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(Sotāpatti) Ānanda Sutta

The Ānanda Discourse (on Streamwinning) | S 22.83

Theme: Puṇṇa Mantāni,putta and Ānanda's attainment of stream-winning

Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2009; 2018

1 Sutta significance

1.1 SUTTA SUMMARY AND HIGHLIGHTS

1.1.1 The (Sotāpatti) Ānanda Sutta (S 22.83) records Ānanda declaring to the monks at Sāvathī how his teacher, the elder Puṇṇa Mantāni,putta [§3 n], is beneficent to him and his colleagues when they are still novice monks (less than 5 years in the order). Puṇṇa instructs them how clinging (*upādāya*) leads to the arising of the “I am” conceit, the basis for all self-views.

1.1.2 Puṇṇa next instructs Ānanda and the monks on how to reflect on the 3 characteristics—the impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and non-self—of the 5 aggregates [§8 header], that is, the “aggregate-characteristic pericope” [§7-11], as recorded in **the Anatta Lakkhaṇa Sutta** (S 22.59). Reflecting on this, the first 5 monks became arhats.¹ The Commentary tells us that Ānanda, listening to this teaching, becomes a streamwinner [§13; 1.2.2].

1.2 ĀNANDA'S BACKGROUND

1.2.1 Ānanda's renunciation

1.2.1.1 The Vinaya records that 7 Sakyas—the Sakya rajah Bhaddiya, Anuruddha, Ānanda, Bhagu, Kimbila, Devadatta and the barber Upāli—renounced the world before the Buddha.² It should be noted here that this Vinaya account only says that they seek permission from the Buddha to renounce the world. If we are to follow the ordination trend of the renunciants during these early years—the Buddha visits Kapilavatthu during the 2nd year of his ministry—he only ordains those who have attained arhat-hood by the “come, bhikkhu!” ordination (*ehi,bhikkhu upasampadā*).³

1.2.1.2 There is no record, even in the Cullavagga [1.2.1.1], on the exact manner how the 6 young Sakya nobles and their barber were ordained. We are only told: “Then, the Blessed One let Upāli the barber go forth first, and afterwards these Sakya youths” (*atha kho bhagavā upāli,kappakarā paṭhamarā pabbājesi pacchā te sakya,kumāre*, V 2:183,18).⁴

Immediately after that, we are told that “the venerable Bhaddiya, within one year attained the 3 knowledges (became an arhat),⁵ the venerable Anuruddha gained the divine eye (*dibba,cakkhu*),⁶ **the**

¹ Also called **Pañca S**, S 22.59 ≈ Mv 6.1.38-47 (V 1:13 f), SD 1.2.

² Cv 7.1.4 (V 2:182 f).

³ On the *ehi,bhikkhu upasampadā*, see SD 45.16 (1).

⁴ For a similar account, see DhA 1.12/1:133-138 (12a).

⁵ AA 1:191 concurs in that Bhaddiya attains arhat-hood in the same year as we went forth.

⁶ Anuruddha is the foremost of those monks with the divine eye (A 1:23), ie, an advanced form of clairvoyance, incl the recollection of past lives: **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2,95.2 (SD 8.10).

venerable Ānanda won the fruit of streamwinning, Devadatta gained ordinary psychic powers.⁷ The Dhammapada Commentary notes that Anuruddha, after listening to **the (Mahā, purisa Vitakka) Anuruddha Sutta** (A 8.30),⁸ attained arhathood (DhA 1:138). The Aṅguttara Commentary adds that Devadatta gained the 8 attainments (the 4 form dhyanas and the 4 formless attainments), and that Bhagu and Kimbila attained arhathood later (AA 1:191).

1.2.1.3 It is possible, even likely, they were admitted by an early (more simplified) version of the “ordination by an act of motion and 3 declarations.”⁹ This means that the Buddha sanctioned the monks as a community—technically, as a “legal person”—to ordain monastics, as early as the 2nd year of his ministry.

A good clue we have for this is the mention of the elder **Belatṭha, sīsa** as “the venerable Ānanda’s preceptor” (*āyasmato ānandassa upajjhāya*) at least twice in the Vinaya.¹⁰ The term “preceptor” (*upajjhāya*) refers to a qualified senior elder who acts as the head of the conclave giving ordination to suitable candidates to be admitted into the order. This proves that Ānanda (and the other Sakya youths and Upāli) [1.2.1.2] were ordained by way of *the ordination by an act of motion and 3 declarations*, that is, by a proper assembly of qualified elders in conclave performing the sangha-act (an ecclesiastical procedure).

1.2.2 Ānanda’s streamwinning

1.2.2.1 The (Sotāpatti) Ānanda Sutta closes with Ānanda himself stating that at the end of Puṇṇa’s Dharma-teaching, he attains streamwinning: “I made the breakthrough into the Dharma” (*dharmo abhisamito*) [§13]. The word “streamwinning” (*sotāpatti*) is not used, but the term *abhisamita* (past participle) and its noun, *abhisamaya*, “breakthrough,” is often a synonym for streamwinning, especially in this context.

1.2.2.2 We have noted that **Ānanda** becomes a streamwinner within a year of going forth in Kapila, vatthu [1.2.1.2]. Hence, it is as a streamwinner that he becomes the Buddha personal attendant, and faithfully attends to the Buddha, and also acting as the relations officer between the Buddha and the public. One of the benefits Ānanda receives for his services is that the Buddha will recount to him teachings that the Buddha gives in his absence.

On account of his busyness and devotion to the Buddha, he remains only a streamwinner throughout his duration as the Buddha’s attendant. It is only after the Buddha’s passing that Ānanda attains arhathood. Ānanda, as it were, effectively postpones his own awakening to look after the Buddha. However, he is not called a “bodhisattva” because there is no such concept in early Buddhism. Moreover, Ānanda later becomes an arhat.

⁷ *Atha kho āyasmā bhaddiyo ten’eva antara, vassena tisso vijjā sacchākāsi, āyasmā anuruddho dibba, cakkhum uppādesi, āyasmā ānando sotāpatii, phalaṃ sacchākāsi, devadatto pothujjanikaṃ iddhiṃ abhinipphādesi* (Cv 7.1.4 @ V 2:183,20-23).

⁸ A 8.30 (SD 19.5); AA 1:191; J 1:140; ApA 270 f.

⁹ *Ñatti, catuttha, kammūpasampadā* (Mv 1.29 @ V 1:56); see SD 45.16 (3). This ordination procedure has 3 key actors: the head is the preceptor (*upajjhāya*) (V 1:45-55), the act-announcer (*kamma, vācācariya*) formally presents the candidate to the assembly (AA 2:194,9; SnA 2:340,10), and the instructor (*anusavan’ācariya*). It is possible that the monastics of Ānanda’s time were admitted by a simple sangha-act performed by the preceptor with a quorum of 5 monks. The role of the *upajjhāya* was later ramified into 2 more: those of the *kamma, vācācariya* and the *anusavan’ācariya* (as is the case today): see SD 45.16 (3).

¹⁰ Mv 6.8.2 (V 1:202,12); Pāc 36.1 (V 4:86,19). Ānanda’s teacher, however, as evident from **(Sotāpatti) Ānanda S** (S 22.83) is the elder Puṇṇa Mantāni,putta [§§3, 12 f].

1.2.3 Ānanda's arhathood

1.2.3.1 While we have suttas that record the attainment of arhathood by most of the other great disciples of the Buddha, we do not have any sutta that recounts how Ānanda becomes an arhat. However, there is a sutta that provides us with some helpful clues to this significant event, that is, **the (Ānanda) Saṅkhitta Dhamma Sutta** (S 35.86).¹¹

1.2.3.2 Although the Sutta does not specifically state Ānanda's attaining of arhathood, it is very likely to be the Buddha's final instructions to the elder Ānanda for his solitary practice for the attaining of arhathood. We have the following reasons for this conclusion. These reasons should not be taken singly but understood as a whole:

- (1) For one of the most prominent disciples of the Buddha, it is perplexing that there is no sutta that records his arhathood, as is common in the cases of other great disciples.
- (2) The contents of the (Ānanda) Saṅkhitta Dhamma Sutta contains **the "6-cycle 18-element" pericope** or cycle which is one of the formulas describing the process of arhathood.¹²
- (3) The Sutta does not mention Ānanda's arhathood because it is merely a record of his "final instruction" from the Buddha, not of his actual solitary practice and its fruit. As a rule, when one of the prominent disciples receives a "brief teaching," goes into solitary retreat, and gains arhathood, he will then report back to the Buddha. When Ānanda attains arhathood, the Buddha has already passed away 3 months earlier. The next day, Ānanda appears before the assembled arhats to attend the 1st council (as recorded in **Cv 11.1.6**).¹³
- (4) As such, there appears to be no conclusion to the Sutta, **S 22.83**.¹⁴ It is interesting that even though the elders of the 1st council knew of Ānanda's arhathood, and that Ānanda himself recited the suttas—surely including S 22.83—no conclusion was added to it. It is likely, then, that S 22.83 was compiled after the 1st council as a record of Ānanda's last instruction from the Buddha himself. This is a likelihood because the Pali Canon was only closed during Asoka's time.¹⁵

1.3 THE SUTTA STRUCTURE

1.3.1 The narrator. Technically, the (Sotāpatti) Ānanda Sutta is special—almost unique—in that *the whole* sutta is actually spoken by Ānanda himself, including the opening tag: "Thus have I heard" (*evam me sutam*). However, in terms of the narrator or **the narrative voice**, we must discern the voices of both Ānanda and of his teacher, Puṇṇa Mantāni,putta. In other words, we have to know when Ānanda is speaking for himself, when he is quoting Puṇṇa.

1.3.2 Nesting

1.3.2.1 Grammatically, we can follow the narrative voices by noting the alternating sequence of double quotes (") and single quotes ('), and the levels of nesting. In a long sutta, this can be difficult and

¹¹ S 35.86 (SD 50.15).

¹² See SD 50.15 (2.0).

¹³ This account is quoted at DA 10. The account of Ānanda's arhathood at **DA 9 f**, however differs somewhat.

¹⁴ For further details, see SD 50.15 (1.2.3).

¹⁵ See A Wynne 2003, 2005. Some academic scholars, however, doubted that the "1st council" was ever held—that it was only a pious literary tradition: Macmillan Encyclopedia of Buddhism 2003:187 f; Routledge Ency of Buddhism 2007:251; Princeton Dict of Buddhism 2014:198.

confusing, and can easily lead to misplaced quote-marks. The Pali itself does not have this English grammatical problem, as it does not make use of the quotation marks.

1.3.2.2 The Pali has only the *iti* or *'ti* end-quote tag. Pali also does not have capital letters as against lower-case letters. This effectively cuts down on technical problems, but we need to constantly keep in mind who the speaker or narrator is, and whether it is a proper noun or not. However, once we are familiar with Pali, this is just a cinch.

1.3.3 Narrative sequence

1.3.3.1 The Sutta's narrative sequence is quite simple: there are only 3 narrative voices—"3 voices deep"—that is, Ānanda, the main narrator; then, Puṇṇa Mantāni,putta the teacher; and Puṇṇa's pupils, thus:

Ānanda's voice:	§§1-3, 12-13	Ānanda addresses his audience
Puṇṇa Mantāni,putta's voice:	§§4-11	Puṇṇa addresses Ānanda

Hence, we have a dialogue between Punna and Ānanda nested on the second level of the Sutta narrative. We should also be aware of another level of narrative voice, that is, when Puṇṇa is "quoting himself," especially the well known phrase: "This is mine, this I am, this is myself," which Puṇṇa applies to each of the 5 aggregates. [§7]

1.3.3.2 When we become more familiar with the sutta passages through constant study and reading, we can easily "hear" the narrator's voice. We begin to hear a clear "narrative flow" of events or the "semantic flow" of the teaching. Of course, this can only happen when we have the sutta laid out *in full*, without any truncations (*peyyāla*).

The *peyyāla*—the Magadhism for *pariyāya*¹⁶—means "repetition, succession, formula; way of saying, phrase." In our present context, *peyyāla* simply refers to "repeated passages," that are truncated, as in the English usage of "et cetera" (etc), "because of the successive Pali text in certain books" (*ekaccesu potthakesu pāli,peyyāla,vasena*, VvA 117).

Note that "books" (*potthaka*) is mentioned in the Vimāna,vatthu Commentary (VvA 117). This suggests that the troublesome practice of **truncating Pali passages** clearly started with the writing down of the suttas, when we have a visual idea of the repetitions, and either wanted to save some space on the palm-leaves or felt that we would save time by not repeating familiar long passages.

1.3.3.3 One simply cannot imagine any truncation in an oral tradition of preserving the Pali texts. Although suttas and parittas are sometimes recited in abridged form or with some omission of passages for the convenience of the audience (often the laity who have little knowledge of Pali), the full recitation of such passage is de rigueur not only for a full presentation and proper preservation of the early texts, but also to facilitate their reflection as part of one's Dharma practice, especially the meditative passages expounding the nature of true reality.

Indeed, in the traditional Pali oral tradition, we may still find abbreviated passages or *peyyāla* in the longer suttas. Such texts only act as aides-memoire for the expert reciter who has memorized the texts. Similarly, in the traditional fortnightly recitation of the Pātimokkha in monastic conclave, the reciter recites the Code from memory, but is assisted by a monk-prompter who has the printed copy before him, to ensure that the Code is correctly recited.

¹⁶ BHS *piyāla* and *peyāla* (Mvst 3:202, 219).

1.3.3.4 The instructive criticism of British Buddhist scholar, **LS Cousins**, regarding Ñāṇamoli’s *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha*, revised by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1995), is well worth heeding, especially in our time of commercialized translations of religious texts:

“Although there are obvious advantages to having the whole work in one volume, especially for the newcomer, the disadvantage is the systematic elimination of repetition. Many readers may see this as a gain but it does amount to the deliberate removal of a meditative element from many suttas. In the original language, when the suttas are chanted rather than read, there is an effect upon the mind which is very much part of their traditional purpose. Moreover, the emphasis is often changed quite critically: when a phrase that is repeated in the original ten times is given only once in translation, it ceases to be a central part which is always retained in memory. The result is that what the sutta tries to stress as important becomes much less noticeable in translation.” (*Journal of Buddhist Ethics* 4, Sep 1997:261 f; emphases added)

2 Sutta teaching

2.1 “CLINGING” (UPĀDĀYA)

The Sutta key term, “**clinging**” (*upādāya*) has 2 senses, both of which apply to our context:

- (1) literally, as the absolutive of *upādiyati*, it means “having clung to,” but
- (2) figuratively, it has an idiomatic sense, “derived from, dependent on,” as in “the form derived from the 4 great elements” (*catunnañ ca mahā, bhūtānaṃ upādāya rūpaṃ*).

The Commentary, however, stresses on the figurative sense, as an adverb: “**Upādāya** means ‘with reference to, based on, in connection with, dependent on’” (*upādāyāti āgamma ārabha sandhāya paṭicca*) (SA 2:308).

The mirror parable supports both senses, as *upādāya* is polysemic, like many important Pali words and terms.¹⁷ The young person looks at his reflection in the mirror with concern for his facial appearance (“with clinging”), and the reflection occurs dependent on the mirror.

Similarly, we conceive “I am” (*asmîti*) “by clinging” to the 5 aggregates, that is “dependent on” the 5 aggregates as a self-view (internal subjective view), that the aggregates as external objects arise as the view, “I am (that).” This twin senses of *upādāya* is again seen in **the Etaṃ Mama Sutta** (S 22.150).¹⁸

2.2 PERICOPES AND CYCLE

2.2.1 A **pericope** is a stock passage that records a state or statement that often recurs in the suttas, and is important enough to be repeated and remembered as a coherent and instructive passage in itself. A pericope may also reflect a “cycle” or “cycles” of doctrines that work as reflections of the nature of true reality.¹⁹

2.2.2 The (Sotāpatti) Ānanda Sutta (S 22.83)—which records Ānanda’s attaining of streamwinning—makes use of “**the 5-cycle aggregate**” **pericope** (also called the aggregate-characteristic pericope). It opens with a “clinging cycle” [§4-6], followed by the 5-cycle aggregate pericope [§7] and the non-self totality pericope [§8]. It closes with the streamwinner’s review knowledge [§9-11] and the conclusion [§§12-13].

¹⁷ On Pali polysemy, see SD 1.1 (4.4.5); SD 10.16 (1.3.1-1.3.2).

¹⁸ S 22.140 (SD 97.19). See also SD 17.2a (1.2.2).

¹⁹ For types of pericopes for the 6 sense-bases (the 18 elements), the 5 aggregates, and the 3 characteristics, see SD 50.15 (2).

2.3 THE “I AM” (ASMĪTI) VIEW

Puṇṇa speaks of the “I am” (*asmīti*) view. This is a shorthand for the “threefold graspings” (*ti, vidha gāha*) formula: “This is mine” (*etam mama*), “This I am” (*eso’ham asmi*), “This is my self” (*eso me attā ti*) [§7 etc]. In **the Anatta Lakkhaṇa Sutta** (S 22.59),²⁰ this formula is applied to the 5 aggregates, and in **the Pārileyya Sutta** (S 22.81),²¹ to the 4 primary elements.²²

The opposite formula of the threefold graspings is “This is *not* mine” (*n’etam mama*), “This I am *not*” (*n’eso’ham asmi*), and “This is not my self” (*na mēso attā’ti*). A brief version—“There can be no considering that (element) as ‘I’ or ‘mine’ or ‘I am’” (*ahan ti vā maman ti vā asmī ti vā*)—is found in **the Mahā Hatthi, padōpama Sutta** (M 28).²³

3 Related sutta

3.1 In the short but significant **(Sa, gāthā) Ānanda Sutta** (S 9.5), we see a forest deity (probably a past relative) advising the elder Ānanda to refrain from getting caught up with socializing with the laity, since it does not conduce to his spiritual progress.

3.2 The Sutta Commentary informs us that the occasion was just after the Buddha’s passing away but before Ānanda’s attaining arhathood. People who knew that Ānanda had been the Buddha’s personal attendant, were asking him for details about the Buddha’s final nirvana, mourning him, and seeking his advice. Ānanda was going around, taking along the Buddha’s bowl and robe with him. (SA 1:246)

3.3 The same verse of rebuke is ascribed to a certain Vajjī elder: **the Vajji, putta-t, thera, gāthā** (Tha 119). It is, however, not amongst the elder Ānanda’s verses (Tha 476, 1018-1050).

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SD 52.4(3)

(Sa, gāthā) Ānanda Sutta

The Ānanda Discourse (With a Verse) | S 9.5/1:199 f (S 772)

Traditional: S 1.9.1.5 = Saṃyutta Nikāya 1, Sa, gāthā Vagga 9, Vana Saṃyutta 1, Vana Vg 5

Theme: Avoid frivolous socializing

- 1 At one time, the venerable Ānanda was staying in a certain forest grove in Kosala.
 - 2 At that time, the venerable Ānanda was excessively busy socializing with crowds of laity.²⁴
 - 3 Then, a deity inhabiting that forest grove, out of compassion, desiring benefit for the venerable Ānanda, wishing to arouse in him a sense of urgency, approached him.
- Having approached the venerable Ānanda, the deity addressed him in verse:

²⁰ S 22.59,12-16/3:68, (SD 1.2).

²¹ S 22.81/3:94-99, (SD 6.1).

²² See also **(Dhātu) Rāhula S** (A 4.177/2:164 f), SD 3.11(4) and **Pārileyya S** (S 22.81), SD 6.1 (5).

²³ M 28/1:184-191 (§§6.2-7, 11.2-12, 16.2-17, 21.2-22), SD 6.16.

²⁴ *Tena kho pana समयेना āyasmā ānando ativelam gihi, saññatti, bahulo viharati.*

The urgency verse²⁵

<p><i>Rukkha, mūla, gahanam pasakkiya</i>²⁶ <i>nibbānam hadayasmim opiya</i>²⁷ <i>jhāya gotama mā ca pamādo</i> <i>kim te bilibilikā</i>²⁸ karissatī²⁹</p>	S 771	<p>Having gone out into the thicket under a tree, having placed nirvana in your heart, [200] meditate, Gotama, and be not heedless! What will this tittle-tattle do for you?</p>
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4 Then, the venerable Ānanda roused by the deity, felt a sense of urgency.³⁰

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(Sotāpatti) Ānanda Sutta

The Ānanda Discourse (on Streamwinning)

S 22.83

1 Thus have I heard.

At one time, the Blessed one was staying in Anātha, piṇḍika’s park-monastery.

2 There the venerable Ānanda addressed the monks, “Avuso, bhikshus!”

“Avuso!” The monks replied to the venerable Ānanda.

3 The venerable Ānanda said:

“Avuso, the venerable Puṇṇa Mantāni,putta³¹ benefitted us greatly when we were novice monks.³²

He admonished us with this admonition:³³

²⁵ This is also the elder Vajji,putta’s verse [3.3].

²⁶ “Having gone out,” *pasakkiya* (gerund): S 1:199 = Tha 119 where Comy glosses it as “having gone up to” (*upagantvā*, ThaA 1:247); Tha 125; from *pa+sakkati*, “to go forth or out to.”

²⁷ “Having placed,” *opiya*, absol of *opeti*, “throws into, heaps up (in)” (Thī 283); vll *upenti* (Ee), *osenti* (Thī 283). Comys however gloss *opiya* as “having put down into” (*pakkhipitvā*, SA 1:199), “having placed” (*ṭhapetvā*, ThaA 1:247). See CPD+DP: opati; Tha:N 140 n119 (long n).

²⁸ “Tittle-tattle,” or babbling (*bilibilikā karissati*), onomatopoeic. Comy: “This sound ‘Bili-bili’ is the tittle-tattle one has with lay people” (*Bilibilikā’ti ayam gihīhi saddhim bilibili, kathā*, SA 1:292). Tha Comy: “It is a ticky-tacky action making the sound of tittle-tattle. It’s just being frivolous babbling thus in the manner of human crowd” (*Bilibilikā’ti vilivilī, kiriya, bilibili’ti sadda-p, pavatti, yathā niratthikā evam bilibilikā, parisā, jana, paññatti*, ThaA 1:247). Norman: “The word is presumably connected with the onomatopoeic roots *biṭ-*, *biḍ-*, *viṭ-*, *viḍ-*, “sound, shout, etc,” found in the Skt Dhātu, pāṭha [Monier Williams], and it must mean something like ‘hullabaloo’.” (Tha:N 150 n119)

²⁹ Cf Tha 119.

³⁰ *Atha kho āyasmā ānando tāya devatāya samvejito samvegam āpādīti. Āpādi*, aor 3 sg of *āpajjati*, “to come to, attain, reach, enter into, commit.”

³¹ Declared by the Buddha as the foremost of monks who are “Dharma-speakers” (*dhamma, kathika*) (A 1:23,25). **Ratha Vinīta S** (M 24) records his explanation of the 7 stages of purification (*satta, visuddhi*) to Sāriputta (M 24/-1:146 f), SD 28.3; **Caṅkama S** (S 14.15,6+14/2:155 f), SD 34.6. For details on Puṇṇa Mantāni,putta, see SD 28.3 (4).

³² *Puṇṇo nāma āvuso āyasmā mantāniputto* [only Be -*mantāṇ-*] *amhākaṃ navakānaṃ sataṃ bahūpakāro hoti*.

³³ *So amhe iminā ovādena ovadati*. Note that Ānanda’s narrative starts here (§3) and ends right at the end (§13). Notice the levels of nesting in his narration. [1.3.3.1]

PUṆṆA'S ADMONITION³⁴

THE CLINGING CYCLE

4 'Avuso Ānanda, it is with clinging that there is the view, "I am," not without clinging.³⁵
And by clinging to what is there the view, "I am," not without clinging?

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|--|---|
| (1) Through clinging to <u>form</u> , | there is the view, "I am," not without clinging. |
| (2) Through clinging to <u>feeling</u> , | <i>there is the view, "I am," not without clinging.</i> |
| (3) Through clinging to <u>perception</u> , | <i>there is the view, "I am," not without clinging.</i> |
| (4) Through clinging to <u>formations</u> , | <i>there is the view, "I am," not without clinging.</i> |
| (5) Through clinging to <u>consciousness</u> , | <i>there is the view, "I am," not without clinging.</i> |

5 Suppose, avuso Ānanda, a woman or a man, young, youthful, fond of ornaments, were to gaze at the reflection of his face in a mirror or in a bowl of water that is clean and clear, he would look at it with clinging, not without clinging.³⁶

6 Even so, avuso Ānanda,

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|--|--|
| (1) it is through clinging to <u>form</u> | that there is the view, "I am," not without clinging; |
| (2) it is through clinging to <u>feeling</u> | <i>that there is the view, "I am," not without clinging;</i> |
| (3) it is through clinging to <u>perception</u> | <i>that there is the view, "I am," not without clinging;</i> |
| (4) it is through clinging to <u>formations</u> | <i>that there is the view, "I am," not without clinging;</i> |
| (5) it is through clinging to <u>consciousness</u> | <i>that there is the view, "I am," not without clinging;</i> |

The aggregate-characteristic pericope³⁷

7 What do you think, avuso Ānanda,

(1) is **form** permanent or impermanent?'

'Impermanent, avuso.'

'Is what is impermanent unsatisfactory [suffering] or satisfactory [pleasurable]?'³⁸

'Unsatisfactory, avuso.'

'Is what is impermanent, unsatisfactory and subject to change fit to be regarded thus:

"This is mine, this I am, this is my self"?'³⁹

³⁴ Puṇṇa's admonition to Ānanda (catechical) starts here (§4) and ends at (§11).

³⁵ *Upādāya āvuso ānanda asmīti hoti no anupādāya*. On "clinging" (*upādāya*), see (2.1).

³⁶ *Seyyathā'pi āvuso ānanda itthi vā puriso vā daharo yuvā maṇḍanaka, jātiko ādāse vā parisuddhe pariyodāte acche vā udaka, patte sakam mukha, nimittam paccavekkhamāno upādāya passeyya no anupādāya*.

³⁷ A shorter version of this and foll sections are given as **Arahatā S 1** (S 22.76/3:82 f @ SD 26.7) = **Arahatā S 2** (S 22.77/3:84, without verse). For details on the 5 aggregates, see SD 17 or, briefly, see (**Dve**) **Khandhā S** (S 22.48), SD 17.1a. On the 3 characteristics, see SD 1.2 (2).

³⁸ *Dukkham vā sukham vā*. Here, the alternative tr, "painful," reminds us that whatever brings us pain or discomfort (bodily or mentally) is not liked by us. When the pain is gone, we feel some pleasure. However, even the pleasurable is impermanent, and when it is gone, we feel pain. Hence, both the painful and the pleasant are "suffering" (*dukkha*). It is useful to understand this difference between pain and suffering. Simply put, pain is natural (we have a physical but conscious body, so we feel pain, whether tolerable or intolerable, which is a sign of irritability or sensitivity of our experiences); suffering is optional (we can train our minds not to be attached to what is pleasant or to reject what is unpleasant, and to regard even the neutral as being impermanent, changing, becoming otherwise.)

³⁹ *Etam mama, eso'ham asmī, eso me attāti*. These are "**the 3 graspings**" (*ti, vidha gāha*), ie, of view (*diṭṭhi*), of craving (*taṇhā*), of conceit (*māna*) (MA 2:111, 225). The notion "This is mine" arises through craving; the notion "This I am" arises through conceit; the notion "This is my self" arises through views. These 3 considerations repre-

‘No, avuso.’ [Mv 1.6.42]

(2) ‘Is **feeling** permanent or impermanent?’

‘Impermanent, avuso.’

‘Is what is impermanent unsatisfactory or satisfactory?’

‘Unsatisfactory, avuso.’

‘Is what is impermanent, unsatisfactory and subject to change fit to be regarded thus:

“This is mine, this I am, this is my self”?’

“No, avuso.”

(3) ‘Is **perception** permanent or impermanent?’

‘Impermanent, avuso.’

‘Is what is impermanent unsatisfactory or satisfactory?’

‘Unsatisfactory, avuso.’

‘Is what is impermanent, unsatisfactory and subject to change fit to be regarded thus:

“This is mine, this I am, this is my self”?’

‘No, avuso.’

(4) ‘Are **formations** permanent or impermanent?’

‘Impermanent, avuso.’

‘Is what is impermanent unsatisfactory or satisfactory?’

‘Unsatisfactory, avuso.’

‘Is what is impermanent, unsatisfactory and subject to change fit to be regarded thus:

“This is mine, this I am, this is my self”?’

‘No, avuso.’

(5) ‘Is **consciousness** permanent or impermanent?’

‘Impermanent, avuso.’

‘Is what is impermanent unsatisfactory or satisfactory?’

‘Unsatisfactory, avuso.’

‘Is what is impermanent, unsatisfactory and subject to change fit to be regarded thus:

“This is mine, this I am, this is my self.”?’

‘No, avuso.’ [Mv 1.6.43]

The non-self totality pericope⁴⁰

8 ‘Therefore, avuso Ānanda,

sent respectively the 3 kinds of mental proliferation (*papañca*) of self-view (*sakkāya diṭṭhi*), of craving (*taṇhā*), and of conceit (*māna*) (Nm 280; Vbh 393; Nett 37 f). The opposite formula, *n’etam mama, n’eso ‘ham asmi, na mēso attā ti*, is applied below to the 5 aggregates [§§17-21]. See Peter Harvey, *The Selfless Mind*, 1995:32 f. For detailed 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.

⁴⁰ This whole section is mutatis mutandis at **Cūḷa Saccaka S** (M 35,24.2/1:234 f), SD 26.5. These are the characteristics of a learner (*sekha*). The arhat, on the other hand, not only has the right view of non-self, but has also abandoned all clinging, as the Buddha explains in **Anatta Lakkhaṇa S** (S 22.50,22), SD 1.2. There, the “specific non-self formula” is the line, “This is not mine, this I am not, this is not the self.” The combined “aggregate characteristics pericope” [§12-16] and the “non-self totality pericope” [§17-21] is called the “general non-self pericope.”

- (1) any kind of **form** whatsoever,
 whether past, future or present,
 internal or external,
 gross or subtle,
 inferior or superior,
 far or near⁴¹—

all forms should be seen as they really are with right wisdom, thus:

“This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.”⁴² [Mv 1.6.44]

- (2) Any kind of **feeling** whatsoever—*whether past, future or present, internal or external, gross or subtle, inferior or superior, far or near*—

all feelings should be seen as they really are with right wisdom, thus:

“This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.”

- (3) Any kind of **perception** whatsoever—*whether past, future or present, internal or external, gross or subtle, inferior or superior, far or near*—

all perceptions should be seen as they really are with right wisdom, thus:

“This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.”

- (4) Any kind of **formations** whatsoever—*whether past, future or present, internal or external, gross or subtle, inferior or superior, far or near*—

all formations should be seen as they really are with right wisdom, thus:

“This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.”

- (5) Any kind of **consciousness** whatsoever—*whether past, future or present, internal or external, gross or subtle, inferior or superior, far or near*—

all consciousness should be seen as they really are with right wisdom, thus:

“This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.” [Mv 1.6.45]

⁴¹ *Atītānagata, paccupannaṃ ajjhataṃ vā bahiddhā vā oḷārikaṃ vā sukhumāṃ vā hīnaṃ vā paṇītaṃ vā yaṃ dūre santike vā*. See **(Dve) Khandha S** (S 22.48/3:47) + SD 17.1a (3.2). This classification of the aggregates (by way of the totality pericope or formula) is expl in detail in Vibhaṅga and briefly in Visuddhimagga: “**internal**” (*ajjhata*) = physical sense-organs; “**external**” (*bahiddhā*) = physical sense-objects; “**gross**” (*oḷārika*) = that which impinges (physical internal and external senses, with touch = earth, wind, fire); “**subtle**” (*sukhuma*) = that which does not impinge (mind, mind-objects, mind-consciousness, and water); “**inferior**” (*hīna*) = unpleasant and undesirable sense-experiences [sense-world existence]; “**superior**” (*paṇīta*) = pleasant and desirable sense-experiences [form & formless existences]; “**far**” (*dūre*) = subtle objects (“difficult to penetrate”); “**near**” (*santike*) = gross objects (“easy to penetrate”) (Vbh 1-13; Vism 14.73/450 f; Abhs 6.7). “Whether or not the details of the Vibhaṅga exposition are accepted as valid for the *nikāyas*, it seems clear that this formula is intended to indicate how each *khandha* is to be seen as a class of states, manifold in nature and displaying a considerable variety and also a certain hierarchy” (Gethin 1986: 41).

⁴² *N’etaṃ mama, n’eso ’ham asmi, na mēso attā ti*. A brief version, “There can be no considering that (element) as ‘I’ or ‘mine’ or ‘I am’” (*ahan ti vā maman ti vā asmī ti vā*) is found in **Mahā Hatthi, padōpama S** (M 28/1:184-191 §§6b-7, 11b-12, 16b-17, 21b-22). This is opp of “the 3 graspings” (*ti, vidha gāha*) formula: *etaṃ mama, eso ’ham asmi, eso me attā ti* [§§12-16]. In **Anatta Lakkhaṇa S** (S 22.59, 12-16/3:68), this formula is applied to the 5 aggregates & in **Pārileyya S** (S 22.81/3:94-99), SD 6.1, to the 4 primary elements. See also **(Dhātu) Rāhula S** (A 4.177/-2:164 f). See **Pārileyya S**, SD 6.1 (5). See Peter Harvey, *The Selfless Mind*, 1995a:32 f.

Revulsion

- 9 Seeing thus, avuso Ānanda, the tutored noble disciple
 is revulsed [disenchanted]⁴³ with form,
 is revulsed with feeling,
 is revulsed with perception,
 is revulsed with formations,
 is revulsed with consciousness.

Liberation: Review knowledge⁴⁴

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>10 Through revulsion, he becomes dispassionate.
 Through dispassion, he is free.
 Freed, there arises the knowledge: “Free!”⁴⁵</p> | <p><i>Nibbindaṃ virajjati
 Virāgā vimuccati
 Vimuttasmim vimuttam iti
 ñāṇaṃ hoti</i></p> |
| <p>11 He understands:
 “Destroyed is birth.
 The holy life has been lived.</p> | <p><i>Khiṇā jāti
 vusitaṃ brahma,cariyaṃ</i></p> |
| <p>What needs to be done has been done.
 There is no more of this state of being.”</p> | <p><i>kataṃ karaṇiyaṃ
 nâparam itthattāyā’ti
 pajānātīti [Mv 1.6.46]</i></p> |

Conclusion

12 Avuso, the venerable Puṇṇa Mantāni,putta [106] was of great benefit to us when we were newly ordained. He admonished us with this admonition.

13 And having heard this venerable Puṇṇa Mantāni,putta’s Dharma-teaching, I made the breakthrough into the Dharma.”⁴⁶

— evaṃ —

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⁴³ On revulsion, see *Nibbidā*, SD 20.1.

⁴⁴ This is the arhat’s review knowledge, when it ends by stating, “And the venerable *so-and-so* became one of the arhats,” eg (**Arahatta**) **Māluṅkya,putta S** (S 35.95,18), SD 5.9. Or, the arhathood is stated in the Conclusion. On the arhathood of the 5 monks, see **Anatta Lakkhaṇa S** (S 22.59,24), SD 1.2; that of the 1000 matted-hair ascetics, see **Āditta Pariyāya S** (S 35.28,11). SD 1.3. Here, it only serves as Ānanda’s “review knowledge,” as it refers only to his attaining streamwinning.

⁴⁵ *Vimuttismim vimuttam iti ñāṇaṃ hoti*, or “When free, there is the knowledge, it (the mind) is free.” Note that the self is not addressed here. On “Free!” see SD 50.1 (3.1.2.2).

⁴⁶ *Idaṃ ca pana me āyasmato puṇṇassa mantāni,puttassa dhamma,desanaṃ sutvā dhammo abhisamito’ti*. The word *abhisamita* (*abhi + sam + ā + √I*, to go) is past part of *abhisameti* (CPD), “to go to, attain; to grasp, to understand.” Its noun is *abhisamaya*, “breakthrough” (S 12.4), SD 49.9, into streamwinning (S 13.1), SD 70.1(5.3.2); into arhathood (S 36.5), SD 17.13, & S 725c (S 8.4), SD 16.12. Explaining **dhammo me abhisameto** (Comy adds *me*), it says that at the end of the teaching, Ānanda penetrates the 4 noble truths with wisdom, and becomes a streamwinner (SA 2:308).