

# 2a

## Ogha,taraṇa Sutta

The Discourse on Flood-crossing | S 1.1 of the **Nala Vagga**, The Reed Group

Ee **Ogha Sutta** The Flood Discourse

Theme: Defilements are like a great flood

Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2018

### 1 Nala Vagga

#### 1.0 CONTENTS

<b>S 1.1.1<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Verses</b>	<b>Naḷa Vagga<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Short title of the sutta</b>	<b>SD 54.2</b>
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S 1.1.1.10 (S 1.10)	17-19	Arañña Sutta	The forest	SD 54.2i

#### 1.1 NATURE OF THE CHAPTER AND SUTTA

**1.1.1 The Nāḷa Vagga** (the reed group)<sup>3</sup> is the very first subchapter or group (*vagga*) of suttas in the **Devatā Saṃyutta**,<sup>4</sup> the connected teachings on deities, which is itself part of the very first chapter, “with verses” —the **Saḡāthā,vagga**<sup>5</sup>—of the Saṃyutta Nikāya<sup>6</sup> itself.

The **Nala Vagga** is a group of 10 suttas, each containing at least a verse uttered by deities, except for the first, the **Ogha,taraṇa Sutta** (S 1.1),<sup>7</sup> where there are only brief exchanges between a deity and the Buddha, with the deity uttering its only verse. Hence, the suttas of Nala Vagga may have between 1 and 3 verses, generally dealing with ideas about the good.

**1.1.2 In the Ogha,taraṇa Sutta** (S 1.1), the deity asks a question in prose to which the Buddha very briefly answers [§4]. When the deity, not understanding the brief answer, further questions the Buddha, he gives another short answer [§5]. Apparently, the Buddha must have given a longer explanation, off

<sup>1</sup> This column gives the traditional sutta numbering as given in the Burmese canon (Be). The sutta numbering in the Pali canons of Sri Lanka (Ce = Ceylonese ed), Thailand (Se = Siamese ed), and the Pali Text Society (PTS) (Ee = European ed) generally agree but with some variations. [2.1.2.1]

<sup>2</sup> See SD 54.2 (3.2).

<sup>3</sup> On the tr of **vagga** as “group” here, see SD 54.2 (2.1.2.4).

<sup>4</sup> See SD 54.2 (4).

<sup>5</sup> See SD 54.2 (3).

<sup>6</sup> See SD 54.2 (2).

<sup>7</sup> See DA 17,7 = DhsA 18,25 ≈ KhpA 12,3; DhsA 25,22.

the record, which is summarized in the Commentary [2.1.2]. Having understood, the deity utters his verse (S 1\*).<sup>8</sup> [2.1.1]

**1.2 The name** of the group (*vagga*) usually comes from the title or theme of its 1<sup>st</sup> sutta. Here, it is **Ogha,-taraṇa**, “crossing the flood,” which is common in the suttas.<sup>9</sup> Hence, the Naḷa Vagga takes its title from the theme of the last sutta in the group, that is, **the reed** (*naḷa*) (S 1:5,9), specifically, a “soft hollow reed,” especially the stalk of the water-lily,<sup>10</sup> which is unique enough.

## 2 Sutta significance and highlights

### 2.1 SUTTA SIGNIFICANCE

#### 2.1.1 Summary and remarks

**2.1.1.1 The Commentary** explains that the Buddha deliberately gives an obscure reply to the deity to humble him, who is bloated with arrogance (*unnata*), thinking himself to be wise. When the Buddha notices that the deity is unable to penetrate the teaching due to his unwholesome mental state, the Buddha first prepares him to curb his pride. (SA 1:17,1-9)

**2.1.1.2** The Commentary explains the deity’s arrogance on account of not knowing the Buddha well enough. It is said that since the previous buddha, Kassapa, passed away, he has not seen any other. Not knowing our Buddha Gotama before, he acted not so reverently to him due to his uncertainty about the Buddha. Hence, the deity’s doubt and question, and his verse opens with “After a long time, at last, I (we) see a brahmin who is fully quenched (that is, Buddha) ... ” [§6 = S 1ab]. (SA 1:20,13-19)

**2.1.1.3** Humbled by the Buddha’s initial reply, the deity, out of curiosity, then asks for clarification and the Buddha explains in verse so that he is able to understand the teaching. In fact, says the Commentary, on account of the Buddha’s instruction [2.1.2], the deity attains streamwinning (SA 1:20,10).<sup>11</sup> Then, joyfully accepting that “the Teacher has approved of me,” he respectfully salutes him and vanishes.

**2.1.2** The Buddha’s brief reply highlights **the middle way** (*majjhima paṭipadā*) in its widest sense, both practical and spiritual. To highlight this vital aspect, the Commentary lists these 7 pairs (*satta duka*) of contrasting qualities reflecting our actions and fate when we are caught in **a flood**, that is, of sinking under (or drowning) and being swept away (also to be drowned) in its explanation of the terms **paṭiṭṭha** and **āyūhana**:

(1) “**Stopping**” (*santiṭṭhanta*) is the commentarial synonym for **paṭiṭṭha**. When we are tricked or forced to stop our spiritual efforts on account of defilements, we *sink* under the floods (*ogha*) of sensuality, existence, views and ignorance [2.3.1]. “**Straining**” (*āyūhanta*) *ourselves*, that is, forcing ourselves *ahead*

<sup>8</sup> The terminal asterisk (\*) signifies a verse.

<sup>9</sup> Occurrences of *ogha* in titles in suttas, etc: **Ogha Vagga**, S 5 (see DPPN 1:463), 59,1-62,11, 136,19-137,17, 139,7-140,8, 191,23-192,16, 241,1-18, 242,12-243,9, 247,15-148,9, 251,1-19, 253,1-19, 292,4-7, 309,10-13. In the Abhidhamma, we have **Ogha,duka**, Duka Paṭṭhāna 32 (288,12).

<sup>10</sup> A 4:169; J 1:392; VvA 43. Cf (1) *naḷī*, a hollow stalk, tube, pipe; a measure of capacity; (2) *nālikā*, a stalk, shaft; a tube, pipe or cylinder for holding anything; a small measure of capacity.

<sup>11</sup> “One crosses the flood with faith” (*saddhāya tarati ogham*, S 10.12/849\*/1:214; ItA 2:79). Through wise faith, the deity overcomes wrong view (but not the other influxes), and attains streamwinning: see SA 1:330,32.

or thinking *about*, rather than “feeling,” what *is* going on in our mind, we are swept away by volitional formations (karmic activities), especially our thoughts. “Feeling” here is used in the sense of “directly experiencing” what is going on before us—a vital aspect or the verb *paṭisaṃvedeti*.<sup>12</sup>

- (2) By way of **craving** and **views**, we sink under; by way of other **defilements**, we are swept away;
- (3) By way of **craving**, we sink under; by way of **views**, we are swept away;
- (4) By way of **the eternalist view** (*sassata, diṭṭhi*), we sink under; by way of **the annihilationist view** (*uccheda, diṭṭhi*), we are swept away (It 43,12-44,4).
- (5) By way of **slackness**, we sink under; by way of **restlessness**, we are swept away;
- (6) By way of **devotion to sensual pleasures**, we sink under; by way of **devotion to self-mortification**, we are swept away.
- (7) By way of **all unwholesome volitional formations** we sink under; by way of **all mundane wholesome volitional formations**, we are swept away. (SA 1:19,24-20,12)

Ñāṇananda suggests connecting the principle of “neither stopping nor straining” (or, “not stopping, not straining”) with each of the 4 floods [2.3.2] (1983:56-58).

## 2.2 SUTTA KEYWORDS

**2.2.0 Key teaching.** The Sutta’s key teaching is summarized in the verse [§6] uttered by the deity, especially in line c: “neither stopping nor straining” (*appatiṭṭhaṃ anāyūhaṃ*). These are the 2 key terms we will now examine.

### 2.2.1 Appatiṭṭha

**2.2.1.1** The term **appatiṭṭha** (mfn) is resolved as *a(p)*, a negating prefix + **patiṭṭha** (*pati*, prefix meaning “against” + *vsthā*, to stand; Skt *a-pratiṣṭha*) means “without footing or support, bottomless,” that is, without a place to stand or stay on. As a noun, it means “that which is neither with a footing, nor is an event (non-occurring), nor has a basis (an object)” (*appatiṭṭhaṃ appavattam anārammaṇam eva taṃ*).<sup>13</sup> This description, of course, points to the nature of nirvana, especially regarding an arhat’s consciousness at the moment of his final passing away.

**2.2.1.2** Its verb **patiṭṭhati** usually means “to become established,” that is, to be attached, mainly on account of craving and other defilements. **The (Devatā) Samiddhi Sutta** (S 1.20) has this interesting verse:

<i>Akkheyya,saññino sattā akkheyyasmim̐ patiṭṭhitā akkheyye apariññāya yogam āyanti maccuno</i>	Beings who perceive the expressible [what can be expressed] are established in the expressible. <sup>14</sup> Not fully understanding the expressible, they go under the yoke of death.	<b>(S 46 = It 3.2.4)<sup>15</sup></b>
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<i>Akkheyyañ ca pariññāya akkhātāraṃ na maññati</i>	But <u>having fully understood the expressible</u> , one does not conceive of “an expresser.”	<b>(S 47ab = It 3.2.4)<sup>16</sup></b>
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<sup>12</sup> On feeling as directly experiencing, see SD 36.1 (1.6.0.2).

<sup>13</sup> U 80,15\*; qu at UA 151,20. See **Nibbāna Paṭisaṃyutta S** (U 8.1), SD 50.1.

<sup>14</sup> See SD 54.3 (2.4.2.3).

<sup>15</sup> The verse recurs in It 3.2.4/54. See Intro (3.1).

<sup>16</sup> S 47ab recur in It 3.2.4/54. See Intro (3.2).

*Tañ hi tassa na hotī ti  
yena naṃ vajjā na tassa atthi*

For, there is nothing about him  
with which there is to speak of.

(S 47)

(S 1.20,18 = S 46\* f), SD 21.4

“**The expressible**” (*akkheyya*) refers to the 5 aggregates—form, feeling, perception, formations and consciousness.<sup>17</sup> These form our mind and body as the elements of existence, of life, death and rebirth, that is endless cyclic existence.

**2.2.1.3 Consciousness**—our link between the moments of existence and between lives—driven by craving is “established,”<sup>18</sup> that is, finds a basis for growth and persistence, in the 5 aggregates [2.2.1.2]. However, when craving is removed, consciousness becomes “unestablished, unsupported,” free of the aggregates, freed from life and death. Hence, it is said in **the Godhika Sutta** (S 4.23) that the arhat passes away “with consciousness unestablished” (*appatiṭṭhitena viññāṇena ... parinibbuto*) [2.2.1.2].<sup>19</sup> We shall further examine the significance of this below. [4]

**2.2.1.4** The Commentary glosses **appatiṭṭham** only with *appatiṭṭhahanto* (the continuous form of the present participle), but the Porāṇa,ṭīkā (the Ancient Subcommentary) elaborates: “‘Not stopping’ is not coming to a standstill on account of defilements and so forth; the meaning is ‘not sinking under’ (*appatiṭṭhahanto’ti kiles’ādīnaṃ vasena asantiṭṭhanto, asamsīdanto’ti attho*)” (SAPṬ:Be 1:46). “To sink under” means to be at the mercy of the 4 floods, those of sensuality, existence, views and ignorance [2.3.1].

**2.2.1.5** From the Ogha,taraṇa Sutta context and its commentarial glosses, it is clear that **appatiṭṭha** is not used in the technical sense, for example, that describes the nature of an arhat’s consciousness when he dies[2.2.1.3]. In the Sutta context, it simply means that the Bodhisattva “does not stop,” that is, he does *not* fail or give in to any temptations or defilements, even when he is enjoying devotion to sensual pleasures in the 3 mansions in his youth,<sup>20</sup> nor when he is practising self-mortification during the 6 difficult years,<sup>21</sup> nor falling for the wiles of Māra the great distractor.<sup>22</sup>

After countless cycles of lives of various experiences and learning about life and death, the Bodhisattva must surely have built up his perfection of wisdom (*paññā,pāramī*), so that he is better at discerning what experiences are helpful and what not to the spiritual growth. He went through these 2 extremes, as it were, experiencing, on the one hand, the greatest pleasures that the body (and bodies) can give, and testing, on the other hand, the limits to which the body can be deprived of pleasure and suffer pain.

Such experiences, far from stopping the Bodhisattva from his quest, brings him to realize that these extremes are not helpful in spiritual growth. Recalling his meditation experience,<sup>23</sup> he discovers the middle way.

## **2.2.2 Anāyūhana**

**2.2.2.1** The other significant word in the key verse [S6\*] is **anāyūham**, which comes from a, the negation prefix + **āyūha** (“effort, exertion, striving, straining”). *Āyūha* is often used in a compound that expres-

<sup>17</sup> On the 5 aggregates, see **(Upādāna) Parivaṭṭa S** (S 22.56), SD 3.7. Defined at SD 3.7 (6+7).

<sup>18</sup> See S 12.38-40, 12.64, 22.53-54.

<sup>19</sup> See **Godhika S** (S 4.23/1:122,12-13), SD 61.16.

<sup>20</sup> See **The miraculous life of Gotama Buddha**, SD 52.1 (6.1.1.1, 6.1.2.6, 6.2.1.5, 18.2.2.1).

<sup>21</sup> See SD 52.1 (13.2).

<sup>22</sup> See SD 52.1 (9.1.2).

<sup>23</sup> See SD 52.1 (5.2.2.2).

ses a cessation, even death.<sup>24</sup> Its verb **āyūhati**<sup>25</sup> is an intensification of **ūhati**, “to consider, pay attention; to carry, convey,” and is formed by being augmented by the prefix *a-* with the infix *-y-* in between two vowels for the sake of euphonic combination or junction (*sandhi*).<sup>26</sup>

The verb **āyūhati** is rare in the Nikāyas, occurring almost only in the negative, **n’āyūhati**, “he strives not” in these verses:

*Yāva na gādhaṃ labhati  
nadīsu āyūhati sabba,gatthehi jantu  
gadhaṃ ca laddhāna thale ṭhito so  
n’āyūhati pāragato hi so’ti.*

While he has not found a footing  
in the river, a man will strive with all his limbs.  
But with a footing gained, standing on firm ground,  
he strives not: for, he has gone beyond. (S 263)

*es-upamā dāmali brāhmaṇassa  
khīṇ’āsavassa nipakassa jhāyino  
pappuyya jāti,marañassa antaṃ  
n’āyūhati pāragato hi so’ti.*

This, O Dāmali, is a parable for the brahmin.  
For, the influx-free, the adept meditator,  
having reached the end of birth and death,  
strives not—for, he has gone beyond. (S 264)

**Dāmali Sutta** (S 2.5/263\* f/1:47 f), SD 86.18

*Aññāya sabbāni nivesanāni  
anikāmayam aññataram pi tesam  
sa ve munī vīta,gedho agiddho  
n’āyūhati pāragato hi hoti.*

Knowing all the abodes (of the mind),  
not desiring any of them,  
that sage, indeed, greed-free, without greed,  
strives not—for, he has gone beyond. (Sn 210)

**Muni Sutta** (Sn 1.12/210/35), SD 49.20

The Sutta Nipāta Commentary explains: “‘He strive not’ means that he does neither the wholesome nor the unwholesome as one who has arisen in such and such an abode” (*tassa tassa nivesanassa nibbattakam kusalam akusalam va na karoti*, SnA 258,8-10). In other words, when one has become an arhat, he is beyond good and bad; that is, to say, whatever he does is naturally good without any karmic consideration on his part.<sup>27</sup>

**2.2.2.2** The verbs *ūhati*, too, is rare in the Nikāyas. Various verbal forms of *ūhati*, however, famously occurs in the Dvedha Vitakka Sutta (M 19), where the Bodhisattva (the Buddha-to-be) uses it to explain how he strives for awakening in a manner, “Let not my mind feel strained (*ma me cittaṃ ūhanīti*),”<sup>28</sup> meaning that he should not strive in such a manner that he strains himself so badly that he suddenly stops and is unable to go on any more.

This explanation by the Buddha of his moderation in striving—keeping to the middle way—as a Bodhisattva in quest of awakening is the case in point when he says to the deity in the Ogha,taraṇa Sutta: “With neither stopping, avuso, nor with straining, I crossed the flood.” [§4]

<sup>24</sup> Eg: loc sg, *~e kālaṇ,kato*, “in straining oneself there is death,” VvA 319,28 (Ee *āyūha~*); *~e manussa,bhāvaṃ pahāya paṭisandhi,gahaṇa,vasena tāvatimsa,deva.nikāyūpago ahosi*, “Straining, he abandoned the human state, and by attaining rebirth went amongst the heavenly host of the 33 devas” PvA 135,8; *~e kālam akāsi*, “he died straining,” Pv-a 162,8. See CPD: *āyūha*.

<sup>25</sup> See sv CPD + DP.

<sup>26</sup> On *sandhi*, see Warde, *Introduction to Pali*, 1963, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed 1974:213-218 (junction).

<sup>27</sup> On the arhat being beyond good and bad, see **Beyond good and evil**, SD 18.7.

<sup>28</sup> M 19,8/1:116,13+16 (SD 61.1).

**2.2.2.3** We have mentioned that the verb *āyūhati* is rare in the Nikāyas. Even rarer is its verbal noun *āyūhana*, “exerting oneself, striving, straining, struggling.” It often occurs in post-Nikāya works, especially the Commentaries, where it is usually used in connection with karma, that is, giving rise to, producing, especially the accumulation of karma that keeps us going on in samsara, holding us to it.

In the later literature, the verbal noun *āyūhana* acquired a technical sense of “accumulation,” and occurs in special reference to **karma**. In the formula of dependent arising (*paṭicca,samuppāda*), volitional formations (*saṅkhārā*) are said to have the function of *āyūhana*, the accumulation of the karmic activities of the mind, body and speech.<sup>29</sup>

**2.2.2.4** In the commentarial texts, the verbal noun, *āyūhana*, assumed the sense of “accumulating,” used especially in reference to karma [2.2.2.3]. This, however, does not seem to reflect any aspect of the word *anāyūhaṃ*, as used in **the Ogha,taraṇa Sutta**, where, free of any technicality, it simply means “without straining,” that is, without “over-reaching” in the sense of *going beyond the most* of what the Bodhisattva is able to enjoy of the sensualities in the 3 mansions or the worst of the pains and follies of self-mortification.

In short, he knows when to **stop**, which is, in fact, the spirit of moral virtue, the very first meaningful leg of the journey on the path of awakening.<sup>30</sup> In this sense, knowing when to stop (including moving away from) whatever endeavour or condition that does not help in spiritual growth is the beginning of our journey on the middle way.

## 2.3 THE FLOODS AND THE WAY ACROSS

### 2.3.1 The 4 floods

**2.3.1.1 The 4 floods** (*ogha*) are metaphors for the 4 mental influxes (*āsava*), that is, those of (1) sense-desires (*kām’ogha*), (2) existence (*bhav’ogha*), (3) views (*ditṭh’ogha*) and (4) ignorance (*avijj’ogha*) (SA 1:17,25). They are called “floods” (S 45.171) because they keep beings submerged in the samsaric flow, the cycle of existence, and do not allow them to rise up to higher states and to nirvana.<sup>31</sup>

The flood imagery is also found in the following verses in the Sa,gāthā,vagga of the Saṃyutta:

		<u>verses</u>	
• the Candana Sutta	(S 2.15)	S 298*-300*	SD 86.9
• the Māra,dhītu Sutta	(S 4.25)	S 511*-513*	SD 36.6
• the Ālavaka Sutta	(S 10.12)	S 848* f	SD 114.12

**2.3.1.2** The Saṃyutta Commentary define **the 4 floods** as follows:

- (1) the flood of sensuality (*kām’ogha*) = desire and lust for the 5 cords of sensual pleasure (*pañcasu kama,gūṇesu chanda,rāgo*), that is, agreeable forms, sounds, etc. (See S 45.176);
- (2) the flood of existence (*bhav’ogha*) = desire and lust for form-sphere existence and formless-sphere existence and attachment to dhyana;<sup>32</sup>
- (3) the flood of views (*ditṭh’ogha*) = the 62 views (*dvā,satṭhi ditṭhiyo*) (D 1:12-38); and

<sup>29</sup> See Pm 1:52,14 + 26; Vism 528,12 (Vism:Ñ 17.51), 579,31-580,4 (Vism:Ñ 17.292-93).

<sup>30</sup> On moral virtue as the 1<sup>st</sup> basis for the 3 trainings, see SD 10.16 (1.6).

<sup>31</sup> SA 1:17,30-18,9; cf ThaA 1:198.

<sup>32</sup> *Rūpārūpa,bhavesu chanda,rāgo jhānanikan’ti ca bhav’ogho nāma* (SA 1:17,27).

- (4) the flood of ignorance (*avijj'ogha*) = lack of knowledge regarding the 4 noble truths (*catūsu saccesu aññāṇam*). (SA 1:17,25-29, 3:136; cf DA 3:1023; PmA 1:117)

### **2.3.2 The way across the floods**

**2.3.2.0** The 2 Sutta keywords ***appatiṭṭham*** and ***anāyūham*** [§6c] refer to the “middle way” (*majjhima paṭipadā*) that rejects various dichotomies of extremes, expressed by the 4 floods [2.3.1]. The following reflection on the 4 floods plays on the 2 key verbs: “**stops**” (*patiṭṭhati*) and “**strains**” (*āyūhati*). Transcending both is the “middle path” discovered by the Buddha and which we should take to reach the same goal of awakening.

***Patiṭṭhāti*** [2.2.1] has the dictionary meaning of “is established; stands firmly; finds a support”. It has the sense of being “stuck” in a particular routine, a ritualistic or predictable life, so that we can or will do nothing else. In this sense, we are “**stopped**” or “stuck” at the body level by *the devotion to sensual pleasures*, prevented from growing mentally and spiritually. This is like being stuck in the past, that is, our imagination of it.

***Āyūhati*** [2.2.2] means “to strive, strain, struggle, exert oneself,” usually for something or someone that we see as worth having [2.3.2.2] or worth being, such as special powers or an eternal life [2.3.3.3]. The idea here is that of being caught in a rut and rush, a **strain** and struggle for what we imagine to be better than what we now *have* or what we now *are*. This is like being lost in the future, that is, our vision of it.

**2.3.2.1 The 1<sup>st</sup> flood**, that of sensuality (*kām'ogha*), stands in contrast against the moral and psychological dynamic of the noble eightfold path in terms of avoiding the 2 extremes of the indulgence in sensual pleasures and of self-mortification. The former extreme (sensuality) “**stops**” our spiritual progress bringing on moral stagnation in the sense that our devotion to sensuality profoundly distracts our mind from mindfulness and meditation so that it lacks both calm and clarity, which are vital as the bases for liberating wisdom.

The latter extreme (self-mortification) “**strains**” our spiritual progress because it severely weakens the body so that it is unable to support and nourish a severely tired mind. Although the flood of sensuality can overwhelm us through over-indulgence in our bodily needs and wants, depriving the body of its basic health will bring about discomfort, pain and ill-health that will negatively affect our mind, the vital tool of spiritual cultivation and freedom.

**The middle way** here is the cultivation of a “pleasure that is not to be feared,” as the Buddha states in **the Mahā Saccaka Sutta** (M 36) of his turning-point after giving the 2 extremes and taking the middle way of awakening.<sup>33</sup> This is the kind of pleasure or joy that transcends both those of the body and of the world—it is the joy of *jhāna*. With this joy, he calms and clears his mind so that it is able to know and see true reality, and awaken as the Buddha.<sup>34</sup>

**2.3.2.2 The 2<sup>nd</sup> flood**, that of existence (*bhav'ogha*), is the basis for our attachment to being and the craving for non-being. The attachment to **being** is rooted in the false view of eternalism (*sassata, diṭṭhi*), which induces us to fall for a *belief* in an eternal God or some abiding external agent or essence that saves or succours us, and *faith* in the false view or false guru that there is an eternal heaven or paradise or some blessing that we can gain after death. None of these views can be true for the simple reason that *whatever exists must exist in time*—they are all impermanent and part of samsara, the cycle of rebirths and redeaths.

<sup>33</sup> M 36,32.2 (SD 49.4).

<sup>34</sup> See **The Buddha discovered dhyana**, SD 33.1b.

This 2<sup>nd</sup> flood is also the basis for the false view of annihilationism (*uccheda, diṭṭhi*), the notion that this is our only life, and that with death, everything ends, at least for us. This is usually based on the wrong view that the body and the soul are the same thing: hence, when the body dies, the soul (whatever it is) also dies. In modern terms, this is the basis for the philosophy of materialism.

Such reactions to existence—represented by flood of existence—fed by the views of eternalism and of annihilationism reflect attitudes of either attachment or aversion to ourself. In the face of the vicissitudes of existence, the eternalist, as it were, tries to “hold back” (*oliyati*)<sup>35</sup> on life while the annihilationist tries to “run away” (*atidhavati*)<sup>36</sup> from life.

**The Diṭṭhi, gata Sutta** (It 2.2.12), that records the Buddha as addressing these 2 extremes, explains thus:

“... [D]elighting in the existence, bhikshus, are gods and men. They rejoice in existence; they approve of existence. When Dharma is being taught, their minds do not leap at it, do not brighten up, do not stay in it, are not freed. Thus, bhikshus, some hold back (*oliyanti*).

... Being pained, ashamed, disgusted by this very existence, they delight in non-existence, thus: ‘Concerning this existence, when the self breaks up, after death, gets annihilated, it will be destroyed and be no more—this is peace, this is sublime, this is the true state.’ Thus, bhikshus, some run away (*atidhavanti*) ...” (It 2.2.12/43 f), SD 57.16

While those who “hold back” try to run after their shadows, those who “run away” try to outrun them. Both are obsessed with their projections, imagining them to be real. The Buddha teaches us to see the shadow for what it is by “seeing things as they really are” (*yathā.bhūta,ñāṇa.dassana*)—views are both conditioned and dependently arisen. When we see our shadows for what they are, we will stop trying to hold back the unreal and stop running away from the real. By cultivating wisdom, we see life and death with clear and joyful equanimity.

“... and how, bhikshus, do those with eyes see? Herein, a monk sees the ‘become’ (*bhūta*) as ‘become.’ Having seen the ‘become’ as ‘become,’ he walks the path that is revulsion, dispassion and cessation towards the ‘become.’ This is how, bhikshus, those with eyes see...” (id).

**2.3.2.3 The 3<sup>rd</sup> flood**, that of views, overwhelms us with the extreme views of absolute existence (*sabbam atthi*, “everything exists”) and absolute non-existence (*sabbam n’atthi*, “nothing exists”). The middle way of dependent arising transcends these two extremes, as taught in **the Kaccā(ya)na, gotta Sutta** (S 12.15), thus:

“This world, Kaccāna, mostly<sup>37</sup> depends upon a duality: upon (the notion of) **existence** and (the notion of) **non-existence**.<sup>38</sup>

**5** But for one who sees **the arising<sup>39</sup> of the world<sup>40</sup>** as it really is with right wisdom, there is no notion of non-existence regarding the world.

<sup>35</sup> *Oliyati* (*ava/apa*, “down” + √LI, to stick), to recede, fall back, lean back. Opp: *atidhavati* (see foll).

<sup>36</sup> *Atidhavati* (*ati*, “too far” + √DHĀV, to run), to run past, transgress, deviate, go too far, over-reach. Opp: *oliyati* (see prec).

<sup>37</sup> “Mostly,” *yebhuyyena*, here refers to the ordinary being, except for the noble saints (*ariya, puggala*) who hold on to the extreme notions of either something exists (*atthitā*) (eternalism, *sassata*) or does not exist (*natthitā*) (annihilationism, *uccheda*) (SA 2:32). See foll n.

<sup>38</sup> Here, in rendering *atthitā* as “the notion of existence” and *n’atthitā* as “the notion of non-existence,” I have followed Bodhi, but they can also function as abstract nouns. See SD 6.13 (2).

<sup>39</sup> On the meaning of “world” (*loka*), see **Rohitassa S** (S 2.26) @ SD 7.2 (1).



And for one who sees **the ending of the world** as it really is with right wisdom, there is no notion of existence regarding the world.<sup>41</sup> (S 12.15), SD 6.13

Very often, our personal, social and religious conditionings skew our worldview in fixed ways of mindsets and tendencies. The world is always undergoing change: here we see rising, there we see falling; hence, the true reality is that of a dynamic vision of the rise and fall of things, and the flow of floods.

**2.3.2.4 The 4<sup>th</sup> flood**, that of ignorance, arises from the opposing attitudes of looking within (such as a self-view) and looking without at events and people as things and measuring them. Both extremes are rooted in delusion (*moha*). All that we are experiencing depends on where and how we direct our attention to the sense-contacts between our sense-faculties and their respective sense-objects. From our reaction to these arises consciousness (*viññāṇa*) interacting with name-and-form (*nāma,rūpa*), each providing a footing or support (*paṭiṭṭha*) for the other. [4.2]

Our **mind** is a sublime “name-caller”: it gives *names* to whatever external *forms* it perceives or recognizes; it “bends or wields” (*namati*) or “measures” (*mināti*) things to help us know and understand them. Even in the absence of those things, it conceives, precognizes<sup>42</sup> or concocts them. From this pattern of rising-falling arises existence.

So fascinating is this riddle of existence that, looking but not finding a “first beginning” for it, we are bent to fancy one. Where there is no single watchmaker of a complex organism, we postulate a single mover, creator, God after our own image. The riddle of existence fascinates us not because we understand it all fully, but that we are mired in ignorance, drowning in its flood.

### 3 Consciousness in the light of the Ogha,taraṇa Sutta

#### 3.1 THE CONSCIOUSNESS CYCLE

**3.1.1 Purpose of this study.** We have briefly discussed a definition of **consciousness** in connection with *appatiṭṭha* [2.2.1], which should be read first, if you have not done so. We will now examine consciousness a little deeper (in practical terms) in the light of the suttas. This survey will help us understand the role that our consciousness (or more simply, the mind) plays and what happens to it, when we turn to the middle way and keep moving along it.

#### 3.1.2 How conscious works

**3.1.2.1** Very simply, **consciousness** (*viññāṇa*) is how we make *sense* of things. This may seem like an over-simplification, but the beauty of this simplicity of defining the most profound of human experien-

<sup>40</sup> On the tr of the terms *samudaya* and *nirodha* see SD 6.13 (3).

<sup>41</sup> The 2 sentences of this verse refer to the 2 extremes rejected by the Buddha in **Lokāyatika S** (S 12.48/2:77), SD 17.15, incl 2 more: that all is unity and that all is plurality. Comy: In terms of dependent arising, “the origin of the world” is the direct conditionality (*anuloma paccay’ākāra*), “the ending of the world” is the reverse conditionality” (*paṭiloma paccay’ākāra*). “The world” refers to formations (*saṅkhāra*). In reflecting on the direct-order dependent arising, (seeing the rise of phenomena) one does not fall into the notion of annihilationism; reflecting on the reverse dependent origination, (seeing the ending of phenomena) one does not fall into the notion of eternalism (SA 2:33). The Buddha shows the origin and ending of the world (in terms of the 5 aggregates) in **Loka S** (S 12.44/2:73 f), SD 7.5.

<sup>42</sup> This word is used in its almost literal sense without any connotation of what the noun “precognition” means, that is, in the sense of making it up even *before* we really know it!

ces should not be lost in making it complicated and non-sensical! To make sense of things, firstly, simply means that, through our faculties of the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind, we accumulate (*āyūhati*) sights, sounds, smells, tastes, touches and thoughts. Each of these and all of them as a whole are the all that we *are*—this is the world we create for ourself, which we inhabit and how we see the worlds of others. This is to elaborate on the essentials of the remarkably succinct **Sabba Sutta** (S 35.23), SD 7.1.

**3.1.2.2** Our basic human experience is that we try to make sense of things [3.1.2.1]. When this is done, we **perceive** what we have sensed. How we have made sense of things goes on to make us recognize a “new” experience. Our experiences are new in the sense that they are happening right *now*: now is new. But the now moves on even as it arises, so whatever is present before our faculties is always *new*.

Our mind, however, is not used to holding on to the “new” sense-objects that keeps popping up at the windows of our senses. Instead of actually observing what really is new, we hold on, as it were, to a frame of the endless movie-shows of newness. What we mentally grasp is merely an image—we *imagine* it—and we hold on to this shadow of the present, that is, **the past**. Epistemologically, we have stopped knowing: we are **conceiving** those shadows of the present, and much of our conscious life is flooded with such conceptions, driven by lust, craving after existence, forming views, all rooted in ignorance.

Often enough, too, we jump into **the future**—we over-reach (*āyūhati*) beyond the present into what has not happen, wanting it to happen. We have projected a shadow of the present by conceiving about future hopes and fears. In short, our consciousness is so plastic that we can practically do anything we want with it. We need to understand how it *works*, and how it can work for *us*. This is what the Buddha has discovered that makes him the awakened one.

### 3.1.3 To be conscious “of”

**3.1.3.1** An unawakened person is unable to see consciousness for what it really is. It is like when we stare too long at ourself in a mirror. When we just gaze at one spot, we would seem to disappear or our image makes no sense any more. Our attention must move around, indeed, jump about, at various points of our image, like the tiny lights on a mocap suit [3.1.4.3]. The initial image that catches our attention is called the “**sign**” (*nimitta*).

When we find it fascinating, that is, pleasurable, we stay with that sign and “look around” at the features—these are called the “**details**” (*vyañjana*). We simply get lost in the details when they fascinate us. We try to hold on to them as long as we can, but then other signs compete for our attention—maybe a sound or some other sensation will take centre stage.

Then, the “sign and details” process begins again. This process occurs rapidly and more often than we care to notice. That’s the point—without right mindfulness, this perceptive process evolved into a conceptual process—we keep extending the limits of our imagined world of **formations**, constructed of thoughts, speech (including sounds) and bodily deeds.

**3.1.3.2** What does it mean to say that we are “**over-reaching**” [3.1.2.2] ourself through our senses [3.1.3.1]. Basically, it means that we do not know when or where consciousness actually stops. We, as it were, often try to push our consciousness beyond its natural limits, we strain it to be more than what it really *is*, and to show more than what can *be*. We see only a part but imagine it to be the whole. This is how we form **views**.

**Where does consciousness stop?** There are at least 2 vital parts to the answer to this question. We can only examine the first answer here, and work on the second one later [3.3]. The 1<sup>st</sup> answer relates to the content of the Buddha’s awakening. In **the Nagara Sutta** (S 12.65), this answer defines the awakening

of our Buddha Gotama, and in **the Mah'āpadāna Sutta** (D 14), it defines the awakening of the Buddha Vipassī,<sup>43</sup> thus:

When there is name-and-form, consciousness occurs;

with *name-and-form* as condition, there is consciousness.

... **this consciousness turns back.**<sup>44</sup> It goes no further than name-and-form.<sup>45</sup> (D 14; S 12.65)<sup>46</sup>

**3.1.3.3** Consciousness stops with **name-and-form**, but it does not end there: it “**turns back**” (*paccudāvattati*). Its etymology—how it is formed—is fascinating [4.1.3.2 n at “name-and-form”). This looped dependent arising of consciousness and name-and-form is the ultimate uroboros—the existential snake that keeps biting and feeding on itself.<sup>47</sup> This is the microcosmic samsara of personality, the root and gene of the macrocosmic samsara of rebirth and redeath.

How do consciousness (*viññāṇa*) and name-and-form (*name-and-form*) work in a loop?<sup>48</sup> This has to do with how we “sense” things [3.1.2]—the most fundamental of our existential processes. In an important sense, this is **all** that can and does happen to us at the most fundamental level of our consciousness. This is **all** that we are, *the all* that we can be: the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind, and their respective sense-objects: sights, sounds, smells, tastes, touches and thoughts [3.1.2.1].

**3.1.3.4** To use a simple model, we can say that our **subconscious**—a convenient common term for our karmic potential, life-continuum and rebirth-consciousness<sup>49</sup>—works like a 6-sensor radar processing whatever arises at the 6 sense-doors (they are “doors” in the sense that they let in sense-data into our consciousness). They are **all** happening *all* the time, at the *same* time. It’s like having 6 phones and they are all ringing at the same time.

Our capacity for **attention** (broadly *manasikāra*; specifically *samannāhāra*) gives us some sense of “free will” (a false notion as we shall soon see) of being able to direct it where we will. And there’s the rub: we are willing but not always *able* to find the right attention or hold it.<sup>50</sup> We are pulled and pushed by the strings of formations (*saṅkhārā*), our self-willed karmic burden of body, speech and mind. Hence, the unawakened consciousness is never free-willed: it is inevitably drawn to name-and-form.<sup>51</sup>

In short, consciousness cannot ordinarily exist on its own. It arises helplessly or helpfully dependent upon name-and-form. Hence, scholars cleverly remind us that we are always conscious “of” something.<sup>52</sup> The eye is conscious *of* visual forms; the ear *of* sounds; the nose *of* smells; the tongue *of* tastes and temperature; the body *of* touch, physical or otherwise; and the mind *of* mental objects or processes.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Vipassī is the 1<sup>st</sup> (earliest) of the 7 buddhas, ie, the 6<sup>th</sup> past buddha before Gotama Buddha. He lived 91 aeons ago (D 14,1.4/2:2,14-16), also (D 14,1.16-3.33), SD 49.8a + SD 49.8b (1.0.4.5).

<sup>44</sup> See SD 14.2 (3.2).

<sup>45</sup> *Paccudāvattati kho idaṃ viññāṇaṃ nāma, rūpamhā, nāparam gacchati*, as at **Nagara S** (S 12.65,9/2:104,30), SD 14.2. “Returns again to (acc),” **paccudāvattati** = *paṭi*, “counter, again” + *ud*, “away from” + *ā*, “around” + *vattati*, “to turn,” D 2:32,29; S 1:224,31, 2:104,30; A 5:337,9. See (10.3.4.2).

<sup>46</sup> **D 14,2.18/32,22-30** (SD 49.8a); **S 12.65,9/2:104,30** (SD 14.2)

<sup>47</sup> See SD 23.3 (1); SD 49.2 (3.3.2.3).

<sup>48</sup> This has been explained in some detail in SD 14.2 (3.3); so here is only a brief overview.

<sup>49</sup> On subconscious and related terms, see SD 3.13 (5.3.2.3); SD 9 (9.10.5.2); SD 17.8a (6.1.2); SD 17.8b (3 + 5.1); def at SD 17.8b (1.1.2).

<sup>50</sup> **Mahā Hatthi, padōpama S** (M 28,27), SD 6.16. On the basic perceptive process: *tajjo samannāhāro hoti*, see **Madhu, piṇḍika S** (M 18,16), SD 6.14; also **Cha Chakka S** (M 148,7-9/3:281 f + 28-39/3:284 f), SD 26.6.

<sup>51</sup> See **Free will and Buddhism**, SD 7.7.

<sup>52</sup> SD 17.8a (7.1).

<sup>53</sup> See SD 17.8a, esp (7.1): Consciousness is a process.

**3.1.3.5** Even then, this is only a manner of speaking, non-technically. Strictly speaking, it is **the mind** that is conscious *of* all these sensory processes. For, without the mind, none of this is possible. All these sensings occur with consciousness; they occur in the mind, with the mind. “They are mental states. The mind precedes all mental states; the mind is supreme, mind-made are they.” (Dh 1-2).<sup>54</sup> The quality of the mind depends on whether the intention (*cetanā*) behind the action is wholesome or not.<sup>55</sup>

In other words, when our **intention** is rooted in lust, hate or delusion—the unawakened mind is invariably riddled with some level of delusion—then the action (a thought, speech or bodily action) is unwholesome. It has a negative karmic potential, but when it fruits, it overwhelms us exponentially: karma tends to give us more than we deserve, whether we realize it or not. As long as there is the mind and its transitive consciousness (being “conscious of”), there is karma.

### **3.1.4 The quality of the mind**

**3.1.4.1** We can speak of the mind’s quality on 3 levels: the moral, the psychological and the spiritual—this reflects the 3 aspects of the Buddhist training of moral virtue, mental concentration and wisdom. We most often talk about **the moral quality of our mind in action** (especially of our body and speech): as we think, so we speak and act. As unawakened beings, we are inevitably rooted in and conditioned by **the 3 unwholesome roots** of greed, hate and delusion.

The preconscious roots of greed, hate and delusion go even deeper, fed by the latent toxins of our **unconscious** drives of lust, revulsion and ignorance.<sup>56</sup> How do these latent tendencies (*anusaya*) act on us? Through perception, we measure our present sense-objects against a massive timeless mental database of past encounters—a kind of collective unconscious.<sup>57</sup>

When a present sense-object—a sight, sound, smell, taste, touch or thought—links up with a similar pleasant object in the past, we recognize it as pleasant, too, and are drawn to it, to approve it, to collect it—this feeds our **lust**. When a present sense-object evokes an unhappy or unpleasant past experience, we would unconsciously, helplessly, reject it, or try to push it away, even to lash out violently and hurtfully like a wounded beast against some unseen tormentor in the dark forest of karma—this feeds our **revulsion**.

When a present experience does not “compute,” when it does not have any mental prototype of a pleasant or unpleasant memory, we would simply ignore it—so we feed out **ignorance**. This is, in fact, the most common and fleeting of our mental processes that we are overwhelmed by ignorance, and we don’t even know it!

**3.1.4.2 The psychological or existential quality** of our mind is rarely evident except under exceptionally wholesome conditions, such as the presence of someone or something truly good, like the Buddha or his Dharma. Even then, for lasting effect and wholesome transformation, we need to cultivate such qualities. Since our actions are rooted in the mind, we need to trim, even exterminate, the negative roots, and cultivate the wholesome roots of non-greed, non-hate and non-delusion.

The cultivation of the wholesome roots is best done through **mental cultivation**, that is, mindfulness and meditation. Simply, mindfulness (*sati*) is directing our mind to wholesome mental objects and not forgetting the good and joyful; meditation (*bhāvanā*) is to keep our mind on the wholesome as the basis for higher states of wholesomeness. In other words, while mindfulness keeps our mind on a leash of calm

<sup>54</sup> See SD 2.13 (2.2.3).

<sup>55</sup> On intention, see **Sañcetanika S** (A 10.206), SD 3.9.

<sup>56</sup> On the terms preconscious and unconscious, as used here, see SD 17.8a (6.1); SD 17.8b esp (1; 2.2); SD 7.10 (3.3).

<sup>57</sup> On the latent tendencies (*anusaya*), see **Sammā Ditthi S** (M 9,65-67), SD 11.14; **Anusaya**, SD 31.3 (8.2).

and good, meditation refines our consciousness in terms of wisdom, of ever clearly seeing true reality with joy.

**3.1.4.3 The spiritual quality** of our mind depends on how well we have refined our consciousness through our vision of true reality. What is this vision? It is knowing and seeing how our consciousness is fed by name-and-form, which is in turn fed by consciousness [3.1.3]. Here, consciousness refers to the mind, or more specifically, **the attention** [3.1.3.4] that “names” the “forms.” Hence, the quality of that attention is decided by whether it is wholesome or unwholesome—**intention** [3.1.3.5], then, is *the moral quality of our attention*.

This attention is also termed “sense-contact” (*phassa*), that is, where we direct our attention in a sense-experience. Our views arise from this attention to the “signs and details” of our experiences [3.1.3.1], like tiny lights or bright markers on a mocap (motion capture) or haptic suit for recording the wearer’s body movements in virtual-reality movie-making.

Hence, in **the Brahma, jāla Sutta** (D 1), the Buddha again and again declares in the Sutta refrain: “ ... even that [every view] is conditioned by sense-contact” (*tad api phassa, paccayā*) (D 1:41-44). All that we think about, every view we hold, arises through sense-contact, shaped by it. We are such sense-based beings. The problem is that we still do not know how it all really works or what it actually does to us.

**3.1.4.4** Clearly, then, we need to understand at least one subtle but helpful point: that **we cannot blame the world or anyone else** for the presence of the 3 roots of greed, hate or delusion. Since both the world and people are but moments in our mind, constructed as we experience them, who is there really to blame? To blame is to ascribe the source of these unwholesome roots that lurk deep in our own consciousness.

Hence, it is not a matter of *blaming* but one of seeing and understanding so that we can uproot our unwholesomeness, as the Buddha declares in **the Nibbedhika Pariyāya Sutta** (A 6.63):<sup>58</sup>

*Saṅkappa, rāgo purisassa kāmo  
n’ete kāmā yāni citrāni loke  
saṅkappa, rāgo purisassa kāmo  
tiṭṭhanti citrāni tath’eva loke  
ath’ettha dhīrā vinayanti chandan’ti*

The thought of lust<sup>59</sup> is a person’s desire:<sup>60</sup> there are no sensual pleasures in the diversely beautiful<sup>61</sup> in the world. The thought of lust is a person’s desire. The diversely beautiful<sup>62</sup> in the world remain just as they are. So here<sup>63</sup> the wise remove desire (for them).<sup>64</sup>

## 3.2 NAMING AND FORMING CONSCIOUSNESS

### 3.2.1 Where to look

<sup>58</sup> This verse recurs as S 104\* in **Na Santi S** (S 1.34,6/1:22), SD 42.6, except that line a has been omitted and it reads *na te* for *n’ete*. The **A 6.63** verse is qu at Kvu 370; NmA 1:12. Comys however qu the verse **S 104**: SA 1:63×2, which attr it to comy on **Pasūra S**, Sn 830 (or one of its verses): SnA 2:539; AA 2:41. Cf Tha 674.

<sup>59</sup> On *saṅkappa, rāga*, “thought of lust” or “lustful intention,” see SD 6.11 (2.2.2.4).

<sup>60</sup> *Saṅkappa, rāgo purisassa kāmo*. Be Ce Ee Se all give the same 5-line stanza. It recurs in **Na Santi S** (S 1.34), SD 42.6 without line a. Here [§3.4] the stress is in our own thinking or intention, while in S 1.34, it is on the nature of the world. Note how line a flows into b, and line c into d. Line e points to what should be done.

<sup>61</sup> “Diversely beautiful,” *citra*: see SD 6.11 (2.2.2.3).

<sup>62</sup> Note that “the diversely beautiful” (*citrāni*) is plural.

<sup>63</sup> “So here the wise” (*ath’ettha dhīrā’ti atha etesu ārammaṇesu paṇḍitā chanda, rāgaṃ vinayanti*, “here then the wise removes lust and desire in the sense-objects,” SA 1:63). In other words, “here” refers to our minds.

<sup>64</sup> On the verse’s significance, see SD 6.11 (2.2.2.1(2)).

**3.2.1.1** In the **Mahā,viyūha Sutta** (Sn 4.13), the Buddha echoes the wisdom of the Nibbedhika Pariyāya Sutta [3.1.4.4], this time, giving us a hint of the solution, thus:

<i>Passaṃ naro dakkhiti nāma,rūpaṃ</i>	A seeing man sees but name-and-form.
<i>disvāna va-ñ-ñassati tāni-m-eva</i>	Having seen, he will but know only these.
<i>kāmaṃ bahuṃ passatu appakaṃ va</i>	Granted that he may see much or little--
<i>na hi tena suddhiṃ kusala vadanti</i>	(Sn 909) the wise speak not of purity in that way.

**The Sabba Sutta** (S 35.23) says that **all that we are** comprise the sense-faculties and their respective sense-objects [3.1.2.1], that is, the “tools and things” of our existential self, the only means and ends we can know in this self-created world. Hence, **Sn 909** reminds us not to make anything of *name-and-form*, the names we give to “thing” in this self-created world.

The mind is not “purified” therein. What, then, do we make of this amazing understanding of the “looped dependent arising” where consciousness constructs itself? [3.1.3.2].

**3.2.1.2** To build on what we have understood so far, we must now ask: What really is (or are) **name-and-form** (*nāma,rūpa*)? **The Sammā,diṭṭhi Sutta** (M 9) is instructive here:

“Feeling, perception, volition, contact and attention—these, avuso, are called ‘**name**.’<sup>65</sup>  
The 4 great elements and material forms derived from the 4 great elements<sup>66</sup>—these, avuso, are called ‘**form**’. ...  
With the arising of consciousness, there is the *arising* of name and form.  
With the ending of consciousness, there is the *ending* of name and form.”

(M 9,54/1:53), SD 11.14

This is, in fact, a description of how our mind (“name”) and body (“form”) work, how they arise and cease. But this arising-ceasing goes in a loop—an existential cycle—in our unawakened being: we are but a conscious body of name-and-form.

**3.2.1.3** **The Kara,ja,kāya Brahma,vihāra S** (A 10.208) put this even more tersely: “This mortal life is but **an intermediate state of consciousness**” (*citt’antaro ayam ... macco*).<sup>67</sup> This life is but a moment of consciousness in a stream of consciousness; or, poetically, this mortal frame is but a halfway house of the mind.<sup>68</sup>

The Aṅguttara Commentary explains the term *citt’antara* in 2 ways:

- (1) *citta,karaṇo*, “caused by the mind [consciousness] or the mind is the cause,” that is, taking *antara* as a cause;<sup>69</sup> or
- (2) *citten’eva antariko*, it is the rebirth-consciousness.<sup>70</sup> (AA 5:77)

The first answer is germane to our current discussion. The “intermediate state of consciousness” is that interaction between our consciousness and name-and-form [3.1.3.2] we have been discussing all this while. This very moment, we *are* that consciousness arising with name-and-form: that name-and-

<sup>65</sup> *Vedanā saññā cetanā phasso manasikāro idaṃ vuccati nāmaṃ*; see Intro (8).

<sup>66</sup> See M 9,54/1:53, SD 11.14; M 28,5/1:185 (SD 6.16); Vism 443.

<sup>67</sup> A 10.208,2.2 + 3.7 + 3.15, SD 2.10 (2.2).

<sup>68</sup> See SD 2.10 (2.2).

<sup>69</sup> See SD 54.2a (3.2.1.3).

<sup>70</sup> For details, see SD 2.10 (2.2.2).

form conditioning our consciousness, then consciousness conditioning name-and-form. What happens next in this moment of consciousness?<sup>71</sup>

**3.2.1.4 The Nagara Sutta** (S 12.65) lays out the whole process of the arising of consciousness, and with it, “this whole mass of suffering” that is samsara, follows, thus:

<b>With <u>name-and-form</u> as condition,</b>	<b>there is <i>consciousness</i>.</b>
<b>With <u>consciousness</u> as condition,</b>	<b>there is <u>name-and-form</u>.</b>
<b>With <i>name-and-form</i> as condition,</b>	<b>there are the 6 sense-bases.</b>
With the 6 sense-bases as condition,	there is contact.
With contact as condition,	there is feeling.
With feeling as condition,	there is craving.
With craving as condition,	there is clinging.
With clinging as condition,	there is existence.
With existence as condition,	there is birth.
With birth as condition,	there is decay-and-death.

Sorrow, lamentation, mental pain, physical pain and despair arise.  
Thus there is the arising of this whole mass of suffering.

Having understood how consciousness arises, the Buddha discovers how it ends, along with the ending of this whole mass of suffering, in **the Nagara Sutta** (S 12.65), thus:

Then, bhikshus, this occurred to me:

‘I have indeed found **this path of awakening**, namely:

<b>With the ending of <u>name-and-form</u>,</b>	<b>there is the ending of</b>	<b><i>consciousness</i>.</b>
<b>With the ending of <u>consciousness</u>,</b>	<b>there is the ending of</b>	<b><u>name-and-form</u>.</b>
<b>With the ending of <i>name-and-form</i>,</b>	<b>there is the ending of</b>	<b>the 6 sense-bases.</b>
With the ending of <b>the 6 sense-bases,</b>	there is the ending of	contact.
With the ending of <b>contact,</b>	there is the ending of	feeling.
With the ending of <b>feeling,</b>	there is the ending of	craving.
With the ending of <b>craving,</b>	there is the ending of	clinging.
With the ending of <b>clinging,</b>	there is the ending of	existence.
With the ending of <b>existence,</b>	there is the ending of	birth.
With the ending of <b>birth,</b>	there is the ending of	decay-and-death:

Sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain, and distress end.

Thus, there is the ending of this whole mass of suffering.

**18 ‘The ending! The ending!’** thus, bhikshus, it occurred to me. In things unheard before, the eye arose in me, knowledge arose, wisdom arose, true knowledge arose, light arose.

(S 12.65,17+18), SD 14.2

### 3.3 LIBERATED CONSCIOUSNESS

#### 3.3.1 Beyond subject and object

**3.3.1.1** Consciousness, as we have noted, “makes sense” of things [3.1.2.1]. To go deeper, we may note that we not only try to **sense** things, that is, see them as “objects” of the senses, but more so, we

<sup>71</sup> For other details, see SD 2.10 (2.2.3-2.2.4).

“make sense” of them as the “subjects” of the way we think: we subjectify them. In this sense, it helps to understand consciousness as how our mind sees as **subjects** (*nāma*) what are merely **objects** (*rūpa*) of our sense-experiences.

The mind does not merely “name” things and experiences, but it gives them a “bad” name or a “good” one. Hence, *name-and-form* is a net in which consciousness is enmeshed.

**3.3.1.2** When we have learned to free consciousness from this sticky net of name-and-form, we are on the path of awakening. This beautiful dialogue between the wise elder Sāriputta and his student, the remarkable young monk Samiddhi, preserved in **the (Navaka) Samiddhi Sutta** (A 9.14), is profoundly instructive:

- (1) “On what basis, Samiddhi, does a person’s intentions and thoughts arise?”  
“On the basis of **name-and-form**, bhante.”
- (2) “How, Samiddhi, do they become diversified?”<sup>72</sup>  
“In **the elements**, bhante.”<sup>73</sup>
- (3) “In what, Samiddhi, is their arising?”<sup>74</sup>  
“They arise in **contact**, bhante.”
- (4) “In what, Samiddhi, is their convergence?”<sup>75</sup>  
“They converge in **feeling**, bhante.”<sup>76</sup>
- (5) “In what, Samiddhi, is their leader?”  
“Their leader, bhante, is **samadhi**.”
- (6) “In what, Samiddhi, is their authority?”  
“Their authority, bhante, is **mindfulness**.”
- (7) “In what, Samiddhi, is their crossing over?”  
“They cross over, bhante, in **wisdom**.”<sup>77</sup>
- (8) “In what, Samiddhi, is their essence?”  
“Their essence, bhante, is in **freedom**.”
- (9) “In what, Samiddhi, is their culmination?”  
“Their culmination, Samiddhi, is in **the deathfree**.”<sup>78</sup> (A 9.14/4:385 f), SD 96.2

### 3.3.2 The way out

**3.3.2.1** Links 1-4 in **the (Navaka) Samiddhi Sutta** [3.3.1.2] are identical to the first 7 links of dependent arising, thus:

<i>avijjā, paccayā</i>	<i>saṅkhārā</i>	with ignorance as condition, there are volitional formations;
<i>saṅkhāra, paccayā</i>	<i>viññāṇam</i>	with volitional formations as condition, there is consciousness;
<i>viññāṇa, paccayā</i>	<i>nāma, rūpam</i>	with consciousness as condition, there is name-and-form;

<sup>72</sup> Or, “How do they proliferate?” alluding to mental proliferation: see SD 16.4 (2).

<sup>73</sup> Basically, this refers to earth (solidity), water (fluidity, cohesiveness), fire (heat, decay) and wind (air, gaseousness, movement). More generally, this refers to 18 elements, ie, the 6 internal senses (the 6 sense-faculties), the 6 external senses (the 6 sense-objects) and their respective consciousnesses. See **Bahu, dhātuka S** (M 115,4), SD 29.1a.

<sup>74</sup> *Te pana samiddhi kiṃ samudayā.*

<sup>75</sup> *Te pana samiddhi kiṃ samosaraṇā.*

<sup>76</sup> Here, feelings are understood as being conditioned and impermanent. Up to this point, the questions and answers refer to all experiences. (5-7) refers to the path-factors; (8) to the fruition; and (9) to the final goal.

<sup>77</sup> *Sat’ādhīpateyya bhante.*

<sup>78</sup> *Amat’ogadhā bhante.*



<i>nāma,rūpa,paccayā</i>	<i>sa'āyatanaṃ</i>	with name-and-form as condition, there are the 6 sense-bases;
<i>sa'āyatana,paccayā</i>	<i>phasso</i>	with the 6 sense-bases as condition, there is contact;
<i>phassa,paccayā</i>	<i>vedanā</i>	with contact as condition, there is feeling;
<i>vedanā,paccayā</i>	<i>taṇhā</i>	with feeling as condition, there is craving.

**Ignorance** and **volitional formations** constitute the karmic process from the past. Rooted in ignorance, our karma as volitional formations condition the present rebirth process, beginning with **consciousness** which works with **name-and-form** to feed our **6 sense-bases** (the “elements”), which, in turn, take in more sense-data at the **contact** link. Then, our **feelings** take over, measuring how pleasant or unpleasant those contacts are, or to ignore the neutral ones, thus feeding the latent tendencies of lust, revulsion and ignorance.<sup>79</sup> [4.1.4.1]

At this point, with proper training and wisdom, we mindfully opt out the “measuring” game, and simply regard all our feelings as being mind-made, conditioned and impermanent. Just as they arise, we let them go. When this is done with a mind in **samadhi**, we generate mental joy so that we no more fall for bodily joy. The joyful mind is also blissfully calm and clear.

This helps us maintain **mindfulness**, the ability to discern good from bad and keep to good, with the help of lovingkindness and the perception of impermanence. From this **wisdom** arises: we are able to apply our mindfulness and knowledge to let go of unwholesome states and overcome lust and craving. This brings us at least temporary freedom (*samaya,vimutti*).<sup>80</sup> When we persevere rightly in this manner, in time, we will attain **the deathfree**, nirvana.

**3.3.2.2** The Buddha and the arhats have escaped from this net by seeing **name-and-form** for what they really are: the dichotomy of object and subject, activating **6 sense-bases**, bringing about **sense-contact** —when we start “making sense” of our experiences. Now, our **feeling** takes over to judge and measure those experiences, to collect or reject or ignore them [3.1.4.1]. For the Buddha and the arhats, it all stops right here.

This is beautifully shown at the end of **the Kevaḍḍha Sutta** (D 11). The houselord’s son Kevaḍḍha is told by the Buddha of a meditating monk who wanted to know where the 4 elements (earth, water, fire and wind) “cease without a trace.” Using his psychic powers, he went up to the heavens to ask the highest Gods themselves. None knew the answer until the highest God himself directed the monk to the Buddha.

The Buddha answers thus:

“The consciousness without attribute [non-manifesting],<sup>81</sup> without end, radiant all around<sup>82</sup>—

<sup>79</sup> On this process of dependent arising, see SD 5.16 (8.3).

<sup>80</sup> See SD 4.25 (2.1.2.3).

<sup>81</sup> “Without attribute [signless],” *anidassana*, “invisible.” Nāṇananda renders it as “non-manifesting” (*Concept and Reality in Early Buddhist Thought*, Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1971:59). See Bodhi’s important n at M:ÑB 1249 n513. See also Thanissaro’s nn: <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.11.0.than.html> & <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.049.than.html>.

<sup>82</sup> “Radiant all around,” *sabbato,pabhaṃ*, where *pabhaṃ*, vl *pahaṃ*. Nāṇamoli, in his *Majjhima tr*, takes *pabhaṃ* to be the negative present participle of *pabhavati* (“to be able”)—*apabhaṃ*—the negative-prefix *a* elided in conjunction with *sabbato*: “The sense can be paraphrased freely by ‘not predicating being in relation to “all,”’ or ‘not assuming of “all” that it is or is not in an absolute sense.’” (M:ÑB 1249 n513). But, argues Bodhi, “if we take *pabhaṃ* as ‘luminous,’ which seems better justified, the [Majjhima] verse links up with the idea of the mind as being intrinsically luminous [A 1:10]” (id). See D:W 557 n241. Cf A 1.10 (SD 8.3) where the mind is said to by nature radiant (*pa-bhassara*) & A 2:139 where the light of wisdom (*paññā,pabha*) is called the best of lights. See Bodhi’s important n at M:ÑB 1249 n513. See also Sue Hamilton, *Identity and Experience*, 1996:100 f.

Here, earth, water, fire, and wind find no footing;  
 here, long and short, small and great, fair and foul;  
 here, name and form are destroyed traceless:  
 with consciousness' cessation this stops here.”<sup>83</sup>

(D 11,85.4), SD 1.7

**3.3.2.3** How do the awakened ones keep themselves free from the sticky net of experience? They neither run after nor are they caught up in the **signs** or **details** of forms [4.1.3.1], whether external (through perception at the level of the 5 physical sense-bases) or internal (through conception or mental projection). They enjoy a “**signless freedom of mind**” (*animitta ceto, vimutti*).<sup>84</sup>

The arhat's awakened consciousness, radiant with joy and open with wisdom, is like the wind that sticks to no net, that no net can catch. But unlike the wind, the awakened mind blows not anywhere. It neither seeks name-and-form nor is defined by them. His mind is clear and void of all naming and forming, empty of all formations. For, he enjoys the “**void freedom of mind**” (*suññata ceto, vimutti*).<sup>85</sup> His mind, too, is said to be free of signs and views. It is like a clear mirror, simply seeing and reflecting true reality.<sup>86</sup> It is said to be undirected, event-free, basis-free (*appaṭiṭṭha appavatta anārammaṇa*).<sup>87</sup>

Hence, he is free of all existence, free from all that define existence. His samsaric journey has ended; the traveller's burden all disposed of—he is at the journey's end. He has won “liberation by final knowledge” (*aññā, vimokha*, Sn 1107),<sup>88</sup> whose fruit is the final knowledge that is nirvana (*aññā, phala*, A 9.37).<sup>89</sup> [3.3.2.4]

**3.3.2.4** The suttas are rich in describing the kind of mind or consciousness that is freed through meditation. Even though this is only a temporary freedom [4.3.2.1], we can catch a revealing glimpse of the same profound beauty that an unawakened mind feels. Here are two descriptions of such a mind. The first is related by the Buddha of Sāriputta's experience, and the second is that by Ānanda of a teaching he received from the Buddha.

In the **Anupada Sutta** (M 111), *Sāriputta* describes how his mind in dhyana is so beautifully free even only just in the 1<sup>st</sup> dhyana before he has awakened, thus:

“Regarding those states (the various qualities of the 1<sup>st</sup> dhyana), he dwelled neither attracted to nor repelled by them; independent and detached from them; free and dissociated from them; with a mind rid of limits. He understood: ‘There is an escape beyond,’ and with the cultivation of that (dhyana), he confirmed that there is.”<sup>90</sup> (M 111)

<sup>83</sup> The Buddha makes a similar statement by way of an Udāna (inspired utterance) on the parinirvana of **Bāhiya Dāru, cīriya**: “Where water, earth, fire and wind find no footing, | There neither brightness burns nor sun shines | There neither moon gleams nor darkness reigns. | When a sage, a brahmin, through wisdom has known this by himself. | Then, he is freed from form and formless, from joy and pain.” (U 9). A similar verse is found at S 1.69/1:15, and a similar teaching is given by Mahā Cunda to Channa (S 35.87/4:59. On this verse in **Kevalāḍḍha S** (D 11,85), SD 1.7, see D:W 557 n242 & **Mahā Parinibbāna S**, SD 9 (9.8.6).

<sup>84</sup> **Mahā Vedalla S** (M 43,27) + SD 30.2 (3.2.3).

<sup>85</sup> See **Mahā Vedalla S** (M 43,27) + SD 30.2 (3.2.3). “Basis-free” (*anarammaṇa*) means that the mind makes no “object” or “thing” of any sense-experience. See M 43,33+36 (SD 30.2).

<sup>86</sup> On the freedom of mind that is “signless, undirected and void,” see SD 17.8a (11.3).

<sup>87</sup> **Nibbāna Paṭisaṃyutta S 1** (U 8.1/80), SD 50.1.

<sup>88</sup> **Udaya Māṇava Pucchā** (Sn 5.14/214).

<sup>89</sup> (**Navaka**) **Ānanda S** (A 9.37/4:428,11), SD 55.18.

<sup>90</sup> *So tesu dhammesu anupāyo anapāyo anissito appaṭibaddho [vl appaṭibandho] vippamutto visāmyutto vimariyādī, katena cetasā viharati. So “atthi uttari nissaraṇaṇ’ti pajānāti. Tab bahulī, kārā atthi tv-ev-assa [Ce Ee atthi t’e-*

**The (Navaka) Ānanda Sutta** (A 9.37) recounts the elder Ānanda explaining to a nun how in deep meditation, we are percipient but undistracted in any way, thus:

“Sister, that samadhi wherein one neither leans forward nor shrinks back,<sup>91</sup> and that is neither restrained nor checked willfully. But, by being mentally freed, it is steady; being steady, it is content; being content, it is unagitated. This samadhi, sister, is said by the Blessed One to be the fruition of final knowledge.’ When one is thus percipient, too, avuso, one does not experience that base.”<sup>92</sup> (A 9.37), SD 55.18

This passage is interesting in that Ānanda explains how a meditator is “percipient” (*saññī*) of all the beautiful qualities but “does not experience that base” (*tad āyatanaṃ no paṭisaṃvedeti*). In other words, no thoughts occur during dhyana, yet we can still recognize or “feel” [2.1.2(1)], in real time, the calm, clarity and joy of it all.<sup>93</sup>

### 3.3.3 The radiant mind

**3.3.3.1 The Uddesa Vibhaṅga Sutta** (M 138) describes, on a deeper level, such a consciousness or mind as being neither distracted or scattered without (*bahiddhā c’assa viññānaṃ avikkhittam avisatam*, M 3:223) nor established (remains stuck) within (*ajjhataṃ ... asaṅghitam*, id).<sup>94</sup> In other words, no outside sense-stimulation or physical sense-experiences can cloud or shake the mind, nor any thought trouble or haunt it.

When the mind gives no basis or footing for name-and-form, it is said to be “non-manifesting” (*anidassana*) that is, it cannot be characterized, without attributes;<sup>95</sup> hence, it is beyond the range of eye-consciousness.<sup>96</sup> Such a calm and clear mind, we have noted [3.3.2.4] is still percipient—it recognizes wholesome states, especially joy and peace, and utterly thought-free [3.3.2.4].

**3.3.3.2 The Bhadd’eka,ratta Sutta** (M 131) speaks of the mind of a meditator “who delights in the auspicious oneness” (*bhadd’eka,ratta*) as being “invincible (*asamhīram*),<sup>97</sup> unshakable (*asaṅkuppam*)”<sup>98</sup> (M 3:187,25\*). Such a mind is “invincible, unshakable” because it is undefeated and undeterred by lust and other defilements. This, however, only describes the spiritually evolving mind.<sup>99</sup> Elsewhere, this pair of words describe **the liberated mind** (eg, Tha 649) and nirvana itself (eg, Sn 1149).

*v’assa] hoti.* (M 111,4/3:25), SD 56.4. By “the escape beyond,” Sāriputta is referring to the next meditative state, the 2<sup>nd</sup> dhyana.

<sup>91</sup> Comy: “Leans forward” with lust, attracted to a pleasant mental state; “shrinks back” with hate from an unpleasant state (AA 4:199,15).

<sup>92</sup> *Yāyaṃ bhagini samādhi na cābhinato na cāpanato na ca sa,saṅkhāra,niggayha,vārita,gato, vimutt’attā ṭhito, ṭhit,attā santusito, santusit’attā no paritassati. Ayaṃ bhagini samādhi aññā,phalo vutto bhagavatā’ti. Evaṃ saññī’pi kho āvuso tad āyatanaṃ no paṭisaṃvedetīti.* (A 9.37,9-14/4:428), SD 55.18.

<sup>93</sup> On thoughts ceasing in dhyana, see **The Buddha discovered dhyana**, SD 33.1b (6.2.2). On how perception occurs in dhyana, see **(Dasaka) Samādhi S** (A 10.6), SD 53.18.

<sup>94</sup> M 138,3/3:223, (SD 33.14).

<sup>95</sup> D 1:223,12\* = M 1:329,30; M 1:127.36; Vbh 70,29 Said of *nibbana*, S 4:370,12, also sutta title.

<sup>96</sup> *Cakkhu,viññāṇassa āpātham anupagamanato anidassanaṃ nāma* (MA 2:413,10).

<sup>97</sup> V 2:96,1; M 131/3:187,25\*; S 8.8/743\*/1:193,19 = Tha 1243; A 4:141,11; Tha 649; It78,1\* ≈ Ap 194,22 = 262,7; Sn 1149; J 4:283.

<sup>98</sup> On the tr of *bhadd’eka,ratta*, see SD 8.9 (1).

<sup>99</sup> Note that the vb *samhīrati* recurs at M 131,8 (SD 8.9), suggesting that we should watch the present moment without being overwhelmed by self-views regarding the past or the future.

To be “vincible” (*samhīram*) is to be vulnerable to defilements. **The radiant mind** (*pabhassara, citta*) is blurred and dimmed by outside defilements (*āgantukā upakkilesā*),<sup>100</sup> that is, when we are caught up with the worldly workings of the senses. Then, we **stop** (*patiṭṭhati*), beguiled and blinded by their pleasures and pains, and we **strain** (*āyūhati*) to *collect* more of what we find desirable, *push away* what we deem undesirable, *ignore* what we make no sense of. The flood-gates are broken and the floods of sensuality, existence, views and ignorance rush in to wash us away and drown us.

When we understand what these 4 floods are, we see the depths and dimensions of the Buddha’s teachings on the ethical, existential, metaphysical and epistemological aspects of our lives. With this understanding, we safely cross the floods. “Crossing the floods” (*ogha, tarāṇa*), then, is simply another word for **the noble path** (*ariya, magga*) (PmA:Be 22).

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## Ogha, tarāṇa Sutta

### The Discourse on Flood-crossing

S 1.1

1 Thus have I heard.

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

2 Then, when the night was far spent, a certain deity of exceeding beauty, lighting up the whole of Jeta’s grove, approached the Blessed One, saluted him and stood at one side.

3 Standing at one side, that deity said to the Blessed One:

4 “How, sir,<sup>101</sup> did you cross the flood?”<sup>102</sup>

“With neither stopping, avuso, nor with straining, I crossed the flood.”<sup>103</sup>

5 “But how, sir, with neither stopping nor with straining, did you cross the flood?”

“When I stopped, avuso, I sank.<sup>104</sup> When I struggled, was swept away. Thus, avuso, did I, with neither stopping nor with straining, cross the flood.”<sup>105</sup>

[The deity:]

6 *Cirassam vata passāmi* [Ce *passāma*]  
*brāhmaṇam parinibbutam*

After a long time, at last, I see [we see]  
a brahmin<sup>106</sup> who is fully quenched,<sup>107</sup>

<sup>100</sup> **Pabhassara S** (A = 1.5.9-10 = 1.6.1-2/1:10), SD 8.3 (6); MA 1:167.

<sup>101</sup> “Sir,” *mārisa* (pl *mārisā*, Sn 682; J 1:47, 49) (Skt *māriṣa* = *maṛṣa*), meaning, “worthy colleague or friend,” an affectionate term (*piya.samudācāra, vacanam*) devas use to address others, esp devas in their host (S 11.3/1:218, -34). Hence, to address the Buddha or any monks thus (eg S 40.10/4:270,16, Sakra addresses Moggallāna thus, SD 12.22; A 6.34,4, where brahma Tissa addresses Moggallāna thus, SD 54.5) is to regard them as “one of us.” It is also used by kings to address one another (S 3.12/1:80,4). Comy explains it as a term of affection wishing another to “be without suffering” (*niddukkha*, SA 1:17,14).

<sup>102</sup> *Katham nu tvam mārisa ogham atarīti*. These “floods,” technically known as “influxes” (*āsava*) (2.3.1).

<sup>103</sup> *Appatiṭṭham khvāham āvuso anāyūham ogham atarin’ti*. The 2 words *appatiṭṭham* and *anāyūham* refer to the “middle way” (*majjhima paṭipadā*): see (2.1.2).

<sup>104</sup> *Yadā svāham āvuso santiṭṭhāmi, tadāssu saṃsīdāmi*. Cf **Hemavata S** (Sn 1.9): “In whom delight and existence are fully destroyed, | he sinks not into the deep” (*nandī.bhava, parikkhīno | so gambhīre na sīdati*. Sn 175).

<sup>105</sup> *Yadā svāham āvuso āyūhāmi, tadāssu nibbuyhāmi* [Be Ce; Be:Ka Ke Se *nivuyhāmi*]. This seems to be only a summary of the Buddha’s teaching, which Comy explains in full [2.1.2].

*appatiṭṭham anāyūham  
tiṇṇam loke visattikan'ti*

(S 1)

neither stopping<sup>108</sup> nor straining,<sup>109</sup>  
who has crossed over stickiness<sup>110</sup> in the world.

7 The deity said this.<sup>111</sup> The teacher approved.

Then, the deity, thinking: “The teacher has approved of me,” saluted the Blessed One, circumambulated rightwise, disappeared right there.<sup>112</sup>

— evaṃ —

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<sup>106</sup> “Brahmin,” *brāhmaṇa*, a term naturally adapted by the Buddha to refer to an arhat (Dh 388, 396-423): see SD 54.1 (1.2.3).

<sup>107</sup> “Fully quenched,” *parinibbutam*, in the sense of having fully extinguished of defilements (*kilesa, nibbānena nibbutam*, MA 3:438,18 = SA 1:20,20), ie, the 3 “fires” of lust, hatred and delusion. In later times, incl our own, there is a tendency take this word as referring to and arhat’s death, but a careful survey of the suttas will show us that it is frequently used to refer to the awakening or “full nirvana” of a living arhat: see SD 50.1 (2.1.1.7; 2.2); SD 50.13 (1.3.1.2). The term *nirūpadhi*, “acquisition-free; without substrate,” too, is mistake to refer to the final passing-away, but cf (**Iti**) **Dhātu S** (It 3.1.2): “Having touched with the body | the death-free element, | the one free of acquisitions | who has realized the abandonment of acquisitions, the influx-free, | the fully self-awakened one teaches | the sorrowless, dust-free state.” (SD 105.13). Note here that the Buddha is well alive and teaching the Dharma, not passing away.

<sup>108</sup> See *appatiṭṭha* [2.2.1].

<sup>109</sup> See *anāyūhana* (2.2.2).

<sup>110</sup> “Stickiness,” *vissatikā*, a synonym for craving (*taṇhā*) in its “pulling” effect (being drawn to sense-objects, grasping after their pleasures) and “sticky” aspects (clinging to them). This sense is connoted by such expressions as “the seamstress” (*sibbani*, Sn 1040, 1042), “to be smeared” (*lippiati*, id) and “finding delight mpw here, now there” (*tatra, tatrābhinandinī*, V 1:10).

<sup>111</sup> Comy: When the deity hears the Buddha’s reply, he attains the fruit of streamwinning (SA 1:20,10) [2.1.1.3].

<sup>112</sup> *Atha kho sā devatā “samanuñño mesatthā’ti” bhagavantam abhivādetvā padakkhiṇam katvā tatth’ev’antara-dhāyīti.*