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Nakula,pitā Sutta

WT:Be **Nakula,pitu Sutta**, The Discourse to Nakula's Father¹ | S 22.1

Theme: Although my body is sick, my mind will not be sick.

Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2003

1 The Bhaggā

1.1 The names Nakula,pitā and Nakula,mātā are not their real names (which are not mentioned in the texts); for, they simply mean “father of Nakula” and “mother of Nakula” respectively. Nakula must have been an important person in the Buddhist community but records of him have not come down to us. Nakula,pitā and his wife, Nakula,mātā, were householders of Suṃsumāra,gira in Bhaggā country.

1.2 Bhaggā (not listed among the 16 major countries of the Buddha's time)² was the name of a tribe and a country, the capital of which was Suṃsumāra,gira, which the Buddha visited several times in the course of his wanderings,³ and four Vinaya rules for the monks were laid down there.⁴

The Bhaggā were probably subjects of king Udena of Kosambī, whose son, Bodhi Rājakumāra, lived there apparently as his father's viceroy. The *Cambridge History of India* (1:175) says that the Bhaggā were members of the Vajjī confederacy. The Bhaggā country lay between Vesālī and Sāvattihī.⁵

1.3 Suṃsumāra,gira was so called because it was said that noise (*gira*) made by a crocodile (*suṃsumāra*) in a nearby lake was heard when the town was being built (MA 2:65; SA 2:249). The Buddha spent his eighth rains retreat there (BA 3). It was while sojourning there that **Moggallāna** was attacked by Māra entering his belly (M 1:332). It was there too that he expounded **the Anumāna Sutta** (M 15/1:95-100). When the Buddha was at Suṃsumāra,gira, he saw (through his divine eye) that Moggallāna was very drowsy while meditating at Kallavāla,muttā, appeared before him and admonished him (A 4:85). The elder **Sirimaṇḍa**, famous for his reflection on the confession of faults, was a brahmin of Suṃsumāra,gira (Tha 447-452). **Sigāla,pitā** (Sigāla's father) went there for meditation and became an arhat (ThaA 1:70). The Apadāna mentions the Bhaggā along with the Kārusā (Ap 2:359).

1.4 The Bhesakalā forest (*bhesakalā,vana*) is a forest in Bhaggā country [1.2]. It is so called because it is the home of the yakshini Bhesakalā (SA 2:249). The forest has a deer park outside a village called Suṃsumāra,gira [1.3]. Nearby is the house of Nakula,pitā and Nakula,mātā. According to the Buddha,vaṃsa Commentary, the Buddha spends the 8th vassa in Bhesakalā forest (BA 3).

The palace named Kokanada, built for prince Bodhi, is in the neighbourhood of the forest (V 2:127; DhA 3:134). While the elder Mahā Moggallāna is staying in this forest, he is molested by Māra, and the occasion is recorded in the Māra Tajjaniya Sutta (M 50).⁶ Sigāla,pitā (Sigāla's father) is said to have retired to Bhesakalā forest for his meditations (ThA 1:70).

The Divyāvadāna gives its Sanskrit name as Bhīsanikā,vana (Divy182).

¹ For a tr of the Sutta, Comy and Subcomy, see G Giustarini, “Affliction without affliction,” *Asian Literature and Translation* 5,1 2018:72-103.

² The 16 great states: see (**Tad-ah'**) **Uposatha S** (A 3.70), SD 4.18 App.

³ eg V 2:127, 4:115, 198; A 2:61, 4:85.

⁴ The rules are as follows: monks are allowed to step on cloth for use after the feet are washed (V 2:127); **Pāc 56** on not kindling a fire when not sick (V 4:115 f); **Sekh 55** on not accepting a drinking vessel with food-soiled hands (V 4:198); **Sekh 56** on not throwing away bowl-washing with rice-grains when amongst houses (V 4:199). Cf V 5:145; VA 1305.

⁵ See DPPN: Bhaggā; B C Law, *Tribes in Ancient India*, 1943:292 f.

⁶ M 50/1:332-338 (SD 36.4).

2 Nakula,pitā and Nakula,mātā

2.1 When the Buddha stayed at Bhesakalā Forest, Nakula,pitā and his wife visited him and immediately fell at his feet, calling him “son” (AA 1:400) and asking why he had been away for so long. It is said that they had been the Bodhisattva’s parents for 500 births and his near relatives for many more (AA 3:95). The Buddha taught them the Dharma and they became streamwinners.

2.2 The Buddha again visited their village when they were old. They entertained him, telling of their devotion to each other *in this life* and asking for a teaching which should keep them likewise together in *the after-life*.⁷ The Buddha referred to this event in the assembly of the Order, declaring them to be the most warm and trustworthy of companions (*vissāsikā*) among his lay disciples.⁸ It is said that Nakula,pitā’s desire for this eminence was first conceived in the time of Padum’uttara Buddha. He was then a householder of Haṃsavatī, and was present at an assembly where that Buddha declared someone to be chief of those with mutual trust (*vissāsikā*) (A 1:400 f).

2.3 Once, when Nakula,pitā lies grievously ill, his wife notices that he is filled with anxiety. She assures him that he need not feel anxious either for her or for his children. She speaks with such conviction that Nakula,pitā regains his composure of mind and recovers. Later he visits the Buddha and recounts the event and is praised by the Buddha for having such a good wife. (A 3:295 ff)

2.4 The Khandha Saṃyutta of the Saṃyutta Nikāya opens with the Nakula,pitā Sutta; hence, this opening chapter is called **Nakula,pitā Vagga** (S 3.1-21). Both husband and wife are mentioned in lists of eminent disciples.⁹ The Nakula,pitā Sutta is an example of a teaching where the Buddha speaks in brief, and that brief teaching is expanded by a disciple (Sāriputta).

3 Puthujjana

3.1 MEANING OF PUTHU. The Commentaries¹⁰ distinguish between two kinds of “worldlings” (*puthujjana*), namely, the “untutored ordinary person” or “uninstructed worldling” (*assutava puthujjana*) and the “good ordinary person” (*kalyāṇa puthujjana*), both of which, as such, have not reached streamwinning. The untutored ordinary person has neither theoretical knowledge of the Dharma nor training in mental development. The good ordinary person, however, has both and is striving to reach the path.

The Commentaries give some details. By *assutava* (ignorant, uninstructed) is meant lacking in learning, questioning and discriminating the aggregates, the elements, the sense-bases, cause-and-effect, the stations of mindfulness, etc. *Puthujjana* (ordinary person, worldling) literally means “a thick or dense person, part of a crowd,” so called because such a one generates much and various defilements—a crowd or mass of defilements—etc (*puthūnaṃ nāna-p,pakāraṇaṃ kiles’ādīnaṃ janana’ādīnaṃ janana’ādi,kāraṇehi puthuj-jana*); and also because he is amongst the masses (*puthūnaṃ janānaṃ anto,gadhattā*), in numbers beyond reckoning, engaged in low Dharma contrary to the Dharma of the noble ones. Or else, *puthu* means “counted as separate”: the ordinary person is one apart from the noble ones who possesses such qualities as

⁷ Sama,jīvi S (A 4.55/2:61 f).

⁸ A 1:26, 2:61 f; AA 1:400 f, 457, 3:95; SA 2:251.

⁹ A 3:465, 4:348. For more information, see Nyanaponika & Hecker, *Great Disciples of the Buddha*, Boston: Wisdom Publications & Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1997:375-378.

¹⁰ For example, DA 1:59, MA 1:21, SA 2:97, AA 1:62, SnA 2:536.

virtue, learning, etc (*puthu vā ayam visum y'eva saṅkham gato, visamsattho sīla, sut'ādi, guṇa, yuttehi ariyehi jano ti puthujano*).¹¹

In his Saṃyutta translation, Bodhi notes that this twofold etymology stems from a twofold understanding of the Pāli **puthu** as representing either Vedic *prthu* (numerous, many) or *prthak* (separate, distinct). The Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit form *prthagjana* indicates a preference for the latter, but the Pali Commentators tend to favour the former (*prthu, jana*) as etymology. (S:B 769 n153)¹²

3.2 THE 2 KINDS OF WORLDLINGS. As already stated [3.1], the Commentaries generally speak of two kinds of worldlings: the blind worldling (*andha puthujana*) and the good worldling (*kalyāṇa puthujana*). The blind worldling is an unawakened being who does not review [reflect on], nor remember, nor listen to, nor question about, nor learn about the five aggregates, the four elements, the six sense-bases and related teachings, while the good worldling does so.¹³

The Commentaries also use the expression “foolish worldling” (*bāla puthujana*) here.¹⁴ *Bāla* has a range of related meanings: a young boy, a fool, an immature person. Such a person is “apart, separate” (*puthu*) from the wise. This separateness is not exactly a fixed category as it is a dynamic *phase*, that is, it is possible for the immature worldling to mature in due course into a wise person.

The good worldling, although still unawakened, is open to the Dharma, and reflects and reviews on the true nature of things, especially that of impermanence. While the blind worldling is one who goes *with* the worldly flow (*anusota, gāmī*), the good worldling goes *against* worldly currents (*paṭisota, gāmī*). In this model, the learners on the path are said to be the “stable-minded” (*ṭhit'atta*), and beyond this is the non-learner, the arhat.¹⁵

In simple terms, these two categories of people, or more correctly, these two tendencies in a person, refer to their willingness and ability to seek and understand the Dharma. There were no concepts of “Buddhist” during the Buddha’s time and in the early after-centuries. The notion of “**statistical Buddhist**” probably arose with communal politics and secular administration.¹⁶ There was also no concept of a “**nominal Buddhist**.” There are only 3 categories of those who understand and practise the Buddha’s teachings, that is,

- (1) the good worldlings (*kalyāṇa puthujana*)¹⁷ or those capable of keeping to the Buddhist training;
- (2) the learners (*sekha*)¹⁸ or the saints (ordained and lay) on the path to awakening; and
- (3) the non-learners (*asekha*) or arhats, who have fully attained to the goal of awakening.

The minimum standard for a “Buddhist” is that of being a streamwinner (*sotāpanna*), or at least, the effective aspiration to be one.¹⁹

¹¹ DA 1:59 = SA 2:97.

¹² For tr of Majjhima Comy (MA 1:20-25) on the term, see Bodhi, *Discourse on the Root of Existence*, Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1980:33-38.

¹³ *Tattha yassa khandha, dhātu, āyatan'ādisu uggaha, paripucchā, savana, dhāraṇa, paccavekkhaṇāni n'atthi, ayam andha, puthujano. Yassa tāni atthi, so kalyāṇa, puthujano.* (DA 1:59 = PmA 1:266; cf PmA 1:205)

¹⁴ Nm 1:138; Miln 69; VA 5:1032; MA 1:183; SnA 1:99, 2:534; ThaA 2:278, 3:41, 78; ApA 118, 178.

¹⁵ NettA (Be 248 = VRI 364).

¹⁶ See “**I**”: **the nature of identity**, SD 19.1 (7.1).

¹⁷ Comys often qu an untraced ref: “The Buddha, the Kinsman of the Sun, speaks of these two worldlings: one is the blind worldling, the other the good worldling” (*Duved puthujjanā vuttā Buddhena Ādicca, bandhunā andho puthujano eko kalyāṇ'eko puthujano ti*): DA 59 = MA 1:21 = SA 2:97 = AA 1:62 = Nm 2:273 = Nc 76 = PmA 1:205 = 266. See also: MA 1:40; ItA 1:61; UA 269, 29 = ItA 2:35, 13.

¹⁸ On *kalyāṇa, puthujana, sekha* & *asekha*, see **Indriya Bhāvanā S** (M 12), SD 17.13.

¹⁹ See **Entering the stream**, SD 3.3 & **(Anicca) Cakkhu S** (S 25.1), SD 16.7.

4 The self-identity view

4.1 The Saṃyutta Commentary gives a helpful explanation of the self-identity view [§12].

(1) The phrase “**he regards form as self**” (*rūpaṃ attato samanupassati*) means that he regards form and the self as identical, just as the flame of an oil lamp and its colour are inseparable.

Example: The materialist view, ie, a mortal soul or self that dies when the body dies.

(2) The phrase “**self as possessing form**” (*rūpavantaṃ attānaṃ*) means he takes the formless (ie, the mind or mental factors) as a self that possesses form in the way an object such as a tree possesses a shadow.

Example: An eternal soul existing separate from the body, a belief of the God-religions.

(3) The phrase “**form as in self**” (*attani rūpaṃ*) means that he takes the formless (the mind) as a self with- in which form is located like the scent is in a flower.

Example: The brahminical belief of the human soul as being a “spark” of the “universal soul.”

(4) The phrase “**self as in form**” (*rūpasmim attānaṃ*) means that he takes the formless (the mind) as a self located in form like a jewel in its casket.

Example: The popular or animistic belief of a disembodied soul that can leave the body at will.²⁰

“**He lives obsessed by the notions, ‘I am form, form is mine’**” (*ahaṃ rūpaṃ mam rūpaṃ ti pariyuṭṭh- aṭṭhāyino*) means having swallowed these ideas, he takes his stand on them and holds on to them (SA 2:254 f).

4.2 The Commentary goes on to say that the identification of each aggregate with the self is the annihila- tionist view (*uccheda, diṭṭhi*), while the other views are variants of the eternalist view (*sassata, diṭṭhi*). Thus there are 5 types of annihilationism and 15 of eternalism (SA 2:255). **Bodhi** however disagrees,

To my mind this is unacceptable, for eternalist views can clearly be formulated by taking the indi- vidual mental aggregates as the self. It also seems to me questionable that a view of self must im- plicitly posit one (or more) of the aggregates as self; for a view of self to have any meaning or con- tent, it need only posit a relationship between a supposed self and the aggregates, but it need not identify one of the aggregates as a self. According to the Buddha, all such positions collapse under analysis.

See the “consideration of self” section of the Mahānidāna Sutta (D 2:66-68), translated with commentary in Bodhi, *The Great Discourse on Causation*, [1984] pp 53-55, 92-98.

(S:B 1045 n5)

The nature of self-identity has been discussed at length elsewhere.²¹

5 Healthy mind

5.1 The Vibhaṅga Commentary states that “the ordinary person is like one mad” (*ummattako viya hi puthujjano*) because without considering what is right [connected] or not right [unconnected], he, due to the force of clinging, creates karma out of a desire for existence²² (VbhA 186). The untutored ordinary person is mad because *he acts out of greed, hate and delusion*.

²⁰ For details of these 4 self-identity views, see SD 2.16 (15.2.1.2).

²¹ See “**I**”: **the nature of identity**, SD 19.1 (2.2).

²² *So idaṃ yuttaṃ idaṃ ayuttan ti avicāretvā yassa kassaci upādānassa vasena yaṃ kiñci bhavaṃ patthetvā yaṃ kiñci kamaṃ karoti yeva.*

In fact, we may say that the untutored ordinary person is basically mad with greed, hate and delusion, unless he is at peace with himself, even for a moment. **The (Dve) Roga Sutta** (A 4.157) has an important connected teaching here:

Bhikshus, there are these 2 kinds of diseases. What are the two?

Illness of the body and illness of the mind.

Bhikshus, there are to be seen beings who can claim to be **physically healthy** [disease-free] for a year, ... 2 years, ... 3 years, ... 4 years, ... 5 years, ... 10 years, ... 20 years, ... 30 years, ... 40 years, ... 50 years, ... who can claim to be healthy for a hundred years.

But, bhikshus, hard to find are those beings who can claim to be **mentally healthy** for even a moment—except for those [arhats] whose mental influxes are destroyed.

(A 4.157,1/2:142 f), SD 42.16

The Sall’atthana Sutta (S 36.6), similarly speaks of the 2 kinds of pain—physical and mental—and how to deal with them.²³

5.2 A connected teaching regarding old age and infirmity is given by the Buddha to Piṅgiya Māṇava,²⁴ found in **the Piṅgiya Sutta** (Sn 5.16) of the Sutta Nipāta:

[Piṅgiya:] Old am I, frail, complexion gone,
(thus said the venerable Piṅgiya,)²⁵
My eyes are dim, my hearing poor.
May I not perish confused meanwhile [in between].²⁶
Teach me the Dharma that I might know
The abandoning of birth and decay here.

[The Buddha:] Seeing the suffering on account of forms,
(O Piṅgiya, replied the Blessed One,
(Seeing) the heedless generation oppressed by forms,²⁷
As such, Piṅgiya, be you heedful—
Let go of form for the sake of no more rebirth!

[Piṅgiya:] The 4 quarters, the quarters in between,
Above and below—these are 10 directions.
There is nothing in the world that you²⁸

²³ S 36.6/4:207-210 (SD 5.5).

²⁴ *Māṇava* lit means “youth,” but Piṅgiya, nephew of Bāvarī, here 120 years old and feeble. As such, this is probably an early name of him that has stuck, or a name fondly given to him as he is one of the 16 “youths,” students of Bāvarī. See SnA 413.

²⁵ This bracketed line and the rest are added by the reciters. See SnA 44,19, & see Sn:N n19-29 (reciters’ remarks).

²⁶ *Mā’ham nassarṃ momuho antarā va*. Here *antarāya* means “obstacle, hindrance, (and as euphemism for) an (imminent) accident, misfortune, danger, or destruction, ruin, death” (CPD). I follow Norman: “**Nc:Ne 199,5* (verse) and 199,22 (lemma)** read *antarā vā*. This is glossed as *antarāyeva*, possibly resolved as *antarāya eva* (cf *manasā yeva*, Sn 1004), but perhaps taken as *antarāy eva*. **SnA 603,1-2: mā’ham nassarṃ momuho antarāyā ti mā’ham tuyham dhammāṃ asacchikatvā antarā eva avidvā hutvā anassirṃ**. The presence of (y)eva in both explanations clearly shows that the correct reading is *antarā va* (Sn:N n1120, citations normalized). Moreover, *antarā* fits the context better if we accept that Piṅgiya is prob referring to the “intermediate state” (*antarā*). This could of course be a pun.

²⁷ *Ruppanti rūpesu janā pamattā*.

Have not seen, heard, sensed, or known.
Teach me the Dharma that I might know
The abandoning of birth and decay here.

[The Buddha:] Seeing humans gripped by craving,
(O Piṅgiya, replied the Blessed One,)
Tormented by birth, overcome by decay,²⁹
Therefore, Piṅgiya, be you heedful!
Let go of craving for the sake of no more rebirth! (Sn 1120-1123)

5.3 In terms of the **Nakula,pitā Sutta**, the mind is said to be “sick” or afflicted (*ātura,citta*) when it is associated with the defilements, that is, greed, hate and delusion. Conversely, the mind is not sick, that is, healthy, when it is free of greed, hate and delusion. The whole world is said to be afflicted in both body and mind but the arhat or adept (*asekha*) is only afflicted in body but unafflicted in mind.

The 7 learners (*sekha*), that is, the 4 saints of the path and the 3 saints at fruition stages, are said to be neither entirely afflicted nor unafflicted in mind, but they are pursuing non-affliction of mind (*anā-tura,cittam y’eva bhajanti*) (SA 2:255 f).

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Nakula,pitā Sutta

The Discourse to Nakula’s Father

S 22.1

[1]

1 Thus have I heard.

At one time the Blessed One was staying in the deer park³⁰ in the Bhesakaḷā Forest³¹ at Suṃsumāra,-gira³² in the Bhaggā country.

2 Then, the houselord Nakula,pitā went up to the Blessed One, saluted him³³ and sat down at one side.

²⁸ This line and next: *Na tuyham adiṭṭham asutam mutam vā | atho aviññatam kiñci n’atthi loke*. I take *na ... kiñci* as “nothing.” *Tuyham* is dative (to you) or genitive (for you, of you, yours), but freely tr here. *Muta* here refers to the activities of the remaining physical senses: smelling, tasting, touching (“feeling”), all sharing the same manner of “sensing” where the molecules impact the sensing area (*phusan’aram*, SnA 498) (M 1:3; Sn 714, 812; S 1:186 = S: 1:237 n; S 4:73; Tha 1216). Norman (Sn:N) renders *muta* here as “thought” which clearly does not fit the context here. Free tr, “There is nothing in the world that you | Have not seen, heard, sensed, or known by you.”

²⁹ *Santāpa,jāte jarasā parete*.

³⁰ “Deer park,” *miga,dāya*, the best known of which is this one outside Benares (S 5:421), where the first discourse is given, as recorded in **Dhamma,cakka Pavattana S** (S 56.11,1/4:420), SD 1.1; another in Bhesakalā forest, near where Nakula,pitā and Nakula,mātā live: see **Anumāna S** (M 15,1/1:95) SD 59.3; **Māra Tajjanīya S** (M 50,1/-1:332), SD 36.4; **Nakula,pitā S** (S 22.1/3:1), SD 5.4; **Sama,jīvi S** (A 4.55,1/2:61), SD 5.1; **Nakula S** (A 6.16/3:295), SD 5.2; **Nakula,mātā S** (A 8.48,1), SD 5.3; and another outside Nādikā [Ñātikā]: see **Cūla Gosiṅga S** (M 31,1), SD 44.11, **Mahā Gosiṅga S** (M 32,1), SD 44.12. For other refs, search CSCD using “migadāy*”.

³¹ So called because it is the home of the yakshini Bhesakaḷā (SA 2:249). The house of Nakula,pitā and Nakula,-mātā is nearby. See Intro (1).

³² Suṃsumāra,gira: see Intro (1).

³³ “Saluted him,” *abhidetvā*, stock phrase omitted in PTS ed.

“Let not the mind be sick”

3 Sitting thus at one side, the houselord Nakula,pitā said this to the Blessed One:

“I am now old, bhante, aged, elderly, my time has gone, I have reached the term of my life, sick in body, always ill.³⁴

Rarely, bhante, do I get to see³⁵ the venerable Blessed One³⁶
and the monks who are worthy of esteem.³⁷

Advise me, bhante! Teach me, Blessed One, for my own good and happiness for a long time.”

4 “So it is, houselord; so it is, houselord. Sick is this body, **houselord, burdened,³⁸ hampered** (by suffering). Houselord, anyone, caring for this body, who claims even a moment’s health would be nothing but foolishness.³⁹

Therefore, houselord, you should train yourself thus:

‘My body may be sick, but my mind will not be sick.’⁴⁰

Thus you should train yourself, houselord.”

5 Then, the houselord Nakula,pitā, being satisfied, rejoiced in the Blessed One’s word. [2] Standing up, he saluted the Blessed One keeping him to the right, and then approached the venerable **Sāriputta**. Having approached the venerable Sāriputta, he saluted him and sat down at one side.

Nakula,pitā meets Sāriputta

6 As the houselord Nakula,pitā was sitting there at one side, the venerable Sāriputta said this to him:

“Calmly clear are your senses, houselord, pure is your countenance. You must have received a Dharma talk in the presence of the Blessed One today, have you not?”

³⁴ *Aham asmi bhante jīṇṇo vuḍḍho mahallako addha,gato vayo,anupatto ātura,kāyo abhikkhaṇā,taṅko.*

³⁵ “Rarely...do I get to see,” *adhicca,dassavī*, lit “(I am) one who rarely sees,” (for Be, Se, PTS reading *anicca,-dassavī*, “not always do I see”). See CPD & S:B 1043 n2.

³⁶ “Venerable Blessed One,” *bhante Bhagavato*. This double vocative reflect Nakula,pitā’s devotion to the Buddha. In **Poṭṭhapāda S** (D 9.5), Poṭṭhapāda addresses the Buddha with the same words (D 9,5/1:179).

³⁷ “Worthy of esteem” and “esteemed,” *mano,bhāvanīyo* or *-bhāvanīyo* often used in apposition with *bhikkhū* (D 2:140; M 2:23, 3:36, 3:261; S 3:1, 5:369, 371; A 3:317-322, 5:185, 189; Vv 34.13/49; Miln 129); used of the Buddha, *mano,bhāvanīyaṃ buddhaṃ*, at **Sovaṇṇa,kattarika Ap** (Ap 427.1/2:389). SA comments that “those great elders such as Sāriputta and Moggallāna are called ‘worthy of esteem because the mind grows in wholesome qualities whenever they are seen’ (SA 2:249 f). See DA 3:832; MA 3:17, 266. **Bodhi** notes that “the expression is a gerundive meaning literally ‘who should be brought to mind,’ ie who are worthy of esteem” (S:B 1043 n2). **Sadda,nīti** (Dhātu,mālā), however, gives both meanings of *mano,bhāvanīya*: (1) one who is worthy of being greeted and asked after his health; (2) one who develops his mind (Sadd:Be 330).

³⁸ “Burdened,” *addha,bhūto*, alt tr “weighed down” (S:B 853, 11144), for Be Se *aṇḍa,bhūto*, “become as an egg,” a metaphor explained by Comy: the body is fragile like a newly laid egg of a chicken or a peacock (SA 2:249).

Addha,bhūta S (S 35.29): “Burdened by birth, decay and death; by sorrow, lamentation, (physical) pain, (mental) displeasure and despair” (S 35.29/4:21). See S:B 1043 n3, 1401 n14.

³⁹ Cf (**Mahā,nāma**) **Gilāyana S** (S 4.157.1): “Bhikshus, there are to be seen beings who can claim to be physically healthy [illness-free] for a year, ...who can claim to be healthy for a hundred years. But, bhikshus, hard to find are those beings who can claim to be mentally healthy for even a moment besides those [arhats] whose mental influxes are destroyed.” (A 4.157.1/2:142 f). See Intro (5).

⁴⁰ *Ātura,kāyassa me sato cittam anāturaṃ bhavissati*. On the 2 kinds of pain, see **Sall’atthana S** (S 36.6,9-10), SD 5.5.

“How could it be otherwise, bhante? Only just now⁴¹ I was anointed with the ambrosia of the Blessed One’s Dharma talk.”⁴²

“With what kind of ambrosia of a Dharma talk did the Blessed One anoint you, houselord?”

7 “Here, bhante, I went up to the Blessed One. Having gone up to the Blessed One, I saluted him⁴³ and sat down at one side.

“Let not the mind be sick”

7.2 Sitting thus at one side, I said this to the Blessed One:

‘I am now old, bhante, aged, elderly, my time has gone, I have reached the term of my life, sick in body, always ill.

Rarely, bhante, do I get to see the venerable Blessed One and the monks who are worthy of esteem. Advise me, bhante! Teach me, Blessed One, for my own good and happiness for a long time.’

7.3 Thus, bhante, the Blessed One said this to me:

‘So it is, houselord; so it is, houselord. Sick is this body, houselord, burdened, hampered (by suffering). Houselord, anyone, caring for this body, who claims even a moment’s health would be nothing but foolishness.

7.4 Therefore, houselord, you should train yourself thus:

‘My body may be sick, but my mind will not be sick.’⁴⁴

Thus you should train yourself, houselord.’

That was how, bhante, I was anointed with the ambrosia of the Blessed One’s Dharma talk.”

8 “But, houselord, did it not occur to you to further ask the Blessed One in return, thus:

‘How, bhante, is one **sick in body** and also sick in **mind**, and how one is sick in **body** but **not** sick in **mind**?’” [3]

9 “Bhante, we would even come from afar to the venerable Sāriputta’s presence to know the meaning of this statement. It would be good if the venerable Sāriputta would clarify the meaning of this statement.”

REFLECTIONS ON THE 5 AGGREGATES

The untutored ordinary person

10 “In that case, houselord, listen, pay close attention to it, I will speak.”

“Yes, bhante,” the houselord Nakula, pitā answered to the venerable Sāriputta.

11 The venerable Sāriputta said this:

“And how, houselord, is **the body sick and the mind sick, too**?”

12 (1) Here, houselord, an untutored ordinary person⁴⁵ who sees not the noble ones, unskilled in the way of the noble ones, untrained in the way of the noble ones,⁴⁶

⁴¹ “Just now,” *idāni*, ie a short while ago.

⁴² “Only just now ... Dharma talk,” *evam khvāharāṃ, bhante, bhagavatā dhammiyā kathāya amatena abhisitto’ti*.

⁴³ “Saluted him,” *abhidetvā*, stock phrase omitted in PTS ed.

⁴⁴ *Ātura, kāyassa me sato cittaṃ anāturaṃ bhavissati*. On the 2 kinds of pain, see **Sall’atthena S** (S 36.6,9-10), SD 5.5.

⁴⁵ “Ignorant ordinary person,” *assutava puthujjana*. See Intro (3).

who sees not the true individuals and is unskilled in the way of the true individual,⁴⁷ untrained in the way of the true individual

—regards **form** as *self*, or *self as possessing form*, or *form as in self*, or *self as in form*,⁴⁸

—he lives obsessed by the notions, ‘*I am form. Form is mine.*’⁴⁹

As he lives obsessed by these notions, ‘*I am form. Form is mine.*’

that form changes and alters.

On account of the change and alteration of form, there arise in him, sorrow, lamentation, (physical) pain, mental pain and despair.

13 (2) He regards **feeling** as *self*, or *self as possessing feeling*, or *feeling as in self*, or *self as in feeling*;

—he lives obsessed by the notions, ‘*I am feeling. Feeling is mine.*’

As he lives obsessed by these notions, ‘*I am feeling. Feeling is mine.*’

that feeling changes and alters.

On account of the change and alteration of feeling, there arise in him, *sorrow, lamentation, (physical) pain, mental pain and despair.*

14 (3) He regards **perception** as *self*, or *self as possessing perception*, or *perception as in self*, or *self as in perception*;

—he lives obsessed by the notions, ‘*I am perception. Perception is mine.*’

As he lives obsessed by these notions, ‘*I am perception. Perception is mine.*’

that perception changes and alters.

On account of the change and alteration of perception, there arise in him, *sorrow, lamentation, (physical) pain, mental pain and despair.*

15 (4) He regards **formations** as *self*, or *self as possessing formations*, or *formations as in self*, or *self as in formations*;

—he lives obsessed by the notions, ‘*I am formations. Formations are mine.*’

As he lives obsessed by the notions, ‘*I am formations. Formations are mine.*’

those formations change and alter.

On account of the change and alteration of formations, [4] there arise in him, *sorrow, lamentation, (physical) pain, mental pain and despair.*

⁴⁶ “The noble ones,” *ariya*, that is, Buddhas, Pratyeka Buddhas, and the saints of the Path. See foll n.

⁴⁷ “True individual,” *sappurisa*, also “true individual,” “virtuous person,” “ideal person,” The term *usu* refers to a Pratyeka Buddha or a saint (SA 2:251). In **Mūla,pariyāya S** (M 1.3/1:1), the Buddhas alone are regarded as the “noble ones” (MA 1:21, 24; Nc 76; DhsA 349). On a worldly level, virtuous disciples such as those who respect their parents are also called “true individuals” (AA 3:251). The qualities of a *sappurisa* are given at D 33,2.2(6)/3:252, 34,1.8(7)/3:283; M 113; A 7.64/4:113, 8:38/4:144 f & at M 110,14-24/3:23 f.

⁴⁸ **Paṭisambhidā,magga** illustrates the 4 basic modes of **self-identity view** in connection with form (*rūpa*) in this manner. One might wrongly regard form as self in the way that the flame of a burning oil-lamp is identical to the colour of the flame. Or one might wrongly regard self as possessing form just as a tree possesses a shadow. Or one might wrongly regard form as in self as the scent is in the flower. Or one might wrongly regard self as in form, as a jewel is in a casket (Pm 2.50, 74, 77, 90 = 1:144 f). See (4).

⁴⁹ Beginning here are the 20 types of self-identity (or personality) view (*sakkāya,diṭṭhi*), ie, the 4 views of self is each posited to each of the 5 aggregates constituting a self-identity (*sakkāya*): see **Sakkāya S** (S 22.105/3:159). Self-identity view is the very first of the 10 fetters: self-identity view (*sakkāya,diṭṭhi*), persistent doubt (*vicikicchā*), attachment to rules and rites (*śīla-b,bata,parāmāsa*), sensual lust (*kāma,rāga*), repulsion (*paṭigha*), greed for form existence (*rūpa,rāga*), greed for formless existence (*arūpa,rāga*), conceit (*māna*), restlessness (*uddhacca*), ignorance (*avijjā*) (S 5:61, A 5:13, Vbh 377). When the first 3 fetters are broken, one becomes a streamwinner. See Intro (4).

16 (5) He regards **consciousness** as self, or self as possessing consciousness, or consciousness as in self, or self as in consciousness;

—he lives obsessed by the notions, ‘I am consciousness. Consciousness is mine.’

As he lives obsessed by these notions, ‘I am consciousness. Consciousness is mine,’ that consciousness changes and alters.

On account of the change and alteration of consciousness, there arise in him, *sorrow, lamentation, (physical) pain, mental pain and despair*.

17 Thus, houselord, is the body sick and the mind sick, too.⁵⁰

The learned noble disciple

18 And how, houselord, is the body sick, but the mind not sick?

19 (1) Here, houselord, the learned noble disciple, who sees the noble ones, skilled in the way of the noble ones, trained in the way of the noble ones,

who sees the true individuals and is skilled in the way of the true individual, trained in the way of the true individual,⁵¹

—does not regard **form** as self, nor self as possessing form, nor form as in self, nor self as in form;

—he lives unobsessed by the notions, ‘I am form. Form is mine.’

As he lives unobsessed by these notions, ‘I am feeling. Feeling is mine,’ that form changes and alters.

With the change and alteration of form,

there do not arise in him, sorrow, lamentation, (physical) pain, mental pain [displeasure] or despair.

20 (2) He does not regard **feeling** as self, nor self as possessing feeling, nor feeling as in self, nor self as in feeling;

—he lives unobsessed by the notions, ‘I am feeling. Feeling is mine.’

As he lives unobsessed by these notions, ‘I am feeling. Feeling is mine,’ that feeling changes and alters.

With the change and alteration of feeling,

there do not arise in him, sorrow, lamentation, (physical) pain, mental pain or despair.

21 (3) He does not regard **perception** as self, nor self as possessing perception, nor perception as in self, nor self as in perception;

—he lives unobsessed by the notions, ‘I am perception. Perception is mine.’

As he lives unobsessed by these notions, ‘I am perception. Perception is mine,’ that perception changes and alters.

With *the change and alteration* of perception,

there do not arise in him, sorrow, lamentation, (physical) pain, mental pain or despair. **[5]**

⁵⁰ Comy: Even the bodies of Buddhas fall sick, but the mind is only sick when it is associated with greed, hate or delusion (SA 2:255).

⁵¹ This whole section is a stock passage, descriptive of the streamwinner, ie one who has destroyed the 3 lower fetters of self-identity view, doubt and attachment to rules and rituals: see **Emotional independence**, SD 40a.8.

22 (4) He does not regard **formations** as self, nor self as possessing formations, nor formations as in self, nor self as in formations;

—he lives unobsessed by the notions, ‘I am formations. Formations are mine.’

As he lives not obsessed by these notions, ‘I am formations. Formations are mine.’
those formations change and alter.

With *the change and alteration* of formations,

there do not arise in him, sorrow, lamentation, (physical) pain, mental pain or despair.

23 (5) He does not regard **consciousness** as self, nor self as possessing consciousness, nor consciousness as in self, nor self as in consciousness;

—he lives unobsessed by the notions, ‘I am consciousness. Consciousness is mine.’

As he lives unobsessed by these notions, ‘I am consciousness. Consciousness is mine,’
that consciousness changes and alters.

With *the change and alteration* of consciousness,

there do not arise in him, sorrow, lamentation, (physical) pain, mental pain or despair.

24 Thus, houselord, is **the body sick but the mind not sick.**⁵²

25 This is what the venerable Sāriputta said, and the houselord Nakula,pitā joyfully approved of the venerable Sāriputta’s word.

— evaṃ —

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⁵² See Intro (5).