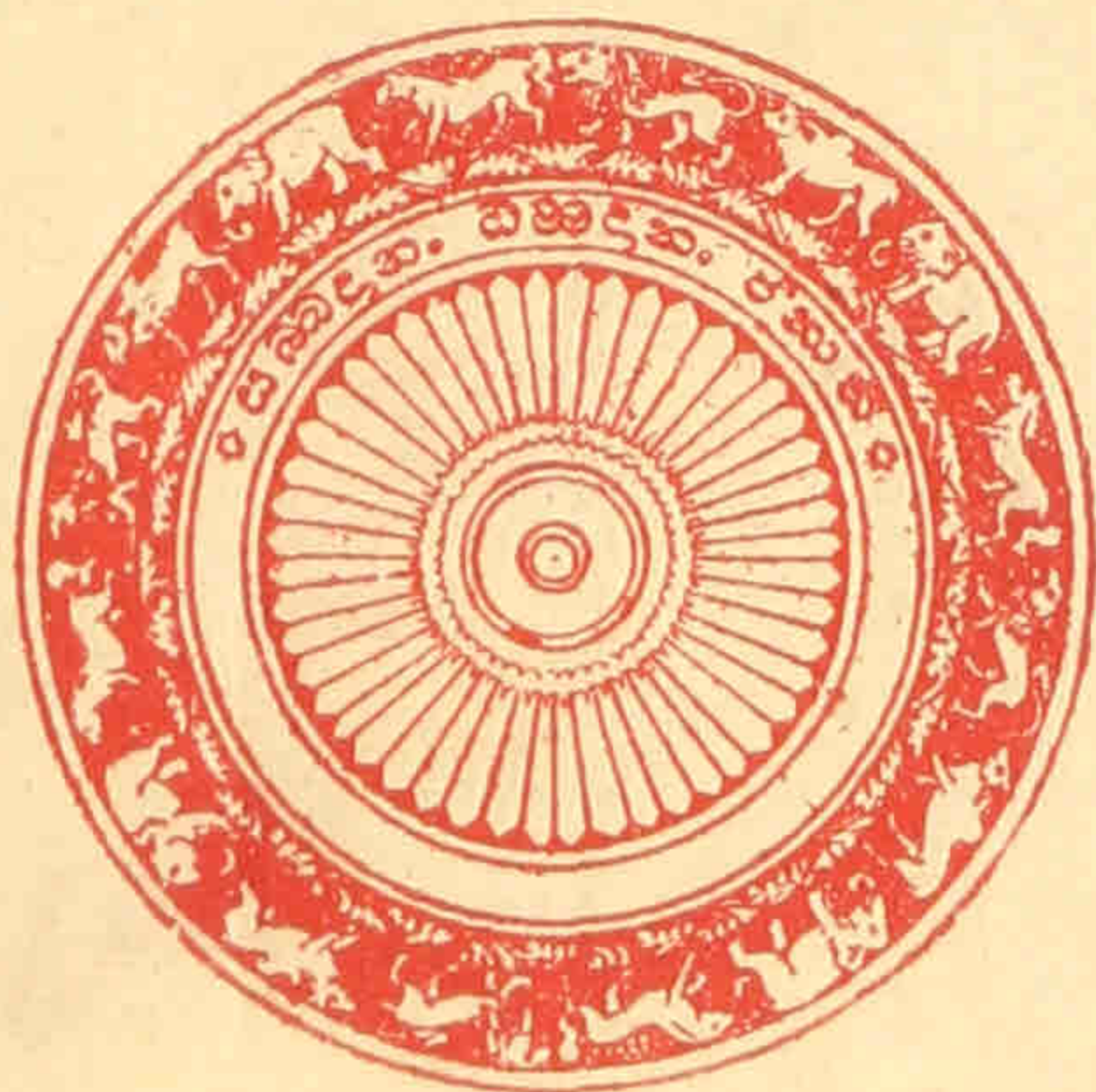

N . Y A N A T I L O K A



FUNDAMENTALS
OF
BUDDHISM

FOUR LECTURES

N Y A N A T I L O K A

FUNDAMENTALS OF · BUDDHISM

PUBLISHED BY
BAUDDHA SĀHITYA SABHĀ

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CONTENTS

	Page
I. ESSENCE OF BUDDHISM	
<i>Radio-lecture, Colombo, 1933</i>	1
II. KARMA & REBIRTH	
<i>Lecture, Ceylon University, 1947</i> ..	16
III. PAṬICCA-SAMUPPĀDA: DEPENDENT ORIGINATION	
<i>2nd Lecture under the Dona Alphina Ratnayaka Trust, University College, Colombo, 1938</i>	37
IV. MENTAL CULTURE	
<i>Based on a lecture delivered at Tokyo, 1920</i>	68

ESSENCE OF BUDDHISM

I shall give you a short exposition of the essence of the genuine teaching of the Buddha, such as we still find it in the Buddhist scriptures handed down to us in the Pali language.

There are many amongst the listeners who are not Buddhists, and to whom therefore, in many cases, the original teaching of the Buddha is a thing almost unknown. It goes without saying that it will not be possible for these, within the limits of 45 minutes allowed to my talk, to gain a thorough and full understanding of such a profound and wide subject. Yet some of you may pick up and take hold of certain ideas that appear important; and these may prove an inducement to further inquiry into this immensely profound world of thought. Even should these words have no other effect than to remove at least some of the many prejudices and false ideas about the Buddha's doctrine, it would be ample reward.

Does it not for instance, appear ironical that this most sober of all the religious doctrines is still considered by many Westerners as some sort of idolatry or mysticism? Did not the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, already long years ago, understand and lay stress upon this *absolute soberness* and clearness of Buddhism when he said: "*Buddhism is a hundred times more realistic than Christianity.* It has entered upon the inheritance of objectively and coolly putting problems. It came to life after several hundred years of philosophical development. The notion of 'God' is done away with as soon as it appears. Prayer is out of the question. So is asceticism. No categorical imperative. No coercion at all, not even within the monastic community. Hence it also does not challenge to fight against those of a different faith. Its teaching

turns against nothing so impressively as against the feeling of revengefulness, animosity and resentment.”

Now, before beginning with the exposition of the Buddha's teaching, we should get acquainted in a few words with the personality of the Buddha. The term 'Buddha' literally means the 'Enlightened One.' It is a name won by the Indian sage Gotama on his enlightenment under the Bodhi tree at Buddhagaya in India. He was born as the son of an Indian king on the borders of modern Nepal, about 600 years before Christ. At his 29th year he renounced the worldly life and exchanged his princely career for that of a homeless mendicant. After 6 years of hard striving he at last attained his Goal: deliverance from the round of rebirths, or Samsāra. The Buddha describes this time in his own words as follows:—“Before, O Bhikkhus, I had attained to full Enlightenment, myself being still subject to birth, decay, disease, death, sorrow and impurity, I too was seeking after that which is subject to birth, decay, disease, death, sorrow and impurity. And so, O Bhikkhus, after a time, whilst still young, a black-haired lad, in my youthful prime, just come to budding manhood's years, against the wishes of father and mother weeping and lamenting, I shore off hair and beard and, clad in the yellow robe, went forth from home to homelessness. Thus vowed to homelessness, I was striving after the highest good, the Incomparable Path to Peace Supreme.”

At first the future Buddha learnt under two great Yogis who had attained to a high state of supernormal psychical powers and faculties. But neither of them could satisfy him, as their teachings did not lead to real everlasting peace and deliverance of mind. So he left them again after having fully realized their teaching. Thereafter he met five ascetics, who were practising the severest forms of self-torture and mortification of the flesh, with the hope of gaining deliverance in this way. The future Buddha made one of their party. He subjected himself with utmost perseverance to extreme

fasting and self-torture, till at last he looked like a mere skeleton. And utterly exhausted, he broke down and collapsed. He came to understand that bodily mortification is vain and useless, and never will lead to peace of heart and to deliverance. He henceforth gave up fasting and bodily mortification and sought refuge in moral and mental development. And with calm and serene mind he began to look into the true nature of existence. Wherever he turned his eyes, he found only one great reality: the law of suffering, the unsatisfactoriness of all forms of existence. He understood that the destiny of beings is not the outcome of mere blind chance, nor that it depends upon the arbitrary action of an imaginary creator, but that our destiny is to be traced back to our own former actions, or Karma. He beheld the sick and the leper, and he saw in their misery and suffering only the result of actions, or Karma, done in former lives. He beheld the blind and the lame, and he saw in their debility and helplessness only the painful harvest of seeds sown by themselves in former lives. He beheld the rich and the poor, the happy and the unhappy ; and wherever he turned his eyes, there he saw this law of retribution, the moral law of cause and effect, the Dhamma.

This *Dhamma*, or the universal moral Law discovered by the Buddha, is summed up in the *Four Noble Truths*: the Truths about the universal sway of Suffering, about its Origin, its Extinction, and the Path leading to its extinction.

(I) The first Truth, about the universality of *Suffering*, teaches, in short, that all forms of existence are of necessity subject to suffering.

(II) The second Truth, about the *Origin of Suffering*, teaches that all suffering is rooted in selfish *craving* and *ignorance*, in *taṇhā* and *avijjā*. It further explains the cause of this seeming injustice in nature, by teaching that nothing in the world can come into existence without reason or cause; and that not only all our latent tendencies, but our whole destiny,

all weal and woe, result from causes which we have to seek partly in this, partly in former states of existence.

The second Truth further teaches us that the future life, with all its weal and woe, must result from the seeds sown in this and former lives.

(III) The third Truth, or the Truth about the *Extinction of Suffering*, shows how, through the extinction of craving and ignorance, all suffering will vanish and liberation from this Samsāra be attained.

(IV) The fourth Truth shows the way, or the means, by which this Goal is reached. It is *The Eightfold Path* of Right Understanding, Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Bodily Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration of Mind.

From these Four Noble Truths we shall pick out and clear up such points as are essential for a general knowledge of the Dhamma. In doing so, we shall at the same time refute a number of wide-spread prejudices concerning the Buddha's teaching.

Let us, however, first outline the Eightfold Path, for it is this Noble Eightfold Path of righteousness and wisdom that really constitutes the *essence of Buddhist practice*,—the mode of living and thinking to be followed by any true follower of the Buddha.

(1) The first stage of the Eightfold Path is, as already stated, *Right Understanding*, *i.e.* understanding the true nature of existence, and the moral laws governing the same. In other words, it is the right understanding of the Dhamma, *i.e.* of the Four Noble Truths.

(2) The second stage of the Eightfold Path is *Right Thought*, *i.e.* a pure state of mind, free from sensual lust, from ill-will, and from cruelty; in other words, thoughts of self-renunciation, of goodness, and of mercy.

(3) The third stage is *Right Speech*. It consists of words which are not false, not harsh, not scandalous,

not frivolous, *i.e.* truthful words, mild words, pacifying words, and wise words.

(4) The fourth stage is *Right Bodily Action*, *i.e.* abstaining from intentional killing or harming of any living creature, abstaining from dishonest taking, abstaining from adultery.

(5) The fifth stage is *Right Livelihood*, *i.e.* such a livelihood as does not bring harm and suffering to other beings.

(6) The sixth stage is *Right Effort*. It is the fourfold effort which we make in 'overcoming' old and 'avoiding' fresh bad actions by body, speech and mind; and the effort which we make in 'developing' old and 'cultivating' fresh actions of righteousness, inner peace and wisdom.

(7) The seventh stage is *Right Mindfulness*, or alertness of mind. It is the ever-ready mental clearness in whatever we are doing, speaking, or thinking, and keeping before our mind the realities of existence, *i.e.* the Impermanence, Unsatisfactoriness and Phenomenality (*anicca, dukkha, anattā*) of all forms of existence.

(8) The eighth stage is *Right Concentration* of mind. Such a kind of mental concentration is meant, as is directed towards a morally wholesome object, and always bound up with Right Thought, Right Effort and Right Mindfulness.

Thus the Eightfold Path is a path of Morality (*sīla*), of Mental Training (*samādhi*), and of Wisdom (*paññā*).

Morality (sīla) therein is indicated by Right Speech, Right Bodily Action, and Right Livelihood. *Mental Training (samādhi)* is indicated by Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration of mind;

while *Wisdom (paññā)* is indicated by Right Understanding and Right Thought.¹

Thus this liberating Eightfold Path is a path of inner culture, of inner progress. By merely external worship, mere ceremonies and selfish prayers, one never can make any real progress in righteousness and insight. The Buddha says : “Be your own isle of refuge, be your own shelter, seek not for any other protection ! Let the truth be your isle of refuge, let the truth be your shelter, seek not after any other protection!” To be of real effect, to ensure an absolute inner progress, all our efforts must be based upon our own understanding and insight. All absolute inward progress is rooted in Right Understanding, and without Right Understanding there is no attainment of perfection and of the unshakable Peace of Nirvāna.

Belief in the moral efficacy of mere external rite and ritual (*sīlabbata-parāmāsa*) constitutes, according to the Buddha’s teaching, a *mighty obstacle to inner progress*. He who takes refuge in mere external practices, is on the wrong path. For, in order to gain real inner progress, all our efforts must necessarily be based on our own understanding and insight. Any real progress is rooted in right understanding, and without right understanding there will be no attainment of unshakable peace and holiness. Moreover, this blind belief in mere external practices is the cause of much misery and wretchedness in the world. It leads to mental stagnation to fanaticism and intolerance, to self-exaltation and contempt for others, to contention, discord, war, strife and bloodshed, as the history of the Middle Ages quite

1. Eightfold Path			
1.	Right Understanding	(<i>Sammā-ditṭhi</i>)	} III. Wisdom (<i>Paññā</i>)
	„ Thought	(„ <i>sankappa</i>)	
3.	„ Speech	(„ <i>vācā</i>)	
4.	„ Bodily action	(„ <i>kammanta</i>)	} I. Morality (<i>sīla</i>)
5.	„ Livelihood	(„ <i>ājiva</i>)	
6.	„ Effort	(„ <i>vāyāma</i>)	
7.	„ Mindfulness	(„ <i>sati</i>)	} II. Concentration (<i>samādhi</i>)
8.	„ Concentration	(„ <i>samādhi</i>)	

For a detailed exposition of the 4 noble truths s. Nyanatiloka, Word of the Buddha.

sufficiently testifies. This belief in mere externals dulls and deadens one's power of thought, stifles every higher emotion in man. It makes him a mental slave, and favours the growth of all kinds of hypocrisy.

The Buddha has clearly and positively expressed himself on this point. He says: "The man enmeshed in delusion will never be purified through the mere study of holy books, or sacrifices to gods, or through fasts, or sleeping on the ground, or difficult and strenuous vigils, or the repetition of prayers. Neither gifts to priests, nor self-castigation, nor performance of rites and ceremonies can work purification in him who is filled with craving. It is not through the partaking of meat or fish that man becomes impure, but through drunkenness, obstinacy, bigotry, deceit, envy, self-exaltation, disparagement of others and evil intentions—through these things man becomes impure."

"There are two extremes : addiction to *Sensual Enjoyment*, and addiction to bodily *Mortification*. These two extremes the Perfect One has rejected, and discovered the *Middle Path* which makes one both to see and to know, which leads to peace, to penetration, enlightenment and liberation. It is that Noble Eight-fold path leading to the end of suffering, namely Right Understanding, Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration of Mind.

Inasmuch as the Buddha teaches that all genuine progress on the path of virtue is necessarily dependent upon one's own understanding and insight, all *dogmatism is excluded* from the Buddha's teaching. *Blind faith* in authority is *rejected* by the Buddha, and is entirely opposed to the spirit of his teaching. In the Kālāma-Sutta the Buddha says :

"Do not go merely by hearsay or tradition, by what has been handed down from olden time, by rumours, by mere reasoning and logical deductions, by outward appearances, by cherished opinions and speculations, by mere possibilities, and do not believe merely because I am your master. But when you yourselves have seen that a thing is evil and

leads to harm and suffering, then you should reject it. And when you see that a thing is good and blameless, and leads to blessing and welfare, then you should do such a thing."

Whoso merely believes or repeats what others have found out, such a one the Buddha compares with a blind man. One who desires to make progress upon the Path of Deliverance, must experience and understand the truth for himself. Lacking one's own understanding, no absolute progress is possible.

The teaching of the Buddha is perhaps the only religious teaching that requires *no belief in traditions*, or in certain historical events. It appeals solely to the understanding of each individual. For wherever there are beings capable of thinking, there the truths proclaimed by the Buddha may be understood and realized, without regard to race, country, nationality or station in life. These truths are universal, not bound up with any particular country, or any particular epoch. And in everyone, even in the lowest of men, there lies latent the capacity for seeing and realizing these truths, and attaining to the Highest Perfection. And whosoever lives a noble life, such a one has already tasted of the truth and, in greater or lesser degree, travels on the Eightfold Path of Peace which all noble and holy men have trod, are treading now, and shall in future tread. The universal laws of morality hold good without variation everywhere and at all times, whether one may call oneself a Buddhist, Hindu, Christian or Mohammedan, or by any other name.

It is the *inward condition* of man and his deeds that count, not a mere name. The true disciple of the Buddha is far removed from all dogmatism. He is *a Free-thinker in the noblest sense of the word*. He falls neither into positive nor negative dogmas, for he knows: both are mere opinions, mere views, rooted in blindness and self-deception. Therefore the Buddha has said of himself: "The Perfect One is *free from any theory*, for the Perfect One *has seen*: Thus is *Corporeality*, thus it arises, thus it passes away ;

thus is *Feeling*, thus it arises, thus it passes away ;
thus is *Perception* , thus it arises, thus it passes away ;
thus are the mental *Formations* , thus they arise, thus
they pass away ; thus is *Consciousness* , thus it arises,
thus it passes away.”

I. This important truth of the *phenomenality* and emptiness of all existence can be, and ought to be, understood by everyone for himself.

According to the Buddha's teaching, our so-called individual existence is in reality nothing but *a mere process of physical and mental phenomena*, a process which since time immemorial was already going on before one's apparent birth, and which also after death will continue for immemorial periods of time. In the following we shall see that the above 5 *Khandhas*, or *Groups of existence*, in no way constitute any real Ego-entity, or *Attā*, and that no Ego-entity exists apart from them, and hence that the *belief in an Ego-entity is merely an illusion*.

That which we call our physical body is merely a name for a combination of manifold component parts, and in reality constitutes no Entity, no personality. This is clear to everyone without further argument. Everybody knows that the body is changing from moment to moment, that old cells are continually breaking down and new ones arising ; in brief, that the body will be quite another body after a few years, that nothing will have remained of the former flesh, bones, blood, etc. Consequently, the body of the babe is not the body of the school boy, and the body of the young man is not the body of the grey-haired old man. Hence, the body is not a persisting something, but rather a continually changing process of arising and passing away, consisting of a perpetual dying out and arising anew of cells. That, however, which we call the mental life of man, is a continually changing process of Feeling, Perceptions, mental Formations and states of Consciousness. At this moment a pleasant feeling arises, the next moment a painful feeling ; this moment one state of consciousness, the next moment another.

That which we call a being, an individual, a person, does not in itself, as such, possess any independent abiding reality. In the absolute sense (*paramattha*) no individual, no person, is there to be found, but merely perpetually changing combinations of physical states, of feelings, volitions and states of consciousness.

What we call 'chariot' has no existence apart and independent of axle, wheels, shaft, etc. What we call 'house' is merely a convenient name for stone, wood, iron, etc., put together after a certain fashion, so as to enclose a portion of space, but there is no separate house-entity as such in existence.

In exactly the same way, that which we call a 'being', or an 'individual', or 'person', or by the name 'I' or 'He' etc., is *nothing but a changing combination of physical and mental phenomena*, and has no real existence in itself.

The words 'I', 'You', 'He', etc., are merely terms found useful in conventional or current (*volāra*) speech, but do not designate realities (*paramattha-dhamma*). For, neither do these physical and mental phenomena constitute a reality, an absolute Ego-entity, nor yet does there exist, outside these phenomena, any Ego-entity, self, or soul, who is the possessor or owner of the same. Thus, when the Buddhist scriptures speak of persons, or even the rebirth of persons, this is done only for the sake of easier understanding, and is not to be taken in a sense of ultimate truth. This so-called 'being', or 'I', is in the absolute sense nothing but a perpetually changing process. Therefore also, to speak of suffering of a 'person', or 'being', is in the absolute sense incorrect. For it is *not a 'person', but a physico-mental process* that is subject to transiency and suffering.

In the absolute sense there are only numberless processes, countless life-waves, in this vast ever-surging ocean of bodily states, of feelings, perceptions, volitions and states of consciousness. Within these phenomena

there exists nothing that is persistent, not even for the brief span of two consecutive moments.

These phenomena have merely momentary duration. They die every moment, and every moment new phenomena are born; a perpetual dying and coming to birth, a ceaseless heaving of waves up and down. All is in a state of perpetual flux; '*panta rhei*'—*all things are flowing*—says therefore the Greek philosopher Heraclitus. The old forms fall to pieces, and new ones are born. One feeling disappears, another appears in its place. One state of consciousness exists this moment, another the following moment. Everywhere is found a perpetual change of material and mental phenomena. In this way, moment follows upon moment, day upon day, year upon year, life upon life. And so this ceaselessly changing process goes on for thousands, yea aeons of years. An eternally surging sea of feelings, perceptions, volitions and states of consciousness: such is existence, such is *Samsāra*, the world of arising and passing away, of growing and decaying, a world of sorrow, misery, lamentation and despair.

Without a real insight into this phenomenality, or *Egolessness* (*anattā*) or *Impersonality* of all existence, it will be impossible to understand the Four Noble Truths of Suffering rightly.

II. In this connection let us come back to the second Noble Truth, the origin of suffering, rooted in selfish Craving and Ignorance (*taṇhā* and *avijjā*). In order to understand this truth better, it will be necessary to speak of a doctrine which so often is wrongly interpreted and misunderstood. It is the Buddhist doctrine of Rebirth.¹ With regard to this teaching, Buddhism is often accused of self-contradiction. Thus it is said that Buddhism on the one hand denies the existence of the soul, while on the other hand it teaches the transmigration of the soul. Nothing could be more mistaken than this. For,

1. See Chapter II.

Buddhism teaches no transmigration at all. The Buddhist doctrine of Rebirth—which is really the same as the *law of causality* extended to the mental and moral domain—has nothing whatever to do with the Brahmin doctrine of reincarnation, or transmigration. There exists a fundamental difference between these two doctrines.

According to the Brahmanical teaching, there exists a soul independently of the body which, after death, leaves its physical envelope and passes over into a new body, exactly as one might throw off an old garment and put on a new one. Quite otherwise, however, is it with the Buddhist doctrine of Rebirth. Buddhism does not recognise in this world any existence of mind apart from matter. *All mental phenomena are conditioned* through the six organs of sense, and without these they cannot exist. According to Buddhism, *mind without matter is an impossibility*. And, as we have seen, the mental phenomena, just as all bodily phenomena are subject to change, and no persisting element, no Ego-entity, no soul, is there to be found. But where there is no real unchanging entity, no soul, there one cannot speak of the transmigration of such a thing.

How then is rebirth possible without something to be reborn, without an Ego, or soul? Here I have to point out that even the word 'rebirth', in this connection, is really not quite correct, but used as a mere makeshift. What the Buddha teaches is, correctly speaking, the *Law of Cause and Effect* working in the moral domain. For just as everything in the physical world happens in accordance with law, as the arising of any physical state is dependent on some preceding state as its cause, in just the same way must this law have universal application in the mental and moral domain too. If every physical state is preceded by another state as its cause, so also must *this present physico-mental life be dependent upon causes anterior to its birth*. Thus, according to Buddhism, the present life-process is the result of the craving for life in former

birth, and the craving for life in this birth is the cause of the life-process that continues after death.

But, as there is nothing that persists from one moment of consciousness to the next, so also no abiding element in this ever changing life-process exists that can pass over from one life to another.

Nothing transmigrates from this moment to the next, nothing from one life to another life. This process of continually producing and being produced may best be compared with a wave on the ocean. In the case of a wave there is not the smallest quantity of water that actually travels over the surface of the sea. The wave-structure that seems to hasten over the surface of the water, though creating the appearance of one and the same mass of water, is in reality nothing but a continued rising and falling of ever new masses of water. And the rising and falling is produced by the transmission of force originally generated by wind. Just so the Buddha did not teach that it is an Ego-entity, or a soul, that hastens through the ocean of rebirth, but that it is in reality merely a life-wave which, according to its nature and activities, appears here as man, there as animal, and elsewhere as invisible being.

III. There is another teaching of the Buddha which often gives rise to serious misunderstanding. It is the teaching of *Nirvāna, or the Extinction of suffering*. This third noble Truth points out that, through the cessation of all selfish craving and all ignorance, of necessity all suffering comes to an end, to extinction, and no new rebirth will take place. For, if the seed is destroyed, it can never sprout again. If the selfish craving that clutches convulsively at life is destroyed, then, after death, there can never again take place a fresh shooting up, a continuation of this process of existence, a so-called rebirth. Where, however, there is no birth, there can be no death. Where there is no arising, there can be no passing away. Where no life exists, no suffering can exist. Now, as with the extinction of all

selfish craving, all its concurrent phenomena, such as conceit, self-seeking, greed, hate, anger and cruelty, come to extinction, therefore this freedom from selfish craving signifies *the highest state of selflessness, wisdom and holiness*.

Now, this fact that after the death of the Holy One, the Arahāt, this physico-mental life-process no longer continues, this fact is by many erroneously believed to be identical with annihilation of Self, annihilation of a real being, and it is therefore maintained that the goal of Buddhism be simply annihilation. Against such a misleading statement one must enter an emphatic protest.

How is it ever possible to speak of the annihilation of a self, or soul, or Ego, where no such thing is to be found? We have seen that in reality there does not exist any Ego-entity, or soul, and therefore also no "transmigration" of such a thing into a new mother's womb.

That bodily process starting anew in the mother's womb is in no way a continuation of a former bodily process, but merely a result, or effect, caused by selfish craving and clinging to life of the so-called dying individual. Thus, he who says that the non-producing of any new life-process is identical with annihilation of a self, should also say that abstention from sexual intercourse is identical with annihilation of a child—which, of course, is absurd.

Here, once more, we may expressly emphasise that, without a clear perception of the Phenomenality, or Egolessness (*anattā*) of all existence, it will be impossible to get a real understanding of the Buddha's teaching, especially that of Rebirth and Nirvana. This teaching of *Anattā* is in fact *the only characteristic Buddhist doctrine*, with which the entire teaching stands or falls.

IV. A further reproach, so often heard against Buddhism, that it is a gloomy and "pessimistic" teaching, proves entirely unfounded by the statements

already made. For, as we have seen, the Buddha not only discloses and explains the fact of misery, but He also shows the way to find total release from it. In view of this fact, one is rather entitled to call *the Buddha's teaching the boldest optimism ever proclaimed to the world.*

Truly, Buddhism is a teaching that *assures hope, comfort and happiness*, even to the most unfortunate. It is a teaching that offers, even to the most wretched of criminals, prospects of final perfection and peace, and this, not through blind belief, or prayers, or asceticism, or outward ceremonies, rites and rituals, but through walking and earnestly persevering on that Noble Eightfold Path of inward perfection, purity and emancipation of heart, consisting in Right Understanding, Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Bodily Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration and peace of mind.

II

KARMA AND REBIRTH

WHEN beholding this world and thinking about the destinies of beings, it will appear to most men, as if everything in nature was unjust. 'Why', they will say, 'is one man rich and powerful, but another man poor and distressed? Why is one man all his life well and healthy, but another man from his very birth sickly or infirm? Why is one man endowed with attractive appearance, intelligence and perfect senses, while another man is repulsive and ugly, an idiot, blind, or deaf and dumb? Why is one child born amid utter misery and amongst wretched people, and brought up as criminal, while another child is born in the midst of plenty and comfort, of noble-minded parents, and enjoys all the advantages of kindly treatment and the best mental and moral education, and sees nothing but good things all around? Why does one man, often, without the slightest effort, succeed in all his enterprises, while to another man all his plans fail? Why can one man live in luxury, while another man has to live in poverty and distress? Why is one man happy, but another man unhappy? Why does one man enjoy long life, while another man in the prime of his life is carried away by death? Why is this so? Why do such differences exist in nature?'

Christianity does not provide us with any reasonable answer to these questions, nor does it try to find an explanation for them. Quite on the contrary! Take, for example, the just mentioned poor, wretched child, born in misery and amongst criminals, and actually trained to become a criminal. Under such circumstances, and without the slightest moral advice, will such a being ever be able to distinguish between moral and immoral, between crime and virtue? No, under such conditions the only way open for him is to become

a criminal. And of such a poor and pitiable being Christianity says—apart from his present misery and suffering—that it is destined after death to eternal punishment in hell. Could there be found in this world anything more unjust and cruel than this kind of thinking? It is really the worst form of fatalism and injustice! For how could a being under the mentioned conditions ever be made responsible for his deeds? Now, as to the question why such differences exist in the destiny of beings, this question is satisfactorily answered solely by Buddhism.

Of all those circumstances and conditions constituting the destiny of a being, none can, according to the Buddha's Teaching, come into existence without a previous cause and the presence of a number of necessary conditions. Just as, for example, from a rotten mango-seed never will come a healthy mango-tree with healthy and sweet fruits, just so the evil volitional actions, or Karma, produced in former birth, are the seeds, or root-causes, of evil destiny in a later birth. It is a necessary postulate of thinking that the good and bad destiny of a being, as well as its latent character, cannot be the product of mere chance, but must of necessity have its causes in a previous birth. According to Buddhism, no organic entity, physical or psychical, can come into existence without a previous cause, *i.e.* without a preceding congenial state out of which it has developed. Also no living organic entity can ever be produced by something altogether outside of it. It can originate only out of itself, *i.e.*, it must have already existed in the bud, or germ, as it were. To be sure, besides this cause, or root-condition, or seed, there are still many minor conditions required for its actual arising and its development, just as the mango tree besides its main cause, the seed, requires for its germinating, growth and development such further conditions as earth, water, light, heat etc. Thus the true cause of the birth of a being, together with its character and destiny, goes back to the Karma-volitions produced in a former birth.

According to Buddhism, there are 3 factors necessary for the rebirth of a human being, that is, for the formation of the embryo in the mother's womb. They are: the female ovum, the male sperm, and the karma-energy, *kamma-vega*, which in the Suttas is metaphorically called '*gandhabba*', i.e., 'ghost', or 'soul'. This karma-energy is sent forth by a dying individual at the moment of his death. Father and mother only provide the necessary physical material for the formation of the embryonic body. With regard to the characteristic features, the tendencies and faculties lying latent in the embryo, the Buddha's teaching may be explained in the following way:—The dying individual, with his whole being convulsively clinging to life, at the very moment of his death, sends forth karmic energies which, like a flash of lightning, hit at a new mother's womb ready for conception. Thus, through the impinging of the Karma-energies on ovum and sperm, there appears, just as a precipitate, the so-called primary cell.

This process may be compared with the functioning of the so-called air-vibrations produced through speech, which, by the impinging on the acoustic organ of another man, produce a sound, which is a purely subjective sensation. At this occasion no transmigration of a sound-sensation takes place, but simply a transference of energy, called the air vibrations. In a similar way, the karma-energies, sent out by the dying individual, produce from the material furnished by the parents the new embryonal being. But no transmigration of a real being, or a soul-entity, takes place at that occasion, but simply the transmission of karma-energy.

Hence we may say that the present Life-process (*upapatti-bhava*) is the objectivation of the corresponding pre-natal Karma-process (*kamma-bhava*), and that the future Life-process is the objectivation of the corresponding present Karma-process. Thus, nothing transmigrates from one life to the next. And, what we call our Ego, is in reality only this process of continual change, of continual arising and passing away. Thus

follows moment after moment, day after day, year after year, life after life. Just as the so-called wave that apparently hastens over the surface of the pond, is in reality nothing but a continuous rising and falling of ever new masses of water, each time called forth through the transmission of energy, even so, closely considered, is there in the ultimate sense no permanent Ego-entity that passes through the ocean of Samsāra, but merely a process of physical and psychical phenomena takes place, ever and again being whipped up by the impulse and will for life.

It is undoubtedly true that the mental condition of the parents at the moment of conception has a considerable influence upon the character of the embryonic being, and that the nature of the mother may make a deep impression on the character of the child she bears in her womb. The indivisible unity of the psychic individuality of the child, however, can in no way be produced by the parents. One must here never confound the actual cause—*i.e.*, the preceding state out of which the later state arises—with the influences and conditions from without. Even if it were really possible that the new individual, as an inseparable whole, was begotten by its parents, twins could by no means ever exhibit totally opposite tendencies. In such a case, children, especially twins, would, with positively no exception, always be found to possess the same character as the parents.

At all times, and in probably all the countries on earth, the belief in ever and again being reborn, has been held by many people ; and this belief seems to be due to an intuitional instinct that lies dormant in all beings. At all times many great thinkers too have taught a continuation of life after death. Already from time immemorial there was taught some form of metempsychosis, *i.e.*, 'transformation of soul', or metamorphosis, *i.e.*, 'transformation of body', etc., thus by the esoteric doctrines of old Egypt, by Pythagoras, Empedocles, Plato, Plotinus, Pindaros,

Vergil, even by the African negroes. Also many of the modern thinkers teach a continuation of the life-process after death.

The great German scientist Edgar Dacqué, in his book called 'The Primeval World, Saga and Mankind', speaking about the wide-spread belief shared by all peoples of the world in a transmigration after death, gives the following warning: "Peoples with culture and acquaintance with science, such as the old Egyptians and wise Indians, acted and lived in accordance with this belief. They lost this belief only after the rise of the naively realistic and rationalistic Hellenism and Judaism. For this reason it would be better, concerning this problem, not to assume the bloodless attitude of modern sham-civilization, but rather adopt a reverential attitude in trying to solve this problem and grasp it in its profundity."

This law of rebirth can be made comprehensible only by the subconscious 'soul- or life-stream', in Pali, *bhavanga-sota*, which is mentioned in the Abhidhamma-Pitaka and further explained in the commentaries, esp. the Visuddhi-Magga. The fundamental import of *bhavanga-sota*, or the subconscious life-stream, as working hypothesis for the explanation of the various Buddhist doctrines, such as Rebirth, Karma, Remembrance of former births *etc.*, has up to now not yet sufficiently been recognized, or understood, by the Western scholars. The term *bhavanga*, or *bhavanga-sota*, is identical with what the modern psychologists, as Jung *etc.*, call the Soul, or the Unconscious, thereby not meaning, of course, the eternal soul-entity of Christian teaching but an ever-changing subconscious process. This subconscious soul- or life-stream is the *sine qua non* of all life, and in it all impressions and experiences are stored up, or better said, appear as a multiple process of past images, or memory pictures, which however, as such, are hidden to full consciousness, but which, especially in dream, cross the threshold of consciousness and become themselves fully conscious.

Professor James (whose words I here retranslate from the German version) says: "Many achievements of the genius have here their beginning. In conversion, mystical experience, and as prayer, it co-operates with religious life. It contains all momentarily inactive reminiscences and sources of all our dimly motivated passions, impulses, intuitions, hypotheses, fancies, superstitions; in short, all our non-rational operations result therefrom. It is the source of dreams etc."

Jung, in his 'Soul Problems of the Present Day', says: "From the living source of instinct springs forth everything creative." And in another place: "Whatever has been created by human mind, results from contents, which were really unconscious (or sub-conscious) germs." And "The term 'instinct' is of course nothing but a collective term for all possible organic and psychic factors, whose nature is for the greater part unknown to us."

The existence of the subconscious life-stream, or *bhavanga-sota*, is a necessary postulate of our thinking. If namely, whatever we have seen, heard, felt, perceived, thought, externally or internally experienced and done, if all this would not, without exception, be somewhere and in some way registered, be it in the extremely complex nervous system, comparable to a gramophone record or photographic plate, and in the Sub-conscious or Unconscious, in that case we would not even be able to remember what we were thinking at the preceding moment; and we would not know anything of the existence of other beings and things; would not know our parents, teachers, friends and so on; would even not be able to think at all, as thinking is conditioned through the remembrance of former experiences; and our mind would be a complete *tabula rasa* and emptier than the actual mind is of an infant just born, nay even of the embryo in the mother's womb.

Thus this sub-conscious life-stream, or *bhavanga-sota*, can be called the precipitate of all our former actions and experiences, which must have been going on since

time immemorial and must continue for still immeasurable periods of time to come. Therefore, whatever constitutes the true and innermost nature of man, or any other being, is this subconscious life-stream, of which we do not know, whence it came and whither it will go. As Heraclitus says : “ We never enter the same stream. We are identical with it, and we are not,” just as it is said in the Milinda-Pañha : “ *na ca so, na ca añño* ; neither is it he, nor is it another one” (that is reborn).” All life, be it corporeal, conscious or subconscious life, all life is a flowing, a continual process of becoming, change and transformation. No persistent element is there to be discovered in this process. Hence, there also is no permanent Ego, or Personality, to be found, but merely these transitory phenomena. About this unreality of the Ego, the Hungarian psychologist Volgyesi in his ‘ Message to the Nervous World ’ says :

“Under the influence of the newest knowledge the psychologists already begin to realize the truth about the delusive nature of the Ego-entity, the mere relative value of the Ego-feeling, the great dependency of this tiny man on the inexhaustible and complex working factors of the whole world The idea of an independent Ego, and of a self-reliant Free Will : these ideas we should give up and reconcile ourselves to the truth that there does not exist any real Ego at all. What we take for our Ego-feeling, is in reality nothing but one of the most wonderful *fata-morgana* plays of nature, etc.” In the ultimate sense, there do not even exist such things as mental states, *i.e.*, stationary things. Feeling, perception, consciousness etc. are, in reality, mere passing processes of feeling, perceiving, becoming conscious etc., within which and outside of which nothing of a separate or permanent Entity lies hidden.

Thus a real understanding of the Buddha’s doctrine of Karma and Rebirth is possible only to him, who has caught a glimpse of the Impersonality, or *anattatā*, and of the Conditionality, or *ida-paccayatā*, of all

phenomena of existence. Therefore it is said in Visuddhi-Magga XIX : “Everywhere, in all the realms of existence, the noble disciple sees only mental and corporeal phenomena, kept going through the concatenation of causes and effects. No producer of the volitional act or Karma does he see apart from the Karma, no recipient of the Karma-result apart from the result. And he is well aware that wise men are using merely conventional language, when, with regard to a karmical act, they speak of a doer, or with regard to a karma-result, they speak of the recipient of the result.

“ No doer of the deeds is found,
No one who ever reaps their fruits ;
Empty phenomena roll on :
This only is the correct view.

“ And while the deeds and their results
Roll on and on, conditioned all,
There is no first beginning found,
Just as it is with seed and tree

“ No god, no Brāhma, can be called
The maker of this wheel of life :
Empty phenomena roll on,
Dependent on conditions all.”

In Milinda-Pañha the King asks Nāgasena :

“ What is it, Venerable Sir, that will be reborn ? ”

“ A psycho-physical combination (*nāma-rūpa*), O King,” is the answer.

“ But how, Venerable Sir? Is it the same psycho-physical combination as this present one ? ”

“ No, O King. But the present psycho-physical combination produces karmically wholesome and unwholesome volitional activities, and through such Karma a new psycho-physical combination will be born.”

As in the ultimate sense, or *paramattha-vasena*, there is no such thing as a real Ego-entity, or Personality, therefore one cannot properly speak of the rebirth of such an one. What we here are concerned with, is this psycho-physical process, which is cut off at the so-called death, in order to continue immediately thereafter somewhere else.

Similarly we read in *Milinda-Pañha*, Chapter III :

“ Does, O Venerable Sir, rebirth take place without transmigration ? ”

“ Yes, O King.”

“ But how, Venerable Sir, can rebirth take place without passing over of anything ? Please, illustrate me this matter.”

“ If, O King, a man should light a lamp with the help of another lamp, does in that case the light of the one lamp pass over to the other lamp ? ”

“ No, Venerable Sir.”

“ Just so, O King, does rebirth take place without transmigration.”

Further in *Visuddhi-Magga* XVII it is said : “Who-soever has no clear idea about death, and does not know that death consists in the dissolution of the 5 groups of existence (*i.e.*, corporeality, feeling, perception, mental formations, consciousness), he thinks that it is a person, or being, that dies and transmigrates to a new body etc. And whosoever has no clear idea about rebirth, and does not know that rebirth consists in the arising of the 5 groups of existence, he thinks that it is a person, or being, that is reborn, or that the person reappears in a new body. And whosoever has no clear idea about the *Samsāra*, the round of rebirths, he thinks that a real person wanders from this world to another world, comes from that world to this world etc. And whosoever has no clear idea about the phenomena of existence, he thinks that the phenomena are his Ego

or something appertaining to the Ego, or something permanent, joyful, or pleasant. And whosoever has no clear idea about the conditional arising of the phenomena of existence, and about the arising of karmical volitions conditioned through ignorance, or *avijjā*, he thinks that it is the Ego that understands or not understands, that acts or causes to act, that enters into a new existence at rebirth. Or he thinks that the atoms or the Creator etc., with the help of the embryonal process, shape the body, provide it with various faculties ; that it is the Ego that receives the sensuous impression, that feels, that desires, that becomes attached, that again in another world enters into existence. Or he thinks that all beings are coming to life through fate or chance.”

“ A mere phenomenon it is, a thing conditioned,
That rises in the following existence.
But not from previous life does transmigrate it there,
And yet it cannot rise without a previous cause.”

“ When, e.g., this conditionally arisen bodily-mental phenomenon (the so called foetus) arises, one says that it has entered into (the next) existence. However, no being (*satta*), or life-principle (*jiva*), is there that has transmigrated from previous existence into this existence, and yet this embryo could not have come into existence without a previous cause.”

This fact may be compared with the reflection of one's face in the mirror, or with the calling forth of an echo by one's voice. Now, just as the image in the mirror or the echo are produced by one's face or voice without any passing over of face or voice, just so it is with the arising of rebirth-consciousness. Should there exist a full identity or sameness between the former and the later birth, in that case milk never would turn into curd ; and should there exist an entire otherness, curd never could be conditioned through milk. Therefore one should admit neither a full identity, nor an entire otherness of the different stages of existence. Hence

na ca so, na ca añño : “neither is it the same, nor is it another one.” As already said above : all life, be it corporeal, conscious or subconscious, all life is a flowing, a continual process of becoming, change and transformation.

To sum up the foregoing, we may say :

There are in the ultimate sense no real beings or things, neither creators nor created ; there is but this process of corporeal and mental phenomena. This whole process of existence has an active and a passive side. The active or causal side of existence consists of the Karma-process (*kamma-bhava*), i.e., of wholesome and unwholesome karma-activity, while the passive or caused side consists of Karma-results, or *vipāka*, the so-called Rebirth-or Life-process (*upapatti-bhava*), i.e. the arising, growing, decaying and passing away of all these karmically neutral phenomena of existence.

Thus, in the absolute sense, there exists no real being that wanders through this round of rebirths, but merely this ever-changing twofold process of Karma-activities and Karma-results takes place.

The so-called present life is, as it were, the reflection of the past one, and the future life the reflection of the present one. Or, the present life is the result of the past karmic activity, and the future life the result of the present karmic activity. Therefore, nowhere is there to be found an Ego-entity that could be the performer of the karmic activity or the recipient of the karma-result. Hence, Buddhism does not teach any real transmigration, as in the highest sense there is no such thing as a Being, or Ego-entity, how much less a transmigration of such an one.

In every man, as already mentioned, there seems to lie dormant the dim instinctive feeling that death cannot be the end of all things, but that somehow a continuation must follow. In which way, however, this may be, is not clear to him.

It is perhaps quite true that a direct proof for rebirth cannot be given. We have, however, the authentic reports about children in Burma and elsewhere, who sometimes are able to remember (probably in dream) quite distinctly events of their previous life. By the way, what we see in dream are mostly distorted reflexes of real things and happenings experienced in this or a previous life. And how could we ever explain the birth of such prodigies, as Bentham who already in his fourth year could read and write Latin and Greek, or as Stuart Mill who at the age of three read Greek and at the age of six wrote a History of Rome, or as Babington Macaulay who in his sixth year wrote a compendium of World History, or as Beethoven who gave public concerts when he was seven, or as Mozart who already before his sixth year had written musical compositions, or as Voltaire who read the fables of Lafontaine when he was three years old. Should all these prodigies and geniuses, who for the most part came from illiterate parents, not already in previous births have laid the foundations to their extraordinary faculties? '*Natura non facit saltus*: nature makes no leaps.'

How could we further explain that a child of righteous and bodily and mentally healthy parents and ancestors, sometimes already immediately after birth, shows signs of the criminal type, of criminal tendencies, perceivable by the shape of the skull, by facial expression, by attitude, movement etc., recognizable to phrenologists, physiognomists, etc. ?

In any case, we may rightly state that the Buddhist doctrine of Karma and Rebirth offers the only plausible explanation for all the variations and dissimilarities in nature, as already said. From the apple seed only an apple tree may come, no mango tree ; from a mango seed only a mango tree, no apple tree. Just so, all animate things, as man, animal etc., probably even plants, nay even crystals, must of necessity be manifestations or objectivations of some specific kind of subconscious impulse, or will for life. 'Buddhism says nothing on the last-mentioned points ; it

simply states that all vegetable life belongs to the Germinal Order, or *bīja-niyāma*.

Buddhism teaches that, if in previous birth the bodily, verbal and mental Karma, or volitional activities, have been evil and low and thus have unfavourably influenced the subconscious soul- or life-stream (*bhavanga-sota*), then also the results, manifested in the present life, must be disagreeable and evil; and so must be the character and the new actions induced or conditioned through the evil pictures and images of the subconscious life-stream. If the beings, however, have in former lives sown good seeds, then they will reap good fruits in present life. It is said (M. 135): “Owners of their Karma, or volitional actions, are the beings, heirs of their Karma, the Karma is the womb from which they have sprung, Karma is their friend and their refuge. Whatever Karma they perform, wholesome or unwholesome, *kusala* or *akusala*, they will be the heirs of their Karma.”

In Majjhima-Nikāya 135 a Brahman raises the problem:—

“There are found men who are short-lived, and such that are long-lived; there are found men who are very sick, and such that are healthy; there are found men who are hideous, and such that are beautiful; there are found men who are powerless, and such that are powerful; there are found men who are poor, and such that are rich; there are found men who are of low family, and such that are of high family; there are found men who are stupid, and such that are intelligent. What then, Master Gotama, is the reason that amongst human beings such inferiority and superiority are found?”

The Blessed One gave the reply:

“Owners of their Karma are the beings, heirs of their Karma, the Karma is the womb from

which they have sprung, Karma is their friend and refuge. Thus Karma divides the beings in high and low.”

In Anguttara-Nikāya (III. 40) it is said : “ Killing, stealing, adultery, lying, backbiting, harsh speech and empty prattling, practised, cultivated and frequently addicted to, will lead to hell, the animal-world or the realm of ghosts.” Further : “ Whoso kills and is cruel, will either go to hell, or if reborn as man, he will be short-lived. Whoso tortures other beings, will be afflicted with disease. The hater will be hideous, the envious will be without influence, the stubborn will be of low rank, the indolent will be ignorant.” In the reverse case, man will be reborn in a heavenly world ; or, if reborn as man, he will be endowed with health, beauty, influence, riches, noble rank and intelligence.

Grimm, in his book ‘ The Doctrine of the Buddha ’, tries to show how the law of affinity may at the moment of death regulate the grasping of the new germ. He says : “ Whoso, devoid of compassion can kill men, or even animals, carries deep within himself the inclination to shorten life. He finds satisfaction, or even pleasure, in the short-livedness of other creatures. Short-lived germs have therefore some affinity for him, an affinity which makes itself known after his death in the grasping of another germ, which then takes place to his own detriment. Even so, germs bearing within themselves the power of developing into a deformed body, have an affinity for one who finds pleasure in ill-treating and disfiguring others.

“ Any angry person begets within himself an affinity for ugly bodies and their respective germs, since it is the characteristic mark of anger to disfigure the face.

“ Whoever is jealous, niggardly, haughty, carries within himself the tendency to grudge everything to others, and to despise them. Accordingly, germs that are destined to develop in poor outward circumstances, possess affinity for him.”

Here I should like to rectify several wrong applications of the term 'Karma' prevailing in the West, and to state once for all :—Karma, Pali *kamma*, comes from the root \sqrt{kar} to do, to make, to act, and thus means 'deed, action' etc. As a Buddhist technical term, Karma is a name for wholesome and unwholesome volition or will (*kusala-* and *akusala-cetanā*) and the consciousness and mental factors associated therewith, manifested as bodily, verbal or mere mental action. Already in the old Sutta-texts it is said : *Cetanāhaṃ bhikkhave kammaṃ vadāmi, cetayitvā kammam karoti kāyena vācāya manasā, i.e.:* "The will (*cetanā*), O Monks, do I call Karma. Through will one does the Karma by means of body, speech or mind." Thus Karma is volitional action, nothing more, nothing less. From this fact result the following three statements:—

1. The term Karma never comprises the result of action, as most people in the West, misled by theosophy, wish this term to be understood. Karma is wholesome or unwholesome volitional 'Action', and *kamma-vipāka* is the 'Result' of action.

2. There are some who consider every happening, even our new wholesome and unwholesome actions, as the result of our prenatal Karma. In other words, they believe that the results again become the causes of new results, and so *ad infinitum*. Thus they are stamping Buddhism as fatalism; and they will have to come to the conclusion that, in this case, our destiny never can be influenced or changed, and no deliverance ever be attained.

3. There is a third wrong application of the term Karma, being an amplification of the first view, *i.e.* that the term Karma comprises also the result of action. It is the assumption of a so-called joint Karma, *i.e.* a mass-Karma, or group-Karma, or people's Karma. According to this view, a group of people, *e.g.* a nation, should be responsible for the bad deeds formerly done by this so-called 'same' people. In reality, however, this present people may not consist at all of the same

individuals who did these bad deeds. According to Buddhism it is of course quite true that anybody who suffers bodily, suffers for his past or present bad deeds. Thus also each of those individuals born within that suffering nation, must, if actually suffering bodily, have done evil somewhere, here or in one of the innumerable spheres of existence, but he may not have had anything to do with the bad deeds of the so-called nation. We might say that through his evil Karma he was attracted to the hellish condition befitting to him. In short, the term Karma applies, in each instance, only to wholesome and unwholesome volitional activity of the single individual. Karma thus forms the cause, or seed, from which the results will accrue to the individual, be it in this life, or hereafter.¹

Hence, man has it in his power to shape his future destiny by means of his will and actions. It depends on his actions, or Karma, whether his destiny will lead him up or down, either to happiness or to misery. Moreover, Karma is the cause and seed not only for the continuation of the life-process after death, *i.e.*, for the so-called rebirth ; but already in this present life-process our actions, or Karma, may produce good and bad results, and exercise a decisive influence on our present character and destiny. Thus, for instance, if day by day we are practising kindness towards all living beings, men as well as animals, we will grow in goodness ; and hatred, and all evil actions done through hatred, as well as all the evil and agonizing mental states produced thereby, will not so easily rise again in us ; and our nature and character will become firm, happy, peaceful and calm.

1. Here I should add that the Pali term *vipāka*, which I generally translate by ' effect ', or ' result ', is not really identical with these two English terms. According to Kathāvatthu, it refers only to the karma-produced ' mental ' results, such as pleasurable and painful feeling of the body and all other primary mental phenomena, while all the corporeal phenomena, such as the 5 physical sense-organs, etc., are not called *vipāka*, but ' *kammaja* ' or ' *kamma-samutthāna* ', *i.e.* ' karma-born ' or ' karma-produced '.

If we practise unselfishness and liberality, greed and avarice will become less. If we practise love and kindness, anger and hatred will vanish. If we develop wisdom and knowledge, ignorance and delusion will more and more disappear. The less greed, hatred and ignorance (*lobha, dosa, moha*) dwell in man's heart, the less will he commit evil and unwholesome actions of body, speech and mind. For, all evil things, and all evil destiny, are really rooted in greed, hate and ignorance; and of these three things ignorance, or delusion, *moha*, or *avijjā*, is the chief root and the primary cause of all evil and misery in the world. If there is no more ignorance, there will be no more greed and hatred, no more rebirth, no more suffering.

This goal, however, in the ultimate sense, will be realized only by Holy Ones (*Arahats*), *i.e.*, by those who, for ever and all time, are freed from these three roots; and this is accomplished through the penetrating insight, or *vipassanā*, into the Impermanency, Unsatisfactoriness and Impersonality, or Egolessness, of this whole life-process, and through the detachment from all forms of existence resulting therefrom. As soon as greed, hate and ignorance have become fully and for ever extinguished, and thereby the will for life, convulsively clinging to existence, and the thirsting for life, have come to an end, then there will be no more rebirth, and there will have been realized the goal shown by the Enlightened One, namely: extinction of all rebirth and suffering. Thus, the Holy One (*Arahat*) performs no more Karma, *i.e.*, no more karmically wholesome or unwholesome volitional actions. He is freed from this life-affirming will expressed in bodily actions, words or thoughts, freed from this seed, or cause, of all existence and life. Now, what is called the character of man, is in reality the sum of these subconscious tendencies produced partly by the prenatal, partly by the present volitional activity, or Karma. And these tendencies may, during life-time become an inducement to wholesome or unwholesome volitional activity, or Karma, by body, speech or mind. If, however, this thirst for life rooted in ignorance is

fully extinguished, then there will be no new entering again into existence. Once the root of a coconut tree has been fully destroyed, the tree will die off. In exactly the same way, there will be no entering again into a new existence, once the life-affirming three evil roots, *i.e.*, greed, hate and ignorance, have been forever destroyed. Here one should not forget that all such personal expressions as 'I', 'He', 'Holy One' etc., are merely conventional names for this really impersonal life-process.

In this connection I have to state that, according to Buddhism, it is merely the last karmical volition just before death, the so-called death-proximate, or *marāṇāsanna-kamma* that decides the immediately following rebirth. In Buddhist countries it is therefore the custom to recall to the dying man's memory his good actions performed by him, in order to rouse in him a happy and pure karmical state of mind, as a preparation for a favourable rebirth. Or, his relations let him see beautiful things which they, for his good and benefit, wish to offer to the Buddha, saying: 'This, my dear, we shall offer to the Buddha for your good and welfare'. Or they let him hear a religious sermon, or let him smell the odour of flowers, or give him sweets to taste, or let him touch precious cloth, saying: 'This we shall offer to the Buddha for your own good and welfare.'

In *Visuddhi-Magga* XVII it is said that, at the moment before death, there, as a rule, will appear to the memory of the evil-doer the mental image of any evil deed, or *Kamma*, formerly done; or that there will appear before his mental eyes an attendant circumstance, or object, called *kamma-nimitta*, connected with that bad deed, such as blood, or a blood-stained dagger etc.; or he may see before his mind an indication of his imminent miserable rebirth, *gati-nimitta*, such as fiery flames, etc. To another dying man there may appear before his mind the image of a voluptuous object inciting his sensual lust.

To a good man there may appear before his mind any noble deed, or *kamma*, formerly done by him, or an object that was present at that time, the so-called *kamma-nimitta* ; or he may see in his mind an indication of his imminent rebirth, or *gati-nimitta*, such as heavenly palaces, etc.

In the Chinese version of the Mahāyāna-text Bhava-saṅkrānti-Sūtra (Aiyaswāmi Sāstri) it is said in a similar way: “ When, at the end of life, the mental consciousness is about to disappear, then all the actions that have been performed, appear in front, just as the image of the beautiful female that has been seen in dream appears before the man, when he remembers her after awakening from sleep. Thus, O king, when the consciousness (at death) has disappeared and the future consciousness is born, it is born either amongst men, or gods, or beasts, or ghosts, or in the hell. Immediately after the future consciousness arises, O king, a (new) series of thought (*citta-santati*) belonging to the future arises to enjoy the resultant fruits which are to be enjoyed. O king, there has never been anything that can transmigrate from this world to the future world. But the fruit of action may be obtained in rebirth. You ought to know, O king, that when the former consciousness disappears, it is called death. When the future consciousness arises, it is called birth. When the former consciousness, O king, disappears, there is no place where it goes away to. When the future consciousness arises, it comes not from any place.”

Already in the Suttas there are distinguished 3 kinds of, Karma, or volitional actions, with regard to the time of their bearing fruit, namely: 1. Karma bearing fruit at life-time (*diṭṭhadhamma-vedanīya-kamma*), 2. Karma bearing fruit in next life (*upapajja-vedanīya-kamma*), 3. Karma bearing fruit in later lives (*aparāpariya-vedanīya-kamma*). The explanations of this subject are somewhat too technical for the general audience. They imply the following: The karma-volitional stage of the process in mind consists of a number of

impulsive thought moments, or *javana-citta*, which flash up, one after the other, in rapid succession. Now, of these impulsive moments the first one will bear fruit at life-time, the last one in the next birth, and those between these two moments will bear fruit in later lives. The two kinds of Karma bearing fruit at life-time and in the next birth, may sometimes become ineffective, or *ahosi-kamma*. Karma, however, that bears fruit in later lives will, whenever and wherever there is an opportunity, be productive of karma-result ; and as long as this life-process is rolling forward, this Karma never will become ineffective.

The Visuddhi-Magga divides Karma, according to its functions, into 4 kinds: Generative Karma, Supportive Karma, Counteractive Karma and Destructive Karma, which all may be either wholesome or unwholesome.

Amongst these 4 kinds, the 'Generative', or *janaka-kamma*, generates at rebirth, and during the succeeding life-continuity, corporeal and neutral mental phenomena, such as the 5 kinds of sense-consciousness, and the mental factors associated therewith, as feeling, perception, sense-impression etc.

The 'Supportive', or *upatthambhaka-kamma*, however, does not generate any karma-result; but as soon as by any karma-volition rebirth has been effected and a Karma-result been produced, then it *supports*, according to its nature, the agreeable or else disagreeable phenomena and keeps them alive.

Also the 'Counteractive,' or *upapīḷaka-kamma*, does not generate any Karma-result ; but as soon as by any karma-volition rebirth has been effected and a Karma-result been produced, then it *counteracts*, according to its nature, the agreeable or else disagreeable phenomena and does not allow them to keep going on.

Also the 'Destructive,' or *upaghātaka-kamma*, does not generate any karma-result ; but as soon as by any

karma-volition rebirth has been effected and a karma-result been produced, then it *destroys* the weaker karma and admits only its own agreeable or else disagreeable karma-results.

In the Commentary to Majjhima-Nikāya (135), Regenerative, or *janaka-kamma*, is compared with a farmer sowing the seeds ; Supportive, or *upatthambhaka-kamma*, with the irrigating, manuring, and watching the field etc. ; Counteracting or *upapīḷaka-kamma*, with the drought that causes a poor harvest ; Destructive, or *upaghātaka-kamma*, with a fire that destroys the whole harvest.

Another illustration is this : the rebirth of Devadatta in a royal family was due to his good Generative Karma. His becoming a monk and attaining high spiritual powers, was a good Supportive Karma. His intention of killing the Buddha was a Counteractive Karma, while his causing a split in the Order of monks was Destructive Karma, owing to which he was born in a world of misery.

It lies outside the scope of this short exposition to give detailed descriptions of all the manifold divisions of Karma found in the Commentaries. What I chiefly wanted to make clear by this lecture, is : that the Buddhist doctrine of Rebirth has nothing to do with the transmigration of any soul or Ego-entity, as in the ultimate sense there does not exist any such Ego or I, but merely a continually changing process of psychic and corporeal phenomena of existence. And further I wanted to point out that the therein included Karma-process and Rebirth-process may both be made comprehensible only by the assumption of a subconscious stream of life underlying everything in living nature.

III

PAṬICCA-SAMUPPĀDA

“DEPENDENT ORIGINATION”

IT is rather with some hesitation that I dare to speak to you on that profoundest of all Buddhist doctrines, namely the Paṭicca-Samuppāda,¹ in English, the “Dependent Origination,” that is to say, the conditional arising of all those mental and physical phenomena generally summed up by the conventional names of “Living Being”, or “Individual”, or “Person”. Thus being well aware of the great difficulty of speaking on this most intricate subject before an audience, perhaps only little acquainted with Buddhist philosophy, I shall try my utmost to avoid, as far as possible, all the highly technical or confusing details. I shall use very plain and simple language, so that any one of you may be able to follow my explanations. At the same time I shall not lose sight of the real goal and purpose for which the Buddha has preached this doctrine to the world. Thus I would beg you to listen carefully and give my words full and undivided attention. And I further beg you to try to retain in mind those very few technical terms in Pali and English, which in the course of my talk I shall be repeatedly using.

You may not be aware that, up to this day, the real significance and purpose of the Paṭicca-Samuppāda are practically unknown to Western scholars. By this, however, I do not mean to say that nobody in the West has ever written or spoken on this doctrine. No, quite the contrary is the case. For there is no other Buddhist doctrine, about which Western scholars, and would-be

1. “*gambhīro c’āyam, Ānanda, paṭiccasamuppādo gambhīravabhāso ca*: Profound, Ananda, is this Dependent Origination, and also profound does it appear” (Mahānidāna-Sutta, Dīgha-Nikāya).

scholars, have written and discussed so much,—but understood so little,—as just this doctrine of the Paṭicca-Samuppāda. If you wish to get a fair idea of those mostly absurd and immature speculations and fanciful interpretations, often based on mere imagination, you may read the Appendix to my “Guide through the Abhidhamma-Piṭaka”.¹ It seems that scarcely one of those occidental authors and lecturers has ever put to himself the question, for what earthly reason the Buddha ever should have thought it necessary to teach such a doctrine. It was surely not for the sake of mental gymnastics and dialectics. No, quite on the contrary! For, the Paṭicca-Samuppāda shows the causes and conditions of all the evil and suffering in the world; and how through the removal of these conditions suffering may rise no more in the future. The P.S. in fact shows that our present existence, with all its woe and suffering, is conditioned, or more exactly said caused, by the life-affirming volitions, or Karma, in a former life, and that again our future life depends on the present life-affirming volitions, or Karma; and that without these life-affirming volitions, no more future rebirth will take place again; and that thereby deliverance will have been found from the round of rebirths, from the restless cycle of Saṃsāra. And this is the final goal and purpose of the Buddha’s message, namely deliverance from rebirth and suffering.

I think that, after what you have heard just now, it will not be necessary to tell you that the P. S. is not intended, as various scholars in the West imagined, as an explanation of the primary beginning of all things; and that its first link “*Avijjā*”, or Ignorance, is not to be considered as the causeless first principle, out of which, in the course of time, all physical and conscious life has evolved. The P. S. simply teaches the conditionality, or dependent nature, of all the manifold mental and physical phenomena of existence; of everything that happens, be it in the realm of the

1. Published by The Associated Newspapers of Ceylon, Ltd., Colombo, and by Luzac & Co., London 1938.

physical or the psychical. The P. S. shows that that sum of mental and physical phenomena known by the conventional name of 'Person', or 'Individual', is not at all the mere play of blind chance; but that each phenomenon in this process of existence is entirely dependent upon other phenomena as conditions; and that therefore with the removal of those phenomena that form the conditions to rebirth and suffering, also rebirth, and therewith all suffering, will perforce cease and come to an end. And this, as already stated, is the vital point and goal of the Buddha's teaching: Deliverance from the cycle of rebirth with all its woe and suffering. Thus the P. S. serves in the elucidation of the second and third Noble Truth about the Origin and the Extinction of Suffering, by explaining these two truths from their very foundations upwards, and giving them a fixed philosophical form.¹

Many amongst you may have read, and may partly remember, the 12 links of the P. S., as well as its 11 propositions. Nevertheless, before going into details, let me first briefly rehearse these 11 propositions. They are:—

Avijjā-paccayā sankhārā, "Through Ignorance are conditioned the *sankhāras*," i.e. the rebirth-producing volitions, or Karma-formations.

Sankhāra-paccayā viññāṇam, "Through the Karma-formations (in the past life) is conditioned (the present) Consciousness."

Viññāṇa-paccayā nāma-rūpam, "Through Consciousness are conditioned the Mental and Physical phenomena", in other words, that which makes up our so-called individual existence.

Nāma-rūpa-paccayāsaḷāyatanam, "Through the Mental and Physical phenomena are conditioned the 6

1. For a detailed exposition of the Four Noble Truths s.Nyanatiloka, The Word of the Buddha. Twelfth Revised English Edition, Colombo, 1952.

Bases (of mental life),” i.e. the 5 physical sense-organs, and consciousness as the sixth.

Salāyatana-paccayā phasso, “Through the 6 Bases (i.e. the 5 sense organs and consciousness) is conditioned the (sensory and mental) Impression.”

Phassa-paccayā vedanā, “Through (the sensory or mental) Impression is conditioned Feeling.”

Vedanā-paccayā taṇhā, “Through Feeling is conditioned Craving.”

Taṇhā-paccayā upādānam, “Through Craving is conditioned Clinging.”

Upādāna-paccayā bhavo, “Through Clinging is conditioned the Process of Becoming” (consisting of the *active* and the *passive* life-process, that is to say, the rebirth-producing *Karmic process*, and as its result, the *rebirth-process*).

Bhava-paccayā jāti, “Through the (rebirth-producing *karmic*) Process of Becoming is conditioned Rebirth.”

And at last: *Jāti-paccayā jarā-maraṇam* etc. “Through Rebirth are conditioned Decay and Death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair. Thus arises this whole mass of suffering (in the future).”

This is in brief the whole P. S., or Dependent Origination. Now let us carefully examine the 11 propositions one by one.

1

Our first proposition was: *Avijjā-paccayā sankhārā* “Through Ignorance, or *Avijjā*, are conditioned the Karma-formations, *sankhārā*.”

Avijjā,¹ also called *moha*, is delusion, infatuation, regarding fleeting things as permanent, miserable things as enjoyment, and unreal things as real. *Avijjā*

1. Literally ‘not-knowing’; from √ *vid* = Lat. *vid-*, English *wit*.

is the ignorance and the not-understanding that all our existence is merely an ever changing process of mental and physical phenomena; it is the not-understanding that these phenomena, in the ultimate sense, do not form any real permanent entity, or person, or Ego; and that there does not exist any permanent entity in, or behind, these fleeting physical and mental phenomena; that therefore what we call 'I', or 'You', or 'He', or 'Person', or 'Buddha', etc., does not, in the ultimate, or paramattha sense, possess any reality apart from these ever changing physical and mental phenomena of existence. *Avijjā*, or *moha*, is the primary root-condition underlying all moral defilement and depravity; in *Avijjā* are rooted all kinds of greed, hatred, conceit, envy and misery in the world. And the overcoming and extinction of *Avijjā*, and therewith of all evil and misery, is the final aim of the Buddha's teaching, the ideal to which any true Buddhist will ever try to come nearer and nearer. And it is for these reasons that *Avijjā* is mentioned first in the formula of the P. S.

By *Sankhāra*, lit. 'formations', are here meant the rebirth-producing, karmically unwholesome or wholesome volitions (*cetanā*), or volitional activities. Let us therefore remember *sankhāra* as 'Karmaformations', or simply as Karma.¹

Now, all such evil volitions manifested by body, speech or mind, as above alluded to, are called *akusala* or unwholesome Karmaformations, as they are bringing unhappy results, here and in after-life. *Kusala* or wholesome Karmaformations, however, are such manifestations of will, or *cetanā*, as will bring happy and pleasant results, here and after life. But even these

1. Thus this Sanskrit term *karma* (Pali *kamma*, lit. doing, action) designates in Buddhist philosophy only rebirth-producing or rebirth-influencing wholesome or unwholesome action, i.e. volition (*cetanā*) manifested by body, speech, or mind. In no way, however, does karma ever signify the 'result of action' (*kamma-vipāka*), as the Theosophists and many Western Buddhists wish this term to be understood.

wholesome Karmaformations are still conditioned and influenced by Avijjā, as otherwise they would not produce future rebirth. And there is only one individual that no longer performs any wholesome or unwholesome Karmaformation, any life-affirming Karma. It is the 'Arahat', the holy and fully enlightened disciple of the Buddha.¹ For through deep insight into the true nature of this empty and evanescent process of existence, he has become utterly detached from life; and he is for ever freed from Avijjā, or ignorance, together with all its evil consequences, freed from any further rebirth.

Avijjā is to all unwholesome Karmaformations, or volitional activities, an indispensable condition, namely by way of its presence and simultaneous arising. For example, whenever an evil manifestation of will, an evil Karmaformation, arises, at that very same moment its arising is conditioned through the simultaneous arising and presence of Avijjā. Without the co-arising of Avijjā, there is no evil Karmaformation. When, for example, an infatuated man, filled with greed or anger, commits various evil things by body, speech or mind, at that time these evil Karmaformations are all entirely conditioned through the *co-arising* and *presence* of Avijjā, or Infatuation. Thus, if there is no Avijjā, there are no evil Karmaformations. Therefore it is said that Avijjā is to its associated Karmaformations a condition by way of *saha-jāta*, i.e. of *Co-nascence*, or simultaneous arising. Further, as there is no evil Karmaformation without the presence of Avijjā, and no Avijjā without the presence of evil Karmaformations, therefore both are, at any time, and under all circumstances, also *Mutual Conditions* to each other (*añña-m-añña-paccaya*); and thus Avijjā and the evil Karmaformations are inseparable.

In so far as Avijjā is an ever-present root of all evil Karmaformations, we say that Avijjā is to the un-

1. On the 3 preceding stages on the way to deliverance s. The Word of the Buddha, 12th ed., p. 35.

wholesome Karmaformations an indispensable condition by way of *Root*, or *hetu*.

But there is still another and entirely different way, in which Avijjā may be a condition to unwholesome Karmaformations, that is as *upanissaya-paccaya*, or *Inducement*. For example, if a man, being filled with greed or anger, is induced by his infatuation and delusive thoughts to commit various crimes, such as murder, theft, adultery etc., in that case Avijjā is the direct inducement and driving power, the *upanissaya-paccaya*, to the subsequent arising of all those bad manifestations of will, *i.e.* of all those unwholesome Karmaformations. In other words, those bad unwholesome Karmaformations are conditioned by a preceding state of Avijjā as a direct *Inducement*, *upanissaya-paccaya*.

There is still another way, in which Avijjā may become an Inducement to *akusala* or unwholesome Karmaformations, namely as object of thinking. Now, let us say, somebody remembers some evil and foolish pleasure once enjoyed by him ; and while he is pondering over that former foolish state, he finds delight in it and becomes again filled with infatuation and greed for it ; or, he becomes sad and despondent that he cannot enjoy it any more. Thus, in consequence of wrongly brooding over such a foolish object, over such a state of ignorance, many evil and unwholesome things arise in his mind. In such a way, Avijjā may be to evil and unwholesome Karmaformations a condition by way of *Inducement as Object*.

Now, here I have to point out that for a detailed understanding of the P. S., we should have to know at least something about those 24 different modes, or ways, in which mental or physical phenomena may be the condition to other mental and physical phenomena. The entire Paṭṭhāna, the last book of the Abhidhamma-Piṭaka, which fills 6 bulky volumes, treats exclusively of these 24 conditions, or *paccaya*, which it first describes and then applies to all the innumerable mental and

physical phenomena of existence.¹ Here we shall consider only those most prominent ones, which we have already alluded to and applied to Avijjā, namely *hetu-paccaya*, Root condition ; *sahajāta-paccaya*, condition by way of Co-nascence, i.e. co-arising ; *añña-mañña-paccaya*, condition by way of Mutuality ; *upanissaya-paccaya*, condition by way of either Direct Inducement (*pakat'upanissaya*), or Inducement through object (*ārammaṇ'upanissaya*). Here, it may be mentioned that all these translations of technical Pali terms are only very inadequate makeshifts, and should be taken as such. I am therefore giving those technical terms repeatedly in both languages, in English as well as in Pali.

Now, the Paṭṭhāna commentary compares the *hetu-paccaya*, or *Root Condition*, to the root of a tree. The tree rests on its roots; and it has life, only as long as these roots are not destroyed. In the same way, all karmically wholesome and unwholesome Karma-formations are at any time conditioned through the Presence and Co-nascence, or simultaneity, of their respective wholesome or unwholesome roots. The 3 *akusalahetu's*, unwholesome roots, are *lobha, dosa, moha*, i.e. Greed, Anger, and Delusion. The 3 *kusalahetu's* or wholesome roots, are *alobha, adosa, amoha*, i.e. Non-greed, or Unselfishness; Non-hate, or Goodness; Non-delusion, or Knowledge.

Let us now consider *saha-jāta-paccaya*, or the condition by way of "Co-nascence", or simultaneous arising. *Saha-jāta*, literally means: 'arisen together' or 'arising together', hence our term 'co-nascence', or simultaneous arising. This condition of co-nascence

1. Of this gigantic and very important, but most complicated of all the Abhidhamma works, not a single line had hitherto been translated into any of the modern languages. Even of the Pali text, only one sixth, partly in form of an abstract, has been published by the PTS London. Mrs. Rhys Davids in her preface to the Paṭṭhāna text says : " . . . the text remains very difficult and obscure to the uninitiated Western mind and I am far from pretending to solve any one of its problems." For a full synopsis of it see my ' Guide through the Abhidhamma-Pitaka ', VII.

applies, above all, to consciousness and its concomitant mental phenomena, such as feeling, perception, volition, sense-impression, attention, etc. For consciousness and all these mental phenomena are mutually conditioned through their co-nascence, or simultaneous arising. One cannot arise or exist without the other. All are inseparably associated. Thus, if we say that feeling is to consciousness a condition by way of co-nascence, or simultaneous arising, we mean to say that without the simultaneous arising of feeling, consciousness will never be able to arise. In exactly the same way it is with all the other mental phenomena.

Once a well known Buddhist author, in a discussion with me, to my greatest surprise positively declared that there may be painful feeling without consciousness, so for example during a painful operation whilst being under chloroform. This, indeed, is a most extraordinary blunder. How will it ever be possible to feel pain without being conscious of it? Painful feeling is a mental phenomenon and as such inseparable from consciousness and the other mental phenomena. If we do not perceive pain, and are not conscious of pain, how can we feel pain? Thus, consciousness, feeling, perception and all the other mental phenomena are mutually conditioned by way of Co-nascence.

Now let us consider *upanissaya-paccaya*, the condition by way of *Inducement*. This condition consists of various kinds, and it forms combinations with certain other conditions.¹ It applies to a very wide field, in fact to anything whatsoever. We shall treat this condition here only in a very general way, without making any distinctions. Anything past or future, physical or mental, real or imaginary, may become an inducement to the arising of mental phenomena, or of actions, or occurrences.

1. The 3 classes of *upanissaya-paccaya*, or the inducement-condition, are: 1. *pakati-upanissaya*, Simple or direct inducement. 2. *ārammaṇūpanissaya*, inducement by way of Object. 3. *anantarūpanissaya*, inducement by way of Proximity. About the latter s. Guide through the Abhidhamma-Pitaka, pp. 99f, 123, 126.

So, for example, the Buddha and his Dharma had been a condition for my coming to the East. So were the Pali scholars whose translations I had read. So was the first Buddhist lecture I had heard in Germany in 1899. Or, Nirvana, as Object of our thinking, may become an Inducement to our joining the Order, or living a pure life, etc. Also all those past thinkers, scientists and artists were by their works and activities an inducement to the developed culture of later generations. Money by desiring it, may, as object of our thinking, become an inducement to our making the necessary exertions to get it; or it also may become an inducement to theft and robbery. Faith, knowledge, mental concentration, etc. may be a direct Inducement to various noble and unselfish actions. Good or bad friends may be a direct Inducement to good or bad morals. Suitable or unsuitable climate, food, dwelling, etc., may be an Inducement to physical health or ill-health; physical health or ill-health to mental health or ill-health. Thus, all these things are conditioned through other things by way of Inducement.

Now, we shall consider *ārammaṇa-paccaya*, the condition by way of *Object*. The object may be either one of the 5 sense-objects, as visible object, sound, smell, taste, or bodily impression; or it may be any object of the mind. Now, anything whatever may become the object of mind, be it physical or mental, past, present or future, real or imaginary. Thus the visible object, consisting in differences of colour, light and dark, is called the object-condition to eye-consciousness, or the visual sense. Similar it is with the 4 other senses. Without physical sense-object no sense-consciousness ever will arise.—Further, past evil deeds, through being the object of our thinking, may, as we already have seen, become an inducement, or *upanissaya*, to repeat the same evil deeds; or they also may arouse our disgust, or repentance. Thus, past evil deeds, by wrong thinking about them, may become an inducement to immoral life by way of object; and by right thinking about them, the same past evil deeds may become

an inducement to moral life. In a similar way, good deeds, by right thinking about them, may become an inducement to further noble deeds ; but by wrong thinking about one's own good deeds, they may become an inducement to self-conceit and vanity, and many other evil phenomena.¹

Hence, also such an immoral thing as Avijjā may become a condition to noble and wholesome karmas. To show this, let us return to our 1st proposition : 'Through Avijjā are conditioned the Karmas'. But, how then may such an evil thing as Avijjā become a condition to noble and wholesome Karmas? It may become so in 2 ways, either by way of Direct Inducement, or Inducement as mental Object. I shall illustrate this statement by an example. At the Buddha's time many a heretic, induced by mere vanity and delusion, went to the Buddha and tried by his dialectics to defeat the Master. However, after a short controversy he was converted to a virtuous follower and life-long supporter of the Blessed One, or even attained perfect holiness. Here, all these virtuous actions, even the attainment of Holiness of the new convert, were conditioned by his former Avijjā as an Inducement ; had this delusive idea of defeating the Buddha not arisen in his mind, he perhaps might have never in his life even visited the Blessed One. Thus Avijjā was to his noble and wholesome Karmas a condition by way of direct Inducement (*pakati-upanissaya*). Further, suppose we take Avijjā as Object of our contemplation, considering it as something evil and rejectable, as the root-cause of all

1. In the Guide (p.121) are given the following examples of how "a wholesome phenomenon may be to an unwholesome phenomenon a condition by way of object." This happens e.g., if after having given alms etc., one indulges and delights in this act, and thereby arises greed, evil views, doubt, restlessness, or sadness ("either to oneself, or to others" says the Com.). Or, if one indulges and delights in good deeds done formerly, and thereby arises greed, etc. Or, if after rising from the Jhānas, one indulges and delights in this attainment, and thereby arises conceit etc. Or if, while regretting that the Jhāna (which one had attained) has vanished, sadness springs up.

misery in the world, then we thereby may produce many noble and wholesome Karmaformations. In this case, Avijjā is to these wholesome Karmaformations a condition by way of Inducement as Object (*ārammaṇūpanissaya*).¹

Now, before proceeding to the 2nd proposition, I wish to call your attention to the fact that Avijjā, or Ignorance, though being the main condition to the Karmaformations, is in no way the only condition to the Karmaformations ; and so are the Karmaformations to Consciousness etc. Each of the conditionally arising phenomena of the P.S. is dependent on various conditions besides that given in the formula, and all may be interrelated and interdependent in manifold ways.

In Samyutta-Nikāya² there are enumerated 7 kinds of knowledge with regard to each of the 11 propositions of the P.S., hence 77 kinds altogether, to wit :—

—the knowledge that (in this present life) the Karmaformations are conditioned through Ignorance ;

—that, if there is no Ignorance, there are no Karmaformations ;

—that also in the past the Karmaformations were conditioned through Ignorance ;

—that, if there had been no Ignorance in the past, there would have been no Karmaformations ;

—that also in the future the Karmaformations will be conditioned through Ignorance ;

—that, if there will be no Ignorance in the future, there will be no Karmaformations ;

—that even one's knowledge of the fixity of this law is subject to decay, disappearance, waning and cessation. In a similar way are to be understood the 7 kinds of

1. For details of the 24 conditions s. Nyanatiloka, Buddhist Dictionary: paccaya.

2. Nidāna-Samyutta, No. 34.

knowledge with regard to each of the remaining 10 propositions.

You may have noticed that nearly always I am speaking only of *conditions*, and rarely have used the word 'cause'. This word 'cause' namely is often used in a very vague or wrong sense. 'Cause' refers really to that thing which—if all the necessary conditions are present—by inner necessity is in time followed by another thing as its 'result', so that already in the cause the future result is lying latent, as it were, just as in the mango-seed the future mango-tree.

And just as from the mango seed only a mango tree may result, never an apple tree, nor any other tree, just so may a cause result only in just one single thing of a similar character, never in various things, nor in things of a different character. If, for example, a man grows furious on being scolded, people generally would say that the scolding man was the cause of his fury. But this is a very vague statement. The cause, namely, of the man's fury really lies in himself, in his own character, not in the person scolding him. The scolder's words were merely an Inducement to the manifestation of his latent fury. The word 'Cause' signifies only one of the many kinds of conditions, and it should, in Buddhist philosophy, be reserved for Karma, *i.e.* the rebirth-producing volitional activities bound up with wholesome or unwholesome roots (*hetu*), constituting the cause of rebirth, and resulting in rebirth as their effect, or *vipāka*.

2

Herewith we come to the 2nd proposition : *Sankhāra-paccayā viññāṇam*, 'Through the Karmaformations conditioned is Consciousness'. In other words: through Karma, or the volitional activities, *kamma-cetanā*, in the past birth is conditioned the conscious life in this present birth.

Here the following has to be stated: The 5 links, as Consciousness, Mental and Physical phenomena, the 6 Bases of mental life, Impression, and Feeling, (*viññāṇa, nāma-rūpa, saḷ-āyatana, phassa, vedanā*): these 5 links

refer here only to karma-resultant (*vipāka*) neutral phenomena, thus representing the 'passive' side of life. However, the 5 links, as Ignorance, Karma-formations, Craving, Clinging, and Karmical Life-process (*avijjā, sankhāra, taṇhā, upādāna, kamma-bhava*): these 5 links constitute Karma, thus representing the 'active' side of life.¹ Hence, the 5 passive links, as consciousness etc., are to be considered as the 5 'Results' (*vipāka*), and the 5 active links, as *avijjā*, etc., as the 5 'Causes'. Thus, the life-affirming will, or volition (*cetanā*), manifested in these 5 karmic causes, is the seed from which all life has sprung, and from which it will spring again in the future. Our 2nd proposition therefore shows that our present conscious life is the result of our Karmaformations produced in the past life, and that without these prenatal Karmaformations as the necessary cause, no conscious life ever would have sprung up in our mother's womb, as can be inferred from the passage in the Mahānidāna-Sutta²: "Once all *Ignorance* (*avijjā*) and *Clinging* are extinguished, neither wholesome nor unwholesome *Karmaformations* (*sankhāra*) are produced, and thus no *Consciousness* (*viññāṇa*) will spring up again in a new mother's womb."

Hence, the Karmaformations are to the Rebirth-consciousness of the embryonic being, at its conception in the mother's womb, a condition by way of *Karma*, or cause. And so are the Karmaformations to all the morally neutral elements of consciousness. Hence, also the 5 kinds of sense-consciousness with desirable and agreeable objects are the result, or *vipāka*, of the prenatal wholesome Karmaformations; and those with undesirable and disagreeable objects are the result of unwholesome Karmaformations.³

1. Cf. diagram p.67.

2. Dīgha-Nikāya.

3. It is really the quality of the 5 sense-objects allotted to each being that, in the main, decides the degree of his worldly happiness or unhappiness.

Now we come to the 3rd proposition, namely : *Viññāṇa-paccayā nāma-rūpaṃ*, 'Through Consciousness conditioned are the Mental and Physical phenomena.' The meaning of this proposition can be inferred from the Nidāna-Saṃyutta, where it is said : " If *Consciousness* (*viññāṇa*) were not to appear in the mother's womb, would there in that case the *Mental and Physical Phenomena* (*nāma-rūpa*) arise ? " ¹

Now, the *mental* phenomena (*nāma*) refer here to those 7 universal mental phenomena inseparably bound up with all Karma-resultant consciousness, even with the 5 kinds of sense-consciousness. These 7 inseparable universal mental phenomena are: feeling, perception, impression, volition, vitality, attention, concentration; in karma-resultant mind-consciousness they are increased by 3 or 4 further phenomena. The *physical* phenomena (*rūpa*) refer to this body and its various organs, faculties and functions. ²

Now, how are the mental phenomena, or *nāma*, conditioned through consciousness? And how the physical phenomena, or *rūpa*?

Any state of *Consciousness*, as already explained, is to its concomitant *Mental* phenomena, such as feeling etc., a condition by way of *Co-nascence*, or simultaneous arising (*sahajāta-paccaya*). Consciousness cannot arise and exist without feeling, nor feeling

1. All such translations of *nāma-rūpa* as 'name and form', 'Bild und Begriff' (image and idea, or concept), 'Geistkoerper' and 'Geist-Leiblichkeit' (mind-body) etc., are totally out of place. *Nāma-rūpa* = "*nāmaṃ ca rūpaṃ ca*" (Majjh. Nik. No. 9), i.e. 'the mental and the physical,' apart from its application in the Paticcasamuppāda, is a name for the 5 groups of existence, namely: the 4 *nāma-kkhandhas*, or mental groups (feeling, perception, mental formations, consciousness), and the *rūpa-kkhandha*, or corporeality-group. Here, in the Paticcasamuppāda, *nāma* stands only for the 3 mental groups: feeling, perception, mental formations, whilst consciousness is singled out, in order to show that all mental and physical life of beings is dependent on it.

2. In the canonical texts only 27 physical phenomena are mentioned, whilst in the commentaries this number is increased by the Physical Seat of Mind (lit. 'heart-base' ; see p. 69).

without consciousness ; and also all the other mental phenomena which belong to the same state of consciousness, are inseparably bound up with it into a single unit, and have no independent existence. These mental phenomena are, as it were, only the different aspects of those units of consciousness which like lightning every moment flash up and immediately thereafter disappear for ever.

But, how may *Consciousness* (*viññāṇa*) be a condition to the various *Physical* (*rūpa*) phenomena, for example to the 5 physical sense-organs?

Whenever the visual-organ, the eye, at birth for the first time begins to function, at that very first moment is the arising of eye-consciousness an absolutely necessary condition to the sensitive visual organ, the eye, *that is* by way of *Co-nascence*, or simultaneous arising (*sahajāta-paccaya*). Thus, as long as the eye-consciousness, or vision, does not arise, so long does the sensitive organ not yet exist. During life-continuity, however, *Consciousness* (*viññāṇa*) is to the already arisen *Physical* (*rūpa*) phenomena a condition by way of *Post-nascence*, or later-arising (*pacchājāta-paccaya*), and also by way of *Nutriment* (*āhāra*), because consciousness forms a prop and support for the up-keep of the body. Just as the feeling of hunger is a condition for the feeding and up-keep of this already arisen body, just so is consciousness to this already arisen body a condition and support by its *Post-nascence*, or later arising. If consciousness would rise no more, the physical organs would gradually cease their functioning, lose their faculties, and the body would die. In this way we have to understand the proposition : *viññāṇa-paccayā nāma-rūpaṃ*, 'Through Consciousness conditioned are the Mental and Physical phenomena.'

4

Now, we come to the fourth proposition : *Nāma-rūpa-paccayā saḷāyatanaṃ*. 'Through the Mental and Physical phenomena (*nāma* and *rūpa*) are conditioned the 6 Bases of mental life, the 6 *āyatanas*.' The first

5 of these Bases are the 5 physical sense-organs, *i.e.* eye, ear, nose, tongue, body; the 6th Base, the Mind-base (*manāyatana*), is a collective term for the many different classes of consciousness, *i.e.* for the five kinds of sense-consciousness, and the many kinds of mind-consciousness. Hence, 5 Bases are Physical phenomena, namely eye, ear, etc., and the 6th Base is identical with Consciousness.

In which way, now, are the Mental and Physical phenomena (*nāma* and *rūpa*) a condition to the 5 physical Bases, or sense-organs, and how to the 6th Base, or consciousness? Here we really get 4 chief questions :—

The 1st question is: How are the Mental phenomena (*nāma*) a condition to the 5 physical Bases (*āyatana*), or sense-organs? The 7 inseparable Mental phenomena (*nāma*) associated with sense-consciousness, such as feeling, perception etc.,¹ these 7 mental phenomena are to the 5 physical Bases (*āyatana*), or sense-organs, a condition by way of Post-nascence, and in other ways. The Mental activity during life, namely, is a necessary support to the 5 physical Bases, or sense organs, already produced at birth, as explained before.

The 2nd question is: How are the Mental (*nāma*) phenomena a condition to the Mind-Base (*manāyatana*), or consciousness? The Mental phenomena, as feeling, perception, volition, etc., are at any time to the Mind-Base, or consciousness, a condition by way of simultaneous arising, or Co-nascence (*sahajāta-paccaya*).

You will remember that I repeatedly have told you that consciousness cannot arise without the co-arising of feeling and the other phenomena, because consciousness and all its mental concomitants are inseparably bound up together, and mutually dependent upon one another. Thus I have shown, how the Mental (*nāma*) phenomena are a condition to the 5 physical Base (*pañcāyatana*), or sense-organs, as well as to the Mind-Base, or consciousness (*manāyatana*).

1. See p. 51

Now we come to the 3rd question : How are the Physical (*rūpa*) phenomena a condition to the 5 physical Bases (*āyatana*), or sense-organs? The 4 primary physical Elements, *i.e.* the solid, fluid, heat, and motion, these 4 elements are to any of the 5 physical Bases, or sense-organs, at the very moment of their first coming to existence, a condition by way of simultaneous arising (*sahajāta-paccaya*); but during life these 4 physical elements are to the 5 Bases, or sense-organs, a condition by way of Foundation (*nissaya*) on which the sense-organs are entirely dependent. Further, the Physical phenomenon 'Vitality', or *rūpa-jīvit'indriya*, is to the 5 Bases, or sense-organs, a condition by way of 'Presence' (*atthi-paccaya*) etc.; in other words, the 5 Bases, or sense-organs, depend on the presence of Physical life, without which the 5 sense-organs could not exist.

The Physical phenomenon 'Nutrition' (*āhāra*), is to the 5 physical Bases, or sense-organs, a condition by way of 'Presence', because the 5 sense-organs can only exist, as long as they get their necessary nutriment. Thus I have shown, how the Physical phenomena, or *rūpa*, are a condition to the 5 physical Bases, or *āyatana*.

There remains only the 4th question : How are the Physical phenomena (*rūpa*) a condition to the Mind-Base (*manāyatana*), or consciousness? The 5 Physical phenomena, as eye, ear, nose, etc., are to the 5 kinds of sense-consciousness, *i.e.* to seeing, hearing, etc., a condition by way of 'Foundation' (*nissaya*) and by way of Pre-nascence, Presence, etc. Because these five kinds of sense-consciousness, during life, cannot arise without the Pre-arising (*pure-jāta*) of the 5 physical sense-organs as their Foundation (*nissaya*) ; therefore without the Pre-arising, and Presence of the eye, no seeing ; without the pre-arising and presence of the ear, no hearing etc.; so that, if these 5 sense-organs are destroyed, no corresponding sense-consciousness can arise any longer.

In a similar way is the Physical organ of mind the

condition to the various stages of mind-consciousness.¹ In the canonical books no special physical organ is mentioned by name as the physical foundation of the inner or Mind-consciousness, neither the brain, nor the heart, though the heart is taught as such by all the commentaries, as well as by the general Buddhist tradition. I think it is my Burmese friend Shwe Zan Aung, by whom this fact was first made known in his *Compendium of Philosophy*.² For the Buddhist it matters little, whether it is the heart, or the brain, or any other organ that constitutes the physical base of Mind.

Thus we have seen, how the Physical (*rūpa*) phenomena are a condition to the Mind-Base (*manāyatana*), or consciousness. And herewith we have settled the proposition: 'Through the Mental and Physical phenomena (*nāma* and *rūpa*) are conditioned the 6 Bases of mental life, the 6 *āyatana*'.

5

Now we come to the 5th proposition: *Sal-āyatana-paccayā phasso*, 'Through the 6 Bases conditioned is Impression'.³ In other words: Conditioned through the physical eye is the visual impression, conditioned through the ear the sound-impression, conditioned through the nose the smell-impression, conditioned through the tongue the taste-impression, conditioned through the body the bodily impression, conditioned

1. *Mano-viññāṇa*, or mind-consciousness, does not depend upon the simultaneous function of any of the 5 physical sense-organs, although visible objects, sounds etc. may nevertheless reappear as mental objects therein. Of this fact, dream-consciousness furnishes a vivid illustration.

2. Shwe Zan Aung, *Compendium of Philosophy*, London 1910, p.277f.

3. The literal and usual translation of *phassa* with 'contact' is very ambiguous and misleading. *Phassa*, namely, does not denote a physiological function, but a purely mental phenomenon. It is heading the list of those 50 phenomena which in Buddhist classification are summed up into the group of mental formations (*sankhāra-kkhandha*). See Nyanatiloka, *The Five Khandhas* (Tables), Colombo 1937.

through the mind or consciousness (*manâyatana*) the mental impression.

The 5 physical Bases, or sense-organs (*āyatana*), are to their corresponding Sense-impressions (*phassa*) a condition by way of Foundation (*nissaya*) and by way of Pre-nascence (*pure-jāta*) and in other ways besides. The 5 sense-organs, to wit, are not only the foundation to Consciousness, as we have seen, but also to all its mental concomitants, hence also to Sense-impression, or *phassa*. And as these 5 Bases, or sense-organs, have already come to existence at birth, they are called a Pre-nascent condition (*pure-jāta-paccaya*) to the later arising 5 Sense-impressions.

The Mind-Base ' (*manâyatana*), or consciousness, is at any time to its concomitant sensory or mental Impression (*phassa*) a condition by way of simultaneous arising or Co-nascence, etc. In other words, eye-consciousness arises simultaneously with visual impression, ear-consciousness with sound impression etc., and mind-consciousness with mental impression.

Also the External physical Bases (*āyatana*), namely the 5 sense-objects, as the visual object, sound, smell, etc., these too are an indispensable condition to the arising of sense-impression (*phassa*). So could visual impression never arise without the pre-arising of the visible object, sound-impression never without the pre-arising of the sound-object etc. Hence, the arising of the 5 Sense-impressions (*phassa*) depends on the pre-arising of the visual object, the sound-object etc. Therefore the arising of the 5 Sense-impressions depends just as much on the Pre-arising and Presence of the 5 physical sense-objects, as on the pre-arising of the 5 sense-organs, as already stated. Thus, Sense-impression is also conditioned through the 5 external physical Bases, *i.e.* through the 5 sense-objects.

Further, as all the physical sense-objects may also become objects of mind-consciousness, therefore they are also a condition to mind-consciousness, as well as

to its concomitant phenomena, as Mental Impression (*phassa*) etc. Thus, without physical sense-organ and physical sense-object there is no Sense-impression ; and without mind and mind-object no Mental impression. Therefore it is said: 'Through the 6 Bases (*āyatana*) is conditioned the Impression (*phassa*)'.

6

Thereafter follows the 6th proposition: *Phassa-paccayā vedanā*, 'Through Impression conditioned is Feeling'. There are 6 kinds of Feeling: feeling associated with visual impression, feeling associated with sound-impression, feeling associated with smell-impression, feeling associated with taste-impression, feeling associated with body-impression, and feeling associated with mental impression. *Bodily* feeling may be either agreeable or disagreeable, according to whether it is the result of wholesome or unwholesome Karma. *Mental* feeling may be either agreeable, *i.e.* joy, or disagreeable, *i.e.* sadness; or it may be indifferent. The feelings associated with visual, sound-, smell- and taste-impression, are, as such, always indifferent, but they may have either desirable or undesirable objects, according to the Karma in a previous life. Whatever the feeling may be, pleasant or painful, happy or unhappy, or indifferent, whether feeling of body, or mind: any Feeling is conditioned either through one of the 5 Sense-impressions or through Mental impression. And these impressions (*phassa*) are a condition to their associated feeling (*vedanā*) by way of co-nascence or simultaneous arising, and in many other ways. Here you will again remember that all the mental phenomena in one and the same state of consciousness, hence also Impression (*phassa*) and Feeling (*vedanā*), are necessarily dependent one upon another by their simultaneous arising, their presence, their association, etc. But to any Feeling associated with the different stages of mind-consciousness following upon a Sense-impression, to such feeling the preceding visual or other Sense-impression is an Inducement by way of Proximity (*anantarūpanissaya-paccaya*).

In other words, the preceding Sense-impression is a decisive support, or inducement, to any Feeling bound up with the succeeding mind-consciousness.

Thus we have seen how through sensory and mental Impression, or *phassa*, is conditioned Feeling, or *vedanā*.

7

Now comes the 7th proposition: *Vedanā-paccayā taṇhā*, 'Through Feeling conditioned is Craving', or *taṇhā*.

Corresponding to the 6 senses, there are 6 kinds of Craving, or *taṇhā*, namely: craving for visible objects, craving for sounds, craving for odours, craving for tastes, craving for bodily impressions, craving for mind-objects. If the craving for any of these objects is connected with the desire for sensual enjoyment, it is called 'Sensuous Craving', or *kāma-taṇhā*. If connected with the belief in eternal personal existence,¹ it is called 'Craving for Existence', or *bhava-taṇhā*. If connected with the belief in Self-annihilation² at death, it is called 'Craving for Self-annihilation' or *vibhava-taṇhā*.

Now, any (Karma-resultant and morally) neutral Feeling (*vedanā*), whether agreeable, disagreeable or indifferent, whether happy or unhappy feeling, any of these feelings may be to the subsequent Craving (*taṇhā*) a condition either by way of simple Inducement, or of Inducement as Object. For example, conditioned through pleasurable feeling due to the beautiful appearance of persons or things, there may arise Craving for such visible objects. Or, conditioned through pleasurable Feeling due to pleasant food, Craving for tastes may arise. Or, thinking of those Feelings of pleasure and enjoyment procurable by money, people may become filled with Craving for money and pleasure. Or, pondering over past pleasures and Feelings of happiness, people may again become filled

1. *sassata-ditṭhi*.

2. *uccheda-ditṭhi*.

with Craving and longing for such pleasures. Or, thinking of heavenly bliss and joy, people may become filled with Craving for rebirth in such heavenly worlds. In all these cases pleasant Feeling (*vedanā*) is to Craving (*taṇhā*) either a condition by way of simple Inducement, or Inducement as Object of thinking.

But not only agreeable and happy Feeling, but even disagreeable and unhappy Feeling may become a condition to Craving. For example, to a man through being tormented with bodily pain, or oppressed in mind, the craving may arise to be released from such misery. Thus, through feeling unhappy and dissatisfied with his miserable lot, a poor man, or a beggar, or an out-cast, or a sick man, or a prisoner, may become filled with longing and Craving for release from such a condition. In all these cases unpleasant and miserable Feeling (*vedanā*) of body and mind forms to Craving (*taṇhā*) a condition by way of Inducement, without which such craving never might have arisen. Even expected *future* Feeling of happiness, as you have seen, may, by thinking about it, become a mighty incentive, or inducement, to Craving. Thus, whatever Craving arises, any Craving depends, in some way or other, always on Feeling, be it past, present, or even future feeling. Therefore it is said: *Vedanā-paccayā taṇhā*, 'Through Feeling conditioned is Craving'.

8

Now we have reached the 8th proposition: *taṇhā-paccayā upādānam*, 'Through Craving conditioned is Clinging'. *Upādāna*, or Clinging, is said to be a name for developed, or intensified craving. In the texts we find 4 kinds of Clinging, or attachment. Now, these 4 kinds of Clinging are: sensuous clinging,¹ clinging to evil views,² clinging to faith in the moral efficacy of mere outward rules and rituals,³ and clinging to the belief in either an eternal or a temporary Ego-entity.⁴ The first one, the sensuous

1. *kāmūpādāna*.

2. *diṭṭhūpādāna*.

3. *sīlabbatūpādāna*.

4. *attavādupādāna*.

clinging, refers to objects of sensuous enjoyment, while the 3 other kinds of clinging are connected with wrong views.

Whenever Clinging to Views or R̥ituals arises, at that very moment also Craving must arise ; without the simultaneous arising of craving, there would be no such attachments to these views and rituals. Hence, Craving, or *taṇhā*, is to these kinds of Clinging, or *upādāna*, a condition by way of co-nascence, or simultaneous arising, *sahajāta-paccaya*. But besides this, craving may be to such kind of clinging also a condition by way of inducement, or *upanissaya-paccaya*. Suppose, a fool who is craving for rebirth in heaven, thinks that by following certain outward moral rules, or by mere belief in a creator, he will attain the object of his desire. So he firmly attaches himself to the practice of mere outward rules and rituals, or to the belief in a creator. In this case, Craving is to such kind of Clinging a condition by way of inducement, or *upanissaya-paccaya*.

To Sensuous Clinging, or *kāmūpādāna*, however, Craving may only be a condition by way of direct Inducement. The Craving for sense-objects itself gradually develops and turns into strong sensuous Clinging and attachment, or *kāmūpādāna*. For example, craving and desire for objects of sensual enjoyment, for money, food, gambling, drinking etc., such Craving may gradually grow into a strong habit, into a firm attachment and Clinging.

Thus I have shown, how Craving, or *taṇhā*, is the condition to Clinging, or *upādāna*. As it is said : *Taṇhā-paccayā upādānam*, 'Through Craving conditioned is Clinging'.

9

Next we come to the 9th proposition : *upādāna-paccayā bhavo*, 'Through Clinging conditioned is the Process of Becoming, or *bhava*.' Now, this process of Becoming or existence, really consists of two processes : (1) the Karma-Process (*kamma-bhava*), i.e. the karmically

active side of life ; and (2) the Karma-resultant Rebirth-Process (*upapatti-bhava*), i.e. the karmically *passive* and morally neutral side of life. The karmically active side of this Life-process is, as we have seen, represented by 5 links, namely: Ignorance, Karmaformations, Craving, Clinging, Karma-process, in Pali *avijjā sankhāra, taṇhā, upādāna, kamma-bhava*; and also the passive side of life is represented by 5 links, namely: Consciousness, Mental and Physical phenomena, the 6 Bases, Impression, Feeling, in Pali: *viññāṇa, nāma-rūpa, saḷ-āyatana, phassa, vedanā*. Thus the 5 *passive* links, as consciousness etc., refer here only to karma-resultant phenomena, and not to such as are associated with active Karma ; and the 5 *karma-active* links, as Ignorance etc., are the causes of the 5 *passive* links of the future, as karma-resultant consciousness etc.; and thus these 5 passive links are the results of the 5 active links. In that way, the P.S. may be represented by 20 links: 5 causes in past life, and 5 results in the present one ; 5 causes in the present life, and 5 results in the future one.¹

As it said in Vis. Magga, xvii :—

‘ ‘ 5 causes were there in the past,
5 fruits are found in present life ;
5 causes which are now produced,
5 fruits are reaped in future life. ’ ’

Let me here recall to you my definition of the term ‘ *cause* ’ as ‘ that which by inner necessity is followed in time by its result ’. There are 24 modes of conditioning, but only one of them should be called *cause*, namely Karma.

Though this karmic cause is in time followed by its result, it nevertheless may depend on (but not be produced by) a preceding karma-result as its Inducement-

1. The past Karma-process (1-2) and the present Karma-process (8-10), though here represented by different links, are nevertheless throughout identical, and both do therefore include the 5 karmic causes. In the same way are the 2 links 11-12 representing the 5 karma-results (3-7). Comp. diagram on p.67.

condition. Thus for example, Feeling, within the Paticca-Samuppāda, is a karma-result ; but still, at the same time, it is an Inducement-condition to the subsequent arising of Craving, which latter is a karmic cause.

Prof. Verworn, the famous German physiologist, in his work 'The Exploring of Life' says : " Our whole task in exploring the mechanical working of sensations, ideas and thoughts —as everywhere in scientific research—consists only in finding out all their *conditions*. Let us therefore become accustomed not to search after 'causes' of the happenings in the world ; but let us analyze the 'conditions' to these happenings. For the world is really a great complex, in which even the tiniest link is unambiguously determined manner. The lifeless things, just as the living world, man with his thinking and striving, as well as man's culture with its ideals, which he by an enormous output of energy has created for himself : all these things are nothing but the expression of certain conditions changing and developing according to laws."

Now, let us return to our proposition : *upādāna-paccayā bhavo*, 'Through Clinging conditioned is the process of Becoming, namely (1) the Karma-process (*kamma-bhava*), and thereafter, in the next life, (2) the karma-resultant Rebirth-process (*upapatti-bhava*). The Karma-process (*kamma-bhava*) in this 9th proposition is, correctly speaking, a collective name for rebirth-producing Volition (*cetanā*) together with all the Mental Phenomena associated therewith ; while the second link, 'Karmaformations' (*sankhāra*), designates as such merely rebirth-producing Volition. But in reality, both links amount to one and the same thing, namely to Karma.

Now, Clinging, or *upādāna*, may be an inducement to all kinds of evil and unwholesome Karma. Sensuous Clinging, or attachment to sense-objects and sensual enjoyment, may be a direct inducement to murder, robbery, theft, adultery, to envy, hatred, revenge ; to many evil actions of body, speech and mind. Cling-

ing to the blind belief in mere outward rules and rituals may lead to self-complacency, mental torpor and stagnation, to contempt of others, assumption, intolerance, fanaticism and cruelty. In all these cases, Clinging (*upādāna*) is to the Karma-Process (*kamma-bhava*) a condition by way of inducement, and is a direct inducement to evil volitional activities of body, speech or mind. Moreover, Clinging is to any evil Karmaprocess also a condition by way of simultaneous arising.

Thus I have shown, how Clinging (*upādāna*) is the condition of the Karmaprocess (*kamma-bhava*). Now I shall show, how the Karma-Process (*kamma-bhava*) is the condition to the karma-resultant Rebirth-Process (*upapatti-bhava*). Herewith we come to the 10th proposition :

10

Bhava-paccayā jāti, 'Through the Process of Becoming (here Karma-Process) is conditioned Rebirth'. That means: the Karmaprocess dominated by the life-affirming volition (*cetanā*), is the cause of rebirth. Rebirth includes here the entire embryonic process which in the world of men begins with conception in the mother's womb, and ends with parturition. Thus, Karmic Volition is the seed from which all life germinates, just as from the mango-seed germinates the little mango-plant, which in the course of time turns into a mighty mango-tree. But, how does one know that the Karma-process, or karmic volition, is really the cause of rebirth? Visuddhi-Magga (xvii) gives the following answer :

“Though the outward conditions at the birth of beings may be absolutely the same, there still can be seen a difference in beings with regard to their character, as wretched or noble, etc. Even though the outward conditions, such as sperm, or blood of father and mother, may be the same, there still can be seen that difference between beings, even if they be twins. This difference cannot be without reason, as it can be noticed at any time, and in any being. It can have no other cause than the pre-natal Karmaprocess. As also for the

life of those beings which have been reborn, no other reason can be found, therefore that difference must be due to the pre-natal Karmaprocess. Karma, or volition, indeed, is the cause for the differences amongst beings with regard to their character, as high, low, etc. Therefore the Buddha has said: 'Karma divides beings into high and low.' In this way we should understand that the Karmic Process is the cause of Rebirth."

Thus, according to Buddhism, the present rebirth is the result of the craving and clinging Karmavolutions in the past birth. And the craving and clinging Karmavolutions in this present birth are the cause of future rebirth. But just as in this ever-changing mental and physical process of existence nothing can be found that passes even from one moment to the next moment, just so no abiding element can be found, no entity, no Ego, that would pass from one birth to the next birth. In this ever and ever repeated process of rebirth, in the absolute sense, no Ego-entity is to be found besides these conditionally arising and passing phenomena. Thus it is, correctly speaking, not myself and not my person that is reborn; nor is it another person that is reborn. All such terms as 'person' or 'individual' or 'man' or 'I' or 'you' or 'mine' etc., all these do not refer to any real Entity; they are merely terms used for convenience sake, in Pali *vohāra-vacana*, 'conventional terms'; and there is really nothing to be found beside these conditionally arising and passing mental and physical phenomena. Therefore the Buddha has said:

"To believe that the doer of the deed will be the same, as the one who experiences its result (in the next life): this is the one extreme. To believe that the doer of the deed, and the one who experiences its result, are two different persons: this is the other extreme. Both these extremes the Perfect One has avoided and taught the truth that lies in the middle of both, to wit: Through Ignorance conditioned are the Karmaformations; through the Karmaformations, Consciousness (in the subsequent birth); through Consciousness, the Mental

and Physical phenomena ; through the Mental and Physical phenomena, the 6 Bases; through the 6 Bases, Impression; through Impression, Feeling; through Feeling, Craving; through Craving, Clinging; through Clinging, the Life-process; through the (Karmic) Life-process, Rebirth; through Rebirth, Decay and Death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair. Thus arises this whole mass of suffering.”

This phenomenality and egolessness of existence has been beautifully expressed in two verses of the Visuddhi-Magga, to wit :

“ No doer of the deeds is found,
No one who ever reaps their fruits,
Empty phenomena roll on.
This only is the correct view.

“ No god, nor Brahma, can be called
The maker of this wheel of life :
Empty phenomena roll on,
Dependent on conditions all.”¹

Now, in hearing that Buddhism teaches that everything is determined by conditions, someone might come to the conclusion that Buddhism teaches some sort of fatalism, or that man has no free will, or that will is not free. Now, with regard to the two questions : (1) ‘ Has ‘ man ’ a free will ? ’, (2) ‘ Is ‘ Will ’ free ? ’, the Buddhist will say that both these questions are to be rejected for being wrongly put, and therefore unanswerable.

The 1st question namely, ‘ Has man a free will ? ’ is to be rejected for the reason that, beside these ever changing mental and physical phenomena, in the absolute sense, no such thing or entity can be found that we could call ‘ man ’, so that ‘ *man* ’, as such, is merely a name without any reality.

The 2nd question ‘ Is Will free ? ’ is to be rejected for the reason that ‘ *will* ’ is only a momentary mental

1. *kammassa kāraṇaṃ n’atthi, na h’ettha devo brahmā vā*
vipākassa ca vedako : saṃsārass’atthi kāraṇaṃ :
suddhadhammā pavattanti, suddhadhammā pavattanti,
ev’etaṃ sammādaṣṣaṇaṃ. hetusambhārapaccayā.

phenomenon, just as feeling, consciousness etc., and thus does not yet exist before it arises, and that therefore of a non-existent thing—of a thing which is not—one could, properly speaking, not ask whether it is free, or unfree. The only admissible question would be: 'Is the arising of Will independent of conditions, or is it conditioned?' But the same question would equally apply also to all the other mental phenomena, as well as to all the physical phenomena, in other words, to everything and every occurrence whatever. And the answer would be:—Be it 'Will', or 'Feeling', or any other mental or any physical phenomenon, the arising of anything whatsoever depends on conditions; and without these conditions, nothing ever can arise or enter into existence.

According to Buddhism, everything mental and physical happens in accordance with laws and conditions; and if it were otherwise, chaos and blind chance would reign. But such a thing is impossible and contradicts all laws of thinking.

11

Now, we have reached the 11th and last proposition: *jāti-paccayā jarā-maraṇam*, 'Through Rebirth conditioned are Decay and Death'. Without Birth there cannot be decay and death. If we had not been born, we would not have to die, and would not be exposed to all sorts of misery. Thus rebirth is a necessary condition to decay and death, and to all the other forms of misery. Therefore it was said: 'Through rebirth conditioned are decay and death.'—

Herewith the explanation of the 11 propositions of the Paṭiccasamuppāda-formula has been brought to a close. From my explanations you will have seen that the 12 links of the formula are distributed over 3 successive lives, and that they may be applied to our past, present and future life. The first 2 links, Avijjā and Karmaformations, represent the karmic causes in the past life; the next 5 links, consciousness etc., represent the karma-results in the present life; the following 3 links, Craving, Clinging and Karma-process,

represent the Karmic-causes in the present life; and the 2 last links, Rebirth, and Decay and Death, represent the karma-results in the future life.

You ought, however, to remember that the full karmic causes are 5, namely: Ignorance, Karmaformations, Craving, Clinging, Karma-process, and that thus we really get 5 causes in the past and 5 results in the present; five causes in the present and 5 results in the future, wherefore it was said :

“ Five causes were there in the past,
Five fruits are found in present life.
Five causes which are now produced,
Five fruits are reaped in future life.”¹

Now, if there had been no ignorance and no karmaformations or life-affirming volitions in the past life, no consciousness and new life would have sprung up in our mother's womb, and our present birth would not have taken place. However, if by deep penetration and deep insight into the evanescent nature and the egolessness of all existence, man fully becomes detached from all forms of existence, and freed from all ignorance, craving and clinging to existence, freed from all those selfish Karmaformations, or volitions, then no further rebirth will follow, and the goal taught by the Buddha will have been realized, namely deliverance from rebirth and suffering.

1. The following diagram of the P.S. shows at a glance the relationship of dependence between three successive lives :—

Past	1. Ignorance (<i>avijjā</i>) 2. Karma-Formations (<i>sankhāra</i>)	Karma-Process (<i>kamma-bhava</i>) or the 5 karmic causes : 1, 2, 8, 9, 10
Present	3. Consciousness (<i>viññāṇa</i>) 4. Corporeality & Mentality (<i>nāma-rūpa</i>) 5. The 6 Bases (<i>āyatana</i>) 6. Impression (<i>phassa</i>) 7. Feeling (<i>vedanā</i>)	Rebirth-Process (<i>upapatti-bhava</i>) or the 5 Karma-results : 3-7
	8. Craving (<i>taṇhā</i>) 9. Clinging (<i>upādāna</i>) 10. Process of Existence	Karma-Process ⁷ (<i>kamma-bhava</i>) or the 5 karmic causes : 1, 2, 8, 9, 10.
Future	11. Rebirth (<i>jāti</i>) 12. Decay & Death (<i>jarā-marana</i>)	Rebirth-Process (<i>upapatti-bhava</i>) or the 5 Karma-results : 3-7.

IV

MENTAL CULTURE

THE whole of the Buddha's teachings may be summed up in three words: Morality, Mental Concentration, and Wisdom, *sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā*. This is the three-fold division of the Eightfold Path leading to deliverance from the misery of Saṃsāra. And of this eightfold path, Right Speech, Action and Livelihood are included in Morality, or *sīla*; Right Effort, Mindfulness and Concentration in mental Concentration, or *samādhi*; Right Understanding and Thought in Wisdom, or *paññā*.¹

Of these three stages, Morality constitutes the foundation without which no real progress along the Eightfold Path to purity and deliverance is possible. The two higher stages, Concentration and Wisdom, are brought to perfection by that which in the West usually, but rather ambiguously, is called 'Meditation'. By this latter term, the Buddhist Pali term *bhāvanā* is usually translated.

The word *bhāvanā* is a verbal noun derived from the causative of the verb $\sqrt{bhū}$ *bhavati*, to be, to become; and therefore literally means 'the bringing into existence', *i.e.* the producing, the development. Thus the Development of Mind is twofold:

1. Development of mental Concentration (*samādhi-bhāvanā*), or Tranquillity (*samatha-bhāvanā*);
2. Development of Wisdom (*paññā-bhāvanā*), or clear Insight (*vipassanā-bhāvanā*).

In this popular exposition I only wish to give a general idea of the authentic method of this twofold mental culture, and I shall not be going much into

1. Cf. p.6, diagram.

details. It is to be regretted that in Lanka one very rarely meets with laymen, or even monks, who are earnestly devoting themselves to these two higher stages of Buddhist life. In Burma and Siam, however, the two strongholds of original Buddhism, we still find quite a number of monks and hermits, who are living in the solitudes of deep forests or in caves, and who, detached from all worldly wishes and anxieties, are striving for the goal set forth by our Master, and are training themselves in 'Tranquillity' and 'Insight' (*samatha* and *vipassanā*). Undoubtedly, for the real development of higher life, solitude, at least temporarily, is an absolute necessity.

Though the concentration- or Samādhi-exercises may serve various preliminary purposes, yet their ultimate object is to reach that unshakable Tranquillity and purity of the mind, which is the foundation of Insight leading to deliverance from the cycle of rebirth and misery. The Buddha has said :

“Now, what, O monks, is Nirvāna ? It is the extinction of Greed, Hate and Delusion (*lobha, dosa, moha*).

“And what, O monks, is the path leading to Nirvāna ? It is mental Tranquillity (*samatha*) and Insight (*vipassanā*).”

“Mental Tranquillity ” (*samatha*) is the unshakable state of mind gained through the persevering training in mental concentration. Tranquillity, according to the Commentary *Sankhepavaṇṇanā*, bestows a three-fold blessing : auspicious rebirth, bliss in this very life, and mental purity and fitness for Insight.

“Insight ” (*vipassanā*) is a name for the flashing forth of the light of wisdom and insight into the true nature of existence, *i.e.* into the Impermanency, Misery and Impersonality (*anicca, dukkha, anattā*) of all corporeality, feelings, perceptions, mental formations and consciousness.

For the development of concentration and mental tranquillity, there exist many different exercises. In Visuddhi-Magga (III—XI) 40 such concentration-exercises are enumerated and minutely explained, namely: 10 Kasina-exercises, 10 Cemetery-meditations, 10 Reflections on the qualities of the Buddha, the Law, the Holy Ones, on Morality, Liberality, Heavenly Beings, further on Death, the Body, In and Out-breathing, and the peace of Detachment. Further the development of the 4 Divine Abodes (All-embracing Kindness, Compassion, Altruistic Joy, Equanimity), the 4 Immaterial States, the perception of the Filthiness of Food, and the analysis of the 4 Elements.

Before entering into discussion of some of these 40 concentration-exercises, I have first to deal with the three grades of intensity of concentration, and further to speak of those higher states of mind called Jhānas, or mental 'Absorptions', which may be attained by a great number of these exercises.

The three grades of intensity of concentration are:

1. Preliminary Concentration (*parikammasamādhi*),
2. Neighbourhood Concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*),
3. Attainment Concentration (*appanāsamādhi*).

(1) "Preliminary Concentration" is present, whenever one directs one's mind to any of the various objects of concentration.

(2) "Neighbourhood-Concentration" is that grade of concentration which approaches, or comes near, the 1st Jhāna, and is in many exercises marked by a mentally visible pure and unshakable mental image, the so-called "Reflex-mark", of which we shall speak later on.

(3) “Attainment-Concentration” is that grade of concentration, which is present during the Jhānas.

By the Jhānas are meant supersensual states of perfect mental Absorption, in which the 5 fold sense-activity has ceased, and which only can be attained in absolute solitude and by unremitting perseverance in the development of concentration. No visual or audible impressions arise at such a time, no bodily feeling is felt. In this state the monk appears to the outside world as if dead. But, although all the outer sense-impressions, as seeing, hearing etc., have disappeared, still the mind remains active, perfectly alert and fully awake.

1. The 1st Jhāna is a stage of peace, ecstasy and joyful bliss, yet “Thought-conception and Discursive Thinking” (*vitakka-vicāra*), i.e. the so-called ‘inner speech’ or “Verbal activities of the mind” (*vacī-sankhāra*), are still at work.

2. As soon as these verbal activities of the mind have ceased, one has attained the 2nd Jhāna, which is a state of highest “Rapture and joyful bliss” (*pīti*), free from thinking and pondering.

3. After the fading away of rapture and ecstasy, the 3rd Jhāna is reached, marked by “Equanimous Joy” (*upekkhā-sukha*).

4. After the complete fading away of joy, a state of perfect “Equanimity” (*upekkhā*) abides, called the 4th Jhāna.

The mind, after emerging from the 4th Jhāna, is in the Sutta-texts again and again described as “serene, pure, lucid, stainless, devoid of evil, pliable, able to act, firm and imperturbable.”

Now, let us deal separately with some of the concentration exercises. Amongst those 40 exercises described in Visuddhi-Magga, the 10 Kasina-exercises resemble somewhat certain methods of inducing hypnotic sleep etc. by gazing at bright objects. There-

fore, in order to avoid such an outcome, one must beware of sleepiness and strive to keep the mind ever alert.

There are 4 Colour-Kasinas, 4 Element-Kasinas, Space-Kasina, and Light-Kasina.—In the Colour-Kasina, a blue, yellow, red or white disk may serve as the object at which to gaze, or flowers, cloth etc. of these colours.—In the Earth-Kasina exercise the object of our gazing may be a ploughed field seen from a distance, or a circular piece of earth prepared for this purpose. In the Water-Kasina exercise we may gaze at a pond seen from a higher elevation, or at water contained in a vessel. Similar it is with the Fire- and Wind-Kasina.

As an example how to practise such an exercise, let us consider the so-called Blue-Kasina exercise. For this purpose let us get ready a round disk made of paper or cloth, and fix it to the wall of our room. Then seated before the disk, we fix our whole attention to this “ Preliminary Mark ” (*parikamma-nimitta*) and so produce the so-called “ Preliminary Concentration ” (*parikamma-samādhī*). Now, while constantly gazing at this blue disk, we must strive to remain mentally alert and steadfast, in order not to fall into hypnotic sleep, as already pointed out. At the same time we must keep from our mind all outside impressions and thoughts on other objects, as well as all those disturbing and often dangerous mental visions and hallucinations that may arise. Whilst exclusively fixing our eyes and thoughts on the blue disk as our sole object, the things around the disk seem, as it were, to disappear. And the disk itself seems to become more and more a mere mental phantom. Now, whether the eyes are opened or closed, we perceive the mentalized Kasina disk, which more and more assumes the appearance of the “ bright orb of the moon. This is the so-called “ Acquired Mark ” (*uggaha-nimitta*) which, though apparently seen by means of our physical eyes, is nevertheless produced and perceived only by our mind, independently of the sense-activity of the eye. As soon as this

mentally produced image becomes steady and vanishes no longer, but remains safely fixed in the mind, we should, according to the Visuddhi-Magga, move to another place and there continue our exercise. In fixing our mental eye more and more, to the mentally produced image or light it becomes continually steadier and brighter, till at last it may assume the appearance of the bright morning star, or something similar. Herewith the mental “Reflex-Mark” (*patibhāga-nimitta*) is attained, and along with it the so-called “Neighbourhood-Concentration” (*upacāra-samādhi*).

Already during this stage all mental “Hindrances” (*nīvaraṇa*) have, at least temporarily, disappeared and do not arise. No “Sensual Lust” (*kāma-cchanda*) arises in such a state. No “Ill-Will” (*vyāpāda*) can irritate the mind. All “Mental Stiffness and Dullness” (*thīna-middha*) are overcome. No “Restlessness and Anxiety” (*uddhacca-kukkucca*) and no wavering doubt and “Scepticism” (*vicikicchā*) can any more divert the mind. As long as there is a possibility for the arising of these 5 mental Hindrances, so long can there be no lasting tranquillity of the mind. Now, by tenaciously fixing our mind to the “Reflex-Mark”, we eventually reach the “Attainment Concentration” (*appanā-samādhi*) and thereby enter into the 1st Jhāna. And by becoming more and more absorbed, and by the gradual vanishing, one by one, of Thought-conception and Discursive Thinking, of Rapture and Joy, we consecutively pass through the 3 remaining Jhānas, as before described.

Next let us touch upon the so-called “Cemetery-Contemplations”. The object of these exercises is to create a concentrated and tranquil state of mind by arousing disgust for the carnal desires and detachment therefrom. The objects of the cemetery contemplations, being either real or imaginary, are: a putrified corpse, a corpse gnawed by wild animals or by worms, a skeleton, scattered bones, bones crumbled to dust etc.

Of the remaining concentration exercises, I intend to speak only of the four “Divine Abodes” (*brahma-vihāra-bhāvanā*), viz.: All-embracing Kindness, Compassion, Altruistic Joy and Equanimity (*mettā, karuṇā, muditā, upekkhā*).

The “Development of All-embracing Kindness” (*mettā-bhāvanā*) is according to Visuddhi-Magga to be practised somewhat like this :

First one should think of oneself: ‘May I be happy ! May I be free from suffering !’ Thus, beginning with oneself, one should then in the same way extend loving and benevolent thoughts to one’s teacher, then to one’s fellow-monks, then to all persons living in and around the monastery, then to the inhabitants of the nearest street, then by and by to the whole village or town, then to the whole country ; and making not the slightest difference between friend and enemy, blood relation and stranger, good men and bad men, one should finally pervade the whole world with all-embracing kindness. And not only human beings, but also animals down to the tiniest insects, all should be embraced with our kindness. Identifying ourselves with all that lives, we should pervade the whole world with all-embracing kindness, above, below, to all sides, and should rouse in our innermost heart the fervent wish : ‘O , that all beings may be happy ! That all beings may be freed from greed, hate and delusion ! O, that all beings may find deliverance from Saṃsāra !’

By developing all-embracing kindness and goodwill, the heart will become purified of ill-feeling and anger, and filled with tranquillity, steadfastness and peace. During this exercise the mind may eventually reach the ecstasy of the first Jhāna, and even gradually pass through the first 3 Jhānas. In a more or less similar way “Compassion” (*karuṇā*) and “Altruistic Joy” (*muditā*) are to be developed.

In the Sutta texts we again and again find the stereotype words :

“There, O monks, the monk with all-embracing kindness—with compassion—with altruistic Joy—with equanimity pervades first one direction, then a second, then a third, then the fourth, above, below, round about, in every quarter. And identifying himself with all, he pervades the entire universe with all-embracing kindness, with heart grown great, wide, deep, boundless, free from wrath and anger.....”

In the 4th Divine Abode, the “Development of Equanimity” (*upekkhā-bhāvanā*), all persons and things are regarded with perfect equanimity and disinterestedness. With unshakable equanimity the mind looks upon wealth and poverty, happiness and misery, free from agitation, free from inclination and aversion, steadfast and unmoved, beyond love and hatred, beyond joy and sorrow.

It may here be mentioned that concentration does not reach the same degree of intensity in each of the 40 exercises. For example, in some of them only “Neighbourhood-Concentration” may be reached, as in the Reflections on the Buddha, the Law, the Holy Ones etc. The Cemetery-Contemplations may induce entrance into the 1st Jhāna. The first 3 “Divine Abodes” may induce the first 3 Jhānas. The 10 “Kasina-Exercises”, however, as well as the exercise of “Equanimity” and the “Attention on In-and Out-breathing” may induce all the 4 Jhānas.

With regard to the nature, or temperament, of the person practising concentration, it should be noted that the 4 Colour Kasimas are particularly suited to an angry nature, while for an unsteady nature the Kasina-disk should be of rather small size.

2

We have already stated that all the concentration exercises, as such, serve only the purpose of developing mental Tranquillity (*samatha*). Mental tranquillity, however, is the fundamental and indispensable condition for the successful development of Insight (*vipassanā*). And this Insight alone possesses the power to confer

immediate entrance to the 4 stages of Holiness, and thus to free us for ever from the 10 Fetters (*samyojana*) that bind beings to the ever-turning Wheel of Existence.

Therefore our Master has said : “May you develop mental concentration, O monks. For whoso is concentrated in mind, sees things as they really are.” Concerning Insight (*vipassanā*) we read in the Milinda-Pañha : “Just as when a man brings a lamp into a dark chamber, the lamp produces light and renders all things visible, just so does Insight, as soon as it arises, dispel the darkness of ignorance and bring forth the light of knowledge ; and sending out its rays of wisdom, it renders clearly visible the 4 Noble Truths. And thus the earnestly striving monk, with clear and bright Insight, beholds the Impermanence, Misery and Impersonality of all existence.” And in Puggala-Paññatti : “Just as a man in a dark and gloomy night, at the sudden flash of lightning, may with his eye clearly recognize the objects : even so one may, through deep Insight, perceive all things as they really are : ‘This is Misery, this is the Origin of misery, this is the Extinction of misery, this is the Path leading to the extinction of misery.’ ”

Hence, just as Morality (*sīla*) forms the indispensable foundation for the successful development of mental Tranquillity and Concentration, just so, supported by morality, does mental Tranquillity and Concentration form the necessary foundation for the development of Wisdom and Insight. And Insight is the immediate condition of the entrance into the 4 stages of Holiness.

For a successful development of Insight however, it is not an absolute necessity to have gained the Jhānas. The Attainment of Neighbourhood-Concentration is sufficient for this purpose. Moreover, during the Jhānas the development of Insight is not possible, as the initial practice of this exercise requires abstract thinking and analysing, while in the 1st Jhāna abstract thinking is already weak, and totally absent in the 3 higher Jhānas.

Insight, as already said, is induced by means of analysis and intense contemplation on all the phenomena of existence, *i.e.* on corporeal phenomena, feelings, perceptions, mental formations and states of consciousness ; by the contemplation on their impersonality, futility, emptiness and unsubstantiality; by contemplating the fact that in reality, neither within nor without these fleeting phenomena, is there to be found any Ego-entity (*attā*), and that 'I' or 'Self' or 'Person' etc. are nothing but conventional names. Really, this teaching of unsubstantiality and impersonality (*anattā*), together with the teaching of the conditionedness of all phenomena of existence, are the only specific doctrines of Buddhism, and without insight into these profound truths, nobody can ever rightly grasp the 4 Noble Truths, or enter the path.

All the other teachings of our Master may also be found in other philosophies or religions. Also the Jhānas have already been attained before, and independently of, the Buddha. Love was preached by some other religions. Likewise the impermanency and miserable nature of existence was taught by others. But the liberating truths of *Impersonality* and *Conditionedness* of all existence have of all religious teachers been taught and revealed in full clearness only by the Buddha. And these are the only specific doctrines, on which the whole Buddhist structure rests.

Hence, as the understanding of Impersonality and Conditionedness of existence is the indispensable condition for a real understanding of the 4 Noble Truths, and for deliverance from Saṃsāra, one may rightly say that none but the Enlightened One has shown the right method of mental culture, and therewith the right way to deliverance.

The exercises for developing Insight (*vipassanā-bhāvanā*) given in Visuddhi-Magga (XIV-XXII) are extremely varied. Anyhow, I shall here quite briefly indicate the most essential ones of them. Before, however, the monk begins with developing his Insight, he at

first should acquire a thorough knowledge of the dhamma and know that the only true or actual elements in this evanescent existence are the 5 groups of existence, viz. corporeal phenomena, feelings, perceptions, mental formations and states of consciousness. And he should think of their impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, their impersonal and conditioned nature, as well as of their twofold division into a psychical and corporeal process (*nāma-rūpa*).

Thus, after attaining and rising again from one of the Jhānas, the monk may analyse the just experienced state of Jhāna. And while doing so, he will realize that this mental state, called Jhāna, is nothing but a heap of ever and again rising and passing phenomena, as thought-conception, discursive thinking, joy, concentration, feeling, perception, mental formations and consciousness. And pondering over these phenomena, he will find that this entire mental process is dependent on corporeality, and that again corporeality is a name for the 4 physical elements and the corporeality depending on them, as e.g. the sense-organs, objects etc.

Another monk may divide this mental-corporeal process into its 18 elements, i.e. the 6 sense-organs, 6 objects and 6 kinds of consciousness, as : eye, visible object, eye-consciousness ; ear, sound, ear-consciousness.....mind, mind-object, mind-consciousness. And he will understand thus : 'Mere mental and physical phenomena are there, but no being, no personality, can there be found.'

When certain things we find combined,
We speak of chariot, speak of car.
Just so, when these five groups appear,
We use the designation 'man'.

Or, just as after building up walls and roof with various materials, the enclosed space is called a house, just so this bodily structure built up by bones, flesh, sinews etc. is called 'body'.

Or, just as a wooden swivel-doll is empty, lifeless and inactive, but may, by means of a pulling device, move or stand and appear to be full of life and activity, just so are mind and body, as such, something empty, lifeless and inactive ; but through the mutual acting of mind and body upon one another, this psycho-physical structure may move or stand and appear full of life and activity.

As with the help and aid of ships
Men move across the mighty sea,
Just so conditioned by this body
The mental group is moving on.

As with the help and aid of men
Ships move across the mighty sea,
Just so conditioned by the mind
The body-group is moving on.

Thus the monk contemplates on the conditionedness of this psycho-physical process. And he understands how all those bodily and mental phenomena come to decay and dissolution. And he perceives the conditioned nature of the bodily and mental groups with regard to their Dependent Origination, namely : 'Amongst the phenomena, Old Age and Death can take place only if there is Birth ; birth only if there is the pre-natal Karma-process, the karma-process only if there is attachment to life.....the Karmaformations only if there is ignorance and delusion.' In this way, all doubts are vanishing in the monk, such as : 'Have I been in the past?' or: 'Have I not been in the past ? etc.'

Everywhere, in all the forms of existence, the monk sees only an ever-changing mental and bodily process, kept going through the concatenation of causes and effects and other conditions. No doer does he see beside the deed (kamma), no receiver of the karma-result. And he has rightly understood that it is only by way of conventional language (*vohāra-vacana*) that the wise men with regard to a deed are speaking

of a 'Doer', or with regard to the karma-result (*vipāka*) of a 'Receiver' of it.

'No doer of the deeds is found,
No being that may reap their fruits;
Empty phenomena roll on:
This only is the correct view.

No god, nor Brahma, can be called
The maker of this wheel of life ;
Empty phenomena roll on.
Dependent on conditions all.

The monk is considering thus:— 'The karma-produced 5 groups (corporeality, feeling etc.) of the past have become extinguished then and there, but conditioned through the past karma (actions) other groups have arisen in this existence; yet from the past existence nothing has passed over to this existence. Also the present groups produced through the past karma, will become extinguished here, but conditioned through the present karma other groups will arise in the future ; yet from this existence nothing will pass over to the next existence.

Whatever there is of corporeality—feelings—perceptions—mental formations—consciousness, whether past, present or future—one's own or external—gross or subtle—lofty or low—far or near : all these phenomena of existence are impermanent—unsatisfactory—impersonal. For, whatever is impersonal is unsatisfactory and unable to ward off its own impermanence or oppression due to its arising and disappearing. How could these things ever assume the role of a Feeler, an Agent, an Experiencer of consciousness, an abiding Personality?

All these things the monk considers as conditioned, subject to dissolution and disappearance.

All life and all existence here,
With all its joy and all its pain,
Depends all on a state of mind,
And quick passes that moment by.

The life-groups that have passed away,
At death as well as during life,
Have all alike become extinguished,
And never will they rise again.

Out of the unseen did they rise,
Into the unseen do they pass.
Just as the lightning flashes forth,
So do they flash and pass away.

Also in the external world the monk may observe the 3 characteristics, *e.g.* : The shoot of the Asoka tree is at first light-red, then after 2 or 3 days it becomes deep-red. Then it gets the appearance of a young sprout, then of a ripe sprout, then of a light-green leaf, then of a blue-green leaf. From this time, continually depending upon a similar physical continuity, it becomes after one year a yellow leaf, and detaching itself from the stalk, it drops to the ground. Thus each time, before the next following stage has appeared, the former state dies off.

Further, by means of the 18 kinds of Insight the monk overcomes the wrong conceptions through their opposites, namely :—

1. Through developing the contemplation on Impermanency (*aniccânupassanā*), he overcomes the wrong idea of permanence.

2. Through developing the contemplation on Unsatisfactoriness of life (*dukkhânupassanā*), he overcomes the wrong idea of real happiness.

3. Through developing the contemplation on Impersonality (*anattânupassanā*), he overcomes the wrong idea of personality.

4. Through developing the contemplation on Turning away (*nibbidânupassanā*), he overcomes affection.

5. Through developing the contemplation on Detachment (*virāgânupassanā*), he overcomes greed.

6. Through developing the contemplation on Extinction (*nirodhānupassanā*), he overcomes the arising.

7. Through developing the contemplation on Giving up (*paṭinissaggānupassanā*), he overcomes attachment.

8. Through developing the contemplation on Dissolution (*khayānupassanā*), he overcomes the wrong idea of something compact.

9. Through developing the contemplation on Disappearance (*vayānupassanā*), he overcomes Karma-accumulation.

10. Through developing the contemplation on Changeableness (*vipariṇāmānupassanā*), he overcomes the wrong idea of something immutable.

11. Through developing the contemplation on the Unconditional (*animittānupassanā*), he overcomes the conditions of rebirth.

12. Through developing the contemplation on the Desireless (*appaṇihitānupassanā*), he overcomes longing.

13. Through developing the contemplation on the Void (*suññatānupassanā*), he overcomes clinging.

14. Through developing Higher Wisdom and Insight (*adhipaññādhamma-vipassanā*), he overcomes the wrong idea of something substantial.

15. Through developing the True Eye of Knowledge (*yathābhūta-ñāṇadassana*), he overcomes clinging to delusion.

16. Through developing the contemplation on Misery (*ādinavānupassanā*), he overcomes clinging to desire.

17. Through developing the Reflecting Contemplation (*paṭisankhānupassanā*), he overcomes thoughtlessness.

18. Through developing the contemplation on the Stand-still of existence (*vivattānupassanā*), he overcomes the being entangled in fetters.

Having thus, by means of the 18 kinds of Insight understood the phenomena with regard to their 3 characteristics, he has penetrated the impermanency, unsatisfactoriness and impersonality of all existence.

1. (Contemplation on Arising and Disappearing : *udayabbayānupassanā*) — Further, the monk trains himself in Insight with regard to the arising and disappearing of things : ‘All the physical and mental phenomena, without having been previously, come to arise, and arisen they disappear again. Through the arising of the pre-natal Ignorance, Craving, Karma, and Nutriment, there is conditioned the arising of corporeality; and through the extinction of these 4 causes, the extinction of corporeality takes place.

All life is like a dew drop that dissolves as soon as the sun rises. Life is as an empty bubble, or as a furrow drawn on the water and immediately disappearing again. Life is something unsubstantial, unreal, an illusion, a mirage, a phantom, just as a fire-wreath called forth by the circular swinging of a firebrand, or as a ghost-land, or as foam, or as a banana-stem (consisting of mere sheaths).

2. (Contemplation on Dissolution : *bhangānupassanā*)—Now, while knowing that all these formations of existence, once arisen, will soon again come to extinction, there arises in him the contemplation on dissolution.

As consciousness is conditioned through the physical or mental objects, he considers it as impermanent. He turns away from it, does no longer delight in it. He detaches himself from it, has no longer greed for it. He brings it to extinction, does not let it rise again. He lets it go, and no longer adheres to it. And considering it as transient, he overcomes the idea of something permanent.

The groups of life become dissolved,
There is no Ego to be found.
The dissolution of the groups :
That's what most people would call death.

3. (Knowledge consisting in Awareness of Terror: *bhayat'upaṭṭhāna-ñāna*)—Whoso knows how in the past all formations of existence have become extinguished, how the present ones are coming to extinction, and how also all the future ones will become extinguished, to him there arises at that occasion the knowledge consisting in awareness of terror.

4. (Contemplation on Misery: *ādīnavānupassanā*)—'The arising of existence is a terror': such knowledge consisting in awareness of terror, is called the knowledge of misery. 'The continuity of existencethe course of rebirth.....the entering into existence.....old age, disease, death, sorrow.....lamentation.....despair are a terror': such knowledge consisting in awareness of terror, is called the knowledge of misery.

5. (Contemplation on Turning away: *nibbidānupassanā*)—While the disciple in this way understands that all formations of existence are misery, his mind turns away from all formations, is weary of them, no longer delights in them.

6. (Knowledge of the Wish for Deliverance: *muñcitu-kamyatā-ñāna*)—Now, while finding no longer delight in the formations of existence, he wishes to get rid of them, seeks for escape from them.

7. (Reflecting Contemplation: *patisankhānupassanā*)—In order to find deliverance from all the formations of existence, he reflects on them and determines their three characteristics.

All formations he understands as impermanent (*anicca*) for their being without duration, persisting only for a short while, being limited by their arising and disappearance, perishable, transient, frail, unsteady,

subject to change, without substance, unreal, conditioned, subject to death.

All formations he considers as unsatisfactory (*dukkha*) for their being again and again oppressed, their being hard to endure, and their being the root of all suffering.

All formations he considers as impure (*asubha*) for their being afflicted with the characteristics of misery.

All formations he considers as impersonal (*anattā*) for their being something alien, unreal, void, empty, without owner, without master, without controller: 'Empty are all formations, void are they of any personality and of anything pertaining to a personality'.—I am not anything to anyone, nor does anything belong to me in any regard.'—Just as a reed is hollow and without pith, so also are corporeality, feeling, perception, mental formations and consciousness empty, void, impersonal, without master, unfree, something uncontrollable, impotent and alien.

8. (Knowledge consisting in Equanimity with regard to all formations: *sankhārupekkhā-ñāṇa*)—While thus the monk is grasping all the formations by considering them as empty, and determining their 3 characteristics, he gives up fear and anguish and abides in equanimity with regard to all the formations, no more concerns himself about them, and no longer conceives the idea of 'I' and 'Mine'.

Whoever considers the formations of existence as impermanent (*anicca*), to him they appear as a passing away. Whoever considers them as unsatisfactory (*dukkha*), to him they appear as terror. Whoever considers them as impersonal (*anattā*), to him they appear as empty.

9. (Adaptation-knowledge: *anuloma-ñāṇa*)—'Now the Path will reveal itself': thus thinking, the monk's mind reflects with equanimity on all the formations of existence as impermanent, unsatisfactory and impersonal (*anicca, dukkha, anattā*), and thereupon his consciousness sinks into the subconscious

stream (*bhavanga-sota*). Immediately thereafter arises awareness at the mind-door, taking as objects all phenomena just as before, regarding them as impermanent, unsatisfactory and impersonal, as object. Thereafter in following up again the interrupted continuity of consciousness, the 3 Impulsive moments (*javana*), known as the preliminary-, access- and adaptation-moment (*parikamma*, *upacara*, *anuloma*), flash up one after the other, with the same phenomena as object. One speaks of 'Adaptation' because this knowledge adapts itself to the preceding 8 kinds of Insightknowledge performing the same functions, and to the following elements of Enlightenment immediately thereafter.

Adaptation-knowledge has the same functions, because it arises through contemplation of the formations of existence together with their 3 characteristics of Impermanency, Unsatisfactoriness and Impersonality. The Adaptation-knowledge, however, forms the conclusion for those kinds of Insight that have the formations as object, and are leading to the 'Ascent', i.e. to the Path.

(Maturity-knowledge : *gotrabhū-ñāna*)—Immediately thereafter follows Maturity knowledge (*gotrabhū-ñāna*), which consists in the turning of the mind to the supermundane path of "Stream-Entrance," or *Sotāpatti*. At that moment the mind is no longer driving towards all those phenomena, no longer clinging to them, no longer captivated by them; and transcending the sphere of the worldling, it enters the sphere of the Noble Ones.

Just as on the cloudless sky the moon is shining pure and bright, just so, as soon as the darkness of ignorance veiling the truth is dispersed, *Maturity knowledge* beholds the purity of *Nibhāna*.

(Path-knowledge : *maggā-ñāna*)—Now, following as immediate continuation upon Adaptation-knowledge, Path-consciousness arises by dispersing and demolish-

ing, for ever and all time, the 3 fetters of: Personality-belief, Sceptical Doubt and Clinging to Rules and Ritual (*sakkāyadiṭṭhi*, *vicikicchā*, *silabbataparāmāsa*).

(Fruition-knowledge: *phala-ñāna*) — Immediately upon this Path-consciousness there arise, as results, those supermundane states of consciousness known as the Fruits (*phala*) of the path, which during life-time may repeat for innumerable times.

The corresponding process takes also place on attaining the 3 higher stages of Holiness, of which the highest one is identical with perfect Holiness, or Arahatsip.¹

Herewith we have arrived at the highest and final goal of the Buddha's teaching. I should, however, like to warn you of the wrong conclusion, as if, according to the Buddha's teaching, it would be necessary, for the realization of the paths, to be ever conscious of all those intricate workings of our mind. This is by no means the case. Let me tell you that in many places in the investigations contained in the Visuddhi-Magga the point is rather to give a scientific explanation of the whole process of gradual development on the path to deliverance. We have here mostly to do with theoretical knowledge and hypotheses gained by abstract reasoning, partly perhaps also with real knowledge gained through intuition by some extraordinary seers or mystics. In any case, deliverance may, under favourable circumstances, sometimes be realized already after a very short time, and with no previous knowledge—

At the conclusion of our subject therefore, I should like to summarise the more popular and more intelligible exposition of the twofold development as given in the Satipatthāna-Sutta and the commentary of it:—

There is only one way to the realization of deliverance, namely the 4 Foundations of Mindfulness, *i.e.* the

* 1. About the 4 stages of Holiness, see (*Ariya-puggala*), in Nyanatiloka, Buddhist Dictionary (2nd ed.: Colombo 1956, Frewin & Co.).

attentive ,contemplation of body, of feeling, of mind, and of mind-objects.

For that purpose the monk retires to a solitary place; and, sitting down and directing his whole attention in front of himself, he watches attentively his In and Out-breathing, and attains thereby mental concentration and the Jhānas.

Or: In going; standing, sitting or lying down, he is well aware and knows that there is no living entity, no real Ego, that moves about, but that it is a mere conventional mode of speaking, if one says: 'I go, I stand' etc.

He is full of attention and clearly conscious in going and coming, looking forward and backward, in bending and stretching his body, in eating, drinking, speaking and keeping silent. Thus in all outer activities, he is clearly conscious of purpose, utility, duty and truth.

Further : He contemplates on the manifold parts of the body, as hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones etc.

Further : He analyses the body with regard to the 4 elements, *i.e.* the solid, liquid, heat and motion.

Further : Just as if he would see a corpse thrown to the burial ground, swollen up, blue-black in colour, he draws the conclusion: 'Also this my body has the same nature, will become so, cannot escape it'. Or: Just as if he would see a corpse, a framework of bones, stripped of flesh, bespattered with blood—bones disconnected and scattered in all directions—bones bleached and resembling shells—bones heaped together—bones weather-worn and crumbled to dust, he draws the conclusion : 'Also this my body has the same nature, will become so, cannot escape it'. Thus he contemplates on his own body, on other bodies, and on both. He sees, how these bodily phenomena are arising and passing away. And he understands that only corporeality is there to be found, but no Ego-entity.

In contemplating on the feelings, he notices the agreeable feeling, the disagreeable feeling and the indifferent feeling; sees how these feelings are arising and passing away, and does not find any Ego-entity within or without the feelings.

In contemplating on the mind, he notices when it is filled with greed, or hate, or delusion, or when it is free from these things; notices when the mind is cramped or scattered, concentrated or not. And he sees how these states of mind are arising and passing away, and knows that there is no Ego-entity to be found.

In contemplating on the mind-objects, he notices when one of the mental hindrances is present, or not present, how it arises, and how it is overcome.—He contemplates on the 6 sense-organs and the corresponding objects, and the mental fetters conditioned through them; contemplates on the 5 groups of existence, on their arising and passing away, on the 7 links of Enlightenment, and on the 4 noble truths.

Thus he contemplates on all the phenomena, sees how they arise and pass away, and how nowhere any Ego-entity can be found.

The Satipaṭṭhāna-Sutta closes with the encouraging words that he who in this way practises the 4 Foundations of Mindfulness, may, sometimes already after 7 days, find deliverance from all suffering.

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