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Sabba Kamma Jaha Sutta

The Discourse on Abandoning All Karma | U 3.1 or Kamma,vipāka,ja Sutta, The Born of Karmic Result Discourse Theme: How to be untroubled by karma Translated by Piya Tan ©2009, 2012

1 A certain meditating monk

1.1 PAIN FROM THE PAST. The Sabba Kamma Jaha Sutta (U 3.1) is a very short and simple text where the Buddha points out to a certain unnamed monk engaged in meditation. The Buddha explains to the monks that this meditating monk is reflecting on a physical pain that has been arising in him as a result of a past karma ("the dust of what is past done, *pure katan rajan*"). [1.3]

The pain he experiences is so severe that it is impossible (*asakkuneyya*) to be tolerated by a common person (*pacura,jana*, "a man of the crowd"), that is, one unawakened. Dhammapāla, the Udāna commentator, explains how that monk deals with his pain, that is, by reflecting thus:

This feeling is <u>impermanent</u>, by the fact that having become, it comes to not; dependently arisen, on account of its having arisen dependent upon an undesirable sense-object, and so on; on account of the singular fact of its own nature of breaking up, that is, once it has arisen, it is of the nature to breaking up, of coming to destruction, of passing away, of letting go, of ending.

(UA 166)

1.2 HOW THE PAIN IS OVERCOME

<u>1.2.1 Proper sitting posture in meditation</u>. The Paţisambhidā,magga and the Commentaries give the following instructions regarding how to properly sit for meditation [§2]:

Therein, "crosswise" (pallaṅka) means that the sitting posture with the thighs fully locked together. "Folding" (ābhujitvā) means having locked them together. "Keeping his body upright" (ujuṅ kāyaṅ paṇidhāya), after keeping his upper body upright, aligning the 18 backbones from top to bottom [end to end]. In this way, when one is sitting, the skin, flesh and sinews do not twist (na namanti). Hence, he sits in this way.⁴

Then, the feelings, which would otherwise arise from moment to moment on account of this twisting, do not arise.

(Pm 1:176; VA 2:407; DA 210; MA 2:216::M 1:181; VbhA 368::Vism 244; Vism 8.60/271)

<u>Sitting cross-legged</u> here actually refers to the "full lotus" yoga posture (Skt *padm'āsana*), as often seen in traditional pictures or statues of the Buddha. However, such a posture should only used if we are adept and comfortable with yoga practice or well used to such a posture. The key element in the sitting posture is *comfort*, that is, keeping the whole physical body relaxed by spreading our weight over the greatest floor area. This helps to reduce pains and tiredness so that we can focus better on the meditation.

Keeping the body upright, the centre of gravity is within the body so that the body's weight sinks right down into the ground. In this way, the body tires less easily. It helps to imagine a pendulum or plumbline hanging from just below our skull with its weight or ball hanging inside our heart or belly. If

¹ Cf UA 91, 215.

² This allusion is to "object condition" (*ārammaṇa paccaya*), that is, the object as a necessary condition without which consciousness cannot arise—is one of the 24 conditions (*paccaya*) of the Paṭṭḥāna: see eg DhsA 2; Bdict sv paccaya; JPTS 1915-1916:52; see also UA 179.

³ Ayam vedanā nāma hutvā abhāvaṭṭhena aniccā, aniṭṭh ʾārammaṇ ʾādipaccaye paṭicca uppannattā paṭicca,sam-uppannā, uppajjitvā ek ʾantena bhijjana,sabhāvattā khaya,dhammā vaya,dhammā virāga,dhammā nirodha,dhammāti. (UA 166). The closing phrase alludes to the famous viveka,nissita formula: see Viveka,nissita, SD 20.4.

⁴ Only this section in Pm 1:176 :: PmA 2:490; Vbh 252; SA 1:238 ad S 1:170; AA 2:294 ad A 1:183, AA 3:202 ad A 2:210; UA 165.

we were to slouch or bend too far forward or lean too far back, the pendulum moves outside of the body—the centre of gravity is no more centred within our body. When the centre of gravity is outside the body, it tires more quickly.

If we were beginners, even after sitting in the best posture, we could still feel some numbness and other pains after some time. This is normal, and we should then mindfully adjust our posture just slightly at first. If we feel more comfortable this way, then it's good. If not, we should adjust ourself as necessary, but do this *mindfully*, as part of our meditation.

As we progress in our meditation, the sitting should become easier. When any discomfort arises, we could use it as our meditation-object without need of any bodily adjustment. This is where we could observe the "rise and fall" of feeling and the nature of impermanence. Anyway, it is still all right to adjust ourselves if we really feel the need to. Even the best of meditators must adjust themselves occasionally.

<u>1.2.2 Only body pains, not the mind</u>. The Sutta gives no details about how the monk overcomes his pain during meditation. This is explained in Dhamma,pāla, in his Udāna Commentary, thus:

Unlike the blind worldling, in the manner stated—"The ignorant worldling, when touched by various painful states, falls into confusion, grieves, wearies, laments, wails, beating his breast" (untraced)—he (the monk) was seated as if he had gained an attainment, without complaining [ungrieving] (avihāñāmāno), putting up with bodily pain, born as karma ripening, without giving rise to mental pain, on account of its having been utterly rooted out by way of the path itself.⁶ (UA 166)

This well known way of watching only bodily pain, and keeping the mind unaffected by any pain, is epitomized in the famous teaching the Buddha gives to the elderly Nakula,pitā, that he should constantly reflect on his old age and infirmity, thus: "Although my body is sick, let not my mind be sick." Later, the elder Sāriputta explains the meaning of this statement as regarding the 5 aggregates—form, feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness—as being "non-self."

1.2.3 Disowning the pain. Psychologically, this practice is that of "not owning the pain," represented by the word *amamassa* (*na mama*), "not mine" [§6c]. Whatever that arises in our body (form) is impermanent, dependently arisen, of the nature to be something else. Similarly, our feelings, what we perceive ("think"), all our actions (bodily action, speech, and thought), and even our life itself (consciousness), are impermanent, dependently arisen, of the nature to be something else. 9

1.3 PAST INFLUENCES. The Udāna Commentary goes on to explain that the pain the monk in the Sutta [§3] is feeling arises from his past karma that was rooted in the "dust" (*raja*) greed, hate and delusion [§6b]. It is called "dust" because it tends to blind us from reality, or distorts our view of reality. This is before he has attained arhathood. However, after becoming an arhat, he is free from such past karmic fruits. He would be like a flower whose roots have been cut off. (UA 166)

The unawakened person is, as a rule, deeply influenced by his past, including childhood conditioning, so that his actions may not harmonize with the realities before him. His past experiences define what is desirable or undesirable in his present life, so that he often misses the goodness and happiness that present themselves before him. He relates to people in the same way, too, often measuring others by their past, without giving them any space to express their potential in the present or the future. ¹⁰

⁵ On watching the rise and fall of feeling, see (Aññathatta) Ānanda S 1 (S 22.37/3:37 f), SD 33.11.

⁶ Avihaññamānoti assutavā, bhikkhave, puthujjano aññatar'aññatarena dukkha,dhammena phuṭṭho samāno socati kilamati paridevati ura-t,tālim kandati sammoham āpajjatîti vutta,nayena andha,puthujjano viya, na vihaññamāno maggen'eva samugghātitattā ceto,dukkham anuppādento kevalam kamma,vipāka,jam sarīra,dukkham adhivāsento samāpattim samāpanno viya nisinno hoti. (UA 166)

⁷ Ātura,kāyassa me sato, cittam anāturam bhavissati (S 22.1.4/3:1), SD 5.4.

⁸ See Samanupassanā S (S 22.47) @ SD 26.12 (5), on how self-identity proliferates.

⁹ For a more detailed study, see **Sall'atthena S** (S 36.6/4:207-210), SD 5.5.

¹⁰ On letting go of the past, see *Bhāvanā*, SD 15.1 (1.5). For a more detailed study, see *Uddhacca,kukkucca*, SD 32.7.

Dh 94

Dh 95

1.4 "FOR SUCH A ONE IS HE"

1.4.1 A certain arhat. From the verse [§6], it is clear that this "certain monk" is an arhat, fully focussed in his meditation. The awakened (including the Buddha), as we know, still feels bodily pains (they still have a physical body!), but their minds are unaffected by the pains. The phrase, "who has abandoned all karma" (*sabba,kamma,jaha*) [§6a], clearly states the case, and which is further supported by two important terms: "steadfast" (*thita*) and "such" (*tādino*).

1.4.2 "Steadfast" (thita). In verse §13c, the certain monk is described as "steadfast in the not-mine" (amamassa thitassa). This can be explained as "he is fully established in the understanding of non-self, and, as such, is liberated." Amamassa has already been explained [1.2.3]. The Udāna Commentary explains titthassa as "having crossed the four floods [sense-desire (kām'āsava), desire for eternal existence (bhav'āsava), views (diṭṭh'āsava), and ignorance (avijj'āsava)]. He is steadfast on the high ground (thale) of nirvana; or, alternatively, steady, in not rushing on by way of grasping rebirth" (UA 166). 13

The Commentary uses "steadfast" to describe the "non-learner" (*asekha*), that is, the arhat, who has fully understood the four noble truths and is fully liberated, and as such has nothing more to learn in terms of spiritual liberation. ¹⁴ The "learners" (*sekha*), that is, the saints who have not yet fully attained arhathood, would still be reborn (although in a more limited way and less painful way than an ordinary worldling). ¹⁵

1.4.3 "Such" (*tādino*)

1.4.3.1 AN ARHAT'S SUCHNESS. The arhat is also described as "such" ($t\bar{a}di$), which means that he is "constant" in his spiritual state and "consistent" in his personal conduct. ¹⁶ $T\bar{a}di$, however, has a wider usage, and also applies to an arhat. ¹⁷ Here, we shall focus on $t\bar{a}dino$. Its meaning is well brought out in these two Dhammapada verses: ¹⁸

Yass'indriyāni samathan,gatāni assā yathā sārathinā sudantā pahīna,mānassa anāsavassa devâpi tassa pihayanti tādino

Paṭhavī,samo no virujjhati inda,khīl'ûpamo tādi subbato rahado va apetaka-d,damo saṃsārā na bhavanti tādino When the senses have been stilled, like horses well tamed by a charioteer, who has abandoned conceit, influx-free, such a one, even the gods envy him.

Like the earth he is not hostile [is untroubled], such is he, like Indra's pillar, 19 true to his vows, like a lake free of mud,

there are no more life-cycles for such a one.²⁰

1.4.3.2 THE BUDDHA'S SUCHNESS. In **the Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta** (D 16), very soon after the Buddha has passed away, Anuruddha says: "There is no more in-breath and out-breath for such a one of

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¹¹ On <u>Does the Buddha have feelings?</u> see (Samyojana) Koṭṭhita S (S 35.232.8/4:164 f), SD 28.4 Intro (3); How the saints feel, SD 55.6; Saḷāyatana Vibhaṅga S (M 137) @ SD 29.5.

¹² Āsava: see (Āsava-k,khaya) Jhāna S (A 9.36) @ SD 33.8 (1).

¹³ Cf Dh 95; U 3.8/31. For Masefield's tr, see UA:M 448.

¹⁴ The full-fledged arhat (*arahata,phala*) is <u>a "non-learner"</u> (*asekha*) since he is fully accomplished in the 4 noble truths by way of *understanding*, *abandoning*, *attaining* and *practising* them in all their aspects: see SD 1.1 (6). The rest are still "learners" (*sekha*), and are, as such, still subject to rebirth but in a more limited way than the worldlings: see **Sabba Kamma Jaha S** (U 3.1) & SD 39.3 (1.4.2).

On the learner and the non-learner, see Sekha S (M 53) @ SD 21.14 (2).

¹⁶ This is also reflected in the Buddha's quality of one "accomplished in wisdom and conduct" (*vijjā*, *caraṇa*, *sam-panno*): see *Buddhânussati*, SD 15.7 (3.3).

¹⁷ This is discussed more fully at **Buddhânussati**, SD 15.7 (2.2.2).

¹⁸ For nn, see Dh:N 87 n95.

¹⁹ "Indra's pillar" (*inda,khīla*; BHS *indra,kīla*), a strong post or solid stone sunk into the ground at the house-door or palace-gate or city-gate against which the door or gate is closed; a symbol of strength and unshakability (V 3:46,-28, 4:160,26; D 3:133,6; S 1:27,4*; Sn 229; Tha 663; J 1:89,7; Pm 1:176,14).

Lit, "samsaric cycles no more become such a one."

steady mind,"²¹ Here, the meaning is something deeper than the mere fact that the Buddha's respiration has stopped (or that he is "clinically dead"), but that he is no more defined by the kind of breathing that keeps us alive; he is immeasurable: he is in nirvana.²²

The Buddha's exemplary qualities that *tādino* connotes also applies to the arhat, or to be emulated so that we become arhats. The Thera.gāthā Commentary (by Dhamma.pāla) on Tha 41 explains it thus: "the son of such a one (tādino), that is, as a son of the Buddha, the Blessed One, accomplished in such [in being constant] towards such characteristics that are agreeable or disagreeable, and so on" (ThaA 1:-

The Mahā Niddesa, the canonical commentary on the Atthaka Vagga of the Sutta Nipātā, gives even more detailed explanations of $t\bar{a}di$, as applied to arhats. ²⁴ As such, we can take $t\bar{a}di$ and its related forms as meaning "Buddha-like." This is, in fact, the sense of the word as found, for example, in the Thera, gāthā (Tha 41).

1.4.4 "There is no need to talk with people" (attho n'atthi janam lapetave) [§6d]. A simple description of "such" a state would be that the arhat, like the Buddha, is untroubled by the eight worldly conditions (loka,dhamma) (UA 167). The arhat is in no way concerned with or troubled by gain or loss, fame or ill-fame, praise or blame, joy or pain.²⁶

The Commentary explains that such a monk [1.4.2] would find neither need nor occasion to communicate with laity on account of his body or health. In other words, it is the nature of arhats that they would not ask for help even when they are seriously ill (UA 167). The Sutta Nipāta Commentary, glossing on Sn 929, gives a similar explanation: "He would not speak to people out of desire for gain" (lābha,kāmya janam na lapayeyya. Sn 929), means that he does not talk to people for such benefits as: "You should serve me with medicine, etc," out of consideration for the state of his body (SnA 2:564).

The Udāna Commentary explains that the arhats would simply let his body take its natural course, "Just as a withered leaf falls from its bond, let this very body, too, having broken, fall away" (untraced quote, UA 167).²⁷ Dhammapāla, the commentator, then quotes Tha 1003, which is the second of a pair of verses from Sāriputta's Thera,gāthā, thus:

nâbhinandāmi maranam nâbhinandāmi jīvitam nikkhipissam imam kāyam sampajāno patissato I delight not in death, nor do I delight in life; I shall cast aside this body fully aware and mindful.

nâbhinandāmi maranam nâbhinandāmi jīvitam I delight not in death, nor do I delight in life; kālam vā patikankhāmi nibbisam bhatako vathā I await my time as a servant his wages.

(Tha 1002 f)²⁸

Here, it might be said, we are looking at how the arhat sees his body and physical existence, in a manner of speaking. Below, we shall examine how an arhat's mind is like [2.2].

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²¹ Nâhu assāsa,passāso thita,cittassa tādino (thita,cittassa tādino: Skt sthira,cittasya tāyinaḥ, Avadś 2.199).

²² See Mahā, parinibbāna S (D 16.6.10b/2:157), SD 9.

²³ **Putto tādino** 'ti iṭṭhâniṭṭh' 'ādisu tādi,lakkhaṇa,sampattiyā tādino buddhassa bhagavato orasa,putto (ThaA 1:115 ad Tha 41); see Tha:N 131 n41 & also Thī 249-250 & Thī:N 169 n. A similar but shorter gloss is at VvA 95. For a similar glosses with more details, see SnA 200 f ad Sn 154 & UA 202 ad U 3.7.

²⁴ Nm 114-116 on **Param'aṭṭhaka S** (Sn 803) & Nm 459-461 on **Sāriputta S** (Sn 957): also MA 3:343. See **Bud**dhânussati, SD 15.7 (2.2.2). For other forms of tādi, see PED: tādin & BHSD: tāyin.

²⁵ For gram analysis, see §12 n at v25d.

²⁶ On the 8 worldly conditions, see **Thāna S** (A 4.192.4/2:188), SD 14.12 & **S Loka, dhamma S** (A 8.6/4:157-160). See Sāriputta-t,thera Vatthu (DhA 7.6/2:178-182).

²⁷ Pand'upalāso viva hi bandhanā pavutto savam evâvam kāvo bhijjitvā patatûti. Cf V 1:96 = 3:47, 4:217; Dh 233; VbhA 244; KhpA 62.

²⁸ Only Tha 1003 is qu in UA here. Elsewhere, these are well quoted verses. Tha 1002 = 607; 1003 = 606, qu at SA 1:126 (on S 1:126) &UA 432 (on U 8.9); Tha 606 f qu at Miln 45 & DA 810 (with a variation). Cf Tha 20, 196 & Manu 6.45. See also **Chann'ovāda S** (M 144) @ SD 11.12 (7.4).

1.4.5 Laymen arhats must ordain or die?

1.4.5.1 NĀGASENA'S VIEW. There is the well known tradition that if a lay person were to become an arhat,²⁹ he must ordain the very same day, or he will die (pass away into parinirvana) that day itself. However, this view is not found in any of the canonical texts.³⁰ The earliest reference to such a belief is found in **the Milinda,pañha** (c100 BCE), which states that while a lay person can become an arhat, on attaining that state, he must either renounce the world that day itself or he would pass away into final nirvana that very day.³¹

Nāgasena's view that the layman arhat would pass away the same day if he does not ordain,³² however, is not supported by any sutta or early teaching. It is possible that his view is based on laymen arhat stories, such as those of the layman arhat **Bāhiya** and the layman non-returner **Pukkusāti**, both of whom die on the day of their attaining their respective paths. Pukkusāti is reborn in Āviha (in the Pure Abodes), and attains arhathood, "upon landing" there.³³

This event, however, is merely incidental. Bāhiya, due to the ripening of his past karma, is gored to death by a cow or a goat. He is *not* destined to die that day (which would be determinism), but simply that a past vengeful enemy (a woman he had abused in a past life), reborn as the beast, takes her revenge.³⁴

1.4.5.2 POSSIBLE EXPLANATION. Since the start of this Sutta Discovery translation series (2002), I have thought of a possible reason for this tradition regarding the layman arhat. As the arhat does not have any more desire as we know it, especially that in connection with our body, he would not bother about looking for food to quell his hunger. [1.4.4]

Understandably, such a conduct would not sustain human life for very long, perhaps for a week. The point remains, however, that when the lay arhat ordains as a monastic, he is bound by the Vinaya to go on almsround and keep on living for the sake of the Dharma, that is, for the benefit of other beings. The final confirmation that Nagasena's view is wrong, then, would be accounts, or even a single account, of a layman arhat who lives beyond a day.

1.4.5.3 NO CANONICAL SUPPORT. The suttas or the Vinaya has no detailed accounts of layman arhats that would throw any light here. Hence, whatever arguments that we have on this question must be from silence (*ex silentio*), which is not helpful here. Nevertheless, it is hard to reconcile Nāgasena's view of the one-day window for a layman arhat with, say, the Buddha's spending 49 days (7 weeks) without food immediately after his awakening, enjoying the bliss of meditation in various postures.³⁵

By definition, the Buddha too is an arhat, and if he is able to survive without food for that long, it is also possible for other arhats to do so. Even if the layman arhats, due to their lack of Buddha qualities, might not last so long without food, they could surely survive beyond a day or even a week, without food.

In fact, there is strong internal evidence that does not favour the one-day life window of a layman arhat. **The (Mahānāma) Gilayāna Sutta** (S 55.54), for example, records the Buddha as declaring how the awakening of even a lay follower as *being no different from that of a monk's*:

²⁹ On <u>laymen arhats</u>, see Naļaka,pāna S (M 68), SD 37.4 (4) & Laymen saints, SD 8.6 (13) Why no mention of lay arhats? + (19) Destiny of the lay arhat.

³⁰ Miln is regarded as canonical—part of the Khuddaka Nikāya—only in Burma (Myanmar), but not by any other Buddhist school, even in our times.

³¹ "If, maharajah, a layman streamwinner attains arhathood, there are only two destinies for him, no other: either he attains parinirvana that very day, or he must gain the monk status" (*yadi mahārāja upāsako sotāpanno arahattam sacchikaroti, dve va tassa gatiyo bhavanti, anaññā: tasmim y'eva divase parinibbāyeyya vā bhikkhu,bhāvam vā upagaccheyya*) (Miln 164,8-11). This view is also mentioned at MA 3:196.

³² Miln 264-266; cf 242-244, 246-252.

³³ **Dhātu Vibhanga S** (M 140.35/3:247), SD 4.17; also MA 5:62; DhA 2:35.

³⁴ On <u>Bāhiya's story</u>, see **(Arahatta) Bāhiya S** (U 1.10/6-9) & SD 33.7 (2); also Ap 2:475 ff; AA 1:282; DhA 2:209 ff; UA 77 ff; cf Dh 142. There is another famous layman arhat, ie, Yasa, who joins the order that same day (V 1:17): see V 1:15-20; DhA 1:72, & also **The great commission**, SD 7.6. The Comy also mentions Santati the privy councillor, Ugga,sena the treasurer's son, and the boy Vīta,soka as examples of layman arhats (MA 3:196). On <u>laymen arhats</u>, see Naļaka,pāna S (M 68), SD 37.4 (4) & Laymen saints, SD 8.6 (13).

³⁵ On the 7 weeks, see SD 26.1 (5).

If he says thus, "My mind has turned away from the Brahmā world and is directed to the cessation of self-identity"—then, Mahānāma, there is no difference between a lay follower who is thus liberated in mind and a monk who has been liberated in mind for a hundred years, that is, there is no difference between the one liberation and the other." (S 55.54.19/4:410) = SD 4.10

Nāgasena's argument, as such, was probably to impress king Milinda, so that he held the monastic order in high esteem. It is likely that Nāgasena's views reflected a possible tension between monastic hegemony and the increasing prevalence of lay Dharma practice in his own times.³⁶ On a darker note, this unattested view of the layman arhat seems to be the start to the downgrading of the arhat ideal, which reached its nadir in later Mahāyāna (such as in the Lotus Sutra).

2 The arhat and feelings

2.1 HOW AN ARHAT DEALS WITH FEELINGS. Dhammapāla, in his commentary, says that the arhat dwells with an "on-looking" mind, perceiving any state, whether repulsive or unrepulsive, by way of the six-limbed equanimity (*cha-l-ang'upekkhā*) (UA 167). These six "limbs" (*anga*) are the six sense-bases, and whatever sense-experiences that arise there, the arhat sees them just as they are. Buddhaghosa, in his Visuddhi,magga, ³⁷ quoting **the Āhuneyya Sutta 1** (A 6.1), says that the a monk "with the eye" (*cakkhu-na*) (that is, an arhat) regards all the six sense-experiences "neither with a positive mind nor a negative mind, but dwells equanimously, mindful and fully aware. ³⁸

How this is done is explained in **the Paṭisambhidā,magga** by way of <u>the five modes of perception</u>, thus:³⁹

In the case of <u>an agreeable object</u> (eg as sensually attractive person), he either pervades it with the thought of foulness or regards it as impermanent.

In the case of <u>a disagreeable object</u> (eg a hostile person), he either pervades it with loving-kindness or regards it as physical elements. 40

He pervades <u>both agreeable and disagreeable objects</u> with the thought of foulness or regards them as impermanent; thus he perceives both as repulsive.

He pervades <u>both disagreeable and agreeable objects</u> with lovingkindness or regards them as physical elements; thus he perceives both as unrepulsive.

Avoiding both disagreeable and agreeable objects, having seen a form with the eyes, heard a sound with the ears, smelt smells with the nose, tasted tastes with the tongue, sensed a touch with the body, cognized a mind-object with the mind, he is neither glad nor sad, but abides in equanimity towards that, mindful and clearly aware.

(Pm 22.26/2:212 f; Vism 12.36/381 f; SA 3:171 f)⁴¹

2.2 NEITHER SPEECH OF DESIRE NOR DESIRE OF SPEECH. Above [1.4.3], we have briefly examined what it means to say of an arhat that "There is no need to talk with people" (*attho n'atthi janam lapetave*) [§6d], which is explained by way of how an arhat sees his body and physical being, in short, his life.

Now, we will briefly examine, or rather, deduce, from what the suttas tell us of <u>the arhat's mind</u>. From **the Sappurisa Sutta** (M 113), we learn that the true practitioner does not feel conceited about his

³⁶ For further discussion on the layman arhat's destiny, see esp **Laymen saints**, SD 8.6 (13-20).

³⁷ Vism 4.157/160.

³⁸ N'eva sumano hoti na dummano, upekkhako viharati sato sampajāno (A 6.1/3:279), SD 80.7.

³⁹ Here arranged according to the Anguttara listing. Cf **Metta,sahagata S** (S 46.54.12/5:119) & SD 10.11(5). See §2 & n.

⁴⁰ "Elements," *dhātu*. The analysis of the elements (*dhātu*, *vavatthāna*), the last of the 40 traditional meditation methods, is described in great detail at Vism 11.27-119/347-371. The method is given in brief in **Mahā Satipaṭṭhā-na S** (D 22.6/2:294 f) and **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10.12/1:57 f), and in detail in **Mahā Hatthi,padûpamā S** (M 28.6-28/1:185-191), **Rāhul'ovāda S** (M 1:421-425/62.8-17) and **Dhātu Vibhaṅga S** (M 140.13-18/3:240-243).

⁴¹ See **Tikaṇḍaki S** (A 5.144/3:169 f) & SD 2.12 (4).

own attainment of the form dhyanas or the formless dhyanas, and *does not identify* with any of them, that is, practises <u>non-identification</u> ($atammayat\bar{a}$) towards them. By the time he attains the level of the cessation of perception and feeling ($sa\tilde{n}n\tilde{a}$, vedayita, nirodha), his inflows ($\bar{a}sava$) are all exterminated, so that "he does not conceive *anything*, does not conceive *about* anything, and does not conceive *in any way*."⁴²

In other words, the arhat is thought-free and does not have any views in a karmic sense. None of these will bear any karmic fruit, as the arhat is completely free of greed, hate and delusion. Whatever mind-object that arises in an arhat's mind is merely a functional event $(kiriy\bar{a})$ that is simply a reflection of the reality that presents itself before him. An arhat might see beautiful nature and praise it, or hear what another person is saying and understand its import, or smell something and know a smell just as it is, or feel the weather as warm or cool, etc, and notice thoughts arising in connection with these.

Or, as stated in **the (Samyojana) Koṭṭhita Sutta** (S 35.232), even the Buddha sees, hears, smells, tastes, touches, and cognizes mind-objects basically in the same way as we do, that is, to say as <u>cognitive processes</u>. The radical difference is that the Buddha (and the arhats) do not have "desire-or-lust" (*chanda,rāga*). In other words, the Buddha does not plan ahead what needs to be done, nor does he have any attachment to a pleasant thing nor repulsion towards an unpleasant one before him. The actions of the Buddha or an arhat is wholesomely, completely, and naturally spontaneous.

3 Jain influence?

3.1 SABBA,KAMMA,JAHA. The theme of the Sabba Kamma Jaha Suta (U 3.1) is that of the aloofness of "a monk who has abandoned all karma, | shaking off the dust of the past deeds" [§6ab]. The prose introduction relates how the inspired verse (udāna) is uttered by the Buddha, upon seeing a monk sitting in meditation, "mindfully and fully aware, enduring without complaining [ungrieving], a feeling that was strong, harsh, and sharp [disagreeable], arising from the fruition of past karma" [§4].

What is striking about the verse is the idea of a monk "who has abandoned all karma" (sabba,kam-ma,jaha) [§6a] by "shaking off" (dhunati) the dust of past deeds [§6b]. Apparently, the phrase sabba,-kamma,jaha, or its various grammatical forms, is a hapax legomenon, that is, it occurs only once throughout the Pali canon, and appears only here. ⁴³ This expression refers to awakening, but the usual word here would be sabba,kamma-k,khaya, "the destruction of all karma."

3.2 DHUNATI. The other rare word in **the Sabba Kamma Jaha Sutta** is *dhunamānassa*, "shaking off" [§6b], which is an adjectival form of *dhunati*, "to shake off (both in the literal and figurative senses)." However, in the suttas, we usually see its various forms used in a figurative sense of "shaking off" or "casting off" of badness or unwholesome states. ⁴⁵

The verse of the Sabba Kamma Jaha Sutta has this unique line, "**shaking off the dust of the past deeds**" (*dhunamānassa pure kataṁ rajaṁ*) [§6b], which is another hapax legomenon, like the expression, *sabba,kamma,jaha* [3.1], found only here and nowhere else in the Pali canon. Now, let us examine the significance of such unique expressions.

3.3 Jain terminology

⁴² na kiñci maññati, na kuhiñci maññati, na kenaci maññatī (M 113,29/3:45), SD 23.7.

⁴³ There is, however, a related expression—*sabba,kamma,vihāyīnain* or *sabba,kamma,vihāyinain*—found in A 4.28 (Be Ce Se), but where Ee at A 2:29,1 reads *sammā kamma,viyākatain*, "who has fully discarded (all) karma." See SD 71.1.

⁴⁴ See S 5.8/1:134,4 = A 4.23/2:24,19 = It 4.13/123,3 = Sn 992c/192,5 (Ee *sabba,dhamma-k,khaya*) = Ap 2:460 = Nc:Be 2—which appears in the same verse context. Again, this term, too, does not seem to be found anywhere else, and prob belongs to the same category of early Buddhist terms borrowed from the Jains. [3.3.4]

⁴⁵ Eg "they cast off badness," *dhunanti pāpam*; Se *panudi,pāpassa* (**D 30**/3:179,8); like a tree shaking off its leaves in the wind, "one shakes off bad states," *dhunāti pāpake dhamme* (**Tha** 2, 1006); just as an elephant would demolish a hut of reed, so "should one shake off Death's [Māra's] army," *dhunatha maccuno senam* (**S 6.14**/1:156,35 + 157,20; "let us shake off Death's army," *dhunāma maccuno senam* (**Tha** 1147, 1149 Se *dhunāmu*); "they shake off the 3 bad roots," *tīṇi pāpassa mūlāni dhunanti* (**Thī** 276); "cast off my doubt," *dhunātha me saṃsayam* (**Sn 3.11**/682). Cf B 18.11 & BA 230,21; J 1:11 (v 48), 3:44; Vv 64.9 = VvA 278 (wr *dhumanti*).

<u>3.3.1 Gombrich</u>. Modern scholars have noted the uniqueness of the expressions *sabba,kamma,jaha* [3.1] and the forms of *dhunati* [3.2]. **Gombrich**, for example, notes that the Sabba Kamma Jaha Sutta's verse (which does not mention pain),

The monk who abandons all acts (kamma) and shakes off the dust previously done ($purekata\dot{m}$ $raja\dot{m}$), who remains without thought of "mine," indescribable ($t\bar{a}d\bar{t}$), has no need to talk to people." We recall that for Jains karma is a kind of dust which clings to the soul (which is moist), so that past karma has to be expunged, by a process known as nijjara, while one does no new acts, which would deposit new dust. (1994:1078)

3.3.2 Enomoto, too, notes that in Jainism, "the elimination *karman* is expressed as 'shaking off' $(dh\bar{u}-)$,' and the word raja (rajas, raya)...implies karman" (1989:45). Examples of such usage can indeed be found in Jain texts, such as the Dasaveyāliya Sutta, which presents the shaking off of the dust of karma as the way to liberation. ⁴⁶ It then explains that past evil can be shaken off through asceticism. ⁴⁷

In such Jain texts, the idea of "shaking off" has a literal sense, as it has to do with freeing oneself from the material layers of karma that have accumulated. It is clear then that the Udāna passage (U 3.1), especially the verse, shows the Buddha or the sutta compiler adapting and naturalizing them to express Buddhist teachings. [3.3.4]. Furthermore, Jain teachings have also found their way into other religious texts, such as the Upanishads.⁴⁸

3.3.3 Chinese and Tibetan versions

3.3.3.1 **Analayo**, in his comparative study of the Chinese and Tibetan versions of **the Sabba Kamma Jaha Sutta** throws some very instructive and insightful light over this interesting problem of Jain influence on an early Buddhist sutta and early Buddhism as a whole (2009:17 f). Instead of the phrase *sabba*, *kamma*, *jahassa*, the Chinese and Tibetan versions of the Sutta have "leaving behind all sensuality," indicating that they were based on a reading that had *kāma* instead of *kamma*. ⁴⁹ The Sanskrit fragment has the crucial beginning of the verse has not been preserved, so that it is of no help here. ⁵⁰

3.3.3.2 This new reading gives the whole Udāna verse a different drift, as **Analayo** notes,

Once the point is leaving behind sensuality, the reference to dust would also fall into place, as other discourses associate the image of dust with sensuality and the life of a householder. Though the qualification of such dust as something 'formerly done' remains puzzling, a reference to sensuality would also concord with the figurative usage of *dhunati* in other discourses, since to shake off the dust of $k\bar{a}ma$ would be a mode of shaking off detrimental mental qualities.⁵¹

(2009:17)

Instead of addressing the problem of karma and having to abandon all past karma, the stress now is o overcoming sensuality ($k\bar{a}ma$) or craving, the primary defilement that prevents our awakening. **The imagery of dust** famously characterizes the household life, as stated in this well known pericope:

⁴⁶ Lalwani 1973:53,27 + 54,8 (ch 4 pt 12 vv 20-21): dhunāti karmarajah.

⁴⁷ Lalwani 1973:198,9 + 203,8 (ch 9 pt 4 stz 8, here counted as 4) and ch 10 stz 7): *tapasā dhunoti purāṇapāpa-kaṁ*. For other examples, see Yamazaki 2003:498 f.

⁴⁸ Enomoto 1989, eg, notes that a similar image can be found in Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad 1,4: *tat-sukṛta-duṣkṛte dhu-nute vā...sa eṣa visukṛta viduṣkṛto brahma-vidvān brahmaivābhipraiti*, tr as "There he shakes off his good deeds and his evil deeds...thus one, freed from good and freed from evil, the knower of *Brahman* goes on to *Brahman*" (S Radhakrishnan, *The Principal Upaniṣads*, NY, 1953:757,4).

⁴⁹ T212 @ T4.765a6: 比丘盡諸愛, 捨愛去貢高, T213 @ T4.796b20: 苾獨諸愛盡, 捨愛去貢高, Beckh 1911:131: *dge slong 'dod pa kun spangs shing, mdun gnas pa yi rdul bsal ba*, Zongtse 1990:378 (32.3): *dge slong 'dod pa kun spangs shing, mdun gnas pa'i rdul bsal ba*. Enomoto 1989:44 n2 says: "The Tibetan and Chinese versions reflect the reading like **sarva*, *kāma*, *jahasya*."

⁵⁰ In the Skt version, the start of the verse reads only ... hasya bhikkhuno, dhunvānasya puraskṛtaṁ rajaḥ, Bernhard 1965:432 (32.3).

⁵¹ Enomoto, apparently, takes *kamma* as the orig reading, and says that "*karman* is replaced by*kāma* (1989:44 n2). Analayo, however, thinks (2009:17 n56) that "the qualification *purekata* would suit *karma* better than *kāma* (id n3).

The household life is stifling, a dusty path. The life of renunciation is like the open air. It is not easy living in a house to practise the holy life fully, in all its purity, like a polished conchshell.

Sambādho gharavāso rajā,patho, abbh'okāso pabbajjā. Na-y-idam sukaram agāram ajjhā-vasatā ekanta,paripuṇṇam ekanta,parisuddham sankha,likhitan brahma,cariyam caritum. Yam nūnâham kesa,massum ohāretvā kāsāyāni vatthāni acchādetvā agārasmā anagāriyam pabbajey-yan'ti.

(D 2,41/1:63,2; M 27,12/1:179,12, etc)

The Sāriputta Sutta (Sn 4.16) speaks of dust as representing lust ($r\bar{a}ga$) for the 5 kinds of sense-objects (Sn 974; SnA 574,16). Most significantly the Udāna Commentary glosses "the dust of past deeds" (pure,katam rajam) in §6b (U 21,11), as "the dust of lust" ($r\bar{a}ga,raja$, UA 166,34).

3.3.3.3 As regards **the prose introduction** of the Sabba Kamma Jaha Sutta, the corresponding Chinese prose section has no reference to experiencing pain that results from former karma. In fact, it does not even mention any monk sitting in meditation.⁵² According to Analayo, "In general, prose sections in the Udāna tend to be later than the verses,⁵³ making it possible that the description of a monk seated in meditation and enduring pain came into being at a time when the stanza already read *sabbakammajaha*." (2009:18 f).

The prose introduction, although it precedes the verse, acts as it commentary, albeit an ancient canonical. The prose section contextualizes the verse, giving us its background. However, this fact does not at once qualify the Chinese prose version as being older than the Pali prose introduction. The Chinese version could have been translated from a source text that, for some reason, does not mention the context of the verse. We can say only that much with the textual evidence we have.

- 3.3.3.4 Putting it all together, then, just as in the case of **the (Karaja,kāya) Brahma,vihāra Sutta** (A 10.208),⁵⁴ Analayo surmises that, in this case, too, "the attribution of Jain thought to the Buddha could be due to an error in textual transmission" (2009:19). Although this might be possible, even likely, in the case of the Sabba Kamma Jaha Sutta, it is, however, unlikely that transmission errors could have occurred in other cases of a presence Jain ideas or hint of Jain influence in the early Buddhist texts.⁵⁵
- 3.3.3.5 Indeed, in the case of **the (Karaja,kāya) Brahma,vihāra Sutta**, the problematic reading at the opening of the Sutta, suggests an effort at "correcting" what appears to be an intrusion of the Jain idea of karma, so that the opening passage (§§1.1-1.2) seems confusing. It is likely that in the case of **the Sabba Kamma Jaha Sutta** here, the usage of the unique terms *sabba,kamma,jaha* and *dhunati* are deliberate, reflecting a time when Jain influence seemed strong or there were a sizable number of Jain converts to Buddhism. Such a skillful means is an example of what may be called a "natural adaptation" by the Buddha or the sutta compilers. ⁵⁷

3.3.4 Natural adaptation

3.3.4.1 In a sense, the scholars are right in thinking that the Buddha is "influenced" by Jain teachings, as evident in the U 3.1 verse and elsewhere [3.1+3.2 nn]. However, such influences often work both

⁵² T212 @ T4.765a8.

⁵³ Analayo says that this would support the suggestion by Bronkhorst that the presence of such passages "in the Buddhist canon can be most easily explained on the assumption that they are not part of earliest Buddhism" (emphasis removed) (1998:12). For a response to Bronkhorst, see Enomoto 2002:243 f.

⁵⁴ A 10.208/5:299-301 @ SD 2.10.

⁵⁵ Another well known case of such "Jain influence" can be found in the last of the 5 methods of overcoming distractions during meditation laid out in **Vitakka Saṇṭhāna S** (M 20/1:121,1), SD 1.6. Then, there is the usage of, *nij-jarā* (*nirjarā*), the Jain term for the annihilation of karma, in (**Nijjarā**) **Nigaṇṭha S** (A 3.74/1:221,23), SD 79.16.

⁵⁶ See SD 2.10 (3.2).

⁵⁷ Since around the early 1980s, I have used the term, "symbolic adaptation" for such usages of non-Buddhist terms and ideas in the early Buddhist texts. However, such borrowings have been <u>naturalized</u> and <u>adapted</u> to reflect Buddhist teachings and training especially for the benefit of those who still have to resolve their previous social and religious conditionings. Hence, **natural adaptation** would reflect this vital process better.

ways: we also see Buddhist teachings and methods being adopted by other religions.⁵⁸ However, it is clear that the Buddha knows what he is doing, and has carefully used such teachings possibly for the benefit of those who are erstwhile Jains or familiar with Jain teachings, or simply to counter or neutralize Jain influence by way of "natural adaptation" [3.3.3.5].

3.3.4.2 Another well known <u>natural adaptation</u> of the Buddha is his acceptance of **the religious cosmology and mythology** of his times. While the prevalent cosmology was structured in terms of karma and rebirth, the Buddha envisioned the 3 worlds—the sense-world, the form world and the formless world—in a psychological way.

The <u>sense-world</u> ($k\bar{a}ma,loka$) comprises beings categorized, as it were, according to how deluded and defiled they are by the sense-faculties. The hell beings, for example, are those who are most painfully affected by a negative manifestation of their senses. The sense-world gods, on the hand, enjoy sublime bliss on account of their more refined conduct in terms of their senses. Humans, who are capable of sensing both good and bad, exist and evolve in their own world, struggling between unremitting suffering and on-going bliss.

Beyond the sense-world, the early Buddhists envision a world defined by our meditative experience. When we are able to transcend our physical senses (which fetter us to the sense-world), then we evolve or arise into the form world ($r\bar{u}pa,loka$), characterized by profound bliss, spiritual equanimity and boundless radiance. And when even these are transcended, we evolve into disembodied beings of pure energy and stillness, that is, the formless world ($ar\bar{u}pa,loka$). The beings of the form worlds and formless worlds (especially the former) are collectively known as devas, the radiant ones.

3.3.4.3 **Natural adaptation**, as we have noted, is the Buddha's method of <u>naturalizing</u> (or indigenizing) and <u>adapting</u> teachings and methods of other systems to reflect Buddhist teachings and training especially for the benefit of those who still have to resolve their previous social and religious conditionings. Another good example of the Buddha's <u>natural adaptation</u> of teachings is the recollection of the gods (*devatā'nussati*), the fifth of the 5 inspirational methods of meditations, supplementing the key methods of the breath meditation and the cultivation of lovingkindness.

The recollection of the gods, then, is a gentle bridge for erstwhile God-believers or those still significantly conditioned by theistic beliefs, and still ridden with fear and guilt, to resolve their negative emotions and cultivate Dharma-inspired joy and stillness. They are taught to recollect the wholesome qualities of some deity or heavenly being to the extent that would bliss up their hearts and calm down their minds. And when they are ready, to go on to cultivate the breath meditation (with the help of lovingkindness), so as to wean them off their negative conditionings. ⁵⁹

4 Similar suttas with meditating monks

The Udāna contains a total of twelve suttas, like the Sabba Kamma Jaha Sutta, where the Buddha points out a monk sitting in meditation nearby. The suttas are as follows:

<u>Udāna</u>	Meditator	Occasion
3.1/21	a certain monk	observing bodily pain, without any mental pain.
3.4/27 f	Sāriputta	deep in meditation "like a mountain, unshaking."
3.5/38 f	Moggallāna	deep in meditation, "being concentrated unbroken."
4.6/42 f	Piṇḍola	an ascetic monk, morally virtuous, deep in dhyana.
4.7/43	Sāriputta	the fully mindful is ungrieving and at peace.
4.10/46	Sāriputta	released from Māra's bondage.
5.7/60	Kankha Revata	all doubts are overcome through the holy life.
5.10/61	Cūļa Panthaka	attaining successive stages of sainthood, blind to Māra.

⁵⁸ Buddhism, eg, not only spurred the brahmins to write the Bhagavad,gītā as a polemic work against Buddhism, but the work itself shows profound Buddhist influences and counter-themes. In other words, the Bhagavad,gītā writers had Buddhism specifically in mind when they wrote the Hindu classic.

⁵⁹ See *Devatânussati*, SD 15.13.

6.3/66	The Buddha	reviewing the countless good states he has cultivated.
6.7/71	Subhūti	perceiving the formless, he becomes an arhat.
7.7/77	The Buddha	the true saint is respected through earth and heaven.
7.8/77 f	Mahā Kaccāna	mindful of the body without being lost in thought.

The Discourse on Abandoning All Karma

U 3.1

1 Thus have I heard.

At one time, the Blessed One was staying in Anātha,piṇḍika's park in Jeta's grove near Sāvaṭṭhī.

- **2** At that time, not far from the Blessed One, a certain monk was sitting, folding his legs crosswise, ⁶⁰ keeping his body upright, ⁶¹
 - 3 mindfully and fully aware, enduring without complaining [ungrieving],
 - a feeling that was strong, harsh, and sharp [disagreeable], 62 arising from the fruition of past karma. 63
 - 4 The Blessed One, saw that monk from afar,

sitting with his legs crossed, keeping his body upright, mindful and fully aware, enduring without complaining [ungrieving], a feeling that was strong, harsh, and sharp [disagreeable], arising from the fruition of past karma.

- 5 Then, the Blessed One, knowing the significance, on the occasion, uttered this udana [inspired utterance]:⁶⁴
 - 6 Sabba,kamma,jahassa bhikkhuno dhunamānassa pure katam rajam⁶⁵ amamassa ṭhitassa tādino attho n'atthi janam lapetave'ti.

For a monk who has abandoned all karma, shaking off the dust of the past deeds, for such a one is he, ⁶⁶ steadfast ⁶⁷ in the "not mine"—there is no need to talk with people. ⁶⁸ — evam —

^{60 &}quot;Sitting cross-legged" (pallankam ābhujitvā): see Intro (1.2.1).

^{61 &}quot;Keeping his body upright" (*ujum kāyam paṇidhāya*): see Intro (1.2.1).

⁶² Dukkham tibbam kharam kaṭukam vedanam adhivāsento sato sampajāno avihaññamāno. "A feeling that was strong, harsh, and sharp," dukkham tibbam kharam kaṭukam vedanam (Mv 1.49.6 @ V 1:78,24+27, Mv 8.26,5 @ V 1:302,35, 303,6, Bhī Pāc 65.1 @ V 4:130,8, Bhī Pāc 65.1 @ 4:321,28, 322×2 (pe), Bhī Pāc 71.1 @ 4:327,13; M 2,18/1:10,28, 119,35/3:97,26, 125,30/3:137,1; A 3.49/1:153,10+17, 4.113/2:116,13 (ins pl), 4.114/2:118,1, 5.123/3:143,27, 144,9, 5.140,12/3:163,32, 6.58,5/3:389,10, 5.71/5:132,11; Nm 2:487). The pl form (dukkhā tibbā kharā kaṭukā vedanā) is more common: M 14,15+16/1:92,29+34, 36,17/1:241,10, 18/1:241,33, 19/1:242,15+17, 30/1:-246,22+24+26, 45,3/1:305,30, 3/1:306,1, 4/1:307,3+14+18, 85,15-18/2:93×4 (pe), 100,14-16/2:212×6 (pe), 129,10-12/3:166×3, 13+14/3:167×2 (pe), 130,10+11/3:183×2 (pe), 17/3:184,5, 21-24/3:185,6+11+18+25, 25+26/3:186,9+19; S 1.38/1:27,17, 1:28,2+7+12+17+22+27, 4.13/1:110,18; A 3.35/1:141,6+9+25, 3.49/1:153,10+17; U (all ins pl) 2.6/14,11+14, 2.8/15×3 (pe); Nimi J, J 541/6:115,30; Nc:Be 236+237. Native gloss: tibba = Be Ce Se balava (strong), Ee bahala (thick), ie "overpowering" (abhibhavitvā); khara = kakkhala (harsh); and kaṭuka = asāta (disagreeable) (UA 165, cf 118). Comy adds that the pain would be impossible to be tolerated by common people" (dukkhan'ti pacura,janehi khamitum asakkuneyyam, UA 165). Cf Sabb'āsava S (M 2.18/1:10,28) whose Comy explains tibba = bahala (thick); khara = pharusa (harsh); and kaṭuka = tikhiṇa (sharp) (MA 1:79).

⁶³ Purāna,kamma,vipāka,jam. Cf §6b.

⁶⁴ Atha kho bhagavā etam attham viditvā tāyam velāyam imam udānam udānesi.

⁶⁵ Lit, "who is shaking off dust created before [in the past]." Cf §3c. Comy glosses *pure,katam rajam* as "the dust of lust" (*rāga,raja*, UA 166,34) [3.2].

⁶⁶ *Tādino*, see Intro (1.4.2).

⁶⁷ *Titthassa* refers to nirvana: see (1.4.2).

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⁶⁸ *Janam lapetave*, *Lapetvae*, Vedic inf, from *lapati*, "he talks," & *lapeti* (caus), "he makes (another) talk." BHSD sv *lapayati* says that PED def it wrongly, and gives "boast (of one's own religious qualities to extract gifts from patrons)." Vbh def *lapanā* in connection with the usage here (Vbh 862/352,27; Vbh:T "insinuating talk"), qu at Vism 1:62/23,10 and expl at Vism 1.72/26,32-27.10. See Intro (1.4.3).