

(Anusaya) Sāriputta Sutta

The Discourse to Sāriputta (on Latent Tendencies) | A 3.32b/1:133 f

Theme: Overcoming I-making
Translated by Piya Tan ©2009, 2010

1 Sutta's import

All the South and Southeast Asian Pali manuscripts, except the PTS edition, treat **the (Anusaya) Ānanda Sutta** (A 3.32a) and **the (Anusaya) Sāriputta Sutta** (A 3.32b) as separate texts. The close parallel of the two texts is probably why the PTS editor put them into one sutta. However, although both discourses are about latent tendencies (*anusaya*), they each treat the topic differently.

In the (Anusaya) Sāriputta Sutta, Sāriputta asks the Buddha whether self-centred thoughts could be ended to such an extent that they would never arise again, that is, leading to awakening. The Buddha quotes **Sn 1106 f** in an affirmative answer [3]. Clearly, at this stage, Sāriputta is still a streamwinner, but within a week of attaining arhathood.¹

2 Liberated both ways

The theme of the **(Anusaya) Sāriputta Sutta** is the teaching of being “liberated both ways,” as alluded to in the two closing quatrains (Sn 1106 f). Those who have destroyed the defilements (that is, become arhats), but lack mastery over the eight liberations (*aṭṭha, vimokkha*),² are called “**liberated by wisdom**” (*paññā, vimutta*). Those who can attain these eight liberations, which include the four formless attainments and the attainment of cessation, are called “*liberated both ways*,” that is, liberated *from the physical body* by means of the formless dhyana, and from all defilements by the path of arhathood. The differences between the two types of liberation are given in **the Mahā, nidāna Sutta** (D 15)³ and **the Kīṭāgiri Sutta** (M 70).⁴

Like Moggallāna, Sāriputta, too, is an arhat “**liberated both ways**” (*ubhato, bhāga, vimutta*). All arhats are perfectly liberated in the same way from ignorance and suffering, but are distinguished into two types on the basis of their proficiency in concentration.⁵

3 The Pār'āyana verses

The (Anusaya) Sāriputta Sutta (A 3.32b) quotes from an ancient text, **the Pār'āyana**, “the Way Across (to the Far Shore),”⁶ which is the fifth and last chapter of the Sutta Nipāta, containing 16 sub-sect-

¹ See **Paṭhama Jhāna Pañha S** (S 40.1/4:262 f) = SD 24.11 Intro (1).

² Briefly, the 8 liberations are: (1) the liberation of one with physical form sees physical forms (*rūpī rūpāni passati*); (2) that of one who does not see physical form internally, but sees physical forms externally (*ajjhataṃ arūpa, saññī bahiddhā rūpāni passati*); (3) that of one liberated after contemplating the idea of the beautiful (*subhan' t'eva adhimutto hoti*); (4) that of in the base of the infinity of space; (5) that of the base of the infinity of consciousness; (6) that of the base of nothingness; (7) that of the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception; (8) that of the cessation of perception and feeling (Pm 2:38-40). Comy on **Mahā Sakuludāyī S** (M 77.22/2:13) says that these liberations are the mind's full (but temporary) release from the opposing states and its full (but temporary) release by delighting in the object (*ārammaṇa*) (MA 3:255, cf 255-259). For details, see **Mahā, parinibbāna S** (D 16.3.33/-2:111 f) = SD 9 & n & **Mahā, nidāna S** (D 15.35/2:70 f) & Intro (10).

³ D 15.35-26/2:70 f = SD 5.17.

⁴ M 70.15-16/1:477 f & SD 11.1 Intro (5.2)

⁵ See **Paṭhama Jhāna Pañha S** (S 40.1/4:262 f) & SD 24.11 Intro (1).

⁶ *Pār'āyana* is resolved as *para* (poetic form, *pāra*, across) + *āyana* (the way). The Aṭṭhaka Vagga (Sn 766-975) and the Pār'āyana Vagga (Sn 976-1149), forming the last two chs of Sutta Nipāta are the very old. They are quoted in other parts of the Pali canon (S 2:47,12; A 1:134,9, 4:63,13: see CPD sv), and incl early concepts of the teaching (see T Vetter, *The Ideas and Meditative Practices of Early Buddhism* Leiden, 1988 & “Some remarks on older parts of the Suttanipāta,” in *Early Buddhism*, Leiden, 1990: 100 f). Mahā Niddesa (Nm) is the canonical comy

ions, each of which is a question by one of 16 brahmins and the Buddha's answers. **The Udaya Pañha**, mentioned in the sutta, is called **the Udaya Māṇava Pucchā**⁷ in the Sutta Nipāta, and is the 14th sutta of the Pār'āyana Vagga (Sn 5.14/1105-1111), from which these verse (Sn 1105 f) are quoted, thus:

Giving up both the perceptions of sensual pleasure | and of displeasure, too,
and the pushing away of sloth, | and the hindrance of remorse,

mindfulness fully purified by equanimity | preceded by the applying of mind to mental states,
is liberation by true knowledge, I say, | the breaking up of ignorance. (Sn 1106 f)

John Brough gives an insightful explanation of these verses, and due to its helpfulness, I have quoted it in full here (only with some editorial standardizing):

The poem in question begins (Sn 1105) *jhāyīm virajam āsīnam*,⁸ and the relevant verses are:

1106	(a) <i>pahānaṃ kāmacchandānaṃ</i>	(b) <i>domanassāna c'ūbhayaṃ</i>
	(c) <i>thīnassa ca panudanaṃ</i>	(d) <i>kukkuccānaṃ nivāraṇaṃ</i>
1107	(e) <i>upekhāsatisamsuddhaṃ</i>	<i>dharmatakkapurejavaṃ</i>
	<i>aññavimokkhaṃ pabrumī</i>	(f) <i>avijjāya pabhedanaṃ.</i>
1111	<i>ajjhataṃ ca bahiddhā ca</i>	<i>vedanaṃ nābhinandato</i>
	<i>evaṃ satassa carato</i>	<i>viññānaṃ uparujjhati.</i> ⁹

The poem is thus clearly based on the formulae of the trance [dhyana]—the *jhānas*, *samāpattis*, and *vimokkhas*. (This is recognized by the commentator, though not elaborated.)¹⁰

The first of the verses quoted gives the preliminaries to the first *jhāna*—*vivicc'eva kāmehi vivicca akusalehi dhammehi*. By the latter are meant the five *nīvaraṇas*, of which four are indicated by the phrases marked *a*, *c*, *d*, and *f* (the last, since *vicikicchā* arises from *avijjā*).

The second *nīvaraṇa*, *vyāpāda*, is here replaced in *b* by *domanassa*, doubtless in part due to the fact that *abhiijhā-domanassa* is a familiar compound; but in addition the fourth *jhāna* involves the passing away of *somanassa-domanassa*. The same *jhāna* is also described as *upekhā-sati-parisuddhiṃ*, reflected here in *e*.

The first word of the sutta, *jhāyīm* [“meditator”], indicates the subject-matter; and the last verse sums up the process by the slightest of hints, which are nevertheless unmistakable in their intention. The phrase *ajjhataṃ ca bahiddhā ca* points to the formulae of the *abhibh'āyatana*,¹¹ the first of which begins with these, while they are transcended in the seventh.¹²

on Atthaka Vagga, and Cūḷa Niddesa (Nc), on Pār'āyana Vagga (and the Khagga,visāṇa S, Sn 35-75). “The fact that only these parts of Sn are explained confirms that their existence as originally separate texts” (Hinuber, *A Handbook of Pāli Literature*, 1996 §116, 98.

⁷ It is likely that Udaya Pañha is the older name (found in the (Anusaya) Sa Sutta, which would otherwise have referred to it as the Puṇṇaka Māṇava Pucchā.

⁸ Sn 1105a: “The meditator seated passion-free.” This is the very first line of the Udaya Māṇava Pucchā.

⁹ Sn 1111: “If one enjoys not a feeling, internally or externally, | for whom who goes about mindfully, consciousness has thus stopped for him.”

¹⁰ For a detailed treatment, see E Lamotte, *Le traité de la grande vertu sagesse de Nāgārjuna* 2 1970: 1013, 1023 ff. (Brough)

¹¹ *Abhibh'āyatana* (Skt *abhibh'āyatana*), ie the 8 bases of mastery (in dhyanic meditation). These are powers gained through *kaṣiṇa* (Skt *kṛtsna*) meditation as means of transcending the sense-sphere. See **Māha,parinibbāna S** (D 16.3.24-32/2:110 f) = SD 9.

¹² Mahāvīyutpatti §71, following the *dhyānas* and *samāpattis* in 67-68 and the *vimokṣas* in 70. (Brough)

In *vedanam nabhinandato* there is summed up the formula applicable to the second and following *samāpattis*:¹³ *so yad eva tattha hoti vedanāgataṃ saññāgataṃ saṅkharagataṃ viññānagataṃ te dhamme aniccato dukkhato rogato...samanupassati*.¹⁴

In the second *samāpatti* the *viññānānañcāyatanam* is attained, and in the third is transcended: hence *viññānam uparujjhati*.

This is too much to be dismissed as an accidental coincidence, even though the terms involved are commonplace enough. The term which concerns us here, *dhamma-takka-purejavam*, may therefore be expected to belong to the same complex of ideas; and in fact we find it in the formula of the first *jhāna*—*savitakka savicāram vivekajam pītisukham*. In the same way as *vedanam* in the last verse of the sutta indicates the larger formula, the first item from this list also was presumably meant to call to mind the other adjectives. Thus *dhamma-takka-purejavam* means simply that the later stages of the trance are “preceded by (or start from) the first *jhāna*.” A more rendering would be “preceded by an examination of the *dharmas*”—not, surely, “reasonings, thoughts of the Law”: the *dharmas* in question are those (*vedanāgata*, etc) mentioned in the formula quoted above from M 1:436.

The conclusion seems certain: *dhamma-takka-* in the Sn verse is merely a poetic licence (for the metre) for *dhamma-vitakka-*. (J Brough (tr), *The Gāndhārī Dharmapada*, 1962: 207 f)

In short, the two verses or quatrains refer to the liberation by wisdom (*paññā, vimutti*) (Sn 1106c), resulting from insight into the true nature of things (Sn 1106b). This brings about the destruction of the five hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*), that is, attachment to sensual pleasure (Sn 1105a), ill will (Sn 1105b), sloth and torpor (Sn 1105cd), and restlessness and worry (Sn 1106a)—which is effectively the liberation of mind (*ceto, vimutti*). Both these liberations are description of *arhathood*, which is confirmed by the last line (Sn 1106d).

The line “mindfulness fully purified by equanimity” (*upekkhā, sati, samsuddham*, Sn 1106a), also refers to the fourth dhyana, as evident from the fourth-dhyana pericope found, for example, in **the (Ti) Sikkhā Sutta** (A 3.88):

With the abandoning of joy and pain—and with the earlier disappearance of pleasure and displeasure—he attains and dwells in **the fourth dhyana**, that is neither painful nor pleasant, and with mindfulness fully purified by equanimity. (A 3.88.3/1:235) = SD 24.10c

I have rendered **Sn 1106b**—*dhamma.takka.pure.javam*—as “preceded by the applying of mind to mental states,” rather than “preceded by thinking of the Dharma” or such like, reading *takka metri causa*¹⁵ as *vitakka*. This reading, I think, is confirmed by the Aṅguttara Commentary when it says that this line (Sn 1106b) refers to right thought (*sammā, saṅkappa*), the second factor of the noble eightfold path, consisting of thoughts free from sensuality, ill will and violence.¹⁶

More significantly, in **the Sa, nidāna Sutta** (S 14.12), we see right thought explained as “dependent ending,”¹⁷ which is actually a formulaic elaboration of right thought, leading to the destruction of ignorance. This is clearly stated in the last line (**Sn 1106d**), “the breaking up of ignorance,” which, says the

¹³ Lamotte, op cit, 1033; M 1:436 (Brough). See **Mahā Māluṅkyā,putta S** (M 64.9-16/1:435-437) = SD 21.10.

¹⁴ “Whatever that is therein that consists of form, of feeling, of perception, of formations, of consciousness, he regards those states as impermanent, as suffering, as a disease, as a tumour, as a barb, as a calamity, as an illness, as alien [as being other], as breaking up, as empty, as not self.” (M:P 64.10).

¹⁵ *Metri causa* means “on account of metre,” ie, as a modification of a sound or syllable in a word to fit the metre. The metre of Udaya Māṇava Pucchā is *śloka (anuṣṭubh)*, ie, 4 lines of 8 syllables, totalling 32 syllables (like the Dhammpada). See KR Norman (tr) *The Group of Discourses (Sutta-nipāta, vol 2)*, 1992:381 (§1106 f) & *The Word of the Doctrine (Dhammaoada)*, 2000: xxv f; also J Brough, *The Gāndhārī Dharmapada*, 1962: 208.

¹⁶ See **Dvedhā Vitakka S** (M 19/1:114-118) = SD 61.1.

¹⁷ S 14.12/2:151-153 = SD 29.8.

Commentary, refers to the fruit of arhathood, which arises with the destruction of ignorance by the path of arhathood (AA 2/208).

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The Discourse to Sāriputta (on the Latent Tendencies)

A 3.32b/1:133 f

1 Then the venerable Sāriputta approached the Blessed One. Having saluted the Blessed One, he sat down at one side. When he was seated thus at one side, the Blessed One said this to the venerable Sāriputta:

“Whether, Sāriputta, I were to teach the Dharma in brief, or whether I were to teach it in detail, or whether I were to teach it both in brief and in detail, it is difficult to find those who would understand.”

2 “Now, Blessed One, is the time! Now, Sugata [Well gone One], is the time! Whether the Blessed One were to teach the Dharma in brief, or whether he were to teach it in detail, or whether he were to teach it both in brief and in detail, there would be those who would understand!”

3 “In that case, Sāriputta, you should train yourself thus:

‘There will be no latent tendencies of I-making, mine-making, and conceit in this conscious body, and likewise there will be no latent tendencies of I-making, mine-making, and conceit towards any external sign¹⁸—

and there will be no latent tendencies of I-making, mine-making, and conceit in whichever liberation of mind and liberation by wisdom that we have attained and dwelled; and we would attain and dwell in that liberation of mind and liberation by wisdom.’¹⁹

Thus you should train yourself.

4 Sāriputta, when a monk has no latent tendencies of I-making, mine-making, and conceit in this conscious body, and likewise he has no latent tendencies of I-making, mine-making, and conceit toward any external sign,

and there would be no latent tendencies of I-making, mine-making, and conceit in whichever liberation of mind and liberation by wisdom²⁰ that he has attained and dwelled; and he attains and dwells in that liberation of mind and liberation by wisdom—

Sāriputta, this monk I call

a monk who has cut off craving, who has removed the fetter: he has, by fully breaking through conceit, made an end of suffering.

5 Furthermore, Sāriputta, it is in this connection that I have spoken in **the Udaya Pañha** in the Pārāyana,²¹ thus:

¹⁸ *imasmiñ ca sa, viññāṇake kāye ahañ.kāra, mamañ.kāra, mānānusayā na bhavissanti, bahiddhā ca sabba, nimittesu ahañ.kāra, mamañ.kāra, mānānusayā na bhavissanti*, For explanation, (**Anusaya**) **Ānanda S** (A 3.32) = SD 31.8a Intro (2).

¹⁹ *Yañ ca ceto, vimuttiñ paññā, vimuttiñ upasampajja viharato ahañ.kāra, mamañ.kāra, mānānusayā na honti.*

²⁰ On these 2 liberations, see Intro (2).

²¹ That is, **the Udaya Māṇava Pucchā**, Sn 1106 f: see Intro (3).

*Pahānaṃ kāma,saññānaṃ
domanassāna cūbhayaṃ,
thinassa ca paṇūdanaṃ
kukkuccānaṃ nivāraṇaṃ.*

Giving up both the perceptions of sensual pleasure
and of displeasure, too,
and the pushing away of sloth,
and the hindrance of remorse,

*Upekkhā,sati,sāmsuddhaṃ
dhamma,takka,pure.javaṃ,
aññā,vimokkhaṃ pabrūmi
avijjāya pabhedanan ti*

mindfulness fully purified by equanimity,
preceded by the applying of mind to mental states,
is liberation by true knowledge, I say,
the breaking up of ignorance.” (Sn 1106 f)

— evaṃ —

091219; 091222; 100614; 100901