

7

Saññoga Sutta

Or **Samyoga Sutta** The Discourse on Bondage | **A 7.48** (A:Be 7.51)

Theme: On sexuality and individuation

Translated by Piya Tan ©2003

0 Sutta summary and significance

0.1 SUTTA SUMMARY

The Saññoga Sutta (A 7.48) relates how one views oneself in sexual terms, as a man or as a woman, and views another in a such dual manner—in terms of manliness or womanliness. After viewing oneself in this sexual manner, one views another in the opposite sexual terms: another’s faculty (maleness or femaleness), one’s ways (manly or womanly), one’s looks, one’s pride, one’s desires, one’s voice, one’s adornments. One is then aroused by them and delights in them.

Viewing another in this manner, one is then aroused by what one finds attractive in that person, and delights in it. Thus aroused, one desires external union,¹ and desires the pleasure and joy arising on account of such a union. Thus, attached to one’s manliness or womanliness, one enters into union with a man or a woman.² [3]

0.2 SUTTA SIGNIFICANCE

The closing statement [0.1] is profoundly significant. It means that while sexuality is basically body-based—the idea of “man” or “woman” and their physical characteristics—it is also **mind-based**, that is, how one views oneself—as a man or as a woman. There is also a psychosocial aspect, that is, the role that one plays in such a sex-based relationship. Hence, even in a homosexual relationship, one partner plays the male role (as “husband”) and the other the female role (as “wife”). Such roles are, of course, flexible, depending on the inclinations of the couple.

1 Origin of sexuality

1.1 In the Aggañña Sutta (D 27) account of the re-evolution of the world, the beings who are reborn on earth, on gaining physical bodies, begin to see their external differences. This is how the Sutta describes the origin of sexuality amongst humans:

16.2 And, Vāseṭṭha (and Bhāradvāja), those beings continued for a very long time feeding on this rice as their food and nourishment. And, Vāseṭṭha (and Bhāradvāja), as they did so, their bodies became coarser still and among themselves they noticed even greater differences in their looks. Then the female developed female organs,³ and the male developed male organs. And the women became excessively preoccupied with the men, and the men with the women. Owing to this excessive preoccupation with each other, lust was aroused, and their bodies burned [with passion]. Because of this burning, **they indulged in sexual activity.** (D 27,16/3:88)

¹ “He desires external union,” *bahiddhā samyoga ākaṅkhati*. It is possible to understand here that “man” and “woman” are both this person’s own perceptions of gender. See (3.2).

² A 7.48/4:57-59 (SD 8.7).

³ DA: That is, those who were women in previous lives. Conversely, the others were men in their past lives.

1.2 The ideas contained in the underscored sentence are elaborated in **the Saññoga Sutta** (A 7.48) here, where the Buddha explains how sexual feelings arise. This Sutta should be studied with the story of **Vakkali** (S 22.87) (on homosexuality),⁴ and the following suttas:

- **Alaggadûpama Sutta** (M 22), where Ariṭṭha wrongly thinks that it is all right for monastics to indulge in sex since some of the sensual pleasures are permissible to lay-followers, even those who are streamwinners. The Buddha's reply is very clear:
"Indeed bhikshus, it is impossible that one can indulge in sensual pleasures without sensual desires, without the perception of sensual desire, without the thought of sensual desire!"⁵
- **Vaṅgīsa Ānanda Sutta** (S 8.4): Ānanda counsels the monk Vaṅgīsa when he confesses being troubled by sexual thoughts.⁶
- **Purisa,bandhana Sutta** (A 8.17): How a woman binds a man by way of the 5 senses.⁷
- **Itthi,bandhana Sutta** (A 8.18): How a man holds a woman by way of the 5 senses.⁸
- **Rūp'ādi,vagga** (A 1.11-1.10), on how sexuality seizes and holds humans.⁹
- **(Taṇhā) Bhikkhuṇī Sutta** (A 4.159), where Ānanda exhorts a love-struck nun how to overcome her lust by sublimating it.¹⁰
- **Subhā Therī,gāthā** (Thī 366-399, SD 20.7): A rogue youth tries to seduce the nun Subhā, but she successfully rejects and instructs him. Subhā is a classic example of one who "has risen above her womanliness" [§2.4].

2 Gender and sexuality

2.1 Furthermore, it should be pointed out that although this Sutta discusses what in modern lingo is called "heterosexuality," the analysis here should be understood as referring to human sexuality as a whole, that is, including homosexuality and any form of sexual desire. The remarkable **Cakka,vatti Sīha,-nāda Sutta** (D 26), for example, makes this prophecy:

And among the generation whose life-span is 500 years, 3 things increased: abnormal lust, uncontrolled greed and deviant practices, and in consequence people's life-span decreased, their beauty decreased, and as a result, the children of those whose life-span has been 500 years live, some for 250 years, some for only 200 years ... (D 26,17/3:70), SD 36.10

2.2 According to the Dīgha Commentary, here "**abnormal lust**" (*adhamma,rāga*) refers to incest, that is, "lust between mother and mother's sister and father's sister and maternal uncle's wife and other such improper situations" (*mātā mātucchā pitucchā mātulānī ti ādike ayutta-t,thāne rāgo*); "**neurotic desire**" (*visama,lobha*) refers to excessive greed by way of consuming things (*paribhoga,yuttetu pi thānesu atibalava,lobho*, in other words, excessive materialism and consumerism); and "**deviant practices**" (*micchā,dhamma*) refer to sexuality "between men and men, women with women." (DA 3:853).

⁴ See **Vakkali S** (S 22.87/3:119-124), SD 8.8; see also foll (2).

⁵ M 22,9/1:133 (SD 3.13).

⁶ S 8.4/1:188 (SD 16.12). Ānanda admonishes Vaṅgīsa to "disown" the lustful perceptions by letting go of the lustful sign (*nimitta*), by not "owning" it (by regarding it as "other"), as suffering and nonself. Ānanda also mentions the mindfulness of the body and letting go of conceit (not measuring ourselves against others).

⁷ A 8.17/4:196 f.

⁸ A 8.17/4:197.

⁹ A 1.11-1.10/1:1 f (SD 66.1).

¹⁰ A 4.159/2:144-146 (SD 10.14). Ānanda explains how the body arises through food, through craving, through the sexual act, and that the last is the "bridge" to rebirth.

Apparently, crowded living conditions (such as heavily urbanized cities) are likely to conduce to human aberrations such as incest, consumerism, and homosexuality. It should, however, be noted that these commentarial notions are not found in the Canon, or at least not so distinctly expressed therein, and may reflect the realities of later times. Either way (whether we are looking at the Buddha's time or at commentarial times), the significance of the problems are real enough for us today, so that we have to address them.

2.3 Taken in their proper perspectives, these statements on sexuality refer to their abnormal (*adhamma*) manifestation, that is, going against the 3rd precept, which basically is about respect for another's freedom, for the person of another, and for family and society. The fact that the third precept is against "sexual misconduct" (*kāmesu micchācāra*) conversely means that there is "proper sexual conduct," or the positive precept of contentment, that is, being committed to one's partner and the cultivation of loving-kindness and spiritual friendship—or, if one chooses, a celibate life (*brahma, cariya*) whether short-term, long-term or life-long.

3 A Buddhist view of homosexuality

3.1 This Sutta gives some insight into the psychological nature of **homosexuality**. The search for satisfaction through a partner (of whatever sex) is related to one's conscious or unconscious identification with the characteristics or behaviour of one's own perceived sex (be it male or female), that is, one's **gender**. Sexuality, as such, refers not merely to one's physical features but to one's *self-love*. After all, the sexual act can be said to be the most *self-centred*, even selfish, of human acts.

A woman (in a physical sense), fixated on her own gender—that is, how she perceives sexuality—compares herself with another's sexuality, and similarly fixates on the other's sexuality through unwise consideration (*ayoniso manasikāra*), that is, being not aware of or by rejecting (repressing) the fleeting, unsatisfactory and insubstantial nature of the perception.

A man similarly fixates on his own gender—how he perceives his own sexuality—and compares himself with another's sexuality. Comparing himself with others in this manner, he sees what he seems to lack, and feels a desire for what he perceives as lacking in himself. In this sense, it is a sexual acquisitiveness. The problem, then, is not with human sexuality, but with how we perceive our gender and our negative reactions to it. Sexuality is natural; gender is constructed.

3.2 In either case—the woman or the man—when the person sexually fixates on another person's external features and behaviour, the former may project onto the latter *both* female and male gender (which is, of course, a sexual perception). The former desires to acquire what is perceived as lacking in himself or herself, and found in the other. In other words, this is a **gender-fused fixation**.

This is evident, for example, in any homosexual relationship, especially of a sustained nature, where one partner invariably plays a "male" role and the other a "female" role. The relationship fails when one partner fails in this "half-role": the relationship, then, is incomplete.

In the case of **a man** who loves himself in a fixated manner, that is, narcissistically, he would as such love his body, that is, its physical features or perceived features. Unwittingly, he has taken on a *woman's* mind, which then goes on to seek another *man* for sexual bonding and satisfaction. Understandably, such a relationship, as a rule, will not work when one is overwhelmed or blinded by self-love.

3.3 As in any "**normal**" human relationship, a homosexual couple will only be happy together when the partnership rises above merely satisfying sexual desire, where both partners habitually work towards higher wholesome goals (especially aesthetic or spiritual ones). In other words, they rise beyond treating

one another as mere sexual objects, but regard one another as true individuals, capable of personal development and spiritual liberation.

The same rule applies to a heterosexual partnership. The point is that no relationship can be based on sex alone. In a sex-based relationship, the sexuality (being desire-oriented) is never really satisfied, and so there is a quest for new partners, and so on. A dedicated human partnership needs must be committed to wholesome regard for one another and to wholesome action and vision.¹¹

3.4 On a more general level, any search for “external union” [§§2.3, 3.3] implies that one is still caught up in the limitations of one’s own gender perception, as **Analayo** notes,

This shows that the affective investment inherent in identifying with one’s gender role and behaviour forms an important link in the arising of sensual desire. In contrast, *arahants*, who have eradicated even the subtlest trace of identification, are unable to engage in sexual intercourse.¹²

(*Satipaṭṭhāna*, 2003:194)

4 Individuation

4.1 Some concepts of **Carl Gustav Jung** (1875-1961), a Swiss psychiatrist and founder of analytical psychology,¹³ may be helpfully used to explain the teachings of the Saññoga Sutta in contemporary language.¹⁴ According to Jung, the anima (Latin, meaning both “soul” and “mind”), refers to the feminine inner personality (or “gender”), as present in the unconscious of the male. It can be identified as all of the unconscious feminine psychological qualities that a male possesses. The anima is usually an aggregate of a man’s mother but may also incorporate aspects of sisters, aunts, and female teachers—this constitute his “gender.”¹⁵

The animus, on the other hand, is the male analogue of anima, that is, a set of unconscious *masculine* qualities and potentials. The shadow is whatever that is in our minds that is unconscious, repressed, undeveloped and denied.¹⁶ The shadow is an archetype,¹⁷ and is present in everyone.

¹¹ For further Buddhist insight into sexuality, see SD 59.5 (2.3.1).

¹² Eg D 3:133. The eradication of sensual desire has already taken place at the level of nonreturning. (Analayo’s fn)

¹³ Jung’s special approach to understanding the mind is through exploring the world of dreams, art, mythology, philosophy and religion. He freely reinterpreted eastern religions (incl Buddhism) to explain and support his theories. Among his notable contributions are the concepts of the psychological archetype, the collective unconscious, and his theory of synchronicity.

¹⁴ Although some of Jung’s idea seem to reflect Buddhist ones, or even overlap, this is not a comparative study, but simply expediting our understanding of early Buddhist teachings in the language of our own times.

¹⁵ In a film interview, Jung was not clear if the anima/animus archetype was totally unconscious, calling it “a little bit conscious and unconscious.” In the interview, he gave an example of a man who falls head over heels in love, then later in life regrets his blind choice as he finds that he has married his own anima—the unconscious idea of the feminine in his mind, rather than the woman herself.

¹⁶ In Jungian psychology, **the shadow** is a part of the unconscious mind that is mysterious and often disagreeable to the conscious mind, but which is also relatively close to the conscious mind. It may partly be our link to our animal nature, which is superseded during early childhood by the conscious mind. Then it goes on to hold thoughts that are repressed by the conscious mind. According to Jung, the shadow is instinctive and irrational, but not necessarily bad, even when it appears so. It can be both ruthless in conflict and empathetic in friendship. It is important as a source of hunches, for understanding of one’s own more inexplicable actions and attitudes (and of others’ reactions), and for learning how to accept and integrate the more problematic or troubling aspects of our personality.

4.2 The unindividuated man—through *anima projection*—identifies with what he regards as symbolically masculine. He develops these potentialities and to some extent integrates their unconscious influences into his conscious personality. However, he does not recognize qualities that are symbolically feminine as part of his own personality, and instead projects them onto women. He may project his anima —unconscious female psychological qualities—onto those women with whom he is emotionally involved, either in a positive or negative manner. *Infatuation* (“love at first sight”) and *compulsive possessiveness* are the signs of anima projection.

4.3 Since the unindividuated man has not consciously developed any of his symbolically feminine qualities (eg, feeling, relationship, and sensitivity), his personality is likely to fall into “anima possession,” so that his emotions and behavior are acted out in a regressive (childish or immature) manner that are apparent to others but not to himself.

The unindividuated woman—through *animus projection*—identifies with those personal qualities that are symbolically feminine. She develops these potentialities and to some extent integrates their unconscious influences into her conscious personality. However, she does not recognize qualities that are symbolically masculine as part of her own personality, but instead projects them onto men. She may project her animus—unconscious male qualities and potentials—onto those men with whom she is emotionally involved, either in a positive or negative manner. *Infatuation* (“love at first sight”) and *compulsive possessiveness* are the signs of animus projection.

4.4 Similarly, since the unindividuated woman has not consciously developed any of her symbolically masculine qualities, such as positive feelings, relatedness with others, her personality is likely to fall into “animus possession,” so that she appears opinionated, argumentative, or domineering to others, but she does not notice it herself.

4.5 By individuation (in Jungian terms) is meant the harmonizing of our anima (for a man) or our animus (for a woman), coming to terms with our *shadow*, and so realizing our *self*.¹⁸ We can overcome or avoid the anima/animus possession and remove projections by integrating the contrasexual archetype into our consciousness, so that we develop wholesome qualities beyond those symbolic of our sexes. The individuated man is able to tap the depths of feeling, relationship and sensitivity, while the individuated woman is erudite, self-reliant, emotionally independent.¹⁹

¹⁷ An **archetype** is a generic, idealized model of a person, object, or concept, from which similar instances are derived, copied, patterned, or emulated. Archetypes found in literature are generally called *stereotypes* (a personality type repeatedly observed, esp an oversimplification), but in a strict sense, an archetype is like a “father” figure or a “mother” figure. In psychology, an archetype is a model of a person, personality, or behavior.

¹⁸ **Eric Pettifor:** “An individuated individual is one in whom the unconscious and conscious are harmonized, and ego is decentralized (prerequisite and consequence). This is achieved by getting in touch with the unconscious, without allowing the ego to be overwhelmed by it. Ego has an explicit value. Functions which exist below the threshold of consciousness need to be brought above that threshold, repressed shadow contents need to be acknowledged, and the major archetypes of the collective unconscious (shadow, anima/animus, self) need to be discovered and related to, so that their influence can be consciously mediated, their concerns addressed, since they are quasi-autonomous subpersonalities in their own right. Individuation is a life long process which is never really finished, though minimum prerequisites are achievable.” (Eric Pettifor, “Becoming whole: Applied Psychoses,” in *Analytical Psychology and Zen Buddhism*. 1995): http://pandc.ca/?cat=carl_jung&page=becoming_whole.

¹⁹ See **Emotional independence**, SD 40a.8.

5 Nature of sexuality

5.1 SEXUALITY, MANLINESS, WOMANLINESS, AND GENDER

5.1.1 Terminology

5.1.1.1 Three points should be made clear here. First, that this is not a discourse against sex, but merely an analysis of the psychological process—especially through **gender perception**—through which sexual desire arises. Hence, we need to distinguish between sexuality and gender. For our purposes here (in the study of this Sutta), we should understand **sexuality** as broadly having both physical and mental perspectives. This is the aspect that concerns us when discussing moral issues relating to, say, the third precept (against sexual misconduct).

5.1.1.2 Womanliness and manliness (or “femaleness” and “maleness”) are basically the physical or sensual aspects of a person, that is, the observable and palpable aspects of sexuality. Hence, I have used these two words to translate terms related to *itthi* (“woman”) and *purisa* (“man”) respectively. These are what the person sees or feels in herself or himself, and in others. This is what we generally mean by “sexuality.”

5.1.1.3 Gender can usefully describe the psychological perception that we have, primarily, of ourself and, secondarily (as a result of that perception), of others (what we see as attractive or desirable in others). Gender, then, is a self-view of our own sexuality in a specific sense, that is, as a woman or as a man, or as both. Sex, then, is what we feel, not what our genitals are. It is the psychological make-up of sexuality that we actually have to deal with. This is the import we need to tease out from the Saññoga Sutta.²⁰

5.1.2 Sexual desire

Sexual desire is the strongest of sensual desires, and so arises like any sensual desire. We can also understand it in the same way—as a sensual desire—as clearly stated in the **Nibbedhika Pariyāya Sutta** (A 6.63), with which the Saññoga Sutta should be studied:

3.2 There are these 5 cords of sensual pleasures (*kāma,guṇa*):

Forms cognizable by the eye that are

desirable, attractive, pleasant, endearing, associated with sensuality, delightful;

Sounds cognizable by the ear that are

desirable, attractive, pleasant, endearing, associated with sensuality, delightful.

Smells cognizable by the nose that are

desirable, attractive, pleasant, endearing, associated with sensuality, delightful.

Tastes cognizable by the tongue that are

desirable, attractive, pleasant, endearing, associated with sensuality, delightful.

Touches cognizable by the body that are

desirable, attractive, pleasant, endearing, associated with sensuality, delightful.

—**Bhikkhus, these are not sensual objects (*kāma*), but in the noble discipline, they are called “cords of sensual desire” (*kāma,guṇa*).**²¹

²⁰ “Boy or girl?” <https://www.facebook.com/bbcthesocial/videos/971141552996268/>.

²¹ *Api ca kho bhikkhave n’ete kāmā, kāma,guṇā nam’ete ariyassa vinaye vuccanti.* This is an enigmatic statement whose meaning is clarified in the verse that follows. See foll n.

The thought of lust is a person's desire:
 There is no sensuality in what is beautiful (*citra*) in the world.
The thought of lust is a person's desire:
 The diversely beautiful in the world remains as they are.
 So here the wise remove the desire for them.²² (A 6.63,3/3:411), SD 6.11

5.2 DEVELOPING THE FACULTIES

An almost identical verse (without line c) is found in **the Na Santi Sutta** (S 1.34/1:22). **The Indriya Bhāvanā Sutta** (M 152) similarly teaches the mastery of one's sense-faculties rather than removing the sense-objects (which have the natural right to be where they are). When the brahmin student Uttara tells the Buddha that his teacher, Pārāsariya's method of developing the faculties is by way of not seeing forms with the eyes, and not listening to sounds with the ear, the Buddha replies:

In that case, Uttara, a blind and a deaf man would have developed faculties, according to what the brahmin Pārāsariya says! For a blind man does not see forms with the eye, and a deaf man does not hear sounds with the ear. (M 152,2/3:298), SD 17.13

5.3 BEYOND LIKING AND DISLIKING

Secondly, the best way to train our faculties is not to think in terms of like and dislike, but to be fully aware, when the world of the senses impinges upon us.²³ This teaching is summarized in this well known pericope, that is, the Buddha's teaching to such disciples as Bāhiya Dārucīriya (U 8) and Mālunkya,putta (S 35.95):

In what is seen, there will only be the seen.
 In what is heard, there will only be the heard.
 In what is sense, there will only be the sensed [smelt, tasted, touched].
 In what is known, there will only be the known [cognized]. (U 8; S 35.95.13/4:73)

5.4 SELF-LOVE

The 3rd point is the most important, and is clearly evident from the Saññoga Sutta, namely, that self-love is the basis for sexuality. We see here how a woman delights in her own physical attributes and is then aroused by and desires for another "in terms a man's faculty" seeking union, that is, the appropriation of what she considers lacking in herself. A man who delights in his own physical attributes is similarly aroused and desires for another "in terms a woman's faculty" seeking union, that is, the appropriation of what he considers lacking in himself. In Mallikā's words, "There is no one dearer than oneself" (*n'atthi koc'añño attanā piyataro*, S 1:75).²⁴ In this sense, sexuality is the most self-centred form of love.

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²² This verse, which explains the previous prose sentence, "plays upon the double meaning of *kāma*, emphasizes that purification is to be achieved by mastering the defilement of sensuality, not by fleeing [from] sensually enticing objects." (A:ÑB 1999:302 n34)

²³ M 152,11-16/3:301.

²⁴ See Lily de Silva 1978:126 f.

Saññoga Sutta

The Discourse on Bondage

A 7.48

[57]

1 Bhikshus, I will teach you a Dharma exposition on bondage and freedom from bondage. Listen to it, bhikshus, pay close attention, I will speak.

And what, bhikshus, is the exposition on bondage and freedom from bondage.

BONDAGE

Womanliness

2 A woman considers her own womanly faculty,²⁵ her womanly ways,²⁶ her womanly looks,²⁷ her womanly pride,²⁸ her womanly desires, her womanly voice, her womanly adornments.²⁹ She is aroused by them and delights in them.³⁰

2.2 Thus aroused, she considers another³¹ in terms of a man's faculty,³² his manly ways, his manly looks,³³ his manly pride,³⁴ his manly desires, his manly voice, his manly adornments.

She is aroused by them and delights in them.

2.3 Thus aroused, she desires external union,³⁵ and she desires the (physical) pleasure and (mental) joy arising on account of such a union.

²⁵ "Own womanly faculty," *ajjhataṃ itth'indriyaṃ*, ie, her own, "internal," sexual organs. *Indriya* here has a psychological sense. It refers to the gender that she perceives herself to be, ie, "femininity." Note that the Sutta's reference is "in terms of a man's faculty," not "in another man": gender is meant here. This is very significant as it reflects the fact that those sexually attracted to others, consciously or unconsciously, may look for such features and responses that excite them in either sex. The term "femininity" usually refers to the psychological aspect or gender of a woman, related to Jung's notions of *anima* and *animus* [4].

²⁶ "Womanly ways," *itthi,kutta*, eg seductiveness, coquetry, and wiles (AA 4:32). Many of such terms in this sentence and their cognates below are in the Pali singular, which however need to be rendered idiomatically into the English plural.

²⁷ "Womanly looks," *itth'ākappa*, ie, her physical looks and how she is dressed (AA 4:32).

²⁸ "Womanly pride," *itthi,vidha*, ie, her pride and conceit (AA 4:32).

²⁹ "Womanly adornments," *itth'alaṅkāra*; "adorning the head, the neck, the hands, the feet, the hips (*kaṭi*)" (*sīsū-pago gīvūpago hatthūpago pādūpago kaṭūpago*, V 4:340)

³⁰ "By them ... in them," *tattha*, lit "therein," here rendered idiomatically.

³¹ "Another," *bahiddhā*, lit "outside (of herself)."

³² "Own manly faculty," *ajjhataṃ puris'indriyaṃ*, ie, his own or "internal" sexual organs. *Indriya* here has a psychological sense. It refers to the gender that he perceives himself to be, ie, "masculinity." Note that the Sutta's reference is "in terms of a woman's faculty," not "in another woman": gender is meant here. This is very significant as it reflects the fact that those sexually attracted to others, consciously or unconsciously, may look for such features and responses that excite them in either sex.

³³ "Manly looks," *puris'ākappa*, ie, his physical looks and how he is dressed. "Looks" here includes his own perception of his own body and the other person's body.

³⁴ "Manly pride," *purisa,vidha*, ie, his pride and conceit.

³⁵ "She desires external union," *bahiddhā saṃyogaṃ ākaṅkhati*. Note that she does not consider her sexual features, but her "femininity." It is possible to understand here that "man" and "woman" are both this person's own perceptions of gender. See (3.2).

Bhikshus, attached to³⁶ her womanliness, she enters into union with men.³⁷

2.4 In this way, bhikshus, a woman does not rise above her womanliness.

Manliness

3 A man considers his own manly faculty,³⁸ his manly ways, his manly looks, his manly pride, his manly desires, his manly voice, his manly adornments.

He is aroused by them and delights in them.

3.2 Thus aroused, he contemplates another in terms of a woman's faculty, her womanly ways, her womanly looks, her womanly pride, her womanly desires, her womanly voice, her womanly adornments. He is aroused by them and delights in them.

3.3 Thus aroused, he desires external union,³⁹ and he desires the pleasure and joy arising on account of such a union.

Bhikshus, attached to his manliness, he enters into union with women.⁴⁰ [58]

3.4 In this way, bhikshus, a man does not rise above his manliness.

FREEDOM FROM BONDAGE

3.5 And what, bhikshus, is freedom from bondage?

Rising above womanliness

4 A woman does *not* think about herself by way of her womanly faculty, her womanly ways, her womanly looks, her womanly pride, her womanly desires, her womanly voice, her womanly adornments. She is not aroused by them and delights not in them.

4.2 Thus unaroused, she does not contemplate another in terms of a man's faculty, his manly ways, his manly looks, his manly pride, his manly desires, his manly voice, his manly adornments. She is unaroused by them and delights not in them.

4.3 Thus unaroused, she does not desire external union (with a man), and she does not desire the pleasure and joy arising on account of such a union.

Bhikshus, detached from her womanliness, she does not enter into union with men.

4.4 In this way, bhikshus, a woman rises above her womanliness.

³⁶ "Attached to," *sattā* (V 1:185; D 2:246; Nc 23, 34; Dh 342; J 1:376).

³⁷ *Itthatte bhikkhave abhiratā sattā purisesu saṃyogaṃ gatā.*

³⁸ "His own masculine faculty," *ajjhataṃ puris'indriyaṃ*, lit "internal masculine sense-organ."

³⁹ "He desires external union," *bahiddhā saṃyogaṃ ākaṅkhati*. It is possible to understand here that "man" and "woman" are both this person's own perceptions of gender. See (3.2).

⁴⁰ *Purisatte bhikkhave abhirato satto purisesu saṃyogaṃ gato.*

Rising above manliness

5 A man does *not* think about himself in terms of his own manly faculty, his manly ways, his manly looks, his manly pride, his manly desires, his manly voice, his manly adornments.

He is not aroused by them and delights not in them.

5.2 Thus unaroused, he does not contemplate another in terms of a woman's faculty, her womanly ways, her womanly looks, her womanly pride, her womanly desires, her womanly voice, her womanly adornments.

He is unaroused by them and delights not in them.

5.3 Thus unaroused, he does not desire external union (with a woman), and he does not desire the pleasure and joy arising on account of such a union.

Bhikshus, detached from his manliness, he does not enter into union with women.

5.4 In this way, [59] bhikshus, a man rises above his manliness.

5.5 This, bhikshus, is freedom from bondage.

6 This, bhikshus, is the exposition on bondage and freedom from bondage.⁴¹

— evaṃ —

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⁴¹ Further see **Sexuality: A Buddhist perspective**, SD 31.7.