ROOLS OF COD

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THE ROOTS OF GOOD AND EVIL

BUDDHIST TEXTS

Translated from the Pali, With Comments and Introduction

by

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CONTENTS

	Introduction	1
	Homage	10
	Motto: For a long time (Text 1)	13
I.	Basic Explanations and Definitions (Texts 2-8)	14
II.	Kamma and Rebirth (Texts 9-11)	35
III.	The Social Significance of the Roots (Texts 12-16)	41
IV.	General Texts (Texts 17-25)	51
V.	The Removal of the Unwholesome Roots	
	(Texts 26-43)	60
	General (Texts 26-33)	60
	Removal through Bare Attention (Texts 34-36)	84
	Removal of Underlying Tendencies through Contemplation of Feelings (Texts 37-39)	
	The Goal (Texts 40-43)	93
VI.	The Wholesome and Unwholesome Roots in the Manager of the Control	_
	Abhidhamma (Text 44)	96

THE ROOTS OF GOOD AND EVIL

INTRODUCTION

THREE Roots of Evil have been taught by the Buddha to be the basic causes of all suffering. They are:

Greed, Hatred and Delusion.

These three terms comprise the entire range of evil, whether of lesser or greater intensity: from a faint tendency to the coarsest manifestation in acts or speech.

There are also three Roots of everything Good:

Non-Greed (unselfishness, liberality, renunciation) Non-Hatred (loving-kindness, compassion), and Non-Delusion (knowledge, wisdom).*

These six mental states are the roots from which everything harmful or beneficial sprouts. They are the roots of the Tree of Life with its sweet and bitter fruits.

Greed and Hatred, kept alive and fed by Delusion, are universal impelling forces of all animate life, individually and socially. But fortunately, also the Roots of Good are active in our world and keep some sort of balance with the forces of evil, though a rather precarious one, which has to be preserved by constant watchfulness and effort. On the level of inanimate nature, too, there are the corresponding forces of attraction and repulsion, kept in their purposeless reactive movement by inherent

^{*} See in the Comments to Text 2, the section "The Range of the six Roots".

nescience which cannot provide a motive for cessation of the process. In that way, the macrocosm of nature and the microcosm of mind have continued for an unfathomable past their contest between attraction and repulsion, greed and hatred, and, unless stopped by voluntary effort and insight, they will so continue for aeons to come. This cosmic conflict of opposing energies, unsolvable on its own level, is one of the aspects of Dukkha (unsatisfactoriness): the ill of restless and senseless movement, as felt by a sensitive being.

On the human level, too, we find that man who proudly believes himself to be a "free agent"—the master of his life and even of nature—is actually in his spiritually undeveloped state, a passive patient pulled and pushed about by inner forces he cannot control. Pulled by his greed and pushed by his hatred, in his blindness he does not see that the brake for stopping these frantic movements is in his reach, within his own heart.

Since the Buddha's chief concern was with the human situation, in the framework of his Teaching the Roots of Good and Evil have found their due place in a great variety of doctrinal contexts with many applications. To illustrate this by an ample selection of Buddhist texts—almost entirely taken from the Discourses of the Buddha—is the intention of the following pages. These pages have been compiled with the wish to help towards a deeper comprehension of this important teaching and to offer practical aids for efforts to eliminate the Roots of Evil and to cultivate the Roots of Good. An additional motivation for compiling this book was the fact that in many Western publications—including large and scholarly works on Buddhist ethics—the Roots have received only scanty treatment or none at all. To bring

into right focus the importance of these Roots through the presentation of source material and additional comments was, therefore, thought desirable.

These six mental states have been called here the Roots of Good and Evil. Our use of the terms Good and Evil should, however, be understood as a provisional simplification chosen for introducing this teaching first by better known terms. In the Buddhist texts, they are called Roots of the Wholesome (or Beneficial; kusala-mūla) and Roots of the Unwholesome (or Harmful; akusala-mūla), respectively; and thus we too shall call them from now onwards, in most instances. This differentiation of terms should not be thought to be of little significance. To the contrary, it is an important distinction, for the "spread" of these Roots is much wider and deeper than the moral realm to which the words Good and Evil refer.

This distinction may be defined as follows. An intentional action (kamma), by words or deeds, is immoral (an evil or a "sin"), when it is motivated by the Unwholesome Roots and is intentionally and directly harmful to others. This constitutes socially significant immorality for which it is the criterion. Such actions are termed unwholesome bodily or verbal Kamma (akusala-kāya vaci-kamma).

Thoughts associated with these Unwholesome Roots, wishing the harm of others, are individually significant immorality and are its criterion. They include thoughts of injury, murder, theft, fraud and rape, etc., and false ideologies leading to the harm of others or condoning it, etc. Irrespective whether these thoughts are followed by deeds or words, they constitute unwholesome mental Kamma (akusala-mano-kamma).

Greed, Hatred and Delusion (in all degrees), which do not cause intentional harm to others, are kammically

unwholesome, though not immoral in a strict sense. Examples are given in the Comments to Text 2 (see also Comments to Text 8).

It is similar with the term Wholesome, which extends beyond socially significant morality and also comprises what is individually beneficial; for instance, acts of radical renunciation, studies and thoughts furthering an understanding of reality, etc.

The recent crisis of theistic faith which has taken hold in the West has brought in its trail a moral crisis as well, for many of those who have lost their belief in a divine sanction for morality did not see any other convincing reason for obligatory moral conduct. Such individuals, left without a sound foundation for ethics, either accepted materialist and political ideologies or allowed their conduct to be guided chiefly by self-interest. Yet, we find today also a growing number of those who seek for better alternatives. To them the Buddha's teaching on the Wholesome and Unwholesome Roots of action can offer a motivation and criterion of Good and Evil that is neither theological nor authoritarian, but is experiential, and has a psychological basis and an autonomous and pragmatic motivation.

The social and political motivations for moral conduct which have been offered to modern man, even when they do not openly contradict the basic sentiments of morality, are nevertheless still limited in view of their time-bound structure and the varying self-interests and prejudices of the ruling social group they reflect. Their values are therefore highly relative and far from universally valid. In contrast, the foundations and values of Buddhist ethics are, in essence, free from relativistic limitations. They provide a core of moral principles which are valid for all time and under all circumstances, since they are based on

psychological fact and not on external contingencies. By introspection and observation, it can be experienced that the Unwholesome Roots are undesirable mental states, while it is the common nature of man to avoid what is undesirable or painful and to desire happiness. From that psychological angle we shall now take a brief glance at the Unwholesome and Wholesome Roots of Action.

Greed is a self-perpetuating mental state of lack, need and want, which, in vain, seeks fulfilment and lasting satisfaction. Greed is unsatiable.

Hatred, in all its degrees, is likewise a state of dissatisfaction of which the internal causes are projected outward,
to people or circumstances. Hatred (aversion) may, for
instance, arise from frustrated self-interest or from hurt
pride. Other negative emotions falling under the category
of hatred — as for instance, disappointment, dejection,
despair, fear — are misguided reactions to the impermanence, insecurity and imperfection inherent in all
conditioned existence.

Delusion, taking the form of ignorance, is a psychological state of confusion, bewilderment and helplessness. In its aspect of false views, Delusion may take on a dogmatic, fanatical and even obsessive character, making for a rigid, encapsulated mentality. Delusion is also a strong contributive cause and a companion of Greed and Hatred.

Of all three Unwholesome Roots it can be said that they are states of inner disharmony and sources of social conflict.

Greed, Hatred and Delusion are located at the very hub of the Wheel of Life,* as depicted in Tibetan paintings

^{*} See The Wheel of Birth and Death by Bhikkhu Khantipālo (The Wheel No. 147/149), p. 16.

by three symbolical animals which, turning round and round, catch each other's tail. The three Unwholesome Roots, indeed, produce and support each other.

From the Root of Greed grow resentment, anger and hatred against those who obstruct the gratification of desire or compete in the chase for gaining the desired objects. This applies not only to the five sense objects, but also to greed for power, dominance, fame, and so forth. Greed often leads to quarrels.

Frustrated Greed, if it does not produce hatred or aversion, brings about grief, sadness, despair, envy and jealousy — all of which come under the heading of Hatred. The pain of deprivation and frustration again sharpens the keenness of desire which then seeks an escape from pain by indulging in other kinds of enjoyment (see Text 35).

Both Greed and Hatred are always linked with Delusion, and, on their part, produce still more delusion while they pursue the objects of desire or aversion. Both love and hate make man blind to the dangers besetting these pursuits as well as to his true advantage. It is Delusion that has that blinding function.

The basic Delusion, from which all its other forms spring, is the idea of an abiding self: the belief in an Ego for the sake of which men lust and hate, and upon which they build their imagination and pride. This ego-belief, must first be clearly comprehended as a delusive viewpoint, by cultivating right, realistic understanding through penetrative thought and meditative insight. This culminates in the perfection of the Path of Seeing (dassanamagga), that is Stream-Entry, when the Fetter of Personality Belief is finally eliminated. The other sources of ego-belief, craving and conceit, are removed on the following three stages of emancipation, belonging to the

Path of Development (bhāvanā-magga) culminating in Arahatta (Sainthood).

Though the Wholesome and Unwholesome Roots are individual mental states, their manifestations and repercussions are of the greatest social significance. Man as a social being is strongly affected by the greed, hatred and ignorance of others, which are aimed at himself, his property, his security and freedom and all he holds dear. His own greed, hatred and ignorance may in turn have a similar impact on others, though he may not be aware of it or may care less about it. From all that results an intricate interlocking of suffering caused, and suffering experienced. Hence, the Buddha repeatedly said that the Unwholesome Roots cause harm to oneself and to others as well; while the Wholesome Roots are sources of benefit and happiness for both the individual and society. (See Texts 12 to 16)

In this context, we may quote the pertinent words of R. H. Tawney:

"It is obvious, indeed, that no change of system or machinery can avert those causes of social malaise which consist in the egotism, greed, or quarrelsomeness* of human nature. What it can do is to create an environment in which those are not the qualities which are encouraged. It cannot secure that men live up to their principles. What it can do is to establish their social order upon principles to which, if they please, they can live up and not live down. It cannot control their actions. It can offer them an end on which to fix their minds. And, as their minds are, so in the long run and with exceptions, their practical activity will be."

"The Affluent Society"

The Wholesome and Unwholesome Roots are of paramount human concern on all levels. This is amply

^{*} Italics added.

illustrated by the texts which form the main body of this book. These texts show, for instance, that the Roots, as the originating causes of Kamma, i.e. our life-affirming and rebirth-producing* intentional actions are the motive powers and driving forces of our deeds, words and thoughts, be they beneficial or harmful. They mould our character and our destiny and hence determine the nature of our rebirth, which, for humans, is classified as having three or two wholesome Roots, or none. Being dominant features in the structure of the mind. the Unwholesome Roots are used for the classification of Unwholesome Consciousness, and also for a typology of temperaments (in Visuddhi Magga, Ch. iii; not included in this book).** Many texts in our compilation show clearly the decisive influence of the Roots in the life of the individual and of society. On the gradual path towards the realisation of the Buddhist goal, all stages of that path are closely concerned with the Roots, wholesome and unwholesome. At the very beginning, the coarsest forms of greed, hatred and irresponsible ignorance have to be abandoned through virtue (sīla), while, on the advanced stages, the aid of meditation (samādhi) and wisdom (paññā) has to be engaged in a deeper-reaching removal of the Unwholesome Roots and in the cultivation of the visolesome ones. Even Arahantship (sainthood) and Nibbana — the consummation of the Great Quest are both explained in terms of the Roots: as the extinction of greed, hatred and delusion. These are some of the features dealt with in the texts that follow.

^{*} See Chapter VI, "Classification of Rebirth Consciousness."

^{**} See The Path of Purification, tr. by Nanamoli (Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy). p. 102ff.

This wide-ranging significance of the Root-teaching places it at the very core of the Buddha Dhamma. Showing the distinct marks of an Enlightened One's mind, it is a teaching simple as well as profound, and hence accessible on many levels. The fact that Greed, Hatred and Delusion, in their extreme forms, are the root causes of much misery and evil should be painfully obvious to everyone who does not identify himself fully with these three taints within himself. Such an initial understanding, open to commonsense, may well grow into full comprehension of all implications of this teaching. It may then give a strong motivation to enter the path to the eradication of greed, hatred and delusion, as indicated in the concluding sections (Texts 40-43) of this book.

May progress on that Path prevail and a steady growth of the Roots of Good!

Homage to Him Who has seen the Roots of All Things!

Namo te mūla-dassāvī.

Nyanaponika Thera.

Kandy, Sri Lanka 18th January 1977

HOMAGE

Greed is the root of heedlessness,
A cause of strife is greed.
Greed into enslavement drags,
A hungry ghost one will in future be.
The Buddha who greed's nature fully knows
I worship Him, the Greed-free One.

Hate is the root of turbulance,
And ugliness results from hate.
Through hatred much destruction comes,
To an infernal world one will in future go.
The Buddha who hate's nature fully knows
I worship him, the Hate-free One.

Delusion is the root of all this misery,
Creator of all ills is ignorant delusion.
Mind's blindness from delusion stems,
As a dumb animal one will in future live.
The Buddha who delusion's nature fully knows
I worship Him, the Undeluded One.

A traditional, devotional Pali text from Sri Lanka (Ceylon). Source unknown. The Pali original is reproduced overleaf.

BUDDHA - VANDANÃ

Pamādamūlako lobho, lobho vivādamūlako, dāsabyakārako lobho, lobho paramhi petiko. Tam lobham parijānantam vande'ham vitalobhakam.

Vihañnamulako doso, doso virupakarako, vinasakarako doso, doso paramhi nerayo.
Tam dosam parijanantam vande'ham vitadosakam.

Sabbāghamūlako moho, moho sabbītikārako, sabbandhakārako moho, moho paramhi svādiko. Tam moham parijānantam vande'ham vītamohakam.

for a long time . . .

OFTEN, o monks, should one reflect upon one's own mind thus: "For a long time has this mind been defiled by greed, by hatred, by delusion." Mental defilements make beings impure, mental cleansing purifies them....

Mind is more multi-featured than a multi-figured painting...

Mind is more variegated than the varieties of animals. ...

Therefore, o monks, should one often reflect upon one's own mind thus: "For a long time has this mind been defiled by greed, by hatred, by delusion." Mental defilements make beings impure, mental cleansing purifies them.

Samyutta Nikaya, vol. III, No. 100 (extract)

Basic Explanations and Definitions (Texts 2 - 8)

2. There are three Roots of the Unwholesome: greed, hatred and delusion; and there are three Roots of the Wholesome: non-greed, non-hatred and non-delusion.

Digha Nikāya, No. 33: Sangīti Sutta

DEFINITIONS.— These two sets of three are, respectively, the Roots of unwholesome or wholesome volitional action (kamma), by way of deeds, words or thoughts.

The term Root (mūla) should be understood, according to the commentarial tradition, to have the sense of firm support, cause, condition and producer. In accordance with the figurative character of the term, it can also be taken as a conveyor of the nourishing sap — wholesome or unwholesome — to the mental factors and functions existing simultaneously, as well as to the wholesome or unwholesome actions which issue from these Roots. They are producers by being productive of rebirth.

The words Unwholesome and Wholesome, as used here, are renderings of the Pali terms akusala and kusala, respectively. Alternative renderings used by other translators are, for the Wholesome: profitable, skilful; for the Unwholesome: unprofitable, unskilful. The terms Wholesome and Unwholesome comprise all volitional actions (kamma) that bind living beings to Samsāra, the Round of Rebirth and Suffering. The actions having these Roots may, therefore, be called karmically wholesome or unwholesome. Hence, the range of the Unwholesome is wider than that of the immoral, as it includes, for instances, such forms of greed which are not immoral in

a strict sense (see Introduction and Comment to Text 8). The Wholesome, as dealt with here and in most (though not all) of the following texts, is that of the mundane type (lokiya-kusala). The Wholesome of the supermundane type (lokuttara-kusala) is not productive of Kamma, and therefore, does not result in Rebirth (see Text 11).*

The commentators to the Pali scriptures explain kusala, the Wholesome, as a healthy state of mind (arogya), as morally faultless (anāvajja), and as having a favourable, or happy, Kamma-result (sukha-vipāka). Another connotation of kusala, dexterous or skilful, is, according to the commentators, not applicable in this context. Yet karmically wholesome actions may also be described as being skilful, in so far as they lead to happiness in the present and future, and to progress on the path to liberation.

Akusala, the Unwholesome, has the opposite characteristics: it is an unhealthy or sickly state of mind (gelañña), morally faulty and blameworthy (sāvajja), and has unhappy kamma-results (dukkha-vipāka). For all these reasons, unwholesome actions, in thoughts, words and deeds, can be said to be unskilful responses to life.

Of these commentarial explanations, two are derived from a Discourse called "The Mantle" (Bāhitika Sutta, Majjhima Nikāya, No. 88): namely, "morally faulty" or

^{*} Mundane (lokiya) are all those states of consciousness—arising in the worldling as well as in Path Attainers (ariya) — which are not associated with the supermundane (lokuttara) paths and fruitions of Stream-entry, etc.

The supermundane type of the Wholesome (lokuttara-kusala) signifies the four paths and four fruitions of the Stream-enterer, Once-returner, Non-returner and the Arahat.

"faultless" (sāvajjo, anāvajjo), and "having unhappy or happy Kamma-results" (dukkha-, sukha-vipāka). The Discourse adds that the Unwholesome brings affliction and harm (sabyāpajjo), while the Wholesome is free from affliction and harm (abyāpajjo). This corresponds to the commentarial description of the Unwholesome as an unhealthy state of mind, and of the Wholesome as a healthy one.

THE RANGE OF THE SIX ROOTS

I. The Unwholesome.— The three unwholesome roots are not restricted to those very strong manifestations as expressed in the English terms, greed, hatred and delusion. For an understanding of their range it is important to know that in the Pāli these three terms stand for all degrees of intensity, even the weakest, of the respective defilement, and for all varieties in which these three defilements may appear. In their weak degrees, their unwholesome influence on character and the karmic consequences they bear are, of course, not as grave as those of their stronger forms. But even weak forms may carry the risk of either growing stronger or making a man's character more susceptible to graver forms of greed, hatred and delusion.

What follows are examples of the various forms of the three Unwholesome Roots, partly taken from the Dhammasangani, the first book of the Abhidhamma Piţaka.

Greed: Liking, wishing, longing, fondness, affection, attachment, lust, cupidity, self-indulgence, possessiveness, avarice; desire for the five sense objects; desire for wealth, offspring, fame, etc.

Hatred: Dislike, disgust, revulsion, resentment, ill-humour, vexation, irritability, antagonism, aversion, anger, vengefulness.

Delusion: Stupidity, dullness, confusion, ignorance (of essentials, e.g., of the Four Truths), prejudice, ideological dogmatism, fanaticism, wrong views, conceit.

II. The Wholesome comprises, in spite of the negative formulation of the three terms, also their positive aspects:

Non-Greed: Unselfishness, liberality, generosity; thoughts and actions of sacrifice and sharing; renunciation, dispassion.

Non-Hatred: Loving-kindness, compassion, sympathy, friendliness, forgivingness, forbearance.

Non-Delusion: Wisdom, insight, knowledge, understanding, intelligence, sagacity, discrimination, impartiality, equanimity.

3. The Commentarial Definitions of the Unwholesome Roots

Greed has the characteristic of grasping an object, like birdlime (lit. 'monkey lime'). Its function is sticking, like meat put in a hot pan. It is manifested as not giving up, like the dye of lamp-black. Its proximate cause is seeing enjoyment in things that lead to bondage. Swelling with the current of craving, it should be regarded as carrying beings along with it to states of misery as a swift-flowing river does to the great ocean.

Hatred has the characteristic of savageness, like a provoked snake. Its function is to spread, like a drop of poison, or its function is to burn up its own support, like a forest fire. It is manifested as persecuting (dūsana) like an enemy that has got his chance. Its proximate cause is the grounds for annoyance (āghāta-vatthu; see

A. V. 150). It should be regarded as being like stale urine mixed with poison.

Delusion has the characteristic of blindness, or it has the characteristic of unknowing. Its function is non-penetration, or its function is to conceal the true nature of an object. It is manifested as the absence of right view, or it is manifested as darkness. Its proximate cause is unwise (unjustified) attention. It should be regarded as the root of all that is unwholesome (akusala).

Visuddhi Magga,
'The Path of Purification',
Transl. by Nanamoli Thera,
p. 529f., 532.

4. The Commentarial Definitions of the Wholesome Roots

Non-Greed has the characteristic of the mind's lack of desire for an object, or it has the characteristic of non-adherence, like a water drop on a lotus leaf. Its function is not to lay hold (or not to grasp), like a liberated bhikkhu. It is manifested as not treating (the desire-evoking object) as a shelter (or non-cleaving), like a man who has fallen into filth (will not cling to it).

Non-hatred has the characteristic of lack of savagery, or the characteristic of non-opposing, like a congenial friend. Its function is to remove annoyance, or its function is to remove fever, as sandalwood does. It is manifested as agreeableness, like the full moon.

Comy.: absence of knowledge concerning (the Truth of) Suffering, etc.

Non-delusion has the characteristic of penetrating (things) according to their true nature, or it has the characteristic of sure penetration, like the penetration of an arrow shot by a skilful archer. Its function is to illuminate the objective field, like a lamp. It is manifested as non-bewilderment, like that of a forest guide.

The three should be regarded as the roots of all that is wholesome (kusala).

Visuddhi Magga
'The Path of Purification'
Transl. by Nänamoli Thera
p. 525.

5. The Nature of the Wholesome Roots

Non-greed is opposed to the taint of avarice; non-hatred to the taint of immorality; non-delusion to an undeveloped state of wholesome qualities.

Non-greed is a condition of Giving (dāna); non-hatred is a condition of virtue (sīla); non-delusion is a condition of mental development (or meditation; bhāvanā).

Through non-greed one does not overrate (an attractive object), as the lustful person does. Through non-hatred one does not underrate, or deprecate (an unattractive or disagreeable object), as the hater does. Through non-delusion one has an undistorted view of things, while one who is deluded conceives things in a distorted way.

With non-greed one will admit an existing fault (in an attractive object) and will behave accordingly, while a greedy, or lustful, person will hide that fault. With non-hatred one will admit an existing virtue (in a disgreeable or hostile object) and will behave accordingly, while

the hater will disparage that virtue. With non-delusion one will admit facts as they are and behave accordingly, while a deluded man holds the true for false (the factual for non factual) and the false for true (the non-factual for factual).

With non-greed one does not have the suffering through separation from the beloved; but the greedy and lustful person identifies himself with the beloved and hence cannot bear the separation from it. With non-hatred one does not have the suffering through association with the unbeloved; but the hater identifies himself with (his aversion against) the unbeloved and cannot bear the association with it. With non-delusion one does not have the suffering through not-obtaining what one wishes, because the undeluded person will be able to reflect in this way: "How can it be possible that what is subject to decay should not enter into decay!"

With non-greed one does not encounter the suffering of birth, because non-greed is the opposite of craving (tanhā), and craving is at the root of the suffering of birth. With non hatred the suffering of ageing is not felt (strongly, or prematurely); because it is one harbouring strong hate who ages quickly. With non-delusion there is no suffering in dying; because it is dying with a confused or deluded mind that is suffering, but this does not happen to one who is undeluded.

Non-greed makes for a happy life among lay people (who often quarrel about property). Non-delusion makes for a happy life among ascetics and monks (who often quarrel about opinions). Non-hatred makes for happy living with all.

Through non-greed there is no rebirth in the realm of the (famished) ghosts (preta): because, generally, beings are reborn there through their craving, and non greed

(unselfishness renunciation) is opposed to craving. Through non-hatred there is no rebirth in the hells; for it is through hate and a fierce temperament that beings are reborn in hell which is congenial to hate; but non-hate (lovingkindness) is opposed to hate. Through non-delusion there is no rebirth in the animal world, for it is generally through delusion that beings are reborn as animals who are always deluded; but non-delusion (wisdom) is opposed to delusion.

Among these three, non-greed prevents approach in lust, non-hatred prevents alienation through hate, non-delusion prevents the loss of equipoise (or impartiality) due to delusion.

Sub-Commentary:— This refers to the delusion that is manifested in attraction and aversion. If through a change of fortune or continued misfortune (or suffering), aversion occurs, the (meditative) Contemplation of Feelings cannot succeed. But through the influence of non-delusion (wisdom, insight), the attending to the Foundation of Mindfulness consisting of Feeling (vedanā-satipatthāna) will be successful.

Furthermore, to these three Roots, in the order given, correspond the following sets of three Perceptions: the perception of renunciation, of freedom from ill-will (i.e. lovingkindness) and of abstention from violence (i.e. compassion)¹; and also the perception of (the body's) foulness, of the Unbounded States² and of the elements.

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Kaba-Aye, Rangoon.

nekkhamma-, abyāpāda-, avihimsa-schāā; these constitute Right Thought (sammā-sankappa) in the Eigthfold Path.

appamanā, synonymous with the Divine Abidings (brahma-vihāra), i.e. lovingkindness, compassion, sympathetic Joy and equanimity.

Through non-greed the extreme of sense-indulgence is avoided; through non-hatred the extreme of self-mortification; through non-delusion, a middle course is practised.

Non-greed breaks the bodily bondage (kāya-gantha) of covetousness; non-hatred breaks the bodily bondage of illwill, and non delusion breaks the other two bondages (i.e. that of Clinging to Rites and Rituals, and of Dogmatical Fanaticism).

By virtue of the first two Wholesome Roots, the practice of the first two Foundations of Mindfulness (i.e. body and feelings) will succeed; by virtue of the third Wholesome Root (non-delusion), the practice of the last two Foundations of Mindfulness (state of mind and contents of mind).

Non-greed is a condition of health; because one who is not greedy will not partake of something unsuitable, even if it is tempting, and hence he will remain healthy. Non-hatred is a condition of youthfulness, because he who is free from hate is not consumed by the fires of hate that cause wrinkles and grey hair, and thus he remains youthful for a long time. Non-delusion is a condition of longevity, because he who is undeluded will know what is beneficial and what is harmful, and by avoiding the harmful and resorting to the beneficial, he will have a long life.

Non-greed is a condition of the boon of wealth (bhoga-sampadā), because one who is not greedy will obtain wealth through his liberality (as a karmic result of it). Non-hatred is a condition of the boon of friendship, because through lovingkindness one will win friends and not lose them. Non-delusion is a condition of the boon of self-development, because he who is undeluded and is doing only what is beneficial, will perfect himself.

Through non-greed one has detachment as to persons and things belonging to one's own group; because even in

the case of their destruction, one will not feel the suffering that is caused by strong attachment. With non-hatred, the same will hold true in the case of persons and things belonging to a hostile group; because he who is free of hatred, will have no thought of enmity even towards those who are hostile. With non-delusion, the same holds true concerning persons and things belonging to a neutral group; because in him who is undeluded there is no strong attachment to anybody or anything.

Through non-greed one will understand Impermanence, for a greedy man, in his longing for enjoyment, will not see the impermanence of transitory phenomena. Through non-hatred one will understand Suffering; for one inclined to non-hate, in comprehending the grounds of annoyance discarded by him, sees phenomena as suffering. Through non-delusion one will understand Not-self; for one who is undeluded, is skilled in grasping the nature of reality, and he knows that the Five Aggregates are without an internal controller. Just as the understanding of impermanence, etc., is effected by non-greed, etc., so are also non-greed, etc., produced by the understanding of impermanence, etc. Through the understanding of impermanence arises non-greed; through the understanding of suffering arises non-hatred; through the understanding of not-self arises non-delusion. For who will allow attachment to arise to something of which he fully well knows that it is impermanent? And, when knowing the phenomena to be suffering, who would produce the additional and exceedingly pungent suffering of anger? And, when knowing the phenomena as void of self, who would again plunge into confusion of mind?

Atthasālini, The commentary to the Dhammasangani of the Abhidhamma Piţaka. From the section on the Wholesome consciousness of the Sense Sphere (PTS ed. of the Pali text, p. 127f.)

6. Causes of Arising and Non-Arising of the Roota

There may be outsiders, O monks, who will ask you:

"Now, friends, what is the cause and condition whereby unarisen greed arises and arisen greed becomes stronger and more powerful?" "An attractive object, they should be told. In him who gives unwise attention to an attractive object, unarisen greed will arise, and greed that has already arisen will become stronger and more powerful."

"Now, friends, what is the cause and condition whereby unarisen hatred arises and arisen hatred becomes stronger and more powerful?" — "'A repulsive object', they should be told. In him who gives unwise attention to a repulsive object, unarisen hatred will arise, and hatred that has already arisen will grow stronger and more powerful."

"Now, friends, what is the cause and condition whereby unarisen delusion arises and arisen delusion becomes stronger and more powerful?" — "'Unwise attention', they should be told. In him who gives unwise attention, unarisen delusion will arise, and delusion that has already arisen will grow stronger and more powerful."

"Now, friends, what is the cause and condition for unarisen greed not to arise and for the abandoning of greed that has arisen?" — "A (meditation) object of impurity, they should be told. In him who gives wise attention to a (meditation) object of impurity, unarisen greed will not arise and greed that has arisen, will be abandoned."

"Now, friends, what is the cause and condition for unarisen hatred not to arise and for the abandoning of hatred that has arisen?" — "Lovingkindness that is a freeing of the mind', they should be told. In him who gives wise attention to Lovingkindness that is a freeing of

the mind, unarisen hatred will not arise and hatred that has arisen, will be abandoned."

"Now, friends, what is the cause and condition for unarisen delusion not to arise and for the abandoning of a delusion that has arisen?"—"Wise attention, they should be told. In him who gives wise attention, unarisen delusion will not arise and delusion that has arisen, will be abandoned."

Anguttara Nikāya, Threes, No. 68

COMMENT. — In considering this text, full weight should be given to the decisive place of attention (unwise or wise; ayoniso or yoniso manasikāra) in the origination or eradication of the Unwholesome Roots.

In the Discourse "All Taints" (Sabbāsava Sutta; M. 2) it is said;

"The uninstructed common man...does not know the things worthy of attention (manasikaraniye dhamme) nor those not worthy of attention (amanasikaraniye)." Hence he fails to give attention to what is worthy of it and directs his attention to what is unworthy. And of the well-instructed disciple the same discourse says that he knows what is worthy of attention and what is not, and that he acts accordingly.

The commentary to that Discourse has here a very illuminating remark: "There is nothing definite in the nature of the things (or objects) themselves that makes them worthy or unworthy of attention; but there is such definiteness in the manner (ākāra) of attention. A manner of attention that provides a basis for the arising of what is unwholesome or evil (akusala), that kind of attention should not be given (to the respective object); but the kind of attention that is the basis for the arising

of the Good and Wholesome (kusala), that manner of attention should be given."

It is this latter type of attention that in our present text is called "wise attention", The former kind is "unwise attention", which, elsewhere in the commentaries is said to be the proximate cause of delusion.

Things pleasant or unpleasant, that is those potentially attractive or repulsive, are given to us as facts of common experience. But there is nothing compulsive in their own nature that determines our reaction to them. It is man's own deliberate attitude towards them, the "manner of attention", which decides whether he will react with greed to the pleasant, and with aversion to the unpleasant; or whether his attention is governed by Right Mindfulness and Right Understanding, resulting in Right Action. In some cases, it will also be possible and advisable to withdraw or divert attention altogether from an object; and this is one of the methods recommended by the Buddha for the removal of unwholesome thoughts.

Man's freedom of choice is present in his very first reaction to a given experience, that is in his attention to it. But only if it is wise attention which he directs to the object of perception, can he make use of his potential freedom of choice, for his own benefit. The range of that freedom can be further widened, if man trains himself to raise that wise attention to the level of right mindfulness.

See Text 29 and Comment.

7. The Diversity of the Unwholesome Roots

There may be outsiders, o monks, who will ask you: "There are, friends, three states of mind: greed, hatred and delusion. What is their distinction, their diversity, their difference?"

Questioned thus, o monks, you may explain it to those outsiders in this way:

"Greed is a lesser fault and fades away slowly; hatred is a great fault and fades away quickly; delusion is a great fault and fades away slowly."

Anguttara Nikāya, Threes, No. 68 (extract)

COMMENT.— The statements in this text, about greed being a lesser fault, and so on, have to be taken in a relative sense.

The Commentary explains: "Greed (or Lust) is a lesser fault (appa-sāvajja) in a twofold way: (1) in public opinion (loka; i.e. in the eyes of the 'world'), and (2) with regard to Kamma-result (vipāka), i.e., the rebirth resulting from the Kamma (impelled by greed). — (1) If, for instance, parents give their children in marriage, there is according to the standards of worldly life, no fault involved therein (though aspects of Greed are involved: the parents' affection, and sexuality in marriage). Greed (or Lust) is, however, "slow in fading away" (dandavirāgī), being as hard to remove as oily soot. Greed for this or that (or sensual lust for a certain person) may persist throughout life; and even when continuing for two or three existences, it may still not disappear."

In other words, Greed is, relative to Hatred and Delusion, a lesser evil, if it remains within the bounds of basic morality, that is, if it does not entail a violation of

the Five Precepts. Within these bounds, it will not exclude a favourable rebirth caused by good Kamma. Greed is, however, very hard to overcome entirely. Greed's fine hair-roots reach very deep into man's nature. Greed may also clad itself in many alluring garments, assuming subtle disguises and sublime forms of beauty. As "lust for life" or "the will to live" it is the very core of existence. As life-affirming Craving (tanhā) it is the very Origin of Suffering.

"Hatred," according to the commentary, "may lead to wrong-doings towards parents, brothers, sisters, ascetics (i.e. people of religious calling), etc. Wherever such an offender goes, blame and bad reputation will follow him. If, through hatred, he even commits one of the Heinous Offences (ānantariya-kamma), as parricide, etc., he will suffer in hell for aeons. In that way, Hatred is a great fault both in public opinion and by its Kamma-result. Yet Hatred may quickly fade away (khippa-virāgī): soon after committing an offence out of hatred or anger, one may repent it, ask those whom one has wronged for forgiveness, and if that is granted, the act is atoned for (as far as the offender's state of mind is concerned)."

Hatred is a source of untold misery for individuals and all human groupings. It is a disruptive and anti-social factor, and, hence, one should have expected society to regard it as a "great fault", as the great enemy of societal welfare, for the elimination or weakening of which all effort should be made. But there have always been human institutions, large and small, which have promoted hate for their own selfish ends, or have fostered deeds, words and thoughts of hate motivated by delusive ideologies. Throughout history, leaders who wanted the

support of the masses have always found it easier to unite people by means of a common hate, rather than by a common love.

On the individual level, hatred in all its degrees is often roused by conflicting self-interests and by other kinds of egocentric antagonism. Hatred can grow as obsessive as lustful passion often does, but it has generally a more destructive character, for both the hater and his victim. Through hatred, man's mind may sink to a sub-human level, an, consequently there is for the hater always the risk that his rebirth will likewise be in sub-human existence.

Yet for one who does not identify himself with every state of mind arising in him, but sees the need, and has the will, to form, reform and transform his own mind, for such a one it will not be very difficult to control his hatred or anger before it grows stronger. Hatred causes irritation, tension and distress in the mind; and since men are basically beings "desirous of happiness and averse to unhappiness", they will normally wish to get rid of hatred, unless they have allowed it to take deep roots in their minds, be it in the form of a smouldering resentment or even to the extent that they enjoy their outbursts of hate.

"Delusion," according to the commentary, "is a great fault for both reasons, that is, in the eyes of public opinion and with regard to its unhappy Kamma-result (in the same ways as mentioned above for Hatred). If an action (kamma) is done under the impact of Delusion, such action will set man free only very slowly; it can be likened to bear skin, which will not become bright even if washed seven times."

If acts of unrestrained or unlawful greed, or lust, are performed without a feeling of guilt, but are, on the contrary, based on the prejudices and conceits of wrong views, claiming, for instance, the "right" of the strong and privileged, it is obvious that such deluded greed will not easily disappear. It will not be given up even under the impact of repeated failures to satisfy it, which may only strengthen the greed through frustration and resentment. There are also forms of deluded greed supported by a religious (or pseudo-religious) sanction (see Comment to Text 10). All these forms of deluded greed can be eliminated only when the delusive false views and principles are discarded. But even in cases where there is no wrong theory behind it: when there is greedy indulgence having the uninhibited innocence of ignorance; or when the delusive view involved is just the naive belief that "this is the right and natural thing to do"—in these cases, too, man's bondage by such deluded greed will be very hard to break.

It is similar when Delusion is associated with Hatred by way of wrong views or attitudes, instigating that hate and keeping it alive. If, for instance, due to delusive views, certain races, classes or religions are regarded as legitimate objects of hate, this will likewise be a very much stronger bondage than any impassioned but temporary outburst of anger, hatred or rage that has only the normal admixture of delusion.

Without the presence of Delusion, no greed or hatred can arise. The Unwholesome Roots of Greed and Delusion, or Hatred and Delusion, always occur together. Delusion, however, may occur by itself and can be a very powerful source of evil and suffering. In view of that omnipresence of Delusion in the entire range of the Unwholesome, the Dhammapada says that there is no entanglement equal to the wide-spread net of delusion (v. 251); and that ignorance (a synonym of delusion) is the greatest taint of the mind (v. 43). Hence it was said by the Buddha: "All unwholesome states have their roots in ignorance, they

converge in ignorance; and by the abolishing of ignorance, all the other unwholesome states, too, are abolished" (Samyutta Nikāya, vol. II: Opamma-Samyutta, No. 1).

By Ignorance, of course, is not meant a mere lack of information about this or that subject of worldly knowledge. It is rather the lack of right understanding concerning the Four Noble Truths: namely, the ignorance (or the wilful ignoring) of the full range and depth of suffering and its true cause; the ignorance that there can be an end of suffering and that there is a path leading to the ending of that ill.

The Truth of Suffering is hidden by the four Distortions of reality (vipallasa), the four great illusions. They consist in seeing permanence in the impermanent, happiness in what is trúly suffering, selfhood in what is void of a self, and beauty in the unbeautiful. These distortions of reality shut out an understanding of the Truth of Suffering, and thereby the other Truths, too, remain obscured. These distortions, or illusions, are a powerful and universal manifestation of ignorance and delusion. They may appear on the level of quite ordinary misperceptions (sañña-vipallāsa) or wrong ways of thinking (cittavipallāsa); or they may find expression in definite wrong ideas and theories (ditthi-vipallasa) concerning the four items afore mentioned. Tenaciously held wrong views (micchā-diţţhi) can forge the strongest chain fettering beings to pain-fraught Samsāra. If these views go as far as to deny the moral relevance of any action, they will lead in the next existence, to a "fixed destiny" of rebirth in a world of misery.1

On "Wrong Views with Fixed Result" (niyata-micchä-ditthi), see 'The Wheel' No. 98/99 (Apannaka Sutta), p. 23.

Sheer stupidity is, of course, likewise a form of ignorance and delusion, and it can stultify a man's inner growth throughout life and for many lives to come. But there can be an escape from it, if, in that stupid person, the good Roots of Non-greed (selflessness) and Non-hate (kindness, compassion) are strong enough to become active.

The most deep-rooted and powerful aspect of Ignorance and Delusion, and the most consequential of wrong views, is personality-belief, be it naive and unreflective, or supported by definite theories and convictions. It is the belief in an abiding self or soul, with its attendent conceits and conceptions. It is chiefly due to this personality-belief that Delusion is so hard to overcome, so slow in fading away, while the moral implications of egocentricity make Delusion a "great fault".

Considering the very wide range and universal impact of Ignorance, it will be understandable why it appears as the first factor in the chain of Dependent Origination (paticca-samuppāda), being the root condition (Delusion) of kammic bondage. As the paramount impelling force that keeps the Wheel of Existential Suffering in rotation, Delusion is, indeed, "a great fault and slow in fading away".

B. The Ten Ways of Action

"If a noble disciple knows what is unwholesome and knows the root of the unwholesome; if he knows what is wholesome and knows the root of the wholesome—he is then, to that extent, one of right understanding, he is one whose understanding is correct, who has firm confidence in the Teaching, and has arrived at (the core of) the Good Law.

And what is unwholesome? Killing is unwholesome, taking what is not given is unwholesome, sexual misconductis unwholesome; lying is unwholesome, tale-bearing is unwholesome, harsh language is unwholesome, vain talk is unwholesome; covetousness is unwholesome, ill-will is unwholesome, wrong views are unwholesome.

And what is the root of the unwholesome? Greed is a root of the unwholesome, hatred is a root of the unwholesome, delusion is a root of the unwholesome.

And what is wholesome? Abstaining from killing is wholesome, abstaining from taking what is not given is wholesome, abstaining from sexual misconduct is wholesome; abstaining from lying ... from tale-bearing ... from harsh language ... from vain talk is wholesome; non-covetousness is wholesome, non-illwill is wholesome, right understanding is wholesome.

And what is the root of the wholesome? Non-greed' is a root of the wholesome, non-hatred is a root of the wholesome, non-delusion is a root of the wholesome.

Majjhima Nikāya No. 9, "Right Understanding"

COMMENT. — In this Discourse, spoken by the venerable Sāriputta, the Unwholesome (akusala) and the Wholesome (kusala) are explained by the Ten Ways of Unwholesome/Wholesome Action (akusala/kusala-kamma-patha), which extend to deeds, words and thoughts. They are also called the tenfold Bad, or Good, Conduct (duccaritāni, sucaritāni).

This explanation of the Unwholesome stands for cases of definite immoral behaviour. Even the last three items, referring to unwholesome mental Kamma, have, in this context, an immoral character. As ways of Unwholesome

Mental Action, they signify the covetous desire for appropriating others' property; the hateful thoughts of harming, hurting or killing others; and those wrong views which deny moral causality (Kamma) and thus give room and justification for immoral acts.

These ten, however, do not exhaust the range of the term unwholesome. As mentioned in the Introduction and in the comments to Text 2, its range goes beyond the moral sphere. It is, for instance, not restricted to a violation of the five moral precepts, but comprises all deeds, words and thoughts which are motivated by any degree of greed, hate and delusion.

To give a few examples: fondness for good food, music or physical comfort is not immoral, but it is an attachment which binds man to the world of five-sense experience and is, therefore, karmically unwholesome. The same holds true for sexual acts, words and thoughts directed to one's marriage partner. These too, according to the moral code of lay society, are not immoral. Yet sexual desire and sexual activity are a very strong form of craving (tanhā) and bondage and therefore fall under the category of the Unwholesome Root 'Greed.' Further, one's private stupidity, narrowness of view, ignorance of what is truly beneficial, these and similar limitations of the mind are neither immoral nor need they have immediate immoral consequences, yet they are great impediments to the acquisition of liberating wisdom and bind man firmly to Samsara. Therefore, they too are unwholesome, being forms of the Unwholesome Root 'Delusion.'

11. Kamma and Rebirth (Texts 9-11)

9. The Roots of the Ten Unwholesome Ways

Killing, I declare, o monks, is of three kinds: motivated by greed, motivated by hatred, motivated by delusion.

Also the taking of what is not given, sexual misconduct, lying, tale-bearing, harsh language, vain talk, covetousness, ill-will and wrong views—all these, I declare, are of three kinds: motivated by greed, motivated by hate, motivated by delusion.

Thus, o monks, greed is an originator of the kamma-concatenation, hatred is an originator of the kammaconcatenation, delusion is an originator of the kammaconcatenation. But by the destruction of greed, hate and delusion, the kamma-concatenation comes to an end.

Anguttara Nikāya, Tens, No. 174

10. The Causes of Actions

There are, o monks, three causes for the origin of actions (kamma): greed, hate and delusion.

From greed, o monks, no greedlessness will arise; it is greed that arises from greed. From hatred no hatelessness will arise; it is hatred that arises from hatred. From delusion no non-delusion will arise; it is delusion that arises from delusion.

Due to actions born of greed, born of hatred, born of delusion, neither divine beings will appear,* nor humans, nor any other kind of happy existence. Rather the hells, the

^{*} By way of rebirth.

animal kingdom, the realm of ghosts or any other kind of woeful existence will appear due to actions born of greed, hatred and delusion.

These are, o monks, three causes for the origin of actions.

There are, o monks, three other causes for the origin of actions: non-greed, non-hatred and non-delusion.

From non-greed, o monks, no greed will arise; it is non-greed that arises from non-greed. From non-hatred no hatred will arise; it is non-hatred that arises from non-hatred. From non-delusion no delusion will arise; it is non-delusion that arises from non-delusion.

Due to actions born of non-greed, non-hatred, non-delusion, neither the hells will appear, nor the animal kingdom, the realm of ghosts, nor any other kind of woeful existence. Rather divine beings, humans or any other kind of happy existence will appear due to actions born of non-greed, non-hatred and non-delusion.

These, too, o monks, are three causes for the origin of actions.

Anguttara Nikāya, Sixes, No. 39

COMMENT. — This text implies the Buddha's rejection of the maxim that "the end justifies the means" — a doctrine widely followed in politics and sometimes even by religious institutions. Our text further declares as groundless the hope of those who apply this maxim in the belief that, in a future life, they will have their reward for serving their cause by any means whatsoever; or in the case of non-religious application: that a future generation will reap the reward in a "paradise on earth", an ideal society.

Our text further negates the notion that lustful passion, or actions usually regarded as immoral or sinful, need

not be obstacles to liberation or salvation, and can even be aids to it.* Such ideas, in varying formulations, have been mooted in Gnosticism, in medieval and later Christian heretical sects, in pre-Buddhist India, and in non-Buddhist and Buddhist Tantra. The notion that the end justifies the means, occurs also in contexts, which are expressed, for instance, as follows: "Whatever is done with a view of doing good to the world, is right or virtuous".

11. Rebirth and its Cessation

I

There are, o monks, three causes for the origin of actions (kamma): greed, hatred and delusion.

An action performed out of greed, born of greed, caused by greed, originating in greed;

an action performed out of hatred, born of hatred, caused by hatred, originating in hatred;

an action performed out of delusion, born of delusion, caused by delusion, originating in delusion —

such an action (kamma) will ripen wherever the individual is reborn; and wherever the action ripens, there the individual will reap the fruit thereof, be it in this life, in the next life, or in future lives.

It is as with seeds that are undamaged and unspoiled, unimpaired by wind and heat, capable of sprouting, sown well in a good field, planted in well-prepared soil. If

[&]quot;'See 'The Snake Simile'' (Majjh. 22), tr. by Nyanaponika ('The Wheel' No. 48/49), pp. 13, 16 (39).

there is plentiful rain, these seeds will come to growth, increase and full development. Similarly, an action performed out of greed, hatred or delusion will ripen wherever the individual is reborn; and wherever the action ripens, the individual will reap the fruit thereof, be it in this life, in the next life, or in future lives.

II

There are three other causes for the origin of actions: non-greed, non-hatred and non-delusion.

If an action is performed out of non-greed, born of non-greed, caused by non-greed, originating in non-greed; and if greed has entirely gone;

If performed out of non-hatred, born of non-hatred, caused by non-hatred, originating in non-hatred, and if hatred has entirely gone;

If performed out of non-delusion, born of non-delusion, caused by non-delusion, originating in non-delusion, and if delusion has entirely gone —

such an action is thereby given up, cut off at its root, made (barren) like a palm-stump, brought to non-existence, and is no longer liable to arise in the future again.

It is as with seeds that are undamaged and unspoiled, unimpaired by wind and heat, capable of sprouting, sown well in a good field. If now a man were to burn them, reduce them to ashes and then scatter the ashes in a strong wind or throw them into a stream's rapid current which carries them away — then these seeds would have been utterly destroyed, made unable to sprout again.

Similarly, if an action is performed out of non-greed, non-hatred and non-delusion, and if greed, hatred and delusion have entirely gone—such an action is thereby

given up, cut off at its root, made (barren) like a palmstump, brought to non-existence, and is no longer liable to arise in the future again.

Anguttara Nikāya, Threes, No. 33

COMMENT on Section II. — Greed and delusion, including their weakest forms, are entirely eliminated on attaining Arahantship (Sainthood): while hatred (again down to its weakest form) is fully abandoned at the stage of the Non-returner (anāgāmī). The Section II of our text applies, therefore, only to actions performed at these stages of final emancipation. Only then these actions are finally "given up" and do no longer lead to a future rebirth. It is, therefore, only at Sainthood that all three Unwholesome Roots are "entirely gone", though they are decisively weakened at the earlier three stages of emancipation.

The same type of an Arahant's actions which are no longer productive of rebirth, occurs, as the fourth item in a fourfold division of kamma:

"Dark action that brings dark results;
bright action that brings bright results;
partly bright and partly dark action, which brings
partly bright and partly dark results;

action which is neither bright nor dark, which brings neither bright nor dark results and leads to the exhaustion of action (kamma-kkhaya)."

Anguttara Nikāya, Fours, No. 232; Majjhima-Nikāya, No. 57

In explanation of the last type of action it is said that it is "the volition (cetanā) of giving up" all the other three kinds of action. This refers to the volition present in the

states, of consciousness pertaining to the four Paths (magga) of emancipation, namely the Path of Stream-entry, etc.

But also the actions of an Arahant performed in ordinary life, do not lead him into kammic involvement, nor into a future rebirth. Though his good actions may appear to be quite similar to some of the moral deeds of "noble (though unliberated) worldlings" (kalyāna-puthujjana), yet the motivation of the Arahat's actions is very different, having not the slightest trace of craving (tanhā) and ignorance (avijjā). In the Arahant's actions there is no greed (craving) by way of wishing that his virtue be recognised and appreciated. There is no delusion (ignorance) by way of a proud satisfaction in "being good' no illusionary expectations as to the result of these good actions; nor is there any other self-reference in performing these actions. An Arahant's good actions are a spontaneous outflow of a fully purified mind and heart, responding without hesitation to situations where help is needed and possible. Though in the Arahant's actions there is detachment and deep serenity instead of emotional involvement, yet his actions do not lack sympathy and compassion.

As the Arahant's mind no longer clings anywhere, also not to the results of his actions, there is no potentiality left for any future rebirth. The life-nourishing sap conveyed by the Roots, has ceased to flow, and the Roots of continued existence themselves are cut off. But as long as the momentum of the past life-force lasts, the Arahant will live on as an embodiment of wisdom and compassion.

111. The Social Significance of the Roots (Texts 12-16)

12. From the Kālāma Sutta

"What do you think, Kālāmas? When greed arises in a man, is it for his benefit or harm?" — "For his harm, venerable sir." — "Kālāmas, a greedy man, overpowered by greed, his thoughts controlled by greed, will take life, take what is not given, indulge in sexual misconduct, and tell lies; he will also prompt others to do likewise. Will that conduce to his harm and his suffering for a long time?" — "Yes, venerable sir."

What do you think, Kālāmas? When hatred arises in a man, is it for his benefit or harm? — For his harm, venerable sir. — Kālāmas, a hating man, overpowered by hatred, his thoughts controlled by hatred, will take life Will that conduce to his harm and his suffering for a long time? — Yes, venerable sir. —

What do you think, Kālāmas? When delusion arises in a man, is it for his benefit or harm? — For his harm, venerable sir. — Kālāmas, a deluded man, overpowered by delusion, his thoughts controlled by delusion, will take life ... Will that conduce to his harm and his suffering for a long time. — Yes, venerable sir. —

What do you think, Kālāmas? Are these things wholesome or unwholesome? — Unwholesome, venerable sir. — Blamable or blameless? — Blamable, venerable sir. — Censured or praised by the wise? — Censured, venerable sir. — Undertaken and practised, do these things lead to harm and suffering, or not? Or how is it in this case? — Undertaken and practised, these things lead to harm and to suffering. So does it appear to us in this case. —

Therefore, Kālāmas, did we say: Do not go upon

repeated hearing (of religious tradition), nor upon a linear succession (of teachers), nor upon hearsay, nor upon the authority of scriptures, nor upon speculative and logical grounds, nor on thought-out theories, nor on preference for views pondered upon, nor upon another's seeming competence, nor on the consideration that "The monk is our teacher".

But when you yourselves know: "These things are unwholesome, blamable, censured by the wise, and if undertaken and practised, they will lead to harm and suffering," then give them up.

(It follows a positive section on the benefits of non-greed, etc., in wordings corresponding to the above)

Anguttara Nikāya, Threes, No. 65

13. Why to give up the Roots of Evil

Once a wandering ascetic, Channa by name, visited the venerable Ananda and spoke to him as follows:

"You, friend Ananda, teach the giving up of greed, hatred and delusion, and we, too, teach it. But, friend Ananda, what disadvantage have you seen in greed, hatred and delusion that you teach that they ought to be given up?"

*"A greedy person, friend, who is overpowered by greed, his thoughts controlled by greed, aims at his own harm, aims at others' harm, aims at the harm of both, and he suffers pain and grief in his mind. But when greed

This refers to listening to the oral tradition of religious and other scriptures, as recited by the teacher and committed to memory by the pupil.

is given up, he will not aim at his own harm, not at the harm of others, nor at the harm of both, and he will not suffer pain and grief in his mind (on account of greed).

- * A greedy person, overpowered by greed, his thoughts controlled by greed, leads an evil way of life in deeds, words and thoughts; he does not know his own true advantage, not that of others, nor that of both. But when greed is given up, he will not lead an evil way of life in deeds, words and thoughts; and he will understand the true advantage of his own, of others, and of both.
- * A hating person, overpowered by hatred, his thoughts controlled by hatred, aims at his own harm, aims at others' harm, aims at the harm of both, and he suffers pain and grief in his mind. But when hate is given up, he will not aim at his own harm, not at the harm of others, nor at the harm of both, and he will not suffer pain and grief in his mind (on account of hatred).
- * A hating person, overpowered by hatred, his thoughts controlled by hatred, leads an evil way of life in deeds, words and thoughts; he does not know his own true advantage, not that of others, nor that of both. But when hate is given up, he will not lead an evil way of life in deeds, words and thoughts; and he will understand the true advantage of his own, of others and of both.
- * A deluded person, overpowered by delusion, his thoughts controlled by delusion, aims at his own harm, aims at others' harm, aims at the harm of both, and he suffers pain and grief in his mind. But when delusion is given up, he will not aim at his own harm, not at the harm of others, nor at the harm of both, and he will not suffer pain and grief in his mind (on account of delusion).
- * A deluded person, overpowered by delusion, his thoughts controlled by delusion, leads an evil way of life in deeds, words and thoughts; he does not know his own

true advantage, not that of others, nor that of both. But when delusion is given up, he will not lead an evil way of life in deeds, words and thoughts; and he will understand the true advantage of his own, of others and of both.

Greed, hatred and delusion, friend, make one blind, unseeing and ignorant; they destroy wisdom, are bound up with distress, and do not lead to Nibbāna.

Because we have seen these disadvantages in greed, hatred and delusion, therefore, friend, do we teach that they ought to be given up."—

"But is there, friend Ananda, a path, is there a way that leads to the giving up of greed, hatred and delusion?"—

"Yes, friend, there is such a path, there is a way." — "And which, friend Ananda, is that path?" —

"It is, friend, this Noble Eightfold Path, namely: right understanding, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration. This, friend, is the path, this is the way to the giving up of greed, hate and delusion." —

"Excellent, friend Ananda, is that path, excellent is the way leading to the giving up of greed, hatred and delusion. And this, friend Ananda, is, indeed, a sufficient reason for applying heedfulness."

Anguttara Nikāya, Threes, No. 71

14. The Visible Teaching

"People speak of the 'visible Teaching'. In how far, Lord, is the Teaching visible here and now, has immediate results, invites to come and see, is onward-leading, and directly experiencable by the wise?" —

"A person who is greedy ... hating ... deluded, overpowered by greed ... hatred ... delusion ... aims at his own harm, at others' harm, at the harm of both, and he suffers pain and grief in his mind. He also leads an evil way of life in deeds, words and thoughts, and he does not know the true advantage of his own, of others and of both.

But when greed, hatred and delusion are given up, he will not aim at his own harm, at others' harm, at the harm of both, and he will not suffer pain and grief in his mind. He will not lead an evil life and he will understand the true advantage of his own, of others and of both *

In that sense is the Teaching visible here and now, has immediate results, invites to come and see, is onward-leading, and directly experiencable by the wise".

Anguttara Nikāya, Threes, No. 53

COMMENT. — The description of the Teaching (Dhamma) as being "visible here and now", and so forth, is the same as in the traditional text of Homage to the Dhamma as one of the Three Refuges and Three Gems. This text of homage begins with the words: "Well proclaimed is the Teaching by the Blessed One: it is visible here and now, has immediate results..." (Svākkhāto Bhagavatā dhammo sandiṭhiko akāliko...).

If the Dhamma is here identified with the teaching on the Unwholesome Roots and their abandonment, we may understand it in this way: the presence of greed, hate and delusion corresponds to the Truths of Suffering and its Origin, while in the abandonment of these Un-

This is a condensation of the full text as given in the preceding Text 13, in the paras marked by an asterisk.

wholesome Roots the Truths of the Path and its goal, Nibbana, are implied.

Through constant effort towards weakening these Evil Roots, culminating in their final eradication, the truth of the Teaching becomes clearly visible by yielding immediate results for one who has followed the invitation to Come and See for himself. Through his earnest effort and encouraged by those immediate results, he will be lead onward in his progress towards the goal — an experience that can and must be made by himself alone, that is by one who has sufficient wisdom to devote himself diligently to the work of liberation.

15. Four Types of Men

There are four types of men in the world. One who works for his own good, but not for the good of others; one who works for the good of others, but not for his own good; one who works neither for his own good nor for the good of others; and one who works for his own good as well as for the good of others.

And which is the person who works for his own good, but not for the good of others? It is he who strives for the abolishing of greed, hatred and delusion in himself, but he does not encourage others to abolish greed, hate and delusion.

And which is the person who works for the good of others, but not for his own good? It is he who encourages others to abolish greed, hatred and delusion, but does not strive for the abolishing of greed, hate and delusion in himself.

And which is the person who does not work for his own good nor for the good of others? It is he who neither strives for the abolishing of greed, hatred and delusion in

himself, nor does he encourage others to abolish greed, hate and delusion.

And which is the person who works for his own good as well as for the good of others? It is he who strives for the abolishing of greed, hatred and delusion in himself, and also encourages others to abolish greed, hate and delusion.

Anguttara Nikāya, Fours, No. 76

16. The Evil Roots as Motivations of Violence and Oppression

There are, o monks, three Roots of the Unwholesome: greed, hatred and delusion.

Greed of whatever kind is unwholesome.¹ Whatever (kamma) a greedy person heaps up,² by deeds, words or thoughts, that, too, is unwholesome.¹ Whatever suffering a greedy person, overpowered by greed, his thoughts controlled by greed, inflicts, under false pretexts,³ upon another, by killing, imprisonment, confiscation of property, false accusations or expulsion, being prompted in this by the thought, 'I have power and I want power' — all this is unwholesome, too. In this manner, there arise in him many evil and unwholesome states of mind, born of greed, caused by greed, originating in greed, conditioned by greed.

The Commentary emphasises here the fact that greed, hate and delusion are not only unwholesome in themselves, but also roots of future unwholesome and evil conditions.

abhisankharoti. This refers to kammic accumulation through the volitional Kamma Formations (sankhāra), which are here of an unwholesome character.

asatā; lit.: falsely, untruthfully.

Hatred of whatever kind is unwholesome. Whatever (kamma) a hating person heaps up, by deeds, words or thoughts, that, too, is unwholesome. Whatever suffering a hating person, overpowered by hatred, his thoughts controlled by hatred, inflicts, under false pretexts, upon another, by killing, imprisonment confiscation of property, false accusations or expulsion, being prompted in this by the thought, 'I have power and I want power'—all this is unwholesome, too. In this manner, there arise in him many evil and unwholesome states of mind, born of hatred, caused by hatred, originating in hatred, conditioned by hatred.

Delusion of whatever kind is unwholesome. Whatever (kamma) a deluded person heaps up, by deeds, words or thoughts, that, too, is unwholesome. Whatever suffering a deluded person, overpowered by delusion, his thoughts controlled by delusion, inflicts, under false pretexts, upon another, by killing, imprisonment, confiscation of property, false accusations or expulsion, being prompted in this by the thought, 'I have power and I want power'— all this is unwholesome, too. In this manner, there arise in him many evil and unwholesome states of mind, born of delusion, caused by delusion, originating in delusion, conditioned by delusion.

Anguttara Nikāya. Threes, No. 69

COMMENT. — Here the Buddha speaks of the unrestrained use of power, motivated by greed, hatred and delusion. The examples as given in the text, make it clear that the Buddha refers here to abuse of power on the part of the ruler of a country, whether in time of war against an enemy, or in peacetime towards the country's own population. During his lifetime, the Buddha must

have observed many such instances of violence and oppression. He will also have known that the false pretexts justifying such abuses of power have been used in war as well as in peace. Lying propaganda against a country's enemy, and slander of the chosen victims in the ruler's own country, obviously existed already 2500 years ago. In fact, all those instances of violence and oppression mentioned by the Buddha, have, alas, quite a familiar ring today. And of course, the chief motivations — greed, hatred and delusion — are still the same. Delusion, however, has played an increasingly greater role in modern history, through various aggressive ideologies, of a religious, political or racial character.

It may have been a reminiscence of the Buddha from his life as prince at the paternal court, when he spoke those moving verses opening the Sutta called "The Use of Violence" (Atta-danda Sutta, Sutta Nipāta):

"The use of violence breeds terror.

The nation see embroiled in strife!

How this has moved my heart,

How I was stirred, I shall now tell.

Seeing the crowds in frantic movement, Like swarms of fish when the pond dries up; Seeing how people fight each other, By fear and horror was I struck."

Only rarely the Buddha spoke about those darker sides of contemporary society, but these few texts show that he was a keen and compassionate observer.

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Generally, all three Roots of Evil — greed, hatred and delusion — will operate in those acts of violence and

oppression, which our text mentions. But in specific cases any of the three might be dominant, though an element of delusion, or ignorance, will always be present. In war, rulers might chiefly be motivated by greed (for territory, wealth, economic dominance or political supremacy); but to make the war popular among their own people, they will employ hate-propaganda as a false pretext. Delusion, as a motivating factor, was prominent in the religious wars of the past, and in our present time in ideological wars and revolutions. Delusion is likewise dominant in religious, political and racial persecutions within a particular country. In all these cases, delusion produces hate. But greed, too, may often lurk in the background as a hidden motivation of conquest or internal oppression. Oppressive regimes, in their acts directed against sections of their own people are likewise motivated by all three Roots.

The interaction of the Roots of Evil is sometimes quite complex, and these Roots grow in strength by feeding on each other.

The Buddha understood well the psychology of the mighty, which basically has not changed throughout the millenniums. All those wrongful acts, from killing down to the expulsion of innocent victims, are committed out of an enjoyment of power and in the wish to make this power secure and to expand it. This power craze is, of course, a form of obsessive delusion and can be found among all who have some degree of authority over others: from the old-style absolute ruler to the modern dictator, down to the petty bureaucrat who likewise enjoys to display his little bit of power.

Our text shows vividly some of the social repercussions of the three Roots of Evil as causing cruelty and inflicting suffering.

IV. General Texts (Nos. 17-25)

17. If three things were not found in the world, the Perfect One, the Holy One who is Fully Enlightened, would not appear in the world, nor would his Teaching and Discipline shed their light over the world.

What are these three things? They are birth, old age and death. Because these three are found in the world, therefore the Perfect One, The Holy One who is Fully Enlightened, has appeared in the world, and, therefore, his Teaching and Discipline shed their light over the world.

It is, however, impossible to overcome birth, old age and death without overcoming another three things, namely greed, hatred and delusion.

Anguttara Nikāya, Tens, No. 76

18. There are two things: secing enjoyment in things that can fetter; seeing dissatisfaction in things that can fetter.

He who lives seeing enjoyment in things that can fetter, cannot give up greed, hatred and delusion; and without giving them up he will not be freed from birth, old age, and death, nor from sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair; he will not be freed from suffering, this I declare.

But he who lives seeing dissatisfaction in things that can fetter, he will give up greed, hatred and delusion; and by

or: two kinds of outlook.

samyo janiyesu dhammesu assādānupassitā; Commentary: things which are conditions for the ten Fetters (samyo jana).

or revulsion, disgust; samyo jani yesu dhammesu nibbidānu passitā.

giving them up he will be freed from birth, old age and death, from sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair; he will be freed from suffering, this I declare.

Anguttara Nikāya, Twos. Ch. I, No. 6

19. Greed is a barb, hatred is a barb, delusion is a barb. Hence, monks, you should abide without (these) barbs, abide free from (these) barbs. Without (such) barbs are the Arahants, free from (such) barbs are the Arahants.

Anguttara Nikāya, Tens, No. 72

COMMENT. — The Pali word for "barb" is kantaka, literally 'a thorn'. A similar figurative expression, that of a dart (salla), occurs in the Sutta Nipāta:

"I saw what is so hard to see,
the dart embedded in the heart —
the dart by which afflicted we
in all directions hurry on.
If once this dart has been removed,
one will not hurry, will not sink."

(vv. 938-939)

20. From the Mahā-Vedalla Sutta

Greed is a producer of limitations, hatred is a producer of limitations, delusion is a producer of limitations.¹

Greed is something (burdensome), hatred is something (burdensome), delusion is something (burdensome).²

Greed is a maker of (tainted) marks, hatred is a maker of (tainted) marks, delusion is a maker of (tainted) marks.³

(All) these are given up by the taint-free Arahant; they are cut off at the root, made barren like a palm-stump, brought to non-existence, no longer liable to arise in the future again.

COMMENT. -

1. "Producer of limitations" (pamāṇa-karaṇo). The three Roots of Evil limit man's outlook, they place limitations on his vision of things as they really are, and they limit man's potential freedom of choice. They make for a limited, that is "shallow and narrow mentality" (uttāno paritta-cetaso), as the Subcommentary says.

The commentary explains differently, saying that the manifestations of the three unwholesome Roots, provide a standard, or criterium (pamāṇa) for judging people whether they are unliberated worldlings (puthujjana) or Noble Persons (ariya). But as this text later contrasts this term with appamāṇa-cetovimutti, the Boundless Liberation of the Mind, the interpretation chosen here appears more probable.

2. "Something (burdensome", kiñcano).— The Pali word kiñcana means 'something'. In another passage of the same text (not reproduced here), this is contrasted with ākiñcañña-cetovimutti, the Liberation of Mind through (the meditative state of) No-thingness.— The commentary, however, relates the word to a verb kiñchati, to crush, press down, oppress. Greed, Hatred and Delusion are certainly a heavy burden, pressing man down by "something or other" that evokes his passions and clouds his vision. The term kiñcana has sometimes also the meaning of property or possessions.

- 3 "Maker of (tainted) marks" (nimitta-karano). The three Unwholesome Roots impress, as it were, their marks upon the objects of sense-perception, by which these objects are habitually identified as attractive, repulsive or as bases evoking confusion or wrong views. They also attach to "self and world" the delusive marks of permanence, happiness, selfhood and beauty (nicca-nimitta, etc.), instead of the true signata of impermanence, liability to suffering, not-self and impurity.
- 21. He who has not abandoned greed, hatred and delusion, is called Māra's prisoner, captured in Māra's snares, subject to the Evil One's will and pleasure.

But he who has abandoned greed, hatred and delusion, is no longer Māra's prisoner, he is freed from Māra's snares, no longer subject to the Evil One's will and pleasure.

Itivuttaka 68.

22. A monk or a nun who has not abandoned greed, hatred and delusion, such a one has not crossed the ocean (of Samsāra), with its waves and whirlpools, monsters and demons.

But a monk or a nun who has abandoned greed, hatred and delusion, such a one has crossed the ocean (of Samsāra), with its waves and whirlpools, monsters and demons, has traversed it and gone to the Other Shore (Nibbāna), standing on firm ground as a true Saint.

Itivuttaka 69

From the Commentary by Bhadantācariya Dhammapāla

Greed, hatred and delusion, to the extent to which they lead to rebirth in the worlds of woe, are abandoned by the first Path (of Stream-entry).

Sense-desire and hatred, in their coarse forms, are abandoned by the second Path (of Once-return).

Both are entirely abandoned by the third Path (of No-return).

Desire for (any) renewed existence (bhava- $r\bar{a}ga$) and all remaining forms of delusion are abandoned by the fourth Path (of Sainthood).

While these are abandoned, also other defilements associarted with them are given up.

23. Which are the things, o monks, that can neither be abandoned by bodily acts nor by speech, but can be abandoned by wisely seeing them? Greed can neither be abandoned by bodily acts nor by speech; but it can be abandoned by wisely seeing it. Hatred can neither be abandoned by bodily acts nor by speech; but it can be abandoned by wisely seeing it. Delusion can neither be abandoned by bodily acts nor by speech; but it can be abandoned by wisely seeing it.

Anguttara Nikāya, Tens, No. 23

COMMENT. — "Wisely seeing" (paññāya disvā) refers here, according to the commentary, to the wisdom pertaining to the Paths of Emancipation (magga-paññā), along with the insight (saha-vipassanāya) that culminates in the Paths. From this explanation follows that the term abandoning has to be understood here in its strict sense, as final and total elimination, effected by realisation of the Paths of Emancipation (stream-entry, etc.).

Nevertheless, a weakening of the Unwholesome Roots can be effected also by body and speech, through curbing

more and more the outward manifestations in deeds and words, motivated by greed, hate and delusion.

The phrase "wisely seeing" may serve to emphasize the crucial importance of mindfully observing the presence or absence of the Unwholesome Roots within one's own mind flux. This repeated confrontation with them will prepare the way to liberating insight (see Texts 34 and 35),

24. The Three Fires

"The world is an ever-living fire." Heraclitus

There are three fires: the fire of lust, the fire of hatred, and the fire of delusion.

The fire of lust burns lustful mortals

Who by the sense-objects are infatuated.

The fire of hate burns wrathful men Who urged by hate slay living beings.

Delusion's fire burns foolish folk Who cannot see the Holy Dhamma.

Those who delight in the Embodied Group¹,
They do not know this triple fire.

They cause to grow the worlds of woe:

The hells, and life as animal,

The ghostly and demoniac realms: Unfreed they are from Māra's chains.

But those who live by day and night Devoted to the Buddha's Law.

The term *Embodied Group* (Pali: sakkaya) refers to the transient personality consisting of the five Aggregates, body, seeling, perception, mental formations and consciousness.

They quench within the fire of lust,

By seeing the impurity of body.

They quench within the fire of hate,

By loving-kindness, loftiest of men.

Delusion's fire they also quench,

By wisdom ripening in penetration.

When they extinguish these three fires,
Wise, unremitting day and night,
Completely are they liberated,
Completely they transcend all Ill.

Seers of the Holy Realm²,

Through perfect knowledge³ wise,

By direct vision ending all rebirth,

They do not go to any new existence.

Itivuttaka, No. 93

From the Commentary by Bhadantācariya Dhammapāla

Because greed when it arises, burns and consumes living beings, therefore it is called a fire; and so it is with hatred and delusion. Just as a fire consumes the fuel through which it has arisen, and grows into a vast conflagration, similarly it is with greed, hatred and delusion: they consume the life-continuity in which they have risen and grow into a vast conflagration that is hard to extinguish.

Literally, "Leading to the piercing (nibbedha-gamini). This refers to the piercing, or destroying, of the mass of defilements.

The "Holy Realm" is Nibbana.

^{*&#}x27;Through perfect Knowledge'' (sammad-annaya). Anna is the Highest Knowledge, or Gnosis, attained by Sainthood.

Innumerable are the beings who, with hearts ablaze with the fire of lust, have come to death through the suffering of unfulfilled desire. This is greed's burning nature. For the burning power of hatred, a special example are the 'deities ruined by their angry minds' (manopadosika-devā) and for delusion, the 'deities ruined by their playful pleasures' (khiḍḍa-padosika devā). In their delusion, the latter become so forgetful that they miss their meal-time and die. This is the burning nature of greed, hatred and delusion, as far as the present life is concerned, in future lives these three are still more terrible and hard to endure, insofar as greed, etc., may cause rebirth in the hells and the other worlds of woe.

25. Three Inner Foes

There are three inner taints, three inner foes, three inner enemies, three inner murderers, three inner antagonists. What are these three? Greed is an inner taint... Hatred is an inner taint... Delusion is an inner taint, an inner foe, an inner enemy, an inner murderer, an inner antagonist.

Greed is a cause of harm,

Unrest of mind it brings.

This danger that has grown within,

Blind folk are unaware of it.

A greedy person cannot see the facts,
Nor can he understand the Dhamma.
When greed has overpowered him,
In complete darkness is he plunged.

But he who can forsake this greed
And what to greed incites, not craves,
From him will quickly greed glide off,
As water from the lotus leaf.

Hate is a cause of harm,
Unrest of mind it brings.
This danger that has grown within,

Blind folk are unaware of it.

A hater cannot see the facts

Nor can be understand the Dhamma.

When hate has overpowered him, In complete darkness is he plunged.

But he who can forsake this hate
And what to hate incites, not hates,
From him will quickly hate fall off
As from the palm tree falls a ripened fruit.

Delusion is a cause of harm,

Unrest of mind it brings.

This danger that has grown within,
blind folk are unaware of it.

Who is deluded cannot see the facts

Nor can he understand the Dhamma.

If man is in delusion's grip,

In complete darkness is he plunged.

But who has shed delusion's veil,
Is undeluded where confusion reigns,
He scatters all delusion sure,
Just as the sun dispels the night.

Itivuttaka, No. 88

V. The Removal of the Unwholesome Roots (Texts 26-43)

General (Texts 26-33)

26. The Triple Gem and the Abandoning of the Roots of Evil

Once the venerable Ananda was staying in Kosambi, at Ghosita's monastery. At that time a certain householder, a lay devotee of the Ajivaka ascetics, went to see the venerable Ananda. Having arrived, he saluted him and sat down at one side. So seated, he said this to the venerable Ananda:

"How is it, revered Ananda: whose doctrine is well proclaimed? Who are those who live well-conducted in the world? Who are the Blessed (Saints) in the world?" 1

- "Now, householder, I shall ask you a question on this matter, and you may answer as you think fit. What do you think, householder: as to those who teach a doctrine for the abandoning of greed, hatred and delusion, is their doctrine well proclaimed or not? Or what do you think about this?"
- "I think, their doctrine is well proclaimed, revered sir."
- "Then, householder, what do you think: those whose conduct is directed to the abandoning of greed,

The words used here, 'well proclaimed' (svākkhāto), well-conducted' (supatipanno) and 'Blessed One' (sugato) are key words in the well-known formula of homage to the Dhamma, Sangha and the Buddha (in our text, in this sequence). The term Sugata, 'well-farer', was perhaps pre-Buddhist usage for a saintly person and was later on increasingly applied to the Buddha as one of his epithets. In medieval India, the Buddhists were known as a Saugata, the followers of the Sugata.

hatred and delusion, do they live well-conducted in the world or not? Or what do you think about this?"

- "I think, they are well-conducted, revered sir."
- "And further, householder, what do you think: those in whom greed, hatred and delusion are abandoned, cut at the root, made (barren) like a palm-stump, brought to non-existence, no longer liable to arise in the future again, are they Blessed (Saints) in the world or not? Or what do you think about this?"
- "Yes, I do think, revered sir, that these are Blessed (Saints) in the world."
- "So householder, you have admitted this: Well proclaimed is the creed of those who teach a doctrine for the abandoning of greed, hatred and delusion. Those are well-conducted whose conduct is directed to the abandoning of greed, hatred and delusion, And the Blessed Ones are those who have abandoned greed, hatred and delusion and have totally destroyed it in themselves."
- "Wonderful, revered sir! Marvellous, revered sir! There was no extolling of your own creed, nor a disparaging of another's creed. Just by keeping to the subject matter, the doctrine was explained by you. Only facts were spoken of and no selfish reference was brought in.

"It is excellent, revered sir, very excellent. It is as if one were to set aright what was overturned, reveal what was hidden, point the way to those who have lost it, hold up a light in the darkness so that those who have eyes may see what is visible. Thus was the Teaching in diverse ways explained by the worthy Ananda.

I now go for refuge to that Exalted One, to his Teaching and to the Order of Monks. May master Ananda accept me as a lay follower from this day onwards as long as life shall last. May he regard me as one who has thus taken refuge."

Anguttara Nikāya, Threes, No. 71

COMMENTS. — The unnamed lay follower of a sect of naked ascetic (the Ajivakas) who is introduced to us in the preceding text, must have been a person of sensitivity. He obviously was disgusted with the self-advertisement he may have found in his own sect and among other contemporary religious teachers. So he wanted to test a disciple of the Buddha, in this respect. He even laid a trap for the venerable Ananda, by phrasing his questions in terms of the well-known Buddhist formula, the Triple Refuge, expecting, perhaps, that' he venerable Ananda would react to it somewhat like this: "These are the very words we use, and we do claim these achievements for our doctrine, for our monks and for our Buddha." But what the venerable Ananda actually replied, came as a happy surprise to our questioner, as there was no self-praise nor blame of others in those words. And as the questioner was seemingly a very perceptive person, he immediately grasped the profound significance of the venerable Ananda's words, when he explained the Three Refuges in terms of overcoming the Three Roots of Evil. Moved to admiration for both the speaker and his teaching, the inquirer declared on the spot his dedication to the Triple Gem.

This dialogue between a non-Buddhist and a Buddhist monk suggests that the teaching on the Three Roots can be immediately convincing to those of open mind and heart who are not entirely immersed in the current of greed, hatred and delusion. This teaching can open an eminently practical and non-creedal approach to the very core of the Dhamma, even for those reluctant to accept other tenets of it. It is for this reason that the awareness of those Three Roots and their significance was called a directly "visible teaching" (Text 14) and a doctrine that can be grasped without recourse to faith,

how greed, hatred and delusion are at the root of all individual and social conflict situations. Those who are non-Buddhists and still hesitate to accept the Buddha's Truths of Suffering and its Origin in their entire range of validity may not be willing to admit that all degrees and varieties of greed, hatred and delusion are Roots of Suffering. Yet, even if only the more extreme forms of those three are clearly understood to be the root causes of evil and unhappiness, a practical application of such understanding will be of immense benefit to the individual and society.

From such initial understanding and application, it may not be too difficult for a searching and honest mind to proceed to the conclusion that even the very subtle manifestations of greed, hatred and delusion are seeds from which their most destructive forms may grow. But the Dhamma is a gradual teaching, and the extension of that initial understanding should be left to the natural growth of insight and experience and not be forced upon the listener. This was the very attitude which the Enlightened One Himself observed in his way of teaching.

Following the example of the venerable Ananda, it will be profitable also in the present days if, for various levels of understanding, attempts are made to formulate the practical message of the Dhamma in terms of the Three Roots of Good and Evil. In its simplicity as well as its profundity, this teaching carries thet distinct seal of Enlightenment. It is a teaching that will directly affect the every-day life, and will also reach to the very depth of existence and to the transcendence of it.

27. The Purpose of the Teaching

(Siha, a general and formerly a disciple of the Niganthas (Jains), once questioned the Buddha about various accusations levelled against him. One of them was that the Buddha taught a destructive doctrine and was a nihilist, a destroyer. The Buddha replied:)

"There is one way, Siha, in which one might rightly speak of me as a destroyer, as one who teaches his doctrine with a destructive purpose: because I teach Dhamma for the purpose of destroying greed, hatred and delusion; for the destroying of manifold evil and unwholesome states of mind do I teach Dhamma."

Anguttara Nikāya, Threes, No. 12

28. It can be done

Abandon what is unwholesome, o monks! One can abandon the Unwholesome, o monks! If it were not possible, I would not ask you to do so.

If this abandoning of the Unwholesome would bring harm and suffering, I would not ask you to abandon it. But as the abandoning of the Unwholesome brings benefit and happiness, therefore I say "Abandon what is unwholesome!"

Cultivate what is wholesome, o monks! One can cultivate the wholesome, o monks! If it were not possible, I would not ask you to do so.

If this cultivation of the Wholesome would bring harm and suffering. I would not ask you to cultivate it. But as the cultivation of the Wholesome beings benefit and happiness, therefore I say "Cultivate what is wholesome!"

Anguttara Nikāya, Twos, II, 9

COMMENT. — This text proclaims, in simple and memorable words, man's potential for achieving the Good, thus invalidating the oft-heard charge that Buddhism is pessimistic. But since man has, as we know only too well, also a strong potential for evil, there is as little ground for our being unreservedly optimistic about man and his future. Which of man's potentialities, that for good or for evil, becomes actual, depends on his own choice. What makes a human being, is to have choices and to make use of them. The range of man's choices and his prior awareness of them will expand with the growth of his mindfulness and wisdom. And along with the growth of these two qualities, those forces that seem to 'condition' and even to compel his choices into a wrong direction, will become weakened. It is only the Arahant who has, in the moral realm, no choice whatsoever than to act, speak and think in a way that is free from greed, hatred and delusion.

These hope-inspiring words of the Buddha about man's positive potential will receive their tremendous significance and their full range, if we remember that the words wholesome and unwholesome are not limited to a narrow moral application. The Wholesome that can be cultivated comprises everything that is beneficial, including those qualities of mind and heart which are indispensible for reaching the highest goal of final liberation. The Unwholesome that can be abandoned includes even the finest traces of greed, hatred and delusion. It is, indeed, a bold and heartening assurance — a veritable 'Lion's Roar' — when the Buddha said that, in such a wide sense, what is benefitcial can be obtained and what is harmful can be conquered.

29. Five Methods for the Removal of Unwholesome Thoughts

A monk who is intent on the Higher Consciousness (of meditation), should from time to time give attention to five items. What five?

- 1. When, owing to an object to which the monk has given (wrong) attention, there arise in him evil, unwholesome thoughts connected with desire*, with hatred and with delusion, then that monk should give his attention to a different object, to one connected with what is wholesome. When he is doing so, those evil, unwholesome thoughts connected with desire, hatred and delusion are abandoned in him and subside. With their abandonment, his mind becomes inwardly steady and settled, unified and concentrated. ...
- 2. If, when giving attention to an object that is wholesome, there still arise in him evil, unwholesome thoughts connected with desire, with hatred and with delusion, then the monk should reflect upon the danger in these thoughts thus, "Truly, for reasons such and such, these thoughts are unwholesome, they are reprehensible and result in suffering!" When he is reflecting in this way, those evil, unwholesome thoughts are abandoned in him and subside. With their abandonment, his mind becomes inwardly steady and settled, unified and concentrated. ...
- 3. If, when reflecting upon the danger in these thoughts, there still arise in him evil, unwholesome thoughts connected with desire, with hatred and with delusion, he

^{*} Here, the Pali term used is chanda, and not raga (lust) or lobha greed.)

should try not to be mindful of them, not to give attention to them. When he is not giving attention to them, those evil, unwholesome thoughts will be abandoned in him and subside. With their abandonment, his mind becomes inwardly steady and settled, unified and concentrated....

- 4. If, while he is not giving attention to these thoughts there still arise in him evil, unwholesome thoughts connected with desire, with hatred and with delusion, he should give attention to the removal of the source of these thoughts.* When he is doing so, those evil, unwholesome thoughts are abandoned in him and subside. With their abandonment, his mind becomes inwardly steady and settled, unified and concentrated. ...
- 5. If, while he is giving attention to the removal of the source of these thoughts, these evil, unwholesome thoughts still arise in him, he should, with teeth clenched and the tongue pressed against the palate, restrain, subdue and suppress mind by mind.** When he is doing so, those evil, unwholesome thoughts are abandoned in him and subside. With their abandonment, his mind becomes inwardly steady and settled, unified and concentrated. ...

When those evil, unwholesome thoughts, connected with desire, hate and delusion, which have arisen owing to (wrong) attention given to an object, have been abandoned in a monk and have subsided (due to his

This rendering follows the commentary on the Discourse, which explains the word sankhāra (in the phrase vitakka-sankhāra-sankhāra) by condition, cause or root. An alternative rendering of this phrase would be 'quieting the thought formations'.

^{**} That is, he has restrained the unwholesome state of mind by a wholesome state of mind, namely by his efforts to remove those unwholesome thoughts.

applying these five methods), and when (due to that) his mind has become steady and settled, unified and concentrated, — then that monk is called a master of the path ways of thoughts: he will think the thoughts he wants to think and will not think those he does not want to think. He has cut off craving, severed the fetter (to existence) and with the full penetration of conceit, he has made an end of suffering.

Majjhima-Nikāya No. 20: The Removal of Unwholesome Thoughts (Vitakka-saṇṭhāna Sutta)

COMMENT.— This Discourse on the Removal of Unwholesome Thoughts* was addressed by the Buddha to monks devoted to meditation, and especially to the attainment of the meditative Absorptions (jhāna), which constitute the Higher Consciousness (adhicitta), mentioned in the Discourse. But the five methods for stopping unwholesome thoughts are not restricted to those engaged in strict meditative practice. These methods are also helpful when desire, aversion and delusion arise during less intensive contemplations undertaken by monks or lay. Even in situations of ordinary life, when one is confronted with an onrush of unwholesome thoughts, these methods will prove effective, provided one can muster the presence of mind needed for promptly applying these methods. In applying them, one will be practising Right Effort, the sixth factor of the Noble Eightfold Path. The Effort to

^{*} For a complete translation, including the commentary, see 'The Wheel' No. 21: 'The Removed of Distracting Thoughts', tr. by Soma Thera.

Overcome unwholesome thoughts which have already arisen, is one of the four Great Efforts (samma ppadhāna), constituting the sixth path factor.

By the first method the intruding harmful thoughts are replaced by their beneficial opposites. The Discourse gives the simile of a carpenter removing a coarse peg that does not fit, with help of a finer peg. The commentary explains as follows: when, as one of those unwholesome thoughts, desire for a living being arises, it should be countered by thinking of the impurity of the body; if there is desire for an inanimate object, its impermanence and its ownerless nature should be considered. In the case of aversion against a living being, the "different thought" to be reflected upon is that of loving-kindness (mettā) and friendliness; resentment against inanimate things or against adverse life situations should be removed by thinking of their impermanence and impersonal nature. When deluded or confused thoughts arise, effort for a clarifying discernment of them should be made. What has been said now, is for the purpose of countering the undesirable thoughts immediately on their arising. For a sustained effort in substantially reducing and finally abolishing them, the Wholesome Roots that are their opposites, should be strenghtened whenever there is an opportunity. Non-Greed should be enhanced by selflessness, generosity and acts of renunciation; Non-Hate by patience and compassion; Non-Delusion by cultivating clarity of thought and a penetrative understanding of reality.

The second method is that of evoking repugnance and a sense of danger, with regard to unwholesome thoughts. The simile in the Discourse is that of a well-dressed young man or wo man who feel horrified, humiliated and disgusted when the carcass of an animal is slung around

his or her neck. Calling to mind the unworthiness of evil thoughts will produce a sense of shame (hiri) and abhorrence. The awareness that these unwholesome thoughts are truly harmful and dangerous, will produce a deterring "dread of consequences" (ottappa). This method of evoking repugnance may also serve as an aid for returning to the first method of "replacement by good thoughts", unless one has now become able to check the intruding thoughts through the second method. This method can be very effective when encounters in ordinary life call for an undelayed curbing of unwholesome thoughts.

By the third method one tries to ignore those undesirable thoughts by diverting one's attention to other thoughts or activities. Here the simile is that of closing one's eyes at a disagreeable sight, or looking into another direction. If this method is applied during a session of meditationt it will imply a temporary interruption of the meditation. For a diverting occupation, the commentary gives these examples: recitation or reading, looking through the contents of one's bag (or pocket). Outside of meditatative practice, too. reciting or reading may likewise be helpful: or, until those troublesome thoughts have subsided, one may take up some little work that requires one's attention.

The fourth method is illustrated in the Discourse by a man who runs fast and then asks himself "Why should I run?" and he slows down; he then continues that process of calming his activity by successively standing still, sitting and lying down. This simile makes one think that it stands for a sublimating and refining of the coarse thoughts of unwholesome nature. This, however, being a slow and gradual process, may not be applicable to a meditative situation when a quicker remedial action is

required. The commentarial interpretation seems, therefore, to be preferable: the tracing of unwholesome thoughts back to the thoughts or the situation which have caused, or stimulated, their arising, and then trying to remove that thought source from one's mind. This may often be easier than confronting directly the full-grown endresult. It will also help to divert the mind (according to the third method) from those unwholesome thoughts, which, at this stage, may have proved hard to dislodge. We may, therefore, describe the fourth method as "tracing the thought source". But from the longer view of continued endeavour to eliminate those harmful thoughts, an interpreting of this method as sublimation or gradual refinement need not be excluded. It can offer ways of reducing the intensity and the immoral quality of the three Unwholesome Roots, and even divert their energy into wholesome channels.

The fifth, and last, method, that of vigorous suppression, is to be applied when unwholesome thoughts have gained such a strength that they threaten to become unmanageable and to bring about situations of grave peril, practically and morally. The Discourse illustrates this method by a strong-bodied man forcing down a weaker person by sheer strength.

If the application of these five methods is not neglected but is kept alive in meditative practice as well as in ordinary circumstances, a marked and progressive weakening of the three Unwholesome Roots can be expected, until, finally, the perfect mastery of thoughts, as promised at the end of the Discourse, has been attained. For one's own sake, monks, vigilant mindfulness should be made the mind's guard and this for four reasons:

'May my mind not harbour lust for anything inducing lust!' — for this reason vigilant mindfulness should be made the mind's guard, for one's own sake.

'May my mind not harbour hatred toward anything inducing hatred!'—for this reason vigilant mindfulness should be made mind's guard, for one's own sake.

'May my mind not harbour delusion concerning anything inducing delusion!' for this reason vigilant mindfulness should be made mind's guard, for one's own sake.

'May my mind not be infatuated by anything inducing infatuation!' — for this reason vigilant mindfulness should be made mind's guard, for one's own sake.

When now, monks, a monk's mind does not harbour lust for lust-inducing things, because he is free from lust;

when his mind does not harbour hatred toward hateinducing things, because he is free from hatred;

when his mind does not harbour delusion concerning anything inducing delusion, because he is free from delusion;

when his mind is not infatuated by anything inducing infatuation, because he is free from infatuation — then such a monk will not waver, shake or tremble, he will not succumb to fear, nor will he adopt the views of other recluses.¹

Anguttara Nikaya, The Fours. No. 117

¹ That is, other religious or philosophical ideas.

Monks, it is good for a monk if, from time to time, he perceives the repulsive in the unrepulsive,

if he perceives the unrepulsive in the repulsive,

if he perceives the repulsive in both the unrepulsive and the repulsive,

if he perceives the unrepulsive in both the repulsive and the unrepulsive,

if he avoids both, the repulsive and the unrepulsive (aspect), and dwells in equanimity, mindful and clearly comprehending.

But with which motive should a monk perceive the repulsive in the unrepulsive? "May not lust arise in me for lust-inducing objects!"—it is with such motive that he should perceive in this way.

With which motive should he perceive the unrepulsive in the repulsive? "May not hatred arise in me towards hate-inducing objects!"— it is with such motive that he should perceive in this way.

With which motive should he perceive the repulsive in the unrepulsive as well as in the repulsive? "May not lust arise in me for lust-inducing objects nor hatred towards hate-inducing objects!" — it is with such motive that he should perceive in this way.

With which motive should he perceive the unrepulsive in the repulsive as well as in the unrepulsive? "May not hatred arise in me towards hate-inducing objects nor lust for lust-inducing objects!"—it is with such motive that he should perceive in this way.

With which motive should he avoid both the repulsive and the unrepulsive, and dwell in equanimity, mindful and clearly comprehending? "May never, anywhere, in any way, arise in me lust for lust-inducing objects, hatred towards hate-inducing objects, nor delusion towards deluding objects!"—it is with such motive that he should avoid both, the repulsive and the unrepulsive, and dwell in equanimity, mindful and clearly comprehending.

Anguttara Nikāya, The Fives, No. 144

COMMENT. — This fivefold consideration of the feelings, or rather their re-consideration, is called in Paliariya iddhi, which may be rendered by noble power, noble success or noble magic; or, alternatively, the power success or magic of the Noble Ones (ariya), i.e. the Arahants or Saints. In its perfection, this arduous practice must certainly be ascribed to the Arahants only as several Discourses and commentaries indicate. But, as our Text says at the beginning, this training was generally recommended by the Buddha, which includes those in whom the three Unwholesome Roots were still active. It is the eradication of these Roots which is said to be the motivation for taking up this practice.

For applying this fivefold power, the following directions have been given in Buddhist texts and Commentaries.¹

1. For perceiving the repulsive in the unrepulsive, one pervades unrepulsive (attractive) living beings with the contemplation of (the body's) impurity; to unrepulsive (attractive) inanimate objects one applies the fact of impermanence.

¹ Compiled from the Paţisambhidā Magga and commentaries to Digha Nikāya and Anguttara Nikāya.

- 2. For perceiving the unrepulsive in the repulsive, one pervades repulsive living beings with loving-kindness; and repulsive inanimate objects are viewed as consisting of the four elements; but also living beings ought to be contemplated by way of elements.
- 3. For perceiving the repulsive in both the unrepulsive and the repulsive, one pervades both with the contemplation of impurity and applies to them the fact of impermanence. Or: if one has first judged a being to be unrepulsive (attractive) and later as repulsive one now regards it as repulsive (throughout; i.e. under the view-point of impurity and impermanence).²
- 4. For perceiving the unrepulsive in both the repulsive and the unrepulsive, one pervades both with loving-kindness and views both as bare elements. Or: if one has first judged a being to be repulsive and later as unrepulsive (attractive). one now regards it as unrepulsive (throughout; i.e. under the view-point of lovingkindness and as consisting of elements).
- 5. Avoiding both (aspects), he applies the six-factored equanimity of which it is said: "On perceiving (one of the six objects, including mental objects), he is neither glad nor sad, but keeps to equanimity and is mindful and clearly comprehending." He does not lust after a desirable object nor does he hate an undesirable one; and where others thoughtlessly allow delusion to arise, he does not give room to delusion. He remains equanimous towards the six objects, being equipped with the six-factored equanimity, which does not abandon the pure natural state of the mind.

[&]quot;Due to a change in one's own attitude towards a person or due to a change in the character (or behaviour) of that person." Sub-Comy. to Majjhima Nikāya.

These five methods of applying the Noble Power are firstly for use during meditation when images of repulsive and unrepulsive beings or things arise in the mind. At such a time one is able to dwell on the counteractive ideas (lovingkindness, elements, etc.) as long as required. Secondly, these methods can be used in the encounters of every-day life when the counteractive ideas must be tersely formulated and rapidly applied. This will require earlier familiarity with them and alertness of mind. In encounters with repulsive persons one may also think of their good qualities and of their sharing, the common human nature, with its failings and sufferings. When meeting a physically attractive person, one may vividly visualize the process of ageing and decaying of that person's body.

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These five modes of perceiving the repulsive in the unrepulsive, etc., are, when perfected in the Arahant, the high-point of mind's sovreign mastery over the world of feelings and emotions, where the response to them, can be chosen at will. The approach in the Contemplation of Feelings is different, as we shall see (Texts 37-39). Here the feeling-value of an experience is perceived and accepted as it is given, and, by applying bare attention to it, one stops short at these sensations and does not allow them to grow into the passionate reactions of lust or aversion. But in this method of the Noble Power the feeling-value itself is not taken for granted; it is not accepted. The response is here to reverse the feeling-value (mode 1, 2), to equalize the response to the repulsive and the unrepulsive (mode 3, 4), and to' transcend both by mindful equanimity (mcde 5).

These five modes are a kind of subtle "magic of transformation" by which pleasant and unpleasant feelings, as they habitually arise, can be changed at will or be replaced by equanimity. A mind that has gone through a training like this, has stood the most severe test, indeed. By that training, an increasing control of emotive reactions can be obtained, and a growing independence from the influence of habits and passions. It is said in the Satipatthana Sutta, "He dwells independent and clings to nought". These words conclude a statement recurring after each of the exercises given in the Sutta. In the light of the above observations, it is of significance that these words also occur after the Contemplation of Feelings in that Discourse.

According to our text, the motivation for cultivating the Noble Power is the eradication of greed, hatred and delusion. In a mind that has gone through such a radical training, these three defilements will not find a fertile soil for growth.

Another benefit resulting from that training is that it provides the experiential basis for comprehending the true nature of feelings as being relative and subjective. This the five modes of the Noble Power demonstrate in a convincing way. The relativity of feelings and of the emotions roused by them, was succinctly expressed by Aryadeva (2nd century C. E.):

"By the same thing lust is incited in one, hate in the other, delusion in the next. Hence sense objects have no inherent value."

(Catuh-Sataka, ch. VIII, v. 177

To be sure, perfection in applying this Noble Power is the domain of the truly Noble Ones; the Arahants, whose mastery of mind and strength of will are equal to the task of exercising that power effortlessly. But also on much lower levels, an earnest endeavour to develop this Noble Power will be of great benefit as we have seen. In the text here commented upon, the Buddha does not restrict the cultivation of the Noble Power to Arahants, but begins his exposition of it with the words: "It is good for a monk ..." (and we may add: not only for a monk). Previous practice of Right Mindfulness (Satipatthāna) will, however, be indispensable. Of particular importance is the Contemplation of Feelings by which one will learn to distinguish between the feeling linked with a perception and the subsequent emotional reaction to it.

32. The Four Ways of progress

There are four Ways of Progress: difficult progress with slow understanding, difficult progress with swift understanding, easy progress with slow understanding, easy progress with swift understanding.

What is the difficult progress with slow understanding? There is one who naturally has strong greed, strong hatred and strong delusion, and caused by it he often suffers pain and grief. The five Faculties, namely faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom, appear in him only in a weak state; and due to their weakness he attains but slowly the immediate (condition) of the destruction of the taints.

What is the difficult progress with swift understanding? There is one who naturally has strong greed, strong hatred and strong delusion, and caused by it he often suffers pain and grief. But the five Faculties, namely

faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom, appear in him in a very strong degree; and due to their strength he attains swiftly the immediate (condition) of the destruction of the taints.

What is the easy progress with slow understanding? There is one who naturally is without strong greed, strong hatred and strong delusion, and therefore he does not often suffer pain and grief, caused by them. The five Faculties, however, appear in him only in a weak state; and due to their weakness he attains only slowly the immediate (condition) of the destruction of the taints.

What is the easy progress with swift understandnig? There is one who naturally is without strong greed, strong hatred and strong delusion, and therefore he does not often suffer pain and grief caused by them. The five Faculties, namely faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom, appear in him in a very strong degree; and due to their strength he attains swiftly to the immediate (condition) of the destruction of the taints.

Anguttara Nikāya, Fours, No. 162

1. catasso patipadā. See "Path of Purification" (Visuddhi Magga) p. 87f,

- 2. dukkha-patipada. The term dukkha has here three different connotations: (1) difficult, (2) painful (due to the consequences of strong greed, etc.), (3) "unpleasant", if progress is achieved with an unpleasant subject of meditation, as e.g. foulness of the body.
- 3. sukha-patipādā. Sukha refers here (1) to a relatively easy conquest of the passions which, therefore, do not cause much suffering; (2) to the happiness experienced during the meditative absorptions (jhāna), which likewise constitute the happy mode of progress (sukha-paṭipadā).
- 4. Well-balanced and strongly developed Faculties (inariya) are the essential mental tools for successful Insight meditation (vipassanā), culminating in Sainthood (arahatta). On the faculties, see "The wheel" No. 65/66 "The Way of Wisdom".

5. "Immediate (condition";) anantariyam) refers, according to the commentary, to the concentration of mind associated with the Path (of Sainthood; magga-samādhi), which, lasting for a single moment, precedes the immediately following attainment to the Fruition of Sainthood where the destruction of the taints (asavā-nam khayo) is in a consummated state.

33. Non-returning

If you give up three things, o monks, I vouchsafe you the state of Non-returning. What are these three things? They are greed, hatred and delusion.

The greed infatuated by which,
beings go to evil destiny,
those of insight give it up,
because they fully understand that greed;
and having thus discarded it,
they never to this world return.

The hate enraged by which,
beings go to evil destiny,
those of insight give it up,
because they fully understand that hate;
and having thus discarded it,
they never to this world return.

The delusion by which blinded,
beings go to evil destiny,
those of insight give it up,
because they fully understand delusion;
and having thus discarded it,
they never to this world return.

Condensed from Itivuttaka 1-3

Texts 34-36 deal with the Removal of the Unwholesome Roots through the Satipatthana method of Bare Attention.

34. From the Satipatthāna Sutta

And how, monks, does a monk dwell practising mind-contemplation on the mind?

Herein a monk knows the mind with lust as with lust; the mind without lust as without lust; the mind with hatred as with hatred; the mind without hatred as without hatred; the mind with delusion as with delusion; the mind without delusion as without delusion......

Thus he dwells practising mind-contemplation on the mind, internally, or externally, or both internally and externally. He dwells contemplating the states of origination in the mind, or he dwells contemplating the states of dissolution in the mind, or he dwells contemplating the states of both origination and dissolution in the mind. Or his mindfulness that 'there is mind' is established in him to the extent necessary for knowledge and awareness. He dwells detached, clinging to nought in the world.

35. Beyond Faith

"Is there a way, o monks, by which a monk without recourse to faith, to cherished opinions, to tradition, to specious reasoning, or preference for his preconceived views, may declare the Final Knowledge (of Sainthood), thus: 'Rebirth has ceased, the Holy Life has been lived, completed is the task, and nothing remains after this'?"...

"There is such a way, o monks. And which is it?

"Herein, monks, a monk has seen a form with his eyes, and if greed, hatred and delusion are in him, he knows 'There is in me greed, hatred and delusion'; and if greed,

hatred and delusion are absent in him, he knows 'There is no greed, hatred and delusion in me'.

"Further, monks, a monk has heard a sound, smelled an odour, tasted a flavour, felt a tactile sensation or cognised a mental object, and if greed, hatred and delusion are in him, he knows 'There is in me greed, hatred and delusion'; and if greed, hatred and delusion are absent in him, he knows 'There is no greed, hatred and delusion in me'.

"And if he thus knows, o monks, are these ideas such as to be known by recourse to faith, to cherished opinions," to tradition, to specious reasoning, or preserence for one's preconceived views?" —

"Certainly not, Lord." —

"Are these not rather ideas to be known after wisely realising them by experience?" —

"That is so, Lord." —

"This, monks, is a way by which a monk, without recourse to faith, to cherished opinions, to tradition, to specious reasining, or preference for his preconceived views, may declare Final Knowledge (of Sainthood), thus: 'Rebirth has ceased, the Holy Life has been lived, completed is the task, and nothing more remains after this'."

Samyutta Nikāya, XLVII, 12

The Visible Teaching — 11²

Once the venerable Upavāna went to the Exalted One, saluted him respectfully and sat down at one side. Thus seated he addressed the Exalted One as follows:

¹ See also Text 14

"People speak of the Visible Teaching. In how far, Lord, is the Teaching visible here and now, is of immediate result, invites to come and see, is onward-leading and directly experiencable by the wise?"—

"Herein, Upavāna, a monk, having seen a form with his eyes, is aware of the form and aware of his desire for the form. Of the desire for forms present in him, he knows: 'There is in me a desire for forms.' If a monk seeing a form with his eyes, is aware of the form and aware of his desire for the form, knowing that desire for forms is present in him, in so far, Upavāna, is the Teaching visible here and now, is of immediate result, invites to come and see, is onward-leading, and directly experienceable by the wise.

(The same is stated for ear and sounds, nose and odours, tongue and flavours, body and tangibles. Then the text continues:)

Further, Upavāna, a monk, having cognized an idea with his mind, is aware of the idea and aware of his desire for the idea. Of the desire for ideas present in him, he knows: 'There is in me a desire for ideas'. If a monk, cognizing an idea with his mind, is aware of the idea and aware of his desire for the idea knowing that desire for ideas is present in him, in so far, Upavāna, is the Teaching visible here and now, is of immediate result, invites to come and see, is onward-leading, and directly experiencable by the wise.

Though this text refers only to desire (rāga, 'lust'), the statements in it are also valid for a reaction to the sixfold sense-perception by hatred and delusion.

Further, Upavāna; there is here a monk who having seen a form with his eyes, is aware of the form and aware that there is no desire for the form. Of the absent desire for forms he knows: 'There is in me no desire for forms'. If a monk, having seen a form with his eyes, is aware of the form and aware that there is no desire for the form, knowing that no desire for forms is present in him, in so far, too, Upavāna, is the Teaching visible here and now, is of immediate result, invities to come and see, is onward-leading, and directly experiencable by the wise.

(The same is stated for ear and sound, etc. Then the text continues:)

Further, Upavana, a monk, having cognized an idea with his mind, is aware of the idea and is aware that there is no desire for the idea. Of the absent desire for ideas he knows: 'There is in me no desire for ideas'. If a monk, having cognized an idea with his mind, is aware of the idea and aware that there is no desire for the idea, knowing that no desire for ideas is present in him, in so far, too, Upavāna, is the Teaching visible here and now, is of immediate result, invites to come and see, is onward-leading, and directly experiencable by the wise."

Samyutta Nikāya XXXV, 70

COMMENT ON TEXTS 34-36. — When thoughts connected with greed (desire, attraction), hatred (anger, aversion) or delusion (prejudices, false views) arise in an untrained mind, generally the reaction to them will be by way of one of two extremes: one will either allow oneself to be carried away by these harmful thought currents or one will avoid giving them any thought or attention

as they are regarded as a disreputable part of one's mind and therefore harmful to one's self-esteem. By that second type of reaction, one will try to make light of them and blot them out from one's memory. The first type of reaction is a full identification with the Unwholesome Roots; the second extreme is the attempt to ignore their presence, shirking a confrontation with them.

The approach through Bare Attention, as indicated in Texts 34-36, is a Middle Way that avoids these two extremes. There is neither submission nor recoil, but a full awareness of the unwholesome thoughts while keeping to the mental posture of factual observation. These thoughts will then be seen just as psychological events, as impersonal and conditioned mental processes: "mere phenomena roll on" (suddha-dhammā pavattanti.) When these unwholesome thoughts have thus been objectified, there will be no emotional reaction to them by way of attachment, aversion or fear. Bare Attention empties these thoughts of any self-reference, and there will be no identification of them (positive or negative) with a fictive ego. In this way. a strong experience of Anattā (egolessness, not-self) may grow even from such a confrontation with one's imperfections. From that, again, there may emerge the state of mind described in the Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness at the end of each of the exercises: "He dwells independent and clings to nought".

It will now be understood why, in the Texts 14 and 36, it is said that even the awareness of the Unwholesome in oneself can make the Teaching "visible here and now".

This application of detached awareness can be said to belong to the first method of Text 29, i.e., replacing the arisen unwholesome thoughts by the wholesome ones of Right Mindfulness. Even if one does not fully succeed

in this way, a sober, factual awareness of the inherent danger, according to the second method, may prove to be effective, before one is obliged to use the stronger emotional impact of repugnance.

Texts 37-39 deal with the

Removal of the Underlying Unwholesome Tendencies through the Contemplation of Feeling

37. The Three Tendencies

In the case of pleasant feelings, o monks, the underlying tendency to lust should be given up; in the case of unpleasant feelings the underlying tendency to resistance (aversion) should be given up; in the case of neutral feelings, the underlying tendency to ignorance should be given up.

If a monk has given up in pleasant feelings the tendency to lust, in unpleasant feelings the tendency to resistance and in neutral feelings the tendency to ignorance, then he is called one who is free of (unwholesome) tendencies, one who has the right outlook. He has cut off craving, severed the fetters (to existence), and, through the penetration of conceit², he has made an end of suffering.

rāgānusayo, paţighānusayo, avijjānusayo. There is another group of seven Tendencies: Sensual Lust (kāma-rāga), resistance (paţigha), wrong views (diţţhi), sceptical doubt (vicikicchā), conceit (māna), desire for continued existence (bhava-rāga) and ignorance (avijjā).

^{*} Conceit' refers in particular to 'self-conceit' (asmi-mana), i.e. personality-belief, on both the intellectual and emotional level.

If one feels joy, but knows not feeling's nature, Bent towards greed, he will not find deliverance.

If one feels pain, but knows not feeling's nature, Bent towards hate, he will not find deliverance.

And even neutral feeling which as peaceful The Lord of Wisdom has proclaimed, If, in attachment, he should cling to it, Will not set free him from the round of ill.

But if a monk is ardent and does not neglect To practise mindfulness and comprehension clear, The nature of all feelings will he penetrate.

And having done so, in this very life
Will he be free from cankers, from all taints.
Mature in knowledge, firm in Dhamma's ways,
When once his life span ends, his body breaks,
All measure and concepts will be transcended.

Vedanā Samyutta, No. 3

COMMENT. — In these three 'underlying tendencies' we encounter again the three Unwholesome Roots, though in different wording. These Tendencies are defilements which, by oft-repeated occurrence, have become habitual responses to situations provoking greed, hate and delusion. Hence they carry with them a strong bias for re-appearing again and again. They may also be called inherent propensities of the mind. They "underlie" the stream of consciousness in a state of latency, always ready to spring up when there is a stimulus inciting them. They will then manifest themselves as unwholesome deeds, words or thoughts. By having grown into underlying tendencies, that unholy trinity of greed, hatred and delusion has obtained its

most tenacious hold on man's mind. Even Moral Conduct and Concentration (Jhāna), by themselves, cannot prevail against the Tendencies, but can only check their manifestations in deeds, words and articulate thoughts. For reaching the Tendencies' level of depth, it is Insight Wisdom (vipassanā-paññā) that is required, though it has to be aided by virtue and concentration. For radically removing those three unwholesome tendencies, Insight-Wisdom must, however, have the strength acquired on the two final stages of emancipation, Non-return and Sainthood.¹

By the Non-returner (anagami) the tendency to resistance or aversion (the Root 'Hatred') is eliminated; and partly, the tendency to lust (the Root 'Greed'), that is, as far as it extends to five-sense desire.

By the Saint (arahant) the remaining tendency to lust is eliminated (i.e. the desire for fine-material and immaterial existence); and also all tendencies to ignorance (the Root 'Delusion').

While not able to effect a final elimination of the 'underlying tendencies', moral restraint in bodily and verbal acts may well help to reduce the formation of new tendencies; and by concentration, the mental source of new unwholesome tendencies will be controlled, at least temporarily. As to results in insight-wisdom, attained on levels lower than that of the Holy Paths and Fruitions, these will provide the gradual progress necessary for the full maturing of liberating wisdom.

The type of Insight Wisdom which is of particular efficacy in weakening and, finally, removing the underlying unwhole-

See Manual of Insight, by Lcdi Sayadaw, p. 81ff (The Wheel No. 31/32)

some tendencies is the Contemplation of Feelings (vedanānupassanā), which is a part of the Satipathāna practice. It is the uncontrolled reaction to feelings (sensations) that produces, and continues to nourish, the unwholesome Tendencies. According to Buddhist psychology, feelings in themselves are morally neutral. They are results of Kamma (vipāka), and not creators of Kamma. the reaction to feelings that determines the moral, immoral, or (for a Saint) kammically inoperative (kriya) character of the state of consciousness following the first arising of a feeling. In the Contemplation of Feelings, being a part of Insight Meditation, it becomes a distinct experience that a pleasant feeling is not identical with lust and need not be followed by it; that an unpleasant feeling is not identical with aversion and need not be followed by it; that a neutral feeling is not identical with ignorant or deluded thoughts and need not be followed by them. In that practice, the meditator learns to stop at the bare sensation of pleasant, etc., and by doing so, he may have made a definite start in cutting through the chain of Dependent Origination at a decisive point, namely where Feeling is said to be a condition of Craving (vedanā paccayā tanhā). It will thus become the meditator's indubitable experience that the causal sequence of Feeling and Craving is not a necessity, and that the Buddha's words of encouragement are true: "One can abandon the Unwholesome! If it were not possible, I would not ask you to do so" (see Text 28).

Therefore it is said of him who has perfected the mastery of feelings, that "he has cut off craving... and has made an end of suffering".

An untaught worldling, o monks, experiences a pleasant feeling, he experiences a painful feeling, or he experiences a neutral feeling. A well-taught noble disciple likewise experiences a pleasant feeling, a painful feeling or a neutral feeling. Now what is the distinction, the diversity, the difference that obtains here bet ween a well-taught noble disciple and an untaught worldling?...

When an untaught worldling is touched by a painful feeling, he worries and grieves, he laments, beats his breast, weeps and is distraught. He then experiences two kinds of feelings, a bodily and a mental feeling. It is as if a man were pierced by a dart and, following the first piercing he is hit by a second dart. So that person will experience feelings caused by two darts. It is similar with an untaught worldling: when touched by a painful (bodily) feeling, he worries and grieves, he laments, beats his breast, weeps and is distraught. So he experiences two feelings, a bodily and a mental feeling.

Having been touched by that painful feeling, he resists (and resents) it: Then in him who so resists (and resents) that painful feeling, an underlying tendency of resistance against that painful feeling comes to underlie (his mind). Under the impact of that painful feeling he then proceeds to enjoy sensual happiness. And why does he do so? An untaught worldling, o monks, does not know of any other escape from painful feelings except the enjoyment of sensual happiness. Then in him who enjoys sensual

¹ patighava hoti.—

patighanusayo anuseti; that is, the underlying tendency manifests itself at that time, and is also strengthened by that manifestation.

happiness, an underlying tendency to lust for pleasant feelings comes to underlie (his mind). He does not know, according to facts, the arising and ending of those feelings, nor the gratification, the danger and the escape, connected with these feelings. In him who lacks that knowledge, an underlying tendency to ignorance as to neutral feelings comes to underlie (his mind). When he experiences a pleasant feeling or a painful feeling or a neutral feeling, he feels it as one fettered by it. Such a one, o monks, is called an untaught worldling who is fettered by birth, by old age, by death, by sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair. He is fettered to suffering, this I declare.

- But in the case of a well-taught noble disciple, o monks, when he is touched by a painful feeling, he does not worry, nor grieve or lament, he does not beat his breast and weep, nor is he distraught. It is one feeling he experiences: a bodily one, but not a mental feeling. It is as if a man were pierced by a dart, but he was not hit by a second dart following the first one. So this person experiences feelings caused by a single dart only. It is similar with a well-taught noble disciple: when touched by a painful feeling, he does not worry, nor grieve or lament, he does not beat his breast and weep, nor is he distraught. He experiences one single feeling, a bodily one.

Having been touched by that painful feeling, he does not resist (and resent it). Then in him who does not resist (and resent) that painful feeling, no underlying tendency of resistance against that painful feeling comes to underlie (his mind). Hence, in consequence of the painful feeling he does not proceed to enjoy sensual happiness. And why not? As a well-taught noble disciple he knows of an escape from painful feelings other than

that by enjoying sensual happiness. Then in him who thus does not proceed to enjoy sensual happiness, no underlying tendency to lust for a pleasant feeling comes to underlie (his mind). He knows, according to facts, the arising and ending of those feelings, and the gratification, the danger and the escape connected with them. In him who knows thus, no underlying tendency to ignorance as to neūtral feelings comes to underlie (his mind). When he experiences a pleasant feeling, or a painful feeling, or a neutral feeling, he feels it as one who is not fettered by it. Such a one, o monks, is called a well-taught noble disciple who is not fettered by birth, by old age, by death; not fettered by sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair. He is not fettered to suffering, this I declare.

This, o monks, is the distinction, the diversity, the difference that obtains between a well-taught noble disciple and an untaught worldling.

Vedanā Samyutta No. 6

39. The Elimination of the Tendencies arising from Sixfold Sense Perception

Dependent on eye and forms eye-consciousness arises—dependent on ear and sounds ear-consciousness arises—dependent on nose and smells nose-consciousness arises—dependent on tongue and flavours tongue-consciousness arises—dependent on body and tangibles body-consciousness arises—dependent of mind and mental objects mind-consciousness arises.

The meeting of the three is contact, and with contact as condition there arises what is felt as pleasant or painful or neutral. If, when touched by pleasant feeling, one does not enjoy it or affirm or accept it, then no underlying

tendency to lust any longer underlies it. If, when touched by painful feeling, one does not worry, grieve and lament, does not beat one's breast and weep, and is not distraught, then no underlying tendency to resistance any longer underlies it. If, when touched by a neutral feeling, one understands, according to facts, the arising and ending of that feeling, and the gratification, danger and escape (connected with it), then no underlying tendency to ignorance any longer underlies it. Then, indeed, o monks, that he shall here and now make an end of suffering by abandoning the underlying tendency to lust for pleasant feelings, by eliminating the underlying tendency to resistance against painful feelings, and by abolishing the -underlying tendency to ignorance in the case of neutral feelings, having thus given up ignorance and produced true knowledge — this is possible.

From Majjhima Nikāya No. 148: "Six Sixes".

The Goal (Texts 40-43)

40. The Visible Nibbana

When greed, hatred and delusion are abandoned, one does neither aim at one's own harm, nor at the harm of others, nor at the harm of both, and one will not suffer pain and grief in one's mind. In that sense is Nibbāna visible here and now.

If one experiences the complete elimination of greed, the complete elimination of hatred, the complete elimination of delusion, in that sense is Nibbana visible here and now, has immediate results, invites to come and see, is onward-leading, and is directly experiencable by the wise.

Anguttara Nikāya, The Threes, No. 56

A wandering ascetic, Jambukhādaka by name, approached the venerable Sāriputta and asked him the following question:

"One speaks about 'Nibbāna, Nibbāna'. Now, what is that Nibbāna, friend?" —

"It is the elimination of greed, the elimination of hatred, the elimination of delusion — this, Friend, is called Nibbana." —

"But is there a way, is there a path, friend, for the realisation of that Nibbana?" —

"Yes, friend, there is such a way, there is a path for the realisation of that Nibbāna. It is the Noble Eightfold Path, namely right understanding, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right mindfulness, right effort and right concentration."

Jambukhādaka Samyutta, No. 1

In the Discourse following the above text (Jambu-khādaka Samyutta No. 2), the same question is asked about Sainthood (arahatta) and is answered by the venerable Sāriputta in the same terms.

42. Two Aspects of Nibbana

This was said by the Blessed One, spoken by the Holy One, and thus I have heard: —

There are, o monks, two aspects of Nibbāna; the Nibbāna-element with the groups of existence still remaining (sa-upādisesa-nibbānadhātu), and the Nibbāna-element with no groups remaining (anupādlsesa-nibbāna-dhātu).

What is now the Nibbāna-element with the groups of existence still remaining? In that case, o monks, a monk is an Arahant: he is taint-free, has fulfilled the holy life, accomplished his task, thrown off the burden, attained his goal, cast off the fetters of existence and is liberated through right wisdom. But there still remain with him (until his death) the five sense-organs that have not yet disappeared and through which he still experiences what is pleasant and unpleasant, as well as bodily ease and pain. The extinction of greed, hatred and delusion in him, this is called the Nibbāna-element with the groups of existence still remaining.

And what is the Nibbāna-element with no groups of existence remaining? In that case, o monks, a monk is an Arahant... liberated through right wisdom. In him, all those feelings, no longer relished, will even here (at his death) come to extinction. This is called the Nibbāna-element with no groups of existence remaing.

Iti-vuttaka, No. 38 (PTS) Adapted from the translation by Nyanatiloka Mahathera.

43. The Happiness of Liberation

He, the Arahant, knows this:

'Once there was greed, and that was evil; now that is no more, and so it is well. Once there was hatred, and that was evil; now that is no more, and so it is well. Once there was delusion, and that was evil; now that is no more and so it is well.'

akusalam, unwholesome, harmful.

kusalam, wholesome, beneficial.

Thus the Arahant lives, even during his lifetime, free of craving's hunger, stilled and cooled (of passion's heat), feeling happy, with his heart become holy.

Anguttara Nikāya, The Threes No. 66

VI. The Wholesome and Unwholesome Roots in the Abhidhamma

In the Dhammasangani, the first book of the Abhidham-ma-Pitaka, the three Unwholesome Roots are used for a

Classification of Unwholesome Consciousness

in eight classes, 'rooted in greed' (lobha-mūla), two 'rooted in hatred' (dosa-mūla) and two 'rooted in delusion' (moha-mūla). These names of the three divisions of unwholesome consciousness are those given to them in the Visuddhi Magga ('The Path of Purification'). These names do not occur in the Dhammasangaṇi, but the Roots are clearly implied. Consciousness rooted in hate is described there as 'associated with resentment' (or resistance; paṭigha-sampayutta).

The states of consciousness rooted in greed and hatred have delusion as a second root. Delusion, however, can also appear as a single root, without the presence of greed or hatred.

in the medieval Abhidhamma manuals (e.g. the Abhidhammattha-sangaha), the nomenclature is: lobha-sahagata (accompanied by greed), patigha-sampayutta (associated with resentment) and momūha (strongly delusive).

The Roots of both Good and Evil occur, of course, also in the lists of the mental concomitants (cetasika) of wholesome and unwholesome consciousness, respectively.

The Wholesome Roots, under the name of hetu, root cause, serve also for a

Classification of Rebirth Consciousness.

Rebirth as a human being is always the result of good kamma (kusala-vipāka). As rebirth-consciousness is a resultant of Kamma, and not Kamma in itself, the root causes accompanying it are 'kammically indeterminate' (abyākata-hetu). In human rebirth consciousness, there - may be either three accompanying root causes (ti-hetukapatisandhi), or two (without non-delusion; dvihetukapatisandhi) or, in rare cases, none (ahetuka-patisandhi). In three-rooted rebirth, the strength or weakness of these Roota may widely differ. In two-rooted rebirth, the absence of non-delusion, of course, does not mean the entire absence of intelligence, but a complete inability to understand reality and, especially, the four Noble Truths. Rootless rebirth (ahetuka-pațisandhi) occurs throughout the four lower worlds of misery (animals, ghosts, demons and hellish beings); among humans it is restricted to those born blind, deaf, crippled, mentally deficient, etc.

In almost every human being there is some potential for the good, because human rebirth is always the result of wholesome kamma. We said "almost", because for mentally deficient human beings this potential is greatly handicapped; but not necessarily so with other humans reborn without wholesome root-causes (ahetuka), as e.g. those born crippled, etc. Whether that good potential in the majority of humans is activated and strengthened, or is weakened and even lost, this will depend to a great

extent on the type of Roots prevailing in the rebirth-producing Kamma of the previous life, which has a strong formative influence on the character tendencies of the present existence. This is the subject of the following commentarial text, entitled:

44. The Exposition of Prevalence

(ussada-kittana)

In some beings greed is prevalent, in others hatred or delusion; and again in others, non-greed, non-hatred or non-delusion are prevalent. What is it that governs this prevalence? It is the previous root-cause (pubbahetu; that is, in the previous life) that governs the prevalence (of roots in the present life.)

There is differentiation at the very moment of the accumulating of Kamma. When in one person, at the moment of (rebirth-producing) kamma-accumulation, greed is strong and non-greed is weak, non-hatred and non-delusion are strong and hatred and delusion are weak, then his weak non-greed is unable to prevail over his greed; but non-hatred and non-delusion being strong, can prevail over his hatred and delusion. Hence when a being is born through rebirth-linking caused by that Kamma, he will be greedy, good-natured, not irascible, intelligent and having knowledge that can be likened to a lightening flash.

When, in another case, at the moment of kamma-accumulation, greed and hatred are strong, and non-greed and non-hatred are weak, but non-delusion is strong and delusion weak, then, in the way stated, that person will have both greed and hatred, but he will be intelligent and have flash-like knowledge as the Elder Datta-Abhaya.

When, at the moment of kamma-accumulation, greed, non-hatred and delusion are strong and the other roots are weak, then, in the way stated, that person will be greedy and dull-witted, but he will be good-natured and not irascible.

When, at the moment of kamma-accumulation, the three roots greed, hatred and delusion are strong and non-greed, etc. are weak, then, in the way stated, that person will be greedy, given to hatred, and to delusion.

When, at the moment of kamma-accumulation, non-greed, hatred and delusion are strong, and the others are weak, then, in the way stated, that person will have few (lustful) defilements, being unmoved even when seeing a heavenly sense-object; but he will be given to hatred and his understanding will be slow.

When, at the moment of kamma-accumulation, nongreed, non-hatred and delusion are strong, an the others are week, then, in the way stated, that person will not be greedy and be good-natured, but he will be slow of understanding.

When, at the moment of kamma-accumulation, nongreed, hatred and non-delusion are strong, and the others are weak, then, in the way stated, that person will not be greedy and will be intelligent, but will be given to hatred and be irascible.

But when, at the moment of kamma-accumulation, the three (wholesome roots), non-greed, non-hatred and non-delusion are strong, and greed, etc., are weak, then, in the ways stated, he has no greed and no hate, and he is wise, as the Elder Sangharakkhita.

From the Atthasālini (Commentary to the Dhammasangani of the Abhidhamma Piţaka), p. 267 (PTS).

Root-Cause Condition

(hetu-paccaya)

The Roots of Good and Evil are also the constituents of the Root-Cause Condition, or Root-Cause Relation, being the first of the 24 modes of conditionality by which all conditioning and conditioned phenomena are related in various ways. These twenty-four modes belong to the framework of the seventh and last work of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka, the Paṭṭhāna,¹ and in its introductory part they are listed and explained.² They are also neccessary for understanding how the 12 links of the Dependent Origination (paṭicca-samuppāda) are related.

We reproduce here excerpts of the explanation of the Root-Cause Condition from a treatise by an eminent Burmese scholar monk:

From: Patthānuddesa-Dīpani. 'The Buddhist Philosophy of Relations,' by the Venerable Ledi Sayadaw, Tr. by the Venerable U Nyāna (Rangoon, 1935)*

What is the Root-Cause Condition, (hetu-paccaya)? Greed, hatred, delusion, and their respective opposites, non-greed (disinterestedness), non-hatred (amity), non-delusion (intelligence, wisdom) — these are the Root-Cause Conditions.

See Conditional Relations (Patthana), tr. by U Nārada. Pali Text Society, London, 1969

Reproduced in "The Path of Purification" (Visuddhi Magga), Ch. XVII, § 66 (tr. by Bhikkhu Nānamoli; Kandy 1975) and in Guide through the Abhidhamma Pitaka, by Nyanatiloka Mahathera (Kandy, Buddhist Publication Society).

Some of the English terms in that treatise have been replaced by those used in this book.

What are the things that are conditioned by them? Those classes of mind and mental qualities that co-exist along with greed etc, or non-greed etc., as well as the groups of material qualities which co-exist with the same — these are the things that are conditioned by way of Root-Cause Condition (hetupaccayuppannā dhammā). They are so called because they arise or come into existence by virtue of the Root-Cause Condition.

Here by the phrase "the groups of material qualities which co-exist with the same" are meant the material qualities produced by Kamma (kamma-ja rūpa) at the initial moment of the hetu-conditioned conception of a new being, as well as such material qualities as may be produced by the hetu-conditioned mind during the life time. Here, by the "moment of conception" is meant the nascent instant (uppādakkhaṇa) of the rebirth-conception, and by "the life-time" is meant the period starting from the static instant (thitikkhaṇa) of the rebirth-conception right on to the moment of the dying-thought.

In what sense is hetu to be understood? And in what sense, paccaya? Hetu is to be understood in the sense of root (mūlattha); and paccaya in the sense of assisting (upakārattha) in the arising, or the coming to be, of the conditionally arisen things (paccayuppannā dhammā).

The state of being a root (mūlaṭṭha) may be illustrated as follows.

Suppose a man is in love with a woman. Now, so long as he has not dispelled the lustful thought, all his acts, words and thoughts regarding this woman will be cooperating with lust (or greed), which at the same time has also under its control the material qualities produced

citta and cetasika, consciousness and mental concomitants.

by the same thought (e.g., kāya-vaci-viññatti, the 'bodily or verbal intimation' of his love). We see then that all these states of mental and material qualities have their root in lustful greed for that woman. Hence, by being a hetu (for it acts as a root) and by being a paccaya (for it assists in the arising of those states of mind and body), greed is a hetu paccaya, a condition aiding by way of being a root-cause. — The rest may be explained and understood in the same manner — i.e, the arising of greed by way of desire for desirable (inanimate) things; the arising of hatred by way of antipathy against hateful persons or things; and the arising of delusion by way of lack of knowledge (about persons, things and ideas not, or incorrectly, perceived or understood).

Taking a tree as illustration — we see that the roots of a tree, having firmly established themselves in the ground and drawing up sap both from soil and water, carry that sap right up to the crown of the tree, and so the tree develops and grows for a long time. In the same way, greed having firmly established itself in desirable things and drawing up the essence of pleasure and enjoyment from them, conveys that essence to the concomitant mental elements, till they burst into immoral acts and words. The same is to be said of hatred, which by way of aversion draws up the essence of displeasure and discomfort; and also of delusion, which by way of lack of knowledge cherishes the growth of the essence of vain (and deceptive) thought at many an object.

Transporting the essence thus, the three elements, greed, hatred and delusion, operate upon the component parts, so that they become happy (so to speak) and joyful at the desirable objects, etc. The component parts also become so as they are operated upon, while the co-existent material qualities share the same effect. ...

Coming now to the bright side — suppose the man sees danger in sensual pleasure, and gives up that lustful thought for the woman. In doing so, disinterestedness (non-greed, alobha) as regards her arises in him. Before this, there took place impure acts, words and thoughts, having as their root delusion (and greed); but for the time-being, these are no longer present, and in their stead there arise pure acts, words and thoughts, having their root in disinterestedness (non-greed). Moreover, renunciation, self-control, Jhāna-exercise, or higher meditative thought, also come into being. Non-greed (alobha), therefore, is known as hetu-paccaya, it being a -hetu because it acts as a root; while it is a paccaya, because it assists in the arising of the concomitants. The same explanation applies to the remainder of non-greed, non-hate and non-delusion; which three are the opposites of greed, etc.

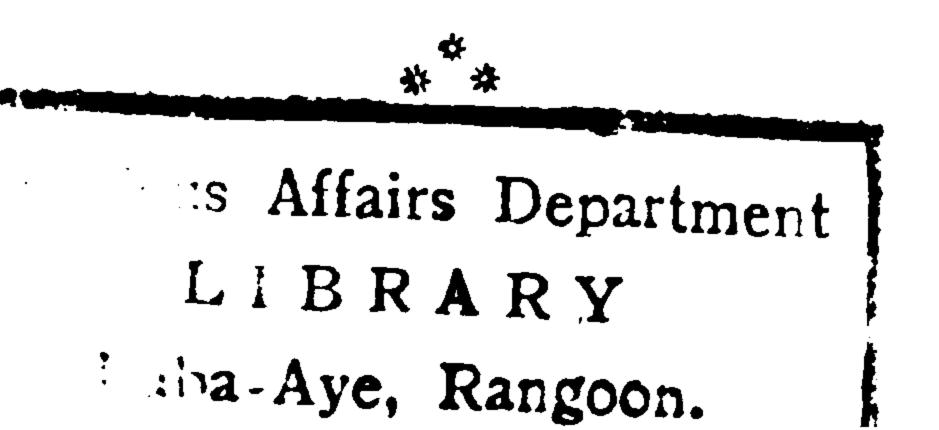
Here, just as the root of the tree stimulates the whole stem and its parts, so it is with non-greed (disinterestedness). It dispels the desire for desirable things, and having promoted the growth of the essence of pleasure void of greed (lobha-viveka-sukha-rasa), it nurtures the concomitant elements with that essence till they become so happy (so to speak) and joyful that they even reach the height of Jhānic-, Path-, or Fruition-happiness. Similarly, non-hatred (amity) and non-delusion (intelligence) respectively dispel hatred and ignorance with regard to hateful and confused (or deceptive) things, and promote the growth of the essence of pleasure void of hate and delusion. Thus the operation of the three elements, non-greed, non-hatred and non-delusion, lasts for a long time, making their mental concomitants happy and joyful. The concomitant

elements also become so as they are operated upon, while the coexistent groups of material qualities are affected in the same way. (p. 1-5)

... Let us say that greed springs into being within a man who desired to get money and grain. Under the influence of greed, he goes to a forest where he clears a piece of land and establishes fields, yards and gardens, and starts to work very hard. Eventually he obtains plenty of money and grain by reason of his strenuous labours. So he takes his gains, looks after his family and performs many virtuous deeds, from which also he will be entitled to reap rewards in his future existences. In this illustration, all the mental and material states coexisting with greed, are called direct effects. Apart from these, all the outcomes, results and rewards, which are to be enjoyed later on in his future existences, are called indirect effects. Of these two kinds of effects, only the former is dealt with in the Patthana. However, the latter kind finds its place in the Suttanta discourses. "If this exists, then that happens; or because of the occurrence of this, that also takes place" — such an exposition is called "expounding by way of Suttanta".

In fact, the three states, greed, hatred and delusion, are called Root Conditions, because they are the roots whence springs the defilement of the whole animate world, of the whole inanimate world, and of the world of space. The three opposite states, non-greed, non-hatred and non-delusion, are also called Root-Conditions, since they are the roots from which springs purification.

(p. 117 - 118)



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