowls. In the expressions “iron pots” and “iron bowls,” and so forth, it is also understood that iron is the substance from which iron pots and bowls are made, and the very iron so made, so shaped, is again called pots and bowls. In exactly the same way that in these instances earth or iron is the substance from which the vessels are made, so the element of extension, the earth-element that pertains to the personality, is assumed to be the substance of living beings; and of the “I” this fanciful estimation of the facts of the case arises: “The element of extension is the living being: the element of extension is the ‘I.’” What is here said in connection with the element of extension is in like manner to be understood in connection with the element of cohesion, the liquid element, and all other elements found in a corporeal existence. This over-estimation or fantastic imagination will be expounded at greater length further on.

These three kinds of fantasy are also called the three *gāha*, or the three holds, to indicate their power of holding tightly and firmly. Since they also multiply erroneous, mistaken actions, which tend gradually, but continuously, to increase beyond all limits and never incline to cease, they are also called the three *papañcas* or the three multipliers.

## The Two Dogmatic Beliefs

**Abhinivesa** means dogmatic belief, a strong belief set in the mind as firmly and immovably as doorposts, stone pillars, and monuments, so that it cannot be moved by any means or expenditure of effort. It is of two different kinds: 1) **taṇhābhinivesa**: dogmatic belief induced by craving; 2) **diṭṭhābhinivesa**: dogmatic belief induced by wrong views.

Of these, **taṇhābhinivesa** means the firm and unshakable belief in what is not “my own” body, head, hands, legs, eyes, nose, and so forth, as being “my own” body, head and so forth, throughout a long succession of existences, caused by attachment to the body.

**Diṭṭhābhinivesa** means the firm and unshakable belief in the existence of the soul or self or separate life in a person or creature, which is held, in accordance with this belief, to be an unchanging supreme thing that governs the body.

These two kinds of dogmatic belief are also called **taṇhā-nissaya** and **diṭṭhi-nissaya** respectively. They may also be called the two great reposeurs upon the five aggregates, and on body-and-mind; or the two great resting-places of the ordinary men of the world (*puthujjana*).

## The Two Stages

**Bhūmi** (*lit.*, soil, ground) means the stages where all creatures find their footing, generate, and grow. It is of two kinds: 1) **puthujjana-bhūmi**: the stage of the worldling; 2) **ariya-bhūmi**: the stage of the noble ones.

**Puthujjana-bhūmi** is the stage of the ordinary or normal being, the worldling (*puthujjana*); speaking in the sense of ultimate truth, it is nothing but the hallucination of views. All creatures of the ordinary worldly kind live in the world making this **diṭṭhi-vipallāsa**, or erroneous view, their resting place, their main support, their standing ground: “There is in me or in my body something that is permanent, pleasurable, and substantial.”

The **diṭṭhi-maññanā** or fantasy through error, the **diṭṭhi-gāha** or erroneous hold, the **diṭṭhi-papañca** or multiplier of error, and the **diṭṭhi-abhinivesa** or strong belief induced by error, are also the landing stages, the supports, the resting places, and the standing grounds of all *puthujjanas*. Hence they will never be released from the state or existence of a *puthujjana*, so long as they take their firm stand on the ground of the aforesaid many-named error.

As to the **ariya-bhūmi**, it is a state of a noble one, a sanctified being, in whom hallucination is eradicated. It is, speaking in the ultimate sense, nothing but this right view, this right apprehension, the right understanding: “There is in me or in my body nothing permanent, pleasurable, and substantial.” As a noble one lives making right view his main footing, this right view may be called the stage of the noble one. Upon the attainment of this right view, a being is said to have transcended the **puthujjana-bhūmi**, and to have set foot on the **ariya-bhūmi**.

Among the innumerable ordinary beings who have been treading the ground of the state of being worldlings during countless existences of unknown beginning, if a certain person trying to eradicate the hallucination of error and to implant right view within himself, on a certain day succeeds in his attempts, he is said to have set foot that self-same day upon the ground of the noble ones and to have become a noble one, that is, a sanctified being. Even if there should remain the hallucinations of thought and perception in some of the noble ones, they would not commit such evil deeds as would produce for them evil effects in the worlds of misfortune, for they have eradicated the weighty hallucination of error. The two remaining hallucinations would merely enable them to enjoy such worldly pleasures as they have lawfully earned.

## The Two Destinations

**Gati** means literally “going,” that is, going from life to life by way of rebirth; in other words, the change of existences, or the future destination of beings. It is of two kinds: 1) **puthujjana-gati**: the destination of worldlings; 2) **ariya-gati**: the destination of sanctified beings.

The former signifies the taking rebirth of the ordinary person, the worldling, which is dispersive (*vinipātana*). That is to say, he cannot be reborn into whatever kind of existence he might wish, but is liable to fall into any of the thirty-one kinds of existence, according as he is thrown by his past kamma. Just as, when a coconut, or any other fruit, falls from a tree, it cannot be ascertained beforehand where it will come to rest; so also when a worldling is reborn after his death, it cannot be known beforehand where he will be reborn. Every creature that comes into life inevitably has to face the evil of death; and after his death he is also sure to fall by dispersion into any type of existence. Thus the two great evils of death and dispersion are inseparably linked to every being born.

Of these two, the dispersion of life after death is worse than death; for the four realms of misery down to the Avīci hell stand wide open to a worldling who departs from the world of men; they are open to him like unobstructed space. As soon as his term of life ends, he may fall into any of the realms of woe. Whether far or near, there is no intervening period of time between two existences. In the wink of an eyelid, he may be reborn as an animal, as a wretched ghost (*peta*), as a titan (*asūra*), an enemy of Sakka, the king of gods. The same possibility holds if he dies in any of the six upper realms of the sphere of sense existence (*kāmāvacara-deva*). But when he expires from the fine-material (*rūpa-loka*), or immaterial worlds (*arūpa-loka*), there is no direct fall into the four realms of misery; there is a halt of one existence either in the abode of men or in those of devas, wherefrom he may fall into those four worlds of misery.

Why do we say that every being fears death? Because death is followed by dispersion to any sphere of existence. If there were no dispersion as regards existence after death, and one could take rebirth in any existence at one’s choice, no one would fear death so much, although, to be sure, sometimes there may be thirst for death when a being, after living a considerable length of time in one existence, desires to move to a new one.

By way of showing how great is the dispersion of existence in the case of a worldling, the similes of the fingernail (**Nakhasikhā Sutta**) and of the blind turtle (**Kāṇakacchapa Sutta**)<sup>1</sup> may be cited from the discourses.

<sup>1</sup> See the Paṭhamachiggaḷayugasuttaṃ (S.v.455) or the Bālaṇḍitasuttaṃ (M.iii.169).

## The Sutta on the Fingernail

At one time the Buddha, showing them some dust that he had taken upon the tip of his fingernail, addressed the disciples thus:

“If, monks, these few grains of dust upon my fingernail and all the dust of the universe were compared in quantity, which would you say was less, and which more?”

“Venerable sir,” the disciples replied, “the dust on your fingernail is less, and that of the universe is more. Surely, Venerable sir, the dust on your fingernail is not worthy of mention in comparison with the dust of the universe.”

“Even so, monks,” the Buddha continued, “those who are reborn in the abodes of men and devas when they have expired, are very few even as the few grains of dust on my fingernail; and those who are reborn in the four realms of misery are exceedingly many, even as the dust of the great universe. Again, those who have expired from the four miserable worlds and are reborn in the abodes of men and devas are few even as the grains of dust on my fingernail; and those who are repeatedly reborn in the four miserable worlds are innumerable, even as the grains of dust of the great universe.”

What has just been said is the substance of the Nakhasikhā Sutta. However, to say nothing of the beings of all the four realms of misery, the creatures that inhabit the four great oceans alone will suffice to make evident how great is the evil of dispersion (*vinipātana-gati*), the variety of possible kinds of existence after death.

## The Sutta on the Blind Turtle

At one time the Buddha addressed the disciples thus:

“There is, monks, in the ocean a blind turtle. He plunges into the water of the unfathomable ocean and swims about incessantly in any direction wherever his head may lead. There is also in the ocean the yoke of a cart, which is ceaselessly floating about on the surface of the water, and is carried away in all directions by tide, current, and wind. Thus these two go on throughout an incalculable space of time. Perchance it happens that in the course of time the yoke arrives at the precise place and time where and when the turtle puts

up his head, and yokes on to it. Now, O monks, is it possible that such a time might come as is said?" "In ordinary truth, Venerable sir," replied the monks, "it is impossible; but time being so vast, and an aeon lasting so long, it may be admitted that perhaps at some time or other it might be possible for the two to yoke together, as said: if the blind tortoise lives long enough, and the yoke does not rot and break up before such a coincidence comes to pass."

Then the Buddha said:

"Monks, the occurrence of such a strange thing is not to be counted a difficult one; for there is a still greater, a harder, a hundred times, a thousand times more difficult thing than this lying hidden from your knowledge. And what is this? It is, monks, the obtaining of a human existence again by a man who has expired and been reborn once in any of the four realms of misery. The occurrence of the yoking of the blind tortoise is not worth thinking of as a difficult occurrence in comparison therewith. Because only those who perform good deeds and abstain from bad actions can obtain the existence of men and devas.

"The beings in the four miserable worlds cannot discern what is virtuous and what vicious, what good and what bad, what moral and what immoral, what meritorious and what demeritorious; consequently, they live a life of immorality and demerit, tormenting one another with all their power. Those creatures of the hells and the ghost world in particular live a very miserable life on account of punishments and torments that they experience with sorrow, pain and distress. Therefore, monks, the opportunity of being reborn in the abode of men is a hundred times, a thousand times harder to obtain than the encountering of the blind turtle with the yoke."

According to this discourse, why those creatures who are born in the miserable planes are far from human existence is because they never look up but always look down. And what is meant by looking down? The ignorance in them by degrees becomes greater and stronger from one existence to another; and as the water of a river always flows down to the lower plains, so also they are always tending towards the lower existences; for the ways towards the higher existences are closed to them, while those towards the lower existences are freely open. This is the meaning of "looking down." Hence, from this story of the

blind turtle, the wise apprehend how great, how fearful, how terribly perilous are the evils of the worldling's destination, *i.e.*, the "dispersion of existence."

What has been said concerns the **puthujjana-gati**. Now, what is the **ariya-gati**, the destination of sanctified beings? It is deliverance from the dispersion of existence after death. It is also the potentiality of being reborn in higher existences or in existences according to one's choice. It is not like the fall of coconuts from trees, but is to be compared to birds that fly through the air to whatsoever place or tree they may wish to perch on. Those men, devas, and Brahmas who have attained the ariya state, can go to whatever better existence — as men, devas, Brahmas — they may wish to be reborn into, when they expire from the particular existence in which they have attained such a noble state. Though they expire unexpectedly without aiming to be reborn in a particular existence, they are destined to be reborn in a better or higher existence, and at the same time are entirely free from rebirth into lower and miserable existences. Moreover, if they are reborn again in the abode of men, they never become of the lower or poorer classes, nor are they fools or heretics, but become quite otherwise. It is the same in the abodes of devas and Brahmas. They are entirely set free from the **puthujjana-gati**.

What has been said concerns the destination of noble ones.

## Explanation of the Two Destinations

Now we will explain the two destinations side by side.

When a man falls from a tree, he falls like a coconut because he has no wings with which to fly in the air. In precisely the same way, when men, devas, and Brahmas who are worldlings riveted to the hallucination of wrong views and not having the wings of the Noble Eightfold Path to make the sky their resting-place, are reborn after the dissolution of their present bodies into new ones. They fall tumbling into the bonds of the evils of dispersion. In this world, ordinary men who climb very tall trees fall tumbling to the ground when the branches that they clutch, or try to make their resting-place, break. They suffer much pain from the fall, and sometimes death ensues because they have no other resting-places but the branches, neither have they wings to fly in the air. It is the same with men, devas, and Brahmas who have the hallucination of wrong views: when their resting-place of wrong views as regards self breaks down, they fall tumbling into the dispersion of existence.



For their resting-places are only their bodies; and they have neither such a resting-place as nibbāna nor strong wings like the Noble Eightfold Path to support them.

As for the birds, though the branches they rest on may break, they never fall, but easily fly through the air to any other tree. For the branches are not their permanent resting-places but only temporary ones. They entirely rely on their wings and the air. In the same way, men, devas, and Brahmas who have become noble ones and are freed from the hallucination of wrong views, neither regard their bodies as their self, nor rely upon them. They have in their possession permanent resting-places, such as nibbāna, which is the entire cessation of all tumbling existences. They also possess the very mighty wings of the Noble Eightfold Path, which are able to bear them to better existences.

## The Two Truths

**Sacca** or truth is the constant faithfulness or concordance of the term that names a thing, to or with that thing's intrinsic nature. It is of two kinds:

1. **Sammuti-sacca**: conventional or relative truth,
2. **Paramattha-sacca**: or ultimate truth.

Of the two, conventional truth is the truthfulness of the customary terms used by the great majority of people, such as “self exists,” “men exist,” “devas exist,” “Sakka exists,” “elephants exist,” “my head exists,” and so on. This conventional truth is the opposite of untruth, and so one can overcome it. It is not a lie or lack of truthfulness when people say: “There probably exists an immutable, permanent, and continuing self or living soul that is neither momentarily rising nor passing away throughout one existence,” for this is the customary manner of speech of the great majority of people who have no intention whatever of deceiving others. But according to ultimate truth, it is reckoned as an hallucination (*vipallāsa*), which erroneously regards the impermanent as permanent and non-self as self. So long as this erroneous view remains undestroyed, one can never escape from the evils of *saṃsāra*, the wheel of life. All this holds good when people say “a person exists,” and so on.

Ultimate truth is the absolute truthfulness of assertion or negation in full and complete accordance with what is actual: the elementary, fundamental qualities of phenomena. Here stating such truth in affirmative form, one may say: “The element of solidity exists,” “the element of extension

exists," "the element of cohesion exists," "the element of kinetic energy exists," "mind exists," "consciousness exists," "contact, feeling, and perception exist," "material aggregates exist," and so on. And expressing such truth in a negative form, it can be said: "No self exists," "no living soul exists," "no person exists," "no being exists," "nor do hands, nor any members of the body exist," "neither does a man exist nor a deva," and so on. In saying here: "No self exists," "no living soul exists," we mean that there is no such ultimate entity as a self or living soul that persists unchanged during the whole term of life, without momentarily coming to be and passing away. In the expressions: "No being exists," and so forth, what is meant is that nothing actually exists but material and mental elements. These elements are neither persons nor beings, nor men, nor devas, etc. Therefore there is no separate being or person apart from the elements. This ultimate truth is the diametrical opposite of the hallucination, and so can confute it. One who is thus able to confute or reject the hallucination can escape from the evils of *saṃsāra*.

According to conventional truth, a person exists, a being exists; a person or a being continually transmigrates from one existence to another in the ocean of life. But according to ultimate truth, neither a person nor a being exists and there is no one who transmigrates from one existence to another. Here it may be asked: "Do not these two truths seem to be poles apart?" Of course they seem to be so. Nevertheless, we may bring them together. Have we not said: "According to conventional truth" and "According to ultimate truth"? Each kind of truth accordingly is truthful as regards its own mode of expression. Hence, if one man should say that there exists a person or a being according to conventional truth, the other to whom he speaks ought not to contradict him, for these conventional terms describe what apparently exists. And likewise, if the other says that there exists neither a person nor a being according to ultimate truth, the former ought not to deny this, for, in the ultimate sense, material and mental phenomena alone truly exist, and in strict reality they know no person or being.

For example: men dig up lumps of earth from certain places, pound them into dust, knead this dust with water into clay, and from this clay make various kinds of useful pots, jars, and cups. Thus there exist various kinds of pots, jars, and cups in the world.

Now, when discussion takes place on this subject, if it were asked: "Are there earthen pots and cups in this world?" the answer according to the conventional truth should be given in the affirmative, and according to the

ultimate truth in the negative, since this kind of truth admits only the positive existence of the earth out of which the pots and so forth were made. Of these two answers the former requires no explanation inasmuch as it is an answer according to the established usage, but as regards the latter, some explanation is needed. In the objects that we called “earthen pots,” and “earthen cups,” what really exists is only earth not pots or cups in the sense of ultimate truth, for the term “earth” applies properly not to pots and cups but to actual substantial earth. There are also pots and cups made of iron, brass, silver, and gold. These cannot be called earthen pots and cups, since they are not made of earth. The terms “pots” and “cups” also are not terms descriptive of earth but of ideas derived from the appearance of pots and cups, such as their circular or spherical shape and so on. This is obvious, because the terms “pots” and “cups” are not applied to the mere lumps of earth that have no shape or form of pots and cups. Hence it follows that the term “earth” is not a term descriptive of pots and cups, but of real earth; and also the terms “pots” and “cups” are not terms descriptive of earth but of pictorial ideas (*saṅṭhāna-paññatti*), which have no elementary substance other than the dust of clay, being mere conceptions presented to the mind by the particular appearance, form, and shape of the worked-up clay. Hence the negative statement according to the ultimate truth, namely, that “no earthen pots and cups exist,” ought to be accepted without question.

# Material Phenomena

Now we come to the analysis of things in the ultimate sense. Of the two kinds of ultimate phenomena, material and mental, as mentioned above, the former is of twenty-eight kinds:

## THE FOUR GREAT ESSENTIALS:

1. Element of solidity (*paṭhavi*),
2. Element of cohesion, or binding, the fluid (*āpo*),
3. Element of heat, including warmth and cold (*tejo*),
4. Element of motion or vibration (*vāyo*).

## THE SIX BASES:

5. Eye-base,
6. Ear-base,
7. Nose-base,
8. Tongue-base,
9. Body-base,
10. Heart-base.

## THE TWO SEXES:

11. Male sex,
12. Female sex.

## ONE SPECIES OF PHYSICAL LIFE:

13. Vital force.

## ONE SPECIES OF MATERIAL NUTRITION:

14. Edible food.

## THE FOUR SENSE FIELDS:

15. Visible form,
16. Sound,
17. Odour,
18. Savour.

The preceding eighteen species are called genetic material qualities (*jāta-rūpāni*), as they possess the power of production.

## ONE SPECIES OF PHYSICAL LIMITATION:

19. Element of space.

## THE TWO COMMUNICATIONS:

20. Intimation through the body,

21. Intimation through speech.

## THE THREE PLASTICITIES:

22. Lightness,

23. Pliancy,

24. Adaptability.

## THE FOUR SALIENT FEATURES:

25. Integration,

26. Continuance,

27. Decay,

28. Impermanence or death.

The preceding ten species are called non-genetic material qualities (*ajāta-rūpāni*) as they do not possess the power of production.

## Four Great Essentials

**Mahābhūta** means to develop greatly.

1. The element of extension is the element of earth, that is, the fundamental principle or foundation of matter. It exists in gradations of many kinds, such as hardness, more hardness, stiffness, more stiffness, softness, more softness, pliability, more pliability, and so on.
2. The element of cohesion is the element of water, that is, the cohesive power of material qualities whereby they form into a mass or bulk or a lump. There are apparently many kinds of cohesion.
3. The element of heat is the element of fire, that is, the power to burn, to inflame, and to mature the material qualities. This maturative quality is of two kinds, namely, the maturative quality of heat and the maturative quality of cold.
4. The element of motion is the element of wind or air, that is, the power of supporting or resisting. It is of many kinds, such as supportive, resistive, conveying, vibratory, diffusive, and so on.

From these four great elements all other forms of matter are born. Or, expressed in another way: All matter is a combination, in one proportion or another, of these four elementary properties, together with a varying number of secondary material phenomena derived from the great elements.

## Derived Materiality

### THE SIX BASES

A base, *vatthu*, is that where consciousness is generated, arises, develops, or that whereupon it depends.

5. The eye-base is the sensorium within the eyeball where consciousness of sight is generated: consciousness of sight connotes the power of seeing various kinds of colours, appearances, forms and shapes.
6. The ear-base is the sensorium within the organ of the ear where consciousness of sound is generated; and the consciousness of sound connotes the power of hearing various kinds of sound.
7. The nose-base is the sensorium within the nose organ where consciousness of smell is generated; and the consciousness of smell connotes the power of smelling different kinds of odours.
8. The tongue-base is the sensorium upon the surface of the tongue where consciousness of taste is generated; the consciousness of taste connotes the power of tasting many kinds of taste such as sweet, sour, and so forth.
9. The body-base is the sensorium locating itself by pervading the whole body within and without from head to foot, where consciousness of touch is generated; the consciousness of touch connotes the power of feeling or sensing physical contacts.
10. The heart-base (*hadaya-vatthu*) is a kind of very fine, bright, subtle matter within the organ of heart where mind consciousness, comprising sixty-nine classes of the same in number is generated.

From these six bases all classes of consciousness are generated and arise.

### THE TWO SEXES

**Bhāva** means production or productive principle.

11. The **itthi-bhāva**, the female sex, is a certain productive principle of matter that produces several different kinds of female features or feminine characteristics.

12. The **puṃ-bhāva**, the male sex, is a certain productive principle of matter that produces several different kinds of male features or appearances and masculine characteristics.

The two sexes respectively locate themselves in the bodies of male and female, like the body-base, they pervade the entire frame from the sole of the foot to the top of the head within and without. Owing to their predominant features the distinction between femininity and masculinity is readily discerned.

### THE VITAL FORCE

13. **Jivita** means life, that is, the vital force that controls the material qualities produced by kamma, and keeps them fresh in the same way that the water of a pond preserves the lotus plants from decay. It so informs them as to prevent them from withering. The common expressions of ordinary speech, “a being lives” or “a being dies,” are descriptive merely of the presence or absence of this material quality of life. When it ceases forever with reference to a particular form, we say “a being dies,” and we say “a being lives” so long as it continues to act in any particular form. This also permeates the whole body.

### MATERIAL NUTRITION

14. **Āhāra-rūpa** means the element of essential nutriment that nourishes or promotes the growth of material qualities. Just as the element of water that resides in earth or falls from the sky nourishes trees or plants, or mainly promotes their growth and helps them to fecundate, develop and last long, so also this material quality of nutrition nourishes the four kinds of matter produced by the four causes — kamma, mind, temperature, and food — and helps them to fecundate and grow. It is the main supporter of the material quality of life, so that undertaking various kinds of work in the world for the sake of getting one’s daily food is called a man’s living or livelihood.

### THE FOUR SENSE FIELDS

**Gocara** means sense field or object of the five senses.

15. The object “visible form” is the quality of colour and shape of various objects.

16. The object “sound” is the quality of sound itself.
17. The object “odour” is the quality of scent or smell.
18. The object “savour” is the quality of savour or taste.

Mention is not made here of touch, the tangible object, as it consists of three of the great elements, namely, tangible extension, tangible temperature, and tangible movement.

Counting the tangible also, we thus get five sense fields in all. Of these, visible form is the object of eye; sound, of ear; odour, of nose; savour, of tongue; and the tangible, of body.

### THE ELEMENT OF SPACE

19. **Ākāsa-dhātu** means the element of space. In a heap of sand there is space between each particle of sand. Hence we may say that there are as many spaces as there are particles of sand in the heap; and we can also distinguish the particles of sand from one another. When the heap is destroyed, the particles of sand are scattered about, and the space enclosed between them disappears also. Similarly, in very hard lumps of stone, marble, iron, and other metals, there are innumerable atoms and particles of atoms, called *kalāpas* or groups. Even the finest, smallest particles of an atom contain at least the following eight qualities of matter: the four essentials and colour, odour, savour, and nutritive essence. And each group is separated by the element of space located between them. Therefore there is at least as much space as there is matter in the lump. It is owing to the existence of this space that lumps of stone and iron can be broken up, or cut into pieces, or pounded into dust, or melted.

### THE TWO MODES OF COMMUNICATION

**Viññatti-rūpa** means mode of communication. It is a sign employed to communicate the willingness, intention, or purpose, of one person to the understanding of another.

20. **Kāya-viññatti** is that peculiar movement of body by which one’s purpose is made known to others.
21. **Vaci-viññatti** is that peculiar movement of sounds in speech by which one’s purpose is made known to others.



Those who cannot see the minds of others know the purpose, the intention, the willingness of others through the use of these two modes of communication. These two are employed not only in communicating one's purpose or intention to the understanding of another, but also in moving the parts of the body while walking, and so forth, according to one's will, as also in learning by heart, reading to one-self, and so forth.

#### THE THREE PLASTICITIES

**Vikāra** means the peculiar expression or distinctive condition of the genetic material qualities (*jāta-rūpa*).

22. **Lahutā** is the lightness of the material qualities.

23. **Mudutā** is the pliancy of the material qualities.

24. **Kammaññatā** is the adaptability of the two media of communication.

When one of the Four Great Essentials falls out of order and becomes disproportionate to the rest in any parts of the body, these parts are not light as usual in applying themselves to some work, but tend to become heavy and awkward; they are not pliable as usual, but tend to become hard, coarse, and rigid; they are not as adaptable as usual in their movements in accord with one's will, but tend to become difficult and strained. Likewise, when the essentials are out of order, the tongue and the lips, are not adaptable according to one's wish in speaking, but become firm and stiff. When the four great essentials are in good order and the parts of the body are in sound health, the matter of the body (*rūpa*) is said to be in possession of these qualities, lightness, pliancy, and adaptability, which are called the three plasticities (*vikāra-rūpa*).

#### THE FOUR SALIENT FEATURES

**Lakkhaṇa** means the salient feature or mark by means of which it is decisively known that all material and mental qualities are subject to impermanence.

25. **Upacaya-rūpa** means both integration and continuance of integration; the former may be called initial integration (*ācaya*) and the latter sequential integration (*upacaya*).

26. **Santati-rūpa** means continuance. From the cessation of sequential integration to the commencement of decay the phenomenon continues without any increase or decrease. And such a continuous state of material phenomenon is called *santati* or prolongation (*pavatti*). The produc-

tion (*jāti*) of the groups of material qualities alone is described by the three names, **ācaya**, **upacaya**, and **santati**.

27. **Jaratā** is the state of growing old, of decline, of maturity, ripeness (in the sense of being ready to fall), decay, caducity, rottenness, or corruption.
28. **Aniccatā** means impermanence, death, termination, cessation, brokenness or the state of disappearing.<sup>1</sup>

A plant has five periods, the **ācaya** period, the **upacaya** period, the **santati** period, the **jaratā** period, and the **aniccatā** period. It is first generated; then it grows up gradually or develops day-by-day; and after the cessation of growth it stands for sometime in the fully developed state. After that it begins to decay, and at last it dies and disappears.

Here, the primary generation of the material qualities is called the **ācaya** period; the gradual growth or development, the **upacaya** period; and their fully developed state, the **santati** period. However, during these three periods there are momentary decays (*khaṇika-jaratā*) and momentary deaths (*khaṇika-aniccatā*), but they are inconspicuous. The declining of the plant is called the **jaratā** period. During the period of decline there are momentary births (*khaṇika-jāti*) and momentary deaths (*khaṇika-maraṇa*), but they are also inconspicuous.<sup>2</sup> The death of the plant and the final disappearance of all its constituents are called the **aniccatā** period. During what we call death there are also momentary births and decays but they are invisible. The five periods allotted to what is apparent to the view are shown here only in order to help one to grasp the idea of *lakkhaṇa-rūpas*.

In a similar manner we may divide, in the life of a fruit tree, the branches, the leaves, the buds, the flowers, and the fruits into five periods each. A fruit can be divided into five periods thus: the first period of appearance; the second period of growth or development; the third period of standing; the fourth period of ripening and decaying; and the fifth period of falling from the stem, total destruction, or final disappearance.

Just as we get five periods in the life of plants, so is it with all creatures, and also with all their bodily parts; with their movements or bodily actions

<sup>1</sup> It is our Ledi Sayādaw's style in writing to express an idea by means of as many synonymous terms as he can collect. A translator such as I, who has not fully attained the mastery of the English language, in which the treasures of Burmese literature are to be deposited, meets difficulty with furnishing the translation with a sufficient number of appropriate terms. — Translator

<sup>2</sup> The commentator of the *Dhammasaṅgāṇi*, in his *Atthasālini*, explains this by an illustration of a well dug out on the bank of a river. The first gushing out of water in the well, he says, is like the **ācaya** of the material phenomenon; the flushing up or the gradual increasing or the rising up of water to the full, is like the **upacaya**; and the flooding is like the **santati**. — Tr.

such as going, coming, standing, and sitting; with their speech and with their thought. The beginning, the middle, and the end are all to be found in the existence of every material thing.

#### THE FOUR PRODUCERS OF MATERIAL PHENOMENA

There are four producers (*samuṭṭhāna*) that produce material phenomena: 1) **kamma**, 2) **citta**, 3) **utu**, 4) **āhāra**.

1. **Kamma** means moral and immoral actions committed in previous existences.
2. **Citta** means mind and mental concomitants existing in the present life.
3. **Utu** means the two states of the fire-element (*tejo-dhātu*); heat (*uṇha-tejo*) and cold (*ṣīta-tejo*).
4. **Āhāra** means the two kinds of nutritive essence: internal nutriment that obtains from the time of conception, and external nutriment that exists in edible food.

Out of the twenty-eight species of material qualities, nine species — the six bases, two sexes, and life are produced only by **kamma**. The two media of communications are produced only by **citta**.

Sound is produced by **citta** and **utu**. The three plasticities are produced by **citta**, **utu**, and **āhāra**. Of the remaining thirteen, excluding decay (*jaratā*) and impermanence (*aniccatā*), the eleven — comprising the four great essentials, nutriment, visible form, odour, savour, the element of space, integration, and continuance — are produced by the four causes. These eleven always appertain severally to the four classes of phenomena produced by the four causes. There are no phenomena that enter into composition without these. Material phenomena enter into composition with these, forming groups of eight, nine, and so forth, and each group is called *rūpa-kalāpa*.

Two salient features, decay and impermanence, are excluded from the material qualities born of the four causes as they disorganise what has been produced.

# Mental Phenomena

There are fifty-four kinds of mental phenomena: **citta**: mind or consciousness; **cetasika**: mental properties or concomitants, fifty-two in number; and **nibbāna**: liberation from the circle of existences.<sup>1</sup>

**Citta** means the faculty of investigating an object (*ārammaṇa*); or of taking possession of an object; or of knowing an object; or of being conscious of an object. **Cetasikā** are factors of consciousness, or mental properties born of mind, or concomitants of mind. Nibbāna means freedom from all suffering.

## Consciousness

Consciousness is divided into six classes:

1. Consciousness of sight,
2. Consciousness of sound,
3. Consciousness of smell,
4. Consciousness of taste,
5. Consciousness of touch,
6. Consciousness of mind.

Of these:

1. The consciousness arising at the eye-base is called consciousness of sight, and has the function of seeing.
2. The consciousness arising at the ear-base is called consciousness of sound, and has the function of hearing.
3. The consciousness arising at the nose-base is called consciousness of smell, and has the function of smelling.
4. The consciousness arising at the tongue-base is called consciousness of taste, and has the function of tasting.
5. The consciousness arising at the body-base is called consciousness of touch, and has the function of touching.
6. The consciousness arising at the heart-base is called consciousness of mind. In the immaterial world (*arūpa-loka*), however, mind-consciousness arises without any physical base.

Mind-consciousness is again subdivided into four kinds:

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<sup>1</sup> Nibbāna is here regarded as a mental phenomenon, not from the objective, but from the subjective point of view. — Tr.

- i. **Kāma**-consciousness,
- ii. **Rūpa**-consciousness,
- iii. **Arūpa**-consciousness,
- iv. **Lokuttara**-consciousness.

Of these:

**Kāma**-consciousness is that which is under the dominance of desire prevailing in the world of sense desire (*kāma-loka*). It is fourfold, thus: moral (*kusala*), immoral (*akusala*), resultant (*vipāka*), and ineffective (*i.e.*, kammically inoperative, *kriyā*).

**Rūpa**-consciousness is the *jhānic* mind that has become free from sense-desire but still remains under the dominance of the desire prevailing in the fine-material world. It is threefold, thus: moral, resultant, and ineffective.

**Arūpa**-consciousness is also the *jhānic* mind that has become free from desire for the fine-material, but still remains under the dominance prevailing in the immaterial world. It is also threefold, thus: moral, resultant, and ineffective.

**Lokuttara**, or supramundane consciousness, is the noble mind (*ariya-citta*) that has become free from the threefold desire, and has transcended the three planes, **kāma**, **rūpa**, and **arūpa**. It is of two kinds, thus: noble consciousness in the path (of stream-entry, *etc.*) and noble consciousness in the fruition (of stream-entry, *etc.*)

## Mental Properties

Mental properties are of fifty-two kinds.

### THE SEVEN COMMON PROPERTIES

The seven common properties (*sabba-citta-sādhāraṇa*), are so called on account of being common to all classes of consciousness:

1. **Phassa**: contact,
2. **Vedanā**: feeling,
3. **Saññā**: perception,
4. **Cetanā**: volition,
5. **Ekaggatā**: one-pointedness of mind,
6. **Jīvita**: psychic life,
7. **Manasikāra**: attention.

## THE SIX PARTICULARS

The six particulars (*pakiṇṇaka*), so called because they are features only of certain types of consciousness:

8. **Vitakka**: initial application,
9. **Vicāra**: sustained application,
10. **Viriya**: effort,
11. **Pīti**: pleasurable interest,
12. **Chanda**: desire-to-do,
13. **Adhimokkha**: decision.

The above thirteen mental properties are called “mixers” (*vomissaka*),<sup>1</sup> meaning that they can mix with both moral and immoral consciousness. Shwe Zan Aung calls them “unmoral properties.”

## THE FOURTEEN IMMORAL PROPERTIES

The fourteen immoral properties (*akusala*) are:

14. **Lobha**: greed,
15. **Dosa**: hate,
16. **Moha**: dullness,
17. **Diṭṭhi**: error,
18. **Māna**: conceit,
19. **Issā**: envy
20. **Macchhariya**: selfishness,
21. **Kukkucca**: worry,
22. **Ahirika**: shamelessness,
23. **Anottappa**: recklessness,
24. **Uddhacca**: distraction,
25. **Thina**: sloth,
26. **Middha**: torpor,
27. **Vicikicchā**: perplexity.

## THE TWENTY-FIVE MORAL PROPERTIES

The twenty-five moral properties (*sobhana*) are:

28. **Alobha**: disinterestedness; *lit.* non-greed,
29. **Adosa**: amity; *lit.*: non-hate,
30. **Amoha**: reason; *lit.*: non-delusion,

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<sup>1</sup> *Vomissaka* literally means “mixed” or “miscellaneous”. — Ed.

31. **Saddhā**: faith,
32. **Sati**: mindfulness,
33. **Hiri**: modesty,
34. **Ottappa**: discretion,
35. **Tatramajjhataṭṭā**: balance of mind,
36. **Kāyapassaddhi**: composure of mental properties,
37. **Cittapassaddhi**: composure of mind,
38. **Kāyalahutā**: buoyancy of mental properties,
39. **Cittalahutā**: buoyancy of mind,
40. **Kāyamudutā**: pliancy of mental properties,
41. **Cittamudutā**: pliancy of mind,
42. **Kāyakammaññatā**: adaptability of mental properties,
43. **Cittakammaññatā**: adaptability of mind,
44. **Kāyapaguññatā**: proficiency of mental properties,
45. **Cittapaguññatā**: proficiency of mind,
46. **Kāyujukatā**: rectitude of mental properties,
47. **Cittujukatā**: rectitude of mind,
48. **Sammā-vācā**: right speech,
49. **Sammā-kammantā**: right action,
50. **Sammā-ājīva**: right livelihood,
51. **Karuṇā**: pity,
52. **Muditā**: appreciation.

## The Common Properties

1. **Phassa** means contact, and contact means the faculty of pressing the object so as to cause the agreeable or disagreeable “sap” to come out. So contact is the main principle or prime mover of the mental properties in their uprising. If the sap cannot be squeezed out, then no object will be of any use.
2. **Vedanā** means feeling, the faculty of tasting the sapid flavour thus squeezed out by **phassa**. All creatures are sunk in feeling.
3. **Saññā** means perception, the act of perceiving. All creatures become wise through this perception, if they perceive things with sufficient clarity in accordance with their own ways, customs, creeds, and so forth.
4. **Cetanā** means volition, the faculty of determining the activities of the mental concomitants so as to bring them into harmony. In the common speech of the world we are accustomed to say of one who supervises a piece of work that he is the performer or author of the work. We usually say: “Oh, this work was done by So-and-so” or “This is such and such a

person's great work." It is somewhat the same in connection with the ethical aspects of things. Volition is called action (*kamma*), as it determines the activities of the mental concomitants and supervises all the actions of body, speech, and mind. As all prosperity in this life is the outcome of the exertions put forth in work performed with body, speech, and mind, so also the conditions of a new existence are the results of the volitions<sup>1</sup> performed in previous existences. Earth, water, mountains, trees, grass, and so forth, are all born of the element of temperature and they may be quite properly be called the children or the issue of volition, or the element of kamma, as they are all born through kamma.

5. **Ekaggatā** means one-pointedness of mind. It is also called concentration (*samādhi*). It becomes prominent in the *jhāna-samāpatti* the attainment of the supernormal modes of mind called *jhāna*.
6. **Jivita** means the life of mental phenomena. It is pre-eminent in preserving the continuance of mental phenomena.
7. **Manasikāra** means attention. Its function is to bring the desired object into view of consciousness.

These seven factors are called common properties, as they always enter into the composition of all consciousness.

## The Particular Properties

8. **Vitakka** means initial application of mind. Its function is to direct the mind towards the object of investigation. It is also called aspiration (*saṅkappa*), which is of two kinds: *sammā-saṅkappa* or right aspiration, *micchā-saṅkappa* or wrong aspiration.
9. **Vicāra** means sustained application of mind. Its function is to keep the mind engaged in the object (by considering, reflecting, etc.)
10. **Viriya** means energy, or effort of mind in actions. It is of two kinds, right effort and wrong effort.
11. **Piti** means pleasurable interest of mind, or buoyancy, or rapture of mind.
12. **Chanda** means desire-to-do, such as desire-to-go, desire-to-speak, and so forth.
13. **Adhimokkha** means decision, or literally, apartness of mind from the object; it is intended to connote the freedom of mind from the wavering state between the two courses; "Is it?" or "Is it not?"

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<sup>1</sup> "Asynchronous volition" is the name given to it in the Paṭṭhāna, and it is known by the name of *kamma* in the actions of body, speech and mind.



These last six mental properties are not common to all classes of consciousness, but severally enter into their composition in some cases. Hence they are called particulars. They make thirteen if they are added to the common properties; and both, taken together, are called mixers as they enter into composition both moral and immoral consciousness.

## The Immoral Properties

14. **Lobha** ethically means greed, but psychologically it means agglutination of the mind with objects. It is sometimes called craving (*taṇhā*), sometimes covetousness (*abhijjhā*), sometimes lust (*kāma*), and sometimes sensual passion (*rāga*).
15. **Dosa** in its ethical sense is hate, but psychologically it means the violent striking of mind at the object (*i.e.*, conflict). It has two other names: repugnance (*paṭigha*) and ill-will (*vyāpāda*).
16. **Moha** means dullness or lack of understanding. It is also called nescience (*avijjā*), not knowing (*aññāṇa*), and not seeing (*adassana*).

The above three are called the three immoral roots, as they are the main sources of all immorality.

17. **Diṭṭhi** means error or wrong view in matters of philosophy. It takes impermanence for permanence, non-soul for soul, and moral activities for immoral ones; or it denies that there are any results of action, and so forth.
18. **Māna** means conceit or wrong estimation. It wrongly imagines the name-and-form (*nāma-rūpa*) to be an “I,” and estimates it as noble or ignoble according to the caste, creed, or family, and so on, to which the person belongs.
19. **Issā** means envy, lack of appreciation, or absence of inclination to congratulate others upon their success in life. It also means a disposition to find fault with others.
20. **Macchariya** means selfishness, meanness, or unwillingness to share with others.
21. **Kukkucca** means worry, anxiety, or undue remorse for what has been done wrongly, or for right actions that have been left undone. There are two wrongs in the world, namely, doing evil deeds and failing to do meritorious deeds. There are also two ways of repenting, thus “I have done evil acts,” or “I have left undone meritorious acts, such as charity, virtue, and so forth.” “A fool always invents plans after all is over,” runs

the saying. So worry is of two kinds, with regard to forgetfulness and with regard to evil, “sins of omission” and “sins of commission.”

22. **Ahirika** means shamelessness. When an evil act is about to be committed, no feeling of shame such as “I will be corrupted if I do this,” or “Some people may know this of me,” arises in him who is shameless.
23. **Anottappa** means utter recklessness as regarding such consequences as self-accusation (“I have been foolish; I have done wrong,” and so forth), accusations by others, punishment in the present life inflicted by rulers, and punishment to be suffered in the realms of misery in the next life.
24. **Uddhacca** means restlessness or distraction of mind as regards an object.
25. **Thina** means slothfulness of mind, that is, the dimness of the mind’s consciousness of an object.
26. **Middha** means slothfulness of mental properties that is, the dimness of the faculties of each of the mental properties, such as contact, feeling, and so forth.
27. **Vicikicchā** means perplexity or sceptical doubt, that is, not believing what ought to be believed.

The above fourteen kinds are called immoral states (*akusala-dhamma*); in fact, they are real immoralities.

## The Moral Properties

28. **Alobha** means disinterestedness of mind as regards an object. It is also called the element of renunciation (*nekkhamma-dhātu*) and liberality (*anabhijjhā*).
29. **Adosa** or amity, in its ethical sense, means inclination of mind in the direction of its object, or purity of mind. It is also called non-ill-will (*avyāpāda*) and loving-kindness (*mettā*).
30. **Amoha** means knowing things as they are. It is also called knowledge (*ñāṇa*), wisdom (*paññā*), true knowledge (*vijjā*), or right-view (*sammā-ditṭhi*).

These three are called the three moral roots as they are the main sources of all morality.

31. **Saddhā** means faith in what ought to be believed.
32. **Sati** means constant mindfulness in good things so as not to forget them.
33. **Hiri** means modesty, that is, hesitation in doing evil deeds through shame of being known to do them.

34. **Ottappa** means moral dread, that is, hesitation in doing evil deeds through fear of self-accusation, or accusation by others, or punishment in this world and in the realms of misery.
35. **Tatramajjhataṭā** is balance of mind, that is, the mode of mind that neither cleaves to an object nor repulses it. This is called equanimity of the sublime abodes (*upekkhā-brahmavihāra*), and equanimity that pertains to the factors of enlightenment (*upekkhā-sambojjhaṅga*).
36. **Kāyapassaddhi** means composure of mental properties.
37. **Cittapassaddhi** means composure of mind. Composure means that the mental properties are set at rest and have become cool, as they are free from the three immoral roots, which cause annoyance in doing good deeds.
38. **Kāyalahutā** means buoyancy of mental properties.
39. **Cittalahutā** means buoyancy of mind. Buoyancy means that the mental properties have become light, as they are free from the immoral properties, which weigh against them in the doing of good deeds. It should be explained in the same manner as the rest.
40. **Kāyamudutā** means pliancy of mental properties.
41. **Cittamudutā** means pliancy of mind.
42. **Kāyakammaññatā** means fitness for work of the mental properties.
43. **Cittakammaññatā** means the fitness for work of the mind.
44. **Kāyapāguññatā** means proficiency of the mental properties.
45. **Cittapāguññatā** means proficiency of the mind. Proficiency here means skillfulness.
46. **Kāyujukatā** means rectitude of mental properties.
47. **Cittujukatā** means rectitude of mind.
48. **Sammā-vācā** means right speech, that is, abstinence from the four wrong modes of speech: lying, slander, abusive language, and idle talk.
49. **Sammā-kammantā** means right action, that is, abstinence from the three wrong acts: killing, stealing, and sexual misconduct.
50. **Sammā-ājīva** means right livelihood.

The above three are called the three abstinences.

51. **Karuṇā** means pity, sympathy, compassion, or wishing to help those who are in distress.
52. **Muditā** means appreciation of and delight in the success of others.

These last two are called the sublime abodes (*brahma-vihāra*) and are also called the illimitables (*appamaññā*).

## Nibbāna

Nibbāna may be classified into three kinds:

1. Freedom or deliverance from the plane of misery is the first nibbāna.
2. Freedom or deliverance from the world of sense-desire is the second nibbāna.
3. Freedom or deliverance from the fine-material and the immaterial worlds is the third nibbāna.<sup>1</sup>

Consciousness, the fifty-two mental properties, and nibbāna together make up fifty-four mental phenomena. Thus the twenty-eight material phenomena and fifty-four mental phenomena make up eighty-two ultimate things that are called ultimate facts. On the other hand, self, soul, creature, person, and so forth, are conventional facts.

## Causes I

Of these eighty-two ultimate things, **nibbāna**, inasmuch as it lies outside the scope of birth (*jāti*), does not need any cause for its maintenance since it also does not come within the range of decay and death (*jarā-maraṇa*). Hence nibbāna is unconditioned and uncompounded. But with the exception of nibbāna, the other eighty-one phenomena, both mental and material, being within the spheres of birth, decay, and death, are conditioned and compounded things.

Among the four causes already dealt with in connection with the material qualities, kamma is merely an originator and mind (*citta*) is simply a stimulus. The physical body develops, stands, and is maintained by the power of the heat element and by the power of the essence of nutriment. If the forces of the latter two come to an end, the forces of the former two also can no longer operate but cease simultaneously.

In the case of trees, for example, the seeds are only their origins. They grow, develop, and are maintained by the elements of earth and water. If these two principles fail them, the power of the seed also fails along with them. Here the physical body is like the tree; kamma is like the seed; the

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<sup>1</sup> The first refers to the first of the four stages of emancipation, stream-entry (*sotāpatti*), where rebirth in the lower worlds is excluded. Since, already at this stage, the final attainment of nibbāna is assured after at most seven existences, the author calls it, in anticipation, the first nibbāna. The second applies to the stage of the non-returner (*Anāgāmi*) who has eliminated the fourth of the ten fetters, sensual lust (*kāma-rāga*). The third is the stage of Arahantship where all fetters are destroyed, among these are the desire for fine-material and immaterial existence (*rūpa-* and *arūpa-rāga*). — (Ed.)

heat-element is like the earth; the nutritive essence is like the rain-water, which falls regularly at proper seasons; and mind is like the atmosphere and the heat of the sun, both of which give support from outside.

With regard to the causes of mind and mental properties, three things are needed for the arising of resultants: a past kamma, a base to depend upon, and an object. The first is like the seed of the tree, the base is like the earth, and the object is like the rain-water.

Two things are necessary for the arising of each of the mental phenomena of the moral properties, the immoral properties, and the ineffective properties, a base to depend upon, and an object. However, to be more detailed, full rational exercise of attention (*yoniso-manasikāra*), or rationally-directed attention, is needed for the moral properties, and irrational exercise of attention (*ayoniso-manasikāra*), or irrationally-directed attention, for the immoral properties. The ineffective properties that have apperceptual functions have the same causes as the moral properties. As for the two classes of consciousness called “turning towards [the object],” if they precede the moral properties they have the same causes as the moral properties; if they precede the immoral properties they have the same causes as the immoral properties. Here, *yoniso-manasikāra* means proper exercise of attention and *ayoniso-manasikāra* means improper exercise of attention. These are the functions of the two classes of consciousness called adverting (*āvajjana*), or “turning towards.” On seeing a man, if attention is rationally utilised, moral consciousness arises; and if attention is irrationally utilised, immoral consciousness arises. There is no particular object that purely of itself will cause to arise only a moral consciousness or only an immoral consciousness. The process of the mind may be compared to a boat of which the *āvajjana-citta*, or “turning-towards-thought,” is the helmsman. As the course of a boat lies entirely in the hands of the helmsman, so too the occurrence of moral and immoral consciousness lies entirely in the hands of the *āvajjana-citta*.

What the seed is to the tree, that the attention is to the moral properties and the immoral properties. What the earth is to a tree, that their base is to the moral properties and immoral properties. While what the rain-water is to a tree, that their object is to the moral properties and immoral properties.

## Causes II

We will now set forth the causes in another way.

Each of the six classes of consciousness has four causes.

For the arising of consciousness of sight, there is needed the eye-base, a form-object, light, and attention. Unless there is light, the function of seeing will not take place, nor the process of cognition. Attention is a name for the *āvajjana-citta*, which turns the mind towards the cognition of the form-object.

For the arising of the consciousness of sound, there is needed the ear-base, a sound-object, space, and attention. Here, space is needed for the sound to be communicated to the ear.

The function of hearing can take place only when it is present; the process of ear-door cognition also occurs only when hearing takes place.

For the arising of the consciousness of smell, there is needed the nose-base, a smell-object, air, and attention. Here, “air” means the air in the nose of the inhaled air. If this is not present, odours cannot come into contact with the nose-base, and consequently the function of smelling and the nose-base, and consequently the function of smelling and the nose-door cognition cannot take place.

For the arising of the consciousness of taste, there is needed the tongue-base, an object of taste, water, and attention. “Water” means wetness of the tongue. If the tongue is dry, the savour or sapidity cannot come into contact with the tongue-base and consequently the function of tasting and the tongue-door cognition cannot take place.

For the arising of the consciousness of touch, there is needed the body-base, an object of touch, a degree of coarseness (*thaddha*) in the object of touch, and attention. Only a somewhat coarse object of touch can make an impression upon the body-base. If the object of the touch is too subtle, it cannot impinge upon the body-base, and unless there is impingement, neither consciousness of touch nor the body-door cognition can arise.

For the arising of the consciousness of mind, there is needed the heart-base, an object of thought, the mind-door, and attention. “Object of thought” (*dhammārammaṇa*) comprises the following: all material qualities other than the five sense objects, all mental phenomena, all ideas, and nibbāna. The five-sense objects also can become objects of mind-consciousness but in order to set forth what is not related to the five senses, only thought-objects are mentioned here.

The mind-door means the continuum of sub-consciousness (*bhavaṅga*). Though the heart-base is the place where consciousness of mind arises, since it does not possess the appropriate kind of sensuous organs, the impressions of objects cannot appear in the mind-door only.

## The Two Super-Knowledges

**Abhiññā** means super-knowledge, the faculty of knowing pre-eminently beyond the knowledge of ordinary mankind. It is of two kinds, **samatha-abhiññā** and **dhamma-abhiññā**.

**Samatha-abhiññā**, means super-knowledge acquired by carrying out of the exercises in calm (*samatha*). It is of five different kinds:

1. **Iddhividha-abhiññā**: supernormal powers,
2. **Dibbasota-abhiññā**: the divine ear,
3. **Cetopariya-abhiññā**: mind-reading,
4. **Pubbenivāsa-abhiññā**: recollection of previous lives,
5. **Yathākammūpaga-abhiññā**: knowledge of the destiny of beings.<sup>1</sup>

The first is the supernormal powers of passing through the air, sinking into the earth, creating wonderful things, transforming oneself into different personalities.

The second is extreme sensitivity of hearing, as is possessed by celestial beings.

The third is the supernormal knowledge of others' thoughts.

The fourth is the supernormal knowledge of previous existences.

The fifth is the supernormal knowledge of the kamma in accordance with which living beings are thrown into the various spheres of existence; it resembles the supernormal vision possessed by celestial beings.

**Dhamma-abhiññā** means the insight by which are discerned all the things of ultimate truth (mentioned in the section on the truths) together with their respective characteristics, which are beyond the range of conventional truth. It is divided into three kinds:

1. **Sutamaya-ñāṇa**: knowledge acquired by learning,
2. **Cintāmayā-ñāṇa**: knowledge acquired by reasoning,
3. **Bhāvanāmayā-ñāṇa**: knowledge acquired by contemplation.

The last of the three is again subdivided into two: 1) **anubodha-ñāṇa**; 2) **paṭivedha-ñāṇa**. Of these, the former is the triple insight into impermanence, suffering, and no-soul, or the insight into things with all their characteristics as they truly are. The latter is the supramundane knowledge of the four paths. By this knowledge, which can dispel the darkness of the defilements (*kilesa*) such as error, perplexity, and so forth, those who have attained the paths are brought into the light.

<sup>1</sup> English translations added by the current editor.

## The Three Profound Knowledges

**Pariññā** means profound knowledge. It is of three kinds:

1. **Ñāta-pariññā**: autological knowledge (*lit.* “knowledge of what has been understood”),
2. **Tiraṇa-pariññā**: analytical knowledge,
3. **Pahāna-pariññā**: dispelling knowledge.

### Autological Knowledge

**Ñāta-pariññā** means a profound and accurate discernment of mental and material phenomena with all their proximate causes, and also of nibbāna, as shown in the previous sections on the truths and the causes. It discerns things deeply by means of philosophical knowledge (*dhamma-abhiññāṇa*) in their ultimate aspects, dispelling all merely pictorial ideas or representations (*saṅṭhāna-paññatti*), such as hair of the body, and so forth. Even if all of these are not discerned, if only the Four Great Essentials out of twenty-eight material phenomena are discerned in the aforesaid manner, it may be said that the function of **ñāta-pariññā** as regards form (*rūpa*), is accomplished. As regards mentality (*nāma*), if only four of the mental phenomena — mind, feeling, perception, and volition — are thoroughly discerned in the aforesaid manner, it may also be said that the function of **ñāta-pariññā** as regards *nāma* is fulfilled. If nibbāna can also be discerned as shown above, the function of **ñāta-pariññā** would be fully realised.

### Triple Knowledge of Impermanence, Ill, and No-soul

**Tiraṇa-pariññā** means a profound and accurate discernment of momentary phenomena (both mental and material) with insight into rise and fall, by skilfully dissecting the continuity of mentality and materiality (*nāma-rūpa*) into momentary ultimate phenomena. It is of three kinds:

1. **Anicca-pariññā**: knowledge of impermanence,
2. **Dukkha-pariññā**: knowledge of ill or suffering,
3. **Anatta-pariññā**: knowledge of no-soul.

**Anicca-pariññā** means either a perfect or a qualified knowledge of the law of death: conventional death and ultimate death. By “conventional death” we mean the kind of death concerning which we are accustomed to say, according to the conventional truth, that “to die some time is unavoidable for every living person or every living creature.” By ultimate



death we mean the momentary death of mental and material phenomena, which occurs innumerable times even in one day. The former neither possesses the real salient feature of impermanence, nor does it lie properly within the domain of **anicca-pariññā**, but only of the recollection of death (*maraṇānussati*). In fact, it is only the latter, ultimate death, which exhibits the salient feature of impermanence, and lies within the domain of **anicca-pariññā**.

**Dukkha-pariññā** means either a perfect or a qualified knowledge of the intrinsic characteristic ill or suffering. Here ill is of two kinds:

1. **Vedayita-dukkha**: ill as painful feeling,
2. **Bhayattha-dukkha**: fear-producing ill.

Of these two, by **vedayita-dukkha**, bodily and mental pains are meant; and by bodily pain is meant the unbearable, unpleasant pain that comes to the various parts of the body; while mental pain means such pains as grief (*soka*), lamentation (*parideva*), sorrow (*domanassa*),<sup>1</sup> and despair (*upāyāsa*), which are experienced by mind. **Bhayattha-dukkha** is that ill that falls within the sphere of knowledge of things as fearful (*bhaya-ñāṇa*) and knowledge of things as dangerous (*ādīnava-ñāṇa*), to wit: ill of birth (*jāti-dukkha*), ill of decay (*jarā-dukkha*), ill of death (*maraṇa-dukkha*), ill of conditionality (*saṅkhāra-dukkha*), and ill of changeability (*vipariṇāma-dukkha*). The last two will be explained later.

## The Simile of the Dangerous Disease

Here is an illustration to show the difference between **vedayita-dukkha** and **bhayattha-dukkha**.

A man has a dangerous disease. He has to live on a simple diet, such as vegetables and fruit, so as to keep himself healthy and the disease in a subdued condition. If he takes rich food, such as poultry, fish, meat, and sweets, even though a sense of comfort and enjoyment may accompany such a dainty meal, after partaking of it he will suffer pain and indigestion for the whole day or maybe for many days, which will cause the disease to arise again in full force. The more dainty the meal is, the longer will he suffer. Now suppose that a friend of his, with a view to acquiring merit, brings him some nicely-cooked, buttered rice, fowl, fish, and meat. The man, fearing the agony of pain that he will have to undergo if he should eat the meal, has to thank his

<sup>1</sup> I have transposed the translations for *soka* and *domanassa* as per the Commentary on the truth of suffering in the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta.— (Current editor.)

friend but decline it, telling him that the meal is too rich for him, and that should he eat it he would be sure to suffer. In this instance, the richly-prepared food is, of course, the pleasurable object, for it will probably furnish a nice savour to the palate while it is being eaten, which feeling of pleasure is called *vedayita-sukha*. But to him who foresees that it will cause him such pain as may break down his health, this same food is really an object devoid of pleasure. He shrinks from and fears it, for he knows that the better the savour the longer he must suffer; hence the pleasure his palate will derive from the food is to him a real fear-producing ill.

In the world, he who has not got rid of the error of ego and become safe against the danger of the dispersion of life (*vinipātana-bhaya*), and its passage to realms of misery, is like the aforesaid man who has the dangerous disease. The existences of men, devas, and Brahmas, and the pleasures experienced therein, are like the richly-prepared food and the feeling of pleasure derived from it. The state of being reborn in different existences after death is like the agony that the man has to suffer after the enjoyment of the food.

Here, **vedayita-dukkha** is synonymous with *dukkha-vedanā*, which is present in the *vedanā* triad of the “things conjoined with pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral feeling.” **Bhayattha-dukkha** is synonymous with the truth of suffering (*dukkha-sacca*) and with *dukkha* as one of the intrinsic characteristics, i.e., impermanence, ill or suffering, and no-soul (*anicca, dukkha, anattā*).

Hence, the perfect as well as the qualified knowledge of the ill inherent in the existences of men, devas, and Brahmas, including also the pleasures experienced therein, is called **dukkha-pariññā**.

**Anatta-pariññā** means the perfect or the qualified knowledge of mental and material phenomena as possessing the characteristic of no-soul. By this knowledge of things as no-soul, (*anatta-ñāṇa*), all the mental and material phenomena that belong to the ultimate truths are discerned as having no-soul, self, or substance. By it also is discerned the personal nature of the “person” of conventional truth.

Neither are persons and creatures discerned as the soul or personality of mental and material phenomena; nor is it assumed that there exists, apart from these, a soul or personality that never dies but transmigrates from one existence to another. If this knowledge attains to its highest degree, it is called **anatta-pariññā**. The triple knowledge of impermanence, ill and no-soul is called **tiraṇa-pariññā**.

## Dispelling Knowledge

**Pahāna-pariññā** means the perfect or the qualified knowledge that dispels hallucinations. It dispels the three hallucinations of permanency (*nicca-vipallāsa*) by means of the insight acquired through the contemplation of impermanence: the three hallucinations of pleasure (*sukha-vipallāsa*) and the three hallucinations of purity<sup>1</sup> (*subha-vipallāsa*), by means of the insight acquired through the contemplation of ill; and the three hallucinations of self (*attā-vipallāsa*) by means of the insight acquired through the contemplation of no-soul.<sup>2</sup>

Here, soul (*attā*) is the supposed underlying essence of a pictorial idea (*santhāna-paññatti*), and life (*jīva*) is the supposed underlying essence of an aggregate-idea (*santati-paññatti*).

Of these two delusions, the former may be got rid of by a knowledge of the two kinds of truth, the ultimate and the conventional; but the latter can be got rid of only when the **anicca-pariññā**, the full knowledge of impermanence, reaches its summit.

Here, by *santati* is meant the continuum of aggregates of the same kind, and by *nānā-santati* is meant the continua of aggregates of different kinds.

This *santati* is of two kinds, mental and material. And the continuum of the material variety of aggregate is again sub-divided into four classes, namely, into those produced by kamma, by mind, by temperature, by food. Each of these four kinds of continua is liable to change if its respective causes change. When changes take place, the change of the continuum, of the kamma-produced class is not apparent but that of the mind-produced class is very apparent. In the one single act of sitting down many movements of the different parts of the body are to be observed. These movements and actions are nothing but the changes in the continua of aggregates.

## The Growth, Decay, and Death of the Material Aggregates

In each aggregate there are three periods: birth, growth-and-decay, and death. In each step taken in the act of walking there are beginning, middle, and end. These are respectively birth, growth-and-decay, and death. Though we say “a step,” this connotes the whole body; that is to say, the whole body undergoes change; the aggregates of the whole body undergo new births,

<sup>1</sup> The usual translation of *subha* is beauty.— (Current editor).

<sup>2</sup> The three hallucinations of permanency are erroneously perceiving, thinking and viewing the impermanent as permanent. Similarly, in the case of pleasure, purity, and soul, the three hallucinations each obtain by way of erroneous perception, thought and view. — Tr. & Ed.

new growth-and-decays, and new deaths. If a hundred steps or a thousand steps are taken in the course of a walk, then, a hundred or a thousand new births, new growth-and-decays, and new deaths take place in the whole body. A step may also be divided into two, the lifting-up aggregate and the laying-down aggregate of the foot. And in each single step, birth, growth-and-decay, and death must be noted. The same holds good with regard to all the postures of the body, such as standing, sitting, sleeping, stretching out, drawing in. Only, what is to be understood here is that all tired, wearied, inflammatory, irritative, inflictive, painful states are changes in the continua of aggregates produced by temperature. Both in exhaling and inhaling, beginning, middle, and end are all discernible. The phase of continuance of stability in the existence of the aggregates is immediately followed by decay which, in connection with such matter, is called exhaustion or weariness. It is produced by inflammatory and irritative matter, and through it unbearably painful feelings arise. Then, through these painful feelings, people become aware that exhaustion is present; but they do not apprehend the perpetual growth-and-decay of the continua. Weariness is indeed the name applied to the growth-and-decay of the continua of aggregates, which at first spring up strongly and cheerfully, while the end of each of these aggregates is the death of the continuum (*santati-maraṇa*). In the same manner it is to be understood that there are beginning, middle, and end in every aggregate produced by laughter, smiling, gladness, joy, grief, sorrow, lamentation, groans, sobs, greed, hate, faith, love, and so forth. Also, in speaking it is obvious that every word has its beginning, its middle, and its end, which are respectively the momentary birth, growth-and-decay, and death of speech.

With regard to matter produced by temperature, aggregates arise and cease at every stroke of our fan when, in hot weather, we fan ourselves. In exactly the same way, while we are bathing there arise and cease cool aggregates each time we pour water over ourselves. Tired, fatigued, ailing aggregates, generally speaking, are changes in the temperature-produced continua. Through hot and cold foods we observe different changes in the body that are sometimes due to temperature (*utu*). The arising, aggravation, and curing of diseases by unsuitable or suitable food and medicines are also due to temperature.

Even in the mind-produced aggregates, there may also be many changes that are due to temperature.

With regard to the aggregates produced by nutritive essence, poverty or abundance of flesh, vigour or defect of vital force must be taken into

account. By vigour of vital force, we mean that as soon as the food taken has entered the stomach, the vital force that pervades the whole body becomes vigorous and is strengthened. Therefore, the most necessary thing for all creatures is to prevent the vital force from failing, and to promote it. What we call “getting a living in the world” is nothing else but getting regular supplies of food for the maintenance of the vital forces. If people hold that it is of great importance to remain alive, it will be obvious to them that a sufficient supply of suitable food is also a matter of great importance. It is more necessary to supply food than to increase the blood; for if the supply of food to the stomach is reduced, all blood and flesh in the body will gradually decrease. The life of the kamma-produced material qualities, such as the eye, the ear, and so forth, is the vital force (*jīvita-rūpa*), which depends on the supply of food. If the supply of food fails, the whole body, together with the vital force, fails. If the supply of fresh food is suspended for six or seven days, the vital force and all the kamma-produced material qualities come to an end. Then it is said that a being dies. Now, it is not necessary to indicate the changes (*i.e.* the birth, the growth-and-decay, and death) of the aggregates of the food-produced material qualities, for they are apparent to everyone.

## The Growth, Decay, and Death of Mental Phenomena

What has been shown is the growth-and-decay and the death of the continua of material aggregates.

Now come the continua of mental phenomena. They are also very numerous. Everyone knows his own mind. There are continua of various kinds of greed, of various kinds of hate, of various kinds of dullness, of various kinds of love. In the single act of sitting, the arising of countless thoughts is recognised by everyone. Each process of thought has its birth, decay, and death. Everyone knows of himself: “Greed is rising in me now,” or “Hate is rising in me now,” or “Greed has ceased in me,” or “Hate has ceased in me.” But it cannot be said that it has ceased forever or that it has come to its final end, for this is only the temporary cessation or death of the process or continuum of thoughts. If circumstances are favourable, they will rise again instantly. What has just been said is in exposition of the mental continuum.

**Nāta-pariññā** is relevant to **tiraṇa-pariññā**, which in turn is relevant to **pahāna-pariññā**, which is the sole necessary thing.

# The Exposition of Tīraṇa-pariññā

## The Mark of Impermanence in Matter

The three salient marks or features are:

1. **Anicca-lakkhaṇa**: the mark of impermanence,
2. **Dukkha-lakkhaṇa**: the mark of ill or suffering,
3. **Anatta-lakkhaṇa**: the mark of no-soul.

**Anicca-lakkhaṇa**, or the mark of impermanence, is the characteristic of the sphere of *vipariṇāma* and of *aññathābhāva*. **Vipariṇāma** means metastasis, that is, a radical change in nature: a change from the present state into that which is not the present state. **Aññathābhāva** means subsequent change of mode. If the spheres of *vipariṇāma* and *aññathābhāva* are exposed to the mind's eye, it will be distinctly discerned that the mental and material phenomena, which are within the spheres of these two, *vipariṇāma* and *aññathābhāva*, are really impermanent things. Therefore we have said: "Anicca-lakkhaṇa or the mark of impermanence, is the characteristic of the sphere of *vipariṇāma* and of *aññathābhāva*." When we closely observe and analyse the flame of a lamp burning at night, we take note of the flame together with its five salient features: birth, growth, continuance, decay, and death. We note that the fire is momentarily arising. This is the birth of a material phenomenon; but it is not fire. We observe that the flame, after arising, is constantly developing. This is the growth of the material phenomenon; but it is not fire. We observe that the flame is uninterruptedly continuing in its normal state. This is the continuance of the material phenomenon; but it is not fire. We observe that the flame is dying down. This is the decay of the material phenomenon; but it is not fire. We observe that the flame is dying away.

This is the death of the material phenomenon; but it is not fire. The property of hotness is, of course, fire. The flame quivers merely on account of the presence of these five salient features. Sometimes it may quiver when the lamp is removed, and in that case it may be said that the quivering is due to wind. These five salient features are therefore the subsequent changes (*aññathābhāva*) of the flame, called the marks of impermanence. By observing and taking note of these five salient features, it can be understood that the flame is an impermanent thing. Similarly, it should be understood that all moving things are impermanent things.

The mobile appearances of the most delicate atoms of matter, which are not discernible by the human eye, are discovered by the help of that clever revealer of nature's secrets, the microscope. Through the discovery of these moving appearances, it is believed by certain Western people — Leibnitz and Fechner, for example — that these material phenomena are living creatures. But in truth they are not living creatures, and the moving appearances are due only to the reproduction of the material phenomena through the function of the physical change (*utu*). By reproduction we here mean the *ācaya-rūpa*. In some bodies, of course, there may be living creatures in existence.

When we look at the flowing water of a river or a stream, or at the boiling water in the kettle, we discern moving appearances. These are the reproductions of material phenomena produced by physical change. And in water that seems still or quiet to the naked eye, moving appearances will also be seen with the help of a microscope. These two are reproductions of material phenomena produced by physical change. Here, “reproductions” means the constant integrations of new phenomena, which are called *ācaya-rūpa*. By discerning the integrations of new phenomena, the subsequent death or disappearances of the old phenomena, which are called the *aniccatā-rūpa*, is also discernible. When the integration of new matter and the death of the old matter take place side-by-side, the *santati-rūpa* is discernible. When the reproduction is excessive, the *apacaya-rūpa* is discernible. When the death of old matter is excessive, the *jaratā-rūpa* is discernible. We have shown above that in every tree, root, branch, leaf, sprout, flower, and fruit there are these five salient marks. So, when we look at them with the aid of a microscope, we see that they are full of very infinitesimal bodies moving about as if they were living creatures, but in fact these are mere reproductions of matter produced by physical change.

As regards the bodies of creatures or persons, these five salient marks are also discernible in every member of the body, such as hair, hair of the body, finger-nails, toe-nails, teeth, the inner skin, the outer skin, muscles, nerves, veins, big bones, small bones, marrow, kidney, heart, liver, membrane, lungs, intestines, entrails, undigested food, digested food, and the brain. So, when we look at them with the help of a microscope, moving organisms like very small creatures are seen. These are the reproductions of matter produced by kamma, mind, food, and physical change.

There may, of course, be microbes in some cases. Thus, if we look with the mind's eye, the mark of impermanence in all the matter of the whole body will clearly be discerned.

What has just been expounded is the mark of impermanence in matter.

## The Mark of Impermanence in Mental Phenomena

In mental phenomena, *i.e.*, mind and its concomitants, the mark of impermanence, which has two distinct features, radical change (*vipariṇāma*) and the subsequent change (*aññathābhāva*), is no less clearly to be seen. In the world, we all know that there are many different terms and expressions applied to the different modes and manners of the elements of mind and body, which are incessantly rising and ceasing. For instance, there are two expressions, “seeing” and “not-seeing,” which are used in describing the function of the eye. Seeing is the term assigned to the element of sight-consciousness; or, when we say “one sees,” this is the term applied in describing the arising of sight-consciousness from the conjuncture of four causes, namely, eye-base, visual form, light, and attention. And when we say, “one does not see,” this is the phrase we use in describing the non-existence of sight-consciousness. When, at night in the dark, no source of light is present, sight-consciousness does not arise upon the eye-base; it is temporarily suspended. But it will arise when the light from a fire, for instance, is introduced. And when the light is put out, sight-consciousness also will again cease. As these are five salient marks present in the flame, if the light comes to be, seeing also comes to be, sight also arises. If the light develops, seeing also develops. If the light continues, seeing also continues. If the light decays, seeing also decays. And if the light ceases, then seeing also ceases. In the daytime also, these two terms “seeing” and “not-seeing” may be used. If there is no obstruction, one sees; and if there is obstruction, one does not see. As regards eye-lids, if they are opened, one sees; and if they are shut, one does not see. What has just been expounded is the *vipariṇāma* and *aññathābhāva* of sight-consciousness through the occasioning cause, light. In cases where the destruction of the eye-base occurs after conception, sight-consciousness also is lost. If the visual form is taken away out of view, sight-consciousness also ceases. While sleeping, as there is no attention, sight-consciousness subsides for some time. The genesis of all classes of consciousness that take part in the process of eye-door perception is to be understood by the term “seeing”; and the subsidence of the same is to be understood by the term “not-seeing.”

Similarly, in each function of hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching, a pair of expressions (existing or otherwise) is obtainable, and these must be dealt with as to their impermanency, *i.e.*, *vipariṇāma* and *aññathābhāva*, in the same way as sight-consciousness. With regard to mind-cognition, it has many different modes, and each is apparent in its nature of *vipariṇāma* and *aññathābhāva*



through the changes of the different kinds of thought. Among the mental concomitants, taking feeling for example, the changes of pleasure, pain, joy, grief, and hedonic indifference, are very evident. So also, the changes of perception, initial application, sustained application, from good to bad and vice versa, are very obvious. It may be easily noticed by anyone that in the single posture of sitting, greed, disinterestedness, hate, and amity, each arise by turns.

What has just been expounded is the impermanence of mental phenomena. So much for the mark of impermanence.

### The Mark of Ill

Briefly speaking, the marks of impermanence in *vipariṇāma* and *aññathābhāva* may also be called the mark of ill, for they are to be feared by the wise in *saṃsāra*, the wheel of life. Why are they to be feared by the wise? Because, in the world, the dangers of decay and death are the dangers most to be feared. *Vipariṇāma* is nothing but momentary decay and death; it is the road to death, and to the dispersion of life into different spheres. All creatures remain alive without moving to another existence only because they are sustained by various methods of preservation. *Vipariṇāma* is also to be feared on account of the disadvantages that may fall on ourselves. *Ācaya*, *upacaya* and *santati*, the features of *aññathābhāva*, may also bring many disadvantages. They may establish in the physical body many kinds of disease and ailments. They may establish in the mental continuum many kinds of afflictions (*kilesa*), many kinds of hallucination, and many other disadvantages. Every material phenomenon possesses these two marks of impermanence; and also every mental phenomenon pertaining to the three realms of being has the same two marks of impermanence. Therefore the mental and material phenomena of men, devas, and Brahmas are all subject to ill. The two marks of impermanence being always present, there are approximately three different marks of ill, *dukkha-dukkhatā*, *saṅkhāra-dukkhatā*, and *vipariṇāma-dukkhatā*.

*Dukkha-dukkhatā* means both bodily (*kāyika*) and mental (*cetasika*) pain. *Saṅkhāra-dukkhatā* is the state of material and mental phenomena that exists only if they are always determined, conditioned, and maintained with a great deal of exertion in every existence. The existences of Brahmas have a great amount of *saṅkhāra-dukkha*. Hardly one out of a hundred, who has abandoned all sensual pleasures, renounced the world, and practised the sublime states (*brahmavihāra*) without regard to his own life, hereafter attains the existence of a Brahmā. Though people know that such existence is a very good thing, they do not venture to practise them, for they take them to be

very hard, difficult and pain-giving. When absorptions and supernormal intellections are attained, they must be maintained with great care and trouble, for if not, they are liable to be lost in a moment upon the most trifling lapse.

*Vipariṇāma-dukkhatā* is the state of destruction, or death occurring at any time, day or hour, whenever circumstances are favourable to it. The existences of men, devas, and Brahmās are the real ills, since they are severally subject to the said three marks of ill.

## The Eleven Marks of Ill

Speaking broadly, there are eleven marks of ill:

1. *Jāti-dukkha*: ill of birth,
2. *Jarā-dukkha*: ill of decay,
3. *Maraṇa-dukkha*: ill of death,
4. *Soka-dukkha*: ill of sorrow,
5. *Parideva-dukkha*: ill of lamentation,
6. *Kāyika-dukkha*: bodily ill,
7. *Cetasika-dukkha*: mental ill,
8. *Upāyāsa-dukkha*: ill of despair,
9. *Appiya-sampayoga-dukkha*: ill due to association with enemies,
10. *Piyavippayoga-dukkha*: ill due to separation from loved ones,
11. *Ichchā-vighāta-dukkha*: ill due to non-fulfilment of wishes.

Of these, *jāti* means birth or production. It is of three kinds, *kilesajāti*: birth of defilements, *kammajāti*: birth of actions, and *vipākajāti*: birth of effects.

Of these three, *kilesajāti* is the birth or the production of defilements such as greed, hate, dullness, error, conceit, and so forth.

*Vipākajāti* is the birth or production of different kinds of diseases, different kinds of ailments, and different kinds of painful feelings in the body, or the production of mean and low existence such as those of birds and animals, and so forth. Among *kilesajāti*, greed is very fierce and violent. It will rise at any time it finds favourable circumstances, like fire fed with gunpowder. When it rises, it is very difficult to suppress it by any means whatsoever; it will grow in volume in an instant. Hence, it is a real “ill,” since it is very much to be feared by all noble beings. The like should be understood in connection with hate, dullness, and so forth, which ethically are one thousand and five hundred in number. Just as a hill that is the abode of very poisonous serpents is feared and no one dares to approach it, so also the existences of men, devas, and Brahmās are feared; and no noble beings dare approach

them with the views “my self” and “my body,” for they are the birth-places of the said defilements. Therefore they are real “ills” that are to be feared.

Of the *kammajāti*, immoral actions of body, speech, and thought are the development of the defilements. Therefore they are equally as fierce as the defilements. Hence this *kammajāti* is also a real “ill” to be feared by all noble ones. Just as the villages where thieves and robbers take up their quarters are feared, and good people do not venture to approach them, so also the existences of men, devas, and Brahmās are feared, and none bent on deliverance dare approach them with such views as “my self” and “my body,” for they are the birth-places of the said *kammajāti*.

As to *vipākajāti*, owing to the dreadfulness of *kilesajāti* and *kammajāti*, *vipākajāti* — the rebirth into the planes of misery, is likewise always a terrible thing in the cycle of existences.

Therefore, the existences of men, and so forth, to which the *vipākajāti* together with the *kilesajāti* and the *kammajāti* are joined, are real “ill.” The moral actions and the fortunate realms furnish food for the defilements, fuel for the flames of the defilements, so that the birth of moral actions and the birth of results therefrom, are all obtainable in the *kilesajāti*.

So much for jātidukkha, the ill of birth.

Concerning the *jarādukkha* and *marañadukkha*: these are the momentary decays and deaths that follow a being from the moment of conception, and are at all times ready to cause him to fall in decay, death, or unfortunate realms whenever opportunities occur. They also obtain in connection with *vipariṇāma-dukkha*: and since they dog the steps of all living beings in every existence from the moment of conception, the existences of men, devas, and Brahmās are real “ill”.

So much for the ills of decay and death.

The ills of sorrow, lamentation, bodily pain, mental pain, and despair always follow the existences of men and devas, ready to arise whenever an opportunity occurs. The realms of the hells and the *peta* worlds are the realms of sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair.

So much for the five kinds of dukkha.

To come into contact with persons, creatures, things, or objects with which one does not wish to unite or that one does not wish even to see is the ill due to association with enemies.

Separation from persons, creatures, things, and objects that one always wishes to meet or be united with, from which one never wishes to be parted in life or by death — this is the ill due to separation from loved ones.

To strive hard, but all in vain, to obtain anything is the ill due to non-fulfilment of wishes.

These “ills” are very numerous and very evident, and are also frequently met with in the world. Hence the existences, of men, devas, and Brahmas are real “ills.” Of these eleven varieties of *dukkha*, birth, decay, and death are the most important.

So much for the mark of ill.

## The Mark of No-soul

The mark by which mental and material phenomena are to be understood as no-soul is called the **anatta-lakkhaṇa**, the mark of no-soul. In considering the word *anattā*, the meaning of *attā* ought first to be understood. *Attā* in the ordinary sense means essence, or substantiality. By essence or substantiality is meant, as we already explained in connection with ultimate truth, for instance the earth that is the essence or the substantiality of a pot. The word “pot” is merely the name by which a certain pictorial idea (*santhāna-paññatti*) is indicated, it is not a name for earth. And a pictorial idea possesses no essence or substantiality as an ultimate thing; here, earth alone is an ultimate thing that possesses essence or substantiality. If the question is asked: “Does such a thing as a pot exist in the world?” those who are unable to differentiate between the two kinds of truth, ultimate and conventional, would answer that the pot exists. These should then be asked to point out the pot. They will now point to an earthen pot near at hand, saying: “Is that not a pot?” But it is not correct of them to assert that earth is a pot; it is a false assertion. Why is it a false assertion? Simply because earth is an ultimate thing and has essence or substantiality, while “pot” is a mere conception having no essence or substantiality, and thus, like space, is void. To assert of earth that it is a pot is, in effect, to try to make out that essential earth constitutes the essence or substantiality of the pot, which is actual fact, seeing that “pot” as a mere representation of the mind that possesses no substantial essence whatsoever. Here, what actually is a non-existent pot becomes an existent pot, and earth also becomes the essence of the pot, so that earth and pot become one and the same thing; the identity of the one is confused with the identity of the other. It is for this reason that we call this a false assertion. In this illustration, “earth” corre-

sponds to the five aggregates or their constituents, material and mental phenomena, while “pot” corresponds to persons and living creatures. Just as earth becomes the essence of the pot in the statement that the earth is the pot, so also the five aggregates or their constituents become the essence of persons and creatures, when it is said that the aggregates are persons and creatures. This is the meaning of essence (*attā*).

Now for *anattā*. In the expression “earthen pot,” if one is able to discern that earth is one thing and pot another, and that earth is an ultimate thing and “pot” is a mere conception of the mind; and again, that earth is not pot and pot is not earth, and also that it is false to call earth a pot, and to call a pot earth; then the earth becomes not the essence (*attā*) of the pot, but becomes void of essence (*anattā*); at the same time, the pot is seen to be void like space, since it is a mere conception of form. A similar result is obtained if one is able to discern the five aggregates and the material and mental phenomena thus: “The five aggregates are ultimate things; persons and creatures are ideas derived from their forms and continua; hence the phenomena are not persons and creatures; and persons and creatures are not the phenomena. If the phenomena are called persons and creatures, this is a false naming of them; and if persons and creatures are called the phenomena, this is false too.”

Accordingly, the phenomena become not the essence of persons and creatures, but become *anattā*, or the reverse of substantial essence. Also, persons and creatures become quite evidently void and empty, inasmuch as they are mere ideas derived from the forms and continua of the phenomena. What has just been said is in exposition of the meaning of *anattā*.

## How the Marks of Impermanence and Ill Become Marks of No-soul

The marks of impermanence and ill expounded in the foregoing pages are also the marks of no-soul. How? It is supposed that the ideas (*paññatti*) of persons and creatures are eternal and immortal<sup>1</sup> both in this existence

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<sup>1</sup> In Buddhist philosophy there are three things that are “eternal and immortal,” in the sense in which that phrase is used here in the text. These three things are, in Pāli, *paññatti*, *ākāsa*, and *nibbāna*; that is, concepts (or ideas), space, and that which supervenes when craving, hate and delusion are completely wiped out. It is held that the existence of these three has nothing whatever to do with time, never enters time, is never limited by time. The law of rise-and-fall, of arising and ceasing, which applies to all other things, does not apply to them. They exist independent of whether any particular being thinks them or not. In other words, they are eternal and immortal and independent of time, not in any sense of being [contd.]

and in those that follow, and it has been explained that the phenomena are not eternal since they are subject to momentary decay and death, which are the marks of impermanence; and also because they are constantly ceasing and being reproduced innumerable times even in one day, the mark of that kind of impermanence is known as **aññathābhāva**.

But in the ideas of persons and creatures no marks of radical change (*vipariṇāma*) and subsequent change (*aññathābhāva*) are to be seen. If such marks were to be found in the ideas of persons and creatures, then, of course, these ideas would also be subject to birth, decay, and death, and would be reborn and decay and die many times even in one day. But these marks are not to be found in the ideas; we discern these marks only in the mental and material phenomena.

Therefore it comes to this, that the mental and material phenomena (*nāma-rūpa-dhammā*) are not to be regarded as the essence or substantiality of persons and creatures. It is in this way that the mark of impermanence becomes the mark of no-soul, in accordance with the text: **asārakatthena anattā**, “On account of being without a core, the word *anattā* is used.”

How does the mark of ill become the mark of no-soul? The marks of ill are very evil, very disadvantageous, and very unsatisfactory; and all creatures desire to be in good states, to be prosperous, and to be satisfied. If mental and material phenomena are the true essence of persons and creatures, the phenomena and the person must be one and the same. And if this be so, their desires must also be one and the same; that is, the person’s desire must also be that of the phenomena, and vice-versa. But if this is not so, then each must be a thing separate from the other.

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[contd.] unbrokenly continuous in time. Nibbāna is distinguished from the two other “eternal and immortal” things in that it has *santilakkhaṇa* or it is *santibhāva*, a word that may be rendered quite adequately in English as “the great peace” and all that this implies. — Translator. The statement of the Translator, the Venerable U Nāṇa, ascribing the teaching on the “eternal nature” of concepts and space to Buddhist philosophy in general, requires qualification. This teaching is obviously of late origin, being found neither in the Abhidhamma Piṭaka nor in the old Abhidhamma Commentaries. The earliest reference might be in the Parivāra, a late summary of the Vinaya, appended as the last book to the Vinaya Piṭaka. There, in a stanza, it is said that “all formations (*saṅkhārā*) are impermanent, painful, not-self, and conditioned (*saṅkhata*); nibbāna and space are not-self” — which, by implication, may mean that the latter two (which do not include concept) are unconditioned (*asaṅkhata*). It was characteristic of the later schools (also the Śrāvakayāna school of the Vaibhāṣikas) to have enlarged the list of the *asaṅkhata-dhammā*, while the Dhammasaṅgaṇi (and so also the Sutta Piṭaka) speaks only of nibbāna as unconditioned (*asaṅkhata*). It is also significant that the two Abhidhamma manuals, Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha and Abhidhammāvatāra, both have chapters on concept (*paññatti*), but make no mention of its eternal and unconditioned nature — (Nyanaponika Thera)

Here, by a “person’s desire” we mean greed (*lobha*) and desire-to-do (*chanda*); and by “the desire of phenomena,” the happening of things in accordance with their causes. A main characteristic of persons and creatures is the craving for happiness of mind and body; and an outstanding feature of phenomena is their uniformity with their causes or conditions, that is, the arising and the ceasing of phenomena are subject to causes, and never occur entirely in accordance with the desires of persons in defiance of causes. For example: if warmth is wanted, the cause that produces warmth must be sought out; or if coldness is wanted, the cause that produces coldness must be sought out. If long life is wanted, the causes of long life, for instance, a daily supply of suitable food, must be sought out; for no man can live long merely by wishing to live long. And if rebirth in the worlds of the fortunate is wanted, then the cause of this, moral or virtuous deeds, must be sought out; for no one can get to the worlds of the fortunate merely by wishing to be reborn there.

It is sometimes erroneously believed that one can be whatever one wishes to be, because upon occasions something one has wished for is later on fulfilled. But in actual fact it has come about only in accordance with a cause that was previously sought out and brought into play. It is falsely believed by many people that one can maintain oneself according to one’s wish when in sound health or at ease in any of the four bodily postures, ignoring the fact that the cause, the partaking of food on previous days, was sought by them and brought into play. They also mistakenly think that their wishes are always fulfilled, when they find themselves living happily in buildings previously in existence. But in truth, if one looks around in this world and sees how great and numerous are the businesses, affairs, occupations and so forth, of men in all their extent and variety, he will soon discern with the mind’s eye that the *saṅkhāra-dukkha*, the suffering associated with conditioned phenomena, is great and manifold in precisely the same measure as men’s activities. And this *dukkha* is due to the establishing of the causes necessary for acquiring of the desired effects; for the phenomena can never become exactly as beings wish them to be or order them to be. Thus, simply in beholding the marks of *saṅkhāra-dukkhatā* all about us, it becomes evident that phenomena do not spontaneously conform to the desires of persons and creatures, and hence they are not their essence or substance. In addition to this, it also should be well noted how conspicuous is non-substantiality with regard to the other types of ill aforementioned, as *dukkha-dukkhatā*, *vipariṇāma-dukkhatā*, *jāti-dukkha*, *jarā-dukkha*, *marāṇa-dukkha*, and so forth.

So much for the mark of no-soul from the standpoint of ill or suffering.

## The Three Knowledges Pertaining to Insight of the Three Marks

The three knowledges pertaining to the insight that fully grasps the meaning of the three marks are called **tiraṇa-pariññā**.

These three knowledges pertaining to the insight are:

1. **Anicca-vipassanā-ñāṇa**: insight-knowledge in contemplating impermanence,
2. **Dukkha-vipassanā-ñāṇa**: insight-knowledge in contemplating ill,
3. **Anattā-vipassanā-ñāṇa**: insight-knowledge in contemplating no-soul.

Of these three knowledges, the last-mentioned must be acquired primarily and fully in order to dispel the error of the soul doctrine. And in order to obtain fully this last-mentioned knowledge, the first must be introduced; for, if the first is well discerned, the last is easily acquired. As for the second, it does not culminate through the acquisition of the first. It is owing to imperfection in obtaining the second knowledge that the transcendental path has four grades, and that lust and conceit are left undispeled. Hence the most important thing for Buddhists to do is to free themselves entirely from the ills of the realms of misery (*apāyadukkha*), *i.e.*, the suffering experienced through rebirth in subhuman worlds. There is no way of escaping from them open to men when the teachings of the Buddha vanish from the world. To escape from the ills of unhappy rebirths means to put away all immoral actions and erroneous views, and to put away all erroneous views means to put away utterly the view of soul. Therefore, in this life in which we are so fortunate to encounter the teaching of the Buddha, we should strive to contemplate or meditate upon the impermanence of things, and thus to bring to fullness the insight-knowledge of no-soul. In confirmation of this, here is a quotation from the texts:

“To him, O Meghiya, who comprehends impermanence, the comprehension of no-soul manifests itself. And to him who comprehends no-soul, the fantasy of an ‘I’ presiding over the five aggregates is brought to destruction; and even in this present life he attains nibbāna.”

There is no need for us to expatiate upon the truth of this text, for we have already shown how the mark of impermanence can become the mark also of no-soul.



The insight exercises can be practised not only in solitude, as is necessary in the case of the exercise of calm or *samatha*, but they can be practised everywhere. Maturity of knowledge is the main thing required. For if knowledge is ripe, the insight of impermanence may easily be accomplished while listening to a discourse or while living a householder's ordinary life. To one whose knowledge is developed, everything within and without oneself, within and without one's house, within and without one's village or town, is an object at the sight of which the insight of impermanence may spring up and develop. But those whose knowledge is, so to speak, still in its infancy, can accomplish this only if they practise assiduously the exercises in calm.

Consideration of the momentary deaths that occur innumerable times even during the wink of an eye is only required in discussion on the Abhidhamma. But in meditating or practising the exercises in insight, all that is needed is consideration of the *santati-vipariṇāma* and the *santati-aññathābhāva*, that is, of the radical change and sequent change of the continua, things that are evident to and personally experienced by every man alive.

The exercises in insight that ought to be taken up are, first, the four great elements from among the material qualities, and the six classes of cognition from among the mental qualities. If one can discern the arising and ceasing of the four elements innumerable times in one day alone, the changes, arisings, and ceasings of the derivative material qualities are also discerned. Of the mental qualities also, if the changes of consciousness are discerned, those of the mental concomitants are simultaneously discerned. In particular, the conspicuous feelings, perceptions, volitions, and so forth, from among the mental qualities, and the conspicuous forms, odours, and so forth from among the material qualities may be taken as objects for the exercise, as they will quickly enable a meditator to acquire with ease the insight of impermanence.

However, from the philosophical point of view, the insight is acquired in order to dispel such notions as "creatures," "persons," "soul," "life," "permanence," "pleasures," and to get rid of the hallucinations. The acquisition of insight also mainly depends on a sound grasp of the three marks, which have been sufficiently dealt with already.

So much for the exposition of *tīraṇāpariññā*.

# The Exposition of Pahāna-pariññā

## The Five Kinds of Dispelling

In Buddhist teachings there are five kinds of *pahāna*, i.e. the dispelling, putting away or giving up of mental defilements:

1. *Tadaṅga-pahāna*: the temporary dispelling of the defilements by substitution of the opposite,
2. *Vikkhambhana-pahāna*: the temporary dispelling by suppression in the *jhānas*,
3. *Samuccheda-pahāna*: the eradication of defilements effected at the moment of attaining the paths (*magga*) of emancipation (*sotāpatti-magga*, etc.),
4. *Paṭippassaddhi-pahāna*: the tranquillisation of defilements at the fruition-stage (*phala*) of emancipation (*sotāpatti-phala*, etc.),
5. *Nissaraṇa-pahāna*: the final escape or deliverance from the defilements on attaining nibbāna.

In order to make clear these five kinds of *pahāna*, the three periods or stages (*bhūmi*) must be mentioned here. They are:

1. *Anusaya-bhūmi*: the stage of latency, the inherent tendency for defilements,
2. *Pariyuṭṭhāna-bhūmi*: the stage of mental involvement or obsession through the occurrence of defiled thought processes,
3. *Vitikkama-bhūmi*: the stage of actual transgression in words or deeds.

Of these three, *anusaya-bhūmi* is the period during which the defilements lie latent surrounding the life-continuum (*bhavaṅga*), but have not come into existence as thought processes within the three phases of time.

*Pariyuṭṭhāna-bhūmi* is the period during which the defilements rise from the latent state and manifest themselves as thought processes at the mind-doors when any object that has the power to arouse them produces a perturbation at any of the six doors of perception.

*Vitikkama-bhūmi* is the period at which the defilements become so fierce and ungovernable that they produce evil actions in deed and word. Thus, during repeated existences without known beginning, every occurrence of greed that goes along with a being's life-continuum has these three periods. Similarly, all other defilements, like hate, ignorance, conceit, etc., have three periods each.

There are three kinds of training (*sikkhā*) in Buddhism, namely: the training of morality (*sīla*), in concentration (*samādhi*), and in wisdom (*paññā*). The training in morality is able to dispel only the third stage of the defilements, that of actual transgression. As there remain two stages undispeled, the defilements temporarily put away by morality can arise again and soon fill up until they reach the stage of transgression.

The second training, in concentration, through attaining the first *jhāna*, the second *jhāna*, and so forth, is able to dispel only the second stage of the defilements left undispeled by morality, that is, the mental involvement by evil thought process. As the stage of latency is still undispeled, if obstacles to *jhāna* were encountered, the defilements temporarily put away by *jhāna* would soon arise and grow until they reach the stage of transgression. Therefore the dispelling by concentration is called *vikkhambhana-pahāna*, which means the putting away to a distance by suppression. Here *jhāna* can dispose of the defilements for a considerable time so that they do not arise soon again, for meditation is more powerful in combating the defilements than morality.

The third training, the training in wisdom — the knowledge that belongs to insight and the knowledge that pertains to the supramundane path — is able to dispel the first, latent stage of the defilements left undispeled by morality and concentration. The defilements that are entirely got rid of through wisdom, leaving nothing behind, will never rise again. Therefore the putting away by wisdom that has reached the supramundane paths of stream-entry, etc., is called dispelling by eradication (*samuccheda-pahāna*). The knowledge that pertains to supramundane fruition puts the defilements away by tranquillising the same defilements that have been put away by the knowledge that pertains to the supramundane path, this putting away is called the *paṭippassaddhi-pahāna*. The putting away by entering nibbāna is called the *nissaraṇa-pahāna*, the utter escape from the ties of existence forever.

Now, we have seen that knowledge is of three kinds: knowledge of insight, knowledge pertaining to the supramundane path, and knowledge pertaining to supramundane fruition. Of these, though the knowledge of insight is able to put away the first, latent stage of the defilements (*anusaya-bhūmi*), it is not able to put it away completely. Only the knowledges pertaining to the paths are able to put away all the defilements that respectively belong to each path. The knowledge pertaining to *sotāpattimagga*, the first path, utterly dispels and eradicates all erroneous views and perplexities. It also finally dispels all immoral actions that could result in rebirth in the realms of misery. The knowledge pertaining to

*sakadāgāmi-magga*, the second path, dispels all coarse lust and hate. The knowledge pertaining to *anāgāmi-magga*, the third path, dispels all subtle lust and ill-will, left undisputed by the second path.

To the ever-returner (Anāgāmi), the link of kinship with this world is broken, and the Brahmā world is the only sphere where he may take rebirth. The knowledge pertaining to *arahatta-magga*, the fourth path, dispels the defilements that were left undisputed by the lower paths. One who kills all defilements becomes an Arahant and escapes from the three worlds. In our Buddhist religion, the dispelling by eradication is the chief thing to be accomplished.

So much for the *pahāna-pariññā*.

## The Practice of Insight Meditation

I will now indicate the main points necessary to those who practise the exercises of insight. Of the three knowledges of insight, the knowledge of impermanence must first and foremost be acquired. How? If we carefully watch the cinematograph show, we will see how quick are the changes of the numerous series of photographs representing the wonderful scene, all in a moment of time. We will also see that a hundred or more photographs are required to represent the scene of a moving body. These are, in fact, the functions of *vipariṇāma* and *aññathābhāva*, or the representation of impermanence or death, or cessation of movements. If we carefully examine the movements in a scene, such as the walking, standing, sitting, sleeping, bending, stretching, and so forth, of the parts of the body during a moment of time, we will see that these are full of changes, or full of impermanence. Even in a moment of walking, in a single step, there are numerous changes of pictures that may be called impermanence or death. It is also the same with the rest of the movements. Now, we must apply this to ourselves. The impermanence and the death of mental and material phenomena are to be found to the full in our bodies, our heads, and in every part of the body. If we are able to discern clearly those functions of impermanence and death that are always operating in our bodies, we shall acquire the insight of the destruction (*bhaṅga-ñāṇa*), into the breaking-up, falling-off, cessation, and changes of the various parts of the body in each second, in each fraction of a second. That is, we shall discern the changes of every part of the body, small and great, of head, of legs, of hands, and so forth. If this be thus discerned, then it may be said that the exercise on the contemplation of impermanence is well accomplished. And if the exercise on the contempla-

tion of impermanence is well accomplished, then that of the contemplation of non-soul is also accomplished. If this is thus discerned, then it may be said that the exercise on the contemplation of impermanence is well accomplished. By the word “accomplished,” it is meant that the exercise has been properly worked out so as to remain a permanent possession, during the whole term of life; but it is not meant that the knowledge of the path and of fruition has been attained. The attainment of the knowledge of the path and fruition, however, is quick or slow, according to opportunity or lack of opportunity in the practice of higher virtues.

It is also very difficult to become correctly aware of the attainment of the paths and fruits. In fact, even the noble one who has attained the first path hardly knows that he has become an attainer of the stream-of-the-path. Why?

Because of the unfathomableness of the latent stage of the defilements. Those yogis or meditators who do not know the unfathomableness of the latent stage of the defilements, sometimes think themselves to be attainers of the stream-of-the-path while as yet their erroneous views and perplexity are only partially, but not completely, put away. If error and perplexity, with all their latent states, are eradicated by the **samuccheda-pahāna**, they would become the real attainers of the stream-of-the-path. The meditators or practitioners of insight, however, for the whole term of life, must gladly continue in the exercise on the contemplation of impermanence until the exercise is systematically worked out. Even the Arahants do not give up these exercises for the securing of tranquillity of mind. If meditators practise these exercises for the whole term of life, their knowledge will be developed till they pass beyond the **puthujjana-bhūmi**, the stage of the worldling, and arrive at the **ariya-bhūmi**, the stage of the noble ones, either before death or at the time of death, either in this life or in the life following, in which latter case they will be reborn as *devas*.

## Conclusion

Here, the concise Vipassanā Dīpanī, The Manual of Insight, written for the Buddhists of Europe, comes to a close. It was written in Mandalay, while I was sojourning in the Ratanasiri Monastery, where the annual meeting of the Society for Propagating Buddhism in Foreign Countries took place; and it was finished on the 14th waxing of Taboung in the year 2458 B.E., corresponding to the 26th February, 1915 C.E.

# A Life Sketch of the Venerable Ledi Sayādaw

The author of this manual, the Venerable Ledi Sayādaw of Burma, was one of the outstanding Buddhist scholars and writers of this age. His numerous writings show not only his vast store of learning, of which he had a ready command, but also a deep penetration of the respective subjects derived from his meditative experience. During a long period of his later life he used to spend six months of the year teaching, preaching, and writing, and the other six months meditating.

He was born in 1846 at a village in the Shwebo District of Burma. Early in life he was ordained a novice (*sāmaṇera*) and at the age of twenty he received the higher ordination with the name Bhikkhu Ñāṇa. He received his monastic education under various teachers and later studied Buddhist literature under the Venerable San-kyaung Sayādaw in one of the large monastic colleges at Mandalay. He was a very bright student. His first book, *Pārami Dīpani* (Manual of the Perfections) was published fourteen years after his higher ordination while he was still at San-kyaung Monastery. It was based on twenty questions set by his teacher, which he alone among the numerous pupils had been able to answer fully and satisfactorily.

During the reign of King Theebaw he became a Pāli lecturer at Mahā Jotikārāma Monastery in Mandalay. One year after the capture of King Theebaw, in 1887, he moved to a place to the north of Monywa town where he established a monastery under the name of Ledi-tawya Monastery, from which he derived the name Ledi Sayādaw under which he became widely known. In later years, he regularly toured many parts of Burma, teaching and preaching, and establishing Abhidhamma classes and meditation centres.

He composed Abhidhamma rhymes (*abhidhamma-sāṅkhitta*) and taught them to his Abhidhamma classes. Some of the Ledi meditation centres still exist and are still famous in the country.

He was awarded the title Agga-Mahāpaṇḍita by the Government of India in 1911. Later the University of Rangoon conferred on him the title D. Litt. (*honoris causa*). In later years he lived at Pyinma where he died in 1923, aged 77.

The Venerable Ledi Sayādaw wrote many essays, letters, poems and manuals, in Burmese and in Pāli, and also some sub-commentaries (*ṭīkā*). A list of his writings has been published in the Buddhist quarterly, "Light of the Dhamma" (Vol. VIII, No. 1),<sup>1</sup> together with a biography on which this

<sup>1</sup> Published by the Union of Burma Buddha Sāsana Council, Kaba Aye P.O., Rangoon, Burma. An extensive list is also given in the B.P.S. translation of the *Vijjāmagga Dīpani*.

brief life sketch is based. Most of his expositions are called *Dīpaṇī* (manuals or lit. illuminators), and became very popular in Burma. Some of these are short treatises; others are larger works, as for instance the *Paramattha Dīpaṇī*, *The Manual of Ultimate Truth*, written in 1897, which is a commentary on the *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha*, a compendium of the *Abhidhamma Philosophy*.

Several of these manuals have been rendered in English and published or reprinted in the magazine “*Light of the Dhamma*”: 1) *Vipassanā Dīpaṇī* — *Manual of Insight*, 2) *Paṭṭhānuddesa Dīpaṇī* — *Manual of the Philosophy of Relations*, 3) *Niyāma Dīpaṇī* — *Manual of Cosmic Order*, 4) *Sammā-diṭṭhi Dīpaṇī* — *Manual of Right Understanding*, 5) *Catusacca Dīpaṇī* — *Manual of the Four Truths*, 6) *Bodhipakkhiya Dīpaṇī* — *Manual of the Requisites of Enlightenment*, 7) *Maggaṅga Dīpaṇī* — *Manual of the Constituents of the Noble Path*.

The “*Light of the Dhamma*” has ceased publication, however, the manuals have been reprinted in a single volume under the title *Manuals of Buddhism* published by the aforementioned Council in Rangoon and by the *Vipassanā Research Institute* in Igatpuri, India.

The BPS has published a few other translations. A revised edition of the *Manual of the Requisites of Enlightenment* has appeared in the *Wheel Series* as *Wheel no. 171/174* (now *BP 412*), likewise, the *Paṭṭhānuddesa Dīpaṇī* as *Wh. 331/333* titled *Buddhist Philosophy of Relations*, the *Maggaṅga Dīpaṇī* as *Wh. 245/247* titled *Noble Eightfold Path and its Factors Explained*, the *Uttamapurisa Dīpaṇī* as *BP 420* titled *Manual of the Excellent Man*, and the *Ānāpāna Dīpaṇī* as *Wh. 431/432* titled *A Manual of Mindfulness of Breathing*.

Translations of the *Manual of Light* (*Alinkyān*) and the *Manual of the Path of Higher Knowledge* (*Vijjāmagga Dīpaṇī*) are forthcoming from the BPS.

A few more translations of Ledi Sayādaw manuals on vegetarianism, abstinence from liquor, and monks’ etiquette can be found on <http://www.aimwell.org>.

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