CHAPTER VI

Conclusion

The concept of Man and Universe according to the Pañca –Nikāya is camouflaged in formula of impermanence (anicca), unsatisfactoriness (dukkha) and egolessness (anatta). Collectively these are called “Three Characteristics” of Existence (ti-lakkhana) or the ‘General Characteristics’ (samanna-lakkhana). The first characteristic of existence maintains that the mysterious world is in a state of continual flux (santana) “all existence are momentary”¹ all conditioned things or phenomenal processes, mental as well as material, that go to make up samsaric plane of existence are transient or impermanent. “All becoming are impermanent, painful, of a nature to change.” ² The theory of anicca (impermanence) in Buddhist literature expounded the changing of Man and Universe.

Contemplating impermanence takes us through the first three stages of clear seeing. First we clearly see that all conditioned phenomena of body, mind, and environment are impermanent. Next we come to see that whatever is impermanent is unsatisfactory in that it can provide no lasting happiness. Then we realize that all impermanent, unsatisfactory phenomena of things,

¹. S. Vol. III, pp. 12, 18, 66, 90.
body and mind are no-self — they can't be the basis for a self, which by
definition would be permanent and (one would hope) satisfactory. They are
empty of self. They are also empty of what could belong to a self because
they are constantly changing and this change is largely beyond the control of
the conditioned mind.

In Pañca-Nikāya, the Buddha says materiality (rupa) is
impermanent. And feeling (vedana) and perception (sanna) and formations
(sankhara) and consciousness (vinnana) are impermanent. ³ Cannonical
commentary summarized that the five categories (khandhas) are
impermanent. In what, sense impermanent? Sense impermanent in the sense
of rise and fall (udaya-vaya).⁴ Again, ‘All is impermanent. And what is the
all that is impermanent? The eye is impermanent, visible objects (rupa) eye-
consciousness eye contact (ckkhu-samphassa) whatever is felt (jvedayita) as
pleasant or unpleasant or neither- unpleasant- nor-pleasant, born of eye
contact is impermanent. Likewise with the ear, nose, tongue, body and mind⁵
or quite succinctly, “All formations are impermanent”⁶ and “whatever is
inseparable from the idea of origination (samudaya) is inseparable from the

⁵. S. Vol .IV,p.28
idea of cessation” (nīroha). The canonical commentary adds, ‘Materiality (etc.) is impermanent in the sense of exhaustion ‘(khaya).

It is distinguished between the impermanent and the characteristic of impermanence, in Buddhaghosa’s commentaries. “The impermanent is to rise and fall and change, and because, after having been, they are not. But the characteristic of impermanence is their state of rise and fall and alteration, or it is their mode-transformation (adaravikara) called non-being after having been,” again “the eye (etc.) can be known as impermanent in the sense of its non-being after having been; and it is impermanent for four reasons as well: because it has rise and fall, because it changes, because it is temporary and because it denies permanence.”

The impermanence (anicca) is discernible empirically in the events of worldly phenomenon, which always is the notion of ‘rise and fall’ from time to time. Externally it is founding the inconsistency of ‘things’ which extends even to the periodical destruction of world system. According to the Pañca-Nikāya, really, whether of external things or the psycho-physical totally of human individual consists in succession and concatenation of microseconds. The world systems are in the inconstancy, ever-changing. It

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will be destroyed in experiencing a sequence of formation, existence, destruction and void.  

12 There is no exception at the physical levels to mind and body will undergo metabolism, passing through the process of birth, aging, illness and death. 13 Whereas impermanence of physical things is readily observable empirically, impermanence of consciousness is ready discerned, until it is pointed out the course our mind being existence, staying, changing, and extinction. Even more impermanence, however, in Buddhism is cognizance, mind or consciousness, which arises and ceases from moment to moment, just as a monkey ranging through a forest seizes a branch, and letting that go seizes another. 14 The Buddha’s word to the monks was also a reminder of the truth of impermanence: “Indeed, O monks, I declare to you, decay is inherent in all component things. Strive for perfection through heedfulness.” 15

Almost scholars distinguished in three aspects interlocking constituent of impermanence, namely, (1) change, (2) formation and (3) a recognizable pattern in a changing process which pattern is set out in the formula of dependent origination (paticca-samuppada).

The aspect of change is regarded as existent character of the word. In the progress of observation the Buddha realizes that the world is called as the meaning of transitory and void. It is transitory by nature that one perceives the world (loda-sanni). The eye is transitory by nature, mind-states, mind-consciousness, mind-contact, whatsoever weal or woe or neutral experienced arises owing to mind-contact that also is transitory by nature.  

It is void of the self in the formation of the eye objects eye-consciousness and the rest. The impermanence or change is not stipulations that the Buddha created. It was constant process in natural process in natural existence of phenomenal things. Through his penetration and realization in the word (loke or samkharaloke) a world-condition (lokadhammo) the Buddha declares, teaches and defines it, opens it and analyzes it. As the Buddha says, “I quarrel not with the world (the word in the sense of other people). It is the world quarrels with me. No preacher of the Norm (dhamma) quarrels with anyone in the world. That which is not upheld in the world of the sages of that I declare, “It is so” …… That is not upheld in the world of the sages there is permanent, stable, eternal materiality, not subject to the idea of change of decay in body, that I declare, “It is not” (Likewise with feeling, perception, the activities and consciousness). That is upheld in the

17. Ibid.
world of the sages there is impermanent, woeful and subject to the idea of change of decay, that I declare, “It is so.”  

Change is just a fact and verified by direct immediate observation. The Buddha uses a typically simple way-‘component things come and go, arise and perish’ to describe change in meaning of nature.

Visuddhimagga pointed out that ‘Impermanence’ is not always obvious except sought out. ‘The characteristic of impermanence does not become apparent because, when rise and fall are not given attention, it is concealed by continuity. However, when continuity is disrupted by discerning rise and fall, the characteristic of impermanence becomes apparent in its true nature.’  

The continuity is disrupted means when continuity is exposed by observation of the perpetual alteration of Dhammas as they go on occurring in succession. For it is not through connectedness of Dhammas that the characteristic of impermanence becomes apparent to one who rightly observes’ rise and fall, ‘ but rather the characteristic becomes properly evident through their disconnectedness, (regarded) as if they were iron darts.  

“If the getting of a selfhood (attabhava) so small as this were permanent, stable, eternal, individual, by nature unchanging, then the loving

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of the life of purity (brahmacariva) could not be described as for the best destruction of suffering would not be set forth.”

The second aspect of the formation mentioned to the process impermanent is to have a beginning and an end, to have ‘risen and fall.’ “There are three formed characteristics of the formed: arising is evident, fall is evident and the alteration of what is present (thitassa annathatam) is evident.” And one who possesses the three factors of ardent energy or endeavor (padhaniyanga) has understanding, possesses understanding (panna) extending to rise and disappearance.

The process of change is expounded by Buddhaghosa who makes use of the empirically observation. It is said that asoka tree’s shoot in the course of a few day’s from pale to dark red and then through brown, to green leaves, which eventually turn yellow, wither and fall to the ground. Or it is use of the illustration of a lighted lamp. “Where it goes to when its oil and wick are used up no one knows…. But that is crudely put, for the flame in each third portion of the wick as it gradually burns away ceases there without reaching the other parts. That is crudely put, too, for the flame in each inch, in each half-inch, in each thread, in each strand, will cease

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21. S. Vol .III.P.143  
22. A.Vol.I ,P.152  
24. Vism .P.75
without reaching the other strands, but no flame can appear without a strand.  

This is further developed in the commentary Visuddhimagga: formed (sankhata) Dhammas by means of cause and condition, they’re coming to be after not being, their acquisition of individuality (attabhava) is their rise. When it arises, it does not come from any heap or store, and when it ceases, it does not go in any direction. There is nowhere any depository in the way of a heap or store, prior to its arising, of the sound that arises when a lute is played, nor does it come from any store when it arises, nor does it go in any direction when it has ceased, but on the contrary, not having been, it is brought into being by depending on the lute, the let’s sound-board and a man’s appropriate effort, and having been, it vanishes, so too, all material (rupa) and immaterial (arupa) Dhammas come to be (with the aid of specific conditions), and having been, they vanish.

The transience and perpetual renewal of Dhammas is compared by the images as dew drops at sunrise, a bubble on water a line drawn on water, a mustard seed on an awl’s point and a lightning flash and they are as a conjuring trick, a mirage, a dream, a whirling firebrand’s circle (alata-

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25. Vism. P. 66
27. Vism.. P.63.
31. Dhp.Vs. 46.
cakka), a goblin city (gandhabbha nagara), forth\textsuperscript{33} a pantain trunk \textsuperscript{34} and so on.

The question of the extent of the moment, as conceived in the commentaries, must be examined. In Nikaya Sutta cited above gave ‘arising, fall and alteration of what is present’ as three characteristics of anything formed. In the commentaries this is restated as ‘rise, presence and dissolution’, \textsuperscript{35} which are each also called ‘sub-moments’.

The third aspect of impermanence is the pattern or structure of specific conditionality, still remains. It is briefly stated, “This being, that becomes, from the arising of this, that arise; this not being, that become not; from the ceasing of this, that ceases.”\textsuperscript{36} Buddha has told cause of Dhammas that come into being due to a cause that which brings there cessation too. In more detail it finds, “consciousness come into being (sambhuti), by dependence on a duality. What is that duality? Owing to the eye and objects arises eye consciousness. The eye is impermanent, changing, -its state is ‘becoming otherness.’ So also are objects. Thus this dual, mobile and transitory, impermanent, changing, its state is ‘becoming otherness.’ Eye-consciousness is impermanent, changing,-its state is ‘becoming otherness.’

\textsuperscript{32} Sn.v.807. 
\textsuperscript{33} Dph.Vs.40. 
\textsuperscript{34} S. Vol. III,P.141. 
\textsuperscript{35} vism. P.31. 
That condition, that relation of the uprising of eye-consciousness, - they also are impermanent, changing its state is ‘becoming otherness.’ This eye-consciousness, arising as it does from an impermanent relation, how could it be permanent? Now the striking together, the falling together, the meeting together of these three things, - this is called ‘eye-contact (phassa).’ Eye-contact is impermanent; changing its state is ‘becoming otherness.’ That condition, that relation of the uprising of eye-contact, - they also are impermanent, changing its state is ‘becoming otherness.’ This eye-contact, arising as it does from an impermanent relation, - how could it be permanent? It is one touched by contact that feels (vedeti)’ likewise who choose (ceteti), likewise who perceives (sanjanati), so these transient, fugitive Dhammas too, (namely, feeling, choice and perception) are impermanent, changing. There state is ‘becoming otherness,’ The same treatment is accorded to ear-sounds, nose-odors, tongue-savors, body-tangible and mind-metal state.\(^{37}\)

Buddhist literature pointed out that all formations are subject to dissolution, if a man sees as impermanent the eye, which is impermanent, he has right view. The Bahudhatuka Sutta of Majjhima Nikaya says, “It is impossible, it cannot come to pass that a man possessed of (right) view

\(^{37}\)  S. IV, PP.69-70.
should go to any construction as permanent- this situation does not occur.”

In Anguttara Nikaya it adds “Formations are impermanent, thus unstable, thus insecure are all compounded things, be ye dissatisfied them, be ye repelled by them, be ye utterly free from them.”

The reality of impermanence means that discernment of the transient nature of all compounded things as they really are. It is the basic nature of the worlds without any exception.

“Impermanent are all component things
They arise and cease that is their nature,
They come into being and pass away,
Release from them is bliss supreme”

(anicca vatta sankhara-upadda vaya dhammino uppajjita nirujjhanti-tesam vupassmo sukho).

In a process the nature of world the law of impermanence (anicca) possesses almost in every component of thing. This is contrary to externalism (sassatvada), which is misconception of the nature of empirical world. The Brahmajala Suttra of Digha Nikaya refers to ten variations on the doctrine of externalism, which is refuted by empiric knowledge and analysis. On the other hand it rejects the other extreme, which was presented by

materialists, the annihilationism (ucchadavada). The repudiation of both this extreme finds in the following words of the Buddha: “This world, kaccayana usually bases (its view) on two things: on existence (sassatvada) and on non-existence (ucchadavada). Now whoever with right insight sees the uprising of the world as it really is, does not hold with the non-existence of the world. But he, who with right insight sees the passing away of the world as it really is, does not hold with the existence of the world.\(^{41}\)

In other words, there is only arising (uppada) and passing away (vaya), a continual state of flux. The optimist may only see the world as constant becoming. The pessimist may be engrossed with the constant pass away but Buddhist objectivity provides us a picture of a continuously changing universe as flux that flows through all nature, both animate and inanimate. In Buddhism said everything is arising from conditional causation in the domination of process Cause and Effect. The Buddha used the word ‘nadisotoviya’ (flowing stream) to express a flux of cause and effect that is constantly changing. It flows so continuously that man finds it hard to perceive a break. The doctrine of causality and conditionality also says to us that the necessary to avoid of the both extreme of determinism and indeterminism which lead to no room for free will and responsibility. The

\(^{41}\) S. Vol II,P.15.
world of phenomenon is brought impermanent characteristic, whatever of
the nature of arising has the nature of ceasing. They appear and disappear,
making way for another to succeed.

The second basic characteristic of the world of experience is
namely unsatisfactoriness (dukkha) or subject to conflict. It is logical
corollary arising from the law of impermanence. It cannot find permanent
happiness in the impermanent nature of everything. Whatever is transient is
also lead to fact unsatisfactory, since every form of samsaric existence is
impermanent, unsatisfactory, and imperfect. In Visuddhimagga
Buddhaghosa recognize the existing of unsatisfactoriness is the process of
change when he explain dukkha (unsatisfactoriness) as three fold namely
dukkha-dukkha (dukkha as suffering), viparinamadukkha (dukkha as
change) and sankhara-dukkha (dukkha as conditioned state).\(^{42}\) In the
Dhammapada Buddha said, “transient are all component things; when this
with wisdom, one discerns, then one is disgusted with unsatisfactoriness:
this is the path to purity” (sabbe sankhara anicca ti yada pannapassati, atha
nibbindati dukkha: esa maggo visuddiya).\(^{43}\)

Beside the commentary Visuddhimagga mentions to other divisions
of dukkha. Such bodily and mental affliction as earache, toothache, fever

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\(^{42}\) S. Vol IV, P.259.
\(^{43}\) Dph. Vs.277.
born of lust, fever born of hate, etc., is called concealed suffering (paticchanna dukkha or apakatadukkha); it is also called unevident suffering. Affliction produced torture etc. are grouped under exposed or evident suffering (pakata or apaticchanna dukkha). It is called evident suffering. Buddhaghosa identifies intrinsic dukkha with direct dukkha (nippariyaya dukkha). All in the exposition of dukkha beginning ‘birth’ (jati) are called indirect dukkha (pariyaya dukkha) (except intrinsic dukkha) because they form the basic for one kind of dukkha or another. In the first discourse to the first five disciples (Pancavaggiya bhikhu) the Buddha says, “And this, monk, is the Noble Truth of suffering: birth is suffering, old age is suffering, disease is suffering and dying is suffering, association with what is not dear is suffering, separation from what is dear is suffering, not getting what one wants is suffering, in short the five aggregates of grasping (Panca-upadanakkhandha) are suffering.” This element of dukkha contains of thirteen different items in Nakaya literature. These are (1) birth (jati), (2) ageing, (3) disease (vyadhi), (4) dying (marana), (5) grief (domanassa), (6) lamentation (parideva), (7) pain (dukkha), (8) sorrow (soka), (9) tribulation (upayasa), (10) association with persons and things which are not dear (appiyehisampayoga), (11) dissociation from persons and things which are

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44. Pancavaggiya bhikhu: The first five disciples of the Buddha are, namely, Kondanna, Vappa, Bhaddiya, Mahanama and Assaji. They also happened to be his erstwhile colleagues.
dear (piyahi vippayoga), (12) not getting what one desires (yam pi iccham na labhati tam) and finally, (13) the five groups of grasping (pancupadanakkhandha).\textsuperscript{46} From the different items of suffering or unsatisfactoriness (dukkha) as described in the scriptures it can be recognized in aspect of physical meaning (birth, ageing, disease, death), as well as of psychological meaning (sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, despair, association with persons and things which are not dear, disassociation with persons and things which are dear, not to obtain what one wants is suffering) and of doctrinal import (five aggregates of grasping). The doctrinal aspect of suffering is stated in brief in the discourse referring to five aggregates (Panca-upadanakkhandha) of grasping; namely: (i) grasping of materiality (rupa), (ii) grasping of feeling (vedana upadana), (iii) grasping of perception (sanna upadana), (iv) grasping of mental formation (sankhara upadana) and (v) grasping of consciousness (vinnana upadana). In other words, holding on to five constituent factors of empiric individuality, they are internal or external cause suffering. This is a very precise statement full of meaning covering all spheres of human life.

The Pañca –Nikāya explains ‘the world is established on suffering’

\textsuperscript{46} The Vinaya Pitaka (Vin. Vol I, p.10) version drops nos.5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 which does not, hover, materially alter the content of dukkha, The Vibhanga contains a similar list with the exception of vyadhī. M. Vol I, P.185 and D. Vol.II, P.305
The existence of dukkha (suffering) is the reality in the there nature, not because the Buddha said they are suffering (dukkha). In general, suffering (dukkha) being the most elementary and universal fact of experience undergone by the vast majority of beings, the Buddha adopts it as the principle on which he bases his scheme of spiritual training leading to wisdom, which gives a clear understanding of life and the external world, enabling one to overcome suffering (dukkha).

Dukkha (suffering) embraces the whole of existence, whether sentient or non-sentient, animate or inanimate; like or dislike, a pleasant or unpleasant condition or a neutral one, all come under dukkha. What is the Noble truth of origin of suffering? The Buddha teaches: “O monks, it is that craving which gives rise to fresh rebirth and bond up with lust and greed, now here, now there, finds ever fresh delight. It is the sensual craving, the craving for existence, and even the craving for self-annihilation wherever in the world there are the delightful and pleasurable forms, there this craving arises, there it takes its root such is said, O monks, to be the Noble truth of origin of suffering.”

Dukkha is understood because it is changing constantly, all the time, at any moment. All those things happy or suffering, they come and go, begin and end, the whole process of this world just

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operates in this way. For this very reason, the concept of suffering necessarily includes the general insecurity of the whole of our experience. The Buddha taught, ‘whatever is impermanent or changing, all that is suffering’ (yad aniccamtam dukkha). Before he said so he observed the whole world and found nothing but a process of change. So changing means the world. The very characteristic of our existence that remains there all the time is but changing whether for better on for worse. In the first sermon at the Deer Park (Migadaya): The Lord Buddha declared: "Life is nothing but suffering" and "The five aggregates are suffering". How important are they! These words were repeated several times by Him and His disciples during forty five years of His preaching. Once, at Saavatthi, He said:

“I will teach you, brethren, pain and the root of pain. Do you listen to it? And what, brethren, is pain? Body, brethren, is pain: feeling is pain: perception..., the activities ..., consciousness is pain. That, brethren, is the meaning of pain. And what, brethren, is the root of pain? It is this craving that leads downward to rebirth, along with the lure and the lust that lingers longingly now here now there: namely, the craving for sense, the craving for rebirth, the craving to have done with rebirth". 49

Addressing the first five monks the Buddha said Dukkha is caused by wrong perception of the Pancakkhandha, which makes man becomes attached to them, is stated differently elsewhere. The samyutta Nikaya records a conversation between the Buddha and Anurudha on this subject. The Buddha questions Anurudha whether the five aggregates are permanent or not, to which the latter answers in the negative. Then he asks Anurudha whether what is impermanent is suffering (dukkha) or pleasant (sukkha). The latter says it is suffering (dukkha).

The way suffering appearing in this world is through six sense doors of eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind. If the object is pleasant, one is attracted and if unpleasant, one is repelled. Thus, whatever kind of feeling (vedana) - pleasant, painful or neutral –one approves of and cherishes the feeling and lust of feelings, cling to existence (upadana) that gives rise to suffering, conflict, unsatisfactoriness through process of sense perception and such types of mentally anguishing experiences connoted by the term dukkha (suffering). The process of sense perception is described in numerous places in the Nikayas. Such as in the Madhupindika Sutta of Majjhima Nikaya it analyzes “ Depending eye and visible from arises visual consciousness meeting of the three is contact (phassa); because of contact

50. S. Vol. IV, P.382.
arise feeling (vedana) what one feels one perceives (sannati); what one reflects on, one is obsessed with (papanceti); what one is obsessed with, due to that concepts characterized by such obsessed perception (papancasannasankha) assails such a person with regard to visible forms cognizable by the eye, belonging to the past, future and the present."\textsuperscript{51} The Buddha taught about suffering and no-suffering. Stressfulness or suffering is of two forms; fundamental and subjective.

Fundamental dukkha is the intrinsic nature of all phenomena; what comes to be, rises up and exists; is subject to decline. Because no thing comes to an absolute point of rest; there is a state of agitation and disruption. All formations, whether these are inanimate-material or a sentient being; are subject to fundamental dukkha. A house is built and needs to be maintained to serve as a shelter; the older the structure; the more maintenance is required until its ultimate demise. And the same can be said of the physical body of a sentient being; it is beset with the elements, illness, aging and ultimately death. This is fundamental dukkha; the state of fabrications coming together and declining.

\textsuperscript{51} M. Vol.I, PP. 111-112.
In the words of the Buddha: “..This is the Noble Truth of Affliction; ‘Birth is painful, aging is painful and death is painful,”\textsuperscript{52}

Subjective Dukkha is the unsatisfactoriness of the fundamental aspect, but personalized by the sentient point-of-view, as one experiences sensate phenomena.

In the words of the Buddha: “Sorrow, weeping, affliction and mental distress are painful, Associating with what is displeasing is painful, separation from what is pleasing is painful and not having what is desired is painful, …” \textsuperscript{53}

Knowledge of this subjective or personal experience of Dukkha is the first-principle of the Buddha’s teachings. The Buddha had said: “In brief, identification with the five bases of causality are painful.” \textsuperscript{54}

In the Buddha’s teachings, the human condition and experience is housed within the “five bases of causality subject to be identified with”: material form, sensations of feeling, sense-awareness, volitional-cognition and consciousness.

\textsuperscript{52} S. Vol. V, PP.357-359.  
\textsuperscript{53} Ibid  
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid
The experience of our world is based upon these, and is known or felt through the stimulation and interaction of the “six extensions of sensation”: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind, as these arise with their respective objects; eye and forms, ear and sounds, nose and smells, tongue and tastes, body and the sense of touch, and the mind and phenomena. These arise with consciousness (awareness; much like a container of experience), and the combination of these three: sense, object of sense and consciousness; together make what is called contact with the sensation. As these rise and fall, so does recognition of our physical world.

Both the five bases and the six extensions of sensations are what make up our human experience of reality and of anything that can be known; as the Buddha had sometimes referred to these as loka - variously translated as ‘the universe… the world… the mundane… the all.’ It is precisely this system of sense experience that the Buddha used to teach the Dhamma - the Truth of Nature.

All psycho-physiological phenomena are a chain of events and interactions; arising, completing their cycle and ceasing, lending to others in a continuous flow of change. When there is ignorance; the unawareness of phenomena as it is - there is volitional cognition; where one concocts the
assumption that the five bases of causality, and the interplay of the six extensions of sensation; comprise a lasting person, self or soul; that there is a stable continuity of form and sensate-experience. Because of this, one is of the viewpoint that material form, sensations of feeling, sense-awareness, volitional cognition and consciousness are oneself; that there is a self that possesses these or that this self is possessed by them.

“He is of the viewpoint that materiality is ‘Self’, or ‘Self’ possesses materiality, or materiality is in ‘Self’, or ‘Self’ is in materiality. He is of the viewpoint that sensations of feeling … that sense-awareness … that volitional-cognition … that consciousness is ‘Self’, or ‘Self’ possesses consciousness, or consciousness is in ‘Self’, or ‘Self’ is in consciousness.”

These assumptions, beset by unawareness of the true nature of things; sets the stage of consciousness for the arising of desire and the preliminary step to the taking up of a new being, a new becoming to be reborn. This process, based on the analysis of Dependant Causality would be as follows: upon ignorant (unaware) contact, sensations arise; upon sensations, desire arises (for states of being, non-being or neither); upon desire, identification arises (here one identifies with the arisen event); upon

identification, becoming arises (the maturing of identification); upon becoming, birth arises… This birth is the cognition (the concocting), of a new mind-body that has formed and arisen in identification with sensations. …upon birth, old-age arises…

Here this new mind-body declines, and there is the experience of subjective dukkha or displeasure in its various forms; pain, dissatisfaction and mental distress.

…upon old-age, death arises…This is the extinction of the new mind-body having completed its cycle and its return to void states of mind.

This interaction is all taking place within the five bases, and when the common person is unaware of the truth of causality; he identifies with what has arisen as self or person. This birth is not of the physical body, but of a mind-moment, which occurs again and again; borne out in a series of ignorant contacts. It is because of this process of ignorant contacts that the assumption of the viewpoint ‘I am’ is reinforced.

“Therefore because of these viewpoints this ‘I am’ has not vanished. Therefore, monks, because this ‘I am’ has not vanished, he is beset with these five characteristics; the eye characteristic, the ear characteristic,
the nose characteristic, the tongue characteristic and the body characteristic. There exists, monks, the mind; there exists its phenomena and there exists the factor of ignorance. Born of ignorant contact, monks, the untaught-commoner is influenced by sensations; thus it occurs to him ‘I am’, thus it occurs to him ‘I am this’, thus it occurs to him ‘I exist’, thus it occurs to him ‘I shall not exist’, thus it occurs to him ‘I shall be composed of materiality’, thus it occurs to him ‘I shall not be composed of materiality’, thus it occurs to him ‘I shall be composed of sense-awareness’, thus it occurs to him ‘I shall not be composed of sense-awareness’, thus it occurs to him ‘I shall consist of neither sense-awareness nor not of sense-awareness’.”

This premise of personal identity with phenomena results in uneasiness and stress as the individual struggles to maintain this perspective as stable and adjust to the ever-changing flow of experience. This struggle manifests as tendencies of craving; craving for that which is desirable to last, to be rid of that which is undesirable and any of a seemingly numberless variety of preferential possibilities. Once craving matures into attachment i.e. the full taking-up of identification with the arisen event; then the becoming and birth of a momentary mind-body relationship with the event occurs – ‘I am and this is mine’. It is this personal event-experience that

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further matures and is experienced as affliction in variations from the most ordinary dissatisfaction to pain and extreme mental distress.

The solution to this is through cultivating the mind to see the true nature of phenomenal events as they are. Then one can understand the consequences that develop from identifying with what has arisen – and the benefits of mindful restraint. This leads to knowledge that nothing lasts from one moment to the next, including those factors that comprise the observer perspective. With knowledge of impermanence there is the cessation of this struggle born out of ignorance. Just as ignorant contact and craving leads to self-identification with the arisen events resulting in dissatisfaction and frustration; it is knowledge of these events as they are, that cultivates wisdom and leads to restraint, detachment and ultimately to liberation and peace.

Thus for the liberated being, based on the analysis of Dependant Genesis, this would be as follows: With knowledge of causality (mindfulness of phenomena as it is); upon contact, sensations arise. Sensations known with mindfulness are seen as impermanent, unstable and no-self.
“And of what is impermanent, unpleasant, and of the nature to change, is it proper to regard these as ‘this is mine, I am this, this is my ‘Self’”? “No, Lord.”

The Buddhist view of self is that it is made up of five distinct parts or khandas, none of these are permanent as they are subject to change and decay. These khandas do not continue into the next birth as the individual consciousness remains in a state of flux and change throughout ones existence. The Buddha taught his followers to constantly detach themselves from the illusion of the involvement of self in their perceptions and experiences to attain truth and emancipation from suffering.

As indicative of a general characteristic of phenomena, the term dukkha should not be understood in a narrower sense to mean only pain, suffering, misery or sorrow. As a Philosophical term it has a wider connotation, as wide as that of the term anicca. In this wider sense, it includes deeper ideas such as imperfection, unrest, conflict in short unsatisfactoriness, this is precisely why even the state of jhana, resulting from the practice of higher meditation and which free from the ordinarily
understood are also included in dukkha. This is also why the characterization dukkha is extended even to matter (rupa).

We come to the third basic characteristic of all phenomena is called anatta (non-substantial). It means that every things in this world is only to subject continually change, but also the focus of Non-substantial. The existence of world is the chain of events that combined from component things. Unbelievable as it seems, this body, this appears to be solid and permanent, is in actual fact composed of sub-atomic particles that are changing at every second. Not only did the Buddha declare that all conditioned phenomena were impermanent, but by analyzing the self-possessing in each being. Buddha also realized that there was no permanent entity called self. All that existed was an ever-changing process.

The Buddha teaches that what we call ego, self, soul, personality, etc., are merely conventional terms that do not refer to any real, independent entity. According to Buddhism there is no reason to believe that there is an eternal soul that comes from heaven or that is created by itself and that will transmigrate or proceed straight away either to heaven or hell after death. Buddhists cannot accept that there is anything either in this world or any other world that is eternal or unchangeable. We only cling to ourselves and
hope to find something immortal. We are like children who wish to clasp a rainbow. To children, a rainbow is something vivid and real; but the grown-ups know that it is merely an illusion caused by certain rays of light and drops of water. The light is only a series of waves or undulations that have no more reality than the rainbow itself.

Man has done well without discovering the soul. He shows no signs of fatigue or degeneration for not having encountered any soul. No man has produced anything to promote mankind by postulating a soul and its imaginary working. Searching for a soul in man is like searching for something in a dark empty room. But the poor man will never realize that what he is searching for is not in the room. It is very difficult to make such a person understand the futility of his search.

Those who believe in the existence of a soul are not in a position to explain what and where it is. The Buddha's advice is not to waste our time over this unnecessary speculation and devote our time to strive for our salvation. When we have attained perfection then we will be able to realize whether there is a soul or not. A wandering ascetic named Vacchagotta asked the Buddha whether there was an Atman (self) or not. The story is as follows:
Vacchagotta comes to the Buddha and asks:

'Venerable Gotama, is there an Atman? The Buddha is silent.

'Then Venerable Gotama, is there no Atman? Again the Buddha is silent.

Vacchagotta gets up and goes away.

After the ascetic has left, Ananda asks the Buddha why He did not answer Vacchagotta's question. The Buddha explains His position:

'Ananda, when asked by Vacchagotta, the Wanderer: 'Is there a Self? If I had answered: 'There is a Self'. Then, Ananda, that would be siding with those recluses and brahmanas who hold the eternalist theory (sassata-vada).'

'And Ananda, when asked by the Wanderer: 'Is there no Self? if I had answered: 'There is no Self', then that would be siding with those recluses and brahmanas who hold the annihilationist theory (uccedavada).

'Again, Ananda, when asked by Vacchagotta: 'Is there a Self? If I had answered: 'There is a Self', would that be in accordance with my knowledge that all dhammas are without Self? ‘Surely not, Sir.’ 'And again, Ananda, when asked by the Wanderer: 'Is there no Self?', if I had answered: 'There is no Self', then that would have created a greater confusion in the
already confused Vacchagotta. For he would have thought: Formerly indeed I had an *Atman* (Self), but now I haven't got one.  

To understand the *Anatta* doctrine, one must understand that the eternal soul theory _'I have a soul'_ and the material theory _'I have no soul'_ are both obstacles to self-realization or salvation. They arise from the misconception _'I AM'_. Hence, to understand the *Anatta* doctrine, one must not cling to any opinion or views on soul-theory; rather, one must try to see things objectively as they are and without any mental projections. One must learn to see the so-called 'I' or Soul, Self for what it really is: merely a combination of changing forces.

The Buddha taught that what we conceive as something eternal within us, is merely a combination of physical and mental aggregates or forces (*pancakkhandha*), made up of body or matter (*rupakkhandha*), sensation (*vedanakkhandha*), perception (*sannakkhandha*), mental formations (*samkharakkhandha*) and consciousness (*vinnanakkhandha*). These forces are working together in a flux of momentary change; they are never the same for two consecutive moments. They are the component forces of the psycho-physical life. When the Buddha analyzed the psycho-

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physical life, He found only these five aggregates or forces. He did not find any eternal soul. However, many people still have the misconception that the soul is the consciousness. The Buddha declared in unequivocal terms that consciousness depends on matter, sensation, perception and mental formations and that it cannot exist independently of them.

The Anatta doctrine of the Buddha is over 2500 years old. Today the thought current of the modern scientific world is flowing towards the Buddha's Teaching of Anatta or No-Soul. In the eyes of the modern scientists, man is merely a bundle of ever-changing sensations. Modern physicists say that the apparently solid universe is not, in reality, composed of solid substance at all, but actually a flux of energy. The modern physicist sees the whole universe as a process of transformation of various forces of which man is a mere part. The Buddha was the first to realize this.

The mere belief in an immortal soul, or the conviction that something in us survives death, does not make us immortal unless we know what it is that survives and that we are capable of identifying ourselves with it. Most human beings choose death instead of immortality by identifying themselves with that which is perishable and impermanent by clinging
stubbornly to the body or the momentary elements of the present personality, which they mistake for the soul or the essential form of life.

About those researches of modern scientists who are now more inclined to assert that the so-called 'Soul' is no more than a bundle of sensations, emotions, sentiments, all relating to the physical experiences. It is the same Anatta doctrine of the Buddha that was introduced in the Pañca – Nikāya.

The belief in soul or Self and the Creator God, is so strongly rooted in the minds of many people that they cannot imagine why the Buddha did not accept these two issues which are indispensable to many religions. In fact some people got a shock or became nervous and tried to show their emotion when they heard that the Buddha rejected these two concepts. That is the main reason why to many unbiased scholars and psychologists stands unique when compared to all the other religions. At the same time, some other scholars who appreciate the various other aspects of Buddhism thought that Buddhism would be enriched by deliberately re-interpreting the Buddha word 'Atta' in order to introduce the concept of Soul and Self into Buddhism. The Buddha was aware of this unsatisfactoriness of man and the conceptual upheaval regarding this belief. “All conditioned things are impermanent. All
conditioned things are suffering. All conditioned or unconditioned things are soulless or selfless.”

When we look at a flower and think a little we can perceive that the flower could not have had its existence without the Earth, the Sun, the rain, and the gardener who tends the plant, the fertilizer and the clouds. In a way of speaking the entire Universe has come together to bring forth the flower. The flower could not exist without each and every element of the Universe that has helped bring it into existence. It is in this sense that we say that the flower is empty of a separate self. It is in no way separate from the clouds, the sunshine, the rain and all the other elements in the Universe that have caused it to have its being. This is the concept of Anatta and it is basic to Buddhism.

But when you or I or anybody else who is not a poet or a thinker or a philosopher looks at a flower we generally do not perceive all these relationships. Our habits of thinking and conceptualizing cut the Universe into pieces in order to name it and classify it and thus make sense out of it. This however is just the way of our looking at the world. Our conscious attention has this characteristic that it can focus on only one very small

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59. Dhp. vs. 277,278,279.
aspect of the world at a time and it has to ignore everything else. This is however the way we think; this is not the way the Universe really is.

The concept of anatta of Buddhism religion forces us to look at the flower in relation to the rest of existence. It forces us to perceive the relationships between the flower and the rest of the Universe. We see that the flower arises out of these relationships; that the flower has no self and no being apart from its relationship to the Earth, the Sun, the rain and so on. And thus we are able to gain a very significant insight. We begin to see the world in terms of relationships that are interdependent. One cannot exist without all the others. If you are a poet, you will see clearly that there is a cloud floating in this sheet of paper. Without a cloud, there will be no rain; without rain, the trees cannot grow; and without trees, we cannot make paper...So we can say that the cloud and the paper 'inter-are.' We cannot just be by ourselves alone; we have to inter-be with every other thing. This outlook would transform our inter-personal relationships also. We would perceive that we need our friends, our relatives, our parents, our enemies and in fact the whole of humanity for our existence and being. We would not have the sense of separation from them or from life. We would realize that we could not exist without these people and we would be more willing to respect their rights, needs and right to live and to be. The same type of
analysis that is applied to the self can be equally applied to all other phenomena. The well-known story of ‘the chariot' is worth reproducing as it clearly illustrates the distinction between the concept of the Self and its aggregate parts.

Whenever different parts, as axle, wheels, frame, pole, etc are combined in a certain manner, we use the conventional designation ‘chariot'. But if we examine one part after the other, we cannot in the ultimate sense, discover anything that can be called a chariot. The Buddha asserted that a chariot, like the self, does not exist as a substantial thing independent of its individual components. It is not equivalent to any of its individual parts, nor does the entire collection of those parts constitute a chariot. The term chariot is something designated of an assemblage of parts, none of which, either individually or collectively, is a chariot. The chariot comes into existence only when the label chariot is designated on the basis of those parts. It is likewise with the Five Groups of Existence (khanda). If they are present, one uses the conventional designation ‘being' or ‘personality', etc. But if we examine each phenomenon in its ultimate sense, there is nothing that can form a basis for such conceptions as ‘I am' and ‘I’. Hence in the ultimate sense only mental and physical phenomena exist.

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It seems to follow from this deconstruction that human beings live in ignorance and delusion regarding their own selves. Of the many delusions there are three which are considered as the most important: the illusion of seeing permanence in the impermanent, of seeing satisfaction in the unsatisfactory, and of seeing a Self in the selfless.

The greatest illusion we suffer is when we perceive ourselves as self-contained egos, clinging to various ideas and images that we have formed of ourselves as the irrefutable truth of our own identity. Because we make the view of Self the lookout point from whence we survey the world, our minds divide everything up into dualities of ‘I' and ‘not-I', and what is ‘mine' and ‘not-mine'. “The eye (ear, nose, tongue, body and mind and their six external objects)” is impermanence, what is impermanent is fraught with sorrow is not ‘self’ or, ‘All is not self’. And what is the all that is not self? The eye is not self, etc…….”61 “All things (dhamma) are no-self”? 62 The concept of Egolessness (anatta) in the commentary Patisanbhidamagga63 is said that human existence is only a composite of the five aggregates or constituents (khandhas) corporeality or physical form (rupa), feelings or sensations (vinnana) none of which is the self or soul. In a process of

62. Dhp. vs. 279.
63. Ps. I. 37.
continuous change, the khandhas themselves are not enduring, but are series
of momentary events, each such event standing in a casual relationship to
next. While there is thus a flux of constantly changing factors in any given
empirical individual. If the world were substance the impact of change
would not influence on the constituent of things, everything could not
change from this state to other state and that it is contrary with the nature of
world.

From the above saying of the Buddha one clearly understands that
the aim of Buddha’s teachings is neither to search for the first cause of
genesis nor to the final end of man and universe, but to completely realize
the nature of Man and Universe, which is only a combination of suffering
(dukkha), impermanence (anicca), and no-self (anatta).