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## Cha-b,bisodhana Sutta

The Discourse on the Sixfold Purification | M 112

Theme: How to recognize an arhat

Translated &amp; annotated by Piya Tan ©2009, 2021

1 Summary and parallels

## 1.1 SUMMARY

**1.1.1 The Cha-b,bisodhana Sutta**, the discourse on six-fold purification, describes how we should examine one who claims to have attained **arhathood**, the stage of highest moral, mental and spiritual awakening [§2]. The Sutta lays out different aspects of this awakening, by way of a series of 5 investigations (into the 6 purifications of an arhat) taught by the Buddha for authenticating the person's claim to have attained the final and true goal of life. [1.1.4]

**1.1.2** The Chabbisodhana Sutta (M 112)<sup>1</sup> and its Madhyama Āgama parallel (MĀ 187),<sup>2</sup> opens with Dharma-based questions for the monk, claiming to be an arhat, on some basic truths and realities that calm his mind [§§3-7] and free him from all patterns of identification regarding body and mind [§§8-11], leading to true renunciation [§12]. He trains in the Vinaya, purifying his body and mind [§13]: thus begins his moral training [§13-16].

This helps him live a life of contentment [§14] and restraint [§15] to overcome liking and disliking. He goes on to develop mindfulness and clear knowing [§16], and overcome the mental hindrances [§17], which leads to the attainment of the 4 dhyanas [§§16-18], followed by the destruction of the influxes, [§19] and, finally, awakening [§20].<sup>3</sup> The Sutta concludes with the Buddha praising such an arhat [§21].

**1.1.3** One claiming to be **an arhat** (fully self-awakened one) should be questioned and cross-questioned on the following aspects of his attainment. The Sutta lists the following 5 qualities to be properly investigated and affirmed:

- |                                                                                              |           |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| (1) detachment in regard to the 4 ways of expression ( <i>vohāra</i> )                       | [§§3.2-5] |
| (2) detachment regarding the 5 aggregates of clinging                                        | [§§5.2-7] |
| (3) detachment from the 6 elements (earth, water, fire, wind, space and consciousness)       | [§§7.2-8] |
| (4) detachment regarding the 6 senses (internal and external)                                | [§§9-11]  |
| (5) freedom from any sense of "I" [§20.3] through proper cultivation of the path of training | [§§12-20] |

**1.1.4** The Cha-b,bisodhana Sutta gives a full definition of an arhat [1.1.1] in terms of **5 aspects of moral and mental purification**. Of these 5, 4 of them highlight various aspects of the detachment and equanimity of an arhat. The 5<sup>th</sup> adds another facet of such detachment showing how this level of purification is attained.

What is interesting about these **5 purifications** is that the number does not seem to match the title of "six-fold purifications" (*cha-b,bisodhana*). We have to work out, as it were, what the 6 purifications (and the 6<sup>th</sup> purification) refer to, so that we begin our own journey towards the path of awakening. The clever faults such a Sutta, but the insightful sees liberating meaning in the Sutta's silence. [1.2.3]

<sup>1</sup> M 112/3:32,33.

<sup>2</sup> MĀ 187 (T26.1.733a13).

<sup>3</sup> M 112/3:32,33 and MĀ 187 (T26.1.733a13). The accounts of the gradual path in M 112 and MĀ 187 show the minor differences between the Majjhima Nikāya and the Madhyama Āgama discourses, eg see nn in §§6.1 9 10.1 13(6) 16.

## 1.2 CHINESE PARALLELS

**1.2.1** The Cha-b,bisodhana Sutta has a Chinese parallel<sup>4</sup> in the **Madhyama Āgama**<sup>5</sup> 說智經 *shuō zhì jīng* “the discourse on the declaration of (final) knowledge” (MĀ 187). The Sutta and its MĀ parallel present the case of a monk who claims to have attained arhathood. In such a case, we are instructed to investigate this claim by questioning him on various aspects of the teaching.<sup>6</sup> [1.2.2]

**1.2.2** Both discourses agree that, on being questioned, one who is **an arhat** will show that he is neither attracted nor repelled towards the seen, heard, sensed and cognized [2.1], that is, he is naturally detached (with on-looking mindfulness) regarding all his experiences. The Cha-b,bisodhana Sutta describes an arhat as dwelling “**unattracted, unrepelled, independent, unbound, unfettered, unyoked, with a barrier-free mind**” (*anupāyo anapāyo anissito appaṭibaddho vippamutto visaṃyutto vimariyādikatena cetasā*) [§4.2] towards them.<sup>7</sup>

The Chinese translation similarly describes the monk as being “not elated, not depressed, not depending, not bound, not defiled, not attached,” 不高,不下,不倚,不縛,不染,不著 *bùgāo, bùxià, bùyǐ, bùfù, bùrǎn, bùzhào*.<sup>8</sup>

The Chabbisodhana Sutta and its parallel, however, differ in the arrangement of the kinds of purification and their sequence (and the details of their exposition), in the following ways:

M 112	MĀ 187
(1) the seen, heard, sensed, cognized	(2) 5 aggregates
(2) the 5 aggregates	[6] the 4 nutriments
(3) the 6 elements	(1) seen, heard, sensed, cognized
(4) the 6 senses	(4) the 6 senses
(5) no sense of “I”; the path	(3) the 6 elements
	(5) no sense of “I”; the path

**Table 1.2: The 5 kinds of purification in M 112 and MĀ 187**

### 1.2.3 A “missing” 6<sup>th</sup> purification?

**1.2.3.1** In **Table 1.2**, we can see that while **M 112** (the Cha-b,bisodhana Sutta) has only 5 modes of purification, in spite of speaking of the arhat’s six-fold purification in its title. The Pali commentary tries to arrive at

<sup>4</sup> This Chin MĀ parallel, MĀ 187 (T26.1.732a-734a), was tr by Gautama Saṅghadeva near the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> cent, apparently based on a Prākṛit original of the Sarvāstivāda tradition(s). Analayo has done an annotated tr of it, with an evaluation of the 2 versions from the perspective of early Buddhist oral tradition. On the language of the Indic orig text, see Bapat 1969:5, Enomoto 1986:20, Hinüber 1982:250; on school affiliation, see Enomoto 1984, Lü 1963:242, Mayeda 1985:98, THICH Minh Chau 1991:27, Waldschmidt 1980:136, SHI Yin-shun 1962:703.

<sup>5</sup> The Chin parallel, **MĀ 187** (T26.1.732a-734a), like M 112, locates the discourse in Jeta’s grove at Savatthi. For a remark on MA 187: THICH Minh Chau 1964:31; for a tr of MA 187: Analayo 2008e. A discourse quote paralleling the 4 expressions (*vohāra*) [§3.3] recurs in Abhk 4:74 (Pradhan 1967:245,8), with its Chin version in T1558 (T29.87b18) and T1559 (T29.242c11); for full quotes: [2.1.2.1 n]. See also Abhk at D (4094) Mgon pa, ju 240b6, Q (5595) tu 275a4 (without the full quote).

<sup>6</sup> For a full tr of MĀ 187, and comparative study with M 112, see Analayo, “The sixfold purity of an arahant according to the Chabbisodhana-sutta and its parallel,” *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* 15, 2008e:241-277.

<sup>7</sup> M 112/3:30,9.

<sup>8</sup> MĀ 187 (T1.732c4).

6 types of purification by taking the freedom from I-making, my-making, and conceit [§11] in terms of not being caught in ideas of self (some kind of abiding nature or essence) in himself and towards others.<sup>9</sup>

This suggestion seems contrived, and does not seem to work because some of the other types of purity, taken up in the Chabbisodhana Sutta, could also be applied to oneself and others, so that such an application of this interpretation would result in *more* than 6 purifications!

**1.2.3.2 The Commentary** further records another opinion, which it attributes to “**elders from across the sea**” (*para,samudda,vasī therā*).<sup>10</sup> According to the explanation, these elders refer to the purity of an arhat’s attitude towards the 4 nutriments or foods (*āhāra*)—solid food, contact (sense-stimuli), volition, consciousness<sup>11</sup>—as relating to the arhat’s 6<sup>th</sup> mode of purification.<sup>12</sup>

In fact, the Chinese version *does* give the 4 nutriments as the 2<sup>nd</sup> kind of purification, that is, relating it by way of an arhat’s attitude to them [Table 1.2]. According to the Madhyama Āgama version, an arhat will be completely detached towards the 4 nutriments of *food, contact, intention, and consciousness*.<sup>13</sup> In this way, we would actually have 6 kinds of purification.

Encouraging as this notion may be, it is, however, difficult to see how they fit into the flow of the Sutta teachings. The underlying principle of the 5 modes of purification is that of detachment and equanimity. How are we to imagine that the arhat is “detached and equanimous” towards *material food, contact, intention and consciousness* in the manner of the other modes? This whole idea clearly seems contrived.

**1.2.3.3** It should also be noted that since the Commentary suggests that there may be an earlier version of the Sutta that included the 4 nutriments, this section was probably lost at some point during or after the transmission of the Sutta from India to Sri Lanka. Indeed, if this were the case, it is more likely that *some elders in India itself*, rather than “elders from across the sea,” would have known about the inclusion of this set of 4 nutriments [1.2.3.2].

**1.2.3.4** Although in the case of **M 122**, it is possible that a considerable part of it could be lost, it also attests to the degree to which the reciting monks were committed to preserving a sutta exactly as they had received it. It would have been easy for the sutta reciters to supply the missing section on the 4 nutriments (or foods) on the strength of the Sutta’s title and the commentarial explanation, or alternatively, to change the title to \*Pañca,sodhana Sutta, “the discourse on the five-fold purification,” in order to make it fit with the Sutta’s content.

Clearly this did not happen and the Sutta was instead handed down in its present truncated state. Analayo, in the conclusion to his comparative study of the Sutta, notes: “This testifies to the fidelity of the reciters and their earnest efforts, albeit not always successful, to pass on a discourse the way they had received it.” (2011:639)

**1.2.3.5** Finally, I think, there is a broad hint in the Commentary’s statement that this Sutta is also called **Eka,vissajjaka Sutta** (The Single-answer Discourse) (MA 4:94,18). Surely, this “single answer” is some kind of summary or idea underpinning the arhat’s 6 purifications. The simplest answer is often the best: it has to do with “6,” which is, clearly, the 6 sense-bases.

<sup>9</sup> MA 4:94,19.

<sup>10</sup> MA 4:94,23.

<sup>11</sup> D 3:228; M 1:48, 261; S 2:13, 48, 98-105; Vbh 401. See also SD 20.6 (2); SD 55.14 (2).

<sup>12</sup> MA 4:94,19-95,5.

<sup>13</sup> MĀ 187 (T1.732b18). The 4 nutriments also occur together with the elements, the aggregates, and the senses in the description of an arhat’s detachment in **Saundara,nanda Kāvya** 18.18 (the story of the elder Nanda in verse) (Johnston 1928:136,5).

This conclusion also has the support of **the Sabba Sutta** (S 35.23) which speaks of the 6 sense-bases and their respective objects as “the all” (*sabba*).<sup>14</sup> The arhat is one who has been purified with regards to “**the all**,” as explained in §9.

Moreover, there is an interesting verse in this connection, which describes the arhat, such as this verse which the Buddha utters in response to Upaka’s question<sup>15</sup> about the Buddha’s teacher:

*Sabbābhibhū sabba, vidū’ham asmi  
sabbesu dhammesu anūpalitto  
sabbañ, jaho taṇha-k, khaye vimutto  
sayam abhiññāya kam uddiseyyam*

*All have I conquered, all do I know,  
not clinging to all states;  
renouncing all, freed by craving’s destruction,  
having understood by myself: whom shall I call teacher?*

(Dh 353 = V 1:8)<sup>16</sup>

### 1.2.4 Small but interesting differences

**1.2.4.1** The accounts of **the gradual path** [1.1.2] in M 112 and MĀ 187 show the same minor differences between Majjhima Nikāya and Madhyama Āgama discourses in the following places (qqv):

§13 (1) regarding killing: **MĀ 187** includes the killing of “insects and bugs”;

(6) harsh speech

(8) abstinence from intoxicants

§15 mindfulness (*satī*) and restraint (*indriya, saṁvara*)

§16 clear knowing (*sampajāna*)

**1.2.4.2 M 112** states that it is only at the end of a satisfactory conclusion of the 5 investigations [§21] that we can ascertain whether the questioned monk’s claim to full awakening is genuine. According to **MĀ 187**, however, the monks had already been satisfied with the first answer. They had kept on inquiring only because they wanted to witness the skill and wisdom of the interrogated monk.<sup>17</sup>

## 2 Key teachings

### **2.1 THE 4 KINDS OF EXPRESSION**

#### **2.1.1 The seen, the heard, the sensed, the cognized**

The Sutta first describes an arhat in terms of “**the 4 kinds of common expressions**,” that is, seeing, hearing, sensing and cognizing (*diṭṭha suta muta viññāta*). These are the common means of mundane sensing (experiencing and knowing), and this tetrad is often found in the suttas, as the 4 “noble expressions” (*ariya, vohāra*), on refraining from the 4 types of wrong speech, and their opposites, the 4 “ignoble expressions” (*anariya vohāra*).<sup>18</sup>

<sup>14</sup> **Sabba S** (S 35.23/4:15), SD 7.1.

<sup>15</sup> On Upaka’s question: **Ariya Pariyesanā S** (M 26,25) n, SD 1.11.

<sup>16</sup> For similar verses that play on “all” (*sabba*), see M 1:171\*, 2:93\*, S 1:134\*, 2:284\*; A 2:24\*; Sn 211; It 122\*; V 2:179: [A 4.8,8 n, SD 51.19]. See also SD 15.7 (3.3.2.4 f). On the meaning of *sabba*, see **Sabba S** (S 35.23), SD 7.1 (5).

<sup>17</sup> MĀ 187 (T1.734a22).

<sup>18</sup> Eg (**Catukka**) **Vohāra 1-4** (A 4.247-250 = A:Be 4.250-253): Suttas 1+3 give the “ignoble expressions” (*anariya vohāra*), while Suttas 2+4 the “noble expressions” (*ariya vohāra*). The ignoble (or non-noble) expressions are those of the worldling: they are faulty (*sa, dosa*, AA 4:147,12), ie, they may be untrue or false. The noble expressions are those of the path saints, they reflect their minds (*yāhi cetanāhi te vohāre voharan’ti. Tāsam etam nāmarā*); they are always true, related to reality. These 4 suttas are paired up and combined by way of the 8 ignoble expressions, (**Aṭṭhaka**) **Vohāra Sutta 1** (A 8.67) and the

### 2.1.2 Comparative analysis

**2.1.2.1** The phrase *ditthe dittha, vāditā, sute suta, vāditā, mute muta, vāditā, viññāte viññāta, vāditā* [§3.3] has its counterpart in **MĀ 187** (T1.732b29) as: 一曰見說, 二曰聞說, 三曰識說, 四曰知說 *yī yuē jiàn shuō, èr yuē wén shuō, sān yuē shí shuō, sì yuē zhī shuō*. The 2 texts treat these terms somewhat differently. Where **M 112** has *viññāta*, “cognized,” **MĀ 187** reads 知 *zhī*, “to know.” Where **M 112** has *muta*, “sensed, experienced,” **MĀ 187** reads 識 *shí*, which elsewhere means being “conscious.” Although the former terms (Pali and Chinese) are practically synonymous, the latter case reflects some difficulty in the translation about the exact sense of *muta* (which is not an easy term). [2.1.2.2]

**2.1.2.2** According to **Pāc 1.2.1** (V 4:2,25), *muta* (or *mata*) refers to what is sensed only by the nose, the tongue or the body, whereas *viññāta* refers to what is experienced by the mind, an explanation also found in the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya.<sup>19</sup> This fits in the sequence where *muta* or *mata*<sup>20</sup> precedes *viññāta* (Skt *vijñāta*), that is, the natural sequence of listing the sense-faculties.<sup>21</sup>

**2.1.2.3** The tetrad *diṭṭha suta muta [mata] viññāta* are clearly a common shorthand for the function of the 6 sense-faculties, that is, *seeing, hearing, sensing and cognition [knowing]*. With our contemporary understanding of medicine, science and psychology, we, in fact, understand such terms better than almost any of the post-Buddha teachers or Chinese text translators who worked with the Buddhist texts, or any theologian or demagogue who reworked the Buddhist texts.<sup>22</sup>

It must have been difficult, yet fascinating, say, for the early Chinese translators, even when they worked with Buddhist monks from India, south Asia or Central Asia (who might or might not themselves had under-

8 noble expressions, respectively, (**Aṭṭhaka**) **Vihāra Sutta 2** (A 8.68); also **Saṅgīti S** (D 33,1.11(41 f)/3:232). See also Caillat 1984b:68.

<sup>19</sup> T1428 (T22.634b6).

<sup>20</sup> On *muta* as in *diṭṭha suta muta* etc: SD 53.5 passim; as the known or felt (?): SD 53.5 (4.2); as the thought: SD 53.5 (5.3).

<sup>21</sup> However, Vetter suggests that the order *diṭṭha, suta, muta*, and *viññāta* “is better explained by the Waxing Syllable Principle [or “waxing compound,” SD 55.7 (1.2.3.3) n] ... etymologically, *muta* rather points to ‘experienced by the [‘sense organ’] mind’ whereas *viññāta* probably has ... the meaning ‘experienced by other external senses’.” (2000:101 n7)

<sup>22</sup> Pasadika draws attention to an Ekottarika Āgama Skt frag (Okubo 1982:105,27), which has the same set, *drṣṭe drṣṭa-vādinī śrute mate vijñāte vijñāta, vādinī* (1985:189 n36; also 107,14). A discourse quote in Abhk 4.74 (Pradhan 1967:245,8) of the ‘ignoble’ expressions, *adrṣṭe avāditā aśrute’mate’vijñāte vijñāta, vāditā*, see T1558 (T29.87b18 f): 謂於不見, 不聞, 不覺, 不知事中, 言實見等 *wèi yú bùjiàn, bù wén, bù jué, bù zhīshì zhōng, yán shí jiàn děng*, and T1559 (T29.242c11): 不見說見, 乃至不知說知 *bùjiàn shuō jiàn, nǎizhì bùzhī shuō zhī*. **Saṅgīti S** (D 33,1.11(41)/3:232,10) lists the 4 ignoble expressions (*anariya vohāra*) as *adiṭṭhe diṭṭha, vāditā, assute suta, vāditā, amute muta, vāditā, aviññāte viññāta, vāditā*, whereas the Chin parallel, DĀ 9 (T1.50b27), reads 不見言見, 不聞言聞, 不覺言覺, 不知言知 *bùjiàn yán jiàn, bùwén yán wén, bùjué yán jué, bùzhī yán zhī*. Stache-Rosen 1968:129 restores the corresponding Skt fragment to (*adrṣṭe drṣṭavāditānāryāvvyāvahārah aśrute śrutavād)itā, am(a)te (matavāditā avijñāte vijñāta, vāditānāryavyava)hārah*, based on Saṅgītiparyāya, T1536 (T26.-410b25 f), which reads 一不見言見, 二不聞言聞, 三不覺言覺, 四不知言知 *yī bùjiàn yán jiàn, èr bùwén yán wén, sān bùjué yán jué, sì bùzhī yán zhī*; cf also SHT I 778b A1-2 (p336). \*Mahāvibhāṣā, T1545 (T27.861b18), similarly reads 一不見言見, 二不聞言聞, 三不覺言覺, 四不知言知 *yī bùjiàn yán jiàn, èr bùwén yán wén, sān bùjué yán jué, sì bùzhī yán zhī*. The sequence in **MĀ 187** as 見聞識知 *jiàn wén niàn zhī*, recurs in **MĀ 106** (T26.1.596b18), parallel to occurrences of *diṭṭha, suta, muta*, and *viññāta* in **M 1/1:3,15** (SD 11.8), where another Chinese parallel in **EĀ 44.6** (T125.2.766b3) reads 見聞念知 *jiàn wén zhī shí*, and a 3<sup>rd</sup> Chin parallel in **T56** (T1.851b3) reads 見聞知識 *jiàn wén zhī shí*, and in **MĀ 200** (T1.764c22), parallel to *diṭṭha, suta, muta*, and *viññāta* in **M 22,16(5)/1:135,34** (SD 3.13), follow the same pattern, though their tr of *muta* or *mata* as 識 *shí* seems somewhat puzzling. This tetrad is also found in **Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 3.7.23**: *aḍṣṭo draṣṭā aśrutah śrotā, amata mantā, avijñāto vijñāta* (Radhakrishnan 1953:229), and **3.8.11**: *aḍṣṭam draṣṭr aśrutam śrotṛ, amatam manṭr, avijñātam vijñāṭr* (233). Nakamura notes that Jainism has their cognate: *diṭṭham suyam mayam vinnāyam* (1983a:312)

stood those texts in the orthodox manner). Surely, the early Chinese translators (amongst other such translators) had to resort to their native cognates (especially Daoist and Confucianist terms), or invent some neologisms that significantly enriched and empowered the Chinese language,<sup>23</sup> but remain mostly religious and textual jargon which remain Chinese (or Greek) to most of us today, except perhaps as **logotheosis**, worship of the word, the text, the Sutra.<sup>24</sup>

Nevertheless, the ingenuity or the ingenuousness of their efforts have come down to us to interpret, one that opens to us like windows into the hazy and hoary past of the Buddha's wisdom and ways. The vital success of **early Buddhism** is, clearly, that it is *not text-based* (not a faith of the Book), but an *experiential* vision based on a meditative experience of the uplifting texts and liberating truths. This is the nature of *self-reliance* in early Buddhism.

## 2.2 INVESTIGATING CLAIMS OF ATTAINMENT OF ARHATHOOD: A FEW POINTS

**2.2.1** Both the Cha-b, bisodhana Sutta (**M 112**) and its Chinese translation (**MĀ 187**) mention 2 kinds of responses towards such claims of arhathood (or some spiritual state), after which we are to continue our investigation. While **M 112** here records that such a claim should *neither* be approved *nor* rejected at once [§3], **MĀ 187** speaks of *rejoicing* in it already at the time of the monk's first stating his claim of arhathood.<sup>25</sup>

Thus, while the Pali Sutta (M 112) states that such a proclamation should only be approved of after some careful investigation and confirmation of the authenticity of the claim, the Chinese version says that such a claim may be accepted right away and then be scrutinized. At best, we should understand this attitude as one of positive response, but not being caught in it. We must go on to investigate the claim. At worst, it is possible that the Chinese translation was influenced by prevalent pious local beliefs at that time.

### 2.2.2 Awakening as state, not status

**2.2.2.1** In view of the possibility that such claims may be mistaken, the cautious attitude recommended in the Pali Sutta is clearly more reasonable. Indeed, such is the attitude recommended by the Buddha in **the Sunakkhata Sutta** (M 105)<sup>26</sup> and its Sanskrit counterparts,<sup>27</sup> since such a claim of arhathood may be an "*arrogant overestimation*" [undue confidence] (*adhimānena*) of their own progress. In other words, it is a mistaken or false claim.

It is also likely that this teaching by the Buddha on how we should respond to such public claims of arhathood was given before a strict ruling was made prohibiting monastics from making such a claim [2.2.2.3]. Nevertheless, the Sutta teachings remain valid and useful as a guide for our own progress on the path and attainment of arhathood. We should also treat with extreme caution any such claims made on behalf of other monastics and teachers.

**2.2.2.2** According to **the Vimamsaka Sutta** (M 47)<sup>28</sup> and its Chinese version, **MĀ 186**,<sup>29</sup> even for the Buddha, there should be a thorough investigation of his conduct before one comes to the conclusion that he was fully awakened. The Buddha, instructing us to investigate whether he is himself awakened as he claims, shows

<sup>23</sup> See eg V Mair, "Buddhism and the rise of the written vernacular in East Asia," *J of Asian Studies* 53, 1994; Guang Xing, "The Buddhist impact of Chinese language," 2012.

<sup>24</sup> On some issues in the early Chinese translation of Buddhist texts, see SD 40b (2.6 f).

<sup>25</sup> MĀ 187/732a25.

<sup>26</sup> M 105,4/2:252,20 (SD 94.3).

<sup>27</sup> SHT IV 32 folio 25R6 (p125) + SHT IV 165 folio 6R4-5 (p182).

<sup>28</sup> M 47,4/1:318,3 (SD 35.6).

<sup>29</sup> MĀ 186 (T26.1.731b9).

that he is vitally serious about awakening as a personal experience, neither as a ritual status or certification, nor as some lineage legacy or franchise. The ritualization of awakening and the path is clearly a fetter of **attachment to rituals and vows** (*sīla-b,bata parāmāsa*), which actually prevents us from ever reaching the path.<sup>30</sup>

**2.2.2.3** It is possible that **the Cha-b,bisodhana Sutta** was given before the introduction of the 4<sup>th</sup> rule of defeat (*pārājika*), whereby any monastic who falsely declares—by way of “**arrogant overestimation**” (*adhimān-ena*) of himself [2.2.2.1]—that he has attained any superhuman state, that is, reached the noble path (especially as an arhat), commits an offence of *pārājika* (defeat). He automatically falls from the state of a monastic.<sup>31</sup>

This rule entailing such a “grave offence” (*garuk’āpatti*) evinces the fact that monastics are prohibited from making any such claims, *whether true or not*. Conversely, it means that the laity, too, should not be “canonizing” monastics they respect as “arhats” and so on. Even if our teacher *were* an arhat, but we do not *work* to attain the path in this life ourselves, we have not kept to the teaching. Instead of attaining the state of freedom on the path, we have commodified awakening as a **fetish** or **status** that would only incite and increase conceit (*māna*) in us: we have “overestimated” ourselves by not working for the path ourselves.

## 2.3 M 112 and MĀ 187 ON THE 6 SENSE-FACULTIES [§§9-11]

### 2.3.1 On MĀ 187’s “economy”

**2.3.1.1** There is an exciting development in the comparative study between §10 of The Cha-b,bisodhana Sutta and its Chinese parallel in **MĀ 187**. The Commentary recognizes the significance of this passage on the 6 internal and external bases (*cha ajjhattaka,bahira āyatama*).<sup>32</sup> These 12 sense-bases [§10.2] are, in this connection, referred to in similar contexts in a discussion amongst arhats and in the arhat Channa’s practice in the Chann’ovāda Sutta (M 144,9 f), which recurs as **the Channa Sutta** (S 35.87),<sup>33</sup> thus:

“the eye, form, eye-consciousness, and things cognizable through eye-consciousness”  
(*cakkhusmiṃ ... rupe, cakkhu,viññāṭe, cakkhu,viññāṇa,viññātabbesu dhammesu*) [§10.2]<sup>34</sup>

In most of the Pali manuscripts of Myanmar (Be) and Thailand (Se), only the passages on the 1<sup>st</sup> base and the 6<sup>th</sup> base are listed in full. The Buddha Jayanti Tipiṭaka (BJT), however, helpfully lists the whole pericope in full. The SD translation here has followed this tradition, and rendered these important passages in full, too [§10.2].

**2.3.1.2** Both M 112 and its Chinese version, **MĀ 187** (T1.732c19), list the passages on the 6 sense-bases and the respective objects, in abridged form (*peyyāla*). However, there seems to be an interesting difference between them that is worth some consideration. The 2 texts list the 6 internal and 6 external sense-bases, thus:

<sup>30</sup> Pār 4 (V 3:109,21-27).

<sup>31</sup> On claiming superhuman states (monastic claiming awakening and dhyana) as *pārājika*: SD 52.12 (1.2.1.1).

<sup>32</sup> See **Sabba S** (S 35.23), SD 7.1; **Saḷ-āyatana Vibhaṅga S** (M 137,4+5), SD 29.5; SD 26.1 (3.2); SD 56.11 (2.1.2). Later called “the 12 sense-bases” (*dvādas’āyatana*) in late canonical works (Nm 1:133, 2:430, 441; Nc:Be 38, 207; Pm 1:101, 104, 122, 2:34, 230; Peṭk 113), the Abhidhamma (Dhs 229; Vbh 70 passim; Dhk 1, 6; Pug 1; Kvu 138 passim; Yam:Be 1.71).

<sup>33</sup> M 144,8-10/3:265-266 = S 35.87 (SD 11.12) (MA 4:93,22-94,7).

<sup>34</sup> M 112/3:32,16 onwards.

**M 112,10.1**

... there are these 6 internal and external Bases rightly proclaimed by the Blessed One

... :

- (1) the eye and forms,  
 (2) the ear and sounds,  
 (3) the nose and smells,  
 (4) the tongue and tastes,  
 (5) the body and touches,  
 (6) the mind and mind-objects.

...

“How does the venerable one know, how does one see, regarding these 6 internal and external bases so that, through not clinging, his mind is liberated from the influxes?”

**MĀ 187** (T26.1.732c14-17)<sup>35</sup>

Venerable friend, the Blessed One has taught 6 internal sense-spheres:

- The eye sense-sphere,  
 the ear ...  
 the nose ...  
 the tongue ...  
 the body ...  
 The mind sense-sphere.

賢者，世尊說  
內六處：

眼處  
耳  
鼻  
舌  
身  
意處。<sup>36</sup>

“Venerable friend, knowing what and and seeing what in regard to these 6 internal sense-spheres have you attained the knowledge that there is no clinging to anything and that (through) the destruction of the Influxes the mind has been liberated?”

[How does the monk whose influxes have been destroyed know that the holy life has been established in the Dharma?]<sup>37</sup>

賢者，云何知  
云何見此  
內六處？  
得知  
無所受  
漏盡  
心解脫耶，  
漏盡比丘  
得知梵行  
已立法者？<sup>38</sup>

Then, in **MĀ 187**, the following passages follow (Analayo’s translation, 2008e:249), here given in full:

**MĀ 187** (Taishō text 26,<sup>39</sup> vol 1, page 732c) lines 17-20

Venerable friends, in regard to **the eye** as well as **eye-consciousness**,  
 and [in regard to] **objects to be experienced by eye-consciousness**,  
 I have complete knowledge.

諸賢。我於眼及眼識<sup>40</sup>  
眼識知法俱知<sup>41</sup>

<sup>42</sup>Having come to know these 2 aspects (of experience), venerable friends,  
 delight (in regard to) **the eye** as well as eye-consciousness,  
 and (in regard to) objects to be experienced by eye-consciousness,  
 has been extinguished.

二法知己。諸賢<sup>43</sup>  
若眼及眼識<sup>44</sup>  
眼識知法樂已盡<sup>45</sup>

(Through) that extinction, dispassion, cessation, tranquillization and calming

彼盡無欲滅息止<sup>46</sup>

<sup>35</sup> The MĀ 187 tr is from Analayo 2008e:248 f.

<sup>36</sup> xiánzhě, shìzūn shuō nèi liù chù: yǎn chù ěrbí shé shēn yì chù.

<sup>37</sup> Inadvertently omitted by Analayo.

<sup>38</sup> xiánzhě, yún hé zhī yún hé jiàn cǐ nèi liù chù? dé zhī wú suǒ shòu lòu jìnxīn jiětuō yé, lòu jìn bǐqiū dé zhī fànxíng yǐ lì fǎ zhě?

<sup>39</sup> **Text 26** refers to the whole of the Madhyama Agama (MĀ) in the Taishō Daizōkyō, now called the SAT (Saṃgaṇikī-kr̥taṃ Taiṣōtripiṭakam) Daisōkyō Text Database): <https://21dzk.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/SAT/satdb2015.php?lang=en>. See SD 40b.23 (2.6.4).

<sup>40</sup> zhūxián. wǒ yú yǎn jí yǎnshì.

<sup>41</sup> yǎnshì zhī fǎ jù zhī.

<sup>42</sup> From hereon, it is stock, repeated for each of the other 5 faculties (incl the mind) [below], which is *italicized*.

<sup>43</sup> èr fǎ zhīyǐ. zhū xián.

<sup>44</sup> ruò yǎn jí yǎnshì.

<sup>45</sup> yǎnshì zhī fǎ lè yǐ jìn.



I attained the knowledge that there is no clinging to anything  
and that (through) the destruction of the influxes the mind has been liberated.

得知無所受漏盡心解脫<sup>47</sup>

### T26.1.732c20-23

*Like this in regard to the ear ... the nose ... the tongue ... the body ...*

如是耳鼻舌身意及意識<sup>48</sup>

**the mind** as well as mind-consciousness,

and (in regard to) objects to be experienced by mind-consciousness,

意識知法俱知<sup>49</sup>

I have complete knowledge.

<sup>50</sup>*Having come to know these 2 aspects (of experience), venerable friends,  
delight (in regard to) the mind as well as mind-consciousness,  
and [in regard to] objects to be experienced by mind-consciousness  
has been extinguished.*

二法知已諸賢<sup>51</sup>

若意及意識<sup>52</sup>

意識知法樂已盡<sup>53</sup>

彼盡無欲滅息止<sup>54</sup>

*(Through) that extinction, dispassion, cessation, tranquillization and calming*

*I attained the knowledge that there is no clinging to anything*

得知無所受漏盡心解脫<sup>55</sup>

*and that [through] the destruction of the influxes the mind has been liberated.*

### T26.1.732c23-25

Venerable friends, knowing like this and seeing like this

諸賢。我如是知如是見<sup>56</sup>

in regard to these 6 internal sense-spheres

此內六處<sup>57</sup>

I attained the knowledge that there is no clinging to anything and

得知無所受漏盡心解脫<sup>58</sup>

that [through] the destruction of the influxes the mind has been liberated.

**2.3.1.3** A careful examination of these passages against the Pali parallels will show they are almost identical in teaching, differing only in word-phrasing. However, there is a very interesting difference which has puzzled and confounded scholars and students alike. Although §10.2 of M 112 lists, for each sense-base, their tetrad of *faculty + object + consciousness + mind-object* as a template, **MĀ 187** [above] omits forms (*rūpa*) and the other “external” bases, that is, the sense-objects: sounds, smells, tastes, touches and thoughts.

**M 112** lists all the textual paradigms for these cognitive analyses, as follows: [2.3.1.1]

the 6 internal bases (the sense-faculties),  
the 6 external bases (the sense-objects),  
their respective 6 sense-consciousness, and  
the respective 6 states to be cognized.

*cha ajjhataka āyatana*  
*cha bahira āyatana*  
*viññāṇa*  
*viññāṇa, viññātabba dhamma*

<sup>46</sup> bǐ jìn wúyù miè xīzhǐ.

<sup>47</sup> dé zhī wú suǒ shòu lòu jìnxīn jiětuō.

<sup>48</sup> rúshì ěr bǐ shé shēn yì jí yìshí. 如是 rúshì: thus (Skt evam: DDB).

<sup>49</sup> yìshí zhī fǎ jù zhī.

<sup>50</sup> This *italicized* passage repeats the stock from the prec passage beginning with “Having come to know ... .”

<sup>51</sup> èr fǎ zhīyǐ zhūxián.

<sup>52</sup> ruò yì jí yìshí.

<sup>53</sup> yìshí zhī fǎ lè yǐ jìn.

<sup>54</sup> bǐ jìn wú yù miè xīzhǐ.

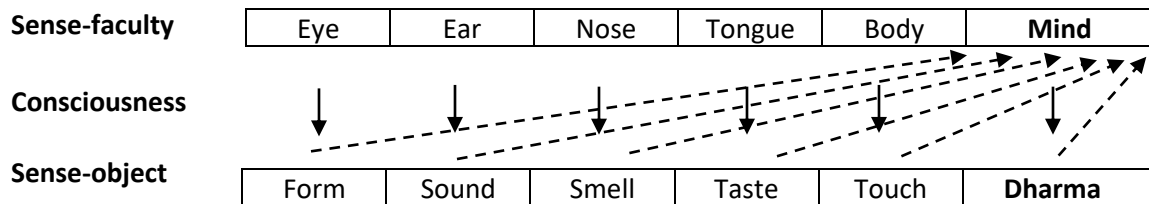
<sup>55</sup> dé zhī wú suǒ shòu lòu jìnxīn jiětuō.

<sup>56</sup> zhūxián. wǒ rúshì zhī rúshì jiàn

<sup>57</sup> cǐ nèi liù chù.

<sup>58</sup> dé zhī wú suǒ shòu lòu jìnxīn jiětuō.

Simply, this last term refers to what an arhat “cognizes” or knows, and may be equated with **perception**, one of the 5 aggregates (without clinging).<sup>59</sup> The whole paradigm of these 6 sense-bases as experienced by the arhat can be represented schematically in **Figure 2.3.1**. Note that for us to understand the diagram—how the arhat’s perception occurs (theoretically)—we need to see the “big picture” represented in this diagram. In other words, all the sense-objects are also listed so that we see how they work in the arhat’s perceptive process. This is how **M 112** represents the whole process, without leaving out any detail for the benefit of the unawakened students (like us).



**Fig 2.3.1.** How an arhat perceives or experiences<sup>60</sup>

**2.3.1.4** The Chinese **MĀ 187** presentation—representing (according to scholarly convention) the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma—sees the proximate mention of both forms (*rūpā*) and things cognizable (by the mind) through eye-consciousness (*cakkhu, viññāṇa, viññātabbā dhammā*) as redundant: thus, it omits all mention of the sense-objects. After all, the arhat does not grasp any of the external sense-objects (liking, disliking, ignoring them) but simply experiences things “as they are.”

Hence, **MĀ 187** omits mention of *forms, sounds, smells, tastes and touches* in **lines 14-17** [2.3.1.2]. After all, the arhat has “complete knowledge” (俱知 *jù zhī*) of all experiences. In other words, they are all well perceived in his own mind, as depicted in **Figure 2.3.1**. This approach may be technically correct, but it is not easy for the general reader or even student to comprehend.

**2.3.1.5** Unlike the Chinese translation in **MĀ 187**, the Pali version in **M 112** does not omit any component of the pericope on the internal and external bases. The respective passages on each of the bases lists *the faculty, its object, its consciousness and the percept* (“things cognizable through the consciousness”), for example, “the eye, forms, eye-consciousness, and things [states] cognizable (by the mind) through eye-consciousness.” This comprehensive layout is a deliberate effort by the sutta reciters to ensure that we the non-arhats, understand **how an arhat perceives things**.

The recurring amplification “(by the mind)” qualifying “things cognizable through the consciousness” shows that all these perceptions are “mind-made” (*mano, maya*). **MĀ 187** excludes all mention of the sense-objects (except the mind) for this very reason: each of these occurs in the arhat’s mind, and he understands what they really are, and is unconcerned with them.

**2.3.1.6 The Sutta Commentary** is helpful in giving us 2 explanations to show the significance of this interesting feature of this unique Sutta. Firstly, “forms,” for example, refers to visible things that arise in the vision-field that is the eye-door as “things cognizable by the eye,” but these external “visible things” cease, for the

<sup>59</sup> The arhat’s 5 aggregates are simply just that *pañca-k, khandha*; those of the unawakened are “the 5 aggregates of clinging” (*pañc’upādāna-k, khandha*) [S5.2]. On the former: (**Upādāna**) **Parivaṭṭa S** (S 22.56), SD 3.7 (2); **Mahā Hatthi, pad-ōpama S** (M 28,27-28), SD 6.16 = SD 17.8a (13.2.2).

<sup>60</sup> For a general application of this diagram, see **Table 3a**: SD 17.13 [3.3].

arhat, right there at the eye-door as soon as they have cognized. These states end right here or will end right here without rearing as future states cognizable in the arhat's consciousness.<sup>61</sup>

Secondly, explains the Commentary, the word "form" (sound, etc) signifies all **forms** (including sounds, etc) without distinction, "things cognizable by the eye" (etc) signifies the 3 mental aggregates (feeling, perception and formations) that function in association with eye-consciousness.<sup>62</sup> (MA 4:93,22-94.7). This is another interesting point regarding the nature of consciousness.

**2.3.1.7** Each sense-consciousness processes only its own sense-object. However, broadly consciousness, or what we can term "**cognitive consciousness**" covers not only these sense-consciousness, but also underlies all other cognitive processes that includes, besides thinking (or conceiving), feeling, perception and intending. Hence, we can usefully categorize consciousness as follows.<sup>63</sup>

<u>type</u>	<u>"cognition"</u>	<u>function</u>	<u>the 5 aggregates</u>
(1) "sense-based"	cognitive consciousness, or simply,	sense-consciousness	form
(2) "feeling-based"	cognitive consciousness, or simply,	affective consciousness	feeling
(3) "perception-based"	cognitive consciousness, or simply,	perceptive consciousness	perception
(4) "formations-based"	conative consciousness, <sup>64</sup> or	karmic consciousness	formations
(5) rebirth- or life-based	existential consciousness	the subconscious <sup>65</sup>	consciousness

Specifically or narrowly, **consciousness** can refer to only "sense-consciousness," that is, in our normal perceptive process. However, broadly (and we should never forget this polysemic sense of consciousness), it is "cognitive consciousness" comprising all the mental aggregates (feeling, perception and formations). Notice that "form" is classed as the 1<sup>st</sup> kind of consciousness, the "sense-based." This is what is well known in the suttas in connection with the "body (endowed with) with consciousness" (*sa,viññāṇaka kaya*).<sup>66</sup>

Then, there is the *broad* sense of consciousness that covers all the mental aggregates, all of which function rooted in consciousness.<sup>67</sup> Finally, there is the "subtlest" sense of consciousness—a kind of "cognitive gene" or "karmic gene"—the subconscious, related to rebirth and the continuation of life itself (as the "lifecontinuum," *bhav'aṅga*).<sup>68</sup> Hence, broadly, we can speak of 2 kinds of consciousnesses: cognitive consciousness and existential consciousness.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>61</sup> *Ettha yaṃ atīte cakkhu,dvārassa āpātham āgantvā niruddham yaṃ ca anāgate āpātham āgantvā nirujjhissati yaṃ pi etarahi āgantvā niruddham taṃ sabbam rūpaṃ nāma.* (MA 4:93,22-25). This is not an easy point. Analayo, in his Majjhima comparative study, in fact, remarks: "This explanation is not convincing, since it would be irrelevant to describe the reaction of an arhat to what he or she does not experience at all." (20082:268; 2011:637 n12). This is a point we should consider, but experientially, the comy point is most interesting and a rare insight into the perceptual process of an arhat for the appreciation of non-arhats.

<sup>62</sup> Analayo again rejects the Comy: "This also does not seem to solve the problem, because the aggregates of *feeling, perception and formation* [sic] are not cognizable by eye-consciousness or any of the other sense-consciousness, so that apart from "form" there would be little scope to find anything that could be fitted into the category "things cognizable through eye-consciousness." (2008e:268; 2011 id). As noted above, consciousness is a broad (and difficult) term that also works *generically*.

<sup>63</sup> On consciousness, see **Viññāṇa**, SD 17.8a.

<sup>64</sup> Although conation (the act of willing, intending) is an important class of its own, it is, in early Buddhism, a sub-category of the cognitive process. Whatever happens in or with the mind is, by definition, "cognitive."

<sup>65</sup> On consciousness, the preconscious, the subconscious, the unconscious: SD 17.8a (6).

<sup>66</sup> SD 17.8a (12.3); SD 56.1 (4.3.2.2) n

<sup>67</sup> See SD 17.8a (6.1).

<sup>68</sup> Also called *bhav'aṅga*, *cuti*, *citta*, *paṭisandhi*, *citta*. See SD 17.8a (6.1); SD 32.1 (3.8); SD 48.1 (9.2.1.3).

<sup>69</sup> On **the 2 kinds of consciousnesses**, see SD 17.8a (6), esp Fig 6.1. On cognitive consciousness as those of the 6 senses, see SD 17.8b (3). On existential consciousness, see SD 17.8a (6.1); SD 32.1 (3.8).

## 2.4 BHIKKHAVO, BHIKKHAVE

**2.4.1 The Pali vocabulary** has words with some exceptions and oddities not usually seen in transcription of modern spoken language or in translations of Buddhist works. Such Pali inconsistencies exist on account of these 2 reasons.<sup>70</sup>

(1) Some words, even a few grammatical inflections, often called **Magadhisms**, since they show traces of a dialect from ancient Magadha, on the eastern part of the central Gangetic plains of north India, that is, the heart of the region where the Buddha lived and taught. Such words and features, inconsistent with the rest of Pāli phonetics, were probably attempts in retaining some features of the speech of the Buddha and his immediate disciples.

“These word forms, with their “frozen” phonetics, mostly represent Buddhist technical terms which perhaps served as identity badges for the Theravāda tradition.”<sup>71</sup>

(2) A set of inconsistencies probably arising from **spelling convention** as the scriptural language evolved and became standardized in the last few centuries BCE. Pali was a Prakrit dialect, one of the vernaculars that “could be formalized or thought about” in terms of the Sanskrit sound-system (id).

**2.4.2** An interesting feature of the Cha-b, bisodhana Sutta is that it opens with the Buddha addressing those assembled as **bhikkhavo** (vocative plural) [§1.2], “bhikshus!” or “monks!” Note that *bhikkhavo* appears here, as it were, by itself, in a self-emphatic mode, and only occurs here. It is a synonym of *bhikkhave*, and appears a total of 10 times in M 112.<sup>72</sup> Note that *bhikkhave* always appears enclitically, that is, postpositively, often after the keyword of the sentence. [2.4.3]

The plural form **bhikkhavo**, “bhikshus” or “monks” is old,<sup>73</sup> assimilated from the Sanskrit *bhikṣavaḥ*,<sup>74</sup> and is also found in Jainism.<sup>75</sup> Etymologically, it is a Magadhism<sup>76</sup> [2.4.1], a Western form, while *bhikkhave* is its Eastern form.<sup>77</sup> As a vocative, it is, like *bhante*, a contraction of the Sanskrit vocative *bhavantaḥ* (sir), which is related to Ardha, Magadhī (the Prakrit of the Jains) *bhante* = *bhadanta*,<sup>78</sup> a common word used by juniors to address seniors, amongst both lay and monastics. However, it is less used in the suttas as a vocative than as a nominative (subject) or as an accusative (object), “the monks.”<sup>79</sup> It is often found in verses<sup>80</sup> and in late canonical works, too.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Geiger, Ghosh and Norman, *A Pāli Grammar* [Geiger PG], 1994: xxvii f (Gombrich’s intro). On the name “Pāli,” see Norman, *Pali Literature*, 1983:1 f.

<sup>71</sup> R Gombrich, intro, Geiger PG, 1983:xxviii.

<sup>72</sup> §§2 3 4 6 8 9 10 12 14.2 21.

<sup>73</sup> See Sn 280, 385; Dh 243; It 41,2\*.

<sup>74</sup> Oberlies PG § 5.1 (p66), §13(4) (p110). For Skt forms, see BHS 12.62 f.

<sup>75</sup> Sūyag 157; Pischel, *A Grammar of the Prākṛit Languages*, [Pischel or Pischel GPL] 1900:314 §381

<sup>76</sup> H Lüders, *Beobachtungen über die Sprache des buddhistischen Urkanons* [Beob], 1953 §1.

<sup>77</sup> D 2:120,21\*, V 1:19,30 = 20,28. See Geiger PG §82.5; Hinüber PG §142. See Oberlies PG

<sup>78</sup> Pischel §§165, 356b; Beob §24; BHS D: bhadanta (405).

<sup>79</sup> Eg Sn 384, 573; Dh 243, 283. See the paradigm for *bhikkhu* in Warder PG where *bhikkhavo* forms both the nom and acc [DP: bhikkhu]; only *bhikkhave* is given as voc (1974:134).

<sup>80</sup> Sn 280, 385; Dh 243d; It 41,2\*.

<sup>81</sup> Some occurrences of **bhikkhavo**: **D** 2:120,21\* 254,11 256,3\*+11\* 262,10' 272,24\* **3**:34,13+23 58.4 142,5; 1:235 **M** 45/1:305,9 2:146\*(Sela S); **S** 1:26\* 35\* 36\* 60x2\* 220\* 4:70\* 71\* 89\*; **Dh** 283d 377d; **It** 41\*; **Sn** 280b 384a 385a 394,23 573a; **Vv** 18\*; **ThaAp** 327.15d/1:263,6 387.3/1:299,5 464.9d/2:464,10 472.27c/2:472,24 541.39b/2:495,13 542.37d/- 2:498,8 542.42d/2:498,18; **ThiAp** 17.157d/2:541,4 17.158d/2:541,6 17.161b/2:541,13 17.174b/2:542,15 17.183d/2:543,8 23.2b/2:569,13 32,23c/2:599,18 40.4d/2:614,16. For all occurrences, search CSCD using wildcard: “bhikkhavo\*”.

**2.4.3** Another Magadhism is *bhikkhave*<sup>82</sup> (a synonym of *bhikkhavo*), which found its way into the literary language (Kunstsprache)<sup>83</sup> of early Buddhism from popular speech.<sup>84</sup> Its *-e* ending comes from *-aḥ*, or *-e* ← *-aḥ*, of the Sanskrit *bhikṣavaḥ* (that is, by *v/o* dissimilation).<sup>85</sup> While *bhikkhavo* was a Western feature [2.4.2], *bhikkhave* was its Eastern form.<sup>86</sup> It has been noted that while *bhikkhavo*, as a vocative shows marked emphasis, *bhikkhave* is always used as an unmarked enclitic<sup>87</sup> vocative<sup>88</sup> [2.4.2].

### 3 Falsifiability of early Buddhist claims

#### 3.1 FALSIFIABILITY OF THE CLAIM TO ARHATHOOD

**3.1.1** In science, the **falsification principle** was proposed by philosopher of science Karl Popper, that, for something to be scientific, it must be able to be proven false. If things are falsifiable (able to possibly be proven false), then, they can be used in scientific studies and inquiry. This interesting and important idea can and must, in principle at least be usefully applied to early Buddhism.

Let me clearly state that I'm neither saying that Buddhism is "scientific" nor using science to prove or support early Buddhism. I'm merely curious about how we can apply the falsification principle in some useful way to what we have learned from **the Cha-b,bisodhana Sutta**, regarding how we can authenticate any claims to the attainment of arhathood. More importantly, it is how this principle helps us better understand and practise the Dharma as taught by the Buddha.

#### 3.1.2 To catch a thief?

**3.1.2.1 The Cha-b,bisodhana Sutta** is a spiritually ironic text: it records the Buddha's instructions on how we should interrogate a claimant to arhathood, that is, by carefully asking 5 questions [1.1.3] and then determining the validity of the answers. It is as if the Buddha is teaching us how to identify a precious stone from cheap glass. The irony here is that these teachings have been given so openly that any unscrupulous monastic, a Buddhist Jesuit or Tartuffe, could have memorized these points and rehearsed them to perfection, so that even a Dharma-spirited sutta expert, especially such a one, may be fooled—we are then only certifying his status or handing down a lineage title. Without the ability of mind-reading, we would not know the claimant's mind; even when we are able to read his mind, we may lack the wisdom to see it for what it is since we have not penetrated all the 5 teachings ourselves!

**3.1.2.2** Clearly, then, it is not meant to be a mere checklist for some quality control over claims of having attained arhathood. By themselves, these 5 teachings can only be used merely as some external criteria by the unawakened. Ideally, it should be a flaming double-edged sword that cuts down both ignorance and craving, both in us (the questioner) and the claimant to arhathood. In other words, knowing the texts alone would not

<sup>82</sup> Sn 78,8, 125,20, 140,4; Mv 1.21,2, 25,4 ff.

<sup>83</sup> SD 49.8b (9.1.1.2); SD 3.2 (1.3); SD 53.5 (4.3.2.3).

<sup>84</sup> Geiger PG §82.5.

<sup>85</sup> Oberlies PG §5.2§12(7), + Stray Rem p108.

<sup>86</sup> See Oberlies, "Eine Dissimilationsregel in den Aśoka-Inschriften: Ein kleiner Beitrag zur Sprachgeographie Indiens," WZKS 36, 1992:19-22, and PG, Stray Remarks pp107 f, with ref to Trenckner, "Critical and philological notes," JPTS 1908: 134 n4. On eastern forms, see Sn:N 150 n7.

<sup>87</sup> By **enclitic** is meant that a word is unemphatic so that it's pronounced as if part of the preceding word, eg, *buddhañ,ca dhammañ,ca saṅghañ,ca*. Hence, in §3 the phrase is read *tassa,bhikkhave*, as if it is one word. Such a feature is, of course, lost in translation.

<sup>88</sup> O H Pind, rev of T Oberlies, *Pāli: A grammar of the language of the Theravāda Tipiṭaka*, ZDMG 154, 2004:412. Occurrences of **bhikkhave** are very common: see eg D index, PTS 1997:239 f. On *bhikkhavo* [above].

be sufficient for us to correctly read another's state. We must have mastered those 5 teachings ourselves and gained their respective attainments. It takes an arhat to truly know another arhat. Otherwise, we are but thieves trying to catch another thief.

**The Cha-b, bisodhana Sutta** presents a set of truths, appropriate means of verifying the reality of the claim of awakening, that any right-minded individual may and must use to verify such a claim. In other words, so long as we have ourselves attained these very same truths, we can test and testify to them in another. There is a special term for this: **intersubjective verifiability**. [3.2]

### 3.2 INTERSUBJECTIVE VERIFIABILITY

**3.2.1** Another interesting and useful term that gives us a better understanding of the nature of the early Buddhist teaching on experience and true reality is the term **intersubjective verifiability**. The component "intersubjective" comprises inter, "between or amongst," and subjective, "having to do with individuals (who each sees things his own way)." And verifiability is "capable of being tested or checked (verified or falsified) by experiment, observation or investigation."

Hence, intersubjective verifiability is the capacity of an idea or teaching to be readily and accurately communicated between or amongst different individuals ("intersubjectively"), and to be *reproduced* under varying circumstances for the purposes of verification. This is a core principle of empirical, scientific investigation. Again here, we are in no way saying that Buddhism is "scientific," or that we are measuring Buddhism by using *scientific* standards. Modern science deals with *measurable* relative truths while early Buddhism teaches unconditioned ultimate reality, that is, nirvana.

**3.2.2** We must surely wonder if there is a contradiction between the truths of intersubjective verification and the textual, authority-based, or crowd-approved (tribal) beliefs. Indeed, it is the disagreements between the truths derived from intersubjective verification, and beliefs based on faith or on appeal to charisma or personal authority (which includes most religious teachings) that form the basis for **the conflict between religion and science**, thus setting them apart.

Religion and science do not really oppose one another: it is the views of religionists and of scientists that see the differences (or the similarities) with one another. In fact, there have been inspiring efforts by scientists themselves to bring the two into congruence. Many scientists see cutting-edge science, especially **quantum physics**, lending itself to a melding of true religious experience and intersubjective verification of beliefs. A number of scientists, amongst the best of them, have described religious worldviews—generally, of a mystical [3.2.3], transpersonally universal, nature—that is consistent with a good understanding of science.

**3.2.3** It is vitally helpful for us to invest some time in examining what we mean by **mystical** here. "Mystical" may be defined as "an inspiring a sense of spiritual mystery, awe and fascination." But then, this inspiration may be rooted in some personal belief or bias that simply excites us, rather than our actually seeing deep into the true realities of the universe.

Or, we might even limit and own this mystique as "having a certain spiritual character or import by virtue of a connexion or union with God transcending human comprehension" (OED). This mystical experience is a personal or projected experience into the true reality of **everything**, one that transcends both the measurability of science and the uroboric self-centredness of religion.

**Religion** then is a symptom of the human hunger for truly knowing himself. Many are those who misread this symptom, who exploit its naivety, pretending to heal others with a diet of instant holiness or imposing crowd control over tribal existence like that of insects drawn to the bright naked flame. The history of religions is painfully penned in the blood of the many shed by the demands of a deluded few.

It is the rise of education and science that eventually awakened and freed us from religion and nurtured us in learning skills for the betterment of an open society and free world. If sex is the most selfish deed of our body, then religion is often the darkest, most destructive weapon of the mind.

### 3.2.4 What Einstein (and others) actually said

**3.2.4.1** The forced marriage between religion and science is the subject of that now infamous quotation attributed to Albert Einstein, recycled with hubris by religious apologists and demagogues, claiming that “science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind”—a fake quote. Further, there is the quip that “the cosmic religion of the future” must be Buddhism: another fake fact peddled by Sinhala Buddhist modernists and chief high priests.

**3.2.4.2 Einstein** never put Buddhism on a pedestal. At best, he mused: “The beginnings of cosmic religious feeling already appear at an early stage of development, eg, in many of the Psalms of David and in some of the Prophets. Buddhism, as we have learned especially from the wonderful writings of Schopenhauer, contains a much stronger element of this.”<sup>89</sup>

Neither did he, in his writings ever betray a belief in God, nor even a respect for unjustified faith and belief. He was reflecting on the primitive urge to understand the universe, along with the “faith” that such understanding is possible:

Though religion may be that which determines the goal, it has, nevertheless, learned from science, in the broadest sense, what means will contribute to the attainment of the goals it has set up. But science can only be created by those who are thoroughly imbued with the aspiration toward truth and understanding. This source of feeling, however, springs from the sphere of religion. To this there also belongs the faith in the possibility that the regulations valid for the world of existence are rational, that is, comprehensible to reason. I cannot conceive of a genuine scientist without that profound faith. This situation may be expressed by an image: science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind. (Einstein, 1954:45 f)

**3.2.4.3 Falsifiability**, theoretically at least, can apply only to statements and status. Language can be used in such a way that a statement can easily or deviously be proven wrong, at least to the wronger. A claim to some status can also be proven wrong, such as by exposing it by being ludicrous or self-centred or simply deluded. Since early Buddhism is not a Book-religion—that its teachings are not finally verified by authority of canonical teaching but by personal experience and attainment—the idea of “falsifiability” (as proposed by Popper) makes no sense for it.

When I feel pain, for example, just because the experience is gone, and now replaced by relief, does not mean that I did *not* experience it. When I put my hand (as it is) into the fire again, I will feel pain (again). This observation, however, becomes more complicated when we examine, say, breaking a precept, such as killing. It’s clear that no human, even non-human creatures, would want to be hurt. If I do not mind dying for my country or protecting my family, it does not disprove that killing is wrong. It is merely a choice I made (for whatever reason). The truth remains that life is precious to those alive.

### 3.2.5 What the Buddha teaches

**3.2.5.1** Similarly, at some early point, I had not heard of the 4 noble truths and did not think of anything resembling them. Some time later, I learned about them and have a good idea of their meaning. Over the years,

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<sup>89</sup> Albert Einstein, *Ideas and opinions. Based on Mein Weltbild*. New York: Crown Publishers, 1954:38.

as I examine the suttas and relate them to my daily experiences, I learn more about their verifiability; hence, their veracity. Since these are not statements, but **experiences**, they cannot be falsified. Only another experience that counters what I had experienced before can falsify my notion of that earlier experience. Hence, what can be falsified by me are only my own **views**.

In fact, as I notice how wrong views are falsified by **right views**, my understanding of the 4 truths gains more focus and clarity into what they really mean and how they can free me from my wrong views, which are preventing me from knowing true reality. Essentially, this is what early Buddhism is teaching us. It teaches us that **self-view** is self-defeating because we cannot know anything without experiencing *other* things. Further, we should neither identify with any of those others (by liking them, and so on) nor reject them (by hating them), nor ignoring them. We can only see change in them, and learn from our observations of them.

**3.2.5.2** The next key point is that we can only know about those “other” or outside things; that, by the time we know any of them, they no longer exist. We then only work or play with *memories* of them. Hence, we cannot look *outside* of ourself for their reality: we have created those realities ourselves, in our own minds. Even when we keep repeating the same process that had brought them into being (or so we thought), we cannot experience them again. The water in a running stream flows; we can only dip our hand but once into the stream. *We can dip our hand into it as many times as we like; it is never the same stream.* To try to do so would be merely **holding on to rituals and vows**. This, too, prevents us from knowing ourself.

**3.2.5.3** There is a 3<sup>rd</sup> mental fetter (hindrance to self-knowing and freedom), that is, we think that we can never know the answer—this is **doubt**—that the right and true answer must come from someone or something outside, something higher than us, and so on. This is simply our own views working against us: indeed, all views work against us, by deceiving us with a bit (of fish-bait) to trick the whole of us! We should never bite the bait. Hence, only by looking within, by examining our own mind, how we think, how we act, how we speak, and noting the conditions and effects they create for us, that we learn about our true nature. Only then, we become wiser: only then, we really and rightly know what to do with what we know. This is called **wisdom**, the knowledge that frees us from ignorance and suffering.

**3.2.5.4** With this understanding and vision of the possibility of universal goodness and wisdom, we can see that early Buddhism is not a religion, certainly not in any form it has become or made to become today. We must see it only as the true **path of self-awakening**, that is, embarking on *a self-reliant mental investigation for a full understanding of how the mind works*. We thus tapping its full powers, freeing ourself from the limits of conditioned reality through attaining unconditioned self-understanding, that is, full awakening. We will see a profound hint of this when we free the sense of the Cha-b,bisodhana Sutta from its words.

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# Cha-b,bisodhana Sutta

## The Discourse on the Sixfold Purity

M 112

1 Thus have I heard.

At one time, the Blessed One was staying in Anātha,piṇḍika's park-monastery in Jeta's grove outside Sāvattihī.

1.2 There the Blessed One addressed the monks thus: "Bhikshus [*Bhikkhavo*]." <sup>90</sup>

"Bhante!" they replied.

The Blessed One said this:

2 "Here, bhikshus [*bhikkhave*],<sup>91</sup> a monk makes a declaration of **final knowledge**, thus: 'I understand thus:

Birth is destroyed, the holy life has been lived,  
what had to be done has been done,  
there is no more coming to any state of being.' [§20.2]

3 That monk's words, bhikshus, should neither be approved nor disapproved.<sup>92</sup>

### (1) The 4 kinds of expression (*catu vohāra*)

3.2 Without approving or disapproving, a question should be put thus:

'Avuso,<sup>93</sup> there are the 4 kinds of expression<sup>94</sup> rightly proclaimed by the Blessed One who knows and sees, accomplished and fully awakened.

3.3 What are the four?<sup>95</sup>

One speaks of	<b>the seen</b>	as it was seen;	<i>diṭṭha</i>
one speaks of	<b>the heard</b>	as it was heard;	<i>suta</i>
one speaks of	<b>the sensed</b>	as it was sensed;	<i>muta</i>
one speaks of	<b>the cognized</b>	as it was cognized. <sup>96</sup> [30]	<i>viññāta</i>

These, avuso, are the 4 kinds of expression rightly proclaimed by the Blessed One *who knows and sees, accomplished and fully awakened*.

How does the venerable one know, how does he see, regarding these 4 kinds of expression, so that through not clinging his mind is liberated from the influxes?'

<sup>90</sup> All MSS *bhikkhavo* only here; hereafter always *bhikkhave*. See [2.4].

<sup>91</sup> On *bhikkhave*: §1 n *bhikkhavo*.

<sup>92</sup> *Tassa bhikkhave bhikkhuno bhāsitaṃ n'eva abhinanditabbaṃ na-p,paṭikkositabbaṃ*. Cf **D 16**,4.8/2:124 for each of the 4 *mahā,padesa* (the 4 criteria of Dharma authenticity): SD 9 (11); **M 136**,2/3:207 (SD 4.16). See {2.2}.

<sup>93</sup> From the context, *āvuso* is herein pl throughout.

<sup>94</sup> *Catu vohāra* (*vi + avahāra*, from *oharati*, "to bring down"), common usage, conventional definition, worldly language.

<sup>95</sup> Cf **V 4**:2; **D 33**,1.11(43)/3:232; **A 4.250-253**/2:246, **8.67+68**/4:307; **Vbh 376**.

<sup>96</sup> In the foll main sections (1)-(4), the states comprising personal identity are taken as **objects of perception** classified into the 4 categories of *the seen, heard, sensed, and cognized*. Here, sensed (*muta*) refers to the data of smell, taste and touch, cognized (*viññāta*) the data of introspection, abstract thinking and imagination. These objects are "conceived" when they are cognized in terms of "mine," "I" and "self," ie, they generate craving, conceit and views.

**4** Bhikshus, when a monk is **one with influxes destroyed**,  
 who has lived the holy life,  
 done what had to be done,  
 laid down the burden,  
 reached the true goal,  
 destroyed the fetters of being, and  
 is completely liberated through final knowledge,  
 this is the natural way for him to answer:

4.2 (1) 'Avuso, regarding the seen,  
 I dwell unattracted (to it), unrepelled (by it); independent, unbound; unfettered, unyoked; with a barrier-free mind.<sup>97</sup>

(2) Regarding the heard,  
 I dwell unattracted (to it), unrepelled (by it); independent, unbound; unfettered, unyoked; with a barrier-free mind.

(3) Regarding the sensed,  
 I dwell unattracted (to it), unrepelled (by it); independent, unbound; unfettered, unyoked; with a barrier-free mind.

(4) Regarding the cognized,  
 I dwell unattracted (to it), unrepelled (by it); independent, unbound; unfettered, unyoked; with a barrier-free mind.

It is by knowing thus, seeing thus, regarding these 4 kinds of expression, that through not clinging my mind is liberated from the influxes.'

**5** Saying 'Sadhu!' one may delight and rejoice in that monk's words.

## (2) The 5 aggregates of clinging (*pañc'upadāna-k.khandha*)

5.2 Having done so, a further question may be put thus:

'Avuso, there are these **5 aggregates** of clinging, rightly proclaimed by the Blessed One *who knows and sees, accomplished and fully awakened*.

What are the five? They are:

- (1) the **form** aggregate of clinging,
- (2) the **feeling** aggregate of clinging,
- (3) the **perception** aggregate of clinging,
- (4) the **formations** aggregate of clinging, and
- (5) the **consciousness** aggregate of clinging.

These, avuso, are the 5 aggregates of clinging, *rightly proclaimed by the Blessed One who knows and sees, accomplished and fully awakened*.

How does the venerable one know, how does he see, regarding these *5 aggregates of clinging*, so that through not clinging his mind is liberated from the influxes?'

<sup>97</sup> *Anupāyo anapāyo anissito appaṭibbadho vippamutto visamṃyutto vimariyādikatena cetasā viharāmi*. As in **Anupada S** (M 111), where Sāriputta uses this stock passage to describe his mind in each of the 9 progressive abodes (*anupubba,-vihāra*)—the 4 form dhyanas, the 4 formless attainments, cessation—ie, in connection with his attaining arhathood (M 111,4-20/3:25), SD 56.4. Here, too, these terms express the complete destruction of defilements by the path of arhathood.

6 “Bhikshus, when a monk is one with influxes destroyed,  
 who has lived the holy life,  
 done what had to be done,  
 laid down the burden,  
 reached the true goal,  
 destroyed the fetters of being, and  
 is completely liberated through final knowledge,  
 this is the natural way for him to answer:<sup>98</sup>

6.2 (1) ‘Avuso, having known **form** to be powerless, fading away, unreliable [comfortless], [31]  
 with the destruction, fading away, cessation, giving up and relinquishing<sup>99</sup>  
 of engagement and clinging<sup>100</sup> regarding form,  
 of mental standpoints, adherences and latent tendencies regarding form,<sup>101</sup>  
 I have understood that my mind is liberated.

(2) Having known **feeling** to be powerless, fading away, unreliable [comfortless], [31]  
 with the destruction, fading away, cessation, giving up and relinquishing  
 of engagement and clinging regarding feeling,  
 of mental standpoints, adherences and latent tendencies regarding feeling,  
 I have understood that my mind is liberated.

(3) Having known **perception** to be powerless, fading away, unreliable [comfortless],  
 with the destruction, fading away, cessation, giving up and relinquishing  
 of engagement and clinging regarding perception,  
 of mental standpoints, adherences and latent tendencies regarding perception,  
 I have understood that my mind is liberated.

(4) Having known **formations** to be powerless, fading away, unreliable [comfortless],  
 with the destruction, fading away, cessation, giving up and relinquishing  
 of engagement and clinging regarding formations,  
 of mental standpoints, adherences and latent tendencies regarding formations,  
 I have understood that my mind is liberated.

(5) Having known **consciousness** to be powerless, fading away, unreliable [comfortless],  
 with the destruction, fading away, cessation, giving up, and relinquishing  
 of engagement and clinging regarding consciousness,

<sup>98</sup> Both M 112 (3:30,31) and MĀ 187 (T1.732b3) agree that, as a result of having seen the impermanent and unreliable nature of the 5 aggregates, an arhat is thoroughly detached from them. M 112 speaks of having seen each aggregate to be “powerless” (*abala*). Here, MĀ 187 (T1.732b2) reads “fruitless,” 非果 *fēi guǒ*, which might be a misreading of *abala*, “powerless,” for *aphala*, “fruitless.”

<sup>99</sup> (Rūpaṃ | Vedanaṃ | Saññāṃ | Saṅkhāre | Viññāṇaṃ) *kho ahaṃ, āvuso, abalaṃ virāgaṃ* [Be Se *viraguṇaṃ*; cf It 69,11: PED] *anassāsikaṃ veditvā*.

<sup>100</sup> “Of engagement and clinging,” Be Ce *upāyūpādānā*, Ee *upāy’upādānā*, Se *upādāy’upādānā*, throughout, all wr for *upay’upādānā* [Be vl] (*upaya* + *upādānā*): synonyms for craving (*taṇhā*) and views (*diṭṭhī*). It is the nature of the 3 worlds to be involved (*upenti*) with craving and views. (MA 4:92,20 f). On “engagement” (*upaya*): **Upāya S** (S 22.53), SD 29.4; **Kaccāna,gotta S** (S 12.15/2:17), SD 6.13; **No Ce Assāda S 1** (S 35.17/4:10), SD 91.20.

<sup>101</sup> Comy: All these terms are names for “trembling” (*tāsam*) with craving and views. Through craving and views, the mind stands fixed (*adhitiṭṭhati*) in ideas of self-identity (*sakkāya*, “own self”). The mind adheres (*abhinivesati*) to craving and views. These then lie latent (*anuseti*) in us. (MA 4:92,23-27)

*of mental standpoints, adherences, and latent tendencies regarding consciousness,  
I have understood that my mind is liberated.*

It is by knowing thus, seeing thus, regarding these 5 aggregates of clinging, that through not clinging my mind is liberated from the influxes.’

7 Saying ‘Sadhu!’ one may delight and rejoice in that monk’s words.

### (3) The 6 elements (*cha dhātu*)

7.2 Having done so, a further question may be put thus:

‘Avuso, there are these **6 elements** rightly proclaimed by the Blessed One *who knows and sees, accomplished and fully awakened*.

What are the six? They are:<sup>102</sup>

- (1) the **earth** element,
- (2) the **water** element,
- (3) the **fire** element,
- (4) the **wind** element,
- (5) the **space** element, and
- (6) the **consciousness** element.

These, avuso, are the 6 elements rightly proclaimed by the Blessed *One who knows and sees, accomplished and fully awakened*.

How does the venerable one know, how does he see, regarding these *6 elements*, so that through not clinging his mind is liberated from the influxes?’

8 Bhikshus, when a monk is one with influxes destroyed,  
*who has lived the holy life,  
done what had to be done,  
laid down the burden,  
reached the true goal,  
destroyed the fetters of being, and  
is completely liberated through final knowledge,*  
this is the natural way for him to answer.<sup>103</sup>

8.2 (1) ‘Avuso, I have treated **the earth element**  
as non-self, with no self based on the earth element.<sup>104</sup>

<sup>102</sup> The 1<sup>st</sup> 4 elements—earth, water, fire, wind—are basic and found in **Mūla,pariyāyā S** (M 1/1:1-6 passim), SD 11.8. The 5 elements—the 4 + space—are listed in **Mahā Rāhul’ovāda S** (M 62,8-12/1:423 f), SD 3.11; and the 6 elements, at **Saṅgīti S** (D 33,2.2.(16)/3:247); **Bahu,dhātuka S** (M 115,5/3:62), SD 29.1a; **Dhātu Vibhaṅga S** (M 140,13/3:240), SD 4.17; **(Rāhula) Dhātu S 1** (S 18.9/2:248), SD 3.11; **Titth’āyatana S** (A 3.61,6/1:176), SD 6.8; Vbh 82 ff; cf VbhA 55.

<sup>103</sup> Both **M 112** (3:31,23) and **MĀ 187** (T1.733a7) state that an arhat has fully realized the nonself nature of the 6 elements: the 4 primary elements + space and consciousness. Schayer notes that the sequence of the 6 elements follows “a ‘graduated scale’ of subtleness, as wind is subtler than water, so is space subtler than wind, and consciousness than space.” (1935:125). For a comparable graduation, cf Taittiriya Upaniṣad 1.1, whose account of evolution proceeds from the self, through space and the other elements up to earth. See also Wynne 2007:36.

And with the destruction, fading away, cessation, giving up, and relinquishing of engagement and clinging based on the earth element, of mental standpoints, adherences, and latent tendencies based on the earth element, I have understood that my mind is liberated.

(2) Avuso, I have treated **the water element** as non-self, with no self based on the water element. And with the destruction, fading away, cessation, giving up, and relinquishing of engagement and clinging based on the water element, of mental standpoints, adherences, and latent tendencies based on the water element, I have understood that my mind is liberated.

(3) Avuso, I have treated **the fire element** as non-self, with no self based on the fire element. And with the destruction, fading away, cessation, giving up, and relinquishing of engagement and clinging based on the fire element, of mental standpoints, adherences, and latent tendencies based on the fire element, I have understood that my mind is liberated.

(4) Avuso, I have treated **the wind element** as non-self, with no self based on the wind element. And with the destruction, fading away, cessation, giving up, and relinquishing of engagement and clinging based on the wind element, of mental standpoints, adherences, and latent tendencies based on the wind element, I have understood that my mind is liberated.

(5) Avuso, I have treated **the space element**<sup>105</sup> as non-self, with no self based on the space element. And with the destruction, fading away, cessation, giving up, and relinquishing of engagement and clinging based on the space element, of mental standpoints, adherences, and latent tendencies based on the space element, I have understood that my mind is liberated.

(6) Avuso, I have treated **the consciousness element**<sup>106</sup> as non-self, with no self based on the consciousness element. And with the destruction, fading away, cessation, giving up, and relinquishing of engagement and clinging based on the consciousness element, of mental standpoints, adherences, and latent tendencies based on the consciousness element, I have understood that my mind is liberated.

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<sup>104</sup> Comy: The 1<sup>st</sup> phrase negates the consideration of the earth element as self, the 2<sup>nd</sup> negates the consideration of the material and mental factors *other* than the earth element as self. The same applies to all the other elements. (MA 4:93,9-15)

<sup>105</sup> Miln says of space (*ākāsa*) and nirvana that neither is born of deeds, cause or the creative power of nature (*ākāso ca nibbānañ ca ime dve akammajā ahetujā anutujā*, Miln 271,6 f; 268,21+25; DhsA:M 161,6 f). However, this is only a comparison of concepts, not realities: the two are *not* identical, since nirvana is unconditioned and beyond attributes. For a discussion, see Noa Ronkin, *Early Buddhist Metaphysics*, 2005:179 f; also A B Keith, *Buddhist Philosophy in India and Ceylon*, 1923 (1979):168 f.

<sup>106</sup> *Viññāṇa,dhatu* is described as *vijāna,dhatu*, “the element of knowing [cognizing]” (MA 4:93,8 = VbhA 55,13 f).

It is by knowing thus, seeing thus, regarding these 6 elements, that through not clinging **my mind is liberated from the influxes.**'

#### (4) The 6 internal and external bases (*cha ajjhattaka, bāhira āyatana*)

9 Bhikshus, saying 'Sadhu!' [32] one may delight and rejoice in that monk's words. Having done so, a further question should be asked thus:<sup>107</sup>

'But, avuso, there are these **6 internal and external bases**,<sup>108</sup> rightly proclaimed by the Blessed One *who knows and sees, accomplished and fully awakened*.

What are the six? They are:

- (1) the eye and forms,
- (2) the ear and sounds,
- (3) the nose and smells,
- (4) the tongue and tastes,
- (5) the body and touches,
- (6) the mind and mind-objects.

These, avuso, are the 6 internal and external bases rightly proclaimed by the Blessed One *who knows and sees, accomplished and fully awakened*.

How does the venerable one know, how does one see, regarding these *6 internal and external bases*, so that, through not clinging, his mind is liberated from the influxes?'

10 Bhikshus, when a monk is one with influxes destroyed,  
*who has lived the holy life,*  
*done what had to be done,*  
*laid down the burden,*  
*reached the true goal,*  
*destroyed the fetters of being, and*  
*is completely liberated through final knowledge,*  
 this is the natural way for him to answer.<sup>109</sup>

10.2 'Avuso, with the destruction, fading away, cessation, giving up, and relinquishing of desire, lust, delight, craving, attraction, and clinging, and of mental standpoints, adherences, and latent tendencies regarding **the eye, forms, eye-consciousness,** and things cognizable (by the mind) through eye-consciousness,<sup>110</sup> I have understood that my mind is liberated.<sup>111</sup>

<sup>107</sup> For a comparative study of this whole section and its Chin (MĀ 187) version: [2.3].

<sup>108</sup> Note that the Sutta simply takes these as 6 pairs of faculties; in later literature, they are called "the 12 sense-bases" (*dvādas'āyatana*): [2.3.1.1].

<sup>109</sup> Both **M 112** (3:32,17) and **MĀ 187** (T1.732c19) agree that an arhat is completely detached in regard to each of these 6 sense-bases. The latter, however, does not mention the underlying tendencies and adherences mentioned in M 112.

<sup>110</sup> This cognizing, as with the other 5 faculties [below], whether *past, future or present*. In this connection, Comy ref to the same passage in the arhat Channa's practice in **Chann'ovāda S** (M 144,9 f) = **Channa S** (S 35.87), SD 11.12. (MA 4:93,22-94,7)

<sup>111</sup> The proximate mention of both forms (*rūpā*) and things cognizable (by the mind) through eye-consciousness (*cakkhu, viññāṇa, viññātabbā dhammā*) seems redundant. Comy mentions 2 opinions proposed to resolve this apparent problem. One holds that "forms" refers to visible things that actually enter cognition; "things cognizable ..." to visible things that

*Avuso, with the destruction, fading away, cessation, giving up, and relinquishing of desire, lust, delight, craving, attraction, and clinging, and of mental standpoints, adherences, and latent tendencies regarding **the ear**, sounds, ear-consciousness, and things cognizable (by the mind) through ear-consciousness, I have understood that my mind is liberated.*

*Avuso, with the destruction, fading away, cessation, giving up, and relinquishing of desire, lust, delight, craving, attraction, and clinging, and of mental standpoints, adherences, and latent tendencies regarding **the nose**, smells, nose-consciousness, and things cognizable (by the mind) through nose-consciousness; I have understood that my mind is liberated.*

*Avuso, with the destruction, fading away, cessation, giving up, and relinquishing of desire, lust, delight, craving, attraction, and clinging, and of mental standpoints, adherences, and latent tendencies regarding **the tongue**, flavours, tongue-consciousness, and things cognizable (by the mind) through tongue-consciousness, I have understood that my mind is liberated.*

*Avuso, with the destruction, fading away, cessation, giving up, and relinquishing of desire, lust, delight, craving, attraction, and clinging, and of mental standpoints, adherences, and latent tendencies regarding **the body**, touches, body-consciousness, and things cognizable (by the mind) through body-consciousness, I have understood that my mind is liberated.*

*Avuso, with the destruction, fading away, cessation, giving up, and relinquishing of desire, lust, delight, craving, attraction, and clinging, and of mental standpoints, adherences, and latent tendencies regarding **the mind**, mind-objects, mind-consciousness, and things cognizable (by the mind) through mind-consciousness, I have understood that my mind is liberated.*

It is by knowing thus, seeing thus, regarding these 6 internal and external bases, that through not clinging my mind is liberated from the influxes.'

### **(5) The 3 trainings**

THE THESIS QUESTION

**11** Saying 'Sadhu!' one may delight and rejoice in that monk's words. Having done so, a further question may be put thus:

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cease without being cognized. The 2<sup>nd</sup> holds that the former term signifies all forms without distinction, the latter term the 3 mental aggregates that function in association with eye-consciousness. (MA 4:93,22-94.7).

‘But, avuso, **how does the venerable one know, how does he see, so that in regard to this body with its consciousness and all external signs, I-making, mine-making, and the latent tendency to conceit have been eradicated in him?**<sup>112</sup> [33]

### Renunciation (*nekkhamma*)

**12** “Bhikshus, when a monk is one with influxes destroyed, who has lived the holy life, done what had to be done, laid down the burden, reached the true goal, destroyed the fetters of being, and is completely liberated through final knowledge, this is the natural way for him to answer:

‘Avuso, formerly when I lived the home life, I was ignorant. Then, the Tathāgata or his disciple taught me the Dharma. On hearing the Dharma I gained faith in the Tathāgata. Possessing that faith, I considered thus:

**“Household life is crowded and dusty; life gone forth is wide open.”**<sup>113</sup>

It is not easy while living in a home to lead the holy life utterly perfect and pure as a polished shell. Suppose I shave off my hair and beard, put on the yellow robe, and go forth from the home life into homelessness.”

On a later occasion, abandoning a small or a large fortune, abandoning a small or a large circle of relations, I shaved off my hair and beard, put on the yellow robe, and went forth from the home life into homelessness.

### (A) MORAL TRAINING

**13** <sup>114</sup>“Having thus gone forth, I am accomplished in the training along with the livelihood of monks.”<sup>115</sup>

#### THE PRECEPTS

(1) Having abandoned the destruction of life, I abstain from destroying life. I dwell with rod and weapon laid down, conscientious,<sup>116</sup> merciful, compassionate for the welfare of all living beings.<sup>117</sup>

<sup>112</sup> This is the Sutta’s key question [cf §19 + n on omission of the 5 mundane knowledges]. Comy explains “I-making” (*ahaṅkāra*) as conceit (*māna*) and “mine-making” (*mamaṅkāra*) as craving (*taṇhā*). They are simply the latent tendency of conceit (*sv-eva mānānusayo*) (MA 4:94,11 f; cf AA 2:206,8 f). “All external signs” (*nimitta*) [§12] refers to the external sense-objects.

<sup>113</sup> Also at **Cūla Hatthi, padôpama S** (M 27,12/1:179), SD 40a.5.

<sup>114</sup> §§13-17, as at **Kandaraka S** (M 51,14-19), SD 32.9.

<sup>115</sup> From here on, all the passages spoken by the arhat monk—the moralities (*sīla*) [§13] and the 3-training pericope [§§14-20]—are in the 1<sup>st</sup> person sg, often marked by the vb *ahosiṃ* (1 sg aor from √bhū I “become,” basically meaning, “I was,” and verbs with similar endings. This testimony in the 1<sup>st</sup> person is very rare in the suttas: the PTS tr reflects this. However, Bodhi only gives a *peyyāla* in §§13-17, which makes it difficult to see vitality of the 1<sup>st</sup>-person testimony.

<sup>116</sup> *Lajjī*, “feel shame, modest,” explain in the Comy on S 1:73 as “one who has moral shame (*hiri*) and moral fear (*ottappa*).” Opp *alajjī*, shameless.



(2) Having abandoned the taking of the not-given, I abstain from taking what is not given. I take only what is given, accept only what is given, live not by stealth but by means of a pure mind.

(3) Having abandoned incelibacy, I live a celibate life,<sup>118</sup> living apart, abstaining from coupling, the way of the village.<sup>119</sup>

#### PURITY OF SPEECH

(4) Having abandoned false speech, I abstain from false speech.

I speak the truth, the truth is my bond,<sup>120</sup> trustworthy, reliable, no deceiver of the world.<sup>121</sup>

(5) Having abandoned divisive speech, I abstain from divisive speech.

What I have heard here, I do not tell there to break those people apart from these people here.

What I have heard there, I do not tell here to break these people apart from those people there.

Thus reconciling those who have broken apart or consolidating those who are united,

I love concord, delight in concord, enjoy concord, speak words conducive to concord.<sup>122</sup>

(6) Having abandoned harsh speech, I abstain from harsh speech.<sup>123</sup>

I speak words that are gentle, pleasant to the ear, loving, touching the heart, urbane, delightful and pleasing to the people.<sup>124</sup>

(7) Having abandoned idle chatter, I abstain from idle chatter.

I speak at the right time, speak what is true, speak on the beneficial [the good].<sup>125</sup>

I speak on the Dharma [teaching]<sup>126</sup> and the Vinaya [discipline].<sup>127</sup>

I speak words worth treasuring, timely, well reasoned, well measured, connected with the goal.<sup>128</sup>

<sup>117</sup> The Chin version (MĀ 146 @ T1.657a16) here adds abstaining from killing “insects and bugs,” 蝼蟲 *kūn chóng*. See **Cūḷa Hatthi, padōpama S** (M 27,13(1)) n, (SD 40a.5).

<sup>118</sup> *Brahma, cariya* is the supreme conduct or holy life, ie celibacy. Dīgha Comy points out that it involves abstaining from other forms of erotic behaviour besides intercourse (DA 1:73).

<sup>119</sup> *Gāma, dhamma*, ie the way of the householder, vulgar (in the sense of being associated with the masses) (MA 2:206 = DA 1:72). See **Gavesī S** (A 5.180,17) n, SD 47.15.

<sup>120</sup> “The truth is his bond,” *sacca, sandha*. Comy glosses as *saccena saccam sandahati*, “he joins truth with truth” (MA 1:206 = DA 1:73).

<sup>121</sup> *Sacca, vādī sacca, sandho theto paccayiko avisamvādako lokassa*. This line as in **Lakkhaṇa S** (D 30,2.16/3:170), SD 36.9.

<sup>122</sup> These 2 lines: *Iti samaggānam vā bhettā, bhinnānam vā anuppadātā, vagg,ārāmo, vagga,rato, vagga,nandī, vagga,-karaṇim vācam bhāsītā hoti*. This para is stock, eg **Sāleyyaka S** (M 41,9/1:286 f), SD 5.7 & **Sevitabbāsevitabba S** (M 114,-6.7/3:49), SD 39.8.

<sup>123</sup> MĀ 146 (T1.657b1), in this section against **harsh speech**, mentions soft and gentle speech; and, the Skt version, too, states that harsh speech is a hindrance for the cultivation of concentration. See **Cūḷa Hatthi, padōpama S** (M 27,13(6)) n, (SD 40a.5).

<sup>124</sup> *Yā sā vācā nelā kaṇṇa, sukhā pemaṇiyā hadayaṇ, gamā porī bahu.jana, kantā bahu.jana, manāpā tathā, rūpim vācam bhāsītā hoti*.

<sup>125</sup> *Kāla, vādī bhūta, vādī attha, vādī*. Comy glosses *attha, vādī*, as that he speaks about what is connected with the spiritual goal here and now, and hereafter (MA 2:208; DA 1:76). However, here, I have rendered *attha* as “the beneficial, the good (incl the goal),” which fits the flow of ideas better. As *attha* (as “goal”) appears at the end of this stock passage, I have rendered this closing word as “the goal,” which seems more fitting.

<sup>126</sup> He speaks on the 9 supramundane things (*nava lok’uttara, dhamma*) (MA 2:208 = DA 1:76), ie the 4 paths, 4 fruits, nirvana (Dhs 1094).

<sup>127</sup> *Dhamma, vādī vinaya, vādī*. The disciplines of restraint (*samvara*) (of the senses) and of letting go (*pahāna*) (of defilements) (MA 2:208 = DA 1:76). We can also connect *attha, vādī* (in the prec line) here, as alt have “He speaks on meanings, he speaks on teachings, he speaks on the discipline.”

<sup>128</sup> *Nidhāna, vatim vācam bhāsītā kālena sāpadesam pariyaṇta, vatim attha, samhitam*. *Pariyaṇta, vati* means “within limits, well defined.” On “the goal” (*attha*), see n on “speaks on the beneficial” above here.

(8) I abstain from damaging seeds and plant life.<sup>129</sup>

#### NOVICE'S PRECEPTS 6-10

(9) I eat only once a day, abstaining from the evening meal and from food at improper times.<sup>130</sup>

(10) I abstain from dancing, singing, music and from watching shows.<sup>131</sup>

(11) I abstain from wearing garlands and from beautifying myself with scents and make-up.<sup>132</sup>

(12) I abstain from high and luxurious beds and seats.<sup>133</sup>

(13) I abstain from accepting gold and silver [money].<sup>134</sup>

#### AVOIDING WORLDLINESS

(14) I abstain from accepting uncooked [raw] grain;

(15) I abstain from accepting raw meat.<sup>135</sup>

(16) I abstain from accepting women and girls.

(17) I abstain from accepting male and female slaves.

(18) I abstain from accepting goats and sheep.

(19) I abstain from accepting fowl and pigs.

(20) I abstain from accepting elephants, cattle, horses, and mares.

(21) I abstain from accepting fields and lands [landed property].<sup>136</sup>

(22) I abstain from running messages [or errands].<sup>137</sup>

(23) I abstain from buying and selling.

(24) I abstain from dealing with false scales, false metals,<sup>138</sup> and false measures.<sup>139</sup> [34]

(25) I abstain from bribery, deception, and fraud.

(26) I abstain from wounding, executing, imprisoning, highway robbery, plunder, and violence.<sup>140</sup>

## (B) MENTAL CULTIVATION

### Contentment

**14** I am content with robes to protect my body and with almsfood to maintain my belly, and wherever I go I set out taking only these<sup>141</sup> with me.

<sup>129</sup> As at D 1:10. On *bija, gāma, bhūta, gāma*, see Pāc 11 (V 4:34); see also D 1:5; MA 2:208. Curiously, this replaces the precept against intoxicants, which is omitted. On the mention of abstinence against intoxicants in Chin & Skt versions, see **Cūḷa Hatthi, padōpama S** (M 27,13(6)) n, (SD 40a.5).

<sup>130</sup> "Improper times" means between noon and the following dawn (V 1:83, 4:86); cf S 5:470; A 1:212; Kvu 2.6.

<sup>131</sup> A *dukkata* (wrong-doing) offence for monks (V 2:108); a *pācittiya* for nuns (V 4:267). Cf D 1:6, Kvu 2.7.

<sup>132</sup> Cf Kvu 2.8.

<sup>133</sup> See Pāc 87; V 1:192, 2:163; D 1:7; A 1:181. Comy says that the "high beds" are those that exceed the prescribed measurements and the "large beds" are those that are not allowable (MA 2:209).

<sup>134</sup> See Nissaggiya 18 (V 3:236 ff); Kvu 2.10. For detailed discussion, see **Money and monastics**, SD 4.19-23.

<sup>135</sup> "Raw meat." See V 3:208 where the nun Uppala.vaṇṇā prepares or roasts meat before offering to the Buddha.

<sup>136</sup> The Buddha however accepted land from rajahs like Bimbisāra and Pasenadi, and others like Anāthapiṇḍika and Visākhā, which were all received in the name of the Sangha. What is connoted here is accepting land on a personal basis.

<sup>137</sup> "Running messages." See D 1:8; S 3:239.

<sup>138</sup> "False metals," *kaṃsa, kūṭa*. See Nun's Nis 11, 12 & n at V:H 3:230. Comy however says that *kaṃsa* refers to a bronze bowl with a veneer of golden colour presented as a golden bowl to mislead others. (MA 2:210 = DA 1:79).

<sup>139</sup> Comys mention 3 methods: *hadaya, bheda* ("heartbreak"), used in measuring ghee, oil, etc; *sikhā, bheda* ("heap break"), used in measuring sesamum, husked rice, etc; *rajju, bheda* ("cord break"), used in measuring fields and sites (MA 2:210 = DA 1:79). *Sikhā* refers to a pyramid-shaped heap of grain on a tray of prescribed measurements.

<sup>140</sup> Dīgha Comy says that they kidnap victims by hiding in the snow and by hiding in a thicket (DA 1:80).

14.2 Just as a **bird**, wherever it goes, flies with its wings as its only burden, so, too, bhikshus, I am *content with robes to protect my body*<sup>142</sup> and with almsfood to sustain my belly, and wherever I go, I take only these with me.<sup>143</sup>

14.3 Possessing this **aggregate of noble virtue**, I experience within myself a blameless joy.<sup>144</sup>

### Sense-restraint<sup>145</sup>

**15**<sup>146</sup> (1) When I see a form with **the eye**, I do not grasp at any sign or detail, by which, as long as I dwell unrestrained in that eye-faculty, bad unwholesome states of covetousness and displeasure<sup>147</sup> would overwhelm me, to that extent I keep myself restrained. **[35]**

I guard the restraint of the eye-faculty, I commit myself to restraint in the eye-faculty.

(2) When I hear a sound with **the ear**, *I do not grasp at any sign or detail*, by which, as long as I dwell unrestrained in that ear-faculty, bad unwholesome states of covetousness and displeasure would overwhelm me,

<sup>141</sup> “These,” ie, the 8 requisites (*aṭṭha parikkhāra*): a small razor (*khuddaka,vāsi*), needle (*sūci*), water-strainer (*parissāvana*), almsbowl (*patta*) with a shoulder-strap, the triple robe (*ti,cīvara*), belt (*kāya,paṭibandha*) (MA 2:213 = DA 1:297; DA 1:206 = J 1:65; DhA 2:61; J 4:342, 5:254). Explained in detail at DA 1:206 f.

<sup>142</sup> As in **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2,66/1:71).

<sup>143</sup> This whole section (Contentment) up to here as in “the mental development” section of **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2,66/1:71), SD 8.10.

<sup>144</sup> “A blameless joy,” *anavajja,sukham*. Comy: “He experiences within himself a blameless, faultless, wholesome bodily and mental happiness accompanied by such phenomena as non-remorse, gladness, rapture, and tranquillity, which are based on moral virtue as their proximate cause” (DA 1:183); “a happiness free from faults” (*niddosa,sukha*, MA 2:214 = AA 3:198). Evidently, this joy arises on account of being free from the fear of being blamed for moral faults. Cf *avyāseka,-sekha* below [§16]. See Intro (5).

<sup>145</sup> Chin (MĀ 144 & T70) & Skt versions explicitly mention the role of mindfulness relating to sense-restraint: **Gaṇaka Moggallāna S** (M 107,4) n (SD 56.3).

<sup>146</sup> This whole para: *So cakkhunā rūpaṃ disvā na nimitta-g,gāhī hoti nānuvyañjana-g,gāhī. Yatvādhikaraṇaṃ enaṃ cakkhu'ndriyaṃ asaṃvutaṃ viharantaṃ abhijjhā,domanassā pāpakā akusalā dhammā anvāssaveyyuṃ, tassa saṃvarāya paṭipajjati, rakkhati cakkhu'ndriyaṃ, cakkhu'ndriye saṃvaraṃ āpajjati. On Na nimitta-g,gāhī hoti nānuvyañjana-g,gāhī, lit “he is not one who grasps at a sign, he is not one who grasps at a detail [a feature],” see SD 19.14. Comys say that “**sign**”(nimitta) here refers to a grasping arising through one’s sensual lust (*chanda,rāga,vasena*) or on account of merely one’s view (*diṭṭhi,matta,vasena*); “**detail**” (*anuvyañjana*) here refers to finding delight by grasping at another’s limb or body part (eyes, arms, legs, etc) (Nm 2:390; Nc 141, 141; DhA 400, 402; cf MA 1:75, 4:195; SA 3:4, 394; Nc 1:55; DhA 1:74). On other meanings of *nimitta*, see SD 13 §3.1a.*

<sup>147</sup> “Covetousness and displeasure,” *abhijjhā,domanassaṃ*, which Walshe (1995:335 & n632) renders as “hankering and fretting for the world”; alt tr “covetousness and displeasure” or “longing and loathing.” MA says that longing and displeasure signify the first two hindrances—sensual desire and ill will—principal hindrances to be overcome for the practice to succeed. They thus represent the contemplation of mind-objects, which begins with the 5 hindrances. Cf M 1:274/39.13; see also **Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna S** (D 22,13, SD 13.2) and **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10,36, SD 13.3) on how to deal with the hindrances in one’s meditation. The monk effects the abandoning of the hindrances by the contemplations of impermanence, fading away (of lust), cessation (of suffering) and letting go (of defilements), and thus comes to look upon the object with equanimity. On *abhijjhā,domanassa*, there is an interesting related passage from **Pubba or Pubb’eva Sambodha S** (A 3.101, SD 14.6): “Bhikshus, before my enlightenment, when I was still a bodhisattva, this thought occurred to me ... . ‘Whatever physical and mental joy (*sukha,somanassa*) there is in the world, that is the gratification (*assāda*) in the world; that the world is impermanent, suffering and of the nature to change, that is, the disadvantage [dangers] (*ādīnava*) in the world—the removal and abandoning of desire and lust for the world, that is, the escape from the world’.” (A 3.101/1:258, pointed out to me by Robert Eddison).

to that extent I keep myself restrained.

I guard the restraint of the ear-faculty, I commit myself to restraint in the ear-faculty.

(3) When I smell a smell with **the nose**, *I do not grasp at any sign or detail*, by which, as long as I dwell unrestrained in that nose-faculty, bad unwholesome states of covetousness and displeasure would overwhelm me, to that extent I keep myself restrained.

I guard the restraint of the nose-faculty, I commit myself to restraint in the nose-faculty.

(4) When I taste a taste with **the tongue**, *I do not grasp at any sign or detail*, by which, as long as I dwell unrestrained in that tongue-faculty, bad unwholesome states of covetousness and displeasure would overwhelm me, to that extent I myself restrained.

I guard the restraint of the tongue-faculty, I commit myself to restraint in the tongue-faculty.

(5) When I feel a touch with **the body**, *I do not grasp at any sign or detail*, by which, as long as I dwell unrestrained in that body-faculty, bad unwholesome states of covetousness and displeasure would overwhelm me, to that extent I keep myself restrained.

I guard the restraint of the body-faculty, I commit myself to restraint in the body-faculty.

(6) When I cognize an object with **the mind**, *I do not grasp at any sign or detail*, by which, as long as I dwell unrestrained in that mind-faculty, bad unwholesome states of covetousness and displeasure would overwhelm me, to that extent I keep myself restrained.

I guard the restraint of the mind-faculty, I commit myself to restraint in the mind-faculty.<sup>148</sup>

15.2 Possessing this **noble sense-restraint**, I experience within myself pure joy.<sup>149</sup>

### Clear knowing<sup>150</sup>

16 While going forward and returning,	I clearly know what I'm doing. <sup>151</sup>
While looking toward and looking away,	I clearly know what I'm doing.
While bending and extending my limbs,	I clearly know what I'm doing.
While carrying my outer robe, my upper robe, and my bowl,	I clearly know what I'm doing.
While eating, drinking, chewing, and tasting,	I clearly know what I'm doing.
While voiding and peeing,	I clearly know what I'm doing.
While walking, standing, sitting, asleep, awake,	I clearly know what I'm doing.

<sup>148</sup> D 2,64/1:70, 10,2.2/1:207, 33,1.11(10)/3:225; M 27,15/1:180, 33,20/1:223, 38,35/1:269, 51,16/1:346, 53,8/1:355, 94,18/2:162, 101,33/2:226; S 35.120/4:104, 35.239/4:176; A 3.16/1:113, 4.14/2:16, 4.37/2:39, 4.164/2:152 (×4), 4.198,-11/2:210, 5.76,12/3:99 f, 5.140,11/3:163, 10.99,6/5:206, 11.18,23/5:351. For a study, see SD 9.14.

<sup>149</sup> So *iminā ariyena indriya saṁvarena samannāgato ajjhattarā abyāseka,sukhaṁ paṭisaṁvedeti*. Cf **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2,63/1:70), SD 8.10. The word *avyāseka* (or *abyāseka*) means “pure, unmixed, not sensual.” This pure joy (*abyāseka,-sukha*) arises from meditation and mindfulness: also at §17 below; cf *anavajja,sukha* above [§15].

<sup>150</sup> Chin version (MĀ 98) has fewer activities of clear knowing; Skt version, too, has minor but interesting differences: **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10,8) n (SD 13.3).

<sup>151</sup> “He acts with full awareness,” *sampajāna,kārī*, lit “he is one who works with full awareness.” **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2,67/1:71) reading: *sati,sampajāna,kārī*, “he acts with mindfulness and full awareness,” so too below here [§36]. As in **Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna S** (D 22,4/2:293) = **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10,8/1:57).

talking, or remaining silent, I clearly know what I'm doing.  
Possessing this aggregate of noble full awareness, I experience within myself pure joy.<sup>152</sup>

## ATTAINING THE DHYANAS

### Overcoming the 5 mental hindrances<sup>153</sup>

**17** Possessing this aggregate of noble virtue<sup>154</sup> and this aggregate of noble sense-restraint and this aggregate of noble mindfulness and clear comprehension,<sup>155</sup> I seek out **a secluded dwelling**:

a forest, the foot of a tree, a mountain, a glen, a hillside cave, a charnel ground, a jungle grove,  
the open air, a heap of straw.<sup>156</sup>

17.2 Returning from my almsround, after my meal, I sit down, cross my legs, hold my body erect, and establish mindfulness before me.<sup>157</sup>

(1) Abandoning **covetousness** regarding the world, I dwell with a mind devoid of covetousness. I cleanse my mind of covetousness.

(2) Abandoning **ill will and anger**, I dwell with a mind devoid of ill will and anger, sympathetic with the welfare of all living beings. I cleanse my mind of ill will and anger.

(3) Abandoning **sloth and torpor**, I dwell with a mind devoid of sloth and torpor, mindful, alert, perceiving light. I cleanse my mind of sloth and torpor.

(4) Abandoning **restlessness and worry**, I dwell undisturbed, my mind inwardly stilled. I cleanse my mind of restlessness and worry.

(5) Abandoning **spiritual doubt**, I dwell having crossed over doubt, with no perplexity with regard to wholesome mental states. I cleanse my mind of doubt. [36]

### The 4 dhyanas (catu jhāna)

**18** Having thus abandoned these **5 hindrances**, imperfections of the mind that weaken wisdom, quite secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unwholesome states,

(1) I entered upon and remained in **the 1<sup>st</sup> dhyana**,  
accompanied by initial application and sustained application,  
accompanied by zest [rapture] and happiness born of seclusion.

(2) Further, with the stilling of initial application and sustained application,  
by gaining inner tranquillity and oneness of mind, I entered and remained in **the 2<sup>nd</sup> dhyana**,  
free from initial application and sustained application,  
accompanied by zest and happiness born of concentration.<sup>158</sup>

<sup>152</sup> "Pure joy," *avyāseka, sukham* [vl *abyāseka, sukham*]: see §16 n.

<sup>153</sup> As in **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10,36/1:60), SD 13.3. See details in **Mahā Assa, pura S** (M 39,12-18/1:274 f), SD 10.13.

<sup>154</sup> Here Be adds: "and possessing this aggregate of contentment" (*imāya ca ariyāya santuṭṭhiyā samannāgato*).

<sup>155</sup> As in **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2,67/1:71), SD 8.10.

<sup>156</sup> "He seeks out ... a heap of straw," see **Mahā Assapura S** on wakefulness (M 39,12/1:274), SD 10.13, & **Gaṇaka Mogallāna S** (M 107,8/3:3), SD 56.3.

<sup>157</sup> Comy. He applies mindfulness towards his meditation subject; or he sets it up in the region of the mouth. As such, it is said in the Vibhaṅga: "This mindfulness is set up, set up well, at the tip of the nose or at the sign of the mouth" (Vbh §537/252). NṬ: The "sign of the mouth" (*mukha, nimitta*) is the middle region of the upper lip, against which the air strikes when it comes out of the nose.

(3) Further, with the fading away of zest, I dwelled equanimous, mindful and clearly knowing, and experienced happiness with the body.

I entered and remained in **the 3<sup>rd</sup> dhyana**, of which the noble ones declare, ‘Happily he dwells in equanimity and mindfulness.’

(4) Further, with the abandoning of joy and abandoning of pain,<sup>159</sup>

and with the earlier disappearance of pleasure and displeasure, I attained and remained in **the 4<sup>th</sup> dhyana** that is neither painful nor pleasant, and with mindfulness fully purified by equanimity.<sup>160</sup>

### (C) WISDOM CULTIVATION

#### The liberating truths (\**vimutti,sacca*)

**19** With the concentrated mind thus purified, and bright, unblemished, free from defects, pliant, malleable, steady and utterly unshakable,<sup>161</sup>

I directed and inclined it to **the knowledge**<sup>162</sup> **of the destruction of the mental influxes**.<sup>163</sup>

I knew, as it really is, that

this is suffering;

this is the arising of suffering;

this is the ending of suffering;

this is the path to the ending of suffering;<sup>164</sup>

<sup>158</sup> The 2<sup>nd</sup> dhyana is known as “the noble silence” (*ariya,tuṇhī,bhāva*) because within its initial application and sustained application (*vitakka,vicāra*) cease, and with their cessation, speech cannot occur (S 2:273); cf S 4:293 where *vitakka* and *vicāra* are called verbal formation (*vacī,saṅkhāra*), the mental factors responsible for speech. In **Ariya Pariyesanā S** (M 26,4.3/1:161), SD 1.11, the Buddha exhorts the monks when assembled to “either speak on the Dharma or observe the noble silence” (ie either talk Dharma or meditate).

<sup>159</sup> “Joy ... pain,” *sukha ... dukkha*: this refers to *physical* feelings. The next phrase—“pleasure and displeasure,” *domanassa ... somanassa*—refers to *mental* feelings, transcended earlier. Mental feelings must be overcome first so that the mind is not distracted by itself, as it were. Then, all the other feelings (arising from the physical sense-contacts) are transcended. On the significance of this, see **Sall’atthana S** (S 36.6/4:207-210), SD 5.5.

<sup>160</sup> Here, **Vibhaṅga** gives 3 factors of the 4<sup>th</sup> dhyana—equanimity (*upekkhā*), mindfulness (*sati*) and one-pointedness of mind (*cittassa ek’aggatā*)—according to the Sutta analysis (Vbh 261), and 2 factors—equanimity and one-pointedness of the mind—according to the Abhidhamma analysis (Vbh 164; Vism 4.183/165). See also **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2,83/1:75), SD 8.10 & **Dhyana**, SD 8.4 (5.4).

<sup>161</sup> §§19 f recurs in **Bhaya Bherava S** (M 4,31 f) as the 3<sup>rd</sup> and last of the 3 knowledges of the Buddha himself, that of full awakening (SD 44.3). The fact that this also describes an arhat’s awakening shows that both the Buddha and the arhat awaken in the same way: **Sambuddha S** (S 22.58), SD 49.10.

<sup>162</sup> Comy says that the knowledges of past-life recollection and of the passing away and rearing of beings (divine eye) (usu incl in this pericope) are not mentioned here because the original question [§11] concerns the attaining of arhathood, not mundane attainments (MA 4:94,15-18)

<sup>163</sup> *Āsava-k,khaya,ñāṇa*. The term *āsava* (lit “inflow, outflow”) comes from *ā-savati* “flows towards” (ie, either “into” or “out” towards the observer). It has been variously translated as taints (“deadly taints,” RD), corruptions, intoxicants, biases, depravity, misery, bad (influence), or simply left untranslated. The Abhidhamma lists 4 *āsava*: the influx of (1) sense-desire (*kām’āsava*), (2) (desire for eternal) existence or becoming (*bhav’āsava*), (3) (wrong) views (*diṭṭh’āsava*), (4) ignorance (*avijjāśava*) (D 16.2.4, Pm 1.442, 561, Dhs §§1096-1100, Vbh §937). These 4 are also known as “floods” (*oghā*) and “yokes” (*yogā*). The list of 3 influxes (omitting the influx of views) is probably older and is found more frequently in the Suttas (D 3:216, 33.1.10(20); M 1:55, 3:41; A 3.59, 67, 6.63). The destruction of these *āsava*s is equivalent to arhathood. See BDict under *āsava*.

these are mental influxes;  
 this is the arising of influxes;  
 this is the ending of influxes;  
 this is the path to the ending of influxes.<sup>165</sup>

20 My mind, thus knowing, thus seeing,<sup>166</sup> was freed from the influx of sensual desire;  
 was freed from the influx of existence;  
 was freed from the influx of ignorance.<sup>167</sup>

When the mind is free,<sup>168</sup>

there is the knowledge in the freedom: 'Free!'<sup>169</sup>

I directly knew: [§2]

20.2 "Birth is destroyed,  
 the holy life has been lived,  
 what had to be done has been done,  
 there is no more coming to any state of being."<sup>170</sup>

<sup>164</sup> These 4 statements on suffering pose an interesting problem: they are not called "noble truths" here (and in **Ariya Pariyesanā S**, M 26,43). Norman remarks that "since they appear to be subordinate to the 4 statements about the *āsavas*, it is possible that the statements about misery are a later addition, which led to a parallel, but inappropriate, set of 4 statements being evolved about the *āsavas*, to provide a symmetry" (Norman 1982:377-91, 1990:130). See also Schmithausen 1981:205. See foll n.

<sup>165</sup> As in **Ariya Pariyesanā S** (M 26,42), SD 1.11. Comy says that the Buddha, having shown the 4 noble truths according to their own nature (in terms of suffering, *dukkha*) (above), then goes on to show them indirectly (*pariyāyato*) in terms of defilements (*kilesa*) here (MA 1:127).

<sup>166</sup> "Thus seeing, thus knowing" (*evaṃ jānato evaṃ passato*) refers to insight and the path, which reaches its goal in the path of arhathood. (MA 1:127)

<sup>167</sup> This set of 3 influxes (*āsava*)—*kām'āsava*, *bhav'āsava*, *avijjāsava*—is ancient; also at A 2:211, 4:179. A later (Abhidhamma) list of 4 (with views, *diṭṭh'āsava*, as third) is found in V 3:5 and Comys.

<sup>168</sup> *Cittam vimuccitṭha*. Comys: "By 'when it is freed' the fruition-moment is shown" (*vimuttasmin'ti iminā phala-k, khaṇam dasseti*) (DA 1:225,14 omits *dasseti*; PugA 244,3). PugA adds: "The mind is freed in the path-moment; there is the freedom in the fruition-moment" (*magga-k, khaṇe hi cittam vimuccati, phala-k, khaṇe vimuttam hoti*, PugA 244,4 f). Philosophically, while the path is an event ("is freed"), the fruition is a state ("freedom"). See prec n.

<sup>169</sup> *Vimuttam iti ñāṇam hoti*. Sutta Comy: "By 'there is the knowledge, 'it is free', ' review-knowledge is shown" (*vimutt'-amhīti ñāṇam hotīti iminā paccavekkhaṇa, ñāṇam*) (DA 1:225,15 f). This and "I directly knew" are part of the arhat's review knowledge (*paccavekkhaṇa, ñāṇa*). Simply, this means that awakening is only known after the fact: see Vism 22.20 f/676. Abhidhamma Comy: "By 'When it is freed, there is the knowledge "Freedom!" review-knowledge is shown" (*vimuttasmin vimuttam iti ñāṇan'ti iminā paccavekkhaṇa, ñāṇam dasseti*) (PugA 244,5-7). Although the 2 Comy readings differ slightly, their sense is practically the same. This is a case where the lineages in the oral tradition remembered the same idea or sense of the passage, but worded it in slightly different ways.

<sup>170</sup> *Nāparam itthatāya*: lit, "there is no more of 'thusness/hereness,'" where *ittha* can mean either "thus" or "here." This is the arhathood or "final knowledge" pericope. "Birth is ended" (*khīṇā, jāti*) means that any kind of birth that might otherwise arise if the path (*magga*, ie sainthood) had not been cultivated has been ended. "The holy life" (*brahma, cariya*) here is that of the path itself (*magga, brahma. cariya*), ie, the practice ending in becoming a streamwinner and so on. "Done that which needs to be done" (*katam karaṇīyam*) means that the 4 tasks of the noble path—fully understanding suffering, abandoning its arising (craving), realizing its ending (nirvana), and cultivated the path—have all been completed for each of the 4 supramundane paths. "Nothing more beyond this" (*nāparam itthatāya*, lit "There is no more of 'thusness'"; *ittha* can mean either "thus" or "here." Hence, *ittha* refers to *this* samsaric state of rebirth and redeath. Comy says that there is now no more of "these kinds of existence" (*ittham, bhāvā*) on account of having cultivated the path, or the destruction of the defilements in the 16 ways." In short, no more rebirth whatsoever. (The "16 ways," *soḷasa, kicca*, refers to the 4 functions of the 4 noble truths as realized on each of the 4 levels of sainthood: see above here, "done that which needs to be done": see SD 1.1 (5.1) on the 4 functions of the truths.) Or, it means that for the Buddha there is no continuity (*santana*)

20.3 It is by knowing thus, seeing thus, avuso, that in regard to this body with its consciousness and all external signs, I-making, mine-making, and the latent tendency to conceit have been eradicated in me.’

### Acknowledgement of another’s awakening

21 Saying ‘Sadhu!’ bhikkhus, one may delight and rejoice in that monk’s words.

22 Having done so, one should say to him:

‘It is a gain for us, avuso, [37] it is a great gain for us, avuso, that we see such a companion in the holy life as the venerable one.’<sup>171</sup>

23 That is what the Blessed One said. The monks were satisfied and approved of the Blessed One’s word.

evam

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of the aggregates, which, having been thoroughly understood, they are like trees cut down at the root (MA 1:128; cf DA 112; SA 1:205; UA 1:158). See **Mahānidāna S** (M 15,22), SD 5.17; also SD 53.1 (3.2.2).

<sup>171</sup> Comy says that this sutta is also called **Eka,vissajjaka Sutta** (The Single-answer Discourse) (MA 4:94,18). On this and the puzzle of the “missing” 6<sup>th</sup> purification: [1.2.3].