

Taṇhā Jālinī Sutta

The Discourse on the Net of Craving

Taṇhā (Vicarita) Sutta = The Discourse on (the Thought-courses of) Craving

A 4.199/2:211-213

Theme: How craving manifests itself in 108 ways

Translated by Piya Tan ©2007

1 Thoughts rooted in craving

The Taṇhā Jālinī Sutta is a short but important sutta dealing with not-self (*anatta*). It lists how craving manifests itself in eighteen ways internally (within oneself, that is, in the mind) and eighteen ways externally (through external sense-objects, that is, through the physical senses).¹ The text is a bit confusing as there are a number of variant readings (“maybe,” notes Gombrich, “because of the awkwardness of using some parts of the verb *as*, ‘to exist,’ in Pali,” 1996:39). However, the thirty-six preoccupations with craving regarding self and regarding other are fully explained in chapter 17 (*Khuddaka, vatthu Vibhaṅga*) of the Vibhaṅga.²

“Craving” (*taṇhā*) is explained below [2.1], so we will discuss only “preoccupation” or thought-course (*vicarita*), which is the past participle of *vicarati* (from *vi*, “divided up,” + *carati*, “he goes, conducts himself”), meaning “he goes about, wanders about.” In the **Sutta Nipāta**, it is often used in connection with “in the world” (*loke*) (Sn 406, 501, 845, 846, 864).

Clearly, the word *vicarita* refers to a mental preoccupation and habitual body conduct, that is, a mind preoccupied with *craving* is caught up in a rut of various self-views and self-desires, which in turn motivates us to act accordingly. This is a painfully cyclic preoccupation, a Sisyphian task,³ and yet because we are unable to find fulfillment, we keep on doing it out of habit, or the addictive hope that we would get it the next time.

The word *vicarita* is also related to the important psychological term, *vitakka, vicāra*, “initial and sustained thought,” which are the bases for speech.⁴ They are both speech-formations (*vitakka, vicārā vacī, saṅkhārā*),⁵ and arise in connection with *mano* (mentation).⁶ In due course, long after the actual events are over, the mind continues to recall its past images, re-projecting them into a growing virtual reality. This is the mind’s “own” object (*dhamma*), associated with thinking and pondering (*vitakka, vicāra*). These memories fuel the “preoccupations with craving.” It should be noted that even a person free from craving may still notice such thoughts [§§3-4], but they would not be preoccupied with them: he simply lets them come, and lets them go.

2 Some key words

2.0 A 4.199.1. The Taṇhā, vicarita Sutta opens dramatically with these words of the Buddha himself:

¹ On these two kinds of sense-experience, namely, conceptual impression (*adhivacana, samphassa*) and sense-impression (*paṭigha, samphassa*), see **Mahā Nidāna S** (D 15.20/2:62) = SD 5.17 Intro (5).

² The Analysis of Minor Items (Vbh §§973-976/392-400; VbhA 513-516; Mohv 222).

³ In Greek mythology, the evil king Sisyphus is punished by the gods to push a huge boulder up a hill, only to watch it roll down again, and to repeat the task for eternity. The French author, Albert Camus, in his essay, *The Myth of Sisyphus* (1942), sees Sisyphus as personifying the absurdity of human life, but concludes, “one must imagine Sisyphus happy” as “The struggle itself towards the heights is enough to fill a man’s heart.” See **Yodh’ajjva S** (42.3) = SD 23.3 Intro.

⁴ See Language and Discourse = SD 26.11 esp (1-2).

⁵ **Cūḷa, vedalla S** (M 44.15/1:301).

⁶ **Pasūra S** (Sn 4.8) eg speaks of “thinking over views in the mind” (*manasā ditṭhi, gatāni cintayanto*, Sn 834) & **Sūci, loma S** (S 808*) mentions “the mind’s thoughts” (*mano, vitakkā*) (S 10.3/1:207).

Bhikshus, I will teach you that craving, the net-trap that flows, far-flung, ensnarling, with which this world is smothered, overwhelmed, like a tangled ball of thread, a tangled ball, like matted munja grass and babbala reed, does not go beyond the plane of misery, the evil destination, the lower realm, samsara [the cycle of rebirth and redeath].

Taṇham vo bhikkhave desissāmi jālinim saritam visaṭam visattikam, yāya ayam loko uddhasto pariyonaddho tantā, kulaka, jāto gulā, guṇḍika, jāto muñja, babbaja, bhūto apāyam duggatim vinipātam saṃsāram nātivattati. [S1]

2.1 CRAVING. The key word, of course, is craving (*taṇhā*), literally meaning “thirst,” that is, the sense of lack that unconsciously overwhelms us, driving us to fill these bottomless mental chasms with things from outside.⁷ Since this lack is perceived or mind-made (they do not really exist), we are never able to satisfy ourselves; hence, we are caught in a rut of dependence on external support by collecting things, reified states (pleasure, wealth and power) and the approval of others,⁸ and we are caught up with measuring things and people.⁹

2.2 NET-TRAP. This craving is compared to a net-trap (*jālinī*), which can also be rendered as “the one with the net (*jāla*)” (a personification of craving). This is a popular imagery, which together with “ensnarling” (*visattika*) are found elsewhere, such as this verse from the Dhammapada:

For whom the ensnarling net-trap	<i>Yassa jālinī visattikā</i>
Takes him nowhere, who is without craving,	<i>taṇhā n’atthi kuhiñci netave</i>
That awakened one, whose pasture is the infinite—	<i>taṃ buddham ananta, gocaram</i>
In what way would you lead him?	<i>apadam kena padena nessatha (Dh 180)</i>

The Dhammapada Commentary explains that “net-trap” (*jālinī*) refers to “craving” (*taṇhā*); and the last line mean that the arhat is not moved by lust, or any other defilement (DhA 3:197). Buddhaghosa explains that “whose pasture is the infinite” (*ananta, gocara*) as meaning that the Buddha’s mind-objects are unlimited on account of his omniscience (*anant’ārammaṇassa sabbaññuta, ñāṇassa vasena, id*).¹⁰ The sense here, actually, is quite plain: *ananta* is an epithet for nirvana, and *ananta, gocara* simply means that the Buddha is one whose pasture is nirvana.¹¹

In the Supati Sutta (S 4.7), Māra appears and tries to distract the Buddha while he is resting after his meditation:

[Māra]	<i>Kim soppasi kim su soppasi</i>	What, you sleep? Why do you sleep?	
	<i>Kim idam soppasi dubbhago viya</i>	What’s this, you sleep like a wretch?	
	<i>suññ’āgāran ti soppasi</i>	Thinking, “Empty house,” you sleep.	
	<i>kim idam soppasi sūriy’uggatē ti</i>	What’s this, you sleep when the sun is up!	459
[Buddha]	<i>Yassa jālinī visattikā</i>	For whom there is no ensnarling net-trap	
	<i>taṇhā n’atthi kuhiñci netave</i>	of craving to take him anywhere,	
	<i>sabbūpadhīnam parikkhāya buddho</i>	with the destruction of all birth-bases, ¹² awake,	
	<i>soppati kin tav’ettha mārā ti</i>	he sleeps: what about you here, Māra?	460
		(S 4.7/1:107) = SD 32.13	

⁷ For a study, see “Mine”: The nature of craving = SD 19.3.

⁸ For a study, see “I”: The nature of identity = SD 19.1.

⁹ For a study, see “Me”: The nature of conceit = SD 19.2.

¹⁰ On the Buddha’s omniscience, see **Kaṇṇaka-t, thala S** (M 90/2:125-133) = SD 10.8 Intro (2) & Sandaka S (M 76) = SD 35.7.

¹¹ Cf *ananta, jina*, a term the Buddha uses in reference to himself when speaking to Upaka (V 1:8; M 1:171; J 1:81; DhA 4:71 f; cf Miln 235; UA 54; Kvu 289; Mvst 3:326): see Why the Buddha Hesitated = SD 12.1 (4) verse.

¹² See SD 28.11 Intro (3.2).

Note that S 460ab = Dh 180ab, and they refer to the same person, that is, the awakened saint, including the Buddha. The Saṃyutta Commentary explains that craving is said to be a “net-trap” (*jālinī*) because it spreads like a net over the three realms of existence (ie the sense-realm, form realm, the formless realm).¹³

2.3 THAT FLOWS. The word “that flows” (*sarita*) appears in the Taṇhā Jālinī Sutta in reference to the “net-trap of craving.” The word *sarita* is a past participle (which I take here as an adjective for *jālinī*) comes from *sarati* (from √SR, to flow), “it flows, runs, goes (as of a river, stream, flood).” *Sarita* can also be rendered as “stream,” that is, the stream of craving.¹⁴

2.4 ENSNARLING, ETC. The net-trap is said to be “ensnarling” (*visattika*) because it clings onto sense-objects, such as forms. Here, the Commentary mentions the other possible senses of *visattika*, deriving it from *visa* (“poison”) (SA 1:175), which is sometimes used in local fishing. “It takes anywhere” (*kuhiñci netave*), that is, within the three realms of existence (SAṬ). The term birth-basis (*upadhi*) refers to the aggregates, defilements, volitional formations, and cords of sense-pleasure.¹⁵

The Commentary explains S 460d as meaning, “Māra, why do you go about irritated, finding fault with this and that like little flies unable to settle on hot porridge?” (SA 1:175). We can also see a touch of humour here. The Buddha, as an awakened being, free from suffering, rests easily and happily. Māra, being unawakened and evil, is ever busy distracting others with worldliness. While the Buddha is restful, Māra is restless!

Putting it altogether, we have these four words—net-trap (*jālinī*), flow (*sarita*), far-flung (*visaṭa*), and ensnarling (*visattika*)—which describe the process of a fisherman using his circular cast-net, common in the east, to catch fish in shallow waters. The cast-net is flung, forming a big circular net, falling far into the flowing stream or water, enmeshing fishes and other water creatures in it.

2.5 PREOCCUPATION WITH CRAVING. Another key term, “preoccupation with craving” (*taṇhā-vicarita*), has already been discussed [1].

3 Teaching on not-self

3.1 YOU ARE NOT IT. The Buddha consistently teaches on how to realize not-self (*anattā*), and one of his commonest methods is admonishing against the self-notion “I am” (*asmī ti*), technically known as the “I am” conceit (*asmī, māna*). We could, for the sake of those familiar with western philosophy, also call this the “Cartesian conceit.”¹⁶ This teaching is declared to be unique to the Buddhas (*buddhāna samukkaṃsika desanā*, M 1:380).¹⁷ No other teacher has taught it or would be able to effectively teach it. With the explication of not-self by the Buddha, who is awakened to true reality, it is easier for us to understand the true nature of selfhood and selflessness.

Another important point to remember about the Buddha’s teaching in general, and about the teaching of not-self in particular, is that he is often addressing a serious prevalent wrong view of his time, that of the eternal soul (*attā*; Skt *ātman*). The most famous brahmanical statement on the *ātman* is the Upanishadic saying, *tat tvam asi* (“You are That”),¹⁸ which identifies the personal self/essence with the world self/essence.

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad, the Vedic sage Uddalāka Āruṇī teaches his son Śvetaketu, “You are That” or “You are It” (*tat tvam asi*), which in the first person becomes *tad aham asmī*, which in Pāli be-

¹³ On the 3 realms, see The Person in Buddhism = SD 29.6b (7.2).

¹⁴ Cf Comy on Pāṭali, gāmiya S (U 8.16): “the ocean of samsara, and the stream of craving” (*samsār’añṇavaṃ taṇhā, saritañ ca*, UA 424).

¹⁵ See S:B 348 n21.

¹⁶ After the French philosopher René Descartes (1595-1650), who proposed the view that man is made up of immaterial thinking substance or soul (*res cogitans*), and a material extended substance, or body (*res extensa*), which mysteriously interact. See Self & Selves = SD 26.9 (3.2).

¹⁷ See Self & Selves = SD 26.9 (4.4).

¹⁸ Chāndogya Upaniṣad 6.8.7. The word *tad* (“that”) refers to the unnamable *Brahman*, the universal soul, and goes back to the Rg, veda 10.129.2.

comes *eso 'ham asmi = eso aham asmi* (“I am that”). It is this basic notion that is the mother of all self-notions, and which the Buddha strongly declares to be false and should be totally rejected.

In the early Buddhist texts, the “I am that” statement is more fully analysed into three, that is,¹⁹

- the notion of possession “This is mine” (*etam mama*) arises through craving,
- the notion of identity “I am this” (*eso 'ham asmi*) arises through conceit,
- the notion of reification “This is my self” (*eso me attā*) arises through view.

3.2 REJECTING THE *ĀTMAN*. The Buddha’s most explicit rejection of the *ātman* in all its forms is found in the Alagaddūpama Sutta (M 22), where the three statements are fully explained and rejected.²⁰ In such early discourses, we often hear echoes of Upanishadic passages which the Buddha rebuts. However, apparently the Commentaries and even 20th-century scholars are unaware of such allusions, except for a few.²¹

The Alagaddūpama Sutta’s key passage on the Buddha’s rejection of notions related to the *ātman* (the brahmanical eternal soul-idea), is as follows:

15 “Bhikshus, there are these SIX GROUNDS FOR VIEWS. What are the six?

Here, bhikshus, an ignorant ordinary person, who has no regard for noble ones and is unskilled and undisciplined in their Dharma, who has no regard for the true individuals²² and is unskilled and undisciplined in their Dharma,

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|--|---|
| (1) regards form thus: | ‘ <u>This is mine; this I am; this is my self.</u> ’ |
| (2) He regards feeling thus: | ‘This is mine; this I am; this is my self.’ |
| (3) He regards perception thus: | ‘This is mine; this I am; this is my self.’ |
| (4) He regards formations thus: | ‘This is mine; this I am; this is my self.’ |
| (5) He regards what is seen, heard, sensed, and thought, found, sought after, mentally pursued thus: | ‘This is mine; this I am; this is my self.’ |
| (6) And this ground for views, namely, ‘The world is the self; after death I will be permanent, everlasting, eternal, unchanging in nature, eternally the same; ²³ I will endure as long as eternity’—this too he regards thus: | ‘This is mine; this I am; this is my self.’ ²⁴ |

¹⁹ This threefold grasping (*ti, vidha gāha*) comprises (1) “This is mine” (*etam mama*) (arises through craving, *tanhā, gāha*), (2) “This I am” (*eso 'ham asmi*) (arises through conceit, *māna, gāha*), and (3) “This is my self” (*eso me attā*) (arises through views, *diṭṭhi, gāha*) (see **Anattā, Jakkhaṇa** S, S 3:68). These three are also known as “latent tendencies to ‘I’-making, ‘mine’-making and conceit” (*ahaṇi, kāra, mamaṇi, kāra, mānānusaya*) (M 22.15, 72.15, 112.11 20, S 2:75, 3:236, 4:41, A 1:132, 133). These threefold graspings are the main factors behind conceptual thinking (M 1) and mental proliferation (M 18). In short, such experiences are not “beliefs” but direct reactions to reality. See Bodhi, *The Discourse on the Root of Existence*, 1980:8-11; Peter Harvey, *The Selfless Mind*, 1995:32 f. See Alagaddūpama S (M 22) Intro (4) esp 4.2.

²⁰ M 22.22-29/1:137-139 = SD 3.13. Tuvia Gelblum has shown that a virtually same set of three clauses, adapted to the *ārya* metre, is found as *kārikā* 64 of Īśvara, kṛṣṇa’s Sāmkhya-kārikā (“Verses on Sāmkhya,” c 2nd cent), where they refer to realizing that the changeless spirit (*puruṣa*) neither is nor possesses any of the evolutes of changeable nature (*prakṛti*) (1970: 78-80).

²¹ Except perhaps for Hermann Oldenberg (1923: 281-354; 1991: 185-219). Towards the end of the 20th century, scholars like KR Norman and his student Richard Gombrich have written on the relationships of early Buddhism with the Brahmanism, Jainism and other religious systems of the Buddha’s times. See eg Norman 1981c & Gombrich 1990.

²² On true individuals, see Udakūpama S (A 7.15) = SD 28.6 Intro (1.2.4.2+3).

²³ “Eternally the same” (*sassati, sama*), a term from the Bṛhad Aranyaka Upaniṣad 5.10 (*sāsvatīh samāh*) (Nyanaponika 1974:42 n21).

²⁴ This is the classic eternalist view, where the personality-view itself becomes an object of craving, conceit and false view of the self. Nyanaponika is of the opinion that this view expresses the identity of the self with the uni-

16 Bhikshus, a well-taught noble disciple, who has regard for noble ones and is skilled and disciplined in their Dharma, who has regard for true individuals and is skilled and disciplined in their Dharma regards form thus: ‘This is not mine; this I am not; this is not my self.’

He regards feeling thus: ‘This is not mine; this I am not; this is not my self.’

He regards perception thus: ‘This is not mine; this I am not; this is not my self.’

He regards formations thus: ‘This is not mine; this I am not; this is not my self.’

He regards what is seen, heard, sensed, thought, found, sought after, mentally pursued thus: ‘This is not mine; this I am not; this is not my self.’

And this ground for views, namely, ‘That which is the self is the world; after death I will be permanent, everlasting, eternal, unchanging in nature, eternally the same; I will endure as long as eternity’—this too he regards thus: ‘This is not mine; this I am not; this is not my self.’

17 Regarding them thus, he is not anxious regarding what is non-existent.²⁵

(M 22.15-17/1:135 f) = SD 3.13

In short, this passage denies that one’s self is the same as the universe, and that one will become the universal self at death. The Buddha exhorts the monks that people worry about something that is non-existent externally (*bahiddhā asati*) and non-existent internally (*ajjhattam asati*)—he is referring respectively to the universal soul and individual soul. Richard Gombrich, commenting on the key passages of the Taṇhā Jālinī Sutta, says,

The Buddha concludes by saying that those caught in the web of these thirty-six considerations are tied up in knots and never escape from the round of rebirth. Though the passage is not entirely clear, it is perfectly clear that the basic wrong move is to think “I am” (*asmi*)—perhaps better “I exist.” While the purpose of this is of course primarily soteriological, it seems to me to be a radical attack on the whole enterprise of constructing an ontology. The Buddha was attacking Vedānta and in effect denying Descartes: from the fact that there is a process of thinking he would refuse to draw the conclusion that “I exist.” But remember that for the Buddha existence implies stasis: it is the opposite of becoming.

Both the passages [of the Taṇhā Jālinī Sutta] are referring to the Upaniṣads. Their doctrine of the essential identity between the individual and the world evolved through speculation in the Brāhmaṇa texts about the meaning of the sacrifice. The individual self with which these texts are concerned is that of the sacrificer, who is sacrificing in the hope of attaining heaven when he dies. In the oldest brahminical texts, that life in heaven was held to be eternal (as, for example, in Christianity). The Buddha seems to have known these more archaic texts too.

(Gombrich 1996:40)

In other words, in our textual studies, we should remember that the Buddha is, amongst other things, a man of his times, enthusiastically speaking out against the wrong beliefs and practices of his days,

verse, but Bodhi thinks that this view is purely hypothetical “as the Pali is ambiguous and could just as well be pointing to a fundamental dualism of self and world along the lines of Sāṃkhya philosophy with its distinction between changeable nature (*prakṛti*) and changeless spirit (*puruṣa*): see *kārikā* 64 of Īśvara,krṣṇa’s Sāṃkhya-kārikā (“Verses on Sāṃkhya,” c 2nd cent). See M:ÑB 2001:1210 n259. See Gombrich 1996: 38 f.

²⁵ “Not anxious over what is non-existent” (*asati na paritassati*). Comy says that the noun *paritassanā* has two connotations: fear (*bhaya*) and craving (*taṇhā*). As such, an alt tr can be “neither fear nor craving over what is non-existent.” Anxiety over what is non-existent externally (§18) refers to the worldling’s despair over losing or not getting possessions. The eternalist is anxious about what is non-existent internally (§20) when he misinterprets the Buddha’s teaching on nirvana as annihilationism. Comy to Brahmajāla S (D 1) has a long discourse on the n *paritassana*, a term that also occurs in Uddeśa,vibhaṅga S (M 138.20), Anupādā Paritassanā S (S 22.7), **Anupādā Na Paritassanā S** (S 22.8), **Upāya S** (S 22.53), and **Udāna S** (S 22.55). The **Samādhi S** (S 22.5) mentions *tāsa* (anxiety).

especially those relating permanent entities (self, soul, God, class, etc). In his insight, the Buddha also shows his foresight, as a man well ahead of his times. He not only disproves the falsehood and futility of the *ātman* beliefs and brahmanical excesses of his time, but in doing so, unequivocally rejects the likes of the Cartesian duality, religious theism, and political theism (such as the violent Hindutva of current Indian politics).

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The Discourse on the Net of Craving

Or, The Discourse on (the Thought-courses of) Craving

A 4.199/2:211-213

The preoccupations with craving

1 Bhikshus, I will teach you regarding craving—the net-trap that flows, far-flung, ensnarling, with which this world is smothered, overwhelmed, like a tangled ball of thread, a tangled ball,²⁶ like matted munja grass and balbaja reed,²⁷ [212] does not go beyond the plane of misery, the evil destination, the lower realm, samsara [the cycle of rebirth and redeath].²⁸

Listen, monks, pay close attention to it, I will speak.”

“Yes, venerable sir!” the monks replied the Blessed One.

The Blessed One said this:

2 “And what, bhikshus, is craving—the net-trap that flows, far-flung, ensnarling, with which this world is smothered, overwhelmed, like a tangled ball of thread, a tangled ball, like matted munja grass and balbaja reed, that does not go beyond the plane of misery, the evil destination, the lower realm, samsara?

Bhikshus, there are these eighteen preoccupations with craving regarding what is internal,²⁹ eighteen preoccupations with craving regarding what is external.³⁰

The 18 internal preoccupations with craving

3 What are the eighteen preoccupations with craving regarding what is internal [the individual self or soul, or concerning oneself]?³¹ (They are these thoughts,)

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|----------------------------------|---|
| (1) “I am” | <i>asmī ti satī;</i> |
| (2) “I am this [I am like this]” | <i>itth’asmī ti hotī;</i> ³² |

²⁶ “Like a tangled ball of thread, a tangled ball,” *tantā,kulaka,jāto gulā,guṇṭhika,jāto*; cf D 2:55; S 2:92, 4:158; A 2:211 & *Journal of the Pāli Text Soc*, 1919: 49.

²⁷ *Muñja* grass, Saccharum munja Roxb, a soft grass, dark in colour, often worn by ancient Indian warriors (D 2:174; Sn 18, 440); *pabbaja*, *vl babbala* (Skt *Balbaja*) is prob Eleusine indica, a coarse grass or reed, often woven into slippers, etc (V 1:190; D 2:55; S 2:92, 3:137, 4:158; A 2:211; Dh 345; DhA 4:55).

²⁸ *Taṇhāṃ vo bhikkhave desissāmi jālinim saritaṃ visaṭaṃ visattikaṃ, yāya ayam loko uddhasto pariyanaddho tantā,kulaka,jāto gulā,guṇṭhika,jāto muñja,pabbaja,bhūto apāyam duggatim vinipātaṃ samsāraṃ nātivattati*. I have here followed Se throughout. On the key terms, see Intro (2).

²⁹ That is, the individual self or soul, or concerning oneself.

³⁰ “External” (*bāhirassa*), ie, the universal self or soul, or concerning others. Gombrich: “I interpret *ajjhattikas-sa upādāya* as a contraction for *ajjhattikaṃ assa upādāya*, and *bāhirassa* analogously as *bāhiraṃ assa*. *Upādāya* never seems to govern the genitive.” (1996:39). Gombrich interprets this sentence narrowly, ie, *historically*, to refer to the personal “self/soul” (“internal”) and the universal “self/soul” (“external”). However, if this were the only purpose of the Buddha, his teachings would only be relevant to his times. I have interpreted it more *contextually*, following the actual text, so that his teaching is universal and timeless.

³¹ *Aṭṭhārasa taṇhā,vicarita ajjhattika*. Here, one has the wrong view, “I am the self/soul,” or psychologically, “I’m sinful; I’m great; I’m powerful; I’m rich; etc.” See Gombrich’s n at end of §2. On *vicarita*, see Intro (2). Fully discussed at Vbh §§973-974/392-396 (VbhA 514-516 & Mohv 222); see also AA 3:206; qu at MA 1:220.

(3) “Thus am I [I am like that]”	<i>evam asmī ti hoti</i> ; ³³
(4) “I am otherwise”	<i>aññath’asmī ti hoti</i> ;
(5) “I do not exist”	<i>asasmī ti hoti</i> ;
(6) “I exist”	<i>sat’asmī ti hoti</i> ; ³⁴
(7) “May I be”	<i>sañ³⁵ ti hoti</i> ;
(8) “May I be this [be like this]”	<i>itthañ san ti hoti</i> ;
(9) “May I be so [be like that]”	<i>evañ san ti hoti</i> ;
(10) “May I otherwise”	<i>aññathā santi hoti</i> ;
(11) “I might be”	<i>api ha san ti hoti</i> ;
(12) “I might be this [be like this]”	<i>api itthañ san ti hoti</i> ;
(13) “I might be that [be like that]”	<i>api evañ san ti hoti</i> ;
(14) “I might be otherwise”	<i>api aññathā san ti hoti</i> ;
(15) “I shall be”	<i>bhavissan ti hoti</i> ;
(16) “I shall be this [be like this]”	<i>itthañ bhavissan ti hoti</i> ;
(17) “I shall be so [be like that]”	<i>evañ bhavissan ti hoti</i> ;
(18) “I shall be otherwise”	<i>aññathā bhavissan ti hoti</i> .

These are the eighteen preoccupations with craving regarding what is internal.

The 18 external preoccupations with craving

4 What are the eighteen preoccupations with craving regarding what is external [the universal self or soul, or concerning others]?³⁶ (They are these thoughts,)

(1) by this (form, etc), “I am” ³⁷	<i>iminā asmī ti sati</i> ;
(2) by this, “I am this [I am like this]” ³⁸	<i>iminā itth’asmī ti hoti</i> ;
(3) by this, “Thus am I [I am like that]”	<i>iminā evam asmī ti hoti</i> ; ³⁹
(4) by this, “I am otherwise”	<i>iminā aññath’asmī ti hoti</i> ;
(5) by this, “I do not exist”	<i>iminā asasmī ti hoti</i> ;
(6) by this, “I exist”	<i>iminā sat’asmī ti hoti</i> ; ⁴⁰
(7) by this, “May I be”	<i>iminā san⁴¹ ti hoti</i> ;
(8) by this, “May I be this [be like this]”	<i>iminā itthañ san ti hoti</i> ;
(9) by this, “May I be so [be like that]”	<i>iminā evañ san ti hoti</i> ;
(10) by this, “May I otherwise”	<i>iminā aññathā santi hoti</i> ;
(11) by this, “I might be”	<i>iminā api ha san ti hoti</i> ;
(12) by this, “I might be this [be like this]”	<i>iminā api itthañ san ti hoti</i> ;
(13) by this, “I might be that”	<i>iminā api evañ san ti hoti</i> ;
(14) by this, “I might be otherwise”	<i>iminā api aññathā san ti hoti</i> ;
(15) by this, “I shall be”	<i>iminā bhavissan ti hoti</i> ;

³² “Such am I” (VbhA:Ñ 277).

³³ Ce thus; Be *evamsmīti*; Se PTS *evasmīti*. They are all sandhi forms of *evam asmī ti*.

³⁴ FL Woodward (1933) thinks that Vbh & Comy misunderstands these two sentences, wrongly taking them the other way around because they do not recognize the forms (A:W 2:226 n2).

³⁵ *Sañ = siyañ*

³⁶ *Aṭṭhārasa taṇhā, vicaritai bāhira*. Fully discussed at Vbh §§975-976/396-400 (VbhA 513-516 & Mohv 222).

³⁷ This passage is identical to the preceding in §2, except for *iminā* here, which Gombrich says, “in this context it must refer to one’s relation with the world soul/essence.” (1996:40). One here holds the wrong view, “I am that universal self/soul,” or psychologically, one identifies with other people, external things or states (beauty, knowledge, wealth, strength, power, etc) and think, “I am that!”

³⁸ “Such am I.” (VbhA:Ñ 277).

³⁹ Ce thus; Be *evamsmīti*; Se PTS *evasmīti*. They are all sandhi forms of *evam asmī ti*.

⁴⁰ FL Woodward (1933) thinks that Vbh & Comy misunderstands these two sentences, wrongly taking them the other way around because they do not recognize the forms (A:W 2:226 n2).

⁴¹ *sañ = siyañ*

- (16) by this, “I shall be this” *iminā ittham bhavissan ti hoti;*
 (17) by this, “I shall be so” *iminā evaṃ bhavissan ti hoti;*
 (18) by this, “I shall be otherwise” *iminā aññathā bhavissan ti hoti.”*

These are the eighteen preoccupations with craving regarding what is external.

5 Thus are these eighteen preoccupations with craving regarding what is *internal*, and these eighteen preoccupations with craving regarding what is *external*. These, bhikshu, are called the thirty-six preoccupations with craving (*chattimsa taṇhā, vicarita*).

Thus, there are thirty-six such preoccupations with craving regarding the *past*, preoccupations with craving regarding the *future* [213], and preoccupation with craving regarding the *present*, making 108 preoccupations with craving (*aṭṭha taṇhā, vicarita sata*).

6 This, bhikshu, is the craving, the net-trap that flows, far-flung, ensnaring, with which this world is smothered, overwhelmed, like a tangled ball of thread, a tangled ball, like matted munja grass and babala reed, that does not go beyond the plane of misery, the evil destination, the lower realm, samsara [the cycle of rebirth and redeath].

— evaṃ —

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