

THE YELLOW TEXT

OF

THERAVADA BUDDHISM

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by

Various Authors

With Five Notes

Written or Annotated by

G.V. Desani

After several semesters of teaching Therāvāda Buddhism at the University of Texas at Austin, Prof. G.V. Desani formalized the course reading material in 1973 with a custom textbook composed of printed-by-permission articles drawn from contemporary Buddhist literature and translated ancient texts.

Desani added five short notes which had been provided to his classes as handouts.

The following table of hyperlinks – Internet and local to this document – correlates with original contents of The Yellow Text of Theravada Buddhism paperback which was printed under the publishing name Cedarbrook Press and sold for \$2.95 to course students and other interested parties.

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- II. [Everyman's Ethics \(Four Discourses of the Buddha\) — by Ven. Narada Mahathera](#)
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PHILOSOPHY 348

Excerpts From the Class Prospectus (1973)

The following paragraphs are excerpts from University of Texas at Austin Philosophy 348 Class Prospectus and quoted for their relevance:

INITIAL OBSERVATIONS

One can hold (and persuasively hawk) entirely opposite views to someone else's on the goals of higher education. For instance, one may regard definition, description, and seemingly endless arguing concerning moral values, as all the philosophical endeavor that there is; an opposite view might demand of one to stop all indulgence in words and forthwith court imprisonment. These points of viewing – independent of the choice to spend a lifetime in verbal battle or in a living expression behind the bars of one's conviction – has something to do with love which compels individuals to feel concerned in the first place. (Some so indulge and so concern themselves for position, power, or punishment: for the hell of it.)

A mature person ought to respect others' motives and views. Fullest information concerning the subject of this course can be had through the [UT Austin] Main Library. A course is justified if an instructor's personal and exclusive experience is placed at a student's disposal. While willing to share his experience, this instructor has no desire, or indeed, time for special advocacy, propaganda, self-defense, alleged Oriental 'moral' or 'spiritual' superiority, commercial practice, conversion, disciples. This sort of imposition, howsoever obliquely encountered, is an affront to reasoning and conscientious – hence responsible – individuals. It is assumed a responsible young American individual is able to reason. To equip oneself to reason is a goal of higher education. (Persons reason differently, often falsely, and this depends largely on their capacity and the sum of their adventure with life.)

Therāvāda (the Doctrine of *Theras*, the Elders) is the oldest form of Buddhism. If nothing else, it offers certain techniques which are very relevant to us today. This conviction of the instructor can be tested in day to day living. Nothing in this course conflicts with any religion, with anyone's faith — including the man-is-*all* humanist's — if one's purpose is to pursue, from responsible choice, as objectively as one can, the truth, so as to live by it.

AN ADDED AMENITY

The Department of Philosophy has a tried criteria – prerequisites, essential reading – to assess a student's competence to take any of its elective or specialized courses. These criteria are not quite geared to the needs of what passes for an Oriental philosophy course. The ancient Oriental tradition, however, demands of a student years of discipline and isolation, to enable him or her to test the truth, or otherwise, of its insights and inspirations: those insights and inspirations are the basis of several systems of Hindu, Jain and Buddhist

beliefs. These systems very often do not agree with one another in content and interpretation.

Young America has its own devices to prepare itself for a confrontation with the good old Oriental tradition. Those include the news media, the advertisement pages of magazines, peddlers, itinerant gurus, astrology, pseudo-science, malnutrition via eerie diets, yoga postures, controlled breathing, qualified methods of 'deep relaxation', 'meditation', leading to entrancements or near-death, "living masters", "words of power", "expansions of awareness", "astral projection", qualified or strict vegetarianism. With utmost deference, these might not be the best means to reason and to critically evaluate a prescription to cure our particular illness. Charlatans have a vested interest in illnesses and in our inclination to fear and hope.

The instructor would be available an extra hour a week to counsel anyone needing neutral background information about India and the East and its cultural productions. This hour is independent of the time allotted for class themes. No credit will be entered for the time spent with the instructor. (Please do not ask personal questions concerning professional gurus as the instructor is neither a privileged holder of a guru's franchise nor is he willing to risk unpleasantness with cultists. Either position is unfortunate: one wins for you undesired friends, the other enemies. A student must assume responsibility after he or she has been assisted in somewhat broader terms.)

A Note on the Doctrine of *Anatta* and the Bodhisattva Ideal

The Buddha, for the first time in the Indian tradition, asserted the doctrine of *Anatta* – non-ego, non-Self. As is true of the other components of the *dhamma*, one hears (or reads) about it, one prepares (practices), and finally – as the result of such hearing and practicing – one penetrates into the truth (or the falseness) of it. That is ‘knowing’. There are techniques of faithful hearing, and techniques dealing with practice. The penetration is an individual achievement. There are, incidentally, reliable tests to evaluate claims to such individual attainments.

In the class only techniques are discussed and not what a practitioner discovers for himself. As free Americans, not committed to a Hindu or a Buddhist tradition or theory of value, you are free to affirm an immortal soul or a true Self (behind the empirical self). Further, to believe that personality is but a concept for components and parts, as the textbooks say, is a belief. It is not, according to the same textbooks, ‘knowing’. You are not required to believe anything. Certainly, this instructor has no interest in a controversy about anyone’s belief. This attitude does not result from an indifference to truth or falsehood. Actually, this is not a subject for controversy: and this instructor has no position to defend except to faithfully deliver and amplify the texts we study. It is for which purpose we assemble in the class each Spring. An adventure to further our inquiry into the substance of man is not a verbal adventure. This is something that you do talk about but it is also something that you *do*. An inquiry into the substance of man is no less rewarding than any of man’s worthwhile works.

A diligent student might ask if such an undertaking means exerting and striving. It does. Anyway, it is not something that can be achieved by argument and counterargument – all which, it is conceded, does provide zest, excitement, and sometimes entertainment (at the expense of the defeated). One might be lacking in charity when one so reacts. Enjoyment in a debate could be an expression of a person’s own cultivated belligerence and love of conflict and strife and the consequent pleasure in humiliation of both friend and foe.

Some men live – and make a living by – pulling down others so as to further themselves. On the other hand, one may accept the fact that folk have viewpoints, comfortable and to them suitable viewpoints, and those depend on their parents’, their mentors’, and their own capabilities. A genuine inquiry into the truth is carried on by pursuing a technique of ethical cultivation, of refining perception, which might give a basis to one to lay claim to – for want of a better term – a spiritual or a mystic experience. Such an experience alone might be a theme of an appraisal: not the theories, cults, commentaries, interpretations, debate, advanced by outsiders, however ably, ingeniously, and in their view finally.

THE *BODHISATTVA* IDEAL

Some say, “Rather than the selfish *Therāvāda* ideal, it is better to reject *Nirvana*” – reject, yes, but the noun *no!* it cannot carry any sense or meaning to a stray debater since he can only lay claim to possession of a word, a concept named *Nirvana* – “and follow the Mahayana’s Bodhisattva ideal.” This instructor does not debate *Nirvana* – for the reason aforementioned – or defend any ‘selfish’ *Arahat*. It might be an unnecessary verbal indulgence. This instructor will assist anyone who believes in the Bodhisattva ideal. Actually, it is described in the *Sutta Pātaka (Khuddaka Nikaya)* and other *Therāvāda* texts, including the *Dhammapada* and the *Jātaka* stories. Quite briefly, *this poor brute does not become a Bodhisattva by assuming a position*, an “I concede” and an “I grant” posture, a *yea*: and this Instructor would gain no merit by neighing a ‘nay’. Pursuing an ideal is something that you *do*.

Indeed, [being] a Bodhisattva is a career, to attain enlightenment or whatever, ‘universally’ rather than ‘personally’ by practicing perfections (*pāramitās*), in innumerable existences – thus the source books – and so pass through several stages of progress (*bhūmis*). This statement is supported by the cited *Therāvāda* texts, and the basic Mahayana texts, such as the *Daśabhūmika Sūtra* and *Bodhisattva Bhūmi* (Maitreya’s *Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra*).

A Bodhisattva-to-be, reciting his daily office, affirms – after the initial devotional practice – to renounce all goods acquired or to be acquired so as to assuage the pain and sorrow of all beings, he further affirms to be food and drink for the hungry and the thirsty during the aeon of famine, affirms to be a healing drug to the sick, and serve the needy with articles and requisites, to renounce all his merits, and pleasure, he himself having renounced desire, so that all may attain the Good, and he affirms, for the welfare of all creatures, to devote his body, even though he might be reviled, mocked, muddied, and murdered, and even if, from the remains of his body, the needy make whatever things that might bring happiness to them. And he further affirms “... to give up everything, that is *Nirvana*, and my heart seeks *Nirvana*. If I must give up everything, then it is best to bestow it (too) upon the living beings...” (Śāntideva, *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, III 6-19, quoted words from Lala Har Dayal’s translation, the except quoted in Bhikshu Sangharakshita’s *A Survey of Buddhism*.)

It might be noted by the enthusiasts that a Bodhisattva-to-be resolves to give and does give concrete goods and things to the needy: and that is very different from being free-handed with words, concepts, and an (as yet) unknown stock in trade named *Nirvana*, which one might be disposed to reject.

INSTRUCTION IN BUDDHIST TECHNIQUES

An Introductory Note

The subject *Therāvāda* Buddhism is treated in (the course) Philosophy 348 under the sub-headings *Ethics*, *Mental Culture*, and *Wisdom*.¹ Requests were received last Spring from a majority of the students for practical instruction in the techniques of Mental Culture. To further the objectives of the course, it was decided that practical instruction may be given to those who qualify.

The term *Buddhist meditation* could be misleading although it has been used by responsible translators. The word ‘mediation’ has religious connotations. The instruction offered is to develop *sati* – mindfulness, awareness – and *samādhi* – concentration, one-pointedness of attention.² A non-Buddhist, anyone at all, can aim at these, and the processes to be taught do not clash with and have no relation with anyone’s faith. These acquisitions are *balas* – strengths. They bless the mind with extra competence.

One progresses step by step. The methods used in monasteries and retreats are obviously different. Those, situated as we are, obviously, are not suitable for us and our students.

The probationary requirements for this training are (1) that the practitioner guard himself against avarice-greed, against hate-anger – and against all unenlightened action.³ (Action means mental action – intentions, thoughts, images – which manifest as verbal and physical action.)⁴ This is the guideline. This is the ethical preparation before undertaking the practice. And (2) the practitioner must possess self-control: this being step 2 of actual practice – a wholesome ethical posture being step 1. To achieve this, he or she trains himself or herself to sit still for *20 minutes*, eventually *40 minutes*. The practitioner sits in a comfortable position, the spine straight, and resolves to sit absolutely still for *10, 20*, eventually *40 minutes*, at a time and place suitable to him or her, when and where he or she is not likely to be disturbed. This result should be brought about within two weeks at the most. (These are the probationary requirements.)

¹ *il*, *sam dhi*, *pañña*. These terms have been fully discussed in the class.

² The word *sam dhi* is used in a different sense in *yoga/s khya* texts.

³ The terms *lobha*, *dosa*, translated as avarice-greed, hate-anger, have been duly discussed in the class. *Moha* – translated as unenlightened mental action – is any intention, thought, image, that is not exact, not true, is not “according to its true meaning” – and its victim does not perceive truly, fully.

⁴ “ *Manifest as verbal and physical action*” – thereby implying that there is a period, the briefest brief passage of time, after mental activity, when this transpires. This is a matter of experiencing – not a verbal matter – and the practitioner is expected to pass a judgment on this assumption, true or false, after acquiring the *balas* – strengths – of *sati* and *sam dhi*. The theoretical basis of the assumption has been discussed and would be discussed in the class.

During the practice – sitting absolutely still without moving a finger, a limb – the practitioner should direct his or her attention to the movement of the abdomen as he or she inhales and exhales. When one breathes in, the abdomen *rises*: when one breathes out, the abdomen *falls*. This can be clearly defined to oneself by placing one’s palms on the abdomen while practicing. *It is to this movement the attention should be directed* – and to make the practice easier – one should mentally pronounce the words ‘*rising*’ and ‘*falling*’ as these events occur (*and are observed by the practitioner*).

All disturbances – a sound, the ringing of the telephone, anything at all, and the sensations, discomfort, irritation, boredom, the intention to stop the practice, anger against the instructor, anger against oneself, a feeling of elation, anything at all, for the duration of 10, 20, eventually 40 minutes – *must be watched, witnessed, observed, noted as it occurs*; and as soon as that is done, *one must return to the basic object of observation, which is the rising and falling of the abdomen*.

(The practitioner, instead of being in a situation – mental or a physical situation that may give rise to sensations, emotions, reactions, conscious response, pleasure, pain, etc. – is *outside* of the situation. *He is a witness*. This is a departure from his former posture of *enjoying* or *suffering* a situation and reacting to it. During the practice, eyes might be open, half-open or closed. There should be no interference with breathing. To fall asleep or to be carried away by imagination is failure.)

This practice – the basic preliminary practice – has no ‘meditative’, ‘mystical’, ‘psychic’ or any other purposes: its purpose, when accomplished – this can be ascertained by the instructor by periodical questioning – is to *train*: to *train* oneself to concentrate upon one object for a period and to withstand stress, disturbance, provocation, and thereby develop endurance, patience. And the practitioner has the *bala* – the strength – of *sati* – mindfulness; he or she is more aware, has self-possession: and he or she has *samādhi* – concentration. These strengths – *balas* – would eventually help the practitioner to perceive truly, to know truly. More benefits and blessings can be listed but ‘inspirational’ promises, appealing ‘copy’ etc., are more a commercial practice than this practice. Anyway, such benefits and blessings would be, strictly speaking, *attainments*. Attainments vary. Individuals vary. To have added awareness, and concentration, is not to have attainments. These two are the means: or *balas*, strengths. What one does with such strengths – *balas* – is important. Our aim is to develop, eventually, *samatha* – tranquility: and *vipassanā*, insight: and so see, perceive, truly.⁵ These are our objectives, it would be found that those accord with the aims of true education without any false premise about working miracles, reaching out for the impossible, arriving at the source of all bliss, instantaneous enlightenment, merging, etc. If a miracle is wrought, the impossible reached, the source of all bliss attained, a practitioner mystically and instantaneously enlightened and merged, the diligent student *steps outside of it, witnesses whatever it is, that gives human impression or the delusion of a miracle, the impossible, the bliss, the enlightenment and the merging*, and as soon as that is done, noted, observed, *he gets back to the movement of the abdomen and to the ‘rising’ and ‘falling’*. (To be carried away, and to indulge, is failure.)

⁵ “See truly” – to perceive truly. The topic has been discussed in the class and will be discussed again.

The candidates who meet these requirements may apply to the instructor for further instruction. Help would be given if (1) a candidate is serious and (2) if he or she meets the probationary requirements (to sit absolutely still for *40 minutes* regardless of any disturbance, and if an individual can assure himself or herself that he or she has conducted himself or herself with as much zeal inwardly – with regard to thoughts, emotions, etc., after starting to train).

These practices might seem too simple or meaningless. That would be a false impression. It is difficult to control one's mind⁶ and, to control or attempt to control it for *40 minutes*, is certainly worth a try. A test to discover one's control (or lack of control) might be devised. Four minutes should be assigned to the test. For the first half, one should resolve *not to think* of a horse. For the remaining two minutes, one should resolve *to think of a horse*. Very few can manage this. Horses intrude when you don't want them. All sorts of images persist when you want a horse to persist. (One needs to cultivate self-mastery by controlling *thinking*. It is the thought that – eventually – manifest as words and deeds.)

It is possible – this is an amplification – that the difference between one's failure and the self-possession of a person who can affirm a horse at will, and deny and dismiss one at will, or an undesirable emotion or image at will, might be the difference between a cultivated mind and an uncultivated mind, between slavery and self-mastery and such a difference might be an important factor in our dealings with ourselves and with others.

No promises – concerning any 'supernatural' attainment, extrasensory perception, etc., attaining *Nibbana*, etc. – are made. No therapeutic effects are predicted. Individuals with certain problems are better helped by a physician, a priest, a psychiatrist, a social worker or a sympathetic listener. This practice is for those who have no problem involvement other than the desire for a fuller education, for trying out a tested means of character-building, and – for the present – the practice is for the purpose precisely outlined in this Note and for nothing else or for more or less. And it is for those who have the will to pursue the practice further.

It is quite obviously a false approach and a poor technique if an individual, while trying to tranquilize himself by sitting still, by trying to direct his thought to one object, *also* – on his own initiative – practices *mantra yoga*, *hatha yoga*, *kundalinī yoga*, deep breathing, or any of the methods that pass for self-development, etc. These practices, unaided by an adept, can do serious harm. Even consuming 10 to 12 bottles a day of a popular beverage with a declared caffeine, or phosphoric acid and an undeclared glucose content, and excitement, agitation, worry, etc., would be poor techniques, surely, since these produce effects opposite to those obtained by (to what is implied by) 'tranquilizing'. And as for 'mindfulness' – that *bala* is neither aroused nor developed by these ways or means.

Last Spring, one of our resourceful students, found more or less crawling in the street and absorbed in contemplating his feet, was invited by the Austin police for questioning. He was subsequently let off as not under compulsion or the influence of a hallucinogenic fix. It was conceded that he was carrying out a

⁶ One's 'mind'. The term 'mind' has been fully defined and discussed in the class as either an untrained or unruly part of oneself (or function of consciousness) or a competent instrument, cultivated, trained, and mastered.

time-honored Buddhist slow-walk meditation exercise. However, no practice other than the one precisely outlined in this Note was recommended in the class. Regardless of its incidental and conceivable educative value to the police, this sort of willful activity must be treated – shall we say – as extracurricular: and the consequences the responsibility of the individual concerned.

DITTHI

According to the *Brahma-Jala Sutta* (Discourse on the Supreme Net) *ditthi* (view, individual points-of-view) are summed up by the Buddha as follows:

1. That after death the *atta* (self), *not being subject to death* (in spite of the physical death) *has form*.
2. *Is formless*. (Would be *formless*.)
3. *Would have, and would not have form*.
4. *Neither has, nor is without form*.
5. *Would be finite*.
6. *Is infinite*.
7. *Is both*.
8. *Is neither*.
9. *Would have one mode of perception*.
10. *Has various modes of perception*.
11. *Would have limited perception*.
12. *Has unlimited perception*.
13. *Would be absolutely happy*.
14. *Is absolutely unhappy*.
15. *Is both*.
16. *Is neither*.

These 16 points of view (or views) – *ditthis* – are speculations about the *future*.

1. That there is no perception in *atta* (after death) and that it would *have form*.
2. *Is formless*.
3. *Has, and has not, form*.
4. *Neither has, nor is without form*.

5. *Is finite.*
6. *Is infinite.*
7. *Is both.*
8. *Is neither.*

These *eight ditthis* (views) are speculations about the *future* of the *atta*.

(“*Neither has, nor is without*” – this may be read as a substitute for ‘inscrutable’.)

1. That there exists neither perception nor non-perception in the *atta* (self, soul) after death, and that it *would have form*.
2. *Is formless.*
3. *Has, and has not, form.*
4. *Neither has, nor is without form.*
5. *Is finite.*
6. *Is infinite.*
7. *Is both.*
8. *Is neither.*

There *eight* views are speculations about the *future* of the *atta*.

1. That there exists nothing of the *atta* after death; that it *is annihilated*.
2. *Is annihilated in the world of the gods* (after passing on from our world).
3. *Is annihilated in a higher plane still.*
4. *Is annihilated in the still higher plane* (of the unbounded space).
5. *Is annihilated in the yet higher plane* (of the unbounded consciousness).
6. *Is annihilated in the still higher plane* (the sphere of Nothingness).
7. *Is annihilated in the still higher plane yet* (the sphere of Neither-perception-nor-Non-perception).

These *seven* are further speculations about the *future* of the *atta*.

1. That the highest bliss (experience, generally) attainable by the *atta*, through the senses, is available to it here and now (in this very life).
2. That the first *Jnāna* (the Ecstasy attained through concentration) is the Highest Bliss.
3. That the second *Jnāna* is the Highest Bliss.
4. That the third *Jnāna* is the Highest Bliss.
5. That the fourth *Jnāna* is the Highest Bliss (and that there is nothing more or further to experience or know).

These *five* are further speculations about the *atta* in the present.

The *ditthi* affirming immortality is held by those who remember 100,000 former existences, 10 world cycles, 40 world-cycles – having lived through the periods and remembering it – and also by *mere speculators and investigators* (without any such recollection of the past).

That some *attas* (souls) are immortal, exist for eternity, and some do not: this *ditthi* (view) is maintained by those who may have fallen from the plane of the gods; the gods debauched from enjoyment and those who remember that existence, and also by *mere speculators and investigators*.

The *ditthi* affirming that the universe has an end and a limit: affirming it is infinite without a limit: is limited in upward and downward directions but infinite across: is neither finite nor infinite (held by *mere speculators and investigators*).

Those who wriggle as eels wriggle and hold forth in this wise: “I don’t take it this way; I don’t take it the other way; I also don’t take it in this way or that; and I don’t take it that it is neither this way or that.” And, “I don’t take it this way; I don’t take it the other way; I also don’t take that in this way or that; and I don’t take it that it is neither this way nor that way.” And there are those who are disgusted with “being challenged by others,” (concerning their points of view – *di hi*).

That the world arises without a cause. This view may be held by one who may have been a god in a former existence: he says, “The *atta* and the world arises without a cause. And why so? Because I had formerly never been. Even so I am now.” This view is also held by *mere speculators and investigators*.

What is SAMMADITTHI (Right or Balanced View)?

The belief that wholesome and unwholesome action (*kāma* or *karma*) done by creatures accompanies them as they assume forms in many world-cycles. (This is known by them through insight and penetration into truth).

Right understanding of the factors of penetrating insight. (They understand the factors that lead them to attaining insight – penetration into truth.)

Right understanding of the Four Truths. (The subject has been fully discussed in the class. The Four Truths are basic to *Therāvāda* Buddhism.)

Understanding that wholesome or unwholesome action (*kāma*) alone is creatures' property and accompanies them: that all beings are heirs of their own deeds: are the descendants of their own deeds (*kāma*), that their own deeds alone are their nearest relative: *kāma* alone their refuge. Whatever mental, verbal, bodily deeds the beings indulge in (those go with them) and they become heirs of those (wholesome or unwholesome) deeds. (That is to say, one makes one's own destiny – subject to what has been said about the irrevocable effect of a past action.)

That *dana* (charity) is a good cause (*kāma*) with wholesome result (*vipaka*).

That large offerings (an act of charity) made are a (wholesome) cause with (wholesome) result on a large scale.

That small offerings (an act of charity) made are a cause with (wholesome) effect on a small scale.

That wholesome and unwholesome *volitional* action (intentions, words deeds) are a cause with effects: one is responsible for one's deeds.

That good and evil deeds done to one's mother, father, are causes with effects.

That there are beings that arise spontaneously (infernal beings, gods, who cannot be seen by men without cultivating special faculties).

That the world, before our very eyes, *exists*, is a fact.

That other worlds and planes (of existence) also exist where one might (according to one's *kāma*) arise (after passing, after death).

That great Buddhas, recluses and Brahmans, following the *dhamma* and possessing tranquility of mind, have themselves seen, through higher powers (attainments) this world, and other worlds (as they exist).

That there is suffering (a state that is unsatisfactory); that there is an origin of this suffering; that there is extinction of this suffering; and that there is a path leading to the extinction of suffering. (These Truths are known by them through their own insight and spiritual attainments.)

Instructor's note: A student is not expected to follow the following text without a commentary. It would be offered in the class and the text must be reserved for reference.

VINNANA KICCHA

According to the *Abhidhamma Pātaka*, there are as many as 14 kinds of *vinnana kiccha* (“Functions of Consciousness”) in a single process of consciousness (*citta-vithi*). Those are: Rebirth (*Patisandhi*); Sub-consciousness (*Bhavanga*); Advertence (*Āvajjana*), Seeing, Hearing, Smelling, Tasting, Body-consciousness; and Receiving (*Sampaticchana*); Investigating (*Santīrana*); Determining (*Votthapana*); Impulsion (*Javana*); Registering (*Tadālabana*).

A single unit of sense perception (for instance, of seeing), is an extremely rapid, almost instantaneous process, and is here illustrated in 17 parts, or mental moments:

(An object is presented to the mind through one of the five ‘doors’ – a ‘door’ being the eye.) Following that occurrence:

1. There is present the past sub-consciousness (*Atīta Bhavanga*).
2. There is the vibrating of past sub-consciousness (*Bhavanga Calana*).
3. There is arrested past sub-consciousness (*Bhavanga Upaccheda*).

These three ‘events’ are *effects* from the past (*vipāka* – effects from past causes).

Each of these ‘events’ has duration: each *arises, exists, passes away*. (Subjectively so known to a trained mind – whatever their objective reality might be.)

4. Sense-door consciousness (*Dvārāvajjana-citta*). (For instance, the *Eye-door* consciousness. It is through that ‘door’ information was gathered.)
5. Sense-consciousness (*Pañca-vinnana-citta*).

(*N.B.* up to this stage the observer – or the mind – ‘sees’ but does not *know* the object.)

6. Receiving consciousness (*Sampaticchana-citta*). (A swift examination of the presented object now takes place.)
 7. Investigative consciousness (*Santīrana-citta*). (Getting to know the object better.)
 8. Determining consciousness (*Votthapana-citta*). (Getting to know the object better still. Its qualities, category, etc.)
9. – 10. – 11. – 12. – 13 – 14. – 15.: These seven parts are impulsion (*Javana-citta*). *Javana* has been discussed in the class.

It is *here* – for the duration of these seven *Javana* instants or parts or mental movements that one acts and is responsible morally for his or her action.

If an act – mental act, manifested as a verbal act or as a physical act – is performed with *right view* and with the mind rightly used (*yoniso manasikāra*) it would be a moral act: If otherwise (*ayoniso manasikāra*) then not a moral act (not from *right view*). Since an object was not viewed truly one's point of view would be false.

(Based on Ven. Narada Mahathera's chart. The chart would be discussed in the class to support the conclusion that so much of man is *effect* – for instance, he is born of parents, is an *effect* of his authors – but he does have the choice and free-will, though limited – in his intentions, the *Javana* parts of his consciousness – to make wholesome causes and hence a desirable destiny.)

Further, it is at this stage (*Javana* stage) that *causes* are made: and the 'coloring' of the consciousness is wholesome (*kusala*) or unwholesome (*akusala*). Wholesome or unwholesome effects follow.

16. – 17.: Registering consciousness (*Tadāmbana-citta*).

[Editor's note: In his course Desani would spend at least two or three sessions on the 17 parts of consciousness and the implication of the ancient thought process analysis on the question of free will vs. determinism.]

[Note: In addition to minor editing, the text has been made consistent with American English spelling and punctuation.]

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