

The *Mahavagga* gives five reasons how the dependence (*nissaya*) of a co-resident on a preceptor can be terminated, viz. on the latter's departure, leaving the Order, death, joining another religious group or at the express wish of the preceptor. In addition to these five reasons a sixth reason is given for the termination of the dependence of a pupil on an *ācariya*, viz. the presence of the preceptor whose authority supersedes that of an *ācariya* (*ibid.*62). In the case of Buddhist nuns it is said that it is a *Pācittiya* offence for one not to wait upon (*nānubandheyya*) for two years the female preceptor (*pavattini*) who conferred higher ordination on her. The very moments he decides that she will not wait upon her for two years this nun becomes guilty of the offence (*ibid.*IV 326). It is also the duty of a woman preceptor who ordains one's co-resident nun (*sahajīvinī*) to help her or get another to do so (*anuggaṇheyya*) for two years. This helping should be with regard to recitation, inquiry, exhortation and instruction. Not to do so or to decide not to do is a *Pācittiya* offence (*ibid.*325)

### Penal Authority of a Preceptor

A co-resident who does not behave properly by fulfilling all his duties towards his preceptor is guilty of an offence of 'wrong-doing' (*dukkāṭa*). If he does not correct his ways even with the imposition of this punishment the preceptor is authorized to give him a heavier punishment by 'turning away' or dismissing (*paṇāmetum*) him. Five qualities are given in the *Mahavagga* which make a co-resident suitable for such a punishment, viz. i. he has no much affection for the preceptor, ii. has no much faith in the preceptor, iii. has no much shame towards him, iv. has no much respect for him and, v. has had no much development under him. The importance of such action to maintain monastic discipline is stressed when it becomes an offence for the preceptor not to punish a co-resident with such negative qualities. On the other hand he is prevented from overstepping his authority by imposing such punishment on well-behaved juniors who possess the opposite positive qualities. Thus steps are taken to prevent unjust action by senior members of the Order.

However, what is rendered into English as dismissal (*paṇāmana*) does not appear to be a permanent break in the preceptorā—co-resident relationship. It appears to be more a strong reprimand than a rupture

of relations for good. For once the punishment is meted out the co-resident is expected to tender an apology to the preceptor. Not to apologize is also an offence of wrong-doing. What is more significant is that the preceptor who does not accept the apology tendered also is guilty of an act of wrong-doing. Thus the penal code of the *Saṅgha* does not allow the offences of any party to go unrecognized. Both the seniors and the juniors have to play their own roles in keeping the monastic atmosphere undisturbed. (*Vin.* I. 53 f.).

C. Witanachchi.

### References

1. Book of the Discipline Vol.4.p. 57
2. Dheerasekera, Jotiya, *Buddhist Monastic Discipline*, Ministry of Higher Education Research Publication Series, Sri Lanka, M.D Gunasena and Co.Ltd. Colombo 12, p.132.

UPAKKILESA SUTTA, the "discourse on [subtle] mental imperfections" is the hundred-twenty-eighth discourse in the *Majjhima Nikāya* (M. III, 152). The Pāli version of this discourse has a counterpart in the seventysecond discourse of the Chinese *Madhyama Āgama* collection (T. I, 532c).<sup>1</sup>

The *Upakkilesa Sutta* begins by reporting the Buddha's attempt to settle a quarrel among the monks at Kosambī, a quarrel also recorded in the Pāli *Vinaya* (*Vin.* I, 337).<sup>2</sup> As the monks of Kosambī were unwilling to follow the Buddha's advice, he decided to leave them and eventually went to visit Anuruddha and his companions, who described their meditative experiences to him. In reply to their description of the difficulties they had in their meditation practice, the Buddha gave an account of his own struggle to develop deeper stages of concentration during the time before his awakening. It is from this account and its treatment of a series of mental imperfections, *upakkilesa*, that the *Upakkilesa Sutta* takes its name.

The series of *upakkilesa* mentioned in the *Upakkilesa Sutta* differ from references to *upakkilesas* in other discourses, where this term stands for unwholesome states of mind such as anger, contempt, conceit and arrogance, etc. The *upakkilesas* mentioned

in the present instance are more specifically related to the development of deeper stages of concentration, covering doubt, lack of attention, sloth-and-torpor, fear, elation, inertia, excess of energy, lack of energy, longing, perception of diversity and excessive contemplation of forms (*M. III, 158*).

According to the *Upakkilesa Sutta* and its Chinese parallel, after overcoming all these mental imperfections the Buddha-to-be developed concentration with initial and sustained application of the mind, *savitakka savicāra*, an expression that stands for the attainment of the first *jhāna*. Next he developed concentration without the former but with a remainder of the latter, *avitakka vicāramatta*, and then concentration without both, *avitakka avicāra*, thereby covering stages of concentration that the more common mode of presentation in the discourses treats in terms of the second, third and fourth *jhānas*.

It is perhaps worthy of note that this alternative mode of reckoning the *jhānas* does not imply a substantial difference in regard to the actual experience, but only takes a different perspective on the same experience of gradually progressing through deeper stages of concentration. The mode of describing such progress in terms of the four *jhānas*, prevalent in the early discourses, emphasizes the affective tone of the different stages of such development. This more affectively oriented mode of description proceeds from the rapture and happiness of seclusion (1<sup>st</sup> *jhāna*), via the rapture and happiness of concentration (2<sup>nd</sup> *jhāna*), to happiness devoid of rapture (3<sup>rd</sup> *jhāna*), and then culminates in equanimity (4<sup>th</sup> *jhāna*).

The threefold presentation found in the *Upakkilesa Sutta*, a presentation referred to also in several other passages (cf. *D. III, 219; S. IV, 360; A. IV, 300*), instead places emphasis on the role of the mental factors *vitakka* and *vicāra*, initial and sustained mental application. This threefold mode treats the deepening of concentration from the perspective of the three stages when *vitakka* and *vicāra* are present, when *vitakka* is absent, and when both *vitakka* and *vicāra* are absent. The matching of these two modes could perhaps best be illustrated by setting them side-by-side:

1<sup>st</sup> *jhāna* = *savitakka savicāra* & *avitakka vicāramatta*

2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> *jhāna* = *avitakka avicāra*

That is, the threefold mode of exposition treats the initial stages of progress through *jhānic* concentration in more detail, as it accords importance to a stage when *vitakka* has already been subdued, but *vicāra* is still present. The more affectively oriented mode of presentation underlying the four *jhāna* scheme does not need to take this interim stage into account, because it still falls under the category “rapture and happiness related to seclusion”.

Conversely, the fourfold mode treats the more advanced stages of progress through *jhānic* concentration in more detail, according importance to the affective changes that occur when concentration that is without *vitakka* and without *vicāra* progressively deepens.

The *Abhidhamma* then brings both modes together, in order to provide a comprehensive account of the mental conditions during deeper concentration. The net result of this is a five-fold presentation, of which the first two stages correspond to the first *jhāna* of the fourfold mode found in the discourses (cf. e.g. *Dhs. 33*).

Another aspect of the *Upakkilesa Sutta* that is of relevance to the development of concentration is its reference to the “sign”, the *nimitta*. According to the *Upakkilesa Sutta* and its parallel, Anuruddha and his companions had told the Buddha that they saw meditative lights and forms, but these soon disappeared. In reply, the Buddha explained that they should “penetrate that sign”, *taṃ ... nimittaṃ paṭivijjhitaḥ* (*M. III, 157*). The use of the expression “sign” in the present context is to some extent ambiguous, as it could have a plain causal sense, simply indicating that they should understand the cause for the disappearance of their meditative visions. This is in fact the way the commentary understands the present passage (*MA. IV, 207*).

Alternatively, *nimitta* can also stand for a “sign” in the sense of the characteristics with the help of which perception recognizes an object. This meaning of the *nimitta* comes to the fore in the early Buddhist account of perception, and also in relation to the development of deeper stages of concentration (See also NIMITTA). To understand *nimitta* in the sense of a meditative sign would also fit the present context, which treats meditative visions and the development

of concentration. In fact, at a later point the *Upakkilesa Sutta* speaks of directing attention to the meditative experience of forms or to that of light in terms of the *rūpanimitta* and the *obhāsanimitta* (*M.* III, 161). This passage explicitly uses the term *nimitta* to refer to the vision of light and forms that Anuruddha and his companions had been unable to stabilize, a usage where *nimitta* unequivocally stands for something that is perceived.

From this it seems that the *Upakkilesa Sutta* could indeed be describing the development of the mental *nimitta* required in order to enter the first *jhāna*. This interpretation would also fit with the mental imperfections listed in the *Upakkilesa Sutta*, which do not mention the first two of the five hindrances, sensual desire and aversion. Their absence implicitly shows that the meditative development treated in the present discourse sets in at a more advanced stage, when these two comparatively gross mental defilements have already been successfully subdued and a basis of mental tranquillity has been established. It is precisely at this stage, when the gross hindrances of sensual desire and aversion have been overcome and the mind becomes increasingly concentrated that, according to the account given in the *Visuddhimagga*, the *nimitta* in the sense of a mental sign will manifest to the meditator (*Vism.* 125).

The commentary, however, takes the reference to seeing visions of forms to stand for the exercise of the divine eye (*MA.* IV, 207). This commentarial explanation is not convincing, since the progress described during this part of the discourse forms the precondition for the development of concentration with *vitakka* and *vicāra*, and hence only the first *jhāna*. For the exercise of the divine eye, however, the concentrative ability of the fourth *jhāna* would be required. Further on the commentary also suggests that the Buddha's pre-awakening progress towards attaining the three types of *samādhi*, described in the *Upakkilesa Sutta*, took place during the last watch of the night of his awakening (*MA.* IV, 209). This explanation is also not convincing, since the *Upakkilesa Sutta* quite explicitly reports that the Buddha to be developed each of these three types of concentration for a whole day, a whole night, and a whole day and night (*M.* III, 161), leaving little scope for associating this development with a single night.

Hence it seems that the commentary to the *Upakkilesa Sutta* is not particularly reliable and the implications of the discourse need to be explored with the help of other relevant passages. Judging from these it would seem that the *Upakkilesa Sutta* describes stages of development of concentration that involve the overcoming of a series of subtle mental imperfections (*upak-kilesa*) in order to stabilize the mental sign (*nimitta*) of meditative visions of light and forms that will eventually lead to *jhāna* attainment. Due to the emphasis given in the present discourse to the progress from an intermediate level of concentration to the attainment of the first *jhāna*, the whole range of *jhānic* experience is described in a mode that places emphasis on the role of *vitakka* and *vicāra*, the two factors characteristic of the first *jhāna*, instead of employing the more commonly used mode of description by way of the four *jhānas*.

The *Upakkilesa Sutta* concludes with the Buddha's proclamation that it was only after overcoming all these subtle mental imperfections and developing the three types of *samādhi* that he was able to reach awakening. The *Madhyama Āgama* discourse makes explicit what would be implicit in the Pāli version's presentation by indicating that, based on the three types of concentration, he developed the factors of awakening (*T.* I, 539b6). In this way the *Madhyama Āgama* discourse clarifies that the present passage is not meant to imply that concentration alone will suffice for reaching the final goal.

Anālayo

## References

1. *T.* stands for the Taishō edition.
2. The same event is also recorded in *Ekottarika Āgama* discourse 24.8, *T.* II, 626b, and in the *Vinayas* of the Dharmaguptaka, Mahā-sāṅghika, Mahīśāsaka, and (Mūla-)Sarvāstivāda traditions, cf. *T.* XXII, 879b; *T.* XXII, 333c; *T.* XXII, 158c; and Nalinaksha Dutt: *Gilgit Manuscripts, Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinayavastu, vol. III part 2*, Delhi: Sri Satguru, 1984: 177.

**UPĀLI (I).** The foremost among the masters of *Vinaya* in the Saṅgha, Upāli was, before ordination as a disciple of the Buddha, a barber (*kappaka*) of the



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VOLUME VIII

FASCICLE 2 : Taiwān–Uttarīmanussadhamma



2008