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Soṇa Kolivīsa Thera,gāthā

The Verses of the Elder Soṇa Kolivīsa | Tha 632-644

Theme: Mental joy of solitude

Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2007, 2014

1 Soṇa Kolivīsa in the Thera,gāthā

The **Soṇa Kolivīsa Thera,gāthā** essentially summarized in verse (Tha 632-644, in 13 stanzas) what are related in prose in the **Soṇa Kolivīsa Sutta** (A 6.55),¹ but the verses have their own lyrical beauty. It is the only title in “the canto of 13 verses” (*terasa,nipāta*). **Thera,gāthā** 640-644 also appears at the end of the **Soṇa Kolivīsa Sutta** (A 6.55).²

The **Thera,gāthā commentary** also gives accounts of Soṇa Kolivīsa. It says that, inspired by Soṇa’s example, Nandaka and his brother, Bharata renounced the world (ThaA 2:49). To distinguish him from other namesakes,³ he is called **Sukhumāla Soṇa**, “delicate Soṇa.”⁴

The details of Soṇa Kolivīsa are given in the Introduction to the **Soṇa Kolivīsa Sutta** (A 6.55) in SD 20.12.

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The Verses of the Elder Soṇa Kolivīsa

Tha 632-644

[65]

- 1 He was exalted in the kingdom, in the service of the rajah of Aṅga.⁵
Today he is exalted in the Dharma, that is, Soṇa who has crossed over suffering. 632
- 2 You should cut off five, abandon five, cultivate five more;⁶
the monk who has overcome the 5 ties is called the flood-crosser.⁷ 633
- 3 The arrogant,⁸ heedless monk, who depends on external things,⁹
does not attain fulfillment of moral virtue, concentration and wisdom. 634
- 4 For what is to be done is left undone, but the not to be done is done:
for the self-centred, the heedless, the mental influxes grow. 635
- 5 But those who are ever well intent in the body-based mindfulness,
they do not associate with the not-to-be-done; they are doers of what is to be done;
the mental influxes of the mindful and fully aware are no more.¹⁰ 636

¹ A 6.55/3:374-379 @ SD 20.12.

² A 6.55,12 & SD 20.12 (2.5).

³ Esp Soṇa Koṭi,kaṇṇa

⁴ AA 3:388; ThaA 2:266; ApA 478; cf UA 307 (distinguished from Soṇa Kuṭi,kaṇṇa).

⁵ *Yāhu raṭṭhe samukkaṭṭho, rañño aṅgassa paddhagū.*

⁶ *Pañca chinde pañca jaha pañca c’uttari bhāvaye.*

⁷ *Pañca,saṅgātigo bhikkhu, ogha,tiṅṅo ti vuccati.* “The floods” (*ogha*): Modern Comy below.

⁸ *Unnaḷassa.* See Modern Comy.

⁹ Ce Ee Se *Unnaḷassa pamattassa, bāhirāsassa* [Ke *bāhir’āsayassa*] *bhikkhuno.* The Khmer reading *bāhir’āsay-assa* = *bāhira* + *āsayassa* makes good sense.

¹⁰ *Satānaṃ sampajānānaṃ, atthaṃ gacchanti āsavā.*

- 6 Walk the straight path that has been pointed out, turn not back!
you yourself should urge yourself on: you should attain nirvana. **637**
- 7 “When my energy was overstrained, the teacher, unsurpassed in the world,
the one with the eyes, showed the Dharma by teaching the parable of the lute:
having heard his word, I live delighting in the teaching. **638**
- 8 I practised calm¹¹ for gaining the highest goal:
the knowledges have been won, done is the Buddha’s teaching.” **639**
- 9 For one intent on renunciation and on mental solitude,
intent on non-affliction and on clinging’s destruction, **640**
- 10 intent on craving’s destruction and on non-confusion of mind:
having seen the arising of the sense-bases, the mind is rightly released. [66] **641**
- 11 For a monk who is rightly released, his mind is at peace;
there is no more to add to the done, no more to be done.¹² **642**
- 12 Just as a solid mountain of rock is unmoved by the wind,
even so, forms, tastes, sounds, smells, touches and all **643**
- 13 states, desirable and undesirable, shake not such a one;
and, his mind remaining unyoked, he observes its falling away.¹³ **644**

— evaṃ —

Modern Commentary

1 Tha 632

1 The Commentary says that **Aṅga** (whose capital was Campā) then had 80,000 village headmen (*gāmika*) who were wealthy and powerful lords. King Bimbisāra was then overlord of the realm of Aṅga-Magadha. Soṇa Kolivīsa was a landlord (*kuṭumbika*) and an eminent householder (*gaha,pati*) in Aṅga, in the service of the king.

Line 2 attests that the Soṇa’s Thera,gāthā is uttered on the day of his attaining arhathood.

2 Tha 633

2.1 This verse is also that of the elder **Kuṇḍa,dhana** (Tha 15), and also found in **the Kati,chindi Sutta** (S 1.5),¹⁴ where the Commentary explains the line “**You should cut off five, abandon five, cultivate five more**” (*pañca chinde pañca jahe pañca c’uttari bhāvaye*) as referring to the qualities:

| | | |
|---------------------------|--|-----------|
| “You should cut off five” | the 5 lower fetters (<i>oram,bhāgiya saṃyojana</i>) [2.2] | |
| “abandon five” | the 5 higher fetters (<i>uddham,bhāgiya saṃyojana</i>) [2.3] | |
| “cultivate five more” | the 5 spiritual faculties (<i>pañc’indriya</i>) [2.4] | (SA 1:24) |

The 5 lower fetters and the 5 higher fetters form the well known set of “10 fetters” (*dasa saṃyojana*).¹⁵

¹¹ Be Ke *samatham*; Ee *samatam*; Se *samādhim*. See Tha:N 218 n639.

¹² *Katassa paṭicayo n’atthi. karaṇīyam na vijjati.*

¹³ *Thitam cittam visaññutam vayan c’assānupassatīti.*

¹⁴ S 8/1.5/1:3.

2.2 The 5 lower fetters (namely, self-identity view, doubt, attachment to rituals and vows, sensual desire and ill will), are so called because they hold us back to the sense-world, the lowest of the 3 worlds. The “higher fetters” [3] hold us back in the other two worlds, that is, the form world (beings living in dhyanic bliss) and the formless world (beings of pure blissful energy).¹⁶ Hence, they “should be cut” (*chinde*).

2.3 The 5 higher fetters (namely, lust for form, lust for the formless, conceit, restlessness, and ignorance) are finer defilements that hold us to *the form world* and *the formless world*. They must be abandoned (*jahe*) if we are to attain arhathood.

2.4 To cut off the 10 fetters, we must “cultivate five more” (*pañca c’uttari bhavaye*),¹⁷ that is, **the 5 spiritual faculties** (namely, faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom). These 5 faculties are the factors effecting mental cultivation leading to spiritual liberation. The key moderating faculty is mindfulness (*sati*) which keeps a harmonious balance between faith and wisdom, and between energy and concentration.¹⁸

Soṇa, as recorded in **the Soṇa Koliṅga Sutta** (A 6.55), badly hurts his feet in his walking meditation until his feet bleed, but he still is unable to gain any concentration (*samādhi*). The Buddha admonishes him with the parable of the vina player to balance his energy with concentration. He does this by letting go or relaxing his effort or energy (*virīya*).¹⁹

2.5 The 5 ties (*pañca, saṅga*) are lust, hate, delusion, conceit, and views. These form a summary of the 10 fetters, which are probably a later set. The first three (greed, hate and delusion) are the 3 unwholesome roots (*akusala mūla*), which lie at the roots of our negative actions. Conceit (*māna*) and views (*diṭṭhi*) are only fully overcome in the arhat. One who has overcome the 5 ties is called a flood-crosser (*ogha, tiṇṇa*), that is, one who has crossed the 4 floods. [2.6]

2.6 The 4 floods²⁰ are the “mental influxes or cankers” (*āsava*),²¹ which are as follows:

- (1) the flood of sensual desire (*kām’ogha*), that is, the desire and lust for the 5 cords of sensual desire, namely, agreeable forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and touches;²²
- (2) the flood of existence (*bhav’ogha*), that is, desire and lust for form-sphere existence and formless-sphere existence, and attachment to dhyana;
- (3) the flood of views (*diṭṭh’ogha*), that is, the 62 bases for wrong views;²³ and
- (4) the flood of ignorance (*avijj’ogha*), that is, not knowing true reality, especially the lack of knowledge regarding the four noble truths.

The “**floods**” are so called, says the Saṃyutta Commentary, “because they keep beings drowned within samsara, and prevent them from rising up to higher states and to nirvana.”²⁴

¹⁵ See **Kīṭṭa, giri S** (M 70) @ SD 11.1 (5.1); (**Sekha**) **Uddesa S** (A 4.85) @ SD 3.3(2); S 5:61; A 5:13; Vbh 377.

¹⁶ On the 10 fetters and the latent tendencies, see **Anusaya**, SD 31.3 (1.2.3). On the 4 saints and the fetters they break, see SD 11.1 (5.1). For a full list of the 31 worlds, see SD 1.7 (Table 1.7).

¹⁷ Comy however explains: “‘cultivate...more’ means that we should cultivate further from the realization of the path of non-return to the realization of the path to the foremost (nirvana) (*uttari bhāvaye uttarim bhāveyya, anā-gāmi, maggādhigamanato ca uparim bhāveyya, agga, maggādhigamana, vasena vaddheyya*, ThaA 1:70). On the 10 fetters, see below comy on **634** n. See also Tha:N 123 n15.

¹⁸ On the 5 faculties, see **Āpaṇa S** (S 48.50), SD 10.4.

¹⁹ A 6.55/3:374-379 @ SD 20.12.

²⁰ V 3:5,27 f; D 16,1.12/2:81,26 = 84,5 & passim, 33,1.11(31)/3:230,10 f; MA 1:62,6 f (ad M 1:6, 22, quoting S 4:256,4; SA 2:65,1 f); AA 2:355 (ad A 1:241,24), 3:79,1 (ad A 2:38,28), 3:321,24 (ad A 3:245,15), 3:395,20 (ad A 3:388,1); ThaA 1:202,23, 214,26; Vbh 373,34 f; Dhs 1:448; Kvu 515,2; Abhs 32,6; Mohv 97,8; Vism 7.59/211,1, 22.56/683,34.

²¹ The 3 influxes—craving (*tanhā*), conceit (*māna*) and views (*diṭṭhi*)—prob form an older set, known as the 3 graspings (*ti, gaha*), on account of which arise, respectively, the notions “this is mine,” “this I am,” and “this is my self”): see **Vatthūpama S** (M 7,18), SD 28.12. For details, see **Sabb’āsava S** (M 2), SD 30.3.

²² See **Kāma, guṇa S** (S 45.176/5:60).

²³ **Brahma, jāla S** (D 1/1:12-38), SD 25.

²⁴ SA 1:330 = SnA 1:234; cf DA 3:1023; SA 3:19.

2.7 On a more positive note, the Thera,gāthā Commentary says, “*ogha,tinṇa* is the one who, having crossed the floods of sensual desire, existence, views and ignorance, to the far side of existence, stands in nirvana”²⁵ (ThaA 2:168). The flood imagery is also found in a number of verses in **the Sa,gāthā Vagga** of the Samyutta.²⁶

3 Tha 634

3.1 This ancient verse is also found in **the Udāna,varga**,²⁷ thus:

Uv 6.13
*uddhatasya pramattasya
 bhikṣuṇo bahir ātmanah
 śīlam samādhiḥ prajñā ca
 pāripūriṃ na gacchati*

Tha 634
*unnaḷassa pamattassa
 bahir’āsayassa bhikkhuno
 sīlam samādhi paññā ca
 pāripūriṃ na gacchati*

3.2 From their translations we can see that the two verses differ mostly in line b, thus:

Uv 6.13
 The arrogant, heedless monk,
Whose mind is outside,
 does not attain fulfillment of
 moral virtue, concentration and wisdom.

Tha 634
 The arrogant, heedless monk,
who depends on external things,
 does not attain fulfillment of
 moral virtue, concentration and wisdom.

Note that the Udāna,varga version replaces *unnaḷa* by *uddhata*—both meaning “arrogant”—which will be examined below [3.3]

The arrogant monk, or anyone, is unable to progress because he “**depends on external things**” (*bāhir’āsayassa*, Tha 634b). The Udāna,varga here instead reads “whose mind is outside” (*bahir ātmanah*, Uv 6.13). In simple terms, it means that the person’s mind is controlled by his physical senses, and is easily distracted by sense-contacts. In both cases, it means that the person is unable to be mindful, much less to meditate and attain inner calm, much less to gain liberating wisdom. [3.3.8]

3.3 Unnaḷa

3.3.1 **John Brough**, who edited the Gandhari Dharmapada, helpfully discusses the Pali word *unnaḷa*—which seems to appear only here (Tha 634b, 635c, Dh 292c)²⁸—at some length. We have the following variant readings of the word:

| | | |
|--|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Pali Dhammapada & Thera,gāthā | <i>unnaḷa</i> | Dh 292c, Tha 634b, 635c |
| Gandhari Dharmapada | <i>unaḍaṇa</i> | Dh:G 339c |
| Sanskrit Patna Dharmapada | <i>unnaddha</i> | Dh:P 266 |
| Sanskrit Udāna,varga | <i>uddhata</i> | Uv 4.19c |

3.3.2 The Pali word *unnaḷa* is quite common, and is usually found in the stock passage, *uddhatto [hoti] unnaḷo capalo mukharo vikiṇṇa,vāco muṭṭhassa asampajāno asamāhito vibbhanta,citto pākat’indriyo*, meaning “restless, arrogant, fickle, sharp-tongued, rambling in words, muddle-headed, lacking

²⁵ *Ogha,tinṇo kāma,bhava,diṭṭhi,avijj’oghe taritvā tesam pāra,bhūte nibbāne ṭhito.*

²⁶ **Candana S** (S 298-300/2.15/1:53), **Māra,dhītā S** (S 511-513/4.25/1:126), **Ālavaka S** (S 848-849/10.12/1:214).

²⁷ The **Udana,varga** is a Buddhist Sanskrit (Sarvāsti,vāda) text similar to the Dhammapada, containing many of the same verses. The Tibetan Buddhist canon has 2 recensions, traditionally said to have been compiled by Dharmatrata (2nd cent CE). The Udanavarga has about 950 verses in 33 cantos, whereas the Pali **Dhammapada**, the best known Dharmapada, has only 423 verses. The Gandhari **Dharmapada**, as we know it, has 344 verses (excluding many lost ones).

²⁸ A word, phrase or sentence that occurs only once in a text is technically called a hapax legomenon. Here, however, it occurs thrice in the same verse or its cognate.

awareness [without clear understanding], unconcentrated, scatter-brained, indulgent in the senses” (SA 1:115), and their various syntactic forms.²⁹

3.3.3 It is clear from the context of the verses above that *unnaḷa* is a synecdoche or shorthand for all the negative characteristics listed in the stock passage, the fullest statement of which is clearly that made by Moggallāna in **the Anaṅgaṇa Sutta** (M 5):

Even so, avuso, there are persons who are faithless, and have gone forth from the home into homelessness, not out of faith, but seeking a livelihood, who are fraudulent, deceitful, treacherous, restless, arrogant, fickle, sharp-tongued, rambling in words, with senses unguarded, immoderate in food, undevoted to wakefulness, unconcerned with recluseship, without any deep respect for the training, luxurious, careless, initiators of backsliding, neglectful of solitude, lazy, wanting in energy, muddle-headed, lacking full awareness [without clear understanding], mentally unconcentrated, scatter-brained, lacking wisdom, drivellers.³⁰ (M 5,32/1:32), SD 37.7

3.3.4 Considering its cognate form in parallel passages in Uv and Dh:G, *unnaḷa* has the senses of “insolent, arrogant, haughty.” The Tibetan translation is *rlom pa* (“proud”). **Brough** remarks that

...if the statement [Uv 6.13a] is slightly more meaningful, we may see in the verse a chiasmus:³¹ those who neglect their duties are *pamatta*, while those who actively do evil are *unnaḷa*. The general sense indicated would thus seem to fall within the range of “boisterous, unseemly behaviour, frivolity” or something similar. And this is at least part of the range of meaning covered by the term *auddhatya* in its specifically Buddhist usage, (Brough 1962:280)

3.3.5 *Unnaḷa* is clearly a synonym or near-synonym of *unnata* or *uṇṇata* (from *unnamati*, *uṇṇamati*, “he raises, exalts himself”). CPD defines *unnata* as “(fig) elated, haughty, arrogant” (sv). *Unnaḷa* also connotes “restlessness,” as a puffed up person is likely to be actively promoting himself and playing one-up-manship. In fact, the Sutta Nipāta Commentary defines *uṇṇata* as *uddhacca* (SnA 492), which is usually rendered as “restlessness.” *Uddhacca* is also the term that appears in **the Soṇa Kolivīsa Sutta** (A 20.-12).³²

3.3.6 Conjecturing on its early senses, Brough says “it would seem probable that the word started its career in the Buddhist texts with such connotations as ‘boisterous, unruly, playing the fool’.” (1962: 280).³³ Either the Thera,gāthā compiler/s had used an early synonym or near-synonym of what *uddhacca* means, or by the time the Sutta was formalized, the sense was fixed as *uddhacca*. Either way, the sense conveyed by the Sutta is unaffected in the least.

3.3.7 As a technical term, *uddhacca* is one of the 10 mental fetters (*saṃyojana*)³⁴ and is often paired with *kukkucca* (“remorse, worry”), one of the 5 mental hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*).³⁵ Here *uddhacca* has the

²⁹ A full list of negative epithets in this connection are found in **Jantu S** (S 2.25/1:61 f), where its Comy explains them.

³⁰ *Evam eva kho, āvuso, ye te puggalā assaddhājīvik’atthā, na saddhā agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajitā, saṭhā māyāvino keṭubhino, uddhatā unnaḷā capalā mukharā vikiṇṇa,vācā, indriyesu agutta,dvārā, bhojane amattañṇuno, jāgariyaṃ ananuyuttā, sāmañṇe anapekkhavanto, sikkhāya na tibba,gāravā, bāhulikā sāthalikā, okkamane pubbañ-gamā, paviveke nikkhitta,dhurā, kusītā hīna,vīriyā muṭṭha-s,satī asampajānā asamāhitā vibbhanta,cittā duppañṇā ela,mūgā.* (M 5.32/1:32)

³¹ A **chiasmus** is a figure of speech in which two clauses are related to each other through a reversal of structures to make a broader point; ie, in verses (poetry), an arrangement of a parallel member of a verse or literary unit to form an a-b-b-a pattern, or in prose, the two clauses display inverted parallelism. Well known examples are “When this is, that is” (S 12.21/2:38), or a double chiasmus, “Just as this is, so is that. Just as that is, so is this” (Sn 203 = Tha 306).

³² A 20.12,1/3:375,19.

³³ See also Tha:N 217 n635.

³⁴ **The 10 mental fetters** (*dasa saṃyojana*) are: (1) self-identity view (*sakkāya,ditṭhi*); (2) spiritual doubt (*vicikicchā*); (3) clinging to mere rules and rituals (*sīla-b,bata,parāmāsa*); (4) sensual lust (*kāma,rāga*); (5) ill will (*vyā-*

sense of restlessness that arises when the mind speculates about the future, especially with fond hopes or in fear of impending disasters. Here, *kukkucca* has the senses of “remorse, worry, guilt” that usually arises when our minds stray into thoughts about the past, regarding things “to be done that is left undone, and the not-to-be-done that is done” (cf **Tha 635**).³⁶

3.3.8 This is a key verse regarding the reason for our continued suffering and inability to progress spiritually: we “**depend on external things**” (*bāhir’āsaya*, Tha 634b), while the Udāna,varga has “whose mind is outside” (*bahir ātmanah*, Uv 6.13). While the former refers to one who is emotionally dependent on things and situations around him, the latter more generally refers to one who is distracted. In both cases, the person fails to look into the inner stillness of the mind, and dwells measuring himself against others. [3.2]

3.3.9 The cultivation of inner stillness and moral courage marks the start of a true Dharma-moved life. Then, when we face difficulties, we do not think in terms of “I,” “me” or “mine,” but see the situation in terms of the conditions that brought them about. When doubt about truth and reality arises in us, we seek to understand why we think that way, so that our faith in self-effort and the Dharma are unshakable. In the face of life’s challenges, we do not seek recourse or refuge in anything outside of ourselves, but investigate within into the roots of how we think and feel.³⁷

4 Tha 635-636

4.1 These ancient **Thera,gāthā** verses are found in the Pali **Dhammapada**, the Gandhari **Dharma-pada**, the Patna **Dhammapada**, and the Sanskrit **Udāna,varga**,³⁸ thus:³⁹

Dh:G 339

ya kica ta a...
... *kiyadi*
unadana prama[taṇa]
...

asava teṣa vaḍhadi
ara te asava-kṣa[ya]

Dh:G 340

yeṣa du susamaradha
nica kaya-kada svadi
...
...
sadaṇa sabrayaṇana
taṣa kṣayadi ...

Uv 4.19

yat kṛtyam tad apavidddham
akṛtyam kriyate punaḥ |
uddhatānām pramattānam
teṣām vardhanti āsravaḥ |

āsravās teṣu vardhante
ārāt te hy āsrava,kṣayāt ||

Uv 4.20

yeṣām tu susamārabdhā
nītyam kāya,gatā,smṛtiḥ |
akṛtyam te na kurvanti
kṛtye sātatyā kāriṇaḥ |
smṛtānām samprajānām
astam gacchanti āsravāḥ ||

Dh 292 = Tha 635

yaṁ hi kiccaṁ tad apavidddham
akiccaṁ pana kayirati
unnalānām pamattānam
tesaṁ vaḍḍhanti āsavā.

Dh 253cd

āsavā tassa vaḍḍhanti
ārā so āsava-k,khaya

Dh 293 = Tha 636

yesaṁ ca susamāraddhā
niccaṁ kāya,gatā sati
akiccan te na sevanti
kicce sātaccakārino
satānām sampajānānam
attham gacchanti āsavā

pāda); (6) lust for form existence (*rūpa,rāga*); (7) lust for formless existence (*arūpa,rāga*); (8) conceit (*māna*); (9) restlessness (*uddhacca*); and (10) ignorance (*avijjā*). The first 5 form the “lower fetters” (*oram,bhāgiya saṁyojana*), as they bind us to the sense-world. The remaining 5 are the “higher fetters” (*uddham,bhāgiya saṁyojana*), as they bind us to the higher world, ie, the form- and the formless worlds. (A 9.67, 68, 10.13; S 5:16; Vbh 377). See also comy on **633** above.

³⁵ The 5 mental hindrances (*pañca,nīvaraṇa*) are: (1) sensual desire (*kāma-c,chanda*); (2) ill will (*vyāpāda*); (3) sloth and torpor (*thīna,middha*); (4) restlessness and remorse (*uddhacca,kukkucca*); (5) spiritual doubt (*vicikicchā*). Similes of the hindrances: A 5.193; overcoming the hindrances leads to dhyana (A 9.40); on their arising and overcoming: A 1.2, 6.21; S 46.51. See Nyanaponika, “The Five Mental Hindrances,” Wheel 26, Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1993: <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/lib/authors/nyanaponika/wheel026.html>.

³⁶ See *Nīvaraṇa*, SD 32.1.

³⁷ See **Emotional independence**, SD 40a.8.

³⁸ The Udāna,varga verse is reconstructed from an ancient MS, parts of which are lost.

³⁹ These parallels are also at Dh:P 266, Dh:Chin(Dh) 29.3, Uv:C1 19 p642, Uv:Tib(E) 16 p17.

Dh:P 266

*yad(a)hi kiccaṃ tad apaviddham
 akiccaṃ puna kīrati |
 unnaddhānaṃ pramattānāṃ
 tesāṃ vaddhanti āsavā ||*

Dh:P 267

*yesāṃ ca susamāradhā
 niccaṃ kāya,gatā satī |
 akiccaṃ te na sevaṃti
 kicce sātacca,kārino |
 satānāṃ samprājānāṃ
 [tesāṃ khīyamti āsavā] ||*

4.2 All these verses are identical and translate as follows:

(Tha 635) For what is to be done is discarded, | but the not to be done is done:
 for the self-centred, the heedless, | the mental influxes grow.
 His influxes grow: | he is far from the destruction of the influxes. = Dh 253cd
 (Dh:G 339 = Uv 4.19 = Dh 292)

Tha 636 But those who are ever well intent | in the body-based mindfulness,
 they do not associate with the not to be done; they are doers of what is to be done;
 the influxes of the mindful and fully aware stand no more.
 (Dh:G 340 = Uv 4.20 = Dh 293)

4.3 Such **coincidences of texts** attest to their age, that they are accepted by many (if not all) of the early schools of Buddhism in India and the lands nearby. From such common texts, we can know the terms and concepts that go back to very early Buddhist times. There is the possibility that all these texts belong to the same school, which would show that they have spread out over a very wide area before the Turkish invasion into Persia, India and its northwest, and Central Asia, in the 11th century.

4.4 Tha 635

4.4.1 The line “**For what is to be done is discarded**” (*yam hi kiccaṃ tad apaviddham*) means that the self-centred, heedless person is unlikely to keep to the Dharma training, especially the keeping of the precepts, or they would lack any deep useful learning or any real compassion to others. For such a person, too, “**the not to be done is done**” (*akiccaṃ pana kayirati*), that is, they would lead indisciplined, loose and luxurious lives, bent on worldly gain, and religion is just a front to attract supporters, money, property, power, pleasure and worldly benefits. Their vision is not the Dharma, which is only a tool for the greater glory of themselves or this world. Hence, their defilements grow.

4.4.2 In spiritual terms, **renunciation** (*nekkhamma*) refers to the stages of meditation in terms of “letting go” (*cāga*) which covers both the sense of “not to be done” and “to be done.” In meditation training, we must first learn to let go of the body (*kāya*), that is, the world or “the all” (*sabba*), that is, the 5 physical senses and their respective sense-stimuli.⁴⁰

As we work on letting go of our world of sense-experiences, we regard whatever feelings (*vedanā*) that arise as simply feelings, whether they are perceived as pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral. Even if we do this well, some thoughts (*citta*) or unstill mind might still be lurking, whispering to us about the past or the future, or even commenting on the present which is unhelpful for our meditation progress.

The idea is to simply observe such mental states as they *arise and fall away*, let them come and let them go, without ever holding to them. Then what is left is a vision of reality (*dhamma*) that points to

⁴⁰ See **Sabba S** (S 35.23), SD 7.1.

what we really are. Again we neither accept nor reject them, but observe them for what they have to teach us in due course.⁴¹

4.4.3 In this connection, too, a practitioner does not see the religious life or the fruits of meditation in terms of worldly benefits. We should not be attracted to the notion of a better rebirth here or beyond, that is, neither in this world nor in this universe neither in some distant galaxy nor paradise, as in common in later Buddhism.⁴²

The purpose of the holy life (indeed, our purpose of life itself) should be to understand our changing body and mind so that we change ourselves for the better; to cultivate a strong and wise heart to clear away the doubts that trouble us; and to wholesomely rely on our own efforts to awaken to liberation in this life itself.⁴³ [§637]

4.4.4 A fuller study of this theme of discerning our spiritual effort—what is to be *done* and *not* to be done—is found in **the Sevittabbāsevitabba Sutta** (M 114).⁴⁴

5 Tha 636

5.1 The “body-based mindfulness” (*kāya, gatā sati*) is the theme of **the Kāya, gatā, sati Sutta** (M 119).⁴⁵ This is another word for “body-based contemplation” (*kāyānupassanā*), the first of the 4 satipatthanas,⁴⁶ except for the satipatthana refrain,⁴⁷ in place of which it has a samadhi refrain.⁴⁸ In **the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta** (M 10), this body-based mindfulness is called “contemplation of the body” (*kāyānupassanā*). This set of body-based meditations consists of the following 6 practices:

| | | <u>Giri-mānanda Sutta</u> (M 119), SD 12.21 | <u>Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta</u> (M 10), SD 13.3 |
|--|----------------------|--|--|
| (1) The breath meditation ⁴⁹ | <i>ānāpāna, sati</i> | M 119,3-4 | M 10,4 |
| (2) The 4 postures ⁵⁰ | <i>iriya, patha</i> | M 119,5 | M 10,6 |
| (3) Full awareness ⁵¹ | <i>sampajāna</i> | M 119,6 | M 10,8 |
| (4) Perception of foulness ⁵² | <i>asubha, saññā</i> | M 119,7 | M 10,10 |
| (5) The 4 elements ⁵³ | <i>mahā, dhātu</i> | M 119, 8 | M 10,12 |

⁴¹ These 4 kinds of training are of course the satipatthana practice of contemplating on the body (*kāyānupassanā*), on feelings (*vedanā'nupassanā*), on the mind (*cittānupassanā*), and on realities (*dhammānupassanā*): see **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10), SD 13.3. The phrase “in due course” means that any reflection or analysis will naturally be done *after* the meditation proper, or right at the end of each sitting during the “review”: see **The Buddha discovered dhyana**, SD 33.1b (6.2.1.1).

⁴² See eg (**Mahā, nāma**) **Gilāyana S** (S 55.54,10-17), SD 4.10.

⁴³ See (**Mahā, nāma**) **Gilāyana S** (S 55.54,18-19), SD 4.10. See the 3 fetters: Emotional independence, SD 40a.8.

⁴⁴ M 114/3:45-61 @ SD 39.8.

⁴⁵ M 119/3:88-99 @ SD 12.21.

⁴⁶ On the 4 satipatthanas, see **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10), SD 13.1+3. On “contemplation of the body” (*kāyānupassanā*), see SD 12.21 (2) & SD 13.1 (5A). For a detailed commentary on this, see **Vibhaṅga Comy** (VbhA 223-263).

⁴⁷ On the 4 satipatthanas, see **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10), SD 13.1+3. On the “satipatthana refrain,” see SD 13.1 (5A.1) & Analayo 2003:92-116 (ch 5).

⁴⁸ **Giri-m-ānanda S** (M 119,4.3+5.2+6.2+7.6+8.4+17.2 etc), SD 12.21.

⁴⁹ On breath meditation, see **Mahā Rāhul'ovāda S** (M 62) + SD 3.11 (2). Here (and at D 22.20) breath meditation is a 4-step exercise; as 16-step exercise in **Ānāpāna, sati S** (M 118/3:78-88); as a perception (*saññā*) at **Giri-m-ānanda S** (A 10.60,12-13/5:111 f); and as a “concentration of breath mindfulness” (*ānāpāna, sati, samādhi*) in **Ānāpāna Saṃyutta** (eg S 5:317).

⁵⁰ For an expanded version of this exercise, see **Mahā Suññata S** (M 122,11/3:122 f), SD 11.4. Except for highlighting the 4 postures, this exercise of this section is actually found in the “Full awareness” section which follows and which, in **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2), is called “mindfulness and full awareness” (*sati sampajañña*) (D 2.65).

⁵¹ “Full awareness,” *sampajañña* or *sampajāna*. See SD 13.1 (3.6abc). See n on “The 4 postures” [3].

⁵² Or, the contemplation on the 31 (or 32) parts of the body: see SD 12.21 (5).

⁵³ Vism 348 says that the 4 primary elements are only briefly explained here—as in **Satipaṭṭhāna Ss** (D 22,6 /2:293; M 10,6/1:56 f)—but at length in **Mahā Hatthi, padōpama S** (M 28,6-27/1185-191), **Mahā Rāhul'ovāda S**

(6) The 9 charnel-ground meditations⁵⁴ *sivathikā* M 119,9-17 M 10,14-30

5.2 The phrases “not to be done” and “to be done” have been mentioned in **Tha 635** [4.4].

6 Tha 637

6.1 Walk the straight path that has been pointed out, turn not back!
you yourself should urge yourself on: you should attain to nirvana. (Tha 637)

The “**straight path**” (*uju,magga*) is of course the noble eightfold path. It is “straight” (*uju*) in three ways, that is, in connection with the 3 trainings.⁵⁵ The path here is our own efforts towards self-betterment and awakening. The foundation of this Dharma-moved spiritual life is that of a morally virtuous life: our body and speech [2] are the vehicles of wisdom and should be respected so. The moral precepts are meant to train us to respect and nurture life, to be happy and share that happiness, to keep our bodies healthy in every way.⁵⁶

6.2 Our **speech** is ordinarily an effective means of human communication but, when properly cultivated, becomes a means of spiritual communication. Worldly speech tends to be opaque and false, slanderous and disharmonious, unpleasant and frivolous. Spiritual communication or right speech is a joyful and life-changing process that is *timely in truth, mutually harmonious, pleasant and conducive to personal and spiritual progress*.⁵⁷

6.3 As already noted in **Tha 636** [4.4.3], the purpose of the holy life (indeed, our purpose of life) should be to understand our changing body and mind so that we change ourselves for the better; to cultivate a strong and wise heart to clear away the doubts that trouble us; and to wholesomely rely on our own efforts to awaken to liberation in this life itself.⁵⁸

7 Tha 638

7.1 **The Soṇa Kolivisa Sutta** (A 6.55) relates how Soṇa is on solitary retreat in the Cool Forest, trying to meditate. He over-exerts himself in walking meditation until his feet bleed. He feels very discouraged and even thought of returning to the lay-life.⁵⁹ There are at least two possible reasons for his failure to progress in his meditation. Firstly, his feet are delicate by nature, and as such are easily hurt through such exertions.⁶⁰ Secondly, he is unable to focus on his meditation due to frequent visits from relatives and friends.⁶¹

(M 62,8-17/1:421-426) and **Dhātu Vibhaṅga S** (M 140,13-18/3:240-242). The 4 elements are explained in some detail in **Mūla,pariyāya S** (M 1). The 6 elements (4 primary elements + space + consciousness) are mentioned in **Saṅgīti S** (D 33,2.1 (16)/3:248), **Bahu,dhātuka S** (M 115,5/3:62), and **Titth’āyatana S** (A 3.61.6/1:175 f @ SD 6.8 n); see also Dhs 638. For the first 5 elements in later Buddhism, see Lama Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism*, London, 1959:183 ff.

⁵⁴ These are the 9 stages of bodily decomposition: see V 3:36; D 2:295 f; A 3:268, 323; J 1:146; Pv 3.5.2. In the suttas, this practice is called *asubha,saññā* (perception of foulness). The term *asubha,nimitta* (the sign of foulness) in Comys, refers to one or other of the 10 foul objects, ie bodily remains in one of the 10 stages of decomposition (Vism 6.1-11/178 f). The two practices are closely related, often overlapping. On details of practice, see **Kāya,gatā,-sati S** (M 119), SD 12.21 (5). See also **Vibhaṅga S** (S 51.29/5:277 f), on the analysis of will or desire (*chanda*).

⁵⁵ See **Sīla samādhi paññā**, SD 21.6.

⁵⁶ This para deals with the first 3 precepts, those against killing, stealing and sexual misconduct: see SD 5.7 (2.1).

⁵⁷ On right speech, see **Sacca Vibhaṅga S** (M 141,26), SD 11.11. For a detailed study, see **Language and discourse**, SD 26.11 esp (2).

⁵⁸ See (**Mahānāma**) **Gilāyana S** (S 55.54,18-19), SD 4.10. On the 3 fetters, see **Emotional independence**, SD 40a.8.

⁵⁹ A 6.55,1.2/3:374 @ SD 20.12.

⁶⁰ SD 20.12 (2.1+2.4).

⁶¹ Mv 5.1.1 = V 1:179 & Mv 5.1.13 = V 1:182 & SD 20.12 (2.4).

7.2 The Soṇa (Kolivīsa) Sutta says that Soṇa was a musician, a skilled player of the Indian lute (*vīnā*) before he joined the order.⁶² The Buddha then teaches him how to balance energy with calmness,⁶³ so that he puts forth fresh effort and attains arhathood.⁶⁴ The Thera,gāthā verse here refers to Soṇa’s famous veena parable. (**Tha 638b**)

8 Tha 639

8.1 Following the Buddha’s admonition, Soṇa keeps to the middle way in his meditation and gains awakening. This verse is interesting in mentioning only “**calm**” (*samatha*)⁶⁵ for “gaining the highest goal” (*uttam’atthassa pattiyā*). In other words, he uses dhyana to attain awakening. Vipassana or insight is not mentioned.⁶⁶ This seems to be the kind of meditation that the Commentaries attribute to the “calm or tranquillity” practitioner (*samatha,yānika*), that is, one whose “vehicle” or means is calm or dhyana.⁶⁷ However, no such category is found in the suttas.

8.2 The Yuganaddha Sutta (A 4.170), however, mentions 4 kinds of meditators, that is, those who follow any of these methods, namely:

- (1) insight preceded by calm (*samatha,pubbañ,gama vipassanā*), using calm to attain insight;
- (2) calm preceded by insight (*vipassanā,pubbañ,gama samatha*), using insight to attain calm;
- (3) calm and insight coupled together (*samatha,vipassanā yuganaddha*), using either to help the other;
- (4) with a mind seized by “Dharma agitation” (*dhamm’uddhacca,viggahita manāsa*), but after a time, his mind becomes internally steadied, composed, unified and concentrated.⁶⁸

(A 4.170/2:156 f & SD 41.5)⁶⁹

8.3 Soṇa’s mode of meditation and attainment would be the first one, that is, insight preceded by calm (*samatha,pubbañ,gama vipassanā*)—he first cultivates calm (through samadhi) and then directs his mind to insight. In other words, his meditation method is that of keeping his mind focused (say, by way of walking meditation) and attaining dhyana.

Once his dhyanas are perfected (that is, at least the first dhyana), he would, on emerging from such a dhyana, go on to direct his calm and clear mind to examine his mental states in terms of the 3 characteristics, that is, impermanence, suffering and non-self.⁷⁰ If he is accomplished in all the 4 form dhyanas, he could then (on emerging from the fourth dhyana), go on to direct his mind to the cultivation of the higher powers (*abhiññā*), often described in the suttas.⁷¹

8.4 Note that only **Tha 638-639** are in the first person (a quote). This means that the other verses were composed by the council reciters (*saṅgīti,kāra*) around this lion-roar (*sīha,nāda*) of Soṇa, uttered in connection with his awakening. Of course, it is possible that Soṇa himself has composed the whole of his Thera,gāthā, but his first verse (Tha 632) is probably added there by the council reciters.

9 Tha 640-641

9.1 These two verses should be read together as a set. **Renunciation** (*nekkhamma*) is not merely the wearing of monastic robes or keeping a shaven head, or any external appearances of holiness, but by a

⁶² Comy says that he was “an adept in the art of the gandharvas” (*gandhabba,sippe cheko*, AA 3:389). Here, *gandhabba* refers to the heavenly minstrels, alluding to his musical prowess. Clearly here it is an allusion to “divine music,” ie, beautiful music. On the meanings of *gandhabba*, see SD 7.10 (3).

⁶³ A 6.55,1.4, SD 20.12.

⁶⁴ A 6.55,2.1, SD 20.12. Tha 632; Mv 5.1.13-18 = V 1:182.

⁶⁵ Be Ke Se *samatham*; Ee *samataṃ*. See Tha:N 218 n639.

⁶⁶ See *Samatha & Vipassanā*, SD 41.1.

⁶⁷ See *Samatha and Vipassanā*, SD 41.1 (2.1).

⁶⁸ For details, see **Paṃsu,dhovaka S** (A 3.100a,4.1/1:254), SD 19.11. See the story of **Bāhiya Dāru,cīriya in (Arahatta) Bāhiya S** (U 1.10/6-9), SD 33.7 & also the story of Anuruddha in **(Anuruddha) Upakkilesa S** (M 128/3:152-162), SD 5.18.

⁶⁹ See *Samatha and vipassana*, SD 41.1 (2.2)

⁷⁰ On the 3 characteristics, see *Atam,mayatā*, SD 19.13 (1). See SID: ti,lakkhaṇa.

⁷¹ See eg **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2,89), SD 8.10.

true devotion to letting go of the world and by attaining inner joy and peace.⁷² As already noted 4.4.2], renunciation should be first of all experienced as the stages of meditation.

9.2 If we are renunciants (monks, nuns, precept-holders, postulants, etc), we should be devoted to a life of solitude. Here, there are 3 kinds of solitude (*viveka*), that is, of the body, of the mind, and of the substrates.

Solitude of the body (*kāya,viveka*) refers basically to the keeping of the precepts (relating to bodily actions and speech), and externally to a suitable place for meditation.

Solitude of mind (*citta,viveka*) is the letting go of the 5 mental hindrances (or at least a few of them) for the sake of attaining mental calm and focus, if not dhyana.

Solitude of the substrates (*upadhi,viveka*) is the goal of the first two kinds of solitude, that is, the liberation from the 5 aggregates,⁷³ the destruction of all defilements,⁷⁴ and nirvana itself.⁷⁵ This is the same as “crossing the floods” [2.7], that is, attaining arhathood [11].

9.3 The Sutta commentary uses *avyābajjha* for the textual *avyāpajjha*, non-affliction, and explains it as follows: “in non-conflict, through being intent on being without suffering, having brought about the dhyanas and the attainments that are yoked and linked to the joy of calm”⁷⁶ (ThaA 2:271). This is the natural beneficial fruit of renunciation and meditation, and this meditative joy, in turn, empowers us to let go of craving, even cutting it off at the root.

In order to overcome craving, we need to understand the nature of pleasure and to experience a higher pleasure, “a joy that is worth cultivating,” that is, dhyanic bliss.⁷⁷ Such a bliss can only be attained by way of dhyana meditation. If we are able to overcome craving in this way, then we can go on to attain non-return, or even arhathood.⁷⁸ Otherwise, we should endeavour to live within the moral virtue of the 5 precepts⁷⁹ and habitually practise the perception of impermanence to go on to attain streamwinning or once-return.⁸⁰

9.4 While craving (*taṇhā*) refers to looking for solace and answers outside of ourselves, clinging (*upādāna*) is the grasping or holding on to such ideas—especially those of pleasure, of power, of things (having), and of permanence (God, soul, heaven, paradise, Buddha-land)—thinking that they are the solution to our problems.

Upādāna also means “fuel,” that is, what keeps a fire, or a process, or an emotion, going. Ideas of pleasure, power, things and permanence keep us going, but in the wrong way, accumulating more suffering, and we do not even know this.

The 3 most common and insidious types of clinging are those to the notions of self-identity, of doubt (that we are spiritually helpless and need external help), and clinging to rituals and vows. When we overcome these **3 “fetters”** (*saṃyojana*)—so called because they *fetter* us to the cycle of lives and deaths, rebirths and redeaths—then we have attained streamwinning, we are on the sure path to full awakening.⁸¹

⁷² See Dh 141, 264, 266, 307, 308, 394, 395.

⁷³ On the 5 aggregates (*pañca-k,khandha*), see SD 17; for an intro, see **Dve Khandha S** (S 22.48), SD 17.1.

⁷⁴ On levels of defilements (*kilesa*), see SD 21.6 (5.1); categories of defilements, SD 32.1 (3.7). See also “mental impurities” (*upakkilesa*): SD 5.18 (3).

⁷⁵ See **Paviveka S** (A 4.92) & SD 44.2.

⁷⁶ *Abyābajjhe nidukkhatāya adhimuttassa jhāna,samāpattiyo nibbattetvā samatha,sukhe yutta,p-payuttassa* (ThaA 2:271).

⁷⁷ For the Bodhisattva’s conclusion that dhyana is a pleasure “not to be feared,” which leads to his subsequent meditation and full awakening, see **Mahā Saccaka S** (M 36.31-32/1:246 f), SD 1.12 (excerpts) + SD 49.4 (full tr).

⁷⁸ See **Mahā Satipatthāna S** (D 22,22/2:314,12); **Sati’patthāna S** (M 10,46/1:62); **Kiṭṭa,giri S** (M 70,27/1:481); **Aññātara S** (S 46.57/5:129); **Nirodha S** (S 46.76/5:133); **Dve Phalā S** (S 48.65/5:236); **Phalā S 1+2** (S 54.4+5/-5:313 f); **Iddhi,pāda S** (A 5.67/3:82); **Sati Supatthita S** (A 5.122/3:143); **Pabbajjā S** (A 10.59/5:108); **Paṭisallāna S** (It 2.2.8/39,15); **Sikkhānisamsa S** (It 2.2.9/40,12); **Jāgariyo S** (It 2.2.10/41,11); **Dvayatānupassanā S** (Sn pp-140,13, 148,13).

⁷⁹ See **Pāsādika S** (D 29,12.155+167), SD 40a.6.

⁸⁰ See **(Anicca) Cakkhu S** (S 25.1), SD 16.7.

⁸¹ See **Emotional independence**, SD 40a.8.

10 Tha 641

“**Having seen the arising of the sense-bases, the mind is rightly released**” [§641] refers to the practitioner’s understanding of dependent arising which brings about awakening and arhathood (in the case of Soṇa). The suttas, such as **the Acela Kassapa S 1** (S 12.17), describe the 12 links of dependent arising as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| with <u>ignorance</u> as condition, | (volitional) formations arise; |
| with <u>formations</u> as condition, | consciousness arises; |
| with <u>consciousness</u> as condition, | name-and-form arises; |
| with <u>name-and-form</u> as condition, | the 6 sense-bases arise; |
| with <u>the 6 sense-bases</u> as condition, | contact arises; |
| with <u>contact</u> as condition, | feeling arises; |
| with <u>feeling</u> as condition, | craving arises; |
| with <u>craving</u> as condition, | clinging arises; |
| with <u>clinging</u> as condition, | existence arises; |
| with <u>existence</u> as condition, | birth arises; |
| with <u>birth</u> as condition, | there arise <u>decay, death, sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain and despair.</u> |

Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering.⁸²

11 Tha 642

11.1 The last three verses rejoice in the arhat’s awakening. The phrase “**mind at peace**” (*santa, citta*) refers to the arhat’s destruction of the influxes (ThaA 270) [633.6], that is, a mind that is “cooled,”⁸³ the fires of greed, hate and delusion extinguished, and nirvana attained. Elsewhere, an arhat is spoken of as: “Thus, in this very life itself he dwells hunger-free, quenched, cooled, enjoying bliss, become divine himself.”⁸⁴

11.2 “**There is no more to add to the done, no more to be done.**”⁸⁵ This is a variation on the more famous arhathood pericope that goes thus:

| | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| “Birth is destroyed, | <i>khīṇa, jāti</i> |
| the holy life has been lived, | <i>vusitam brahma, cariyam</i> |
| done what is to be done, | <i>kataṃ karaṇīyam</i> |
| there is no more for this state of being.” ⁸⁶ | <i>nāparam itthattāyāti</i> |

Here, the line “there is no more to add to the done, no more to be done” has the same sense as the phrase, describing an arhat’s attainment, that is, he has “**done what is to be done**” (*kataṃ karaṇīyam*). It means that he has understood the noble truths in all their 16 aspects, that is, he has full understanding of suffering (the 1st truth), he has abandoned craving (the 2nd truth), by realizing nirvana (the 3rd truth), and

⁸² S 12.17/2:20 f @ SD 18.5. See **Titth’āyatana S** (A 3.61), SD 6.8) Intro, & also (**Kāya Na Tumha S** (S 12.37), SD 5.14. For dependent ending, see the closing of (**Paṭicca,samuppāda**) **Vibhaṅga S** (S 12.2,16.2), SD 5.15.

⁸³ *Nibbuta, cittassa* (VA 1083; AA 3:393).

⁸⁴ *Iti so diṭṭh’eva dhamme nicchāto nibbuto sīti, bhūto sukha-p, paṭisaṃvedī brahma, bhūtena attanā viharatīti*. This remarkable passage is at **Kandaraka S** (M 51,5), SD 32.9; **Apaṇṇaka S** (M60,35), SD 35.5; **Sāḷha S** (A 3.66,18), SD 43.6; **Attan Tapa S** (A 4.198), SD 56.7; Nm 1:159, 204, 211, 246, 441; Nc:Be 37, 42, 88, 142, 203; Pug 4.24/7. Comy explains this as meaning that the practitioner experiences the bliss of the dhyanas, the paths, the fruits and nirvana (MA 3:10). “By having become divine himself,” *brahma, bhūtena attanā* = “by becoming the best [supreme] himself” (*seṭṭha, bhūtena attanā*, MA 3:10,9 = PugA 234,9).

⁸⁵ *Katassa paṭicayo n’atthi. karaṇīyam na vijjati*.

⁸⁶ Eg **Poṭṭhapāda S** (D 9,56.3/1:203) n, SD 7.14; **Miga, jāla S 2** (S 35.64,17), SD 44.7.

by cultivating the path (the 4th truth), in all its awakening stages, that is, streamwinning, once-return, non-return and arhathood.⁸⁷

11.3 In the **Pāsādika Sutta** (D 29), a similar phrase is applied to the **holy life** (*brahma, cariya*), that is, the training taught by the Buddha for our personal development and spiritual awakening, that is to say:

the holy life—the well spoken, fully accomplished holy life that has been well proclaimed—is accomplished in every way, with nothing less, with nothing more.⁸⁸

The key phrase, “**with nothing less, nothing more**” (*anūnaṃ anadhikaṃ*), means that the Buddha’s teaching has neither anything missing nor anything superfluous, despite the voluminous, prolix and imaginative teachings of later Buddhism that mostly ritualize meditation⁸⁹ and philosophize on wisdom.⁹⁰

The Buddha has given us **the “great commission”** in this connection, that is, to propagate the holy life that has “nothing more, nothing less.” thus:

Teach the Dharma, bhikshus, which is good in the beginning, good in the middle, good in the end, both in the spirit and in the letter.

Declare the holy life in its whole⁹¹ and complete purity.

(Mv 11.1 @ V 1:21) = (**Māra**) **Pāsa Sutta 2**, S 4.5/1:105 f; Mvst 3:415 f)

12 Tha 643-644

12.1 While **Tha 642** describes Soṇa’s **arhathood** (and arhathood in general) literally, **643** speaks of the same thing using the imagery of a “solid mountain of rock,” which is also found at **Dh 81ab**.⁹² This imagery evokes a sense of natural strength and stability where the arhat is not moved in anyway by the 8 winds of gain and loss, praise and blame, fame and ill fame, and joy and sorrow.

12.2 In other words, an arhat has feelings, since he experiences (“feels”) the effects of “forms, tastes, sounds, smells, touches and all states, desirable and undesirable” [§643 f], but he is unshaken by them.⁹³ The arhat is unmoved and unshaken by the pleasurable and the painful. Because his mind is “unyoked” (*visaññutta = visamyutta*), that is, not caught up in any kinds of duality. He sees only their “falling away” (*vaya*) or impermanence.⁹⁴

Throughout such experiences, however, it is in the arhat’s nature to be completely equanimous. His, in other words, is a mirror-like mind that immediately reflects the nature of those before him, so that he is able to help them in a most spontaneous and effective manner.⁹⁵

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⁸⁷ DA 1:225 in detail; MA 1:180 in brief. On the 4 kinds of saints, see SD 11.1 (5).

⁸⁸ *Yam kho taṃ cunda sammā vadamāno vadeyya sabb ’ākāra, paripūraṃ anūnaṃ anadhikaṃ svākkhātaṃ kevala, paripūraṃ brahma, cariyāṃ suppakāsitaṃ.*

⁸⁹ On the ritualization of meditation, see **How Buddhism became Chinese**, SD 40b.5 (5.1).

⁹⁰ On the philosophization of wisdom, see **How Buddhism became Chinese**, SD 40b.5 (4.1.2.7; 7.5.2.3).

⁹¹ “Whole,” *kevala*, ie unadulterated, entire, not mixed with anything else.

⁹² *Selo yathā eka, ghano | vātena na samīrati.* Also at Dh:G 239, Dh:Patna 93 (line b: *vadeṇa na sabhijadi*), Uv 29.49 (line b: *vāyunā na prakampyate*). For a philological n, see Dh:N 83 n81.

⁹³ On the saints and feelings, see (**Samyojana**) **Koṭṭhita S** (S 35.232,8) & SD 28.4 (3), SD 29.5 (3.2), & **How the saints feel**, SD 55.6.

⁹⁴ On how the saints deal with their sense-experiences, see **Tikaṇḍaki S** (A 5.133) + SD 2.12 (1.4+1.5).

⁹⁵ On the arhat’s equanimity, see **How the saints feel**, SD 55.6, On the practice of equanimity as a “divine abode,” see SD 38.5 (6).

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