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(Catukka) Sañcetanā Sutta
Or (Catukka) Cetanā Sutta The (Fours) Discourse on Intention | A 4.171
Theme: Karma is rooted in ignorance and often occurs without our knowledge
Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2016, 2017

1 Sutta summary and highlights

1.1 SUTTA SUMMARY AND EXPLANATIONS

1.1.1 The (Catukka) Sañcetanā Sutta (A 4.171) is a succinct text on the essential nature of karma. In the Sutta, the Buddha first explains the 3 karmic doors of action done through the body, speech and mind [§§1-3]. Then, he tells us that mental formations arise “with ignorance as condition” [§4]. This is, in fact, the start of dependent arising, rooted in ignorance and ending in various forms of suffering for us. [3.2.2.1]

1.1.2 Then, the Buddha explains how we create karma (act in a karmic manner) through the 3 doors on our own initiative (sāmaṁ) or on account of others (pare) [§§5-6, 9-10, 13-14]. We act on our own (“unprompted”) when we initiate the action without any instigation from others. We act on account of others (“prompted”) when others encourage or command us to act. (AA 3:145)

1.1.3 We can create karma with clear awareness (sampajāna) or without clear awareness (asampajāna) [§§7-8, 11-12, 15-16]. To create karma with clear awareness means that we act consciously, knowing the wholesome and the unwholesome nature of the act and their respective fruits. To create karma without clear awareness means that we do not understand the oral significance of our act. (AA 3:145)

1.1.3 Then, at the start of the closing section—which contains the key teaching—the Buddha reminds us that “subject to ignorance … are these states,” that is, the arising of karma through the 3 doors, unprompted and prompted, conscious and unconscious [§17].

The Commentary explains that these states are subject to ignorance and function both as a co-existent condition (saha,jāta) and a decisive-support condition (upanissaya). Thus, the samsaric cycle and its root, ignorance, are shown. (AA 3:145)

1.1.4 Finally, the Buddha declares that “with the remainderless fading away and ending of ignorance,” all these karmic activities stop for good [§§18-25]. [3.2.2.2]

1.2 KEY TEACHING

The (Catukka) Sañcetanā Sutta (A 4.171) is a key sutta on karma. Specifically, it explains how karma arises and ceases. The Sutta’s seminal teachings are found in the second half of the (Kamma,vāda) Bhūmiṇa Sutta (S 12.25), given to Ānanda¹ [3.1].

1.3 ONE SUTTA OR TWO?

1.3.1 The Pali Text Society (PTS) Pali edition treats the (Catukka) Sañcetana Sutta (A 4.171) and the Atta,bhava Paṭilābha Sutta (A 4.172),² which follows it in the Aṅguttara, as two separate suttas. The

¹ S 12.25 (SD 31.2).
² SD 51.20

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Burmeses, Sinhalese and Siamese editions, however, following the Commentary (AA 3:144-148), treat A 4.171 and A 4.172 (SD 54.13) as a single sutta. While the opening paragraph of A 4.172 clearly looks like the beginning of a new sutta, and perhaps was originally, the Commentary takes it to be continuous with the analysis of intention, as given here.

It says that by the end of the Sañcetana Sutta, the Buddha has explained how karma is created through the 3 doors of action. Then, in the Vibhātī Sutta, he shows where that karma ripens as an acquisition of personality (atta.bhava,paṭilābha), that is, the arising of a being. “Acquisition of personality” (atta.bhāva-p,paṭilābha) is an individual existence, a combination of body and mind that constitutes a particular life.

1.3.2 The name vibhātī, “analysis, classification”—and the title Vibhātī Sutta—better applies to the sutta after the Atta,bhava Paṭilābha, that is, A 4.173, on the 4 analytic knowledges (paṭisambhidā), and which is taught by Sāriputta to the monks.

2 The nature of intention

2.1 HOW KARMA ARISES: THE 3 DOORS:

Karma—the natural moral reality that seeks and works with its own kind—occurs through the 3 doors of body, speech and mind. Karma is intention, often this means a deliberate act, especially which is mindfully done. However, as we shall see, an important aspect of karma (often overlooked or misunderstood) is that it is often a habitual act, both good and bad. [2.2]

2.2 NATURE OF INTENTIONS

2.2.1 Hidden intentions

In this second half, the Buddha explains that not all karmic actions are done with full awareness or consciously (sampajāna). The same theme is found in the Cetanā Sutta 1 (S 12.38)—a very important text in this connection—where it is stated that karma still works without our being aware of it, that is, we are often driven by our latent tendencies (anusaya): [3.1.3]

6 If, bhikshus, one neither thinks nor plans, but if one is still driven by latent tendencies (anuseti)—this is a mental basis (ārammaṇa) that supports consciousness. When there is a mental basis, there is a support for consciousness.

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1 A 4.173 (SD 54.13).
2 From the well known statement of the Buddha: “Karma is intention, I say” (cetanā’haṁ vadāmi): Nibbedhika (Pariyāya) S (A 6.63/3:415), SD 6.11; SD 48.1 (9.1.3).
3 See Saṅkhāra, SD 17.6 (6.2) & (8.2).
4 See Anusaya, SD 31.3.
5 No ce bhikkhave ceteti no ce pakappeti atha ce anuseti, ārammaṇam etaiḥ hoti viññāvassa ṭhitiyā.
6 “But one is still driven by latent tendencies” (atha ce anuseti): the latent tendencies are included because they have not been abandoned here in the resultants of the three planes, in the limited functional states (the five-door advertising and mind-door advertising cittas), and in form. As long as the latent tendencies exist, they become a condition for the karmic consciousness; for there is no way to prevent its arising. See Intro (2) for more details.

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When consciousness has a support and grows, there is further [continued] arising of rebirth. When there is the further arising of rebirth, there further arise birth, decay-and-death, sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain, and despair. Such is the arising of this whole mass of suffering.\(^8\) (S 12.38.3/2:65), SD 7.6

### 2.2.2 Karma, conscious and unconscious

#### 2.2.2.1 We often understand that to act “intentionally” means to act fully aware (sampajāna), that is, understanding both the action and its fruit, that is, to act deliberately. However, more often, we act without being fully aware (asampajāna), that is, without any such knowledge, that is, to act indeliberately, that is, without a thought (SA 2:58). We simply think, speak and act out of habit.

As a rule, we do our job or our hobby without a thought—but there is an underlying, even unconscious, sense of hating our work or delighting in our hobby. As a rule, we do our job or our hobby without a thought—but there is an underlying, even unconscious, sense of hating our work or delighting in our hobby: this is greed and hate! An extreme example is that of a hunter. He may rationalize that the prey “is there,” or that he “enjoys” the past-time and bears neither desire nor hate for the prey—but clearly, there is delusion: the notion that we have the right to take the lives of others, or that we are doing nothing wrong.

#### 2.2.2.2 Intention, then, is a very subtle and elusive reality: we may not always be aware that we are intending to do something, we may not even be aware that we are deliberately committing an act—we simply act out of habit. A simple example is that of a professional assassin, or even a butcher—he kills so habitually that he may feel neither greed nor hate over his actions, but there is always delusion.

A habitual bad act, even when unconsciously done is still functionally intentional. Psychologically, that bad habit has been “wired” deeper into our mind that lies below the radar of the conscious mind—we are not aware that our act is unwholesome. However, if there is greed, hate or delusion present behind the action, it is clearly intentional. In other words, such karma will bear fruit when the conditions are right.

### 2.2.3 Dealing with karma

#### 2.2.3.1 As such, it is not enough that we avoid doing bad consciously, that we do not create bad karma “deliberately.” We must ensure that we are not being subtly manipulated by our latent tendencies, our unconscious, that record and replay our bad habits. The precepts or moral conduct can only control our conscious bad habits—not to consciously kill, steal, misconduct ourselves sexually, lie or get drunk or drugged—but they cannot prevent or stop our unconscious moral lapses.

#### 2.2.3.2 We need meditation to reach the deeper limits of our mind to correct these bad habits. It is helpful to note here that a strong practice of lovingkindness helps us in this karmic correction and alleviation process.\(^9\) What we have here is a Buddhist psychology of the unconscious.\(^10\)

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\(^8\) Comy says that this section refers to the moment when there is occurrence of volition of the 3 planes, and no occurrence of mental fabrications of craving and views (SA 2:71). See Cetanā S 1 (S 12.38) (3) for details.

\(^9\) On how lovingkindness can limit our karma, see SD 2.10 (2); Karaja,kāya Brahma,vihāra S (A 10.208) + SD 2.10 (1+2); SD 3.9 (7.2.3).

\(^10\) See The unconscious, SD 17.8b.
3 Ignorance and formation

3.1 IGNORANCE

3.1.1 The root of karma

3.1.1.1 Karma arises from ignorance—not intellectual ignorance, but existential ignorance, a lack of proper understanding of the true nature of life and its conditions. Karma can be understood as the dependent arising of suffering. In the dependent arising formula, we have this starting sequence of the first 4 links, as, for example, laid out in the Kaccā(ya)na,gotta Sutta (S 12.15) [1], thus:

Ignorance → formations → consciousness → name-and-form → ... (suffering). [2]

3.1.1.2 Our view-formation is best understood as starting with ignorance (avijjā), which moves us with the craving to act or not to act, to be or not to be. Motivated by craving in the form of lust, hate and delusion. We are driven by intentions as the formations (saṅkhārā) arising through mind, speech and body. This feeds our consciousness or “conscious body” (sa,viññāṇaka kāya) [3]—body, speech and mind—making us more sensitive and sophisticated at detecting and “making sense” of experiences, that is, at constructing name-and-form (nāma,rūpa) out of them—giving names to forms, giving forms to names, making sense of things, rationalizing, conning ourself with reasons for everything that confront us. Everything, we think, happens for a reason: our reason.

3.1.2 Karma formation

3.1.2.1 We form views on a deeply mental level, rooted in mental formations (saṅkhārā), when we are driven by an intention to form ideas in our mind, and then to speak and act on them. The mind, too, creates its own ideas and plans of greed, hate, delusion and fear.

Such views, ideas and biases are unstable: they rise and fall with the moment, and will not really trouble us if we neither pursue them nor store them as memories or images in our consciousness—as “prototypes” or fixed views (first, as conceptions, and later as perceptions): our actions (through mind, speech and body) are somehow dictated by such mental “prototypes.”

And so we cognize and recognize, we act and react, to the external stimuli of our own self-created sense-experiences. We get caught up with the memes we have projected into our virtual-reality world. [3.1.2.2]

3.1.2.2 This is where we construct views of an abiding self, or wish for or believe in an immortal soul by identifying with our body, its features and actions, or feelings, or perceptions, or formations (intentions), or consciousness (general awareness of things)—these are the 5 aggregates. [4] With this habitual pattern of dependent arising, we form self-views and world-views—our philosophies of life. This is where we can and must end these view-formations before we are swallowed up whole by them.

A view, then, is a very private but potent idea of our world of experiences that attracts more of its kind to itself: it is a self-replication process. Views attract and breed karma, and karma is the most dreaded

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[1] This is actually the first 2 noble truths which define the meaning of life: see SD 1.1 (4.0).
[3] On sa,viññāṇaka kaya, see SD 17.8a (12.3).
of replicators.\textsuperscript{15} Karma is a self-replicating mental process whose only purpose is to feed, grow and multiply itself so that it becomes immortal, as it were. Psychologically, this is called a meme.\textsuperscript{16} [3.2]

### 3.1.3 Latent tendencies

3.1.3.1 Once we assimilate any views—or rather when a view assimilates “us”—it “lies latent or dormant” (anuseti) like a virus, gathering strength through our continued keeping, feeding and growing them. Our unfettered sense-experiences—measuring people, liking and disliking things—feed these mental viruses that infest our “unconscious”—in fact, they are our unconscious, the latent tendencies (anusaya), that control our thought, speech and action, like a puppet-master holding and playing with us with his many strong strings of lust, hate and delusion.

3.1.3.2 Our views—or rather, the roots of these views: lust, hate and delusion in their various forms—lie latent in our unconscious (we do not even know they are there). But at every opportune moment, they assault (samudācaranti) us tenaciously bending, twisting and crushing us to reinforce our identity with self-view (“This is me”), to measure our self against others with conceit (“This I am”), and relentlessly pushing us to do this with craving (“This is mine!”).\textsuperscript{17}

### 3.1.4 Mental proliferation

3.1.4.2 When we grasp a view, we take the shape of that view. We become our view: we think, speak and act as those views. It is like living in blinding darkness and looking into it. Then, as our eyes adjust to the darkness, we begin to make out things. The reality is that when we stare into this darkness, it stares back at us with images that we project from our own minds—our greed, hate, delusion and fear.

3.1.4.3 Each view leads to many more: they proliferate; one thought arouses many others—leading to a mental proliferation (papañca). We are drowned in our thoughts; they overflow through our speech and actions drowning others, too, especially those already drowning in their own thoughts.\textsuperscript{18}

And so we become our views—as we think, so we are—we exist through them, and are reborn as them to repeat and replay everything all over again, as long as we are unawakened. Hence, in the Sallekha Sutta, for example, the Buddha teaches us how to break this vicious cycle and completely free ourselves from suffering and rebirth.\textsuperscript{19}

### 3.2 FORMATION (saṅkhāra)

#### 3.2.1 Definitions

3.2.1.1 The term saṅkhāra is resolved as saṁ (= con, “together”) + KṚ, “to do,” from which comes the verb karoti, “he does, he makes.” Hence, saṅkhāra has the sense of “putting something together.” In

\textsuperscript{15} On the imagery of replicators, see SD 44.1 (6.4.2).

\textsuperscript{16} Memes, SD 26.3.

\textsuperscript{17} For studies, see I: The nature of identity, SD 19.1; Me: The nature of conceit, SD 19.2a; Mine: The nature of craving, SD 19.3.

\textsuperscript{18} On mental proliferation (papañca), see Madhu,piṇḍika S (M 18) SD 6.14 (2). On non-identifying with sense-objects, see Atammayatā, SD 19.13.

\textsuperscript{19} Sallekha Sutta (M 8), SD 51.8.3
fact, it literally means “constructing, construction.” The noun has both the active and the passive senses. As such, saṅkhārā are both the things that deliberately put together, construct and compound the things that are put together, constructed and compounded with love, hate, faith and fear.

3.2.1.2 The suttas define saṅkhāra primarily in terms of will or volition (cetanā). This is to willfully put together (abhisaṅkhāro) — more often, in the plural, abhisāṅkhāranti — each of the aggregates (khandha) (form, feeling, formations and consciousness), in turn, into something that is “put together” or “conditioned” (saṅkhata). However, although we think we are “willing” our actions, the reality is that our “will” has, more often than not, already been decided for us by our unconscious.

In other words, we do not really have any free will, although we are often deluded into thinking so. Perhaps, in our moments of great charity, love or wisdom, we are both willing and able to get the better of ourself and do what is right, or not doing what is wrong. We then renounce “the world,” so to speak — we let go of what is wrong. Nothing in the world is ours anyway: we must let it go. Then, we begin to be free of our will altogether and awaken to true reality. To be really free, then, we must let go of what is not ours.

3.2.1.3 As such, saṅkhārā (pl) are conditioning factors acting as active volitional forces. Intention (cetanā) is, of course, understood as karma (kamma) on the mental level. In the early Abhidhamma texts, all those mental factors that are considered to be specifically skilful (kusaḷa) are subsumed under “the aggregate of formations” (saṅkhāra-k, khandha).

Hence, the composition of our aggregate of formations (saṅkhāra-k, khandha) leads the way or is primary in determining whether a particular arising of consciousness is wholesome or unwholesome karma. All this is well attested by the suttas’ highlighting intention as characterizing the nature of formations. Good intentions create good formations: in this sense, good begets good.

3.2.1.4 Formation (saṅkhāra), as used in the Saṅcetana Sutta, is, technically, the 2nd link of dependent arising, that is, as a mental “condition” (paccaya) or “link (cause)” (nidāna) in our karmic cycle. Formation as a condition or link is also the formation as an aggregate (khandha). It is the active “producing” or “generating” karmic conditioner.

As the 2nd link of dependent arising, formations are the karmically active volitions responsible, in conjunction with ignorance and craving, for producing rebirth and clinging on to the wheel of existence--

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20 S 22.79/3:87. See also BDict: saṅkhāra.
21 For defs of saṅkhāra, see Sue Hamilton, Identity and Experience, 1996:66-81 (ch 4).
22 Eg, Khandha Sainiyutta defs, S 3:59 f, 86 f.
23 See Free will and Buddhism, SD 7.7 (12).
24 See Alagaddūpama S (M 22,40) & SD 3.13 (4.2).
26 “This is most simply expressed at Dhtk 9 where the truth of arising and the truth of the path are said to be saṅkhārakkhandha; it is elaborated at Dhs 185-225, and at Vbh 63-69, where the various categories of unskillful dharmas are treated in terms of the khandhas.” (See Gethin 1953:37)
27 Cf Vism 14.135.
28 On the different meanings of saṅkhāra, see SD 17.6 (5). On saṅkhāra (sg) and saṅkhārā (pl), see SD 40a.9 (2.4.4).
29 See Dh 1+2. However, in karma, good does not always beget good, or bad bad, but is more complicated than this consequentialist over-simplification: see Isayo Samuddaka S (S 903*) + SD 39.2 (2); SD 3.5 (1); SD 4.16 (2.5).
30 S 2:5; Vbh 144, 173. See (Pāṭicca, samuppāda) Vibhaṅga S (S 12.2.12) n in SD 5.10 (2004).

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as such, they are best rendered as “volitional activities” or “karma-formations” to distinguish them from the passive “formations” of the Kāma,bhū Sutta 2 (S 41.6).\textsuperscript{31}

This latter set (passive formations) is used only in the context of the attainment of the cessation of perception and feeling,\textsuperscript{32} and never used in connection with dependent arising.\textsuperscript{33} In the (Pacettana) Ratha,kāra Sutta (A 3.15), however, we see this meaning applied to abhisāṅkhāra, that includes the broader sense of the aggregates (as the karma of the 3 doors).\textsuperscript{34}

\textbf{3.2.1.5 The Saṅcetana Sutta (A 4.171)} often mentions the 3 volitional formations—bodily formations, verbal formations and mental formations (respectively, kāya,saṅkhāra, vaci,saṅkhāra, mano,-saṅkhāra): the karmic creations of body, speech and mind. Karma is our creator.

According to the Sutta, we create them “by ourself” (sāmaṁ) when we act without being induced by others [§5], with an unprompted mind (asasāṅkhārika,citta); we create them “on account of others” (pare) [§6] when we act with a prompted mind (saṅkhārika,citta), that is, on account of others.\textsuperscript{35}

\textbf{3.2.2 Uprooting karma: Ending ignorance}

\textbf{3.2.2.1 The Saṅcetanā Sutta} first explains the 3 karmic doors of bodily actions, verbal actions and mental actions [§§1-3], and then tells us that mental formations arise “with ignorance as condition” [§4]. This is, in fact, the start of our dependent arising, rooted in ignorance and ending in various forms of suffering for us.

\textbf{3.2.2.2} The Sutta then explains how karmic actions arise through the 3 doors on our own initiative (“unprompted”) or on account of others (“prompted”) [§§5-6, 9-10, 13-14], and consciously done or unconsciously done [§§7-8, 11-12, 15-16].

Then, at the start of the closing section, the Buddha reminds us that “subject to ignorance ... are these states,” that is, the arising of karma through the 3 doors, unprompted and prompted, conscious and unconscious [§17].

Finally, the Buddha declares that “with the remainderless fading away and ending of ignorance,” all these karmic activities stop for good [§§18-25]. Remove ignorance, karma ends. Ignorance can only be properly removed with a full and right understanding of the 4 noble truths.\textsuperscript{36}

In simple terms, this means that without ignorance—that is, with awakened wisdom—there will be no more arising of the 5 aggregates, the bases of all our experiences, and there is total freedom from being troubled by the experiences of pleasure and pain. We are awakened and liberated as arhats, like the Buddha.

\textbf{3.2.2.3 How do we cultivate the wisdom that leads to awakening?} The Buddha gives us a simple but potent method in the conclusion of his teachings on the layperson’s welfare called the Dīgha,jānu Sutta (A 8.54), that is, in “the accomplishment of wisdom” (paññā sampadā), defined as follows:

Here, Vyagghapajja, the son of family is

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item See Ariya Pariyesanā S (M 26.42/1:275) n in SD 1.11 (2003a).
\item See SD 17.6 (5.3.2) usage (6).
\item A 3.15/1:110-113 (SD 17.7). On the term’s usage as “aggregate,” see foll def.
\item It is possible that the Abhidhamma distinction between saṅkhārika,citta and asaṅkhārika,citta” is rooted in a text such as this: see Abhs:BRS 1.4. (S:B 561 n78).
\item On the 4 noble truths, see SD 1.1 (4.0).
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
wise, possesses wisdom directed to the rising and falling away (of phenomena)\textsuperscript{37} that is noble and penetrative, leading to the complete destruction of suffering.\textsuperscript{38} This, Vyagghapajja, is called the accomplishment of wisdom. (A 8.54,15), SD 5.10

3.2.2.4 **Wisdom** (*paññā*)—rightly seeing into the true nature of things—is the proximate basis for awakening and liberation. The basis for the practice leading to wisdom is “the wisdom directed to the rising and falling away (of phenomena)” (*uday’attha,gāmi*).\textsuperscript{39} This is the meditation and mindfulness of impermanence, especially the perception of impermanence (*abnicca,saññā*)—as laid out in all the 10 suttas of the **Okkanta Saṁyutta** (S 25).

The regular perception of impermanence—whether done simply out of faith or carefully rooted with wisdom—is guaranteed by the Buddha, in **the (Anicca) Cakkhu Sutta** (S 25.1) (the first of the 10 suttas in the Okkanta Saṁyutta), to bring us streamwinning—the very first step on the noble path of awakening. With this practice, we will attain streamwinning in this life itself, if not, certainly at the moment of passing away.\textsuperscript{40}

4 Related suttas

4.1 **The (Kamma,vāda) Bhūmiya Sutta** (S 12.13)

The **(Catukka) Sañcetanā Sutta** (A 4.171) recurs in the second half of **the (Kamma,vādā) Bhūmiya Sutta** (S 12.13), its key section, where Ānanda is addressed instead of “bhikshus” (*bhikkhave*).\textsuperscript{41} There are at least two possible explanations for this:

1. the Sañyutta Reciters and the Anguttara Reciters drew from the same ancient source (urtext) but separately attributed them to actors known to them, or

2. the two reciter traditions, each codified the teaching as they had remembered it, giving their own narrative frame.

In either case, it is possible that the Sutta records the same teaching given on two separate occasions.

4.2 **Other Sañcetanā Suttas**

4.2.1 **The (Rāhula) Sutta** (S 18.7/2:247 f)

The Buddha asks Rāhula about intention regarding the 6 sense-objects, whether it is permanent or impermanent. Rāhula replies that it is impermanent. The Buddha says that a noble disciple who sees things in this way becomes revulsed with intentions, becomes dispassionate (lust-free) and so is freed.

4.2.2 **The (Khandha) Sañcetanā Sutta** (S 26.7/3:230)

The Buddha teaches the monks that the arising, continuation, production and manifestation of intention regarding form, feeling, perception, formations and consciousness is the arising of suffering itself. The cessation, subsiding and fading away of craving regarding form, etc, is the cessation of suffering.

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

\textsuperscript{38} For its significance, see **(Sotāpanna) Nandiya S** (S 55.40), esp SD 47.1 (1.1.3.3).

\textsuperscript{39} On directed cultivation, see further **Bhikkhuṇī Vāsaka S** (S 47.10/5:154-157), SD 24.2 (1.2).

\textsuperscript{40} S 25.1 (SD 16.7).

\textsuperscript{41} S 12.13,13-19.2 (SD 31.2).
4.2.3 The (Kilesa) Sañcetanā Sutta (S 27.7/3:233)

The Buddha teaches the monks that desire and lust for intention regarding form, feeling, perception, formations and consciousness are the corruption of the mind. When we abandon mental corruption, the mind becomes wieldy regarding those things to be realized by direct knowledge.

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(Catukka) Sañcetanā Sutta
The (Fours) Discourse on Intention
A 4.171

The 3 doors of action

1 Kāye vā bhikkhave sati kaya,sañcetanā,hetu uppañjati ajjhattām sukha,dukkham
2 vācāya vā bhikkhave sati vacī,sañcetanā,hetu uppañjati ajjhattām sukha,dukkham
3 mane vā bhikkhave sati mano,sañcetanā,hetu uppañjati ajjhattām sukha,dukkham
4 avijjā, paccayā vā.\(^{42}\)

Bodily actions: conscious and unconscious

5 Sāmaṁ vā tam\(^{44}\) bhikkhave kaya, sañkhāram abhisankharoti\(^{45}\) yam paccayā’ssa tam uppañjati ajjhattām sukha, dikkham
6 pare vā’ssa\(^{46}\) tam bhikkhave kaya, sañkhāram abhisankharoti\(^{47}\) yam paccayā’ssa tam uppañjati ajjhattām sukha, dikkham

1 Bhikshus, when there is the body, then, there arise, with bodily intention as cause, internal [personal] pleasure and pain.
2 Bhikshus, when there is speech, then, there arise, with verbal intention as cause, internal pleasure and pain.
3 Bhikshus, when there is mind, then, there arise, with mental intention as cause, internal pleasure and pain—
4 with ignorance as condition.\(^{43}\)

5 Either by oneself, bhikshus, one creates bodily formation, conditioned by which there arise internal pleasure and pain;
6 or, on account of others, bhikshus, one creates bodily formation, conditioned by which there arise internal pleasure and pain—

\(^{42}\) Be:King Ce avijjā, paccayā va; Ee Se avijjā, paccayā vā.
\(^{43}\) “Ignorance as condition.” Comy: This section shows that pleasure and pain do not arise conditioned by contact alone, but with other conditions as well. In this case, bodily intentions (kāya, sañcetanā), verbal intentions (vaci, sañcetanā) and mental intentions (mano, sañcetanā) are the karmically effective intentions that function as conditions for the resultant pleasure and pain (vipāka, sukha, dukkha) (SA 2:57). See (Kamma, vāda) Bhūmija S (S 12.25, - 13), SD 31.2.
\(^{44}\) Be:King vā tam; Ce: Se E vā.
\(^{45}\) Only Ce:Tr (enckner) abhisankharoti.
\(^{46}\) Only Be:K pare vā tassa.
\(^{47}\) Be abhisankharoti; Ee abhisankharoti.
7 sampajāṇo vā taṁ bhikkhave kaya, saṅkhārāṁ abhisankharoti yaṁ paccayāʾssa taṁ uppajjati ajjhattaṁ sukha, dukkham,
8 asampajāṇo vā taṁ bhikkhave kaya, saṅkhārāṁ abhisankharoti yaṁ paccayāʾssa taṁ uppajjati ajjhattaṁ sukha, dukkham,

Verbal actions: conscious and unconscious

9 Sāmaṁ vā taṁ bhikkhave vacī, saṅkhārāṁ abhisankharoti yaṁ paccayāʾssa taṁ uppajjati ajjhattaṁ sukha, dukkham
10 pare vāʾssa taṁ bhikkhave vacī, saṅkhārāṁ abhisankharoti yaṁ paccayāʾssa taṁ uppajjati ajjhattaṁ sukha, dukkham

Mental actions: conscious and unconscious

11 sampajāṇo vā taṁ bhikkhave vacī, saṅkhārāṁ abhisankharoti yaṁ paccayāʾssa taṁ uppajjati ajjhattaṁ sukha, dukkham
12 asampajāṇo vā taṁ bhikkhave vacī, saṅkhārāṁ abhisankharoti yaṁ paccayāʾssa taṁ uppajjati ajjhattaṁ sukha, dukkham

7 Either with clear comprehension, bhikshus, one creates bodily formation, conditioned by which there arise internal pleasure and pain;
8 or, without clear comprehension, bhikshus, one creates bodily formation, conditioned by which there arise internal pleasure and pain.

9 Either by oneself, bhikshus, one creates verbal formation, conditioned by which there arise internal pleasure and pain;
10 or, on account of others, bhikshus, one creates verbal formation, conditioned by which there arise internal pleasure and pain;

11 Either with clear comprehension, bhikshus, one creates verbal formation, conditioned by which there arise internal pleasure and pain;
12 or, without clear comprehension, bhikshus, one creates verbal formation, conditioned by which there arise internal pleasure and pain.

13 Sāmaṁ vā taṁ bhikkhave mano, saṅkhāram abhisankharoti yam paccayas sa taṁ uppajjati ajjhattaṁ sukha, dukkham
14 pare vāʾssa taṁ bhikkhave mano, saṅkhāram abhisankharoti yam paccayas sa taṁ uppajjati ajjhattaṁ sukha, dukkham

15 sampajāṇo vā taṁ bhikkhave mano, saṅkhāram abhisankharoti

13 Either by oneself, bhikshus, one creates mental formation, conditioned by which there arise internal pleasure and pain;
14 or, on account of others, bhikshus, one creates mental formation, conditioned by which there arise internal pleasure and pain;

15 Either with clear comprehension, bhikshus, one creates mental formation.

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48 Only Ce:Tr abhisankharoti.
49 Mano, saṅkhāra, in this context, is clearly syn with citta, saṅkhāra in (Paṭicca, samuppāda) Vibhaṅga S (S 12.2,-14/2:4), SD 5.15; see S:B 727 n7. However, here we cannot identify the latter with the citta, saṅkhāra at Kāma, bhū S 2 (S 41.6.5.27.2/4:293), SD 48.7, & Cūla Vedalla S (M 44.15.1.4/1:301) + SD 40a.9 (2.4.3), where both def citta, - saṅkhara as saññā and vedanā; see S:B 749 n79.
16 asampajjano vā taṁ bhikkhave mano, saṁkhāram abhisankharoti yam paccayā’ssa taṁ uppaṭṭhati ajjhattam sukhā, dukkhaṁ, conditioned by which there arise internal pleasure and pain;

16 or, without clear comprehension, bhikṣus, one creates mental formation, conditioned by which there arise internal pleasure and pain.

17 Subject to ignorance, bhikṣus, are these states.50

17 With the remainderless fading away and ending of ignorance,

18 so kāyo na hoti yam paccayā’ssa taṁ uppaṭṭhati ajjhattam sukhā, dukkhaṁ

18 that body of his does not exist conditioned by which there arise internal pleasure and pain;

19 so vācā na hoti yam paccayā’ssa taṁ uppaṭṭhati ajjhattam sukhā, dukkhaṁ

20 that speech of his does not exist conditioned by which there arise internal pleasure and pain;

21 so mano na hoti yam paccayā’ssa taṁ uppaṭṭhati ajjhattam sukhā, dukkhaṁ

21 that mind of his does not exist conditioned by which there arise internal pleasure and pain.51

22 khettaṁ52 taṁ na hoti, yam paccayā’ssa taṁ uppaṭṭhati ajjhattam sukhā, dukkhaṁ

22 There is for him no field conditioned by which there arise internal pleasure and pain.

23 vāṭṭhaṁ taṁ na hoti, yam paccayā’ssa taṁ uppaṭṭhati ajjhattam sukhā, dukkhaṁ

22 There is for him no land conditioned by which there arise internal pleasure and pain.

24 āyatanaṁ taṁ na hoti, yam paccayā’ssa taṁ uppaṭṭhati ajjhattam sukhā, dukkhaṁ

23 There is for him no base conditioned by which there arise internal pleasure and pain.

25 adhikaraṇaṁ taṁ na hoti yam paccayā’ssa taṁ uppaṭṭhati ajjhattam sukhā, dukkhaṁ ’ti

25 There is for him no foundation conditioned by which there arise internal pleasure and pain.

— evaṁ —

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50 Imesu ... dharmesu avijjā anupatitā, lit, “Ignorance is included in these states.” Comy: Ignorance is included among these states under the heading of “decisive support” (upanissaya). For, they are all understood under the phrase, “with ignorance as condition, there are volitional formations.” (SA 2:58). On the interpretation of dependent arising by way of the 24 conditional relations of the Paṭṭhāna, see Vism 17: see Nyanatiloka, Guide Through the Abhidhamma Piṭaka, 1971:159-173.

51 Comy: No such body exists where it would enable pleasure and pain to arise conditioned by bodily volition: the same applies to speech and mind. (Question:) But an arhat acts, speaks and thinks, show how is it that his body, etc, do not exist? (Reply:) In the sense, that they do not create karmic results. For, the deeds done by an arhat are neither wholesome nor unwholesome karma, but merely functional (kiriya, matta); thus, for him, it is said: “that body, etc, do not exist.” (SA 2:58). On the arhat’s functional consciousness, see Abh:BRS 1.15.

52 These paragraphs (§§22-25) recur at (Kamma,vāda) Bhūmjī 5 (S.12.15,19.2), SD 31.2.

53 Comy: There is no field (khetta) in the sense of a place of growth; no land (vāṭṭha), in the sense of a support; no base (āyatana) in the sense of a condition; no foundation (adhikaraṇa), in the sense of a cause. (SA 2:59)