

Notes

SUTTA 1

- 1 For a fuller treatment of this important and difficult sutta, see Bhikkhu Bodhi, *Discourse on the Root of Existence*. This work contains, besides a translation of the sutta, a lengthy analytical study of its philosophical significance and copious extracts from the very helpful commentarial literature that has accumulated around it. Ñm's rendering of this sutta in Ms was highly conjectural; thus, while I have retained most of his terminology, I have substituted my own rendering of the syntax to bring out the meaning that accords with the traditional interpretation and that seems warranted by the original Pali text as well. The key passages as Ñm rendered them will be given in the Notes.
- 2 MA explains that the Buddha delivered this sutta to dispel the conceit that had arisen in five hundred bhikkhus on account of their erudition and intellectual mastery of the Buddha's teachings. These bhikkhus were formerly brahmins learned in the Vedic literature, and the Buddha's cryptic utterances may well have been intended to challenge the brahmanic views to which they may still have adhered.
- 3 *Sabbadhammamūlapariyāya*. MĪ explains that the word "all" (*sabba*) is being used here in the restricted sense of the "all of personality" (*sakkāyasabba*), that is, with reference to all states or phenomena (*dhammā*) comprised within the five aggregates affected by clinging (see MN 28.4). Supramundane states – the paths, fruits, and

Nibbāna – are excluded. The “root of all things” – that is, the special condition that maintains the continuity of the process of repeated existence – MT explains to be craving, conceit, and views (which are the underlying springs of “conceiving”), and these in turn are underlaid by ignorance, suggested in the sutta by the phrase “he has not fully understood it.”

- 4 The “untaught ordinary person” (*assutavā puthujjana*) is the common worldling, who possesses neither learning nor spiritual accomplishment in the Dhamma of the noble ones, and allows himself to be dominated by the multitude of defilements and wrong views. See Bodhi, *Discourse on the Root of Existence*, pp. 40–46.
- 5 *Paṭhavim paṭhavito sañjānāti*. Although perceiving “earth as earth” seems to suggest seeing the object as it really is, the aim of Buddhist insight meditation, the context makes it clear that the ordinary person’s perception of “earth as earth” already introduces a slight distortion of the object, a distortion that will be blown up into full-fledged misinterpretation when the cognitive process enters the phase of “conceiving.” MA explains that the ordinary person seizes upon the conventional expression “it is earth,” and applying this to the object, perceives it through a “perversion of perception” (*saññāvipallāsa*). The latter is a technical expression explained as perceiving the impermanent as permanent, the painful as pleasurable, what is not self as self, and what is foul as beautiful (AN 4:49/ii.52). Nm reads the ablative suffix *-to* of the Pali as signifying derivation and translates the phrase: “From earth he has a percept of earth.”
- 6 The Pali verb “conceives” (*maññati*), from the root *man*, “to think,” is often used in the Pali suttas to mean distortional thinking – thought that ascribes to its object characteristics and a significance derived not from the object itself, but from its own subjective imaginings. The cognitive distortion introduced by conceiving consists, in brief, in the intrusion of the egocentric perspective into the experience already slightly distorted by spontaneous perception. According to the commentaries, the activity of conceiving is governed by three defile-

ments, which accounts for the different ways it comes to manifestation – craving (*taṇhā*), conceit (*māna*), and views (*ditṭhi*).

MA paraphrases this text thus: “Having perceived earth with a perverted perception, the ordinary person afterwards conceives it – construes or discriminates it – through the gross proliferating tendencies (*papañca*) of craving, conceit, and views, which are here called ‘conceivings.’...He apprehends it in diverse ways contrary [to reality].”

The four ways of conceiving (*maññanā*): The Buddha shows that the conceiving of any object may occur in any of four ways, expressed by the text as a fourfold linguistic pattern: accusative, locative, ablative, and appropriative. The primary significance of this modal pattern – enigmatic in the Pali as well – seems to be ontological. I take the pattern to represent the diverse ways in which the ordinary person attempts to give positive being to his imagined sense of ego-hood by positing, below the threshold of reflection, a relationship between himself as the subject of cognition and the perceived phenomenon as its object. According to the fourfold pattern given, this relationship may be one either of direct identification (“he conceives X”), or of inherence (“he conceives in X”), or of contrast or derivation (“he conceives from X”), or of simple appropriation (“he conceives X to be ‘mine’”).

But care is needed in interpreting these phrases. The Pali does not supply any direct object for the second and third modes, and this suggests that the process at work in conceiving proceeds from a deeper and more general level than that involved in the forming of an explicit view of self, as described for example at MN 2.8 or MN 44.7. The activity of conceiving thus seems to comprise the entire range of subjectively tinged cognition, from the impulses and thoughts in which the sense of personal identity is still inchoate to elaborate intellectual structures in which it has been fully explicated.

Ñm, however, understands the implicit object of conceiving to be the percept itself, and accordingly translates: “having had from earth a percept of earth, he conceives

[that to be] earth, he conceives [that to be] in earth, he conceives [that to be apart] from earth," etc.

The fifth phrase, "he delights in X," explicitly connects conceiving with craving, which is elsewhere said to "delight here and there." This, moreover, hints at the danger in the worldling's thought processes, since craving is pointed to by the Buddha as the origin of suffering.

MA gives prolific examples illustrating all the different modes of conceiving, and these clearly establish that the intended object of conceiving is the misplaced sense of egoity.

- 7 MA states that one who fully understands earth does so by the three types of full understanding: the full understanding of the known (*ñātapariññā*) – the definition of the earth element by way of its unique characteristic, function, manifestation, and proximate cause; the full understanding by scrutinization (*tīraṇapariññā*) – the contemplation of the earth element by way of the three general characteristics of impermanence, suffering, and non-self; and the full understanding of abandonment (*pāhānapariññā*) – the abandoning of desire and lust for the earth element through the supreme path (of arahantship).
- 8 *Bhūtā*. MA says that "beings" here signifies only living beings below the heaven of the Four Great Kings, the lowest of the sense-sphere heavens; the higher grades of living beings are covered by the terms to follow. MA exemplifies the application of the three types of conceiving to this situation as follows: When a person becomes attached to beings as a result of sight, hearing, etc., or desires rebirth in a certain class of beings, this is conceiving due to craving. When he ranks himself as superior, equal, or inferior to others, this is conceiving due to conceit. And when he thinks, "Beings are permanent, stable, eternal," etc., this is conceiving due to views.
- 9 MA: The gods of the six sense-sphere heavenly worlds are meant, except for Māra and his retinue in the heaven of the gods who wield power over others' creations. See the account of Buddhist cosmology in the Introduction, pp. 31–33.
- 10 *Prajāpati*, "lord of creation," is a name given by the

- Vedas to Indra, Agni, etc., as the highest of the Vedic divinities. But according to MA, *Pajāpati* here is a name for Māra because he is the ruler of this “generation” (*pajā*) made up of living beings.
- 11 *Brahmā* here is Mahābrahmā, the first deity to be born at the beginning of a new cosmic cycle and whose lifespan lasts for the entire cycle. The Ministers of Brahmā and the Assembly of Brahmā – the other deities whose position is determined by attainment of the first jhāna – are also included.
 - 12 MA: By mentioning these, all beings occupying the plane of the second jhāna – the gods of Limited Radiance and the gods of Immeasurable Radiance – should be included, for all these occupy a single level.
 - 13 MA: By mentioning these, all beings occupying the plane of the third jhāna – the gods of Limited Glory and the gods of Immeasurable Glory – should be included.
 - 14 These are divinities on the plane of the fourth jhāna.
 - 15 *Abhibhū*. MA says this term is a designation for the non-percipient realm, called thus because it vanquishes (*abhibhavati*) the four immaterial aggregates. The identification sounds contrived, especially because the word “*abhibhū*” is a masculine singular noun. Elsewhere (MN 49.5) the word appears as part of Baka the Brahmā’s claim to theocratic hegemony, yet MA rejects identifying the Abhibhū with Brahmā here as a redundancy.
 - 16 This and the next three sections deal with conceiving in relation to the four immaterial planes of existence – the cosmological counterparts of the four immaterial meditative attainments. With §18 the division of conceiving by way of planes of existence is completed.
 - 17 In these four sections the phenomena comprising personality are considered as objects of perception classified into the four categories of the seen, heard, sensed, and cognized. Here, *sensed* (*muta*) signifies the data of smell, taste, and touch, *cognized* (*viññāta*) the data of introspection, abstract thought, and imagination. The objects of perception are “conceived” when they are cognized in terms of “mine,” “I,” and “self,” or in ways that generate craving, conceit, and views.
 - 18 In this section and the next, the phenomena comprising

personality are treated as twofold – by way of unity and diversity. The emphasis on *unity* (*ekatta*), MA informs us, is characteristic of one who attains the jhānas, in which the mind occurs in a single mode on a single object. The emphasis on *diversity* (*nānatta*) prevails in the case of the non-attainer who lacks the overwhelming unitive experience of jhānas. Conceptions stressing diversity come to expression in philosophies of pluralism, those stressing unity in philosophies of the monistic type.

- 19 In this section, all phenomena of personality are collected together and shown as singlefold. This idea of totality can form the basis for philosophies of the pantheistic or monistic type, depending on the relation posited between the self and the all.
- 20 MA understands “Nibbāna” here to refer to the five kinds of “supreme Nibbāna here and now” included among the sixty-two wrong views of the Brahmajāla Sutta (DN 1.3.19–25/i.36–38), that is, Nibbāna identified with the full enjoyment of sense pleasures or with the four jhānas. Enjoying this state, or yearning for it, he conceives it with craving. Priding himself on attaining it, he conceives it with conceit. Holding this imaginary Nibbāna to be permanent, etc., he conceives it with views.
- 21 The *sekha*, the disciple in higher training, is one who has reached any of the three lower planes of sanctity – stream-entry, once-returning, or non-returning – but must still train further in order to reach the goal, arahantship, the supreme security from bondage. MN 53 is devoted to expounding the training he must undertake. The arahant is sometimes described as *asekha*, one beyond training, in the sense that he has completed the training in the Noble Eightfold Path. *Ñm* rendered *sekha* as “initiate” and *asekha* as “adept,” which have been changed here to avoid their “esoteric” connotations.
- 22 It should be noted that, whereas the ordinary man is said to *perceive* each of the bases, the one in higher training is said to *directly know* them (*abhiñāṇāti*). MA explains that he knows them with distinguished knowledge, knows them in accordance with their real nature as impermanent, suffering, and non-self. *Ñm* rendered:

"From earth he has direct knowledge of earth."

- 23 The disciple in higher training is urged by the Buddha to refrain from conceiving and delight because the dispositions to these mental processes still remain within him. With his attainment of stream-entry he eradicated the fetter of personality view and thus can no longer conceive in terms of wrong views. But the defilements of craving and conceit are only uprooted by the path of arahantship, and thus the *sekha* remains vulnerable to the conceivings to which they are capable of giving rise. Whereas direct knowledge (*abhiññā*) is the province of both the *sekha* and the arahant, full understanding (*pariññā*) is the province exclusively of the arahant, as it involves the full abandoning of all defilements.
- 24 This is the stock description of the arahant, repeated in many suttas.
- 25 When ignorance has been abolished by the attainment of full understanding, the subtlest dispositions to craving and conceit are also eradicated. Thus the arahant can no longer engage in conceiving and delight.
- 26 This section and the following two are stated to show that the arahant does not conceive, not only because he has fully understood the object, but because he has eradicated the three unwholesome roots – lust (or greed), hate, and delusion. The phrase "free from lust through the destruction of lust" is used to stress that the arahant is not merely temporarily without lust, but has destroyed it at the most fundamental level. Similarly with hate and delusion.
- 27 On this word, the epithet the Buddha uses most often when referring to himself, see the Introduction, p. 24. The commentaries give a long detailed etymology, into which they try to compress virtually the entire Dhamma. The passage has been translated in Bhikkhu Bodhi, *Discourse on the All-Embracing Net of Views*, pp. 331–44.
- 28 *Pariññātantaṃ tathāgatassa*. So BBS and SBJ eds. and MA, though PTS ed. reads simply *pariññātaṃ*. MA glosses: "fully understood to the conclusion, fully understood to the limit, fully understood without remainder." It explains that while Buddhas and disciple-arahants are

alike in abandoning all defilements, there is a distinction in their range of full understanding: whereas disciples can attain Nibbāna after comprehending with insight only a limited number of formations, Buddhas fully understand all formations without exception.

- 29 This sentence gives a highly compressed statement of the formula of dependent origination (*paṭicca samuppāda*), usually expounded in twelve factors (as in MN 38). As interpreted by MA, "delight" is the craving of the previous life that brought into being the "suffering" of the five aggregates in the present life, "being" the kammically determinative aspect of the present life that causes future birth, followed by future ageing and death. This passage shows the cause for the Buddha's elimination of conceiving to be his penetration of dependent origination on the night of his enlightenment. The mention of "delight" (*nandī*) as the root of suffering links up with the sutta's title; moreover, by referring to the earlier statement that the ordinary person delights in earth, etc., it shows suffering to be the ultimate consequence of delight.
- 30 MA explains the sequence of ideas thus: The Tathāgata does not conceive earth and does not delight in earth because he has understood that delight is the root of suffering. Further, by understanding dependent origination, he has completely abandoned the craving here called "delight" and has awakened to supreme full enlightenment. As a result he does not conceive earth or delight in earth.
- 31 The bhikkhus did *not* delight in the Buddha's words, apparently because the discourse probed too deeply into the tender regions of their own conceit, and perhaps their residual brahmanic views. At a later time, MA tells us, when their pride had been humbled, the Buddha expounded to these same bhikkhus the *Gotamaka Sutta* (AN 3:123/i.276), in the course of which they all attained arahantship.

SUTTA 2

- 32 The taints (*āsava*), a category of defilements existing at

the deepest and most fundamental level, are discussed in the Introduction, p. 38. MA explains that restraint (*saṁvara*) is fivefold: through virtue, mindfulness, knowledge, energy, and patience. In the present sutta, restraint through virtue is illustrated by avoiding unsuitable seats and resorts (§19); restraint through mindfulness, by restraining the sense faculties (§12); restraint through knowledge, by the repeated phrase “reflecting wisely”; restraint through energy, by the removing of unwholesome thoughts (§20); and restraint through patience, by the passage on enduring (§18).

- 33 Wise attention (*yoniso manasikāra*) is glossed as attention that is the right means (*upāya*), on the right track (*patha*). It is explained as mental advertence, consideration, or preoccupation that accords with the truth, namely, attention to the impermanent as impermanent, etc. Unwise attention (*ayoniso manasikāra*) is attention that is the wrong means, on the wrong track (*uppatha*), contrary to the truth, namely, attention to the impermanent as permanent, the painful as pleasurable, what is not self as self, and what is foul as beautiful. Unwise attention, MA informs us, is at the root of the round of existence, for it causes ignorance and craving to increase; wise attention is at the root of liberation from the round, since it leads to the development of the Noble Eightfold Path. MA sums up the point of this passage thus: the destruction of the taints is for one who *knows* how to arouse wise attention and who *sees* to it that unwise attention does not arise.
- 34 Six of these – omitting the taints to be abandoned by seeing – are mentioned in the catechism on the taints in AN 6:58/iii.387–90.
- 35 The word “seeing” (*dassana*) here refers to the first of the four supramundane paths – the path of stream-entry (*sotāpattimagga*) – so designated because it offers the first glimpse of Nibbāna. The higher three paths are called the paths of development (*bhāvanā*) because they develop the vision of Nibbāna to the point at which all defilements are eradicated.
- 36 MA makes the important point that there is no fixed determination in things themselves as to whether they

are fit or unfit for attention. The distinction consists, rather, in the mode of attention. That mode of attention that is a causal basis for unwholesome states of mind should be avoided, while that mode of attention that is a causal basis for wholesome states should be developed. This same principle applies to §9.

- 37 MA illustrates the growth of the taints through unwise attention as follows: When he attends to gratification in the five cords of sensual pleasure, the taint of sensual desire arises and increases; when he attends to gratification in the exalted states (the *jhānas*), the taint of being arises and increases; and when he attends to any mundane things through the four "perversions" (of permanence, etc. – see n.5), the taint of ignorance arises and increases.
- 38 According to MA, this passage is undertaken to show the taint of views (*diṭṭhāsava*, not expressly mentioned in the discourse) under the heading of doubt. However, it might be more correct to say that the taint of views, disclosed by §8, emerges out of unwise attention in the form of doubt. The various types of doubt are already pregnant with the wrong views that will come to explicit expression in the next section.
- 39 Of these six views, the first two represent the simple antinomy of eternalism and annihilationism; the view that "no self exists for me" is *not* the non-self doctrine of the Buddha, but the materialist view that identifies the individual with the body and thus holds that there is no personal continuity beyond death. The next three views may be understood to arise out of the philosophically more sophisticated observation that experience has a built-in reflexive structure that allows for self-consciousness, the capacity of the mind to become cognizant of itself, its contents, and the body with which it is inter-connected. Engaged in a search for his "true nature," the untaught ordinary person will identify self either with both aspects of the experience (view 3), or with the observer alone (view 4), or with the observed alone (view 5). The last view is a full-blown version of eternalism in which all reservations have been discarded.
- 40 The self as speaker represents the conception of the self as the agent of action; the self as feeler, the conception

of the self as the passive subject. "Here and there" suggests the self as the transmigrating entity that retains its identity through a succession of different incarnations. The same view is maintained by the bhikkhu Sāti at MN 38.2.

- 41 This is, of course, the formula for the Four Noble Truths, treated as a subject of contemplation and insight. MA says that up to the attainment of the path of stream-entry, attention denotes insight (*vipassanā*), but at the moment of the path it denotes path-knowledge. Insight directly apprehends the first two truths, since its objective range is the mental and material phenomena comprised under *dukkha* and its origin; it can know the latter two truths only inferentially. Path-knowledge makes the truth of cessation its object, apprehending it by penetration as object (*ārammaṇa*). Path-knowledge performs four functions regarding the four truths: it fully understands the truth of suffering, abandons the origin of suffering, realises the cessation of suffering, and develops the way to the cessation of suffering.
- 42 The path of stream-entry has the function of cutting off the first three fetters binding to saṃsāra. MA says that personality view and adherence to rules and observances, being included in the taint of views, are taints as well as fetters, while doubt is (ordinarily) classified as only a fetter, not a taint; but because it is included here among the "taints to be abandoned by seeing," it may be spoken of as a taint.
- 43 If abandonment of the taints is understood in the strict sense as their ultimate destruction, then only two of the seven methods mentioned in the sutta effect their abandonment – seeing and development – which between them comprise the four supramundane paths. The other five methods cannot directly accomplish the destruction of the taints, but they can keep them under control during the preparatory stages of practice and thereby facilitate their eventual eradication by the supramundane paths.
- 44 The primary factor responsible for exercising this restraint over the sense faculties is mindfulness. A fuller formula for sense restraint is given in many other suttas – e.g., MN 27.15 – and analysed in detail at Vsm I, 53–59.

- MA explains "fever" (*pariḷāha*) in the above passage as the fever of defilements and of their (kammic) results.
- 45 The passages that follow here have become the standard formulas that bhikkhus use in their daily reflections upon the four requisites of the holy life. They are explained in detail at Vsm I, 85–97.
- 46 Unsuitable seats are the two kinds mentioned in the Pātimokkha – sitting with a woman on a screened seat convenient for sexual intercourse, and sitting alone with a woman in a private place. Various kinds of unsuitable resort are mentioned at Vsm I, 45.
- 47 The first three types of unwholesome thought – of sensual desire, ill will, and cruelty – constitute wrong thought or wrong intention, the opposite of the second factor of the Noble Eightfold Path. The three types of wrong thought and their opposites are dealt with more fully in MN 19.
- 48 These are the seven enlightenment factors (*satta bojjhaṅgā*) included among the thirty-seven requisites of enlightenment, and treated more extensively below at MN 10.42 and MN 118.29–40. The present section explains the seven enlightenment factors specifically as aids for developing the three higher supramundane paths, by which the taints that escaped eradication by the first path will be eradicated. The terms "seclusion" (*viveka*), "dispassion" (*virāga*), and "cessation" (*nirodha*) may all be understood as referring to Nibbāna. Their use in this context signifies that the development of the enlightenment factors is directed to Nibbāna as its goal during the preparatory stages of the path, and as its object with the attainment of the supramundane paths. MA explains that the word *vossagga*, rendered as "relinquishment," has the two meanings of "giving up" (*pariccāga*), i.e., the abandonment of defilements, and "entering into" (*pakkhandana*), i.e., culminating in Nibbāna.
- 49 The taint of sensual desire is eradicated by the path of non-returning, the taints of being and of ignorance only by the final path, that of arahantship.
- 50 The ten fetters that must be destroyed to gain full deliverance have been enumerated in the Introduction, pp. 42–43. Conceit, at the most subtle level, is the conceit

"I am," which lingers in the mental continuum until the attainment of arahantship. The "penetration of conceit" (*mānābhisamaya*) means seeing *through* conceit and abandoning it, which are both accomplished simultaneously by the path of arahantship. The bhikkhu has "made an end of suffering" in the sense that he has put an end to the suffering of the round of *saṃsāra* (*vaṭṭadukkha*).

SUTTA 3

- 51 MA: The Buddha delivered this sutta because many bhikkhus were becoming elated over the gains and honour accruing to the Sangha, to the neglect of their spiritual training. The Buddha obviously could not lay down a training rule prohibiting the use of the requisites, but he wanted to show the practice of the heirs in Dhamma to those bhikkhus who were earnestly desirous of training.
- 52 MA explains that these five qualities gradually fulfil all the stages of the practice culminating in arahantship.
- 53 Elder bhikkhus (*thera*) are those with more than ten rainy seasons since ordination (*upasampadā*); middle bhikkhus have between five and nine rains; new bhikkhus less than five rains.
- 54 The evil qualities mentioned here, and in the sections that follow, are introduced to show the states referred to above (§6) by the statement: "They do not abandon what the Teacher tells them to abandon." They are also the factors that induce a bhikkhu to become an heir of material things rather than an heir of Dhamma. In MN 7.3 the same sixteen qualities, with "ill will" substituted for "hate," are referred to as "the imperfections that defile the mind" (*cittass' upakkilesā*).
- 55 The Noble Eightfold Path is introduced here to show the practice that makes one an "heir in Dhamma." The antithesis between the defilements and the path restates, from a new angle, the contrast between "heirs in material things" and "heirs in Dhamma" with which the Buddha had opened the sutta.

SUTTA 4

- 56 MA says that Jāṇussoṇi was not a given name but an honorific title meaning "royal chaplain" (*purohita*) bestowed on him by the king. MN 27 is also addressed to the brahmin Jāṇussoṇi.
- 57 *Bhoto Gotamassa sā janatā ditṭhānugatim āpajjati*. Ñm renders: "Do these people follow the implications of Master Gotama's view?" And Horner: "These people emulate the views of the honoured Gotama" (MLS 1:22). MA, too, glosses: "These people have the same view, opinion, outlook as Master Gotama." However, it makes much better sense in this context to read *ditṭha* not as a *sandhi* form of *ditṭhi*, but as the past participle, and to take this phrase as meaning "following what they have seen of him," i.e., his example. This meaning is clearly required by the phrase in its appearances at SN ii.203, AN i.126, AN iii.108, 251, 422.
- 58 Ñm originally had rendered this phrase as "perfect in understanding," and the corresponding phrase in the preceding section as "perfect in concentration." However, since it seems inappropriate to ascribe perfection in *samādhi* and *paññā* to the Bodhisatta prior to his enlightenment, I have chosen to render the suffix *sampanna* throughout as "possessed of." MA explains that this is neither the wisdom of insight nor of the path, but the wisdom that defines the nature of its object (*ārammaṇavavattthānapaññā*).
- 59 The Indian year, according to the ancient system inherited by Buddhism, is divided into three seasons – the cold season, the hot season, and the rainy season – each lasting for four months. The four months are subdivided into eight fortnights (*pakkha*), the third and the seventh containing fourteen days and the others fifteen days. Within each fortnight, the nights of the full moon and the new moon (either the fourteenth or fifteenth) and the night of the half-moon (the eighth) are regarded as especially auspicious. Within Buddhism these days become the Uposatha, the days of religious observance. On the full moon and new moon days the bhikkhus recite their

code of precepts and lay people visit the monasteries to listen to sermons and to practise meditation.

- 60 The four postures (*iriyāpatha*) often mentioned in the Buddhist texts are walking, standing, sitting, and lying down.
- 61 Beginning with this section, the Buddha shows the course of practice that led him to the peak of non-delusion.
- 62 MA says that the Bodhisatta developed the four jhānas using mindfulness of breathing as his meditation subject.
- 63 Explained in detail at Vsm XIII, 13–71.
- 64 Explained in detail at Vsm XIII, 72–101.
- 65 MA: Having shown the Four Noble Truths in their own nature (that is, in terms of suffering), the passage on the taints is stated to show them indirectly by way of the defilements.
- 66 According to MA, the phrase “When I knew and saw thus” refers to insight and the path, which reaches its climax in the path of arahantship; the phrase “my mind was liberated” shows the moment of the fruit; and the phrase “there came the knowledge: ‘It is liberated’” shows reviewing knowledge (see Vsm XXII, 20–21), as does the next sentence beginning “I directly knew.”
- 67 This is the stock canonical announcement of final knowledge or arahantship. MA explains that the statement “Birth is destroyed” means that any type of birth that might have arisen if the path had not been developed has been rendered incapable of arising by the development of the path. The “holy life” that has been lived is the holy life of the path (*maggabrahmacariya*). The phrase “what had to be done has been done” (*katariṃ karaṇīyaṃ*) indicates that the four tasks of the noble path – fully understanding suffering, abandoning its origin, realising its cessation, and developing the path – have now all been completed for each of the four supramundane paths. The fourth phrase, *nāparam itthattāya*, is glossed by MA thus: “Now there is no need for me to develop the path again for ‘such a state,’ i.e., for the sixteenfold function (of the path) or for the destruction of the defilements. Or alternatively: after ‘such a state,’ i.e., the continuum of aggregates now occurring, there is no further continuum of aggregates for me. These five aggregates, having been

fully understood, stand like trees that are cut at the root. With the cessation of the last consciousness, they will be extinguished like a fire without fuel." I have opted for the second of these interpretations, but take *itthattāya* as a dative. The word, which literally means "the state of this" or "the state of thus," implies manifestation in a concrete state of existence. Nm had rendered: "There is no more of this beyond."

- 68 MA: He has "compassion for future generations" insofar as later generations of monks, seeing that the Buddha resorted to forest dwellings, will follow his example and thus hasten their progress towards making an end of suffering.

SUTTA 5

- 69 MA, picking up on the venerable Sāriputta's use of the word "person" (*puggala*), explains that the Buddha has a twofold teaching – a conventional teaching (*sammuti-desanā*) expressed in terms of persons, beings, women, and men, etc.; and an ultimate teaching (*paramatthadesanā*) expressed solely in terms that possess ultimate ontological validity, such as aggregates, elements, sense bases, impermanent, suffering, not self, etc. The Buddha expounds his teaching through whichever approach is best suited to enable the hearer to penetrate the meaning, dispel delusion, and achieve distinction. The use of the word "person," therefore, does not imply a misconception of the person as a self.
- 70 *Subhanimitta*: an attractive object that is the basis for lust. The Buddha says that unwise attention to the sign of the beautiful is the nutriment (*āhāra*) for the arising of unarisen sensual desire and for the growth and increase of arisen sensual desire (SN 46:2/v.64).
- 71 These are strict ascetic practices. The forest dweller, almsfood eater, house-to-house seeker and refuse-rag wearer are explained in Vsm II.
- 72 These are "softer" practices than those referred to in §29, generally regarded as signs of a less earnest commitment to exertion for the sake of the goal.
- 73 The Ājīvakas, or Ājivikas, were a rival sect whose teaching emphasised severe austerities based on a philosophy

bordering on fatalism. See Basham, *History and Doctrines of the Ājīvikas*.

- 74 The possessive pronouns qualifying heart are not in the Pali, but the sense of the phrase has to be understood by consideration of the simile. Just as Samīti planed the faults out of the fellow as if he knew Paṇḍuputta's heart with his own heart, so does Sāriputta plane out the faults of the bhikkhus as if he knew Moggallāna's wish to have them removed. MLS (1:40) misses the point by translating: "because he knows their hearts with his heart," taking the first reference to be to the monks rather than to Ven. Moggallāna.
- 75 *Mahānāga*. The *nāgas* are a class of dragonlike beings in Indian mythology believed to inhabit the nether regions of the earth and to be the guardians of hidden treasures. The word comes to represent any gigantic or powerful creature, such as a tusker elephant or a cobra and, by extension, an arahant bhikkhu. See Dhṛp, ch. 23, Nāgavagga.

SUTTA 6

- 76 MA says that the expression *sampannasīlā*, translated here as "possessed of virtue," can mean either "perfect in virtue" (*paripunṇasīlā*) or "endowed with virtue" (*sīlasamangino*). The Pātimokkha is the code of monastic discipline, which in its Pali version consists of 227 rules. "Resort" (*gocara*) implies a proper resort for alms, though it may also signify the proper deportment of a monk, his serene and self-possessed bearing. The key terms in this passage are analysed at Vsm I, 43–52.
- 77 MA: The passage beginning with "let him fulfil the precepts," repeated for each of the following sections until the end of the sutta, comprises the entire threefold training. The phrase about fulfilling the precepts signifies the training in higher virtue (*adhisīlasikkhā*); the phrase "be devoted to internal serenity of mind, not neglect meditation" indicates the training in concentration or the higher mind (*adhicittasikkhā*); and the phrase "be possessed of insight" points to the training in the higher wisdom (*adhipaññāsikkhā*). The phrase "dwell in empty huts" combines the latter two trainings, since one

- resorts to an empty hut to develop serenity and insight.
- 78 That is, if the relatives who have been reborn in the realm of ghosts or in some lower deva realm recollect virtuous bhikkhus with confidence, that confidence will become a source of merit for them, protecting them from bad rebirths and becoming a positive condition for the attainment of Nibbāna.
- 79 These are the four immaterial attainments for which the full formulas are to be found below at MN 8.8–11, MN 25.16–19, etc. MA glosses “body” as “mental body” (*nāmakāya*).
- 80 The three fetters destroyed by the stream-enterer are personality view, doubt, and adherence to rules and observances, as mentioned at MN 2.11.
- 81 In addition to the first three fetters, the non-returner destroys the other two “lower fetters” of sensual desire and ill will. The non-returner is reborn in a special region of the Brahma-world called the Pure Abodes, and there makes an end of suffering.
- 82 §§14–19 present the six kinds of direct knowledge (*abhiññā*). See Introduction, p. 37; for details, see Vsm XII and XIII.
- 83 MA: In this passage “mind” and “wisdom” signify, respectively, the concentration and wisdom associated with the fruit of arahantship. Concentration is called “deliverance of mind” (*cetovimutti*) because it is liberated from lust; wisdom is called “deliverance by wisdom” (*paññāvimutti*) because it is liberated from ignorance. The former is normally the result of serenity, the latter the result of insight. But when they are coupled and described as taintless (*anāsava*), they jointly result from the destruction of the taints by the supramundane path of arahantship.

SUTTA 7

- 84 For a more thorough treatment of this sutta and the following one, with helpful introductions and lengthy explanatory notes, see Nyanaponika Thera, *The Simile of the Cloth and The Discourse on Effacement*.

- 85 An unhappy destination (*duggati*) is rebirth in the three states of deprivation – hell, the animal kingdom, and the realm of ghosts. A happy destination (*sugati*), mentioned just below, is rebirth in a superior state among humans and in the heavenly worlds.
- 86 *Cittassa upakkilesā*. The word *upakkilesā* is sometimes used in the sense of blemishes or imperfections of meditative concentration, as at MN 128.27, 30; sometimes in the sense of blemishes or imperfections of insight, as at Vsm XX, 105; and sometimes to signify the minor defilements that arise from the three unwholesome roots – greed, hate, and delusion – either as their modes or their offshoots. Here it is used in this third sense, but to maintain the connection with its first two usages, it has been translated by the phrase “imperfections that defile the mind.”
- 87 MA offers several tentative distinctions between covetousness (*abhijjhā*) and unrighteous greed (*visamalobha*), but then it points out that since, from the standpoint of the higher training, all greed is unrighteous, the two terms can be understood as merely different names for the same mental factor, greed or lust.
- 88 MA says that the abandoning spoken of here should be understood as “abandonment by eradication” (*sāmuchedappahāna*), that is, complete uprooting by the supramundane path. The sixteen defilements are abandoned by the noble paths in the following order:
1. The *path of stream-entry* abandons: contempt, a domineering attitude, envy, avarice, deceit, fraud.
 2. The *path of non-returning* abandons: ill will, anger, revenge, negligence.
 3. The *path of arahantship* abandons: covetousness and unrighteous greed, obstinacy, presumption, conceit, arrogance, vanity.

MA maintains, by reference to an ancient exegetical source, that in this passage the path of the non-returner is being described. Therefore we must understand that those defilements to be fully abandoned by the path of arahantship have at this point only been abandoned in part, by way of their coarser manifestations.

- 89 Perfect confidence (*aveccappasāda*) in the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha is an attribute of a noble disciple at the minimal level of a stream-enterer, whose confidence is perfect because he has seen the truth of the Dhamma for himself. The formulas for recollection of the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha given here are explained at length in Vsm VII.
- 90 This translation follows the reading *yatodhi* and MA's explanation of this as the partial abandoning of defilements by the first three paths, contrasted with the total (*anodhi*) abandoning of defilements by the fourth and final path. *Ñm*, following the reading *yathodhi*, translates: "And whatever [from among those imperfections] has, according to the limitation [set by whichever of the first three paths he has attained], been given up, has been [forever] dropped, let go, abandoned, relinquished."
- 91 *Labhati atthavedaṃ labhati dhammavedaṃ*. Ven. Nyānaponika renders: "He gains enthusiasm for the goal, gains enthusiasm for the Dhamma." MA explains *veda* as meaning joy and the knowledge connected with that joy, and says: "*Atthaveda* is the inspiration arisen in one who reviews his perfect confidence; *dhammaveda* is the inspiration arisen in one who reviews the abandonment of the defilements in part, the cause of that perfect confidence."
- 92 The Pali equivalents, in noun form, for the terms in this series are: *pāmojja*, gladness; *pīti*, rapture; *passaddhi*, tranquillity; *sukha*, pleasure; *samādhī*, concentration. Tranquillity, by removing the subtle bodily and mental disturbances connected with gladness and rapture, brings the serene pleasure that prepares the mind for deepened concentration.
- 93 The Pali terms are: *evaṃsīlo evaṃdhammo evaṃpañño*. The middle term, in this context, obviously must refer to the second stage of the threefold training, concentration, though it is puzzling why *samādhī* itself is not used. The commentary to MN 123.2 glosses a parallel expression by *samādhī-pakkha-dhammā*, "states belonging to concentration."
- 94 This statement underscores his attainment of the stage of non-returner. Since the non-returner has eradicated sen-

sual desire, delicious food cannot impede him in his quest for the final path and fruit.

- 95 §§13–16 present the standard sutta formulas for the four “divine abodes” (*brahmavihāra*). Briefly, loving-kindness (*mettā*) is the wish for the welfare and happiness of others; compassion (*karuṇā*), the empathy with them in their suffering; appreciative joy (*muditā*), rejoicing in their virtues and success; and equanimity (*upekkhā*), the attitude of detached impartiality towards beings (not apathy or indifference). For a fuller treatment, see Vsm IX.
- 96 MA: The present section shows the non-returner’s practice of insight meditation aimed at arahantship and the following section his attainment of arahantship. The phrase “there is this” signifies the truth of suffering; “there is the inferior,” the origin of suffering; “the superior,” the truth of the path; and “the escape from this whole field of perception” is Nibbāna, the cessation of suffering.
- 97 MA: The Buddha used this phrase to arouse the attention of the brahmin Sundarika Bhāradvāja, who was in the assembly and believed in purification by ritual bathing. The Buddha foresaw that the brahmin would be inspired to take ordination under him and would attain arahantship.
- 98 These are rivers and fords that were popularly believed to give purification.
- 99 The Pali has *phaggu*, a day of brahmanical purification in the month of *Phagguna* (February–March), and *uposatha*, the religious observance days regulated by the lunar calendar. See n.59.
- 100 The going forth (*pabbajjā*) is the formal ordination of entering the homeless life as a novice (*sāmaṇera*); the full admission (*upasampadā*) confers the status of a bhikkhu, a full member of the Sangha.

SUTTA 8

- 101 See n.84.
- 102 Views associated with doctrines of a self (*attavādapati-samyuttā*), according to MA, are the twenty types of per-

sonality view enumerated at MN 44.7, though they may also be understood to include the more elaborate doctrines about a self discussed in MN 102. Views associated with doctrines about the world (*lokavādapapaṭisaṃyuttā*) are the eight views: the world is eternal, non-eternal, both, or neither; the world is infinite, finite, both, or neither. See MN 63 and MN 72 for the Buddha's rejection of these views.

- 103 MA: This question refers to one who has only reached the initial stages of insight meditation without attaining stream-entry. The type of abandonment under discussion is abandoning by eradication, which is effected only by the path of stream-entry. Ven. Mahā Cunda posed this question because some meditators were overestimating their achievement, thinking they had abandoned such views while they had not really eradicated them.
- 104 MA explains that the word "arise" (*uppajjanti*) refers here to the arising of views that have not arisen before; "underlie" (*anusenti*) to their gathering strength through continued adherence to them; and being "exercised" (*samudācaranti*) to their gaining bodily or verbal expression. The "object" upon which they are based is the five aggregates (*khandha*) that constitute a person or living being – material form, feeling, perception, mental formations, and consciousness.
- 105 By this statement[†] the Buddha shows the means by which these views are eradicated: contemplation of the five aggregates as "not mine," etc., with the wisdom of insight culminating in the path of stream-entry.
- 106 MA explains that the Buddha, having answered the Elder's question, now speaks of another type of overestimator – those who attain the eight meditative attainments and believe that they are practising true effacement (*sallekha*). The word *sallekha*, originally meaning austerity or ascetic practice, is used by the Buddha to signify the radical effacing or removal of defilements. Though the eight attainments are elsewhere placed securely within the Buddhist training (see MN 25.12–19, MN 26.34–41), it is here said that they should not be called effacement because the bhikkhu who attains them does not use

them as a basis for insight – as described for example in MN 52 and MN 64 – but only as a means of enjoying bliss and peace.

- 107 The forty-four “modes of effacement” to be expounded fall, by and large, into several fixed sets of doctrinal categories as follows. Those not mentioned here do not fit into any fixed set.

(2)–(11) are the ten courses of unwholesome and wholesome action (*kamma**patha*) – see MN 9.4, 9.6;

(12)–(18) are the last seven factors of the eightfold path – wrong and right – the first factor being identical with (11);

(19)–(20) are sometimes added to the two eightfold paths – see MN 117.34–36;

(21)–(23) are the last three of the five hindrances – see MN 10.36 – the first two being identical with (9) and (10);

(24)–(33) are ten of the sixteen imperfections that defile the mind, mentioned in MN 7.3;

(37)–(43) are the seven bad qualities and the seven good qualities (*saddhammā*) mentioned in MN 53.11–17.

- 108 MT: Non-cruelty (*avihiṃsā*), which is a synonym for compassion, is mentioned at the beginning because it is the root of all virtues, especially the root-cause of morality.

- 109 MA: This is a description of those who hold firmly to a view that has occurred to them, believing “This alone is the truth”; they do not relinquish it even if spoken to by the Buddha with reasoned arguments.

- 110 MA: The inclination of mind is of great benefit because it entails exclusively welfare and happiness, and because it is the cause of the subsequent actions that conform to it.

- 111 The Pali term rendered by “extinguished” is *parinibbuto*, which can also mean “attained to Nibbāna”; and the Pali term rendered by “help extinguish” is *parinibbāpessati*, which can also mean “help attain Nibbāna” or “bring to Nibbāna.” The Pali original for the expression to follow, “by which to extinguish it,” *parinibbānaya*, might have been rendered “for attaining Nibbāna.” Though in all three cases the alternative rendering would be too strong to insist on literally, its implications contribute to the

suggestiveness of the original in a way that cannot be captured in translation.

- 112 MA points out that this statement can be understood in two ways: (1) one who is himself free from cruelty can use his non-cruelty to help extinguish the cruelty of another person; and (2) one who is himself cruel can develop non-cruelty to extinguish his own cruel disposition. All the following cases should be similarly understood in this twofold way.
- 113 MA: The compassionate teacher's task is the correct teaching of the Dhamma; beyond that is the practice, which is the work of the disciples.

SUTTA 9

- 114 MA: Right view is twofold: mundane and supramundane. Mundane right view is again twofold: the view that kamma produces its fruits, which may be held both by Buddhists and outsiders, and the view that accords with the Four Noble Truths, which is exclusive to the Buddha's Dispensation. Supramundane right view is the understanding of the Four Noble Truths attained by penetrating to the four paths and fruits of sanctity. The question posed by the Ven. Sāriputta concerns the *sekha*, the disciple in higher training, who possesses supramundane right view leading irreversibly to emancipation. This is implied by the phrase "perfect confidence" and "arrived at this true Dhamma."
- 115 Here the unwholesome (*akusala*) is explained by the ten unwholesome courses of action. The first three of these pertain to bodily action, the middle four to verbal action, the last three to mental action. The ten are explained at greater length at MN 41.8–10.
- 116 These three are called the roots of the unwholesome because they motivate all unwholesome actions. For a thorough and informative textual study of these factors and their opposites, see Nyanaponika Thera, *The Roots of Good and Evil*.
- 117 These ten wholesome courses of action are elaborated upon in MN 41.12–14.

- 118 MA explains the disciple's understanding of these four terms by way of the Four Noble Truths thus: all the courses of action are the truth of suffering; the wholesome and unwholesome roots are the truth of the origin; the non-occurrence of both actions and their roots is the truth of cessation; and the noble path that realises cessation is the truth of the path. To this extent a noble disciple at one of the first three stages has been described – one who has arrived at supramundane right view but has not yet eliminated all defilements.
- 119 The passage from "he entirely abandons the underlying tendency to lust" until "he makes an end of suffering" shows the work accomplished by the paths of the non-returner and of arahantship – the elimination of the most subtle and obstinate defilements and the achievement of final knowledge. Here, the underlying tendencies to sensual lust and aversion are eliminated by the path of the non-returner, the underlying tendency to the view and conceit "I am" and ignorance by the path of arahantship. MA explains that the expression "underlying tendency to the view and conceit 'I am'" (*asmī ti ditṭhimānānusaya*) should be interpreted to mean the underlying tendency to conceit that is *similar* to a view because, like the view of self, it occurs apprehending the notion "I am."
- 120 Nutriment (*āhāra*) is to be understood here in a broad sense as a prominent condition for the individual life-continuity. Physical food (*kabalinkāra āhāra*) is an important condition for the physical body, contact for feeling, mental volition for consciousness, and consciousness for mentality-materiality, the psychophysical organism in its totality. Craving is called the origin of nutriment in that the craving of the previous existence is the source of the present individuality with its dependence upon and continual consumption of the four nutriments in this existence. For an annotated compilation of the canonical and commentarial texts on the nutriments, see Nyanaponika Thera, *The Four Nutriments of Life*.
- 121 The next twelve sections present, in reverse order, a factor-by-factor examination of dependent origination. The principal terms of the formula are explained briefly in the

Introduction, pp. 30–31. The detailed exegesis is in Vsm XVII. Here each factor is patterned after the Four Noble Truths.

- 122 This refers to the five aggregates. See MN 10.38 and MN 44.2.
- 123 The six bases for contact are enumerated at §50 below.
- 124 The three kinds of being are explained in the Introduction, pp. 46–48, in the discussion of Buddhist cosmology. Here, by “being” should be understood both the actual planes of rebirth and the types of kamma that generate rebirth into those planes.
- 125 Clinging to rules and observances is the adherence to the view that purification can be achieved by adopting certain external rules or following certain observances, particularly of ascetic self-discipline; clinging to a doctrine of self is synonymous with personality view in one or another of its twenty forms (see MN 44.7); clinging to views is the clinging to all other types of views except the two mentioned separately. Clinging in any of its varieties represents a strengthening of craving, its condition.
- 126 Craving for mind-objects (*dharmataṇhā*) is the craving for all objects of consciousness except the objects of the five kinds of sense consciousness. Examples would be the craving for fantasies and mental imagery, for abstract ideas and intellectual systems, for feelings and emotional states, etc.
- 127 Contact (*phassa*) is explained at MN 18.16 as the meeting of sense faculty, its object, and consciousness.
- 128 Mind-base (*manāyatana*) is a collective term for all classes of consciousness. One part of this base – the “life continuum” (*bhavanga*) or subliminal consciousness – is the “door” for the arising of mind-consciousness. See n.130.
- 129 Mentality-materiality (*nāmarūpa*) is an umbrella term for the psychophysical organism exclusive of consciousness. The five mental factors mentioned under *nāma* are indispensable to consciousness and thus pertain to all conscious experience. The four great elements concretely represent matter’s essential properties of solidity, cohesion, heat, and distension. The material form derived from the elements includes, according to the Abhidham-

ma analysis, the sensitive substance of the five sense faculties; four sense objects – colour, sound, smell, and taste (tangibles being the three elements of earth, fire, and air); the physical life faculty, nutritive essence, sex determination, and other types of material phenomena. See also the Introduction, p. 56.

- 130 Mind-consciousness (*manoviññāṇa*) comprises all consciousness except the five types of sense consciousness just mentioned. It includes consciousness of mental images, abstract ideas, and internal states of mind, as well as the consciousness in reflection upon sense objects.
- 131 In the context of the doctrine of dependent origination, formations (*sankhārā*) are wholesome and unwholesome volitions, or, in short, kamma. The bodily formation is volition that is expressed through the body, the verbal formation volition that is expressed by speech, and the mental formation volition that remains internal without coming to bodily or verbal expression.
- 132 It should be noted that while ignorance is a condition for the taints, the taints – which include the taint of ignorance – are in turn a condition for ignorance. MA says that this conditioning of ignorance by ignorance should be understood to mean that the ignorance in any one existence is conditioned by the ignorance in the preceding existence. Since this is so, the conclusion follows that no first point can be discovered for ignorance, and thus that saṃsāra is without discernible beginning.

SUTTA 10

- 133 This is one of the most important suttas in the Pali Canon, containing the most comprehensive statement of the most direct way to the attainment of the Buddhist goal. Virtually the identical sutta is found as well at DN 22, though with an expanded analysis of the Four Noble Truths attached, which accounts for its greater length. The sutta, its commentary, and copious extracts from its difficult but illuminating subcommentary have been presented together in translation by Soma Thera in *The Way of Mindfulness*. A very readable translation of the

- sutta, with a modern commentary excelling in clarity and depth, will be found in Nyanaponika Thera, *The Heart of Buddhist Meditation*.
- 134 This town is said by some scholars to have been in the vicinity of modern Delhi.
- 135 The Pali reads *ekāyano ayaṃ bhikkhave maggo*, and virtually all translators understand this as a statement upholding *satipaṭṭhāna* as an exclusive path. Thus Ven. Soma renders it: "This is the only way, O bhikkhus," and Ven. Nyanaponika: "This is the sole way, monks." Ñm, however, points out that *ekāyana magga* at MN 12.37–42 has the unambiguous contextual meaning of "a path that goes in one way only," and so he rendered the phrase in this passage, too. The expression used here, "the direct path," is an attempt to preserve this meaning in a more streamlined phrasing. MA explains *ekāyana magga* as a single path, not a divided path; as a way that has to be walked by oneself alone, without a companion; and as a way that goes to one goal, Nibbāna. Though there is neither canonical nor commentarial basis for this view, it might be maintained that *satipaṭṭhāna* is called *ekāyana magga*, the direct path, to distinguish it from the approach to meditative attainment that proceeds through the jhānas or *brahmavihāras*. While the latter can lead to Nibbāna, they do not do so necessarily but can lead to sidetracks, whereas *satipaṭṭhāna* leads invariably to the final goal.
- 136 The word *satipaṭṭhāna* is a compound term. The first part, *sati*, originally meant "memory," but in Pali Buddhist usage it far more frequently bears the meaning of attentiveness directed to the present – hence the makeshift rendering "mindfulness." The second part is explained in two ways: either as a shortened form of *upaṭṭhāna*, meaning "setting up" or "establishing" – here, of mindfulness; or as *paṭṭhāna*, meaning "domain" or "foundation" – again, of mindfulness. Thus the four *satipaṭṭhānas* may be understood as either the four ways of setting up mindfulness or as the four objective domains of mindfulness, to be amplified in the rest of the sutta. The former seems to be the etymologically correct derivation (confirmed by

the Sanskrit *sm, tyupasthāna*), but the Pali commentators, while admitting both explanations, have a predilection for the latter.

- 137 MA says that in this context, "bhikkhu" is a term indicating a person who earnestly endeavours to accomplish the practice of the teaching: "Whoever undertakes that practice...is here comprised under the term 'bhikkhu.'"
- 138 The repetition in the phrase "contemplating the body as a body" (*kāye kāyānupassī*), according to MA, has the purpose of precisely determining the object of contemplation and of isolating that object from others with which it might be confused. Thus, in this practice, the body should be contemplated as such, and not one's feelings, ideas, and emotions concerning it. The phrase also means that the body should be contemplated simply as a body and not as a man, a woman, a self, or a living being. Similar considerations apply to the repetitions in the case of each of the other three foundations of mindfulness. "Covetousness and grief," MA says, stands for sensual desire and ill will, the principal hindrances that must be overcome for the practice to succeed, enumerated separately below in §36.
- 139 The structure of this sutta is fairly simple. Following the preamble, the body of the discourse falls into four parts by way of the four foundations of mindfulness:
- I. *Contemplation of the body*, which comprises fourteen exercises: mindfulness of breathing; contemplation of the four postures; full awareness; attention to foulness; attention to the elements; and nine "charnel ground contemplations" – reflection on corpses in different stages of decomposition.
 - II. *Contemplation of feeling*, considered one exercise.
 - III. *Contemplation of mind*, also one exercise.
 - IV. *Contemplation of mind-objects*, which has five subdivisions – the five hindrances; the five aggregates; the six sense bases; the seven enlightenment factors; and the Four Noble Truths.

Thus the sutta expounds altogether twenty-one exercises in contemplation. Each exercise in turn has two aspects: the basic exercise, explained first, and a supple-

mentary section on insight (essentially the same for all the exercises), which indicates how the contemplation is to be developed to deepen understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

Finally the sutta concludes with a statement of assurance in which the Buddha personally vouches for the effectiveness of the method by declaring the fruits of continuous practice to be either arahantship or non-returning.

- 140 The practice of mindfulness of breathing (*ānāpānasati*) involves no deliberate attempt to regulate the breath, as in hatha yoga, but a sustained effort to fix awareness on the breath as it moves in and out in its natural rhythm. Mindfulness is set up at the nostrils or the upper lip, wherever the impact of the breath is felt most distinctly; the length of the breath is noted but not consciously controlled. The complete development of this meditation method is expounded in MN 118. For an organised collection of texts on this subject, see Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli, *Mindfulness of Breathing*. See too Vsm VIII, 145–244.
- 141 MA: The phrase “experiencing the whole body” (*sabbakāyapaṭisaṁvedī*) means that the meditator becomes aware of each in-and-out breath through the three phases of its beginning, middle, and end.
- 142 The “bodily formation” (*kāyasankhāra*) is defined at MN 44.13 as in-and-out breathing itself. Thus, as MA explains, with the successful development of the practice, the meditator’s breathing becomes increasingly quiet, tranquil, and peaceful.
- 143 MA: “Internally”: contemplating the breathing in his own body. “Externally”: contemplating the breathing occurring in the body of another. “Internally and externally”: contemplating the breathing in his own body and in the body of another alternately, with uninterrupted attention. A similar explanation applies to the refrain that follows each of the other sections, except that under the contemplation of feeling, mind, and mind-objects, the contemplation externally, apart from those possessing telepathic powers, must be inferential.
- 144 MA: The “arising factors” (*samudayadhammā*) for the body are the conditions on account of which the body

has arisen – namely, ignorance, craving, kamma, and food – together with the concrete fact of the moment-by-moment origination of material phenomena in the body. In the case of mindfulness of breathing, an additional arising factor mentioned by the commentaries is the physiological apparatus of respiration. The “vanishing factors” (*vayadhammā*) for the body are the cessation of the causal conditions and the momentary dissolution of material phenomena in the body.

- 145 MA: For the sake of a wider and wider and higher and higher measure of knowledge and mindfulness.
- 146 The understanding of the bodily postures referred to in this exercise is not our ordinary natural knowledge of our bodily activity, but a close, constant, and careful awareness of the body in every position, coupled with an analytical examination intended to dispel the delusion of a self as the agent of bodily movement.
- 147 *Sampajañña*, also translated as “clear comprehension” (Soma, Nyanaponika), is analysed in the commentaries into four types: full awareness of the purpose of one’s action; full awareness of the suitability of one’s means; full awareness of the domain, that is, not abandoning the subject of meditation during one’s daily routine; and full awareness of reality, the knowledge that behind one’s activities there is no abiding self. See *The Way of Mindfulness*, pp. 60–100; *The Heart of Buddhist Meditation*, pp. 46–55.
- 148 In later Pali works the brain is added to the above list to form thirty-two parts. The details of this meditation practice are explained at Vsm VIII, 42–144.
- 149 These four elements are explained by Buddhist tradition as the primary attributes of matter – solidity, cohesion, heat, and distension. The detailed explanation is found at Vsm XI, 27–117.
- 150 The phrase “as though” (*seyyathāpi*) suggests that this meditation, and those to follow, need not be based upon an actual encounter with a corpse in the state of decay described, but can be performed as an imaginative exercise. “This same body” is, of course, the meditator’s own body.
- 151 Each of the four types of corpse mentioned here, and the

three types below, may be taken as a separate and self-sufficient subject of meditation; or the entire set may be used as a progressive series for impressing on the mind the idea of the body's transience and insubstantiality. The progression continues in §§26–30.

- 152 Feeling (*vedanā*) signifies the affective quality of experience, bodily and mental, either pleasant, painful, or neither, i.e., neutral feeling. Examples of the "worldly" and "unworldly" forms of these feelings are given at MN 137.9–15 under the rubric of the six kinds of joy, grief, and equanimity based respectively on the household life and renunciation.
- 153 The arising and vanishing factors for feeling are the same as those for the body (see n.144) except that food is replaced by contact, since contact is the condition for feeling (see MN 9.42).
- 154 Mind (*citta*) as an object of contemplation refers to the general state and level of consciousness. Since consciousness itself, in its own nature, is the bare knowing or cognizing of an object, the quality of any state of mind is determined by its associated mental factors, such as lust, hate, and delusion or their opposites, as mentioned by the sutta.
- 155 The paired examples of *citta* given in this passage contrast states of mind of wholesome and unwholesome, or developed and undeveloped character. An exception, however, is the pair "contracted" and "distracted," which are both unwholesome, the former due to sloth and torpor, the latter due to restlessness and remorse. MA explains "exalted mind" and "unsurpassed mind" as the mind pertaining to the level of the *jhānas* and *immaterial meditative attainments*, and "unexalted mind" and "surpassed mind" as the mind pertaining to the level of sense-sphere consciousness. "Liberated mind" must be understood as a mind temporarily and partly freed from defilements through insight or the *jhānas*. Since the practice of *satipaṭṭhāna* pertains to the preliminary phase of the path aimed at the supramundane paths of deliverance, this last category should not be understood as a mind liberated through attainment of the supramundane paths.
- 156 The arising and vanishing factors of mind are the same

as those for the body except that food is replaced by mentality-materiality, since the latter is the condition for consciousness (see DN 15.22/ii.63).

- 157 The word rendered here as "mind-objects" is the polymorphous *dhammā*. In this context *dhammā* can be understood as comprising all phenomena classified by way of the categories of the Dhamma, the Buddha's teaching of actuality. This contemplation reaches its climax in the penetration of the teaching at the heart of the Dhamma – the Four Noble Truths.
- 158 The five hindrances (*pañcanīvaraṇā*) are the main inner impediments to the development of concentration and insight. Sensual desire arises through attending unwisely to a sensually attractive object and is abandoned by meditation on a foul object (as in §10 and §§14–30); ill will arises through attending unwisely to a repugnant object and is abandoned by developing loving-kindness; sloth and torpor arise by submitting to boredom and laziness and are abandoned by arousing energy; restlessness and remorse arise through unwisely reflecting on disturbing thoughts and are abandoned by wisely reflecting on tranquillity; doubt arises through unwisely reflecting on dubious matters and is abandoned by study, investigation, and inquiry. The hindrances are fully eradicated only by the supramundane paths. For a fuller treatment, see *The Way of Mindfulness*, pp. 119–130; Nyanaponika Thera, *The Five Mental Hindrances*; and also below, MN 27.18 and MN 39.13–14.
- 159 The five aggregates affected by clinging (*pañc'upādāna-kkhandhā*) are the five groups of factors comprising the individual personality. The aggregates are discussed in the Introduction, p. 26, and are analysed and explained in terms of their origin and disappearance at MN 109.9.
- 160 The internal bases are, as shown, the six sense faculties; the external bases, their respective objects. The fetter that arises dependent upon the pairs may be understood by way of the ten fetters explained in the Introduction, pp. 42–43, or more simply as attraction (greed), aversion (hatred), and the underlying delusion.
- 161 How the seven enlightenment factors unfold in progres-

sive sequence is explained at MN 118.29–40. For a more detailed discussion, see Piyadassi Thera, *The Seven Factors of Enlightenment*.

- 162 "Investigation of states" (*dharmavicaya*) means the scrutiny of the mental and physical phenomena presented to the meditator's mind by mindfulness.
- 163 The commentaries explain in detail the conditions that conduce to the maturation of the enlightenment factors. See *The Way of Mindfulness*, pp. 134–149.
- 164 With this section, the contemplation of *dhammā* as mind-objects culminates in the understanding of the Dhamma in its core formulation as the Four Noble Truths. The longer *Mahāsatipatṭhāna Sutta* of the Dīgha Nikāya gives extended definitions and elaborations of each of the truths.
- 165 Final knowledge, *aññā*, is the arahant's knowledge of final deliverance. Non-return (*anāgāmitā*) is, of course, the state of a non-returner, who is reborn in a higher world where he attains final Nibbāna without ever returning to the human world.

SUTTA 11

- 166 The phrase "only here" means only in the Buddha's Dispensation. The four recluses (*samaṇa*) referred to are the four grades of noble disciples – the stream-enterer, once-returner, non-returner, and arahant. A "lion's roar" (*sīhanāda*), according to MA, is a roar of supremacy and fearlessness, a roar that cannot be confuted. In connection with the Buddha's proclamation, see also his discussion with Subhadda in the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* (DN 16:5.27/ii.151–52).
- 167 MA: Even though the adherents of other sects all declare arahantship – understood in a general way as spiritual perfection – to be the goal, they point out other attainments as the goal in accordance with their views. Thus the brahmins declare the Brahma-world to be the goal, the ascetics declare the gods of Streaming Radiance, the wanderers the gods of Refulgent Glory, and the Ājīvakas the non-percipient state, which they imagine to be "infinite mind."

- 168 "Favouring and opposing" (*anurodhapaṭivirodha*) means reacting with attraction through lust and with aversion through hate.
- 169 Proliferation (*papañca*), according to MA, is here mental activity governed by craving and views. For more on this important term, see n.229.
- 170 The view of being (*bhavadiṭṭhi*) is eternalism, the belief in an eternal self; the view of non-being (*vibhavadiṭṭhi*) is annihilationism, the denial of any principle of continuity as a basis for rebirth and kammic retribution. The adoption of one view entailing opposition to the other ties up with the earlier statement that the goal is for one who does not favour and oppose.
- 171 As the origin (*samudaya*) of these views, MA mentions eight conditions: the five aggregates, ignorance, contact, perception, thought, unwise attention, bad friends, and the voice of another. Their disappearance (*atthangama*) is the path of stream-entry, which eradicates all wrong views. Their gratification (*assāda*) may be understood as the satisfaction of psychological need that they provide; their danger (*ādinava*) is the continual bondage that they entail; the escape (*nissaraṇa*) from them is Nibbāna.
- 172 MA glosses full understanding (*pariññā*) here as overcoming, transcending (*samatikkama*), with reference to the commentarial notion of *pahānapariññā*, "full understanding as abandonment." See n.7.
- 173 This passage clearly states that the critical factor differentiating the Buddha's teaching from all other religious and philosophical creeds is its "full understanding of clinging to a doctrine of self." This means, in effect, that the Buddha alone is able to show how to overcome all views of self by developing penetration of the truth of non-self. Since the other spiritual teachers lack this understanding of non-self, their claims to fully understand the three other kinds of clinging are also suspect.
- 174 MA: That is, the Buddha teaches how clinging to sense pleasures (understood as comprising all forms of greed, MṬ) is abandoned by the path of arahantship, the other three clings by the path of stream-entry.
- 175 This passage is stated to show how clinging is to be aban-

doned. Clinging is traced back to its root-cause in ignorance, and then the destruction of ignorance is shown to be the means to eradicate clinging.

- 176 The Pali idiom, *n'eva kāmupādānaṃ upādiyati*, would have to be rendered literally as "he does not cling to the clinging to sense pleasures," which may obscure the sense rather than convey it. *Upādāna* in Pali is the object of its own verb form, while "clinging" in English is not. At one stage in his translation Ñm tried to circumvent this problem by borrowing the word *upādāna*'s other meaning of "fuel" and translating: "he no longer clings to sensual desires [as fuel for] clinging." This, however, also borders on obscurity, and I have therefore attempted to cut through the difficulty by translating directly in accordance with the sense rather than in conformity with the literal idiom.

SUTTA 12

- 177 The *Sunakkhatta Sutta* (MN 105) had been expounded to him by the Buddha, apparently before he joined the Sangha; the account of his defection is given in the *Pāṭika Sutta* (DN 24). He became dissatisfied and left the Order because the Buddha would not perform any miracles for him or explain to him the beginning of things.
- 178 Superhuman states (*uttari manussadhammā*) are states, virtues, or attainments higher than the ordinary human virtues comprised in the ten wholesome courses of action (see MN 9.6); they include the *jhānas*, the kinds of direct knowledge, and the paths and fruits. "Distinction in knowledge and vision worthy of the noble ones" (*alamariyañāṇadassanavisesa*), a frequently occurring expression in the suttas, signifies all higher degrees of meditative knowledge characteristic of the noble individual. Here, according to MA, it means specifically the supramundane path, which Sunakkhatta is denying of the Buddha.
- 179 The gist of his criticism is that the Buddha teaches a doctrine that he has merely worked out in thought rather than one he has realised through transcendental wisdom. Apparently he believes that being led to the complete destruction of suffering is, as a goal, inferior to the acqui-

sition of miraculous powers.

- 180 All the sections to follow are set forth as a rebuttal of Sunakkhatta's criticism of the Buddha. §§6–8 cover the first three of the six direct knowledges (*abhiññā*), the last three appearing as the last of the ten powers of the Tathāgata. The latter, according to MA, are to be understood as powers of knowledge (*ñāṇabala*) that are attained by all Buddhas as the fruit of their accumulation of merit. The Vibhanga (§§809–31/440–51) of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka provides an elaborate analysis of them.
- 181 On the Buddha's sounding of his lion's roar, see SN 22:78/iii.84–86. The Wheel of Brahmā is the supreme, best, most excellent wheel, the Wheel of the Dhamma (*dharmacakka*) in its twofold meaning: the knowledge penetrating the truth and the knowledge of how to expound the teaching (MA).
- 182 Vbh §809 explicates this knowledge by quoting at length MN 115.12–17. MA, however, explains it differently as the knowledge of the correlations between causes and their results.
- 183 This knowledge can be exemplified by the Buddha's analysis of kamma in MN 57, MN 135 and MN 136.
- 184 This knowledge will be elucidated in §§35–42 below.
- 185 The Tathāgata's understanding of the many elements constituting the world will be found in MN 115.4–9.
- 186 Vbh §813 explains that the Tathāgata understands that beings are of inferior inclinations and superior inclinations, and that they gravitate towards those who share their own inclinations.
- 187 Vbh §§814–27 gives a detailed analysis. MA states the meaning more concisely as the Tathāgata's knowledge of the superiority and inferiority of beings' faculties of faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom.
- 188 Vbh §828: The "defilement" (*sankilesa*) is a state causing deterioration, "cleansing" (*vodāna*) a state causing excellence, "emergence" (*vuṭṭhāna*) is both cleansing and the rising out of an attainment. The eight liberations (*vimokkhā*) are enumerated in MN 77.22 and MN 137.26; the nine attainments (*samāpatti*) are the four jhānas, four immaterial attainments, and the cessation of perception

- and feeling as in MN 25.12–20.
- 189 The idiom *yathābhataṃ nikkhitto evaṃ niraye* is knotty; the rendering here follows the commentary: “He will be put in hell as if carried off and put there by the wardens of hell.”
- 190 In later Buddhist tradition the *asuras*, titans or “anti-gods,” are added as a separate realm to make six destinations.
- 191 *Ekanta*: may also mean “exclusively” or “incessantly.”
- 192 MA: Even though the description is the same as that of the bliss of the heavenly world, the meaning is different. For the bliss of the heavenly world is not really extremely pleasant because the fevers of lust, etc., are still present there. But the bliss of Nibbāna is extremely pleasant in every way through the subsiding of all fevers.
- 193 At this juncture, MA informs us, the Buddha related this account of his past ascetic practices because Sunakkhatta was a great admirer of extreme asceticism (as the *Pāṭika Sutta* shows) and the Buddha wanted to make it known that there was no one who could equal him in the practice of austerities. The passages to follow should be collated with MN 4.20 and MN 36.20–30 for a fuller picture of the Bodhisatta’s experiment with the extreme of self-mortification.
- 194 The “eight-days interval of frost” refers to a regular cold spell that occurs in northern India in late December or early January. *
- 195 That is, they hold the view that beings are purified by reducing their intake of food.
- 196 Rebirth into the Pure Abodes (*suddhāvāsa*) is possible only for non-returners.
- 197 The Pali for the four terms is: *sati, gati, dhiti, paññāveyyattiya*. MA explains *sati* as the ability to grasp in mind a hundred or a thousand phrases as they are being spoken; *gati* as the ability to bind them and retain them in the mind; *dhiti* as the ability to recite back what has been grasped and retained; and *paññāveyyattiya* as the ability to discern the meaning and logic of those phrases.
- 198 Ven. Nāgasamāla had been a personal attendant of the Buddha during the first twenty years of his ministry.
- 199 *Lomaḥamsanapariyāya*. The sutta is referred to by that

name at Miln 398 and in the commentary to the Dīgha Nikāya.

SUTTA 13

- 200 MA: "Full understanding" (*pariññā*) here means overcoming (*samatikkama*) or abandoning (*pahāna*). The wanderers of other sects identify the full understanding of sensual pleasures with the first jhāna, the full understanding of material form with the immaterial planes of being, and the full understanding of feelings with the impercipient plane of being. The Buddha, in contrast, describes the full understanding of sensual pleasures as the path of the non-returner, and the full understanding of both material form and feelings as the path of arahantship.
- 201 MA gives a graphic description of each of these forms of torture.
- 202 It should be noted that while the previous dangers in sensual pleasures were called "a mass of suffering visible here and now" (*sandittthiko dukkhakkhandho*), this one is called "a mass of suffering in the life to come" (*samparāyiko dukkhakkhandho*).
- 203 MA says that Nibbāna is the removal and abandonment of desire and lust for sensual pleasures, for in dependence on Nibbāna, desire and lust are removed and abandoned. It might also be taken to include the path of the non-returner, which accomplishes the abandoning of desire and lust for sensual pleasures.
- 204 To expose the danger in feelings, the Buddha chooses the most refined and exalted type of mundane pleasure, the bliss and peacefulness of the jhānas, and shows that even those states are impermanent and therefore unsatisfactory.

SUTTA 14

- 205 Mahānāma the Sakyan was a cousin of the Buddha and the brother of Vens. Anuruddha and Ānanda. He chose to remain a householder and let Anuruddha become a monk. The story is told in Ñāṇamoli, *The Life of the Buddha*, pp. 80–81.

- 206 According to MA, Mahānāma had long ago attained the fruit of the once-returner, which only weakens greed, hate, and delusion but does not eradicate them. MA says that he had the mistaken notion that greed, hate, and delusion are eradicated by the path of the once-returner. Thus, when he saw that they still arose in his mind, he realised that they were not abandoned and inquired from the Buddha the cause for their arising. Noble disciples can be mistaken about which defilements are abandoned by which path.
- 207 From the ensuing discussion on the danger in sensual pleasures, it seems that the "state" (*dhamma*) unabandoned by Mahānāma was sensual desire, which kept him tied to the home life and the enjoyment of sensual pleasures.
- 208 The "rapture and pleasure that are apart from sensual pleasures" are the rapture and pleasure pertaining to the first and second jhānas; the states "more peaceful than that" are the higher jhānas. From this passage it seems that a disciple may attain even to the second path and fruit without possessing mundane jhāna.
- 209 The Nigaṇṭhas or Jains, followers of the teacher Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta (also known as Mahāvīra), stressed the practice of austerities to wear off the accumulations of past evil kamma. The purpose of this passage, according to MA, is to show the *escape*, which was not shown earlier along with the gratification and the danger in sensual pleasures. The Buddha brings in the Jain practice of asceticism to demonstrate that his own teaching is a "Middle Way" free from the two extremes of sensual indulgence and self-mortification.
- 210 The Jains held the view that whatever a person experiences is caused by past kamma. If that were so, the Buddha argues, the severe pains to which they subjected themselves as part of their ascetic discipline would have to be rooted in grave actions of their previous lives.
- 211 MA: This refers to his own experience of the pleasure of fruition attainment, i.e., the attainment of the fruit of arahantship (*arahattaphalasamāpatti*).

SUTTA 15

- 212 *Vadantu*, meaning literally “let them speak to me,” has the implied sense: “Let them speak to me by way of instruction and exhortation” (MA).
- 213 See MN 5.10–29.
- 214 See MN 8.44 and n.109.
- 215 It is from this passage that the sutta acquires its name.
- 216 MA: The ancients called this sutta the “Bhikkhupāti-mokkha.” A bhikkhu should review himself three times daily in the way described in the sutta. If he cannot do so three times, then he should do so twice, or, at the minimum, once.

SUTTA 16

- 217 MA explains *cetokhila*, translated “wilderness in the heart,” as rigidity, rubbish, or a stump in the mind. It explains *cetaso vinibandha* as something that binds the mind, clenching it like a fist; hence “shackle in the heart.” The former, as will be seen, consists of four cases of doubt, one of hate; the latter of five varieties of greed.
- 218 MA explains “Dhamma” here as the scriptural teaching and penetration to the paths, fruits, and Nibbāna. The Dhamma as practice is mentioned separately just below as the training (*sikkhā*) – that is, the threefold training in virtue, concentration, and wisdom.
- 219 “Body” here is his own body, while “form” just below is outer forms, the bodies of others.
- 220 The four bases for spiritual power (*iddhipāda*) are included among the thirty-seven requisites of enlightenment; they are the special foundation for the five mundane kinds of direct knowledge (*abhiññā*). According to MA, enthusiasm (*ussolhi*) is energy, which is to be applied everywhere.
- 221 The fifteen factors are the abandoning of the five wildernesses of the heart, the abandoning of the five shackles, and the five just mentioned. “Supreme security from bondage” (*anuttara yogakkhema*) is arahantship, as at MN 1.27.
- 222 This simile appears again at MN 53.19–22 in connection

with the disciple's breaking out to the three types of true knowledge (*tevijjā*).

SUTTA 17

- 223 The pattern on which §§3–6 are constructed may be stated simply as follows:
 no progress and requisites are scarce = depart;
 no progress and requisites are plentiful = depart;
 progress and requisites are scarce = stay;
 progress and requisites are plentiful = stay.
- 224 The same pattern is applied in §§7–22 to village, town, city, and country.
- 225 PTS ed., in reading here *anāpucchā*, "without taking leave," seems to be mistaken. BBS and SBJ eds. read *āpucchā*, "after taking leave," which seems more fitting. As the person on whom the bhikkhu relied – presumably a lay supporter – provided the requisites in adequate measure, courtesy requires that the bhikkhu take leave of him before departing.

SUTTA 18

- 226 Daṇḍapāṇi, whose name means "stick-in-hand," was so called because he used to walk around ostentatiously with a golden walking stick, even though he was still young and healthy. According to MA, he sided with Devadatta, the Buddha's arch foe, when the latter attempted to create a schism in the Buddha's following. His manner of asking the question is arrogant and deliberately provocative.
- 227 The first part of the Buddha's reply directly counters Daṇḍapāṇi's aggressive attitude. MA quotes in this connection SN 22:94/iii.138: "Bhikkhus, I do not dispute with the world, it is the world that disputes with me. A speaker of Dhamma does not dispute with anyone in the world." The second part may be taken to mean that, for the arahant (spoken of here as "that brahmin" with reference to the Buddha himself), perceptions no longer awaken the dormant underlying tendencies to defile-

- ments, to be enumerated in §8.
- 228 This response seems to be an expression of frustration and bewilderment.
- 229 The interpretation of this cryptic passage hinges on the word *papañca* and the compound *papañca-saññā-sankhā*. Ñm had translated the former as "diversification" and the latter as "calculations about perceptions of diversification." It seems, however, that the primary problem to which the term *papañca* points is not "diversification," which may be quite in place when the sensory field itself displays diversity, but the propensity of the worldling's imagination to erupt in an effusion of mental commentary that obscures the bare data of cognition. In a penetrative study, *Concept and Reality in Early Buddhism*, Bhikkhu Ñāṇananda explains *papañca* as "conceptual proliferation," and I follow him in substituting "proliferation" for Ñm's "diversification." The commentaries identify the springs of this proliferation as the three factors – craving, conceit, and views – on account of which the mind "embellishes" experience by interpreting it in terms of "mine," "I" and "my self." *Papañca* is thus closely akin to the *maññanā*, "conceiving," of MN 1 – see n.6.

The compound *papañca-saññā-sankhā* is more problematic. Ven. Ñāṇananda interprets it to mean "concepts characterised by the mind's prolific tendency," but this explanation still leaves the word *saññā* out of account. MA glosses *sankhā* by *koṭṭhāsa*, "portion," and says that *saññā* is either perception associated with *papañca* or *papañca* itself. I go along with Ven. Ñāṇananda in taking *sankhā* to mean concept or notion (Ñm's "calculation" is too literal) rather than portion. My decision to treat *saññā-sankhā* as a *dvanda* compound, "perceptions and notions," may be questioned, but as the expression *papañca-saññā-sankhā* occurs but rarely in the Canon and is never verbally analysed, no rendering is utterly beyond doubt. On alternative interpretations of its components, the expression might have been rendered "notions [arisen from] the proliferation of perceptions" or "perceptual notions [arisen from] proliferation."

The sequel will make it clear that the process of cogni-

tion is itself "the source through which perceptions and notions tinged by mental proliferation beset a man." If nothing in the process of cognition is found to delight in, to welcome, or to hold to, the underlying tendencies of the defilements will come to an end.

- 230 Ven. Mahā Kaccāna was declared by the Buddha to be the most eminent disciple in expounding the detailed meaning of a brief saying. MN 133 and MN 138 were also spoken by him under similar circumstances.
- 231 *Cakkhubhūto ñāṇabhūto dhammabhūto brahmabhūto*. MA: He is vision in the sense that he is the leader in vision; he is knowledge in the sense that he makes things known; he is the Dhamma in the sense that he consists of the Dhamma that he utters verbally after considering it in his heart; he is Brahmā, the holy one, in the sense of the best.
- 232 This passage shows how *papañca*, emerging from the process of cognition, gives rise to perceptions and notions that overwhelm and victimise their hapless creator. Ms contains a note by Ñm: "The meeting of eye, form, and eye-consciousness is called contact. Contact, according to dependent origination, is the principal condition of feeling. Feeling and perception are inseparable (MN 43.9). What is perceived as 'this' is thought about in its differences and is thus diversified from 'that' and from 'me.' This diversification – involving craving for form, wrong view about permanence of form, etc., and the conceit 'I am' – leads to preoccupation with calculating the desirability of past and present forms with a view to obtaining desirable forms in the future." Perhaps the key to the interpretation of this passage is Ven. Mahā Kaccāna's explanation of the Bhaddekaratta verses in MN 133. There too delight in the elements of cognition plays a prominent role in causing bondage, and the elaboration of the verses in terms of the three periods of time links up with the reference to the three times in this sutta.
- 233 The Pali idiom *phassapaññattim paññāpessati*, in which the verb takes an object derived from itself, is difficult. Ñm originally rendered "that one will describe a description of contact." "To point out a manifestation" is less literal,

but it should do justice to the meaning without jeopardising intelligibility. MA says that this passage is intended to show the entire round of existence (*vaṭṭa*) by way of the twelve sense bases; §18 shows the cessation of the round (*vivaṭṭa*) by the negation of the twelve sense bases.

- 234 A large sweet cake or a ball made from flour, ghee, molasses, honey, sugar, etc. See also AN 5:194/iii.237.

SUTTA 19

- 235 The Bodhisatta's twofold division of thought occurred during his six-year struggle for enlightenment.
- 236 Thoughts of non-ill will and thoughts of non-cruelty may also be explained positively as thoughts of loving-kindness (*mettā*) and thoughts of compassion (*karuṇā*).
- 237 MA: Excessive thinking and pondering leads to agitation. To tame and soften the mind, the Bodhisatta would enter a meditative attainment, then he would emerge from it and develop insight.

SUTTA 20

- 238 This sutta together with its commentary is available in a translation by Soma Thera, *The Removal of Distracting Thoughts*.
- 239 MA: The higher mind (*adhicitta*) is the mind of the eight meditative attainments used as a basis for insight; it is called "higher mind" because it is higher than the ordinary (wholesome) mind of the ten wholesome courses of action. The five "signs" (*nimitta*) may be understood as practical methods of removing the distracting thoughts. They should be resorted to only when the distractions become persistent or obtrusive; at other times the meditator should remain with his primary subject of meditation.
- 240 MA: When thoughts of sensual desire arise directed towards living beings, the "other sign" is the meditation on foulness (see MN 10.10); when the thoughts are directed to inanimate things, the "other sign" is attention to impermanence. When thoughts of hate arise directed towards living beings, the "other sign" is the meditation

on loving-kindness; when they are directed to inanimate things, the "other sign" is attention to the elements (see MN 10.12). The remedy for thoughts connected with delusion is living under a teacher, studying the Dhamma, inquiring into its meaning, listening to the Dhamma, and inquiring into causes.

- 241 This method can be illustrated by the reflections of the Bodhisatta in MN 19.3–5. Calling to mind the unworthiness of the evil thoughts produces a sense of shame (*hiri*); calling to mind their dangerous consequences produces fear of wrongdoing (*ottappa*).
- 242 *Vitakka-sankhāra-saṅghānam*. MA understands *sankhāra* here as condition, cause, or root, and takes the compound to mean "stopping the cause of the thought." This is accomplished by inquiring, when an unwholesome thought has arisen: "What is its cause? What is the cause of its cause?" etc. Such an inquiry, according to MA, brings about a slackening, and eventually the cessation, of the flow of unwholesome thought.
- 243 MA: He should crush the unwholesome state of mind with a wholesome state of mind.
- 244 This shows the attainment of arahantship. See n.50.

SUTTA 21

- 245 At SN 12:12/ii.13 Moliya Phagga puts a series of questions to the Buddha, which the Buddha rejects as wrongly formulated. Later it is reported that he reverted to lay life (SN 12:32/ii.50).
- 246 According to MA, the Buddha said this because Phagga still did not wish to comply with his advice but continued to resist him, and this induced the Buddha to speak praise of the compliant bhikkhus during an earlier part of his ministry. For the passage on eating at a single session, see MN 65.2 and MN 70.2.
- 247 *Tadārammaṇam*, lit. "with him as the object." MA: First one develops loving-kindness towards the person who addresses one with one or another of the five courses of

speech, then one directs that mind of loving-kindness towards all beings, making the entire world the object.

SUTTA 22

- 248 This sutta with a fine introduction and detailed notes is available in a translation by Nyanaponika Thera, *The Discourse on the Snake Simile*.
- 249 In making this assertion he directly contradicts the third of the four intrepidities of the Tathāgata – see MN 12.25. According to MA, while reflecting in seclusion he came to the conclusion that there would be no harm if bhikkhus were to engage in sexual relations with women and he maintained that this should not be prohibited by the monastic rules. Though his statement does not expressly mention the sexual issue, the similes about sensual pleasures brought forth by the bhikkhus lend credence to the commentary.
- 250 The first seven similes for sense pleasures are expanded upon at MN 54.15–21.
- 251 This first part of the Ariṭṭha episode occurs twice in the Vinaya Piṭaka. At Vin ii.25 it leads to the Sangha announcing an act of suspension (*ukkhepaniyakamma*) against Ariṭṭha for refusing to give up his wrong view. At Vin iv.133–34 his refusal to give up his wrong view after repeated admonitions is defined as a monastic offence of the Pācittiya class.
- 252 Though the Pali uses the one word *kāma* in all four cases, from the context the first phrase must be understood to refer to objective sensual pleasures, i.e., sensually enjoyable objects, the other phrases to refer to subjective defilements connected with sensuality, i.e., sensual desire. MA glosses “that one can engage in sensual pleasures” with “that one can indulge in sexual intercourse.” Mṭ says that other physical acts expressive of sexual desire such as hugging and stroking should be included.

- 253 MA explains that this passage is stated in order to show the fault in wrongly motivated acquisition of intellectual knowledge of the Dhamma – apparently the pitfall into which Ariṭṭha fell. The “good (*attha*) for the sake of which they learned the Dhamma” is the paths and fruits.
- 254 This famous “simile of the raft” continues the same argument against misuse of learning introduced by the simile of the snake. One who is preoccupied with using the Dhamma to stir up controversy and win debates carries the Dhamma around on his head instead of using it to cross the flood.
- 255 *Dhammā pi vo pahātabbā pageva adhammā*. MA identifies the good states with serenity and insight (*samatha-vipassanā*), and paraphrases the meaning: “I teach, bhikkhus, even the abandoning of desire and attachment to such peaceful and sublime states as serenity and insight, how much more so to that low, vulgar, contemptible, coarse, and impure thing that this foolish Ariṭṭha sees as harmless when he says that there is no obstruction in desire and lust for the five cords of sensual pleasure.” The commentator cites MN 66.26–33 as an example of the Buddha teaching the abandonment of attachment to serenity, MN 38.14 as an example of his teaching the abandonment of attachment to insight. Note that it is in each case the *attachment* to the good states that should be abandoned, not the good states themselves. The Buddha’s injunction is not an invitation to moral nihilism or a proposal that the enlightened person has gone beyond good and evil. In this connection see MN 76.51.
- 256 This section evidently has the purpose of forestalling another type of misconception and misrepresentation of the Dhamma, i.e., the introduction of a view of self into the teaching. According to MA, standpoints for views (*ditṭhiṭṭhāna*) are wrong views themselves as grounds for other more elaborate wrong views; the objects of views, i.e., the five aggregates; and the conditions for views, i.e., such factors as ignorance, perverted perception, and false thoughts, etc.
- 257 MA states that the notion “this is mine” is induced by craving, the notion “this I am” by conceit, and the notion

- "this is my self" by wrong views. These three – craving, conceit, and views – are called the three obsessions (*gāha*). They are also the mainsprings behind conceiving (MN 1) and mental proliferation (MN 18).
- 258 This series of terms shows the aggregate of consciousness indirectly, by way of its object. The "seen" points to eye-consciousness, the "heard" to ear-consciousness, the "sensed" to the other three kinds of sense consciousness, and the remaining terms to mind-consciousness.
- 259 This is a full-fledged eternalist view arisen on the basis of one of the earlier, more rudimentary types of personality view; here it becomes itself an object of craving, conceit, and the false view of self. Ven. Nyanaponika contends that this view expresses the identity of the self with the universe, though this interpretation is purely hypothetical as the Pali is ambiguous and could just as well be pointing to a fundamental dualism of self and world along the lines of Sāṅkhya philosophy with its distinction between changeable Nature (*prakṛti*) and changeless Spirit (*puruṣa*)
- 260 *Asati na paritassati*. The noun form *paritassanā*, according to MA, has the twofold connotation of fear and craving, thus "agitation" was chosen as comprehending both. Agitation about what is non-existent externally (§18) refers to the worldling's despair over the loss or non-acquisition of possessions; agitation about what is non-existent internally (§20) to the eternalist's despair when he misinterprets the Buddha's teaching on Nibbāna as a doctrine of annihilation.
- 261 *Pariggahaṃ parigaṇheyyātha*, lit. "you may possess that possession." This links up with §18 on agitation about external possessions.
- 262 *Attavādupādānaṃ upādiyetha*, lit. "you may cling to that clinging to a doctrine of self." On the problem this idiom involves for translation, see n.176. This passage links up with §20 on agitation arising from a view of self.
- 263 The support of views (*diṭṭhinissaya*), according to MA, is the sixty-two views mentioned in the Brahmajāla Sutta (DN 1), which emerge from personality view or "doctrine of a self." It might also include the pernicious view

adopted by Aritṭha at the beginning of the sutta.

- 264 The notion "what belongs to self" or "self's property" (*attaniya*) is ascribed to whichever among the five aggregates are not identified as self, as well as to all the individual's external possessions. This passage shows the mutual dependence, and thus the equal untenability, of the twin notions "I" and "mine."
- 265 According to the commentaries, disenchantment (*nibbidā*, also rendered "revulsion" or "disgust") signifies the culminating stages of insight, dispassion (*virāga*) the attainment of the supramundane path, and liberation (*vimutti*) the fruit. The arahant's reviewing knowledge (*paccavekkhaṇaṇāṇa*) is shown by the phrase "there comes the knowledge" and "he understands: 'Birth is destroyed...'"
- 266 "Thus gone" is, in Pali, *tathāgata*, the usual epithet of the Buddha, but here applied more broadly to the arahant. MA interprets this passage in two alternative ways thus: (1) The arahant even while alive is here and now untraceable as a being or individual (in the sense of an abiding self) because in the ultimate sense there is no being (as self). (2) The arahant is untraceable here and now because it is impossible for the gods, etc., to find the support for his insight-mind, path-mind, or fruition-mind (*vipassanācitta*, *maggacitta*, *phalacitta*); that is, the object being Nibbāna, his mind cannot be known by the worldling.
- 267 This refers back to §20, where the eternalist misunderstands the Buddha's teaching on Nibbāna, the cessation of being, to involve the annihilation of an existing being considered as self.
- 268 The import of this statement is deeper than appears on the surface. In the context of the false accusations of §37, the Buddha is stating that he teaches that a living being is not a self but a mere conglomeration of factors, material and mental events, linked together in a process that is inherently *dukkha*, and that Nibbāna, the cessation of suffering, is not the annihilation of a being but the termination of that same unsatisfactory process. This statement should be read in conjunction with SN 12:15/ii.17, where the Buddha says that one with right view, who

has discarded all doctrines of a self, sees that whatever arises is only *dukkha* arising, and whatever ceases is only *dukkha* ceasing.

- 269 "What had earlier come to be fully understood" (*pubbe parinñātāṃ*) are the five aggregates. Since it is only these to which honour and abuse are shown, not an "I" or self, there is no reason for elation or dejection.
- 270 MA points out that it is the attachment to the five aggregates that should be abandoned; the aggregates themselves cannot be torn apart or pulled out.
- 271 MA: "*Chinna-pilotika: pilotikā* is a torn and worn-out rag stitched and knotted here and there; there is nothing (in the Dhamma) like this – torn, worn-out, stitched and knotted by way of hypocrisy and other deceptions."
- 272 That is, as the arahants have achieved deliverance from the entire round of existence, it is impossible to point to any plane within the round where they might be reborn.
- 273 These are two classes of individuals standing on the path of stream-entry. "Dhamma-followers" (*dhammānusārin*) are disciples in whom the faculty of wisdom (*paññindriya*) is predominant and who develop the noble path with wisdom in the lead; when they attain the fruit they are called "attained-to-view" (*ditthipatta*). "Faith-followers" (*saddhānusārin*) are disciples in whom the faculty of faith (*saddhindriya*) is predominant and who develop the noble path with faith in the lead; when they attain the fruit they are called "liberated-by-faith" (*saddhāvimutta*). See MN 70.20, 21; also Pug 1:35–36/15 and Vsm XXI, 75.
- 274 MA says that this refers to persons devoted to the practice of insight meditation who have not reached any supramundane attainment. Note that they are headed only for heaven, not for enlightenment, though if their practice matures they can attain the path of stream-entry and thus gain assurance of enlightenment. The expression *saddhāmattaṃ pemamattaṃ* might be rendered "simply faith, simply love" or "mere faith, mere love" (as it sometimes is), but this could not explain the guarantee of rebirth in heaven. It therefore seems obligatory to take the suffix *matta* here as implying a requisite amount of faith and love, not simple possession of these qualities.

SUTTA 23

- 275 Ven. Kumāra Kassapa was an adopted son of King Pasenadi of Kosala, born of a woman who, not knowing she was pregnant, had gone forth as a bhikkhunī after having conceived him. At the time this sutta was delivered he was still a *sekha*; he attained arahantship using this sutta as his subject of meditation.
- 276 According to MA, this deity was a non-returner living in the Pure Abodes. He and Kumāra Kassapa had been members of a group of five fellow monks who, in the Dispensation of the previous Buddha Kassapa, had practised meditation together on a mountain-top. It was this same deity who spurred Bāhiya Dāruciriya, another former member of the group, to visit the Buddha (see Ud 1:10/7).
- 277 The meaning of the deities' imagery will be explained later on in the sutta itself.
- 278 *Kummāsa*: The Vinaya and commentaries explain it as something made of *yava*, barley. Nm had translated the word as bread, but from MN 82.18 it is clear that *kummāsa* is viscous and spoils overnight. PED defines it as junket; Horner translates as "sour milk."
- 279 MA: Just as a bar across the entrance to a city prevents people from entering it, so ignorance prevents people from attaining Nibbāna.
- 280 *Dvedhāpatha* might also have been rendered "a forked path," an obvious symbol for doubt.
- 281 MA states that the four feet and head of a tortoise are similar to the five aggregates.
- 282 MA: the axe and block (*asisūna*, at MN 22.3 rendered "slaughterhouse") are used for chopping meat. Similarly, beings desiring sensual enjoyments are chopped up by the axe of sensual desires upon the block of sense objects.
- 283 The symbolism is explicated at MN 54.16.
- 284 This is an arahant. For the symbolism, see n.75.

SUTTA 24

- 285 The parenthetical specification is supplied from MA. The Buddha's native land is Kapilavatthu, at the foot of the

Himalayas.

- 286 The last five items form a set called the five aggregates of Dhamma (*dharmakkhandhā*). "Deliverance" is identified with the noble fruits, "the knowledge and vision of deliverance" with reviewing knowledge.
- 287 Ven. Puṇṇa Mantāniputta belonged to a brahmin family and was ordained by Ven. Añña Kondañña at Kapilavattu, where he continued to reside until he decided to visit the Buddha at Sāvattihī. He was later declared by the Buddha the most eminent bhikkhu among the preachers of the Dhamma.
- 288 Although these seven purifications (*satta visuddhi*) are mentioned elsewhere in the Pali Canon (at DN iii.288, with two added: purification by wisdom and purification by deliverance), it is curious that they are not analysed as a set anywhere in the Nikāyas; and this becomes even more puzzling when both these great disciples seem to recognise them as a fixed group of doctrinal categories. The sevenfold scheme forms, however, the scaffolding for the entire *Visuddhimagga*, which defines the different stages by means of the fully developed commentarial traditions on concentration and insight meditation.

In brief, "purification of virtue" (*sīlavisuddhi*) is the unbroken adherence to the moral precepts one has undertaken, explained by Vsm with reference to the moral training of a bhikkhu as the "fourfold purification of virtue." "Purification of mind" (*cittavisuddhi*) is the overcoming of the five hindrances through the attainment of access concentration and the jhānas. "Purification of view" (*diṭṭhivisuddhi*) is the understanding that defines the nature of the five aggregates constituting a living being. "Purification by overcoming doubt" (*kankhāvitaraṇavisuddhi*) is the understanding of conditionality. "Purification by knowledge and vision of what is the path and what is not the path" (*maggāmaggañāṇadassanavisuddhi*) is the correct discrimination between the false path of the ecstatic, exhilarating experiences and the true path of insight into impermanence, suffering, and not self. "Purification by knowledge and vision of the way" (*paṭipadañāṇadassanavisuddhi*) comprises the ascending series of insight knowledges up to the supramundane

paths. And "purification by knowledge and vision" (*ñānadassanavisuddhi*) is the supramundane paths.

- 289 MA glosses *anupādānaparinibbāna* as *appaccayaparinibbāna*, "final Nibbāna that has no condition," explaining that *upādāna* has two meanings: grasping (*gahana*), as in the usual passage on the four types of clinging; and condition (*paccaya*), as illustrated by this passage. The commentators explain "final Nibbāna without clinging" either as the fruit of arahantship, because it cannot be grasped by any of the four types of clinging; or as Nibbāna the unconditioned, because it has not arisen through any condition.
- 290 MA explains that the first six stages are "accompanied by clinging" in the sense both of being conditioned and of existing in one who still has grasping; the seventh stage, being supramundane, only in the sense of being conditioned.
- 291 MA says that Sāriputta asked this only as a way of greeting Puṇṇa Mantāniputta since he already knew his name. Puṇṇa, however, had never seen Sāriputta before and so must have been genuinely surprised to meet the great disciple.
- 292 *Satthukappa*. MA says that this is the highest praise that can be spoken of a disciple.

SUTTA 25

- 293 *Cetovimutti*: MA explains that they simply abandoned their resolution to live in the wilds, though it could well be that these ascetics had attained – and lost – the eight meditative attainments that are usually implied by the term *cetovimutti*.
- 294 These are the ten speculative views debated by the ascetic philosophers of the Buddha's age. All were rejected by the Buddha as being unconnected with the fundamentals of the holy life and uncondusive to liberation from suffering. See MN 63, MN 72.
- 295 The eight meditative attainments here must be understood, as MA explains, as bases for insight. When a bhikkhu has entered such a jhāna, Māra cannot see how

his mind is proceeding. This immunity from Māra's influence, however, is as yet only temporary.

- 296 This last bhikkhu, by destroying the taints, has become not only temporarily invisible to Māra but permanently inaccessible to him. On the cessation of perception and feeling, see Introduction, p. 41.

SUTTA 26

- 297 This title follows the PTS and SBJ eds. of MN. The BBS ed. of MN, and both the PTS and BBS eds. of MA, refer to this discourse as the *Pāsarāsi Sutta*, The Heap of Snares, with reference to the simile in §§32–33.
- 298 MA points out that the second jhāna and one's basic meditation subject are both called "noble silence" (*ariyo tuṇhībhāvo*). Those who cannot attain the second jhāna are advised to maintain noble silence by attending to their basic meditation subject.
- 299 *Upadhi*: The root meaning is foundation, basis, ground (PED). In the commentaries various kinds of *upadhi* are enumerated, among them the five aggregates, objects of sensual pleasure, defilements, and kamma. Ñm renders the term consistently throughout as "essentials of existence," which often obscures its clear contextual meaning. I have tried to capture the several connotations of the word by rendering it "objects of attachment" where its objective meaning is prominent (as it is here) and as "attachment" where its subjective meaning is prominent. At MN 26.19 Nibbāna is called "the relinquishing of all attachments" (*sabb'ūpadhipaṭinissagga*), with both meanings intended.
- 300 Gold and silver are excluded from the things subject to sickness, death, and sorrow, but they are subject to defilement, according to MA, because they can be alloyed with metals of lesser worth.
- 301 MA: He taught him the seven attainments (of serenity meditation) ending in the base of nothingness, the third of the four immaterial attainments. Though these attainments are spiritually exalted, they are still mundane and not in themselves directly conducive to Nibbāna.

- 302 That is, it leads to rebirth in the plane of existence called the base of nothingness, the objective counterpart of the seventh meditative attainment. Here the lifespan is supposed to be 60,000 aeons, but when that has elapsed one must pass away and return to a lower world. Thus one who attains this is still not free from birth and death but is caught in the trap of Māra (MA). Horner misses the point that rebirth is the issue by translating "only as far as reaching the plane of no-thing" (MLS 1:209).
- 303 Both Horner in MLS and Ñm in Ms err in their translations of the account of the Bodhisatta's meeting with Uddaka Rāmaputta by assuming that Uddaka is identical with Rāma. However, as his name indicates, Uddaka was the son (*putta*) of Rāma, either biological or spiritual. Rāma himself must have already passed away before the Bodhisatta arrived on the scene. It should be noted that all references to Rāma are in the past tense and the third person, and that Uddaka in the end places the Bodhisatta in the position of teacher. Though the text does not allow for definite conclusions, this suggests that he himself had not yet reached the fourth immaterial attainment.
- 304 MN 36, which includes the account of the Bodhisatta's meetings with Ālāra Kālāma and Uddaka Rāmaputta, continues from this point with the story of the extreme ascetic practices that brought him to the verge of death and of his subsequent discovery of the Middle Way that led to enlightenment.
- 305 MA identifies "this Dhamma" with the Four Noble Truths. The two truths or states (*thāna*) spoken of just below – dependent origination and Nibbāna – are the truths of the origin of suffering and the cessation of suffering, which respectively imply the truths of suffering and the path.
- 306 *Ālaya*. It is difficult to find for this word a suitable English equivalent that has not already been assigned to a more frequently occurring Pali term. Horner renders it as "sensual pleasure," which appropriates the usual rendering of *kāma* and may be too narrow. In Ms and in other published works Ñm translates it as "something to rely on," which may draw upon a connotation of the

word that is not the one intended here. MA explains *ālaya* as comprising both objective sense pleasures and the thoughts of craving concerned with them; thus "worldliness" has been chosen as sharing this twofold meaning of the original.

- 307 MA raises the question why, when the Bodhisatta had long ago made an aspiration to reach Buddhahood in order to liberate others, his mind now inclined towards inaction. The reason, the commentator says, is that only now, after reaching enlightenment, did he become fully cognizant of the strength of the defilements in people's minds and of the profundity of the Dhamma. Also, he wanted Brahmā to entreat him to teach so that beings who venerated Brahmā would recognise the precious value of the Dhamma and desire to listen to it.
- 308 These five monks attended on the Bodhisatta during his period of self-mortification, convinced that he would attain enlightenment and teach them the Dhamma. However, when he abandoned his austerities and resumed taking solid food, they lost faith in him, accused him of reverting to luxury, and deserted him. See MN 36.33.
- 309 *Anantajina*: perhaps this was an Ājīvakan epithet for the spiritually perfected individual.
- 310 According to MA, Upaka thereafter fell in love with a hunter's daughter and married her. When his marriage turned out to be an unhappy one, he returned to the Buddha, entered the Sangha, and became a non-returner. He was reborn in the Avīha heaven, where he attained arahantship.
- 311 *Āvuso*: a familiar term of address used among equals.
- 312 See n.178.
- 313 The change in address from "friend" to "venerable sir" (*bhante*) indicates that they have now accepted the Buddha's claim and are prepared to regard him as their superior.
- 314 At this point the Buddha preached to them his first sermon, the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*, The Setting in Motion of the Wheel of Dhamma, on the Four Noble Truths. Two weeks later, after they had all become stream-enterers, he taught them the *Anattalakkhaṇa Sutta*,

The Characteristic of Non-self, upon hearing which they all attained arahantship. The complete narrative, found in the Mahāvagga (Vin i.7–14), is included in Ñāṇamoli, *The Life of the Buddha*, pp. 42–47.

- 315 This section reverts to the theme of the noble and ignoble quests with which the Buddha's discourse opened. It is intended to show that the adoption of the monastic life is no automatic guarantee that one has embarked on the noble quest, for the ignoble quest makes inroads upon the monastic life as well.
- 316 This refers to the use of the four requisites with reflection upon their proper purpose in the life of renunciation. See MN 2.13–16.
- 317 See n.295.
- 318 See n.296.

SUTTA 27

- 319 According to the chronicles of Sri Lanka, this was the first sutta preached by Mahinda Thera following his arrival in Sri Lanka.
- 320 Vacchāyana is Pilotika's clan name.
- 321 Ñm translates *ekabhaddika*, "one-mealer," in accordance with the commentarial explanation as eating only in the forenoon. According to the Vinaya the proper time for bhikkhus to eat is between dawn and noon. From noon until the next dawn only liquids are allowed.
- 322 This formula is analysed at Vsm I, 53–59. Briefly, the signs (*nimitta*) are the most distinctive qualities of the object which, when grasped at unmindfully, can kindle defiled thoughts; the features (*anubyañjana*) are the details that may subsequently catch the attention when the first perceptual contact has not been followed up by restraint. "States of covetousness and grief" signifies the alternative reactions of desire and aversion, attraction and repulsion, towards sense objects.
- 323 Covetousness (*abhijjhā*) here is synonymous with sensual desire (*kāmacchanda*), the first of the five hindrances.
- 324 MA: He does not come to this conclusion about the

Triple Gem because the jhānas and the (mundane) direct knowledges are held in common with those outside the Buddha's Dispensation.

- 325 This, according to MA, shows the moment of the path, and since at this point the noble disciple has still not completed his task, he has not yet come to a conclusion (*na tveva niṭṭham gato hoti*) about the Triple Gem; rather, he is in the process of coming to a conclusion (*niṭṭham gacchati*). The sutta employs a pun on the meaning of the expression "coming to a conclusion" that is as viable in English as in Pali.
- 326 This shows the occasion when the disciple has attained the fruit of arahantship, and having completed all his tasks in every way, has come to the conclusion about the Triple Gem.

SUTTA 28

- 327 This discourse has been published separately with introduction and notes by Nyanaponika Thera, *The Greater Discourse on the Elephant-Footprint Simile*.
- 328 The structure of this discourse may be outlined as follows: Ven. Sāriputta first enumerates the Four Noble Truths (§2). He then takes up the truth of suffering for analysis into its various aspects (§3). From among these, he selects the last and enumerates the five aggregates affected by clinging (§4). He next selects the first aggregate, that of material form (§5). Taking up each of the great elements in turn, he shows it as having two aspects – internal and external – the former being selected for detailed analysis, the latter only briefly mentioned for the sake of completeness and comparison (e.g., §§6–7). Each of the elements is expounded as a basis for insight meditation as well as for developing patience, faith, and equanimity (e.g., §§8–10). Having finished examining the elements, Ven. Sāriputta next takes up the aspects of the Four Noble Truths he earlier had put aside. He introduces derivative material form by way of the sense faculties and their objects (§27, etc.), then he relates this to

the other four aggregates of the first noble truth, and finally he sets this whole complex of ideas in relation to the other three noble truths (§28, etc.).

- 329 *Upādinna*, "clung-to," is used in the Abhidhamma as a technical term applicable to bodily phenomena that are produced by kamma. Here, however, it is used in a more general sense as applicable to the entire body insofar as it is grasped as "mine" and misapprehended as a self. The phrase "whatever else" is intended to include the earth element comprised in those parts of the body not included in the above enumeration. According to the Abhidhamma analysis of matter, the four primary elements are inseparable, and thus each element is also included, though in a subordinate role, in the bodily phenomena listed under the other three elements.
- 330 MA: This statement is made to underscore the insentient nature (*acetanābhāva*) of the internal earth element by yoking it to the external earth element, the insentient nature of which is much more easily discerned.
- 331 According to ancient Indian cosmology the cyclical destruction of the world may be due to either water, fire, or wind. See Vsm XIII, 30–65.
- 332 The notions "I," "mine," and "I am," represent the three obsessions of personality view, craving, and conceit, respectively.
- 333 MA explains that this passage, referring to a bhikkhu who practises meditation on the elements, is intended to show his strength of mind in applying his comprehension of things to undesirable objects arisen at the "door" of the ear. By contemplating the experience by way of conditionality and impermanence, he transforms the potentially provocative situation of being subjected to abuse into an opportunity for insight.
- 334 *Tassa dhātārammaṇam eva cittaṃ pakkhandaṭi*. This sentence can be construed in two alternative ways, depending on how the compound *dhātārammaṇam* is understood. Ven. Nyanaponika takes it as the object of the verb *pakkhandaṭi*, and he understands *dhātu* here as "an impersonal element in general" capable of including sound, contact, feeling, etc. Thus he translates: "And his mind enters into

that very object [taking it just as an impersonal] element." *Ñm* reads the compound as an adjunct qualifying *citta*, and supplies the object of the verb in parenthesis. MA seems to support the former reading; MT explicitly identifies *dhātu* as the earth element, thus supporting the latter reading. MA explains the phrase "acquires decision" to mean that the meditator contemplates the situation by way of elements and thus has neither attachment nor aversion concerning it.

335 MA: This passage is intended to show the strength of the meditating *bhikkhu* on an occasion when he is subjected to affliction by way of the body.

336 See MN 21.20.

337 MA: The recollection of the Buddha is undertaken here by recalling that the Blessed One spoke this simile of the saw, the recollection of the Dhamma by recalling the advice given in the simile of the saw, and the recollection of the Sangha by recalling the virtues of the *bhikkhu* who can endure such abuse without giving rise to a mind of hate. "Equanimity supported by the wholesome" (*upekkhā kusalanissitā*) is the equanimity of insight, the sixfold equanimity of neither attraction nor aversion towards agreeable and disagreeable objects that appear at the six sense doors. Strictly speaking, the sixfold equanimity pertains only to the arahant, but it is here ascribed to the monk in training because his insight approximates to the perfect equanimity of the arahant.

338 This is said to stress once again the egoless nature of the body. MT: He shows that the four elements are only mere elements not belonging to a self; they are without a being, without a soul.

339 This section is set forth, according to MA, to introduce the material form derived from the four great elements. Derived material form, according to the Abhidhamma analysis of matter, includes the five sense faculties (*pasādarūpa*) and the first four kinds of sense object, the tangible object being identified with the primary elements themselves. "Corresponding (conscious) engagement" (*tajjo samannāhāro*) is explained by MA as attention (*manasikāra*) arising in dependence on the eye and forms;

it is identified with the "five-door adverting consciousness" (*pañcadvārāvajjanacitta*), which breaks off the flow of the life continuum (*bhavanga*) to initiate a process of cognition. Even when forms come into range of the eye, if attention is not engaged by the form because one is occupied with something else, there is still no manifestation of the "corresponding class of consciousness," i.e., eye-consciousness.

- 340 This section is set forth to show the Four Noble Truths by way of the sense doors. "What has thus come to be" (*tathābhūta*) is the entire complex of factors arisen by way of eye-consciousness. By analysing this complex into the five aggregates, Ven. Sāriputta shows that any occasion of sense experience is comprised within the truth of suffering.
- 341 This statement has not been traced directly to the Buddha in any of the existing suttas in the Pali Canon. MA glosses, perhaps with too little sensitivity to the statement's profounder implications: "One who sees dependent origination sees dependently arisen states (*paṭicca samuppanne dhamme*); one who sees dependently arisen states sees dependent origination."
- 342 The four terms – *chanda*, *ālaya*, *anunaya*, *ajjhosaṇa* – are synonyms for craving (*taṇhā*).
- 343 Though only three of the Four Noble Truths are explicitly shown in the text, the fourth truth is implied. According to MA, it is the penetration of these three truths by the development of the eight factors of the path.
- 344 MA identifies "mind" (*mano*) in this passage with the life-continuum consciousness (*bhavangacitta*).
- 345 MA illustrates this case by the mind's preoccupation with a familiar object when it does not notice the familiar details of that object. The "corresponding class of consciousness" here is mind-consciousness (*manoviññāṇa*), which takes non-sensuous objects as its sphere of cognition.

SUTTA 29

- 346 After Devadatta had unsuccessfully attempted to kill the Buddha and usurp control of the Sangha, he broke away

from the Buddha and tried to establish his own sect with himself at the head. See Nāṇamoli, *The Life of the Buddha*, pp. 266–69.

- 347 “Knowledge and vision” (*ñāṇadassana*) here refers to the divine eye (MA), the ability to see subtle forms invisible to normal vision.
- 348 This translation follows the BBS and SBJ eds., which read *asamayavimokkhaṃ* in the preceding sentence and *asamayavimuttiya* in this sentence. The PTS ed., on which both Horner and Ñm based their translations, is evidently mistaken in reading *samaya* in the two compounds and *ṭhānaṃ* instead of *aṭṭhānaṃ*. MA cites the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* (ii.40) for a definition of *asamayavimokkha* (lit., non-temporary or “perpetual” liberation) as the four paths, four fruits, and Nibbāna, and of *samayavimokkha* (temporary liberation) as the four jhānas and four formless attainments. See also MN 122.4.
- 349 “Unshakeable deliverance of mind” is the fruit of arahantship (MA). Thus “perpetual liberation” – as including all four paths and fruits – has a wider range of meaning than “unshakeable deliverance of mind,” which alone is declared to be the goal of the holy life.

SUTTA 30

- 350 These six teachers, the Buddha’s senior contemporaries, all stood outside the fold of orthodox Brahmanism, and their doctrines are indicative of the speculative audacity of the Buddha’s age. The six are often mentioned together in the Canon. Their teachings, as understood within the Buddhist community, are stated at DN 2.17–32/ii.52–59.
- 351 Precisely the same question is posed to the Buddha on the eve of his Parinibbāna by the wanderer Subhadda at DN 16.5.26–27/ii.150–152.
- 352 It is this sentence, used in place of the sentence beginning “He becomes intoxicated...,” that distinguishes these passages of this sutta from the corresponding passages of the preceding sutta.
- 353 Although the jhānas may also have been included in the attainment of concentration set forth in §10, and knowl-

edge and vision was described as higher than the attainment of concentration, the jhānas now become higher than knowledge and vision because they are being treated as the basis for the attainment of cessation and the destruction of the taints (in §21).

SUTTA 31

- 354 Ven. Anuruddha was the Buddha's cousin; Vens. Nandiya and Kimbila were Anuruddha's friends and constant companions.
- 355 These are three of the "six memorable qualities" explained at MN 48.6.
- 356 MA identifies this *yakkha* as a celestial king (*devarāja*) included among the twenty-eight commanders of the *yakkhas* mentioned at DN 32.10/iii.205.

SUTTA 32

- 357 The four assemblies are those of bhikkhus, bhikkhunīs, men lay followers, and women lay followers. The seven underlying tendencies are enumerated at MN 18.8. Ven. Ānanda was declared by the Buddha to be the pre-eminent disciple among those who had learned much, and his discourses are said to have delighted the four assemblies (DN 16.5.16/ii.145).
- 358 *Yathā sakarī paṭibhānam*. This phrase might also be rendered "according to his own intuition" or "according to his own ideal." Nm renders "as it occurs to him"; Horner, "according to his own capacity."
- 359 Ven. Revata was declared the pre-eminent disciple among those who are meditators.
- 360 Ven. Anuruddha was the pre-eminent disciple among those who possessed the divine eye.
- 361 Mahā Kassapa was the pre-eminent disciple among those who observed the ascetic practices.
- 362 *Abhidhamma*. Though the word cannot refer here to the Piṭaka of that name – obviously the product of a phase of Buddhist thought later than the Nikāyas – it may well indicate a systematic and analytical approach to the doc-

trine that served as the original nucleus of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka. In a careful study of the contexts in which the word “Abhidhamma” occurs in the Sutta Piṭakas of several early recensions, the Japanese Pali scholar Fumimaro Watanabe concludes that the Buddha’s own disciples formed the conception of Abhidhamma as an elementary philosophical study that attempted to define, analyse, and classify *dhammas* and to explore their mutual relations. See his *Philosophy and its Development in the Nikāyas and Abhidhamma*, pp. 34–36.

- 363 While the replies of the disciples hold up as the ideal a bhikkhu who has already achieved proficiency in a particular sphere of the renunciant life, the Buddha’s reply, by focusing on a bhikkhu still striving for the goal, underscores the ultimate purpose of that life itself.

SUTTA 33

- 364 See MN 129.2, 27.
- 365 The Codes (*mātikā*) are probably the rules of the Pātimokkha abstracted from their explanatory matrix, as well as lists of the primary doctrinal categories used for expounding the Dhamma. For more on the *mātikās* see Watanabe, *Philosophy and its Development in the Nikāyas and Abhidhamma*, pp. 42–45.
- 366 See n.89.
- 367 At SN 47:6/v.148 the four foundations of mindfulness are called the proper pasture (*gocara*) of a bhikkhu, in the sense of being the proper sphere of his activity.

SUTTA 34

- 368 See n.273.

SUTTA 35

- 369 According to MA, Saccaka was the son of Nigaṇṭha (Jain) parents who were both skilled in philosophical debate. He had learned a thousand doctrines from his parents and many more philosophical systems from others. In

the discussion below he is referred to by his clan name, Aggivessana.

- 370 Ven. Assaji was one of the first five disciples of the Buddha.
- 371 This summary of the doctrine omits the second of the three characteristics, *dukkha* or suffering. MA explains that Assaji omitted this in order to avoid giving Saccaka the opportunity to attempt a refutation of the Buddha's doctrine.
- 372 MA explains that men play this game when preparing hemp cloth. They bind up handfuls of rough hemp, immerse them in the water, and beat them on planks to the left, right, and middle. A royal elephant saw this game, and plunging into the water, he took up water in his trunk and sprayed it on his belly, his body, both sides, and his groin.
- 373 In asserting the five aggregates to be self he is, of course, directly contradicting the Buddha's teaching of *anattā*. He ascribes this view to the "great multitude" with the thought that "the majority cannot be wrong."
- 374 The Buddha is here suggesting that the aggregates are not self because they lack one of the essential characteristics of selfhood – being susceptible to the exercise of mastery. What cannot come under my mastery or perfect control cannot be identified as "my self."
- 375 MA identifies this spirit (*yakkha*) as Sakka, ruler of the gods.
- 376 The text between the asterisks is absent from the PTS ed. but is supplied from the BBS and SBJ eds. The five aggregates are here called suffering because they are impermanent and not susceptible to the exercise of mastery.
- 377 These are the characteristics of a *sekha*. The arahant, in contrast, not only possesses the right view of non-self, but has used it to eradicate all clinging, as the Buddha will explain in §25.
- 378 MA gives several alternative explanations of these three terms. They are mundane and supramundane wisdom, practice, and deliverance. Or they are entirely supramundane: the first is the right view of the path of arahantship, the second the remaining seven path factors, the third the supreme fruit (of arahantship). Or the first is the vision of

Nibbāna, the second the path factors, the third the supreme fruit.

- 379 Though Saccaka admitted defeat in debate, he must have still considered himself a saint, and thus did not feel impelled to go for refuge to the Triple Gem. Also, because he continued to regard himself as a saint, he must have felt that it was not proper for him to dedicate the merit of the alms offering to himself, and thus he wished to dedicate the merit to the Licchavis. But the Buddha replies that the Licchavis will gain the merit of providing Saccaka with food to offer to the Buddha, while Saccaka himself will gain the merit of offering the food to the Buddha. The merit of giving alms differs in quality according to the purity of the recipient, as explained at MN 142.6.

SUTTA 36

- 380 MA: Saccaka approached with the intention of refuting the Buddha's doctrine, which he failed to do in his earlier encounter with the Buddha (in MN 35). But this time he came alone, thinking that if he were to suffer defeat no one would know about it. He intended to refute the Buddha with his question about sleeping during the day, which he does not ask until close to the end of the sutta (§45).
- 381 MA: Ānanda says this out of compassion for Saccaka, thinking that if he gets to see the Buddha and to hear the Dhamma, it will lead to his welfare and happiness for a long time.
- 382 It will become clear from §5 that Saccaka identifies "development of body" (*kāyabhāvanā*) with the practice of self-mortification. Because he does not see the Buddhist bhikkhus engaged in self-mortification, he maintains that they do not pursue development of the body. But the Buddha (according to MA) understands "development of body" as insight meditation, "development of mind" (*citta-bhāvanā*) as serenity meditation.
- 383 These are the three mentors of the Ājīvakas; the last was a contemporary of the Buddha, the former two are near legendary figures whose identities remain obscure. The

Bodhisatta had adopted their practices during his period of asceticism – see MN 12.45 – but subsequently rejected them as un conducive to enlightenment.

- 384 MA explains that “development of body” here is insight, and “development of mind” concentration. When the noble disciple experiences pleasant feeling, he does not become overwhelmed by it because, through his development of insight, he understands the feeling to be impermanent, unsatisfactory, and essenceless; and when he experiences painful feeling, he does not become overwhelmed by it because, through his development of concentration, he is able to escape from it by entering into one of the meditative absorptions.
- 385 Now the Buddha will answer Saccaka’s questions by showing first the extremely painful feelings he experienced during his course of ascetic practices, and thereafter the extremely pleasant feelings he experienced during his meditative attainments preceding his enlightenment.
- 386 The PTS ed. is certainly mistaken in reading here *avūpakaṭṭho*, “not withdrawn.” *Ñm* in Ms had translated this sentence from a reading which omitted *cittena*, “and mentally.” This translation follows the BBS ed., which includes *cittena*. Although it may seem contradictory to say that those recluses and brahmins live mentally withdrawn from sensual pleasures yet still have not abandoned sensual desire, if we understand *kāma* here as physical objects productive of sensual pleasure the contradiction will be resolved.
- 387 In this connection MA raises the question: Why did the Bodhisatta undertake the practice of austerities if he could have attained Buddhahood without doing so? It answers: He did so, first, in order to show his own exertion to the world, because the quality of invincible energy gave him joy; and second, out of compassion for later generations, by inspiring them to strive with the same determination that he applied to the attainment of enlightenment.
- 388 This sentence, repeated at the end of each of the following sections as well, answers the second of the two questions posed by Saccaka in §11.
- 389 MA: During the Bodhisatta’s boyhood as a prince, on one

occasion his father led a ceremonial ploughing at a traditional festival of the Sakṃyans. The prince was brought to the festival and a place was prepared for him under a rose-apple tree. When his attendants left him to watch the ploughing ceremony, the prince, finding himself all alone, spontaneously sat up in the meditation posture and attained the first jhāna through mindfulness of breathing. When the attendants returned and found the boy seated in meditation, they reported this to the king, who came and bowed down in veneration to his son.

- 390 This passage marks a change in the Bodhisatta's evaluation of pleasure; now it is no longer regarded as something to be feared and banished by the practice of austerities, but, when born of seclusion and detachment, is seen as a valuable accompaniment of the higher stages along the path to enlightenment. See MN 139.9 on the twofold division of pleasure.
- 391 This sentence answers the first of the two questions posed by Saccaka in §11.
- 392 MA explains the "sign of concentration" (*samādhinimitta*) here as the fruition attainment of emptiness (*suññataphalasamāpatti*). See also MN 122.6.
- 393 This was the question that Saccaka originally intended to ask the Buddha. MA explains that though arahants have eliminated all sloth and torpor, they still need to sleep in order to dispel the physical tiredness intrinsic to the body.
- 394 MA explains that even though Saccaka did not reach any attainment or even become established in the Three Refuges, the Buddha taught him two long suttas in order to deposit in him a mental impression (*vāsanā*) coming to maturity in the future. For he foresaw that at a later time, after the Dispensation became established in Sri Lanka, Saccaka would be reborn there and would attain arahantship as the great arahant, Kāḷa Buddhārakkhita Thera.

SUTTA 37

- 395 MA: Sakka asks about the preliminary practice of the arahant bhikkhu, by which he becomes liberated by the destruction of craving.

- 396 MA explains this passage as follows: "Everything" (*sabbe dhammā*) is the five aggregates, the twelve bases, the eighteen elements. These are "not worth adhering to" by way of craving and views because they turn out in actuality to be different from the way they are grasped: grasped as permanent, pleasurable, and self, they turn out to be impermanent, suffering, and not self. He "directly knows" them as impermanent, suffering, and not self, and "fully understands" them by scrutinising them in the same way. "Contemplating impermanence," etc., is accomplished by the insight knowledges of rise and fall and of destruction and disappearance. "He does not cling" to any formation by way of craving and views, does not become agitated because of craving, and personally attains Nibbāna by the extinguishing of all defilements.
- 397 A personal name of Sakka, meaning "the owl."
- 398 The gods and titans (*asura*) are depicted in the Pali Canon as being perpetually in a state of war with each other. See especially the *Sakkasaṃyutta* (SN i.216–28).
- 399 One of the Four Great Kings, the ruler of the *yakkhas*, his kingdom being in the north.
- 400 MA: He did this by entering into meditation on the water-kasiṇa and then resolving: "Let the foundation of the palace be like water."
- 401 Sakka can refer to Ven. Mahā Moggallāna as a "companion in the holy life" because he himself had earlier attained to stream-entry (DN 21.2.10/ii.289) and was thus a noble disciple bound for the same deliverance that Mahā Moggallāna had already achieved.

SUTTA 38

- 402 According to MA, through faulty reasoning based on the fact of rebirth, Sāti came to the conclusion that a persisting consciousness transmigrating from one existence to another is necessary to explain rebirth. The first part of the sutta (down to §8) replicates the opening of MN 22, the only difference being in the view espoused.
- 403 This is the last of the six views described at MN 2.8. See n.40.

- 404 MA: The purpose of the simile is to show that there is no transmigration of consciousness across the sense doors. Just as a log fire burns in dependence on logs and ceases when its fuel is finished, without transmigrating to faggots and becoming reckoned as a faggot fire, so too, consciousness arisen in the eye door dependent on the eye and forms ceases when its conditions are removed, without transmigrating to the ear, etc., and becoming reckoned as ear-consciousness, etc. Thus the Buddha says in effect: "In the occurrence of consciousness there is not even the mere transmigration from door to door, so how can this misguided Sāti speak of transmigration from existence to existence?"
- 405 *Bhūtaṃ idaṃ ti.* MA: "This" refers to the five aggregates. Having shown the conditionality of consciousness, the Buddha states this passage to show the conditionality of all the five aggregates, which come into being through conditions, their "nutriment," and pass out of being with the ceasing of those conditions. In the following *tadāhārasambhavaṃ*, MA takes the *tad* as a nominative representing the subject (= *taṃ khandhapañcakam*), but it seems more likely that it qualifies *āhāra* and that both should be taken as ablatives, the subject *idaṃ* being understood. This interpretation seems confirmed by the third statement, *tadāhāranirodhā yaṃ bhutaṃ taṃ nirodhadhammaṃ*. Horner's "This is the origination of nutriment" is clearly wrong.
- 406 This is said to show the bhikkhus that they should not cling even to the right view of insight meditation. The simile of the raft refers to MN 22.13.
- 407 On the four nutriments, see n.120. MA: The Buddha states this passage and the following one linking up the nutriments with dependent origination in order to show that he knows not merely the five aggregates but the entire chain of conditions responsible for their being.
- 408 This is a statement of the abstract principle of dependent origination exemplified by the twelfefold formula. The abstract principle on cessation is stated at §22. Ñm had rendered the principle of arising thus: "That is when this is; that arises with the arising of this." And the principle of cessation: "That is not when this is not; that ceases with

the cessation of this."

- 409 As in MN 2.7. According to MA, this "running back into the past" and "running forward to the future" occur because of craving and views. The next passage drives home the lesson by ensuring that the bhikkhus speak from their own personal knowledge.
- 410 The following portion of the discourse may be understood as a concrete application of dependent origination – so far expressed only as a doctrinal formula – to the course of individual existence. The passage §§26–29 may be taken to show the factors from consciousness through feeling that result from past ignorance and formations, §40 the causal factors of craving and clinging as they build up a continuation of the saṃsāric round. The following section (§§31–40), connecting dependent origination to the appearance of the Buddha and his teaching of the Dhamma, shows the practice of the Dhamma to be the means of bringing the round to an end.
- 411 *Gandhabba*. MA: The *gandhabba* is the being to be reborn. It is not someone (i.e., a disembodied spirit) standing nearby watching the future parents having intercourse, but a being driven on by the mechanism of kamma, due to be reborn on that occasion.
- 412 MA explains that he delights in the painful feeling by clinging to it with thoughts of "I" and "mine." In confirmation of the statement that a worldling may delight in painful feelings, one thinks not only of full-fledged masochism but also of the common tendency of people to put themselves into distressing situations in order to reinforce their sense of ego.
- 413 MA: An immeasurable mind (*appamāṇacetaso*) is a supra-mundane mind; this means that he possesses the path.
- 414 This statement reveals that the chain of dependent origination is broken at the link between feeling and craving. Feeling arises necessarily because the body acquired through past craving is subject to the maturation of past kamma. However, if one does not delight in feeling, craving will not have the opportunity to arise and set off reactions of like and dislike that provide further fuel for

the round, and thus the round will come to an end.

SUTTA 39

- 415 "Brahmin" should be understood in the sense explained below, §24.
- 416 Shame (*hiri*) and fear of wrongdoing (*ottappa*) are two complementary qualities designated by the Buddha "the guardians of the world" (AN i.51) because they serve as the foundation for morality. *Shame* has the characteristic of disgust with evil, is dominated by a sense of self-respect, and manifests itself as conscience. *Fear of wrongdoing* has the characteristic of dread of evil, is dominated by a concern for the opinions of others, and manifests itself as fear of doing evil. See Vsm XIV, 142.
- 417 MA quotes SN 45:35–36/v.25: "What, bhikkhus, is recluseship (*sāmañña*)? The Noble Eightfold Path... – this is called recluseship. And what, bhikkhus, is the goal of recluseship (*sāmaññaṭṭho*)? The destruction of greed, hate, and delusion – this is called the goal of recluseship."
- 418 MA gives a detailed elaboration of each of the five similes. An English translation can be found in Nyanaponika Thera, *The Five Mental Hindrances*, pp. 27–34.
- 419 Each of the explanations to follow involves a word play that cannot be reproduced in English, e.g., a bhikkhu is a recluse (*samaṇa*) because he has quieted down (*samita*) evil states, a brahmin because he has expelled (*bāhita*) evil states, etc.
- 420 The term "washed" (*nhātaka*) refers to a brahmin who, at the end of his discipleship under his teacher, has taken a ceremonial bath marking the end of his training. See Sn 521.
- 421 The Pali word *sotthiya* (Sanskrit, *srottriya*) means a brahmin well versed in the Vedas, one conversant with sacred knowledge.

SUTTA 40

- 422 Where the previous sutta used the phrase "things that

make one a recluse" (*dhammā samaṇakaraṇā*), the present sutta speaks of "the way proper to the recluse" (*samaṇa-samīcipaṭipadā*).

- 423 The first ten of these twelve "stains for a recluse" are included among the sixteen "imperfections that defile the mind" at MN 7.3.
- 424 MA: Because he has quieted down (*samīta*) all defilements, he is a recluse in the highest sense (*paramatthasamaṇa*).

SUTTA 41

- 425 This is a morally nihilistic materialist view that denies an afterlife and kammic retribution. "There is nothing given" means that there is no fruit of giving; "no this world, no other world" that there is no rebirth into either this world or a world beyond; "no mother, no father" that there is no fruit of good conduct and bad conduct towards mother and father. The statement about recluses and brahmins denies the existence of Buddhas and arahants.
- 426 MA explains that "the gods of Radiance" is not a separate class of gods but a collective name for the three classes that follow; the same applies to "the gods of Glory." This celestial hierarchy is explained in the Introduction, pp. 46–48.
- 427 It should be noted that while "conduct in accordance with the Dhamma" as described in the sutta is a necessary condition for rebirth in the higher heavenly worlds and for the destruction of the taints, it is by no means a sufficient condition. Rebirth into the realms beginning with the gods of Brahmā's retinue requires the attainment of *jhāna*, rebirth into the Pure Abodes (the five beginning with the *Avihā* gods) the attainment of the stage of non-returned, rebirth into the immaterial planes the corresponding immaterial attainments, and the destruction of the taints requires the full practice of the Noble Eightfold Path up to the path of arahantship.

SUTTA 43

- 428 Ven. Mahā Koṭṭhita was declared by the Buddha the foremost disciple of those who have attained the analytical knowledges (*pañisaṃbhida*).
- 429 According to MA, the understanding of the Four Noble Truths being discussed here is penetration by the supramundane path. Thus the lowest type of person to be described as “one who is wise” (*paññāvā*) is the person on the path of stream-entry. The rendering of *paññā* as “wisdom” (which I substituted for Ñm’s “understanding”) has the disadvantage of severing the tie, evident in the Pali, with the verb *pajānāti*. To preserve the connection, here and in the preceding paragraph, the verb has been rendered “wisely understand.”
- 430 The Pali phrase defining consciousness uses only the verb, *viñānāti viñānāti*, and this could as well be understood to mean “One cognizes, one cognizes.” Although Ñm had translated this phrase without any pronoun, the pronoun has been inserted for greater intelligibility. The renderings of the verb definitions of feeling and perception at §7 and §8 have been similarly augmented by the addition of the pronoun.
- 431 MA: The question concerns the consciousness with which the person described as “one who is wise” examines formations; that is, the consciousness of insight by which that person arrived (at his attainment), the mind which does the work of meditation. Ven. Sāriputta answers by explaining the meditation subject of feeling, in the way it has come down in the Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness (MN 10.32). The Pali construction, *sukhan ti pi viñānāti*, indicates that the feeling is being treated as a direct object of consciousness rather than as an affective tone of the experience; to show this the words “this is” have been supplied in brackets and the entire phrase set in quotation marks.
- 432 MA: This statement refers to the wisdom and consciousness on the occasions of both insight and the supramundane path. The two are conjoined in that they arise and cease simultaneously and share a single sense base and

object. However, the two are not inseparably conjoined since, while wisdom always requires consciousness, consciousness can occur without wisdom.

- 433 Wisdom, being the path factor of right view, is to be developed as a factor of the path. Consciousness, being included among the five aggregates that pertain to the noble truth of suffering, is to be fully understood – as impermanent, suffering, and not self.
- 434 MA says that the question and reply refer to mundane feelings that are the objective range of insight. The Pali construction here, *sukham pi vedeti*, etc., shows feeling as simultaneously a quality of the object and an affective tone of the experience by which it is apprehended. MA points out that feeling itself feels; there is no other (separate) feeler.
- 435 MA: The question and reply refer to mundane perceptions that are the objective range of insight.
- 436 MA: Wisdom has been excluded from this exchange because the intention is to show only the states that are conjoined on every occasion of consciousness.
- 437 MA: Purified mind-consciousness (*parisuddha mano-viññāṇa*) is the consciousness of the fourth jhāna. It can know the immaterial attainments insofar as one established in the fourth jhāna is capable of reaching them. The base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception is excluded here because, owing to its subtlety, it does not come into the direct range of contemplation for the attainment of insight.
- 438 MA: The eye of wisdom (*paññācakkhu*) is wisdom itself, called an eye in the sense that it is an organ of spiritual vision.
- 439 For the distinction between direct knowledge (*abhiññā*) and full understanding (*pariññā*), see n.23.
- 440 MA: "The voice of another" (*parato ghosa*) is the teaching of beneficial Dhamma. These two conditions are necessary for disciples to arrive at the right view of insight and the right view of the supramundane path. But paccekabuddhas arrive at their enlightenment and fully enlightened Buddhas at omniscience solely in dependence on wise attention without "the voice of another."

- 441 MA: Right view here is the right view pertaining to the path of arahantship. "Deliverance of mind" and "deliverance by wisdom" both refer to the fruit of arahantship; see n.83. When one fulfils these five factors, the path of arahantship arises and yields its fruit.
- 442 "Renewal of being in the future" (*āyatim punabbhavābhiniḃbatti*) is rebirth, the continuation of the round. This question and the next may be regarded as synoptic approaches to the entire twelvefold formula of dependent origination laid out in MN 38.17 and 20.
- 443 The five outer sense faculties each have their own unique object – forms for the eye, sounds for the ear, etc. – but the mind faculty is able to experience the objects of all five sense faculties as well as the mental objects exclusive to itself. Hence the other five faculties have mind as their resort (*manopatisaraṇam*).
- 444 MA identifies vitality (*āyu*) with the life faculty (*jīvit-indriya*), which has the function of maintaining and vitalising the other material phenomena of the living body.
- 445 Heat (*usmā*) is the kamma-born heat intrinsic to the living body.
- 446 "Vital formations" (*āyusankhārā*), according to MA, denotes vitality itself. They cannot be states of feeling because they are required to keep the body of a bhikkhu alive when he has attained to the cessation of perception and feeling. This special meditative attainment, in which all mental activity ceases, is accessible only to non-returners and arahants who also have mastery over the eight attainments on the side of serenity. For a brief discussion see the Introduction, p. 28, and for the full scholastic account, Vsm XXIII, 16–52. The cessation of perception and feeling will be taken up again in MN 44.
- 447 That is, dead. The departure of consciousness from the body is not sufficient to constitute death; vitality and the vital heat must also perish.
- 448 The bodily formations are in-and-out breathing, the verbal formations are applied thought and sustained thought, the mental formations are perception and feeling – see MN 44.14–15. MA says that the faculties during the ordinary course of life, being impinged upon by

sense objects, are afflicted and soiled like a mirror set up at a crossroads; but the faculties of one in cessation become exceptionally clear like a mirror placed in a case and deposited in a box.

- 449 MA: The "signless deliverance of mind" (*animittā cetovimutti*) is the attainment of fruition; the "signs" are objects such as forms, etc.; the "signless element" is Nibbāna, in which all signs of conditioned things are absent.
- 450 MA identifies this *suññatā cetovimutti* with insight into the voidness of selfhood in persons and things.
- 451 As above, the signless deliverance of mind is identified by MA with the attainment of fruition. Of the four deliverances of mind mentioned in §30, this one alone is supramundane. The first three – the *brahmavihāras*, the third immaterial attainment, and insight into the voidness of formations – all pertain to the mundane level.
- 452 Lust, hate, and delusion may be understood as "makers of measurement" (*pamāṇakaraṇa*) in that they impose limitations upon the range and depths of the mind; MA, however, explains this phrase to mean that the defilements enable one to measure a person as a worldling, a stream-enterer, a once-returner, or a non-returner.
- 453 MA: There are twelve immeasurable deliverances of mind: the four *brahmavihāras*, the four paths, and the four fruits. The unshakeable deliverance of mind is the fruit of arahantship. The statement that this unshakeable deliverance is void of lust, hate, and delusion – repeated at the end of §36 and §37 as well – also identifies it as the supramundane deliverance of mind through voidness.
- 454 The word *kiñcana* is explained by MA as meaning "impediment" or "obstacle." Nm rendered it as "owning." I have gone back to the original meaning "something" to maintain coherence with the statement that its abandonment issues in deliverance of mind through nothingness.
- 455 MA: There are nine deliverances of mind through nothingness: the base of nothingness and the four paths and fruits.
- 456 MA interprets the phrase "maker of signs" (*nimittakaraṇa*) to mean that lust, hate, and delusion brand a per-

son as a worldling or a noble one, as lustful, hating, or deluded. But it may also mean that these defilements cause the mind to ascribe a false significance to things as being permanent, pleasurable, self, or beautiful.

- 457 MA: There are thirteen signless deliverances of mind: insight, because it removes the signs of permanence, pleasure, and self; the four immaterial attainments, because they lack the sign of material form; and the four paths and fruits, because of the absence of the sign of defilements.
- 458 All the four deliverances of mind are one in meaning in that they all refer to the fruition attainment of arahantship. MA also points out that the four deliverances are one in meaning because the terms – the immeasurable, nothingness, voidness, and the signless – are all names for Nibbāna, which is the object of the fruition attainment of arahantship.

SUTTA 44

- 459 Visākha was a wealthy merchant of Rājagaha and a non-returner. Dhammadinnā, his former wife in lay life, had attained arahantship soon after her ordination as a bhikkhunī. She was declared by the Buddha the foremost bhikkhunī disciple in expounding the Dhamma.
- 460 MA explains the compound *pañc'upādānakkhandhā* as the five aggregates that become the condition for clinging (Mġ: as its objects). Since these five aggregates are, in brief, the entire noble truth of suffering (MN 9.15; 28.3), it will be seen that the first four questions pose an inquiry into the Four Noble Truths expressed in terms of personality rather than suffering.
- 461 MA: Because clinging is only one part of the aggregate of formations (as defined here, greed), it is not the same as the five aggregates; and because clinging cannot be altogether disconnected from the aggregates, there is no clinging apart from the aggregates.
- 462 These are the twenty kinds of personality view. MA quotes Pts i.144–45 to illustrate the four basic modes of personality view in regard to material form. One may

regard material form as self, in the way the flame of a burning oil-lamp is identical with the colour (of the flame). Or one may regard self as possessing material form, as a tree possesses a shadow; or one may regard material form as in self, as the scent is in the flower; or one may regard self as in material form, as a jewel is in a casket.

- 463 The word *khandha* here has a different meaning than in the more common context of the five aggregates affected by clinging. It here refers to a body of training principles, the three divisions of the Noble Eightfold Path into virtue (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*paññā*).
- 464 The four foundations of mindfulness are the basis of concentration (*samādhinimitta*) in the sense of being its condition (MA). Here it would seem incorrect to translate *nimitta* as "sign," in the sense of either distinguishing mark or object. The four right kinds of striving are explained at MN 77.16.
- 465 MA: Dhammadinnā anticipated Visākha's intention to ask about the formations that cease when one enters the attainment of cessation. Thus she explained the three formations in this way rather than as wholesome and unwholesome volitions of body, speech, and mind, the meaning relevant within the context of dependent origination.
- 466 MA explains further that the bodily formation and the mental formation are said to be formations "bound up" with the body and the mind in the sense that they *are formed by* the body and *by* the mind, while the verbal formation is a formation in the sense that it *forms* speech. The verb form *vitakketvā vicāretovā* has been rendered in a way that maintains consistency with the rendering of the nouns *vitakka* and *vicāra* as "applied thought" and "sustained thought."
- 467 Cessation can be attained only by a non-returner or an arahant with mastery over the eight jhānic attainments. The meditator enters each attainment in turn, emerges from it, and contemplates it with insight as impermanent, suffering, and not self. After completing this procedure with the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, and attending to certain preliminaries, the meditator

- determines to be without mind for a particular length of time. His determination, backed by his previous accomplishments and preparations, leads him into the attainment of cessation. See Vsm XXIII, 32–43.
- 468 Applied and sustained thought cease first in the second jhāna; in-and-out breathing cease next in the fourth jhāna; and perception and feeling cease last in the attainment of cessation itself.
- 469 When the time decided upon by the determination for the attainment has lapsed, by reason of that prior determination the meditator spontaneously emerges from the attainment of cessation and the mind-process resumes.
- 470 MA: When one emerges from cessation, the consciousness of fruition attainment arises first, and the perception and feeling associated with that are the mental formation that arises first. Then, with the subsequent descent into the life continuum, the bodily formation, i.e., breathing, recommences. And subsequently, when the meditator resumes his ordinary activity, the verbal formation arises.
- 471 The first state of consciousness to arise on emerging from cessation is that of fruition attainment, which is called voidness, the signless, and the desireless because of its own inherent quality and because of its object, Nibbāna. Here these three names for fruition are assigned to the contact associated with fruition.
- 472 MT: Nibbāna, the object of the fruition consciousness that arises on emerging from cessation, is called seclusion (*viveka*) because it is secluded from all conditioned things.
- 473 MT: The three defilements are called *anusaya*, underlying tendencies, in the sense that they have not been abandoned in the mental continuum to which they belong and because they are capable of arising when a suitable cause presents itself.
- 474 MA explains that the bhikkhu suppresses the tendency to lust and attains the first jhāna. Having made the tendency to lust well suppressed by the jhāna, he develops insight and eradicates the tendency to lust by the path of the non-returner. But because it has been suppressed by the jhāna, it is said “the underlying tendency to lust does not underlie that.”

- 475 MA identifies "that base" (*tadāyatana*), as well as "the supreme liberations," with arahantship. The grief that arises because of that longing is elsewhere called "the grief based on renunciation" (MN 137.13). MA explains that one does not actually abandon the tendency to aversion by means of that grief; rather, spurred on by the longing for the supreme liberations, one takes up the practice with firm determination and eradicates the tendency to aversion by attaining the path of the non-returner.
- 476 MA: The bhikkhu suppresses the tendency to ignorance with the fourth jhāna, makes it well suppressed, and then eradicates the tendency to ignorance by attaining the path of arahantship.
- 477 The word "counterpart" (*paṭibhāga*) is used to express the relationships of both opposition and supplementation.
- 478 Ignorance is its counterpart because neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling is subtle and difficult to recognise.
- 479 MT: Nibbāna does have an opposite counterpart, namely, conditioned states. But in the strict sense it has no supplementary counterpart, for how can there be anything to supplement Nibbāna, the unconditioned?
- 480 MA: By saying this, the Buddha makes this sutta Word of the Conqueror, stamped as it were with the seal of the Conqueror.

SUTTA 46

- 481 A full analysis of the things that should and should not be followed is presented in MN 114.

SUTTA 47

- 482 *Parassa cetopariyāyam ajānantena*, reading the last word with the BBS and SBJ eds. rather than with the PTS ed. as *ājānantena*, which gives the positive sense "knowing." In the context the negative is clearly required, since the bhikkhu who cannot know by direct cognition of the Buddha's mind that he is fully enlightened must arrive at this conclusion by inference from his bodily

and verbal behaviour and the other evidence adduced by the sutta.

- 483 Bodily actions are "states cognizable through the eye." Words are "states cognizable through the ear." MA: Just as one infers the presence of fish from the rippling and bubbling of water, so from a defiled action or utterance one infers that the mind originating it is defiled.
- 484 MT: "Mixed states" (*vītimissā dhammā*) refers to the conduct of one who is engaged in purifying his conduct but is unable to keep to it consistently. Sometimes his conduct is pure or bright, sometimes impure or dark.
- 485 MA: The dangers are conceit, arrogance, etc. For some bhikkhus, as long as they have not become well known or acquired a following, these dangers are not found, and they are very calm and quiet; but when they have become famous and have acquired a following, they go about behaving improperly, attacking other bhikkhus like a leopard pouncing on a herd of deer.
- 486 MA: The opposite of those who teach a group – those who dwell detached from a group – though not mentioned, should be understood.
- 487 MA: This passage shows the Buddha's impartiality (*tādibhāva*) towards beings: he does not extol some and disparage others.
- 488 *No ca tena tammayo*. MA glosses: "I do not identify with that purified virtue, I am without craving for it."
- 489 *So tasmim dhamme abhiññāya idh'ekaccaṃ dhammaṃ dhammesu niṭṭhaṃ gacchati*. In order to convey the intended meaning I have rendered the second occurrence of *dhamma* here as "teaching," i.e., the particular doctrine taught to him, the plural *dhammesu* as "teachings," and *tasmim dhamme* as "that Dhamma," in the sense of the total teaching. MA and MT together explicate the meaning thus: When the Dhamma has been taught by the Teacher, by directly knowing the Dhamma through penetration of the path, fruit, and Nibbāna, the bhikkhu comes to a conclusion about the preliminary teaching of the Dhamma on the requisites of enlightenment (*bodhipakkhiyā dhammā*).

- 490 *Ākāraṇatī saddhā dassanāmūlikā dalhā*. This phrase refers to the faith of a stream-enterer who has seen the Dhamma through the supramundane path and can never point to any other teacher than the Buddha.

SUTTA 48

- 491 The background to this sutta is the quarrel at Kosambī, which is related at Vin Mv Kh 10 (Vin i.337 ff.) and in Nāṇamoli, *The Life of the Buddha*, pp. 109–19. The quarrel, which began with a casual misunderstanding of a minor disciplinary rule, quickly flared up and divided a large part of the Sangha and laity resident at Kosambī into two hostile factions.
- 492 MA: This is the right view belonging to the noble path.
- 493 The Four Noble Truths.
- 494 *Dhammatā*.
- 495 This is a breach of the code of monastic discipline from which a bhikkhu can be rehabilitated either by a formal act of the Sangha or by confession to another bhikkhu. Even though a noble disciple may commit such an offence unintentionally or through lack of knowledge, he makes no attempt to conceal it but immediately discloses it and seeks the means of rehabilitation.
- 496 *Balātā*.
- 497 See n.91.
- 498 MA calls those seven factors the "great reviewing knowledges" (*mahāpaccavekkhaṇāñāṇa*) of a stream-enterer. On the reviewing knowledges see Vsm XXII, 19–21.

SUTTA 49

- 499 The *Mūlapariyāya Sutta* (MN 1) was also delivered by the Buddha while he was living in the Subhaga Grove at Ukkatthā, and the similarity in formulation and theme between these two suttas – perhaps the only two recorded as originating at Ukkatthā – is striking. It is even possible to see the present sutta as a dramatic representation of the same ideas set forth by the *Mūlapariyāya* in abstract philosophical terms. Thus Baka the Brahṃā may be taken

to represent *being* or personality in its most eminent form, blindly engaged in the activity of *conceiving*, sustaining itself with its delusions of permanence, pleasure, and selfhood. Underlying being is *craving*, symbolised by Māra – seemingly inconspicuous in the assembly, yet the real author of all the outpourings of conceiving, the one who holds the entire universe in his grip. The alliance of Brahmā and Māra, God and Satan, an incomprehensible union from the perspective of Western theism, points to the thirst for continued being as the hidden root of all world affirmation, whether theistic or non-theistic. In the sutta the superficial theoretical contest between Baka and the Buddha soon gives way to a gripping deep-level confrontation between Māra and the Buddha – Māra as craving demanding the affirmation of being, the Enlightened One pointing to the cessation of being through the uprooting of delight.

- 500 A similar encounter between the Buddha and Baka is recorded at SN 6:4/i.142–44, though without the dramatic trappings of this meeting and with an extended exchange in verse. According to MA and MṬ, he held this eternalist view with regard to both his own individual personality and the world over which he presided. His denial of an “escape beyond” is a rejection of the higher jhāna planes, the paths and fruits, and Nibbāna, none of which he even knows exist.
- 501 MA: When Māra discovered that the Buddha had gone to the Brahma-world, he became anxious that the Brahmās might be won over to the Dhamma and escape from his control; thus he went there to discourage the Buddha from teaching the Dhamma.
- 502 MA: Because they considered it to be impermanent, suffering, and not self.
- 503 MA: In the four states of deprivation. Here, and at §10 and §29, the word “body” (*kāya*) is used to mean plane of existence.
- 504 MA: They lauded it by speaking praise of it as permanent, everlasting, eternal, etc., and delighted in it by way of craving and views.
- 505 MA: In the Brahma-world.

- 506 MA: Māra's intention is to show: "If you do as Brahmā says without overstepping his word, you too will shine with the same splendour and glory as that with which the Brahmā's Assembly shines."
- 507 MA says that by the first two terms he tries to cajole the Buddha, by the remaining two terms he threatens him. To "hold to earth" is to grasp it by way of craving, conceit, and views. The list of categories here, though condensed, is reminiscent of MN 1.
- 508 MA: Baka Brahmā was a Brahmā exercising sovereignty over a thousand world-systems, but above him there are Brahmās exercising sovereignty over two, three, four, five, ten thousand, and a hundred thousand world-systems.
- 509 The body of Streaming Radiance is a realm of rebirth pertaining to the second jhāna, while Baka Brahmā's realm pertains only to the first jhāna. The body of Refulgent Glory and the body of Great Fruit in the next paragraph pertain to the third and fourth jhānas.
- 510 In the *Brahmajāla Sutta* (DN 1.2.2-6/ii.17-19) the Buddha shows how Mahā Brahmā gives rise to the delusion that he is the supreme creator God. When the world begins to form again after a period of dissolution, a being of great merit is the first to be reborn in the newly formed Brahma-world. Subsequently, other beings take rebirth in the Brahma-world and this causes Mahā Brahmā to imagine that he is their creator and master. See Bodhi, *The Discourse on the All-Embracing Net of Views*, pp. 69-70, 159-166.
- 511 This passage, parallel in structure to the corresponding passage of MN 1, is a difficult one. The difficulty centres around the verb used in the first four statements regarding earth, about which there is not even certainty as to the correct reading. Ñm prefers the BBS ed. reading *apahosiri*, which he takes to be an aorist of *pabhavati*, meaning "to produce, to give being to." MA glosses: "I did not grasp earth through the obsessions of craving, conceit, and views." Ñm had rendered *ananubhūtaṃ* as "not co-essential with." This has been replaced by "not commensurate with," following MA's gloss, "not reached by earth" and MT: "Its nature is not shared in common with earth." MA says that what is "not com-

mensurate with the earthness of earth" is Nibbāna, which is detached from all that is conditioned.

- 512 The PTS ed. is surely mistaken in omitting here the *ti* ending a direct quotation, and this misleads Horner into ascribing the following passage to Baka rather than to the Buddha (MLS 1:392). The BBS and SBJ eds. supply the *ti*.
- 513 These lines (which also appear as part of a full verse at DN 11.85/i.223) have been a perennial challenge to Buddhist scholarship, and even Ācariya Buddhaghosa seems to founder over them. MA takes the subject of the sentence to be Nibbāna, called "consciousness" in the sense that "it can be cognized." This is obviously a contrived derivation, since nowhere in the Canon is Nibbāna ever described as consciousness. MA offers three explanations of the phrase *sabbato pabhaṇi*: (1) completely possessed of splendour (*pabhā*); (2) possessing being (*pabhūtam*) everywhere; and (3) a ford (*pabham*) accessible from all sides, i.e., through any of the thirty-eight meditation objects. Only the first of these seems to have any linguistic legitimacy. Nm, in Ms, explains that he takes *pabhaṇi* to be a negative present participle of *pabhavati* – *apabham* – the negative-prefix *a* dropping off in conjunction with *sabbato*: "The sense can be paraphrased freely by 'not predicating being in relation to "all,"' or 'not assuming of "all" that it is or is not in an absolute sense.'"

As an alternative translation more in keeping with MA, Maurice Walshe renders: "...consciousness [that] is signless, boundless, all-luminous" (*Thus Have I Heard*, p. 179).

- 514 The Buddha's disappearance seems to be a "visible" demonstration of his verse. Having extirpated delight in being, he is able to vanish from the sight of Baka, the supreme representative of being and world affirmation. But Baka, bound to being by clinging, cannot transcend the range of the Buddha's knowledge, which encompasses both being and non-being at the same time that it transcends them.
- 515 This is the same inclination that arose in the Buddha's mind in the period immediately after his enlightenment – see MN 26.19. Compare also DN 16.3.34/ii.112 where Māra attempts to persuade the newly enlightened

Buddha to pass away peacefully at once.

- 516 *Tādiso*: that is, whether he teaches or not he remains the Tathāgata.

SUTTA 50

- 517 The name means "the Corrupter" or "the Corrupted One." In the Buddhist conception of the universe the position of Māra, like that of Mahā Brahmā, is a fixed one that is assumed by different individuals in accordance with their kamma.
- 518 Kakusandha was the first Buddha to arise in this present cosmological cycle called the "Auspicious Age." He was followed by the Buddhas Konāgamaṇa and Kassapa, after whom the present Buddha Gotama arose.
- 519 The name means "the Unrivalled."
- 520 One who has attained to cessation, it seems, is not subject to injury or death within the attainment itself. At Vsm XXIII, 37 it is said that the attainment protects even his belongings such as his robes and seat from destruction.
- 521 The name means "the Survivor."
- 522 That is, by causing defilements to arise in their minds, he will prevent them from escaping from saṃsāra.
- 523 MA takes pains to point out that Māra did not exercise control over their actions, in which case he alone would have been responsible and the brahmins could not have generated bad kamma by their deeds. Rather, Māra caused the brahmins to imagine scenes of the bhikkhus engaged in improper conduct, and this aroused their antagonism and induced them to harass the bhikkhus. Māra's intent in doing so was to make the bhikkhus give rise to anger and dejection.
- 524 "The Kinsman" (*bandhu*) is Brahmā, who was called thus by the brahmins because they regarded him as their primal ancestor. MA explains that it was a belief among the brahmins that they themselves were the offspring of Brahmā's mouth, the *khattiyas* of his breast, the *vessas* of his belly, the *suddas* of his legs, and *samaṇas* of the soles of his feet.

- 525 *Jhāyanti pajjhāyanti nijjhāyanti apajjhāyanti*. Though the verbs individually do not have an established pejorative sense, the string is obviously intended as a denigration. At MN 108.26 the four verbs are used to describe the meditation of one whose mind is obsessed by the five hindrances.
- 526 The four *brahmavihāras* are the appropriate antidote for the hostility of others, as well as for the tendencies to anger and dejection in one's own mind.
- 527 This time Māra's intent was to cause the bhikkhus to fall victim to pride, complacency, and negligence.
- 528 MA quotes a sutta (AN 7:46/iv.46–53) stating that these four meditations are the antidotes, respectively, for sexual desire, craving for tastes, attraction to the world, and infatuation with gain, honour, and praise.
- 529 MA: The elephant look (*nāgapalokita*) means that without twisting his neck, he turns his whole body in order to look. The Māra Dūsī did not die *because* of the Buddha's elephant look, but because the evil kamma he generated in wronging a great disciple cut off his life right on the spot.
- 530 The Great Hell, also called Avīci, is described in greater detail in MN 130.16–19.
- 531 MA: This feeling, experienced in the auxiliary (*ussada*) of the Great Hell, is said to be more painful than the feelings experienced in the Great Hell itself.
- 532 The Buddha Kakusandha is called a brahmin in the sense of MN 39.24.
- 533 The reference is to SN 51:14/v.269–70.
- 534 See MN 37.11.
- 535 See MN 37.12.
- 536 The reference is to SN 6:5/i.145.
- 537 This verse refers to Ven. Moggallāna's mastery over the supernormal power of travelling in space like a bird.

SUTTA 51

- 538 From this difference in their manner of greeting the Buddha it is evident that Pessa is a follower of the Buddha, whereas Kandaraka – despite his respect and

- admiration – belongs to a different religious community.
- 539 MA: Out of respect for the Buddha and because of their training, the bhikkhus did not converse with one another, nor did they even clear their throats. Unmoving in body, undistracted in mind, they sat surrounding the Blessed One like ruddy clouds surrounding the peak of Mount Sineru. Kandaraka must have been privately comparing this assembly of the bhikkhus with the assemblies of wanderers as described in MN 76.4.
- 540 MA explains that Kandaraka did not have direct knowledge of the Buddhas of the past and future. He made this statement as a way of expressing his admiration for the well-trained, disciplined, and calm Sangha of bhikkhus. The Buddha, however, confirms this on the basis of direct knowledge.
- 541 MA: The four foundations of mindfulness are brought in to show the *cause* for the calm and tranquil deportment of the Sangha. On the foundations of mindfulness, see MN 10.
- 542 MA glosses: “We too, when we get an opportunity, from time to time attend to this; we are also practitioners; we do not completely neglect meditation.”
- 543 The point of this statement is that an animal’s guile and trickery is very limited, while that of human beings is inexhaustible.
- 544 MA explains that this passage is introduced as a sequel to Pessa’s statement that the Blessed One knows the welfare and harm of beings; for the Buddha shows that the first three kinds of persons are practising in harmful ways, while the fourth is practising in a beneficial way. The passage can also be connected with Kandaraka’s praise of the Sangha; for the Buddha will show three ways in which he does not train the Sangha and the one way in which all the Buddhas of the past, present, and future train their Sanghas.
- 545 *Sukhapaṭisaṃvedī brahmabhūtena attanā*. MA: He experiences the bliss of the jhānas, paths, fruits, and Nibbāna. “Brahma” here should be understood in the sense of holy or excellent (*seṭṭha*).
- 546 MA: Pessa would have attained the fruit of stream-entry, but he rose from his seat and left before the Buddha had

completed his discourse. The benefits he did receive are two: he gained greater confidence in the Sangha, and he gave rise to a new method for comprehending the foundations of mindfulness.

- 547 This passage details the austerities undertaken by many of the Buddha's ascetic contemporaries, as well as by the Bodhisatta himself during his period of striving for enlightenment. See MN 12.45.
- 548 This passage shows the practice of one who torments himself in the hope of gaining merit and then offers sacrifices that involve the slaughter of many animals and the oppression of his workers.
- 549 This is the arahant. To show clearly that he torments neither himself nor others, the Buddha next undertakes to describe the path of practice by which he arrived at arahantship.

SUTTA 52

- 550 All these expressions are descriptive of arahantship.
- 551 *Abhisankhatam abhisañcetaṇṇam*. The two terms are frequently used in conjunction and indicate a conditioned state in which volition (*cetanā*) is the most prominent conditioning factor.
- 552 This passage explains a method for developing "insight preceded by serenity" (*samathapubbangamā vipassanā*; see AN 4:170/ ii.157). Having first attained a jhāna, the meditator emerges from it and contemplates that state as brought into being by conditions, particularly volition. On the basis of this, he ascertains its impermanence, and then contemplates the jhāna with insight into the three marks of impermanence, suffering, and non-self. See also MN 64.9–15 for a somewhat different approach to developing insight on the basis of the jhānas.
- 553 *Dhammarāgena dhammanandiyā*. MA: These two terms signify desire and attachment (*chandarāga*) with respect to serenity and insight. If one is able to discard all desire and attachment concerning serenity and insight, one becomes an arahant; if one cannot discard them, one becomes a non-returner and is reborn in the Pure

Abodes.

- 554 The base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception is not mentioned because it is too subtle a state for its constituent factors to be used as objects of insight contemplation.
- 555 The eleven "doors to the Deathless" are the four *jhānas*, the four *brahmavihāras*, and the first three immaterial attainments used as bases for the development of insight and attainment of arahantship.
- 556 This would be five hundred *kahāpaṇas*, the latter being the standard monetary unit of the time.

SUTTA 53

- 557 It was believed to be a source of merit for those who construct a new dwelling to invite an eminent religious personage to dwell in it even for a single night before they inhabit it themselves. This belief still continues in Buddhist lands today, and people who have built a new house for themselves will often invite bhikkhus to hold an all-night recitation of *paritta* (protective) suttas in their new home before they move in.
- 558 *Sekho paṭipado*. On the *sekha*, see n.21.
- 559 On the distinction between shame (*hiri*) and fear of wrongdoing (*ottappa*), see n.416.
- 560 Here the text explains *sati*, mindfulness, by reference to its original meaning of memory. The relationship between the two senses of *sati* – memory and attentiveness – may be formulated thus: keen attentiveness to the present forms the basis for an accurate memory of the past. MA takes the mention of *sati* here to imply all seven factors of enlightenment, among which it is the first.
- 561 MA: This is the wisdom of insight and of the path, capable of penetrating the rise and fall of the five aggregates. Path wisdom is called "penetrative" (*nibbedhikā*) because it pierces through and eradicates the mass of greed, hate, and delusion; insight wisdom is called penetrative because it pierces through them temporarily and because it leads to penetration by the path.
- 562 As at MN 16.26.

- 563 This refers to the fourth jhāna, which is the foundation for the three knowledges to follow.
- 564 At this point he ceases to be a *sekha* and becomes an arahant.
- 565 These constitute the traditional list of fifteen factors making up conduct (*caraṇa*), which are often conjoined with the three following types of knowledge in the complete course of training. The two together enter into the common epithet of the Buddha and the arahants, *vijjā-caraṇasampanna*, "perfect in true knowledge and conduct." See Vsm VII, 30–31.
- 566 The verse was approved by the Buddha at DN 3.1.28/i.99. The Brahmā Sanankumāra, "Forever Young," according to MA was a youth who attained jhāna, passed away, and was reborn in the Brahma-world, retaining the same handsome form he possessed in his existence in the human world. See DN 18.17–29/ii.210–218.

SUTTA 54

- 567 Translated literally the Pali reads simply "no rapacious greed." Since, in the English idiom, it is difficult to see how the mere absence of an evil can serve as a support, I have added the phrase "refraining from" here and in the next two cases, which are also expressed as simple negatives in the Pali.
- 568 MA: Although the killing of living beings is not included among the ten fetters and five hindrances, it may be called a fetter in the sense of binding one to the round of rebirths and a hindrance in the sense of obstructing one's true welfare.
- 569 MA: Killing and taking what is not given are to be abandoned by bodily virtue; false speech and malicious speech, by verbal virtue; rapacious greed, angry despair, and arrogance, by mental virtue. Spiteful scolding (which can include violent reprisals) is to be abandoned by both bodily and verbal virtue.
- 570 These similes for the dangers in sensual pleasures are alluded to at MN 22.3, though this sutta does not elabo-

rate on the last three similes mentioned there.

- 571 According to MA, the "equanimity that is based on diversity" is equanimity (i.e., apathy, indifference) related to the five cords of sensual pleasure; the "equanimity that is based on unity" is the equanimity of the fourth jhāna.
- 572 In Ms, Nm had followed the gloss of MA in rendering *ājānīya* as "those who know" (taking the word as derived from *ājānāti*); it seems far preferable, however, to understand the word here as a metaphorical expression in its literal meaning "thoroughbred." See MN 65.32 for *assā-jānīya*, "thoroughbred colt", and for *purisājānīya*, "thoroughbred man" (i.e., an arahant), see AN 9:10/v, 324.

SUTTA 55

- 573 Jīvaka was the abandoned child of a courtesan. Discovered and raised by Prince Abhaya, he studied medicine at Takkaṣilā and was later appointed the personal physician of the Buddha. He became a stream-enterer after hearing the Buddha teach the Dhamma.
- 574 This passage states clearly and explicitly the regulations on meat-eating laid down by the Buddha for the Sangha. It will be noted that the Buddha does not require the bhikkhus to observe a vegetarian diet, but permits them to consume meat when they are confident that the animal has not been slaughtered especially to provide them with food. Such meat is called *tikoṭiparisuddha*, "pure in three aspects," because it is not seen, heard, or suspected to come from an animal killed specifically for the bhikkhu. The lay Buddhist's precept of abstaining from the taking of life would prohibit him from killing for his food, but does not proscribe purchasing meat prepared from animals already dead. For more on this issue see Vin Mv Kh 6/i.237-38, and I.B. Horner, *Early Buddhism and the Taking of Life*, pp. 20-26.
- 575 Here the Buddha shows that he does not merely abide in loving-kindness by suppressing his ill will with jhāna based on loving-kindness, as the divinity Brahmā does, but has eradicated the roots of ill will through his attainment of arahantship.

- 576 Cruelty, discontent, and aversion (*vihesā, arati, paṭigha*) are the opposites of compassion, appreciative joy, and equanimity respectively.
- 577 It is puzzling that Jīvaka here declares himself a lay follower as if for the first time when he had already been established in stream-entry. Perhaps this formula was used as a means of reaffirming one's dedication to the Triple Gem and was not restricted to an initial profession of going for refuge.

SUTTA 56

- 578 This means "Tall Ascetic," a name given to him because of his height.
- 579 *Danḍa*, originally a stick or staff, acquires the meaning of rod as an instrument of punishment, and subsequently comes to mean punishment or infliction itself, even without reference to an instrument. Here the idea seems to be suggested that the Jains regarded bodily, verbal, and mental activity as instruments by which the individual torments himself by prolonging his bondage in saṃsāra and torments others by causing them harm.
- 580 MA: The Nigaṇṭhas held that the first two "rods" create kamma independently of the involvement of the mind (*acittaka*) just as, when the wind blows, the branches sway and the leaves rustle without any initiative of mind.
- 581 The Buddha may have said this because in his teaching volition (*cetanā*), a mental factor, is the essential ingredient of kamma, and in its absence – that is, in the case of unintentional bodily or verbal activity – no kamma is created. MA, however, maintains that the Buddha said this referring to wrong view with fixed consequences (*niyatā micchā diṭṭhi*), and it quotes in support AN 1:18.3/i.33: "Bhikkhus, I see nothing so blameworthy as wrong view. Wrong view is the most blameworthy of all things." These types of wrong view are described at MN 60.5, 13 and 21.
- 582 As at MN 35.5.
- 583 The parenthetical additions in the previous paragraph, inserted by Nm, are supplied from MA. Nm, in Ms,

sums up the argument thus: The Nigaṇṭhas are not allowed to use cold water (because they regard it as containing living beings). By his bodily and verbal refusal of cold water he has kept his bodily and verbal conduct pure, but if he longs in his mind for cold water his mental conduct is impure, and thus he is reborn among the "mind-bound gods" (*manosattā devā*).

- 584 At §15 Upāli admits that at this point he had already acquired confidence in the Buddha. However, he continued to oppose him because he wished to hear the Buddha's varied solutions to the problem.
- 585 This statement, at DN 2.29/i.57, is ascribed to the Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta himself as a formulation of the Jain doctrine. Nm points out in Ms that it may involve a pun on the word *vāri*, which can mean both "water" and "curb" (from *vāreti*, to ward off). In my translation of the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*, *The Discourse on the Fruits of Reclusheship*, p. 24, I render it based on the Dīgha commentary as follows: "A Nigaṇṭha is restrained with regard to all water; he is endowed with the avoidance of all evil; he is cleansed by the avoidance of all evil; he is suffused with the avoidance of all evil." Though the statement conveys a concern for moral purity, the tone is decidedly different from that of the Buddha's teachings.
- 586 The Buddha points to a contradiction between the Jain thesis that, even in the absence of volition, the "bodily rod" is the most reprehensible of all, and their assertion that the presence of volition significantly alters the moral character of an action.
- 587 See Jāt iii.463, v.133ff., 267; v.144; vi.389, v.267; v.114, 267; Miln 130.
- 588 MA: Vision of the Dhamma (*dharmacakkhu*) is the path of stream-entry. The phrase "All that is subject to arising is subject to cessation" shows the mode in which the path arises. The path takes cessation (*Nibbāna*) as its object, but its function is to penetrate all conditioned states as subject to arising and cessation.
- 589 The "Dhamma" referred to here is the Four Noble Truths. Having seen these truths for himself, he has cut off the fetter of doubt and now possesses the "view that

is noble and emancipating and (which) leads the one who practises in accordance with it to the complete destruction of suffering" (MN 48.7).

590 MA: Upāli says this referring to the path of stream-entry he had penetrated earlier.

591 See MN 16.3–7.

592 The PTS and SBJ eds. read *vessantarassa*; the BBS ed. of text and MA read *vesamantarassa*; MT supports the former reading. MA explains: "He has transcended the unrighteous state (*visama*) of lust, etc."

593 *Monapattassa*. The "silence" is wisdom, related to *muni*, silent sage.

594 The "banner" is the conceit "I am." See MN 22.35.

595 *Nippapañcassa*. See n.229.

596 *Isisattamassa*. MA interprets this to mean "the seventh seer" – in line with the brahmanic conception of the seven rishis – and takes it as referring to Gotama's status as the seventh Buddha since Vipassī (see DN 14.1.4/ii.2). It is more probable, however, that *sattama* here is the superlative of *sad*, and thus that the compound means "the best of seers." The expression *isisattama* occurs at Sn 356, and the commentary to that verse allows both interpretations, offering *uttama* as a gloss on *sattama*.

597 This refers to the absence of attachment and repulsion.

598 Ñm translates from a Siamese alternative reading given in the BBS ed., *appabhīṭassa*, pointing out that the PTS ed.'s *appahīṇassa* does not make sense here.

599 MA: A heavy sorrow arose in him because of the loss of his lay supporter, and this produced a bodily disorder that resulted in his vomiting hot blood. After vomiting hot blood, few beings can continue to live. Thus they brought him to Pāvā on a litter, and shortly thereafter he passed away.

SUTTA 57

600 MA: Puṇṇa wore horns on his head, tied a tail to his backside, and went about eating grass together with the cows. Seniya performed all the actions typical for a dog.

601 It should be noted that a wrong ascetic practice has less

severe consequences when it is undertaken without wrong view than when it is accompanied by wrong view. Although few nowadays will take up the dog-duty practice, many other deviant lifestyles have become widespread, and to the extent that these are justified by a wrong view, their consequences become that much more harmful.

- 602 *Sabyābajjham kāyasankhāram (vacīsaṅkhāram, mano-saṅkhāram) abhisankharoti.* Here an "afflictive bodily formation" may be understood as the volition responsible for the three courses of unwholesome bodily action; an "afflictive verbal formation" as the volition responsible for the four courses of unwholesome verbal action; and an "afflictive mental formation" as the volition responsible for the three courses of unwholesome mental action. See MN 9.4.
- 603 He is reborn in one of the states of deprivation – hell, the animal kingdom, or the realm of ghosts.
- 604 *Bhūtā bhūtassa upapatti hoti.* MA: Beings are reborn through the actions they perform and in ways conforming to those actions. The implications of this thesis are explored more fully in MN 135 and MN 136.
- 605 Here the volitions responsible for the ten courses of wholesome action, together with the volitions of the jhānas, are intended.
- 606 He is reborn in a heavenly world.
- 607 Strictly speaking, no volitional action can be simultaneously both wholesome and unwholesome, for the volition responsible for the action must be either one or the other. Thus here we should understand that the being engages in a medley of wholesome and unwholesome actions, none of which is particularly dominant.
- 608 MA: This is the volition of the four supramundane paths culminating in arahantship. Although the arahant performs deeds, his deeds no longer have any kammic potency to generate new existence or to bring forth results even in the present existence.
- 609 MA explains that *pabbajjā*, the going forth, is mentioned here only in a loose figure of speech. In actual fact, he receives the going forth before the probationary period

and then lives on probation for four months before being entitled to receive *upasampadā*, full admission to the Sangha.

- 610 MA: The Buddha can decide: “This person must live on probation, this one need not live on probation.”

SUTTA 58

- 611 Prince Abhaya was a son of King Bimbisāra of Magadha, though not the heir to the throne.
- 612 Both horns of the dilemma devised by the Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta presupposed that the Buddha would give a one-sided answer. Now that a one-sided answer has been rejected, the dilemma becomes inapplicable.
- 613 The Buddha does not hesitate to rebuke and admonish his disciples when he sees that such speech will promote their welfare.
- 614 MA says that *dhammadhātu* (“element of things”) refers to the Buddha’s knowledge of omniscience. *Dhammadhātu* here should not be confused with the same term used to signify the element of mind-objects among the eighteen elements, nor does it bear the meaning of an all-embracing cosmic principle that the term acquires in Mahāyāna Buddhism.

SUTTA 59

- 615 Pañcakanga, the carpenter for King Pasenadi of Kosala, was a devoted follower of the Buddha. He reappears in MN 78 and MN 127.
- 616 The *two kinds* of feeling are bodily and mental feeling, or (less commonly) the two mentioned by Pañcakanga in §3. The *three kinds* are the three mentioned by Udāyin in §3. The *five kinds* are the faculties of (bodily) pleasure, (mental) joy, (bodily) pain, (mental) grief, and equanimity. The *six kinds* are the feelings born of contact through the six sense faculties. The *eighteen kinds* are the eighteen kinds of mental exploration – exploring the six sense objects that are productive of joy, productive of grief, and

productive of equanimity (see MN 137.8). The *thirty-six kinds* are the thirty-six positions of beings – the six kinds of joy, grief, and equanimity each based either on the household life or on renunciation (see MN 137.9–15). The *hundred and eight kinds* are the previous thirty-six considered as referring to the past, present, and future.

- 617 MA points out that by speaking of the neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling of the fourth jhāna as a kind of pleasure, the Buddha is implicitly endorsing the view put forth by Pañcakanga.
- 618 MA: Both felt pleasure and unfelt pleasure are found (the latter being the pleasure pertaining to the attainment of cessation). The Tathāgata describes both as pleasure in the sense that they are without suffering (*niddukkhabhāva*).

SUTTA 60

- 619 MA: The Buddha began by asking this question because the village of Sālā was situated at the entrance to a forest, and many recluses and brahmins of diverse creeds would stay there overnight, expounding their own views and tearing down the views of their opponents. This left the villagers perplexed, unable to commit themselves to a particular teaching.
- 620 *Apaṇṇakadhamma*. MA explains this as a teaching that is uncontradictable, free from ambiguity, definitely acceptable (*aviraddho advejjhagāmī ekamsagāhiko*). The term also occurs at AN 3:16/i.113 and AN 4:71/ii.76.
- 621 The three views discussed in §§5, 13 and 21 are called wrong views with fixed evil result (*niyatā micchā diṭṭhi*). To adhere to them with firm conviction closes off the prospect of a heavenly rebirth and the attainment of liberation. For a fuller discussion see Bodhi, *Discourse on the Fruits of Reclusheship*, pp. 79–83.

The examination of these views unfolds according to the following pattern: The Buddha discloses the wrong view A and its antithesis B. Taking up A for examination first, in A.i he shows the pernicious effect of this view on bodily, verbal, and mental conduct. In A.ii he proceeds from the judgement that the view is actually wrong and

elicits additional negative consequences of its adoption. Then in A.iii he shows how a wise person comes to the conclusion that whether or not the view is true, it serves his best interest to reject it.

Next, position B is considered. In B.i the Buddha describes the wholesome influence of this view on conduct. In B.ii he elicits additional positive consequences of adopting such a view. And in B.iii he shows how a wise person comes to the conclusion that, irrespective of its actual veracity, it serves his best interest to conduct his affairs as though the view is true.

- 622 See n.425 for clarification of several expressions used in the formulation of this view.
- 623 The Pali terms are *susīlya* and *dusīlya*. Since "corrupt virtue" sounds self-contradictory, "conduct" has been used in my rendering of the latter expression. Ñm had used "unvirtuousness."
- 624 He has made himself safe (*sotthi*) in the sense that he will not be subject to suffering in a future existence. However, he is still liable to the types of suffering to be encountered in this existence, which the Buddha is about to mention.
- 625 *Natthikavāda*, lit. "the doctrine of non-existence," is so called because it denies the existence of an afterlife and of kammic retribution.
- 626 His undertaking of the incontrovertible teaching "extends only to one side" in the sense that he makes himself safe with regard to the next life only on the presupposition that there is no afterlife, while if there is an afterlife he loses on both counts.
- 627 *Atthikavāda*: the affirmation of the existence of an afterlife and of kammic retribution.
- 628 His undertaking "extends to both sides" since he reaps the benefits of his view affirming the afterlife whether or not an afterlife actually exists.
- 629 This doctrine of non-doing (*akiriyavāda*), in the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta* (DN 2.17/i.52-53), is attributed to Pūraṇa Kassapa. Although on first encounter the view seems to rest on materialist premises, as the previous nihilistic view does, there is canonical evidence that Pūraṇa Kassapa subscribed to a fatalistic doctrine. Thus

his moral antinomianism probably follows from the view that all action is predestined in ways that abrogate the ascription of moral responsibility to its agent. See Basham, *History and Doctrines of the Ājīvikas*, p. 84.

- 630 This is the doctrine of non-causality (*ahetukavāda*) maintained by the Ājīvaka leader Makkhali Gosāla, and called in the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta* the doctrine of purification by saṃsāra (*saṃsārasuddhi*, DN 2.21/i.54). The philosophy of Makkhali Gosāla has been examined in detail by Basham, *History and Doctrines of the Ājīvikas*, Chapters 12 and 13. A translation of the Dīgha commentary on this doctrine will be found in Bodhi, *Discourse on the Fruits of Reclusheship*, pp. 70–77.
- 631 *Niyati*, destiny or fate, is the primary explanatory principle in Makkhali's philosophy, "circumstance and nature" (*sangatibhāva*) seem to be its modes of operation in external events and in the constitution of the individual, respectively. The six classes (*abhijāti*) are six gradations of human beings according to their level of spiritual development, the highest being reserved for the three mentors of the Ājīvakas mentioned at MN 36.5. On the six classes, see Bodhi, *Discourse on the Fruits of Reclusheship*, pp. 73–75. Also, AN 6:57/iii.383–84.
- 632 This is a denial of the four immaterial planes of existence, the objective counterparts of the four immaterial meditative attainments.
- 633 These are the gods of the planes corresponding to the four jhānas. They possess bodies of subtle matter, unlike the gods of the immaterial planes who consist entirely of mind without any admixture of matter.
- 634 MA: Even though the wise man discussed here has doubts about the existence of the immaterial planes, he attains the fourth jhāna, and on the basis of that he attempts to attain the immaterial absorptions. If he fails he is certain of rebirth in the fine-material planes, but if he succeeds he will be reborn in the immaterial planes. Thus for him this wager is an "incontrovertible teaching."
- 635 MA: Cessation of being (*bhavanirodha*) here is Nibbāna.
- 636 MA: Even though this person has doubts about the existence of Nibbāna, he attains the eight meditative

attainments, and then, using one of those attainments as a basis, he develops insight, thinking: "If there is cessation, then I will reach arahantship and attain Nibbāna." If he fails he is certain of rebirth in the immaterial planes, but if he succeeds he reaches arahantship and attains Nibbāna.

SUTTA 61

- 637 Rāhula was the only son of the Buddha, born on the day his father left the palace to seek enlightenment. At the age of seven he was ordained as a novice by Ven. Sāriputta on the occasion of the Buddha's first return visit to Kapilavatthu after his enlightenment. The Buddha declared him the foremost disciple among those desirous of training. According to MA, this discourse was taught to Rāhula when he was seven years old, thus very shortly after his ordination. At MN 147 he attains arahantship after listening to a discourse by the Buddha on the development of insight.
- 638 To acknowledge a wrong deed as such, confess it, and undertake restraint for the future leads to growth in the discipline of the Noble One. See MN 65.13.
- 639 In this section, however, the phrase "then you should confess such a bodily action...and laid it open" is replaced by the following: "Then you should be repelled, ashamed, and disgusted by that mental action. Having become repelled, ashamed, and disgusted by that mental action..." This substitution is made because unwholesome thoughts, unlike bodily and verbal transgressions, do not require confession as a means of exoneration. Both Horner in MLS and Ñm in Ms missed this variation.

SUTTA 62

- 640 According to MA, this discourse was taught to Rāhula when he was eighteen years old, for the purpose of dispelling desire connected with the household life. The Shorter Discourse of Advice to Rāhula is MN 147.

- 641 MA: While Rāhula was following the Buddha, he noted with admiration the physical perfection of the Master and reflected that he himself was of similar appearance, thinking: "I too am handsome like my father the Blessed One. The Buddha's form is beautiful and so too is mine." The Buddha read Rāhula's thought and decided to admonish him at once, before such vain thoughts led him into greater difficulties. Hence the Buddha framed his advice in terms of contemplating the body as neither a self nor the possession of a self.
- 642 MA: Ven. Sāriputta, Rāhula's teacher, gave Rāhula this advice unaware that he had already been given different meditation instructions by the Buddha. He was misled by Rāhula's cross-legged posture into thinking that he was practising mindfulness of breathing.
- 643 MA: The Buddha here explains the meditation on the four great elements rather than mindfulness of breathing in order to dispel Rāhula's attachment to the body, which had not yet been removed by the brief instruction on the egolessness of material form. See n.329 for explanation of terms requiring comment.
- 644 Space (*ākāsa*) is not a primary material element but is classified under derivative material form (*upādā rūpa*).
- 645 MA: This passage (§13–17) is taught to show the quality of impartiality (*tādibhāva*).
- 646 For explanations of unclear terms in this first tetrad on mindfulness of breathing (§26), see nn.140–142. Terms needing clarification in the following three tetrads will be explained in the notes to MN 118, the *Ānāpānasati Sutta*.
- 647 That is, the meditator dies calmly, with mindfulness and awareness.

SUTTA 63

- 648 Those who have always wondered about the fate of the monk who almost left the Buddha to satisfy his metaphysical curiosity will be gladdened to know that in his old age Mālunkyāputta received a brief discourse on the six sense bases from the Buddha, went off into solitary

meditation, and attained arahantship. See SN 35:95/iv.72-76. His verses are at Thag 399-404 and 794-817.

SUTTA 64

- 649 The five lower fetters (*orambhāgiyāni saṃyojanāni*) are so called because they lead to rebirth in the sense-sphere planes. They are eradicated in their entirety only by the non-returner.
- 650 MA: The question may be raised: "When the Buddha had asked about the fetters and the Elder replied in terms of the fetters, why does the Buddha criticise his reply?" The reason is that Mālunkyaṇputta held the view that a person is fettered by the defilements only at times when they assail him, while at other times he is not fettered by them. The Buddha spoke as he did to show the error in this view.
- 651 *Anuseti tvev'assa sakkāyadiṭṭhānusayo*. On the *anusayas* or underlying tendencies, see n.473. In the commentaries the defilements are distinguished as occurring at three levels: the *anusaya* level, where they remain as mere latent dispositions in the mind; the *pariyutṭhāna* level, where they rise up to obsess and enslave the mind (referred to in §5 of this discourse); and the *vitikkama* level, where they motivate unwholesome bodily and verbal action. The point of the Buddha's criticism is that the fetters, even when they do not come to active manifestation, continue to exist at the *anusaya* level so long as they have not been eradicated by the supramundane path.
- 652 *Dhammā*. This could also have been rendered "things."
- 653 MA: The fetter and the underlying tendency are in principle not distinct things; rather, it is the same defilement that is called a fetter in the sense of binding, and an underlying tendency in the sense of being unabandoned.
- 654 *Upadhivivekā*. MA glosses *upadhi* here as the five cords of sensual pleasure. Though the first three clauses of this statement seem to express the same ideas as the two more usual clauses that follow, Mṭ indicates that they are intended to show the *means* for becoming "quite

secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unwholesome states."

655 This passage shows the development of insight (*vipassanā*) upon a basis of serenity (*samatha*), using the *jhāna* on which the practice of insight is based as the object of insight contemplation. See MN 52.4 and n.552. Here two terms – impermanent and disintegrating – show the characteristic of impermanence; three terms – alien, void, and not self – show the characteristic of non-self; the remaining six terms show the characteristic of suffering.

656 MA: He "turns his mind away" from the five aggregates included within the *jhāna*, which he has seen to be stamped with the three characteristics. The "deathless element" (*amata dhātu*) is Nibbāna. First "he directs his mind to it" with the insight consciousness, having heard it praised and described as "the peaceful and sublime," etc. Then, with the supramundane path, "he directs his mind to it" by making it an object and penetrating it as the peaceful and sublime, etc.

657 See n.553.

658 It should be noted that, when the immaterial attainments are made the basis for insight contemplation, the aggregate of material form is not included among the objects of insight. Thus only the four immaterial aggregates are mentioned here.

659 MA: Among those who proceed by way of serenity, one *bhikkhu* emphasises unification of mind – he is said to gain deliverance of mind; another emphasises wisdom – he is said to gain deliverance by wisdom. Among those who proceed by way of insight, one emphasises wisdom – he is said to gain deliverance by wisdom; another emphasises unification of mind – he is said to gain deliverance of mind. The two chief disciples attained arahantship by emphasising both serenity and insight, but Ven. Sāriputta became one who gained deliverance by wisdom and Ven. Mahā Moggallāna became one who gained deliverance of mind. Thus the reason (for the different designations) is the difference in their faculties, i.e., between the predominance of the concentration faculty and of the wisdom faculty.

SUTTA 65

- 660 This refers to the Buddha's practice of eating a single meal in the forenoon only. According to the Pātimokkha, the bhikkhus are prohibited from eating from noon until the following dawn, though the single-session practice is only recommended but not required.
- 661 MA: He would be worried and anxious whether he could live the holy life for his entire life.
- 662 His anxiety persisted because he would still have to finish his meal of the remains by noon.
- 663 This is the rule prohibiting eating outside the proper time limits. See Vin Pāc 37/iv.35.
- 664 The seven terms used in this section represent a seven-fold classification of noble individuals. They are explicated at MN 70.14–21.
- 665 Both Ñm and Horner take *sankameyya* here to mean that the bhikkhu makes himself a plank, i.e., lies down across the mud. This, however, is contradicted by Bhaddāli's negative answer. Thus it would seem more correct to take this verb to mean that he crosses over himself (as the verb literally does mean), in disregard of the Buddha's injunction. MA points out that the Buddha would never give such a command to his disciples, but only says this to emphasise the recalcitrant behaviour of Bhaddāli.
- 666 MA: He maintains himself by a measure of worldly faith and worldly love towards his preceptor and teacher. Because the other bhikkhus help him, he remains in the homeless life and may eventually become a great monk attained to the direct knowledges.
- 667 This passage refers to the fixed principle that the Buddha does not lay down a training rule until a case arises that requires the promulgation of an appropriate training rule. See Vin Pār 1/iii.9–10.
- 668 *Tasmim̐ thāne parinibbāyati*. The verb used here is the verbal form of *parinibbāna*, and could be literally, though erroneously, translated, "He attains final Nibbāna in that action."
- 669 "One beyond training" (*asekha*) is an arahant. MA explains these ten factors as constituents of the fruit of arahantship.

- 670 Right knowledge (*sammā ñāṇa*) is the knowledge pertaining to the fruit of arahantship, right deliverance (*sammā vimutti*) the arahant's liberation from all defilements.

SUTTA 66

- 671 From this passage and that to follow, it appears that the Buddha restricted the allowable time for bhikkhus' meals in two successive stages, first prohibiting only the afternoon meal and allowing a night meal. However, in the Vinaya account of the origin of Pāc 37 (Vin iv.85) no mention is made of this successive prohibition. To the contrary, the text seems to assume that it is an item of common knowledge that monks should not consume food past noon, and it shows the Buddha laying down the rule against *untimely* eating with one complete pronouncement valid for all meals past noon.
- 672 The utterance is in what appears to be very colloquial Pali. MA explains: If one's mother and father were alive, they would give their son various kinds of food and offer him a place to sleep, and thus he would not have to wander about for food at night.
- 673 MA: The Buddha undertakes this teaching in order to analyse the person who abandons what he is told to abandon (§9) into four distinct types of individuals.
- 674 *Upadhi*. MA glosses: For the abandoning of four kinds of *upadhi* – the aggregates, defilements, volitional formations, and cords of sensual pleasure (*khandh'upadhi kiles'upadhi abhisankhār'upadhi kāmagūṇ'upadhi*).
- 675 MA: The ordinary man, the stream-enterer, the once-returner, and the non-returner can all be included under the first category (§14), the non-returner because the craving for being still exists in him and thus at times he can delight in thoughts of worldly enjoyment. The same four can be included in the second category (§15), the ordinary man because he may suppress arisen defilements, arouse energy, develop insight, and eradicate defilements by attaining the supramundane path.
- 676 This type is distinguished from the previous type only by his sluggishness in arousing mindfulness to abandon arisen defilements.

- 677 This is the arahant, who alone has eradicated all the fetters.
 678 Here I have departed from *Ñm* in rendering *sukha* as "bliss" rather than "pleasure" in order to avoid the awkward-sounding phrases that would result from strict consistency. MA explains the *jhānas* as *nekkhammasukha* because they yield the bliss of renouncing sensual pleasures; as *pavivekasukha* because they yield the bliss of being secluded from the crowd and from defilements; as *upasamasukha* because their bliss is for the purpose of quieting down the defilements; and as *sambodhasukha* because their bliss is for the purpose of attaining enlightenment. The *jhānas* themselves, of course, are not states of enlightenment.
- 679 All states of mind below the fourth *jhāna* are classified as "the perturbable" (*iñjita*). The fourth *jhāna* and all higher states are called "the imperturbable" (*aniñjita*). See n.1000.
- 680 MA: It is not fitting to become attached to it with craving, and one should not come to a standstill at this point.
- 681 The cessation of perception and feeling is not simply one more higher attainment along the scale of concentration, but here implies the full development of insight brought to its climax in arahantship.

SUTTA 67

- 682 *Kevaṭṭa maññe macchavilope*. MA gives two explanations: one favours this rendering, the other suggests "fisherman hauling in fish."
- 683 It was the Brahmā Sahampati who entreated the newly enlightened Buddha to teach the Dhamma to the world. See MN 26.20.
- 684 MA: In this case Ven. Sāriputta erred in not recognising his responsibility, for the Sangha is the responsibility of the two great elders. Thus the Buddha rebuked him but commended Ven. Moggallāna, who recognised his responsibility.
- 685 MA: The Buddha undertook this teaching to show that there are four fears (or dangers, *bhaya*) in his Dispensation. Those who can overcome these four fears will become established in the Dispensation, the others will not become established.

- 686 Pali uses two distinct words signifying different types of food: *khādaniya*, "food to be consumed," includes all varieties of vegetables, nuts, fruits, yams, etc.; *bhojanīya*, "food to be eaten," includes food made of grain, meat, and fish. Things to be tasted (*sāyitabba*) would include light refreshments.
- 687 The proper time is from dawn to noon, beyond which only liquids may be drunk.

SUTTA 68

- 688 The "rapture and pleasure secluded from sensual pleasures" signifies the first and second jhānas, "something more peaceful than that" the higher jhānas and the four paths.
- 689 See MN 2.4. These are practices undertaken by one in training to prevent the arising of latent taints that have not yet been abandoned.
- 690 This refers to the Buddha's ability to discover by clairvoyance the states in which his disciples have taken rebirth.
- 691 *Aññā*: the knowledge attained by the arahant.

SUTTA 69

- 692 This is prohibited by Pāc 46 (Vin iv.98–101). A bhikkhu may visit families at these times only if he has informed another bhikkhu in the monastery of his intentions, except during the season for making and giving robes.
- 693 *Abhidhamma abhivinaya*. MA says that he should apply himself to learning the text and commentary to the Abhidhamma Piṭaka and the Vinaya Piṭaka. This is clearly anachronistic. On Abhidhamma in the context of the suttas, see n.362. Although there is no corresponding body of literature called "Abhivinaya," it seems probable the word refers to a systematic and analytical approach to the study of the Vinaya, perhaps that embedded in the Suttavibhanga of the Vinaya Piṭaka.
- 694 MA: This refers to the eight meditative attainments. As a minimum he should become proficient in the preliminary work of one meditation subject, such as a kasīṇa.

- 695 MA: This refers to all the supramundane states. As a minimum he should become proficient in one approach to developing insight up to arahantship.

SUTTA 70

- 696 See n.671. In agreement with MN 66.6, MA explains that the Buddha had first prohibited the afternoon meal and then at a later time prohibited the night meal. He did this out of concern for the delicate bhikkhus in the Order, since they might have become fatigued too quickly if both late meals were prohibited simultaneously.
- 697 In the Vinaya Piṭaka, Assaji and Punabbasuka are described as “unscrupulous and depraved” monks and are shown indulging in various kinds of bad conduct that bring about the corruption of the laity. At Kīṭāgiri an act of banishment was pronounced against them, and their refusal to obey led to the promulgation of Sanghādisesa 13 (Vin iii.179–84).
- 698 MA: This statement is made with pointed reference to pleasure experienced in eating a night meal, which does not conduce to the practice of a monk’s duties.
- 699 MA: The former type of pleasant feeling is the joy based on the household life, the latter the joy based on renunciation. Similarly, the next two sentences refer to the grief and equanimity based, respectively, on the household life and on renunciation. See MN 137.9–15.
- 700 §§8–10 serve to provide, by appeal to the Buddha’s perfect understanding, the grounds for his injunction to abandon all feelings based on the household life and to develop the feelings based on renunciation.
- 701 Here follows a sevenfold classification of noble individuals which categorises them not merely on the basis of their path and fruit attainment – as the more familiar eightfold scheme does – but according to their dominant faculty. Alternative definitions of these seven are offered by Pug 1:30–36/14–15.
- 702 *Ubhatobhāgavimutta*. MA: He is “liberated-in-both-ways” because he is liberated from the physical body by the

immaterial attainments and from the mental body by the path (of arahantship). The Pug definition reads: "He contacts with the body and abides in the eight liberations, and his taints are destroyed by his seeing with wisdom." MA says that the *ubhatobhāgavimutta* includes those who attain arahantship after emerging from one or another of the four immaterial attainments and the one who attains it after emerging from the attainment of cessation.

- 703 *Paññāvimutta*. MA: This includes those who attain arahantship either as dry-insight meditators (*sukkhā-vipassaka*) or after emerging from one or another of the four jhānas. The Pug definition merely substitutes the eight liberations for "those liberations...transcending forms."
- 704 *Kāyasakkhin*. MA: This type includes the six individuals – from the one established in the fruit of stream-entry up to the one on the path of arahantship – who first contact the (immaterial) jhānas and subsequently realise Nibbāna. Mṭ stresses that one or another of the immaterial attainments including cessation is needed to qualify as *kāyasakkhin*. The Pug definition merely substitutes the eight liberations.
- 705 *Diṭṭhipatta*. MA says that this type includes the same six individuals included under *kāyasakkhin* – from the stream-enterer to the one on the path of arahantship – but without possession of the immaterial attainments. Pug defines him as one who has understood the Four Noble Truths and who has reviewed and examined with wisdom the teachings proclaimed by the Tathāgata.
- 706 *Saddhāvimutta*. MA says that this type too includes the same six. Pug defines him in the same way as it defines the *diṭṭhipatta*, but adds that he has not reviewed and examined the teachings with wisdom to the same extent that the *diṭṭhipatta* has.
- 707 MA says that this type, the *dharmānusārin*, and the next, the *saddhānusārin*, are individuals on the path of stream-entry, the former with predominance of wisdom, the latter with predominance of faith. For more on these two types, see n.273.
- 708 MA: With the mental body he realises Nibbāna, the ultimate truth, and he penetrates it with the wisdom pertaining to the supramundane path.

- 709 That is, these bhikkhus have not had the faith required to undertake the training laid down for them by the Buddha.
- 710 MA says that the "four-phrased statement" (*catuppadam veyyākaraṇam*) is the teaching of the Four Noble Truths. However, no mention is made here of the four truths.
- 711 MA: By this the Buddha shows that the ideal disciple practises by arousing his energy and resolving: "I shall not rise up so long as I have not attained arahantship."

SUTTA 71

- 712 This sutta and the following two seem to present a chronological account of Vacchagotta's spiritual evolution. The Saṃyutta Nikāya contains a whole section of short discussions between the Buddha and Vacchagotta, SN 33/iii.257-62. See also SN 44:7-11/iv.391-402.
- 713 This is the type of omniscience that the Jain teacher the Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta claims at MN 14.17.
- 714 MA explains that even though part of the statement is valid, the Buddha rejects the entire statement because of the portion that is invalid. The part of the statement that is valid is the assertion that the Buddha is omniscient and all-seeing; the part that is excessive is the assertion that knowledge and vision are continuously present to him. According to the Theravāda tradition the Buddha is omniscient in the sense that all knowable things are potentially accessible to him. He cannot, however, know everything simultaneously and must advert to whatever he wishes to know. At MN 90.8 the Buddha says that it is possible to know and see all, though not simultaneously, and at AN 4:24/ii.24 he claims to know all that can be seen, heard, sensed, and cognized, which is understood by the Theravāda tradition as an assertion of omniscience in the qualified sense. See too in this connection Miln 102-7.
- 715 MA explains "the fetter of householdership" (*gihisaṃyojana*) as attachment to the requisites of a householder, which MT details as land, ornaments, wealth, grain, etc. MA says that even though the texts mention some individuals who attained arahantship as laymen, by the path

of arahantship they destroyed all attachment to worldly things and thus either went forth as monks or passed away immediately after their attainment. The question of lay arahants is discussed at Miln 264.

716 On the Ājīvakas see MN 5.5.

717 Since this Ājīvaka believed in the moral efficacy of action, he could not have subscribed to the orthodox philosophical fatalism of the Ājīvakas, which denied the effective role of kamma and volitional deeds in modifying human destiny. MA identifies this Ājīvaka with the Bodhisatta in a previous birth.

SUTTA 72

718 The view that the soul (*jīva*) and the body are the same is materialism, which reduces the soul to the body. The following view that the soul and the body are different is an eternalist view, which regards the soul as a persisting spiritual principle that can exist independently of the body.

719 The view that a Tathāgata exists after death is a form of eternalism that regards the Tathāgata, or spiritually perfect individual, as possessing a self that attains eternal deliverance after the death of the body. The view that a Tathāgata does not exist after death also identifies the Tathāgata as self, but holds that this self is annihilated upon the death of the body. The third view attempts a synthesis of these two, which the Buddha rejects because both components involve a wrong view. The fourth view seems to be a sceptical attempt to reject both alternatives or to avoid taking a definite stand.

720 In the Pali a word play is involved between *ditṭhigata*, "speculative view," which the Tathāgata has put away, and *ditṭha*, what has been "seen" by the Tathāgata with direct vision, namely, the rise and fall of the five aggregates.

721 MA says that "does not reappear" actually does apply, in the sense that the arahant does not undergo a new existence. But if Vacchagotta were to hear this he would misapprehend it as annihilationism, and thus the Buddha denies that it applies in the sense that annihilation is not a tenable position.

- 722 MA says this is the material form by which one would describe the Tathāgata as a being (or self) possessing material form. MṬ adds that the material form has been abandoned by the abandonment of the fetters connected with it, and it has thus become incapable of arising again in the future.
- 723 This passage should be connected with the simile of the extinguished fire. Just as the extinguished fire cannot be described as having gone to any direction, so the Tathāgata who has attained to final Nibbāna cannot be described in terms of the four alternatives. The simile concerns solely the legitimacy of conceptual and linguistic usage and is not intended to suggest, as some scholars have held, that the Tathāgata attains to some mystical absorption in the Absolute. The words "profound, immeasurable, unfathomable" point to the transcendental dimension of the liberation attained by the Accomplished One, its inaccessibility to discursive thought.

SUTTA 73

- 724 This question and the next refer to arahantship, which (according to MA) Vacchagotta thought may have been an exclusive prerogative of the Buddha.
- 725 This question refers to the non-returner. Even though the non-returner may remain in the lay life, he necessarily observes celibacy because he has cut off the fetter of sensual desire.
- 726 This question refers to the stream-enterer and the once-returner, who may still indulge in sensual pleasures if they remain in the lay life.
- 727 MA: He had attained the fruit of the non-returner and came to ask the Buddha about the practice of insight for attaining the path of arahantship. However, the Buddha saw that he had the supporting conditions for the six direct knowledges. Thus he taught him serenity for producing the five mundane direct knowledges and insight for reaching arahantship.
- 728 The suitable basis (*āyatana*) is the fourth jhāna for the five direct knowledges and insight for arahantship.

- 729 *Paricīṇṇo me Bhagavā, paricīṇṇo me Sugato*. This is an indirect way of informing the Buddha of his attainment of arahantship. The bhikkhus did not understand this, and therefore the Buddha interprets its significance for them.

SUTTA 74

- 730 Dīghanakha was Ven. Sāriputta's nephew. At the time he approached the Buddha, Sāriputta had been a bhikkhu for only two weeks and was still a stream-enterer.
- 731 MA holds that Dīghanakha is an annihilationist (*ucchedavādin*) and explains this assertion to mean: "No [mode of] rebirth is acceptable to me." However, the text itself does not give any concrete evidence supporting this interpretation. It seems much more likely that Dīghanakha's statement, "Nothing is acceptable to me" (*sabbam me na khamati*), is intended to apply specifically to other philosophical views, and thus shows Dīghanakha to be a radical sceptic of the class satirically characterised at MN 76.30 as "eel-wrigglers". His assertion would then be tantamount to a wholesale repudiation of all philosophical views.
- 732 This exchange, as interpreted by MA and MṬ, should be understood as follows: The Buddha suggests, by his question, that Dīghanakha's assertion involves an inherent contradiction. For he cannot reject everything without also rejecting his own view, and this would entail the opposite position, namely, that something is acceptable to him. However, though Dīghanakha recognises the implication of the Buddha's question, he continues to insist on his view that nothing is acceptable to him.
- 733 MA says that the first sentence refers to those who first take up a basic eternalist or annihilationist view and then subsequently adopt secondary variations on that view; the second sentence refers to those who abandon their basic view without adopting an alternative. But if, as seems plausible, Dīghanakha was a radical sceptic, then the Buddha's statement might be understood to point to an unsatisfactoriness inherent in the sceptic's position: it

is psychologically uncomfortable to insist on remaining in the dark. Thus most sceptics, while professing a rejection of all views, surreptitiously adopt some definite view, while a few abandon their scepticism to seek a path to personal knowledge.

- 734 MA identifies the three views here as eternalism, annihilationism, and partial eternalism. The eternalist view is close to lust (*sārāgāya santike*), etc., because it affirms and delights in existence in however sublimated a form; annihilationism is close to non-lust, etc., because, though involving a wrong conception of self, it leads to disenchantment with existence. If the second view is understood as radical scepticism, it could also be seen as close to non-lust in that it expresses disillusionment with the attempt to buttress the attachment to existence with a theoretical foundation and thus represents a tentative, though mistaken, step in the direction of dispassion.
- 735 MA: This teaching is undertaken to show Dīghanakha the danger in his view and thereby encourage him to discard it.
- 736 MA: At this point Dīghanakha has discarded his annihilationist view. Thus the Buddha now undertakes to teach him insight meditation, first by way of the impermanence of the body and then by way of the impermanence of the mental factors under the heading of feeling.
- 737 MA quotes a verse that says that an arahant may use the words "I" and "mine" without giving rise to conceit or misconceiving them as referring to a self or ego (SN 1:5/i.14). See too DN 9.53/i.202, where the Buddha says of expressions employing the word "self": "These are merely names, expressions, turns of speech, designations in common use in the world, which the Tathāgata uses without misapprehending them."
- 738 MA: Having reflected on the discourse spoken to his nephew, Ven. Sāriputta developed insight and attained arahantship. Dīghanakha attained the fruit of stream-entry.
- 739 See nn.588–89.

SUTTA 75

- 740 *Bhūnahuno*. In Ms, Nm had rendered this cryptic expression "a wrecker of being." I follow Horner in translating after the commentarial gloss *hatavaḍḍhino mariyādakāra-kassa*. MA explains that he held the view that "growth" should be accomplished in the six senses by experiencing whatever sense objects one has never experienced before without clinging to those that are already familiar. His view thus seems close to the contemporary attitude that intensity and variety of experience is the ultimate good and should be pursued without inhibitions or restrictions. The reason for his disapproval of the Buddha will become clear in §8.
- 741 His father, the king, had provided him with three palaces and the entourage of women in hopes of keeping him confined to the lay life and distracting him from thoughts of renunciation.
- 742 MA: This is said referring to the attainment of the fruit of arahantship based on the fourth jhāna.
- 743 The expression *viparītasaññā* alludes to the "perverted perception" (*saññāvipallāsa*) of perceiving pleasure in what is really painful. MT says that sensual pleasures are painful because they arouse the painful defilements and because they yield painful fruits in the future. Horner misses the point by translating the line "(they may) receive a change of sensation and think it pleasant" (MLS 2:187).
- 744 Māgandiya evidently understands the verse in line with the fifty-eighth wrong view of the *Brahmajāla Sutta*: "When this self, furnished and supplied with the five strands of sense pleasures, revels in them – at this point the self attains supreme Nibbāna here and now" (DN 1.3.20/i.36).
- 745 MA: The full verse had been recited by the previous Buddhas seated in the midst of their fourfold assemblies. The multitude learned it as "a verse concerned with the good." After the last Buddha passed away, it spread among the wanderers, who were able to preserve only the first two lines in their books.

- 746 The emphatic *yeva*, "just," implies that he was clinging to material form, feeling, etc., misconceived to be "I," "mine," and "my self." With the arising of vision – a metaphorical expression for the path of stream-entry – personality view is eradicated and he understands the aggregates to be mere empty phenomena devoid of the selfhood that he had earlier imputed to them.
- 747 "These" refers to the five aggregates.

SUTTA 76

- 748 *Tiracchānakathā*. Many translators render this expression as "animal talk." However, *tiracchāna* means literally "going horizontally," and though this term is used as a designation for animals, MA explains that in the present context it means talk that goes "horizontally" or "perpendicularly" to the path leading to heaven and liberation.
- 749 The "four ways that negate the living of the holy life" (*abrahmacariyavāsā*, lit. "ways that are not living the holy life") are teachings that in principle nullify the prospect of attaining the ultimate fruits of spiritual discipline. As the sutta will show, their proponents – inconsistently with their own principles – did observe celibacy and practise austerities. The "four kinds of holy life without consolation" (*anassāsikāni brahmacariyāni*) do not undermine the principles of the holy life, but they also fail to offer the prospect of attaining the ultimate fruits of spiritual discipline.
- 750 The following passage makes explicit the materialist premises of the nihilistic view already set forth at MN 60.7. The *Sāmaññaphala Sutta* ascribes this view to Ajita Kesakambalin (DN 2.23/i.55).
- 751 The point seems to be that even if one does not live the holy life, one ultimately reaps the same rewards as one who does, as the rest of the passage will make clear.
- 752 In the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta* the view that follows, as far as "the space between the seven bodies," is ascribed to Pakudha Kaccāyana (DN 2.26/i.56). However, in that sutta the following passage on the elaborate system of classifications, down to "fools and the wise both will

- make an end of suffering," is connected with the view of non-causality and follows immediately upon the statement of the doctrine of non-causality set forth in this sutta at §13. The entire view is there assigned to Makkhali Gosāla. Since there are evident connections between the non-causality doctrine and items in the system of classifications (e.g., the reference to the "six classes"), and since both are known to have been typical of the Ājīvaka movement headed by Makkhali Gosāla, it seems that the inclusion of this system of classifications here under the doctrine of the seven bodies came about through an error of oral transmission. The correct version would thus be the one preserved by the *Dīgha Nikāya*. For the commentary on the system of classification, see Bodhi, *The Discourse on the Fruits of Reclusheship*, pp. 72–77.
- 753 This statement reaffirms the fatalistic view of liberation enunciated in §13.
- 754 This is the claim made by the Jain teacher the Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta at MN 14.17, and both the latter and Pūraṇa Kassapa at AN 9:38/iv.428–29. The fact that he makes bad judgements and must ask questions belies his claim to omniscience.
- 755 MA: This position is called eel-wriggling (*amarāvikkhepa*) because the doctrine roams about here and there, like an eel diving in and out of the water, and thus it is impossible to catch hold of it. In the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta* this position is ascribed to Saṁjaya Belaṭṭhiputta (DN 2.32/1.58–59). It is quite possible that the "eel-wrigglers" were a class of radical sceptics who questioned the entire prospect of apodictic knowledge about ultimate issues.
- 756 MA: He is incapable of storing up food provisions and other pleasurable goods and subsequently enjoying them.
- 757 At DN 29.26/iii.133 four other things that the arahant cannot do are mentioned: he cannot take a wrong course of action because of desire, hatred, fear, or delusion.
- 758 The translation of this passage follows the BBS ed.
- 759 *Niyyātāro*: Ñm had rendered this as "guides," Horner as "great leaders." Evidently both followed PED, which takes *niyyātar* to be an agent noun related to *niyyāma(ka)*, pilot or helmsman. But *niyyātar* must be an agent noun of

the verb *niyyāti*, "to go out (to final emancipation)," and thus it has been rendered here as "emancipated one."

- 760 On these three mentors of the Ājīvakas, see MN 36.5 and n.383. MA explains the phrase *puttamatāya puttā*, "mother's dead sons," thus: The idea occurred to him, "The Ājīvakas are dead; their mother had dead sons."

SUTTA 77

- 761 *Anāgataṃ vādapathaṃ*. Nīm had translated: "a future logical consequence of an assertion." The meaning seems to be that the Buddha understands all the unexpressed implications of his own doctrine as well as of his opponents' doctrines. The phrase may also imply that, in such suttas as the *Brahmajāla Sutta*, the Buddha has laid down a critique applicable to any doctrine that might arise in the future course of religio-philosophical thought.
- 762 Explained in full in MN 10. The first seven groups of "wholesome states" (§§15–21) constitute the thirty-seven requisites of enlightenment (*bodhipakkhiyā dhammā*).
- 763 *Abhiññāvosānapāramippatta*. MA explains as the attainment of arahantship. This may be the only sense that the word *pāramī* bears in its appearance in the four Nikāyas. In the later Theravāda literature, beginning perhaps with such works as the *Buddhavaṃsa*, this word comes to signify the perfect virtues that a bodhisatta must fulfil over many lives in order to attain Buddhahood. In that context it corresponds to the *pāramitā* of the Mahāyāna literature, though the numerical lists of virtues overlap only in part.
- 764 MA explains liberation (*vimokkha*) here as meaning the mind's full (but temporary) release from the opposing states and its full (but temporary) release by delighting in the object. The first liberation is the attainment of the four jhānas using a kasiṇa (see §24 and n.768) derived from a coloured object in one's own body; the second is the attainment of the jhānas using a kasiṇa derived from an external object; the third can be understood as the attainment of the jhānas through either a very pure and beautiful coloured kasiṇa or the four *brahmavihāras*. The

remaining liberations are the immaterial attainments and the attainment of cessation.

- 765 MA explains that these are called bases of transcendence (*abhibhāyatana*) because they transcend (*abhibhavati*, overcome) the opposing states and the objects, the former through the application of the appropriate antidote, the latter through the arising of knowledge.
- 766 MA: The meditator does the preliminary work on an internal form – e.g., the blue of the eyes for a blue-kasiṇa, the skin for a yellow kasiṇa, the blood for a red-kasiṇa, the teeth for a white-kasiṇa – but the sign of concentration (*nimitta*) arises externally. The “transcending” of the forms is the attainment of absorption together with the arising of the sign. The perception “I know, I see” is the advertence (*ābhoga*) that occurs after he emerges from the attainment, not within the attainment. The second base of transcendence differs from the first only by the extension of the sign from limited to unlimited dimensions.
- 767 MA: The second and fourth bases involve preliminary work done on an external form and the arising of the sign externally. The fifth through eighth bases differ from the third and fourth in the superior purity and luminosity of their colours.
- 768 The kasiṇa is a meditation object derived from a physical device that provides a support for acquiring the inwardly visualised sign. Thus, for example, a disk made of clay can be used as the preliminary object for practising the earth-kasiṇa, a bowl of water for practising the water-kasiṇa. The kasiṇas are explained in detail in Vsm IV and V. There, however, the space-kasiṇa is restricted to limited space, and the consciousness-kasiṇa is replaced by the light-kasiṇa.
- 769 The similes for the jhānas also appear in MN 39, as do the similes for the last three types of knowledge at §§34–36.
- 770 §§29–36 describe eight varieties of higher knowledge which, in the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*, are designated superior fruits of recluseship.

SUTTA 78

- 771 MA: The park had been built by Queen Mallikā, the wife of King Pasenadi of Kosala, and beautified with flower trees and fruit trees. At first only one hall was built, which accounts for its name, but afterwards many halls were built. Various companies of brahmins and wanderers would assemble here to expound and discuss their doctrines.
- 772 MA: First the Buddha shows the plane of the arahant, the one beyond training (i.e., by mentioning the ten qualities), then he sets up an outline applicable to the *sekha*, the disciple in higher training. The word rendered as "habits" is *sīla*, which in some contexts can assume a wider range of meaning than "virtue."
- 773 MA explains that this refers to the fruit of stream-entry, for it is at that point that the virtue of restraint by the Pātimokkha is fulfilled (and, for a lay Buddhist, the observance of the Five Precepts). MA will also explain the subsequent passages by reference to the other supramundane paths and fruits. Although the text of the sutta does not expressly mention these attainments, the commentarial interpretation seems to be justified by the expression "cease without remainder" (*aparisesā nirujjanti*), for it is only with the attainment of the respective paths and fruits that a total cessation of the particular defilement occurs. The commentary's view is further supported by the culmination of the entire discourse in the figure of the arahant.
- 774 MA: As far as the path of stream-entry he is said to be practising for their cessation; when he has attained the fruit of stream-entry they are said to have ceased.
- 775 This passage shows the arahant, who maintains virtuous conduct but no longer identifies with his virtue by conceiving it as "I" and "mine." Since his virtuous habits no longer generate kamma, they are not describable as "wholesome."
- 776 MA: As far as the path of arahantship he is said to be practising for their cessation; when he has attained the fruit of arahantship they are said to have ceased.

- 777 MA: This refers to the first jhāna pertaining to the fruit of non-returning. The path of non-returning eradicates sensual desire and ill will, and thus prevents any future arising of the three unwholesome intentions – those of sensual desire, ill will, and cruelty.
- 778 MA: As far as the path of non-returning he is said to be practising for their cessation; when he has attained the fruit of non-returning they are said to have ceased.
- 779 MA: This refers to the second jhāna pertaining to the fruit of arahantship.
- 780 MA: As far as the path of arahantship he is said to be practising for their cessation; when he has obtained the fruit of arahantship they are said to have ceased. The virtuous intentions of the arahant are not described as “wholesome.”
- 781 See MN 65.34.

SUTTA 79

- 782 See n.408.
- 783 *Evaṃvaṇṇo attā hoti arogo param maraṇā*. The word *arogo*, normally meaning healthy, here should be understood to mean permanent. MA says that he speaks with reference to rebirth in the heavenly world of Refulgent Glory, the objective counterpart of the third jhāna, of which he has heard without actually attaining it. His view would seem to fall into the class described at MN 102.3.
- 784 Previous translators seem to have been perplexed by the verb *anassāma*. Thus Ñm in Ms renders the line: “We don’t renounce our teachers’ doctrines for this reason.” And Horner: “We have heard to here from our own teachers.” But *anassāma* is a first-person plural aorist of *nassati*, “to perish, to be lost.” The same form occurs at MN 27.7. MA explains that they knew that in the past meditators would do the preparatory work on the *kaṣiṇa*, attain the third jhāna, and be reborn in the world of Refulgent Glory. But as time went on, the preparatory work on the *kaṣiṇa* was no longer understood and meditators were not able to attain the third jhāna. The wanderers only learned that “an entirely pleasant world”

exists and that the five qualities mentioned at §21 were the “practical way” to it. They knew of no entirely pleasant world higher than the third jhāna, and of no practical way higher than the five qualities.

- 785 MA: Having attained the fourth jhāna, by supernormal power he goes to the world of Refulgent Glory and converses with the deities there.
- 786 MA explains that in a previous life, as a monk during the time of the Buddha Kassapa, he had persuaded another monk to return to lay life in order to gain his robes and bowl, and this obstructive kamma prevented him from going forth under the Buddha in this life. But the Buddha taught him two long suttas to provide him with a condition for future attainment. During the reign of King Asoka he attained arahantship as the Elder Assagutta, who excelled in the practice of loving-kindness.

SUTTA 80

- 787 MA identifies Vekhanassa as Sakuludāyin’s teacher.
- 788 MA: Even though he was a wanderer, he was keenly intent on sensual pleasures. The Buddha undertook this teaching in order to make him recognise his strong concern with sensual pleasures, and thus the discourse would be beneficial to him.
- 789 In the Pali this sentence takes the form of a riddle, and the translation here is conjectural. MA explains that the “pleasure higher than the sensual” (or “the highest sensual pleasure,” *kāmaggasukham*) is Nibbāna.

SUTTA 81

- 790 At the end of this sutta the Buddha will state that at that time he himself was Jotipāla. At SN 1:50/i,35–36 the deity Ghaṭikāra visits the Buddha Gotama and recalls their ancient friendship.
- 791 This seems to have been a common pejorative expression used by the brahmin householders with reference to those who led a full-time renunciate life, contrary to their own ideal of maintaining the family lineage.

- 792 In the East it is considered, under normal circumstances, a serious breach of etiquette for one of lower birth to touch one of superior birth on the head. MA explains that Ghaṭikāra was prepared to risk that breach in order to persuade Jotipāla to meet the Buddha.
- 793 MA states that bodhisattas go forth under the Buddhas, purify their virtue, learn the Buddha's teachings, practise the meditative life, and develop insight up to conformity knowledge (*anulomañāṇa*). But they do not make effort to attain the paths and fruits (which would terminate their bodhisatta career).
- 794 His conduct approximates as closely to that of a monk as is possible for one still leading the household life. MA explains that he does not trade in the pottery he makes but merely engages in a free exchange of services with his neighbours.
- 795 MA explains that he refused because of his fewness of wishes (*appicchatā*). He realised that the king had sent the foodstuffs because he had heard the Buddha's report about his own virtues, but he thought: "I have no need of this. With what I acquire through my work I can support my parents and make offerings to the Buddha."

SUTTA 82

- 796 Because of his readiness to risk death in order to obtain his parents' permission to go forth, he was later declared by the Buddha the foremost of those gone forth in faith. His verses are at Thag 769-93.
- 797 Although the stock phrase "before long" is used here, MA says that it took Raṭṭhapāla twelve years of striving to attain arahantship. This statement seems correct in view of the fact that on his return journey to his parents' home his father did not immediately recognise him.
- 798 *Ābhidosikaṃ kummāsaṃ*. Elsewhere Nm translated *kummāsa* as "bread," but here it obviously means something of a semi-liquid nature. MA says it is made from barley (*yava*).
- 799 MA explains that his father meant to say: "Raṭṭhapāla, my dear, there is our wealth - we cannot be called poor -

yet you sit in such a place eating old porridge!" However, the householder was afflicted with such sorrow that he was unable to complete his utterance.

800 The verses obviously refer to his former wives, adorned in order to entice him back to the lay life. Strangely, no mention is made of the wives in the portion of the sutta conceived in his pre-ordination days.

801 MA: Recalling the Elder, the king would speak praise of him in the midst of his army or his harem: "That young man has done a difficult thing – having abandoned great wealth, he went forth without turning back or looking aside."

802 *Upanīyati loko addhuvo*. MA: It is swept away towards ageing and death.

803 *Attāno loko anabhissaro*. MA: There is no one able to offer it shelter or to console it with a refuge. This statement, of course, does not deny a refuge from the world, which is just what the Dhamma offers.

804 *Assako loko sabbari pahāya gamanīyari*.

805 *Ūno loko atitto tanhādāso*.

SUTTA 83

806 See *Makhādeva Jātaka* (No. 9) and *Nimi Jātaka* (No. 54). King Makhādeva and King Nimi were earlier births of the Buddha Gotama.

807 The grove was originally planted by Makhādeva and thus was still named after him.

808 MA: He was established in the ten wholesome courses of action.

809 The Uposatha is the religious observance day of ancient India, also absorbed as such into Buddhism. See n.59.

810 According to Buddhist cosmology, the lifespan of human beings oscillates between a minimum of ten years and a maximum of many thousands of years. Makhādeva lived at a time when the lifespan was at the long end of the spectrum.

811 On the "divine messengers" – the foretokens of old age, illness, and death – see MN 130.

812 MA: Mātali led him first through the hells, then he turned back and led him through the heavenly world.

- 813 MA: The good practice is being broken by a virtuous bhikkhu when he thinks, "I cannot obtain arahantship" and does not exert energy. It has been broken by a corrupt bhikkhu. It is being continued by the seven *sekhas*. It has been continued by the arahant.

SUTTA 84

- 814 See n.230.

- 815 From this passage it seems that despite a tendency to rigidification, the Indian class system was at the time considerably more elastic than the later caste system that evolved from it.

SUTTA 85

- 816 Prince Bodhi was the son of King Udena of Kosambī; his mother was the daughter of King Caṇḍappajjota of Avanti. The portion of the sutta from §2 through §8 is also found at Vin Cv Kh 5/ii.127–29, where it leads to the formulation of the rule mentioned in the following note.

- 817 MA explains that Prince Bodhi was childless and desired a son. He had heard that people can fulfil their wishes by making special offerings to the Buddha, so he spread the white cloth with the idea: "If I am to have a son, the Buddha will step on the cloth; if I am not to have a son, he will not step on the cloth." The Buddha knew that by reason of past evil kamma, he and his wife were destined to remain childless. Hence he did not step on the cloth. Later he laid down a disciplinary rule prohibiting the bhikkhus from stepping on a white cloth, but subsequently modified the rule to allow bhikkhus to step on a cloth as a blessing for householders.

- 818 *Pacchimam janatam Tathāgato apaloketi*. The Vin version here reads *anukampati*, "has compassion," which is preferable. MA explains that Ven. Ānanda said this with the thought in mind: "In later times people will come to regard honour to the bhikkhus as a way of ensuring the fulfilment of their mundane wishes and will lose faith in

the Sangha if their displays of honour do not bring the success they desire."

819 This is the basic tenet of the Jains, as at MN 14.20.

SUTTA 86

820 The name "Angulimāla" is an epithet meaning "garland (mālā) of fingers (*angulī*). He was the son of the brahmin Bhaggava, a chaplain to King Pasenadi of Kosala. His given name was Ahimsaka, meaning "harmless one." He studied at Takkasilā, where he became his teacher's favourite. His fellow students, jealous of him, told the teacher that Ahimsaka had committed adultery with his wife. The teacher, intent on bringing Ahimsaka to ruin, commanded him to bring him a thousand human right-hand fingers as an honorarium. Ahimsaka lived in the Jālīnī forest, attacking travellers, cutting off a finger of each, and wearing them as a garland around his neck. At the time the sutta opens he was one short of a thousand and had made a determination to kill the next person to come along. The Buddha saw that Angulimāla's mother was on her way to visit him, and aware that Angulimāla had the supporting conditions for arahantship, he intercepted him shortly before his mother was due to arrive.

821 MA explains that Angulimāla had just realised that the monk before him was the Buddha himself and that he had come to the forest for the express purpose of transforming him.

822 MA: By virtue of his merit from past lives, Angulimāla acquired the bowl and robes through the spiritual power of the Buddha as soon as the Buddha said, "Come, bhikkhu."

823 Even today this utterance is often recited by Buddhist monks as a protective charm (*paritta*) for pregnant women close to their time of delivery.

824 MA explains that any volitional action (*kamma*) is capable of yielding three kinds of result: a result to be experienced here and now, i.e., in the same life in which the deed is committed; a result to be experienced in the next

existence; and a result to be experienced in any life subsequent to the next, as long as one's sojourn in saṃsāra continues. Because he had attained arahantship, Angulimāla had escaped the latter two types of result but not the first, since even arahants are susceptible to experiencing the present-life results of actions they performed before attaining arahantship.

- 825 Several of the verses to follow also appear in the Dhammapada. Angulimāla's verses are found in full at Thag 866–91.
- 826 Although MA says that Ahimsaka, "Harmless," was Angulimāla's given name, the commentary to the Theragāthā says his original name was Himsaka, meaning "dangerous."
- 827 Whereas virtuous bhikkhus short of arahants are said to eat the country's almsfood as an inheritance from the Buddha, the arahant eats "free from debt" because he has made himself fully worthy of receiving alms. See Vsm I, 125–27.

SUTTA 87

- 828 The expression is often used to mean serious illness and death.
- 829 Viḍḍabha was the king's son, who eventually overthrew him. Kāsi and Kosala are lands over which the king ruled.
- 830 MA: He used this to wash his hands and feet and clean his mouth before saluting the Buddha.

SUTTA 88

- 831 MA explains that the king asked this question with reference to the case involving the female wanderer Sundarī, which was pending investigation at the time. Wishing to discredit the Buddha, some wandering ascetics persuaded Sundarī to visit Jeta's Grove at night and then let herself be seen returning at dawn, so people would become suspicious. After some time they had her murdered and buried

near Jeta's Grove, and when her body was discovered there, they pointed an accusing finger at the Buddha. After a week the false report was exposed when the king's spies found out the real story behind the murder. See Ud 4:8/42–45.

- 832 Briefly, this passage offers five criteria of evil actions: *unwholesomeness* underscores the psychological quality of the action, its unhealthy effect upon the mind; its being *blameworthy* underscores its morally detrimental nature; its capacity to produce *painful results* calls attention to its undesirable kammic potential; and the last statement calls attention to both its evil *motivation* and the harmful long-range *consequences* such action entails for both oneself and others. The opposite explanation applies to good action, discussed in §14.
- 833 MA: Ven. Ānanda's answer goes beyond the question, for he shows not only that the Buddha praises the abandoning of all unwholesome states, but that he acts in accordance with his word by having abandoned all unwholesome states as well.
- 834 MA explains the word *bāhitikā*, after which the sutta is named, as a cloak produced in a foreign country.

SUTTA 89

- 835 Dīgha Kārāyaṇa was the commander-in-chief of King Pasenadi's forces. He was the nephew of Bandhula, chief of the Mallas and a former friend of King Pasenadi, whom the king had killed together with his thirty-two sons through the treacherous contrivance of his corrupt ministers. Kārāyaṇa was in secret collusion with Prince Viḍḍabha, Pasenadi's son, to help the latter usurp his father's throne.
- 836 Three leagues (*yojana*) would be approximately twenty miles.
- 837 MA says that he thought: "Previously, after conferring in private with the recluse Gotama, the king arrested my uncle and his thirty-two sons. Perhaps this time he will arrest me." The royal insignia entrusted to Dīgha

Kārāyaṇa also included the fan, parasol, and sandals. Dīgha Kārāyaṇa hurried back to the capital with the royal insignia and crowned Viḍūḍabha king.

- 838 At MN 13.11 these quarrels are said to arise because of sensual pleasures.
- 839 As at MN 77.6.
- 840 As at MN 27.4–7.
- 841 At the time of their deaths both were declared by the Buddha to be once-returners. See AN 6:44/iii.348.
- 842 This statement indicates that this sutta can be assigned to the last year of the Buddha's life.
- 843 When King Pasenadi returned to the place where he had left Dīgha Kārāyaṇa, he found only a servant woman who reported the news to him. He then hurried on to Rājagaha to enlist the aid of his nephew, King Ajātasattu. But since he arrived late, he found the city gates closed. Exhausted by the journey, he lay down in a hall outside the city and died during the night.
- 844 MA: "Monuments to the Dhamma" means words expressing reverence to the Dhamma. Whenever reverence is shown towards any of the Three Jewels, it is also shown to the others.

SUTTA 90

- 845 MA: These two sisters are the king's wives (not his sisters!).
- 846 MA: There is no one who can know and see all – past, present, and future – with one act of mental adverting, with one act of consciousness; thus this problem is discussed in terms of a single act of consciousness (*ekacitta*). On the question of the kind of omniscience the Theravāda tradition attributes to the Buddha, see n.714.
- 847 That is, he is not inquiring about their social status but about their prospects for spiritual progress and attainment.
- 848 As at MN 85.58.
- 849 MA's explanation of this reply suggests that the former class of gods are non-returners, while the latter class are gods who have not attained the status of non-returners. The same would apply to the question on Brahmās in §15. The two key terms that here distinguish the two

types of gods appear in the PTS ed. as *savyāpajjhā* and *abyāpajjhā*, which would be rendered as "subject to ill will" and "free from ill will," respectively. The BBS ed. reading accepted here, *sabyābajjhā* and *abyābajjhā*, has the support of MA, which glosses the former as "who have not abandoned mental suffering by eradicating it," and the latter as "who have eradicated suffering." As either reading would be applicable to non-returners, no significant difference is entailed. Note that the word *itthatta*, which in the stock declaration of arahantship signifies any state of manifest existence, is here glossed by MA as *manussaloka*, the human world.

SUTTA 91

- 850 This is a stock description of a learned brahmin. According to MA, the Three Vedas are the Iru, Yaju, and Sāma (= Rig, Yajur, and Sāman). The fourth Veda, the Atharva, is not mentioned, but MA says its existence is implied when the histories (Itihāsa) are called "the fifth," i.e., of the works regarded as authoritative by the brahmins. It is more likely, however, that the histories are called "the fifth" in connection with the four branches of study auxiliary to the Vedas that precede them in the description. The translation of technical terms here follows MA, with the help of Monier-William's *Sanskrit-English Dictionary* (Oxford, 1899). On the marks of a Great Man, MA says that this was a science based on 12,000 works explaining the characteristics of great men, such as Buddhas, paccekabuddhas, chief disciples, great disciples, Wheel-turning Monarchs, etc. These works included 16,000 verses called "The Buddha Mantra."
- 851 The thirty-two marks, enumerated in §9 below, are the subject of an entire sutta in the Dīgha Nikāya, DN 30, *Lakkhaṇa Sutta*. There each of the marks is explained as the kammic consequence of a particular virtue perfected by the Buddha during his earlier existences as a bodhisatta.
- 852 The seven treasures are discussed in MN 129.34-41. The acquisition of the wheel-treasure explains why he is called a "Wheel-turning Monarch."

- 853 MA: The world, enveloped in the darkness of the defilements, is covered by seven veils: lust, hate, delusion, conceit, views, ignorance, and immoral conduct. Having removed these veils, the Buddha abides generating light all around.
- 854 MA explains that the Buddha worked this feat after first ascertaining that Uttara's teacher, Brahmāyu, had the potential for achieving the fruit of non-returning, and that his attainment of this fruit depended upon the dispelling of Uttara's doubts.
- 855 The seven are the backs of the four limbs, the two shoulders, and the trunk.
- 856 *Rasaggasaggī*. The *Lakkhaṇa Sutta* expands (DN 30.2.7/iii.166): "Whatever he touches with the tip of his tongue he tastes in his throat, and the taste is dispersed everywhere." It is difficult, however, to understand either how this quality could be considered a physical characteristic or how it could be perceived by others.
- 857 This mark, the *uṇhīsa*, accounts for the protuberance commonly seen on the top of the head of Buddha-images.
- 858 This is the standard reflection on the proper use of alms-food, as at MN 2.14.
- 859 The blessing (*anumodanā*) is a short talk following the meal, instructing the donors in some aspect of the Dhamma and expressing the wish that their meritorious kamma will bring them abundant fruit.
- 860 MA: This is the intention: "The excellent qualities I have not described are far more numerous than those I have described. The excellent qualities of Master Gotama are like the great earth and the great ocean; expounded in detail they are infinite and immeasurable, like space."
- 861 The Pali word for the tongue, *jivhā*, is of the feminine gender.
- 862 What must be directly known (*abhiññeyya*) are the Four Noble Truths, what must be developed (*bhāvetabba*) is the Noble Eightfold Path, and what must be abandoned (*pahātabba*) are the defilements headed by craving. Here the context requires that the word "Buddha" be understood in the specific sense of a Fully Enlightened One (*sammāsambuddha*).

- 863 *Vedagū*. This term and the following two – *tevijja* and *sotthiya* – seem to have represented ideal types among the brahmins; see too MN 39.24, 26, and 27. The sixth and seventh terms – *kevalī* and *muni* – were probably ideal types among the non-Vedic ascetic orders. By his reply, the Buddha endows these terms with new meanings derived from his own spiritual system.
- 864 Here and in the reply the word “Buddha” may signify simply one who is enlightened or awakened, in a sense applicable to any arahant, though Brahmāyu’s response also suggests it may be intended in the narrower sense of a Fully Enlightened One.
- 865 MA offers an involved explanation of how the Buddha’s reply answers all eight of Brahmāyu’s questions.
- 866 As at MN 56.18.

SUTTA 92

- 867 The text of this sutta has not been included in the PTS ed. of the Majjhima Nikāya, as it is identical with the sutta of the same name in the Sutta Nipāta, published in two different versions by the PTS. The bracketed page numbers here therefore refer to the more recent PTS ed. of Sn, that edited by Dines Anderson and Helmer Smith.
- 868 That is, Jambudīpa, the Indian subcontinent.

SUTTA 93

- 869 The argument in favour of this thesis is set forth at MN 90.10–12.
- 870 MA: They speak thus intending to say: “Having studied the Three Vedas, you have trained in the mantras by which those who go forth undertake their going forth and the mantras they maintain after they have gone forth. You have practised their mode of conduct. Therefore, you will not be defeated. Victory will be yours.”
- 871 This statement is intended to show that brahmins are born of women, just like other human beings, and there is thus no substance to their claim that they are born of Brahmā’s mouth.

- 872 Yona is probably the Pali equivalent of Ionia, the reference being to the Bactrian Greeks. Kamboja is a district in India to the north of the Middle Country.
- 873 The argument of §§7–8 here is substantially identical with that of MN 84.
- 874 MA identifies Devala the Dark, Asita Devala, with the Buddha in an earlier life. The Buddha undertakes this teaching to show: "In the past, when you were of a superior birth and I was of an inferior birth, you could not answer a question I asked you about an assertion concerning birth. So how can you do so now, when you are inferior and I have become a Buddha?"
- 875 As in MN 38.26.
- 876 MA: Puṇṇa was the name of a servant of the seven seers; he would take a spoon, cook leaves, and serve them.

SUTTA 94

- 877 MA: He did this after recognising that a lengthy discussion would be required.
- 878 The *kahāpaṇa* was the principal monetary unit of the time.
- 879 During the Buddha's last days, this city was still a small town known as Pāṭaligāma. At DN 16.1.28/iii.87, the Buddha predicts its future greatness. It eventually became the capital of Magadha. Its present-day descendent is the city of Patna, capital of the state of Bihar.

SUTTA 95

- 880 The opening passage of this sutta, down to §10, is virtually identical with the opening of the *Soṇadaṇḍa Sutta* (DN 4).
- 881 MA: It was called thus because offerings were made there to the gods.
- 882 Another wealthy brahmin who resided in Ukkaṭṭhā, a crown property given to him by King Pasenadi. At DN 2.21/i.110 he hears a discourse from the Buddha, attains stream-entry, and goes for refuge along with his family and retinue.
- 883 These are the ancient rishis whom the brahmins regarded as the divinely inspired authors of the Vedic hymns.

- 884 In Pali: *saddhā, ruci, anussava, ākāraparivitakka, diṭṭhi-nijjhānakkhanti*. Of these five grounds for arriving at a conviction, the first two seem to be primarily emotive, the third to be a blind acceptance of tradition, and the last two primarily rational or cognitive. The "two different ways" each may turn out are true and false.
- 885 It is not proper for him to come to this conclusion because he has not personally ascertained the truth of his conviction but only accepts it on a ground that is not capable of yielding certainty.
- 886 *Saccānurakkhana*: or, the safeguarding of truth, the protection of truth.
- 887 *Saccānubodha*: or, the awakening to truth.
- 888 The procedure for the discovery of truth recommended in this sutta appears to be an elaboration of the approach described in MN 47.
- 889 *Tūleti*. MA: He investigates things in terms of impermanence, and so forth. This stage thus seems to be that of insight contemplation.
- 890 Although applying the will (*ussahati*) appears similar to striving (*padahati*), the former may be understood as the exertion undertaken prior to insight contemplation, the latter as the exertion that brings insight up to the level of the supramundane path.
- 891 MA: He realises Nibbāna with the mental body (of the path of stream-entry), and having penetrated the defilements, he sees Nibbāna with wisdom, making it clear and evident.
- 892 While the discovery of truth in this context appears to signify the attainment of stream-entry, the final arrival at truth (*saccānupatti*) seems to mean the full attainment of arahantship.
- 893 See n.524.

SUTTA 96

- 894 MA: It had been an ancient practice among the brahmins to wander for alms even when they possessed great wealth.
- 895 Although agriculture may seem a strange occupation for one described as a merchant, it should be understood that

the *vessas* not only ran the urban business enterprises, but also owned and supervised agrarian undertakings.

896 *Ariyam kho aham brāhmaṇa lokuttaram dhammam purisassa sandhanam paññāpemi.*

897 *Attabhāvassa abhinibbatti:* literally, "wherever the reconception of his individuality takes place."

SUTTA 97

898 *Sati uttarakaraṇīye.* Ven. Sāriputta had left without giving him a teaching that would have enabled him to arrive at the supramundane path and become fixed in destination for enlightenment. Compared to this even rebirth in the Brahma-world is described as "inferior" (*hīna*).

899 This remark has the force of a gentle reproach. The Buddha must have seen that Dhānañjāni had the potential to attain the supramundane path, since elsewhere (e.g., MN 99.24–27) he himself teaches only the way to the Brahma-world when that potential is lacking in his listener.

SUTTA 98

900 The text of this sutta has not been included in the PTS ed. of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, for the same reason given in n.867. The bracketed page numbers refer to the Anderson-Smith ed. of Sn.

901 Here the word "kamma" has to be understood as present action or deed, and not past action producing its present consequences.

902 *Sāmañña.* MA: Among animals the diversity in the shape of their bodily parts is determined by their species (*yonī*), but that (species differentiation) is not found in the individual bodies of brahmins and other classes of humans. Such being the case, the distinction between brahmins, *khattiyas*, etc., is purely a verbal designation; it is spoken of as mere conventional expression.

903 MA: Up to this point the Buddha has criticised the assertion of Bhāradvāja that birth makes one a brahmin. Now

he will uphold the assertion of Vāseṭṭha that action makes one a brahmin. For the ancient brahmins and other wise ones in the world would not recognise the brahminhood of one defective in livelihood, virtue, and conduct.

904 *Bhovādi*. *Bho*, "sir," was a mode of address used among the brahmins. From this point on the Buddha will identify the true brahmin with the arahant. Verses 27–54 here are identical with Dhṛp 396–423, except for an additional couplet in Dhṛp 423.

905 MA: By the present volitional action which accomplishes the work of farming, etc.

906 With this verse the word "kamma" undergoes a shift in meaning signalled by the term "dependent origination." "Kamma" here no longer means simply present action determining one's social status, but action in the special sense of a force binding beings to the round of existence. This same line of thought becomes even clearer in the next verse.

907 This verse and the following one again refer to the arahant. Here, however, the contrast is not between the arahant as the one made holy by his actions and the born brahmin unworthy of his designation, but between the arahant as the one liberated from the bondage of action and result and all other beings who remain tied by their actions to the wheel of birth and death.

SUTTA 99

908 Todeyya was a wealthy brahmin, the overlord of Tudigāma, a village near Sāvatthī. MN 135 was also spoken to this same Subha.

909 *Vibhajjavādo kho aham ettha*. Such statements account for the later designation of Buddhism as *vibhajjavāda*, "the doctrine of analysis."

910 Obviously at the time trade was still in an early stage of development. The same statement could hardly be made today!

911 As at MN 95.13.

912 This statement must have been made before Pokkhara-

sāti became a follower of the Buddha, as is mentioned at MN 95.9.

913 *Anukampājātika*.

914 This knowledge pertains to the third of the Tathāgata's powers, knowing the ways to all destinations. See MN 12.12.

915 MA explains limiting action (*pamāṇakataṃ kammaṃ*) as kamma pertaining to the sense sphere (*kāmaṇvacara*). It is contrasted with a limitless or immeasurable action, namely, the jhānas pertaining to the fine-material sphere or the immaterial sphere. In this case the *brahmavihāras* developed to the jhānic level are intended. When a jhāna pertaining to the fine-material sphere or the immaterial sphere is attained and mastered, a kamma pertaining to the sense sphere cannot overpower it and gain the opportunity to yield its own result. Rather, the kamma pertaining to the fine-material sphere or the immaterial sphere overpowers the sense-sphere kammās and produces its results. Obstructing the result of the sense-sphere kammās, the *brahmavihāra* that has been mastered leads to rebirth in the company of Brahmā.

916 As at MN 27.2

SUTTA 100

917 Dhānañjānī was a stream-enterer. MA says that Sangārava was her husband's younger brother.

918 *Diṭṭhadhammābhiniññāvosānapāramippattā adibrahmacariyaṃ paṭijānanti*. MA glosses: They claim to be the originators, creators, producers of a holy life, saying: "Having directly known here and now in this present existence and having reached the consummation, we have attained Nibbāna, called 'perfection' because it is the transcendence of everything."

919 It is puzzling that the reasoners and investigators (*takkī, vīmaṃsī*) are here said to rely on the basis of mere faith (*saddhāmattakena*). Elsewhere faith and reasoning are contrasted as two different grounds of conviction (MN 95.14), and "mere faith" seems more closely allied with reliance on oral tradition than with reasoning and investigation.

- 920 *Sāmaṃ yeva dhammaṃ abhiññāya*. This phrase emphasises direct personal realisation as the foundation for promulgating a holy life.
- 921 MA says that Sangārava had the idea that the Buddha spoke thus without actual knowledge, and he therefore accuses the Buddha of false speech. The sequence of ideas in this passage is difficult to follow and it is likely that the text is corrupt.

SUTTA 101

- 922 This doctrine, which is here ascribed to the Jains, is also taken up for criticism by the Buddha at SN 36:21/iv.230–31 and AN 3:61/i.173–74. The Buddha's teaching recognises the existence of feeling that is not the result of past action but a concomitant of present action, and also admits feeling that is neither kammically active nor kammic result.
- 923 From here until §5, "That being so...", also at MN 14.17–19. The statement of the Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta, which at MN 14.17 introduces the Nigaṇṭhas' position, here comes afterwards, at §10, as the Nigaṇṭhas' justification for their assertion.
- 924 As at MN 95.14.
- 925 It is not fitting for them to make that declaration because their "intense exertion," i.e., their ascetic practice, is the cause for their painful feelings, as the Buddha states in §15.
- 926 This is a technical expression for an action that is to ripen in this present life.
- 927 MA: "An action [whose result] is to be experienced in a matured [personality]" is a synonym for an action [whose result] is to be experienced here and now. "An action [whose result] is to be experienced in an unmatured personality" is a synonym for action [whose result] is to be experienced in the next life. But a specification is made as follows: any action that yields its result in the same life is one to be experienced here and now, but only an action that produces its result *within seven days* is called one to be experienced in a matured personality.

- 928 This is an action that does not gain the opportunity to yield its result and thereby becomes defunct.
- 929 *Issaranimmānahetu*. This doctrine of the theists is criticised by the Buddha at AN 3:61/i.174.
- 930 *Sangatibhāva*hetu. This alludes to the doctrine of Makkhali Gosāla, criticised at length at MN 60.21 and AN 3:61/i.175.
- 931 *Abhijāti*hetu. This also refers to a tenet of Makkhali Gosāla.
- 932 This is a formulation of the Buddha's Middle Way, which avoids the extreme of self-mortification without falling into the other extreme of infatuation with sensual pleasure.
- 933 MA explains the source of suffering to be craving, so called because it is the root of the suffering comprised in the five aggregates. The passage shows two alternative approaches toward overcoming craving – one employing energetic striving, the other detached equanimity. The “fading away” of the source is identified by MA with the supramundane path. The passage is said to illustrate the practice of one who progresses on a pleasant path with quick direct knowledge (*sukhapatipadā khippābhiññā*).
- 934 This passage is brought forth to show the Buddha's reason for permitting his monks to undertake the ascetic practices (*dhutanga*): the moderate use of austerities is conducive to overcoming the defilements. But they are not undertaken to wear away old kamma and to purify the soul, as the Jains and other ascetic sects believed. MA says that this passage illustrates the practice of one who progresses on a difficult path with sluggish direct knowledge (*dukkhapatipadā dandhābhiññā*).

SUTTA 102

- 935 This sutta is a “middle length” counterpart of the longer *Brahmajāla Sutta*, included in the *Dīgha Nikāya* and published in translation with its commentaries in Bodhi, *Discourse on the All-Embracing Net of Views*. Detailed explanations for almost all the views mentioned in this sutta will be found in the Introduction and Part Two of that work.
- 936 *Aroga*, “healthy,” explained by MA as meaning permanent.

- 937 In the *Brahmajāla Sutta* sixteen varieties of this view are mentioned, the eight given here and two other tetrads: the self as finite, infinite, both, and neither; and the self as experiencing exclusively pleasure, exclusively pain, a mixture of both, and neither. In the present sutta these two tetrads are incorporated under speculations about the past in §14.
- 938 Evidently, in the above list the views of the self as immaterial, percipient of unity, and percipient of the immeasurable are based on attainment of the base of infinite space. MĪ explains the consciousness-kasiṇa as the base of infinite consciousness, stating that these theorists declare that base to be the self.
- 939 The perception within the third immaterial meditation – the base of nothingness – is the subtlest and most refined of all mundane perceptions. Although there is still a kind of perception in the fourth immaterial attainment, it is so subtle that it is considered no longer appropriate to designate it perception.
- 940 MA paraphrases thus: “All those types of perceptions together with the views are conditioned, and because they are conditioned, they are gross. But there is Nibbāna, called the cessation of formations, that is, of the conditioned. Having known ‘There is this,’ that there is Nibbāna, seeing the escape from the conditioned, the Tathāgata has gone beyond the conditioned.”
- 941 The second tetrad of §3 is dropped here since the self is conceived as non-percipient. In the *Brahmajāla Sutta* eight varieties of this view are mentioned, these four plus the finite-infinite tetrad.
- 942 MA points out that this statement is made with reference to those planes of existence where all five aggregates exist. In the immaterial planes consciousness occurs without the aggregate of material form, and in the non-percipient plane there is material form without consciousness. But consciousness never occurs without the three other mental aggregates.
- 943 The *Brahmajāla Sutta* mentions eight varieties of this view, these four plus the finite-infinite tetrad.
- 944 *Sammoha*, here obviously having a different meaning

than the usual "confusion" or "delusion."

- 945 MA explains the compound *ditṭhasutamutaviññātabba* as meaning "what is to be cognized as the seen, heard, and sensed" and takes it to refer to sense-door cognitions. However, it can also comprise all grosser mind-door cognitions as well. To enter the fourth immaterial attainment, all the ordinary "mental formations" involved in other cognitive processes must be overcome, for their persistence is an obstacle to entering this attainment. Hence it is called "not percipient" (*n'eva saññī*).
- 946 *Sasankhārāvasesasamāpatti*. Within the fourth immaterial attainment a residue of extremely subtle mental formations remains. Hence it is called "not non-percipient" (*nāsaññī*).
- 947 The *Brahmajāla* explains seven types of annihilationism, here all collected together as one.
- 948 The "fear and disgust with personality" is an aspect of *vibhavataṇhā*, the craving for non-existence. The annihilationist view to which it gives rise still involves an identification of personality with self – a self that is annihilated at death – and thus, despite his denial, it binds the theorist to the round of existence.
- 949 So far only four of the original five classes of speculations about the future have been analysed, yet the Buddha speaks as if they were all explicated. MA tries to resolve the problem by explaining that assertions of "Nibbāna here and now" were comprised by the terms "percipient of unity" and "percipient of diversity" in §3. This explanation, however, is not convincing. Nm, in Ms, had added the heading "Nibbāna Here and Now" over §17, and §§17–21 do seem to correspond with the last four of the five doctrines of Nibbāna here and now in the *Brahmajāla*. However, this interpretation seems contradicted by §13 and by the phrase used in §17, §19 and §21, "with the relinquishing of views about the past and the future," which would exclude the doctrines of Nibbāna here and now. The problem seems insoluble, and raises the question whether a passage on Nibbāna here and now was not lost in the course of the sutta's oral transmission. In the *Brahmajāla* the five doctrines are the asser-

tion of sensual pleasures and the four jhānas to be the self's attainment of supreme Nibbāna here and now.

- 950 This view includes all four of the eternalists who speculate about the past mentioned in the *Brahmajāla*.
- 951 Since this is a view referring to the past, it may be taken to imply that the self and the world arose spontaneously out of nothing at some point in the past. Thus it would comprise the two doctrines of fortuitous origination of the *Brahmajāla*, as MA maintains.
- 952 This includes the four types of partial eternalism.
- 953 This may include the four types of endless equivocation or "eel-wriggling" of the *Brahmajāla*.
- 954 Views 5–8 correspond exactly to the four extensionists of the *Brahmajāla*.
- 955 The eight views (9–16) are, in the *Brahmajāla*, included among the doctrines of percipient immortality comprised under speculations about the future.
- 956 That is, they must accept their doctrine on some ground other than knowledge, one involving belief or reasoning. At MN 95.14, it is said that these five grounds of conviction yield conclusions that can turn out to be either true or false.
- 957 MA: That is not really knowledge but wrong understanding; thus it is declared to be clinging to views.
- 958 MA says that at this point all sixty-two of the views set forth in the *Brahmajāla Sutta* have been incorporated, yet this sutta has an even wider range since it includes an exposition of personality view (most notably implied by §24).
- 959 This section title, and the following Roman numeral "V", were inserted by Ñm on the supposition that this passage presents the doctrines of Nibbāna here and now, mentioned but not explicated earlier. However, as pointed out in n.949, while the text of this passage lends some support to that supposition, there are also cogent reasons against it. Unfortunately, Ms contains no note by Ñm dealing with the problem of sequence in this sutta.
- 960 MA: This section is intended to show how all sixty-two speculative views arise predominated over by personality view.

- 961 *Pavivekam pītim*. This refers to the first two jhānas, which include *pīti*.
- 962 MA explains that this is the grief caused by the loss of the jhāna. The grief does not arise immediately upon the cessation of the jhāna, but only after reflection upon its disappearance.
- 963 *Nirāmisam sukhami*. This is the pleasure of the third jhāna.
- 964 The fourth jhāna.
- 965 *Santo'ham asmi, nibbuto'ham asmi, anupādāno'ham asmi*. In the Pali the expression *aham asmi*, "I am," reveals that he is still involved with clinging, as the Buddha will point out.
- 966 MA takes this to be an allusion to personality view. Thus he is still clinging to a view.
- 967 MA states that elsewhere the expression "liberation through not clinging" (*anupādā vimokkha*) signifies Nibbāna, but here it means the attainment of the fruit of arahantship.
- 968 The *Brahmajāla Sutta* too points to the understanding of the origination, etc., of the six bases of contact as the way to transcend all views.

SUTTA 103

- 969 *Bhavābhavaḥetu*. MA: "Do you think that he teaches the Dhamma as a means of gaining merit so that he can experience happiness in this or that [higher] state of being?"
- 970 *Abhidhamma*. MA says that this refers to the thirty-seven requisites of enlightenment mentioned in the previous paragraph. See n.362.
- 971 Meaning (*attha*) and phrasing (*byañjana*) are the two aspects of the Dhamma taught by the Buddha. The following passage, §§5–8, should be compared with DN 29:18–21/iii.128–29, which also expresses a concern for the preservation of the correct meaning and phrasing of the Dhamma.
- 972 This statement is made because slight deviations from the correct phrasing are not necessarily an obstacle to a proper understanding of the meaning. But elsewhere (e.g., AN 2:20/i.59) the Buddha points out that the wrong expression of the letter and the wrong interpretation of

the meaning are two factors responsible for the distortion and disappearance of the true Dhamma.

- 973 The general principle underlying §§10–14 is this: If the offending bhikkhu can be rehabilitated, then despite the hurt to him and the trouble to oneself, one should try to correct him. But if he is not susceptible to being rehabilitated, one should just maintain one's own equanimity.
- 974 "The Recluse" (*samaṇa*) is glossed by MA with *satthā*, the Teacher, referring to the Buddha. A similar use of the term is found at MN 105.18, 21.
- 975 The "thing" (*dhamma*) intended, MA says, is quarrelling.

SUTTA 104

- 976 The opening of this sutta is the same as that of DN 29, which is also concerned with preserving harmony in the Sangha after the Buddha's demise.
- 977 MA: The "shrine" and "refuge" are the Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta, who is now dead.
- 978 The novice Cunda was the younger brother of Ven. Sāriputta.
- 979 Even while the Buddha was still alive such a dispute had already broken out among the bhikkhus at Kosambī, referred to at MN 48.2.
- 980 This would be a dispute about the Noble Eightfold Path or the other requisites of enlightenment.
- 981 The first four pairs are included among the "imperfections that defile the mind" at MN 7.3.
- 982 *Adhikaraṇa*. Horner translates "legal questions." They are dealt with at length at Vin Cv Kh 4/Vin ii.88–93; see Horner, *Book of the Discipline*, 5:117–25. Briefly, litigation because of a dispute (*vivādādhikaraṇa*) arises when bhikkhus dispute about the Dhamma and the Discipline; litigation because of an accusation (*anuvādādhikaraṇa*) when bhikkhus accuse a bhikkhu of committing a transgression of the monastic rules; litigation because of an offence (*āpattādhikaraṇa*) when a bhikkhu who has committed a transgression seeks to exonerate himself from it; and litigation concerning procedures (*kiccādhikaraṇa*) deals with the enactment of the formal functions of the

Sangha.

- 983 *Adhikaraṇasamatha*. They are dealt with in detail in Vin Cv Kh 4. How the seven means of settlement are to be applied for the resolution of the four kinds of litigation is discussed at Vin ii.93–104; see Horner, *Book of the Discipline*, 5:125–40.
- 984 *Sammukhāvinaya*. Horner translates “verdict in the presence of.” At Vin ii.93, this is explained as confrontation with (or presence of) the Sangha, the Dhamma, the Discipline, and the individuals who are parties to the dispute. This kind of settlement applies to all four kinds of litigation, with minor differences in formulation.
- 985 *Dhammanetti samanumajjitabbā*. MA gives as an example of *dhammanetti* the ten courses of wholesome and unwholesome conduct, but says that here the Dhamma and Discipline themselves are meant.
- 986 *Sativinaya*. Horner renders “verdict of innocence”. At Vin ii.80, it is said that this is given when a bhikkhu is pure and without offences and he is reproached with an offence; he must ask the Sangha to give him such a verdict by appeal to his full and accurate recollection of his behaviour.
- 987 An offence involving defeat, a *pārājika* offence, requires expulsion from the Sangha. An offence bordering on defeat is either a *sanghādisesa* offence, which requires a formal meeting of the Sangha and a period of temporary penalisation, or the preliminary steps leading to a *pārājika* offence.
- 988 *Amūḷhavinaya*. A verdict of past insanity is given when a bhikkhu commits offences during a period of madness. The criterion for determining insanity is that he must have no recollection of his behaviour during the period for which the verdict is requested.
- 989 The procedure described is the established method by which a bhikkhu obtains exoneration for his transgression when he has fallen into any offence that can be cleared by confession.
- 990 *Pāpiyyāsikā*. Horner renders “decision for specific depravity.” This verdict is pronounced against a bhikkhu who is a maker of strife and quarrels in the Sangha, who is igno-

rant and full of offences, or who lives in unbecoming association with householders.

- 991 *Tiṇavattthāraka*. This means of settlement is resorted to when the Sangha has been involved in a dispute in the course of which the bhikkhus committed many minor offences. Since to pursue charges for these offences might prolong the conflict, the offences are cleared by the means described in the sutta. MA explains that this method is like throwing grass over excrement to remove the bad smell, hence the name "covering over with grass."
- 992 Offences calling for serious censure are those of the *pārājika* and *sanghādisesa* classes. Those connected with the laity are cases where a bhikkhu reviles and disparages householders.
- 993 As at MN 48.6.
- 994 At MN 21.21, this is said with reference to the simile of the saw.

SUTTA 105

- 995 See MN 12 and n.177.
- 996 *Adhimānena*. MA: They declare this out of conceit, considering themselves to have attained what they have not attained.
- 997 MA: To make clear to them their level of attainment.
- 998 MA: Because they are motivated by desire, the Tathāgata's thought of teaching the Dhamma, which arises towards true practitioners, changes (i.e., fades away).
- 999 *Lokāmisā*. These are the five cords of sensual pleasure.
- 1000 *Āneñja* (BBS ed.); *āṇañja* (PTS ed.). This is a technical term for the meditative attainments from the fourth jhāna through the four immaterial attainments. But since the highest two immaterial attainments are dealt with separately, it seems that in this sutta only the fourth jhāna and the lower two immaterial attainments are intended as "the imperturbable."
- 1001 The Buddha.
- 1002 Reading with the BBS ed., *evaṃmānī assa atatham samānam*. This passage refers back to the problem of self-

overestimation with which the discourse began.

- 1003 I read with the BBS ed., *sa-upādiseso ti jānamāno*, and again just below, *analañ ca te antarāyāya*, "but it is incapable of harming you." The SBJ ed. is in substantial agreement but the PTS ed. gives the opposite readings, *anupādiseso ti maññamāno* and *alañ ca te antarāyāya*.
- 1004 Any offence of the two classes, *pārājika* and *sanghādisesa*; see n.987. The analogy is difficult to apply with complete precision, since if craving and ignorance had truly been removed from him with only a trace left behind, the bhikkhu would be a *sekha*; yet it is inconceivable that a *sekha* would abandon the training or commit a defiled offence. It seems that in this case the analogy must be applied loosely, and the bhikkhu should be understood as one who falsely imagines that craving and ignorance have been removed from him.
- 1005 As at MN 66.17.
- 1006 As at MN 46.19.

SUTTA 106

- 1007 See n.1000. Here, too, the term "imperturbable" seems to cover only the fourth jhāna and the two lower immaterial attainments.
- 1008 MA says both objective sensual pleasures and sensual defilements are intended.
- 1009 MA glosses: "having transcended the sense-sphere world and having resolved with a mind that has jhāna as its objective."
- 1010 MA explains the phrase "his mind acquires confidence in this base" to mean that he attains either insight aimed at reaching arahantship or the access to the fourth jhāna. If he gains access to the fourth jhāna, this becomes his basis for attaining "the imperturbable," i.e., the fourth jhāna itself. But if he gains insight, then he decides upon perfecting wisdom by deepening his insight in order to reach arahantship. The decision "to perfect wisdom" may explain why so many of the following sections of this sutta, though culminating in attainments along the scale of concentration, are expressed in phrasing appro-

priate to the development of insight.

- 1011 MA explains that this passage describes the rebirth process of one who could not realise arahantship after reaching the fourth jhāna. The “consciousness leading [to rebirth]” (*sarivattanikam viññānam*) is the resultant consciousness by which this person is reborn, and this has the same imperturbable nature as the kammically formative consciousness that attained to the fourth jhāna. Since it is the fourth-jhāna consciousness that determines rebirth, this person will be reborn in one of the celestial realms corresponding to the fourth jhāna.
- 1012 MA says that this is the reflection of one who has attained the fourth jhāna. Since he includes material form among the things to be transcended, if he attains to the imperturbable he reaches the base of infinite space, and if he does not attain arahantship he is reborn in the plane of infinite space.
- 1013 MA says that this is the reflection of one who has attained the base of infinite space. If he attains to the imperturbable, he reaches the base of infinite consciousness and is reborn in that plane if he does not reach arahantship.
- 1014 This is the reflection of one who has attained the base of infinite consciousness and aims at attaining the base of nothingness.
- 1015 MA calls this two-pointed voidness – the absence of “I” and “mine” – and says that this teaching of the base of nothingness is expounded by way of insight rather than concentration, the approach taken in the previous section. At MN 43.33, this contemplation is said to lead to the deliverance of mind through voidness.
- 1016 MA calls this four-pointed voidness and explains thus: (i) he does not see his self anywhere; (ii) he does not see a self of his own that can be treated as something belonging to another, e.g., as a brother, friend, assistant, etc.; (iii) he does not see the self of another; (iv) he does not see the self of another that can be treated as something belonging to him. Ms has a note by Ñm: “These expressions [in this paragraph and the next] seem to have been stereotyped slogans or descriptions of the attainments of nothingness and neither-perception-nor-non-perception,

primarily non-Buddhist, and sometimes used as a basis for the existing-body [=personality] view." See Nm's note 19 to Vsm XXI, 53 for further discussion and other references.

- 1017 MA glosses: "If the round of kamma had not been accumulated by me, now there would not be for me the round of results; if the round of kamma is not accumulated by me now, in the future there will not be the round of results." "What exists, what has come to be" are the five aggregates. The first part of the formula again seems to be a condensed formulation of a view held by non-Buddhists. Several suttas identify it as an expression for the annihilationist view, adapted by the Buddha with new meanings assigned to it. For other occurrences of this formula, see SN iii.55–56, 99, 183, 206; AN iv.69–72, v.63.
- 1018 MA says that he obtains the equanimity of insight, but from §11 it seems that the equanimity of the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception is also intended.
- 1019 MA: This is said with reference to the rebirth of one who attains the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. The meaning is that he takes rebirth in the best, the highest, plane of existence.
- 1020 *Nissāya nissāya oghassa nittharaṇā*. MA: The Buddha has explained the crossing of the flood for a bhikkhu who uses as the baṣis (for reaching arahantship) any of the attainments from the third jhāna up to the fourth immaterial attainment.
- 1021 MA: Ānanda's question is intended to elicit from the Buddha an account of the practice of the dry-insight meditator (*sukkhavipassaka*), who attains arahantship without depending on a jhānic attainment.
- 1022 *Esa sakkāyo yāvataṃ sakkāyo*. MA: This is the personality in its entirety – the round of the three realms of existence; there is no personality outside of this.
- 1023 MA says that the arahantship of the dry-insight meditator is intended. MT adds that arahantship is called "the Deathless" because it has the flavour of the Deathless, being attained on the basis of Nibbāna the Deathless.

SUTTA 107

- 1024 MA: It is not possible to construct a seven-storied mansion in a single day. Once the site is cleared, from the time the foundation is laid until the paint job is finished there is gradual progress.
- 1025 *Gaṇaka*. His name means "Moggallāna the Accountant."
- 1026 See MN 65.33.
- 1027 While the preceding steps of practice are necessary measures for bhikkhus in training to attain arahantship, they are also beneficial to arahants in that they conduce to "a pleasant abiding here and now." MA identifies this "abiding" with the attainment of the fruit of arahantship, and explains that some arahants can enter fruition easily at any time while others must apply themselves diligently to the steps of practice to enter fruition.
- 1028 *Maggakkhāyī Tathāgato*. Compare Dh 276: "You yourselves must strive; the Tathāgatas only point the way."
- 1029 The following as at MN 5.32.
- 1030 *Paramajjadharmesu*. MA: The doctrine of Gotama is supreme, the highest, among contemporary teachings – the teachings of the six outside teachers.

SUTTA 108

- 1031 MA says that after the Buddha's relics had been distributed, Ven. Ānanda had come to Rājagaha for the recitation of the Dhamma (at the first Great Council).
- 1032 King Pajjota was a friend of King Bimbisāra of Magadha, who had been killed by his son Ajātasattu. According to MA, Ajātasattu thought King Pajjota might seek to avenge his friend's murder.
- 1033 See DN 16.1.2–5/iii.72–76.
- 1034 The import of this statement is that the Sangha is not governed by the personal judgements of its members but by the Dhamma and disciplinary code laid down for it by the Buddha. In this the bhikkhus follow the Buddha's final injunction: "What I have taught and explained to you as Dhamma and Discipline will, at my passing, be your teacher" (DN 16.6.1/ii.154).

1035 See n.525.

SUTTA 109

- 1036 The fifteenth day of the fortnight. See n.59 and n.809.
- 1037 MA explains that this bhikkhu was himself an arahant and the teacher of sixty other bhikkhus who lived with him in the forest, striving in meditation. With their teacher's guidance they had developed various insight knowledges but could not attain the paths and fruits. Therefore their teacher brought them to see the Buddha in the hope that he could guide them to the supramundane attainments. The teacher asks the questions, not because he has doubts, but in order to dispel the doubts of his disciples.
- 1038 *Chandamūlakā*. MA glosses *chanda* by *taṇhā*, craving, which is the origin of the suffering comprised by the five aggregates.
- 1039 As at MN 44.6.
- 1040 In the material form aggregate each of the four great elements is a condition for the other three and for derived material form. Contact is a condition for each of the three middle aggregates, as it is said: "Contacted one feels, bhikkhus; contacted one perceives; contacted one wills" (SN 35:93/iv.68). MA explains that at the moment of conception, the material phenomena and the three mental aggregates that arise are the mentality-materiality that is a condition for the rebirth consciousness. During the course of life the physical sense faculties and the sense objects together with the three mental aggregates are the mentality-materiality that is a condition for sense consciousness.
- 1041 As at MN 44.7-8.
- 1042 It seems that this bhikkhu had difficulty in understanding how kamma can produce results without a self to receive them.
- 1043 The readings of this sentence are highly divergent in different editions. The same sutta appears at SN 22:82/iii.104, and the reading there (*paṭipucchā vinītā*) seems preferable to the reading here (in the PTS ed., *paṭicca vinītā*; in the BBS ed., *paṭivinitā*). The translation here fol-

lows the Saṃyutta text. Ñm's translation, based on the PTS Majjhima text, reads: "Now, bhikkhus, you have been trained by me in dependent [conditionality] in various instances." Neither version is idiomatic Pali, and the commentaries to both Nikāyas are silent.

- 1044 MA: The sixty bhikkhus discarded their original meditation subjects and investigated a new subject (based on the Buddha's discourse, MĪ). Without breaking their posture, right in their seats they attained arahantship.

SUTTA 110

- 1045 *Asappurisa*. MA glosses by *pāpapurisa*, an evil man.

SUTTA 111

- 1046 *Anupadadhammavipassanā*. MA explains that he developed insight into states in successive order by way of the meditative attainments and the jhāna factors, as will be described. The two-week period referred to fell from the time of Ven. Sāriputta's ordination under the Buddha to his attainment of arahantship while listening to the Buddha explain the comprehension of feeling to Dīghanakha (see MN 74.14).
- 1047 The first five states in the list are the jhāna factors proper of the first jhāna; the following states are additional components each performing their individual functions within the jhāna. This minute analysis of mental states into their components anticipates the methodology of the Abhidhamma, and it is thus no coincidence that the name of Sāriputta is so closely linked with the emergence of the Abhidhamma literature.
- 1048 All these terms signify the temporary suppression of the defilements by the power of the jhāna, not the full liberation from defilements through their eradication by the highest path, which Ven. Sāriputta had yet to attain.
- 1049 The "escape beyond" (*uttarim nissaraṇam*) here is the next higher attainment, the second jhāna.
- 1050 Reading with the BBS ed. *passaddhattā cetaso anābhogo*. MA explains that the mental concern with pleasure,

which persists in the third jhāna, is now considered to be gross, and when it subsides there is "mental unconcern due to tranquillity." The PTS ed. reading, *passi vedanā*, is unintelligible and clearly an error.

- 1051 This indirect introspective method must be used to contemplate the fourth immaterial attainment because this attainment, being extremely subtle, does not enter into the direct range of investigation for disciples. Only fully enlightened Buddhas are able to contemplate it directly.
- 1052 MA offers this explanation of the passage, transmitted by "the elders of India": "The Elder Sāriputta cultivated serenity and insight in paired conjunction and realised the fruit of non-returning. Then he entered the attainment of cessation, and after emerging from it he attained arahantship."
- 1053 Since there are no mental factors in the attainment of cessation, MA says that "these states" here must refer either to the states of material form that were occurring while he attained cessation, or to the mental factors of the preceding fourth immaterial attainment.
- 1054 Note the realisation that there is "no escape beyond" the attainment of arahantship.
- 1055 *Vasippatto pāramipatto*. See n.763.

SUTTA 112

- 1056 See n.17.
- 1057 As at MN 111.4, but here these terms are intended to express the complete eradication of defilements by the path of arahantship.
- 1058 MA: All these terms signify craving and views.
- 1059 MA: The first phrase negates the consideration of the earth element as self, the second negates the consideration of the material and mental factors other than the earth element as self. The same method applies to the other elements.
- 1060 The text appears redundant in mentioning both forms (*rūpā*) and things cognizable (by the mind) through eye-consciousness (*cakkhuviññāṇa-viññātabbā dhammā*). MA mentions two opinions proposed to resolve this problem.

One holds that “forms” refers to visible things that actually enter into cognition, “things cognizable...” to visible things that cease without being cognized. The second holds that the former term signifies all form without distinction, the latter term the three mental aggregates that function in association with eye-consciousness.

- 1061 MA explains “I-making” (*ahankāra*) as conceit and “mine-making” (*mamankāra*) as craving. “All external signs” (*nimitta*) are external objects.
- 1062 MA: The recollection of past lives and the knowledge of the passing away and reappearance of beings (usually included in this type of exposition) are here omitted because the original question at §11 concerned the attainment of arahantship, not mundane attainments.
- 1063 MA says that this sutta is also called the *Ekavissajjita Sutta* (The Single Answer Discourse). MA finds it difficult to account for the “sixfold” mentioned in the original title, since only five questions and answers have come down in the discourse. It suggests dividing the last item into two – one’s own body with its consciousness and the conscious bodies of others – and also mentions another opinion that the four nutriments should be brought in as the sixth. Neither of these suggestions, however, appears cogent, and it seems likely that a section has been lost.

SUTTA 113

- 1064 *Sappurisadhamma; asappurisadhamma.*
- 1065 These are nine of the thirteen ascetic practices discussed in Vsm II.
- 1066 MA explains “non-identification” (*atammayatā*, lit. “not consisting of that”) as the absence of craving. However, the context suggests that the absence of conceit may be the meaning. The statement “for in whatever way they conceive, the fact is ever other than that” (*yena yena hi maññanti tato taṃ hoti aññathā*) is a philosophical riddle appearing also at Sn 588, Sn 757, and Ud 3:10. Though MA is silent, the Udāna commentary explains it to mean that in whatever way worldly people conceive any of the five aggregates – as self or self’s belonging, etc. – the thing

conceived turns out to be other than the aspect ascribed to it: it is not self or self's belonging, not "I" or "mine."

- 1067 It should be noted that there is no passage on the untrue man entering the cessation of perception and feeling. Unlike the jhānas and immaterial attainments, which can be attained by worldlings, cessation is the domain exclusively of non-returners and arahants.
- 1068 *Na kiñci maññati, na kuhiñci maññati, na kenaci maññati.* This is a brief statement of the same situation described in full at MN 1.51–146. On "conceiving" see n.6

SUTTA 114

- 1069 This first paragraph offers merely a "table of contents," to be elaborated in the body of the sutta.
- 1070 *Aññamaññam.* MA: The two are mutually exclusive, and there is no way by which the one can be regarded as the other.
- 1071 Although wrong view and right view are usually included under mental conduct, in this sutta they are shown separately in §10 as "the acquisition of view."
- 1072 Whereas the covetousness and ill will described in §7 possess the strength of a full course of action (*kamma-patha*), in this section on inclination of mind (*cittuppāda*) they are shown in their nascent stage as mere dispositions that have not yet erupted into obsessive volitions.
- 1073 "Acquisition of individuality" (*attabhāvaapaṭilābha*) here refers to mode of rebirth.
- 1074 *Apariniṭṭhitabhāva.* The translation of this unusual expression follows the gloss by MA.
- 1075 MA points out that the clause "Forms are either the one or the other" is not used here because the distinction does not lie in the object but in the approach to it. For one person lust and other defilements arise towards a particular form, but another person develops dispassion and detachment in regard to the same form.
- 1076 MA says that those who study the text and commentary to this sutta without practising in accordance with it cannot be said to "understand the detailed meaning." Only those who practise accordingly can be so described.

SUTTA 115

- 1077 The eighteen elements are defined at Vbh §§183–84/87–90 and are explained in detail at Vsm XV, 17–43. Briefly, the mind element (*manodhātu*), according to the Abhidhamma, includes the consciousness that adverts to the five sense objects impinging on the five sense faculties (*pañcadvārāvajjana-citta*) and the consciousness that receives the object after it has been cognized through the senses (*sampaṭicchana-citta*). The mind-consciousness element (*manoviññāṇadhātu*) includes all types of consciousness except the five sense consciousnesses and the mind-element. The mind-object element (*dhammadhātu*) includes the types of subtle material phenomena not involved in sense cognition, the three mental aggregates of feeling, perception, and formations, and Nibbāna. It does not include concepts, abstract ideas, judgements, etc. Though these latter are included in the notion of mind-object (*dhammārammaṇa*), the mind-object element includes only things that exist by their own nature, not things constructed by the mind.
- 1078 These are defined at Vbh §180/85–86. The pleasure and pain elements are bodily pleasant and painful feeling; the joy and grief elements are mental pleasant and painful feeling; the equanimity element is neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling. MA says that ignorance is brought in because of its apparent similarity to the equanimity element.
- 1079 Vbh §183/86–87 defines these as the six corresponding types of applied thought (*vitakka*); see MN 19.2.
- 1080 MA explains the sense-sphere element as the five aggregates pertaining to the sense-sphere (*kāmāvacara*), the fine-material element as the five aggregates pertaining to the fine-material sphere (*rūpāvacara*), and the immaterial element as the four aggregates pertaining to the immaterial sphere (*arūpāvacara*).
- 1081 MA: the conditioned element includes everything produced by conditions and is a designation for the five aggregates. The unconditioned element is Nibbāna.
- 1082 The twelve bases are defined at Vbh §§155–167/70–73 and explained at Vsm XV, 1–16. The mind base includes

- all types of consciousness, and thus comprises all seven elements that exercise the function of consciousness. The mind-object base is identical with the mind-object element.
- 1083 On the terms in the formula of dependent origination, see Introduction, pp. 30–31.
- 1084 MA: A person possessing right view (*ditṭhisampanno*) is one possessing the view of the path, a noble disciple at the minimal level of a stream-enterer. "Formation" here is to be understood as a conditioned formation (*sankhata-sankhāra*), i.e., anything conditioned.
- 1085 MA points out that a noble disciple below the level of arahantship can still apprehend formations as pleasurable with a mind dissociated from wrong view, but he cannot adopt the view that any formation is pleasurable. Although perceptions and thoughts of formations as pleasurable arise in him, he knows reflectively that such notions are mistaken.
- 1086 In the passage on self, *sankhāra*, "formation," is replaced by *dhamma*, "thing." MA explains that this substitution is made to include concepts, such as a kasiṇa sign, etc., which the ordinary person is also prone to identify as self. However, in view of the fact that Nibbāna is described as imperishable (*accuta*) and as bliss (*sukha*), and is also liable to be misconceived as self (see MN 1.26), the word *sankhāra* may be taken to include only the conditioned, while *dhamma* includes both the conditioned and the unconditioned. This interpretation, however, is not endorsed by the commentaries of Ācariya Buddhaghosa.
- 1087 This section distinguishes the ordinary person and noble disciple in terms of the five heinous crimes. MA points out that a noble disciple is in fact incapable of intentionally depriving any living being of life, but the contrast is made here by way of matricide and patricide to stress the dangerous side of the ordinary person's condition and the strength of the noble disciple.
- 1088 That is, could acknowledge anyone other than the Buddha as the supreme spiritual teacher.
- 1089 MA: The arising of another Buddha is impossible from the time a bodhisatta takes his final conception in his

- mother's womb until his Dispensation has completely disappeared. The problem is discussed at Miln 236-39.
- 1090 This statement asserts only that a Fully Enlightened Buddha always has the male sex, but does not deny that a person who is now a woman may become a Fully Enlightened Buddha in the future. To do so, however, at an earlier point she will have had to be reborn as a man.
- 1091 In this passage the phrase "on that account, for that reason" (*tannidānā tappaccayā*) is of prime importance. As the Buddha will show in MN 136, a person who engages in evil conduct may be reborn in a heavenly world and a person who engages in good conduct may be reborn in a lower world. But in those cases the rebirth will be caused by some kamma different from the kamma in which the person habitually engages. Strict lawfulness applies only to the relation between kamma and its result.
- 1092 The "four cycles" are the elements, the bases, dependent origination, and the possible and the impossible.

SUTTA 116

- 1093 In Sri Lanka this sutta is regularly recited as a protective discourse and is included in the medieval compilation, *Mahā Pirit Pota*, "The Great Book of Protection."
- 1094 This and the following are mountains surrounding Rājagaha.
- 1095 A paccekabuddha is one who attains enlightenment and liberation on his own, without relying on the Dhamma taught by the Buddha, but is not capable of teaching the Dhamma to others and establishing the Dispensation. Paccekabuddhas arise only at a time when no Dispensation of a Buddha exists in the world. For a fuller study of the subject see Ria Kloppenborg, *The Paccekabuddha: A Buddhist Ascetic*.
- 1096 *Ayam pabbato ime iṣṭ gilati*: a word play is involved here.
- 1097 Tagarasikhin is referred to at Ud 5:4/50 and SN 3:20/i.92.
- 1098 Ñm remarks in Ms that without the aid of the commentary it is extremely difficult to distinguish the proper names of the paccekabuddhas from their descriptive epithets.

SUTTA 117

- 1099 *Ariyam sammā samādhiṃ sa-upanisaṃ saparikkhāraṃ*. MA explains "noble" here as supramundane, and says that this is the concentration pertaining to the supramundane path. Its "supports and requisites," as will be shown, are the other seven path factors.
- 1100 *Pubbangamā*, lit. "the forerunner." MA says that two kinds of right view are forerunners: the right view of insight, which investigates formations as impermanent, suffering, and non-self; and the right view of the path, which arises as a consequence of insight and effects the radical destruction of defilements. The right view of insight as the forerunner seems to be shown in §§4, 10, 16, 22 and 28; the right view of the path as forerunner in §§34 and 35.
- 1101 This statement suggests that in order to acquire right view about the nature of reality, one must first be able to distinguish between wrong and right teachings on the nature of reality. MA says that this is the right view of insight which understands wrong view as an object by penetrating its characteristics of impermanence, etc., and which understands right view by exercising the function of comprehension and by clearing away confusion.
- 1102 This is mundane right view, a meritorious factor that conduces to a favourable rebirth but cannot by itself issue in a transcendence of conditioned existence.
- 1103 This definition defines supramundane right view as the wisdom (*paññā*) found among the requisites of enlightenment as a faculty, power, enlightenment factor, and path factor. The definition is formulated by way of the cognitive function rather than the objective content of the view. Elsewhere (MN 141.24) the right view of the path is defined as knowledge of the Four Noble Truths. We may understand that the conceptual comprehension of the four truths falls under mundane right view, while the direct penetration of the truths by realising Nibbāna with the path constitutes supramundane right view.
- 1104 MA: They accompany right view as its co-existents and precursors. Right effort and right mindfulness are

- co-existent with supramundane right view; the right view of insight is the precursor of supramundane right view.
- 1105 MA explains this as the right view of insight which understands right intention by way of its function and by clearing away confusion. It seems, though, that a more elementary discrimination of the two kinds of intention is the issue.
- 1106 This is the standard definition of right intention as a factor of the Noble Eightfold Path; see MN 141.25.
- 1107 In this definition, the factor of intention (*sankappa*) is identified with applied thought (*vitakka*), which is further specified as the factor responsible for absorption by fixing and directing the mind upon its object. For applied thought as "verbal formation," see MN 44.15.
- 1108 MA: This statement refers exclusively to the co-existent factors accompanying supramundane right intention. In the preliminary phase of the practice, the three mundane right intentions arise separately, but at the moment of the supramundane path, a single right intention arises cutting off the threefold wrong intention. Thus the supramundane right intention may also be described as the intention of renunciation, non-ill will, and non-cruelty. The same method applies to right speech, etc.
- 1109 Whereas mundane right speech is exercised in four different modes according to the type of wrong speech from which there is abstinence, on the occasion of the supramundane path, the single factor of right speech exercises the fourfold function of cutting off the tendencies towards the four kinds of wrong speech. The same principle applies to right action.
- 1110 These are wrong means for bhikkhus to acquire their requisites; they are explained at Vsm I, 61–65. MA says that those mentioned in the sutta are not the only kinds of wrong livelihood, which include any mode of earning one's living that involves transgression of the precepts. At AN 5:177/iii.208, the Buddha mentions five kinds of wrong livelihood for lay people: dealing in arms, beings, meat, intoxicants, and poisons.
- 1111 MA explains that for one having the right view of the path, the right intention of the path comes into being;

similarly, for one having the right view of the fruit, the right intention of the fruit comes into being. Similarly, the following factors except the last two also refer to the supramundane path.

- 1112 The additional two factors possessed by the arahant are right knowledge, which can be identified with his reviewing knowledge that he has destroyed all the defilements, and right deliverance, which can be identified with his experience of liberation from all defilements.
- 1113 The twenty factors on the wholesome side are the ten right factors and the wholesome states that originate from each; the twenty factors on the unwholesome side are the ten wrong factors and the unwholesome states that originate from each. Hence the name "The Great Forty."
- 1114 MA says only that these two were individuals who lived in the country of Okkala. Otherwise their identity is unknown.

SUTTA 118

- 1115 The Pavāraṇā is the ceremony that concludes the rains residence, at which the bhikkhus invite each other to admonish them for their transgressions.
- 1116 Komudī is the full-moon day of the month of Kattika, the fourth month of the rainy season; it is called by this name because the white water-lily (*kumuda*) is said to bloom at that time.
- 1117 Explanatory notes for the first tetrad will be found at nn.140–142. MN 10.4 differs from this passage only by the addition of the simile. Since Ācariya Buddhaghosa has commented on the four tetrads on mindfulness of breathing in the *Visuddhimagga*, in MA he merely refers the reader to the latter work for explanation. Notes 1118–21 are drawn from Vsm VIII, 226–37, also included by Ñm in his *Mindfulness of Breathing*.
- 1118 One experiences rapture in two ways: by attaining one of the lower two jhānas in which rapture is present, one experiences rapture in the mode of serenity; by emerging from that jhāna and contemplating that rapture as subject to destruction, one experiences rapture in the mode of insight.

- 1119 The same method of explanation as in n.1118 applies to the second and third clauses, except that the second comprises the three lower jhānas and the third all four jhānas. The mental formation is perception and feeling (see MN 44.14), which is tranquillised by the development of successively higher levels of serenity and insight.
- 1120 "Experiencing the mind" is to be understood by way of the four jhānas. "Gladdening the mind" is explained either as the attainment of the two jhānas containing rapture or as the penetration of those jhānas with insight as subject to destruction, etc. "Concentrating the mind" refers either to the concentration pertaining to the jhāna or to the momentary concentration that arises along with insight. "Liberating the mind" means liberating it from hindrances and grosser jhānic factors by successively higher levels of concentration, and from the cognitive distortions by way of insight knowledge.
- 1121 This tetrad deals entirely with insight, unlike the previous three, which deal with both serenity and insight. "Contemplating fading away" and "contemplating cessation" can be understood both as the insight into the impermanence of formations and as the supramundane path realising Nibbāna, called the fading away of lust (i.e., dispassion, *virāga*) and the cessation of suffering. "Contemplating relinquishment" is the giving up of defilements through insight and the entering into Nibbāna by attainment of the path.
- 1122 MA: In-and-out breathing is to be counted as the air element among the four elements making up the body. It should also be included in the base of tangibles among bodily phenomena (since the object of attention is the touch sensation of the breath entering and leaving the nostrils).
- 1123 MA explains that close attention (*sādhuka manasikāra*) is not itself actually feeling, but is spoken of as such only figuratively. In the second tetrad the actual feeling is the pleasure mentioned in the second clause and also the feeling comprised by the expression "mental formation" in the third and fourth clauses.
- 1124 MA: Although the meditating bhikkhu takes as his object the sign of in-and-out breathing, he is said to be

"contemplating mind as mind" because he maintains his mind on the object by arousing mindfulness and full awareness, two factors of mind.

- 1125 MA: Covetousness and grief signify the first two hindrances, sensual desire and ill will, and thus represent the contemplation of mind-objects, which begins with the five hindrances. The bhikkhu sees the abandoning of the hindrances effected by the contemplations of impermanence, fading away, cessation, and relinquishment, and thus comes to look upon the object with equanimity.
- 1126 MA says that the above passage shows the enlightenment factors existing together in each mind-moment in the practice of insight meditation.
- 1127 See n.48.
- 1128 MA: The mindfulness that comprehends breathing is mundane; the mundane mindfulness of breathing perfects the mundane foundations of mindfulness; the mundane foundations of mindfulness perfect the supramundane enlightenment factors; and the supramundane enlightenment factors perfect (or fulfil) true knowledge and deliverance, i.e., the fruit and Nibbāna.

SUTTA 119

- 1129 §§4–17 of this sutta is identical with MN 10.4–30, except that here the refrain on insight has been replaced by the refrain that begins "As he abides thus diligent." This change indicates a shift in emphasis from insight in MN 10 to concentration in the present sutta. This shift reappears in the passage on the jhānas at §§18–21 and the passage on the direct knowledges at §§37–41, both of which distinguish this sutta from MN 10.
- 1130 The similes for the jhānas are also found at MN 39.15–18 and MN 77.25–28.
- 1131 *Vijjābhāgiyā dhammā*. MA explains these states as the eight types of knowledge expounded at MN 77.29–36.

SUTTA 120

- 1132 Although I have attempted to render *sankhārā* consistently throughout as "formations," here it seemed that the content required a different rendering to bring the intended meaning to light. Nm had used "determinations," his own consistent choice for *sankhārā*. MA initially explains *sankhārupapatti* as meaning either reappearance (i.e., rebirth) of mere formations, not of a being or person, or reappearance of the aggregates in a new existence through a meritorious kamma-formation. However, in subsequent passages, MA glosses *sankhārā* with *patthanā*, a word unambiguously meaning aspiration.
- 1133 MA: "The way" is the five qualities beginning with faith, together with the aspiration. One who has either the five qualities without the aspiration, or the aspiration without the qualities, does not have a fixed destination. The destination can only be fixed when both factors are present.
- 1134 MA explains that there are five kinds of pervasion: pervasion of mind, i.e., knowing the thoughts of the beings throughout a thousand worlds; pervasion of the kasiṇa, i.e., extending the kasiṇa image to a thousand worlds; pervasion of the divine eye, i.e., seeing a thousand worlds with the divine eye; pervasion of light, which is the same as the previous pervasion; and pervasion of body, i.e., extending one's bodily aura to a thousand worlds.
- 1135 See n.426.
- 1136 MA: The five qualities mentioned are sufficient for rebirth into the sense-sphere realm, but for the higher modes of rebirth and the destruction of the taints, more is required. Basing oneself on the five qualities, if one attains the jhānas, one is reborn in the Brahma-world; if one attains the immaterial attainments, one is reborn in the immaterial world; if one develops insight and attains the fruit of non-returning, one is reborn in the Pure Abodes; and if one reaches the path of arahantship, one attains the destruction of the taints.

SUTTA 121

- 1137 *Suññatāvihāra*. The discourse will gradually make it clear that this refers to the fruition attainment of voidness (*suññataphala-samāpatti*), the fruition attainment of arahantship that is entered by focusing upon the void aspect of Nibbāna. See n.458.
- 1138 MA: He attends to the perception of forest dependent on the single forest itself, thinking: "This is a forest, this is a tree, this is a mountain, this a grove."
- 1139 MA and MṬ explain the sense of this passage thus: The disturbance of defilements – attraction and repulsion – that arise through perception of people are not present here. But there is still the disturbance caused by the occurrence of gross states due to lack of the necessary tranquillity.
- 1140 MA: He abandons the perception of forest and attends to the perception of earth because one cannot achieve any distinction in meditation through the perception of forest, neither access concentration nor full absorption. But earth can be used as the preliminary object for *kaṣiṇa*, on the basis of which one produces *jhāna*, develops insight, and attains arahantship.
- 1141 Having used the perception of earth to attain the four *jhānas*, he extends the earth-*kaṣiṇa* and then removes the *kaṣiṇa* sign to attain the base of infinite space. See Vsm X, 6–7.
- 1142 *Animitta cetosamādhi*. MA: This is the concentration of the mind in insight; it is called "signless" because it is devoid of the signs of permanence, etc.
- 1143 See MN 52.4. MA calls this "counter-insight" (*paṭvivipassanā*), i.e., the application of the principles of insight to the act of consciousness that exercises the function of insight. On the basis of this he attains arahantship.
- 1144 Here the words "supreme and unsurpassed" (*paramānuttarā*) have been added. MA says that this is the arahant's fruition attainment of voidness.

SUTTA 122

- 1145 This sutta together with its full commentary has been published in translation by Ñm as *The Greater Discourse on Voidness*.
- 1146 MA: This was a dwelling built in Nigrodha's Park by Kālakhemaka the Sakyan. Beds, chairs, mattresses, and mats were prepared, and they were so close together that the dwelling looked like the residence of a society of bhikkhus.
- 1147 MA explains that this was merely a rhetorical question, since the Buddhas can know by direct knowledge whatever they wish to know. The Buddha asked this with the thought in mind: "As soon as these bhikkhus form into a society and delight in society, they will act in improper ways. I shall expound the Great Practice of Voidness which will be like a training rule [prohibiting delight in society]."
- 1148 MA: Ven. Ānanda intended to say: "These bhikkhus are living this way not just because they delight in being busy, but on account of making robes."
- 1149 See MN 66.20 and n.678.
- 1150 The former is deliverance through the jhānas and the immaterial attainments, the latter deliverance through the supramundane paths and fruits. See also MN 29.6 and n.348.
- 1151 MA: The Buddha begins the present passage in order to ward off the criticism that while he enjoins his disciples to live in solitude, he himself is often surrounded by a large retinue. "Voidness" here is the fruition attainment of voidness; see n.1137.
- 1152 MA explains voidness internally as that connected with one's own five aggregates, voidness externally as that connected with the aggregates of others. The voidness spoken of here thus must be the temporary deliverance of mind reached through the insight contemplation of non-self, as explained at MN 43.33. When the insight into non-self is brought to the level of the path, it issues in the fruition experiencing Nibbāna by way of its aspect of voidness.
- 1153 MA: He gives attention to an imperturbable immaterial meditative attainment.

- 1154 MA: This refers to the jhāna that was used as the basis for insight. If, after emerging from the basic jhāna, his mind does not enter into voidness through insight contemplation on his own aggregates or those of others, and he also cannot attain the imperturbable immaterial attainment, he should return to the same basic jhāna that he originally developed and attend to it again and again.
- 1155 According to MA, up to this point the Buddha has shown the training for the attainment of the first two paths, those of stream-entry and once-returning. He now speaks the present passage (§§14–15) to point out the insight needed to attain the path of non-returning, which culminates in the abandoning of sensual desire.
- 1156 This passage (§§16–17) points out the insight needed to attain the path of arahantship, which culminates in the abandoning of the conceit “I am.”
- 1157 *Ācariyūpaddava, antevāsūpaddava, brahmacariyūpaddava. Upaddava* may also be rendered as disaster, calamity. MA explains that the Buddha speaks the present passage to show the danger in solitude when one does not fulfil the proper purpose of solitary living. The “teacher” is a teacher outside the Buddha’s Dispensation.
- 1158 MA: The going forth into homelessness outside the Dispensation brings small gain, so one who falls away from that falls away only from mundane attainment; he meets with no great suffering, as one who falls from the back of a donkey merely becomes covered with dust. But the going forth in the Buddha’s Dispensation brings great gain – the paths, fruits, and Nibbāna. Thus one who falls away from this meets great suffering, like one who falls from the back of an elephant.
- 1159 The contrast in this simile is between the way the potter treats the raw damp clay and the way he treats the baked pots produced from the clay. MA paraphrases: “After advising once I shall not be silent; I shall advise and instruct by repeatedly admonishing you. Just as the potter tests the baked pots, puts aside those that are cracked, split, or faulty, and keeps only those that pass the test, so I shall advise and instruct by repeatedly testing you. Those among you who are sound, having reached the

paths and fruits, will stand the test." MA adds that the mundane virtuous qualities are also intended as a criterion of soundness.

SUTTA 123

- 1160 This ability is exemplified by DN 14, which provides detailed information about the six Buddhas preceding Gotama.
- 1161 This refers to the Bodhisatta's rebirth in the Tusita heaven, which followed his preceding human existence as Vessantara and preceded his birth in the human world as Siddhattha Gotama.
- 1162 MA: Between every three world systems there is an interspace measuring 8,000 yojanas; it is like the space between three cartwheels or almsbowls touching one another. The beings who live there have taken rebirth there because of committing some heavy, terrible offence against their parents or righteous recluses and brahmins, or because of some habitual evil deed like killing animals, etc.
- 1163 MA: The four deities were the Four Great Kings (the presiding deities of the heaven of the Four Great Kings).
- 1164 MA: This happened, not through a defect in the birth, but through the expiration of her lifespan; for the place (in the womb) occupied by the Bodhisatta, like the inner chamber of a cetiya, is not to be used by others.
- 1165 MA explains each aspect of this event as a foretoken of the Buddha's later attainments. Thus, his standing with his feet (*pāda*) firmly on the ground was a foretoken of his attaining the four bases for spiritual power (*iddhipāda*); his facing the north, of his going above and beyond the multitude; his seven steps, of his acquiring the seven enlightenment factors; the white parasol, of his acquiring the parasol of deliverance; his surveying the quarters, of his acquiring the unobstructed knowledge of omniscience; his uttering the words of the Leader of the Herd, of his setting in motion the irreversible Wheel of the Dhamma; his statement "This is my last birth," of his passing away into the Nibbāna element with no residue remaining (of the factors of existence).

- 1166 This statement seems to be the Buddha's way of calling attention to the quality he regarded as the true wonder and marvel.

SUTTA 124

- 1167 According to MA, Ven. Bakkula became a monk in his eightieth year, which would make him 160 at the time this sutta takes place. He was declared by the Buddha to be the foremost disciple with respect to good health.
- 1168 MA says that the passages here enclosed in brackets were added by the elders who compiled the Dhamma.
- 1169 This passage and those to follow show Ven. Bakkula as an observer of the ascetic practices. The *kaṭhina* time is the period following the three-month rains residence when bhikkhus make new robes from the cloth they have received.
- 1170 MA says that after he went forth, he was an ordinary man for seven days, but on the eighth day he attained arahantship together with the analytical knowledges (*paṭisambhidā*).
- 1171 MA: Ven. Bakkula himself did not give the ordination (which would have been a violation of his mode of practice) but arranged for other bhikkhus to give it.
- 1172 MA: Ven. Bakkula had considered that all his life he had never made himself a burden to the other bhikkhus, and he did not want his body to be a burden after his death. Thus he entered into meditation on the heat element and attained final Nibbāna by causing his entire body to be consumed by the blaze. Only the relics remained.
- 1173 MA says that this sutta was recited at the second compilation of the Dhamma, held about a hundred years after the Buddha's passing away.

SUTTA 125

- 1174 MA identifies Prince Jayasena as a son of King Bimbisāra.
- 1175 The simile as at MN 90.11.
- 1176 Note that here the four foundations of mindfulness are expounded in the place usually reserved for the four jhānas.

- 1177 Since the exposition begins here directly with the second jhāna, this suggests that the earlier passage on the development of the foundations of mindfulness must have implicitly covered the first jhāna.

SUTTA 126

- 1178 MA says that Ven. Bhūmija was the uncle of Prince Jayasena.
- 1179 *Āsaṃ karitvā*: if one makes a wish, if one raises a hope or expectation. The recluses and brahmins who held this view must have been the sceptics or the annihilationists.

SUTTA 127

- 1180 *Appamāṇā cetovimutti, mahaggatā cetovimutti*. At MN 43.31, as here, the immeasurable deliverance of mind is explained as the four *brahmavihāras*. Since the formula for each *brahmavihāra* includes the word “exalted,” Pañcakaṅga was apparently misled into supposing that the two deliverances were the same in meaning.
- 1181 MA: He covers an area the size of one tree root with his kasīṇa sign, and he abides resolved upon that kasīṇa sign, pervading it with the exalted jhāna. The same method of explanation applies to the following cases.
- 1182 MA: This teaching is undertaken to show the kinds of rebirth that result from the attainment of the exalted deliverance.
- 1183 MA explains that there are no separate realms of gods called those of “Defiled Radiance” and those of “Pure Radiance.” Both are subdivisions within the two realms – the gods of Limited Radiance and the gods of Immeasurable Radiance. Rebirth among the gods of Limited Radiance is determined by the attainment of the (second) jhāna with a limited kasīṇa sign, rebirth among the gods of Immeasurable Radiance by the attainment of the same jhāna with an extended kasīṇa sign. Rebirth with defiled radiance is for those who have not mastered the jhāna and purified it of obstructive states; rebirth with pure radiance is for those who have acquired this mastery and purification.

- 1184 A pun is involved here. In Pali the verb *jhāyati* means both to burn and to meditate, though the two meanings are derived from different Sanskrit verbs: *kshāyati* is to burn, *dhyāyati* to meditate.
- 1185 Abhiya's words are discourteous because they inquire very directly into the personal experience of Ven. Anuruddha. MA says that while fulfilling the perfections (*pāramīs*) in past lives, Anuruddha had gone forth as a recluse, reached the meditative attainments, and passed three hundred existences without interruption in the Brahma-world. Hence his reply.

SUTTA 128

- 1186 The opening of this sutta is the same as that of MN 48.
- 1187 This verse and the next two appear at Dh 3, 5–6. The last three verses appear at Dh 328–30.
- 1188 The passage at §§8–15 is nearly identical with MN 31.3–10. From the sequel, however, it is clear that the present sutta is set at an earlier time, for in MN 31 all three bhikkhus have reached arahantship while here they are still striving for the goal.
- 1189 It is here that the present sutta continues differently from MN 31. MA explains light (*obhāsa*) as the preliminary light, which Mṭ glosses as the light-produced by the access to jhāna. Mṭ adds that one who gains the fourth jhāna develops the light-kasiṇa as the preliminary to arousing the divine eye. The "vision of forms" (*dassanaṃ rūpānaṃ*) is the seeing of forms with the divine eye. Ven. Anuruddha was later declared by the Buddha to be the foremost disciple in the exercise of the divine eye.
- 1190 *Nimittam paṭivijjhitabbari*. Lit. "You should penetrate that sign."
- 1191 See MN 52.15.
- 1192 MA paraphrases: "While I was attending to a single type of form, longing arose. Thinking 'I will attend to different kinds of forms,' sometimes I directed my attention towards the heavenly world, sometimes towards the human world. As I attended to different kinds of forms, perception of diversity arose in me."

- 1193 *Atinijjhāyitattam rūpānam*. MA: "When perception of diversity arose, I thought I would attend to one type of form, whether agreeable or disagreeable. As I did so, excessive meditation upon forms arose in me."
- 1194 *Cittassa upakkilesa*. The same term is used at MN 7.3, though here it means not so much defilements of the mind as imperfections in the development of concentration. Hence the expression has been rendered slightly differently in the two cases.
- 1195 The "three ways" seem to be the first three types of concentration mentioned in the next paragraph, also spoken of as a triad at DN 33.1.10/iii.219. Of these, the first is the first jhāna and the third covers the three higher jhānas of the usual fourfold scheme. The second type of concentration has no place in the fourfold scheme, but appears as the second jhāna in a fivefold division of jhānas expounded in the Abhidhamma Piṭaka. This second jhāna of the fivefold scheme is attained by those who cannot overcome applied thought and sustained thought simultaneously but must eliminate them successively.
- 1196 MA: The concentration with rapture is the two lower jhānas; without rapture, the two higher jhānas; accompanied by enjoyment (*sāta*), the three lower jhānas; accompanied by equanimity, the fourth jhāna.
- 1197 MA says that the Buddha developed these concentrations in the last watch of the night on the night of his enlightenment while sitting at the foot of the Bodhi tree.

SUTTA 129

- 1198 As at MN 13.14.
- 1199 The following simile is explained at SN 12:63/ii.100 to illustrate the nutriment of consciousness (*viññāṇāhāra*).
- 1200 And he will – at MN 130.17–27.
- 1201 MA: That is, the fool engages in the three types of misconduct, because of which he is reborn in hell. By the residue of that kamma, when he comes back to the human state he is reborn in a low family. Having again engaged in the three types of misconduct, he is again reborn in hell.

- 1202 Although the Pali does not contain the negative particle *na*, it seems to be required here to yield the intended meaning, and it does appear in the parallel clauses of the following paragraph.
- 1203 See MN 91.5. The legend of the Wheel-turning Monarch is treated more extensively in DN 17 and DN 26.
- 1204 See n.809.
- 1205 MA: That is, the wise man engages in the three types of good conduct, because of which he is reborn in heaven. Returning to the human world, he is reborn in a good family with wealth and beauty. He engages in the three types of good conduct and is again reborn in heaven. It should be noted that the "complete perfection of the wise man's grade" is entirely mundane and takes no account of the more excellent stages along the path to liberation.

SUTTA 130

- 1206 Yama is the god of death. MA says that he is a king of spirits possessing a celestial mansion. Sometimes he lives in his celestial mansion enjoying celestial pleasures, sometimes he experiences the result of kamma; he is a righteous king. MA adds that there are in fact four Yamas, one at each of four gates (of hell?).
- 1207 According to Buddhist legend, three of the divine messengers – the old man, the sick man, and the dead man – appeared to the Bodhisatta while he was living in the palace, destroying his enchantment with the worldly life and awakening in him a desire to seek the way to deliverance. See AN 3:38/i.145–46 for the psychological nucleus out of which the legend must have developed.
- 1208 The following description of hell, down to §16, is also found at MN 129.10–16.

SUTTA 131

- 1209 This discourse with a lengthy introduction and notes is available separately in a translation by Bhikkhu Ñāṇananda under the title *Ideal Solitude*.

- 1210 Ms contains the following note by Ñm on this expression, which accounts for the title of this and the following three suttas:

This term has elsewhere been translated by "true saint" and like phrases, which, however, quite miss the point. The commentary says only this: "*Bhaddekarattassa* means 'of one who is fortunate (*bhadda*) in having one (*eka*) attachment (*ratta* or *ratti*)'; this is because of his possessing application to insight." The subcommentary resolves the compound *ekaratta* (one-attachment) into *ekā ratti*, and says only that "*bhaddekaratta* means one who has a fortunate single attachment (*bhaddo ekaratto etassa*); it is a term for a person who is cultivating insight." There appears to be no other mention of this term elsewhere in the Canon and its commentaries.

The Pali word *ratta* (adj.) or *ratti* (n.) in this instance is from the root *raj*, "to take pleasure in." So the "*bhaddekaratta*" appears to be the one who is applying himself *invincibly, unshakeably, to know and to study the present state as it occurs* (see verse). This application of *attachment* is auspicious or *fortunate* because it leads to liberation... It might be supposed that the expression "*bhaddekaratta*" was a popular phrase taken over by the Buddha and given a special sense by him, as was not infrequently done, but there seems to be no reason to do so and there is no evidence for it in this case. It is more likely to be a term coined by the Buddha himself to describe a certain aspect of development.

Ven. Nāṇananda, in the introduction to his translation, offers an argument for rendering the term "the ideal lover of solitude." Horner renders it simply as "the Auspicious."

- 1211 More literally the first two lines would be translated: "Let not a person run back to the past or live in expectation of the future." The meaning will be elucidated in the expository passage of the sutta.

- 1212 MA: He should contemplate each presently arisen state, just where it has arisen, with insight into its impermanence, etc.
- 1213 *Asaṃhīraṃ asankuppaṃ*. MA explains that this is said for the purpose of showing insight and repeated insight; for insight is "invincible, unshakeable" because it is not vanquished or shaken by lust and other defilements. Elsewhere the expression "the invincible, the unshakeable" is used as a description of Nibbāna (e.g., Sn v.1149) or of the liberated mind (e.g., Thag v.649), but here it seems to refer to a stage in the development of insight. The recurrence of the verb form *saṃhīrati* in §8 and §9 suggests that the intended meaning is contemplation of the present moment without being misled into the adoption of a personality view.
- 1214 The "Peaceful Sage" (*santo muni*) is the Buddha.
- 1215 MA: One "finds delight" by bringing to bear upon the past either craving or a view associated with craving. It should be noted that it is not the mere recollection of the past through memory that causes bondage, but the reliving of past experiences with thoughts of craving. In this respect the Buddha's teaching differs significantly from that of Krishnamurti, who seems to regard memory itself as the villain behind the scene.
- 1216 Perhaps this sentence, and all the parallel sentences to follow, should be translated: "One does not find delight there thinking, 'I had such material form in the past.'" The translation as it stands suggests that such thoughts arise but without the accompaniment of delight, while the alternative proposed here suggests that these thoughts do not arise at all. The same alternative construction can also be applied to thoughts about the future in §7. The Pali can admit either rendering.
- 1217 Perhaps this phrase should be taken as an exclamation: "May I have such material form in the future!"
- 1218 The verb here and in the next paragraph, *saṃhīrati*, refers back to the line in the verse, "invincibly, unshakeably." MA glosses: "One is dragged in by craving and views because of the lack of insight."

SUTTA 133

- 1219 Down to §12, as at MN 18.10–15.
- 1220 MA: In the two previous suttas and in the one to follow the Buddha set up the outline and analysis by way of the five aggregates, but here he set it up in order for it to be analysed by way of the twelve sense bases. Understanding the Buddha's intention, Ven. Mahā Kaccāna spoke as he did, and because of his skill in grasping the method even when it was not explicitly shown, the Buddha appointed him the foremost disciple in explaining in detail a teaching stated in brief.

SUTTA 134

- 1221 According to the commentary to Thag, Ven. Lomasakangiya had been a bhikkhu in the time of the Buddha Kassapa. After the Buddha Kassapa had taught the *Bhaddekaratta Sutta*, a certain bhikkhu spoke about it to Lomasakangiya. Unable to understand it, he exclaimed: "In the future, may I be able to teach you this sutta!" The other answered: "May I ask you about it!" In the present age Lomasakangiya was born into a Sakyan family at Kapilavatthu, while the other bhikkhu became the god Candana.
- 1222 MA explains that this occurred in the seventh year after the Buddha's enlightenment, at the time when he spent the three months of the rainy season in the heaven of the Thirty-three teaching the Abhidhamma to the gods who had assembled from ten thousand world-systems.

SUTTA 135

- 1223 See MN 99. According to MA, his father, the brahmin Todeyya, was reborn as a dog in his own house because of his extreme stinginess. The Buddha identified him to Subha by getting the dog to dig up some hidden treasure Subha's father had buried before his death. This inspired Subha's confidence in the Buddha and moved him to approach and inquire about the workings of kamma.
- 1224 If the kamma of killing directly determines the mode of

rebirth, it will produce rebirth in one of the states of deprivation. But if a wholesome kamma brings about a human rebirth – and rebirth as a human being is always the result of wholesome kamma – the kamma of killing will operate in a manner contrary to that of the rebirth-generative kamma by causing various adversities that may reach their peak in a premature death. The same principle holds for the subsequent cases in which unwholesome kamma comes to maturity in a human existence: in each case the unwholesome kamma counteracts the wholesome kamma responsible for the human rebirth by engendering a specific type of misfortune corresponding to its own distinctive quality.

- 1225 In this case the wholesome kamma of abstaining from killing may be directly responsible for either the heavenly rebirth or the longevity in a human existence. The same principle applies in all the passages on the maturation of wholesome kamma.

SUTTA 136

- 1226 MA says that Potaliputta did not actually hear this personally from the Buddha, but had heard a report that these statements were made by the Buddha. The former is a distorted version of the Buddha's declaration at MN 56.5 that mental action is the most reprehensible of the three types of deeds for the performance of evil action. The latter derives from the Buddha's discussion of the cessation of perception in the *Poṭṭhapāda Sutta* (DN 9). MA glosses the word "vain" by "fruitless."
- 1227 This statement is made by the Buddha at SN 36:11/ iv.216, with reference to the suffering inherent in all formations by reason of their impermanence. Though the statement itself is true, Samiddhi seems to have misinterpreted it to mean that all feeling is felt as suffering, which is patently false.
- 1228 MA: This section is not the expounding of the Tathāgata's knowledge of the great exposition of action, but the setting up of the outline for the purpose of presenting that exposition.
- 1229 MA: This too is not the expounding of the knowledge of

the great exposition of action, but is still the setting up of the outline. The purpose here is to show what can be accepted and what should be rejected in the claims of the outside recluses and brahmins. Briefly put, the propositions they put forth reporting their direct observations can be accepted, but the generalisations they derive from those observations must be rejected.

1230 Here begins the expounding of the knowledge of the great exposition of action.

1231 MA: The person who was seen with the divine eye killing living beings, etc., is reborn in hell because of another evil deed he had done earlier than the deed of killing, etc., or because of an evil deed he did afterwards, or because of a wrong view he accepted at the time of death. Although the Pali seems to be saying that he was necessarily reborn in hell on account of some action other than the one he was seen performing, this should not be understood as an apodictic pronouncement but only as a statement of possibility. That is, while it may be true that he was reborn in hell because of the evil action he was seen performing, it is also possible that he was reborn there because of some other evil action he did earlier or later or because of wrong view.

1232 This statement shows that even if his evil kamma does not generate the mode of rebirth, it will still mature for him in some other way either in this life, in the next life, or in some more distant future life.

1233 In this case the heavenly rebirth must be due to some action other than the one he was seen performing, since an evil action cannot produce a fortunate mode of rebirth.

1234 MA: The first is illustrated by the person who kills living beings and is reborn in hell: his action is incapable (of good result) because it is unwholesome, and it appears incapable because, since he is reborn in hell, it seems to be the cause for his rebirth there. The second is illustrated by the person who kills living beings and is reborn in heaven: his action is incapable (of good result) because it is unwholesome, yet it appears capable because he is reborn in heaven; thus to the outside recluses and brahmins it seems to be the cause for his rebirth in heav-

en. The remaining two terms should be understood along the same lines, with appropriate changes.

SUTTA 137

- 1235 MA: Mental exploration (*manopavicāra*) is applied thought and sustained thought. One explores (or examines, *upavicarati*) the object by the occurrence of sustained thought (*vicāra*), and applied thought is associated with the latter.
- 1236 MA: Having seen a form with eye-consciousness, one explores a form which, as an object, is a cause of joy (grief, equanimity).
- 1237 MA: These are positions (*pada*) for beings who are intent on the round of existence and for those intent on the cessation of the round.
- 1238 MA: "Based on the household life" means connected with the cords of sensual pleasure; "based on renunciation" means connected with insight.
- 1239 MA: This is the joy that arises when one has set up insight and is sitting watching the breakup of formations with a current of sharp and bright insight knowledge focused on formations.
- 1240 MA explains "the supreme liberations" and "that base" as arahantship. See MN 44.28.
- 1241 MA: This is the equanimity of unknowing that arises in one who has not conquered the limitations imposed by the defilements or the future results (of action). It "does not transcend the form" because it is stuck, fastened to the object like flies to a ball of sugar.
- 1242 MA: This is the equanimity associated with insight knowledge. It does not become lustful towards desirable objects that come into range of the senses, nor does it become angry because of undesirable objects.
- 1243 MA says that previously worldly equanimity was discussed, but here the contrast is between the equanimity in differentiated sense experience and the equanimity of the meditative attainments.
- 1244 MA paraphrases: "By the equanimity of the immaterial attainments, abandon the equanimity of the fine-material attainments; by insight into the immaterial sphere, abandon insight into the fine-material sphere."

- 1245 MA says that non-identification (*atammayatā* – see n.1066) here refers to “insight leading to emergence,” i.e., the insight immediately preceding the arising of the supra-mundane path; for this effects the abandonment of the equanimity of the immaterial attainments and the equanimity of insight.
- 1246 *Satipaṭṭhāna* here obviously has a different meaning than usual, as the sequel will make clear. The “Noble One” is the Buddha.
- 1247 This is one of the nine epithets of the Buddha in the usual enumeration of the Buddha’s qualities.
- 1248 These “eight directions” are the eight liberations, on which see n.764.

SUTTA 138

- 1249 It is strange that the Buddha, having announced that he will teach a summary and an exposition, should recite only the summary and leave without giving the exposition. Although elsewhere the Buddha departs suddenly after making an enigmatic statement (e.g., in MN 18), on those occasions he had not previously declared his intention to give an exposition. MA offers no explanation.
- 1250 MA: Consciousness is “distracted and scattered externally,” i.e., among external objects, when it occurs by way of attachment towards an external object.
- 1251 MĪ: The form itself is called the sign of form (*rūpanimitta*) in that it is the cause for the arising of defilements. One “follows after it” by way of lust.
- 1252 MA: The mind is “stuck internally” by way of attachment to an internal object. The text of the sutta itself makes the shift from *viññāṇa* in the Buddha’s summary to *citta* in Mahā Kaccāna’s exposition.
- 1253 All known editions of the Pali text of MN 138 read here *anupādā paritassanā*, literally “agitation due to non-clinging,” which obviously contradicts what the Buddha consistently teaches: that agitation arises from clinging, and ceases with the removal of clinging. However, this reading apparently precedes the time of the commentaries, for MA accepts *anupādā* as correct and offers the following explanation: “In what sense is there agitation due

to non-clinging? Through the non-existence of anything to cling to. For if there existed any formation that were permanent, stable, a self, or the belonging of a self, it would be possible to cling to it. Then this agitation would be agitation due to clinging (something to cling to). But because there is no formation that can be clung to thus, then even though material form, etc., are clung to with the idea 'material form is self,' etc., they are not clung to (in the way they are conceived). Thus, what is here called 'agitation due to non-clinging' is in meaning agitation due to clinging by way of views." Ñm had followed this reading, and on the basis of MA's explanation, had rendered the phrase "anguish [agitation] due to not finding anything to cling to." He did not discuss the problem in his notes.

A sutta in the Saṃyutta Nikāya (SN 22:7/iii, 16) is virtually identical with this passage of MN 138, except that here it reads, as we should expect, *upādā paritassanā*, "agitation due to clinging." From the Saṃyutta text we may safely infer that the Majjhima reading is an ancient error that should be discounted. My rendering here is based on the reading of SN 22:7. Horner too follows the latter text in MLS.

- 1254 MA explains the unusual phrase *paritassanā dhammasamuppāda* as "the agitation of craving and the arising of (other) unwholesome states."
- 1255 The agitation thus results from the lack of any permanent essence in things that could provide a refuge from the suffering precipitated by their change and instability.
- 1256 This phrase is identical in both the Majjhima and Saṃyutta versions.

SUTTA 139

- 1257 This is substantially identical with the proclamation with which the newly enlightened Buddha opened his first discourse to the five bhikkhus, before teaching them the Four Noble Truths.
- 1258 This is a more complicated expression for the pursuit of sensual pleasure.
- 1259 MA: It is "beset by suffering, vexation," etc., through the

suffering and vexation, etc., of its results and the suffering and vexation, etc., of its attendant defilements.

1260 This is craving for being.

1261 That is, extolling and disparaging come about when one frames one's statements in terms of persons, some of whom are praised and others blamed. One teaches "only the Dhamma" when one frames one's statements in terms of the state (*dhamma*) – the mode of practice – without explicit references to persons.

1262 This problem of "insistence on local language" must have been particularly acute in the Sangha, when the bhikkhus lived a life of constant wandering and had to pass through many localities each with their distinct dialects.

1263 Ven. Subhūti was the younger brother of Anāthapiṇḍika and became a bhikkhu on the day Jeta's Grove was offered to the Sangha. The Buddha appointed him the foremost disciple in two categories – those who live without conflict and those who are worthy of gifts.

SUTTA 140

1264 According to MA, Pukkusāti had been the king of Takkasilā and had entered into a friendship with King Bimbisāra of Magadha through merchants who travelled between the two countries for purposes of trade. In an exchange of gifts Bimbisāra sent Pukkusāti a golden plate on which he had inscribed descriptions of the Three Jewels and various aspects of the Dhamma. When Pukkusāti read the inscription, he was filled with joy and decided to renounce the world. Without taking formal ordination, he shaved his head, put on yellow robes, and left the palace. He went to Rājagaha intending to meet the Buddha, who was then in Sāvattihī, about 300 miles away. The Buddha saw Pukkusāti with his clairvoyant knowledge, and recognising his capacity to attain the paths and fruits, he journeyed alone on foot to Rājagaha to meet him. To avoid being recognised, by an act of will the Buddha caused his special physical attributes such as the marks of a Great Man to be concealed, and he appeared just like an ordinary wandering monk. He

arrived at the potter's shed shortly after Pukkusāti had arrived there intending to leave for Sāvatthī the next day in order to meet the Buddha.

1265 Pukkusāti, unaware that the new arrival is the Buddha, addresses him by the familiar appellation "*āvuso*."

1266 MA: The Buddha asked these questions merely as a way to start a conversation, as he already knew that Pukkusāti had gone forth on account of himself.

1267 MA: Since Pukkusāti had already purified the preliminary practice of the path and was able to attain the fourth jhāna through mindfulness of breathing, the Buddha began directly with a talk on insight meditation, expounding the ultimate voidness that is the foundation for arahantship.

1268 MA: Here the Buddha expounds the non-truly existent by way of the truly existent; for the elements are truly existent but the person is not truly existent. This is meant: "That which you perceive as a person consists of six elements. Ultimately there is no person here. 'Person' is a mere concept."

1269 As at MN 137.8.

1270 *Paññādhīṭṭhāna*, *saccādhīṭṭhāna*, *cāgādhīṭṭhāna*, *upasamādhīṭṭhāna*. Nm, in Ms, had first rendered *adhīṭṭhāna* as "resolve," and then replaced it with "mode of expression," neither of which seems suitable for this context. MA glosses the word with *patīṭṭha*, which clearly means foundation, and explains the sense of the statement thus: "This person who consists of the six elements, the six bases of contact, and the eighteen kinds of mental approach – when he turns away from these and attains arahantship, the supreme accomplishment, he does so established upon these four bases." The four foundations will be individually elucidated by the sequel, §§12–29.

1271 MA: From the start one should not neglect the wisdom born of concentration and insight in order to penetrate through to the wisdom of the fruit of arahantship. One should preserve truthful speech in order to realise Nibbāna, the ultimate truth. One should cultivate the relinquishment of defilements in order to accomplish the relinquishing of all defilements by the path of ara-

hantship. From the start one should train in the pacification of defilements in order to pacify all defilements by the path of arahantship. Thus the wisdom, etc., born of serenity and insight are spoken of as the preliminary foundations for achieving the foundations of wisdom, etc. (distinctive of arahantship).

- 1272 MA: The non-neglecting of wisdom is explained by way of the meditation on the elements. The analysis of the elements here is identical with that of MN 28.6, 11, 16, 21 and MN 62.8–12.
- 1273 MA: This is the sixth element, which “remains” in that it has yet to be expounded by the Buddha and penetrated by Pukkusāti. Here it is explained as the consciousness that accomplishes the work of insight contemplation on the elements. Under the heading of consciousness, the contemplation of feeling is also introduced.
- 1274 This passage shows the conditionality of feeling and its impermanence through the cessation of its condition.
- 1275 MA identifies this as the equanimity of the fourth jhāna. According to MA, Pukkusāti had already achieved the fourth jhāna and had a strong attachment to it. The Buddha first praises this equanimity to inspire Pukkusāti’s confidence, then he gradually leads him to the immaterial jhānas and the attainment of the paths and fruits.
- 1276 The sense is: If he attains the base of infinite space and should pass away while still attached to it, he would be reborn in the plane of infinite space and would live there for the full lifespan of 20,000 aeons specified for that plane. In the higher three immaterial planes the lifespan is respectively 40,000 aeons, 60,000 aeons, and 84,000 aeons.
- 1277 MA: This is said in order to show the danger in the immaterial jhānas. By the one phrase, “This would be conditioned,” he shows: “Even though the lifespan there is 20,000 aeons, that is conditioned, fashioned, built up. It is thus impermanent, unstable, not lasting, transient. It is subject to perishing, breaking up, and dissolution; it is involved with birth, ageing, and death, grounded upon suffering. It is not a shelter, a place of safety, a refuge. Having passed away there as a worldling, one can still be

reborn in the four states of deprivation."

- 1278 *So n'eva abhisankharoti nābhisañcetayati bhavāya vā vibhavāya*. The two verbs suggest the notion of volition as a constructive power that builds up the continuation of conditioned existence. Ceasing to will for either being or non-being shows the extinction of craving for eternal existence and annihilation, culminating in the attainment of arahantship.
- 1279 MA says that at this point Pukkusāti penetrated three paths and fruits, becoming a non-returner. He realised that his teacher was the Buddha himself, but he could not express his realisation since the Buddha still continued with his discourse.
- 1280 This passage shows the arahant's abiding in the Nibbāna element with a residue remaining (of the factors of conditioned existence, *sa-upādisesa nibbānadhātu*). Though he continues to experience feelings, he is free from lust towards pleasant feeling, from aversion towards painful feeling, and from ignorance about neutral feeling.
- 1281 That is, he continues to experience feeling only as long as the body with its life faculty continues, but not beyond that.
- 1282 This refers to his attainment of the Nibbāna-element with no residue remaining (*anupādisesa nibbānadhātu*) – the cessation of all conditioned existence with his final passing away.
- 1283 This completes the exposition of the first foundation, which began at §13. MA says that the knowledge of the destruction of all suffering is the wisdom pertaining to the fruit of arahantship.
- 1284 MA mentions four kinds of attachment (*upadhi*) here: see n.674.
- 1285 The "tides of conceiving" (*maññiussavā*), as the following paragraph will show, are thoughts and notions originating from the three roots of conceiving – craving, conceit, and views. For a fuller explanation, see n.6. The "sage at peace" (*muni santo*) is the arahant.
- 1286 That which is not present in him is craving for being, which leads those who have not eradicated it back to a new birth following death.

- 1287 MA says that he was reborn in the Pure Abode called Avihā and attained arahantship as soon as he took rebirth there. It quotes a verse from the Saṃyutta Nikāya (SN 1:50/i.35) mentioning Pukkusāti as one of seven bhikkhus who were reborn in Avihā and attained deliverance by transcending the celestial bonds.

SUTTA 141

- 1288 This refers to the Buddha's first sermon, delivered to the five bhikkhus in the Deer Park at Isipatana.
- 1289 MA: Ven. Sāriputta trains them until he knows they have attained the fruit of stream-entry, then he lets them develop the higher paths on their own and he takes on a new batch of pupils. But Ven. Moggallāna continues to train his pupils until they have attained arahantship.
- 1290 The definitions of birth, ageing, and death are also found at MN 9.22, 26. This entire detailed analysis of the Four Noble Truths is included in the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, with an even more elaborate exposition of the second and third truths. See DN 22.18–21/ii.305–13.

SUTTA 142

- 1291 Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī was the younger sister of Queen Mahāmāyā, the Buddha's mother, and was also the wife of King Suddhodana. After Mahāmāyā's death, she became the Buddha's foster mother. The present sutta takes place at an early point in the Buddha's ministry, on one of his return visits to his native city. After King Suddhodana's death, Mahāpajāpatī pleaded with the Buddha to admit women into the Sangha, and her acceptance marked the beginning of the Bhikkhunī Sangha, the Order of Nuns. The story is found at Vin Cv Kh 10/ii.253–56 (see Ñāṇamoli, *The Life of the Buddha*, pp. 104–7).
- 1292 MA: The Buddha asked her to give the gift to the Sangha because he wanted her volition of generosity to be directed both to the Sangha and to himself, as the combined volition would yield merit conducive to her welfare and happiness for a long time to come. He also said this in order

that later generations would be inspired to show respect towards the Sangha, and by supporting the Sangha with the four physical requisites would contribute towards the longevity of the Dispensation.

1293 These are the four factors of stream-entry. Thus it is clear that at the time this sutta takes place, Mahāpajāpati Gotamī was already a stream-enterer.

1294 MA: The Buddha undertakes this teaching because the sutta began with a personal gift presented to him, and he wishes to make clear the comparative value of personal gifts and gifts offered to the Sangha.

1295 MA and MṬ explain that this term can be loosely extended to include even a lay follower who has gone for refuge to the Triple Gem, as well as lay people and monks intent on fulfilling the moral training and the practice of concentration and insight. In the strict technical sense it refers only to those possessing the supramundane path of stream-entry.

1296 This is a non-Buddhist contemplative who attains the jhānas and the mundane kinds of direct knowledge.

1297 MA: In a hundred existences it gives long life, beauty, happiness, strength, and intelligence, and it makes one free of agitation. The following attainments should be understood accordingly.

1298 MA says that although the results of giving in each of these cases is incalculable, there is still an ascending gradation in their incalculability, similar to the ascending incalculability of the waters in a great river, etc., up to that of the waters in the ocean. Perhaps the "incalculable, immeasurable" value of these gifts consists in their becoming a supporting condition for attainment of the paths, fruits, and Nibbāna.

1299 MA: There is no gift equal in measure to this gift. This is the kind of gift Mahāpajāpati would be giving by offering the pair of cloths to the Sangha.

1300 MA: "Members of the clan" (*gotrabhuno*) are those who are monks merely in name. They will go about with a piece of yellow cloth tied around their necks or arms, and will support their wives and children by engaging in trade and farming, etc.

1301 The gift is incalculable and immeasurable in value

because it is offered, by way of the intention of the donor, not to the "yellow-necks" as individuals but to the Sangha as a corporate whole. Thus the recipient body includes all the virtuous bhikkhus of the past, even those who have long passed away.

1302 MA states that a gift offered to an immoral bhikkhu taken to represent the entire Sangha is more fruitful than a gift offered on a personal basis to an arahant. But for the gift to be properly presented to the Sangha, the donor must take no account of the personal qualities of the recipient but must see him solely as representing the Sangha as a whole.

1303 MA: Here the word "purified" has the meaning "made fruitful."

1304 MA: This last verse refers to the gift one arahant gives to another arahant. Although the arahant believes in the fruit of kamma, because he is without desire and lust for existence his own act of giving is not productive of any fruits. It is a mere functional action (*kiriya*) that leaves no traces behind.

SUTTA 143

1305 MA says that clinging to the eye takes place by way of desire and lust; consciousness is dependent on the eye by way of craving and views. However, since Anāthapiṇḍika was already a stream-enterer, dependence for him would have involved only craving, views having been eradicated by the path of stream-entry.

1306 This statement does not imply that there is any inherent exclusiveness or arbitrary discrimination in the Buddha's way of presenting his teaching. But as those who remain in lay life must look after their families, possessions, and occupations, such talk leading to complete detachment would not have been appropriate for them.

SUTTA 144

1307 This is an elliptical expression for committing suicide.

1308 By making this statement he is implicitly claiming arahantship, as will be made clear at §13. Whether his claim

- at this point was valid or not is uncertain, the commentary regarding it as a case of self-overestimation.
- 1309 MA says that Ven. Mahā Cunda gave him this instruction thinking that he must still be an ordinary person, since he could not endure the deadly pains and wanted to commit suicide.
- 1310 The sense of this instruction might be explained with the help of MA thus: One is dependent because of craving and views and becomes independent by abandoning them with the attainment of arahantship. Bias (*nati*, lit. bending) comes about through craving, and its absence means there is no inclination or desire for existence. There is no coming and going by the ending of rebirth and death, no here nor beyond nor in between by the transcendence of this world, the world beyond, and the passage between one and the other. This is the end of the suffering of defilements and the suffering of the round.
- 1311 MA: He cut his throat, and just at that moment the fear of death descended on him and the sign of future rebirth appeared. Recognising that he was still an ordinary person, he was aroused and developed insight. Comprehending the formations, he attained arahantship just before he expired.
- 1312 MA: Although the Ven. Channa was still an ordinary person at the time he made the declaration, because he attained final Nibbāna immediately afterwards, the Buddha spoke thus referring to that same declaration.
- 1313 *Upavajjakulāni*. It seems from MA and MṬ that Channa had associated closely with his lay supporters in ways that were not proper for a monk, and even though he was intent on the right practice, this intimacy had aroused suspicion within the Sangha.
- 1314 This statement seems to imply that Channa was an arahant at the time he committed suicide, though the commentary explains otherwise.

SUTTA 145

- 1315 This Puṇṇa is a different person from Puṇṇa Mantāṇi-putta of MN 24. He was from a family of merchants residing in the port city of Suppāraka in the Sunāparanta

country (present-day Maharashtra). On a business trip to Sāvattthī he heard the Buddha give a discourse and renounced the home life to become a bhikkhū.

- 1316 MA explains this instruction as a short teaching on the Four Noble Truths. Delight (*nandī*) is an aspect of craving. Through the arising of delight in regard to the eye and forms there arises the suffering of the five aggregates. Thus in this first part of the instruction the Buddha teaches the round of existence by way of the first two truths – suffering and its origin – as they occur through the six senses. In the second part (§4) he teaches the ending of the round by way of the second two truths – cessation and the path – expressed as the abandoning of delight in the six senses and their objects.
- 1317 That is, he expired. Since the Buddha still refers to Puṇṇa as a clansman (*kulaṇḍa*), he must have died within a short time after returning to the Sunāparanta country. The texts leave no record of how he died.

SUTTA 146

- 1318 One of the eight important rules laid down by the Buddha when he established the Bhikkhunī Sangha stipulated that every fortnight the bhikkhunīs should request the bhikkhus to send a bhikkhu for the purpose of giving them an exhortation. According to MA, in a previous life Ven. Nandaka had been a king and those bhikkhunīs had been his concubines. He wanted to avoid his turn in advising the bhikkhunīs because he thought that another bhikkhu possessing the knowledge of past lives, seeing him giving an exhortation surrounded by the bhikkhunīs, would think that he still could not separate himself from his former concubines. But the Buddha saw that Nandaka's discourse to the bhikkhunīs would benefit them and thus he requested him to instruct them.
- 1319 MA: They have seen this with the wisdom of insight.
- 1320 *Tajjam tajjam paccayam paṭicca tajjā tajjā vedanā uppajjanti.* The coming together of the eye, forms, and eye-consciousness is eye-contact, and this is the primary condition for the arising of feeling born of eye-contact. With the cessation of the eye, one of the factors responsible for eye-con-

tact is removed. Thus eye-contact ceases, and with its cessation the feeling born of eye-contact also ceases.

- 1321 MA: He undertakes this teaching on the enlightenment factors because wisdom is not able to cut away the defilements by itself, but only when accompanied by the other six enlightenment factors (wisdom being equivalent to the investigation-of-states enlightenment factor).
- 1322 MA: She who was last in regard to good qualities had become a stream-enterer, but those whose intentions were to become once-returners, non-returners, and arahants each achieved the fulfilment of their intentions. Because of these results, the Buddha named Ven. Nandaka the foremost bhikkhu in instructing the bhikkhunīs.

SUTTA 147

- 1323 MA says that this discourse was spoken to Rāhula shortly after his higher ordination, presumably at the age of twenty.
- 1324 *Vimuttiparipācanīyā dhammā*. MA mentions fifteen states that ripen in deliverance: the five spiritual faculties; the five penetrative insights – into impermanence, suffering, non-self, abandoning, and fading away; and the five things taught to Meghiya – noble friendship, virtue, beneficial discussion, energy, and wisdom (see AN 9:3/iv.356; Ud 4:1/36).
- 1325 MA says that these deities, who came from various celestial realms, had been companions of Rāhula's during the previous life in which he first made the aspiration to attain arahantship as the son of a Buddha.
- 1326 It should be noted that the last four items mentioned are the four mental aggregates. Thus this discourse covers not only the sense bases but also the five aggregates, the aggregate of material form being implied by the physical sense faculties and their objects.
- 1327 According to MA, stream-entry was the minimal attainment of those deities, but some attained the higher paths and fruits up to arahantship.

SUTTA 148

- 1328 This string of epithets, usually descriptions of the Dhamma as a whole, here serves to emphasise the importance of the discourse the Buddha is about to deliver.
- 1329 The last two clauses in this sequence are also found in the standard formulation of dependent origination, which is thus implicitly incorporated into this discourse on the six sets of six.
- 1330 The verb *upapajjati* (the PTS ed. reading, *uppajjati*, is an error), normally means "reappears" or "is reborn," but it also has a special usage in logic whereby it means "to be tenable, to be acceptable," as it does here.
- 1331 The argument derives the principle of non-self from the verifiable premise of impermanence. The structure of the argument may be briefly set out thus: Whatever is self must be permanent; X is directly perceived to be impermanent, i.e., marked by rise and fall; therefore X is not self.
- 1332 The full argument of the previous paragraph is repeated for each of the remaining five terms in each set of six.
- 1333 MA explains that this passage is stated to show two noble truths – suffering and its origin – by way of the three obsessions (*gāha*). The truth of suffering is shown by the term "personality," elsewhere explicated as the five aggregates affected by clinging (MN 44.2). The three obsessions are craving, conceit, and views, which respectively give rise to the notions "mine," "I am" and "my self." The two truths together constitute the round of existence.
- 1334 MA: This passage is stated to show the other two noble truths – cessation and the path – by the repudiation of the three obsessions. These two truths constitute the ending of the round.
- 1335 MA: This passage shows the round of existence once again, this time by way of the underlying tendencies. On the underlying tendencies and their correlation with the three types of feeling, see MN 44.25–28.
- 1336 MA: The first-mentioned ignorance is only the lack of understanding of the origination, etc., of neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling. The second-mentioned is the ignorance that is at the root of the round.
- 1337 MA: There is nothing wonderful in the fact that sixty

bhikkhus attained arahantship when the Buddha first taught this sutta. But each time Sāriputta, Moggallāna, and the eighty great disciples taught it, sixty bhikkhus attained arahantship. In Sri Lanka the Elder Maliyadeva taught this sutta in sixty places, and each time sixty bhikkhus attained arahantship. But when the Elder Tipiṭaka Cūlanāga taught this sutta to a vast assembly of humans and gods, at the end of the discourse a thousand bhikkhus attained arahantship, and among the gods only one remained a worldling.

SUTTA 149

- 1338 MA: When one does not know and see the eye by way of insight knowledge and path knowledge.
- 1339 That is, the craving that arises and settles on the eye and forms, etc., holds to them with clinging, and this brings about an accumulation of kamma that tends to generate a new set of five aggregates in the next existence.
- 1340 When one knows and sees the eye by insight and the path.
- 1341 The eight factors of the path mentioned here seem to pertain to the preliminary or mundane portion of the path. MĪ identifies them with the factors possessed by a person at the highest level of insight development, immediately prior to the emergence of the supramundane path. In this stage only the former five path factors are actively operative, the three factors of the morality group having been purified prior to the undertaking of insight meditation. But when the supramundane path arises, all eight factors occur simultaneously, the three factors of the morality group exercising the function of eradicating the defilements responsible for moral transgression in speech, action, and livelihood.
- 1342 MA says that this refers to the simultaneous arising of serenity and insight in the supramundane path. The former is present under the heading of right concentration, the latter under the heading of right view.
- 1343 These are the four functions exercised by the supramundane path: fully understanding the truth of suffering, abandoning the cause of suffering, realising the cessation

of suffering, and developing the path leading to the end of suffering.

- 1344 Here serenity and insight represent the entire Noble Eightfold Path.
- 1345 MA identifies "true knowledge" with the knowledge of the path of arahantship, "deliverance" with the fruit of arahantship. Here these take the place usually reserved for Nibbāna, the true cessation of suffering.
- 1346 This passage and each of the following passages repeat the entire text of §§9–11, the only change being in the sense faculty and object.

SUTTA 151

- 1347 MA: The arahant's fruition attainment of voidness. See n.458 and n.1144.
- 1348 MA: This is the abiding of such great men (*mahāpurisa*) as Buddhas, paccekabuddhas, and the great disciples of the Tathāgatas.
- 1349 Among the five terms, desire and lust are synonymous as are hate and aversion.
- 1350 Beginning with this section a sequence of development may be discerned. The abandoning of the five cords of sensual pleasure is the preliminary step for developing the jhānas, and the abandoning of the five hindrances (§10) the immediate antecedent to the attainment of the first jhāna. The full understanding of the five aggregates (§11) indicates the insight wisdom necessary to attain the path of stream-entry, and the sections on the thirty-seven requisites of enlightenment (§§12–18) the cultivation of the factors needed to arrive at the intermediate stages of sanctity. The section on serenity and insight (§19), though applicable to all stages, can be seen as fully actualised by the non-returner striving for arahantship. Finally, the section on true knowledge and deliverance signifies the attainment of the path and fruit of arahantship.
- 1351 Although the arahant, who has fully realised true knowledge and deliverance, has no need for further training, he continues to cultivate serenity and insight in order to enter into the bliss of the jhānas, the fruition attainment of

arahantship, and the cessation of perception and feeling.

SUTTA 152

- 1352 The expression "the development of the faculties" (*indriyabhāvanā*) properly signifies the development of the mind in responding to the objects experienced through the sense faculties. The more rudimentary aspect of this practice, the restraint of the sense faculties (*indriya-samvara*), involves controlling the mind in such a way that one does not grasp at the "signs and features" of things, their distinctive attractive and repulsive attributes. The development of the faculties carries this process of control through to the point where, by an act of will, one can immediately set up insight even in the course of sense perception. At the highest level one acquires the ability to radically transform the subjective significance of perceptual objects themselves, making them appear in a mode that is the very opposite of the way they are normally apprehended.
- 1353 MA explains that when a desirable form comes into range of the eye, an agreeable state (*manāpa*) arises; when an undesirable form appears, a disagreeable state (*amanāpa*) arises; and when an indifferent form appears, a state that is both agreeable and disagreeable arises. It should be noted that though these three terms are ordinarily used to qualify the sense objects, here they also seem to signify subtle states of liking, aversion, and dull indifference that arise due to the influence of the underlying tendencies. MĪ identifies "the agreeable" with wholesome and unwholesome states of mind associated with joy, "the disagreeable" with unwholesome states of mind associated with grief (displeasure), and "the agreeable and disagreeable" with states of mind associated with equanimous feeling.
- 1354 MA: This equanimity is the equanimity of insight (*vipassan'upekkhā*). The bhikkhu does not allow his mind to be overcome by lust, hate, or delusion, but comprehends the object and sets up insight in the neutral state. MĪ explains this to mean that he enters into equanimity regarding formations (*sankhār'upekkhā*), a particular stage

of insight knowledge (see Vsm XXI, 61–66).

- 1355 MT: The noble development of the faculties is the suppression of lust, etc., arisen through the eye, and the establishment of the equanimity of insight.
- 1356 The same simile appears at MN 66.16.
- 1357 Although the *sekha* has already entered upon the way to final deliverance, he is still prone to subtle states of liking, aversion, and dull indifference in regard to sense objects. He experiences these, however, as impediments to his progress, and thus becomes ashamed, humiliated, and disgusted by them.
- 1358 *Ariya bhāvitindriya*: the arahant is meant.
- 1359 Since the arahant has eradicated all the defilements along with their underlying tendencies, in this passage the three terms – the agreeable, etc. – must be understood simply as the feelings that arise through contact with sense objects, and not as the subtle traces of liking, aversion, and indifference relevant to the preceding passage.
- 1360 The Paṭisambhidāmagga calls this practice “the noble supernormal power” (*ariya iddhi*) and explains it thus (ii.212): To abide perceiving the unrepulsive in the repulsive, one pervades a repulsive being with loving-kindness, or one attends to a repulsive object (either animate or inanimate) as a mere assemblage of impersonal elements. To abide perceiving the repulsive in the unrepulsive, one pervades a (sensually) attractive person with the idea of the foulness of the body, or one attends to an attractive object (either animate or inanimate) as impermanent. The third and fourth methods involve the application of the first and second contemplations to both repulsive and unrepulsive objects, without discrimination. The fifth method involves the avoidance of joy and sorrow in response to the six sense objects, thus enabling one to abide in equanimity, mindful and fully aware.

Although this fivefold contemplation is ascribed to the arahant as a power perfectly under his control, elsewhere the Buddha teaches it to bhikkhus still in training as a way to overcome the three unwholesome roots. See AN 5:144/iii.169–70; and for a thoughtful commentary on that sutta, see Nyanaponika Thera, *The Roots of Good and Evil*, pp. 73–78.

