the entire gamut of the *pathūjana* society. The lotus flower in its different stages of growth and blooming in its journey towards light and freedom quite aptly represents the diverse categories and classes of men and women, all *pathūjana* type, some badly caught in *samsāra* and some struggling to achieve freedom very often under a Buddha’s guidance.

In the Buddha’s usage the term *pathūjana* always implies the lower level of the mundane life as also exemplified by his use of its adjectival form *pathūjanika* in describing sensual indulgence (kāmasukhallikā nuyoga) as “low-class” in the first sermon, the DhammaUkkappavattana Sutta.

A.G.S. Kariyawasam

RĀGA means ‘lust’ or ‘passion’. Together with anger (dosa) and delusion (moha), rāga is one of the fundamental defilements recognized in early Buddhism, a defilement similar in nature to ‘greed’ (lobha), ‘longing’ (canda), ‘delight’ (nandi), ‘craving’ (taphā), and ‘grasping’ (upādāna).

Rāga features prominently in the second noble truth, according to which the entire range of the human predicament can be traced to craving, which is accompanied by rāga and delight (S. V, 421: taphā nandirīgasahagata). Rāga has moreover received the dubitable honour of being reckoned as one of the daughters of Māra (S. I, 124), and is responsible for forming a distinctive character type, the rāgacarita, one whose predominant disposition is towards lust and passion (Vism. 102). All these instances highlight the importance and detrimental repercussions of this particular mental defilement.

When rāga arises in the mind, one becomes unable to discern what constitutes one’s own and another’s welfare, a predicament which only easily leads to evil conduct by way of body, speech and mind (A. I, 1215). Rāga in the form of sensual passion (kāmarāga) causes householders to quarrel with each other, while rāga manifesting as passionate attachment to views (diṭṭhirāga) will cause recluses to quarrel with each other (A. I, 166). Such passionate attachment stands at the back of much philosophical speculation, which in the final count can be traced to the presence of rāga in regard to the five aggregates (S. IV, 387).

The presence of sensual passion (kāmarāga) in the mind leads moreover to forgetfulness, making it difficult to keep things in mind even though they have been repeatedly memorized (S. V, 121). The debilitating influence of rāga not only impairs memory, but also perception. Being not free from rāga in relation to sensual pleasures suffer from a perceptual distortion (viparītāsaññā) which causes them to attribute happiness to what turns out to be the opposite (M. I, 507). The deluded notions resulting from the influence of rāga on the mind are as illusory as the images of a woman or a man created by a painter - however real they may seem, they remain artificially created images (S. II, 101). Though such notions are illusory, their repercussions are all too real, as rāga can set the whole mind on fire (S. I, 188). No other fire, indeed, is like the fire of passion (Dhp. 202).

A monk who goes begging food without sense-restraint, or who is given to excessive socialization, can easily be overwhelmed by rāga, tormenting him to such an extent that he might commit an offence or disrobe (A. III, 95 and A. III, 393). The degree to which rāga can lead to mental distress can be inferred from the case of the nun Sīhā, who was driven to the verge of suicide because for years sensual passion (kāmarāga) had prevented her from getting any peace of mind (Thig, 77-81).

Such sensual passion (kāmarāga) is responsible for the arising of fear and dread not only in regard to the present, but also in regard to the future (A. IV, 289). Fear in regard to the present moment arises when one retires to a secluded spot in the forest with a mind under the influence of rāga (M. I, 17). Fear in regard to the future arises when one is afflicted by some disease and, due to the presence of rāga in relation to sensual pleasures and to the body, fear of death manifests (A. II, 173).

In view of these manifold disadvantages, it comes as no surprise that the removal of rāga is a central concern of the Buddha’s teaching. In contrast to the present and future predicament caused by rāga stands the happiness incumbent on gaining freedom from lust and passion. Such happiness, so the Buddha, constitutes the peak of unworldly happiness (S. IV,
The image of being bound recurs again with the four types of ‘bonds’ (catuṭṭhāṇa yonā), where rāga underlies three out of altogether four such bonds (A. II, 10): the bondage to sensuality due to sensual lust (kāmarūpa), the bondage to existence due to lust for existence (bhavarūpa) and the bondage of views as a manifestation of lust for views (diṭṭhirūpa). The same image recurs again with the five types of mental bondages (cetaso vinibhandha), which undermine the inspiration to practice and thereby prevent growth in the Dhamma (M. I, 101). Three out of this set of five are manifestations of rāga, as lust in relation to sensual pleasures, to the body and to forms. Summing up these various perspectives on the bondage caused by rāga with the help of a metaphor found in the Dhammapada: to be under the influence of rāga is a predicament comparable to a spider caught in his own net (Dhp. 347).

Another important category in early Buddhism is concerned with the anusayas, the ‘underlying tendencies’ that lie latent in the mind and lead to the arising of defilements. Here rāga makes its appearance in two out of altogether seven occasions (V. III, 254): as the underlying tendency to sensual lust (kāmarūpa) and as the underlying tendency to lust for existence (bhavarūpa). The underlying tendency to sensual lust is already present in the case of a newborn baby, even though an infant would not yet be able to conceive even the idea of sensuality (M. I, 433).

The activation of rāga as an underlying tendency is closely linked to the arising of pleasant feeling. This relation, however, is not one of necessity, since some pleasant feelings, such as those experienced in meditative absorption (jhāna), do not activate this underlying tendency (M. I, 303). In relation to the more mundane types of pleasant feelings, however, a sustained effort has to be made to go beyond the influence of this underlying tendency. A manifestation of rāga which may not pertain to the realm of what is wholesome could be dhammarūpa, ‘lust for the Dhamma’. This term makes its appearance on instances where someone fails to reach the full eradication of the influxes and, due to such dhammarūpa, gains non-return (M. I, 1,350). The way
these instances are formulated seems to allow for two explanations, taking dhammarāga to be either the factor that has prevented the full eradication of the influxes, or else to be the factor that has ensured at least the gain of non-return. The commentarial explanation supports the first alternative, taking dhammarāga to represent chandarāga, ‘lustful longing’ in relation to one’s meditative experiences (MA.III, 146). This interpretation did not remain unchallenged, and the same commentary records the argument being raised that on this interpretation an unwholesome mental factor is made responsible for leading to such sublime attainment as non-return and its consequent rebirth in the Pure Abodes.

Be that as it may, a mental-factor entirely in the realm of what is unwholesome is adhammarāga, ‘unlawful lust’, an expression which the Aṭṭhasālinī explains to refer to incestuous passion (DhpA. 366). According to the Cakkavattissanāda Sutta, such adhammarāga is characteristic of periods when human civilization is on the decline (D. III, 70). Another discourse describes the dire consequences of indulging in adhammarāga, which apparently not only causes the arising of quarrels and fighting, but can also lead to adverse climatic conditions and an increase in demonic forces (A. I, 160).

The task of recognizing the presence or absence of any form of rāga forms part of contemplation of the mind according to the Satipāṭṭhāna Sutta (M. I, 59). Such introspective recognition of the presence or absence of rāga in one’s own mind stands out as an example for the Buddha’s teaching being a directly and immediately visible teaching, inviting one to come and see, leading onwards and to be experienced personally by the wise (S. IV, 41).

Compared with anger (dosa), rāga is less blameworthy, though it takes longer to overcome it (A. I, 200). The arising of rāga can be traced to two main conditions (A. I, 87): the sign of beauty (subhanimitta), often attributed to the physical body of the other gender, and unwise attention (ayoniso manasikāra). The obvious counter method, therefore, is wise attention to the less appealing aspects of the body, examining its anatomical constitution and the unattractive nature of its parts (A. III, 323). Additional counter strategies are to develop restraint of the senses, contentment with food, wakefulness and mindfulness together with clear comprehension (A. IV, 166).

In order to ensure that one’s mind is not overwhelmed by rāga, recollection of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha can be undertaken (A. III, 286). From among the four brahmavihāras, the meditative development of equanimity (upekkhā cetovimutti) stands out as an escape (nissaraṇa) from rāga (D. III, 249). These passages indicate that the development of mental tranquillity (samaṇa) can also function as an antidote to rāga.

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The term rāga is derived from the foot raj, to ‘colour’, and can also mean ‘colour’ or ‘dye’. Rāga occurs in this sense in a passage in the Vinaya (Vin. II, 107), which reports a group of notoriously ill-behaved monks using ‘face colour’ (mukharāga), apparently an ancient Indian type of make up.

The two meanings of rāga are to some extent interrelated, since rāga as passion or lust is a mental quality that ‘colours’ the mind. The discourses illustrate this colouring influence of sensual lust (kāmarāga) with the example of someone attempting to see the reflection of his or her face in water mixed with dye (S. V, 121). Due to the presence of the dye, the natural mirroring function of the water is distorted, making it impossible to properly see the reflection of one’s face.

The alternative sense of rāga as colour becomes particularly evident with the term virāga, which depending on context can either mean ‘fading away’, derived from the sense of decolouration, or else ‘dispassion’, derived from the primary sense of rāga
as lust or passion. These two senses of virūga can to
some extent be related to each other, since
contemplating the 'fading away' and therewith the
impermanent nature of phenomena will result in
'dispassion'. A play on both senses of the term can be
found in such instances as when the Buddha
proclaimed the purpose of his teaching to be
rāgavirūga, the 'fading away of passion' (S. IV, 47).

Questioned to declare a cause for the purification
of beings, the Buddha pointed to dispassion (virūga)
as the path to purification (S. III, 70). The same
dispassion forms also one of the epithets of Nibbāna.
Nibbāna, the summum bonum of the Buddha's
preaching, is but the destruction of rūga and its allied
evils of anger and delusion (S. IV, 251), a destruction
that similarly merits being reckoned as the unconditioned
(S. IV, 359: asankhata), the deathless
(S. V, 8: amatra), and the final goal of the religious
life (S. V, 8: brahmacarīyaparītyosūna).

Hence it is no wonder to find the Buddha
proclaiming to his foster mother Mahāpajāpati Gotami
that whatever leads to dispassion (virūga) should be
considered as his teaching (A. IV, 280). The central
role of dispassion becomes also evident from the
Buddha's reflection in regard to his two teachers, Aññā
Kālīma and Uddaka Rāmaputta. Having reached the
consummation of their teaching he realized that what
they proposed as the ultimate goal was not conducive
to dispassion, a reflection which motivated him to
continue his quest for awakening (M. I, 165). Once he
had gained awakening, the depth of his realization led
the Buddha to wonder whether those 'dyed in lust'
(rigaratta) will be able to perceive this truth (M. I,
168).

To sum up, one who teaches the overcoming of
rūga and its allied evils is a speaker of Dhamma
(dhammaavādī), one who practices for their overcoming
is practising well (suppatipanna) and one who has
overcome them is 'well-gone' (sugata) indeed (S. IV,
252). Of all things or phenomena, dispassion (virūga)
stands out supreme (A. II, 34). See also ABHIJHĀ;
DESIRE; KĀMA; LOBHA

References

1. The similarity in meaning of these terms can be
deduced from passages which mention them as
near equivalents, cf. e.g. M. III, 32: yo chando
yo rūgo yā nandī yā taṇhā ye ca upāyuṇḍānā.

2. M. II, 138: rasapasatāsamvedikho para sa bhavam
Gotamo āhāraṃ āhāreti, no ca rasaśāga
paṭissaṃvedi

3. A. I, 61: samatho bhāvito... cittaṃ bhāvyati,
Cittaṃ bhāvyam... yo rūgo so paḥyati.

4. D. II, 36: sabbaśatākārasamatho sabbupadhi
paṭisassaggo taṇhākkhaya virūga nirodh
nibbānā.

RĀHULA (1) An Arahant Thera. Rāhula was the
son of Prince Siddhattha Gotama and was born on a
Full Moon Day of Āsala in which day Prince Siddhattha renounced household life (AA. I, 82). The
news of Rāhula's birth was conveyed to Siddhattha
who was enjoying himself in his pleasance on the
bank of the royal pond after being decked by
Vissakamma. When he received the news of the birth
of Rāhula, he thought of renouncing the world as soon
as possible, for he thought the birth of a son was a new
bond attaching him to household life. There he uttered
the words 'Rāhulo jāto bandhanān jātan' (Rāhula is
born, a Bond is born). King Sudhodana, who was
later informed by his men about the utterance, named
the new born child as Rāhula (Paramattha Dipani. Vol.
II p. 125).

When the Buddha visited Kapilavatthu for the first
time after attaining Enlightenment accepting an invitation
of King Sudhodana to do so, Rāhula's mother
(Yasodarā) sent Rāhula to the Buddha to ask for his
inheritance (dāyajita). Prince Rāhula who was seven
years old by that time, approached the Buddha and said
'pleasant is your shadow, recluse' sukkha te samaya
chāyā (Vin. I, 82) and asked for his inheritance. The
Buddha who gave him no answer, left the palace after
meals to Nigrodhārāma where he lived at that time.
Rāhula followed the Buddha repeating his request.
There the Buddha asked Venerable Sāriputta to ordain
the child, as the ordination was the only dāyajita the
Buddha had to give him as there was no other wealth
left with him. (Ibid). When Venerable Sāriputta asked
the Buddha how the Ordination should be carried out,
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