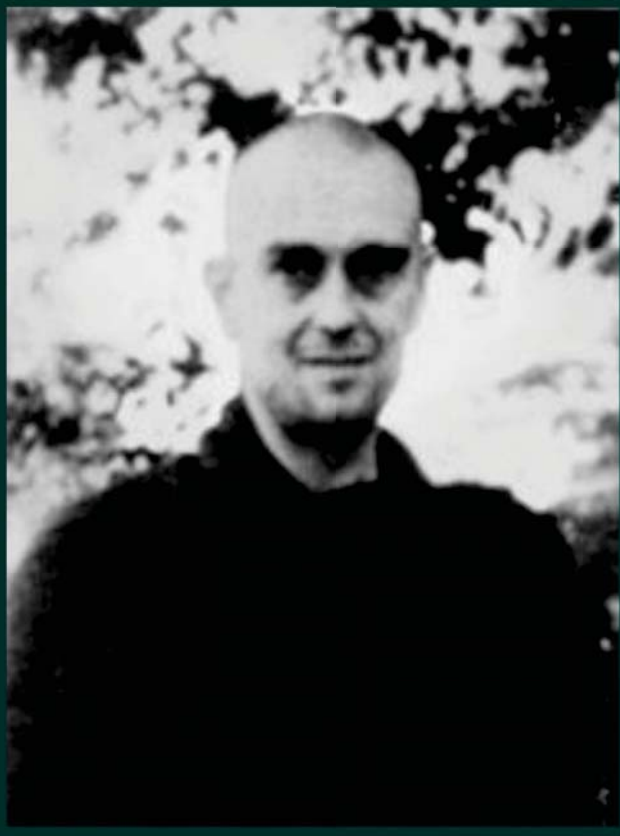
NOTES ON DHAMMA



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BOOKS

Notes on Dhamma

Preface

The principal aim of these Notes on Dhamma is to point out certain current misinterpretations, mostly traditional, of the Pali Suttas, and to offer in their place something certainly less easy but perhaps also less inadequate. These Notes assume, therefore, that the reader is (or is prepared to become) familiar with the original texts, and in Pali (for even the most competent translations sacrifice some essential accuracy to style, and the rest are seriously misleading).[a] They assume, also, that the reader's sole interest in the Pali Suttas is a concern for his own welfare. The reader is presumed to be subjectively engaged with an anxious problem, the problem of his existence, which is also the problem of his suffering. There is therefore nothing in these pages to interest the professional scholar, for whom the question of personal existence does not arise; for the scholar's whole concern is to eliminate or ignore the individual point of view in an effort to establish the objective truth -- a would-be impersonal synthesis of public facts. The scholar's essentially horizontal view of things, seeking connexions in space and time, and his historical approach to the texts,[b] disqualify him from any possibility of understanding a Dhamma that the Buddha himself has called akālika, 'timeless'.[c] Only in a vertical view, straight down into the abyss of his own personal existence, is a man capable of apprehending the perilous insecurity of his situation; and only a man who does apprehend this is prepared to listen to the Buddha's Teaching. But human kind, it seems, cannot bear very much reality: men, for the most part, draw back in alarm and dismay from this vertiginous direct view of being and seek refuge in distractions.

There have always been a few, however, who have not drawn back, and some of them have described what they saw. Amongst these, today, are the people known as existentialist philosophers, and an acquaintance with their mode of thinking, far from being a disadvantage, may well serve to restore the individual point of view, without which nothing can be understood. Here is a passage from an expositor of their philosophies.

The main jet of Marcel's thinking, like all existentialism, is forced from the conclusion that the type of thought which dominates or encloses or sees through its object is necessarily inapplicable to the total situation in which the thinker himself as existing individual is enclosed, and therefore every system (since in principle a system of thought is outside the thinker and transparent to him) is a mere invention and the most misleading of false analogies. The thinker is concerned with the interior of the situation in which he is enclosed: with his own internal reality, rather than with the collection of qualities by which he is defined or the external relations by which his position is plotted; and with his own participation in the situation, rather than with the inaccessible view of its externality. His thought refers to a self which can only be pre-supposed and not thought and to a situation in which he is involved and which he therefore cannot fully envisage; so that in the nature of the case philosophic thought cannot have the complete clarity and mastery of scientific thought which deals with an object

in general for a subject in general. To look for this type of thinking in philosophy is to overlook the necessary conditions of human thinking on ultimate questions; for philosophers to produce it at this time of day is sheer paralysis induced by superstitious regard for the prestige of contemporary science or of the classical philosophies.[d]

'The essence of man is to be in a situation' say these philosophers, and this is their common starting - point, whatever various conclusions -- or lack of conclusions -- they may eventually arrive at. Every man, at every moment of his life, is engaged in a perfectly definite concrete situation in a world that he normally takes for granted. But it occasionally happens that he starts to think. He becomes aware, obscurely, that he is in perpetual contradiction with himself and with the world in which he exists. 'I am, am I not? -- but what am I? What is this elusive self that is always elsewhere whenever I try to grasp it? And this familiar world -- why is it silent when I ask the reason for my presence here? ' These insidious doubts about the assurance of his personal identity and the purpose of his existence in a world that has suddenly become indifferent to him begin to undermine his simple faith in the established order of things (whatever it may happen to be), whose function it is to relieve him of anxiety. And the great service performed by the existential philosophies is to prevent a return to complacency.

The peculiarity of existentialism, then, is that it deals with the separation of man from himself and from the world, which raises the questions of philosophy, not by attempting to establish some universal form of justification which will enable man to readjust himself but by permanently enlarging and lining the separation itself as primordial and constitutive for personal existence. The main business of this philosophy therefore is not to answer the questions which are raised but to drive home the questions themselves until they engage the whole man and are made personal, urgent, and anguished. Such questions cannot be merely the traditional questions of the schools nor merely disinterested questions of curiosity concerning the conditions of knowledge or of moral or aesthetic judgements, for what is put in question by the separation of man from himself and from the world is his own being and the being of the objective world. ...These questions are not theoretical but existential, the scission which makes the existing individual aware of himself and of the world in which he is makes him a question to himself and life a question to him. ...Existential philosophies insist that any plain and positive answer is false, because the truth is in the insurmountable ambiguity which is at the heart of man and of the world.[e]

Existential philosophies, then, insist upon asking questions about self and the world, taking care at the same time to insist that they are unanswerable.[f] Beyond this point of frustration these philosophies cannot go. The Buddha, too, insists that questions about self and the world are unanswerable, either by refusing to answer them[g] or by indicating that no statement about self and the world can be justified.[h] But -- and here is the vital difference -- the Buddha can and does go beyond this point: not, to be sure, by answering the unanswerable, but by showing the way leading to the final cessation of all questions about self and the world.[i][j] Let there be no mistake in the matter: the existential

philosophies are not a substitute for the Buddha's Teaching -- for which, indeed, there can be no substitute.[k] The questions that they persist in asking are the questions of a puthujjana, of a 'commoner',[l] and though they see that they are unanswerable they have no alternative but to go on asking them; for the tacit assumption upon which all these philosophies rest is that the questions are valid. They are faced with an ambiguity that they cannot resolve.[m] The Buddha, on the other hand, sees that the questions are not valid and that to ask them is to make the mistake of assuming that they are. One who has understood the Buddha's Teaching no longer asks these questions; he is ariya, 'noble', and no more a puthujjana, and he is beyond the range of the existential philosophies; but he would never have reached the point of listening to the Buddha's Teaching had he not first been disquieted by existential questions about himself and the world. There is no suggestion, of course, that it is necessary to become an existentialist philosopher before one can understand the Buddha: every intelligent man questions himself quite naturally about the nature and significance of his own existence, and provided he refuses to be satisfied with the first ready-made answer that he is offered he is as well placed as anyone to grasp the Buddha's Teaching when he hears it. None the less many people, on first coming across the Suttas, are puzzled to know what their relevance is in the elaborate context of modern thought; and for them an indication that the existential philosophies (in their general methods, that is to say, rather than their individual conclusions) afford a way of approach to the Suttas may be helpful.

The Note on Fundamental Structure perhaps needs a remark. It is offered as an instrument of thought[n] to those who are looking for something on these lines, and such people will probably find it self-explanatory. The fact that it is unfinished is of no great consequence, since anyone who succeeds in following what there is of it will be able to continue it for himself as far as he pleases. Those who are unable to understand what it is all about would be best advised to ignore it altogether: not everybody needs this kind of apparatus in order to think effectively. The Figure in §I/13 was first suggested (though not in that form) by a chapter of Eddington's, [o] but neither its application nor the manner of arriving at it, as described in this Note, seems to have anything very much in common with Eddington's conception.[p]

A Pali-English Glossary together with English Translations of all quoted Pali passages will be found at the end of the book. These are provided in order to make the book more accessible to those who do not know Pali, in the hope that they will think it worth their while to acquire this not very difficult language. Some additional texts, referred to in the Notes but not quoted there, are also provided.

All textual references are given (i) by Vagga and Sutta number, and in the case of Samyutta and Anguttara references also by the title of the Samyutta and the number of the Nipāta respectively, and

(ii) by Volume and Page of the P.T.S. editions. The P.T.S. reference is given within brackets after the Vagga and Sutta reference.

The views expressed in this book will perhaps be regarded in one quarter or another either as doubtful or as definitely wrong. To prevent misunderstandings, therefore, I should make it clear that I alone, as the author, am responsible for these views, and that they are not put forward as representing the opinion of any other person or of any body of people.

Ñānavīra

Būndala,

Ceylon.

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Footnotes:

[a] These books of the Pali Canon correctly represent the Buddha's Teaching, and can be regarded as trustworthy throughout. (Vinayapitaka:) Suttavibhanga, Mahāvagga, Cūlavagga; (Suttapitaka:) Dīghanikāya, Majjhimanikāya, Samyuttanikāya, Anguttaranikāya, Suttanipāta, Dhammapada, Udāna, Itivuttaka, Theratherīgāthā. (The Jātaka verses may be authentic, but they do not come within the scope of these Notes.) No other Pali books whatsoever should be taken as authoritative; and ignorance of them (and particularly of the traditional Commentaries) may be counted a positive advantage, as leaving less to be unlearned. [Back to text]

[b] The P.T.S. (London Pali Text Society) Dictionary, for example, supposes that the word attā in the Suttas refers either to a phenomenon of purely historical interest (of the Seventh and Sixth Centuries B.C.) known as a 'soul', or else to the reflexive 'self', apparently of purely grammatical interest. All suggestion that there might be some connexion (of purely vital interest) between 'soul' and 'self' is prudently avoided. [Back to text]

[c] The scholar's sterile situation has been admirably summed up by Kierkegaard.

Let the enquiring scholar labour with incessant zeal, even to the extent of shortening his life in the enthusiastic service of science; let the speculative philosopher be sparing neither of time nor of diligence; they are none the less not interested infinitely, personally, and passionately, nor could they wish to be. On the contrary, they will seek to cultivate an attitude of objectivity and disinterestedness. And as for the relationship of the subject to the truth when he comes to know it, the assumption is that if only the truth is brought to light, its appropriation is a relatively unimportant matter, something that follows as a matter of course. And in any case, what happens to the individual is in the last analysis a matter of indifference. Herein lies the lofty equanimity of the scholar and the comic thoughtlessness of his parrot-like echo. --- S. Kierkegaard, Concluding Unscientific Postscript, tr. D. F. Swenson, Princeton 1941 & Oxford 1945, pp. 23-24.

And here is Nietzsche.

The diligence of our best scholars, their senseless industry, their burning the candle of their brain at both ends -- their very mastery of their handiwork -- how often is the real meaning of all that to prevent themselves continuing to see a certain thing? Science as self-anaesthetic: do you know that? --- F. Nietzsche, The Genealogy of Morals, Third Essay.

And so, in the scholarly article on Tāvatimsa in the P.T.S. Dictionary, we are informed that 'Good Buddhists, after death in this world, are reborn in heaven' -- but we are not told where good scholars are reborn. We do not, naturally, forget what we owe to scholars -- careful and accurate editions, grammars, dictionaries, concordances, all things that wonderfully lighten the task of reading the texts -- and we are duly grateful; but all the science of the scholar does not lead to a comprehensionof the texts -- witness Stcherbatsky's lament:

Although a hundred years have elapsed since the scientific study of Buddhism has been initiated in Europe, we are nevertheless still in the dark about the fundamental teachings of this religion and its

philosophy. Certainly no other religion has proved so refractory to clear formulation. --- T. Stcherbatsky, The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāna, Leningrad 1927, p. 1. [Back to text]

[d] H. J. Blackham, Six Existentialist Thinkers, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London 1952, p. 83. This is a useful summary. (See also, for greater detail and further references, R. Grimsley, Existentialist Thought, University of Wales Press, Cardiff 1955). [Back to text]

[e] H. J. Blackham, op. cit., pp. 151-3. [Back to text]

[f] The scholar or scientist, with his objective method, cannot even ask such questions, since on principle he knows and wishes to know nothing of self, and nothing, therefore, of its inseparable correlative, the world. (The world, we must understand, is determined as such only with reference to self; for it is essentially 'what belongs to self', being that in which self is situated and implicated. My world, as Heidegger notes, is the world of my preoccupations and concerns, that is to say an organized perspective of things all significant to me and signifying me. The collection of independent public facts produced by the scientific method is inherently incapable of constituting a world, since it altogether lacks any unifying personal determinant -- which, indeed, it is the business of science to eliminate. Things, not facts, pace Wittgenstein, make up my world.) [Back to text]

[g] Ekam antam nisinno kho Vacchagotto paribbājako Bhagavantam etad avoca. Kin nu kho bho Gotama, atth'attā ti. Evam vutte Bhagavā tunhī ahosi. Kim pana bho Gotama, n'atth'attā ti. Dutiyam pi kho Bhagavā tunhī ahosi. Atha kho Vacchagotto paribbājako utthāyāsanā pakkāmi. ('Being seated at one side, the wanderer Vacchagotta said to the Auspicious One, -- How is it, master Gotama, does self exist? When this was said the Auspicious One was silent. -- How then, master Gotama, does self not exist? A second time, too, the Auspicious One was silent. Then the wanderer Vacchagotta got up from his seat and went away.') Avyākata Samy. 10 <S.iv,400> [Back to text]

[h] Tatra bhikkhave ye te samanabrāhmanā evamvādino evamditthino, Sassato attā ca loko ca [Asassato attā ca loko ca (and so on)], idam eva saccam mogham aññan ti, tesam vata aññatr'eva saddhāya aññatra ruciyā aññatra anussavā aññatra ākāraparivitakkā aññatra ditthinijjhānakkhantiyā paccattam yeva ñānam bhavissati parisuddham pariyodātan ti n'etam thānam vijjati. ('Therein, monks, those recluses and divines whose belief and view is thus, 'Self and the world are eternal [Self and the world are non-eternal (and so on)], just this is truth and all else foolishness', -- that other merely than faith, other than preference, other than tradition, other than excogitation, other than acquiescent meditation of a (wrong) view, they should have private knowledge, purified and cleansed, such a thing is not possible.') Majjhima xi,2 <M.ii,234> [Back to text]

[i] Tayidam sankhatam olārikam, atthi kho pana sankhārānam nirodho, Atth'etan ti. Iti viditvā tassa nissaranadassāvī Tathāgato tad upātivatto. Ibid. ('This is determined and coarse; but there is such a thing as cessation of determinations -- that there is. Knowing thus, and seeing the escape, the Tathāgata passes beyond.It is for this reason that the Ariya Dhamma is called lokuttara, 'beyond the world'.') [Back to text]

[j] It is all the fashion nowadays to hail modern science as the vindication of the Buddha's anattā doctrine. Here is an example from a recent book: 'This voidness of selfhood, which forms the distinguishing feature of the Buddhist analysis of being, is a view that is fully in accord with the conclusions drawn by modern scientific thinkers who have arrived at it independently.'[k] The supposition is that the Buddha solved the question of self and the world simply by anticipating and adopting the impersonal attitude of scientific objectivity. The seasoned thinker is not likely to be delayed by this sort of thing, but the beginner is easily misled. [Back to text]

[k] To arrive at the Buddha's Teaching independently is to become a Buddha oneself. N'atthi kho ito bahiddhā añño samano vā brāhmano vā yo evam bhūtam taccham tatham dhammam deseti yathā Bhagavā. ('Outside here there is no other recluse or divine who sets forth as the Auspicious One does so real and factual and justified a Teaching.') Indriya Samy. vi,3 <S.v,230> [Back to text]

[l] See, for example, the Sabbāsavasutta, Majjhima i,2 <M.i,8>: Ahan nu kho'smi, no nu kho'smi, kin nu kho'smi, kathan nu kho'smi, ('Am I? Am I not? What am I? How am I?' [See M.i,2 at PARAMATTHA SACCA §2.]) and so on. [Back to text]

[m] Several of these philosophies, in their conclusions, point to a mystical solution of the existential ambiguity, seeking to justify it in some form of Transcendental Being. But they do not deny the ambiguity. Practising mystics, however, who have seen the Beatific Vision, who have realized union with the Divine Ground, are fully satisfied, so it seems, that during their mystical experience the ambiguity no longer exists. But they are agreed, one and all, that the nature of the Divine Ground (or Ultimate Reality, or whatever else they may call it) is inexpressible. In other words, they succeed, momentarily at least, in eliminating the mystery of the individual by raising it to a Higher Power: they envelop the mystery within the Mystery, so that it is no longer visible. ('By not thinking on self transcend self' --- Augustine.) But a paradox is not resolved by wrapping it up inside a bigger one; on the contrary, the task is to unwrap it. Mahāyāna and Zen Buddhism have a strong mystical flavouring,

but there is nothing of this in the Pali Suttas. Mystically inclined readers of these Notes will find them little to their taste. [Back to text]

[n] It is for negative thinking. 'Precisely because the negative is present in existence, and present everywhere (for existence is a constant process of becoming), it is necessary to become aware of its presence continuously, as the only safeguard against it.' --- S. Kierkegaard, op. cit., p. 75. Positive or abstract thinking abstracts from existence and is thus incapable of thinking it continuously. The difficulty that arises for the positive thinker is expressed by Kierkegaard in these terms.

To think existence sub specie aeterni and in abstract terms is essentially to abrogate it.... It is impossible to conceive existence without movement, and movement cannot be conceived sub specie aeterni. To leave movement out is not precisely a distinguished achievement.... But inasmuch as all thought is eternal, there is here created a difficulty for the existing individual. Existence, like movement, is a difficult category to deal with; for if I think it, I abrogate it, and then I do not think it. It might therefore seem to be the proper thing to say that there is something that cannot be thought, namely, existence. But the difficulty persists, in that existence itself combines thinking with existing, in so far as the thinker exists. Op. cit., pp. 273-4. [Back to text]

[o] A. S. Eddington, New Pathways in Science, Cambridge 1935, Ch. XII. [Back to text]

[p] A. S. Eddington, The Philosophy of Physical Science, Cambridge 1939, Chh. IX & X. The equivocal posture of the quantum physicist, who adopts simultaneously the reflexive attitude of phenomenology (which requires the observer) and the objective attitude of science (which eliminates the observer), expressing his results in equations whose terms depend on the principle that black is white, makes him singularly unfitted to produce intelligible philosophy. (Camus, in L'Homme Révolté [Gallimard, Paris 1951, p. 126], remarks on Breton's surrealist thought as offering the curious spectacle of a Western mode of thinking where the principle of analogy is persistently favoured to the detriment of the principles of identity and contradiction. And yet, in The Principles of Quantum Mechanics [Oxford <1930> 1958], Dirac introduces us, without turning a hair, to certain abstract quantities, fundamental to the theory, that [p. 53] can be replaced by 'sets of numbers with analogous mathematical properties'. These abstract quantities, as one reads the early chapters, do indeed have a surrealist air about them.) [Back to text]

A NOTE ON PAṬICCASAMUPPĀDA

Api c'Udāyi tiṭṭhatu pubbanto tiṭṭhatu aparanto, dhammaṃ te desessāmi: Imasmim sati idam hoti, imass'uppādā idam uppajjati; imasmim asati idam na hoti, imassa nirodhā idam nirujjhatī ti.

But, Udāyi, let be the past, let be the future, I shall set you forth the Teaching: When there is this this is, with arising of this this arises; when there is not this this is not, with cessation of this this ceases.

Majjhima viii,9 <M.ii,32>

Imasmim sati idam hoti, imass'uppādā idam uppajjati; yadidam avijjāpaccayā sankhārā, sankhārapaccayā viññānam, viññānapaccayā nāmarūpam, nāmarūpapaccayā salāyatanam, salāyatanapaccayā phasso, phassapaccayā vedanā, vedanāpaccayā tanhā, tanhāpaccayā upādānam, upādānapaccayā bhavo, bhavapaccayā jāti, jātipaccayā jarāmaranam sokaparidevadukkhadomanass' upāyāsā sambhavanti; evam etassa kevalassa dukkhakkhandhassa samudayo hoti.

When there is this this is, with arising of this this arises; that is to say, with nescience as condition, determinations; with determinations as condition, consciousness; with consciousness as condition, name-&-matter; with name-&-matter as condition, six bases; with six bases as condition, contact; with contact as condition, feeling; with feeling as condition, craving; with craving as condition, holding; with holding as condition, being; with being as condition, birth; with birth as condition, ageing-&-death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair, come into being; thus is the arising of this whole mass of unpleasure (suffering).

Imasmim asati idam na hoti, imassa nirodhā idam nirujjhati; yadidam avijjānirodhā sankhāranirodho, sankhāranirodhā viññānanirodho, viññānanirodhā nāmarūpanirodho, nāmarūpanirodhā salāyatananirodho, salāyatananirodhā phassanirodho, phassanirodhā vedanānirodho, vedanānirodhā tanhānirodho, tanhānirodhā upādānanirodho, upādānanirodhā bhavanirodho, bhavanirodhā jātinirodho, jātinirodhā jarāmaranam sokaparidevadukkhadomanass' upāyāsā nirujjhanti; evam etassa kevalassa dukkhakkhandhassa nirodho hoti.

When there is not this this is not, with cessation of this this ceases; that is to say, with cessation of nescience, ceasing of determinations; with cessation of determinations, ceasing of consciousness; with cessation of consciousness, ceasing of name-&-matter; with cessation of name-&-matter, ceasing of six bases; with cessation of six bases, ceasing of contact; with cessation of contact, ceasing of

feeling; with cessation of feeling, ceasing of craving; with cessation of craving, ceasing of holding; with cessation of holding, ceasing of being; with cessation of being, ceasing of birth; with cessation of birth, ageing-&-death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair, cease; thus is the ceasing of this whole mass of unpleasure (suffering).

Majjhima iv,8 <M.i,262-3 & 264>

1. The traditional interpretation of paticcasamuppāda (of its usual twelve-factored formulation, that is to say) apparently has its roots in the Patisambhidāmagga <i,52>, or perhaps in the Abhidhammapitaka. This interpretation is fully expounded in the Visuddhimagga <Ch. XVII>. It can be briefly summarized thus: avijjā and sankhārā are kamma in the previous existence, and their vipāka is viññāna, nāmarūpa, salāyatana, phassa, and vedanā, in the present existence; tanhā, upādāna, and bhava, are kamma in the present existence, and their vipāka is jāti and jarāmarana in the subsequent existence.

2. This Note will take for granted first, that the reader is acquainted with this traditional interpretation, and secondly, that he is dissatisfied with it. It is not therefore proposed to enter into a detailed discussion of this interpretation, but rather to indicate briefly that dissatisfaction with it is not unjustified, and then to outline what may perhaps be found to be a more satisfactory approach.

3. As the traditional interpretation has it, vedanā is kammavipāka. Reference to Vedanā Samy. iii,2 <S.iv,230> will show that as far as concerns bodily feeling (with which the Sutta is evidently dealing) there are seven reasons for it that are specifically not kammavipāka. Only in the eighth place do we find kammavipākajā vedanā. This would at once limit the application of paticcasamuppāda to certain bodily feelings only and would exclude others, if the traditional interpretation is right. Some of these bodily feelings would be paticcasamuppannā, but not all; and this would hardly accord with, for example, the passage: Paticcasamuppannam kho āvuso sukhadukkham vuttam Bhagavatā. ('The Auspicious One, friend, has said that pleasure and unpleasure are dependently arisen.') (Nidāna/Abhisamaya Samy. iii,5 <S.ii,38>).

4. There is, however, a more serious difficulty regarding feeling. In Anguttara III,vii,1 <A.i,176> it is clear that somanassa, domanassa, and upekkhā, are included in vedanā, in the specific context of the paticcasamuppāda formulation. But these three feelings are mental, and arise (as the Sutta tells us) when the mind dwells upon (upavicarati) some object; thus they involve cetanā, 'intention', in their very structure. And the Commentary to the Sutta would seem to allow this, but in doing so must either exclude these mental feelings from vedanā in the paticcasamuppāda formulation or else assert that they are vipāka. In either case the Commentary would go against the Sutta we are considering. This Sutta (which should be studied at first hand) not only treats these mental feelings as included in vedanā but also specifically states that to hold the view that whatever a man experiences, pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral, is due to past acts, is to adopt a form of determinism making present action futile—one is a killer on account of past acts, a thief on account of past acts, and so on. To take these mental feelings as vipāka would be to fall into precisely this wrong view; and, in fact, the traditional interpretation, rather than that, prefers to exclude them from paticcasamuppāda, at least as vedanā (see Visuddhimagga, loc. cit.). Unfortunately for the traditional interpretation there are Suttas (e.g. Majjhima i,9 <M.i,53>[1]) that define the paticcasamuppāda item nāmarūpa—also traditionally taken as vipāka—in terms of (amongst other things) not only vedanā but also cetanā, and our Commentary is obliged to speak of a vipakācetanā. But the Buddha has said (Anguttara VI,vi,9 <A.iii,415>[2]) that kamma is cetanā (action is intention), and the notion of vipakācetanā, consequently, is a plain self-contradiction. (It needs, after all, only a moment's reflection to see that if, for example, the pleasant feeling that I experience when I indulge in lustful thoughts is the vipāka of some past kamma, then I have no present responsibility in the matter and can now do nothing about it. But I know from my own experience that this is not so; if I choose to enjoy pleasure by thinking lustful thoughts I can do so, and I can also choose [if I see good reason] to refrain from thinking such thoughts.)[a]

5. Let us now consider sankhārā, which we shall make no attempt to translate for the moment so as not to beg the question. We may turn to Nidāna/Abhisamaya Samy. i,2 <S.ii,4> for a definition of sankhārā in the context of the paticcasamuppāda formulation. Katame ca bhikkhave sankhārā. Tayo'me bhikkhave sankhārā, kāyasankhāro vacīsankhāro cittasankhāro. Ime vuccanti bhikkhave sankhārā. ('And which, monks, are determinations? There are, monks, these three determinations: body-determination, speech-determination, mind-determination. These, monks, are called determinations.') But what are kāyasankhāra, vacīsankhāra, and cittasankhāra? The Cūlavedallasutta (Majjhima v,4 <M.i,301> & cf. Citta Samy. 6 <S.iv,293>) will tell us. Kati pan'ayye sankhārā ti. Tayo'me āvuso Visākha sankhārā, kāyasankhāro vacīsankhāro cittasankhāro ti. Katamo pan'ayye kāyasankhāro, katamo vacīsankhāro, katamo cittasankhāro ti. Assāsapassāsā kho āvuso Visākha kāyasankhāro, vitakkavicārā vacīsankhāro, saññā ca vedanā ca cittasankhāro ti. Kasmā pan'ayye assāsapassāsā kāyasankhāro, kasmā vitakkavicārā vacīsankhāro, kasmā saññā ca vedanā ca cittasankhāro ti. Assāsapassāsā kho āvuso Visākha kāyikā, ete dhammā kāyapatibaddhā, tasmā assāsapassāsā kāyasankhāro. Pubbe kho āvuso Visākha vitakketvā vicāretvā pacchā vācam bhindati, tasmā vitakkavicārā vacīsankhāro. Saññā ca vedanā ca cetasikā, ete dhammā cittapatibaddhā, tasmā saññā ca

vedanā ca cittasankhāro ti. ('But, lady, how many determinations are there?—There are, friend Vis&aacuute;kha, these three determinations: body-determination, speech-determination, mind-determination.—But which, lady, is body-determination, which is speech-determination, which is mind-determination?—The in-&-out-breaths, friend Visākha, are body-determination, thinking-&-pondering are speech-determination, perception and feeling are mind-determination.—But why, lady, are the in-&-out-breaths body-determination, why are thinking-&-pondering speech-determination, why are perception and feeling mind-determination?—The in-&-out-breaths, friend Visākha, are bodily, these things are bound up with the body; that is why the in-&-out-breaths are body-determination. First, friend Visākha, having thought and pondered, afterwards one breaks into speech; that is why thinking-&-pondering are speech-determination. Perception and feeling are mental, these things are bound up with the mind; that is why perception and feeling are mind-determination.') Now the traditional interpretation says that sankhārā in the paticcasamuppāda context are kamma, being cetanā. Are we therefore obliged to understand in-&-out-breaths, thinking-&-pondering, and perception and feeling, respectively, as bodily, verbal, and mental kamma (or cetanā)? Is my present existence the result of my breathing in the preceding existence? Is thinking-&-pondering verbal action? Must we regard perception and feeling as intention, when the Suttas distinguish between them (Phuttho bhikkhave vedeti, phuttho ceteti, phuttho sañjānāti... ('Contacted, monks, one feels; contacted, one intends; contacted, one perceives;...') [Salāyatana Samy. ix,10 <S.iv,68>])? Certainly, sankhārā may, upon occasion, be cetanā (e.g. Khandha Samy. vi,4 <S.iii,60>[3]); but this is by no means always so. The Cūlavedallasutta tells us clearly in what sense in-&-out-breaths, thinking-&-pondering, and perception and feeling, are sankhārā (i.e. in that body, speech, and mind [citta], are intimately connected with them, and do not occur without them); and it would do violence to the Sutta to interpret sankhārā here as cetanā.

6. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to suppose from the foregoing that sankhārā in the paticcasamuppāda context cannot mean cetanā. One Sutta (Nidāna/Abhisamaya Samy. vi,1 <S.ii,82>) gives sankhārā in this context as puññābhisankhāra, apuññābhisankhāra, and āneñjābhisankhāra, and it is clear enough that we must understand sankhārā here as some kind of cetanā. Indeed, it is upon this very Sutta that the traditional interpretation relies to justify its conception of sankhārā in the context of the paticcasamuppāda formulation. It might be wondered how the traditional interpretation gets round the difficulty of explaining assāsapassāsā, vitakkavicārā, and saññā and vedanā, as cetanā, in defiance of the Cūlavedallasutta passage. The answer is simple: the traditional interpretation, choosing to identify cittasankhāra with manosankhāra, roundly asserts (in the Visuddhimagga) that kāyasankhāra, vacīsankhāra, and cittasankhāra, are kāyasañcetanā, vacīsañcetanā, and manosañcetanā,—see §16 --, and altogether ignores the Cūlavedallasutta. The difficulty is thus, discreetly, not permitted to arise.

7. No doubt more such specific inadequacies and inconsistencies in the traditional interpretation of paticcasamuppāda could be found, but since this is not a polemic we are not concerned to seek them out. There remains, however, a reason for dissatisfaction with the general manner of this interpretation. The Buddha has said (Majjhima iii,8 <M.i,191>) that he who sees the Dhamma sees paticcasamuppāda; and he has also said that the Dhamma is sanditthika and akālika, that it is immediately visible and without involving time (see in particular Majjhima iv,8 <M.i,265>). Now it is evident that the twelve items, avijjā to jarāmarana, cannot, if the traditional interpretation is correct, all be seen at once; for they are spread over three successive existences. I may, for example, see present viññāna to vedanā, but I cannot now see the kamma of the past existence—avijjā and sankhārā—that (according to the traditional interpretation) was the cause of these present things. Or I may see tanhā and so on, but I cannot now see the jāti and jarāmarana that will result from these things in the next existence. And the situation is no better if it is argued that since all twelve items are present in each existence it is possible to see them all at once. It is, no doubt, true that all these things can be seen at once, but the avijjā and sankhārā that I now see are the cause (says the traditional interpretation) of viññāna to vedanā in the next existence, and have no causal connexion with the viññāna to vedanā that I now see. In other words, the relation sankhārapaccayā viññānam cannot be seen in either case. The consequence of this is that the paticcasamuppāda formulation (if the traditional interpretation is correct) is something that, in part at least, must be taken on trust. And even if there is memory of the past existence the situation is still unsatisfactory, since memory is not on the same level of certainty as present reflexive experience. Instead of imass'uppādā idam uppajjati, imassa nirodhā idam nirujjhati, 'with arising of this this arises, with cessation of this this ceases', the traditional interpretation says, in effect, imassa nirodhā idam uppajjati, 'with cessation of this, this arises'. It is needless to press this point further: either the reader will already have recognized that this is, for him, a valid objection to the traditional interpretation, or he will not. And if he has not already seen this as an objection, no amount of argument will open his eyes. It is a matter of one's fundamental attitude to one's own existence—is there, or is there not, a present problem or, rather, anxiety that can only be resolved in the present?

8. If paticcasamuppāda is sanditthika and akālika then it is clear that it can have nothing to do with kamma and kammavipāka—at least in their usual sense of ethical action and its eventual retribution (see KAMMA) --; for the ripening of kamma as vipāka takes time—vipāka always follows kamma after an interval and is never simultaneous with it. It will at once be evident that if an interpretation of the paticcasamuppāda formulation can be found that does not involve kamma and vipāka the difficulties raised in §§3&4 will vanish; for we shall no longer be called upon to decide whether vedanā is, or is not, kamma or vipāka, and there will be no need for such contradictions as vipākacetanā. Irrespective of whether or not it is either kamma or vipāka, vedanā will be paticcasamuppannā. We shall also find that the apparent conflict of §§5&6 disappears; for when sankhārā, as the second item of the paticcasamuppāda formulation, is no longer necessarily to be regarded as kamma, we shall be free to look for a meaning of the word sankhāra that can comfortably accomodate the kāya-, vacī-, and citta-

sankhārā of the Cūlavedallasutta, as well as the puñña-, apuñña-, and āneñja-abhisankhārā of Nidāna/Abhisamaya Samy. vi,1. (We may note in passing that though kamma is cetanā—action is intention—we are in no way obliged, when we deal with cetanā, to think in terms of kamma and its eventual vipāka. Present cetanā is structurally inseparable from present saññā and present vedanā; and thoughts about the future are quite irrelevant to the present problem of suffering—Yam kiñci vedayitam tam dukkhasmin ti. ('Whatever is felt counts as unpleasure (suffering).' [See Vedanā Samy. ii,1, quoted in NIBBĀNA.])[Nidāna/Abhisamaya Samy. iv,2 <S.ii,53>].[b]

9. It will be convenient to start at the end of the paticcasamuppāda formulation and to discuss jāti and jarāmarana first. To begin with, jāti is 'birth' and not 're-birth'. 'Re-birth' is punabbhavābhinibbatti, as in Majjhima v,3 <M.i,294> where it is said that future 'birth into renewed existence' comes of avijjā and tanhā; and it is clear that, here, two successive existences are involved. It is, no doubt, possible for a Buddha to see the re-birth that is at each moment awaiting a living individual who still has tanhā—the re-birth, that is to say, that is now awaiting the individual who now has tanhā. If this is so, then for a Buddha the dependence of re-birth upon tanhā is a matter of direct seeing, not involving time. But this is by no means always possible (if, indeed, at all) for an ariyasāvaka, who, though he sees paticcasamuppāda for himself, and with certainty (it is aparapaccayā ñānam), may still need to accept re-birth on the Buddha's authority.[c] In other words, an ariyasāvaka sees birth with direct vision (since jāti is part of the paticcasamuppāda formulation), but does not necessarily see re-birth with direct vision. It is obvious, however, that jāti does not refer straightforwardly to the ariyasāvaka's own physical birth into his present existence; for that at best could only be a memory, and it is probably not remembered at all. How, then, is jāti to be understood?

10. Upādānapaccayā bhavo; bhavapaccayā jāti; jātipaccayā jarāmaranam... ('With holding as condition, being; with being as condition, birth; with birth as condition, ageing-&-death...') The fundamental upādāna or 'holding' is attavāda (see Majjhima ii,1 <M.i,67>), which is holding a belief in 'self'. The puthujjana takes what appears to be his 'self' at its face value; and so long as this goes on he continues to be a 'self', at least in his own eyes (and in those of others like him). This is bhava or 'being'. The puthujjana knows that people are born and die; and since he thinks 'my self exists' so he also thinks 'my self was born' and 'my self will die'. The puthujjana sees a 'self' to whom the words birth and death apply.[d] In contrast to the puthujjana, the arahat has altogether got rid of asmimāna (not to speak of attavāda—see MAMA), and does not even think 'I am'. This is bhavanirodha, cessation of being. And since he does not think 'I am' he also does not think 'I was born' or 'I shall die'. In other words, he sees no 'self' or even 'I' for the words birth and death to apply to. This is jātinirodha and jarāmarananirodha. (See, in Kosala Samy. i,3 <S.i,71>, how the words birth and death are avoided when the arahat is spoken of. Atthi nu kho bhante jātassa aññatra jarāmaranā ti. N'atthi kho mahārāja jātassa aññatra jarāmaranā. Ye pi te mahārāja khattiyamahāsālā... brāhmanamahāsālā... gahapatimahāsālā..., tesam pi jātānam n'atthi aññatra jarāmaranā. Ye pi te mahārāja bhikkhu arahanto

khīnāsavā..., tesam pāyam kāyo bhedanadhammo nikkhepanadhammo ti. ('—For one who is born, lord, is there anything other than ageing-&-death?—For one who is born, great king, there is nothing other than ageing-&-death. Those, great king, who are wealthy warriors... wealthy divines... wealthy householders...,—for them, too, being born, there is nothing other than ageing-&-death. Those monks, great king, who are worthy ones, destroyers of the cankers...,—for them, too, it is the nature of this body to break up, to be laid down.')) The puthujjana, taking his apparent 'self' at face value, does not see that he is a victim of upādāna; he does not see that 'being a self' depends upon 'holding a belief in self' (upādānapaccayā bhavo); and he does not see that birth and death depend upon his 'being a self' (bhavapaccayā jāti, and so on). The ariyasāvaka, on the other hand, does see these things, and he sees also their cessation (even though he may not yet have fully realized it); and his seeing of these things is direct. Quite clearly, the idea of re-birth is totally irrelevant here.

11. Let us now turn to the beginning of the paticcasamuppāda formulation and consider the word sankhāra. The passage from the Cūlavedallasutta quoted in §5 evidently uses sankhāra to mean a thing from which some other thing is inseparable—in other words, a necessary condition. This definition is perfectly simple and quite general, and we shall find that it is all that we need. (If a sankhāra is something upon which something else depends, we can say that the 'something else' is determined by the first thing, i.e. by the sankhāra, which is therefore a 'determination' or a 'determinant'. It will be convenient to use the word determination when we need to translate sankhāra.)

12. Some discussion will be necessary if we are to see that sankhāra, whenever it occurs, always has this meaning in one form or another. We may start with the fundamental triad: Sabbe sankhārā aniccā; Sabbe sankhārā dukkhā; Sabbe dhammā anattā. ('All determinations are impermanent; All determinations are unpleasurable (suffering); All things are not-self.') (Dhammapada xx,5-7 <Dh. 277-9>) A puthujjana accepts what appears to be his 'self' at face value. When he asks himself 'What is my self?' he seeks to identify it in some way with one thing or another, and specifically with the pañc'upādānakkhandhā or one of them (see Khandha Samy. v,5 <S.iii,46>[4]). Whatever thing (dhamma) he identifies as 'self', that thing he takes as being permanent; for if he saw it as impermanent he would not identify it as 'self' (see DHAMMA). Since, however, he does see it as permanent—more permanent, indeed, than anything else—he will think 'Other things may be impermanent, but not this thing, which is myself'. In order, then, that he shall see it as impermanent, indirect methods are necessary: he must first see that this thing is dependent upon, or determined by, some other thing, and he must then see that this other thing, this determination or sankhāra, is impermanent. When he sees that the other thing, the sankhāra on which this thing depends, is impermanent, he sees that this thing, too, must be impermanent, and he no longer regards it as 'self'. (See SANKHĀRA.) Thus, when sabbe sankhārā aniccā is seen, sabbe dhammā anattā is seen. And similarly with sabbe sankhārā dukkhā. We may therefore understand sabbe sankhārā aniccā as 'All

things upon which other things (dhammā) depend—i.e. all determinations (sankhārā)—are impermanent' with a tacit corollary 'All things dependent upon other things (sankhārā)—i.e. all determined things (sankhatā dhammā)—are impermanent'. After this, sabbe dhammā anattā, 'All things are not-self', follows as a matter of course.[e]

13. Every thing (dhamma) must, of necessity, be (or be somehow included within) one or more of the pañc('upādān)akkhandhā, either generally—e.g. feeling in general, feeling as opposed to what is not feeling—or particularly—e.g. this present painful feeling as opposed to the previous pleasant feeling (present as a past feeling). In the same way, every determination (sankhāra) must also be one or more of the pañc('upādān)akkhandhā. Thus the pañc('upādān)akkhandhā can be regarded either as sankhārā or as dhammā according as they are seen as 'things-that-other-things-depend-on' or simply as 'things themselves'. See Majjhima iv,5 <M.i,228>.[5]

14. Sankhārā are one of the pañc'upādānakkhandhā (or, in the case of the arahat, one of the pañcakkhandhā—see Khandha Samy. v,6 <S.iii,47>). The Sutta mentioned in §5 (Khandha Samy. vi,4)[3] says explicitly, in this context, that sankhārā are cetanā. If this is so, cetanā must be something that other things depend on. What are these things? The answer is given at once by the Khajjaniyasutta (Khandha Samy. viii,7 <S.iii,87>[6]): they are the pañc('upādān)akkhandhā themselves.[f]

15. This leads us to the puññābhisankhāra, apuññābhisankhāra, and āneñjābhisankhāra, of §6. These determinations are clearly cetanā of some kind—indeed the Sutta itself (Nidāna/Abhisamaya Samy. vi,1) associates the words abhisankharoti and abhisañcetayati. A brief discussion is needed. The Sutta says: Avijjāgato'yam bhikkhave purisapuggalo puññañ ce sankhāram abhisankharoti, puññūpagam hoti viññānam. ('If, monks, this individual man, who is involved in nescience, is determining a meritorious determination, consciousness has arrived at merit.') The word puñña is commonly associated with kamma, and the traditional interpretation supposes that puññūpaga viññāna is puññakammavipāka in the following existence. Puñña is certainly kamma, but nothing in the Sutta suggests that puññūpaga viññāna is anything other than the meritorious consciousness of one who is determining or intending merit. (When merit is intended by an individual he is conscious of his world as 'world-for-doing-merit-in', and consciousness has thus 'arrived at merit'.) In §14 we saw that cetanā (or intentions) of all kinds are sankhārā, and these are no exception. As we see from the Sutta, however, they are of a particular kind; for they are not found in the arahat. They are intentions in which belief in 'self' is implicitly involved. We saw in §10 that belief in 'self' is the condition for birth, and that when all trace of such belief is eradicated the word birth no longer applies. Belief in 'self', in exactly the same way, is the condition for consciousness, and when it altogether ceases the word consciousness no longer applies. Thus, with cessation of these particular intentions there is cessation of consciousness. The

arahat, however, still lives, and he has both intentions (or, more generally, determinations) and consciousness; but this consciousness is niruddha, and the intentions (or determinations) must similarly be accounted as 'ceased'. (This matter is further discussed in §22. See also VIÑÑĀNA.) Sankhārapaccayā viññānam, which means 'so long as there are determinations there is consciousness', is therefore also to be understood as meaning 'so long as there are puthujjana's determinations there is puthujjana's consciousness'. Even though the Khajjaniyasutta (§14) tells us that determinations are so called since 'they determine the determined' (which includes consciousness), we must not conclude that the determinations in 'determinations are a condition for consciousness' (sankhārapaccayā viññānam) are determinations because they are a condition for consciousness: on the contrary, they are a condition for consciousness because they are determinations. Thus, vitakkavicārā determine vacī, which is why they are called vacīsankhāra; and it is as a sankhāra that they are a condition for viññāna. In particular, puññābhisankhāra, apuññābhisankhāra, and āneñjābhisankhāra, are cetanā that determine viññāna as puññūpaga, apuññūpaga, and āneñjūpaga, respectively. They are certain intentions determining certain consciousnesses. Since they determine something (no matter what), these intentions are determinations (as stated in the Khajjaniyasutta). As determinations they are a condition for consciousness. And as puthujjana's determinations they are a condition for puthujjana's consciousness (which is always puññūpaga, apuññūpaga, or āneñjūpaga). Exactly why determinations are a condition for consciousness will be discussed later.

16. There is nothing to add to what was said about kāyasankhāra, vacīsankhāra, and cittasankhāra, in §5, except to note that we occasionally encounter in the Suttas the terms kāyasankhāra, vacīsankhāra, and manosankhāra (not cittasankhāra). These are to be understood (see Nidāna/Abhisamaya Samy. iii,5 <S.ii,40>) as kāyasañcetanā, vacīsañcetanā, and manosañcetanā, and should not be confused with the former triad.[g] Other varieties of sankhārā met with in the Suttas (e.g. āyusankhārā, 'what life depends on', in Majjhima v,3 <M.i,295>), do not raise any particular difficulty. we shall henceforth take it for granted that the essential meaning of sankhāra is as defined in §11.

17. Consider now this phrase: Tisso imā bhikkhave vedanā aniccā sankhatā paticcasamuppannā... ('There are, monks, these three feelings, which are impermanent, determined, dependently arisen...') (Vedanā Samy. i,9 <S.iv,214>). We see in the first place that what is sankhata is anicca; this we already know from the discussion in §12. In the second place we see that to be sankhata and to be paticcasamuppanna are the same thing. This at once tells us the purpose of paticcasamuppāda formulations, namely to show, by the indirect method of §12, that all the items mentioned therein are impermanent, since each depends upon the preceding item. The question may now arise, 'What about the first item—since there is no item preceding it, is it therefore permanent?'. In several Suttas (Dīgha ii,1 <D.ii,32>; Nidāna/Abhisamaya Samy. vii,5 <S.ii,104>; ibid. vii,7 <S.ii,112-5>) the series runs back to nāmarūpapaccayā salāyatanam, viññānapaccayā nāmarūpam, and then forward again with

nāmarūpapaccayā viññānam. ('with name-&-matter as condition, six bases; with consciousness as condition, name-&-matter; ...with name-&-matter as condition, consciousness.') This is remarked upon by the Buddha (Dīgha ii,1 & Nidāna/Abhisamaya Samy. vii,5) as follows: Paccudāvattati kho idam viññānam nāmarūpamhā nāparam gacchati; ettāvatā jāyetha vā jīyetha vā mīyetha vā cavetha vā uppajjetha vā yadidam nāmarūpapaccayā viññānam, viññānapaccayā nāmarūpam, nāmarūpapaccayā salāyatanam, ('This consciousness turns back from name-&-matter, it does not go further; thus far may one be born or age or die or fall or arise; that is to say, with name-&-matter as condition, consciousness; with consciousness as condition, name-&-matter; with name-&-matter as condition, six bases;...') and so on. In this formulation it is clear that there is no 'first item with no item preceding it'—nāmarūpa depends upon viññāna, and viññāna depends upon nāmarūpa, each being determined by the other. If the puthujjana decides upon viññāna as 'self', he finds its permanence undermined by the impermanence of nāmarūpa; and if he decides upon nāmarūpa as 'self', its permanence is undermined by the impermanence of viññāna. (We may note in passing that the traditional interpretation of nāmarūpa as 'mind-&-matter'—see Visuddhimagga Ch. XVIII—is quite mistaken. Rūpa is certainly 'matter' [or perhaps 'substance'], but nāma is not 'mind'. Further discussion is out of place here, but see NĀMA. We may, provisionally, translate as 'name-&-matter'.)

18. Since to be sankhata and to be paticcasamuppanna are one and the same thing, we see that each item in the series of §17 is preceded by a sankhāra upon which it depends, and that therefore the total collection of items in the series depends upon the total collection of their respective sankhārā. In this sense we might say that the total collection of items is sankhārapaccayā. But since this statement means only that each and every particular item of the series depends upon a particular sankhāra, it does not say anything fresh. Sankhārapaccayā, however, can be understood in a different way: instead of 'dependent upon a collection of particular sankhārā', we can take it as meaning 'dependent upon the fact that there are such things as sankhārā'. In the first sense sankhārapaccayā is the equivalent of paticcasamuppanna ('dependently arisen'), and applies to a given series as a collection of particular items; in the second sense sankhārapaccayā is the equivalent of paticcasamuppāda ('dependent arising'), and applies to a given series as the exemplification of a structural principle. In the second sense it is true quite generally of all formulations of paticcasamuppāda, and not merely of this formulation (since any other formulation will consist of some other set of particular items). Paticcasamuppāda is, in fact, a structural principle (formally stated in the first Sutta passage at the head of this Note), and not one or another specific chain of sankhārā. It is thus an over-simplification to regard any one given formulation in particular terms as paticcasamuppāda. Every such formulation exemplifies the principle: none states it. Any paticcasamuppāda series, purely in virtue of its being an exemplification of paticcasamuppāda, depends upon the fact that there are such things as sankhārā; and a fortiori the series of §17 depends upon the fact of the existence of sankhārā: if there were no such things as sankhārā there would be no such thing as paticcasamuppāda at all, and therefore no such thing as this individual formulation of it.

19. But though it is an over-simplification to regard any one series as paticcasamuppāda, it is not entirely wrong. For we find a certain definite set of items (viññāna, nāmarūpa, salāyatana, phassa, and so on) recurring, with little variation (Dīgha ii,2 <D.ii,56>,[9] for example, omits salāyatana), in almost every formulation of paticcasamuppāda in particular terms. The reason for this recurrence is that, though paticcasamuppāda is a structural principle, the Buddha's Teaching is concerned with a particular problem, and therefore with a particular application of this principle. The problem is suffering and its cessation; the sphere in which this problem arises is the sphere of experience, of sentient existence or being; and the particular items, viññāna, nāmarūpa, and the rest, are the fundamental categories of this sphere. In consequence of this, the series, nāmarūpapaccayā viññānam, viññānapaccayā nāmarūpam, nāmarūpapaccayā salāyatanam, salāyatanapaccayā phasso, and so forth, is the fundamental exemplification of paticcasamuppāda in the Buddha's Teaching, and the particular items are the basic sankhārā. (See KAMMA for a Sutta passage where the paticcasamuppāda is exemplified on an entirely different level. Failure to understand that paticcasamuppāda is essentially a structural principle with widely different applications leads to confusion.) These particular items, then, being the fundamental categories in terms of which experience is described, are present in all experience; and this basic formulation of paticcasamuppāda tells us that they are all dependent, ultimately, upon viññāna (this is obviously so, since without consciousness there is no experience).[h] But since all these items, including viññāna, are dependent upon sankhārā, the series as a whole is sankhārapaccayā. (Though this is true in both the senses discussed in §18, the first sense yields us merely a tautology, and it is only the second sense of sankhārapaccayā that interests us.) If, therefore, we wish to express this fact, all we have to say is sankhārapaccayā viññānam. Since sankhārapaccayā (in the sense that interests us) is the equivalent of paticcasamuppāda, sankhārapaccayā viññānam presumably means 'viññāna is paticcasamuppāda'. Let us try to expand this phrase.

20. Any given experience involves paticcasamuppāda, but it may do so in a number of different ways at once, each of which cuts across the others. Thus (experience of) the body is inseparable from (experience of) breathing, and (experience of) speaking is inseparable from (experience of) thinking; and both (experience of) breathing and (experience of) thinking are therefore sankhārā. But in all experience, as its fundamental categories and basic sankhārā, there are viññāna, nāmarūpa, and so on. Thus whenever there is breathing (kāyasankhāra), or thinking (vacīsankhāra), or, of course, perception and feeling (cittasankhāra), there are viññāna, nāmarūpa, and so on, which also are sankhārā. Similarly, all experience is intentional: it is inseparable (except for the arahat) from puññābhisankhāra, apuññābhisankhāra, and āneñjābhisankhāra. But in all experience, once again, there are viññāna, nāmarūpa, and so on, its fundamental categories and basic sankhārā.[i] In other words, any exemplification of paticcasamuppāda in the sphere of experience can be re-stated in the form of the fundamental exemplification of paticcasamuppāda in the sphere of experience, which is,

as it must be, that beginning with viññāna. Thus viññāna and paticcasamupāda are one. This, then, is the meaning of sankhārapaccayā viññānam; this is why 'with determinations as condition there is consciousness'.

21. This discussion may perhaps have made it clear why sankhārā in the usual twelve-factored paticcasamuppāda series can include such a mixed collection of things as intentions of merit, demerit, and imperturbability, in-&-out-breaths, thinking-&-pondering, and perception and feeling. These things, one and all, are things that other things depend on, and as such are sankhārā of one kind or another; and so long as there are sankhārā of any kind at all there is viññāna and everything dependent upon viññāna, in other words there is paticcasamuppāda. (We may ignore the irrelevant exception of āyusankhāra and saññāvedayitanirodha, lying outside the sphere of experience. See Majjhima v,3 <M.i,295>.) Conversely, viññāna (and therefore paticcasamuppāda) ceases to exist when sankhārā of all kinds have ceased. (It might be asked why kāyasankhāra and the other two are singled out for special mention as sankhārā. The answer seems to be that it is in order to show progressive cessation of sankhārā in the attainment of saññāvedayitanirodha—see Majjhima v,4 <M.i,301> and Vedanā Samy. ii,1 <S.iv,216>—or, more simply, to show that so long as there is paticcasamuppāda there is body, speech, or [at least] mind.)

22. It should be borne in mind that paticcasamuppāda anulomam ('with the grain'—the samudaya sacca) always refers to the puthujjana, and patilomam ('against the grain'—the nirodha sacca) to the arahat. Avijjāpaccayā sankhārā is true of the puthujjana, and avijjānirodhā sankhāranirodho is true of the arahat. This might provoke the objection that so long as the arahat is living he breathes, thinks-&-ponders, and perceives and feels; and consequently that cessation of avijjā does not bring about general cessation of sankhārā. It is right to say that with a living arahat there is still consciousness, name-&-matter, six bases, contact, and feeling, but only in a certain sense. Actually and in truth (saccato thetato, which incidentally has nothing to do with paramattha sacca, 'truth in the highest [or absolute] sense', a fallacious notion much used in the traditional exegesis—see PARAMATTHA SACCA) there is, even in this very life, no arahat to be found (e.g. Avyākata Samy. 2 <S.iv,384>—see PARAMATTHA SACCA §4 [a]); and though there is certainly consciousness and so on, there is no apparent 'self' for whom there is consciousness. Yena viññānena Tathāgatam paññāpayamāno paññāpeyya, tam viññānam Tathāgatassa pahīnam ucchinnamūlam tālāvatthukatam anabhāvakatam āyatim anuppādadhammam; viññānasankhāya vimutto kho mahārāja Tathāgato... ('That consciousness by which the Tathāgata might be manifested has been eliminated by the Tathāgata, cut off at the root, dug up, made non-existent, it is incapable of future arising; the Tathāgata, great king, is free from reckoning as consciousness...') (Avyākata Samy. 1 <S.iv,379>). There is no longer any consciousness pointing (with feeling and the rest) to an existing 'self' and with which that 'self' might be identified. And in the Kevaddhasutta (Dīgha i,11 <D.i,223>), viññānam anidassanam,[j] which is the arahat's 'non-indicative consciousness', is also viññānassa nirodho. While the arahat yet lives, his

consciousness is niruddha, or 'ceased', for the reason that it is ananuruddha-appativiruddha (Majjhima ii,1 <M.i,65>). In the same way, when there is no longer any apparent 'self' to be contacted, contact (phassa) is said to have ceased: Phusanti phassā upadhim paticca / Nirūpadhim kena phuseyyum phassā. ('Contacts contact dependent on ground -- How should contacts contact a groundless one?') (Udāna ii,4 <Ud.12> This matter has already been touched upon in §§10 & 15. (See also VIÑÑĀNA & PHASSA.)

23. Sankhārapaccayā viññānam, as we now see, can be taken to mean that any specific series of sankhāra-sankhatadhamma pairs (one or more) of which the first contains viññāna is dependent upon the very fact that there are sankhārā at all. Avijjāpaccayā sankhārā will then mean that the very fact that there are sankhārā at all is dependent upon avijjā; and with cessation of avijjā—avijjānirodhā—all sankhārā whatsoever will cease—sankhāranirodho. This is perhaps most simply stated in the lines from the Vinaya Mahāvagga: Ye dhammā hetuppabhavā / Tesam hetum Tathāgato āha / Tesañ ca yo nirodho / Evamvādī mahāsamano. ('Of things originating with conditions, The Tathāgata has told the condition, And what their cessation is. The Great Recluse speaks thus.') Here, Ye dhammā hetuppabhavā are all things whatsoever that depend upon hetū ('conditions'—synonymous with paccayā). Since each of these things depends upon its respective hetu (as in any paticcasamuppāda formulation), it shares the same fate as its hetu—it is present when the hetu< is present, and absent when the hetu is absent. Thus the hetu of them taken as a whole (all things that are hetuppabhavā) is no different from the hetu of their individual hetū taken as a whole. When there are hetū at all there are hetuppabhavā dhammā, when there are no hetū there are no hetuppabhavā dhammā; and hetū, being nothing else than sankhārā, have avijjā as condition. Tesam hetum ('their condition'), therefore, is avijjā. To see the Dhamma is to see paticcasamuppāda (as noted in §7), and avijjā is therefore non-seeing of paticcasamuppāda. Avijjāpaccayā sankhārā will thus mean 'paticcasamuppāda depends upon non-seeing of paticcasamuppāda'. Conversely, seeing of paticcasamuppāda is cessation of avijjā, and when paticcasamuppāda is seen it loses its condition ('non-seeing of paticcasamuppāda') and ceases. And this is cessation of all hetuppabhavā dhammā. Thus tesam yo nirodho is cessation of avijjā.

24. We must now again ask the question of §17: 'What about the first item of the paticcasamuppāda formulation—since there is no item preceding it, is it therefore permanent?'. The first item is now avijjā, and the Buddha himself answers the question in a Sutta of the Anguttara Nikāya (X,vii,1 <A.v,113>). This answer is to the effect that avijjā depends upon not hearing and not practising the Dhamma. It is not, however, the only way of answering the question, as we may see from the Sammāditthisutta (Majjhima i,9 <M.i,54>). Here we find that avijjā depends upon āsavā, and āsavā depend upon avijjā. But one of the āsavā is, precisely, avijj'āsava, which seems to indicate that avijjā depends upon avijjā.[k] Let us see if this is so. We know that sankhārā depend upon avijjā—avijjāpaccayā sankhārā. But since something that something else depends upon is a sankhāra, it is evident that avijjā is a sankhāra. And, as before, sankhārā depend upon avijjā. Thus avijjā depends

upon avijjā. Far from being a logical trick, this result reflects a structural feature of the first importance.[l] Before discussing it, however, we must note that this result leads us to expect that any condition upon which avijjā depends will itself involve avijjā implicitly or explicitly. (In terms of §23 the foregoing argument runs thus. Avijjāpaccayā sankhārā may be taken as 'with non-seeing of paticcasamuppāda as condition there is paticcasamuppāda'. But this itself is seen only when paticcasamuppāda is seen; for paticcasamuppāda cannot be seen as paticcasamuppanna before paticcasamuppāda is seen. To see avijjā or non-seeing, avijjā or non-seeing must cease. Avijjā therefore comes first; for, being its own condition, it can have no anterior term that does not itself involve avijjā.)

25. The faculty of self-observation or reflexion is inherent in the structure of our experience. Some degree of reflexion is almost never entirely absent in our waking life, and in the practice of mindfulness it is deliberately cultivated. To describe it simply, we may say that one part of our experience is immediately concerned with the world as its object, while at the same time another part of our experience is concerned with the immediate experience as its object. This second part we may call reflexive experience. (Reflexion is discussed in greater detail in Shorter Notes & FUNDAMENTAL STRUCTURE.) It will be clear that when there is avijjā there is avijjā in both parts of our experience, the immediate and the reflexive; for though, in reflexion, experience is divided within itself, it is still one single, even if complex, structure. The effect of this may be seen from the Sabbāsavasutta (Majjhima i,2 <M.i,8>) wherein certain wrong views are spoken of. Three of them are: Attanā va attānam sañjānāmī ti; Attanā va anattānam sañjānāmī ti; and Anattanā va attānam sañjānāmī ti. ('With self I perceive self; With self I perceive not-self; With not-self I perceive self.') A man with avijjā, practising reflexion, may identify 'self' with both reflexive and immediate experience, or with reflexive experience alone, or with immediate experience alone. He does not conclude that neither is 'self', and the reason is clear: it is not possible to get outside avijjā by means of reflexion alone; for however much a man may 'step back' from himself to observe himself he cannot help taking avijjā with him. There is just as much avijjā in the self-observer as there is in the self-observed. (See CETANĀ [b].) And this is the very reason why avijjā is so stable in spite of its being sankhatā.[m] Simply by reflexion the puthujjana can never observe avijjā and at the same time recognize it as avijjā; for in reflexion avijjā is the Judge as well as the Accused, and the verdict is always 'Not Guilty'. In order to put an end to avijjā, which is a matter of recognizing avijjā as avijjā, it is necessary to accept on trust from the Buddha a Teaching that contradicts the direct evidence of the puthujjana's reflexion. This is why the Dhamma is patisotagāmī (Majjhima iii,6 <M.i,168>), or 'going against the stream'. The Dhamma gives the puthujjana the outside view of avijjā, which is inherently unobtainable for him by unaided reflexion (in the ariyasāvaka this view has, as it were, 'taken' like a graft, and is perpetually available). Thus it will be seen that avijjā in reflexive experience (actual or potential) is the condition for avijjā in immediate experience. It is possible, also, to take a second step back and reflect upon reflexion; but there is still avijjā in this self-observation of self-observation, and we have a third layer of avijjā protecting the first

two. And there is no reason in theory why we should stop here; but however far we go we shall not get beyond avijjā. The hierarchy of avijjā can also be seen from the Suttas in the following way.

Katamā pan'āvuso avijjā....

Yam kho āvuso dukkhe aññānam,

dukkhasamudaye aññānam,

dukkhanirodhe aññānam,

dukkhanirodhagāminīpatipadāya aññānam,

ayam vuccat'āvuso avijjā. (Majjhima i,9 <M.i,54>)

Katamañ ca bhikkhave dukkham ariyasaccam...

Katamañ ca bhikkhave dukkhasamudayam ariyasaccam...

Katamañ ca bhikkhave dukkhanirodham ariyasaccam...

Katamañ ca bhikkhave dukkhanirodhagāminīpatipadā ariyasaccam.

Ayam eva ariyo atthangiko maggo,

seyyathīdam sammāditthi...

Katamā ca bhikkhave sammāditthi...

Yam kho bhikkhave dukkhe ñānam,

dukkhasamudaye ñānam,

dukkhanirodhe ñānam,

dukkhanirodhagāminīpatipadāya ñānam,

ayam vuccati bhikkhave sammāditthi.

(Dīgha ii,9 <D.ii,305-12>)

But which, friends, is nescience?...

That which is non-knowledge of suffering,

non-knowledge of arising of suffering,

non-knowledge of ceasing of suffering,

non-knowledge of the way that leads to ceasing of suffering,

this, friends, is called nescience.

And which, monks, is the noble truth of suffering...

And which, monks, is the noble truth of arising of suffering...

And which, monks, is the noble truth of ceasing of suffering...

And which, monks, is the noble truth of the way that leads to ceasing of suffering?

Just this noble eight-factored path,

that is to say: right view...

And which, monks, is right view?...

That which is knowledge of suffering,

knowledge of arising of suffering,

knowledge of ceasing of suffering,

knowledge of the way that leads to ceasing of suffering,

this, monks, is called right view.

Avijjā is non-knowledge of the four noble truths. Sammāditthi is knowledge of the four noble truths. But sammāditthi is part of the four noble truths. Thus avijjā is non-knowledge of sammāditthi; that is to say, non-knowledge of knowledge of the four noble truths. But since sammāditthi, which is knowledge of the four noble truths, is part of the four noble truths, so avijjā is non-knowledge of knowledge of knowledge of the four noble truths. And so we can go on indefinitely. But the point to be noted is that each of these successive stages represents an additional layer of (potentially) reflexive avijjā. Non-knowledge of knowledge of the four noble truths is non-knowledge of vijjā, and non-knowledge of vijjā is failure to recognize avijjā as avijjā. Conversely, it is evident that when avijjā is once recognized anywhere in this structure it must vanish everywhere; for knowledge of the four noble truths entails knowledge of knowledge of the four noble truths, and vijjā ('science') replaces avijjā ('nescience') throughout.[n]

Footnotes:

[a] A present intention (or action) is certainly determined, but it is determined by a superior (or more reflexive) intention that also is present: it is, therefore, not pre-determined. (To be future is essentially to be under-determined. See FUNDAMENTAL STRUCTURE.) Every voluntary (or reflexive) intention (i.e. every volition or act of will) is perpetually revocable, and every involuntary (or immediate) intention (i.e. every inclination or tendency) is voluntarily modifiable. (There is a mistaken idea, common [and convenient] enough, that our inclinations are in the nature of impulsions to which we can only submit, rather as a stone passively suffers the pressure that moves it. But, far from being an imposition that must be passively suffered, an inclination is an active seeking of a still only possible state of affairs. Cf. 'D'ailleurs, si l'acte n'est pas pur mouvement, il doit se définir par une intention. De quelque manière que l'on considère cette intention, elle ne peut être qu'un dépassement du donné vers un résultat à obtenir. ...Lorsque les psychologues, par exemple, font de la tendance un état de fait, ils ne voient pas qu'ils lui ôtent tout caractère d'appétit [ad-petitio].' --- J.-P. Sartre, L'Être et le Néant, Gallimard, Paris 1943, p. 556. ['Besides, if the act is not pure movement, it must be defined by an intention. In whatever way we may consider this intention, it can only be a passing beyond the given towards a result to be obtained. ...When the psychologists, for example, turn tendency into a state of fact, they fail to see that they are taking away from it all character of appetite <ad-petitio>.']) Cf. CETANĀ [e]. [Back to text]

[b] The anguish of the moment when a man apprehends that he is going to die is evidence of this perpetually present sankhāradukkha (see Vedanā Samy. ii,1, quoted in NIBBĀNA), and has to do with the changing joys and miseries of this life only in so far as they are, in fact, changing.[cf.17] It is this anguish that makes deliberate suicide, even if it is to be painless, such a difficult enterprise. Only the arahat has no anguish in the face of death:

Nābhinandāmi maranam
nābhinandāmi jīvitam,
Kālañ ca patikankhāmi
nibbisam bhatako yathā;
Nābhinandāmi maranam
nābhinandāmi jīvitam,
Kālañ ca patikankhāmi
sampajāno patissato.

I delight not in death,

I delight not in life,

I await my time

like a hireling his wage;

I delight not in death,

I delight not in life,

I await my time

composed and aware.

Theragāthā vv. 606 & 607. [Back to text]

[c] This, naturally, is not to be taken as denying the possibility of evidence for re-birth quite independent of what is said in the Suttas. (A curious view, that the Buddha was an agnostic on the question of re-birth and refused to pronounce on it, seems to be gaining currency. Even a very slight acquaintance with the Suttas will correct this idea. See e.g. Majjhima ii,2 <M.i,73-7>.) [Back to text]

[d] While maintaining the necessary reservations (see Preface) about his views, we may observe that Heidegger, in his Sein und Zeit (Halle 1927, p. 374), subordinates the ideas of birth and death to that of being, within the unity of our existential structure. I exist, I am, as born; and, as born, I am as liable at every moment to die. (This book, in English translation [by J. Macquarrie & E. S. Robinson, Being and Time, SCM Press, London 1962], has only lately [1965] become available to me: I find that, where they disagree, Heidegger, as against Sartre, is generally in the right.) [Back to text]

[e] It may seem, upon occasion, that sankhāra and dhamma coincide. Thus the pañc'upādānakkhandhā are what attavād'upādāna depends on, and they are therefore sankhārā. But also it is with them that attā is identified, and they are thus dhammā. This situation, however, is telescoped; for in attavād'upādāna, which is a complex affair, what is primarily (though implicitly) identified as attā is upādāna, and the pañc'upādānakkhandhā are involved only in the second place. See PARAMATTHA SACCA §§3&4. (This, of course, is not the only way in which they are sankhārā, though §3 might give that impression. The reciprocal dependence of viññāna and nāmarūpa—with or without upādāna—is another. And see also what follows.) The word upādāna (lit. 'taking up') has a certain ambiguity about it. As well as 'holding' (seizing, grasping), which is eminently a characteristic of fire no less than of passion (the upādāna of pañc'upādānakkhandhā is chandarāga, 'desire-&-lust'),

the word can also mean the fuel of a fire (Majjhima viii,2 <M.i,487>; Avyākata Samy. 9 <S.iv,399-400>). The burning fuel, being held by the 'holding' fire, is itself the fire's 'holding'. The fire is burning, the fuel is burning: two aspects of the same thing. [Back to text]

[f] This Sutta shows that sankhārā—here cetanā—determine not only rūpa, vedanā, saññā, and viññāna, but also sankhārā: Sankhāre sankhārattāya sankhatam abhisankharonti.... Sankhatam abhisankharontī ti kho bhikkhave tasmā Sankhārā ti vuccanti.[6] The question might arise whether these determinations that are determined by determinations do themselves determine (other) things or not. Are there determinations that do not, in fact, determine anything? The answer is that there cannot be. A determination is essentially negative—'Omnis determinatio est negatio' said Spinoza --, and a negative, a negation, only exists as a denial of something positive. The positive thing's existence is asserted by the negative in the very act of denying it (just as atheism, which exists as a denial of theism, is evidence that theism exists); and its essence (or nature) is defined by the negative in stating what it is not (if we know what atheism is we shall know at once what theism is). A negative thus determines both the existence and the essence of a positive. In what way is cetanā negative? A sheet of paper lying on a table is determined as a sheet of paper by its potentialities or possibilities—i.e. by what it is for. It can be used for writing on, for drawing on, for wrapping up something, for wiping up a mess, for covering another sheet, for burning, and so on. But though it can be used for these things, it is not actually being used for any of them. Thus these potentialities deny the object lying on the table as it actually is (which is why they are potentialities and not actualities); nevertheless if it were not for the fact that these particular potentialities are associated with the object on the table we should not see the object as a 'sheet of paper'. These potentialities, which are not the object, determine it for what it is. We know what a thing is when we know what it is for. Thus these potentialities can also be understood as the significance or purpose of the object, and therefore as its intention(s). (This account is necessarily restricted to the crudely utilitarian level, but will serve to give an indication.) One of these intentions, though of a special kind (present only when there is avijjā), is that the object is for me—it is mine, etam mama. And all these intentions are nothing more nor less than cetanā. (See also CETANĀ & ATTĀ.) Determinations generally, whether they are cetanā or not, have two essential characteristics: (i) they are bound up with what they determine and (ii) they are not what they determine (or not wholly). And, of course, determinations in their turn require other determinations to determine them; which is why sankhārā are themselves sankhatā. Thus, a sheet of paper is for wiping up a mess, which is for having my room clean, which is for my personal comfort, which is for attending to my concerns, which is for my future comfort. Cf. Heidegger, op. cit., p. 63 et seq. [Back to text]

[g] So far are the expressions cittasankhāra and manosankhāra from being interchangeable that their respective definitions actually seem to be mutually exclusive. Cittasankhāra is saññā ca vedanā ca; manosankhāra is manosañcetanā; and the passage from the Salāyatana Samyutta (ix,10) quoted in §5

makes an explicit distinction between vedanā, cetanā, and saññā. But the two expressions are really quite different in kind, and are not to be directly opposed to each other at all. (i) The citta of cittasankhāra is not synonymous with the mano of manosankhāra: citta, here, means (conscious) experience generally, whereas mano distinguishes thought from word and deed. (ii) The word sankhāra has a different sense in the two cases: in the first it means 'determination' in a quite general sense (§11); in the second it is a particular kind of determination, viz intention or volition. (iii) The two compounds are grammatically different: cittasankhāra is a dutiya (accusative) tappurisa, cittam + sankhāro, 'that which determines mind (citta)'; manosankhāra is a tatiya (instrumentive) tappurisa, manasā + sankhāro, 'determination (intention or volition) by mind (mano)', i.e. mental action (as opposed to verbal and bodily action)—cf. Majjhima vi,7 <M.i,389>. Clearly enough (ii) and (iii) will apply mutatis mutandis to the two senses of the expressions kāyasankhāra and vacīsankhāra. [Back to text]

[h] Viññāna, being the presence of the phenomenon, of what is present, is negative as regards essence. Other things can be described directly by way of their positive essence as this or that, but not consciousness. Consciousness, however, is necessary before any other thing can be described; for if something is to be described it must first be present in experience (real or imaginary), and its presence is consciousness. Since consciousness can be described only as that upon which other things depend, it is the existential determination and nothing else. This will explain also what follows. (Note that the word existential is used here in the simple sense of a thing's existence as opposed to its essence, and not in the pregnant sense of bhava. See VIÑÑĀNA.) [Back to text]

[i] See also the heterogeneous series of items (pariyesanā, lābha, and so on) appearing in the middle of the paticcasamuppāda formulation of Dīgha ii,2 <D.ii,58>. [Back to text]

[j] In the line Viññānam anidassanam anantam sabbatopaham, ('Non-indicative consciousness, limitless, wholly non-originating.') the compound sabbatopaham (in Majjhima v,9 <M.i,329>, sabbatopabham) is probably sabbato + apaham (or apabham) from apahoti, a + pahoti (or apabhavati [apabhoti]). (Note that in the Majjhima passage preceding this line there is a Burmese v.l., nāpahosi for nāhosi.) [Back to text]

[k] Cf. Avijjā kho bhikkhu eko dhammo yassa pahānā bhikkhuno avijjā pahīyati vijjā uppajjatī ti. ('Nescience, monk, is the one thing with a monk's elimination of which nescience is eliminated and science arises') Salāyatana Samy. viii,7 <S.iv,50> [Back to text]

[l] On the charge of 'circularity' that common sense may like to bring here, see Heidegger, op. cit., pp. 314-6. [Back to text]

[m] The Anguttara Sutta (X,vii,1) referred to in §24 begins thus: Purimā bhikkhave koti na paññāyati avijjāya, Ito pubbe avijjā nāhosi, atha pacchā sambhavī ti. Evañ ce tam bhikkhave vuccati, atha ca pana paññāyati, Idapaccayā avijjā ti. Avijjam p'aham bhikkhave sāhāram vadāmi, no anāhāram. ('An earliest point of nescience, monks, is not manifest: 'Before this, nescience was not; then afterwards it came into being'. Even if that is said thus, monks, nevertheless it is manifest: 'With this as condition, nescience'. I say, monks, that nescience, too, is with sustenance, not without sustenance.') (In the P.T.S. edition, for c'etam read ce tam and adjust punctuation.) [Back to text]

[n] Compare also the following: Rūpā [Saddā ... Dhammā] loke piyarūpam sātarūpam, etth'esā tanhā uppajjamānā uppajjati ettha nivisamānā nivisati ... Rūpatanhā [Saddatanhā ... Dhammatanhā] loke piyarūpam sātarūpam, etth'esā tanhā uppajjamānā uppajjati ettha nivisamānā nivisati. ('Visible forms [Sounds ... Images (Ideas)] are dear and agreeable in the world; herein this craving arises, herein it adheres ... Craving-for-visible-forms [Craving-for-sounds ... Craving-for-images (-ideas)] is dear and agreeable in the world; herein this craving arises, herein it adheres.')

And the converse:

...etth'esā tanhā pahīyamānā pahīyati ettha nirujjhamānā nirujjhati. ('...herein this craving is eliminated, herein it ceases.') Dīgha ii,9 <D.ii,308-11>

Not only is there craving, but there is craving for craving as a condition for craving: indifference to craving destroys it. (Tanhā, be it noted, is not the coarse hankering after what we do not have [which is abhijjhā or covetousness], but the subtle craving for more of what we have. In particular, I am because I crave to be, and with cessation of craving-for-being [bhavatanhā, which is itself dependent on avijjā and, like it, without first beginning—Anguttara X,vii,2 <A.v,116>], 'I am' ceases. Bhavatanhā, in fact, is the craving for more craving on which craving depends.) [Back to text]

ATAKKĀVACARA

Sometimes translated as 'unattainable by reasoning' or 'not accessible to doubt'. But the Cartesian cogito ergo sum is also, in a sense, inaccessible to doubt; for I cannot doubt my existence without tacitly assuming it. This merely shows, however, that one cannot get beyond the cogito by doubting it. And the Dhamma is beyond the cogito. The cogito, then, can be reached by doubt—one doubts and doubts until one finds what one cannot doubt, what is inaccessible to doubt, namely the cogito. But the Dhamma cannot be reached in this way. Thus the Dhamma, though certainly inaccessible to doubt, is more than that; it is altogether beyond the sphere of doubt. The rationalist, however, does not even reach the inadequate cogito, or if he does reach it[a] he overshoots the mark (atidhāvati—Itivuttaka II,ii,12 <Iti. 43>); for he starts from the axiom that everything can be doubted (including, of course, the cogito). Cf. also Majjhima xi,2 <M.ii,232-3> & i,2 <M.i,8>. See NIBBĀNA.

Footnotes:

[a] When he is being professional, the rationalist will not allow that what is inaccessible to doubt is even intelligible, and he does not permit himself to consider the cogito; but in his unprofessional moments, when the personal problem becomes insistent, he exorcizes the cogito by supposing that it is a rational proposition, which enables him to doubt it, and then to deny it. 'Les positivistes ne font qu'exorciser le spectre de l'Absolu, qui reparaît cependant toujours et vient les troubler dans leur repos.' -- - J. Grenier, op. cit., p. 44. ('The positivists do nothing but exorcize the spectre of the Absolute, which however always reappears and comes to trouble them in their sleep.') For Grenier, the Absolute is not (as with Bradley) the totality of experiences, but is to be reached at the very heart of personality by a thought transcending the relativity of all things, perceiving therein a void (pp. 100-1). Precisely—and what, ultimately, is this Absolute but avijjā, self-dependent and without first beginning? And what, therefore, does the Buddha teach but that this Absolute is not absolute, that it can be brought to an end? See A NOTE ON PATICCASAMUPPĀDA §§24 & 25. [Back to text]

ATTĀ

In the arahat's reflexion what appears reflexively is only pañcakkhandhā, which he calls 'myself' simply for want of any other term. But in the puthujjana's reflexion what appears reflexively is pañc'upādānakkhandhā, or sakkāya; and sakkāya (q.v.), when it appears reflexively, appears (in one way or another) as being and belonging to an extra-temporal changeless 'self' (i.e. a soul). The puthujjana confuses (as the arahat does not) the self-identity of simple reflexion—as with a mirror, where the same thing is seen from two points of view at once ('the thing itself', 'the selfsame thing')—with the 'self' as the subject that appears in reflexion—'my self' (i.e. 'I itself', i.e. 'the I that appears when I reflect'). For the puthujjana the word self is necessarily ambiguous, since he cannot conceive of any reflexion not involving reflexive experience of the subject—i.e. not involving manifestation of a

soul. Since the self of self-identity is involved in the structure of the subject appearing in reflexion ('my self' = 'I itself'), it is sometimes taken (when recourse is not had to a supposed Transcendental Being) as the basic principle of all subjectivity. The subject is then conceived as a hypostasized play of reflexions of one kind or another, the hypostasis itself somehow deriving from (or being motivated by) the play of reflexions. The puthujjana, however, does not see that attainment of arahattā removes all trace of the desire or conceit '(I) am', leaving the entire reflexive structure intact—in other words, that subjectivity is a parasite on experience. Indeed, it is by his very failure to see this that he remains a puthujjana.

The question of self-identity arises either when a thing is seen from two points of view at once (as in reflexion,[a] for example; or when it is at the same time the object of two different senses—I am now both looking at my pen and touching it with my fingers, and I might wonder if it is the same pen in the two simultaneous experiences [see RŪPA]), or when a thing is seen to endure in time, when the question may be asked if it continues to be the same thing (the answer being, that a thing at any one given level of generality is the invariant of a transformation—see ANICCA [a] & FUNDAMENTAL STRUCTURE—, and that 'to remain the same' means just this).[b] With the question of a thing's self-identity (which presents no particular difficulty) the Buddha's Teaching of anattā has nothing whatsoever to do: anattā is purely concerned with 'self' as subject. (See PATICCASAMUPPĀDA [c].)

'Self' as subject can be briefly discussed as follows. As pointed out in PHASSA [b], the puthujjana thinks 'things are mine (i.e. are my concern) because I am, because I exist'. He takes the subject ('I') for granted; and if things are appropriated, that is because he, the subject, exists. The ditthisampanna (or sotāpanna) sees, however, that this is the wrong way round. He sees that the notion 'I am' arises because things (so long as there is any trace of avijjā) present themselves as 'mine'. This significance (or intention, or determination), 'mine' or 'for me'—see A NOTE ON PATICCASAMUPPĀDA [e]—, is, in a sense, a void, a negative aspect of the present thing (or existing phenomenon), since it simply points to a subject; and the puthujjana, not seeing impermanence (or more specifically, not seeing the impermanence of this ubiquitous determination), deceives himself into supposing that there actually exists a subject—'self'—independent of the object (which latter, as the ditthisampanna well understands, is merely the positive aspect of the phenomenon—that which is 'for me'). In this way it may be seen that the puthujjana's experience, pañc'upādānakkhandhā, has a negative aspect (the subject) and a positive aspect (the object). But care is needed; for, in fact, the division subject/object is not a simple negative/positive division. If it were, only the positive would be present (as an existing phenomenon) and the negative (the subject) would not be present at all—it would simply not exist. But the subject is, in a sense, phenomenal: it (or he) is an existing phenomenal negative, a negative that appears; for the puthujjana asserts the present reality of his 'self' ('the irreplaceable being that I am'). The fact is, that the intention or determination 'mine', pointing to a subject, is a complex structure involving avijjā. The subject is not simply a negative in relation to the positive object: it (or

he) is master over the object, and is thus a kind of positive negative, a master who does not appear explicitly but who, somehow or other, nevertheless exists.[c] It is this master whom the puthujjana, when he engages in reflexion, is seeking to identify—in vain![d] This delusive mastery of subject over object must be rigorously distinguished from the reflexive power of control or choice that is exercised in voluntary action by puthujjana and arahat alike.

For a discussion of sabbe dhammā anattā see DHAMMA.

Footnotes:

[a] In immediate experience the thing is present; in reflexive experience the thing is again present, but as implicit in a more general thing. Thus in reflexion the thing is twice present, once immediately and once reflexively. This is true of reflexion both in the loose sense (as reflection or discursive thinking) and a fortiori in the stricter sense (for the reason that reflection involves reflexion, though not vice versa). See MANO and also VIÑÑĀNA [d]. [Back to text]

[b] 'It takes two to make the same, and the least we can have is some change of event in a self-same thing, or the return to that thing from some suggested difference.'—F. H. Bradley, The Principles of Logic, Oxford (1883) 1958, I,v,§1. [Back to text]

[c] With the exception of consciousness (which cannot be directly qualified—see VIÑÑĀNA [c]—every determination has a positive as well as a negative aspect: it is positive in so far as it is in itself something, and negative in so far as it is not what it determines. This is evident enough in the case of a thing's potentialities, which are given as images (or absents) together with the real (or present) thing. But the positive negativity of the subject, which is what concerns us here, is by no means such a simple affair: the subject presents itself (or himself), at the same time, as certainly more elusive, and yet as no less real, than the object.

Images are present as absent (or negative) reality, but as images (or images of images) they are present, or real. Also, being plural, they are more elusive, individually, than reality, which is singular (see NĀMA). The imaginary, therefore, in any given part of it, combines reality with elusiveness; and it

is thus easily supposed that what is imaginary is subjective and what is real is objective. But imagination survives the disappearance of subjectivity (asmimāna, asmī ti chanda): Samvijjati kho āvuso Bhagavato mano, vijānāti Bhagavā manasā dhammam, chandarāgo Bhagavato n'atthi, suvimuttacitto Bhagavā. ('The Auspicious One, friend, possesses a mind (mano); the Auspicious One cognizes images (ideas) with the mind; desire-&-lust for the Auspicious One there is not; the Auspicious One is wholly freed in heart (citta). (Cf. Salāyatana Samy. xviii,5, quoted at PHASSA [d].)') Salāyatana Samy. xviii,5 <S.iv.164> The elusiveness of images is not at all the same as the elusiveness of the subject. (It is in this sense that science, in claiming to deal only with reality, calls itself objective.) [Back to text]

[d] 'I urge the following dilemma. If your Ego has no content, it is nothing, and it therefore is not experienced; but if on the other hand it is anything, it is a phenomenon in time.'—F. H. Bradley, Appearance and Reality, Oxford (1893) 1962, Ch. XXIII. [Back to text]

ANICCA

Aniccatā or 'impermanence', in the Buddha's Teaching, is sometimes taken as a 'doctrine of universal flux', or continuous change of condition. This is a disastrous over-simplification—see PATICCASAMUPPĀDA [c].

In the Khandha Samyutta (iv,6 <S.iii,38>) it is said of rūpa, vedanā, saññā, sankhārā, and viññāna: uppādo paññāyati; vayo paññāyati; thitassa aññathattam paññāyati. ('Arising (appearance) is manifest; disappearance is manifest; change while standing is manifest. (Cf. Anguttara III,v,7, at the head of FUNDAMENTAL STRUCTURE.)')[a] These three sankhatassa sankhatalakkhanāni (Anguttara III,v,7 <A.i,152>), or characteristics whereby what is determined (i.e. a sankhata dhamma) may be known as such (i.e. as sankhata), concisely indicate the fundamental structure in virtue of which things are things—in virtue of which, that is to say, things are distinct, one from another. It is also in virtue of this structure that all experience, including the arahat's, is intentional (see CETANĀ) or teleological (i.e. that things are significant, that they point to other, possible, things—e.g. a hammer is a thing for hammering, and what it is for hammering is nails; or, more subtly, a particular shade of a particular colour is just that shade by pointing to all the other distinct shades that it might be, while yet remaining the same colour, but actually is not [cf. Spinoza's dictum 'Omnis determinatio est negatio']). [b] The arahat's experience, as stated above, is teleological, as is the puthujjana's; but with the arahat things no longer have the particular significance of being 'mine'. This special significance, dependent upon avijjā, is not of the same kind as a thing's simple intentional or teleological significances, but is, as it were, a parasite upon them. Detailed consideration of this structure and its implications seems to lead to the solution of a great many philosophical problems, but these are no more than indirectly

relevant to the understanding of the Buddha's Teaching.[c] Some people, however, may find that a description of this structure provides a useful instrument for thinking with. (See FUNDAMENTAL STRUCTURE.)

For a discussion of sabbe sankhārā aniccā see DHAMMA.

Footnotes:

[a] Cf. 'La "chose" existe d'un seul jet, comme "forme" [Gestalt], c'est-à-dire comme un tout qui n'est affecté par aucune des variations superficielles et parasitaires que nous pouvons y voir. Chaque ceci se dévoile avec une loi d'être qui détermine son seuil, c'est-à-dire le niveau de changement où il cessera d'être ce qu'il est pour n'être plus, simplement.'—J.-P. Sartre, op. cit., pp. 256-7. ('The "thing" exists all at once, as a "configuration", that is to say as a whole that is unaffected by any of the superficial and parasitic variations that we may see there. Each this is revealed with a law of being that determines its threshold, that is to say the level of change where it will cease to be what it is, in order, simply, to be no more.' [The occurrence of the word parasitic both here and in (c) below is coincidental: two different things are referred to. Should we not, in any case, prefer the single word subordinate to superficial and parasitic?])

The third characteristic, thitassa aññathattam, occurs as 'Invariance under Transformation' (or similar expressions, e.g. 'Unity in Diversity' or 'Identity in Difference') in idealist logic (Bradley) and in relativity and quantum theories. The branch of mathematics that deals with it is the theory of groups.

This third characteristic answers the question What? —i.e. 'Is this the same thing that was, or is it another?' (see ATTĀ)—: it does not, as the argument Na ca so na ca añño in the Milindapañha mistakenly implies, answer the question Who? If the answer were quite as simple as that, it would not take a Buddha to discover it—a Bradley would almost do. In other words, the question of impermanence is not simply that of establishing these three characteristics. See NA CA SO for a discussion of the illegitimacy of the question Who? (It is perhaps being over-charitable to the Milinda to associate its argument with the three sankhatalakkhanāni: the Milinda is probably thinking in terms of flux or continuous change. Bradley, while accepting the principle of identity on the ideal level, does

not reject a real continuous change: we may possibly not be wrong in attributing some such view to the Milinda in its interpretation of the Dhamma. See PATICCASAMUPPĀDA [c].) [Back to text]

[b] McTaggart, in The Nature of Existence (Cambridge 1921-7, §§149-54), remarks that philosophers have usually taken the expressions 'organic unity' and 'inner teleology' as synonymous (the aspect of unity becoming the end in the terminology of the latter conception), and that they distinguish 'inner teleology' from 'external teleology', which is what we normally call volition. Without discussing McTaggart's views, we may note that the distinction between 'inner' and 'external' teleology is simply the distinction between immediate and reflexive intention. Every situation is an organic unity, whether it is a cube or bankruptcy we are faced with. [Back to text]

[c] Some description of the complex parasitic structure of appropriatedness, of being mastered or in subjection ('mine'—see PHASSA), seems not impossible; but it is evidently of much less practical consequence to make such a description—supposing, that is to say, that it could actually be done—than to see how it might be made. For if one sees this (it would appear to be a matter of describing the peculiar weightage—see CETANĀ—of the special unitary intention 'mine', superposed on all other weightage, immediate or reflexive), then one already has seen that appropriatedness is in fact a parasite. [Back to text]

KAMMA

Verses 651, 652, and 653, of the Suttanipāta are as follows:

651 Kassako kammanā hoti, sippiko hoti kammanā,

vānijo kammanā hoti, pessiko hoti kammanā.

By action is one a farmer, by action a craftsman,

By action is one a merchant, by action a servant,

652 Coro pi kammanā hoti, yodhājīvo pi kammanā,

yājako kammanā hoti, rājā pi hoti kammanā.

By action is one a thief, by action a soldier,

By action is one a priest, by action a king.

653 Evam etam yathābhūtam kammam passanti panditā

paticcasamuppādadasā kammavipākakovidā.

In this way the wise see action as it really is,

Seeing dependent arising, understanding result of action.

Verse 653 is sometimes isolated from its context and used to justify the 'three-life' interpretation of the twelve-factored formulation of paticcasamuppāda as kamma/kammavipāka—kamma/kammavipāka, an interpretation that is wholly inadmissible (see PATICCASAMUPPĀDA and A NOTE ON PATICCASAMUPPĀDA). When the verse is restored to its context the meaning is clear: kammam paticca kassako hoti, sippiko hoti, and so on; in other words, what one is depends on what one does. And the result (vipāka) of acting in a certain way is that one is known accordingly. For vipāka used in this sense see Anguttara VI,vi,9 <A. iii,413>: Vohāravepakkāham bhikkhave saññā vadāmi; yathā yathā nam sañjānāti tathā tathā voharati, Evam saññī ahosin ti. Ayam vuccati bhikkhave saññānam vipāko. ('Perceptions, monks, I say result in description; according as one perceives such-and-such, so one describes: 'I was perceptive thus'. This, monks, is called the result of perceptions.') (For the usual meaning of kammavipāka as the more or less delayed retribution for ethically significant actions, see e.g. Anguttara III,iv,4 <A.i,134-6> [The P.T.S. numbering has gone astray here].)

The question of kamma or 'action'—'What should I do?'—is the ethical question;; for all personal action—all action done by me—is either akusala or kusala, unskilful or skilful. Unskilful action is rooted in lobha (rāga), dosa, moha, or lust, hate, and delusion, and (apart from resulting in future dukkha or unpleasure) leads to arising of action, not to cessation of action—tam kammam kammasamudayāya samvattati na tam kammam kammanirodhāya samvattati. ('That action leads to arising of action, that action does not lead to ceasing of action.') Skilful action is rooted in non-lust, non-hate, and non-delusion, and leads to cessation of action, not to arising of action. (Anguttara III,xi,7&8 <A.i,263>) The puthujjana does not understand this, since he sees neither arising nor cessation of action;[a] the ditthisampanna does understand this, since he sees both arising and cessation of action—Yato kho āvuso ariyasāvako akusalañ ca pajānāti akusalamūlañ ca pajānāti, kusalañ ca pajānāti kusalamūlañ ca pajānāti, ettāvatā pi kho āvuso ariyasāvako sammāditthi hoti ujugatā'ssa ditthi, dhamme aveccappasādena samannāgato, āgato imam saddhammam ('In so far, friend, as a noble disciple understands unskill and understands the root of unskill, understands skill and understands the root of skill, so far too, friend, the noble disciple has right view, his view is

correct, he is endowed with tried confidence in the Teaching, he has arrived at this Good Teaching') (Majjhima i,9 <M.i,46>)—; the arahat not only understands this, but also has reached cessation of action, since for him the question 'What should I do?' no more arises. To the extent that there is still intention in the case of the arahat—see CETANĀ [f]—there is still conscious action, but since it is neither unskilful nor skilful it is no longer action in the ethical sense. Extinction, nibbāna, is cessation of ethics—Kullūpamam vo bhikkhave ājānantehi dhammā pi vo pahātabbā pageva adhammā ('Comprehending the parable of the raft, monks, you have to eliminate ethical things too, let alone unethical things') (Majjhima iii,2 <M.i,135>).[b] See MAMA [a].

For a brief account of action see NĀMA; for a definition see RŪPA [b].

Footnotes:

[a] A puthujjana may adopt a set of moral values for any of a number of different reasons—faith in a teacher, acceptance of traditional or established values, personal philosophical views, and so on—, but in the last analysis the necessity of moral values, however much he may feel their need, is not for him a matter of self-evidence. At the end of his book (op. cit., p. 111) Jean Grenier writes: 'En fait toutes les attitudes que nous avons passées en revue au sujet du choix ne se résignent à l'absence de vérité que par désespoir de l'atteindre et par suite des nécessités de l'action. Elles n'aboutissent toutes qu'à des morales provisoires. Un choix, au sens plein du mot, un "vrai" choix n'est possible que s'il y a ouverture de l'homme à la vérité; sinon il n'y a que des compromis de toutes sortes: les plus nobles sont aussi les plus modestes.' ('In fact all the attitudes we have passed in review on the subject of choice are resigned to the absence of truth only out of despair of attaining it and as a consequence of the necessities of action. They end up, all of them, only at provisional moralities. A choice, in the full sense of the word, a "real" choice is possible only if man has access to the truth; if not there are only compromises of all kinds: the noblest are also the most modest.') And Sartre, more bleakly, concludes (op. cit., p. 76) that man is bound by his nature to adopt values of one sort or another, and that, although he cannot escape this task of choosing, he himself is totally responsible for his choice (for there is no Divine Dictator of values), and there is absolutely nothing in his nature that can justify him in adopting this particular value or set of values rather than that. The puthujjana sees neither a task to be performed that can justify his existence—not even, in the last analysis, that of perpetual reflexion (Heidegger's Entschlossenheit or 'resoluteness', acceptance of the guilt of existing; which does no more than make the best of a bad job)—nor a way to bring his unjustifiable existence to an end. The ariyasāvaka, on the other hand, does see the way to bring his existence to an end, and he sees that it is this very task that justifies his existence. Ariyam kho aham brāhmana lokuttaram

dhammam purisassa sandhanam paññāpemi. ('I, divine, make known the noble world-transcending Teaching as the business of man.') Majjhima x,6 <M.ii,181> [Back to text]

[b] Hegel, it seems, in his Phänomenologie des Geistes, has said that there can only be an ethical consciousness in so far as there is disagreement between nature and ethics: if ethical behaviour became natural, conscience would disappear. And from this it follows that if ethical action is the absolute aim, the absolute aim must also be the absence of ethical action. This is quite right; but is ethical action the absolute aim? The difficulty is, precisely, to see the action that puts an end to action in the ethical sense. Whereas unskilful action is absolutely blameworthy as leading only to future unpleasure and to the arising of action, there is action, leading to a bright future, that yet does not lead to the ending of action. See Majjhima vi,7 <M.i,387-92>. The generous man, the virtuous man, the man even who purifies his mind in samādhi, without right view remains a puthujjana, and so does not escape reproach: Yo kho Sāriputta imañ ca kāyam nikkhipati aññañ ca kāyam upādiyati tam aham Sa-upavajjo ti vadāmi. ('One who lays down this body, Sāriputta, and takes hold of another body, he I say is blameworthy.') Majjhima xv,2 <M.iii,266> [Back to text]

CITTA

Cittavīthi, 'mental process, cognitive series'. Visuddhimagga, Ch. XIV etc. It is, perhaps, not superfluous to remark that this doctrine, of which so much use is made in the Visuddhimagga (and see also the Abhidhammatthasangaha), is a pure scholastic invention and has nothing at all to do with the Buddha's Teaching (or, indeed, with anything else). It is, moreover, a vicious doctrine, totally at variance with paticcasamuppāda, setting forth the arising of experience as a succession of items each coming to an end before the next appears (imassa nirodhā idam uppajjati—cf. A NOTE ON PATICCASAMUPPĀDA §7). The decay first seems to set in with the Vibhanga and Patthāna of the Abhidhamma Pitaka. (See SAÑÑĀ, and refer to The Path of Purification [Visuddhimagga translation by the Ven. Ñānamoli Bhikkhu], Semage, Colombo 1956, Ch. IV, note 13.)

Connected with this doctrine is the erroneous notion of anuloma-gotrabhu-magga-phala, supposed to be the successive moments in the attainment of sotāpatti. It is sometimes thought that the word akālika as applied to the Dhamma means that attainment of magga is followed 'without interval of time' by attainment of phala; but this is quite mistaken.[a] Akālika dhamma has an entirely different meaning (for which see PATICCASAMUPPĀDA). Then, in the Okkantika Samyutta <S.iii, 225> it is stated only that the dhammānusārī and the saddhānusārī (who have reached the magga leading to sotāpatti) are bound to attain sotāpattiphala before their death; and other Suttas—e.g. Majjhima vii,5&10 <M.i,439&479>—show clearly that one is dhammānusārī or saddhanusārī for more than 'one moment'. For gotrabhu see Majjhima xiv,12 <M.iii,256>, where it says that he may be dussīla

pāpadhamma. In Sutta usage it probably means no more than 'a member of the bhikkhusangha'. For anuloma see SAKKĀYA [b].

See NĀMA [c] and the Glossary for meanings of citta. For cittasankhāra as opposed to manosankhāra see A NOTE ON PATICCASAMUPPĀDA §§5 & 16.

Footnotes:

[a] The notion of two successive 'moments', A and B, as akālika or non-temporal is a confusion. Either A and B are simultaneous (as e.g. viññāna and nāmarūpa), in which case they are indeed akālika; or B follows A and they are successive (as e.g. the in-&-out-breaths), in which case they are kālika. Even if there is no interval of time between the ending of A and the beginning of B, it remains true that B comes after A, and time is still involved. The source of the confusion is in the contradictory idea of a moment as the smallest possible interval of time—i.e. as absolute shortness of time—, and therefore as no time. Two successive moments are, thus, also no time: 0 + 0 = 0. This is nothing but a mystification: it is like the notion of 'absolute smallness of size' in quantum theory (Dirac, op. cit., pp. 3-4), introduced to compensate for other philosophically unjustifiable assumptions made elsewhere. (Quantum theory, of course, being an elaborate and ingenious rule of thumb, does not require philosophical justification; but ipso facto it provides no foundation for philosophy.) To the idea of a 'moment' as the shortest empirically observable interval of time there is no objection; but this merely marks the threshold below which changes are too small and rapid to be clearly apprehended as discontinuous and are grasped irrationally and ambiguously as a flux. What it does not mark is the boundary between kālika and akālika. See PATICCASAMUPPĀDA [c]. A different approach to this whole question is outlined in FUNDAMENTAL STRUCTURE. [Back to text]

CETANĀ

See first, ANICCA, NĀMA, & A NOTE ON PATICCASAMUPPĀDA [f]. Cetanā, properly speaking, is 'intentional intention'—i.e. 'will' or 'volition'—, but the word intention, in its normal looser meaning, will include these, and is the best translation for cetanā. The following passage from Husserl's article 'Phenomenology' in the Encyclopaedia Britannica may throw some light on a stricter or more philosophical sense of the word.

But before determining the question of an unlimited psychology, we must be sure of the characteristics of psychological experience and the psychical data it provides. We turn naturally to our immediate experiences. But we cannot discover the psychical in any experience, except by a 'reflexion,' or perversion of the ordinary attitude. We are accustomed to concentrate upon the matters, thoughts, and values of the moment, and not upon the psychical 'act of experience' in which these are apprehended. This 'act' is revealed by a 'reflexion'; and a reflexion can be practised on every experience.[a] Instead of the matters themselves, the values, goals, utilities, etc., we regard the subjective[b] experiences in which these 'appear'. These 'appearances' are phenomena, whose nature is to be a 'consciousness-of' their object, real or unreal as it be. Common language catches this sense of 'relativity,' saying, I was thinking of something, I was frightened ofsomething, etc. Phenomenological psychology takes its name from the 'phenomena,' with the psychological aspect of which it is concerned: and the word 'intentional' has been borrowed from the scholastic to denote the essential 'reference' character of the phenomena. All consciousness is 'intentional'.

In unreflective consciousness we are 'directed' upon objects, we 'intend' them; and reflection reveals this to be an immanent process characteristic of all experience, though infinitely varied in form. To be conscious of something is no empty having of that something in consciousness. Each phenomenon has its own intentional structure, which analysis shows to be an ever-widening system of individually intentional and intentionally related components. The perception of a cube, for example, reveals a multiple and synthesized intention:[c] a continuous variety in the 'appearance' of the cube, according to the differences in the points of view from which it is seen, and corresponding differences in 'perspective', and all the differences between the 'front side' actually seen at the moment and the 'back side' which is not seen, and which remains, therefore, relatively 'indeterminate,' and yet is supposed equally to be existent. Observation of this 'stream' of 'appearance-aspects' [Sartre suggests 'profiles'] and of the manner of their synthesis, shows that every phase and interval is already in itself a 'consciousness-of' something, yet in such a way that with the constant entry of new phases the total consciousness, at any moment, lacks not synthetic unity, and is, in fact, a consciousness of one and the same object. The intentional structure of the train of a perception must conform to a certain type, if any physical object is to be perceived as there! And if the same object be intuited in other modes, if it be imagined, or remembered, or copied, all its intentional forms recur, though modified in character from what they were in the perception to correspond to their new modes. The same is true of every kind of psychical experience. Judgement, valuation, pursuit,—these also are no empty experiences, having in consciousness of judgements, values, goals and means, but are likewise experiences compounded of an intentional stream, each conforming to its own fast type.

Intentions may be regarded basically as the relation between the actual and the possible. A thing always presents itself from a particular point of view; there is an actual aspect together with a number of possible aspects.[d] The set of relations between the actual aspect and all the alternative aspects is the same, no matter which one of the various aspects should happen to be actual. It is in virtue of this that a thing remains the same, as the point of view changes. Intentions are the significance of the actual aspect; they are every possible aspect, and therefore the thing-as-a-whole. In intentional

intention the possible aspects show themselves as possible, and the actual aspect, consequently, appears as optional. There is now exercise of preference (with the pleasant preferred to the unpleasant),[e] and this is volition in its simplest form. There is no limit, however, to the degree of reflexive complexity that may be involved—every reflexive attitude is itself optional. It will be seen that intentions by themselves are a purely structural affair, a matter of negatives; and when the question is asked, 'What are the intentions upon this occasion?' the answer will be in the positive terms of nāmarūpa and viññāna.[f] We must also consider the matter of the difference of emphasis or 'weight' possessed by the various possible aspects: though each alternative to the actual aspect is possible, they are not all equally probable (or potential), and some stand out more prominently than others. The emphasized aspect may, of course, be the actual aspect as the negative of all the possible aspects; and this will tend to preserve the actual state of affairs. This is 'attention' (manasikāra) in its simplest terms: it may be described as 'direction of emphasis'. Clearly, there will be no intentional intention that does not involve attention. (A thing—a lump of iron, say—has many possible purposes; and these determine it for what it is; they are its intentions. But when the lump is to be used, one among these purposes must be attended to at the expense of the others—it cannot be used both for driving a nail into the wall and as a paper-weight at the same time.) And, naturally, where there is attention there is intentional intention (i.e. cetanā); and there is no consciousness without at least incipient attention. (I have taken attention as essentially reflexive, but it might be argued that there is already immediate attention as the perspective of immediate intention.)

Footnotes:

[a] Cf. 'Now by phenomenology Peirce means a method of examining any experience you please with a view to abstracting from it its most general and, as he claims, its absolutely necessary characteristics.'—W. B. Gallie, Peirce and Pragmatism, Penguin (Pelican) Books, London. The word 'abstracting' is unfortunate—see MANO [b]. For more on 'reflexion' see DHAMMA [b] & ATTĀ [a]. [Back to text]

[b] Later in the same article Husserl speaks of the 'bare subjectivity of consciousness', thereby indicating that he identifies consciousness, in one way or another, with 'self'. He evidently accepts the subject revealed in reflexion (see ATTĀ) at face value, and regards it as consciousness (though for other puthujjanā it may be, instead, matter (substance) or feeling or perception or determinations or, in some way, all five—see Khandha Samy. v,5 <S.iii,46>[4]). See VIÑÑĀNA. This extract has to be taken with considerable reserve: Husserl's doctrine is not acceptable in detail.

Husserl goes on to make the following remarks. 'The "I" and "we," which we apprehend presuppose a hidden "I" and "we" to whom they are "present". ...But though the transcendental "I" [i.e. the reflexive "I" to whom the immediate "I" is revealed] is not my psychological "I," [i.e. the immediate "I" apprehended in reflexion] it must not be considered as if it were a second "I," for it is no more separated from my psychological "I" in the conventional sense of separation, than it is joined to it in the conventional sense of being joined.' Husserl seems to be aware that, taken in isolation, no single one of the trio of wrong views of the Sabbāsavasutta on the nature of reflexion—see A NOTE ON PATICCASAMUPPĀDA §25—is adequate; but, also, he is unable to escape from them. So, by means of this ingenious verbal device, he attempts to combine them—and succeeds in falling, very elegantly, between three stools. [Back to text]

[c] Bertrand Russell seems to say (Mysticism and Logic, Penguin (Pelican) Books, London, VIIIth Essay) that a cube (or whatever it may be) is an inference, that all possible appearances of a cube are inferred from any single appearance. But this supposes that inference, which is a matter of logic or thinking (takka, vitakka), is fundamental and irreducible. Husserl, however, says that a cube is an intention. Note that vitakka does not go beyond first jhāna, whereas cetanā is present up to ākiñcaññāyatana (Majjhima xii,1 <M.iii, 25- 9>). [Back to text]

[d] It seems that, at the first level of complexity, the actual aspect is necessarily accompanied by precisely three possible aspects (like a tetrahedron presenting any given face). For details see FUNDAMENTAL STRUCTURE I. Cf. Bradley's acute observation (op. cit. [Logic], I,iv,§§13 & 14) that, in disjunctive judgement, where it is given that A is b or c (not both), though we can say with the certainty of knowledge that if A is b it is not c, we can say that if A is not c then it is b only if we make the assumption that, because we do not find a predicate of A that excludes b or c [i.e. b-or-c], therefore there is none. It now turns out that we do find such predicates and that the disjunction must be fourfold: if A is b or c it must be b or c or d or e. No doubt the only evident example is the three-dimensional nature of geometrical space, which can be represented by four points (the vertices of a tetrahedron), any one of which can be taken as the point of origin to the exclusion of the other three (which remain possible). (These mathematical illustrations are treacherous; they make things appear simpler than they are, and contain self-contradictions—'points', for example—; and the picture must be abandoned before it is allowed to mislead.) [Back to text]

[e] This does not mean that what is preferred will necessarily be obtained; for each aspect, actual or possible, is presented with its own arbitrary inertia at the most immediate level of experience. Reflexive intention can only modify the given state of affairs. (Strictly, [there is] an arbitrary

'weightage' prior to (i.e. below) immediate intention; this is 'discovered' in a perspective by consciousness and immediate (involuntary) intention is a modification of it (and of that perspective); then reflexive intention is a modification of all this.) But, other things being equal, the pleasant dominates the unpleasant ('pleasant' and 'unpleasant' being understood here in their widest possible sense). [Back to text]

[f] Though there is intention (cetanā), both simple and reflexive (i.e. volition), in the arahat's experience (pañcakkhandhā), there is no craving (tanhā). In other words, there is, and there is not, intention with the arahat, just as there is, and there is not, consciousness (viññāna—q.v.). There is no consciousness without intention. Craving, however, is a gratuitous (though beginningless) parasite on the intentional structure described here, and its necessity is not to be deduced from the necessity of intention in all experience. Intention does not imply craving—a hard thing to understand! But if intention did imply craving, arahattā would be out of the question, and there would be no escape. [Back to text]

DHAMMA

The word dhamma, in its most general sense, is equivalent to 'thing'—i.e. whatever is distinct from anything else (see ANICCA). More precisely it is what a thing is in itself, as opposed to how it is;[a] it is the essence or nature of a thing—that is, a thing as a particular essence or nature distinct from all other essences or natures. Thus, if a thing is a solid pleasant shady tree for lying under that I now see, its nature is, precisely, that it is solid, that it is pleasant, that it is shady, that it is a tree for lying under, and that it is visible to me. The solid pleasant shady tree for lying under that I see is a thing, a nature, a dhamma. Furthermore, each item severally—the solidity, the pleasantness, the shadiness, and so on—is a thing, a nature, a dhamma, in that each is distinct from the others, even though here they may not be independent of one another. These dhammā, in the immediate experience, are all particular. When, however, the reflexive[b] attitude is adopted (as it is in satisampajañña, the normal state of one practising the Dhamma), the particular nature—the solid pleasant shady tree for lying under that I see—is, as it were, 'put in brackets' (Husserl's expression, though not quite his meaning of it), and we arrive at the nature of the particular nature. Instead of solid, pleasant, shady, tree for lying under, visible to me, and so on, we have matter (or substance), feeling, perception, determinations, consciousness, and all the various 'things' that the Suttas speak of. These things are of universal application—i.e. common to all particular natures (e.g. eye- consciousness is common to all things that have ever been, or are, or will be, visible to me)—and are the dhammā that make up the Dhamma. The Dhamma is thus the Nature of Things. And since this is what the Buddha teaches, it comes to mean also the Teaching, and dhammā are particular teachings. The word matter—'I will bear this matter in mind'—sometimes expresses the meaning of dhamma (though it will not do as a normal rendering).

Sabbe sankhārā aniccā; Sabbe sankhārā dukkhā; Sabbe dhammā anattā. ('All determinations are impermanent; All determinations are unpleasurable (suffering); All things are not-self.') Attā, 'self', is fundamentally a notion of mastery over things (cf. Majjhima iv,5 <M.i,231-2> & Khandha Samy. vi,7 <S.iii,66>[7]). But this notion is entertained only if it is pleasurable,[c] and it is only pleasurable provided the mastery is assumed to be permanent; for a mastery—which is essentially a kind of absolute timelessness, an unmoved moving of things—that is undermined by impermanence is no mastery at all, but a mockery. Thus the regarding of a thing, a dhamma, as attā or 'self' can survive for only so long as the notion gives pleasure, and it only gives pleasure for so long as that dhamma can be considered as permanent (for the regarding of a thing as 'self' endows it with the illusion of a kind of super-stability in time). In itself, as a dhamma regarded as attā, its impermanence is not manifest (for it is pleasant to consider it as permanent); but when it is seen to be dependent upon other dhammā not considered to be permanent, its impermanence does then become manifest. To see impermanence in what is regarded as attā, one must emerge from the confines of the individual dhamma itself and see that it depends on what is impermanent. Thus sabbe sankhārā (not dhammā) aniccā is said, meaning 'All things that things (dhammā) depend on are impermanent'. A given dhamma, as a dhamma regarded as attā, is, on account of being so regarded, considered to be pleasant; but when it is seen to be dependent upon some other dhamma that, not being regarded as attā, is manifestly unpleasurable (owing to the invariable false perception of permanence, of super-stability, in one not free from asmimāna), then its own unpleasurableness becomes manifest. Thus sabbe sankhārā (not dhammā) dukkhā is said. When this is seen—i.e. when perception of permanence and pleasure is understood to be false --, the notion 'This dhamma is my attā' comes to an end, and is replaced by sabbe dhammā anattā. Note that it is the sotāpanna who, knowing and seeing that his perception of permanence and pleasure is false, is free from this notion of 'self', though not from the more subtle conceit '(I) am' (asmimāna);[d] but it is only the arahat who is entirely free from the (false) perception of permanence and pleasure, and 'for him' perception of impermanence is no longer unpleasurable. (See also A NOTE ON PATICCASAMUPPĀDA §12 & PARAMATTHA SACCA.)

Footnotes:

[a] How a thing is, is a matter of structure, that is to say, of intentions (cetanā) or determinations (sankhārā). See CETANĀ. These are essentially negative, whereas dhamma is positive. [Back to text]

[b] This word is neither quite right nor quite wrong, but it is as good as any. See CETANĀ, MANO, and ATTĀ, and also FUNDAMENTAL STRUCTURE (where, in Part I, the possibility of reflexion is shown to be structurally justified). The possibility of reflexion depends upon the fact that all experience (the five

khandhā or aggregates) is hierarchically ordered in different levels of generality (or particularity), going to infinity in both directions. This supports another hierarchy, as it were 'at right angles' to the original hierarchy. In immediacy, attention rests on the world. This requires no effort. In reflexion, attention moves back one step from the world in this second hierarchy. It does not, however, move back spontaneously: it requires to be pulled back by an intention that embraces both the ground level and the first step. This pulling back of attention is reflexive intention. A deliberate entering upon reflexion requires a further reflexive intention; for deliberate intention is intention to intend (or volition). Double attention is involved. But though, in immediacy, attention rests at ground level, the entire reflexive hierarchy remains 'potential' (it is there, but not attended to), and immediacy is always under potential reflexive observation (i.e. it is seen but not noticed). Another way of saying this is that the 'potential' reflexive hierarchy—which we might call pre-reflexive—is a hierarchy of consciousness (viññāna), not of awareness (sampajañña). For awareness, reflexive intention is necessary. [Back to text]

[c] This notion is pleasurable only if it is itself taken as permanent (it is my notion); thus it does not escape sankhāradukkha. But unless this notion is brought to an end there is no escape from sankhāradukkha. The linchpin is carried by the wheel as it turns; but so long as it carries the linchpin the wheel will turn. (That 'self' is spoken of here as a notion should not mislead the reader into supposing that a purely abstract idea, based upon faulty reasoning, is what is referred to. The puthujjana does not by any means experience his 'self' as an abstraction, and this because it is not rationally that notions of subjectivity are bound up with nescience (avijjā), but affectively. Reason comes in (when it comes in at all) only in the second place, to make what it can of a fait accompli. Avijjāsamphassajena bhikhave vedayitena phutthassa assutavato puthujjanassa, Asmī ti pi'ssa hoti, Ayam aham asmī ti pi'ssa hoti, Bhavissan ti pi'ssa hoti,... ('To the uninstructed commoner, monks, contacted by feeling born of nescience-contact, it occurs '(I) am', it occurs 'It is this that I am', it occurs 'I shall be',...') Khandha Samy. v,5 <S.iii,46>. And in Dīgha ii,2 <D.ii,66-8> it is in relation to feeling that the possible ways of regarding 'self' are discussed: Vedanā me attā ti; Na h'eva kho me vedanā attā, appatisamvedano me attā ti; Na h'eva kho me vedanā attā, no pi appatisamvedano me attā, attā me vediyati vedanādhammo hi me attā ti. ('My self is feeling; My self is not in fact feeling, my self is devoid of feeling; My self is not in fact feeling, but neither is my self devoid of feeling, my self feels, to feel is the nature of my self.') [Back to text]

[d] Manifest impermanence and unpleasurableness at a coarse level does not exclude (false) perception of permanence and pleasure at a fine level (indeed, manifest unpleasurableness requires false perception of permanence, as remarked above [this refers, of course, only to sankhāradukkha]). But the coarse notion of 'self' must be removed before the subtle conceit '(I) am' can go. What is not regarded as 'self' is more manifestly impermanent and unpleasurable (and, of course, not-'self') than

what is so regarded. Therefore the indirect approach to dhammā by way of sankhārā. Avijjā cannot be pulled out like a nail: it must be unscrewed. See MAMA & SANKHĀRA. [Back to text]

NA CA SO

Na ca so na ca añño, 'Neither he nor another'. This often-quoted dictum occurs in the Milindapañha somewhere, as the answer to the question 'When a man dies, who is reborn—he or another?'. This question is quite illegitimate, and any attempt to answer it cannot be less so. The question, in asking who is reborn, falls into sakkāyaditthi. It takes for granted the validity of the person as 'self'; for it is only about 'self' that this question—'Eternal (so) or perishable (añño)?'—can be asked (cf. PATICCASAMUPPĀDA, ANICCA [a], & SAKKĀYA). The answer also takes this 'self' for granted, since it allows that the question can be asked. It merely denies that this 'self' (which must be either eternal or perishable) is either eternal or perishable, thus making confusion worse confounded. The proper way is to reject the question in the first place. Compare Anguttara VI,ix,10 <A.iii,440>, where it is said that the ditthisampanna not only can not hold that the author of pleasure and pain was somebody (either himself or another) but also can not hold that the author was not somebody (neither himself nor another). The ditthisampanna sees the present person (sakkāya) as arisen dependent upon present conditions and as ceasing with the cessation of these present conditions. And, seeing this, he does not regard the present person as present 'self'. Consequently, he does not ask the question Who? about the present. By inference—atītānāgate nayam netvā having induced the principle to past and future (cf. Gāmini Samy. 11 <S.iv,328>)[a]—he does not regard the past or future person as past or future 'self', and does not ask the question Who? about the past or the future. (Cf. Māra's question in line 2 of PARAMATTHA SACCA §1.) (The Milindapañha is a particularly misleading book. See also ANICCA [a], PATICCASAMUPPĀDA [c], RŪPA [e], & PARAMATTHA SACCA §§8-10.)

Footnotes:

[a] Dhamm'anvaye ñānam is knowledge dependent upon the inferability of the Dhamma—i.e. knowledge that the fundamental Nature of Things is invariable in time and can be inferred with certainty (unlike rational inference) from present to past or future. See Nidāna/Abhisamaya Samy. iv,3 <S.ii,58>. In other words, generalization without abstraction—see MANO [b]. [Back to text]

NĀMA

In any experience (leaving out of account arūpa) there is a phenomenon that is present (i.e. that is cognized). The presence, or cognition, or consciousness, of the phenomenon is viññāna (q.v.). The

phenomenon has two characteristics, inertia and designation (patigha and adhivacana). The inertia of a phenomenon is rūpa ('matter' or 'substance'), which may be seen also as its behaviour; and this presents itself only in the passage of time (however short). (These four mahābhūtā are the general modes of behaviour or matter: earthy, or persistent and resistant, or solid; watery, or cohesive; fiery, or ripening, or maturing; airy, or tense, or distended, or moving. See RŪPA.) The designation of a phenomenon is nāma ('name'), which may be seen also as its appearance (the form or guise adopted by the behaviour, as distinct from the behaviour itself).[a] Nāma consists of the following (Majjhima i,9 <M.i,53>[1]): whether (the experience is) pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral (vedanā or 'feeling'); shape, colour, smell, and so on (saññā [q.v.] or 'perception [percepts]'); significance or purpose (cetanā [q.v.] or 'intention[s]'); engagement in experience (phassa [q.v.] or 'contact'); and (intentional) direction of emphasis (manasikāra or 'attention'). Phassa is included in nāma since nāma, in specifying saññā, necessarily specifies the pair of āyatanāni ('bases') and kind of viññāna involved (e.g. perception of sourness specifies tongue, tastes, and tongue-consciousness), whereas rūpa does not (inertia or behaviour does not specify its mode of appearance, visual, auditory, and so on): nāma, in other words, entails (but does not include) viññāna, whereas rūpa is simply 'discovered' by viññāna (see RŪPA). Manasikāra is included in nāma since, whereas rūpa precedes manasikāra (logically, not temporally: behaviour takes place whether it is attended to or not—the clock, for example, does not stop when I leave the room), nāma involves manasikāra: experience is always particular or selective, one thing to the fore at once and the rest receding in the background. Rūpa, in other words, in order to appear—i.e. in order to be phenomenal as nāmarūpa—, must be oriented: a phenomenon cannot present all aspects at once with equal emphasis, but only in a perspective involving manasikāra. (Manasikāra is involved as an intentional modification of the perspective or direction of emphasis that is given at the most immediate level. Cf. CETANĀ [e] & Bradley, op. cit. (Logic) , III/I, vi, §13.)

To be present is to be here-and-now; to be absent is to be here-and-then (then = not now; at some other time) or there-and-now (there = not here; at some other place) or there-and-then. Attention is (intentional) difference between presence and absence, i.e. between varying degrees of presence, of consciousness ('Let this be present, let that be absent!'). Consciousness is the difference between presence (in any degree) and utter non-presence (i.e. non- existence). (An image may be present or absent, but even if present it is always absent reality. Mind-consciousness, manoviññāna, is the presence of an image or, since an image can be absent, of an image of an image.)[b] Intention is the absent in relation to the present. Every present is necessarily accompanied by a number of absents—the present is singular, the absent is plural. Each absent is a possibility of the present, and the ordered total of the present's absents is the significance of the present (i.e. what it points to, or indicates, beyond itself), which is also its intention. (In general, no two absents—even of the same order—are of exactly the same 'weight'.) Volition (which is what is more commonly understood by 'intention') is really a double intention (in the sense used here), i.e. it is intentional intention. This simply means that certain of the absents (or possibles) are intentionally emphasized at the expense of the others. When, in the course of time, one absent comes wholly to predominate over the others (often, but not

necessarily, the one preferred), the present suddenly vanishes, and the absent takes its place as the new present. (The vanished present—see ANICCA [a] —is now to be found among the absents.) This is a description of action (kamma) in its essential form, but leaving out of account the question of kammavipāka, which is acinteyya (Anguttara IV,viii,7 <A.ii,80>[8]), and therefore rather beyond the scope of these Notes. See also a definition of action in RŪPA [b], and an ethical account in KAMMA.

The passage at Dīgha ii,2 <D.ii,62-3>[9] is essential for an understanding of nāmarūpa, and it rules out the facile and slipshod interpretation of nāmarūpa as 'mind-&- matter'—rūpa is certainly 'matter' (or 'substance'), but nāma is not 'mind'.[c] The passage at Majjhima iii,8 <M.i,190-1>[10] makes it clear that all five upādānakkhandhā, and therefore viññāna with nāmarūpa, are present both in five-base experience and in mental experience. Thus, a visible (real) stone persists (or keeps its shape and its colour—i.e. is earthy) visibly (or in reality); an imagined stone persists in imagination. Both the actual (real) taste of castor oil and the thought of tasting it (i.e. the imaginary taste) are unpleasant. Both matter and feeling (as also perception and the rest) are both real and imaginary.[d] See PHASSA [a]. Nāmarūpa at Dīgha ii,2 <D.ii,63,§21>[9] may firstly be taken as one's own cognized body. Cf. Nidāna/Abhisamaya Samy. ii,9 <S.ii,24>: Avijjānīvaranassa bhikkhave bālassa/panditassa tanhāya sampayuttassa evam ayam kāyo samudāgato. Iti ayam c'eva kāyo bahiddhā ca nāmarūpam, itth'etam dvayam. ('A stupid/intelligent man, monks, constrained by nescience and attached by craving, has thus acquired this body. So there is just this body and name-&-matter externally: in that way there is a dyad.') This passage distinguishes between nāmarūpa that is external and one's own body. Together, these make up the totality of nāmarūpa at any time. The body, as rūpa, is independent of its appearance; but together with its appearance, which is how we normally take it, it is nāmarūpa. Nāmarūpa that is external is all cognized phenomena apart from one's own body. Cf. Majjhima xi,9 <M.iii,19>: ...imasmiñ ca saviññānake kāye bahiddhā ca sabbanimittesu... ('...in this conscious body and externally in all objects...') Though, as said above, we may firstly understand nāmarūpa in the Dīgha passage as one's own cognized body, properly speaking we must take nāmarūpa as the total cognized phenomena (which may not be explicitly formulated), thus: (i) 'I-[am]-lying-in-the- mother's-womb'; (ii) 'I-[am]-being-born-into-the-world'; (iii) 'I-[am]-a-young-man-about-town'. In other words, I am ultimately concerned not with this or that particular phenomenon in my experience but with myself as determined by my whole situation.

Footnotes:

[a] Inertia or behaviour, as just noted, is what we call 'matter' or 'substance', rūpa—and nāma is the appearance of rūpa—its 'name'. The appearance of rūpa is 'what it looks like', its description (though not the description of how [it] behaves). Conversely, rūpa is the behaviour of nāma—its 'matter'. So

we get nāmarūpa, 'name-&-matter'. (N.B. Neither the use here of the word 'appearance' [= manifestation, as opposed to substance] nor our normal use of the word 'reality' [see (b) below] has anything to do with the celebrated [and fictitious] distinctions between Appearance and Reality of Bradley and others. The idea that there is a so-called 'reality' behind or beyond phenomena ['mere appearance'] is a mistake ['the illusion of hinder-worlds' in Nietzsche's phrase]. Phenomena present themselves for what they are, and can be studied and described simply as they appear. But this is not to say that they are simple. Cf. Sartre, op. cit., pp. 11-14.) [Back to text]

[b]

Real = {Present

{Central

{Actual Imaginary = {Absent

{Peripheral

{Possible

(The disjunctions 'central/peripheral' and 'actual/possible' [or 'certain/possible'] represent two slightly different aspects of the more general 'present/absent': the former is as it is in strict reflexion, the latter is as it is in abstract judgement or discursive reflection—see MANO [b].) Although, relative to the imaginary of mental experience, five-base experience is real, yet, relative to what is central in a given field of five-base experience, whatever is peripheral in that field is already beginning to partake of the nature of the imaginary. In general, the further removed a thing is from the centre of consciousness the less real it is, and therefore the more imaginary. In mental experience proper, however, where there is more or less explicit withdrawal of attention from reality (see MANO), what is central in the field is, precisely, an image (which may be plural), with more imaginary images in the periphery. (There is no doubt that images are frequently made up of elements of past real [five-base] experience; and in simple cases, where the images are coherent and familiar, we speak of memories. But there are also images that are telepathic, clairvoyant, retrocognitive, and precognitive; and these do not conform to such a convenient scheme. The presence of an image, of an absent reality, is in no way dependent upon its ever previously [or even subsequently] being present as a present reality [though considerations of probability cannot be ignored]. On the other hand, no image ever appears or is created ex nihilo. See FUNDAMENTAL STRUCTURE [c] & [l].) [Back to text]

[c] When nāma is understood as 'mind' or 'mentality' it will inevitably include viññāna or consciousness—as, for example, in the Visuddhimagga (Ch. XVIII passim). This is entirely without justification in the Suttas; and it is clear enough that any mode of thinking that proposes to make a fundamental division between 'mind' and 'matter' will soon find itself among insuperable difficulties. 'Mind' (i.e. mano [q.v.] in one of its senses) already means 'imagination' as opposed to 'reality', and it cannot also be opposed to 'matter'. 'Reality' and 'matter' are not by any means the same thing—is real pain (as opposed to imaginary pain) also material pain? There are, to be sure, various distinctions between body and mind (in different senses); and we may speak of bodily (kāyika) pain as opposed to mental or volitional (cetasika) pain—see Majjhima v,4 <M.i,302>; Vedanā Samy. iii,2 <S.iv,231>—, but these are distinctions of quite a different kind. Bodily pain may be real or imaginary, and so may volitional pain (grief), but material pain—painful feeling composed of matter—is a contradiction in terms. (Observe that there are two discrepant senses of the word cetasika on two successive pages of the same Sutta [Majjhima v,4]: (i) on one page <M.i,301> we find that saññā and vedanā are cittasankhāra because they are cetasikā [see A NOTE ON PATICCASAMUPPĀDA §5] and (ii) on the next <302> we find that vedanā may be either kāyikā or cetasikā [see above]. Citta and cetasika are not fixed terms in the Suttas, and, as well as different shades, have two principal [and incompatible] meanings according to context, like their nearest English equivalent, 'mind, mental' [which, however, has to do duty also for mano—see Glossary]. In (i), evidently, cetasika is 'mental' as opposed to 'material' [see also A NOTE ON PATICCASAMUPPĀDA [g]], and in (ii) it is 'mental' as opposed to 'sensual'. In the Suttas the contexts are distinct, and confusion between these two senses does not arise; but a passage from Russell will provide a striking example of failure to distinguish between them: 'I do not know how to give a sharp definition of the word "mental", but something may be done by enumerating occurrences which are indubitably mental: believing, doubting, wishing, willing, being pleased or pained, are certainly mental occurrences; so are what we may call experiences, seeing, hearing, smelling, perceiving generally.' [Op. cit., VIIth Essay.] 'Mind', whether in English or Pali [mano, citta], represents an intersection of mutually incompatible concepts. Confusion is often worse confounded by the misunderstanding discussed in PHASSA [e], where matter is conceded only an inferred existence in a supposed 'external world' beyond my experience.) [Back to text]

[d] A distinction approximating to that between nāma and rūpa, under the names 'forme' and 'matiére', is made by Gaston Bachelard in his book L'Eau et les Rêves, Essai sur l'imagination de la matière (José Corti, Paris 1942). Bachelard regards matter as the four primary elements, Earth, Water, Fire, and Air, and emphasizes the resistant nature of matter (which would correspond to patigha). This book (there are also companion volumes on the other elements) is written from a literary rather than a philosophical point of view, but its interest lies in the fact that Bachelard makes these fundamental distinctions quite independently of the Buddha's Teaching, of which he apparently knows nothing. He is concerned, in particular, with the various 'valorisations' of the four elements as they occur in literature, that is to say with the various significances that they may possess. These are examples of sankhārā (as cetanā): rūpam rūpattāya sankhatam abhisankharonti ('Matter as matter is the

determined that they determine' (See Additional Texts 6.)) (cf. A NOTE ON PATICCASAMUPPĀDA [f]). The philosophical distinction between primary and secondary qualities also seems to approximate to that between rūpa and at least certain aspects of nāma. (Here is Bradley [op. cit. (A.&R.), Ch. I]: 'The primary qualities are those aspects of what we perceive or feel, which, in a word, are spatial; and the residue is secondary.' But see RŪPA [e].) These indications may serve to assure the apprehensive newcomer that the technical terms of the Suttas do not represent totally strange and inaccessible categories. But it is one thing to make these distinctions (approximately, at least), and another thing to understand the Buddha's Teaching. [Back to text]

NIBBĀNA

See Itivuttaka II,ii,7 <Iti.38>.[12]

The opinion has been expressed (in the P.T.S. Dictionary) that nibbāna is not transcendental. If by 'transcendental' is meant 'mystical', either in the sense of having to do with a (supposed) Divine Ground or simply of being by nature a mystery, then nibbāna (or 'extinction') is not transcendental: indeed, it is anti-transcendental; for mystification is the state, not of the arahat (who has realized nibbāna), but of the puthujjana (who has not).[a] For the arahat, all sense of personality or selfhood has subsided, and with it has gone all possibility of numinous experience; and a fortiori the mystical intuition of a trans-personal Spirit or Absolute Self—of a Purpose or an Essence or a Oneness or what have you—can no longer arise. Cf. Preface (m). Nor, for one who sees, is the nature of nibbāna a mystery at all. When a fire becomes extinguished (nibbuta) we do not suppose that it enters a mysterious 'transcendental state': neither are we to suppose such a thing of the person that attains nibbāna. See Majjhima viii,2 & PARAMATTHA SACCA [a].

But if 'transcendental' means 'outside the range of investigation of the disinterested scholar or scientist', then nibbāna is transcendental (but so are other things). And if 'transcendental' means 'outside the range of understanding of the puthujjana'—though the dictionary hardly intends this[b]—, then again it is transcendental. Only this last meaning corresponds to lokuttara. (i) Existence or being (bhava) transcends reason (takka, which is the range of the scholar or scientist), and (ii) extinction (nibbāna) transcends existence (which is the range of the puthujjana):

(i) There is no reason why I am, why I exist. My existence cannot be demonstrated by reasoning since it is not necessary, and any attempt to do so simply begs the question. The Cartesian cogito ergo sum is not a logical proposition—logically speaking it is a mere tautology. My existence is beyond reason.

(ii) I can assert my existence or I can deny it, but in order to do either I must exist; for it is I myself who assert it or deny it. Any attempt I may make to abolish my existence tacitly confirms it; for it is my existence that I am seeking to abolish. Ye kho te bhonto samanabrāhmanā sato sattassa ucchedam vināsam vibhavam paññāpenti te sakkāyabhayā sakkāyaparijegucchā sakkāyam yeva anuparidhāvanti anuparivattanti. Seyyathāpi nāma sā gaddūlabaddho dalhe thambhe vā khīle vā upanibaddho tam eva thambham vā khīlam vā anuparidhāvati anuparivattati, evam ev'ime bhonto samanabrāhmanā sakkāyabhayā sakkāyaparijegucchā sakkāyam yeva anuparidhāvanti anuparivattanti. ('Those recluses and divines who make known the annihilation, perishing, and un-being, of the existing creature,—they, through fear of perssonality, through loathing of personality, are simply running and circling around personality. Just, indeed, as a dog, tied with a leash to a firm post or stake, runs and circles around that same post or stake, so these recluses and divines, through fear of personality, through loathing of personality, are simply running and circling around personality.') (Majjhima xi,2 <M.ii,232>) Cessation of 'my existence' (which is extinction— bhavanirodho nibbānam ('Extinction is cessation of being.') [Anguttara X,i,7 <A.v,9>]) is beyond my existence. See ATAKKĀVACARA.

The idea of nibbāna as the ultimate goal of human endeavour will no doubt strike the common man, innocently enjoying the pleasures of his senses, as a singularly discouraging notion if he is told that it is no more than 'cessation of being'. Without actually going so far (overtly, at least) as to hope for Bradley's Absolute ('It would be experience entire, containing all elements in harmony. Thought would be present as a higher intuition; will would be there where the ideal had become reality; and beauty and pleasure and feeling would live on in this total fulfilment. Every flame of passion, chaste or carnal, would still burn in the Absolute unquenched and unabridged, a note absorbed in the harmony of its higher bliss.' [Op. cit. (A.&R.), Ch. XV]),—without perhaps going quite so far as this, even a thoughtful man may like to expect something a little more positive than 'mere extinction' as the summum bonum. We shrink before the idea that our existence, with its anguishes and its extasies, is wholly gratuitous, and we are repelled by the suggestion that we should be better off without it; and it is only natural that the puthujjana should look for a formula to save something from (as he imagines) the shipwreck.[c]

In the Udāna (viii,3 <Ud.80>) nibbāna is spoken of by the Buddha in these terms: Atthi bhikkhave ajātam abhūtam akatam asankhatam, no ce tam bhikkhave abhavissa ajātam abhūtam akatam asankhatam na yidha jātassa bhūtassa katassa sankhatassa nissaranam paññāyetha. ('There is, monks, a non-born, non-become, non-made, non-determined; for if, monks, there were not that non-born, non-become, non-made, non-determined, an escape here from the born, become, made, determined, would not be manifest.') 'Such a positive assertion of the existence of the Unconditioned' it is sometimes urged 'must surely imply that nibbāna is not simply annihilation.' Nibbāna, certainly, is not

'simply annihilation'—or rather, it is not annihilation at all: extinction, cessation of being, is by no means the same thing as the (supposed) annihilation of an eternal 'self' or soul. (See Majjhima xi,2, above.) And the assertion of the existence of nibbāna is positive enough—but what, precisely, is asserted? In the Asankhata Samyutta (i,1 & ii,23 <S.iv,359&371>) we read Yo bhikkhave rāgakkhayo dosakkhayo mohakkhayo, idam vuccati bhikkhave asankhatam/nibbānam; ('The destruction, monks, of lust, of hate, of delusion—this, monks, is called (the) non-determined/extinction.') and we see that, if we do not go beyond the Suttas, we cannot derive more than the positive assertion of the existence here of the destruction of lust, hate, and delusion. And this is simply a statement that to get rid, in this very life, of lust, hate, and delusion, is possible (if it were not, there would be no escape from them, and therefore—Anguttara X,viii,6 <A.v,144>—no escape from birth, ageing, and death). And the arahat has, in fact, done so. But if, in our stewing minds, we still cannot help feeling that nibbāna really ought, somehow, to be an eternity of positive enjoyment, or at least of experience, we may ponder these two Sutta passages:

Tisso imā bhikkhu vedanā vuttā mayā, sukhā vedanā dukkhā vedanā adukkhamasukhā vedanā, imā tisso vedanā vuttā mayā. Vuttam kho pan' etam bhikkhu mayā, Yam kiñci vedayitam tam dukkhasmin ti. Tam kho pan'etam bhikkhu mayā sankhārānam yeva aniccatam sandhāya bhāsitam... ('There are, monk, these three feelings stated by me: pleasant feeling, unpleasant feeling, neither-unpleasant-nor-pleasant feeling—these three feelings have been stated by me. But this, monk, has been stated by me: 'Whatever is felt counts as unpleasure (suffering)'. That, however, monk, was said by me concerning the impermanence of determinations...' (See Vedanā Samy. i,9, quoted at A NOTE ON PATICCASAMUPPĀDA §17.)) Vedanā Samy. ii,1 <S.iv,216>

Āyasmā Sāriputto etad avoca. Sukham idam āvuso nibbānam, sukham idam āvuso nibbānan ti. Evam vutte āyasmā Udāyi āyasmantam Sāriputtam etad avoca. Kim pan'ettha āvuso Sāriputta sukham, yad ettha n'atthi vedayitan ti. Etad eva khv ettha āvuso sukham, yad ettha n'atthi vedayitam. ('The venerable Sāriputta said this:—It is extinction, friends, that is pleasant! It is extinction, friends, that is pleasant! When this was said, the venerable Udāyi said to the venerable Sāriputta,—But what herein is pleasant, friend Sāriputta, since herein there is nothing felt?—Just this is pleasant, friend, that herein there is nothing felt.') Anguttara IX,iv,3 <A.iv,414>

Footnotes:

[a] Cf. 'De qui et de quoi en effet puis-je dire: "Je connais cela!" Ce coeur en moi, je puis l'éprouver et je juge qu'il existe. Ce monde, je puis le toucher et je juge encore qu'il existe. Là s'arrête toute ma science et le reste est construction. Car si j'essaie de saisir ce moi dont je m'assure, si j'essaie de le définir et de le résumer, il n'est plus qu'une eau qui coule entre mes doigts. Je puis dessiner un à un

tous les visages qu'il sait prendre, tous ceux aussi qu'on lui a donnés, cette éducation, cette origine, cette ardeur ou ces silences, cette grandeur ou cette bassesse. Mais on n'additionne pas des visages. Ce coeur même qui est le mien me restera à jamais indéfinissable. Entre la certitude que j'ai de mon existence et le contenu que j'essaie de donner à cette assurance, le fossé ne sera jamais comblé. Pour toujours je serai étranger à moi-même. ...Voici encore des arbres et je connais leur rugueux, de l'eau et j'éprouve sa saveur. Ces parfums d'herbe et d'étoiles, la nuit, certains soirs où le coeur se détend, comment nierai-je ce monde dont j'éprouve la puissance et les forces? Pourtant toute la science de cette terre ne me donnera rien qui puisse m'assurer que ce monde est à moi.'—A. Camus, Le Mythhe de Sisyphe, Gallimard, Paris 1942, pp. 34-5. ('Of whom and of what in fact can I say "I know about that!" This heart in me, I can experience it and I conclude that it exists. This world, I can touch it and I conclude again that it exists. All my knowledge stops there, and the rest is construction. For if I try to grasp this self of which I am assured, if I try to define it and to sum it up, it is no more than a liquid that flows between my fingers. I can depict one by one all the faces that it can assume; all those given it, too, by this education, this origin, this boldness or these silences, this grandeur or this vileness. But one cannot add up faces. This same heart which is mine will ever remain for me undefinable. Between the certainty that I have of my existence and the content that I strive to give to this assurance, the gap will never be filled. Always shall I be a stranger to myself. ...Here, again, are trees and I know their roughness, water and I experience its savour. This scent of grass and of stars, night, certain evenings when the heart relaxes,—how shall I deny this world whose power and forces I experience? Yet all the science of this earth will give me nothing that can assure me that this world is mine.') A more lucid account by a puthujjana of his own predicament could scarcely be desired. This situation cannot be transcended so long as what appears to be one's 'self' is accepted at its face value: 'this self of which I am assured', 'this same heart which is mine'. The paradox (Marcel would speak of a mystery: a problem that encroaches on its own data)—the paradox, attā hi attano n'atthi ('(His) very self is not (his) self's.' (More freely: 'He himself is not his own.')) (Dhammapada v,3 <Dh.62>), must be resolved. This necessarily rather chromatic passage, which does not lend itself kindly to translation (though one is provided), makes the overtone of despair clearly audible. Needless perhaps to say, this despair marks the extreme limit of the puthujjana's thought, where it recoils impotently upon itself—and not by any means his normal attitude towards the routine business of living from day to day. [Back to text]

[b] The dictionary merely says that nibbāna is not transcendental since it is purely and solely an ethical state to be reached in this birth. But this is altogether too simple a view. As pointed out in KAMMA, an understanding of the foundation of ethical practice is already beyond the range of the puthujjana, and ultimately, by means of ethical practice, the arahat completely and finally transcends it. Nibbāna is an ethical state inasmuch as it is reached by ethical practice, but inasmuch as that state is cessation of ethics nibbāna is transcendental. (It must be emphasized, lest anyone mistake this for a kind of antinomianism, that the arahat is in no way exempted from observance of the disciplinary rules of the Vinaya. How far he is capable of breaking them is another question. See Anguttara III,ix,5-7 <A.i,231-4> & IX,i,7&8 <iv,369-72>.) [Back to text]

[c] Jaspers, with the final and inevitable ruin of all his hopes, still reads his temptation to despair in a positive sense—we are able, he concludes, 'in shipwreck to experience Being' ('...im Scheitern das Sein zu erfahren.'—K. Jaspers, Philosophie, Springer, Berlin 1932, Vol. iii, p. 237). But the Suttas are less accommodating. See Majjhima iii,2 <M.i,136-7> for an account of the eternalist's unrelieved angst in the face of subjective non-being (ajjhattam asati paritassanā) upon hearing the Buddha's Teaching of extinction. He apprehends annihilation, despairs, and falls, beating his breast, into confusion. But not so the ariyasāvaka. [Back to text]

PAṬICCASAMUPPĀDA

For a fuller discussion of some of this, see A NOTE ON PATICCASAMUPPĀDA.

In spite of the venerable tradition, starting with the Patisambhidāmagga (or perhaps the Abhidhamma Pitaka) and continued in all the Commentaries (see Anguttara V,viii,9 <A.iii,107,§4>), paticcasamuppāda has nothing to do with temporal succession (cause-and-effect). Precedence in paticcasamuppāda is structural, not temporal: paticcasamuppāda is not the description of a process. For as long as paticcasamuppāda is thought to involve temporal succession (as it is, notably, in the traditional 'three-life' interpretation), so long is it liable to be regarded as some kind of hypothesis (that there is re-birth and that it is caused by avijjā) to be verified (or not) in the course of time (like any hypothesis of the natural sciences), and so long are people liable to think that the necessary and sufficient criterion of a 'Buddhist'[a] is the acceptance of this hypothesis on trust (for no hypothesis can be known to be certainly true, since upon the next occasion it may fail to verify itself). But the Buddha tells us (Majjhima iv,8 <M.i,265>) that paticcasamuppāda is sanditthiko akāliko ehipassiko opanayiko paccattam veditabbo viññūhi. ('immediate, timeless, evident, leading, to be known privately by the wise.') What temporal succession is akālika? (See CITTA [a].) For an ariyasāvaka, paticcasamuppāda is a matter of direct reflexive certainty: the ariyasāvaka has direct, certain, reflexive knowledge of the condition upon which birth depends. He has no such knowledge about re-birth, which is quite a different matter. He knows for himself that avijjā is the condition for birth; but he does not know for himself that when there is avijjā there is re-birth. (That there is re-birth, i.e. samsāra, may remain, even for the ariyasāvaka, a matter of trust in the Buddha.) The ariyasāvaka knows for himself that even in this very life the arahat is, actually, not to be found (cf. Khandha Samy. ix,3 <S.iii,109-15> and see PARAMATTHA SACCA [a]), and that it is wrong to say that the arahat 'was born' or 'will die'. With sakkāyanirodha there is no longer any 'somebody' (or a person—sakkāya, q.v.) to whom the words birth and death can apply. They apply, however, to the puthujjana, who still 'is somebody'.[b] But to endow his birth with a condition in the past—i.e. a cause—is to accept this 'somebody' at its face value as a permanent 'self'; for cessation of birth requires cessation of its

condition, which, being safely past (in the preceding life), cannot now be brought to an end; and this 'somebody' cannot therefore now cease. Introduction of this idea into paticcasamuppāda infects the samudayasacca with sassatadiṭṭhi and the nirodhasacca with ucchedadiṭṭhi. Not surprisingly, the result is hardly coherent. And to make matters worse, most of the terms—and notably saṅkhāra (q.v.) —have been misconceived by the Visuddhimagga.

It is sometimes thought possible to modify this interpretation of paticcasamuppāda, confining its application to the present life. Instead of temporal succession we have continuous becoming, conceived as a flux, where the effect cannot be clearly distinguished from the cause—the cause becomes the effect. But this does not get rid of the temporal element, and the concept of a flux raises its own difficulties.[c]

The problem lies in the present, which is always with us; and any attempt to consider past or future without first settling the present problem can only beg the question—'self' is either asserted or denied, or both, or both assertion and denial are denied, all of which take it for granted (see NA CA SO). Any interpretation of paticcasamuppāda that involves time is an attempt to resolve the present problem by referring to past or future, and is therefore necessarily mistaken. The argument that both past and future exist in the present (which, in a certain sense, is correct) does not lead to the resolution of the problem.

Footnotes:

[a] To be a follower of the Buddha it is certainly necessary to accept on trust that for one who is not rid of avijjā at his death there is re-birth, but it is by no means sufficient. What is sufficient is to see paticcasamuppāda—Yo paticcasamuppādam passati so dhammam passati ('He who sees dependent arising sees the Teaching') (Majjhima iii,8 <M.i,191>). For those who cannot now see the re-birth that is at every moment awaiting beings with avijjā, the dependence of re-birth on avijjā must be accepted on trust. They cannot get beyond temporal succession in this matter and must take it on trust that it is a question of dependence (and not of cause-and-effect)—i.e. that it is not a hypothesis at all, but (for the Buddha) a matter of certainty. But accepting this on trust is not the same as seeing paticcasamuppāda. (Past and future only make their appearance with anvaye ñānam [see NA CA SO [a]), not with dhamme ñānam. 'As it is, so it was, so it will be.' Paticcasamuppāda is just 'As it is'—i.e. the present structure of dependence.) [Back to text]

[b] So long as there are the thoughts 'I was born', 'I shall die', there is birth and death: so long as the five khandhā are sa-upādānā, 'somebody' becomes manifest and breaks up. [Back to text]

[c] The notion of flux can be expressed thus: A = B, B = C, A ≠ C, where A, B, and C, are consecutive (Poincaré's definition of continuity). This contradiction can only be concealed by verbal legerdemain. (The origin of this misleading notion, as of so many others in the traditional interpretation, seems to be the Milindapañha, which, to judge by its simile of the flame, intends its formula na ca so na ca añño to be understood as describing continuous change.) The misunderstanding arises from failure to see that change at any given level of generality must be discontinuous and absolute, and that there must be different levels of generality. When these are taken together, any desired approximation to 'continuous change' can be obtained without contradiction. But change, as marking 'the passage of time', is no more than change of aspect or orientation: change of substance is not necessary, nor is movement. (See ANICCA [a], CITTA [a], & FUNDAMENTAL STRUCTURE.) Kierkegaard (op. cit., p. 277) points out that Heraclitus, who summed up his doctrine of universal flux in the celebrated dictum that one cannot pass through the same river twice, had a disciple who remarked that one cannot pass through the same river even once. If everything is changing, there is no change at all. The assumption of a single absolute time, conceived as a uniform continuity (or flux) of instants, leads at once to a very common misconception of the Dhamma:

A.

Even if I now perceive things as self- identically persisting in time, my present perception is only one out of a flux or continuous succession of perceptions, and there is no guarantee that I continue to perceive the same self-identities for two successive instants. All I am therefore entitled to say is that there appear to be self-identities persisting in time; but whether it is so or not in reality I am quite unable to discover.

B.

The Buddha's teachings of impermanence and not-self answer this question in the negative: In reality no things exist, and if they appear to do so that is because of my ignorance of these teachings (which is avijjā).

But we may remark: (i) That A is the result of taking presumptively the rational view of time, and using it to question the validity of direct reflexive experience. But the rational view of time is itself derived, ultimately, from direct reflexive experience—how can we know about time at all, if not from experience? --, and it is quite illegitimate to use it to dig away its own foundations. The fault is in the act of rationalization, in the attempt to see time from a point outside it; and the result—a continuous succession of isolated instants each of no duration and without past or future (from a timeless point of view they are all present)—is a monster. The distinction in A (as everywhere else) between 'appearance' and 'reality' is wholly spurious. (ii) That since our knowledge of time comes only from perception of change, the nature of change must be determined before we can know the structure of time. We have, therefore, no antecedent reason—if we do not actually encounter the thing itself—for entertaining the self-contradictory idea (see Poincaré above) of continuous change. (iii) That, whether or not we do actually perceive continuous change, we certainly perceive discontinuous changes (so much is admitted by A), and there is thus a prima-facie case at least in favour of the latter. (iv) That the experiments of the Gestalt psychologists indicate that, in fact, we perceive only discontinuous changes, not continuous change (cf. Sartre, op. cit., p. 190). (v) That if, nevertheless, we say that we do at times and in the normal way have intuitive experience, distinct and unambiguous, of continuous change, and if we also say that continuous change, in accordance with B, is what is meant by the teaching of impermanence, then it will follow that at such times we must enjoy a direct view of 'reality' and be free from avijjā. Why, then, should we need a Buddha to tell us these things? But if we reject the first premiss we shall have no longer any grounds for having to assert a uniformly continuous time, and if we reject the second we shall have no longer any grounds for wishing to assert it. (On the question of self-identity, see ATTĀ.)

Our undeniable experience of movement and similar things (e.g. the fading of lights) will no doubt be adduced as evidence of continuous change—indeed, it will be said that they are continuous change. That movement is evidence of what it is, is quite certain; but it is not so certain that it is evidence of continuous change. We may understand movement as, at each level of generality, a succession of contiguous fixed finite trajectories (to borrow Sartre's expression), and each such trajectory, at the next lower level, as a relatively faster succession of lesser trajectories, and so on indefinitely. But, as discussed in FUNDAMENTAL STRUCTURE [h], our ability to perceive distinctions is limited, and this hierarchy of trajectories is anomalously apprehended as a series of discrete continuities of displacement—which is, precisely, what we are accustomed to call movement. In other words, it is only where our power of discrimination leaves off that we start talking about 'continuous change'. (Consideration of the mechanism of the cinematograph—see the foregoing reference—is enough to show that continuous change cannot safely be inferred from the experience of movement;

but it must not be supposed that the structure of movement can be reduced simply to the structure of the cinematograph film. See also FUNDAMENTAL STRUCTURE [m].) [Back to text]

PHASSA

Phassa, 'contact', is defined (Salāyatana Samy. iv,10 <S.iv,67-9>) as the coming together of the eye, forms, and eye-consciousness (and so with the ear and the rest). But it is probably wrong to suppose that we must therefore understand the word phassa, primarily at least, as contact between these three things.[a] So long as there is avijjā, all things (dhammā) are fundamentally as described in the earlier part of the Mūlapariyāyasutta (Majjhima i,1 <M.i,1>); that is to say, they are inherently in subjection, they are appropriated, they are mine (See ANICCA, MAMA, & A NOTE ON PATICCASAMUPPĀDA [f]). This is the foundation of the notion that I am and that things are in contact with me. This contact between me and things is phassa. The ditthisampanna sees the deception, but the puthujjana accepts it at its face value and elaborates it into a relationship between himself and the world (attā ca loko ca—which relationship is then capable of further elaboration into a variety of views [Majjhima xi,2 <M.ii,233>]).[b] But though the ditthisampanna is not deceived, yet until he becomes arahat the aroma of subjectivity (asmī ti, '[I] am') hangs about all his experience. All normal experience is dual (dvayam—see NĀMA, final paragraph): there are present (i) one's conscious six-based body (saviññānaka salāyatanika kāya), and (ii) other phenomena (namely, whatever is not one's body); and reflexion will show that, though both are objective in the experience, the aroma of subjectivity that attaches to the experience will naturally tend to be attributed to the body.[c] In this way, phassa comes to be seen as contact between the conscious eye and forms—but mark that this is because contact is primarily between subject and object, and not between eye, forms, and eye-consciousness. This approach makes it possible to see in what sense, with the entire cessation of all illusion of 'I' and 'mine', there is phassanirodha in the arahat (where, though there are still, so long as he continues to live, both the conscious body and the other phenomena, there is no longer any appropriation). But when (as commonly) phassa is interpreted as 'contact between sense-organ and sense-object, resulting in consciousness'—and its translation as '(sense-)impression' implies this interpretation—then we are at once cut off from all possibility of understanding phassanirodha in the arahat;[d] for the question whether or not the eye is the subject is not even raised—we are concerned only with the eye as a sense-organ, and it is a sense-organ in puthujjana and arahat alike. Understanding of phassa now consists in accounting for consciousness starting from physiological (or neurological) descriptions of the sense-organs and their functioning. Consciousness, however, is not physiologically observable, and the entire project rests upon unjustifiable assumptions from the start.[e] This epistemological interpretation of phassa misconceives the Dhamma as a kind of natural-science-cum-psychology that provides an explanation of things in terms of cause-and- effect.

Footnotes:

[a] This interpretation of phassa is not invited by the Mahānidānasuttanta (Dīgha ii,2 <D.ii,62>[9]), where nāmarūpapaccayā phasso is discussed without reference to salāyatana, and in terms of adhivacanasamphassa and patighasamphassa. These terms are more easily comprehensible when phassa is understood as 'contact between subject and object'. (It is an elementary mistake to equate patighasamphassa ['resistance-contact'] with five-base-contact [cakkhusamphassa &c.] and adhivacanasamphassa ['designation-contact'] with mind-contact [manosamphassa]. Adhivacana and patigha correspond to nāma and rūpa respectively, and it is clear from Majjhima iii,8 <M.i,190-1>[10] that both nāma and rūpa are conditions for each of the six kinds of contact. See NĀMA.) [Back to text]

[b] The puthujjana takes for granted that 'I am' is the fundamental fact, and supposes that 'things are mine (or concern me) because I am'. The ditthisampanna sees that this is the wrong way round. He sees that there is the conceit (concept) '(I) am' because 'things are mine'. With perception of impermanence, the inherent appropriation subsides; 'things are mine' gives place to just 'things are' (which things are still significant—they point to or indicate other things—, but no longer point to a 'subject'); and 'I am' vanishes. With the coming to an end of the arahat's life there is the ending of 'things are'. While the arahat still lives, then, there continue to be 'objects' in the sense of 'things'; but if 'objects' are understood as necessarily correlative to a 'subject', then 'things' can no longer be called 'objects'. See ATTĀ. Similarly with the 'world' as the correlative of 'self': so long as the arahat lives, there is still an organized perspective of significant things; but they are no longer significant 'to him', nor do they 'signify him'. See Preface (f). [Back to text]

[c] If experience were confined to the use of a single eye, the eye and forms would not be distinguishable, they would not appear as separate things; there would be just the experience describable in terms of pañc'upādānakkhandhā. But normal experience is always multiple, and other faculties (touch and so on) are engaged at the same time, and the eye and forms as separate things are manifest to them (in the duality of experience already referred to). The original experience is thus found to be a relationship: but the fleshly eye is observed (by the other faculties, notably touch, and by the eyes themselves seeing their own reflexion) to be invariable (it is always 'here', idha), whereas forms are observed to be variable (they are plural and 'yonder', huram). Visual experience, however, also is variable, and its entire content is thus naturally attributed to forms and none of it to the eye. In visual experience, then, forms are seen, the eye is unseen, yet (as our other faculties or a looking-glass informs us) there is the eye. Also in visual experience, but in quite a different way (indicated earlier), objects are seen, the subject is unseen (explicitly, at least; otherwise it [or he] would be an object), yet there is the subject ('I am'). On account of their structural similarity these two independent patterns appear one superimposed on the other; and when there is failure to distinguish between these patterns, the subject comes to be identified with the eye (and mutatis mutandis for the other

āyatanāni). See VIÑÑĀNA for an account of how, in a similar way, consciousness comes to be superimposed on the eye (and the six-based body generally). [Back to text]

[d]

Phusanti phassā upadhim paticca

Nirūpadhim kena phuseyyum phassā

Contacts contact dependent on ground—

How should contacts contact a groundless one? Udāna ii,4 <Ud.12>

It must, of course, be remembered that phassanirodha in the arahat does not mean that experience as such (pañcakkhandhā) is at an end. But, also, there is no experience without phassa. In other words, to the extent that we can still speak of an eye, of forms, and of eye-consciousness (seeing)—e.g. Samvijjati kho āvuso Bhagavato cakkhu, passati Bhagavā cakkhunā rūpam, chandarāgo Bhagavato n'atthi, suvimuttacitto Bhagavā ('The Auspicious One, friend, possesses an eye; the Auspicious One sees visible forms with the eye; desire-&-lust for the Auspicious One there is not; the Auspicious One is wholly freed in heart (citta)' (Cf. ATTĀ [c].)) (Salāyatana Samy. xviii,5 <S.iv,164>)—to that extent we can still speak of phassa. But it must no longer be regarded as contact with me (or with him, or with somebody). There is, and there is not, contact in the case of the arahat, just as there is, and there is not, consciousness. See CETANĀ [f]. [Back to text]

[e] The reader may note that the word 'sensation' is claimed by physiology: a sensation is what is carried by, or travels over, the nervous system. One respectable authority speaks 'in physiological terms alone' of 'the classical pathways by which sensation reaches the thalamus and finally the cerebral cortex'. Presumably, therefore, a sensation is an electro-chemical impulse in a nerve. But the word properly belongs to psychology: Sensation, according to the Pocket Oxford Dictionary, is 'Consciousness of perceiving or seeming to perceive some state or affection of one's body or its parts or senses or of one's mind or its emotions'. What, then, is sensation—is it nervous impulse? or is it consciousness? Or is it not, rather, a convenient verbal device for persuading ourselves that consciousness is nervous impulse, and therefore physiologically observable? 'Consciousness' affirms our authority 'is the sum of the activities of the whole nervous system', and this appears to be the current official doctrine.

The notion of sensation, however, as we see from the dictionary's definition, is an abomination from the start—how can one 'perceive the state of one's senses' when it is precisely by means of one's senses that one perceives? (See MANO.) Another individual's perception (with his eye) of the state of my eye may well have, in certain respects, a one-one correspondence with my perception (with my eye) of, say, a tree (or, for that matter, a ghost, or, since the eye as visual organ extends into the brain, a migraine); but it is mere lazy thinking to presume from this that when I perceive a tree I am really perceiving the state of my eye—and then, to account for my sensation, inferring the existence of a tree in a supposed 'external' world beyond my experience. The reader is referred to Sartre's excellent discussion of this equivocal concept (op. cit., pp. 372-8), of which we can give here only the peroration. 'La sensation, notion hybride entre le subjectif et l'objectif, conçue à partir de l'objet, et appliquée ensuite au sujet, existence bâtarde dont on ne saurait dire si elle est de fait ou de droit, la sensation est une pure rêverie de psychologue, il faut la rejeter délibérément de toute théorie sérieuse sur les rapports de la conscience et du monde.' ('Sensation, hybrid notion between the subjective and the objective, conceived starting from the object, and then applied to the subject, bastard entity of which one cannot say whether it is de facto or de jure,—sensation is a pure psychologist's day-dream: it must be deliberately rejected from every serious theory on the relations of consciousness [which, for Sartre, is subjectivity] and the world.') Descartes, it seems, with his 'representative ideas', is the modern philosopher primarily responsible for the present tangle—see Heidegger, op. cit., p. 200 et seq. (Heidegger quotes Kant as saying that it is 'a scandal of philosophy and of human reason in general' that there is still no cogent proof for the 'being-there of things outside us' that will do away with all scepticism. Then he remarks 'The "scandal of philosophy" is not that this proof is yet to be given, but that such proofs are expected and attempted again and again'.) Removal of the pseudo-problem of the 'external' world removes materialism, but does not remove matter (for which see NĀMA & RŪPA). [Back to text]

BALA

The distinction between indriya and bala seems to be that indriya, 'faculty', means a qualitative range of capacity or extent of dominion in a given province, whereas bala, 'power', implies rather a quantitative superiority of endowment. As faculties the five items, saddhā, viriya, sati, samādhi, and paññā, are, in the ariyasāvaka, either effective or latent all at once (see Indriya Samy. vi,2 <S.v,228>) and are totally absent from the puthujjana (ibid. ii,8 <S.v,202>[11]). As powers they are the strength of the ariyasāvaka, who has equipment for practice of the Dhamma that is lacking in the puthujjana. Katamañ ca bhikkhave bhāvanābalam. Tatra bhikkhave yam idam bhāvanābalam sekhānam etam balam sekhamhi. ('And which, monks, is the development-power? Herein, monks, as to the development-power, this is the trainers' power, in trainers.') (Anguttara II,ii,1 <A.i,52>) It is sometimes supposed that a puthujjana possesses these faculties and powers, at least in embryo, and that his task is to develop them. This is a misunderstanding. It is the puthujjana's task to acquire them. It is for the sekha, who has acquired them, to develop them.

MANO

Much mental activity (imagination) is to some extent reflexive (in a loose sense);[a] and reflexion brings to light not merely things (as does the unreflexive attitude) but also the nature of things (see DHAMMA). Thus dhammā, as the external counterpart of mano, can often be understood as 'universals'.[b] This does not mean, of course, that the mind will necessarily choose to attend to these universal things that appear; it may prefer to enjoy the images as the eye enjoys visible forms; nevertheless, it is reflexively withdrawn from the immediate world. See NĀMA [b].

Note that just as the eye, as cakkhāyatana or cakkhudhātu, is that yena lokasmim lokasaññī hoti lokamānī ('[that] by which, in the world, one is a perceiver and conceiver of the world') (Salāyatana Samy. xii,3 <S.iv,95>), i.e. that thing in the world dependent upon which there is perceiving and conceiving of the world, namely a spherical lump of flesh set in my face; so the mind, as manāyatana or manodhātu, also is that yena lokasmim lokasaññī hoti lokamānī, i.e. that thing in the world dependent upon which there is perceiving and conceiving of the world, namely various ill-defined parts of my body, but principally a mass of grey matter contained in my head (physiological and neurological descriptions are strictly out of place—see PHASSA).[c] This is in agreement with the fact that all five khandhā arise in connexion with each of the six āyatanāni—see NĀMA & PHASSA [a]. For 'perceiving and conceiving' see MAMA [a].

More loosely, in other contexts, the mind (mano) is simply 'imagination' or 'reflexion', which, strictly, in the context of the foregoing paragraph, is manoviññāna, i.e. the presence of images. See NĀMA [c]. The Vibhanga (of the Abhidhamma Pitaka) introduces chaos by supposing that manodhātu and manoviññānadhatu are successive stages of awareness, differing only in intensity (and perhaps also, somehow, in kind). See CITTA.

Footnotes:

[a] For reflexion in the stricter sense see DHAMMA [b]. Something of the distinction between these two senses of reflexion can be seen in the following two Sutta definitions of sati or 'mindfulness':

(i) Ariyasāvako satimā hoti paramena satinepakkena samannāgato cirakatam pi cirabhāsitam pi saritā anussaritā. ('The noble disciple is mindful, he is endowed with the highest mindfulness and

discretion, he remembers and recalls what was done and what was said long ago.') E.g. Indriya Samy. v,10 <S.v,225>. This is more 'reflection' than 'reflexion'. Sati, here, is mindfulness (calling to mind) of the past, and therefore memory or recollection.

(ii) Idha bhikkhave bhikkhu kāye kāyānupassī…vedanāsu vedanānupassī…citte cittānupassī…dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati ātāpī sampajāno satimā vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassam. Evam kho bhikkhave bhikkhu sato hoti. ('Here, monks, a monk dwells contemplating the body in the body…feelings in feelings…mind in the mind…ideas in ideas, ardent, aware, mindful, having put away worldly covetousness and grief. Thus, monks, is a monk mindful.') Vedanā Samy. i,7 <S.iv,211> In this context, sati is mindfulness of the present. Here we might be said to have both the present and its image together. [Back to text]

[b] A universal becomes an abstraction only in so far as an attempt is made to think it in isolation from all particular or concrete content—divorced, that is to say, from existence. The stricter the reflexion the less the abstraction.

A distinction must be made between 'relative universals', where the content of a given experience is generalized ('this horse', 'this brown', appear as examples or instances of 'horse' and 'brown', i.e. as one of 'all possible horses', of 'all possible browns'), and 'absolute universals', where the characteristics of a given experience as such are generalized ('this matter', 'this feeling', &c., appear as examples of 'matter', 'feeling', &c., i.e. as one of the rūpakkhandhā, of the vedanākkhandhā, and so on: see Majjhima xi,9 <M.iii,16-7>)—cf. CETANĀ [a]. The former is partly a discursive withdrawal from the real into the imaginary (or from the imaginary into the imaginary imaginary, as when a particular imagined horse is generalized); the latter, more radical, is an intuitive withdrawal from the immediate (both real and imaginary) into the reflexive, in the stricter sense of note (a [ii]) above. Cf. Bradley, op. cit. (Logic), I,ii,§§24-27. Note: (i) That 'this horse' is 'one of all possible appearances or aspects of this horse' before it is 'one of all possible horses', and unique particulars (e.g. 'Socrates') will not reach the second stage. (ii) That the appearance of universals (of any kind) is due to reflexion and not to abstraction; and reflection is a combination of both: thus 'relative universals' do not cease to be universals as reflexion becomes stricter; they simply tend to be disregarded (or 'put in brackets'). (iii) That abstractions and ideas are the same thing; and, though they do not exist apart from images, they are not anchored to any one particular image; but, in the sense that they necessarily have one or another concrete (even if multiple) imaginary content, the abstraction is illusory: abstraction is a discursive escape from the singularity of the real to the plurality of the imaginary—it is not an escape from the concrete. (This shows the reason for Kierkegaard's paradox—see Preface [n] .) (iv) That it is a function of the practice of samādhi to reduce discursive thinking: mindfulness of breathing is

particularly recommended—ānāpānasati bhāvetabbā vitakk'upacchedāya ('Mindfulness of breathing should be developed for the cutting-off of thoughts') (Udāna iv,1 <Ud.37>). (The fact that almost nothing is said in these Notes about samādhi is due simply to their exclusive concern with right and wrong ditthi, and is absolutely not to be taken as implying that the task of developing samādhi can be dispensed with.) [Back to text]

[c] This account of mind (as manāyatana) is not entirely satisfactory. We should probably do better to envisage mind in this context as five imaginary ajjhattāyatanāni related to the five real ajjhattāyatanāni (eye, ear, and so on) as imaginary sights and sounds (and so on) are related to real sights and sounds. (See NĀMA [b].) The world, of course, includes both the real (or present) and the imaginary (or absent); and just as, to see real things, there must be a real eye (incarnating a real point of view) 'in the world', so, to see imaginary things, there must be an imaginary eye (incarnating an imaginary point of view) also 'in the world'. Cf. Majjhima v,3 <M.i,295>. [Back to text]

MAMA

Cakkhum, Etam mama, eso'ham asmi, eso me attā ti samanupassati. Cakkhum, N'etam mama, n'eso'ham asmi, n'eso me attā ti samanupassati. Majjhima xv,6 <M.iii,284>

'This is mine; this am I; this is my self'—so he regards the eye. 'Not, this is mine; not, this am I; not, this is my self'—so he regards the eye.

If N'etam mama is translated 'This is not mine' the implication is that something other than this is mine, which must be avoided. These three views (of which the sotāpanna is free) correspond to three degrees or levels of appropriation. Etam mama is the most fundamental, a rationalization (or at least a conceptual elaboration) of the situation described in the Mūlapariyāyasutta (Majjhima i,1 <M.i,1-6>) and in the Salāyatana Samyutta iii,8 <S.iv,22-3>. Eso'ham asmi is a rationalization of asmimāna. Eso me attā is a rationalization of attavāda—it is full-blown sakkāyaditthi. Though the sotāpanna is free of these views, he is not yet free of the maññanā of the Mūlapariyāyasutta (which is fundamental in all bhava) or of asmimāna, but he cannot be said to have attavāda.[a] See DHAMMA [d] & PHASSA. The sotāpanna (and the other two sekhā), in whom asmimāna is still present, know and see for themselves that notions of 'I' and 'mine' are deceptions. So they say N'etam mama, n'eso'ham asmi, n'eso me attā ti. The arahat is quite free from asmimāna, and, not having any trace of 'I' and 'mine', does not even say N'etam mama, n'eso'ham asmi, n'eso me attā ti.

Footnotes:

[a] The Mūlapariyāyasutta is as follows. (i) The puthujjana 'perceives X as X; perceiving X as X, he conceives X, he conceives In X, he conceives From X, he conceives "X is mine"; he delights in X...'. (ii) The sekha 'recognizes X as X; recognizing X as X, he should not conceive X, he should not conceive In X, he should not conceive From X, he should not conceive "X is mine"; he should not delight in X...'. (iii) The arahat 'recognizes X as X; recognizing X as X, he does not conceive X, he does not conceive In X, he does not conceive From X, he does not conceive "X is mine"; he does not delight in X...'. This tetrad of maññanā, of 'conceivings', represents four progressive levels of explicitness in the basic structure of appropriation. The first, 'he conceives X', is so subtle that the appropriation is simply implicit in the verb. Taking advantage of an extension of meaning (not, however, found in the Pali maññati), we can re-state 'he conceives X' as 'X conceives', and then understand this as 'X is pregnant'—pregnant, that is to say, with subjectivity. And, just as when a woman first conceives she has nothing to show for it, so at this most implicit level we can still only say 'X'; but as the pregnancy advances, and it begins to be noticeable, we are obliged to say 'In X'; then the third stage of the pregnancy, when we begin to suspect that a separation is eventually going to take place, can be described as 'From X'; and the fourth stage, when the infant's head makes a public appearance and the separation is on the point of becoming definite, is the explicit 'X is mine (me, not mama)'. This separation is first actually realized in asmimāna, where I, as subject, am opposed to X, as object; and when the subject eventually grows up he becomes the 'self' of attavāda, face to face with the 'world' in which he exists. (In spite of the simile, what is described here is a single graded structure all implicated in the present, and not a development taking place in time. When there is attavāda, the rest of this edifice lies beneath it: thus attavāda requires asmimāna (and the rest), but there can be asmimāna without attavāda.) Note that it is only the sekha who has the ethical imperative 'should not': the puthujjana, not 'recognizing X as X' (he perceives X as X, but not as impermanent), does not see for himself that he should not conceive X; while the arahat, though 'recognizing X as X', no longer conceives X. See KAMMA. [Back to text]

RŪPA

In the Kevaddhasutta (Dīgha i,11 <D.i,223>), it is said that the question 'Where do the four mahābhūtā finally cease?' is wrongly asked, and that the question should be 'Where do [the four mahābhūtā] get no footing? Where do nāma and rūpa finally cease?' Matter or substance (rūpa) is essentially inertia or resistance (see Dīgha ii,2 <D.ii,62>[9]), or as the four mahābhūtā it can be regarded as four kinds of behaviour (i.e. the four primary patterns of inertia—see NĀMA). Behaviour (or inertia) is independent of the particular sense-experience that happens to be exhibiting it: a message in the Morse code (which would be a certain complex mode of behaviour) could be received in any sense-experience (though seeing and hearing are the most usual). In any one kind of sense-experience there is revealed a vast set of various behaviours, of various patterns of inertia; and in any other contemporary sense-experience there is revealed a set that, to a great extent, corresponds to this first set.[a] (One particular group of behaviours common to all my sense-experiences is of especial significance—it is 'this body', ayam kāyo rūpī catummahābhūtiko ('this body composed of matter, of the four great

entities') [Majjhima viii,5 <M.i,500>].) Thus, when I see a bird opening its beak at intervals I can often at the same time hear a corresponding sound, and I say that it is the (visible) bird that is (audibly) singing. The fact that there seems to be one single (though elaborate) set of behaviours common to all my sense-experiences at any one time, and not an entirely different set for each sense, gives rise to the notion of one single material world revealed indifferently by any one of my senses. Furthermore, the material world of one individual largely corresponds to that of another (particularly if allowance is made for difference in point of view), and we arrive at the wider notion of one general material world common to all individuals.[b] The fact that a given mode of behaviour can be common to sense-experiences of two or more different kinds shows that it is independent of any one particular kind of consciousness (unlike a given perception—blue, for example, which is deppendent upon eye-consciousness and not upon ear-consciousness or the others); and being independent of any one particular kind of consciousness it is independent of all consciousness except for its presence or existence. One mode of behaviour can be distinguished from another, and in order that this can be done they must exist—they must be present either in reality or in imagination, they must be cognized. But since it makes no difference in what form they are present—whether as sights or sounds (and even with one as visible and one as audible, and one real and one imaginary)—, the difference between them is not a matter of consciousness.[c] Behaviour, then, in itself does not involve consciousness (as perception does), and the rūpakkhandha is not phassapaccayā (as the saññākkhandha is)—see Majjhima xi,9 <M.iii,17>. In itself, purely as inertia or behaviour, matter cannot be said to exist. (Cf. Heidegger, op. cit., p. 212.) And if it cannot be said to exist it cannot be said to cease. Thus the question 'Where do the four mahābhūtā finally cease?' is improper. (The question will have been asked with the notion in mind of an existing general material world common to all. Such a general world could only exist—and cease—if there were a general consciousness common to all. But this is a contradiction, since consciousness and individuality [see SAKKĀYA] are one.) But behaviour can get a footing in existence by being present in some form. As rūpa in nāmarūpa, the four mahābhūtā get a borrowed existence as the behaviour of appearance (just as feeling, perception, and intentions, get a borrowed substance as the appearance of behaviour). And nāmarūpa is the condition for viññāna as viññāna is for nāmarūpa. When viññāna (q.v.) is anidassana it is said to have ceased (since avijjā has ceased). Thus, with cessation of viññāna there is cessation of nāmarūpa, and the four mahābhūtā no longer get a footing in existence. (The passage at Salāyatana Samyutta xix,8 <S.iv,192>, ...bhikkhu catunnam mahābhūtānam samudayañ ca atthagamañ ca yathābhūtam pajānāti, ('...a monk understands as they really are the arising and ceasing of the four great entities') is to be understood in this sense.)

From the foregoing discussion it can be seen that in order to distinguish rūpa from nāma it is only necessary to separate what is (or could be) common to two or more kinds of consciousness from what is not. But care is needed. It might seem that shape is rūpa and not nāma since it is present in both eye-consciousness and body-consciousness (e.g. touching with the fingers). This, however, is a mistake. Vision is a double faculty: it cognizes both colour and shape (see FUNDAMENTAL STRUCTURE

§§I/4 & II/8). The eye touches what it sees (it is only necessary to run the eye first across and then down some vertical lines or bars to discover this), and the result is coloured shapes. The eye is capable of intentional movement more delicate even than the fingers, and the corresponding perception of shapes is even more subtle.[d] Similar considerations apply, though in a much lesser degree, to hearing (and even to taste and to smell) where perception of shape, when present (however vaguely), corresponds to movement, real or imaginary (which will include the directional effect of two ears), of the head or of the entire body.[e] But provided different kinds of consciousness are adequately distinguished, this method gives a definite criterion for telling what is matter from what is not. It is consequently not necessary to look for strict analysis of the four mahābhūtā: provided only that our idea of them conforms to this criterion, and that they cover all the primary modes of matter, this is all that is needed. Thus it is not necessary to look beyond the passage at Majjhima xiv,10 <M.iii,240> for a definition of them. (It is easy, but fatal, to assume that the Buddha's Teaching is concerned with analysis for its own sake, and then to complain that the analysis is not pushed far enough.) A human body in action, clearly enough, will present a behaviour that is a highly complex combination of these primary modes: it is behaviour of behaviour, but it still does not get beyond behaviour. (It is important to note that the laws of science—of biochemistry and physics in particular—do not cover behaviour (i.e. matter) associated with conscious [intentional] action.)[f]

Footnotes:

[a] Mind-experience is not considered in this Note to avoid complication. It is not, however, essentially different. See MANO [c]. [Back to text]

[b] Natural science, in taking this concept as its starting-point and polishing it a little to remove irregularities, has no place for the individual and his sense-experience (let alone mind-experience or imagination); for the material world of science is by definition utterly without point of view (in relativity theory every point is a point of view, which comes to the same thing), it is uniformly and quite indifferently communal—it is essentially public>. Consciousness, intention, perception, and feeling, not being public, are not a part of the universe of science. Science is inherently incapable of understanding the nature of material change due to conscious action—which is, concisely, reflexive exercise of preference for one available mode of behaviour (or set of them) at the expense of the others. (Quantum physics, in hoping to reinstate the 'observer'—even if only as a point of view—, is merely locking the stable door after the horse has been stolen.) [Back to text]

[c] A visual and an auditive experience differ in consciousness (whether or not they differ in matter); but between two different visual (or auditive) experiences the difference is in matter (or substance, or inertia) and not in consciousness. [At this point the question might be asked, 'What is the material difference between the simple experiences of, for example, a blue thing and a red thing (ignoring spatial extension)?' The immediate answer is that they are simply different things, i.e. different inertias. But if it is insisted that one inertia can only differ from another in behaviour (i.e. in pattern of inertia)—in other words, that no inertia is absolutely simple—, we shall perhaps find the answer in the idea of a difference in frequency. But this would involve us in discussion of an order of structure underlying the four mahābhūtā. See FUNDAMENTAL STRUCTURE [j].] Thus it will be observed that all difference in appearance (nāma) is difference in either consciousness (viññāna) or matter (rūpa). Why is this? Neither consciousness nor matter, by itself, can appear (or be manifest); for consciousness by itself lacks substance or specification—it is pure presence or existence without any thing that is present (or exists)—, and matter by itself lacks presence or existence—it is pure substance or specification, of which one cannot say 'it is' (i.e. 'it is present [or absent]'). Appearance or manifestation must necessarily partake of both consciousness and matter, but as an overlapping () and not simply an addition (for the simple superposition of two things each itself incapable of appearing would not produce appearance). Appearance is existence as substance, or substance as existence, and there must be also simple existence (or consciousness) and simple substance (or matter) to support this imbrication. Appearance, in a manner of speaking, is sandwiched between consciousness and matter: there must be rūpa, and nāma, and viññāna (). (There is more to be said about this, but not briefly.) It is because of this structure that all differences in appearance can be resolved into differences either of consciousness or of matter (or both). [Back to text]

[d] Strictly, the shapes are there before the eyeball is moved, just as the hand perceives the shape of an object merely by resting on it; movement of the eyeball, as of the fingers, only confirms the perception and makes it explicit. This does not matter: we are concerned only to point out the similarity of the eye and the hand as both yielding perceptions of shape, not to give an account of such perceptions. [Back to text]

[e] This discussion, it will be seen, makes space a secondary and not a primary quality (see NĀMA [d]): space is essentially tactile (in a wide sense), and is related to the body (as organ of touch) as colours and sounds (and so on) are related to the eye and the ear—indeed, we should do better to think of 'spaces' rather than of any absolute 'space'. Space, in fact, has no right to its privileged position opposite time as one of the joint basic determinants of matter: we are no more entitled to speak of 'space-(&-)time' than we are of 'smell-(&-)time'. Time itself is not absolute (see PATICCASAMUPPĀDA [c] & FUNDAMENTAL STRUCTURE §II/5), and material things, as they exist, are not 'in' time (like floatage on a river), but rather have time as their characteristic; space, however, besides not being absolute, is not, strictly, even a characteristic of matter. On the other hand, our first four sense-organs

are each a part of the body, which is the fifth, and space does hold a privileged position relative to colour, sound, smell, and taste. Thus we sometimes find in the Suttas (e.g. Majjhima vii,2 <M.i,423>) an ākāsadhātu alongside the four mahābhūtā; and for practical purposes—which is ultimately all we are concerned with—space can be regarded as a quasi-material element. But the Milindapañha has no business whatever to put ākāsa together with nibbāna as asankhata. [Back to text]

[f] Pace Russell: 'Physical things are those series of appearances whose matter obeys the laws of physics'. Op. cit., VIIIth Essay, §xi. [Back to text]

VIÑÑĀṆA

Consciousness (viññāna) can be thought of as the presence of a phenomenon, which consists of nāma and rūpa. Nāmarūpa and viññāna together constitute the phenomenon 'in person'—i.e. an experience (in German: Erlebnis). The phenomenon is the support (ārammana—see first reference in [c] below) of consciousness, and all consciousness is consciousness of something (viz, of a phenomenon). Just as there cannot be presence without something that is present, so there cannot be something without its being to that extent present—thus viññāna and nāmarūpa depend on each other (see A NOTE ON PATICCASAMUPPĀDA §17). 'To be' and 'to be present' are the same thing.[a] But note that 'being' as bhava, involves the existence of the (illusory) subject, and with cessation of the conceit (concept) '(I) am', asmimāna, there is cessation of being, bhavanirodha. With the arahat, there is just presence of the phenomenon ('This is present'), instead of the presence (or existence) of an apparent 'subject' to whom there is present an 'object' ('I am, and this is present to [or for] me', i.e. [what appears to be] the subject is present ['I am'], the object is present ['this is'], and the object concerns or 'belongs to' the subject [the object is 'for me' or 'mine']—see PHASSA & ATTĀ); and consciousness is then said to be anidassana, 'non-indicative' (i.e. not pointing to the presence of a 'subject'), or niruddha, 'ceased' (see A NOTE ON PATICCASAMUPPĀDA §22). Viññānanirodha refers indifferently to anidassana viññāna (saupādisesa nibbānadhātu, which refers to the living arahat: Itivuttaka II,ii,7 <Iti.38>[12]) and to cessation, at the arahat's death, of all consciousness whatsoever (anupādisesa nibbānadhātu).[b] Viññānanirodha, strictly speaking, is cessation of viññān'upādānakkhandha as bhavanirodha is cessation of pañc'upādānakkhandhā (i.e. sakkāyanirodha), but it is extended to cover the final cessation of viññānakkhandha (and therefore of pañcakkhandhā) at the breaking up of the arahat's body.

Consciousness, it must be noted, is emphatically no more 'subjective' than are the other four upādānakkhandhā (i.e. than nāmarūpa). (This should be clear from what has gone before; but it is a commonly held view that consciousness is essentially subjective, and a slight discussion will be in place.) It is quite wrong to regard viññāna as the subject to whom the phenomenon (nāmarūpa), now

regarded as object, is present (in which case we should have to say, with Sartre, that consciousness as subjectivity is presence to the object). Viññāna is negative as regards essence (or 'what-ness'): it is not part of the phenomenon, of what is present, but is simply the presence of the phenomenon.[c] Consequently, in visual experience (for example), phenomena are seen, eye-consciousness is not seen (being negative as regards essence), yet there is eye-consciousness (eye -consciousness is present reflexively).[d] In this way consciousness comes to be associated with the body (saviññānaka kāya), and is frequently identified as the subject, or at least as subjectivity (e.g. by Husserl [see CETANĀ [b]] and Sartre [op. cit., p. 27]). (To follow this discussion reference should be made to PHASSA, particularly [c], where it is shown that there is a natural tendency for subjectivity to be associated with the body. Three distinct pairs of complementaries are thus seen to be superimposed: eye & forms (or, generally: six-based body & externals); consciousness & phenomena; subject & objects. To identify consciousness and the subject is only too easy. With attainment of arahattā all trace of the subject-&-objects duality vanishes. Cf. also ATTĀ [c].)

Footnotes:

[a] A distinction must be made. 'To be' and 'being' are (in English) ambiguous. On the one hand they may refer to the existence of a phenomenon as opposed to what it is that exists (namely, the phenomenon). This is viññāna (though it does not follow that viññāna should be translated as 'being' or 'existence'). On the other hand they may refer to the existing thing, the phenomenon as existing; in other words, to the entity. But a further distinction must be made. The entity that the Buddha's Teaching is concerned with is not the thing but the person—but not the person as opposed to the thing, as subject in distinction from object. Personal existence is a synthetic relationship, dependent upon upādāna, and consisting of a subject and his objects. Being or existence in this pregnant sense is bhava, at least as it occurs in the paticcasamuppāda context, and the 'entity' in question is sakkāya (q.v.) or pañc'upādānakkhandhā. (It must be noted that the 'existence' of the living arahat is, properly speaking, not bhava but bhavanirodha, since the conceit '(I) am' has ceased. Strictly, there is no arahat to be found. See [b].) Bhava is to be translated as 'being' (or 'existence'). [Back to text]

[b] Strictly, we cannot speak of the 'living arahat' or of the 'arahat's death'—see A NOTE ON PATICCASAMUPPĀDA §§10 & 22. The terms saupādisesa and anupādisesa nibbānadhātu, which sometimes give trouble, may be rendered 'extinction-element with/without residue'. Saupādisesa and anupādisesa occur at Majjhima xi,5 <M.ii,257&259>, where they can hardly mean more than 'with/without something (stuff, material) left'. At Majjhima i,10 <M.i,62> the presence of upādisesa is what distinguishes the anāgāmí from the arahat, which is clearly not the same thing as what

distinguishes the two extinction-elements. Upādisesa must therefore be unspecified residue. [Back to text]

[c] See Khandha Samy. vi,2 <S.iii,54>. Viññāna is positively differentiated only by what it arises in dependence upon. E.g., that dependent upon eye and visible forms is eye-consciousness, and so with the rest. Cf. Majjhima iv,8 <M.i,259>. That none of the five upādānakkhandhā is to be regarded as 'subjective' can be seen from the following passage: So yad eva tattha hoti rūpagatam vedanāgatam saññāgatam sankhāragatam viññānagatam te dhamme aniccato dukkhato rogato gandato sallato aghato ābādhato parato palokato suññato anattato samanupassati. ('Whatever herein there is of matter, of feeling, of perception, of determinations, of consciousness, these things he regards as impermanent, as suffering, as sickness, as a boil, as a dart, as a calamity, as an affliction, as alien, as wasting, as void, as not-self.') Majjhima vii,4 <M.i,435> (This formula, which is applied in turn to each of the ascending jhāna attainments, should be enough to dispel any idea that jhāna is a mystical experience, in the sense—see Preface (m)—of being intuition of, or union with, some Transcendental Being or Absolute Principle.) [Back to text]

[d] In reflexion, different degrees of consciousness, of presence, will be apparent. Distinction should be made between immediate presence and reflexive presence:

Immediate presence: 'a pain is', or 'consciousness of a pain'.

Reflexive presence: 'there is an existing pain', or 'there is consciousness of a pain'.

We can say 'there is consciousness', which means 'there is immediate presence' ('of a pain', of course, being understood or 'in brackets'), and this is reflexive evidence. But we cannot say 'consciousness is', or 'consciousness of consciousness' (i.e. immediate presence of immediate presence), since presence cannot be immediately present as a pain can. In French, the verbal distinction is more marked: être/y avoir ('ceci est'/'il y a ceci'). In Pali, the distinction is: ruppati/atthi rūpam; vediyati/atthi vedanā; sañjānāti/atthi saññā; abhisankharonti/atthi sankhārā; vijānāti/atthi viññānam. (The reflexive reduplication of experience is, of course, reduplication of all five khandhā, not of viññāna alone.) [Back to text]

SAKKĀYA

Sakkāya is pañc'upādānakkhandhā (Majjhima v,4 <M.i,299>), and may conveniently be translated as 'somebody' or 'person' or, abstractly, 'personality'. See PARAMATTHA SACCA, also for what follows.

An arahat (while alive—that is, if we can speak of a 'living arahat') continues to be individual in the sense that 'he' is a sequence of states (Theragāthā v. 716)[13] distinguishable from other arahanto (and a fortiori from individuals other than arahanto). Every set of pañcakkhandhā[a]—not pañc'upādānakkhandhā in the arahat's case—is unique, and individuality in this sense ceases only with the final cessation of the pañcakkhandhā at the breaking up of the arahat's body. But a living arahat is no longer somebody or a person, since the notion or conceit '(I) am' has already ceased. Individuality must therefore be carefully distinguished from personality,[b] which is: being a person, being somebody, being a subject (to whom objects are present), selfhood, the mirage 'I am', and so on. The puthujjana is not able to distinguish them—for him individuality is not conceivable apart from personality, which he takes as selfhood. The sotāpanna is able to distinguish them—he sees that personality or 'selfhood' is a deception dependent upon avijjā, a deception dependent upon not seeing the deception, which is not the case with individuality—, though he is not yet free from an aroma of subjectivity, asmimāna. The arahat not only distinguishes them but also has entirely got rid of all taint of subjectivity—'he' is individual but in no way personal. For lack of suitable expressions (which in any case would puzzle the puthujjana) 'he' is obliged to go on saying 'I' and 'me' and 'mine' (cf. Dīgha i,9 <D.i,202>; Devatā Samy. iii,5 <S.i,14>[14]). Individuality where the arahat is concerned still involves the perspective or orientation that things necessarily adopt when they exist, or are present, or are cognized; and for each individual the perspective is different. Loss of upādāna is not loss of point of view. See RŪPA and remarks on manasikāra in NĀMA.

Sakkāyaditthi (Majjhima v,4 <M.i,300>) is sometimes explained as the view or belief (often attributed to a purely verbal misunderstanding)[c] that in one or other of the khandhā there is a permanent entity, a 'self'. These rationalized accounts entirely miss the point, which is the distinction (Khandha Samy. v,6 <S.iii,47>) between pañc'upādānakkhandhā (which is sakkāya) and pañcakkhandhā (which is sakkāyanirodha). To have ditthi about sakkāya is not an optional matter (as if one could regard sakkāya from the outside and form ditthi about it or not, as one pleased): sakkāya contains sakkāyaditthi (in a latent form at least) as a necessary part of its structure.[d] If there is sakkāya there is sakkāyaditthi, and with the giving up of sakkāyaditthi there comes to be cessation of sakkāya. To give up sakkāyaditthi, sakkāya must be seen (i.e. as pañc'upādānakkhandhā), and this means that the puthujjana does not see pañc'upādānakkhandhā as such (i.e. he does not recognize them—see MAMA [a] and cf. Majjhima viii,5 <M.i,511>). A puthujjana (especially one who puts his trust in the Commentaries) sometimes comes to believe that he does see pañc'upādānakkhandhā as such, thereby blocking his own progress and meeting with frustration: he cannot see what further task is to be done, and yet remains a puthujjana.

Footnotes:

[a] Past, future, and present, 'five aggregates': matter (or substance), feeling, perception, determinations, and consciousness. [Back to text]

[b] Taken in conjunction with what follows it, this evidently means 'A puthujjana must take good care to become a sotāpanna'. In other words, a purely intellectual distinction (i.e. without direct experience) is not possible. (This statement perhaps requires some modification to allow for the anulomikāya khantiyā samannāgato. One who is anulomikāya khantiyā samannāgato, though a puthujjana, is not at that time assutavā (through hearing the Dhamma he has some understanding, but he can still lose this and return to his former state). But to be anulomikāya khantiyā samannāgato it is by no manner of means enough to have studied the Suttas and to profess oneself a follower of the Buddha. See Anguttara VI,x,3-6 <A.iii,441-3> & CITTA. Anulomikāya khantiyā samannāgato may be translated 'endowed with acquiescence in conformity (scil. with the Dhamma)'; such an individual is not of contrary view to the Teaching, but does not actually see it for himself.). [Back to text]

[c] If avijjā were simply a matter of verbal misunderstanding, a maggot would be an arahat. [Back to text]

[d] The reader is referred to the passage (d) in the Preface, quoted from Blackham. It is not possible to lay too much stress on this point. See also DHAMMA [c], NIBBĀNA [a], & A NOTE ON PATICCASAMUPPĀDA §§24 & 25. [Back to text]

SAṄKHĀRA

A full discussion of this key word is given in A NOTE ON PATICCASAMUPPĀDA. It is there maintained that the word sankhāra, in all contexts, means 'something that something else depends on', that is to say a determination (determinant). It might be thought that this introduces an unnecessary complication into such passages as Vayadhammā sankhārā appamādena sampādetha ('To disappear is the nature of determinations; strive unremittingly') and Aniccā vata sankhārā uppādavayadhammino ('Impermanent indeed are determinations; to arise (appear) and disappear is their nature') (Dīgha ii,3 <D.ii,156&7>). Why, instead of telling us that things (dhammā) are impermanent and bound to disappear, should the Buddha take us out of our way to let us know that things that things depend on are impermanent and bound to disappear? The answer is that the Dhamma does not set out to explain, but to lead—it is opanayika. This means that the Dhamma is not seeking disinterested intellectual approval, but to provoke an effort of comprehension or insight leading to the abandonment of attavāda and eventually of asmimāna. Its method is therefore necessarily indirect: we can only stop regarding this as 'self' if we see that what this depends on is impermanent (see

DHAMMA for more detail). Consider, for example, the Mahāsudassanasuttanta (Dīgha ii,4 <D.ii,169-99>), where the Buddha describes in detail the rich endowments and possessions of King Mahāsudassana, and then finishes: Pass'Ānanda sabbe te sankhārā atītā niruddhā viparinatā. Evam aniccā kho Ānanda sankhārā, evam addhuvā kho Ānanda sankhārā, yāvañ c'idam Ānanda alam eva sabbasankhāresu nibbinditum, alam virajjitum, alam vimuccitum. ('See, Ānanda, how all those determinations have passed, have ceased, have altered. So impermanent, Ānanda, are determinations, so unlasting, Ānanda, are determinations, that this, Ānanda, is enough for weariness of all determinations, enough for dispassion, enough for release.') This is not a simple statement that all those things, being impermanent by nature, are now no more; it is a lever to prize the notion of 'selfhood' out of its firm socket. Those things were sankhārā: they were things on which King Mahāsudassana depended for his very identity; they determined his person as 'King Mahāsudassana', and with their cessation the thought 'I am King Mahāsudassana' came to an end. More formally, those sankhārā were nāmarúpa, the condition for phassa (Dīgha ii,2 <D.ii,62>[9]), upon which sakkāyaditthi depends (cf. Dīgha i,1 <D.i,42-3> together with Citta Samy. 3 <S.iv,287>).

SAÑÑĀ

Saññā and viññāna (perception and consciousness) may be differentiated as follows. Saññā (defined in Anguttara VI,vi,9 <A.iii,413>) is the quality or percept itself (e.g. blue), whereas viññāna (q.v) is the presence or consciousness of the quality or percept—or, more strictly, of the thing exhibiting the quality or percept (i.e. of nāmarūpa). (A quality, it may be noted, is unchanged whether it is present or absent—blue is blue whether seen or imagined --, and the word saññā is used both of five-base experience and of mental experience.)

It would be as wrong to say 'a feeling is perceived' as it would 'a percept is felt' (which mix up saññā and vedanā); but it is quite in order to say 'a feeling, a percept, (that is, a felt thing, a perceived thing) is cognized', which simply means that a feeling or a percept is present (as, indeed, they both are in all experience—see Majjhima v,3 <M.i,293>[15]). Strictly speaking, then, what is cognized is nāmarūpa, whereas what is perceived (or felt) is saññā (or vedanā), i.e. only nāma. This distinction can be shown grammatically. Vijānāti, to cognize, is active voice in sense (taking an objective accusative): consciousness cognizes a phenomenon (nāmarūpa); consciousness is always consciousness of something. Sañjānāti, to perceive, (or vediyati, to feel) is middle voice in sense (taking a cognate accusative): perception perceives [a percept] (or feeling feels [a feeling]). Thus we should say 'a blue thing (= a blueness), a painful thing (= a pain), is cognized', but 'blue is perceived' and 'pain is felt'. (In the Suttas generally, due allowance is to be made for the elasticity in the common usage of words. But in certain passages, and also in one's finer thinking, stricter definition may be required.)

At Dīgha i,9 <D.i,185>, Potthapāda asks the Buddha whether perception arises before knowledge, or knowledge before perception, or both together. The Buddha gives the following answer: Saññā kho Potthapāda pathamam uppajjati, pacchā ñānam; saññ'uppādā ca pana ñān'uppādo hoti. So evam pajānāti, Idapaccayā kira me ñānam udapādí ti. ('Perception, Potthapāda, arises first, knowledge afterwards; but with arising of perception there is arising of knowledge. One understands thus: 'With this as condition, indeed, knowledge arose in me.'') Saññā thus precedes ñāna, not only temporally but also structurally (or logically). Perception, that is to say, is structurally simpler than knowledge; and though perception comes first in time, it does not cease (see CITTA) in order that knowledge can arise. [a] However many stories there are to a house, the ground floor is built first; but it is not then removed to make way for the rest. (The case of vitakkavicārā and vācā—A NOTE ON PATICCASAMUPPĀDA §5—is parallel.)

The temptation must be resisted (into which, however, the Visuddhimagga [Ch. XIV] falls) to understand viññāna, in the primitive context of the khandhā, as a more elaborate version of saññā, thus approximating it to ñāna. But, whereas there is always consciousness when there is perception (see above), there is not always knowledge (which is preceded by perception). The difference between viññāna and saññā is in kind, not in degree. (In looser contexts, however,—e.g. Majjhima v,7 <M.i,317>—viññāna does tend to mean 'knowing', but not in opposition to saññā. In Majjhima xv,1 <M.iii,259-60>[16] & xiv,8 <227-8>[17] viññāna occurs in both senses, where the second is the complex consciousness of reflexion, i.e. the presence of a known phenomenon—of an example of a universal, that is to say.)

Footnotes:

[a] Cf. Bradley on judgement (op. cit. [Logic], T.E. II): 'I have taken judgement as the more or less conscious enlargement of an object, not in fact but as truth. The object is thus not altered in existence, but qualified in idea. ...For the object, merely as perceived, is not, as such, qualified as true.' And on inference (T.E. I): 'And our inference, to retain its unity and so in short be an inference, must...remain throughout within the limits of its special object.' 'Every inference, we saw, both starts with and is confined to a special object.' 'If, on the one hand, the object does not advance beyond its beginning, there clearly is no inference. But, on the other hand, if the object passes beyond what is itself, the inference is destroyed.' For Bradley, all inference is an ideal self-development of a real object, and judgement is an implicit inference. (For 'real' and 'ideal' we shall prefer 'immediate' and 'reflexive', at least in the first place.) This will scarcely be intelligible to the rationalist, who does not admit any experience more simple, structurally speaking, than knowledge. For the rationalist, moreover, all knowledge is explicitly inferential, whereas, as Sartre has pointed out (op. cit., p. 220),

there is no knowledge, properly speaking, other than intuitive. Inference is merely instrumental in leading to intuition, and is then discarded; or, if intuition is not reached, it remains as a signpost. Rational knowledge is thus at two removes from perception (which, of course, is intuitive); and similarly with descriptive knowledge. Intuition is immediate contact between subject and object (see PHASSA); with the reflexive reduplication of intuitive knowledge (see ATTĀ [a] & MANO [b]), this becomes immediate contact between knowing (reflecting) subject and known (reflected) object; which, in the case of the arahat, is simply (presence of) the known thing. Cf. also Heidegger, op. cit., pp. 59-62 & 212-30. [Back to text]

Fundamental Structure

showing 'Invariance under Transformation'

Tīn'imāni bhikkhave sankhatassa sankhatalakkhanāni. Katamāni tīni. Uppādo paññāyati, vayo paññāyati, thitassa aññathattam paññāyati. Imāni kho bhikkhave tīni sankhatassa sankhatalakkhanānī ti.

There are, monks, these three determined- characteristics of what is determined. Which are the three? Arising (appearance) is manifest; disappearance is manifest; change while standing is manifest. These, monks, are the three determined-characteristics of what is determined.

Anguttara III,v,7 <A.i,152>

Tayo'me bhikkhave addhā. Katame tayo. Atīto addhā, anāgato addhā, paccuppanno addhā. Ime kho bhikkhave tayo addhā ti.

There are, monks, these three periods. Which are the three? The past period, the future period, the present period. These, monks, are the three periods.

Itivuttaka III,ii,4 <Iti.53>

I. STATIC ASPECT II. DYNAMIC ASPECT

I. STATIC ASPECT

1. Let o represent a thing.[a]

2. If we wish to represent another thing, not o, we must represent it by another symbol; for we cannot distinguish between o and o except by the fact of their being spatially separated, left and right, on this page; and since this is a representation, not of a structure in space (i.e. of a spatial object), but of the structure of space (amongst other things), which structure is not itself spatial, such spatial distinctions in the representation must not be taken into account.[b] Thus, whether we write o once or a hundred times still only one thing is represented.

3. Let us, then, represent a thing other than o by x. (We are concerned to represent only the framework within which things exist, that is to say the possibility of the existence of things; consequently it does not matter whether there are in fact things—it is enough that there could be. But the actual existence of things is indispensable evidence that they can exist; and when there actually is a given thing o, there actually are, also, other things.)[c] We now have two things, o and x.

4. We are, however, still unable to distinguish them; for, since spatial distinctions are to be disregarded, we cannot tell which is the original thing, o or x. Experience shows us that when we are conscious of one thing we are not also equally conscious of another thing; or, better, it can always be observed (by reflexion) that two (different) experiences are not both the centre of consciousness at the same time. The difference between two things is, ultimately, their order of priority—one is 'this' and the other is 'that' --, and this difference we represent by a difference in shape; for if two things are identical in all qualitative respects, have all their properties in common (including position if they are tactile things—and it must be remembered that the eye, since it is muscular, is also an organ of touch, giving perceptions of space and shape as well as of colour and light),[d] no priority is evident, and there are not two things, but only one; and thus difference in priority can be represented by difference of qualitative property. But difference in shape alone only tells us that if one of them is 'this' the other is 'that'—it does not tell us which is 'this'.[e]

5. We have, then, to distinguish between first and second, or one and two. At first sight this seems easy—one is obviously o and two is o x. But since it makes no difference where we write these symbols (spatial distinctions being of no account), we cannot be sure that they will not group themselves o o and x. Since o and o are only one thing, namely o, we are back where we started.

6. To say that o and o are only one thing is to say that there is no difference between them; and to say that o and x are two things is to say that there is a difference between them (no matter which precedes). In other words, two things define a thing, namely the difference between them. And the difference between them, clearly, is what has to be done to pass from one to the other, or the

operation of transforming one into the other (that is, of interchanging them). A little thought will show that this operation is invariant during the transformation (a 'journey from A to B'—to give a rough illustration—remains unchanged as a 'journey from A to B' at all stages of the journey), and also that the operation is a thing of a higher or more general order than either of the two things that define it (a 'journey from A to B' is more general than either 'being in A' or 'being in B' since it embraces both: a 'journey from A to B' may be defined as the operation of transforming 'being in A' into 'being in B' and 'not being in B' into 'not being in A'). Each of these two things, furthermore, is itself an operation of the same nature, but of a lower or more particular order (a 'journey from one part of A [or B] to another' is 'being in A [or B]', just as a 'journey from A to B' is 'being in Z', where A and B are adjacent towns and Z is the province containing them). But we must get back to our noughts and crosses.

7. Since o o is one, and o x is two (though the order of precedence between o and x is not determined), it is evident that we can use these two pairs to distinguish between first and second. In whatever way the four symbols, o, o, o, and x, may pair off, the result is the same (and it makes no difference whether o o is regarded as one thing and o x as two things, or, as in the last paragraph, o o is regarded as no operation and o x as one operation—nought precedes one as one precedes two). We have only to write down these four symbols (in any pattern we please) to represent 'two things, o and x, o preceding x'.

8. As these four symbols pair off, we get two distinguishable things, o o and o x (which are 'o first' and 'x second'). These two things themselves define an operation—that of transforming o o into o x and o x into o o. This operation is itself a thing, which we may write, purely for the sake of convenience, thus: .

9. It will readily be seen that if is a thing, then another thing, not , will be represented by ; for if we take as 'o precedes x', then we must take as 'x precedes o'. But we do not know which comes first, or . By repetition of the earlier discussion, we see that we must take three of one and one of the other to indicate precedence; and in this way we arrive at a fresh thing (of greater complexity) represented by . Here it is clear that though in the fourth quarter, , x precedes o, yet the first quarter, , precedes the fourth quarter. So in the whole we must say 'o precedes x first, and then x precedes o .

10. Obviously we can represent the negative of this fresh thing by , and repeat the whole procedure to arrive at a thing of still greater complexity; and there is no limit to the number of times that we can do this.

11. In §7 we said that in whatever way the four symbols, o, o, o, and x, may pair off, the result is the same. In how many ways can they pair off? To find out we must number them. But a difficulty arises. So long as we had the four symbols written down anywhere, the objection that we were using spatial distinctions to distinguish one o from another did not arise (and in §8 we noted that we chose to write them purely for convenience' sake). Once we number them (1, 2, 3, 4), however, the objection becomes valid; for the only distinction between o(1) and o(2) and o(3)—apart from the numbers attached to them—is their relative spatial positioning on this page. But at least we know this, that represents 'o precedes x'; and so it follows that, even if we cannot distinguish between the first three, x comes fourth. In any way, then, in which we happen to write down these four symbols, x marks the fourth place. (If, for example, we had written them o x o o, the symbol x would still mark the fourth place.) And if x comes in the fourth place in the first place, it will come in the first place in the fourth place. This means that we can choose the first place at our convenience (only the fourth place being already fixed) and mark it with 'x in the fourth place', i.e. . With the fourth place determined, we are left with a choice of three possible arrangements: . Note that we must adjust the position of x in the fourth tetrad to come in whichever place we choose as the first. Let us (again purely for convenience' sake) choose the first of these three possibilities. It is clear that if x comes in the fourth place in the first place and in the first place in the fourth place, it will come in the third place in the second place and in the second place in the third place. So now we can complete the scheme thus: . But although we can now distinguish between the second place and the third place, we cannot tell which of the two, or , is the second and which the third: all we can say is that if one of them is the second the other is the third. This, as we shall see, is all that is necessary. Let us refer to them, for convenience, as 2/3 and 3/2, so: . Replacing the symbols by numbers, we finally have this: (the figure is enlarged to accommodate the numerals).

12. In this way the four symbols, o, o, o, and x, when written , can be numbered ; and we see that pairing off can be done in three ways: [1 - 2/3] [3/2 - 4], [1 - 3/2] [2/3 - 4], and [1 - 4] [2/3 - 3/2]. These may be understood as the operations, respectively, (i) of interchanging column with column , (ii) of interchanging row with row , and (iii) of doing both (i) and (ii) in either order and therefore both together (this really means that the three operations are mutually independent, do not obstruct one another, and can all proceed at once).[f] And these, when set out in full—first the original arrangement (which may be taken as the zero operation of no interchange), and then the results of the other three operations, , , and —, make up the figure at the end of the last paragraph. It is easily seen that no question of priority between 2/3 and 3/2 arises.

13. We have found that a thing can be represented, in increasing complexity of structure, as follows: o, ,, and so on, indefinitely. The first of these, o, clearly does not allow of further discussion; but the second, , as will be seen from what has gone before, can be regarded as a combination, or rather superposition, of four operations: no interchange, interchange of columns , interchange of rows , and

interchange of columns and rows together ; the whole being represented so: . A thing represented by , that is to say, consists of four members, one of which corresponds to each of the four operations. As we go to greater complexity and consider a thing represented by , we find that the following operations are superposed: no interchange; interchange of column 1 with column 2 and of column 3 with column 4; similar interchange of rows; interchange of column 1-&-2 with column 3-&-4; similar interchange of rows; and any or all of these together. The total is sixteen; and the whole representation is given below (the numbers are not necessary but are given for clarity's sake, with 2/3 just as 2 and 3/2 as 3 and corresponding simplifications in the other numbers).

Here we have sixteen members, one corresponding to each operation (as before). If we go to still more complex representations of a thing (as indicated in §10) we shall get 64 members, and then 256 members, and so on, indefinitely. Note that any of these representations can—more strictly, though less conveniently—be written in one line, in which case there are no columns-and-rows; and we are then concerned throughout only with interchanges of symbols—singly and in pairs, in pairs of pairs and in pairs of pairs of pairs, and so on. (This, incidentally, throws light on the structure of a line; for we are taking advantage of the structure of a line to represent structure in general. The structure of the line—or, more exactly, of length—is seen when we superpose all the members of the representation.)

14. It is a characteristic of all these representations that the operation of transforming any given member into any other member of the set transforms every member of the set into another member of the same set. The whole, then, is invariant under transformation. Attention, in other words, can shift from one aspect of a thing to another while the thing as a whole remains absolutely unchanged. (This universal property of a thing is so much taken for granted that a structural reason for it—or rather, the possibility of representing it symbolically—is rarely suspected.) See CETANĀ (Husserl's cube).

15. Representations of a thing in greater complexity than the 4-member figure show the structure of successive orders of reflexion (or, more strictly, of pre-reflexion—see DHAMMA [b]). Thus, with 16 members we represent the fundamental structure of the fundamental structure of a thing, in other words the structure of first-order reflexion; whereas with four members we have simply first-order reflexion or the structure of the immediate thing. (In first-order reflexion, the immediate thing is merely an example of a thing: it is, as it were, 'in brackets'. In second-order reflexion—the 16-member

figure—, first-order reflexion is 'in brackets' as an example of fundamental structure.) In the 16-member representation, any two of the other 15 members of the set together with a given member uniquely define a tetrad with the structure of the 4-member representation; and any such tetrad uniquely defines three other tetrads such that the four tetrads together form a tetrad of tetrads, and this again with the same structure. From this it can be seen that the structure of the structure of a thing is the same as the structure of a thing, or more generally that the structure of structure has the structure of structure.[g] The 16-member representation gives the fundamental structure of first-order reflexion, just as 4 members represent the fundamental structure of immediacy, and the single member (o) represents simply immediacy, the thing.

16. The same structure, naturally, is repeated at each level of generality, as will be evident from the numbers in the figure at the end of §11. The whole (either at the immediate or at any reflexive level) forms a hierarchy infinite in both directions[h] (thus disposing, incidentally, of the current assumptions of absolute smallness—the electron—in quantum physics, and absolute largeness—the universe—in astronomical physics).[i] It will also be evident that successive orders of reflexion generate a hierarchy that is infinite, though in one direction only (perpendicular, as it were, to the doubly infinite particular-and-general hierarchy).

17. The foregoing discussion attempts to indicate in the barest possible outline the nature of fundamental structure in its static aspect. Discussion of the dynamic aspect must deal with the structure of duration, and will go on to distinguish past, present, and future, at any time, as over-determined, determined, and under- determined, respectively. The way will then be open for discussion of intention, action, and choice, and the teleological nature of experience generally.

Continue to II. DYNAMIC ASPECT

Footnotes:

[a] An existing thing is an experience (in German: Erlebnis), either present or (in some degree) absent (i.e. either immediately or more or less remotely present). See NĀMA & RŪPA . [Back to text]

[b] See RŪPA [e], where it is shown that space is a secondary, not a primary, quality. [Back to text]

[c] All this, of course, is tautologous; for 'to be a thing' means 'to be able to be or exist', and there is no thing that cannot exist. And if anything exists, everything else does (see (a) above). Compare this utterance of Parmenides: 'It needs must be that what can be thought of and spoken of is; for it is possible for it to be, and it is not possible for what is no thing to be'. (Parmenides seems to have drawn excessive conclusions from this principle through ignoring the fact that a thought is an imaginary, and therefore absent, experience—or rather, a complex of absent experiences—; but the principle itself is sound. The images involved in thinking must, individually at least [though not necessarily in association], already in some sense be given—i.e. as what is elsewhere, or at some other time, or both—at the immediate level, before they can be thought. Perhaps the method of this Note will suggest a reconciliation between the Parmenidean absolute denial of the existence of no thing, with its corollary, the absolute existence of whatever does exist, and the merely relative existence of every thing as implied by the undeniable fact of change.) [Back to text]

[d] Strictly, we should not go from muscles to spatial perceptions. Spatial perceptions come first; then we observe that whenever there are spatial perceptions a muscular organ can be found; finally we conclude that a muscular organ is very probably a condition for spatial perceptions. See PHASSA & RŪPA. [Back to text]

[e] McTaggart, I discover, (op. cit. §45) bases his version of fundamental structure on a twofold direct appeal to experience: first, that something exists, and secondly, that more than one thing exists. But this is not enough: it is essential also to see that, of two things, in so far as they are two, one is 'this' and one is 'that'. [Back to text]

[f] If we describe the three operations as 'horizontal interchange', 'vertical interchange', and 'diagonal interchange', it will readily be seen that any one of the three is equivalent to the other two done together. And since each is both the other two, it is not either of them. [Back to text]

[g] There is an old axiom: Quidquid cognoscitur, per modum cognoscentis cognoscitur—Whatever is known, is known in the mode of the knower. This would imply that, if the mode (or structure) of immediate experience were different from that of reflexive experience, it would be systematically falsified in the very act of being known. A further act of reflexion would then be necessary to reveal the falsification. And this, in turn, would involve a further falsification, requiring yet a further act of reflexion. And so on indefinitely, with no end to the falsification; and fundamental structure (if any) would never be knowable. But we now see that the modes of immediate and of reflexive experience are the same, and consequently that any further act of reflexion can only confirm the original reflexive

evidence, which is therefore apodictic. Fundamental structure guarantees reflexive knowledge of it. [Back to text]

[h] The structure of the immediate hierarchy, based on , comes into view when the operations of interchange of §12 are themselves subjected to these operations. The original operations are given by , and we operate on this to get ; and, clearly, we can continue indefinitely. Similarly for the hierarchies of each level of reflexive experience. [Back to text]

[i] It is evident, in practice, that limits are encountered. There is, for example, a limit to the degree of smallness that can be distinguished. The reason for this is to be looked for on the volitional level. In order for a thing to be distinguished (or isolated) it must be observable at leisure, and this is a voluntary reflexive capacity. Beyond a certain degree of smallness this capacity fails. The smallest thing that can be distinguished has a certain appreciable size, but the visual (tactile) oscillations can no longer be controlled reflexively so that one part may be distinguishable from another part. And conversely, above a certain degree of largeness it is not possible to pass from one part to another at will, so as to appreciate the whole. Similar considerations will apply to perceptions other than size. The range of voluntary reflexion is not dictated by fundamental structure and varies (we may presume) from individual to individual, and particularly from individuals of one species to those of another. The ranges of an elephant and of an ant, at least as regards spatial perceptions, will scarcely overlap at all. The existence of such limits can easily be demonstrated by an artificial device. If a cinematograph film is projected slowly enough, we perceive a series of stills, each of which we can examine individually. When the projection is speeded up, this examination becomes more difficult, and the series of stills is seen as a flicker. Then, at a certain point, the flickering ceases and we see simply a single (moving) picture. If, on the other hand, the projection is slowed down instead of speeded up, there comes a point past which the individual stills are no longer grasped as forming part of a series, and the unity of the film as a whole is lost. [Back to text]

II. DYNAMIC ASPECT

1. Between its appearance and its disappearance a thing endures.

2. To fix the idea of duration we might imagine some rigid object—a lamp, say—together with the ticking of a clock. Both are necessary; for if either is missing the image fails. The image is no doubt rather crude, but will perhaps serve to make it clear that duration—what we sometimes call 'the passage of time'—is a combination of unchange and change. Duration and Invariance under Transformation are one and the same.

3. We saw, in Part I, that a thing can be represented by the four symbols, o, o, o, and x, which pair off to define the operation of interchanging o o and o x. This, we found, can be done in three ways, , , and , or by interchange of columns, of rows, and of both together. We do not need, at present, to distinguish them, and we can take interchange of columns, , as representative of the whole. When o o is transformed into o x and vice versa, the thing or operation (o, o, o, x) is invariant—all that has happened is that the symbols have rearranged themselves: has become . This is one unit of duration—one moment. Clearly enough we can repeat the operation, so: . It is still the same operation, namely interchange of columns. (The operation of transforming o o into o x automatically transforms o x into o o—when the old 'o first' becomes the new 'x second', the old 'x second' becomes the new 'o first', as with our journey of §I/6 from A to B—, and each time we are ready to start afresh.) This gives us a second moment; and by continued repetition we can get as many moments as we please, with the thing as a whole remaining unchanged.

4. We know, however, that the structure is hierarchical; and 'a time must come' when the thing as a whole changes—just as becomes , so must become . How many times must the transformation be repeated before the transformation is itself transformed? For how many moments does a thing endure? Let us suppose that it endures for a certain finite number of moments, say a hundred. Then, after a hundred moments the thing changes, and after another hundred moments it changes again, and after yet another hundred moments it changes yet again, and so on. It will be seen that we do not, in fact, have a combination of unchange and change, but two different rates of change, one slow and one fast, just like two interlocking cog-wheels of which one revolves once as the other revolves a hundred times. And we see that this fails to give the idea of duration; for if we make the large cog-wheel really unchanging by holding it fast, the small cog-wheel also is obliged to stop. Similarly, we do not say 'a minute endures for sixty seconds' but 'a minute is sixty seconds'—it would never occur to us to time a minute with a stop-watch. To get duration, the difference between the unchanging and the changing must be absolute: the unchanging must be unchanging however much the changing changes.[j] If a thing endures, it endures for ever. A thing is eternal.

5. A thing changes, then, after an infinity of moments. And since the structure is hierarchical, each moment must itself endure for an infinity of moments of lesser order before it can give place to the next moment. And, naturally, the same applies to each of these lesser moments. It might perhaps seem that with such a congestion of eternities no change can ever take place at any level. But we must be careful not to introduce preconceived notions of time: just as the structure is not in space but of space (amongst other things)—see §I/2—, so the structure is not in time but of time. Thus we are not at all obliged to regard each moment as lasting the same length of absolute time as its predecessor; for we have not encountered 'absolute time'. Naturally, if we regard a given thing as eternal, then each of the infinite moments for which it endures will be of the same duration—one unit. But if this eternal thing is to change (or transform), then clearly the infinite series of moments must accelerate. If each

successive moment is a definite fraction (less than unity) of its predecessor, then the whole infinite series will come to an end sooner or later.

6. Now we see that three levels of the hierarchy are involved: on top, at the most general level of the three, we have a thing enduring eternally unchanged; below this, we have a thing changing at regular intervals of one unit of duration, one moment; and below this again, in each of these regular intervals, in each of these moments, we have an infinite series of moments of lesser order accelerating and coming to an end. We have only to take into account an eternal thing of still higher order of generality to see that our former eternal thing will now be changing at regular intervals, that the thing formerly changing at regular intervals will be accelerating its changes (and the series of changes repeatedly coming to an end at regular intervals), and that the formerly accelerating series will be a doubly accelerating series of series. There is no difficulty in extending the scheme infinitely in both directions of the hierarchy; and when we have done so we see that there is no place for anything absolutely enduring for ever, and that there is no place for anything absolutely without duration.[k]

7. We can represent a thing by O. This, however, is eternal. To see the structure of change we must go to the 4-symbol representation , where o and x are things of the next lower order of generality. From §3 it will be seen that O is the invariant operation of interchange of columns: becomes , and then becomes , and so on, to infinity. But now that we have found that moments (or things) come to an end, some modification in this account is needed. In , o is 'this' and x is 'that' (i.e. 'not-this'), as we saw in Part I. When the moment marked by one interchange of columns comes to an end, 'this' vanishes entirely, and we are left just with 'that', which, clearly, is the new 'this'. The o's disappear, in other words. Thus when has become we shall not, contrary to what we have just said, have the same operation simply in the opposite sense, i.e. , since all that remains is . In the repetition of the operation, then, x will occupy the same position as o in the original, and O (i.e. 'interchange of columns') will now be represented by . The second interchange of columns will thus be , the third interchange will be , and the fourth , and so on. It will be evident that, while O is invariant (eternally), the symbols at the next lower level of generality will be alternating between o and x. (For convenience we may start off the whole system with the symbol o at each level, though in different sizes, to represent 'this'; and we may then allow these to change to x as the system is set in motion. But we can only do this below a given level, since if only we go up far enough we shall always find that the system has already started. We cannot, therefore, start the system at any absolute first point—we can only 'come in in the middle'. It will be seen, also, that the system is not reversible: future is future and past is past. But this will become clearer as we proceed.)

8. Disregarding other things, consciousness of a thing while it endures is constant: and this may be counted as unity. We can regard consciousness of a thing as the thing's intensity or weight—quite simply, the degree to which it is. In §I/12 (f) we noted that any interchange is equivalent to the other two done together. Thus, to pass from 1 to 4 it is necessary to go by way of both 2/3 and 3/2, so: . The intensity or weight must therefore be distributed among the four symbols in the following way: , or . This will mean that the intensity of o is two-thirds of the whole, and of x, one-third. (A moment's reflexion will verify that 'this' is necessarily more intense than 'that'. Visual reflexion will do here; but it must be remembered that visual experience, which is easy to refer to, is structurally very complex—see §I/4—, and visual evidence normally requires further break-down before revealing aspects of fundamental structure. It is usually less misleading to think in terms of sound or of extension than of vision, and it is advisable in any case to check the evidence of one sense with that of another.) When vanishes we shall be left with x, whose intensity is only one-third of the whole. But just as stands to x in the proportion of intensity of 2:1, so of a lesser order stands to o of the same lesser order in the same proportion, and so on indefinitely. Thus we obtain a hierarchy of intensity , , , , ,... to infinity, the sum of which is unity. The total intensity at any time must be unity, as we noted above; and when the first term of this hierarchy, , which is the total intensity, vanishes, it is necessary to increase the intensity of the rest to compensate for this loss; and to do this we must make x, when it becomes , be (or exist) correspondingly faster. This is achieved, clearly enough, by doubling the rate of existence (i.e. halving the relative length) of each successive moment. (When the first term of + + + + ... vanishes, it is only necessary to double the remainder, + + ++ ..., to restore the status quo.)

9. If we go to the 16-member representation it will be clearer what is happening. This representation, , combines two adjacent levels of generality: it is a combination of and . But this combination, we see, can be made in two ways: and . Alternatively, however, we can regard the combination of and not as that of two adjacent levels of generality, but as that of the present and the future on the same level of generality; and, clearly, this too can be made in these two ways. If, furthermore, we regard the first of these two ways in which the combination of and can be made as the combination of two adjacent, equally present, levels of generality, we must regard the second way as the combination of the present and the future, both of the same level of generality; and, of course, vice versa. This means that, from the point of view of , can be regarded either as present but of lower order or as of the same order but future. (And, of course, from the point of view of , can be regarded either as present but of higher order or as of the same order but past.) In other words, the general/particular hierarchy can equally well be regarded—or rather, must at the same time be regarded—as the past, present, and future, at any one level of generality. (A simple illustration can be given. Consider this figure:

It presents itself either as a large square enclosing a number of progressively smaller squares all within one plane at the same distance from the observer, or as a number of squares of equal size but in separate planes at progressively greater distances from the observer, giving the appearance of a

corridor. A slight change of attention is all that is needed to switch from one aspect to the other. In fundamental structure, however, both aspects are equally in evidence.) This allows us to dispose of the tiresome paradox (noted, but not resolved, by Augustine) that, (i) since the past is over and done with and the future has not yet arrived, we cannot possibly know anything about them in the present; and (ii) there is, nevertheless, present perception and knowledge of the past and of the future (memory is familiar to everyone,[l] and retrocognition and precognition are well-known occurrences; though it is clear that awareness of movement or of change of substance provides more immediate evidence[m])—the very words past and future would not exist if experience of what they stand for were inherently impossible.[n]

10. Past and future (as well as present) exist in the present; but they exist as past and as future (though what exactly the pastness of the past—'this is over and done with'—and the futurity of the future—'this has not yet arrived'—consist of will only become apparent at a later stage when we discuss the nature of intention). And since each 'present' is a self-sufficient totality, complete with the entire past and the entire future, it is meaningless to ask whether the past and the future that exist at present are the same as the real past or future, that is to say as the present that was existing in the past and the present that will be existing in the future: 'the present that existed in the past' is simply another way of saying 'the past that exists in the present'.[o] From this it will be understood that whenever we discuss past, present, and future, we are discussing the present hierarchy, and whenever we discuss the present hierarchy we are discussing past, present, and future. The two aspects are rigorously interchangeable:

11. In §3 we took the interchange of columns as representative of all three possible interchanges: (i) of columns, (ii) of rows, and (iii) of both together. We must now discriminate between them. Neglecting the zero operation of no interchange, we may regard a thing as a superposition of these three interchanges (§I/13). We saw in §8 that ('this') has twice the intensity or weight of ('that'), and this is obviously true of each of the three possible interchanges. But this imposes no restriction whatsoever on the intensities of the three interchanges relative one to another: what these relative intensities shall be is a matter of complete indifference to fundamental structure. Let us, therefore, choose convenient numbers; let us suppose that the weight of interchange of columns, , is one-half of the total, of interchange of rows, , one-third, and of interchange of both, , one-sixth, the total being unity. Then, in interchange of columns, 'this' will have the value , and 'that' the value ; in interchange of rows, 'this' will have the value , and 'that' the value ; and in interchange of both, 'this' will have the value , and 'that' the value . It will be observed that the three 'this' are indistinguishable, whereas the

three 'that' and are not; and that consequently we simply have one single 'this', of value or , and three separate 'that', of respective values , , and , totalling . No matter what the relative weights of the three interchanges may be, the weight of 'this' is always twice the combined weights of the three 'that'. This means, in effect, that however much the relative weights of the three 'that' may vary among themselves, the weight of 'this' remains constant.

12. The question now arises, which of these three possible interchanges is the one that will take place when the time comes for 'this' to vanish and 'that' to become 'this'. We said, in §7, that a thing, O, is the invariant operation of interchange of columns to infinity. This, however, is equally true of interchange of rows and of both columns and rows. In other words, O is simply the invariant operation of interchange, no matter whether of columns, of rows, or of both. Any or all of these interchanges are O. It will be seen, then, that the invariance of O is unaffected by the distribution of weight among the three possible interchanges that can take place. A simplified illustration may make this clearer. Suppose my room contains a chair, a table, a bed, and a wardrobe. If there is no other article of furniture in the room, the chair is determined as the chair by its not being the table, the bed, or the wardrobe. In other words, the piece of furniture in my room that is not-the-table, not-the-bed, and not-the-wardrobe, is the chair. But so long as all these determinations are to some extent present it matters not at all where the emphasis is placed. The question of degree, that is to say, does not arise. If, when I am about to sit down and start writing, I pay attention to the chair, it will present itself strongly to me as being not-the-table, but perhaps only faintly as not-the-wardrobe, and hardly at all as not-the-bed; but if I pay attention to it when I am feeling sleepy, it will be most strongly present as not-the-bed, and much less as not- the-table and not-the-wardrobe. In either case the chair keeps its identity unaltered as 'the piece of furniture that is neither table, bed, nor wardrobe'.

13. Let us consider two adjacent levels of generality, O and o, where O endures for one moment while o undergoes an infinity of transformations in an accelerating series. But the symbols O and o simply give the immediate thing (§I/15), and we need to see the structure of the thing. We must therefore write each thing in the form and expand accordingly. We also need to see the structure of the two adjacent levels at the same time. This will give us the figure of §I/16 (h), viz: .

(This figure is out of scale: it should be one-quarter the size.) We see that O is represented by and o by . (Note that D, for example, is simply with interchange of both columns and rows, i.e. , and similarly with B and C.) Let us suppose that, at the lower level, repeated interchange of columns (a-b, c-d) is taking place. This, naturally, will be taking place in all four quarters, A, B, C, and D. Let us also suppose that, to begin with, the relative weights of the three possible interchanges of O are 1(A-B) : 2(A-D) : 3(A-C). We have seen in §7 that whenever an interchange, say, takes place, it is actually not simply an interchange, but a disappearance of leaving just x. This x is then the fresh , which in its turn becomes o, and so on. In other words, each time what we have represented as an interchange takes place,

things lose a dimension. This statement can be inverted, and we can say that the present, each time it advances into the future, gains a dimension, with the consequence that immediately future things, when they become present, will necessarily appear with one dimension less. Though, from one point of view, O remains invariant throughout the series of interchanges (it is the series of interchanges, of any or all of the three possible kinds), from another point of view, each time an interchange takes place O vanishes and is replaced by another O differing from the earlier O only in that having been future to it (or of lower order—see §9) it has, relative to it, a second dimension. We must at once qualify this statement. The loss of a dimension takes place at the level, not of O, but of o, which is at a lower level of generality; and properly speaking we should say that O loses an infinitesimal part of its one dimension each time there is the loss of a dimension at the level of o. Similarly, O's successor is only infinitesimally future or of lower order. In other words, O's dimension is of a higher order than that of o. But consideration of O's possible interchanges takes place at the level of o, as we may gather from the necessity, noted above, of writing O in the reflexive form . It must therefore be understood that when we say that each future O has one more dimension than the present O, the dimension in question is a dimension of o, not of O. The original O, then, while present, has one dimension: its successor, so long as it is future, has two dimensions: and when this becomes present it appears as having one dimension, just as its predecessor did when present. But the original O now has no dimension; for it has vanished. (That is to say, o has vanished: O is actually no more than infinitesimally closer to the point of vanishing—which means that it remains absolutely the same, in the ordinary meaning of that word. But we have to remember that changes in a thing's internal distribution of weight—the weight, that is, of its determinations—do not affect it.) Relatively speaking, then, each next future O has one more dimension, at the level of o, than the present O, even though it has but one dimension when it is itself present. If, therefore, the relative weights of the possible interchanges of the original O are in the proportions 3:2:1, the relative weights of the succeeding O, when it becomes present, will be in the proportion 9:4:1, that is, with each number squared. Following that, the next O will have relative weights 81:16:1, and so on. It is obvious, first, that the most heavily weighted of the possible interchanges will tend more and more to dominate the others and, in a manner of speaking, to draw all the weight to itself; and secondly, that it can only draw the entire weight to itself after an infinity of squarings, that is, of interchanges at the level of o. As soon as one of the three possible interchanges has drawn the entire weight to itself and altogether eliminated its rivals, that interchange takes place (at the level of O).[p] In the case we are considering there will be interchange of rows, i.e. of A and C, and of B and D. Notice that this interchange is quite independent of the kind of interchange that is taking place at the next lower level: interchange of rows at the level of O does not in the least require that the interchange at the level of o should also have been of rows.

(UNFINISHED)

Footnotes:

[j] This will clearly permit different relative rates of change, or frequencies, at the same level. The ratios between such frequencies would seem to be arbitrary, but it is clear that they can change only discontinuously. In other words, the substance of my world (real and imaginary) at any time is not dictated by fundamental structure, and vanishes abruptly. (See RŪPA [c].) The only change considered by the main body of this Note, in its present incomplete form, is change of orientation or perspective. Duration does not require change of substance, though the converse is not true. (Might it not be that with every change of orientation in the world of one sense there is a corresponding change of substance in the world of each of the others? This is partly observable at least in the case of intentional bodily action; which, indeed, seems to change the substance also of its own world—as when the left hand alters the world of the right. But this supposition is not without its difficulties.) The 'unchange' that is here in question is on no account to be confused with what is described in ATTĀ as an 'extra-temporal changeless "self"'. Experience of the supposed subject or 'self' (a would-be extra-temporal personal nunc stans) is a gratuitous (though beginningless) imposition or parasite upon the structure we are now discussing. See CETANĀ [f] . (Cf. in this connexion the equivocal existentialist positions discussed by M. Wyschogrod in Kierkegaard and Heidegger (The Ontology of Existence), Routledge & Kegan Paul, London 1954.) [Back to text]

[k] It would be a mistake to attempt to take up a position outside the whole system in order to visualize it as passing from the future into the past through a 'present moment' in a kind of universal time. At any given level of generality, the 'present moment' lasts for one whole eternity relative to the next lower level, and there is thus no such thing as a 'present moment' for the system as a whole; nor has the system any outside (even imaginary) from which it may be viewed 'as a whole'. [Back to text]

[l] All memory involves perception of the past, but perception of the past is not in itself memory. The question of memory, however, does not otherwise concern us in these Notes. (The attention we give to whatever happens to be present will, no doubt, permanently increase its weightage relative to all that does not come to be present.) [Back to text]

[m] Neither movement nor change of substance is fundamental: fundamental structure is necessary for them to be possible, and this is true also of their respective times (see §4 (j)). In other words, the time (past, present, future) that is manifest in movement and in change of substance is dependent upon, but does not share the structure of, the time that is discussed in these pages. Thus, in movement, the time is simply that of the hierarchy of trajectories (see PATICCASAMUPPĀDA [c]), and its structure is therefore that of the straight line (see §I/13): the time of movement, in other words, is perfectly homogeneous and infinitely subdivisible. In itself, therefore, this time makes no distinction

between past, present, and future, and must necessarily rest upon a sub-structure that does give a meaning to these words. In fundamental time, each unit—each moment—is absolutely indivisible, since adjacent levels are heterogeneous. [Back to text]

[n] McTaggart has argued (op. cit., §§325 et seq.) that the ideas of past, present, and future, which are essential characteristics of change and time, involve a contradiction that can only be resolved in an infinite regress. This regress, he maintained, is vicious, and change and time are therefore 'unreal'. It is clear enough that perception of movement, and therefore of time, does involve an infinite reflexive (or rather, pre-reflexive) regress. We perceive uniform motion; we perceive accelerated motion, and recognize it as such; we can perhaps also recognize doubly accelerated motion; and the idea of still higher orders of acceleration is perfectly acceptable to us, without any definite limit: all this would be out of the question unless time had an indefinitely regressive hierarchical structure. If this regress is vicious, then so much the worse for virtue. But see §I/15 (g), which indicates that it is not in fact vicious. [Back to text]

[o] These remarks do not imply that the present that will be existing in the future is now determined; on the contrary (as we shall see) it is under-determined—which is what makes it future. Similarly, the past is now what is over-determined. [Back to text]

[p] §I/4 (d) would seem to imply that three different frequencies are involved, all converging to infinity together. This will complicate the arithmetic, but can scarcely prevent the eventual emergence of one dominating interchange. (If they are not all to be squared together, the relative weights a : b : c must be made absolute before each squaring: .) [Back to text]

Glossary

This Pali-English Glossary contains all the Pali terms used in Notes on Dhamma together with their English equivalents (sometimes only approximate). Only the separate elements of some compound words are given. Words occurring in quoted Pali passages and whose meaning may be discovered from the English renderings of such passgaes are not always listed separately.

Akālika—timeless, intemporal.

akusala—unskilful.

acinteyya—not to be speculated about, unthinkable.

ajjhatta—inside, internal, subjective. (Opp. bahiddhā.)

aññā—other, another. (Opp. sa.)

atthapurisapuggalā—(the) eight individual men.

atakkāvacara—not in the sphere of reason or logic.

atidhāvati—(to) overrun, overshoot.

attavāda—belief in self.

attā—self.

atthi—there is.

adhivacana—designation.

anattā—not-self.

anāgāmī—non- returner.

anicca—impermanent.

aniccatā—impermanence.

anidassana—non-indication, non- indicative.

anupādisesa—without residue.

anuruddha-pativiruddha—approving-&-disapproving, accepting-&- rejecting, attracting-&-repelling.

anuloma—with the grain, in conformity. (Opp. patiloma.)

anulomikāya khantiyā samannāgato—one endowed with acquiescence in conformity.

anvaya—inference, inferability.

aparapaccayā—not dependent on others.

apuñña—demerit.

abhijjhā—covetousness.

abhisankharoti—(to) determine.

abhisankhāra = sankhāra.

abhisañcetayati—(to) intend, will.

arahat—one who is worthy. (Usually untranslated.)

arahattā—state of the arahat.

ariya—noble. (Opp. puthujjana.)

ariyasāvaka—noble disciple.

arūpa—immaterial.

avijjā—nescience. (Opp. vijjā.)

asankhata—non-determined.

asmimāna—conceit '(I) am. ('Conceit', māna, is to be understood as a cross between 'concept' and 'pride'—almost the French 'orgueil' suitably attenuated. Asmi is 'I am' without the pronoun, like the Latin 'sum'; but plain 'am' is too weak to render asmi, and aham asmi ('ego sum') is too emphatic to be adequately rendered 'I am'.)

asmī ti chanda—desire '(I) am'. (See asmimāna.)

assāsapassāsā—in-&-out- breaths.

assutavā—uninstructed.

Ākāsa—space.

ākiñcaññāyatana—nothingness-base.

āneñja—immobility, unshakability, imperturbability.

āyatana—base.

āyusankhāra—life-determination.

āsava—canker, intoxication.

Idha—here.

indriya—faculty.

Ucchedaditthi—annihilationist-view. (Opp. sassataditthi.)

upavicarati—(to) dwell upon, ponder.

upādāna—holding.

upekkhā—indifference.

Etam—this, that.

Opanayika—leading.

Kamma—action.

kāya—body.

kāyika—bodily.

kālika—temporal, involving time.

kusala—skilful.

khandha—aggregate, mass, totality.

Gotrabhu—become of the clan or lineage. (Sometimes translated as 'one who destroys the lineage'; the etymologists seem to be in doubt.)

Cakkhu—eye.

citta—mind, consciousness, cognition, spirit, heart, purpose, (conscious) experience, &c. (Citta is sometimes synonymous with mano, and sometimes not; it is occasionally equivalent to viññāna in certain senses. Related to cetanā, but more general. Its precise meaning must be determined afresh in each new context.)

cittavīthi—mental process, cognitive series.

cetanā—intention, volition, will.

cetasika—mental. (See citta.)

Jarā—ageing, decay.

jāti—birth.

jhāna—meditation.

Ñāna—knowledge.

Takka—reasoning, logic.

tanhā—craving.

Tathāgata—(usually untranslated epithet of) the Buddha, (and, by transference, of) an arahat.

Tāvatimsa—'Heaven of the Thirty-Three'.

theta—reliable, actual.

Ditthi—view. (Usually, wrong view.)

ditthigata—going to, involved with, consisting of, (wrong) view.

ditthisampanna—(one) attained to (right) view. (= sotāpanna.)

dukkha—unpleasure (opp. sukha), pain, suffering.

dutiya, tatiya tappurisa—accusative, instrumentive dependent determinative compound.

(Grammatical terms.)

dussīla—immoral, unvirtuous.

domanassa—grief.

dosa—hate.

dvayam—dyad, duality.

dhamma—thing, image, idea, essence, universal, teaching, Teaching, nature, natural law, ethic, ethical law, &c.

(cf. the Heraclitan 'logos').

dhamm'anvaya—inferability of the dhamma (to past and future).

dhammānusārī—teaching-follower. (Opp. saddhānusārī.)

dhātu—element.

Nāma—name.

nāmarūpa—name-&-matter.

nidassana—indication, indicative.

nibbāna—extinction.

nibbuta—extinguished.

niruddha—ceased.

nirodha—ceasing, cessation.

Paccaya—condition.

pañcakkhandhā—five aggregates.

pañc'upādānakkhandhā—five holding aggregates. (This needs expansion to be intelligible.)

paññā—understanding.

patigha—resistance.

paticcasamuppanna—dependently arisen.

paticcasamuppāda—dependent arising.

patiloma—against the grain. (Opp. anuloma.)

patisotagāmī—going against the stream.

paramattha sacca—truth in the highest, or ultimate, or absolute, sense.

paritassanā—anxiety, anguish, angst.

pariyesanā—seeking.

pahoti—(to) originate.

pāna—animal, living being.

pāpadhamma—evil-natured.

pāpima—evil one.

puggala—individual.

puñña—merit.

puthujjana—commoner. (Opp. ariya.)

punabbhavābhinibbatti—coming into renewed being, re-birth.

purisa—man, male.

phala—fruit, fruition.

phassa—contact.

Bala—power, strength.

bahiddhā—outside, external, objective. (Opp. ajjhatta.)

bhava—being, existence.

bhikkhu—monk, almsman.

bhikkhunī—nun, almswoman.

bhūta—being.

Magga—path.

maññati—(to) conceive. (See asmimāna.)

maññanā—conceiving. (See asmimāna.)

manasikāra—attention.

manussa—human (being).

mano—mind. (See citta.)

mama—mine, of me.

marana—death.

mahābhūta—great entity.

micchāditthi—wrong view. (Opp. sammāditthi.)

me—mine. (Weaker than mama.)

moha—delusion.

Rāga = lobha.

ruppati—(to) 'matter', be broken. (Untranslatable verb from rūpa.)

rūpa—matter, substance, (visible) form.

Lakkhana—mark, characteristic.

lābha—gain.

loka—world.

lokuttara—beyond the world, world-transcending.

lobha—lust.

Vacī—speech.

vicāra—pondering.

vijānāti—(to) cognize, be conscious (of).

vijjā—science. (Opp. avijjā.)

viññāna—consciousness, knowing.

vitakka—thinking, thought.

vipāka—ripening, result, consequence.

viriya—energy, exertion.

vedanā—feeling.

vediyati—(to) feel.

Sa—that, the same. (Opp. aññ a.)

sa-—with. (Prefix.)

saupādisesa—with residue.

sakkāya—person, somebody, personality.

sakkāyaditthi.—personality -view.

sankhata—determined.

sankhāra—determination, determinant.

sangha—Community, Order.

sacca—truth.

sañcetanā = cetanā.

sañjānāti—(to) perceive.

saññā—perception, percept.

saññāvedayitanirodha—cessation of perception and feeling.

sati—mindfulness, recollection, memory.

satta—creature, sentient being.

sattama puggala—seventh individual.

saddhā—faith, confidence, trust.

saddhānusārī—faith-follower. (Opp. dhammānusārī.)

sanditthika—evident, immediately visible.

samādhi—concentration.

samudaya—appearing, arising, coming into being.

sampajañña—awareness.

samphassa = phassa.

sammāditthi—right view. (Opp. micchāditthi.)

sassataditthi—eternalist-view. (Opp. ucchedaditthi.)

salāyatana—six bases.

samsāra—running on (from existence to existence).

sukha—pleasure. (Opp. dukkha.)

sutavā—instructed.

sekha—one in training, (self-)trainer.

so (see sa).

sotāpatti—attaining of the stream.

sotāpanna—stream-attainer.

somanassa—joy.

Huram—yonder.

hetu—condition (= paccaya).

Additional Texts

Some of the more important Sutta passages referred to in the Notes, but not quoted, are given here (with translation) for the reader's convenience.

1. Majjhima i,9

Vedanā saññā cetanā phasso manasikāro, idam vuccat'āvuso nāmam; cattāri ca mahābhūtāni catunnañ ca mahābhūtānam upādāya rūpam, idam vuccat'āvuso rūpam; iti idañ ca nāmam idañ ca rūpam, idam vuccat'āvuso nāmarūpam.

Feeling, perception, intention, contact, attention,—this, friends, is called name; the four great entities and matter held (i.e. taken up by craving) from the four great entities,—this, friends, is called matter; thus, this name and this matter,—this, friends, is called name-&-matter.

2. Anguttara VI,vi,9

Cetanāham bhikkhave kammam vadāmi; cetayitvā kammam karoti kāyena vācāya manasā.

Action, monks, I say is intention; intending, one does action by body, by speech, by mind.

3. Khandha Samy. vi,4

Katamañ ca bhikkhave rūpam…

Katamā ca bhikkhave vedanā…

Katamā ca bhikkhave saññā…

Katame ca bhikkhave sankhārā. Chayime bhikkhave cetanākāyā, rūpasañcetanā saddasañcetanā gandhasañcetanā rasasañcetanā photthabbasañcetanā dhammasañcetanā. Ime vuccanti bhikkhave sankhārā…

Katamañ ca bhikkhave viññānam…

And which, monks, is matter?…

And which, monks, is feeling?…

And which, monks, is perception?…

And which, monks, are determinations? There are, monks, these six bodies of intention: intention of visible forms, intention of sounds, intention of smells, intention of tastes, intention of touches, intention of images/ideas. These, monks, are called determinations…

And which, monks, is consciousness?…

4. Khandha Samy. v,5

Ye hi keci bhikkhave samanā vā brāmanā vā anekavihitam attānam samanupassamānā samanupassanti, sabbe te pañc'upādānakkhandhe samanupassanti etesam vā aññataram.

Whatever recluses or divines there may be, monks, who in various ways regard self, they are all regarding the five holding aggregates or a certain one of them.

5. Majjhima iv,5

Rūpam bhikkhave aniccam, vedanā aniccā, saññā aniccā, sankhārā aniccā, viññānam aniccam; rūpam bhikkhave anattā, vedanā anattā, saññā anattā, sankhārā anattā, viññānam anattā; sabbe sankhārā aniccā, sabbe dhammā anattā.

Matter, monks, is impermanent, feeling is impermanent, perception is impermanent, determinations are impermanent, consciousness is impermanent; matter, monks, is not-self, feeling is not-self, perception is not-self, determinations are not-self, consciousness is not-self; all determinations are impermanent, all things are not-self.

6. Khandha Samy. viii,7

Kiñ ca bhikkhave rūpam vadetha...

Kiñ ca bhikkhave vedanam vadetha...

Kiñ ca bhikkhave saññam vadetha...

Kiñ ca bhikkhave sankhāre vadetha. Sankhatam abhisankharontī ti bhikkhave tasmā Sankhārā ti vuccanti.

Kiñ ca sankhatam abhisankharonti.

Rūpam rūpattāya sankhatam abhisankharonti,

Vedanam vedanattāya sankhatam abhisankharonti,

Saññam saññattāya sankhatam abhisankharonti,

Sankhāre sankhārattāya sankhatam abhisankharonti,

Viññānam viññānattāya sankhatam abhisankharonti.

Sankhatam abhisankharontī ti kho bhikkhave tasmā Sankhārā ti vuccanti.

Kiñ ca bhikkhave viññānam vadetha...

And what, monks, do you say is matter?...

And what, monks, do you say is feeling?...

And what, monks, do you say is perception?...

And what, monks, do you say are determinations? 'They determine the determined': that, monks, is why they are called 'determinations'.

And what is the determined that they determine?

Matter as matter is the determined that they determine,

Feeling as feeling is the determined that they determine,

Perception as perception is the determined that they determine,

Determinations as determinations are the determined that they determine,

Consciousness as consciousness is the determined that they determine.

'They determine the determined': that indeed, monks, is why they are called 'determinations'.

And what, monks, do you say is consciousness?...

7. Khandha Samy. vi,7

Rūpam [Vedanā... Saññā... Sankhārā... Viññānam...] bhikkhave anattā. Rūpañ ca h'idam bhikkhave attā abhavissa nayidam rūpam ābādhāya samvatteyya, labbhetha ca rūpe, Evam me rūpam hotu, evam me rūpam mā ahosī ti. Yasmā ca kho bhikkhave rūpam anattā tasmā rūpam ābādhāya samvattati, na ca labbhati rūpe, Evam me rūpam hotu, evam me rūpam mā ahosī ti.

Matter [Feeling... Perception... Determinations... Consciousness...], monks, is not-self. For if, monks, matter were self, then matter would not lead to affliction, and one would obtain of matter 'Let my matter be thus, let my matter not be thus'. As indeed, monks, matter is not-self, so matter leads to affliction, and it is not obtained of matter 'Let my matter be thus, let my matter not be thus'.

8. Anguttara IV,viii,7

Kammavipāko bhikkhave acinteyyo na cintetabbo, yam cintento ummādassa vighātassa bhāgī assa.

The ripening of action, monks, is unthinkable, should not be thought (i.e. should not be speculated about); for one thinking (it) would come to madness and distraction.

9. Dīgha ii,2

Nāmarūpapaccayā phasso ti iti kho pan'etam vuttam; tad Ānanda iminā p'etam pariyāyena veditabbam yathā nāmarūpapaccayā phasso. Yehi Ānanda ākārehi yehi lingehi yehi nimittehi yehi uddesehi nāmakāyassa paññatti hoti, tesu ākāresu tesu lingesu tesu nimittesu tesu uddesesu asati, api nu kho rūpakāye adhivacanasamphasso paññāyethā ti.

No h'etam bhante.

Yehi Ānanda ākārehi yehi lingehi yehi nimittehi yehi uddesehi rūpakāyassa paññatti hoti, tesu ākāresu tesu lingesu tesu nimittesu tesu uddesesu asati, api nu kho nāmakāye patighasamphasso paññāyethā ti.

No h'etam bhante.

Yehi Ānanda ākārehi yehi lingehi yehi nimittehi yehi uddesehi nāmakāyassa ca rūpakāyassa ca paññatti hoti, tesu ākāresu tesu lingesu tesu nimittesu tesu uddesesu asati, api nu kho adhivacanasamphasso vā patighasamphasso vā paññāyethā ti.

No h'etam bhante.

Yehi Ānanda ākārehi yehi lingehi yehi nimittehi yehi uddesehi nāmarūpassa paññatti hoti, tesu ākāresu tesu lingesu tesu nimittesu tesu uddesesu asati, api nu kho phasso paññāyethā ti.

No h'etam bhante.

Tasmātih'Ānanda es'eva hetu etam nidānam esa samudayo esa paccayo phassassa yadidam nāmarūpam.

Viññānapaccayā nāmarupan ti iti kho pan'etam vuttam; tad Ānanda iminā p'etam pariyāyena veditabbam yathā viññānapaccayā nāmarūpam. Viññānam va hi Ānanda mātu kucchim na okkamissatha, api nu kho nāmarūpam mātu kucchismim samucchissathā ti.

No h'etam bhante.

Viññānam va hi Ānanda mātu kucchim okkamitvā vokkamissatha, api nu kho nāmarūpam itthattāya abhinibbattissathā ti.

No h'etam bhante.

Viññānam va hi Ānanda daharass'eva sato vocchijjissatha kumārassa vā kumārikāya vā, api nu kho nāmarūpam vuddhim virūlhim vepullam āpajjissathā ti.

No h'etam bhante.

Tasmātih'Ānanda es'eva hetu etam nidānam esa samudayo esa paccayo nāmarūpassa yadidam viññānam.

Nāmarūpapaccayā viññānan ti iti kho pan'etam vuttam; tad Ānanda iminā p'etam pariyāyena veditabbam yathā nāmarūpapaccayā viññānam. Viññānam va hi Ānanda nāmarūpe patitttham nālabhissatha, api nu kho āyati jātijarāmaranadukkhasamudayasambhavo paññāyethā ti.

No h'etam bhante.

Tasmātih'Ānanda es'eva hetu etam nidānam esa samudayo esa paccayo viññānassa yadidam nāmarūpam.

Ettāvatā kho Ānanda jāyetha vā jīyetha vā mīyetha vā cavetha vā uppajjetha vā, ettāvatā adhivacanapatho, ettāvatā niruttipatho, ettāvatā paññattipatho, ettāvatā paññāvacaram, ettāvatā vattam vattati itthattam paññāpanāya, yadidam nāmarūpam saha viññānena.

– 'With name-&-matter as condition, contact', so it was said: how it is, Ānanda, that with name-&-matter as condition there is contact should be seen in this manner. Those tokens, Ānanda, those marks, those signs, those indications by which the name-body is described,—they being absent, would designation-contact be manifest in the matter-body?

– No indeed, lord.

– Those tokens, Ānanda, those marks, those signs, those indications by which the matter-body is described,—they being absent, would resistance-contact be manifest in the name-body?

– No indeed, lord.

– Those tokens, Ānanda, those marks, those signs, those indications by which the name-body and the matter-body are described,—they being absent, would either designation- contact or resistance-contact be manifest?

– No indeed, lord.

– Those tokens, Ānanda, those marks, those signs, those indications by which name-&-matter is described,—they being absent, would contact be manifest?

– No indeed, lord.

– Therefore, Ānanda, just this is the reason, this is the occasion, this is the arising, this is the condition of contact, that is to say name-&-matter.

'With consciousness as condition, name-&-matter', so it was said: how it is, Ānanda, that with consciousness as condition there is name-&-matter should be seen in this manner. If, Ānanda, consciousness were not to descend into the mother's womb, would name-&-matter be consolidated in the mother's womb?

– No indeed, lord.

– If, Ānanda, having descended into the mother's womb, consciousness were to turn aside, would name-&-matter be delivered into this situation?

– No indeed, lord.

– If, Ānanda, consciousness were cut off from one still young, from a boy or a girl, would name- &-matter come to increase, growth, and fullness?

– No indeed, lord.

– Therefore, Ānanda, just this is the reason, this is the occasion, this is the arising, this is the condition of name-&-matter, that is to say consciousness.

'With name-&-matter as condition, consciousness', so it was said: how it is, Ānanda, that with name-&-matter as condition there is consciousness should be seen in this manner. If, Ānanda, consciousness were not to obtain a stay in name-&-matter, would future arising and coming-into-being of birth, aging, death, and unpleasure (suffering), be manifest?

– No indeed, lord.

– Therefore, Ānanda, just this is the reason, this is the occasion, this is the arising, this is the condition of consciousness, that is to say name-&-matter.

Thus far, Ānanda, may one be born or age or die or fall or arise, thus far is there a way of designation, thus far is there a way of language, thus far is there a way of description, thus far is there a sphere of understanding, thus far the round proceeds as manifestation in a situation,—so far, that is to say, as there is name-&-matter together with consciousness.

10. Majjhima iii,8

Yato ca kho āvuso ajjhattikañ c'eva cakkhum [sotam, ghānam, jivhā, kāyo, mano] aparibhinnam hoti, bāhirā ca rūpā [saddā, gandhā, rasā, photthabbā, dhammā] āpātham āgacchanti, tajjo ca samannāhāro hoti, evam tajjassa viññānabhāgassa pātubhāvo hoti. Yam tathābhūtassa rūpam tam rūp'upādānakkhandhe sangaham gacchati; ...vedanā...; ...saññā...; ...sankhārā...; yam tathābhūtassa viññānam tam viññān'upādānakkhandhe sangaham gacchati.

It is when, friends, the internal eye [ear, nose, tongue, body, mind] is unbroken, and external visible forms [sounds, smells, tastes, touches, images/ideas] come in the way, and there is the appropriate connexion,—it is then that there is the appearance of the appropriate kind of consciousness. Of what thus comes into existence, the matter goes for inclusion in the holding aggregate of matter; ...the feeling...; ...the perception...; ...the determinations...; of what thus comes into existence, the consciousness goes for inclusion in the holding aggregate of consciousness.

11. Indriya Samy. ii,8

Yassa kho bhikkhave imāni pañc'indriyāni sabbena sabbam sabbathā sabbam n'atthi, tam aham Bāhiro puthujjanapakkhe thito ti vadāmi.

In whom, monks, altogether and in every way there are not these five faculties, of him I say 'An outsider, one who stands on the commoner's side'.

12. Itivuttaka II,ii,7

Dve'mā bhikkhave nibbānadhātuyo. Katamā dve. Saupādisesā ca nibbānadhātu anupādisesā ca nibbānadhātu.

Katamā ca bhikkhave saupādisesā nibbānadhātu. Idha bhikkhave bhikkhu araham hoti khīnāsavo vusitavā katakaranīyo ohitabhāro anuppattasadattho parikkhīnabhavasamyojano sammadaññāvimutto. Tassa titthant'eva pañc'indriyāni, yesam avighātattā manāpāmanāpam paccanubhoti sukhadukkham patisamvediyati. Tassa yo rāgakkhayo dosakkhayo mohakkhayo, ayam vuccati bhikkhave saupādisesā nibbānadhātu.

Katamā ca bhikkhave anupādisesā nibbānadhātu. Idha bhikkhave bhikkhu araham hoti khīnāsavo vusitavā katakaranīyo ohitabharo anuppattasadattho parikkhīnabhavasamyojano sammadaññāvimutto. Tassa idh'eva bhikkhave sabbavedayitāni anabhinanditāni sītibhavissanti, ayam vuccati bhikkhave anupādisesā nibbānadhātu.

Imā kho bhikkhave dve nibbānadhātuyo.

There are, monks, these two extinction-elements. Which are the two? The extinction-element with residue and the extinction-element without residue.

And which, monks, is the extinction-element with residue? Here, monks, a monk is a worthy one, a destroyer of the cankers, one who has reached completion, done what was to be done, laid down the burden, achieved his own welfare, destroyed attachment to being, one who is released through comprehending rightly. His five faculties [seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching] still remain: owing to their being intact he experiences what is agreeable and disagreeable, he feels what is pleasant and unpleasant. It is his destruction of lust, hate, and delusion, monks, that is called the extinction-element with residue.

And which, monks, is the extinction-element without residue? Here, monks, a monk is a worthy one, a destroyer of the cankers, one who has reached completion, done what was to be done, laid down the burden, achieved his own welfare, destroyed attachment to being, one who is released through comprehending rightly. All his feelings, monks, not being delighted in, will become cold in this very place: it is this, monks, that is called the extinction-element without residue.

These, monks, are the two extinction-elements.

13.Theragāthā 715, 716

715 Na me hoti Ahosin ti, Bhavissan ti na hoti me;

Sankhārā vibhavissanti: tattha kā paridevanā.

716 Suddham dhammasamuppādam suddham sankhārasantatim

Passantassa yathābhūtam na bhayam hoti gāmani.

715 'I was' is not for me, not for me is 'I shall be';

Determinations will un-be: therein what place for sighs?

716 Pure arising of things, pure series of determinants—

For one who sees this as it is, chieftain, there is no fear.

14. Devatā Samy. iii,5

Yo hoti bhikkhu araham katāvī

Khīnāsavo antimadehadhārī,

Mānam nu kho so upāgamma bhikkhu

Aham vadāmī ti pi so vadeyya

Mamam vadantī ti pi so vadeyyā ti.

Pahīnamānassa na santi ganthā,

Vidhūpitā mānaganthassa sabbe;

Sa vītivatto yamatam sumedho

Aham vadāmī ti pi so vadeyya

Mamam vadantī ti pi so vadeyya;

Loke samaññam kusalo viditvā

Vohāramattena so vohareyyā ti.

—A monk who is a worthy one, his task done,

His cankers destroyed, wearing his last body,—

Is it because this monk has arrived at conceit

That he might say 'I say',

And that he might say 'They say to me'?

—For one who is rid of conceit there are no ties,

All his ties of conceit (mānaganthā'ssa) are dissolved;

This wise man, having got beyond conceiving (yam matam),

Might say 'I say',

And he might say 'They say to me':

Skilled in worldly expressions, knowing about them,

He might use them within the limits of usage.

15. Majjhima v,3

Yā c'āvuso vedanā yā ca saññā yañ ca viññānam, ime dhammā samsatthā no visamsatthā, na ca labbhā imesam dhammānam vinibbhujitvā vinibbhujitvā nānākaranam paññāpetum. Yam h'āvuso vedeti tam sañjānāti, yam sañjānāti tam vijānāti, tasmā ime dhammā samsatthā no visamsatthā, na ca labbhā imesam dhammānam vinibbhujitvā vinibbhujitvā nānākaranam paññāpetum.

That, friend, which is feeling, that which is perception, that which is consciousness,—these things are associated, not dissociated, and it is not possible to show the distinction between these things having separated them one from another. For what, friend, one feels that one perceives, what one perceives that one cognizes,—that is why these things are associated, not dissociated, and it is not possible to show the distinction between these things having separated them one from another.

16. Majjhima xv,1

Tasmātiha te gahapati evam sikkhitabbam. Na rūpam upādiyissāmi, na ca me rūpanissitam viññānam bhavissatī ti. Na vedanam... Na saññam... Na sankhāre... Na viññānam upādiyissāmi, na ca me viññānanissitam viññānam bhavissatī ti. Evam hi te gahapati sikkhitabbam.

Therefore, householder, you should train yourself thus. 'I shall not hold matter, nor shall my consciousness be hanging to matter.' 'I shall not hold feeling...' 'I shall not hold perception...' 'I shall not hold determinations...' 'I shall not hold consciousness, nor shall my consciousness be hanging to consciousness.' For thus, householder, should you train yourself.

17. Majjhima xiv,8

Kathañ c'āvuso anupādā paritassanā hoti. Idh'āvuso assutavā puthujjano ariyānam adassāvī ariyadhammassa akovido ariyadhamme avinīto sappurisānam adassāvī sappurisadhammassa akovido sappurisadhamme avinīto rūpam [vedanam, saññam, sankhāre, viññānam] attato samanupassati rūpavantam [...viññānavantam] vā attānam attani vā rūpam [...viññānam] rūpasmim [...viññānasmim] vā attānam. Tassa tam rūpam [viññānam] viparinamati aññathā hoti, tassa rūpa[...viññāna] viparinām'aññathābhāvā rūpa[...viññāna]viparināmānuparivatti viññānam hoti, tassa rūpa [...viññāna]viparināmānuparivattajā paritassanā dhammasamuppādā cittam pariyādāya titthanti, cetaso pariyādānā uttāsavā ca hoti vighātavā ca apekhavā ca anupādāya ca paritassati. Evam kho āvuso anupādā paritassanā hoti.

And how, friends, is there anxiety at not holding? Here, friends, an uninstructed commoner, unseeing of the nobles, ignorant of the noble Teaching, undisciplined in the noble Teaching, unseeing of the good men, ignorant of the good men's Teaching, undisciplined in the good men's Teaching, regards matter [feeling, perception, determinations, consciousness] as self, or self as endowed with matter [...consciousness], or matter [...consciousness] as belonging to self, or self as in matter [...consciousness]. That matter [...consciousness] of his changes and becomes otherwise; as that matter [...consciousness] changes and becomes otherwise so his consciousness follows around (keeps track of) that change of matter [...consciousness]; anxious ideas that arise born of following around that change of matter [...consciousness] seize upon his mind and become established; with that mental seizure, he is perturbed and disquieted and concerned, and from not holding he is anxious. Thus, friends, is there anxiety at not holding.

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