



Sammā Samādhi II

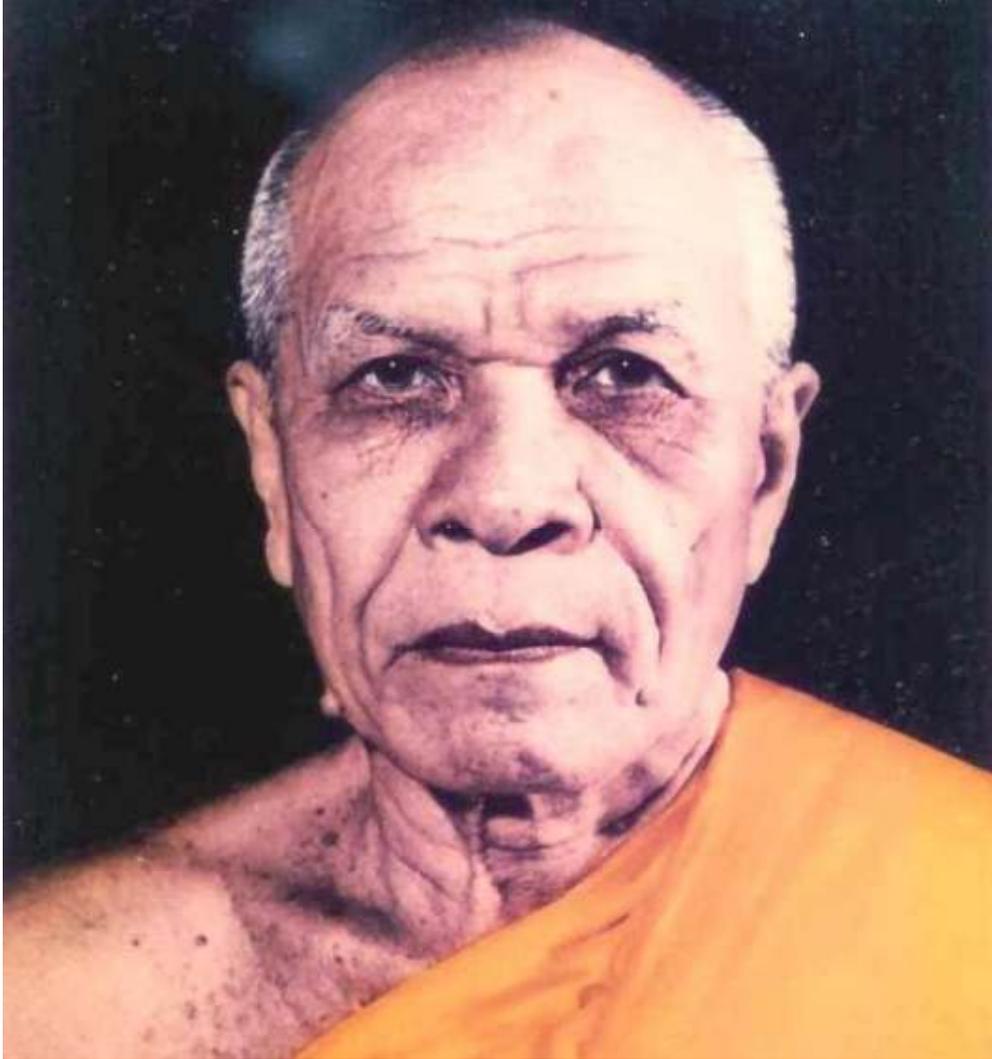
An Exposition of Attainments derived from
Samatha Vipassanā

T. Magness
(The Venerable Suratano Bhikkhu)

Based on the General Teaching

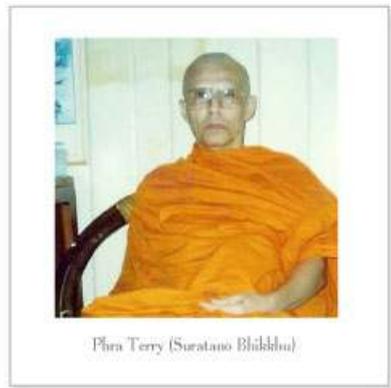
Of

The Venerable Chao Kun Mongkol-Thepmuni
(Late Abbot of Wat Paknam, Basicharoen, Thonburi, Thailand)



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(Late Abbot of Wat Paknam, Basicharoaen)

About the Author



Phra Terry was born Terence Barnett Magness on May 1929 in Penang, then British Malaya into an English Catholic family. He attended school at St. Xavier's Institute and, the church nearby. The idyllic life as a youth came to an abrupt end with the Japanese invasion of Malaya and with it, his education as well.

By February or March of 1946 at about 16-17 years old, he and an elder sister fled Penang for Thailand seeking safety from Japanese bombardment. His parents had already been stationed in Southern Thailand as his father was employed by a British company there. One sister, however, chose to stay in Penang. This sister, who was a Catholic nun, subsequently became the Mother Superior there. She died some 30 years ago.

His parents were tragically killed by Japanese bombs like so many others. The sister, who fled with him, was interned in a camp in Thailand, but managed to survive the war, and married a Thai of royal lineage. His brother-in-law owned an interior decoration business when peace arrived, and Phra Terry worked for him until he became a monk. Both his sister and brother-in-law were lost in a tragic car accident in 1971, a year after Phra Terry was ordained.

With his formal education ended precipitously, Phra Terry taught himself the 3Rs, if you will. He delved into humanities and the arts and, indeed, all matters metaphysical, esoteric, social and scientific and so forth that could occupy an enquiring mind. He spent his time at bookshops and libraries exploring the philosophies and thinking of the ancients. He had a voracious appetite for religion, philosophy, history, literature and cultures of the Romans, Greeks, Indians, Chinese, and the Europeans and others.

Apart from his apparent love of books and knowledge; he led a pretty normal life of a young man, sometimes going to the movies and partaking of fine foods, music and such like with friends. However, one group of his friends – 3 of them were of a different bent, they were interested in meditation and the Dhamma. One of these friends, Archarn Charoen Phanrat, an engineer by profession introduced him to Wat Paknam in 1958, along with the other two who were architects.

This small group of friends would go to Wat Paknam by bus and learn meditation there on a regular basis from a Mae Chi (an 8-preceptor, upasika), Archarn Kalayawadee. She was an outstanding student of the great sage Luang Phor Mongkol Thepmuni and she taught Phra Terry meditation. She

subsequently founded the Mongkol-Dham Group, Bangkok with her husband Archarn Charoen (since deceased in 1992). Phra Terry and their other friends were foundations members as well.

Phra Terry learnt and practised the Vijjā Dhammakāya and the Method of Meditation for 12 years before he was ordained as a monk at Wat Doi Suthep, Chiangmai. After his ordination he went to spend some months at Wat Djittabhawan, Pattaya in 1971. From May 1971, he went to Wat Paknam and remained there for some years before returning to Wat Doi Suthep. Phra Terry spent more than 20 years in Chiangmai and still lives there.

Phra Terry's writing career was prompted by the total lack of an English translation of Luang Phor's Teachings on the Vijjā Dhammakāya in the 1950s. His first book, "*The Dhammakāya – Metaphysical Implications*" was published in 1960 and it was later expanded and renamed *Sammā Samādhi I*, in 1961. His second book, *The Life and Teachings of the Venerable Chao Khun Mongkol Thepmuni* was published later in the same year, 1960.

Then *Sammā Ditṭhi – A Treatise on Right Understanding* was published in 1962; another book, *Sammā Samādhi II (Right Concentration)* in 1963; and, *The Altitude & the Buddhist Experience*, in the early 1970s after he became a monk. A couple of these books were expanded, re-arranged and renamed in later editions. For instance, *The Vistas – Buddhist Insights into Immortality* (is the enlarged and renamed *Sammā Samādhi I*) and *Samatha Vipassanā: An Exposition of Attainments*, is the enlarged *Sammā Samādhi II*.

Phra Terry's books exhibit a rare quality of an in-depth personal understanding and knowledge of the Sublime Dhamma and an appreciation of ancient religion and philosophies. His explanations of how the law of kamma works in ancient as well as contemporary societies are instructive and enlightening. From his works, a reader can see that he knows the Vijjā Dhammakāya and the Method of Meditation, for he is a meditator himself.

As disciples of Luang Phor and Phra Terry, we have, with the aid of his books, come to understand a little of the Sublime Dhamma in its original condition and pristine purity and are profoundly grateful to them both.

The central message of the Buddha is communicated clearly by his works: that all earnest seekers who are upright, without guile and deceit and intelligent, would be able to achieve to the Ultimate Release. And, the unique Dhammakāya Method of Meditation is the means to cultivating the Noble-Eightfold Path in full scope and measure and to comprehending the Four Noble Truths in perfect clarity, without taint or distortion.

The Editors
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"What is there for you, Vakkali, in approaching and perceiving this body which is subject to decay? Whosoever, Vakkali, perceives the Dhamma perceives the Tathāgata. Whosoever perceives the Tathāgata perceives the Dhamma. For one who perceives the Dhamma perceives the Tathāgata, perceiving the Tathāgata he perceives the Dhamma."

S. iii. 120. ...

"Now what think you, O Bhikkhus. Which are more, these few simsapa leaves which in my hand I hold, or those in yonder grove?..."

"Even so, Bhikkhus, those things which by his supernormal knowledge the Tathāgata knows, but still leaves unrevealed, are greater much by far than those which he has since disclosed..."

S.N.v.437.

"A Bhikkhu masters. . . teaches . . . studies. . . thinks about the Scriptures as he has heard and mastered it. He spends the day therein, thereby neglecting subjective tranquillity of absorption. He is called one who is intent on mastering... teaching... studying... and thinking, but not one who goes along by the Dhamma..."

"Whatever is to be done by a teacher out of compassion for the welfare of his disciples that has the Tathāgata done for you. Meditate, O Bhikkhus and be not negligent so as to allow remorse to befall you in time to come. This is the advice of the Tathāgata to you."

A. iii. 86 - 7.



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BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

OF

THE VENERABLE CHAO KHUN MONGKOL-THEPMUNI

LATE ABBOT OF WAT PAKNAM BHASICHAROEN

Born in B. E. 2427, the late Abbot became a Bhikkhu at the age of twenty-two, studying the Pali Scriptures as well as Vipassanā.

After eleven years of such study, the thought arose in him that from the age of nineteen his earnest wish had been to become a Bhikkhu for life. Now after all these years, the truth which Buddha had beheld remained as far from him as ever. The only thing left for him, therefore, was to try his utmost at concentrated - attainment once and for all.

With this resolution in mind, that if he failed to perceive the truth which Buddha had beheld he would not arise from his meditation seat, he began one evening of a full moon in the tenth month (Thai style) to supplicate the Buddha for aid, so as to perceive, if not all, at least a portion of the truth which Buddha had beheld. However, if the perception of the truth were to result only in adversity for the religion of the Buddha, then may the Buddha withhold the truth from him. But if it should be beneficial for the religion of the Buddha that he perceive the truth, then may the Buddha in his compassion offer him support. If so, he would serve the Buddha Sāsana for the rest of his days.

Having prepared his seat and settled down to concentrate, however, the thought of ants arose. For the place was infested therewith, and thinking that they might disturb his meditations, he took a bottle of kerosene and dipped his finger therein with the intention of drawing a circle round him so as to prevent the ants from encroaching his person. As he was about to draw the circle, however, the thought that he had but recently vowed to sacrifice his life and not arise from his seat, suffused him with shame. Wherewith, putting the bottle of kerosene aside, he began to concentrate far into the night, oblivious of the time.

The fruit of this, and later meditations during the rest of the month, he gradually and painstakingly began, in the face of overwhelming odds (such as the attempts of hooligans to murder him) and lack of support from other Bhikkhus, to teach. Despite the opposition received, the principle always upheld by him was that a Bhikkhu must never retaliate, nor ever run, for that was the only way conquest could be attained. For almost forty years, after his appointment to the Abbotship of Wat Paknam, till his decease in B.E. 2502, his disciples and followers multiplied by the thousand. Wat Paknam alone houses Bhikkhus and novices by the hundreds.

It is in view of this signal service which he has rendered the Buddha Sāsana that it is hoped these booklets on Sammā Samādhi in the English language, based upon his general teaching, may serve as a rather belated dedication to the memory of this great and compassionate Elder, Mahā Thera.



PREFACE

"In the world today, gentlemen, a great thing is dying. It is Truth. Without a certain margin of tranquillity Truth succumbs."

We will have further occasion to refer to Ortega Y Gasset, the Spanish philosopher, to whom the above fragment belongs. For the present, we only presume to amend the fact that Truth does not succumb, but that whenever man becomes unworthy of its light, it simply sinks from sight.

It may seem a ridiculous statement to make, nevertheless all mature investigation of the subject points to the fact that the major portion of existence in the universe remains invisible, inaudible, and intangible to the five human sense-organs and, consequently, to the human mind.

This is an inevitability because, for one thing, consciousness (the most immediate yet elusive of essences) is not something which can be juggled up for inspection like a cheap circus trick. It is not mere idle presumption, therefore, to affirm that as long as this factor of consciousness cannot be traced to its origins, so long will man be the victim of invisibility, inaudibility, and intangibility.

The problem is further complicated, and therefore becomes more perverse and intractable, by the fact that from the start and with little provocation, contemporary man refuses to allow for factors other than what the senses can grasp. Which attitude automatically circumscribes his investigations and outlook; not recognising that, as the late Professor Whitehead observes:

"Sense-perception, despite its prominence in consciousness, belongs to the superficialities of experience."

Other reflections than these have, down through the ages, led man to believe that he is something more than his sensations. However, his search to discover what it is he has momentary inklings of, but eluding definite proof, has not always been crowned with success. It is the mark of civilization to aspire to an expansion of consciousness so as to apprehend things in the context of a deeper reality. As representative of this movement towards such expansion, it is typical of the West to turn *outwards* - namely, to the development of precision instruments, which are sometimes termed 'extensions of self'. Contemporary technology has, in consequence of this movement, achieved considerable progress.

However, the data received with the aid of these 'extensions' has inevitably (for it to be comprehensible at all) to be referred back to the sense-organs and their respective fields, so as to be filtered to the mind. But the mind (at this level composed of little more than sense-impressions) is limited in the extreme - that is to say, moving along its particular plane of past experience and groove of prejudice. What is more, the senses themselves distort by their very nature the evidence received. For what does a man actually grasp in any given act of perception, accepting it so casually and with such confidence? Thin air, mostly. Or (to be *scientific*) energy, molecules, electrons, and so forth. However, according to Whitehead:

*"This system (of electrons) forming the primordial element, is nothing at any instant. It requires its whole period in which to manifest itself... Accordingly, in asking **where** the 'primordial' element is, we must settle on its average position at the centre of each period. If we divide time into smaller electrons, the vibratory*

*system as one electronic entity has no existence... We have already got rid of **matter** with its appearance of undifferentiated endurance ... The field is now open for the introduction of some new doctrine of organism which may take the place of the materialism which, since the 17th century science has saddled philosophy. It must be remembered that the physicists' energy is obviously an **abstraction**. The concrete fact, which is the organism, must be a complete expression of the character of a real occurrence."*

With all due respect to the late Professor, it might as well be stated here that it takes something more than mere philosophy or a doctrine of organism, to penetrate beyond electrons. What is to the point here is that the elusiveness and intangibility of existence becomes obvious when we reduce it to essence. That is to say, nothing has been explained, the mystery remains. We apprehend existence merely through its periodicity, its manifestation in a series, an event in time, synchronising sufficiently well for the human continuity-of-consciousness to intercept. Which interception in the gross we term 'matter' or 'substance'. However, this continuity is in reality a series of detached and spasmodic jumps of electrons. The interval between one jump of an electron and the next is inapprehensible, a void. Thus:

"A colour is eternal. It haunts time like a spirit. It comes and goes. But where it comes, it is the same colour. It neither survives nor does it live! It appears when it is wanted."

All things are obviously by their very nature evanescent. They manifest, are suspended to instant peak, and, are precipitated into a void. This system of manifestation, suspension, and precipitation, applies to nothing more essential than consciousness. Which consciousness is indeed well worth our investigation, as everything apprehensible at all has first to impinge there on before it can be apprehended at all?

In view of this fundamental mystery and intangibility of existence, it is only inevitable that a false sense of security envelopes the contemporary scene. Which is the despair of the earnest man. The attempts of theology to fill in the void which contemporary materialism has ushered into man's consciousness can scarcely be said to be crowned with success. For theology removes the mind from the seat of immediate experience; expecting man to grasp the essence of things by an effort of faith, emphasising that truth and salvation can be vouchsafed only through the aid and bounty of the divine. This the earnest seeker, perplexed and yearning with his heart to believe, cannot with a mind intellectually honest, accept.

On the other hand, he also cannot wholeheartedly accept the deductions of those scientists who reduce life to biological freaks composed of chemicals, protoplasm, and cellular affinities. Inevitably. Because the average specialist has his nose stuck so close to the microscope that he fails to recognise that what should first be analysed lies not before his lenses, but rather that which squints down at it. Namely, himself. This fact is on its way to becoming a platitude.

However, for the average man engaged in the business of life, *insight into reality* is simply too boring and tedious a subject to propose. Nevertheless, it is this realisation which distinguishes the man who is *conscious* from the man who is not. Consciousness implies awareness. If a man, therefore, is unaware of the fundamental situation in which he breathes and has existence, then he might as well be *unconscious*. It seems that even in decadent Greece there were those who knew better. For as Plato assures us:

"The noblest of all studies is the study of what man is and what he should pursue..."

For it is here that man's greatest danger lies, and for those reasons we must give all heed that each of us, putting aside all other learning, may search after and study this alone, if in any way he may be able to learn and discover who will give him capacity and knowledge to discern the good and evil in life, and always and everywhere to choose the better according to his ability... There is only one currency for which all these tokens of ours should be exchanged, and that is wisdom. In fact, it is wisdom that makes possible courage and self-control and integrity - or, in a word, true goodness. And the presence or absence of pleasures and fears and other such feelings makes no difference at all, whereas a system of morality which is based on relative emotional values is a mere illusion, a thoroughly vulgar conception, which has nothing sound in it and nothing true. The true moral ideal - whether self-control, integrity, or courage - is really a kind of purgation from all these emotions, and wisdom itself is a kind of purge."

The issue of this booklet on Sammā Samādhi is a further essay into the potentialities of consciousness and its properties, being intended for those who already have penetrated to the depths alluded to in the previous volume. To those who have failed in that respect, or to those for whom this booklet is their first acquaintance with the subject, the following pages will not only seem meaningless but may even serve as some cause for amusement. However, it is a platitude that truth is stranger than fiction. The human mind, in fact, is too feeble and futile to be able to *invent* anything so ultimate as truth, contenting itself rather with mere fictions. Some of these fictions, however, it is unfortunate to admit, in course of time become (like the thermonuclear bomb) dangerous realities. Fictions which become realities, therefore, deserve our attention and regard, especially when they are dangerous ones.

One other motive for releasing further information regarding Sammā Samādhi, or Right Concentration, is to help counteract the growing greed, fear, and materialism of the peoples of the world, both East and West, who have their noses stuck so close to the flesh-pots of this life that they fail to perceive any other. In regard of this fundamental predicament facing man today, Ortega throws some light upon the subject, insofar as the Western element is concerned:

*"No small part of the anguish which is today tormenting the soul of the West derives from the fact that during the past century - and perhaps for the first time in history - man reached the point of believing himself secure... The progressivist idea consists in affirming not only that humanity - an abstract, irresponsible, nonexistent entity invented for the occasion - progresses, which is certain, but that it progresses necessarily... That is why I prefer to renew in myself at frequent intervals the emotion roused in my youth by Hegel's words: When we contemplate the Past - that is, History - the first thing we see is nothing but **ruins**. Let us in passing seize the opportunity to see from the elevation of this vision Nietzsche's famous imperative: 'Live dangerously.' Which, furthermore, is not Nietzsche's at all but the exaggeration of an old Italian motto, **Vivere risolutamente**: 'Live alertly.' He does not say 'Live alertly,' which would have been good, but 'Live dangerously.' And this shows that Nietzsche, despite his genius, did not know that the very substance of our life is danger, and that hence it is rather affected - not to say trying too hard for an effect - to propose to us as something new, added and original, that we should seek and collect danger... In every period there are ideas which I would call 'fishing' ideas, ideas which are thought of only as a game. In a period which has no strong experience of insecurity, like the **fin de siècle** period, they **play** at the dangerous life."*

The test of any philosophy or way of life must inevitably be assessed by its ultimate *durability*.

Nietzsche died insane. Which cancels him as an authority upon the subject. In fact, it seems to be the sad fate of armchair-prophets to fail to escape romping down the perilous road of the Inane. As Marcus Aurelius, the Roman emperor-philosopher, observes:

"The object of life is not to be on the side of the majority, but to escape finding oneself in the ranks of the insane."

It has become obvious that the boundary between sanity and insanity is a very delicate one indeed. Especially now in this most perilous of periods when man finds himself on his own, alone. For if anything has impressed the earnest man down through the ages, it is the mysterious immensity of the universe in which he breathes, and his own isolation therein. For such, this sense of spiritual isolation manifests itself even at an early age, being more or less amorously experienced. Nevertheless, amounting almost to a pang because of its very amorphousness. It is only with the arrival of manhood, however, that the depths of this isolation become sombre in the extreme, in more ways than one. Because he, the adult man, has to exist amidst the clatter and chatter of a thousand trams and tongues, and progress with a capital P seems to be on everyone's lips. It is only inevitable that his inner isolation stands out, by this blatant contrast, even larger than life, almost out of proportion to the sensation.

After mature reflection at a more profound level, it becomes obvious that the root of all this isolation and dissatisfaction lies not in any immediate material discomfort or lack, but is basically the inherent problem of a spiritual vacuum. In the perspective of which vacuum man's smug and inflated schemes to 'conquer' this or that becomes inane, when all reflections on the subject point to the realisation that man and his creations flounders forward neither with ultimate direction nor purpose but in a vicious circle, and that if there is anything more desirable and in greatest need of conquest, it is - himself.

And how? It does not require any devious or supernatural reflection to disclose to any sane man that there is more to life than meets the eye, and that there is not merely one level to consciousness, but *levels*. Conscience, instinct, the knowledge of right and wrong, of good and evil, the sense of guilt, are only a few superficial landmarks of this system of things. Consciousness in its totality is something more than Freud's superficial and biased interpretation thereof, scarcely of a mere neurotic-sexual origin: That which for Freud is the 'unconscious' is merely one such level of what it would be more accurate to classify as the *peripheral mind*.

This peripheral mind dominates the average man through acceptance and complete identification therewith, submerging and his confused dwarfing thereby the more devious levels of consciousness in effectiveness and intensity. To comprehend rightly these levels scarcely signifies a method of *intellectual gymnastics*, but necessitates rather the immersing of the innermost consciousness in itself, in its own essence, and identifying from beginning to end the connections in all their ramifications.

It becomes obvious, therefore, that before a man can know what really are the causes which underlie and activate life, he has first to know himself, otherwise he can hardly be said to *know*, but only to have an *opinion*. In this respect Plato has something to say. Namely, that pure consciousness is like an eye:

"When resting upon that on which truth and being shine, it perceives and understands, and is radiant with intelligence. But when turned towards the twilight of becoming and perishing, then it has opinion only, and goes blinking about and is first of one opinion and then of another, and seems to have no intelligence."

All of which is very well. But the attainment of clarity of vision so as to apprehend Being necessitates something more substantial than that acquired by mere intellectual means. It needs quite a radical system of gymnastic. In this respect, too, Plato is not without a suggestion. Namely, that consciousness must be made to stand on its own potential, without bodily support:

"To withdraw from all contact with the body and concentrate itself by itself and to have its dwelling, so far as it can, both now and in the future, alone by itself, freed from the shackles of the body."

Nevertheless, whether attached to a body or not, all creatures are at dissimilar levels of "disenlightenment", being, as it were, imprisoned in a cave, on whose walls they perceive their moving shadows. Perceiving only shadows, they regard them as real - that is, as *ultimate*. That this is a blunder of the first magnitude, is evidenced by those who succeed in eventually escaping from the cave to the clear light of day to behold ultimate things at last. Having escaped it themselves, such men consider it their duty to return to the cave so as to lead their fellowmen out. However, on their return to the murkiness of the cave they perceive its shadows (because of the *light* which fills their eyes) more indistinctly than its perpetual inhabitants, who have so long been accustomed thereto. To these underground men, therefore, the 'escapists' will inevitably seem more foolish and dreamy than before their escape. And, therefore, the 'escapists' attempt to convince their fellows are, unfortunately, seldom crowned with success. Due to their cavish habits, mortals become burdened with opinions and fail to discern truth. This lack of discernment begins early, whenever a child is born. That is to say, when consciousness is re-embodied. For it is no *fresh* entity which is born, but only consciousness being re-embodied. As soon as embodied, consciousness is thrown out of focus by the metabolism of the body.

Equilibrium (the circling in the head) is adjusted with the gradual process of maturity, and correct judgement established by *right* education. Stress is laid on *right* education because consciousness, embodied once again, has lost immediate awareness of its past experiences, in other lives and other states. Awareness of them is regained through the faculty of recollection:

"If it is true that we acquired our knowledge before our birth, and lost it at the moment of birth, but afterwards (by the exercise of our senses upon sensible objects) recover the knowledge which we had once before, I suppose that what we call learning will be the recovery of our own knowledge, and surely we would be right, in calling this recollection. Yes, because we see that it is possible for the perception of an object by sight or hearing, or any of the other senses, to suggest to the percipient through association (whether there is any similarity or not) another object which he has forgotten. So as I maintain, there are two alternatives: either we are born with knowledge of these standards (of truth, of good and evil) and retain it throughout our lives - or else, when we speak of learning, we are simply recollecting what we knew before."

Although the above method may bear results, this form of recollection, it is obvious, is hardly an *exact* one. There will have to be a more exact and deeper recollective system of gymnastic than through mere modes of association. It would also be folly to infer that nothing *new* as such is ever learnt. Rather, what is implicit in the doctrine of recollection, is that there is, ultimately speaking, nothing *new in the universe*. That is to say, ultimate truth is ultimate truth, and there are certain basic laws which govern and circumscribe psychic as well as inorganic behaviour. Fundamentally speaking therefore, there is nothing new to discover, but only to rediscover. Man should try to surpass himself for good, once and for all, penetrating worldly phenomena for transcendental principles, and never to be content with mere superficial explanations. Life is neither mere materialism nor mere *idle idealism*, but

a search for the true, the beautiful, and the good. Or, in a word, for that which *endures*. All existence is lived under certain Forms, or Universals, which may be assumed to be eternal, considering that they persistently recur wherever life is manifested or found. What one of Plato's translators (Professor A.D. Lindsay) renders, is significant in this respect:

"We understand the relation of different experiences to one another by means of the forms under which we think them. For perfect knowledge we ought to be able to understand the relation of the forms to one another by means of some single and Ultimate Form. This ideal of knowledge Plato calls the Form of the Good. We must remember that he says he cannot explain it to us. We could only understand it when we had perfect knowledge. What he is doing is to show us the kind of way in which we ought to be able to understand the world, the ideal which all knowing implies. Now in questions of action, when we can explain conduct as accomplishing what we simply recognise as good, we need go no further. We ought to be able to do the same in science, otherwise we should only have an endless succession of phenomena, coming we know not whence, leading we know not whither, we can never hope to get back to the beginning or on to the end. But it would be enough if we were to understand this changing world as the manifestation of a principle we regarded as good. Not good for anything - least of all good for man - but as good in itself. If we could do that, then the laws of conduct and of things would be seen as manifestations of the same principle, and science and morality be completely united. This is the goal of philosophy, and the effort to reach this goal is the perfect life for man. A life which we cannot limit to this world, but which we must regard as continuing after death."

It may seem a peculiar way to preface a subject so devious as *Sammā Samādhi* with such a lengthy peroration, with ideas culled from Western sources, both ancient and contemporary, when Buddhist authorities should be expounded instead. However, this peroration has been a deliberate one, intended to reaffirm the fact that truth is universal, and that men in all ages and walks of life may have glimpses thereof, no matter how amorphous or how brief. Truth is something much vaster than mere personal preference, locality, or creed. If we have quoted Western sources at length, it is to help place us in that frame of mind which is most conducive to equability, without bias, as to approach our abstruse subject, even if for the first time, in the broad prospect and horizon of an open mind.

For what, after all, does men's efforts down through the ages amount to? Spinoza may be called in to conclude for us here. For he tells us that:

"After experience had taught me that all things which frequently take place in ordinary life are vain and futile, and when I saw that all the things I feared, and which feared me, had nothing good or bad in them save in so far as the mind was affected by them, I determined at last to inquire whether I might discover and attain the faculty of enjoying throughout eternity continual supreme happiness."

This it seems is the goal of all men of good will, and not only for themselves but for all. But how?

"The more the mind knows the better it understands its forces and the order of nature, and the more it understands the order of nature, the more easily it will be able to liberate itself from useless things. This is the whole method."

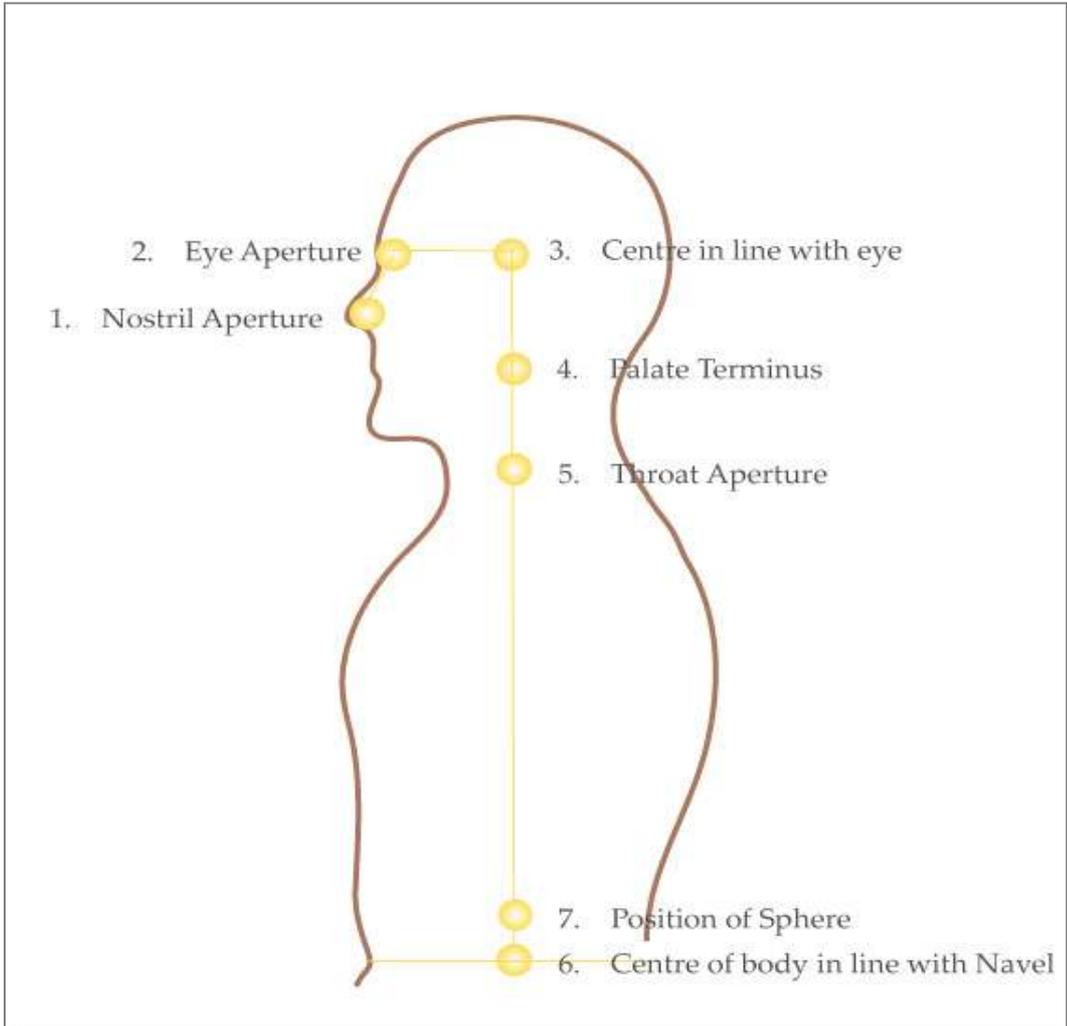
It is dubious whether the lonely philosopher of Amsterdam attained his aim. Nevertheless, the beauty and earnestness of his appeal, in the concluding passage of his *Ethics*, may be recalled, for it has

bearing on our subject, and may also serve as the conclusion to our theme:

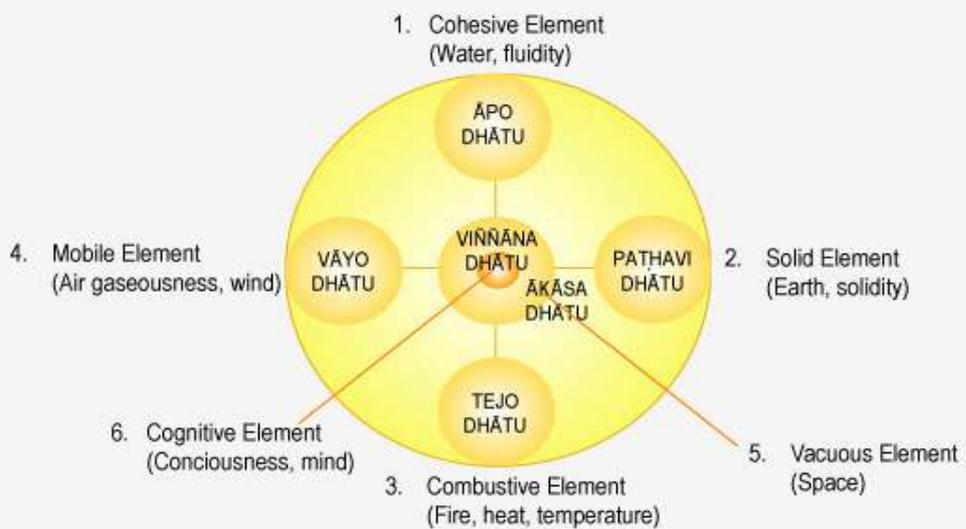
“If the path I have shown to lead to this (true virtue) is very difficult, it can yet be discovered. And clearly it must be very hard when it is so seldom found. For how could it be that it is neglected by all, if salvation were close at hand and could be found without difficulty? But all things excellent are as difficult as they are rare.”



LORD BUDDHA GOTAMA



THE SPHERE AT THE CENTRE OF THE BODY
IN RELATION TO THE ELEMENTS



INTRODUCTION

“Even in this very body, six feet in length, with its sense-impressions, thoughts and ideas, is the world, the origin of the world, the cessation of the world, and the way leading to the cessation thereof.”

This statement made twenty-five centuries ago by the Buddha is much more profound than is generally supposed. For a thing is perceived as profound in proportion to the profundity of the perceiver. It may seem a rather large claim to make, but only the practice and attainment of Sammā Samādhi (Right Concentration) - that is to say, the system of Samatha-Vipassanā which ushers in calm and insight-reveals in its true scope the extent to which existence as a whole is profound.

What is of prime import insofar as the practice of Samatha-Vipassanā is concerned, is that it reveals the structure of consciousness to be comprised not merely of one level but levels. These levels may be classified only in general terms. Because, if we were to go into detail, their number will be revealed to surpass all count.

Levels of Consciousness

Regarding the human aspect of the matter alone, it is obvious that from the moment of birth a human being begins a process of acquiring a considerable number of levels of consciousness. Which can be briefly reduced to three. Firstly, there is the environment of childhood with all its infantile associations. Secondly, there is the environment of school and all its student associations. Thirdly, there is the environment of raising a family with all its domestic associations.

These levels may be tentatively regarded as superimposing each other in respective order of age. As one later level submerges the earlier in course of time, it pushes it out of perceptive immediacy. It, of course, does not push it out of potential memory. However, although the human personality at this juncture may be regarded as preserving some form of unity, it in reality is a disunity, as contemporary psychoanalysis bears witness. It would seem that each of these levels of consciousness is sufficient in itself. That is to say, a living thing, possessing its own associations, desires, and demands.

Are we to assume, then, that “these levels of consciousness arise by mere occasion and contact with the environment and have no other originative basis than the physical? Or is there also some deeper basis for their origination? Are we to assume that individual character is just an ‘offshoot’ of chance contact with the environment heritage, or what you will? One thing is certain, observation reveals that no two persons are exactly alike, whether from the standpoint of character, heritage, upbringing, predilection, or what you will.

Now whatever ordinary investigation may have to say regarding the subject, Samatha-Vipassanā reveals character to be no mere product of chance but with roots in a remote past. That is to say, ‘in rebirth-consciousness, the prenatal element.

It may easily be conceded that, insofar as this present life is concerned, there are levels of consciousness, as tentatively described. Few, however, will go so far as to accept the fourth level alluded to. Namely, rebirth-consciousness. That indeed is a problem, but not so serious as it may seem. At least nothing more serious than the fact that it cannot be juggled up for inspection like a cheap circus trick. Not more serious than the fact that most of the values by which life is lived

(consciousness itself included) are beyond the sphere of logic. And so forth.

Of course, it may be argued that we have no right to go by a mere belief, that we must have facts. This is understandable. The veracity of rebirth-consciousness, therefore, remains a problem only because it hasn't been investigated thoroughly and impartially, not because it is not a fact.

Rebirth-consciousness

Samatha-Vipassanā reveals that if rebirth-consciousness were not to descend into the mother's womb, no conception could possibly take place. Specifically, it reveals that the kammic entity which impregnates the cellular speck in the womb provides the basic potential which prepares fresh new levels of consciousness from coming to exist. Which levels, in course of time, superimpose and submerge the original nucleus of birth.

In its immediate natal state the *brain* of the child, of course, cannot be said to possess previous psychological content. It is devoid of immediate content because, after all, it is a new *brain*. Which can be said to acquire specific content only with the functioning of the sense-organs. Which sense-organs, meeting objects of contact, accumulate and absorb data incessantly. This collective data in this brain we term mind, *peripheral* mind.

In the meantime, it may be a subject for question where the rebirth-consciousness has submerged itself after having introduced itself so sinuously to provide the basis for embryonic expansion, growth, and birth? It remains where it has always remained. Namely, in the centre of the body in line with the navel (See diagram). This centre is distinct from the brain centre, although it is in the general assumption that the brain is the only such centre. From which assumption all the confusion starts.

As each matures into manhood it inevitably identifies itself completely with the fresh new ego it feels itself to be. The roots which aid this sense of ego are the five aggregates of human personality (Pañcupādāna khandha). Namely, form, feeling, perception, memory, and consciousness. This identification with the five khandhas is a fatal one. Fatal, that is, in that it henceforth inevitably circumscribes and limits experience and knowledge to merely surface level. And not only it is fatal in this respect, it also detaches conscious contact from the rebirth-consciousness, so that these levels live, as it were, a separate existence of their own with no perceptible interconnection. Which deteriorates into a 'split', deteriorative to the harmonious functioning of the whole psychic personality, for where there was once some semblance of unity there now is disunity, at different ends of the human stick.

Of course, that which is termed the peripheral mind (or brain centre) is not completely isolated from the navel centre. Considering that rebirth-consciousness was its initial cause, this peripheral mind is perfumed by tendencies (*vāsanās*) pertaining to the original rebirth-consciousness. This connection, for it is a connection, is however expressed more or less 'unconsciously', by vague urges and impulses which are kammic in content, being characteristic of the rebirth personality. Rebirth-consciousness is, therefore, said to *perfume* the new personality so as to colour all its sense-perceptions and outlook. All of which, however, is a one-sided process, in that the subject becomes an 'unconscious' victim of his kamma rather than a conscious participator and regulator of it. It is a one-sided process in that the rebirth level of consciousness is aware, more or less, of the peripheral level, but not vice versa.

However, in actuality it is not such a one-sided process as it seems. This is so because in sleep the peripheral mind (which at the juncture of manhood is already composed of more than one level of consciousness) sinks to the base termed void centre (the sixth position in the diagram). If the peripheral mind sinks to void centre, then the subject does not dream. That state in sleep which is not perfumed or activated by dreams is called *bhavanga* (the basic ground of consciousness). If the subject

dreams, then it implies that the peripheral mind has drifted up to the seventh position (as seen in the diagram). In sleep all dreams emerge not from the brain, as is commonly supposed, but from the sphere of what is called the refined human form at the seventh position. If the peripheral mind were not to drowse from side to side, and gradually sink to void centre (the sixth position) or the seventh position, sleep would scarcely descend. The integral importance of both the sixth and seventh positions; therefore, cannot be too often stressed. The sixth position, or void centre, serves as the heart-base, being the seat and support of all perception, memory, thought, and knowledge, pertaining to this life as well as to the aggregates of past lives.

Each one once reborn forgets, of course, its former experiences, consciousness being thrown out of focus by the new unadjusted brain; as well as the metabolism of the body. Focus is regained *in its totality* only through the system of sinking consciousness to void centre for information contact. Which, in other words, is the development of extra-sensory perception. The main obstacle to such development and contact is the peripheral mind, which through its crudity and ignorance blocks the way. All the pleasures and pains it experiences through the process of living together with all the accumulations derived from sense-contact, aid and support the 'heresy' of a permanent and singular ego or self. As Plato observes:

"Every pleasure and pain has a sort of rivet with which it fastens consciousness to the body and pins it down and makes it corporeal, accepting as true whatever the body certifies. The result of agreeing with the body and finding pleasure in the same things is, I imagine, that it cannot help becoming like it in character and training, so that it can never get clear away to the unseen world, but is always saturated with the body when it sets out, and so soon falls back again into another body where it takes root and grows. Consequently, it is excluded from all fellowship with the pure, and uniform, and divine... It is from these reasons that sages exhibit self-control and courage, not for the reasons which are generally supposed."

An individual's field of consciousness may be rendered equivalent to his past experience. It is customary to regard consciousness as a fixed and determinate quantity (and quality) standard for all persons. That there are past lives renders this conclusion unfeasible. Consciousness can never be standard for all persons, because each individual is comprised of a totally different set of experiences, which differ not only in quantity but in quality. That is to say, each individual has evolved, extended, enlarged, and augmented his conscious limits through personal experience in various ways and for quite different lengths of time. As a matter of fact, some have but recently, so to speak, experienced the mystery of consciousness, while others have begun countless aeons ago. A matter, of course, which we in this context cannot elaborate but can only state.

The problem, therefore, is this: Namely, how to submerge apprehension beneath the superficial 'self' and arrive at *core*. To arrive there, not haphazardly or by chance, or in the incoherence of dreams and sleep, but by a system of concentration which can contact, reunify, and recollect all experience at will. It need hardly be stressed that until such contact, reunification, and recollection is re-established, human personality will continue to present itself as the pitiful and abject phenomenon that it is.

Buddha's emphasis on the *anatta* (not-self) aspect of existence is simply the intention to inculcate in man the recognition that all things have a tendency to split (like the amoeba) into as many centres, or series of 'selves', as there are sensory contacts. Obviously, we have not made the issue clear-cut at all. There is need to elaborate. As always, it is on the prime factor of consciousness that all things hinge.

Now the very first thing which we observe regarding consciousness is its capacity for *instantaneousness*, for apprehending things at immense speeds, whether in the concrete or the abstract.

However, each mind-instant manifests, is suspended for an instant, and is precipitated on to extinction. Whence a new cycle manifests. The whole process of which is spontaneous, each instant jostling into fragmentary existence and out. Only man's corporeality, his physical frame of reference (whose cells also mutate, perish, and arise by the second), prevents him from recognising the intermittent quality and mutation of self-becoming, concatenating from split-second to split-second.

In view of its immense velocity, consciousness is precipitated by its own momentum, in diverse fields of attraction and frames of reference as it contacts, accidentally or otherwise. Which contacts register in the form of *impressions*. It would seem, however, that such random contact must disintegrate the doctrine of kamma and causality. As Hume observes:

“Objects have no discoverable connection together, nor is it from any other principle but custom operating upon the imagination that we can draw any inference from the appearance of one to the existence of another. All our reasonings concerning causes and effects are derived from nothing but custom.”

One argument for this extreme stand is that causal relations are imperceptible in their immediacy, and that man only infers them from relations which can be perceived. It is asserted that there is no connection, only a succession of separate events.

Indeed, existence does seem to consist of nothing but irregular and random elements flashing out of nowhere and flashing out again. No doubt, to our limited perception, the invariable succession and concatenation of occasions and events which manifest as *consciousness* in no way assures us anything more stable than mere continuity, both as to personal identity and phenomenal externality. However, it is only valid to infer that even these random flashings must possess laws of behaviour by which they originate and manifest at all, considering that these random flashings (as in the physical electron) arise, manifest, and perish in the larger scope of an order which is self-evidently cyclic. It is only due to ignorance of these laws (which are not really *laws* as such but *modes*) that their manifestation, whether sudden or otherwise, confuses and perplexes our comprehensions.

Now although causal relations are not generally perceived (due to the crudity of sense-perception), it may be viewed from a comprehensive standpoint that all manifestations have their play within the scope and orbit of 24 modes. Namely: position, object, dominance, proximity, immediate contiguity, coexistence, reciprocity, dependence, condition, antecedent, consequence, succession, kamma, effect, support, control, jhāna, means, association, dissociation, presence, absence, abeyance, continuance.

Within the broad framework of these modes, existence manifests and is perpetuated. Which framework of modes may be termed, in a certain sense, ultimate. Ultimate, that is, in contrast to the mutable causes themselves which merely activate from moment to moment. As Spinoza observes:

“It would be impossible for human weakness to follow up the series of individual mutable things, not only because their number surpasses all count, but because of the many circumstances, in one and the same thing, each of which may be the cause of the things existence. For, indeed, the existence of particular things has no connection with their essence, and is not an eternal truth.... Their essence is only to be found in fixed and eternal things and from the laws inscribed in those things as their true codes, according to which all individual things are made and arranged. Nay, these individual and mutable things depend so intimately and essentially on these fixed ones that without them they can neither exist nor be conceived.”

Man, as a *conscious* creature, is basically *sensitive* rather than *cogitative*, and as such apprehends reality

instinctually rather than intellectually. Whenever he starts to reason he does so at the expense of forfeiting *perceptive immediacy*. As Hume admits, reason is far inferior in vivacity and vividity to a sense-impression. If not, all existence would be intellectually sterilised:

“It is more conformable to the ordinary wisdom of nature to secure so necessary an act of the mind, by some instinct or mechanical tendency, which may be infallible in its operations, may discover itself at the first appearance of life and thought, and may be independent of all the laboured deductions of the understanding. As nature has taught us the use of our limbs, without giving us the knowledge of the muscles and nerves, by which they are actuated, so has she planted in us an instinct, which carries forward the thought in a correspondent course to that which she has established among external objects, though we are ignorant of those powers and forces, on which this regular course and succession of objects totally depends.”

It is obvious that at this stage of development it is too much to hope that all the factors, whether perceptible or imperceptible, which activate existence are capable of apprehension. From factors already apprehended by the average man, however, a theoretically reliable universe of sense has been mentally constructed-sufficiently reliable, that is, to hold its own in *general* tenus. It proves insufficient in holding its own and becomes ‘illogical’, however, when it comes to *details*. That is to say, the theory (of a cosmos and its laws of behaviour) is not *false*, so to speak, but merely *incomplete*. If it is allowed that the universe as a whole (that which is imperceptible and perceptible) is, technically speaking, reliable, then it is not a symptom of irregularity if it also offers scope for variability and irrationality (like the physical electron) in its details.

Freewill

This margin (a broad one) of irrationality is, in the individual unit (such as man), amply vouchsafed for by the phenomenon of freewill. That is, the capacity to act and motivate an innumerable series of events within given conditions and limits. A factor without which existence as we know it would be impossible, for without this margin of freewill life itself would be reduced to nothing more significant than a machine.

It is generally recognised that freewill is what determines human behaviour and human circumstances in general. Nowhere is freewill better observed than in the privilege of choice. However, although all creatures are observed to possess the privilege of choice, the choice itself is not as *free* as is generally supposed. For it may be noticed that it is determined by a particular organism, its character, and the motives which inspire it. Choice (which is freewill in action) circumscribes itself through habit (which is a form of necessity), working and moving in the particular groove set up by itself. A groove being what it is; all actions once acted out have a tendency to repeat themselves, mechanically.

Now whatever may be said for the ‘groove’ or ‘grooves’ in which his freewill works, or no matter how free and broad in his outlook a man may be, it is obvious that he in reality possesses little choice. A certain collection of possibilities present themselves, are before him to choose. He, however, cannot choose what is not before him. He may even choose *all* the possibilities (trying them out one by one). But he cannot choose an impossibility - that is, something which is not presented for him to choose.

The point we are at pains to demonstrate in this context is that a man cannot choose himself. For he has already ‘chosen’ (through antecedent kamma and desire) and must of necessity be burdened with the result. This is the grievance, though often amorphous, which besets a man: namely, that he in

reality has no choice, cannot escape himself, his 'groove'.¹

We have already mentioned the immense velocity of consciousness. In its precipitate haste it multiplies its contacts. These contacts register as impressions. These impressions deflect the direction. Some impressions, of course, are insufficient in intensity to suspend attention and dominate for long. Others, however, are of sufficient power to hold consciousness in their orb for varying lengths of time in proportion to their (the impressions') intensity. Now impressions of intensity draw consciousness from the main stream, forming sub-streams; sub-centres. As it is impelled on, therefore, consciousness is said to multiply. Not only does it multiply, it divides. And not only does it divide, it splits.

In this fashion (and in a much more profound sense than that which contemporary psychology assumes) all individuals are to a more or less degree schizophrenics, split-personalities. Only establishment in a physical form prevents this from immediate view. As long as the process continues within a common frame of reference (such as the body) the phenomenon remains invisible - though not impalpable. However, in the average man, this split-process of consciousness is insufficient in intensity to upset the peripheral personality as to explode it into the phenomenon of what is called schizophrenia. Which schizophrenia is a kammic maladjustment or displacement of these innumerable centres of consciousness so as to upset the whole metabolism of the peripheral personality.

Now if we look upon man as a physical and substantial object, he appears inseparable and incapable of partition. But if we recognise him to be a psychic field of occasions and events, a psychic continuum, a concatenating force, then he becomes a phenomenon capable of divisibility. This divisibility becomes more comprehensible when it is realised that man is a creature of desire, and that it is not reason but desire which rules his life.

Now it is obvious that a man is not composed of one desire but, a concatenation thereof. If this is so, then we arrive not at singularity but at multiplicity. And why? Because each desire, or emotional impulse is, to a more or less degree, *a separate centre of potentiality*. It is a fallacy to suppose that just because a number of desires or impulses exist in a common body that they must also possess a common centre or foci of gravity, being the offshoots thereof. Experience shows that desires and emotional impulses are in perpetual conflict with one another. Indeed, that the psychic personality does not split under the strain of so many divided desires and emotional impulses is a psychical wonder. However, that the psyche does split when pressed too far is borne out by the phenomenon of split-personality (schizophrenia).

In fact, only the body (which always preserves a seeming appearance of consistency) prevents the fact from recognition that the psychic personality has by its very nature a tendency to split unless held, otherwise together. It is primarily the body which (as a reorientation centre) prevents consciousness from streaming off into inanity altogether, as nightmares partially bear witness.

It is obvious that the psyche is never for a moment singular but is always under the impulsion of plurality, a concatenation of split-impulses. If it were to split the centrifugal forces which hold it together, then it would split into as many bits as there are 'impulses'. Whereby an extremely fantastic

¹ As Tolstoi observes:

"However often reflection and experience may show a man that, given the same conditions and character, he will always at a given juncture do precisely what he did before, he will nonetheless feel assured, when for perhaps the thousandth time he engages in action, which has hitherto always ended in the same way, that he can act as he pleases... The reason why life would be intolerable to him is that all aspirations of man, all his incitements to live, are so many aspirations towards an increase of freedom."

form of psychic parthenogenesis would present itself to sight.

It is easily conceded that individuality is a process of assimilating potential resources into the orbit of one common centre. But in the individual make-up, observation reveals that there is not one common centre but centres. That is to say, within the dominant groove of a psychic personality there activate a whole concatenating series of grooves, each imbued with its especial associations, desires, and wills. Individuality, therefore, maybe said to be composed not of one simple identity but *identities*.

It may be objected, however, that all sensory experience must possess a common centre whereby data may be digested and preserved. No doubt, in a rudimentary sense. But we have passed beyond the rudimentary stage and are now in the throes of a psyche which has begotten more *psyches* (psychic amoeba, more or less), each possessing henceforth a separate centre and individuality of its own.

The point we are driving at is this: that identity is by its very nature a *divisible process* and *not a thing-in-itself*. We are not dealing with dead lifeless matter, for there is no dead lifeless matter anymore. There is, only a process of forces, occasions, thoughts, percepts, memories, and ideas, ever effervescent in their concatenating activity. These forces, events, occasions, thoughts, percepts, memories, and ideas are the factors which perpetuate life.

Psychic Divisibility

Psychic divisibility suggests many possibilities. Specifically, however, it defines that the hard-and-fast distinctions of separateness and indivisibility (revoked in the physical sphere by the splitting of the atom) are arbitrary concepts. And why? Because all phenomena (whether organic or inorganic, animate or inanimate, physical or psychic) lose their separate significance and identity as such in proportion to their momentariness, their effervency, their adaptability, and their ineffectuality.

If it is conceded that existence is a flux, with eddies of consciousness activating and manifesting therein, then it becomes obvious that any concept of selfhood partakes of the nature of impermanence. For by the very nature of things all identity (whether of substances, occasions, events, or consciousness) cannot be considered as permanently self-existent as such but only *provisionally* so.

However, although all things are impermanent and interchangeable, this impermanence and interchangeability itself is being perpetuated and preserved by the mystery and scope of the element in nature which is cognitive and conscious. Namely, the units of consciousness inherent in all living things.

This perpetuation and preservation of a past which is ephemeral into a present and future is exemplified in a palpable form by the potentiality of memory. By which potentiality consciousness can recall to perceptive immediacy any occasion or event that has been assimilated. Of course, it is not the *actual* occasion or event as it happened *then* in space - time which is summoned up for re-inspection, but the *impression* thereof. Which to all intents and purposes, however, is just as relevant.

This recollection of a past which has evanesced from perceptive immediacy is not merely an individual recollection of a conglomeration of experiences with their habitat in the spheres of the submerged psyche, but a potentiality of universal scope. The universe at large may be viewed as being in the nature of a vast storehouse of memory, registerative by very aspect of the element in its nature which is psychic. It is only an unfortunate limitation of extra-sensory apperception common to all creatures which prevents the average individual from tapping the vast ocean of preserved data and

apprehending the requisite impressions which impinge.²

This *psychic* aspect of nature, however, may be questioned insofar as its origins are concerned. We have already been led to suppose that animate and inanimate nature in general have no distinct laws of separateness but are potentially interdependent. It is still customary, however, to distinguish the organic aspect from the inorganic. What is more, there is a further distinction appertaining to the physical and psychic. All of which are, despite their validity, mere arbitrary distinctions, for no one has as yet proved that nature herself (from which existence is held to have emerged) is not as psychic in essence as it is physical in manifestation. It is justified to infer that since nature in general produces psychic offspring, it must itself be potentially psychic in character. Also, it is evident that life does not emerge out of nothing but out of the complexity of an already extant cosmic potential.

As Jung recognises, there seems to be a fundamental difference in the way the East and the West approach reality:

“Even a superficial acquaintance with Eastern thought is sufficient to show that a fundamental difference divides East and West. The East bases itself upon psychic reality, that is, upon the psyche as the main and unique condition of existence... ‘Psychic reality’ is a controversial concept-like ‘psyche’ or ‘mind’. By the latter terms some understand consciousness and its contents, others allow the existence of ‘dark’ or ‘sub-conscious’ representations. Some include instincts in the psychic realm, others exclude them. The vast majority consider the psyche to be a result of biochemical processes in the brain cells. A few conjecture that it is the psyche that makes the cortical cells function. Some identify ‘life’ with psyche. But only an insignificant minority regards the psychic phenomenon as a category of existence per se and draws the necessary conclusions. It is indeed paradoxical that the category of existence, the indispensable sine qua non of all existence, namely the psyche, should be treated as if it were only semi-existent. Psychic existence is the only category of existence of which we have immediate knowledge, since nothing can be known unless it first appears as a psychic image. Only psychic existence is immediately verifiable. To the extent that the world does not assume the form of a psychic image it is virtually non-existent. This is a fact, which with few exceptions - as for instance in Schopenhauer’s philosophy - the West has not yet fully realised. But Schopenhauer was influenced by Buddhism and by the Upanishads.”

If it is recognised that the universe at large, and all phenomena therein, is not so explicitly *physical* as such but rather in the nature of an event or occasion of experience, then the psychic quality of existence will be appreciated. However, if pressed to its logical limits all these distinctions become arbitrary, for no one will be so foolish as to uphold that existence is totally physical as opposed to psychic, and vice versa. As Whitehead observes:

“Each occasion, has its physical inheritance and its mental reaction, which drives it on to its self-completion. The world is not merely physical nor is it merely mental. Nor is it merely one with many subordinate phases. Nor is it merely a complete fact, in its essence static, with the illusion of change. Whenever a vicious dualism appears, it is by reason of mistaking an abstraction for a final concrete fact. The universe is dual because, in the fullest sense, it is both transient and eternal. The universe is dual because each duality required abstract character. The universe is dual because each occasion unites its formal immediacy with objective otherness.

² See Appendix VII

The universe is many because it is wholly and completely to be analysed into many final actualities... The universe is one because of the universal immanence. There is thus a dualism in this contrast between the unity and multiplicity. Throughout the universe there reigns the union of opposites which is the ground of dualism."

Now we have already observed Hume's assertion that causal relations are imperceptible in their immediacy. As far as the psyche is concerned, this imperceptibility is reflected in the fact that one mind-instant is not an indivisible quantity but is by its very nature fragmentary. If atomic fission is made perceptible by instantaneous photography, the splitting of a mind-instant so as to make it perceptible would be an unrewarding task, for the revelation would be unintelligible and irrelevant. In any case, although reflection upon the subject of our own minds (as it shifts at tangents with intense velocity from one thing to another and into all manner of combinations) perplexes our comprehensions, it is not so embarrassing after all, because even if its nature and processes are not completely understood consciousness itself *continues*. Since it continues (being apprehended only thus) it produces results. These results only are the average man's concern, not the mechanism of consciousness itself.

However, it is worth our study. And why? Because most of the misunderstanding and intolerance which prevails today stems from this fundamental inability to penetrate into the very essence of a thing, and to experience in perceptive immediacy the mechanism and reference to antecedent causes by which all creatures live and move. Namely, in grooves of their own making. It is not that a man, due to habit, cannot but act and react except in a particular way, but rather that he cannot help himself *at the moment* of the act or thought, so set in its groove and automatic in its circuit has his consciousness become. Thus, if consciousness can be said to be a stream which flows, the flow itself is cyclic in character. A vicious cycle of momentum, repetitive, inconclusive, and endless.

The unnecessary suffering which is so prevalent today stems, basically, from the fact that the average man's mind is so effervescent and agitated as each mind-instant to push and jostle, willy-nilly, into the next without direction or purpose, knocking off into psychic chaos. Most activities fizzle off into inanity due to the friction and fission of mind-instants which culminate in exhaustion and neurosis. The rise of modern psychotherapy and hypnotism have assuaged to some degree the strain and stress which besieges the psyche on all sides. However, due to the intensity and incessant mechanism of the psyche itself, we cannot expect contemporary psychotherapy, such as in use at present, to achieve miracles whenever the friction and fission overstrains its limits. It may be considered a boon already if tension can be even in a minor way alleviated.

Due to this fundamental incoherence of consciousness, men's efforts down through the ages may be witnessed as a strenuous and tragic endeavour to harness the incoherence and gain control, so as to give life direction and purpose. For if left to itself and its incoherence (especially in dreams) consciousness is nothing more than a leaf in a storm, battered about till it sinks to the level of idiocy, a thing without identity.

All life, we observe, is an incessant struggle for identity for happiness, and for invulnerability. For immortality. The universe can no longer be regarded as a static and lifeless thing, but as a ceaseless living process. In view of this very 'livingness' of the universe, all existence may be regarded as an incessant struggle for individual survival at various levels of identity. However, due to the fundamental amorphousness of the basic ground of consciousness, no permanent individual identity as such is assured, but merely momentary flashings of psychic and organic manifestation within frames of ever-changing reference.

Percepts and Perceptions

However, in virtue of the fact that consciousness is perpetuated within a particular field (such as bodily form), and in frames of reference which are perceptible, it is credited with a self-sufficient identity which in reality it does not possess. Namely, the soul. One weakness of the traditional concept of soul is its permanent indivisibility. A concept rendered untenable if it is recognised that consciousness is not a static totality but a process of dynamic divisibility. In fact, the momentary and intermittent nature of consciousness reveals itself on investigation to be rather in the nature of an old mind perishing and giving way to a new one with each split-second. There are only moments of consciousness, no everlasting 'I'. There are only a succession and concatenation of data and percepts in relation to particular frames of reference. Frames of reference, moreover which are themselves in continuous flux. There is thus only the perpetuation of immediacy, no eternity of durability.

We have laboured the proposition that there are only moments of consciousness, momentary flashings of awareness, within differentiated frames of reference. These we will call percepts. Consciousness possesses the capacity of attaching itself in a particular percept, or series of percepts, in detail by focusing and fixing the attention thereon. However, this can be achieved by the average man for only a brief duration, because attention is always being lured away to other things, skipping from one percept to the next.

Now our use of the term 'percepts' is a broad one, and implies not merely objects of perception but perception itself, memory, ideas, thoughts and knowledge. In fact, the whole host of potential experiences. We have mentioned consciousness as skipping from one percept to the next. Now it is usually regarded that that percept which experiences immediate subjectivity of presentation is the 'I' or the 'permanent perceiver'. The error is to distinguish this percept as being the soul-like self, in contrast to the total aggregate of percepts in the receptacle of consciousness (which are regarded as objective).

There is no permanent subjectivity or objectivity, however, insofar as consciousness is concerned. There is no permanent 'I' skipping and flitting from one percept to the next (along the whole gamut thereof), because each percept is valid as any other and not entitled to any especial isolation in itself. If any one percept is classified as 'I', then it would be just as justified to classify the whole gamut of percepts as a series and system of 'I's'. As said of old, whenever any mode of self is going on it is not reckoned as another: *"It is only reckoned by the name of that particular personality (percept) which prevails."* Which prevalence is scarcely permanent, but ephemeral. In reality there is no permanent 'I' but only percepts. As Hume observes:

"(Men) are nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with inconceivable rapidity and are in perpetual flux and movement. The mind is a kind of theatre, where several perceptions successively make their appearance, pass, repass, glide away, and mingle in an infinite variety of postures and situations... For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call myself, I always stumble on some particular perception or other (of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure), I can never catch myself at any time without a perception, and never can observe anything but the perception"

It is justified to conclude, therefore, that there is only one percept (or series of percepts) observing another percept (or series of percepts). Here we are only reaffirming what was stated succinctly twenty-five centuries earlier by the Buddha:

"In the seen there can be only what is seen, in the heard there can be only what is heard, in the thought there can be only what is thought, in the known there can be

only what is known."

Leaving no mysterious, permanent, soul-like entity lurking somewhere in the background. There are only percepts and more percepts, each capable of cognizing the other by virtue of the element in their very nature which is cognitive and conscious.

These percepts once drawn into a field (such as the human creature) concatenate in subjective apprehension. It has already been observed that the illusion of a self-sufficient and separative identity is created primarily by the bodily compost. It is this bodily compost, and the brain in particular, which through its peripheral function creates the idea of an integral selfness and a feeling of personality, and clings thereto. However, if consciousness is viewed in its identity-less aspect, it may be revealed that it is not the physical brain which creates consciousness, but the other way round. Namely, it is consciousness which creates the brain. Which consciousness is independent of the brain phenomenon, even as a fragrant essence is independent of the bottle in which it is stored.

These, of course, are propositions which we in this context cannot prove but can only state. In opposition to all the hypothetical laws of phrenology, it may be asserted that consciousness does not require a *physical* brain to contain it and in which to exist, but has acquired a brain at all due to desire for one. A strange claim to make, no doubt. It may not appear so strange if it is realised that it is not the brain which fundamentally determines the perpetuation of the life force, but desire or emotion (forms of consciousness). Desire and emotion, persisting in despite, are of course never single in themselves but are really a concatenation of discords.

Consciousness, consisting of a flux of percepts, exists in context and in relation to other percepts. Impermeation in a physical frame of reference (such as the bodily compost) affords it temporary dimension and form. Be that as it may, as long as it is impermeated in a physical frame of reference it is necessarily conditioned thereby. Which frame of reference (when compared to the desires and emotions which impel and activate it) is stable enough to sustain and preserve a seeming appearance of durability. Buddha's admonition comes to mind:

"From time immemorial the ignorant and unconverted man has held, cherished, and affected the notion 'this is mine, I am this, this is my self'. But it were better, O Bhikkhus, if he were to regard the body which is composed of the four elements as his self rather than the mind. And why? Because it is obvious that the body lasts one year, three, twenty, fifty, a hundred years, and even more. But that, O Bhikkhus, which is called mind, intellect, consciousness, keeps up an incessant round by day and night of perishing as one thing and springing up as another."

Thus, due to its relative durability, a man constantly orients and reorients himself by the bodily compost. Whatever his will and desire, it is from the body as base that he works. Wherever his thoughts or fancies transport him it is to the bodily compost that he returns, anchored as he is thereto. However, embodied though it be and subject thereto, it would be perverse to hold that consciousness is not characterised by qualities of self-transcendence - prospective, retrospective, spatial, and logical. Qualities of transcending an embodied condition. Consciousness, in fact, can scarcely be termed a victim of its environment, possessing as it does essential potentialities capable of relegating it to dimensions of its own. Transcending immediate space and time by the potentials of purposivity, memory, visualization, and deductivity.

No doubt, these are potentialities not basically isolated from the environment, but are rather potentialities of the psyche developed and enlarged in its traverse through diverse frames of reference and impermeation in form. Which frames of reference and form it may potentially (as in abstraction)

transcend. It is the inevitable misery of consciousness, however, that in its traverse through diverse frames of reference and impermeation in form, that it should become so enmeshed therein as its clarity of apprehension to become so beclouded and befogged.

Nevertheless, for all the fog inherent in the gross, consciousness still possesses the capacity to apprehend intimations of what we might term the Ideal. All of which intimations point to an intangible essence eluding precise definition, but intangibly underlying phenomenality. Plato's historic attempt to elucidate this essence underlying phenomenality by his theory of Universals is a case in point. An attempt, however, not exactly crowned with success. Which he himself recognised, leaving it always open to modification.

It may be questioned, however, how consciousness can apprehend such an Ideal? That is, if it is allowed that there is such an Ideal at all, which of course there may be good reason to doubt. Enmeshed as it is in its individual frame of reference and form, by its very nature so unstable and effervescent, how can consciousness apprehend anything so amorphous at all?

This is a legitimate objection, especially when individuality is a split-process, a schizophrenic phenomenon, with a plurality of centres. It is obvious that to control the psychic forces to some degree of stability, serenity, direction, and purpose is a superhuman task. Because it is not as if some external agency, or the body itself, were capable of assuaging the chaos, but that it is a matter of the mind attempting to control the mind. It is only with sustained application of purpose that we can ever hope to induce the peripheral mind to quietude and stabilize it in what is called *jhāna* (concentrated-absorption).

Although it is a superhuman task, it is not so insurmountable as it seems. There are those who are capable of attaining to such tranquillity. When consciousness is absorbed to such a concentrated pitch as in the deeper *jhānas*, perception becomes keen enough to penetrate beyond normal sense-data and into dimensions heretofore unseen. The phenomenon of *jhāna*, therefore, is worth our investigation, as it is of indisputable value not only in matters of supernormal apperception but also in matters of mental health.

We have observed that the cognitive element in nature (namely, consciousness) is of a greater vibration at velocity than other phenomena, and that it becomes befogged when impermeated in matter and form. Be that as it may, the human creature, in view of the veil of gross crudity which besieges consciousness on all sides, has to arrive at such a high degree of concentrated intensity as to seem motionless, before it can be really said to transcend itself. Acuteness of apprehension depends upon this factor of concentrated refinement. The more intense the refinement, therefore, the greater the perceptive detail. This concentrated refinement (unlike scientific precision instruments) can be established and culminated only under the process of another frequency altogether than that under which consciousness nominally is perpetuated, otherwise the margin between physicality and psychicality remains unbridged. In short, extra-sensory perception can be induced only through the system of concentrated-absorption called *jhāna*. In the equilibrium thereof.

The problem of arriving at such a concentrated pitch of perceptive refinement is always complicated by the diffusiveness and effervency which dominates the psyche and all its activities. It has to be admitted, however, that the average man is not dismayed regarding the diffusiveness and effervency of his psyche. On the contrary, he finds it to be an asset rather than a liability, and scarcely considers the motionless intensity of concentrated refinement desirable or ideal, regarding it rather as an escape from reality and life. For not only can he, the average man, by the diffusiveness and effervency of his psyche divide his attention to various different activities in the course of each day, but he can also press a great number of buttons and thereby activate whole remote networks of production for the

benefit of humanity.

No doubt, this diffusiveness and effervency of the psyche has its assets. Its liabilities, however, are also considerable when they do appear. For if a man were to be deprived of all this diffuse activity (by illness or a nervous breakdown), he would be instantly thrown into a vacuum. In fact, time for self-reflection is not conducive to peace of mind, for it reveals the heart-breaking futility in which humanity really exists and gropes. Self-discovery often reveals the insignificance of a man's contribution to his own and others' *essential* happiness. For amidst all the diffusiveness and effervency, such self-discovery reveals that he has had so little opportunity to stabilize and experience first of all, *himself*.

The problem of selfhood, in view of the various conflicting factors involved (whether visible or invisible), is a real one, very much so. So real, in fact, that it often degenerates into an obsession. However, it is a general deficiency, to which man succumbs, that even without comprehending the essence of a thing he is still able to live and exploit it. Which exploitation applies to nothing more aptly than selfhood, which without in the least comprehending he is still able to expedite and exploit.

It has been tentatively proposed that a man cannot escape himself, by virtue of the groove in which he is installed. This would seem to support the theory that he must forever be a victim of automatism and momentum. A negative philosophy, of defeatism and despair. However, if the psyche's automatism and instability has been so belaboured already, the proposition that consciousness possesses the capacity of transcending itself has also, as an antidote, been advanced. That is to say, if it is conceded that for a duration consciousness possesses the potentiality of transcending immediate space-time by the factors of purposivity, memory, visualization and deductivity, then may it not also transcend it for good? Namely, is ultimacy of identity a possibility attainable by man?

Man's habitual estate of sense would seem to preclude this possibility from the start. The environment of everyday existence shuts it from view. The everyday environment of which Plato observes:

"Perceived by sense, created, always in motion, becoming in place and again vanishing out of place, which is apprehended by opinion and sense."

However, in contrast to this, it is only logical to assume the existence of an opposite-considering that all things observable partake of the nature of opposites:

"There is one kind of being which is always the same, uncreated and indestructible, never receiving anything into itself from without, nor itself going out into any other, but invisible and imperceptible by any sense, and of which the contemplation is granted to intelligence only."

Experience in Sammā Samādhi (of which Plato knew nothing about) reveals that there are innumerable forms of astral existence. Chiefly, however, they may be classified into the astral human form, the celestial form, the Brahma form, and the Arūpa Brahma form. All these forms, however, are characterised by impermanence. That is to say, desire activates them and they are subject to what is often termed metempsychosis (rebirth). Thus, these forms of life cannot be classified in Plato's term of 'being always the same, uncreated and indestructible, never receiving anything into itself from without, nor itself going out into any other'.

And why? Individual existence (whatever the form thereof) is really capable of being reduced to a single definition: propensity. The propensities of fickle will and momentary desire. The ephemeral impetus which accumulates the potential (kammic) which is hopelessly antagonistic to equilibrium.

Plato's definition of a being 'which never receives anything into itself from without, nor itself going out into any other' is nothing less than the attainment of *permanent equilibrium of consciousness*. Which again, is nothing less than emancipation and immunity from all conflict?

We arrive at this conclusion because we observe that nature in general is an ever-insistent process to preserve equilibrium and identity, no matter how transitorily. If this were not so, all things would possess a tendency to immediately split apart without much ado - a fact which we observe nature abhors.

Astral Existences

We have classified astral existence into the astral human form, the celestial form, the Brahma form, and the Arūpa Brahma form, as being forms of *external* life, so to speak. However, these forms are not only external but are also capable of being internally produced. What exactly does this imply? It implies that the psyche possesses the facility of splitting itself into two or more frames of reference. This becomes obvious (if only in an elementary sense) when someone contemplates himself in his mind's eye', so called. Even as he is in the act he can at, as many removes as he pleases, contemplate 'himself'. But what, however, can he term *himself*? That which contemplates, or that which is contemplated? They can hardly be termed separate, yet neither can they be termed the same.

The fact is that (as we have observed from Hume) there is, strictly speaking, no *himself* but percepts. And that consciousness can be divided into as many frames of reference as it possesses percepts. Percepts, of course are never at rest. Whether forward or backward, in recollective aspect or in anticipatory aspect, they are forever a flitting and skipping thing, always hopelessly involved, even in sleep. Even in death, so called, they are scarcely dissolved, but continue-dependent and in relation to other frames of reference. In fact, the disembodied psyche has a tendency to, diverge into the direction of any one percept which dominates for the moment and prevails.

Percepts in their totality, of course, are never in instantaneous objectivity of presentation *all at once* - an impossibility insofar as man is concerned. Even if they were to be presented all at once they would appear unintelligible, becoming intelligible only when presented in a classified series of manifested effects, as memories, as ideas, and as thoughts. Which, again, can be classified in ethical 'constellations', whether wholesome or unwholesome. No man can comprehensively survey with logical consistency the totality of his percepts in one sitting, but has first to present them in objective clarity as a classified succession of data. Even after having so presented them (as in serious philosophical treatises) no man has completely objectified all his percepts, because not only is the psyche forever in a process of assimilating fresh data, but because there are levels of submerged percepts which he has failed to plumb, not having discovered the capacity thereto.

Now the astral human form, the celestial form, the Brahma form, and the Arūpa Brahma form, are when reduced to essence little more than percepts objectified in their especial dimensions and form. In short, they are levels of consciousness objectified in especial centres. If we recognise that consciousness (percepts) is the fundamental material (the *spheres* of the human form, celestial form, etc.) from which forms are fashioned, then we will realise that all experiences (of consciousness) in past existences are the material (consciousness-percepts) by which, all these forms (the human, the celestial, etc.) are brought and cultivated in this present life to perceptive immediacy, and thereby to *re-exist* as such.

In view of its momentariness, instability, and effervency, we have raised the objection regarding the capacity of consciousness to apprehend the Ideal. It would seem that a system of intermittency so unstable and momentary as consciousness hovers precariously upon the brink of extinction, between

one flashing and the next. As Plato³ observes:

“The common fear is that consciousness may be disintegrated at the very moment of death, and that this may be the end of its existence. They are afraid, as children are, that when consciousness emerges from the body the wind may really puff it away and scatter it especially when a person does not die on a calm day but with a gale blowing! Don’t suppose it is we who are afraid, but that probably even in us there is a little boy who has these childish terrors - which terror has to be charmed away. And how? The world is a large place with many foreign races. You must ransack all of them in your search for the magician who can charm away your fears, without sparing money or trouble, because it is probable that you would not easily find anyone better fitted for the task.”

Mind Instants

We have already noted that each mind-instant is characterised by three cyclic states of manifestation, suspension and extinction. The term extinction, however, is a misleading one, as it conveys the impression of nothingness. It is not explicitly extinction, for it does not hurtle into oblivion but into another mind-instant, objectified and perpetuated thereby. ‘Thus, through the very potential of cyclic momentum, consciousness persists in flashes of re-manifestation, impelled even as electrons are towards fresh fields of attraction. It is in view of this that, insofar as causality (kamma) is concerned, what has a cause must have an effect - due to the nuclei of causes perpetuated. Namely, through the phenomenon of momentum.

Each mind instant, then, is given direction through initial impetus, and is carried on by its own momentum, until its existence is exhausted in other mind-instants which arise. However, even as energy is assumed to be indestructible in that it persists, only changing its apparitional form, even so consciousness by its very momentum does not dissolve into nothingness but is by its very momentum pushed newly-risen into fresh frames of reference and fields of attraction. Total dissolution, in fact, is one of the most difficult of things to achieve, being valid in theory but inapplicable in practice. It should be realised that existence, physical or psychic, is something which arises through power. The cosmic power, that is, which pervades all things. As Plato observes:

“My suggestion would be that anything which possesses any sort of power to affect another, or to be affected by another even for a moment, however thrilling the cause and however slight and momentary the effect, has real existence. And I hold that the definition of being is simply power.”

Power, not merely physical but of the mind. As said of old:

“All that we are is the result of what we have thought.”

It would seem that Buddha is here indirectly recommending us to do nothing but *think*, as though it has some especial virtue in itself. The significance implicit in the above assertion, however, is that due to our muddled grasping (upādāna) in the past, conditions have arisen to groove us in a rut, subject to a kammic form of bondage. It is plain, therefore, that we are not merely the result of what we have

³ And Tolstoi:

“Men fear the death of the body because the thought of that event causes them to realise their need of a true life, which they feel they do not possess... Knowing that we have received and developed our lives from a past we do not see, we should feel no fear of a future we also do not see,”

thought as such (as usually superficially inferred), but what we postulate, crave, and grasp. These postulations, cravings, and graspings have – like echoes out of the past – for the moment caught up with us. Namely, by materialising as Tom, as Dick, and as Harry.

We have made much of percepts in this context, reducing all existence to a series of not-selves (anatta). We have made much of it because it is of fundamental importance to realise the amorphousness and instability of what normally passes for identity. This amorphousness and instability is revealed nowhere so explicitly than in Sammā Samādhi. It becomes apparent from the practice of Sammā Samādhi that a man can neither be correctly said to be his percepts nor not to be them. And why? Because percepts are *acquired* characteristics, and not specifically inherent.

It is customary to regard a newborn babe as possessing *pure consciousness* devoid of content. A matter, however, which is always open to debate. If we agree with this belief, then percepts acquired as life proceeds are in the nature of a gross imposition, and in no way the *self*. On the other hand, it is obvious that *pure consciousness devoid of content* must also be devoid of attributes and character, and as such would be a meaningless nonentity. It is the accumulated experience derived from percepts which determine a person's individuality and lend him distinct character as such.

However, if a man were to identify himself with his percepts, he will obviously be at their mercy. For it is witnessed that when a man is agitated (as by anger or by hate) he forgets 'himself' and does all manner of things which he may later, when calm, regret. It is obvious that the percept in question (anger or hate) is in no way his 'self'. For which are we to consider as his *real* self, the angry or the calm? He himself will be the last one capable of estimating, because for the duration that any one percept is to the fore, he is completely certain that he is being 'himself'. Not only is he sure that he is being himself when angry, but he is also sure that he is being himself when calm. And so forth for the whole gamut of possibilities.

It follows, therefore, that if a man is neither pure consciousness by itself nor all his percepts, how much less so must he be only one percept at a particular moment. It is folly indeed to identify oneself - especially a self held in some quarters to be divinely eternal – with the personality or percept which at a particular moment prevails. If it were to *prevail* long enough, it could be – for that duration at least - be termed immortal. But, as is observed, percepts (all emotions, experiences, thoughts, and forms being considered as percepts) pass and repass like the wind, with little *immortal* rhyme or reason.

Which reflection, of course, in no way emancipates the mind. It does, nevertheless, deepen a man's understanding of himself, thereby to inculcate a broader sympathy with his fellows. If it is usual to shun the idea of returning to the elementary consciousness of a babe and identifying it as his self or soul, then it is just as puerile to identify selfhood as a collection of percepts, which by haphazard impact and occasion arise of their own accord, accompanied by a jerking up of all manner of emotions - which make him the hapless victim of every incident that momentarily exists.

The conclusion which may, be drawn from this reflection is that if there is ever to be a hope for *ultimate* integration and identity (or selfhood) then it has to be something more than the personality which at a particular moment prevails. Personality, such as it is, is, scarcely little more than a parcel of affectations - externalised as a face, a gesture, a name, a percept. Identification with any moment of a particular percept is indeed to be deplored. Because although it is in the very nature of consciousness to be *momentary*, life and ultimate identity (such as we have in view) does not rest on one such moment, and reckless abandonment to it not only often results in disaster, but in many a case is fatal.

Equilibrium of consciousness

We have defined ultimacy of identity as a possibility attainable by man. Namely, nothing less than the attainment of permanent equilibrium of consciousness. Permanent equilibrium, of course, need not imply *inactivity* but rather a highly intense velocity of suspension within a particular frame of reference. That is to say (based upon the principle that a divided house shall fall), *if* it is possible for consciousness to conserve itself in some form and preserve its field-of-force. Which field-of-force then becomes activity in equilibrium. If energy is recognised to be indestructible, such energy when equilibrated in a psychic field is possible of attaining to individual invulnerability. That is, insofar as the individual can attain to such equilibrium.

That this permanent equilibrium (of consciousness) remains a possibility beyond the immediate attainment of the average man need hardly be stressed. We have already observed that existence (in all its forms) presents itself as an incessant internecine struggle for individual survival at different levels of identity. Which struggle, in the last analysis, is nothing less than the desire for invulnerability. That this invulnerability remains a dim hope is due to the inability of consciousness to equilibrate itself. And why? Due to the potential factor of desire itself. Which desire can scarcely be classified as a *mysterious* force, but merely causality (kamma) as applied and appertaining to the psyche. It has almost become a platitude that it is these very internecine forces (kamma and desire) which drag and propel the individual's psychic whereabouts in space-time.

It follows, that desire is the main element which will have to be disposed of if permanent equilibrium of consciousness is to be attained. That is to say, the tendency of the mind to split (schizophrenia) must be rendered extinct. However, this schizophrenic phenomenon is never really resolved, for even when a man acts deliberately, he acts only because one portion of consciousness has had a temporary triumph, submerging for the moment the rest. The rest still remains a disunity. It is obvious that desire does not permanently disperse of itself through prolonged dissipation but involves the factor of will. It is the function of a prospective Arahatta (Emancipated One) to render the schizophrenic phenomenon extinct. Which is achieved through the process of *nirodha samāpatti* (cessation attainment).

The only alternative open for the attainment of permanent individual invulnerability (considering that all phenomena and personality tend to lose separate and distinct identity as such in proportion to their momentariness, their effervency, their adaptability, and their ineffectuality) is to possess a highly determined will with the resolution to endure as far as it is possible to endure at all. If permanent identity is ever to be attained it is this factor of resolve (*adhiṭṭhāna*) which is the potential base for futurity. Where the resolve is strong, *conscious* perpetualisation comes into play. Due to its very will for permanence, perpetuity of identity begins to accrue. For it is obvious that identity is not something with which any living thing is born and inherently endowed, but is something which is painstakingly accrued. Thus, a Buddha is not born but made – self-made.

It is observed even in matters of everyday life that by willing enough a centrifugal force is created which pulls and attracts to it the required possibility. This is the temporal aspect. The aspect we have in mind may be termed the transcendental. Namely, the will to discover whether it is possible - or indeed desirable - to attain to a positive state of permanent emancipation from all the impermanence, pain and split-personality with which existence is so characteristically beset, and which preconditions all living things in one form or another, without end.

If it is conceded that energy is indestructible, when equilibrated in a psychic field, then such energy may also be conceded to be possible of attaining to individual invulnerability. In fact, it is a process which when purged of mundane transitoriness, possesses not only direction and purpose but the promise of enduring ultimacy. In contrast to all phenomena, this enduring ultimacy which we have in

mind is not something which is merely perpetuated but eternalised. There is need here to draw a distinction between perpetuated and eternalised. And why? Because all things are already in a process of being perpetuated in some fresh frame of reference of form. They, however, can never be said to be as *distinct entities eternalised*. That is to say, insofar as consciousness is concerned, if it perpetuates itself by kammic momentum and desire, it in no way is assured of *permanent identity* (identical singularity), but merely amorphous plurality.

The claim made, therefore, is that the attainment we have in mind is not the perpetuation of *amorphous plurality* (anatta), which is already a process of nature, but ultimacy of identity. That is to say, eternalisation of consciousness is no madman's dream, but in certain circumstances, an inevitability. The conclusion we arrive at from this reflection is that permanent equilibrium of consciousness is a possibility worthy of our consideration and respect. That this equilibrium of consciousness is not devoid of active content, but is rather *pure intelligence* in a state of detached immunity.

However, it is obvious that man is a creature of desire and as such exists. Plato suggests that we abandon bodily pleasures and adornments and devote ourselves to wisdom, and that we deck ourselves not with a borrowed beauty but our own. But it is obvious that few indeed are prepared to abandon bodily pleasures and adornments and devote themselves to wisdom. What is more, not only is man a creature of desire, but desires often attain to the proportions of an obsession, until a man's whole existence becomes identified therewith.

Do desires, then, make the man? The question, however, seems to be incorrectly put, but should rather be this: take away his desires and what is left?

It may safely be said that a certain nucleus of consciousness is left, awareness of existence and percepts are not lost. And where there is such awareness, happiness apparently is not barred. If happiness is possible, does it necessarily rest upon the factor of desire? Or, is it not that desire is one of the main factors which culminate in pain? Of course, masochists and sadists delight in pain, but they are in the minority, and it is always open to doubt whether their delight is really sincere. We scarcely have time for such abnormalities, but have the average man in mind.

Observation and reflection reveals that happiness does not necessitate any process of *desiring*, but rather *participation*. What exactly is participation? It, in this context, may be said to be the faculty of experiencing that which is by its very nature and essence, unique. The capacity to share. Such participation, or sharing, does not necessitate desire as a base. To afford a superficial case, one can participate in a fine day which has arrived without having desired it beforehand. In its negative aspect, therefore, participation may be viewed as the potentiality of accepting whatever is inevitable by its very nature, and therefore devoid of that active attachment and internecine bondage which is the foster-mother of all becoming, deprivation, and pain.

Insofar as true happiness is concerned, it has become a platitude that a man can exist comparatively at ease only if he takes what comes and neither moans for what is not, nor regrets that which already and inevitably is. Which in opposition to the popular fallacy is not a negative but a positive achievement, for it inculcates a great deal of effort and will.

It may be contested, however, that although desirelessness is proposable in theory, it is unfeasible in actual practice, considering that desire is involved in all men's activities, from basic hunger upwards. But we have to draw a distinction between the dictates of necessity and the 'freewill' of desire. Hunger, for instance, is not a desire as such but a necessity. For exactness, suffering has to be classified into two categories or aspects, necessary and unnecessary. Necessary sufferings are obviously those which partake of the order of hunger, pain, decay, and death – being part of the

process of manifestation and growth, and inherent in the nature of things. Unnecessary sufferings are those which have active desire as their motivating cause and immediate root. It is from all these dictates – whether of necessity or unnecessary – that emancipation and immunity is sought. That is to say, by lessening and eliminating even now, through abstention from active and immediate desire, all deleterious effects.

Expectation of emancipation and immunity, it may be objected, is itself a form of desire. Indeed, but it is a constructive form. It need scarcely be stressed that it is not the constructive but the *destructive* forms of active desire which are disparaged and deplored. As said of old:

“There is a way in which one might say that the ascetic Gotama upholds the principle of non-action... and another way in which it might rightly be said that he upholds the principle of action. And how does he uphold the principle of non-action? By non-performance in evil conduct in body, word, and thought, and of various kinds of wicked things. And how does he uphold the principle of action? By performance of good conduct in body, word, and thought, and of various kinds of things which are good.”

Despite all objections to the contrary, therefore, the point that still remains is that desire is not condemned in itself, but only where it inculcates unwholesome and deleterious repercussions. That it is disadvantageous to desire anything which is fundamentally incapable of fulfilment, which possesses deleterious repercussions, and which it is not in our immediate power to attain. However, when such ends as are attainable (without deleterious repercussions) present themselves, then the capacity for aspiration and participation is in no way emasculated but come spontaneously into play. Thus, even if the individual revolves in a groove, possible escape from which is remote, there remains one possibility within a man's control. Namely, of reducing desire to a minimum so as to achieve the greatest immunity from pain.

Adhiṭṭhāna – the key

Complete immunity, of course, is attained only with the attainment of Nibbāna. Which attainment has first to be established in consciousness by an earnest resolve (adhiṭṭhāna) so as to give it (consciousness) ultimate direction and purpose. The significance of *adhiṭṭhāna* is basic, it being one of the ten pāramīs (perfections). Although Buddha (a severe realist by all standards) recognised nothing permanent in the individual as he is, such an *adhiṭṭhāna* he knew from personal experience to be the basic nucleus which gives life ultimate direction and purpose. It may be questioned how such an ever shifting (anatta) potential as consciousness can attain such ultimate direction and purpose in the remote future at all, if not here and now. It is attainable because, although consciousness shifts from second to second, it nevertheless moves along a characteristic groove, (or grooves). The *adhiṭṭhāna* for ultimate immunity is the establishment of such a new groove in consciousness. Which particular groove (despite the rest) is the one that finally attains its aim.

If the contemporary scene presents itself as a schizophrenic picture, it is only the inevitable result of failure to discover ultimate meaning. Schizophrenic, that is, to the extent of being ultimately aimless. Such ultimate meaning and aim as we have in mind is scarcely political, social, or economical, but is even more fundamental to life. For what would all progress in the world achieve if at heart man still remains vulnerable and afraid? After all, all things fade into insignificance in face of the great unknown. There, therefore, is only one means of breaking this endless circuit, this deadlock of the psyche. Namely, to establish and instate a fresh beginning made in the full unity of consciousness.

With the establishment of such ultimate aim in consciousness, existence loses a great deal of sting.

Even if in the process of attaining to ultimacy a man suffers, he suffers only to the extent that he in an unfinished product. No doubt, the *adhittjhāna* becomes 'unconscious' in the process of passing from one existence to the next. However, it is not lost, for continuity is assured through the phenomenon of automatism and momentum. This automatism and momentum of consciousness is the factor which ensures it not only perpetuity but ultimacy.

In Buddhism, of course, the individual is scarcely regarded as eternal, due not only to the fact that all component things (*sankhāras*) are in perpetual flux (*aniccam*), but due to the phenomenon of split personality (*anatta*). However, if the individual is never credited with self-sufficiency and ultimacy, there are four aspects which are classified as ultimate (*paramatā*). Namely: consciousness (*citta*), concomitants of consciousness (*cetasikas*), visible or invisible form (*rūpa dhamma*), and the ultimate abode (*Nibbāna*).

Now it is obvious that the consciousness and its concomitants mentioned here are not ultimate in the sense of *individual entities*, but as *universals*. Thus, the consciousness (*citta*) referred to is not specifically individual, but the universal phenomenon of consciousness made perpetually manifest wherever life comes to exist. The concomitants (*cetasikas*) of consciousness are fifty-two in number, whether wholesome or unwholesome, and are also not specifically individual but universal. As for form (*rūpa dhamma*), it is the figure and appearance which anything which arises in the world must for a certain duration somehow take. Individual form itself is not ultimate, but the universality of forms. Thus, whenever a child is born it is not *individuality* as such which is being perpetuated but the human *form*. The individual as such is evanescent, to say the least, and beside the point. What is said to be ultimate is not the individual but the universal form of things.

"The Form of Good"

Which brings us to the *Dhammakāya*, the purest and most transcendental of all forms. This *Dhammakāya* is scarcely to be confused with the traditional concept of the 'eternal soul', which is held to be something ready-made and God-given. There is no such thing as a 'ready-made' Buddha, it being something which is strenuously self-made. The *Dhammakāya* cannot be said to previously exist (as the said concept of soul) or not to exist. The *Dhammakāya*, in fact, is the form (percept) which, through the concentrated process of involuted-cultivation (*bhāvanā*), manifests when consciousness is pushed to its most translucent limit. It will be appreciated, therefore, that it is not something to speculate upon but to *initiate*, so as to come into view of the Ultimate itself.

Now how are all these forms (*Dhammakāya* inclusive) established in the human form itself? One Buddhist text (*Visuddhi Magga*) may be cited:

"Establish the human form in consciousness (of jhāna) as hollow. It becomes hollow. Whence advert to another form therein, and having done the preliminary work once more (of establishing it in consciousness of jhāna as hollow), resolve that another form emerge therefrom. Then draw it out like a reed from its sheath... The sheath is one, the reed is another. But it was from the sheath that the reed was pulled. Even so the mind-made forms."

The astral human form, the celestial form, the Brahma form, and the *Arūpa Brahma* form, are forms of existence beyond immediate apprehension of the average man. Nevertheless, all these forms are only classed as mundane (*lokiya*), in contrast to the *Dhammakāya*, which penetrates into the supramundane (*lokuttara*). The yogis of ancient India were quite capable of attaining to the mundane forms, due to their power of concentration in *jhāna*. However, after having attained to the *Arūpa Brahma* form, they turned their attention to the formless attainments of the infinity of space, the

infinity of consciousness, voidness, and neither perception nor non-perception. Which formless attainments were grasped not merely as a means to an end, but as ends in themselves. That is why Buddha, who practised them before final enlightenment, abandoned them in disgust. Such methods are not conducive to release. Because release is concerned not with formless states of mind, but *cessation attainment* (nirodha samāpatti). If the yogis had adverted to the void centre of the Arūpa Brahma form and pressed on, they would have arrived at the Dhammakāya form and resolved their difficulties.⁴ Jhāna alone, therefore, is insufficient. It has to be supported by unification in the Dhammakāya. Insight does not arise from jhāna as such (as commonly assumed), but from penetration established with the Dhammakāya as base. Which Dhammakāya is classed as the most ultimate of forms. As said of old:

“What is there for you, Vakkali, in approaching and perceiving this body which is subject to decay? Whosoever, Vakkali, perceives the Dhamma perceives the Tathāgata. Whosoever perceives the Tathāgata perceives the Dhamma. For one who perceives the Dhamma perceives the Tathāgata, perceiving the Tathāgata he perceives the Dhamma.”

The Dhammakāya when attained is not the attainment of the Dhammakāya pertaining to the Buddha, but the Dhammakāya pertaining to oneself. This Dhammakāya may be tentatively viewed as the personification of Plato's concept of the Ultimate Form. Namely, the Form of the Good.

It may be questioned: of what really is the Dhammakāya composed? In *form*, it is composed of the cognitive element (viññāna dhātu) that is, consciousness purged to a translucent degree of intensity. This purified element of cognition goes to fashion its form. The Dhammakāya is capable of expanding and contracting its form at will due to this cognitive element of which it is composed. In *essence*, the Dhammakāya is composed of accumulated perfections (pāramī) arising from merit achieved. That is to say, the concentrated essence arising out of the accumulates of charity, morality, renunciation, wisdom, energy, fortitude, truth, earnest resolve, compassionate love and equanimity. Essence is fused and impermeated in form.⁵

Thus, in the last analysis, it may be observed that it is not an ‘eternal soul’ or individuality (as humanly conceived) which ultimately survives and prevails. What essentially survives and prevails are *perfect qualities of consciousness*. Perfect qualities of consciousness, that is, concentrated and equilibrated in a specific field.

This Dhammakāya has to be purified from its crudest beginnings to its most refined. Only with this Dhammakāya as base, are the various steps on the Path (Magga) - namely, Sotāpanna (Stream-enterer), Sakadāgāmin (Once-returner), Anāgāmin (Non-returner), and Arahatta (Emancipated) - by process of purification ultimately attained. As it is said:

“A Bhikkhu masters... teaches... studies... thinks about the Scriptures as he has heard and mastered it. He spends the day therein, thereby neglecting subjective tranquillity of absorption. He is called one who is intent on mastering. . . teaching. . . studying. . . and thinking, but not one who goes along by the Dhamma... Whatever is to be done by a teacher out of compassion for the welfare of his disciples that has the Tathāgata done for you. Meditate, O Bhikkhus, and be not negligent so as to allow remorse to befall you in time to come. This is the advice of the Tathāgata to you.”

⁴ See Appendix I and VI

⁵ See Appendix V



THE ATTAINMENTS



LOKIYA JHĀNA SAMĀPATTI (Mundane concentrated-absorption attainments)

As described in the previous volume of *Sammā Samādhi I* (now renamed *Vistas*), there are 18 basic forms and their respective spheres to be attained. After having completed and acquired facility in the practice of entering these 18 basic forms and their respective spheres⁶, concentrate the Dhammakāya's attention upon the human form. Concentrate on the first sphere of Paṭhama Magga (or the sphere of the human form), within its centre, in its translucence and luminosity.

Expand this sphere of Paṭhama Magga and establish it as a flat and translucent disc-like vehicle of support, 2 vah⁷ in diameter, 6 vah in circumference, and approximately a hand's length thick. This is called Paṭhama jhāna. It may thus be observed that by jhāna is not only meant a state of mind but also a disc-like vehicle of support.

Seat the Dhammakāya upon this disc-like vehicle of support. This is called the Dhammakāya established in Paṭhama jhāna.

Next, concentrate the Dhammakāya's attention upon the sphere in the centre of the celestial form (Dibba Kāya). Namely, the sphere of the celestial form in its translucence and luminosity.

Establish this sphere of the celestial form as a flat and translucent disc-like vehicle of support, as mentioned above. This is called Dutiya jhāna. As soon as the Dhammakāya's attention has adverted thereto, the Paṭhama jhāna slips off and the Dutiya jhāna takes its place. The Dhammakāya seats itself upon this disc-like vehicle of support.

This is called the, Dhammakāya established in Dutiya jhāna.

Next, concentrate the Dhammakāya's attention upon the sphere in the centre of the Brahma form. Namely, the sphere of the Brahma form, in its translucence and luminosity.

Establish this sphere of the Brahma form as a flat and translucent disc-like vehicle of support. This is called Tatiya jhāna. As soon as the Dhammakāya's attention has adverted thereto, the Dutiya jhāna slips off and the Tatiya jhāna takes its place. The Dhammakāya seats itself upon this disc-like vehicle of support.

This is called the Dhammakāya established in Tatiya jhāna.

Next, concentrate the Dhammakāya's attention upon the sphere in the centre of the Arūpa Brahma form. Namely, the sphere of the Arūpa Brahma form in its translucence and luminosity.

Establish this sphere of the Arūpa Brahma form as a flat and translucent disc-like vehicle of support. This is called Catuttha jhāna. As soon as the Dhammakāya's attention has adverted thereto, the Tatiya jhāna slips off and the Catuttha jhāna takes its place. The Dhammakāya seats itself upon this disc-like vehicle of support.

This is called the, Dhammakāya established in Catuttha jhāna.

All these above 4 jhānas are Rūpa (form) jhānas. That is to say, the concentrated-absorptions of form.

⁶ See Appendix VIII

⁷ A vah is an indeterminate measure of length, dependent on the individual's dimensions. It is the span of both outstretched arms, measuring from finger-tip to finger-tip

Next, sink the Dhammakāya's attention down into the void centre of the Paṭhama jhāna. Establish this void centre of the Paṭhama jhāna as a flat and translucent disc-like vehicle of support. This is called Ākāsānañca āyatana jhāna. Namely, the state of the infinity of space.⁸ As soon as the Dhammakāya's attention has adverted thereto, the Catuttha jhāna slips off and the Ākāsānañca āyatana jhāna takes its place. The Dhammakāya seats itself upon this disc-like vehicle of support.

This is called the, Dhammakāya established in Ākāsānañca āyatana jhāna.

Next, sink the Dhammakāya's attention down into the void centre of the Duttiya jhāna. Establish this void centre of the Duttiya jhāna as a flat and translucent disc-like vehicle of support. This is called Viññānānañca āyatana jhāna. Namely, the sphere of the infinity of consciousness. As soon as the Dhammakāya's attention has adverted thereto, the Ākāsānañca āyatana jhāna slips off and the Viññānānañca āyatana jhāna takes its place. The Dhammakāya seats itself upon this disc-like vehicle of support.

This is called the, Dhammakāya established in Viññānānañca āyatana jhāna.

Next, sink the Dhammakāya's attention down into the void centre of the Tatiya jhāna. Establish this void centre of the Tatiya jhāna as a flat and translucent disc-like vehicle of support. This is called Akiñcaññā āyatana jhāna. Namely, the sphere of voidness. As soon as the Dhammakāya's attention has adverted thereto, the Viññānānañca āyatana jhāna slips off and the Akiñcaññā āyatana jhāna takes its place. The Dhammakāya seats itself upon this disc-like vehicle of support.

This is called the, Dhammakāya established in Akiñcaññā āyatana jhāna.

Next, sink the Dhammakāya's attention down into the void centre of the Catuttha jhāna. Establish this void centre of the Catuttha jhāna as a flat and translucent disc-like vehicle of support. This is called Nevasaññā nāsaññā āyatana jhāna. Namely, the sphere of perception nor non perception. As soon as the Dhammakāya's attention has adverted thereto, the Akiñcaññā āyatana jhāna slips off and the Nevasaññā nāsaññā āyatana jhāna takes its place. The Dhammakāya seats itself upon this disc-like vehicle of support.

This is called the, Dhammakāya established in Nevasaññā nāsaññā āyatana jhāna.

These last 4 jhānas are Arūpa (formless) jhāna. That is to say, the concentrated-absorptions of formlessness.

This above process is called entering the jhānas from first to eighth by direct (anuloma) process.

Next, reverse the process, descending from eighth to the first by inverse (patiloma) process.

The whole process is called the accomplishing of jhāna samāpatti.

DUKKHA (Suffering)

Now investigate the Noble Truth (Ariya Sacca) of Suffering as pertaining to the human form

⁸ See Appendix I

(Manussa Kāya). Which is born, ages, sickens, and dies.

Now that which is called birth, has the characteristic of being a translucent nucleus, at its minimum the size of a Bodhi-tree seed. At its maximum, with a diameter of 3 centimetres.

This nucleus (or sphere) of birth begins to centre down into the sphere of the human form at the age of fourteen. It is this nucleus which instigates birth in all, and if it were not present no birth would arise.

After the Dhammakāya has witnessed for itself the cause and process of birth in all its ramifications, then investigate the process of growing old.

The characteristic known as 'growing old' has its submerged centre in the nucleus of birth, and is black in colour and opaque. When this nucleus of age is still small, it is the start. As it augments in size, decay sets in. It is this nucleus alone which ages the human form and ushers in the process of decay.

Within this nucleus (or sphere) of age, again, another nucleus has its centre. Namely, the nucleus of sickness and disease. Which is even blacker in hue than that of the nucleus of age.

As soon as this nucleus of sickness and disease begins to activate and centres down into the nucleus of age, the human form becomes immediately ill.

Now as soon as this illness appears, the nucleus of death augments in force and size. This nucleus of death, the blackest of all, has its centre in the nucleus of sickness and disease.

As soon as the nucleus of death augments right between the connecting link of the human and the astral form, cutting and obliterating it, the human form immediately dies.⁹

After this process has been witnessed by the penetrating perception of the Dhammakāya, perceptive knowledge (ñāna) of the impermanence and uncertainty of birth, old age, sickness, and death is attained.

Having known, perceived, and accomplished this process, is called the attainment of Sacca Ñāna.

After the Dhammakāya has witnessed that birth, old age, sickness, and death is suffering indeed. Is something to be known, is called the attainment of Kicca Ñāna.

After having perceived that all this is suffering - that is, seen clearly, known clearly - is called the attainment of Kata Ñāna.

This is called the investigation of the Noble Truth of Suffering. Contemplated in perceptive immediacy of Ñāna.

SAMUDAYA (Origin)

Now investigate the second Noble Truth. Namely, the origin of suffering. Suffering originates

⁹ See Appendix II

through causes with roots in desire.

There are three nuclei (or spheres) of desire within the sphere of the human form, one enveloping the other. The external one is black, the inner one even blacker, and the in innermost one blackest of all.

Having contemplated with the penetrating perception of the Dhammakāya, realising that because of desire suffering arises, is called the attainment of Sacca Ñāna.

Having realised that desire is worth rendering extinct because of the suffering it inculcates is called the attainment of Kicca Ñāna.

Having perceived that desire ushers in suffering - that is, seen clearly, known clearly - is called the attainment of Kata Ñāna.

This is called the investigation of the Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering. Contemplated in perceptive immediacy of Ñāna.

NIRODHA (Extinction)

Desire having risen, it has become essential to expedite the method of extinguishing it, back to its root. That is, rendering it extinct. This is called Nirodha.

Nirodha has the characteristic of a translucent sphere, 5 vah in diameter, situated within the sphere of the human form. (It may be questioned why all these spheres are so large, out of proportion to the human form itself. They are large because they do not possess the properties of physicality, but are psychical entities belonging to another plane of things. Being psychical spheres they are capable of being expanded and contracted at will.)

As soon as the sphere of Nirodha has taken effect, desire disappears even as the radiance of the sun at dawn banishes the dark.

Having contemplated with the penetrating perception of the Dhammakāya that desire is rendered extinct by Nirodha, is called the attainment of Sacca Ñāna.

Having realised that Nirodha is worth accomplishing is called the attainment of Kicca Ñāna.

Having perceived all the way in its clarity that which has been rendered extinct by Nirodha, is called the attainment of Kata Ñāna.

This is called the investigation of the third Noble Truth of the Extinction of Suffering. Contemplated in perceptive immediacy of Ñāna.

ARIYA MAGGA (The Noble Eightfold Path)

Having witnessed that which was to be rendered extinct, the Path is open to Release.

The Path is characterised by three spheres, situated in the sphere of the human form. Namely, the spheres of Sīla (Morality), Samādhi (Concentration), and Paññā (Wisdom).

As perceived with the penetration of the Dhammakāya, all these spheres are in appearance translucent, and in diameter the breadth of the Dhammakāya itself in concentrated pose (from knee to knee).

Having contemplated with the penetrating perception of the Dhammakāya that these spheres are the Path to Release, is called the attainment of Sacca Ñāna.

Having realised that this Path is worth developing and treading is called the attainment of Kicca Ñāna.

Having perceived all the way in its clarity that the Path has been developed and tread, is called the attainment of Kata Ñāna.

This is called the investigation of the fourth Noble Truth of the Noble Eightfold Path. Contemplated in perceptive immediacy of Ñāna.

(Note: It may be, questioned why there are only three spheres instead of eight insofar as the Path is concerned? All the eight characteristics of the Path can be classified under the spheres of Morality, Concentration, and Wisdom, for it is in these spheres that they exist and manifest. One other cause for doubt is the spherical character of all these psychical phenomena. But if the spherical character is common to both the microcosm (such as the electron) and the macrocosm (such as the solar orbs), then this spherical characteristic of psychical phenomena must also be classed as commonplace. It needs hardly be stressed that the sphere is the most complete and perfect of forms.)¹⁰

DHAMMAKĀYA SOTĀPANNA (The Stream-enterer)

Having investigated the Four Noble Truths as pertaining to the human form (Manussa Kāya) and accomplished jhāna samāpatti, sink the Dhammakāya's attention to void centre.

Whereupon, a translucent sphere, 5 vah in diameter, appears. In which the Dhammakāya Sotāpanna, 5 vah in diameter (from knee to knee) and 5 vah high, is seen in concentrated pose.

Enter this Dhammakāya Sotāpanna, in jhāna. And concentrate its attention upon the celestial form (Dibba Kāya). Then investigate the Four Noble Truths as pertaining thereto. Applying the same method as before.

Having accomplished this process to completion, sink the Dhammakāya Sotāpanna's attention to void centre.

Whereupon, a translucent sphere, 10 vah in diameter, appears. In which the Dhammakāya

¹⁰ See Appendix IV

Sakadāgāmin, 10 vah in diameter (from knee to knee) and 10 vah high, is seen in concentrated pose.

DHAMMAKĀYA SAKADĀGĀMIN (The Once-returned)

Enter this Dhammakāya Sakadāgāmin, seated in jhāna. And concentrate its attention upon the Brahma form (Rūpa Brahma Kāya). Then investigate the Four Noble Truths as pertaining thereto. Applying the same method as before.

Having accomplished this process to completion, sink the Dhammakāya Sakadāgāmin's attention to void centre.

Whereupon, a translucent sphere, 15 vah in diameter, appears. In the Dhammakāya Anāgāmin, 15 vah in diameter (from knee to knee) and 15 vah high, is seen in concentrated pose.

DHAMMAKĀYA ANĀGĀMIN (The Non-returned)

Enter this Dhammakāya Anāgāmin, seated in jhāna. And concentrate its attention upon the Arūpa Brahma form. Then investigate the Four Noble Truths as pertaining thereto. Applying the same method as before.

Having accomplished this process to completion, sink the Dhammakāya Anāgāmin's attention to void centre.

Whereupon, a translucent sphere, 20 vah in diameter appears. In which the Dhammakāya Arahatta, 20 vah in diameter (from knee to knee) and 20 vah high, is seen in concentrated pose.

LOKUTTARA JHĀNA SAMĀPATTI

Now bring up the sphere of Dhammakāya Sotāpanna and establish it as Paṭhama lokuttara jhāna (as done before to the sphere of the human form).

Bring up the sphere of Dhammakāya Sakadāgāmin and establish it as Duttiya lokuttara jhāna.

Bring up the sphere of Dhammakāya Anāgāmin and establish it as Tatiya lokuttara jhāna.

Bring up the sphere of Dhammakāya Arahatta and establish it as Catuttha lokuttara jhāna.

Void centre of the Paṭhama jhāna establish as Ākāsānañca āyatana lokuttara jhāna.

Void centre of the Duttiya jhāna establish as Viññānānañca āyatana lokuttara jhāna.

Void centre of the Tatiya jhāna establish as Akiñcaññā āyatana lokuttara jhāna.

Void centre of the Catuttha jhāna establish as Nevasaññā nāsaññā āyatana lokuttara jhāna.

Accomplish jhāna samāpatti of all these eight attainments by direct (anuloma) and inverse (patiloma) process seven times, using the Dhammakāya Arahatta as accomplisher.¹¹

PUBBE NIVĀSA ANUSSATI ÑĀNA (The perception and knowledge of past births)

Establish the spheres of the human form (Manussa Kāya), the celestial form (Dibba Kāya), the Brahma form (Rūpa Brahma Kāya), and the Arūpa Brahma form, in Rūpajhāna and Arūpajhāna.

Accomplish jhāna samāpatti in all these forms simultaneously, using the Dhammakāya as accomplisher and observer. Then investigate and observe the present life.

Concentrate absolutely still in the Centre.

Observe the present life, beginning from immediacy of contact down each day, retreating back to the day of birth. Then on to the period before birth, the pre-natal status in the womb. As far back as the first cellular speck (Kalala Rūpa).

Retreat back to the period before entry, into the womb. Back to the period when the rebirth-consciousness first entered the father's form (the rebirth-consciousness first enters the father's form before that of the prospective mother).

Retreat back to the former existence. Back to each birth, respectively, step by step, life after life, one step at a remove.

Back to the first consciousness (Paṭhama viññāna).

Then return (as retreated) back to the present.

Thereafter, investigate and observe *future* births.

Do so as to perceive it all the way in clarity, using the Dhammakāya as perceiver.

This is called Pubbe Nivāsa Anussati Ñāna.

(Note: It may be questioned how *future* births can be perceived when they haven't even occurred? However, it is not only possible but inevitable. It is so because the kammic seeds of rebirths are already lying in latent potentiality within the subject itself. It needs only time and opportunity for these embryonic seeds to become a manifested physicalised fact.)

¹¹ See Appendix I

CUTŪPAPĀTA ÑĀNA (The perception and knowledge of others' destinies)

Having investigated and observed existences as pertaining to oneself, thereafter investigate and observe the existences of others.

Establish the spheres of the human form, the celestial form, the Brahma form, and the Arūpa Brahma form, pertaining to the other subject, in jhāna samāpatti.

Accomplish jhāna samāpatti in all these forms simultaneously, using the Dhammakāya as accomplisher and observer. Then investigate and observe as before, but pertaining now to the subject in hand.

This is called Cutūpapāta Ñāna. The perception and knowledge of others' destinies.

(Note: Regarding the matter of recalling previous existences, pertaining to oneself as well as to others, it is as well to mention here that such recollection broadens the perspective and outlook. For it is obvious that no one is consistently born in the same country, climate, colour, or creed, but that births take place in countries, climates, colours, and creeds as various as the universe is wide. The more births recollected, therefore, the broader the outlook. This it would seem is, in the last analysis, the only method by which the folly of fighting for an eggshell may be convincingly reaffirmed.)

ĀYATANA TI-LOKA¹² (The sphere of the three worlds)

Establish the sphere of the Three Lokas in Rūpajhāna samāpatti. Namely, the sensual world (Kama Loka), the Brahma world (Rūpa loka), and the Arūpa Brahma world (Arūpa Loka).

Establish the sphere in Rūpajhāna samāpatti.

Void centre of this sphere (of Rūpajhāna samāpatti) establish in Arūpajhāna samāpatti.

Accomplish jhāna samāpatti therein, using the Dhammakāya as accomplisher.

Investigate and observe the Three Lokas, perceiving both outside and inside, so as to apprehend it in full clarity of vision all the way.

Now that which comprises the Three Lokas are the realms of the giant demons, the ghosts, the animals, the purgatorial creatures (of which there are eight planes), the earth plane (Manussa Loka), the six planes of the celestial world (Deva Loka), the sixteen planes of the Brahma world, and the four planes of the Arūpa Brahma world.

Within the sphere of the Three Lokas, creatures have their endless circuit of birth and death, propelled by the momentum of their own kammic potential.

¹² See Appendix III

ĀYATANA LOKANTA (The sphere of outer fiends)

Establish the sphere of Lokanta in Rūpajhāna samāpatti.

Void centre of this sphere (of Rūpajhāna samāpatti) establish in Arūpajhāna samāpatti.

Accomplish jhāna samāpatti, using the Dhammakāya as accomplisher.

Investigate and observe Lokanta, perceiving both outside and inside, so as to apprehend it in full clarity of vision all the way.

Now that which is called Lokanta (literally world-end) is separate and detached from the Three Lokas, lower than the lowest hell of Avici, below and outside the bounds of the sphere of the Three Lokas, not to be measured in the distance therefrom.

This āyatana (sphere) is called Lokanta, and is the abode of those creatures with the greatest penalty on their heads, for which debt they often have to pay for kalpas (world cycles). But even these doomed creatures in perpetual darkness may one day re-arise from this sphere, once retribution has been paid in full, thence to be reborn in the Three Lokas again.

ĀYATANA NIBBĀNA (The sphere of the Emancipated)

Establish the sphere of Dhammakāya Arahatta in Rūpajhāna samāpatti.

Void centre of this sphere (of Rūpajhāna samāpatti) establish in Arūpajhāna samāpatti.

Accomplish jhāna samāpatti, using the Dhammakāya Arahatta as accomplisher.¹³

Investigate and observe Nibbāna, perceiving both outside and inside, so as to apprehend it in full clarity of vision all the way. Let no doubt remain pertaining thereto.

Nibbāna is another āyatana in direct ascension above the Three Lokas (just as Lokanta is in direct declension below the Three Lokas). It rises beyond the highest plane (Nevasaññā nāsaññā āyatana) of the formless Brahma world. It is outside the bounds thereof, not to be measured in the distance therefrom.

This sphere is called Āyatana Nibbāna, and is the abode of those beings emancipated from all stupidity and impurity, which is its own reward.

¹³ See Appendix VI

THE SPHERES OF PERCEPTION, MEMORY, THOUGHT, AND KNOWLEDGE

The sphere of perception (approximately 3 cm at its normal size) pertaining to the human form, has its seat in the sphere of the human form, is spherical in character and translucent.

Establish the sphere of perception in jhāna samāpatti.

Accomplish jhāna samāpatti therein until translucence is reached.

Then expand the sphere of perception pertaining to the human form until it has attained to the dimensions of the Dhammakāya. That is to say, 5 vah in diameter.

The sphere of memory (approximately the size of an eye) is submerged in that of perception, and translucent.

Establish the sphere of memory in jhāna samāpatti.

Accomplish jhāna samāpatti therein until translucence is reached.

Then expand the sphere of memory pertaining to the human form until it has attained to the dimensions of the Dhammakāya.

The sphere of thought (approximately the size of the iris of an eye) is submerged in that of memory, and translucent.

Establish the sphere of thought in jhāna samāpatti.

Accomplish jhāna samāpatti therein until translucence is reached.

Then expand the sphere of thought pertaining to the human form until it has attained to the dimensions of the Dhammakāya.

The sphere of knowledge (approximately the size of the pupil of an eye) is submerged in that of the sphere of thought, and translucent.

Establish the sphere of knowledge in jhāna samāpatti.

Accomplish jhāna samāpatti therein until translucence is reached.

Then expand the sphere of knowledge pertaining to the human form until it has attained to the dimensions of the Dhammakāya.

That which is mentioned here are merely the spheres of perception, memory, thought, and knowledge as pertaining to the human form. As for the four spheres thereof pertaining to the celestial form, the Brahma form, the Arūpa Brahma form, the Dhammakāya form, and all the other Dhammakāya forms, from the crudest to the most refined, the same procedure must be repeated for each.

PĀRAMĪ (Perfections)

There are three categories of pāramī (perfections arising from merit accumulated). Namely: 10 pāramī (normal), 10 upapāramī (medium), and 10 paramata pāramī (supreme).

The merit (puñña) arising from charity performed (after having done so repeatedly) accumulates so as to expand into a sphere approximately 20 centimetres in diameter. After which it contracts and condenses itself to the diameter of approximately 3 centimetres. It is in this manner that the sphere of pāramī is attained. In this case, the sphere of Dāna (Charity) pāramī.

After the accomplishment of further charity performed, the sphere expands. Until its accumulated proportions attains to approximately 20 centimetres in diameter. Whence it contracts and condenses itself to the diameter of approximately 3 centimetres. This sphere is called the sphere of Dāna upapāramī.

With the accomplishment of even further charity performed, the sphere expands. Until its accumulated proportions attains to approximately 20 centimetres in diameter. Whence it contracts and condenses itself to the diameter of approximately 3 centimetres. This sphere is called the sphere of Dāna paramata pāramī.

Regarding merit accomplished and accumulated from morality (sīla), renunciation (nekkhamma), wisdom (paññā), energy (virīya), fortitude (khanti), truth (sacca), earnest resolve (adhiṭṭhāna), compassionate love (mettā), and equanimity (upekkhā), their various spheres expand and contract and condense after the same process as already mentioned for that of Dāna pāramī. Thus, becoming the spheres of 10 pāramī, 10 upapāramī, and 10 paramata pāramī, respectively, in proportion to the merit accomplished and accumulated.

After all these spheres of pāramī have expanded and condensed themselves repeatedly, augmenting their dimensions thereby, until finally attaining to the diameter of 20 centimetres, those who have earnestly resolved to become Arahatta disciples attain Nibbāna, this accumulated pāramī being the potential which supports their resolve so as to finally establish it as a reality.

For those who earnestly resolve to become great disciples (Mahā Sāvaka), chief disciples (Akka Sāvaka), solitary (Pacceka) Buddhas, or All-Enlightened (Sabbaññu) Buddhas, a far greater store of pāramī has to be accumulated, in proportion to the magnitude of the resolve¹⁴.

All these spheres of pāramī are situated in the centre of the forms, from the crudest up to the most refined. Within the sphere of Dāna pāramī there is the sphere of Sīla (Morality), Samādhi (Concentration), Paññā (Wisdom), Vimutti (Release), and Vimutti Ñāna Dassana (Perception and Knowledge of Release).

Establish the sphere of Dāna pāramī in jhāna samāpatti. Accomplish jhāna samāpatti therein until translucence is reached.

After which procedure, repeat the same process for each of the other spheres of pāramī, till all have been purified to translucency.

In each of these spheres of pāramī there are the spheres of Sīla, Samādhi, Paññā, Vimutti, and Vimutti Ñāna Dassana.

¹⁴ See Appendix V

Expedite the same process in each of the forms, from the crudest up to the most refined.

THE PROVIDERS

In the sphere (Paṭhama Magga) of the human form (Manussa Kāya) is an astral form which makes provision for it.

Concentrate absolutely still in the centre of this Provider, as it is termed. Within this form of the Provider will be discovered the sphere which goes form it. In which sphere, again, there, are the spheres of Sīla, Samādhi, Paññā, Vimutti, and Vimutti Ñāna Dassana, respectively, as in the human form itself.

Having penetrated all these spheres to their culmination, concentrate next on the Provider pertaining to the celestial form (Dibba Kāya). The Provider for which is situated in the sphere of the celestial form, and makes provision for it.

Within this Provider, too, is the sphere which goes to fashion it. Within which sphere again are the spheres of Sīla, Samādhi, Paññā, Vimutti, and Vimutti Ñāna Dassana, respectively.

Next concentrate on the Provider pertaining to the Brahma form. In the sphere of this Provider, too, are the spheres of Sīla, Samādhi, Paññā, Vimutti, and Vimutti Ñāna Dassana.

Then concentrate on the Provider pertaining to the Arūpa Brahma form. In which sphere of the Provider are the spheres of Sīla, Samādhi, Paññā, Vimutti, and Vimutti Ñāna Dassana.

Now concentrate on the Provider pertaining to the Dhammakāya form. In which sphere of the Provider, too, are the spheres of Sīla, Samādhi, Paññā, Vimutti, and Vimutti Ñāna Dassana.

Continue this process of penetrating and observing the Providers, from the crudest of the Dhammakāya forms up to the most refined.

Then retreat by inverse process, down to the crudest of human forms.

As for the technical proficiencies involving these Providers, the same procedure applies to them as the 18 basic forms already mentioned.

NIBBĀNA

Nibbāna is an āyatana (sphere) of establishment, but of a different status from that of the Loka āyatana, the six āyatanas of sense, or the twelve bases of cognition. It is the most ultimate of āyatanas and the most refined. Nevertheless, its function parallels that of the Loka āyatana, whose function is to gravitate all creatures within its sphere, unable to pass beyond its bounds. The six āyatanas of human sense also function after the same fashion, gravitating shape, sound, odour, objects of taste, tangibles, and all mental formations within the sphere of a particular personality.

In the same manner, the Nibbānic āyatana has its function of gravitating those who have liberated themselves from the endless circuit of kammic momentum and desire which perpetuates life in the Lokas, without end. Those capable of emancipating themselves from this ceaseless round of birth and death are called Buddhas and Arahattas, and their final sphere of establishment, beyond the bounds of the Lokas, is called Āyatana Nibbāna.

The Nibbānic āyatana is spherical in character, pure in essence, and effulgent. One such āyatana (there being innumerable such āyatanas) is in diameter of the order of 141,330,000 yojanas, with a bounding edge of the order of 15,120,000 yojanas thick. One Buddha and his Arahatta disciples inhabit the void space bounded by this thick spherical edge. Removed from all crudity, this region is spacious, vast, and radiant with its own inherent essence (free from all external light of sun or star) as well as the beings that inhabit it. In short, it is the effulgence which is born of purity and the purgation of ignorance. As said of old:

“There is, O Bhikkhus, a sphere (āyatana) where there is neither earth, nor water, nor fire, nor wind, nor the sphere of the infinity of space (ākāsānañca āyatana), nor the sphere of the infinity of consciousness (viññānānañca āyatana), nor the sphere of voidness (ākiñcañña āyatana), nor the sphere of neither perception nor non-perception (nevasaññā nāsaññā āyatana). There is not this world, nor the other world, nor sun and moon. That, O Bhikkhus, I call neither coming nor going, nor staying, nor passing away, nor arising. Without support, or going on, or basis is it. This is the end of pain.

As for the terms, Kilesa Nibbāna, Khandha Nibbāna, Dhātu Nibbāna, Saupādisesa Nibbāna, and Anupādisesa Nibbāna, they have the following implications:

(1) **Kilesa Nibbāna:** At the time when the future Buddha, in his thirty-fifth year, was undergoing ascetic practices in the grove of Uruvela, he finally rendered passion extinct so as to attain to perfect perception and enlightenment. This extinction of the defilements (kilesāsava), which erebefore had constrained him in the circuit of birth and death without end, is called Kilesa Nibbāna.

(2) **Khandha Nibbāna:** That extinction of the elements of mundane personality (pañcupādāna khandha) - namely, form (rūpa), feeling (vedanā), perception (saññā), sensorial aggregates (sankhāras), and consciousness (viññāna) - to which life after life he (Buddha) had been repeatedly subject, and which he at last had rendered extinct, never to arise again, is called Khandha Nibbāna. With which extinction only the Dhammakāya Arahatta remained, final Nibbāna being attained therewith.

(3) **Dhātu Nibbāna:** This last Buddha, known as Samana (Ascetic) Gotama, still has his element (dhātu) existing in the world. Namely, in the form of bone relics, etc., and therefore it cannot be said that they have entered Nibbāna. However, whenever the mission in the world of the said Buddha has been completed and fulfilled, whatever elements remaining and pertaining thereto shall in due course of time be rendered unto its Nibbānic state. This rendering of the elements unto its Nibbānic state is called Dhātu Nibbāna.

(4) **Saupādisesa Nibbāna:** That state of release which is the Dhammakāya Arahatta's sphere of being is effulgent and pure, and is centred in the crude human form, applying to the time when Buddhas and Arahattas still inhabit such a human form. This state of Nibbāna, with residue of the mundane aggregates, is called Saupādisesa Nibbāna. If Buddha's statement to Vakkali that whosoever perceives the Tathāgata perceives the Dhammakāya is noted, then it will be understood that the essence-form of the Buddha has been perceived. To perceive this essence-form necessitates the involuted cultivation

(bhāvanā) of Samatha-Vipassanā. There is no other method.

(5) **Anupādisesa Nibbāna:** That state of release attained by the Dhammakāya Arahatta which is devoid of the aggregates of mundane personality is called Anupādisesa Nibbāna. And it applies to the time when having rendered all mundane aggregates extinct; the Dhammakāya Arahatta departs from this mundane sphere for good. Thus, the Saupādisesa Nibbāna serves as the base by which Anupādisesa Nibbāna is attained. The process of attaining Anupādisesa Nibbāna is witnessed in the Mahā Parinibbāna Sutta, where Buddha is recorded as accomplishing jhāna samāpatti by direct (anuloma) process. Having entered Saupādisesa Nibbāna (the Dhammakāya Arahatta) at this juncture, and accomplished the ninth attainment of the cessation of all mundane perception and feeling (saññā vedayita nirodha samāpatti), he attained Anupādisesa Nibbāna - retreating by inverse process (patiloma) from the ninth attainment down to the first jhāna, thence up again to the fourth. Whence, sinking to void centre,¹⁵ he (the Dhammakāya Arahatta of the Buddha) entered Āyatana Nibbāna for good.

Those who have attained to Arahattaship possess a Dhammakāya form, the dimensions, of which are twenty vah in width (from knee to knee in concentrated pose) and twenty vah in height. Instinct with will and mind, it is effulgent and in essence pure. This Dhammakāya Arahatta has its seat in Āyatana Nibbāna. That is to say, the Nibbāna of an All-Enlightened (Sabbaññu) Buddha. This Buddha has his seat (jhāna) in the centre of the said Āyatana Nibbāna, encompassed by his disciples (sāvaka).

This, of course, is not the only Āyatana Nibbāna. Their number surpasses count. Those who are Pacceka (Solitary) Buddhas, who haven't taught, are seated in solitary state. The varying degrees of radiance and effulgence pertaining to these Nibbānic beings are the external symbol of the extent of their accumulated pāramī, some greater and others less. Thus, each Āyatana Nibbāna varies in dimensions, dependent on the extent of the pāramī of the particular Buddha to whom it belongs.

These Dhammakāya forms are usually in process of accomplishing nirodha samāpatti (cessation attainment), soundlessly and sustained. This cessation attainment, accomplished by a form beyond decay, in an existence which endlessly endures, has been alluded to of old as the greatest bliss. Namely, Nibbānam Paramam Sukham.

Nibbāna Paccayo Hotu

(May this be the means whereby Nibbāna is attained)



¹⁵ See Appendix VI



APPENDICES



Appendix I : The Jhānas

The jhānas may be questioned in some respects. Namely, why are they mentioned as possessing a disc-like form and size when their very nature suggests formlessness and infinity?

The clarification is this. They are mentioned as possessing form and size in view of centralization and standardization. The question, in fact, does not apply. Because it should be understood that jhānas are primarily *states of mind*. A state of mind in jhāna can be classified as finite or infinite, as the case may be, considering that all classifications are mind-made. If the mind in jhāna desires to expand or contract its range and scope, it immediately conforms. Thus, if it adverts to the concept of the infinity of space, it becomes the infinity of space. And so forth.

All these jhānas, however, differ with regard to translucency and clarity. That is to say, each successive jhāna is more translucent than its predecessor. It is due to these very degrees of increasing refinement and clarity that the eight jhāna samāpattis are expedited to accomplish direct and inverse process in all concentration attainments, so as to purify consciousness (and the object of perception) to its highest peak of translucence and clarity.

Now we have observed that the spheres of the human form, the celestial form, the Brahma form, and the Arūpa Brahma form, are expedited to form and establish the eight jhāna samāpattis. Jhānas attained in this fashion are mundane (lokiya) jhānas, and should be recognised as such, for they have the mundane spheres as their base. However, it may be noticed that in the section entitled Lokuttara Jhāna Samāpatti, the spheres of the Dhammakāya Sotāpanna, Dhammakāya Sakadāgāmin, Dhammakāya Anāgāmin, and Dhammakāya Arahatta, respectively, are expedited to form and establish the eight jhāna samāpattis.

A subtle difference should be recognised here. Namely, the latter are supramundane (lokuttara) jhānas, and therefore possess an even greater intensity of translucence and clarity than the jhānas attained by the yogis of old, which are mundane (lokiya) jhānas. It is here that the distinct difference between the jhānas of the yogis and the Buddhas and Arahattas may be clearly distinguished. Namely, mundane in contrast to supramundane. It is due to this very mundane basis of the lokiya jhānas, in fact, that even after having practised and attained them all the yogis of old failed in their attempt at release. And which constrained the future Buddha to abandon them in disgust.

As for the size of the flat and translucent disc-like vehicle of support (jhāna) established as being 2 vah in diameter, 6 vah in circumference, and a hand's length thick, it should be understood that whensoever the Dhammakāya expands its dimensions, scope, and range, the dimensions of the jhāna also expands and extends in proportion therewith.

Appendix II : Death and Rebirth

When the body is about to give up the ghost, characterised externally by the death convulsions, the aggregates of perception, memory, thought, and knowledge pertaining to the human personality, gradually sinks and gravitates to the sixth position, and the connecting link between the human and the astral form is, consequently, split.

The aggregates of perception, memory, thought, and knowledge unify and integrate at the sixth position, whence they arise to the seventh position. After having unified and integrated even further, these aggregates sink to the sixth position again, where they take on an astral form, thence issuing out of the human nostril (the left nostril for the woman, and the right for the man).

Activated by kammic forces, this astral form is henceforth impelled to its next formation or habitat, and is called Kāya Sambhavesin. That is to say, the form seeking rebirth. It should be understood that by rebirth is not only implied incarnation in a physical form, but that some form of rebirth must take place - whether as a deva, a peta, or any other astral form of life. Immediate physical rebirth is rare.

The procedure for rebirth is as follows. Rebirth-consciousness has to enter the sixth and seventh positions (of the mother). It sinks and gravitates to the seventh position, and unifies there. As it integrates and unifies in the proper position, it sinks to the sixth position, manifesting as a translucent sphere with a diameter of approximately three centimetres. Having integrated and unified further, it drifts up to the seventh position. Whence having unified itself even more, it sinks to the sixth position again, and is called the sphere of Paṭhama Magga. At its minimum dimensions this sphere of Paṭhama Magga manifests as a mere star-like nucleus, and three centimetres in diameter at its maximum.

This process of integration and unification of the rebirth-consciousness at the sixth and seventh positions is an essential process, for they are the unification centres where the physical and psychical fuse to form fresh life. If there were no such centres, nothing pertaining to organic human life could manifest and come to be. Once rebirth-consciousness has established itself at the sixth position (of the mother), it sparks and impermeates the cellular foetus, serving as the potential base for future life. It is found in the Pali Canon, that without the threefold combination of a woman whose womb is fertile, a man whose seed is potent, and the presence of a rebirth-entity, no conception is possible. The rebirth-consciousness is the current which ignites life into organic activity, or else no development would result.

Appendix III : The Three Lokas

ARŪPA LOKA (The Formless World):

		Height	Maximum limit of life span
Plane 4:	Nevasaññā nāsaññā āyatana (the sphere of neither perception nor non-perception)	5,508,000 yojanas	80,000 kalpas
Plane 3:	Ākiñcañña āyatana (the sphere of voidness)	5,508,000 yojanas	60,000 kalpas
Plane 2:	Viññānānañca āyatana (the sphere of the infinity of consciousness)	5,508,000 yojanas	40,000 kalpas
Plane 1:	Ākāsañca āyatana (the sphere of the infinity of space)	5,508,000 yojanas	20,000 kalpas

These planes are the destiny of those who have practised and attained one, or all, of the formless attainments (arūpajhāna samāpatti). And they are called Arūpa Brahmas.

RŪPA LOKA (The Form World):

		Height	Maximum limit of life span
Plane 16:	Akanitthā (Superior)	5,508,000 yojanas	16,000 kalpas
Plane 15:	Sudassī (Clear Sighted)	5,508,000 yojanas	8,000 kalpas
Plane 14:	Sudassā (Beautiful)	5,508,000 yojanas	4,000 kalpas
Plane 13:	Atappā (Serene)	5,508,000 yojanas	2,000 kalpas
Plane 12:	Avihā (Immobile)	5,508,000 yojanas	1,000 kalpas

These five planes are otherwise called Suddhāvāsa (Pure Abodes), and are the favourite abode of Non-returners (Anāgāmins), who after final purification of consciousness there, attain ultimate release. It may also be noted that the formless (arūpa) planes are not selected for this purpose, they being uncondusive to the realisation and attainment of a far more transcendental state of things.

		Height	Maximum limit of life span
Plane 11:	Asaññā satta (Perceptionless)	5,508,000 yojanas	500 kalpas
Plane 10:	Vehapphalā (Great Fruit)	5,508,000 yojanas	500 kalpas

All these above planes (16-10) are attained by those who have practised the fourth jhāna (Catuttha jhāna). Such is their resultant destiny.

		Height	Maximum limit of life span
Plane 9:	Subhakinha (Refulgent)	5,508,000 yojanas	64 kalpas
Plane 8:	Appamāṇasubha (Great Aura)	5,508,000 yojanas	32 kalpas
Plane 7:	Parittasubha (Minor Aura)	5,508,000 yojanas	16 kalpas

The above planes (9-7) are attained by those who have practised the third jhāna (Tatiya jhāna). Such is their resultant destiny.

Whensoever the world is destroyed (at the end of kalpas) by wind, it dissolves and annihilates the Brahma planes up to the Subhakiṅḡa (Plane 9)

		Height	Maximum limit of life span
Plane 6:	Ābhassara (<i>Radiant</i>)	5,508,000 yojanas	8 kalpas
Plane 5:	Appamāṅābha (<i>Great Lustre</i>)	5,508,000 yojanas	4 kalpas
Plane 4:	Parittābha (<i>Minor Lustre</i>)	5,508,000 yojanas	2 kalpas

The above planes (6-4) are attained by those who have practised the second jhāna (Dutiya jhāna). Such is their resultant destiny.

Whensoever the world is destroyed (at the end of kalpas) by water, it dissolves and annihilates the Brahma planes up to the Ābhassara (Plane 6)

		Height	Maximum limit of life span
Plane 3:	Mahā Brahma (<i>Great Brahma</i>)	5,508,000 yojanas	1 kalpas
Plane 2:	Purohita (<i>Minister</i>)	5,508,000 yojanas	1/2 kalpas
Plane 1:	Pārisajja (<i>Retinue</i>)	5,508,000 yojanas	1/3 kalpas

The above planes (3-1) are attained by those who have practised the first jhāna (Paṭhama jhāna). Such is their resultant destiny.

Whensoever the world is destroyed (at the end of kalpas) by fire, it dissolves and annihilates the Brahma planes up to the Mahā Brahma (Plane 3).

There is no sexuality in all these above planes. And its inhabitants are called Rūpa Brahmas.

KĀMA LOKA (The Sensual World):

		Height	Maximum limit of life span
Plane 6:	Paranimmitavasavattī (<i>Transformation</i>)	42,000 yojanas	9,216,000,000 terrestrial years
Plane 5:	Nimmānaratī (<i>Creative</i>)	42,000 yojanas	2,304,000,000 terrestrial years
Plane 4:	Tusitā (<i>Delight</i>)	42,000 yojanas	576,000,000 terrestrial years
Plane 3:	Yāmā	42,000 yojanas	144,000,000 terrestrial years
Plane 2:	Tāvatiṃṡa (<i>The Thirty-Three</i>)	42,000 yojanas	36,000,000 terrestrial years
Plane 1:	Cātumahārājikā (<i>Four Kings</i>)	42,000 yojanas	9,000,000 terrestrial years

The above planes are attained by those whose merit is of greater or lesser scope, not involving the practice of jhāna. Sexuality is common to the two lower planes, the four higher being idealistic. Unlike the Brahma planes, where the sex is masculine, all these celestial planes are inhabited by creatures of both sexes.

- Manussa Loka (The realm of humans).
- Asura Yoni (The realm of giant demons).
- Peta Yoni (The realm of ghosts).
- Tiracchāna Yoni (The realm of dumb animals).
- Niraya (The realm of purgatorial creatures). There are 8 Planes.

Appendix IV : Psychic Phenomena

Regarding the apprehension of psychic phenomena, the Dhammakāya (and not some lesser form) is expedited throughout most of these operations due to its faculties of microscopic intensity, which are capable of expanding and penetrating any object of perception in detail. Being able to apprehend and comprehend the Four Noble Truths and the three characteristics of impermanence, suffering, and impersonality in all their ramifications. Established in jhāna samāpatti, the Dhammakāya aspect of consciousness is the only vehicle by which the momentariness of existence is observed in perceptive immediacy - its precipitate manifestation, abeyance, and extinction.

When the anatta aspect of existence regarding the human aggregates has been witnessed by the Dhammakāya (Gotrabhu), no doubt remains, and belief in a permanent identity and the efficacy of pernicious rites is put aside. This realisation makes for the attainment of the Sotāpanna aspect of consciousness established in jhāna.

This Sotāpanna level of consciousness is then expedited to investigate and observe the celestial aggregates, from the same viewpoint of the Four Noble Truths and the three characteristics of impermanence, suffering, and impersonality. The result of which issues in the putting aside of sensual passion and malice. Which realisation makes for the attainment of the Sakādāgamin aspect of consciousness established in jhāna.

This Sakādāgamin level of consciousness is then expedited to investigate and observe the Rūpa Brahma aggregates. The result of which is the putting aside of the desire for formative states of existence. Issuing in the attainment of the Anāgāmin aspect of consciousness established in jhāna.

This Anāgāmin level of consciousness is then expedited to investigate and observe the Arūpa Brahma aggregates. The result of which is the putting aside of attachment to formless states of attainment, egoism, and ignorance. Issuing in the attainment of the Arahatta aspect of consciousness established in jhāna.

It will be observed, therefore, how a supramundane level of consciousness is expedited to investigate and observe its apposite mundane counterpart.

This is so because only something of greater refinement can fully comprehend the crudity existent in adjacent phenomena, and not vice versa.

It is by this 'parallel' process, as it were, that consciousness (established in jhāna) is instigated to gradually winnow itself away from the crudest to the refinedest degrees of defilement by temporary and adjacent stages, until they are all finally put aside. That is, for the duration that consciousness in each specific state is established in jhāna.

The operations and percepts witnessed when consciousness is established in jhāna may appear improbable and strange. However, it is strange only to the extent of its being approached from the human angle of consciousness. The Dhammakāya aspect of consciousness established in jhāna, on the other hand, views these phenomena with an unmoved eye as being in the normal course of things. Desiring knowledge regarding a particular object, it directs its attention thereto, and clarification arises by itself. It is only the human level of consciousness, detached as it is from jhāna that contains misgivings and doubts pertaining to an astral plane of things. And this shows that the human consciousness, upon which man so prizes himself, can scarcely be classified as a superior level insofar as supernormal apprehension is concerned, but is rather in the nature of states in the gross, attached through lifelong habit to human sense and tactile concepts - which, when expedited to phenomena

witnessed in jhāna, confuse comprehension because they do not apply, being out of place.

Appendix V : Pāramī

It should be understood that all earnest resolves (adhiṭṭhana) have to be supported by merit performed. An earnest resolve unsupported by merit is tantamount to a cheque signed, but without the requisite funds in the bank to back it up. A mortal in this plane, or any other plane, can only sign for what his bank balance is. Thus, although the earnest resolve may seem a simple matter and applicable in all, circumstances, it, in reality is a, highly complex affair, not necessarily effective in practice, dependent as it is on factors beyond the vision of the average man.

Regarding the building of pāramī (perfect qualities of consciousness), it may be said that it is not only a means to an end (Nibbāna) but, in a certain sense, an end in itself. That is to say, it is the process of gravitating perfect qualities of consciousness into a specific field, and thereby personified. The Dhammakāya, of which so much has already been said, is in form and essence the personification of these pāramīs gravitated into a specific field. Insofar as an individual can ever be said to endure at all from existence to existence, he can be said to do so only to the extent that his pāramīs are preserved intact. For it is not the personality which at a particular moment prevails that insures *ultimate* identity, but only these pāramīs, and it is only as such that he can be said to have any ultimate importance at all. The struggle to build pāramī is the process of acquiring such ultimate identity as is possible (Dhammakāya), or else all that results is mere meaningless nonentity (anatta). Thus, the individual field-of-consciousness, sphere of influence, and attainment of final release, is inextricably bound up with the extent of pāramī completed and fulfilled, and nothing less.

Now to attain to the position of a great disciple (Mahā Sāvaka) necessitates the accomplishment of a pāramī extent covering 100,000 kalpas (world cycles or aeons of time). The attainment of chief discipleship (Akka Sāvaka) entails the accomplishment of a pāramī extent covering 1 Asankheyya (of the order of 1×10^{140} kalpas) and 100,000 kalpas. Whereas the attainment of Solitary (Pacceka) Buddhahood entails a pāramī extent covering 2 Asankheyya and 100,000 kalpas.

As for All-Enlightened (Sabbaññu) Buddhas, there are three categories. The first category (to which the present Buddha Gotama belongs) attains its pāramī through the Wisdom (Paññā) approach. The second category attains its pāramī through the Faith (Saddhā) approach. Whereas the third category (to whom the next Buddha Metteyya belongs) attains its pāramī through the Effort (Viriya) approach.

Now the first category (Paññā) of Buddha has a pāramī extent covering 4 Asankheyya and 100,000 kalpas. The second category (Saddhā) of Buddha has a pāramī extent covering 8 Asankheyya and 100,000 kalpas. Whereas the third category (Viriya) of Buddha has a pāramī extent covering 16 Asankheyya and 100,000 kalpas.

However, this applies only to the pāramī accumulated from the time of their earnest resolve to be a Buddha. Before such a resolution is possible of being made and accepted, the extent of pāramī necessary to support such a vow has to be 16 Asankheyya kalpas for the first Paññā category, thus making a total extent of 20 Asankheyya and 100,000 kalpas. For the second Saddhā category, 32 Asankheyya kalpas are necessary to support such a vow, thus making a total extent of 40 Asankheyya and 100,000 kalpas. Whereas for the third Viriya category, 64 Asankheyya kalpas are necessary, thus making a total extent of 80 Asankheyya and 100,000 kalpas.

A Sabbaññu Buddha's field of authority extends to 100,000 million world-spheres (lokadhātu). Whenever it is mentioned in the Pali Canon that so many million creatures attained comprehension of the Truth at one hearing, it is not implied that these creatures belong only to this world-sphere, least of all that particular locality of India wherein Buddha preached. It is obvious that there weren't

enough creatures in India at the time in the first place. The creatures mentioned pertain not only to those in this world-sphere but other world-spheres. That is to say, the creatures are mainly astral. For in the course of aeons in which a Buddha traverses to attain enlightenment, the extent includes these 100,000 million world-spheres, and it is his destined right, therefore, to teach creatures within this extent, which is considered as his field of authority.

This may serve to clarify the fact that the accumulation of pāramī is a matter involving great effort and time, and therefore is not accrued merely for it to be dissolved in annihilation - as the term Nibbāna may lead one to suppose. The attainment of Nibbāna is not only the attainment of a state, but a sphere of establishment (āyatana) wherein ignorance and defilement have no foothold. It is due to this very pāramī accumulated through the aeons, in fact, which makes the establishment of a fresh Āyatana Nibbāna possible. And that the establishment of such an Āyatana Nibbāna is a Sabbaññu Buddha's especial estate, without which creatures would have no possible means of ultimate release from the ceaseless round of rebirth, without end.

Appendix VI : Void Centre

It should be understood that the void centre mentioned in this text is the 'loophole' through which the Dhammakāya Arahatta (or released consciousness) penetrates in its exit to Āyatana Nibbāna, and through which all psychic phenomena make their entry and exit insofar as the individual in jhāna is concerned. By void centre is implied the alignment not of something *physical* but of *astral* status, and is established in jhāna as such. The physical, in view of its crudity, presents no problem to consciousness at all when established in jhāna.

Insofar as integrated release is concerned, the Āyatana Nibbāna can only exert its gravitational pull on the Dhammakāya Arahatta (or released consciousness) through the loophole of this void centre, around which the gross circumscribes. Were it not for this loophole, consciousness would never be able to emancipate itself from the restless circuit of birth and death which perpetuates existence in the Lokas, without end. When the Dhammakāya in jhāna adverts to void centre it arrives thereat in an instant, and makes its exit there-through into temporary or permanent release, as the case may be.

Now what exactly is implied by temporary and permanent release?

The clarification is this. That possibility of entering Āyatana Nibbāna, as whenever pleased, and of returning to the Lokas again, is termed temporary release. It is temporary because consciousness is still attached to the five aggregates of mundane personality (pañcupādāna khandha) and has perforce to return. For there is no permanent abiding in the Āyatana Nibbāna as long as the aggregates of mundane personality have not been rendered extinct. It should be understood that attainment of the Dhammakāya Arahatta form (through the involuted-cultivation of bhāvanā) permits temporary entry (through the said form) into Āyatana Nibbāna for a duration not exceeding seven days, so as to validate for oneself the existence of Buddhas and Arahattas there, but not for permanency of abiding when still attached to the khandhas.

Having entered an Āyatana Nibbāna (their number surpassing count) it is possible to contact any Buddha or Arahatta there as pleased. Since, however, to remain there for an indefinite duration is impossible, a return is made by the simple process of adverting to void centre again, and down into the Lokas once more.

This is what is implied when a difference is asserted between temporary and permanent release.

However, it is something which cannot be too often repeated, that the attainment of the Dhammakāya Arahatta form does not automatically establish one as an Arahatta for good - an error into which it is only too easy to plunge, so as to delude one out of one's wits. As stated in Buddha's discourse to Potthapāda (quoted in the first volume of Sammā Samādhi (now called *Vistas*), when any *mode of self* is going on it is not reckoned as another:

"It is only reckoned by the name of that particular personality which prevails."

And for the ordinary man, unfortunately, it is only the crude *human* personality which prevails. For no matter how long he may be able to sustain consciousness at the Dhammakāya Arahatta level, it is to the human level that he finally sinks, the defilements of the khandhas still not having been rendered extinct.

The attainment of Arahattaship is inextricably bound up with the fulfilment and culmination of a certain quota of pāramī. That Arahattaship may seem easy of attainment is due in part to the records, which portray Buddha as making a short discourse, resulting in someone attaining emancipation of

mind. That this is so is because the quota of pāramī (pertaining to that person) necessary for attainment has already culminated. Foreknowledge of which, in fact, made Buddha speak at all. As it is said of the Ascetic Gotama:

“Speech that he knows to be untrue, false, and useless, and pleasant and agreeable to others, he does not speak. That which is true, real, useless, and pleasant and agreeable to others; that too he does not speak. But that which is true, real, and useful, and pleasant and agreeable to others, in that case he knows the right time to express it.”

It may also be stressed that only a Buddha, and not some self-deluded layman, is in a position to state to what stage (if at all) of release anyone has attained.

Appendix VII : Space, Time, Perception and Knowledge

It is generally agreed that creatures are endowed with memory. That is, the power of recollecting anything in past experience. Of course, insofar as man is concerned, memory is far from perfect, and even recent events are often forgotten beyond recall. However, this is due to individual feebleness rather than to any poverty of memory's capacity for preserving past records. In any case, what is our concern here is merely the fact that memory is that process which summons up any past event or idea to *recollective immediacy*, thus making past experience an ever potential present or 'here-now'.

If this is so, then it may be that this system of apprehension is also applicable in the opposite direction. That is, the capacity to apprehend that which *has not as yet happened*. This, of course, may seem rather a queer proposition to make. However, it may not be as queer as it seems. At least, not more queer than the fact that contemporary science assures us that events taking place in far distant corners of the universe, such as the birth or death of a star, take millions of light-years for such knowledge to reach us. That is, they have already *happened*, but due to the distances involved the results of their happening have yet to be intercepted and that what is being observed through a telescope *now* is not the star at all, but merely the stale light which has travelled so long and tediously into our ken. The star itself may already be extinct, but that momentous fact (to observers on this planet) has not as yet happened. Some thing has already happened, yet these observers believe it has as yet to happen. What is more, by the time such knowledge, reaches this planet, the observers shall no longer be present to observe it.

The fruit of this reflection is that, insofar as the human element is concerned, there is very little perceptive immediacy, and that what is usually perceived from day to day in any given act of perception is almost certainly something stale. That is, something which has already happened. However, it follows that if we were capable of extending our consciousness to a remote point in space, then we may actually witness the birth or death of a star in *perceptive immediacy*, and not just be spectators to mere stale light. If this were possible of attainment, then we would be quite justified in claiming the possibility of apprehending that which *has not as yet happened*. That is, in relation to our mundane sphere.

It is obvious, however, that man is far from the attainment of such an extension of consciousness. Nevertheless consciousness is not necessarily something limited by space and time or size. This becomes evident whenever it transports itself, by inclination, to things remote. Of course, transportation of this sort is usually mere memory or anticipation, and not actual immediacy of perception. However, the practice and attainment of jhāna samāpatti reveals that this phenomenon is possible, and that consciousness in jhāna is capable of expanding or contracting what is called its 'field'. This applies with special emphasis to the Dhammakāya aspect of consciousness when established in jhāna.

This implies that relative time is possible of being transcended. But time is not only relative, it is also absolute. It is relative in that it is contexted to events in particular frames of reference. It is absolute in that the universe (tantamount to space as a whole) endures. That is to say, *continues*. And that such continuance to endure must involve absoluteness of time, irrespective of the events happening in particular parts. Within the vast frame of reference which is the continuing universe, there is room for all manner of events to manifest themselves in particular frames of reference, involving relative time. Which events and particular frames of reference finally dissolve into that which endures and is absolute. Thus, the main support for the theory of relative time are events manifested in particular frames of reference. Whereas the chief claim for the theory of absolute time is that the universe (which is tentatively classed as tantamount to space as a whole) endures.

Now by 'space' it is as well to clarify that it is something which should not be confused with our habitual sense-concepts thereof. This is expressed in point by Whitehead in his reference to Plato's concept of the Receptacle:

"In our effort to divine his meaning, we must remember that Plato says that it is an obscure concept, and that in its own essence the Receptacle is devoid of all forms. It is thus certainly not the ordinary geometrical space with its mathematical relations."

The 'space' implied is:

"Eternal and admits of no destruction and provides a home for all created things, and is apprehended without the help of sense, by a kind of spurious reason, and is hardly real - which we, beholding as in a dream, say of all existence that it must of necessity be in some place and occupy a space, but that what is neither in heaven nor on earth has no existence."

Human consciousness has become so habitualised to the apparent solidity and fixity of things in space-time, that it needs a huge effort of mind indeed to recognise that all existence (individuality and identity inclusive) rests on nothing more amorphous than the interaction of six forces or principles. Namely, cohesion, fluxion, expansion, vibration, vacuity, and cognition.

It is in view of this very amorphousness and *elasticity*, as it were, of space that throws light on the fact that astral phenomena fuse and coexist with physical phenomena side by side, without either of them however encroaching on each other's manifested domains. And that without any sense of contradiction (once the true facts are known) that the psychical phenomena mentioned in this text (such as the Dhammakāya) are claimed to be situated in the human form, possessing such huge dimensions out of proportion to the human form itself.

What emerges from this reflection is that our whole concept of space has to be radically reviewed before a true grasp of what existence really is can be attained. With which it would be as well to bear Plato's injunction in mind:

"The true lover of knowledge is always striving after being... He will not rest at these multitudinous phenomena whose existence is appearance only."

Now all this, however, in no way validates our original thesis of the predictability of a future event. For, in this case, the event (hypothetical) in question has (let us assert) definitely not as yet happened, and may never do so.

Now although this appears at first to be a formidable obstacle, it is not as insurmountable as it seems, for it will be recognised that in a certain sense it has already happened. That is to say, the factors for its manifestation are already implicit in the subject (such as a man), and it is only a question of time before a subjective cause ripens and culminates in an objective effect. The fact that the individual under consideration is alive, and that all the potential ingredients for his future perpetuation, both organic and psychic, are in process of maturing, necessarily determine the prospective event in space-time. It is scarcely a mystic prediction but an empirical attitude which asserts that what has the constituents of immediate activity in any given subject must necessarily evolve to *something*. It is only left for one to know *all* the constituents which go to activate the subject, and the future outcome will be resolved by *the factor of the greatest probability*.

Of course, the capacity to know all about a given subject under consideration is not something with

which man is fundamentally endowed. All that is claimed here is that it is possible if all the causes are known. Experience in jhāna samāpatti also confirms this claim, for experience in jhāna endows consciousness with the capacity to penetrate into factors not perceptible by the human eye, and therefore adds to the general knowledge of any given subject in hand. Given the adequate circumstances - that, possesses a sufficient supply of perceptible data relative to any given subject - it is possible to predict the eventual outcome or destiny of the said subject by the factor of the greatest probability. And why? Because, it may be observed that no matter how irregular, irrational, or inconstant any given subject may be, it nevertheless exists and moves in a characteristic groove, which groove is the involuntary result of a whole host of subtle antecedent causes.

It may be objected, however, that this is to confuse the issue - which is not mere psychologicality but actual events in space-time which strike out of nowhere, as it were, and without reason or rhyme. Indeed. There may be random factors with sufficient impetus to throw the given subject off course. But it should be realised that all predictions are necessarily limited, involving as they do only the perception of factors which, though invisible to the human eye, are already in existence at the moment of prediction. Which fact in no way precludes the possibility of other future motivating forces (as yet non-existent) from giving any predicted event a modified impetus and drift. It is obvious that in this respect a man (for instance) possesses both free will and antecedent determinates. What is even more, as long as he is subject to a world of latent potentialities and collective accidents, there must be taken into consideration this third factor involved. Namely, the potentiality of immediate environment - wherein he is always liable to incur events which he has neither involuntarily instigated nor deliberately caused.

It is due to this very factor of uncertainty and mishap characteristic of existence in the world, that it is recommended for man to consider in earnest the piteousness of that which passes for life, and to accomplish his very best so as to put an end to its vulnerability, once and for all, by nothing less than the attainment of invulnerability. That is to say, Nibbāna.

Regarding Nibbāna, however, it is characteristic to consider it as a state bordering on *nothingness*, due to lack of actual experience thereof. Tolstoi is a case in point:

“When death draws near, intercourse with people who in this life look beyond its bounds is precious and cheering, and you and those rare real people I have met in life always stand on the very verge and see clearly, just because they look now at Nibbāna - the illimitable, the unknown - and now at Samsara, and that glance at Nibbāna strengthens their sight... We all (I at least) feel that it is much more interesting than life. But I agree that however much I may think about it, I can think of nothing else than that Nibbāna is nothingness. I only stand up for one thing: religious reverence-awe of that Nibbāna. There is, at any rate, nothing more important than it.”

The point is that Nibbāna is not something to think about, but to *experience*. For no amount of *thought* has ever transported consciousness into its bounds.

Man exists as an intelligent creature at all through knowledge. Knowledge is generally regarded as being derivative from human sense-percepts. We say that a man has knowledge or possesses experience, and infer that he has acquired it through sense-perception. This inference, however, is erroneous and it does not require Plato to point out that sense-perception and knowledge are far from identical.

Even from a mundane point of view, it has become obvious that phenomena can no longer be taken

for granted, at face value, for even such gross externals as tables and chairs begin to lose their solidity and shape under the scientific eye, and crude concepts such as these become refined into 'space-time continuums'. Existence, in fact, is accepted not through *knowledge* thereof, but merely by habit and by *custom*. If so, a man can no longer be sure of anything, least of all his perceptions. Which proposition would seem to bring man to an impasse. However, life is observed to flow on as before, and nothing appears awry at all.

In view of the ambiguousness of human sense-perception and the amorphousness of feeling in general, scepticism regarding the existence of an extrasensory universe becomes an inevitability. On the other hand, a man is quite justified in claiming the existence of an extra-sensory universe, for although tables and chairs may be 'space-time continuums' they need not necessarily be *perceived* as such. However, unless they have been perceived as such, any casual acceptance of tables and chairs as *solid* substances is unwarranted and 'unscientific', to say the least.

If we concede that the majority of that which passes for knowledge and experience is really devoid of substantiality and perceptive immediacy, then despair of ever arriving at ultimate essence becomes an inevitability. However, insofar as an extra-sensory universe is concerned, it is quite justified to claim its existence without immediate apprehension thereof. It is justified because a thing may exist without our knowledge of it, just as America (for instance) exists even for those who have never perceived it or are ever likely to do so. In this instance, they may even be ashamed to admit their ignorance thereof.

What is really at issue is that even if ultimate essence is not self-evident, it is customary to regulate our lives in accordance with a collection of values, no matter how rudimentary or few. For without them neither the individual nor society could be established in stability. It is thus generally accepted as law that it is evil to kill. Without much logic Rousseau claims that:

"Nothing on this earth is worth buying at the price of human blood... It is in order not to become victims of an assassin that we consent to die if we become assassins."

Although, insofar as *nature* is concerned, non-killing is not a morally self-evident law, nevertheless it holds good in human affairs. And so on for the other moralities. It follows, therefore, that it is not man's sense-perceptions as such but his knowledge of *values* which determine his attitude and life. Without the moral values referred to, existence as we know it would be impossible, resulting in an intolerable nightmare.

Now if we seek to discover what is it that knowledge consists of, there has to be some general criterion, or principle of judgement, whereby a just standard of values may be established, applicable not merely to flatter any individual's particular bias, but for all men and for all time. Due reflection reveals that a knowledge of values does not emerge from merely *intellectual* roots, but rests on something more fundamental. This fundamentality is expressed as a certain concern upon the part of the individual in his relation to the rest of the world. Such *concern* possesses what may be termed an *emotional* content. Thus, if a man's knowledge of values is primarily determined by his concerns, if the concerns are few or one-tracked, then, it is inevitable that his field-of-consciousness will be limited even to the extent that he himself, consciously or unconsciously, circumscribes it.

A man's field-of-consciousness, of course, is his own business, and he may be so habituated as to prefer the apprehension of mud rather than stars. In that case, any attitude of perversity reveals him for what he is and cancels him as a responsible authority upon the subject.

It may be conceded, then, that a knowledge of values implies something broad. Namely, a broad horizon of concerns. This broad horizon involves and includes not merely the world of externality but

of internality. However, the external world as it presents itself to the senses conspires, as it were, to mock all efforts at arriving at the ultimate essence of things. This is so because the external world and the senses synchronise so efficiently as to make *sense*. Namely, *common-sense*. But the great drawback of common-sense is that it, more often than not, tends to make a man self complacent and smug. Which is the very last thing that an earnest seeker after truth desires to be accused.

If it is true that common-sense limits man's horizons, then if he ever hopes to stumble upon the truth at all he obviously must keep his extra-sensory faculties as open as he can. Thus kept open, it is more than probable that something *uncommon* - in contrast to common-sense - may in due course of time impinge, out of nowhere as it were, upon his psychic field, wherewith habitual common-sense may be stunned out of its normal focus. If so, the development of extra-sensory faculties must evidently be of interest to all men of goodwill. For it is surely no mere subjective state which determines the truth, but certain laws and causes - which, whether visible or invisible, may well be accepted as ones of necessity.

A few fundamental principles may tentatively be established without necessarily committing ourselves, insofar as the acquisition of knowledge by extra-sensory faculties are concerned. It would be conservative enough to infer, as a general principle that out of the concatenation of extra-sensory data which impinges upon the individual psyche there springs forth perception. That out of perception arises awareness. That out of awareness - knowledge comes to be. That out of the synthesis of such knowledge only does experience emerge. And that, finally, out of the transmutation of such experience, true wisdom is born.

Appendix VIII : The Forms and Spheres

It should be realised that the 18 basic forms and their respective spheres mentioned are not repetitions of one and the same concentrated stage of attainment but of different stages altogether. They are a continuous *process*. The process, that is, of pushing consciousness from its crudest mundane level to its most translucent supramundane limits. And why? Because it is only when consciousness has been pushed to its most translucent level that it is able to investigate and observe things in their true light. It would be futile to direct attention to phenomena and the comprehension of the Four Noble Truths, the Chain of Dependent Origination, the Five Aggregates of Mundane Personality, the Twenty-Two Potential Faculties, the Twelve Bases of Cognition, and the Eighteen Elements, unless the basic forms and their respective spheres have been attained. And why? Because they serve as the base for comprehension of the different levels of purity and impurity with which phenomena is composed.

It is in view of this very impurity of consciousness pertaining to creatures in general that we discover Buddha hesitating to preach at the beginning of his mission, for fear no one would comprehend him. It was scarcely through peripheral gymnastics that Buddha himself arrived at the truth, considering that phenomena have to be directly experienced to be appreciated. Thus, through impurity of the consciousness which does the investigation, any rationalizing from the mundane level regarding aspects of existence are hardly crowned with success, issuing only in mere repetitions of what others have said, lacking depth, power, and conviction. As has been compared of old, a man with only word-depth is as one who keeps cows for hire, whereas only the one with insight is like the owner who enjoys all the products of the cow.

Thus, it is realised from experience that the various forms mentioned are successive levels of consciousness, of ever-increasing intensity and range. They are scarcely the result of auto-suggestion but the product of the process. They are actually aggregates of consciousness, fashioning into shape as concentration becomes keen. Thus we have the human aggregate of consciousness, the celestial aggregate, the Brahma aggregate, the Arūpa Brahma aggregate, and their respective refined counterparts. And so forth. The Arūpa Brahma aggregate does not imply that it is devoid of *form* but that the attainments practised by this kind of aggregate (such as the infinity of space) are formless. As for the spheres pertaining to each form, they are attainments (*sampadās*) containing inherent qualities peculiar to themselves.

In the process of attaining to final Arahattaship, nothing is left of these mundane aggregates except those pertaining to the crude human personality, which are completely rendered extinct as death descends. It may be observed, therefore, that the five aggregates of mundane personality do not merely imply those pertaining to the human form but also to its more subtle levels of refinement. Namely, the celestial, Brahma, and Arūpa Brahma aspect thereof.

It will be realised, therefore, that a mere perusal of Buddhist texts only results in confusion and lack of poise, for one is never completely assured that one's interpretation of the Buddha word is correct, considering that Buddha defined matters at devious levels, which definitions when detached from their level and applied superficially are bound to leave a dubious impress, conveying a different sense altogether. It is only after concentration up to a certain stage has been attained that a return to the texts reveals them in their true light. It is thus that *Sammā Samādhi* remains the final clause in the Eightfold Path, because it is the only method by which depth is attained and doubt resolved. As said of old:

“Meditate, O Bhikkhus, and be not negligent so as to allow remorse to befall you in time to come. This is the advice of the Tathāgata to you.”

Appendix IX : Element - Essence

The world is pervaded and impermeated by element-essences (dhātu-dhamma) which fuse to manifest as life. That which partakes of the elemental is termed *dhātu*, whereas essence is that portion which is termed *dhamma*. The element-essences which impermeate existence are classified as meritorious (kusala) and demeritorious (akusala).

Now there is a way of observing that which is meritorious (in oneself as well as the world at large) amidst that which is demeritorious. Impermeate the Dhammakāya field-of-consciousness (in jhāna) within the spheres of enlightenment and cessation (nirodha). Concentrate absolutely still therein, up to its refinedest peak. Then observe the environment within the Dhammakāya's sphere of vision. The element-essences which activate for good and evil in the world will then be perceived.

These element-essences are characterised by three colours or categories. There is the white element-essence, which instigates all that is wholesome in the world. Then there is the black element-essence, which instigates all that is unwholesome in the world. Between these two extremes, again, there is the element-essence which is grey, being the intermixture and impermeation of white with black, both struggling for predominance.

Now whensoever manifested life struggles in its meritorious ascent to good, it is constantly checked and obstructed by the element-essence which is black. Again, whensoever manifested life struggles in its demeritorious descent to evil, it too is checked and obstructed by the element-essence which is white. This is the result of astral forces at work, beyond the vision of the average man. As long as the white element-essence predominates, all activities are crowned with good. And the reverse, if the black element-essence predominates.

The black element-essences are externally characterised by the factors of greed, delusion, and hate.

Merit achieved by charity performed, morality observed, and meditation practised, is the result of element-essences which are white.

The element-essences which are white, black, and grey in each manifested (or unmanifested) factor of existence number by the Asankheyya (surpassing count). The centre of the sphere of knowledge is the meeting-place of these element-essences. It is, therefore, of great import to constantly observe in the depths of the spheres of knowledge, enlightenment, and cessation, which colour element-essence is activating from period to period. So as to be always on guard, against the threat of element-essences which are overwhelmingly black.

Meditation constantly practised, strengthens the white element-essence in the individual, so that it gradually comes to predominate and prevail. Evil being constantly performed, however, strengthens the black element-essence until it finally prevails and predominates. If, again, neither merit nor demerit is performed, it is the grey element-essence which prevails.

But, of course, it should be realised that only the Arahatta (Emancipated One) is completely pure and free from defilement, beyond merit and demerit, and rendered neutral (*avyākatā dhamma*). And this is so because of the cessation attainment (*nirodha samāpatti*) which he has achieved. The rest of creatures are impermeated by both black and white element-essences, which make for grey.

It should be realised by this investigation and observation of element-essences which pervade and impermeate the world, that manifest existence is always at the mercy of *astral* as well as physical forces which it is unable to penetrate and plumb. Due to these imperceptible factors which

impermeate and activate existence, mankind cannot be always complacently classed as the decider of its destiny but is, more often than not, only the maudlin victim thereof. In this mundane jungle there are no victors, only victims. And the only victories are moral ones.

The only way to put an end to the element-essences which are black is through the Noble Eightfold Path of Right Understanding, Right Aspiration, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Livelihood, Right Endeavour, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration. Or, more briefly, through the three main pillars of Morality, Concentration, and Wisdom.

The elimination of element-essences which are black is, of course, a slow and strenuous process. It is the inculcation of a discipline which issues in the form of perfect qualities of consciousness, so as to become character. What is character? It is nothing less than habits developed and digested so as to become part of consciousness. The fruit of a noble character is that it thinks, speaks, and acts nobly. A truly noble man acts nobly not because of any desire for heavenly rewards or worldly applause, but simply because nobility is part of his character, and he cannot but act according to his nature. The process of establishing nobility as part of our nature, so that we cannot but act thus, remains the problem of the earnest man.

Regarding the element-essences which pervade and impermeate life, it should be understood that not only is their manifestation specifically *astral*, but that they simultaneously manifest in the form of physicality. As Rousseau observes:

“It has been observed that the majority of men are often in the course of their lives quite unlike themselves, they seemed to be changed into quite different people... Looking within myself and seeking in others for the cause upon which these different states of being depended, I discovered that they had a great deal to do with our previous impressions from external objects, and that, being continually a little changed through the agency of our senses and our organs, we were unconsciously affected in our thoughts, our feelings, and even our actions by the impact of these slight changes upon us. Numerous striking examples that I had collected put the matter beyond all dispute, and thanks to their physical basis they seemed to me capable of providing an external code which, varied according to circumstances, could put or keep the mind in the state most conducive to virtue. From what errors would reason be preserved, and what vices would be choked even before birth, if one knew how to compel the brute functions to support that moral order which they so often disturb? Climates, seasons, sounds, colours, darkness, light, the elements, food, noise, silence, movement, repose - they all act on our machines, and consequently upon our consciousness, and they all offer us innumerable and almost certain opportunities for controlling those feelings, which we allow to dominate us, at their very onset.”

Rousseau himself confesses that in his youth, after once being accused of theft, he pushed the blame on an innocent girl:

“Never was wickedness further from me than at this cruel moment, and when I accused the poor girl, it is contradictory and yet it is true that my affection for her was the cause of what I did. She was present to my mind, and I threw the blame from myself on the first object that presented itself.”

Vigilance of mind (*satipatṭhāna*) is essential, in view of the lack of self-control to which the mind is always subject. Whenever a wholesome impulse manifests itself it is usually simultaneously

accompanied by its vicious counterpart. And, vice-versa. Once these impulses manifest in consciousness, they become rutted in a groove, because it is in the nature of consciousness to revolve in grooves and it is only after great effort that the vicious element is capable of being ejected, by the constant inculcation of wholesome impulses (sammāpadhāna). The effort, therefore, is to inculcate only such quantity of data which is most conducive to virtue, the rest being stifled out of memory, from the start. Since all minds move along a particular groove, of habit, the inculcation of positive and wholesome grooves is obviously more profitable in the long run than an inculcation of the reverse.

Even if not in actual application at any given moment, psychic data is preserved in memory for service as reference when circumstances require. In view of this, it is inevitable that each individual comprehends only that which he has experienced before, classifying all data in the light of past-experience, in the range and scope of his particular level of consciousness. This, of course, hardly implies that new experience may not instate fresh levels of consciousness, since consciousness is a loose osculatory potential arising through occasions of contact. Thus, if the element-essences mentioned, are beyond immediate apprehension, future perception of their existence may instate a radical change in an individual's psychic make-up, which would surely be beneficial in result, broadening his whole outlook.

We are all familiar with causes and effects. It is a platitude (though metaphysically questioned in some circles), that for anything to issue in an effect a cause is necessary. However, before a cause can manifest in an effect, it has to be precipitated through a void. This is so because (as we have observed from Whitehead) the system of electrons forming the primordial physical element is nothing at any instant. It requires its whole period (time) in which to manifest itself, and that if each period were to be divided into smaller electrons the vibratory system as one electronic entity would cease to exist. That is to say, it would reveal itself to be interspersed by voids. Thus, the very nature of phenomenality - characterised by the cyclic states of split-manifestation, abeyance, and extinction - preconditions it. All phenomena, consciousness included, are characterised by intermittency involving voidness. It is in view of this void hiatus characteristic of phenomenal manifestation that causal relations (as asserted by Hume) have *no perceptible and distinct connection* with each other, and that it is only through custom and habit that it is inferred that one thing ever passes to the existence of another.

That the universe does not collapse, however, is proof enough that causes do have connections with effects (and vice versa), even though the connections themselves may not be observed to have *distinct sequence* as such. And this is so, not only because causality necessitates the *contact of voidness* (thus being imperceptible) and the element of time, but because (as Spinoza observes) the mutable cause are so numerous that any one factor may be said to be the cause of its existence. Due to ignorance of all the factors involved, a particular factor (usually visible) is fastened on as the cause.

That all things must by their very nature activate and manifest within a broad framework of modes, has already been discussed. Incessantly though these shift and shuffle into each other, the more can they be said to remain what they essentially are. Namely, modes.

Regarding the apprehension of fundamental element-essences, however, it is something which through its very nature must come last. As Plato observes:

“In the world of knowledge the Form of the Good is perceived last and with difficulty, but when it is perceived it must be inferred that it is the cause of all that is right and beautiful in things, producing in the visible world light and the lord of light, and being itself lord in the intelligible world and the giver of truth and reason. And this Form of the Good must be perceived by whosoever would act wisely,

whether in public or in private."

We may conclude, therefore, that a profound grasp of modes and causes through which life manifests is essential if a comprehensive assessment of Ultimacy is ever to be attained. It remains the tentative task of the earnest man to discover what these modes and causes unfold and finally reveal.

