Chapter - V

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So much has been said or written, in the previous chapters, either against or in favour of the problem before us. But still it seems to us that nothing has been said and nothing has been written. But why? Because, it is easy to say and believe that there is a permanent entity called 'Soul' or 'Self' which maintains connecting link between one life and the next, and which experiences the effect of Karma, here and hereafter, as most of the people say and believe so. But it is very very difficult to make arguments or to comment anything in favour of the doctrine of not-self or soullessness, as because 99.9% people of the world would hardly believe it. "The belief in the categories of an abiding self with changing qualities is so deeply rooted in our habits of thought that we are reluctant to admit the doctrine of pure and complete change. Even among the Buddhist schools, the doctrine did not hold undisputed sway. The notion of a permanent entity, constituting reality, though officially banned and repudiated, constantly tended to appear through some back-door and to haunt the domain of Buddhist Philosophy in various disguises" - says Dr. Malalasekera, a genuine Buddhist scholar of the present century, in connection with the Buddha's doctrine of Anatta.

From this just remark of Dr. Malalasekera, it is clear that the truth of Anatta is, of all truths, the most difficult to realise. For this reason, Buddhaghosa, who ranks in the Buddhist Church as its greatest commentator and exegetist, also said: "Anatta-lakkhana-paññāpanaṁ hi aññassa ñassesu avisayo, sabbaññu-Buddhānaṁ eva visayo - the characteristics of not-self is the province of none but the Perfectly Enlightened Ones i.e. the Buddhas. Because, till all the fetters (=samyojanas) are completely broken and insight
(paññā) has been properly developed, our attempts to escape from belief in Self are like those of the hare in the old Indian tale who, annoyed with the earth, jumped off it, hoping never to return, only to find that the higher he jumped the greater was the thud with which he fell. Not to speak of the modern scholars, even king Milinda, who was highly renowned for his unparallel scholasticism of his time, could not realise the truth of Anattā, the Buddha's bold and epoch-making doctrine against the universally popular theory of the existence of a permanent Soul. The king raised many questions in connection with it and asked the venerable Nāgasena. The questions are as follows:

1. "If, most revered Nāgasena, there be no permanent individuality (no soul) involved in the matter, who is it, pray, who gives to you members of the Order, your robes and food and lodging and necessaries for the sick?"

2. "Who is it who enjoys such things when given?"

3. "Who is it who lives a life of righteousness?"

4. "Who is it who devotes himself to meditation?"

5. "Who is it who attains to the goal of the Excellent Way, to Nibbāna?"

6. "Who is it who destroys or kills living creatures?"

7. "Who is it who takes what is not given?"
8. "Who is it who lives an evil life of worldly lusts; who speaks lies; who drinks strong drinks; who commits any one of the five sins which work out their bitter fruit even in this life? If that be so, there is neither merit nor demerit; there is neither doer nor causer of good or evil deeds; there is neither fruit nor result of good or evil Karma. If, most revered Nāgasena, we are to think that were a man to kill you, there would be no murderer, then it follows that there are no real masters and teachers in your Order, and that your ordinations are void."

These and such others are the objections against the denial of the soul put forth before Thera Nāgasena by the king. But Nāgasena was an Arahant. So he could satisfy the king by removing his doubts. The king was so pleased that he said: even if the Buddha were present now, he would speak in praise of you, revered Nāgasena, saying: "Well, well, Nāgasena, you have answered very nicely."

But now-a-days where is such a versatile genius, at the same time an Arahant like Nāgasena? So, who will remove the doubts of the modern scholars as regards the Buddha's doctrine of Anattā? It, therefore, seems to us ridiculous when we find peculiar interpretations of the doctrine, as some scholars attempted to explain. Without going through the original scriptures even renowned philosopher like Dr. Radhakrishnan made an erroneous statement that the Buddha had the same theory about Atman as in the 'Upanishad, but he (the Buddha) had not clearly referred it anywhere."
We fail to understand how a great Pali scholar like Mrs. Rhys Davids could remark in her later works\(^{(5)}\) that the Buddha did not deny the soul or self outright, rather the Buddha advocated the existence of soul and carried on the tradition of the Upanishads and thus withdrawing completely from her previous interpretation - "how carefully and conscientiously this anti-substantialist position had been cherished" by the Buddha. More astonishing was that she blamed the compilers of the Pali Piṭakas for not maintaining the purity of the Buddha's teachings\(^{(6)}\). Prof. Dr. Hajime Nakamura, a veteran Buddhist scholar of Japan, also could not properly understand the true implication of the Buddha's doctrine of Anattā. He said: "Early Buddhists believed that by the attitude of not assuming anything except one's Self as Self, one could get over sufferings. Paradoxically speaking, Buddhism aimed at establishing the existential subjectivity or individuality by the negation of the ego. The realization of the true Self was striven for. Buddhism did not deny the self as such, contrary to the general assumption by many scholars who tend to regard the theory of Non-Self as a sort of nihilism. The practice of Buddhism can be interpreted as the formation of the true self."\(^{(7)}\) Prof. Dr. A.B. Keith is regarded as one of the best expositors of the Early Buddhist Philosophy. But his comments regarding the Anattā doctrine of the Buddha are not clear and rather seem to be ambiguous. It seems to us that as Mrs. Rhys Davids was suffering from the Atma-biasness, Prof. Keith was suffering from Upanishad-biasness just like Dr. Radhakrishnan. Any way without any further comment let us quote here something from Dr. Keith: \(^{(8)}\)
The doctrine of non-self (anattā) clearly asserts that there are no internal substances in the world nor yet substances which perish utterly, but that the whole world is a process of becoming; anything in time could not be the true reality. Again the universe in time includes and is equivalent to the five constituents (=khandhas) of nature and whatever consists of them, and every kind of consciousness or spiritual existence, extending to that of Kāmaloka, Rūpa-brahmaloka and Arūpa-brahmaloka. But it does not embrace a being which cannot be called corporeal or spiritual or both (nāmarūpa) in any sense, which would be a true absolute. Now in the Alagaddūpama Sutta (9) of the Majjhima there is a striking denial by the Buddha, following on an exposition of the doctrine of the not-self and a declaration of the nature of the enlightened one as beyond nature and inconceivable already in this life. The accusation is made that the Buddha holds the destruction of a real entity. ("Venayiko Samāno Gotamo, sato sattassa uccchedam vināsam vibhavaṁ paññāpeti ti" - M I 140). This he denies absolutely; what he bids men throw off is the non-ego consisting of the five constituents...; as the owner of a wood, is not injured by the taking away of the grass, boughs etc., so the real entity is not destroyed by the laying aside of the constituents. This view may be strengthened by the observation that the Buddhist formula applied to everything in nature: 'This is not mine; I am not this; this is not my self (n'etaṁ mama; n'esō'haṁ asmi; na m'esō attā)' is applied by the Sāṁkhya school (10) in almost exactly the same form (nāsmi; na me; nāham) to exactly the same object, the whole of material and spiritual nature, but with the single aim of expressing the
absolute otherness of the self (=puruṣa) from nature (=prakriti). Nor is it inconsistent with this view that the same Sutta contains a very emphatic denial of the reality of a permanent self identical with the world, a view which we must understand in the sense of the self of the Upanishads: 'World and the self are one; that shall I be after death; eternal, firm, everlasting, not subject to change, like the everlasting one; thus shall I stay; 'is not that, O monks, a mere complete doctrine of fools?' This doctrine may quite legitimately be interpreted as an emphatic denial of the pantheistic view which appears in certain of the Upanishads and which would certainly be wholly repugnant to the Buddha. We may, therefore, see in this passage a clear recognition that the absolute must be regarded as standing wholly aside from empirical determinations, as being without even the attribute of consciousness (vijñāna) admitted in the Upanishads.

Now, one thing we must say that while going to criticize others, a critic should make his mind free from any biasness first, otherwise his criticism regarding any matter will be faulty and beg questions. But our critics, as mentioned above, are not free from biasness and so they could not realise what the Buddha actually intended to say in his doctrine. The Buddhist philosophers like Nāgasena, Buddhaghosa, Vasubandhu, Diṃnāga, Dharma-kīrti, Śāntarakṣhita and others deny the reality of the permanent self. Nowhere they have ever said that the compilers of the Buddha's discourses were not faithful enough and therefore they could not represent Buddha-vacana as it is; not only that, they have introduced something new (like
the doctrine of Anattā, as Mrs. Rhys Davids was of opinion with a label of Buddha-vacana. But we do not know what had tempted Mrs. Rhys Davids for making such assertions. We wonder if Nāgasena, Buddhaghosa, Vasubandhu and others could not properly understand the Buddha, whereas Mrs. Rhys Davids, Dr. Radhakrishnan, Dr. Keith and others did. We know how Nāgasena could explain the Buddha's Anattā doctrine to the king Milinda, as a result of which the learned king was so pleased that he highly praised Nāgasena saying: "Revered Nāgasena, even if the Buddha were present now, he would speak in praise of you." We know that Ācārya Vasubandhu devoted a whole chapter in his Abhidharmakośa, an indispensable expositor of the Buddha's Abhidharma Philosophy, in order to justify and firmly establish the Anattā doctrine of the Buddha. And what about Buddhaghosa? Mrs. Rhys Davids herself edited the Visuddhimagga of Buddhaghosa which was published by the Pali Text Society, London, in 1920-21, where we find a highly commendable and authentic exposition of the Anattā doctrine. Buddhaghosa explains: In all becomings, places of birth, courses, durations and abodes, there appear just the Nāma-rūpa (i.e. five aggregates) proceeding by way of cause and effect. Beyond the cause, there is not a doer, beyond the proceeding of results, there is none to enjoy the results. To say that there is a doer ... there is someone to enjoy the results, is, according to the wise, only a concept, mere usage. Hence said the Ancients—

"Of karma there's no doer; nor is there somebody to experience its result. It's nothing but bare phenomena that come to pass."
To see this is to have discernment right.
The starting point of karma and result,
Proceeding thus together with their cause,
May not be known, just like the starting point
Of trees and other things that grow from seeds.

The heretics who do not know this truth
Are no more independent in their views.
They hold, there is a person, and they grasp
As Nihilists, and as Eternalists,
At all the sixty-two perverted views,
Thus causing contradiction 'mongst themselves.
They're bound fast by the chains of their own views;
The stream of craving carries them away.

As fires dwell not in sun, cowdung,
Or gem, or outside of these things,
But only is produced by means
Of all its parts constituent,
So fruit is not in karma or outside;
Nor in the fruit is karma to be found.
The karma is devoid of fruit,
Nor is the fruit in karma found.
But it's the karma and naught else,
From which the fruit is reproduced.
For there's no deva, no Brahma,
The maker of the round of life.
It's nothing but bare states that come to pass,
The right conditions being all fulfilled."

Further, just as the rehearsing voice from the mouth of the teacher does not enter the pupil's mouth, yet it cannot be denied that, because of it, the rehearsal takes place in the latter's mouth. As the charmed water drunk by a (sick man's) messenger does not enter the stomach of the sick man, yet it cannot be denied that, because of it, the disease is cured. As the decoration on the face does not go to the reflection of the face on the surface of a mirror and so on, yet it cannot be denied that, because of it, the decoration appears there; as the flame of a lamp does not go from one wick to another, yet it cannot be denied that, because of it, the flame appears on the other wick. - Even so, nothing comes over to this existence from the past, nor does anything pass over to the future from the present, yet it cannot be denied that, because of the aggregates, sense-organs, elements of the past existence they are born here, or that, because of them being here, they are born in the future.

"As consciousness of eye, that comes at once
After the element of mind, does not
Come thence, yet similarly is born at once,
So at rebirth, thought is continuous;
The first breaks up, the second thought is born."
No break nor interval between them is,
Naught goes from hence and yet rebirth takes place.\(^{(12)}\)

Further:

"There is here truly name-and-form,
Wherein exists no being nor man.
'Its void and fashioned like a doll,
A lump of ill, like grass and sticks.\(^{(13)}\)

And

"The couple name-and-form depend on one another,
When one breaks up, so through relation doth the other".

Buddhaghosa explains: Of the two name-and-form, 'name' is without power, and is unable to proceed by its own power. It does not eat, or drink, or speak, or adopt any of the four postures (of a being). 'Form' also is without power, and is unable to proceed by its own power. It has no desire to eat, to drink, to speak, or adopt any of the four postures (of a being). But depending on name, form proceeds and depending on form, name proceeds.

Hence this is said:

"As by a boat, men roam about the sea,
So by the form, the group of name proceeds.
As by the men, the boat goes on the sea,
So by the name, the group of form proceeds.
As men and boat together cross the sea,
So name and form on one another rest."

Buddhaghosa, therefore, comes to the conclusion that if the discernment of name-and-form (i.e. five aggregates) is done in this way, according to the truth, confusion of the idea of a 'being' or 'self' or 'Soul' can be removed.\(^{(14)}\)

This is how Buddhaghosa very faithfully explains the doctrine of Anattā or the doctrine of name-and-form (=five aggregates) in his Visuddhimagga. But Mrs. Rhys Davids was not happy with the exposition of Buddhaghosa and Porāṇas (=Ancients). This is evident from her comments made in the "Afterword" of her edition of the Visuddhimagga. She did not believe what Buddhaghosa and the Porāṇas said about the doctrine of Anattā. Her opinion was that the Buddha did not say those words regarding Anattā. She writes \(^{(15)}\)

"Buddhaghosa ranked himself as what we might call a Neo-Porānist in the tradition of the Porāṇas. He cites them to conform with, not to differ from them. In nothing is this more noticeable than in their more positive atheistic position as compared with the veiled silence of the Founder (=Buddha). Concerning a divine source of the world's saṁsāra, Gotama affirmed nothing, he only cross-examined those who did. The Porāṇas affirmed: 'There is no experiencer, no agent behind our consciousness and our actions; no deva or Brāhma has started the flow of phenomena (saṁsāra). Bare phenomena course on, caused by a congeries of conditions - this is the right view (p. 62 f.)."
Gotama did not say this. It is conceivable that his lips were sealed. We cannot say. The aftermen took the great silence for a denial."

Recently (of course in 1973) Professor Kamaleswar BHATTACHARYA published his scholastic work "L'ATMAN-BRAHMAN DANS LE BOUDDHISME ANCIEN" from Paris. It is really an indispensable book for the students and scholars of Buddhist Philosophy. But our humble submission is that the conclusion arrived at by Professor BHATTACHARYA as regards Ātman and Anātman is not clear and rather ambiguous. According to him what the Buddha denied was not the Upanishadic Ātman, but an empiric Ātman. He says \((16)\)

"The Buddha had denied the Ātman. Since then this Ātman is not the upanisadal Ātman. Better still : for the upanisad, as for the Buddha, the true spiritual Ātman is the negation of that which man in general considered as Ātman, in order to know the psycho-physical individuality.

In truth, our controversy is only a quarrel of words. The authentic Ātman, being the negation of the empiric Ātman, is anātman ; and anātman is a negative expression, which indicates the authentic Ātman, which is ineffable.
and - from the objective point of view - "inexistent". There is no contradic-
tion between the ātman and anātman. Ātman is denied and the one which
is affirmed inspite of this negation, pertains to two different levels. It
is only when we cannot distinguish these, that the terms ātman and anātman
seem to be opposing."

But our conclusion will be at par with those of Nāgasena, Buddhaghosa,
Vasubandhu and such other learned successors of the Buddha, and never
with those of Mrs. Rhys Davids, Dr. Radhakrishnan, Dr. Keith, Professor
BHATTACHARYA, and such others. Accordingly, as Dr. Malalasekera very
rightly comments, the personality in which other systems of thought, espe-
cially the Upanishad, imagine the presence of a permanent spiritual principle,
a self or soul (=Ātman), is, from the point of view of the Buddha, only
a bundle of elements or forces (=saṅkhāra) and a stream or a series of
successive states (=santāna) originating and existing in dependence on the
previous states. Everything is a succession, there is nothing substantial
or permanent. The personality does not remain the same for two consecutive
moments. The spiritual part (i.e. Nāma or mentality) of the human being
and its physical frame (i.e. Rūpa or materiality) are linked together by
causal laws, one is dependent on the other, as in the case of a blind man
and a lame. The individual is entirely phenomenal, governed by the laws
of life, without any extra-phenomenal self or soul or Ātman within him.
In the language of the Buddha this definite law is called Patīcca-samuppāda
or the Dependent Origination, the formula of which being: Imasmīṁ sati
idaṁ hoti, imassa uppādā idaṁ uppajjati ; imasmīṁ asati idaṁ na hoti.
imassa nirodha idam nirujjhati. - if there is this, that comes to be, from the arising of this, that arises; in the absence of this, that too is absent, from the cessation of this, that ceases to be. Here, the relationship is, however, one of consecution, rather than of causation. There is no destruction of one thing and no creation of another, no influx of one substance into the other. There is only a constant, uninterrupted, infinitely graduated change.

There is a basic difference between the Upanishad-teaching and the Buddha's teaching. While the Upanishad teaches: "Let no man try to find what speech is, let him know the speaker; let him not try to find what the seen-thing is, but let him know the one who sees; not what the doing is, but the doer, etc.", the Buddha very categorically says: "There is no doer, only doing; no seer only seeing, etc. No doer, no experiencer, no agent behind our consciousness and our actions. Bare phenomena that come to pass, caused by a congeries of conditions." For this the oft-quoted Pali verse is as follows:

"Kammassa kārako n'atthi vipākassa ca vedako,
Suddha-dhammā pavattanti ev'etaṁ sammā-dassanāṁ."

In the words of Professor Stcherbatsky: "When Buddha calls the doctrine of an eternal Self "a doctrine of fools" it is clear that he is fighting against an established doctrine. Whenever in his Sermons he comes to speak about soullessness or Woring Personalism (satkāyadrsti) a sense of opposition or even animosity is clearly felt in his words. This doctrine along with its
positive counterpart - the separate elements that are active in life and whose activity must gradually be suppressed till Eternal Repose is attained - is the central point of the whole bulk of Buddhist teaching... We may add that the whole of the history of Buddhist philosophy can be described as a series of attempts to penetrate more deeply into this original intuition of Buddha, what he himself believed to be his great discovery. (17)

Now, the question is as to why the Buddha had to fight against an established doctrine of the Upanishad, although both had the same problem i.e. liberation from worldly suffering and bondage. Here, in this regard, the Buddha's viewpoint is very clear. He says that the basic concept of the Upanishads is wrong and contradictory to the liberation from suffering and bondage. Because, for the Upanishads, Ātman is a reality, Ātman is Brahman; there is no other to it. No fear, aversion or attachment could afflict it. As a result, although 'desirelessness' was their goal, the means adopted by them was wrong, as it was a positive path. According to the Upanishads, to realise the self (ātmakāma) is to have all desires satisfied (āptakāma), and thus to transcend all desires (akāma). The Buddha also preaches the very goal of desirelessness (taṇhakkhaya), but not by the universalisation of Ātman, but by denying it altogether. For, as Dr. T.R.V. Murti (18) explains, only when we consider anything as permanent and pleasant, as a self, do we get attached to it and are averse to other things that are opposed to it; there is then bondage (samsāra). The Atta is the root-cause of all passions, and this notion has to be rooted out completely to attain perfect
liberation. So the spiritual genius of the Buddha carved out a new path, the negative path, i.e. to pull down the foundation of desire where it can rest. In the words of the Buddha:

"Tattha katamaṁ dukkhanirodho ariyasaccam ?"
"Yo tassā yevaṭhāya asesa-virāga-nirodho cāgo paṭinissaggo mutti anālayo"
- "What is the noble truth of the Extinction of suffering ?"
- "It is the complete fading away and extinction of desire or craving, its forsaking and giving up, liberation and detachment from it."

Thus it is the extinction of desire round which has directly or indirectly centred all that is said by the Buddha as well as by his followers.

Now, against the Buddha's doctrine of Anattā many objections were raised in a natural way. The Buddha meets the objections boldly, gives his sound arguments in defence of his doctrine and comes out successful. Professor Vidhushekara Bhattacharya\(^{19}\) sums up the Buddha's arguments in two main categories. The first argument consists in the regularity of the relationship of cause and effect, which was satisfactorily demonstrated by the Law of Dependent Origination (=Paṭicca-samuppāda-nītī). This law shows that the origination of thing depends only on its cause and conditions. For example, if there be a good seed, and favourable conditions (=paccayas), the sprout invariably comes out from the seed, and from the sprout comes the leaf, from the leaf the joint, from the joint the stalk, and so on, gradually up to the fruit. Evidently there is no intervention of Atman, here, there being
nothing for it to do. If there were no seed nor the conditions, such as earth, water, heat, air, space and season, there would be no sprout, nor leaf, etc. Now when there is the origination of the sprout from the seed, the seed does not think: 'I cause the sprout;' nor does the sprout think: 'I am caused by the seed.' Similarly the earth and the other conditions referred to above do not think: 'We do our respective functions with regard to the origination of the sprout;' nor does the sprout think: 'I am caused by these conditions.'

Again, the sprout is produced not by itself (sayaṅkata), nor by another (parakata), nor by both (ubhayakata), nor by God (Issarakata), nor from the Primeval Cause (pakatikata), nor is it owing to the transformation due to time (kāla-parināma), nor is it dependent only on one cause (eka-kāraṇa-bhūta), nor is it produced without any cause (ahetuka).

This Law of Dependent Origination (=Paṭicca-samuppāda-nīti) does not involve the question of permanency (=sassata), or annihilation (=uccheda), or transition (=saṅkanti). There is no identity of the seed and the sprout, for clearly they are two different things. It is also evident that when the seed is destroyed the sprout comes into being. Thus it cannot be held that in the origination of the sprout there is any permanency. Nor can it be said that there is annihilation, for the sprout comes into existence from the seed which is neither wholly destroyed nor wholly undestroyed; the fact is that the moment the seed is being destroyed, the sprout comes into being. Again, as the seed is one and the sprout another, it cannot
also be said that there is transition.

Thus as the sprout owes its existence to nothing other than the Law of Dependent Origination, so also in exactly the same way an individual consisting of the body and mind (nāma-rūpa, Pañcakkhandha) depends for its being solely on the same Law of Dependent Origination without any super­vention of Ātman. The individual is nothing other than the Nāma-rūpa or the five aggregates. These aggregates (Rūpa etc.), just like the sprout etc. must have their cause and conditions without which their existence is impossible. In brief, the cause or root cause is ignorance (=avijjā), from ignorance springs activities (saṅkhāras) or good and bad actions of body, speech and mind, from them the consciousness (=vinnāna), and so on up to decay, death, sorrow etc. Now, ignorance does not think : 'I cause the activities of the body, speech and mind,' nor do these activities think : 'We are caused by ignorance.' And so on.

The conditions are the six elements, viz. earth, water, fire, air, space and consciousness. Each of them has some special function, as for instance, the element of earth causes hardness, that of water cohesion, that of fire heat and that of air motion. And so on. As in the cases of the causes like Avijjā etc. these conditions too do not think that they cause those particular functions of the body; nor is there any thought on the part of the body that those functions are performed by the conditions. Yet, the body comes into being from their union. Here in the body the element of earth is not Ātman or a living being, not a man, not a woman, not
a neuter; and not I, not mine, nor any one else's. So also with the other element. Thus all questions relating to individuality are solved by the Law of Dependent Origination and no room is left for the intervention of Self.

The second argument has been advanced with regard to meeting the objections raised against the theory of momentariness i.e. there is no identity of an individual even in two succeeding moments. The opponents are of opinion that the succeeding moments are altogether different from each other. But the fact is not so. According to the Buddha, they are neither identical nor different (na ca so, na ca añño). The parables from the Milinda-pañha, as cited in Chapter IV are applicable here. For example, parable of the same child's becoming a grown up man, that of the flame of lamp burning throughout the night, that of the minor girl when grown up married to another person etc.

From the above it is clear that if there are (1) the regularity of the relationship of cause and effect, as well as the (2) law of continuity of Elements (dhamma-santāna), there is nothing that can demand the intervention of Ātman.

In this way the Anatā doctrine of the Buddha can be proved. So, thanks to Professor Bhattacharya for his explanation of the doctrine in a very simple way. But only theoretical proof will not help, it needs a practical proof. For, the theoretical proof also comes to the purview of Anicca (impermanent) - what seems to be true today may be proved wrong tomorrow. But if it has been proved practically by one's own practical insight, it will become
the ultimate truth which is ineffable, inexpressible and indescribable, but which is very difficult to attain. So the Buddha said: "Profound is this doctrine, hard to see, hard to comprehend, calm, excellent, beyond the sphere of reasoning, subtle, intelligible only to the wise." Buddhaghosa also, therefore, comes to the conclusion that "the description of the characteristics of Anatta is the province of none but the Universal Buddhas" (anattā-lakkhana-pannāpanāṁ hi anānassā kassa cī avisayō, sabbaññu-Buddhānaṁ eva visayō). To explain this he gives an example in his Sammohavinodanā, the commentary of the Vibhaṅga. He says: If anything, a cup or a dish or glass, falls from the hand and breaks, people exclaim saying 'how impermanent is everything' - and thus the characteristics of Anicca become manifested and known to all. Similarly, if boils, abscess etc. appear on any part of the body, or if the body is afflicted with any thorn, stump or stake, people exclaim saying 'what a pain, what a suffering' - and thus the characteristics of Dukkha become manifested and known to all. But in a similar way the characteristics of Anatta cannot be manifested or explained, as they are in darkness, beyond the scope of manifestation, not clear, not distinct, impenetrable, inscrutable, inexplicable and indescribable. ("anattā-lakkhanam pana apākaṭanāṁ andhakāraṁ avibhūtaṁ dappatiṭivijjhaṁ dudīpanaṁ duppaṇḍapanāṁ" - Vibha-a, pp. 49-50). Buddhaghosa explains further why the characteristics of Anattā are not understandable (na upatṭhahanti). It is firstly because the knowledge of Rise-and-fall (udayabbaya-nāpa) are not properly comprehended, and secondly because of the obscurity of continuity or succession without break (=santatiyā paṭicchannattā). According
to the Buddha, consciousness - moment is the time occupied by one single stage in the perceptual process or cognitive series (=citta-vīthi). This moment again is subdivided into the genetic moment (=upāda), static (=ṭhiti) and dissolving (=bhaṅga) moment. One such moment is said to be of inconceivably short duration and to last not longer than the billionth part of the time occupied by a flash of lightning. However that may be, we ourselves know from experience that it is possible within one single second to dream of innumerable things and events. In the Aṅguttaranikāya, the Buddha said: "Nothing, O monks, do I know that changes so rapidly as consciousness. Scarcely anything may be found that could be compared with this so rapidly changing consciousness." Further, the moments just before the Buddha attained his enlightenment, which the Buddha himself described, may be cited here to show how consciousness changes so rapidly, and to prove that there is nothing that can demand the intervention of Ātman. This is as follows:

"The solution of the vital problems which confronted me made its appearance in my consciousness as an inspiration. By introspective meditation on the realities of nature in my own self, it came vividly to me that there is no substantiality, as it seems to be, in the human body and that it is nothing but the sum total of innumerable millions of Kalāpas each about 1 46656 th part of a particle of dust from the wheel of a chariot in Summer. On further investigation, I realised that this Kalāpa also is a matter in constant change or flux. So also with the mind which is a representative
of the mental forces (creative) going out and the mental forces (created) coming into the system of an individual continually and throughout eternity. I then proclaimed that my eye of wisdom had arisen when I got over the substantiality of my own-self; and I saw by means of the lens of Samādhi, the Kalāpas on which I next applied the law of Anicca (impermanence) and reduced them to non-entity or behaviour, doing away with Paññatti and coming to a state of Paramattha or nature of forces or in other words Ultimate reality. Accordingly I came to a realisation of the perpetual change of Mind and Matter in my-self and as a sequel thereto the Truth of Suffering (Dukkha). It was then that the ego-centralism in me broke down into the void and I got over to a stage beyond "Suffering" (i.e. dukkha-nirodha) with no more traces of Atta or attachment to Self left behind. "Mind and Matter" were to me but empty phenomena which roll on forever, within the range of the law of Cause and Effect and the law of Dependent Origination. The Truth was realised. Complete Enlightenment came to me and I became the Buddha.

DOCTRINE OF ANATTĀ LEADING TO FINAL EMANCIPATION

The All-compassionate Buddha not only preached the doctrine of Anattā, but also he preached the Path, the Way for the realization of Anattā and coming out of that to become fully liberated from worldly sufferings and bondages. He preached the Vipassanā or Insight Meditation. Here we are going to give some idea of that. First of all we should restrain our bodily and vocal activities and then restrain our Mind with the help of clear
awareness in In-breathing and Out-breathing. Thus while sitting quietly with a calm, clear awareness in meditation, all vibrations, feelings, perceptions, thoughts, ideas etc. come flashing through the senses, rousing up consciousness. They seem to spring up from out of void and to have no real relationship with us. They are only a whirlwind of feelings and mental pictures with no substantiality, but yet we build all our thoughts and actions based on them. Our whole objectified world of experience arises accordingly. Hence is the saying: 'all things come from the mind, they are mind-made (mano-pubbaţgamā dhammā manoseţţhā manomaya - Dhp. 1).

It all depends on the contact between the six organs of senses and their corresponding objects of sense, which includes thoughts and ideas, imagination etc.

The incoming sensations or vibrations we receive through the senses come and go in one 'mind moment'. If we do not react or take further action (through attachment or aversion) to them they will vanish instantly back into the void of mind from where they arose. But if we grasp or avert (mentally), ponder and think about, and automatically react to the objects they represent, then the objects, feelings, perceptions, concepts and thoughts about them seem to be real and to be something permanent, substantial and important to us. If they persist they can also agitate or cause mental unrest or negative thoughts and cause us to do some action or think about something else. This sets off a long chain of reactions, allowing the activities of the self (=saņkhārakkhandha) or past conditioning to manifest, causing
a complete re-routing of our thought pattern, or of what is happening 'Here and Now.'

Feelings such as bodily sensations, aches or pains, seem to last or be the same for one, five, ten or thirty seconds or more. However, in reality every instant (mind-moment) they are continually arising and passing away, conditioning another to arise, followed by another, instantaneously, consecutively in quick succession. To normal perceiving consciousness it illusively feels like one long enduring feeling. In the movement of a step or swing of an arm, each instant is a different separate command from the mind to that part of the body causing it to move. Each minute movement produces a different feeling or sensation, cognized by the body-consciousness. This in turn, conditions the arising of the next thought or directive to keep moving the arm or leg, whatever the case may be. It is a rapid consecutive series of movements and sensations which follow each other so quickly that they give the illusive appearance of being one long continuous movement, if not examined closely and very minutely. It is similar to the working of a motion-picture, which is made up of many individual, separate frames, each representing a single phase of action. When these frames are run rapidly through the film - projector, it gives the appearance on the screen, of an uninterrupted, flowing scene.

"Just as the flame that now is, not the same
Flame that was a moment ago, nor yet something
Apart from that flame, but is the result of the
Growth of that flame. So is it with the five
Grasping groups. As the flame burns by laying
Hold of new fuel ever and again, so is the life
Process constantly arising ever and again,
Laying hold of objects by nature of habit tendencies
That lie within the process of grasping."

Thus Vipassanā or Insight Meditation is the process of becoming aware
of and observing the mental processes involved in sensory perception which
are normally an unconscious (one is not aware of it) activity. Meditation
then is the process of making the unconscious activity of the mind, a cons­
cious activity. In this way, all delusions concerning the nature of the mind
are removed and the truth perceived and realized. Therefore the Buddha
said:

"Develop, O monks, concentration. He who is concentrated understands
according to actuality. And what does he understand according to actuality?
The origin and extinction of form (rūpa), the origin and extinction of feelings,
perceptions, mental formations, and the origin and extinction of consciousness."

The illusive feeling and idea there being, a separate individual 'I' or 'Self'
has attached itself like a parasite to the arising five-fold mass of phenomena
(consciousness). It is this aroma of 'I' which we must endeavour to understand
and remove from consciousness, to purify the mind of the ego-centred,
ownership idea. This is because the 'self-cherishing-I' prevents a person
from being able to experience one-pointed concentration or higher states of awareness. The 'I'-reflex-notion as subject will not allow the mind to let go of itself in order to experience 'oneness' or non-duality. The 'I' keeps the mind bound in dual relationships. So it is said:

"The perceiving of impermanence and soullessness in the five groups of grasping, if practised and enlarged, wears out all sensual passion, wears out all passion for material existence and rebirth, wears out and abolishes all conceit of 'I am.' Just as in the autumn, a farmer, ploughing with a plough, cuts through all the spreading roots and parasites as he ploughs, in the same way, Monks, the perceiving of the impermanence and soullessness in the five grasping groups, developed and frequently practised, destroys all sensual passion, destroys and abolishes all conceit of 'I am.'"

The objective in Buddhist meditation is to remove this 'I' as being the subject so as to be able to genuinely transcend all subject-object relationships, even itself as being the subject. In this way one will truly realize that the five aggregates of phenomena are in reality not our Attā or 'Self', and that there is no permanent, individual soul or experiencer behind the experiences. There are only conditioned reflexive-like phenomena rolling on and on. Thus one will be able to free consciousness from it's bondage to the body and mind and to experience the ultimate release and bliss of Nibbāna.\(^{(22)}\)
Here is our humble submission. The subject we have attempted to deal with is profound and hard to comprehend. Really it is the province of none but the Buddhas. On the other hand our knowledge is too poor. Yet we have attempted to do our best. We will conclude here with the following words as Vasubandhu concluded his Exposition of the Soul Theory in the Ninth Kośasthāna of the Abhidharmakośa:

"Mere Elements exist! There is no Soul! This stainless doctrine of the Buddhas, In perfect arguments exposed, The Saint perceives in pure intuition. Wrong, stubborn dogma he rejects, Professed by blind heretics. In perfect clearness of his sight, He calmlywanders through these worlds T'w ards life's Repose Eternal. Like a broad way in broad daylight By rays of sun illuminated, So is this Soullessness disclosed By words of sunlike Buddhas. It is the only glorious path T'w ards Final Rescue's City. The path is open to the wise, T'is trodden by saints in thousands.
But simple people nonetheless,
Their sight obstructed by delusion
Do not perceive the glorious path,
Cannot conceive that there's no Soul.

Of this deep doctrine for the learned
I made a short exposure,
By their schooled mind they will pervade
The whole with strength unfettered.
Like poison are they, these learned men:
One only spot it enters,
And then pervades by its own force
All limbs without exception. \(^2\)

Yad atra sauṣṭhavaṁ kiñcit tad vidāṁ eva me na hi //
Yad atrāsausṭhavaṁ kiñcit tan mamaiva vidāṁ na hi //
REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. The Truth of Anatta, p. 27

2. Sammohavinodanî, Vibh-a, p. 50

3. Milinda, pp. 25-27

4. Indian Philosophy, I, 676

5. Gotama the Man (1928), Sakya or Buddhist Origins (1931), A Manual of Buddhism (1932), Outlines of Buddhism (1934), To Become or not to Become (1937), What was the Original Buddhism (1938), Birth of Indian Psychology and its Development in Buddhism (1936), Buddhism (1934), etc.

6. Sakya or Buddhist Origins, pp. 5 ; 339

7. Indian Buddhism, pp. 63-64


9. MI I40 ff.

10. Sānkhyakārika, 64

11. C.A.F. Rhys Davids asserts that the anatta theory was formed in later days. Vide Indian Historical Quarterly, IV. 1928. pp. 405-17.


13. "Nāmaṁ ca rūpaṁ ca idha atthi saccato
Na h'ettha satto manujo ca vijjati,
Suññāṁ idaṁ yantaṁ iv'abhisāṅkhataṁ,
Dukkhassa puñjo tinakatṭhasadiso" ti. - Visuddhimagga, p. 595.

14. Visuddhimagga, pp. 595-7
15. Visuddhimagga (PTS), 'Afterword' by Mrs. Rhys Davids (1921), p. 768

16. L'Atman-Brahman Dans Le Bouddhisme Ancien; p. 138


18. The Central Philosophy of Buddhism, p. 19

19. The Basic Conception of Buddhism, pp. 84-95

20. We have discussed about the Law of Dependent Origination, in detail, in pages 16-19 of this thesis.

21. P. 49

22. Bhikkhu, Yogavacara Rahula, Breaking Through the 'Self' Delusion, pp. 52-57

23. Translated into English by Th. Stcherbatsky in The Soul Theory of the Buddhist, pp. 949-950