

A Study of *Cetanā* and the Dynamics of Volition in Theravāda Buddhism

Nalini Devdas

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Abstract

A Study of *Cetanā* and the Dynamics of Volition in Theravāda Buddhism

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Concordia University, 2004

This work is a detailed investigation of the nuances of meaning that the scriptural texts of the Theravāda school of Buddhism assign to the Pāli term *cetanā*, which can be translated with such approximate equivalents as “volition,” “intentional impetus,” and “purposive impulse.” More generally, this work discusses how Theravāda interprets the processes of choosing among alternatives and deciding on goals, while adhering firmly to its causal theory that all physical and mental states are subject to causes and conditions. The argument made here is that Theravāda does not posit a controlling will, but seeks to establish the possibility of changing attitudes of mind and corresponding goal-oriented impulses through holistic methods of training. The texts maintain that changes in attitude are made possible because consciousness has the capacity to become aware of its own processes of conditioning, and can diversify its responses to its environment.

While comparisons with modern schools of psychology and philosophy are not attempted in this work, the analysis of the Theravāda concept of *cetanā* it provides can prove to be a valuable aid for future comparative studies.

Acknowledgements

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I conclude by thanking those who share my earliest memories. My sister and brother have never failed to challenge me intellectually and support me with love. I thank my dear extended family of cousins, nieces, nephews, and their children. I offer my thanks to three women who have inspired me with their zest for life: my aunt Saraswathi Lakshmanan, and my friends Mrs. Elizabeth Huggins and Mrs. Savitri Devanesan.

Dedication

To the memory of my mother, Annamma Devanandan, my husband, A. G. Devdas,
and the guardian angel of my childhood, Kezia Ethel Munson.

Abbreviations

I have used the Pali Text Society editions of Buddhist texts. References to Pāli sources, except in the cases of those named below, are given by the abbreviation of the source used followed by a Roman numeral indicating the volume number and an Arabic numeral indicating the page. References to the *Dhammapada*, the *Theragāthā*, the *Therīgāthā*, and the *Sutta-nipāta* are given by an Arabic numeral indicating the verse number. References to the *Visuddhimagga* are given by chapter and verse. The Upaniṣadic sources are taken from S. Radhakrishnan, *The Principal Upanishads* (London : George Allen and Unwin, 1953). I have followed Radhakrishnan's system of numbering. The abbreviation of the *Upaniṣad* is followed by a Roman numeral indicating the section and an Arabic numeral indicating the verse. References to the *Yoga-sūtra* and the *Vyāsa-bhāṣya* are given by chapter and verse. The editions of the *Yoga-sūtra* and the *Vyāsa-bhāṣya* are those found in T.S. Rukmani, *Yogavārttika of Vijñānabhikṣu : Text with English translation and critical notes along with the text and English translation of Pātañjala Yogasūtras and Vyāsabhāṣya* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1981-89).

- A. *Aṅguttara-nikāya*
AA. *Aṅguttara-nikāya commentary (Manorathapūraṇī)*
Abhk. *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*
AbhkA. *Abhidarmakośabhāṣya commentary (Sphuṭārthā of Yaśomitra)*

Abhs.	<i>Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha</i>
Asl.	<i>Atthasālinī (Dhammasaṅgaṇi commentary)</i>
A.U.	<i>Aitareya Upaniṣad</i>
Bhg.	<i>Bhagavad-gītā</i>
B.U.	<i>Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad</i>
C.P.D.	<i>A Critical Pāli Dictionary</i> , ed. V. Trenckner (Copenhagen: Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters, 1924 - 1981)
C.U.	<i>Chāndogya Upaniṣad</i>
D.	<i>Dīgha-nikāya</i>
DA.	<i>Dīgha-nikāya commentary (Sumaṅgalavilāsini)</i>
Dhp.	<i>Dhammapada</i>
Dhs.	<i>Dhammasaṅgaṇi</i>
It.	<i>Itivuttaka</i>
K.U.	<i>Kaṭha Upaniṣad</i>
Ks.U.	<i>Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad</i>
Kvu.	<i>Kathāvatthu</i>
KvuA.	<i>Kathāvatthu commentary (Kathāvatthuppakaraṇa-aṭṭhakathā)</i>
M.	<i>Majjhima-nikāya</i>
MA.	<i>Majjhima-nikāya commentary (Papañcasūdanī)</i>
Mil.	<i>Milindapañhapāli</i>
M.U.	<i>Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad</i>
Mt.U.	<i>Maitrī Upaniṣad</i>

Nt.	<i>Nettipakaraṇa</i>
P.E.D.	<i>Pali-English Dictionary</i> , ed. T.W. Rhys Davids and W. Stede (New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1975. Originally published in 1921 - 25 by the Pali Text Society, London)
Ps.	<i>Paṭisambhidāmagga</i>
P.T.S.	Pali Text Society
P.U.	<i>Praśna Upaniṣad</i>
Rg.	<i>Rg Veda</i>
S.	<i>Saṃyutta-nikāya</i>
SA	<i>Saṃyutta-nikāya commentary (Sāratthappakāsinī)</i>
S.E.D.	<i>A Sanskrit-English Dictionary</i> , M. Monier-Williams (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1809)
SK.	<i>Sāṃkhya-kārikā of Īśvarakṛṣṇa</i>
Sn.	<i>Sutta-nipāta</i>
S.U.	<i>Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad</i>
Tha.	<i>Theragāthā</i>
Thi.	<i>Therīgāthā</i>
T.U.	<i>Taittirīya Upaniṣad</i>
Ud.	<i>Udāna</i>
VB.	<i>Vyāsa-bhāṣya</i>
Vbh.	<i>Vibhaṅga</i>
Vin.	<i>Vinaya-piṭaka</i>

Vsm.	<i>Visuddhimagga</i>
VsmA.	<i>Visuddhimagga commentary (Paramattha-mañjūsā)</i>
YS.	<i>Yoga-sūtra of Patañjali</i>

A Note on Transliteration

In this work, the plural of Pāli terms is indicated by the addition of 's'. The Pāli term itself appears in italics. For example, the plural of *cetanā* and *citta* appear as *cetanās* and *cittas*.

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Introduction

A verse from the *Dhammapada*, treasured by Buddhists, seeks to distil the entirety of Buddhism in a few terse phrases:

Refraining from all evil,
Pursuing what is good,
Cleansing one's own mind:
That is the teaching of all the Buddhas.¹ (Dhp. 183)

Practitioners and scholars of Theravāda Buddhism would agree with the central message of this verse: that volition and self-effort are at the very core of the teaching of the Buddhas. Nevertheless, whereas recent scholarship has contributed much to a deeper understanding of the concept of "the absence of a soul" (*anattā*), the notion of *kamma*, the epistemological views, and the techniques of meditation put forward in the Pāli texts, less attention has been devoted to an investigation of volition. The purpose of this work is to investigate how the Theravāda tradition approaches and perceives the processes of volition, and more specifically, to trace the connotations of *cetanā*, the term that is most often translated as "volition." The fundamental question that needs to be addressed is how Theravāda interprets the process of choosing between possibilities, deciding on a goal, and initiating goal-oriented action, without going against its central principle that all mental processes are governed by causes and conditions. Equally fundamental is the question of how Theravāda interprets the dynamics of volition in the context of *kamma*.

In the *Sutta* literature, perhaps the best-known statement where the term *cetanā* occurs is the definition of *kamma* given by the Buddha (A. III. 415). The Buddha begins

by affirming that it is *cetanā* that he declares to be *kamma* (*cetanā' haṃ bhikkhave kammaṃ vadāmi*). The next part of the definition explains why activity (*kamma*) of body, speech, and mind that carries moral values and produces karmic consequences is identified with *cetanā*. The Buddha points out that a person performs such acts after applying *cetanā* (*cetayitvā kammaṃ karoti kāyena vācāya manasā*). *Cetanā* is here related to a verb that signifies "to think" or "to intend." My purpose is to discover the Theravāda view of the nature and function of this *cetanā* that the Buddha identifies with *kamma*. A related question is what role Theravāda assigns to *cetanā* in the volitional endeavour leading to liberation from sorrow if *cetanā* is associated with sorrow-producing *kamma*. These questions stem from the broader question regarding the role that is assigned to *cetanā* in the Theravāda view of the dynamics of volition.

More specifically, however, the purpose of this work is to discover the nuances of meaning in the term *cetanā*. The investigation becomes focused on whether Theravāda conceives of *cetanā* primarily as a cognitive function identified with intention and the choice of goals or as a factor of dynamic energy that produces goal-directed action in the organism. If cognitive processes of forming an intention and conative capacities of initiating action coalesce in *cetanā*, it becomes necessary to examine how intention or goal-directed thought and the conative capacity to carry out that intention are synthesized in the Theravāda view of consciousness. From the perspective of Theravāda psychology, it is not possible to discover the nature of *cetanā* without penetrating the connections that *cetanā* has to *citta* and to *saṅkhāra*. It will be shown in this work that *citta* conveys Theravāda's holistic view of consciousness. *Saṅkhāra* has a wide range of meanings, but primarily signifies the "constructive activity" of consciousness, through which mental

factors are brought together in such a way as to effectuate acts of body, speech, and mind. This thesis is an extended analysis of the relationship between *citta*, *cetanā*, and *saṅkhāra*.

The main primary sources for this work are the first four *nikāyas* of the *Sutta-piṭaka* (the *Dīgha-nikāya*, the *Majjhima-nikāya*, the *Saṃyutta-nikāya*, and the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*), the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*, the *Kathāvatthu*, the commentaries to these texts, and the *Visuddhimagga*. Of the texts of *Khuddaka-nikāya*, only the *Theragāthā*, the *Therīgāthā*, the *Sutta-nipātha*, the *Udāna*, the *Itivuttaka*, and the *Dhammapada* have been consulted. The *Milindapañha* contains an important definition of *cetanā* and discussions of the relationship between intention and act. The *Nettipakaraṇa* includes an analysis of the relationship between *kamma* and *cetanā*. These two texts are included in the *Khuddaka-nikāya* in Burma, though not in Sri Lanka. With regard to the *Vinaya-piṭaka*, only those passages that have a direct reference to *cetanā* have been analyzed in this thesis.

The texts named above are viewed in this thesis as a unified whole, despite the fact that they were composed over a long period of time. The reason for treating these texts as a single integral whole is that they fall within a single scholarly tradition named Theravāda. Collins has shown very convincingly in his article, "On the very idea of the Pāli canon" (1990a) that rather than equating the "Pāli Canon" with "Early Buddhism" and regarding the Pāli Canon as the textual basis for the development of the Theravāda school, we should see the Pāli Canon as "a product of that school."

Tradition has it that the Pāli texts and the commentaries were brought to Sri Lanka during the reign of the Indian emperor Aśoka (third century B.C.E.) and preserved there orally. According to the traditional account in the *Dīpavaṃsa* and the *Mahāvaṃsa*, the commentaries were translated into Sinhalese and enlarged, as a line of Sri Lankan teachers added their interpretations. Finally, during the reign of King Vātṭagāmaṇī (in the

period between 29 and 17 B.C.E.) the texts and their commentaries were written down (Norman 1983, 7-11). The crux of the argument put forward by Collins is that there is no way of knowing for sure to what extent the collection of texts that was committed to writing in the first century B.C.E. would have resembled the Pāli Canon as we have it today. Collins agrees with those who hold that the Pāli Canon—as a closed list of scriptural texts—did not come into existence until the time of the great commentator Buddhaghosa (fifth century C.E.). Furthermore, Collins holds that the monks of the Mahāvihāra monastery in Sri Lanka decided to translate the Sinhalese commentaries into Pāli and to commit texts and commentaries to writing in the form of a single fixed Pāli Canon so that they could hold on to their claim to be the sole custodians of Buddhism in Sri Lanka.

The argument put forward by Collins gives support to the method of approaching the texts of the Pāli Canon as a single organic whole. Nevertheless, it is important to keep in mind the approximate time period in which different groups of texts were composed. Recent scholarship has challenged the generally accepted date of around 486 B.C.E. for the passing away of the Buddha. The revised dating of between 375 and 355 B.C.E. suggested by Heinz Bechert (1981) has been supported by archaeological data (Erdorsy 1993). Both Bechert and Erdosy conclude that the Buddhism that prevailed at the time of Aśoka was very similar to the Buddhism that developed immediately following the *parinibbāna* of the Buddha. Since passages from Pāli texts are quoted in the Aśokan edicts, it is accepted that at least the core of what came to be the Pāli Canon was well established at the time of Aśoka. Erdosy suggests that "the Buddha was a living figure" at the time of the composition of the earliest sections of the *Sutta-piṭaka* and the *Vinaya-piṭaka*.

The *Sutta-piṭaka* was passed down orally for a considerable period of time by *bhāṇakas* ("reciters") who specialized in individual *nikāyas*. Von Hinüber (1997, 25-26) points out that "the cultural environment of the first four Nikāyas of the Suttapiṭaka is markedly older than that of the Vinayapiṭaka," but he goes on to say that not much success has been achieved in separating earlier and later layers in the *Sutta* literature. The earliest section of the *Vinaya-piṭaka* consists of the *Pātimokkha*² rules, which were probably drawn up during the Buddha's life or very soon after his passing away. According to von Hinüber (1997, 21) most of the *Vinaya-piṭaka* was completed³ before it was brought to Sri Lanka in the time of Aśoka (about 250 B.C.E.). It is generally agreed that the books of the *Abhidhamma-piṭaka* grew out of summaries (*mātikās*) of the main topics of what came to be accepted as the Buddha's teachings. The *Abhidhamma* is later than the *Suttas* and the *Vinaya*. The chronicles (the *Dīpavaṃsa* and the *Mahāvaṃsa*) offer no evidence that the *Abhidhamma* texts were recited in the first council that was held immediately after the Buddha's *parinibbāna* or at the second council, a hundred years later (Norman 1983, 96). A large part of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*, the earliest of the *Abhidhamma* texts was probably available at the time of the third council, which was held during the time of Aśoka (Norman 1983, 97). The dating of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* is important for understanding the development of the psychological categories of the *Abhidhamma* system, since this text already contains precise and elaborate classifications of mental states as wholesome, unwholesome, and ethically indeterminate.

It is generally accepted that the commentaries to the first four *nikāyas*, the *Vinaya-piṭaka*, and the *Abhidhamma-piṭaka* were composed by Buddhaghosa at the Mahāvihāra monastery. According to von Hinüber (1997, 103), Buddhaghosa's dates are no earlier than 370 C.E. and no later than 450 C.E. Besides these commentaries,

Buddhaghosa also composed the *Visuddhimagga*, a text that is not only a manual of meditation but also a compendium of Theravāda doctrines. Buddhaghosa refers in his own commentaries to older Sinhalese commentaries as well as to the opinions of earlier teachers. He saw his work, not as a personal endeavour, but as his participation in the shared task of preserving and passing down the tradition (Norman 1983, 119-121).

The brief survey given above indicates that the primary sources for this thesis cover a time-span of nearly a thousand years. However, throughout that period, the Theravāda tradition tried to preserve its own coherence and consistency. Theravādins perceive the *Suttas* as the source of inspiration for the development of their tradition and as the fundamental point of reference to which the composers of the later Theravāda texts continually returned. The *Abhidhamma* is seen as the explication and elaboration of what is implicitly contained in the *Suttas*. The tradition maintains that the commentators preserve a consistent line of interpretation. Furthermore, the Theravāda tradition is unified by a firm adherence to the causal theory of conditioned origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) throughout its history. Though the main themes of the *Suttas* are elaborated in precise detail, enlarged, and interpreted in the *Abhidhamma* and the commentarial literature, since this development takes place within the boundaries of the theory of conditioned origination, Theravāda remains a unified whole. Though the *Abhidhamma* view that the universe is constituted of a series of momentary physical and mental states (*dhammas*) is not found in the *Suttas*, the theory of momentariness is developed within the framework of the causal theory of conditioned origination. In the *Suttas*, a *cetanā* is conceived as a mental state that arises together with other mental states through the processes of perception, and becomes a constituent of a dynamic *saṅkhāra* process that produces an act of body, speech, or mind. This relationship of *cetanā* to cognitive processes and to the

processes that initiate action is reiterated throughout the classifications of momentary mental states in the *Abhidhamma*, the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Atthasālinī*. There is a similarity in the way *cetanā* is conceived throughout the Theravāda tradition.

This thesis is an exploration and interpretation of the way the Theravāda tradition perceives the mental processes related to volition. Following the Theravāda way of approaching the Pāli texts as a single whole, I have depended on the method of juxtaposing and comparing various contexts in which a psychological term appears, in order to draw out the connotations of the term. However, I have gone further and commented on the information obtained through this method. My comments in this regard have been influenced by the analysis of *cetanā* given by some modern scholars of Theravāda. Their views on the concept of volition in Theravāda and on *cetanā* are summarized below. My primary concern, though, has been to reflect on psychological terms such as *citta*, *cetanā*, and *saṅkhāra* as they occur in the texts. I hope to allow the meaning of a term to emerge by setting up dialogues, as it were, between different passages where the term occurs. By the same token, I perceive an on-going dialogue between the psychological issues raised by modern scholars of Theravāda and the psychological concepts delineated in the texts. I have reflected critically on the interpretation that a modern scholar gives to a passage where *cetanā*, *citta*, or *saṅkhāra* occurs, by reviewing the passage and investigating how the passage is interpreted in the Theravāda tradition.

I take *cetanā* to be a "psychological" term in the Theravāda tradition. This approach to *cetanā* implies that the Theravādins had well-formulated theories about the nature of consciousness and that they saw *cetanā* as a mental factor with specific characteristics, functioning in a specific manner in the continuum of consciousness.

Moreover, from a Buddhist perspective, "psychological" implies data that can be observed through the techniques of "mindfully" observing one's own physical and mental states. It should be added that the texts show that those who developed and practised these techniques of observation were critically aware that the world-view and the immediate state of mind of the subject condition the process of observation and the data so obtained. The Buddha, his disciples, and later *Abhidhamma* teachers gave careful attention to the mental processes of the novices in their care and observed the behaviour of the lay followers who came to them for counsel. Having set *cetanā* in a psychological framework, in this thesis I do not seek to discover the meaning of *cetanā* by approaching it from the perspective of any modern psychological theory. I see *cetanā* as a concept that is related to a spectrum of psychological concepts in the Pāli tradition. In order to understand the Theravāda view of what *cetanā* is and how it functions, I look for the nuances of meaning that the term *cetanā* holds in the various contexts in which it occurs in the texts. In order to clarify the meaning of *cetanā*, I have also looked for the characteristics and functions of *cetanā* that distinguish it from other mental factors related to volition.

In order to elucidate the meaning of key psychological concepts in Theravāda, I have discussed parallel concepts in the *Upaniṣads*, in the *Yoga-sūtra* and the *Vyāsa-bhāṣya*, and in some early Jaina texts. None of these texts can be dated precisely. However, most of them fall within the time period when the texts of the Pāli Canon and their commentaries were being composed. Though the earliest of the principal *Upaniṣads* can be assigned to the period between the seventh and the sixth centuries B.C.E., these texts were composed over a long period of time and the latest of them were not completed till the beginning of the common era (Olivelle 1998, xxxvi-xxxvii). The *Yoga-*

sūtra of Patañjali in its present form is assigned to the second or third century C.E. (Feuerstein 1979a, 26), and its commentary, the *Vyāsa-bhāṣya*, is placed in the period between the fifth and sixth centuries C.E. (Whicher 1988, 320). It is generally agreed that the Jaina tradition developed from the groups of ascetics known in the *Suttas* as the *Nigaṇṭhas*. Nātaputta, who is mentioned in the *Suttas* as the pre-eminent *Nigaṇṭha* teacher is none other than the Jaina Tīrthaṅkara, Mahāvīra. The first text that systematizes the Jaina teachings into a philosophical system is the *Tattvārtha-sūtra* composed in the period between 150 C. E. and 350 C. E. (Johnson 1995, 46).

Unfortunately, a full discussion of the concept of volition in early schools of Buddhism other than Theravāda falls outside the scope of this thesis. However, I have made references to accounts that the *Kathāvatthu* gives of debates among various Buddhist schools. Some of the debates are on *kamma* and other topics related to *cetanā*. The references to *cetanā* in the *Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya* (fifth century C.E.) were also found to be very helpful. The *Abhidharmakośa* and its *Bhāṣya* (commentary) are written from the point of view of the non-Mahāyāna Sarvāstivāda-Vaibhāṣika school. The Sarvāstivāda classification of mental states, therefore, is incorporated into the *Abhidharmakośa* (Haldar 1981, 9-14). All the early schools of Buddhism that possessed an *Abhidharma* gave much importance to the classification of physical and mental states (Warder 1970, 220-223). *Cetanā* is defined and described as an observable mental state in the *Abhidharmakośa*, without any specific reference to the distinctive doctrines of Sarvāstivāda or the Idealist views of Yogācāra. Comparison with the description of *cetanā* in the *Abhidharmakośa* is helpful in elucidating how the relationship of *cetanā* to the cognitive processes of the *citta* and to the dynamic processes of *saṅkhārās* is conceived in the Theravāda *Abhidhamma*. There are obvious problems of scholarship in

selecting a few texts outside the Theravāda tradition for a comparative study of psychological concepts, while ignoring others. Nevertheless, it is equally problematic to discuss the Theravāda tradition as if it were an isolated entity and not to make some acknowledgement of the rich cultural landscape in which it was nurtured in its formative period.

This thesis follows the practice of fundamental research by returning at every point of the argument to the Pāli texts. The range of meaning of the three terms with which this work is concerned—namely, *cetanā*, *citta*, and *saṅkhāra*—is investigated by collating and comparing passages in the texts where these terms occur. Much attention is devoted in this thesis to how the *Dhammasaṅgani*, the *Kathāvatthu*, the *Visuddhimagga*, the *Atthasālinī* and the commentaries to the *Suttas* interpret passages in the *Suttas* where *cetanā* occurs. However, the emphasis is not on distinguishing earlier and later periods in the texts. The focus of this work is not the history of *cetanā*, but the range of meanings assigned to *cetanā* and its significance as a psychological concept in Theravāda. The semantic range of *cetanā* is explored with the sole purpose of understanding its significance within the system of observing, defining, classifying, and correlating mental states that was developed in Theravāda from its earliest period.

The method of investigation in this thesis is modelled after the method that Rune Johansson puts forward in two of his works: “*Citta, Mano and Viññāṇa—A Psychosemantic Investigation*” (1965) and *The Dynamic Psychology of Early Buddhism* (1979). However, whereas Johansson rarely refers to the *Abhidhamma* texts or the commentarial literature and depends on making inferences after comparing passages in the *Suttas*, the procedure in this work is to see how the later texts approach and interpret the psychological concepts introduced in the *Suttas*. This method of procedure

indicates that the parameters of this thesis do not extend beyond investigating the connotations of *cetanā* and its place within the system of interpreting mental processes developed in Theravāda.

This thesis opens with brief surveys of terms referring to processes related to volition that occur in the *Upaniṣads* and the early Jaina Tradition. The reason for referring to Indian traditions other than Theravāda is to provide a context for the meaning assigned to psychological terms in Theravāda, by exploring the connotations that the same terms carry in these traditions. Providing a chronology for the development of terms referring to mental functions and experiences in the *Upaniṣads*, the Yoga tradition, the Jaina tradition, and Theravāda falls outside the scope of this thesis. Reference to modern psychological concepts is found in this thesis only in cases where a modern scholar's interpretation of any passage where *cetanā*, *citta*, or *saṅkhāra* occurs is based on a specific modern system of psychology. No attempt is made in this thesis to give a systematic account of *cetanā* through the vocabulary and concepts of any specific school of modern psychology or to make a systematic study of similarities and differences between terms related to volition in Theravāda and parallel terms in other systems of thought developed in India.

The plan of this thesis is as follows. In Chapter I the point is made that in the *Upaniṣads*, the Yoga tradition, and Theravāda, empirical consciousness is conceived as a whole that is constituted of the interplay of thought, emotion, and the capacity of the mind to initiate action in the organism. Chapter II deals with the debate between Jainas and Theravādins on the question of whether moral value rests in the intention or in the act (*cetanā* or *kamma*). Chapter III investigates how the concepts of *citta* (states of mind), *saṅkhāra* (constructive activities in the mind), and *anusaya* (underlying unwholesome tendencies) are delineated in the context of conditioned origination, how *citta*, *saṅkhāra*,

and *anusaya* are related to *cetanā*, and the role of these relationships in the dynamics of volition. Chapter IV shows how the *Suttas* describe the role of *cetanā* both in producing acts with karmic consequences and in bringing about the disciplines of the Eightfold Path. Chapter V focuses on how the role of *cetanā* with regard to the instigation of wholesome and unwholesome acts is defined in the context of the *Abhidhamma* theory of momentary mental states. Chapter VI shows how the cognitive processes of goal-directed thought and the capacity to initiate action are brought together in *cetanā*. The Conclusion offers some thoughts on the Theravāda approach to "freedom of choice."

In order to provide a context for my work and to open up the main paths of enquiry, I will begin by exploring how some representative modern scholars have approached the concepts of volition and motivation in the Theravāda tradition. The focus here is on the definitions of volition that these scholars employ in approaching the psychological concepts of Theravāda. Following that, I will investigate how they interpret the connotations of the term *cetanā*.

Approaches to the concept of volition in modern Theravāda scholarship

The pioneering work of Caroline Rhys Davids in Buddhist psychology is often forgotten because the attention of scholars has been concentrated on her controversial interpretation of the concept of *anattā*. Her translation of the *Dhammasaṅgani*, entitled *A Buddhist Manual of Psychological Ethics* contains a long introductory essay and valuable notes, where some key psychological terms of Buddhism are discussed. This was published in 1900. Mrs. Rhys Davids focuses on two points with regard to the concept of volition in Buddhism: first, she distinguishes between Pāli terms indicating the mind's capacity to initiate action in the organism that are not ethically loaded and those

terms that signify morally reprehensible but powerfully dynamic desire; and second, she stresses that conditioned origination precludes the concept of an autonomous and controlling "will."⁴

In her article, "On the Will in Buddhism" (1898), Mrs. Rhys Davids argues that Buddhism has often been misinterpreted as a pessimistic doctrine that aims at suppressing all forms of willing because translators have failed to distinguish between the connotations of Pāli terms that signify basic initiation of action or goal-oriented endeavour and those that express morally reprehensible craving. For example, she notes that the Pāli texts employ the term *virīya* and its cognates to express dynamism in initiating and sustaining action that is not in itself morally qualified, but can be turned towards morally good or morally evil goals. Such terms, she says, express "trying and striving, effort and endeavour, zeal and ardour, vigour and resistance, persistent striving, sustained desiring and exertion, grasping of a weight" (1898, 49). She maintains that when the texts express mental resolve as a carrier of moral values, and not just basic energy in bringing about goal-oriented acts, they take care either to employ distinctive, morally weighted terms or to qualify a term of simple conation in such a manner as to make it convey moral values.

Want or wish (*ākaṅkhā*) becomes *craving* or *thirst* (*taṇhā*); for desire (*chando*) we get *lust* (*chandarāgo*), *lusts of the flesh* (*kāmarāgo*), *sensual delight* (*nandirāgo*), or else some qualifying phrase, desire *for form* (*rūpe chando*), and so forth. (C.A.F. Rhys Davids 1898, 49)

In this context, it is to be noted that *cetanā* is a morally "neutral" term and is distinguished from terms that convey morally reprehensible and sorrow-producing craving or passion for objects. Mrs. Rhys Davids seeks to counteract the tendency of some scholars of that period to identify Schopenhauer's "will to live" with *taṇhā*

(craving), a mental state that Buddhists abhor as the root of suffering, and seek to eradicate. She argues that it was this erroneous identification of two very different concepts that induced these scholars to expunge from Buddhism all primal affirmations of life and all initiatives of volition. She points out that the Pāli texts are filled with terms of goal-oriented aspiration, especially in contexts where the Eightfold Path is elucidated. She goes so far as to say:

In fact, if there be one feature in Buddhist ethics eminent for the emphasis attached to it, it is not only that will as such, desire as such, are not to be repressed, but that the culture and development of them are absolutely indispensable to any advance towards the attainment of its ideals.
(C.A.F. Rhys Davids 1898, 50)

It is significant that the term she prefers to translate as "desire" is the morally neutral term *chanda* (defined as "desire-to-act," *kattukāmatā*, at Vsm. XIV. 150), and not *taphā* (which she renders as "craving" or "thirst").⁵ *Chanda*, according to the *Abhidhamma* texts, is a term signifying impetus to act that can be directed either towards objects of sensual pleasure (*kāma-chanda*) or towards the Eightfold Path (*dhmma-chanda*). The point she makes is that "desire" in the sense of an impetus to act that is energized by emotions like enthusiasm or zeal should be distinguished from "desire" in the sense of unwholesome greed for objects (1978a, 278). In her article "On the Will in Buddhism," she notes that the *Suttas* and *Abhidhamma* texts abound in terms like *ussāha*, *tulanā*, and *padhāna* (which she translates, respectively, as "zeal," "pondering," and "struggle"). These terms convey, not only energetic effort, but also heart-felt motivation, courageous persistence, and enthusiasm.

Furthermore, by translating *chanda* as "desire," Mrs. Rhys Davids challenges what she perceives as a tendency among translators of her time to pick a psychological term that denotes just basic impetus to act and employ it to render a range of Pāli terms that

signify morally blameable mental states. She provides lists to prove that "the one English word 'desire' is made to do duty for no less than seventeen Pāli words, not one of which means desire taken in the sense of wish to seek a goal, but rather in that of perverted, morbid excessive desire" (1898, 54; cf. C.A.F. Rhys Davids 1978a, 279). Her contention is that the unqualified term *chanda* signifies desire "in its ordinary general sense," and should be distinguished from terms conveying unwholesome (*akusala*) greed or lust.⁶

In highlighting the distinction between terms that are meant to indicate morally neutral goal-oriented dynamism and those that convey morally reprehensible mental states, Mrs. Rhys Davids, in fact, is drawing attention to the remarkable care and precision with which mental states are classified, analyzed, and defined, in the *Abhidhamma* system. In her Introductory Essay and notes to her translation of the *Dhammasaṅgani* (1900), in her valuable editorial comments to S.Z. Aung's translation of the *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* (1910), and in her *Birth of Indian Psychology* (1924), she not only makes the reader aware of why she chooses certain English equivalents for Pāli terms, but also alludes to fascinating discussions between herself and Burmese *Abhidhamma* scholars with reference to Pāli terms. *Cetanā* was evidently one of the terms that were discussed at length (C.A.F. Rhys Davids 1978a, 276). In Chapter VI of this work, the definitions that the *Atthasālinī* gives of *chanda* and other terms of conation are examined to clarify how *cetanā* is distinguished from these terms.

In *The Birth of Indian Psychology*, Mrs. Rhys Davids presents her own perspective on the Theravāda concept of will. The thrust of her argument is that whereas the essence of Buddhist practice is the deployment of will in the quest for the full development of the human potential, Buddhism, taken as a system of thought, has neither a fully developed

concept of will nor a noun and verb that are the exact equivalents of "will" and "to will" (1978a, 107). And she adds:

No writer, Buddhist or other, has so far joined hands with me over this seeing in Buddhism a gospel of Will put forth in the teeth of there being no fit word for will. . . . (1978a, 296)

It becomes clear in *The Birth of Indian Psychology* that the way she defines "will" includes three criteria, none of which she finds in the semantic range of the psychological terms of Theravāda. First and foremost, she conceives of will as the arousal of the entire personality and its orientation towards a goal.⁷ She believes will to be fundamental to a person, "a very synergy of man's essential nature," whether that person is ignorant or enlightened (1978a, 278). In her judgement, terms such as *virīya* and *padhāna* (which she renders as "energy" and "concentrated effort") do not signify a fundamental, autonomous ability to initiate action: "they are only modes of exerting will" (1978a, 284). Nor does she accept that *chanda* signifies will. She cites the statement that the *arahant* gives up all trace of *chanda* (S. V. 272) and argues that if *chanda* is regarded as dispensable, it cannot signify a capacity fundamental to human nature (1978a, 282).

The second criterion implicit in the definition of will that Mrs. Rhys David puts forward is that volition must be an autonomous capacity: it cannot be either a correlate of emotion or a subordinate expression of discursive thought. In her opinion, the mind's purposive deliberation does not guide the functioning of the will, but rather follows volition and expresses what the will has already chosen to do. She says that the "idea" of the goal that arises in a person's mind is, in fact, "his self-directing, his will, pausing to give shape to what he wills" (1978a, 437). Mrs Rhys Davids maintains that in the *Upaniṣads* and in the Pāli *Suttas*, she could find only "mixed terms" expressing the blending of volition with coefficients of cognition or emotion or both (1978a, 108). She

reiterates that she could not find a term that expresses precisely a fundamental capacity to act in such a way as to convey what one is and what one is choosing to become. The third criterion implicit in her argument is that "will," by definition, signifies a "self-directing." She maintains that there can be no fully developed concept of will in Buddhism because there is no concept of the self as the agent of intention and action (1978a, 283). She concludes: "Now we cannot get very far in an adequate notion of will without a willer. . . Will without willer is meaningless" (1978a, 297-298).

This criticism of the Theravāda approach to the concept of will put forward by Mrs. Rhys Davids cannot be countered by looking for loopholes in her argument. The discussion has to be reopened by starting with different premises and a different definition of will than what she puts forward. Mrs. Rhys Davids maintains that the will must be regarded as capable of sustaining itself, and as fundamental to the personality. Because of its teaching of conditioned origination, Theravāda cannot posit an autonomous will with an inherent capacity to initiate action in the organism and control physical and mental processes. Furthermore, Mrs. Rhys Davids conceives of the will as a capacity that can be clearly demarcated from emotional and cognitive coefficients, and is not dependent on other mental processes for its basic conative capacity. Obviously, since the Theravāda system posits that the five aggregates,⁸ comprising all the physical and mental processes of the human organism, are mutually dependent, it cannot accommodate a concept of will that regards volition as an autonomous capacity that can function without cognitive and emotional admixture. Those who disagree with Mrs. Rhys Davids maintain that while Theravāda does not posit a central self or an autonomous will, it succeeds in demonstrating that there are functions of consciousness that initiate action and give direction to the personality, even though these functions themselves are

conditioned. In the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 111-112) and the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 135) *cetanā* is defined as the leader among the conditioned mental factors that produce goal-directed action.

Writing some decades later, H. V. Guenther interprets *cetanā* to be the primary motivational drive in the mind. Guenther presents his definitions of the terms "drive," "motive," and "volition" in his work *Philosophy and Psychology in the Abhidharma*, first published in 1957. These definitions occur in the course of his analysis of the definition of *cetanā* given in the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 111). He maintains that *cetanā* should be defined, not as "volition," but as a "drive"; and he goes on to explain:

A drive is a stimulus that arouses persistent mass activity, and a motive is a stimulus that sustains activity until the stimulus is removed. . . . (Guenther 1976, 41)

According to Guenther, then, the distinctive characteristic of motivation is the capacity to arouse activity in different areas of the body and mind simultaneously, and to impel that activity towards a goal. In contrast with the two terms "drive" and "stimulus," "volition" is defined by Guenther as the cognitive process of deliberating and deciding upon a course of action:

In its most sharply distinguished sense volition designates merely the act of making a choice or decision, but it rarely suggests the determination to put one's decision or choice into effect. (1976, 43-44)

More will be said below about how Mrs. Rhys Davids and Guenther apply their definitions of volition and motivation specifically to the elucidation of *cetanā*. Here my purpose is to focus on Guenther's definitions of motivation and volition, and to set them in the context of his general approach to Theravāda. Thus in Guenther's view, "stimulus," "drive," and "motivation" are aspects of the conative capacity to initiate action, and they are clearly distinguished from "volition," which is defined as a function of purposive

thought expressed as "the act of making a choice or decision" (1976, 44). According to Guenther, motivation derives its power, not from any preceding cognitive process of making a choice, but from its invariable association with "emotional tensions" (1976, 45). He describes emotional tension as the condition that arises when feelings that assign specific values to physical and mental states interact with the bodily changes in muscles and organs that correspond to these feelings. He describes strong motivations as those that are aroused by stimuli with strong emotional tensions, and are capable of generating a broad spectrum of actions in the organism.

Guenther's strongly stated, unambiguous analysis is helpful because it draws attention to two key issues that should be kept in mind when applying modern theories of motivation to the interpretation of Theravāda. The first relates to the clear separation of cognitive processes from conative functions in Guenther's analysis. The cardinal teaching of Theravāda, however, is the interrelatedness of all physical and mental states, and this implies the mutual conditioning and interdependence of thought, emotion, and the capacity to initiate action. The second relates to Guenther's reluctance to ascribe motivational capacity to cognitive factors. Theravāda, however, clearly ascribes to cognitive processes the capacity to initiate action; for example, Theravāda assigns a leading role in the motivational processes of the Eightfold Path to the cognitive factors of right understanding (*sammā-dīṭṭhi*), mindfulness (*satī*), and wisdom (*paññā*).

Another approach to how Theravāda views volition is found in Rune Johansson's interpretation of psychological concepts in the *Suttas*. In *The Dynamic Psychology of Early Buddhism*,⁹ Johansson defines motivation in terms of "needs" that manifest themselves as "homeostatic deficiencies" in different parts of the body

(Johansson 1979, 99). Johansson reduces all forms of motivation to "needs" occurring in different facets of life,¹⁰ and he maintains that even intellectual and aesthetic needs can be traced to a physiological basis, though these needs should be regarded as being formed through complex processes of learning and conditioning.¹¹

When Johansson distinguishes between motivation and volition, he defines the latter as "will power," by which he means the special effort put forth to fulfil a need under difficult circumstances. In his view then, volition is just the intensification of motivational endeavour and there can be no deployment of "will" without the experience of a want: "behind the will-power there is always a need" (1979, 100). In applying his theory of motivational needs to Theravāda, he acknowledges the Theravāda position that no physical or mental state can claim primacy, since all factors in the organism are interdependent and condition each other. However, it will be shown below that his interpretation is finally influenced by his conviction that needs have the primary role in governing motivation.

Johansson's comment on the "enumerations" or lists of motives in the *Sutta* texts (A. V. 86-87; D. III. 183; and A. IV. 353, for example) is worth quoting in full for the light that it sheds on the Theravāda approach to the dynamics of volition.

It is characteristic of all such enumerations of motives, that the distinction between cognitive, emotional and dynamic terms usually observed in Western psychology is absent: we would call illusion [*moha*], understanding [*paññā*] and perhaps also faith [*saddhā*], cognitive terms; fear [*bhaya*], shame [*hiri*] and remorse [*ottappa*] are to us emotional terms, and only greed [*lobha*], ambition [*chanda*], desire [*rāga*] and energy [*virīya*] would be considered as dynamic factors proper. In addition, terms are included which to us belong to the area of method: proper attention [*yoniso-manasikāra*] and a rightly directed mind [*sammā-panīhitam citta*]. But this mixture is natural

from a Buddhist point of view, since all personality factors are considered more or less dynamic. Even the cognitive factors are thought to have a force of their own. The tragic conflict between the powerful instincts and powerless knowledge is therefore unknown in Buddhism.
(Johansson 1979, 102)

Here Johansson takes the position that Theravāda Buddhism, far from separating the cognitive, emotional, and dynamic aspects of experience, actually attributes a capacity to initiate action to obviously cognitive factors. However, as he proceeds with his discussion, he reverts to his position that Theravāda consistently finds the basis for the arising of motivation in the over-riding urgency of experienced needs.

According to Johansson, Theravāda holds that in an actual motivational situation, the personality is impelled by a need that becomes more urgent than other needs, and that other factors, including processes of reflective thought, then take the subordinate role of reinforcing that primary need. For example, he perceives *vitakka* (thought, application of the mind) to be a "needful" activity that serves to buttress the capacity to initiate goal-directed action. He writes:

Even if a special motivational factor is not always mentioned when speaking about thought, the Buddha always meant it to be personal and purposeful, a natural result of the leading motives of the person.
(Johansson 1979, 187)

If thought (*vitakka*) is regarded as "a natural result" of a person's physical or mental "needs," then there is little room for the idea that processes of reflection and cognitive determination can assess, evaluate, and control motivational needs.

In support of his interpretation, Johansson refers to A. I. 264-265 where two opposed motivational situations are described: a person may hanker after previously enjoyed objects, or alternatively, a person may understand the harmful consequences of such pursuits and refrain from them. According to Johansson's interpretation of this

passage, reflection (*vitakka*) and understanding (*paññā*) cannot directly counter a harmful desire. Understanding can only play a role in motivation by evoking a "counter-desire," presumably, the desire to avoid painful consequences; and it is this counter-desire alone, which has the capacity to neutralize the initial harmful desire. Johansson adds that understanding can "strengthen the counter force" by consciously analyzing and repeatedly recollecting the sorrowful consequences of the harmful desire, once the counter-desire begins to exert its neutralizing capacity (Johansson 1979, 208). With regard to the role of *paññā*, Johansson distinguishes between the early stages of discipleship and the final, liberating stages of the Eightfold Path. Johansson maintains that in the early stage of training, understanding (*paññā*) manifests as "a pure theoretical function of understanding, without a motivational power of its own" (1979, 200). In this early stage of discipleship, understanding can combat sensual desires only when it is associated with the counteractive capacity of "another type of joy and happiness" that radiates from the practice of mental calm. Johansson describes the understanding of a mature disciple as having the power of "katharsis," with the capacity to cleanse the mind of harmful motivations (1979, 207). Thus, according to Johansson's interpretation, whereas in the early stages of the Path *paññā* can only motivate action when it is associated with a need, mature *paññā* has motivational power of its own; it does not necessarily act through a "counter-desire" to combat unwholesome mental states.

When Johansson maintains that Theravāda explains motivation primarily in terms of desires and counter-desires, he does less than justice to the role that Theravāda assigns to cognitive factors such as systematic attention (*yoniso-manasikāra*), deliberation (*vitakka*, *vicāra*), and mindful observation (*sati*) in the processes of forming and implementing intentions. Mindfulness and systematic attention are regarded as techniques

that can be cultivated in such a way that they become capable of evaluating and choosing between needs.

Padmasiri de Silva's interpretation differs from that of Guenther and Johansson since he approaches the psychological concepts of Theravāda from the Psychological perspective put forward by Freud. In his work *An Introduction to Buddhist Psychology* (1979),¹² Padmasiri de Silva defines motivation broadly as a cycle that covers three aspects of behaviour: "states that motivate behaviour, behaviour motivated by these states and the goals of such behaviour" (1979, 35). He shares Johansson's view that terms like "motive," "drive," and "want" connote some physiologically based condition of deficiency that initiates action in the organism to overcome that lack or fulfil that want. However, he is more firm and consistent than Johansson in taking the position that factors that initiate action and cognitive factors become fused in motivation.

Padmasiri de Silva concedes that the "tripartite division" into cognitive, dynamic, and affective aspects may provide a structure for analyzing the complex processes of the mind. He also perceives certain correspondences between the aggregate of feeling (*vedanākkhandha*) and the affective dimension of experience, the aggregate of mental formations (*saṅkhārakkhandha*) and the dynamic aspect, and the two aggregates of perception and general awareness (*saññākkhandha* and *viññāṇakkhandha*) and the cognitive dimension (de Silva 1979, 17-18). At the same time, he insists that the interrelatedness, and even interpenetration, of the three dimensions of experience is a pivotal concept in Theravāda:

In a deeper sense all four mental *khandhas* are present in all states of consciousness and experience. Thus a mental factor like volition is not a separate entity but is inseparably associated with other factors. In this manner, the three dimensions of experience are the product of abstract

analysis, whereas all three aspects are found in all states of consciousness and behaviour. (de Silva 1979, 18)

Unfortunately, de Silva does not offer a definition of volition. In fact, he maintains that "will" is a "semantically troublesome" term, and he concludes that its vagueness makes it inapplicable in interpreting "the more diversified, specific and analytical Buddhist terms" (1979, 78). Here he echoes the sentiments of Guenther, who maintains that the term "volition" should be discarded forthwith since it masks much confusion (Guenther 1976, 43, n. 3). However, de Silva does use the term "volition" while discussing *saṅkhāras*. In this context he assigns to "will" the specific function of "deliberation" or purposive thought (de Silva 1979, 78). Thus, de Silva defines volition as a thought process deployed in deciding on a goal, and he defines motivation as "dynamism" manifesting itself in the capacity to initiate action to fulfil that goal. De Silva interprets *saṅkhāras* as dispositions or habits, and he maintains that deliberation and dynamism are inseparably linked in the complex function of a *saṅkhāra* (1979, 78-79). I will return to this point below in the discussion of de Silva's interpretation of *cetanā*.

Yet another approach to how Theravāda conceives of volition is put forward by Joanna Macy. Her approach to the psychological concepts in Theravāda is based on her innovative interpretation of the idea of conditioned origination. In her work *Mutual Causality in Buddhism and General Systems Theory*,¹³ first published in 1991, Joanna Macy develops her interpretation of the dynamics of volition in Theravāda against the background of the central principles of general systems theory. By arguing that the causal principle of *paṭicca-samuppāda* (conditioned origination) signifies systems of causes and effects in mutually dependent relationships, and by seeking to demonstrate that *paṭicca-*

samuppāda repudiates a unidirectional, linear view of causality, she posits viable parallels between Theravāda Buddhism and general systems theory.¹⁴

According to the general systems view, as interpreted by Joanna Macy, the personality is a dynamic, open system that is in constant interaction with a personal world: it receives a flow of information that it processes in the form of perceptions, thoughts, and volitions; and its internal structure constantly transforms, and is transformed by, that information (1991, 83).¹⁵ Macy notes that the general systems view stresses the capacity of the organism to modify its own components in such a manner that it may adjust to impacts from the environment. According to this view, it is not the information received from the environment that determines or modifies behaviour, but what happens to that information when it is processed by the mind, and the changes that the mind itself undergoes as it assimilates and responds to that information (1991, 93).

In the context of the general systems view, Macy defines motivation as the quest of the organism for internal coherence and for meaning in relation to the environment. She points out that according to this view, cognition and motivation mutually generate, nourish, and support each other. By utilizing the gestalts and structures that it has previously developed, the mind strives towards meaning in its cognitions. This cognitive quest for meaning affects the way a person decides to act. The volitional responses, in their turn, influence and transform both outward behaviour and the mental structures through which sensory data are sorted, sifted, and transformed to achieve personal meaning (1991, 82-85).

Macy maintains that there is a parallel between general systems theory and Theravāda Buddhism in that they both posit "a mutual causal relationship between our behaviour and the psychophysical structure we present at a given point" (1991, 166). She

designates this idea of a reciprocal relationship between the developing personality and its on-going actions as "co-arising of doer and deed," and she commences her interpretation of the Theravāda concepts of *kamma* and motivation at this point. As she sees it, the central principle in the Theravāda view of *kamma* is: "What we do not only matters, it moulds us" (1991, 161). According to this interpretation, our actions not only affect the external circumstances of our lives, but they also display a "reflexive dynamic" such that they shape and mould the very personality structures that produced them. It is this idea that personality and willed action mutually produce each other that dominates her interpretation of *kamma* in Theravāda.

Joanna Macy accepts the interpretation of scholars who maintain that in the Theravāda view of *kamma*, it is the volition underlying an act that primarily determines its moral value and its karmic consequences. In her interpretation of the *Bhūmija-sutta* (S. II. 37-41) where the pleasant and sorrowful fruits of *kamma* are causally linked to *sañcetanā*, she renders the latter term as "will" (1991, 172).¹⁶ Although she does not offer definitions of "will," "volition," and "intention," it becomes obvious from her discussion that in her view, *cetanā* signifies the interweaving of cognitive and motivational factors in the act of making a choice. She stresses the transformative effect that the process of deciding has on the cognitive factors that are making the decision, on the motivational factors that are implementing the decision, and on the emerging personality as a whole. She maintains that *cetanā* and etymologically related Pāli terms signify purposive thought functioning as a process of continuous engagement with one's personal environment:

In mutual causality, as we have stressed, knowing and thinking do not consist in a passive registering of data, but are transactional processes and hence . . . involve our moral responsibility. (Macy 1991, 179, n. 47)

The idea of mutual causality offers a way of interpreting structural unity, continuity, and identity with regard to the five aggregates. If it is accepted that the five aggregates arise together through a process of mutual conditioning, the identity and continuity of the personality they form cannot be vested solely in any one of the aggregates, not even in consciousness (*viññāṇa*). Continuity and identity must be regarded as arising through the mutually causal relationship of the aggregates each with the other, with the environment, and with the dynamic, open system of the personality that they constitute. Thus, by positing the reciprocal causal relationship of the aggregates, it becomes possible for Macy to offer a viable interpretation of the concept of volition in Theravāda. She renders *cetanā* as "will" and gives the explanation that processes of volition arise through the mutual conditioning of the cognitive processes of consciousness (*viññāṇa*) and the conative capacity to initiate action in the mental dispositions and habit-forming tendencies that constitute the *saṅkhārakkhandha*. According to her interpretation, these volitional processes are characterized by both goal-directed thought or purpose and the capacity to initiate action.

In the context of mutual causality, Macy views the *saṅkhārās* as "volitional formations" that come into being through the "reflexive or recoil effects of actions" (1991, 165). By this she means that decisions and deeds not only affect a person's external circumstances, but also rebound, as it were, and act upon the personality by creating tendencies, by forming and perpetuating habits, and by carrying into the future the latent energies of habit (1991, 165). Furthermore, it is significant that the principle of mutual causality enables her to ascribe to the mental dispositions two mutually conditioning roles: one pertaining to action and the other pertaining to thought. As habits of thought, they form purposes imbued with volitional energy that becomes expressed in

activity (*kamma*) of body, speech, and mind. At the same time, the mental dispositions serve as the gestalts and structures through which information is sifted and organized in cognitive processes (1991, 124). According to the principle of mutual causality, the cognitive role of *saṅkhārās* as gestalts that mould perception and their dynamic role as habits of thought that shape behaviour are held together and make each other viable, like two sides of the same coin.

Furthermore, Joanna Macy makes the principle of mutual causality the basis of her interpretation of the Theravāda practice of developing insight (*vipassanā*) into the conditioned origination of physical and mental states through the practice of mindful meditation. The idea of mutual causality enables her to deal with the question of how Theravāda can validate its position that the cognitive processes of mindful concentration have the conative capacity to effect changes in the motivation and behaviour of the disciple who follows the Eightfold Path. She interprets insight meditation as a practice where one learns to direct attention "not to the things we see but to how we see them," so that there is a growing awareness of "the dependently co-arising nature of feelings, thoughts, and perceptions" (1991, 136). In her interpretation of the disciplines of mindfulness and insight (*vipassanā*), Macy acknowledges that the processes of insight practice cannot avoid being conditioned by the structures and habit patterns of the mind. Nevertheless, from the systems perspective, she emphasizes that the processes of insight have a recoil effect: they begin to exert their influence on those very structures of the mind from which they arose. As a consequence, when the cultivation of mindfulness and insight bring about increasing experiential awareness of the "mutual conditioning of knower and known," patterns of behaviour towards others and towards the shared

environment also begin to change: through the practice one gains the "eye of wisdom" (*paññācakkhu*), and no longer sees the world through eyes of greed and hate (1991, 136).

I will return to Macy's concept of mutual causality in the course of this work when I find that it can illuminate a specific question. At this juncture, however, it is necessary to look more closely at her interpretation of *paṭicca-samuppāda*. Macy refers to several passages in the Pāli texts, which can be interpreted to signify the "reciprocity of causal factors" and the interdependence of causes and effects, like sheaves of reeds holding each other in place (1991, 55-64). Nevertheless, there are other passages, especially those describing motivational processes, where it seems that the configuration of factors that forms the motivating cause must be well in place before it can be followed in the course of time by the behaviour that constitutes the effect. Johansson lays out, in the form of charts, narratives from the *Sutta* texts spelling out the specific events through which a person strives towards a goal (Johansson 1985, 119, 136, 209, 211). These charts are meant to show the stages by which behaviour is transformed following each other as causes and effects in unilinear temporal sequence. One of the examples that Johansson cites is a description of the sequential stages in a disciple's quest for liberation. In the narrative, the quest is set in motion by an encounter with a worthy teacher; and at each stage the disciple practises certain disciplines as an essential preparation for the next stage (M. II.173). Whether these accounts of motivational processes are taken as descriptions or as prescriptions, the emphasis is not on the reciprocity of cause and effect but on the notion that when the causal conditions are well established, the effect follows in due course of time as a manifestation of the principle of conditioned origination.

Some Modern Interpretations of *Cetanā*

The equivalents of *cetanā* found in modern works on Theravāda are "volition," "will," "motive," and "intention." Unfortunately, it is not always clarified in these works why the author has chosen a particular term as the equivalent of *cetanā* in translation. What is apparent, however, is that there is no consensus about the precise connotations of *cetanā*. The basic question that emerges is whether *cetanā* should be perceived primarily as a conative function with inherent dynamism and the capacity to initiate action, or as a cognitive function expressed as purposive intellection. If *cetanā* is interpreted to be a conative factor, an "impetus" or "motive" that "pushes" the personality towards a goal, then the question arises whether *cetanā* is also associated with the coordination, direction, and control provided by cognitive insights. If *cetanā* is interpreted to be a cognitive process of purposive thought that functions as the act of making a choice or decision, the question arises whether *cetanā* has the inherent capacity to initiate action in order to make that choice effective. If *cetanā* is perceived to be a fusion of purposive thought with conative capacity, it is necessary to investigate how Theravāda explains the interpenetration of these two dimensions of experience. Of the scholars discussed above, Mrs. Rhys Davids interprets *cetanā* to be purposive thought; Guenther most emphatically declares *cetanā* to be a dynamic drive; and de Silva argues that, although *cetanā* is primarily a cognitive function expressing deliberation, it is linked with conative energy within the configuration of a mental disposition (*saṅkhāra*).

Mrs. Rhys Davids gives a frank account of her own frustrations in seeking to probe the significance of *cetanā*. Her first attempts, she says, were based on etymology: "Groping by etymology I had found *cetanā* too intellectual for equating with will" (1978a, 276). Nevertheless, in her translation of the *Dhammasaṅgani*, entitled *Buddhist*

Psychological Ethics and first published in 1900, she translated *cetanā* as "volition" at the persuasion of Burmese *Abhidhamma* scholars. She came to feel very uncomfortable about having done so since she defines "will" as an energy that gives expression to the whole personality, but perceives *cetanā* to be a cognitive function, related to *citta* and *cetas*. As a noun derived from the verb *ceteti*, *cetanā* signifies the practical application of thought in the form of intention or purpose (P.E.D. 271, col. 2). In *The Birth of Indian Psychology* she writes:

I was very willing twenty-five years ago to be corrected by the lore of Burma. . . . I am not nearly so willing today; I think I was in the main right; I regret the rendering of *cetanā* by "volition" in the later edition of my *Buddhist Psychological Ethics* (1923). I am trying here to make good. (1978a, 276)

Her conclusion is that *cetanā* is thought (*citta*) "shown as the precedent of act" (1978a, 276). In this context, she turns to the Buddha's definition of *kamma* (A. III. 415), where he says that *kamma* is to be identified with *cetanā* since one performs an act of body, speech, or mind, after having engaged in a process of *cetanā* (*cetayitvā*). According to the interpretation that Mrs. Rhys Davids gives, *cetayitvā* signifies the goal-oriented thinking that precedes and prepares the way for physical, verbal, or mental action (1978a, 276). Her point that *cetanā* is integrally connected to the processes of discursive thought in the *citta* is well taken. In Chapter VI it will be shown that, whereas the definitions of *cetanā* in the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 135) and *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 111-112) perceive it to be a dynamic function through which action is initiated, other sections the *Atthasālinī* also emphasize that the dynamism of *cetanā* emerges from the purposive thoughts that are formed in a specific state of mind (*citta*).

Whereas Mrs. Rhys Davids links *cetanā* with thought processes involved in making decisions, Guenther interprets *cetanā* to be a drive that puts forth goal-oriented action. His

rendering of *cetanā* as "motive" or "drive" must be set in the context of his emphasis on the creative nature of the continuum of consciousness. He points out that consciousness is to be regarded, not as a passive recipient of sensory impressions, but as "something creative and autonomous in its own right which moulds the world after its own fashion" (Guenther 1976, 41). In Guenther's interpretation, *cetanā* is that which stimulates the mind and impels it to act:

That which arouses and sustains activity on the part of the human psyche is called *cetanā*. Broadly speaking, it is a stimulus, and in a sense, may be considered as a motive and also as a drive. (1976, 41)

Guenther's interpretation of the Buddha's statement, "It is *cetanā* that I call *kamma*" (A. III. 415) differs from that of other scholars mentioned in this section. According to Guenther, *kamma* is a universal principle that displays itself in the repeated accumulation and outpouring of energy. Following this line of argument, Guenther maintains that "*cetanā* and Karman are synonymous," since both terms denote the drive that keeps the individual bound to the rhythm of "accumulating" motivating energy in the form of dispositions and tendencies, and "releasing" the energy in the form of acts. In Guenther's view, *cetanā* is the stimulus that brings about the release of energy in the form of acts.

Guenther does not refer to the etymological roots of *cetanā* that would link it with the thought processes of the mind. He sees *cetanā* as conative energy putting forth acts with karmic consequences.

Like Mrs. Rhys Davids, Padmasiri de Silva regards *cetanā* as purposeful deliberation, but he posits that *cetanā* is inseparably linked with conative dynamism within the complex configuration of a mental habit or disposition (de Silva 1979, 20, 78). According to de Silva's analysis, a mental disposition or tendency (*saṅkhāra*) has two

aspects that are fused together: volition (*cetanā*) that functions as "deliberation, planning, making a choice" and as "dynamism" (*abhisāṅkhāra*) that initiates action to make the purposive deliberation effective (de Silva 1973, 18). Since he perceives mental disposition (*saṅkhāra*) to be a complex function where goal-oriented thought (*cetanā*) and goal-effectuating dynamism are blended, he suggests that an appropriate rendering of *saṅkhāra* would be "directed disposition" (1973, 18) or "conative disposition" (1979, 78).

Like de Silva, David Kalupahana maintains that in Theravāda Buddhism mental dispositions (*saṅkhāras*) are regarded as the basis of all volitional processes. In his work *Ethics in Early Buddhism* (1995), Kalupahana argues that the Buddha's concept of will is in perfect accord with his teaching of the Middle Way.¹⁷ According to Kalupahana, the Buddha avoided the idea of an autonomous will or conscience, which is one extreme, as well as the notion that human persons have no power of decision, which is the other extreme, and posited that there are "tendencies" (*saṅkhāras*) in the personality that make it possible for a person to plan and initiate actions, and even to chart a new course that triumphantly flows against (*paṭisotagāmi*) the present course of mental attitudes.

Kalupahana concludes:

There is no one single term in the Buddhist texts that could be considered the equivalent of the term *will*. This means that the so-called will is not one single controlling force, but rather a whole group of tendencies. (1995, 49)

Kalupahana distinguishes between two "slightly different concepts of the will" in Theravāda: "the immediately felt tendency to act," which is expressed in the *Suttas* by a variety of terms connoting energy or exertion, and "the gradually developed tendency to act," where dispositions (*saṅkhāras*) formed over a period of time generate and guide behaviour (1995, 49).

Kalupahana stresses that these dispositions are not autonomous or self-generating but arise and gradually develop from the decisions and the behaviour of the past. He maintains that the *Suttas* give the following "psychological explanation" of the relationship between decision-making (*cetanā*), mental dispositions, and intentional action (*kamma*) involving moral responsibility. Purposive thoughts and processes of decision-making (*cetanā, sañcetanā*) generate actions (*kamma*); these actions and decisions begin to form tendencies and dispositions. These dispositions constitute the gradually shaped "character" of a person, and that "character" becomes the basis of future decision and future behaviour. He argues that "while volition [*cetanā*] may be an immediate act of deciding, dispositions [*saṅkhāras*] represent the gradually built-up character involved in decision-making (1995, 52)." This statement can be seen as Kalupahana's response to the declaration of Mrs. Rhys Davids: "Will without willer is meaningless" (C.A.F. Rhys Davids 1978a, 298). According to Kalupahana, the gradually forming mental dispositions and tendencies constitute a "will": acts are generated by dispositions and tendencies that have been formed through previous conscious decisions, intentional acts, and chosen mode of life. Kalupahana holds that *cetanā* signifies an immediate intention or decision that emerges from a mental disposition.

Kalupahana regards "selectivity" and "individuation" as the two fundamental capacities of *saṅkhāras*, and he argues that these capacities enable *saṅkhāras* to amply fulfil the functions of a "will." According to his interpretation, "selection" signifies the capacity of the dispositions (*saṅkhāras*) to focus attention on certain selected areas of experience so that the personality may not be bombarded by the data of sensory processes. Kalupahana interprets "individuation" to be the capacity of the dispositions to shape experience in such a way as to form a specific individual with a distinctive

configuration of characteristics and memories (Kalupahana 1987, 89).¹⁸ He maintains that the capacities of "selection" and "individuation" enable the dispositions to perform "a special function of processing the personality" (Kalupahana 1995, 51). By "processing" he means "giving form, guiding or directing, setting up goals and trying to achieve them" (1995, 51). In another context, he says:

This selectivity in consciousness accounts for the possibility and, therefore, the ability on the part of the human being to choose, think and act, and these represent the core of selfhood or personality in the Buddha's doctrine. Hence, his statement that the self is a "lump of dispositions" (*saṅkhāra-puñjā*). (1978, 89)

By claiming that *saṅkhārās*, functioning as dispositions, enable a person to break out of old patterns of behaviour and choose fresh ways of thinking and living, Kalupahana seeks to give an account of the Theravāda concept of will that is entirely faithful to the principle of conditioned origination. Nevertheless, his interpretation of *saṅkhāra* as "disposition" or "tendency" and his concept of "will" as a configuration of dispositions are not without problems. The obvious problem of ascribing the functions of choice and decision-making to the dispositions is that they are constituted of mental habits that cannot transcend the processes of conditioning through which they have originated. It is difficult to see how functions such as making difficult choices, controlling motives, and changing habitual behaviour, which are usually ascribed to the will, can be performed by habits, dispositions, or tendencies. These functions require the cognitive capacity of assessing different possibilities and critically reflecting on alternative choices. Dispositions, by their very nature, repeat the habits of the past; left to themselves, they do not envision new ways of thought and behaviour.

Cetanā* and the “ethicization” of the idea of *kamma

In *The Way to Nirvāṇa*, first published in 1917, la Vallée Poussin renders *cetanā* as "volition" and "mental or spiritual action." He maintains that the Buddhist definition of *kamma*—according to which *kamma* comprises both volition (*cetanā*) itself and the acts of body, speech, and mind that stem from volition—marks the attainment of a significant stage in the history of Indian thought, since it signals a break from a purely ritualistic understanding of *kamma* (la Vallée Poussin 1917, 70). This pronouncement of la Vallée Poussin needs to be qualified. There are statements in the *Upaniṣads* (for example, M.U. I. 2.7, 9, 10) and in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (Bhg. II. 41-44) upholding moral attitudes of mind and deriding those who put their faith in rituals. Steven Collins explains that the process of "the ethicization" of the idea of *kamma* had already begun in the teachings of Yājñavalkya (B.U. IV. 4.5), and Buddhism's contribution was to bring this process to completion by making volition or intention (*cetanā*), rather than the manifest physical act alone, the crucial causal factor in the process of *kamma* (Collins 1990, 82, 201).

Winston King, James Paul McDermott, and Richard Gombrich have added their voices to the idea that the identification of *kamma* with *cetanā* brought about the ethicization of *kamma*. They join Collins in attributing to *cetanā* the meaning of "intention" (McDermott 1984, 27; King 1964, 121; Gombrich 1988, 67). In interpreting the connection between *cetanā* and moral responsibility, King suggests that though the primary connotation of *cetanā* is deliberate intention, the term also includes a reference to the "motive" or reason underlying the intention. He points out that Buddhists locate the "motive" in "basic attitudes or dispositions that is the deeper character of the actor himself" (King 1964, 121). He also notes that Buddhists accord fundamental importance to whether the "motive" or reason behind the intention is wholesome (*kusala*) or

unwholesome (*akusala*) when they gauge the moral quality of the act that the intention generates (1964, 121-122).

Gombrich goes farther than the others mentioned above in the claims that he makes for the process of ethicization in early Buddhism. According to Gombrich (1988, 66-67), the "great innovation" of the Buddha was the "internalization" of *kamma*, which he achieved by locating the moral quality of any act in the "intention" (*cetanā*) behind it. From a sociological perspective, Gombrich describes the Buddha's achievement as the replacement of the notion of specific sets of duties that differed from caste to caste with "a simple and universal ethical dualism of right and wrong" based on the moral quality of the intention (*cetanā*). Furthermore, Gombrich maintains that as a result of vesting ethical value in intention (*cetanā*), Theravāda Buddhism arrives at the conclusion that "the individual is autonomous and the final authority is what we would call individual conscience" (Gombrich 1988, 68). The above statement suggests that there is a central, autonomous will in the individual that functions as the conscience and is the ultimate source of every intention. This is the will that Mrs. Rhys Davids sought and failed to find in Buddhism. There is no room for the notion of an autonomous individual conscience in Theravāda Buddhism since all aspects of the personality are defined as impermanent and conditioned. Gombrich himself points out that early Buddhism emphasized education, training, and the influence of society, family, preceptors, and friends no less than the other religious traditions of India did (1988, 60-113). These influences were considered to have a pivotal role in developing clarity of thought and the dispositions (*saṅkhārās*), both of which were regarded as the causal factors underlying intentions (*cetanā*). The emphasis was on training, rather than on the notion of an autonomous conscience.

The above survey shows that there is no consensus among modern scholars of Theravāda with regard to the concept of *cetanā*. Mrs. Rhys Davids regards *cetanā* as purposive thought emerging from the cognitive processes of the *citta*. Guenther defines *cetanā* as a conative drive that impels action. Kalupahana considers *cetanā* to be a present decision to act stemming from a disposition (*saṅkhārā*) or habit of mind that has been gradually developed. Macy regards *cetanā* as intention that arises from the mutual conditioning of cognitive processes and mental dispositions (*saṅkhārās*). In the course of this thesis, I will further examine these ideas regarding *cetanā* put forward by modern scholars of Theravāda.

Through an analysis of relevant passages in the *Suttas*, the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Atthasālinī*, it will be shown in this thesis that though *cetanā* is not regarded as an autonomous controlling "will," nevertheless, it is attributed with the capacities of putting forth intentions, implementing those intentions by initiating bodily and mental activity, and directing such activity towards the chosen goal. *Cetanā* is conceived as a purposive impulse that arises within a specific state of mind (*citta*) and expresses the dominant cognitive perspectives and the emotional tensions that are present in the mind at the time of its arising. Coming into being as a purposive thought or intention, *cetanā* becomes the leading factor in the dynamic processes of the *saṅkhārās*. In this thesis *saṅkhārās* are defined as the processes by which the required mental conditions are brought together in the continuum of consciousness to initiate goal-oriented acts. The links to the cognitive processes of the *citta* and to *saṅkhārās* makes *cetanā* a mental factor that both produces an intention and has the capacity to initiate action to seek to bring about what is intended. Through the concept of *cetanā*, therefore, Theravāda avoids the notion of a rift between intention and action.

At the same time, the links with specific states of mind imply that *cetanā* arises as an intention that is conditioned by the ideas and emotions that are present in the mind. Similarly, the capacity of *cetanā* to initiate action to implement intentions is restricted and conditioned by the habits of body and mind that are formed by *saṅkhārās*. This thesis will show that though unconditioned freedom of choice is not claimed in the *Suttas* and the *Abhidhamma*, Theravāda maintains that transformations in motivation and behaviour can be brought about through the mind's ability to observe its contents and become aware of the patterns of conditioning that operate in its processes.

Working definitions used in this thesis

In this thesis the terms "motive," "intention," "volition," and "conation" are defined in the manner given below. I use the term "conation" to convey the capacity to initiate action or, in other words, the impulse to act. In contexts where the term is used, no assumption is made regarding the moral quality of the mental factors that produce the capacity to initiate action. Neither "conation" nor "volition" indicates, in this thesis, a will that is autonomous and has the capacity to control the process of thought and emotion.

For purposes of clarification, I will distinguish the two terms "intention" and "volition." In this work, the term "intention" signifies the cognitive act of deciding to pursue a specific goal. Intention connotes directed thought or aspiration, and it indicates planning and an image of the future. Intention implies the availability of alternatives and the focusing of attention on the chosen alternative. Emotional urges and purposive thought come together in an intention. However, an intention does not necessarily lead to the initiation of action; it can remain merely as an idea in the mind.

The term "volition" is used here to cover a much broader range of meaning than "intention." It connotes a complex function with three aspects: choosing a goal and intending to pursue it, initiating action for that purpose, and directing physical and mental activity towards that goal. Both "intention" and "volition" connote the orientation of the personality towards the future. Thus they connote purpose and a "pull" that a mental picture of the future exerts on a person's present attitudes and behaviour. In addition, the term "volition" indicates that the cognitive processes of directed thought and conscious planning have the capacity to activate the sources of conation in a person. It is posited that these cognitive functions do not operate merely as aids of "drives" and "motives," but have the dynamic energy to control and direct behaviour by reshaping attitudes, memories, and perspectives.

In this work, the distinction between "volition" and "motivation" is drawn along the following lines. "Volition" indicates that behaviour must be explained primarily in terms of cognitive processes that act in conjunction with emotions. The emphasis is on the capacity of such cognitive processes as appraisal, attribution, choosing, and planning to initiate and guide behaviour. "Motivation," on the other hand, signifies that the impetus for behaviour comes from drives and motives. These definitions posit that the goals of volition exert a teleological "pull" on the personality because of their image of the future, while motives based on felt needs "push" the personality to initiate action to fulfil those needs.

The two terms "drive," and "motive" are used interchangeably to signify a stimulus that is instigated by the personal experience of a need or deficiency. It is assumed that the need can be either physical, such as the need to acquire goods, or psychological, such as the need for understanding or peace of mind. Following Guenther and Johansson, I define

a psychological need as the experience of a lack or deficiency arising from emotional tensions, dispositions and tendencies in the personality, influences in the environment, or previous training.

In this thesis, I have not adopted a standard way of rendering *cetanā*, so that the connotations of the term may be allowed to unfold from the texts. I have referred to *cetanā* as "goal-oriented thought and impulse" or "purposive impulse," or "intention imbued with conative energy" to show that Theravāda always links the functioning of *cetanā* both to the cognitive processes by which consciousness (*citta*) attends to objects, as well as the impetus in consciousness to garner its resources and direct them towards goal-oriented acts (*saṅkhāras*).

Chapter I

Approaches to the Concept of Volition in the *Upaniṣads*

The *Sutta* literature gives us pictures of a vibrant society at the time of the Buddha, where many world-views were put forward by a variety of teachers and students, who came to be known as *śramaṇas* (Pāli: *samaṇa*). The Buddha and his followers formed one of the *samaṇa* communities (Warder, 1970, 31-42). This chapter does not endorse the view that the Buddhist tradition developed out of the Vedic tradition. Nevertheless, the *Upaniṣads* and the *Suttas* come out of the same social and cultural background and were composed by people who shared many ideas and ideals. Both the *Upaniṣads* and the *Suttas* display a need to understand how the human personality is constituted and how the processes of the mind work. There are indications that terms connoting cognitive processes, emotions, and conative capacities are shared by both the Upaniṣadic and the Buddhist traditions, though the shades of meaning assigned to these terms sometimes differ in the two traditions.

In this chapter, the focus is on three following issues regarding mental processes and the dynamics of volition that are of interest to both the Upaniṣadic and the Buddhist traditions. At the outset, it is important to note that both traditions affirm a holistic view of consciousness and perceive thought processes, emotional states, and conative dynamism as experiences involving the entire mind, rather than as separate factors within the mind. In both traditions, *hṛd* (heart), *manas* (mind), and *citta* (continuum of consciousness) are terms that indicate the mind viewed as an organic whole.

Moreover, both traditions accept the concepts of *karma* and rebirth. This entails that their ideas regarding the dynamics of volitions are set in the context of *karma*. It is sometimes held that the Buddha "ethicized" the notion of *karma* by making intention, rather than the act itself, the factor on which the moral quality of the act depends (Gombrich 1988, 66-69). This chapter will show that the teachers of the *Upaniṣads* were profoundly concerned that their disciples should become aware of the diverse mental attitudes that generate intentions and instigate acts. They stressed the relationship between mental attitude and action.

Moreover, it can be shown, from a psychological perspective, that both traditions display the need to distinguish between desire (*kāma*, *trṣṇā*) and intention. In the Vedic tradition, *saṁkalpa* is a term that is developed to indicate intention that can be either morally good or evil. *Kratu* is another term that signifies firmness of intention or strength of purpose. This chapter outlines the range of meaning of the two terms *saṁkalpa* and *kratu* and shows how they are distinguished from *kāma*.

This chapter is concerned only with the principal *Upaniṣads* that were probably composed in the period between the seventh century B.C.E. and the beginning of the Common Era (Olivelle 1998, xxxvi-xxxvii). All references to "the *Upaniṣads*" in this chapter are limited to these texts.

The possibility of volitional endeavour in the realm of ignorance and rebirth

In *The Philosophy of the Upanishads*, first published in 1906, Paul Deussen maintains that the prevailing doctrine in the *Upaniṣads* is that *Brahman* is the sole reality and, as a corollary, that the entire universe is an illusory appearance (*māyā*). His approach to the question of the freedom of the human will in the *Upaniṣads* follows from his

interpretation of the Upaniṣadic world-view. According to him, the *Upaniṣads* posit that the human will is totally constrained by the conditions of space, time, and causality that prevail within the *māyā*-ridden world of plurality. His conclusion is that in the Upaniṣadic view, total freedom can only be achieved when a person comes to the realization that the ultimate Self (*ātman*) is not different from *Brahman* (Deussen 1966, 210-211).

Deussen's interpretation of the concept of bondage in the Upaniṣadic tradition is that the idea of God as the supreme ruler of the universe of plurality and the idea of *karma* as the governing principle of that universe dominate the minds of people as long as they are deluded by *māyā*. As a consequence, Deussen argues that one cannot logically uphold freedom of will while affirming the sovereignty of God and the irrevocability of *karma*. In support of his argument, he quotes a passage from the *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* (Ks.U. III. 8), where he finds a "form of the doctrine of predestination" (Deussen 1966, 176).¹ In the same vein, the *Maitrī Upaniṣad* (Mt.U. III. 2) holds that a person is swept along and polluted by the flood of nature's constituents (*guṇaughā*). Changing the analogy, the *Maitrī Upaniṣad* compares a person bound by the perpetuation of desire (*kāma*) for nature's varied objects to an ensnared bird.²

Certainly, there are passages, especially in the *Maitrī Upaniṣad*, that appear to deny freedom of choice to individuals caught up in day-to-day experiences. Nevertheless, the main thrust of the Upaniṣadic teachings is that the human mind is capable of making decisions and of exerting itself, precisely when it is still bound by ignorance and rebirth. The *Upaniṣads* state that such volitional endeavour is essential in order to experience the *ātman* and to become freed of desires. For example, though Yājñavalkya defines the human being as "constituted of desires" (*kāmamaya*) in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, he

urges his listeners to undertake the disciplines that will lead to knowledge of Brahman (B.U. IV. 4.22-23).

The emphasis on the need to cultivate the disciplines of *yoga* is intensified in the *Kaṭha Muṇḍaka*, *Śvetāśvatara* and *Maitrī Upaniṣads*. It is clearly recognized in these three *Upaniṣads* that the cultivation of *yoga* requires powerful and sustained application of one's volition. And the call to make such volitional effort is addressed to disciples still struggling against the lure of earthly successes and heavenly rewards. Thus the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* stresses that austerity (*tapas*) and discipline are integral to the cultivation of *yoga* (M.U. I. 2.11), and concludes that the goal can only be attained by one who strives (*yatate*) to cultivate the disciplines of *yoga*, not by one who is lacking in strength (*balahīna*). The same verses warn against negligence (*pramāda*) and the false application, or aimless cultivation, of ascetic disciplines (M.U. III. 2.4). Similarly, the *Maitrī Upaniṣad* contains powerfully worded instructions for purifying and concentrating the mind (Mt.U. VI. 18-28). At the same time, the *Maitrī Upaniṣad* takes the position that all people, excepting the wise knowers of *Brahman*, are conditioned by the basic constituents (*guṇas*) of primal Nature (*prakṛti*).

The prevailing Upaniṣadic view, therefore, is that though the causal processes of *karma* apply universally, people still have the capacity, within the boundaries of *karma*, of deploying their minds to reflect on the alternatives open to them, to choose their goals, and to initiate action to fulfil those goals. As a corollary of their practical teachings, the *Upaniṣads* contain a range of terms referring to various processes and functions of the personality. Unfortunately, these terms are seldom defined. Nevertheless, there are some clues indicating the main Upaniṣadic notions of the concrete psychological processes by which volition is initiated and exercised.

Hṛd (heart): the core of the personality

In his work *Origins of Indian Psychology* (1990, 101-127), Reat focuses on three terms that were deployed in the *Rgveda* to signify consciousness as a whole: *hṛd* (heart), *manas* (mind), and *citta* (thought, state of mind). These three terms are found also in the *Upaniṣads*, with *manas* occurring by far most frequently (Rhys Davids 1978a, 21). In the Pāli literature, *citta* becomes the preferred term to denote consciousness in a general sense, but *manas* frequently carries this meaning; and the 'heart' (Pāli: *hadaya*) is seen as the centre of thought, of feelings, and especially of powerful passions (P.E.D. 728, col. 2). The way these three terms are used attests to the fact that in these early texts consciousness is perceived to be an undivided whole, despite the interest displayed in distinguishing its various functions.

A passage in the *Aitareya Upaniṣad* reveals that the Upaniṣadic view follows the trend in the *Rgveda* to regard the "heart" as the centre of cognitive, conative, and emotive modes of experience, as well as of vitality (A.U. III. 1.2). In this passage, *hṛd* is identified with *manas* (mind) and is said to possess the following mental functions: *saṁjñāna* (sentience), *ājñāna* (perception), *viññāna* (distinguishing, discriminating objects), *prajñāna* (intelligence), *medhā* (mental vigour, wisdom), *darṣṭi* (insight), *dhṛti* (constancy, steadfastness), *mati* (thought), *manīṣā* (wisdom, inspiration), *jūti* (impetus, impulse), *smṛti* (memory), *saṁkalpa* (conceptualization, intention), *kratu* (purpose, resolve), *asu* (life), *kāma* (desire), and *vaśa* (control). Among the mental functions in the *Aitareya* list, *jūti*, *saṁkalpa*, *kratu* and *kāma* are linked in some way with intention and the capacity to initiate action. *Kratu*, *saṁkalpa* and *kāma* are discussed separately below. The rare term *jūti* is derived from a verb root that signifies "to press forward," "to impel," or "to incite," and it expresses excitation or deployment of energy (S.E.D. 424, col. 2). In her discussion

of the *Aitareya* list of mental functions, Mrs. Rhys Davids regards both *jūti* and *vaśa* as "two terms which may be called purely volitional" (1978a, 108). However, in the *Abhidhamma*, the term *javana*, which is related to *jūti*, becomes connected with perception rather than with volition.³ *Vaśa* signifies "will, wish, desire," as well as "authority, power, control, dominion" (S.E.D. 929, col. 2). It is rarely used in the *Upaniṣads* in the sense of exerting control over oneself. An exception is in a passage of the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (K.U. I. 3.4-6) where the faculties (*indriyāṇi*) of a person whose mind is unrestrained are said to be uncontrolled (*avaśyāṇi*), whereas the faculties of a person of sound understanding and restrained mind are described as *vaśyāṇi* (controlled). This passage in the *Aitareya Upaniṣad* shows that the "heart " was regarded as the unifying centre from which a variety of cognitions, emotions, and conative energies emanated, and in which they cohered.

In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (B.U. II. 4.11; IV. 5.12), the heart is celebrated as the goal or "uniting place" (*ekāyana*) of all branches of knowledge. At the same time, the heart is said to be the place where the desires that perpetuate sorrow are entrenched (B.U. IV. 4.7; K.U. II. 3.14). There are also references to the "knots of the heart" (*hṛdaya granthi*) that bind a person to the wheel of rebirth (K.U. II. 3.15; M.U. II. 2.9). This imagery graphically suggests that the causes of sorrow are at the inmost centre of the personality. From the knotted centre, the tangles spread into cognitive, emotive and volitional processes.

***Citta*: the range of the mind**

If the term *hṛd* indicates the inward centre of the mind in the Upaniṣadic view, *citta* refers to its spreading diameters. Reat explains that the verb root *cīt-* and its derivatives in

the *Ṛgveda* resemble the Buddhist concept of *citta* in that they both "refer in the broadest way possible to mental processes whether perceptive, intellectual, emotional or imaginative" (Reat 1990, 101).

Reat also observes that in the *Ṛgveda* the specific connotation of the verb root *cit-* depends on the term with which it is linked in any verse. Thus, in association with mind (*manas*), *cit-* signifies "mental perception or intellectual thought"; when linked with "heart" (*hṛd*), it conveys "emotional or intuitive thought"; with contemplation or inspiration (*dhī*), it connotes "imaginative, visionary thought"; and with mental power or purpose (*kratu*), *cit-* stands for "volitional thought" (1990, 107).⁴ The Vedic use of the term *citta* to signify mental activity in general is continued in the *Upaniṣads*. It is said in the *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* that when *citta* departs from the body of a dying person (*udakramīt cittam*), the senses begin to fail. The dying person does not hear, does not see, does not utter words and does not think (Ks.U. III. 3).⁵

The term *cetanā*, which is another derivative of *cit-*, occurs only a few times in the *Upaniṣads*. Reat refers to two verses where the term is used in the *Ṛgveda* (Ṛg. VIII. 13.18; VIII. 92.21). In these verses, the poet says that *cetanā* is stirred, or literally "churned," by the fire ritual (*yajñamatnata*).⁶ Reat translates *cetanā* as "thought" in this verse, while Griffith prefers to render it as "mind" (Reat 1990, 102; Griffith 1973, 404). Gonda holds that, in the *Ṛgveda*, the verb root *cit-* includes in its meaning a reference to coming to know through visual perception, and conveys the general sense of "distinguishing, perceiving, noticing, being attentive to" (Gonda 1963, 100). According to Gonda's interpretation, the causative form of the verb root *cit-*, from which *cetanā* is formed, has the primary meaning of "to make visible," and embraces in its meaning both "to exhibit to the sight" as well as "to disclose something

not previously known" (1963, 100). Thus, both Gonda and Reat take *cetanā* in the *Rgveda* to be primarily indicative of cognitive processes. Neither of them finds in this term the sense of "volition," which it acquires in the *Tipiṭaka*.

The term *cetanā* occurs only very rarely in the *Upaniṣads*, and it enfolds in its range of meaning both the very basic sentience that empowers the body and mind to put forth their manifold functions as well as the power of knowledge that belongs to *Brahman*. Thus *Brahman* is adored as the "eternal one amidst ephemeral beings, the conscious one among conscious beings, (*cetanaś cetanānām*), the one among the manifold" (K.U. II. 2.13). The significance of the phrase "the conscious one among conscious beings" is further elucidated in the *Maitrī Upaniṣad* (Mt.U. II.3-6). Here, the body is compared to a cart that is devoid of sentience (*śakaṭam ivācetanam idaṁ śarīram*). The question is then raised, "To what supersensuous being belongs such power by which such a sort of thing has been made intelligent [*cetanavat pratiṣṭhāpitam*], or in other words, who is its mover?" (Radhakrishnan 1953, 800). The answer is that *Prajāpati*, the Lord of Creatures, established the body as an entity endowed with consciousness (*cetanā*) by equipping it with the vital breaths, the five senses, and the organs of action, and by providing it with a driver in the form of the mind (*manas*). In this context, *cetanā* probably signifies basic sentience or fundamental awareness that manifests itself not only as the mind's power to cognize objects, but also as the volitional dynamism that impels a person to seek out and pursue goals. The idea that the mind acquires power to "drive" the body when it is endowed with *cetanā* suggests that *cetanā* signifies conscious awareness that functions as the capacity to initiate action in the body and the mind. On the other hand, when the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* exalts God as "the Conscious one" among those

who are endowed as consciousness (S.U. VI. 13), in this verse *cetanā* signifies the highest power of knowledge.

***Manas* (mind): the controlling centre**

Manas, the third Upaniṣadic term that signifies a holistic view of consciousness, differs from *hṛd* and *citta* in that it stresses the capacity of consciousness to regulate the sensory and motor functions of the individual. If *hṛd* signifies the inward centre from which conscious functions emanate, and if *citta* indicates the range of these functions, *manas* points to the capacity of consciousness to interpret sensory information and to coordinate it with motor responses.

Both Gonda and Reat emphasize two features of *manas* in the *Rgveda*: the wide range of *manas* as the agent and locus of thought, volition, and emotion, and the capacity of *manas* to "realize" itself in ideas and purposes. They designate this capacity of "realization" as the mind's "inventiveness" (Gonda), or its "creativity" (Reat). Reat holds that whereas the verbal forms of *man-* in the *Rgveda* cover the meanings of "to ponder" and "to evaluate," the noun *manas* is less intellectual in its connotations and is more associated with feelings and emotions (1990, 108).

The capacity of the mind "to realize" is stressed by Gonda in his analysis of the verb root *man-* in the *Rgveda*:

By making an entity or an idea the object of the process denoted by *man-* one "realized" it, that is to say: one does not only cause it to appear real to the mind by forming a clear conception of it, one is according to the view of the ancients also able to convert it into actuality. (1963, 146)

By "realize" Gonda means achieving a specific effect or obtaining a particular object.

For example, he says that *manas*, as "the psychical organ in which the processes of thought, will, and feeling take place," actually "produces" or, at the very least, becomes

the "birth-place" of poetic insight or vision. In this context, he refers to L. Renou's description of *manas* in the *Rgveda* as "essentiellement façonnant" (1963, 75). Reat goes much farther than Gonda in his interpretation of the Vedic view of the creative powers ascribed to *manas*.⁷

The *Upaniṣads* follow the *Rgveda* in assigning to the mind wide-ranging functions, making it the agent and locus of cognitive, volitional, and emotional processes. The argument is made in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* and in the *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* that the mind's attention is essential for the functioning of the sense organs and the organs that govern motor activities. The point is made that none of these organs is able to perform its appointed task, if the mind is "elsewhere" (*anyatra*) (B.U. I. 5.3; Ks.U. III. 7). The conclusion is then drawn that, ultimately, it is the mind that sees or smells.⁸ Similarly, in the *Majjhima-nikāya* (M. I. 295), it is posited that, whereas each of the five senses has its own range of objects (*nānā-visayam, nānā-gocaram*), the mind (*manas*) is the resort (*paṭisaraṇam*) of the five senses and experiences (*paccanubhoti*) all their objects. It can be inferred from this passage of the *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* (Ks.U. III. 7) that in the Upaniṣadic view, the mind is perceived as the faculty that co-ordinates incoming sensory information with outgoing voluntary responses. Furthermore, it is to be noted that in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, the mind is viewed not only as the agent of perception (B.U. I. 5.3) but also as the goal or "uniting place" (*ekāyana*) of conceptualizations (*saṁkalpa*), which often take the form of intentions or purposes (B.U. II. 4.11, IV. 5.12).

In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (B.U. III. 2.1-9), the mind (*manas*) is listed as an organ of perception (*graha*), and the object that exerts a controlling influence on the mind (*atigraha*) is designated as *kāma* (desire).⁹ It is implied here that there is a reciprocal relationship between the mind and its object: the object, for its part, has features that

cause the mind to be interested in it; and the mind, for its part, is motivated to focus its attention on that which it finds to be of interest. When the object to which the mind becomes related is designated as *kāma*, it is implied that the mind not only cognizes its object but desires it and wishes to appropriate it. The object is related not only to the mind's cognitive capacity but also to its processes of intention and capacity to initiate action. The mind's function of becoming motivated to seek out that which attracts its attention is regarded as integral to the process of perception. Thus the cognitive capacity of the mind to receive information and its outgoing conative dynamism become intertwined. If the thing that comes within the purview of the mind is an object of interest (*kāma*), the chances are that the mind's attention will be drawn to that object and that perception will occur. It is implied that there is a reciprocal relationship between desire as a motivating impetus that guides the perceiving mind to a specific object and the desirable quality, which draws the mind's attention to the object. It is significant that both in Saṃskṛt and in Pāli the term *kāma* comes to signify both the mental state of desire as well as object of desire (S.E.D. 271, col. 3; P.E.D. 203, col. 1).

The *Maitrī Upaniṣad* presents its version of the reciprocity between the mind and its objects with a specifically Sāṃkhya slant (Mt.U. VI. 10).¹⁰ In this passage, the world is compared to food (*anna*) with the three characteristics of pleasure (*sukha*), pain (*duḥkha*), and delusion (*moha*).¹¹ It is obvious that these three characteristics emerge only through the interaction between the mind and its objects. In this process of interaction, the mind is affected by the impact of objects. Simultaneously, the manner in which objects appear to the mind—the characteristics of pleasure, pain, and delusion they acquire—is influenced by the attitudes that dominate the mind that perceives them.

This Upaniṣadic idea that there is a reciprocal influence between one's state of mind and the objects that one perceives is taken up again in the *Sutta* literature. Furthermore, the *Suttas* echo the notion that one's desire (*kāma*) and intention (*saṅkappa*) stem from the impacts that objects have on the mind. The discipline that the Buddha taught includes being vigilant so that the mind does not become entranced by the defining features of objects (*na nimittaggāhī hoti*) or by their detailed characteristics (*nānūvyañjanaggāhī*) (D. I. 70; A. I. 113; A. II. 16). The warning is given that covetousness (*abhijjhā*) dejection (*domanassa*) and morally wrong, unwholesome states of mind arise when a person is enthralled by the objects of the senses. Moreover, contacts with sensory and mental objects are regarded as the sources of wholesome and unwholesome purposive impulses (*cetanās*) (D. II. 309, III. 244). Desire and passion for sensory experiences and mental stimulation are linked with yearning for the past, attachment to the present, and projection into the future (M. III. 197). From a psychological perspective, both the *Upaniṣads* and the *Suttas* view perception as the cause of morally good and evil purposes.

The Upaniṣadic view of the impact that this reciprocity between the mind and its objects has on the mind's function of volition is reflected in the well-known analogy of the chariot and its driver. In the version that occurs in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (K.U. I. 3.3-6), the *ātman* is likened to the owner of the chariot (*rathin*), the body to the chariot, the faculty of cognitive awareness and intellection (*buddhi*) to the driver of the chariot, the senses to the galloping horses, and the mind to the reins (*pragraha*) by which the horses are controlled. The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* maintains that the senses can only be controlled (*vaśyāni*) by a controlled mind (*yuktena manasā*). Furthermore, the *Upaniṣad* says that only a person with understanding (*vijñānavān*), who is pure (*śuciḥ*), and whose

mind is functioning with attention (*samanaskah*) can reach the end of the journey. In this context, purity (*śuci*) signifies "unsullied, undefiled, innocent, honest, virtuous" (S.E.D. 1081. col. 1). Since the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* insists not only on understanding (*vijñāna*) but also on inward purity (*śuci*) as conditions for the mind's capacity to control the senses, it can be inferred that the type of control meant here includes restraint, not only from false perceptions but also harmful intentions. In other words, the control extends to the conative functions of the mind through the organs of action, as well as to its cognitive functions through the sense organs. The *Maitrī Upaniṣad* (Mt. U. II. 6) superimposes on the image of the chariot the bleak image of a potter's wheel relentlessly repeating the same circles. The body circling round and round, driven by the whip that is constituted of the individual's own physical and mental characteristics, is compared to the potter's wheel that keeps turning in the self-same circles.

The theme of bondage to *karma* and ignorance that the *Maitrī Upaniṣad* so relentlessly emphasizes echoes throughout the *Upaniṣads*. Nevertheless, the main message of the *Upaniṣads* is that the mind can be trained and released from ignorance. From a psychological perspective, the argument can be made that this affirmation that the mind is amenable to training is based on a holistic view of consciousness. When consciousness is seen as an organic whole, it is implied that thoughts, emotions, and conative energies are interconnected in such a way that wholesome changes in one set of mental processes will set off a pattern of wholesome influences throughout the mind. It was shown above that in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* the mind (*manas*) is perceived not only as the co-ordinator of sensory experiences (B.U. I. 5.3), but as the agent of desire (B.U. III. 2.7) and the point of convergence of conceptualizations (*saṁkalpa*) that become expressed as intentions. Such a view of the mind implies that it is possible to train any

one of the aspects of the mind in such a way that wholesome influences begin to pervade the entire mind.

It will be shown in Chapter IV that a similarly holistic view of consciousness underlies an equally strong affirmation in the *Suttas* that the mind is responsive to training. The concept of the "protected state of mind" (*rakkhita-citta*) signifies that the interlinked processes of cognition, emotion, and conative dynamism are equally guarded by the disciplines of the Eightfold Path. It is stated in the *Anguttara-nikāya* that the guarded mind entails the guarding of all acts of body, speech, and mind (A. I. 7, Dh. 33-39).

***Samkalpa* (conceptualization, intention)**

In the *Tipiṭaka* the second aspect of the Eightfold Path is *sammā-saṅkappa*. The firm determination or resolve of mind required in the Path is indicated by the term *saṅkappa*. Though the term *saṁkalpa* does not occur often in the *Upaniṣads*, it adds important dimension to Upaniṣadic thought by forging a link between conceptualization and intention. *Samkalpa* is derived from the verb root *klp-* which has the basic meaning of "to be well ordered or regulated." This verb root also signifies "to produce, cause, effect, create." The causative form, *kalpayate*, carries the meaning "to set in order, arrange, distribute, dispose" (S.E.D. 308, col. 2). The noun *saṁkalpa* includes in its frame of reference both the cognitive processes of conceptualization and purposive thought as well as the volitional factors of intention and resolve (S.E.D. 1126, col. 2-3). The range of *saṁkalpa* becomes evident, for example, in Radhakrishnan's translation of the term in two identical passages of the *Bṛadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, where *manas* (mind) is said to be the "uniting place" or goal (*ekāyana*) of all *saṁkalpa*. In the first of these passages

(B.U. II. 4.11), Radhakrishnan renders *saṁkalpa* as "determination." Here he is following Śaṅkara, who defines *saṁkalpa* as the process of cognitively determining the nature of a thing (*pratyupasthita-viśaya-vikalpanam*)—for example, whether it is white or blue (Radhakrishnan 1953, 175-176). However, in the second passage (B.U. IV. 5.12), which is identical with the one referred to above, Radhakrishnan translates *saṁkalpa* as "intention." Here it is shown that *saṁkalpa* includes both determining the nature of an object as well as deciding how to react to that object.

Mrs. Rhys Davids notes that translators of the *Upaniṣads* working in European languages were well aware of the range of meanings included in the term *saṁkalpa*. Her work, *The Birth of Indian Psychology*, contains a very interesting chart showing how six different scholars had translated *saṁkalpa* in nine different passages in the *Upaniṣads* (1978a, 121). The chart shows that *saṁkalpa* had been translated as "conception," "imagination," "will," "wish," "determination," "resolve," "thought," and "intention." Mrs. Rhys Davids agrees with Émile Senart that the basic meaning of *saṁkalpa* is thought "realizing" or "constituting" itself, both in the form of specific ideas and images as well as in the form of concrete purposes and resolves (Rhys Davids 1978a, 120).

Olivelle agrees that *saṁkalpa* "contains a very elusive concept." He explains:

It [*saṁkalpa*] refers first to intention, will, or purpose; in a more ritual sense, to the public declaration of one's intention to perform a rite. Its verbal equivalents, on the other hand, have a wider range of meanings, including the formation, the ordering, and the coming into being of something. (1998. 352)

The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (C.U. VII. 3-5) teaches the disciple to meditate on the Supreme Being in stages, by identifying *Brahman* with *manas* (mind), with *saṁkalpa* (conceptualization, intention), with *citta* (thought), and with other psychological and physical categories. In the meditation in which *Brahman* is identified with mind, the

emphasis is on the mind's capacity of volition. The text says that when one makes up one's mind (*manasā manasyati*), "I should learn the sacred hymns," then one learns them; if one decides to perform sacred acts (*karmāṇi*), one performs them; if one chooses to desire sons and cattle, one desires them; if one applies one's mind to desiring this world and the next, one desires them. Commenting on this passage, Mrs. Rhys Davids remarks: "*Manas* here is virtually 'will'" (1978a, 66).

The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (C.U. VII. 5.1) brings together *manas*, *saṁkalpa*, and *citta* as follows: when a person becomes engaged in thought (*cetayate*), then that person conceives a purpose (*atha saṁkalpayate*), applies the mind (*atha manasyati*), and utters speech (*atha vācam īrayati*). Here the capacity to think (*citta*) is given a status more basic than the multi-dimensioned mind; and the capacity to conceptualize and form intentions and purposes (*saṁkalpa*) is posited as the driving force behind the operations of the mind (*manas*). However, it is possible to conceive a purpose in the mind without implementing it in action. This passage of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* indicates that when a purpose has been conceived through the capacity of conceptualization (*saṁkalpa*), *manas* comes into play as the instrument through which the decision to implement action is made so that the purpose can be fulfilled (*manasā manasyati*).

The moral dimension of *saṁkalpa* is demonstrated in another passage of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (C.U. I. 2), where the teaching is set in the context of an episode in the story of the cosmic warfare between the gods and the titans (*asurās*). The *Upaniṣad* narrates how the titans proceed to infect the sense faculties of smell, vision and hearing as well as speech and mind with karmic demerit and moral evil (*pāpa*). The result is that each of the above faculties becomes twofold: it sometimes functions as it ought to function and sometimes it functions inappropriately. According to the narrative, because

the titans afflicted *manas* with evil, its function of conceptualization (*saṁkalpa*) becomes morally divided. The mind conceives both what it ought to conceive and what it ought not to conceive (*saṁkalpanīyaṁ cāsaṁkalpanīyaṁ ca*). The story of the gods and titans shows that *saṁkalpa* can be interpreted in such a way as to include the mind's capacity to conceptualize, as well as the ideas, imaginations, and purposes—both good and evil—into which these conceptualizations are shaped.

It is significant that both in the *Upaniṣads* and in the *Suttas*, *saṁkalpa/saṁkappa* is a morally neutral term. The story of the *asuras* in the *Chandogya Upaniṣad* (C.U. I. 2. 6.) emphasizes that the purposes and intentions that take shape in the mind can become either good or evil. Similarly, the *Sutta* literature (M. II. 27) classifies *saṁkappas* into wholesome (*kusala*) and unwholesome (*akusala*) types. Intentions based on covetousness (*kāma-saṁkappa*), malevolence (*vyāpāda-saṁkappa*), and cruelty (*vihiṁsā-saṁkappa*) are regarded as the effects of perceptions that are influenced by correspondingly unwholesome emotions in the mind of the perceiver. Likewise, wholesome *saṁkappas* of renunciation, benevolence, and kindness are said to arise when wholesome emotions prevail in the mind of a person cognizing sensory and mental objects.

In the *Upaniṣads*, *satyasaṁkalpa* is an appellation of the soul, signifying that the intentions of the soul turn towards that which is real.¹² In Theravāda, *sammā-saṁkappa*, as an aspect of the Eightfold Path, indicates the right intention to follow that Path until the goal is reached. It is important to note that in the *Upaniṣads*, the term *saṁkalpa* displays a wide semantic range. In the *Upaniṣads* and the *Suttas*, a strong resolve (*saṁkalpa/saṁkappa*) is considered to be essential for the practice of any form of spiritual training. At the same time, both the *Upaniṣads* and the *Suttas* emphasize that intentions

and resolves can become occasions when unwholesome desire (*kāma*, *rāga*) takes hold of the mind.

In the final analysis, both the *Upaniṣads* and the *Suttas* maintain that all intentions and purposes, both wholesome and unwholesome, inevitably bind a person to future goals and aspirations. For this reason, the *Maitrī Upaniṣad* (Mt. U. VI. 19) teaches that a person disciplined in *yoga* should become free of all *saṁkalpas* (*niḥsaṁkalpas tatas tiṣṭhet*). Similarly, in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (Bhg. VI. 2, 4, 24), the disciple of *yoga* is told that all desires that are born of *saṁkalpa* (*saṁkalpa-prabhavān-kāmān*) should be renounced. In the *Suttas*, goal-oriented impulses stemming from the mind (*mano-saṁcetanās*) are regarded as a "nutrient" (*āhāra*) in the processes of *kamma* that motivates more and more wholesome and unwholesome acts and keeps a person bound to future rebirth (S. II. 98-99; D. III. 211; M. I. 48). From a psychological perspective, the *Suttas* concur with the *Upaniṣads* in maintaining that the predilection to form future-oriented thoughts, purposes, and intentions ceases when one cultivates the disciplines that lead to liberation from sorrow.

"Ethicization" of the idea of *karma*

In his work *Theravāda Buddhism*, Gombrich claims that it was Buddha's "great innovation to say that the moral quality of an act lies in the intention behind it" (1998, 67). However, in the pre-Buddhist period, the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* puts forward the view that the moral quality of an act depends, not solely on the act itself and its consequences, but on the mental attitudes that produce and shape the act.

In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (B.U. IV. 4.5-6), the sage Yājñavalkya presents two contenders for the role of the governing principle in the rebirth process: *karma*

(action) and *kāma* (desire).¹³ He first presents the view of those who hold that what a person turns out to be—that is to say, how a person develops—depends on how that person acts (*yathākārī*) and habitually behaves (*yathācārī*). According to this view, a person who performs good actions will become good and garner merit (*puṇya*); a person who does bad acts will become bad and accumulate demerit (*pāpa*). The second view links *kāma* (desire), *kratu* (purpose) and *karma* (action) in a causal series. Here it is held that a person is constituted of desire (*kāmamaya evāyam puruṣa iti*). Desire (*kāma*) is posited as the basic factor that gives rise to a person's purpose and resolve (*kratu*); this *kratu*,¹⁴ in turn, is regarded as the cause of actions (*karma*); and finally, actions are said to determine what accrues to a person in the process of rebirth.

The term *kratu* appears frequently in the *Ṛgveda*. Both in the Vedic hymns and in the *Upaniṣads*, *kratu* ranges in meaning between the cognitive functions of intelligence, understanding, and poetic inspiration, and the action-producing functions of determination, desire and will (S.E.D. 319, col. 1). In the dynamics of volition, *kratu* covers both the purpose that arises in the mind as well as the capacity of the mind to initiate action to achieve that purpose.

Both Gonda and Reat discuss whether *kratu* conveys the meaning of "purpose" and "volition" in the *Ṛgveda*. Gonda says that though earlier scholars had translated *kratu* in the *Ṛgveda* as volition or will, he prefers to interpret this term more "vaguely" as "inventiveness" or "resourcefulness" (Gonda 1963, 111). He describes *kratu* as "a kind of effective mental power or intelligence, mental energy and determination, which enables its possessor to have solutions for preponderantly practical difficulties" (1963, 183). Reat maintains that neither the term "volition" nor Gonda's "resourcefulness" captures the numinous implications of *kratu* in the *Ṛgveda*. He cites verses where *kratu* signifies the

poet's mental power. In Reat's interpretation, the term *kratu* covers both the intention or purpose in the mind as well as "a self-actualizing mental power" linked with that purpose (1990, 135-137). Reat maintains that "inventiveness" and "resourcefulness" are more appropriate to the term *dakṣa*, since this term denotes the practical skill needed to implement one's purpose (Reat 1990, 138). In support of his position, Reat quotes the following statement in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (4.1.4.1): "When a man wishes, 'May I do that; may I have that,' that is *kratu*. When he attains it, that is *dakṣa*."¹⁵

Commenting on Yājñavalkya's statement that a person is constituted of desire (*kāma*), Mrs. Rhys Davids argues that in this context *kāma* does not signify a morally reprehensible mental state that inevitably leads to sorrow. She maintains that here *kāma* denotes a conative impetus or will to act that can be deployed equally towards either good or evil ends. This passage says that *kāma* gives rise to *kratu*, and *kratu* gives rise to action (*karma*). Since the action can be either morally good or evil, it makes sense to hold that *kāma*, the motivating energy underlying action can be directed towards good or evil goals. Mrs. Rhys Davids considers *kratu* to be the "intention" or "purpose" that provides "the bridge between will and act, between *kāma* and *karma*" (1978a, 45).

There are statements in the *Upaniṣads* that define *karma* and rebirth in terms of strict moral retribution (C.U. V. 10.7; Ks.U. I. 2).¹⁶ Yājñavalkya, without denying the idea of moral retribution, shifts the focus to the causal link between the way one acts and one's psychological make-up. He states that whether one is to be counted as a good person (*sāduḥ*) or as a bad person (*pāpaḥ*) depends, not only on specific acts that one has performed (*yathākārit*), but also on one's accustomed modes of behaviour (*yathācārī*). Furthermore, Yājñavalkya does not view each action as an isolated event but as the end product of a causal process that begins with motivating desire (*kāma*). It is significant

that Yājñavalkya does not consider the motivating drive of desire to be the sole factor governing action. His view of *karma* provides for the intervention of cognitive processes of purposive deliberation signified by *kratu*. Because of the mental processes of "filtering" and "sorting" that occurs in purposive deliberation, one can presume that not every motivating impetus of desire (*kāma*) becomes a firm purpose or intention (*kratu*). By the same token, not every intention becomes action. The holistic view of the mind in the *Upaniṣads* implies that unless the purpose is embraced by the *citta* as a whole, it is not translated into concrete action (*karma*). Thus Yājñavalkya's interpretation of *karma* implies that motivating desires (*kāma*) and purposes (*kratu*) arising from the deliberating mind are inseparable from action (*karma*). They are the causal energies that produce action. The logical conclusion to Yājñavalkya's analysis of *karma* is that motivating desire (*kāma*) and purposive deliberation (*kratu*) are causally linked with the consequences of action (*karma*), which will be experienced in future births.

Kāma, saṃkalpa, and kratu in the process of rebirth

The idea that desire provides both drive and direction in the course of rebirth is either overtly stated or implied throughout the Upaniṣadic tradition. Similarly, in the *Suttas*, *taṇhā* (craving) and ignorance (*avijjā*) are regarded as the fundamental factors that not only cause, but also chart the course, of rebirth. Yājñavalkya puts forward a view that defines the human person as a being who is constituted of desire (*kāmamaya evāyam puruṣa*) (B.U. IV. 4. 5.). This statement implies that a human being, by definition, is one who perpetually conceives purposes and is driven to realize them through goal-oriented acts. The descriptions of *kāma* in the *Upaniṣads* and *taṇhā* in the *Suttas* suggest that the two terms denote a drive that is caused by a felt need, becomes manifest as emotional and

physical tension, and retains its capacity to initiate acts until the need is assuaged. Thus *taṇhā* or *kāma* is to the emotions what appetite is to the body: desire impels action. In the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (K.U. I. 1.26) the capacity to move from object to object is regarded as a defining characteristic of *kāma*. Over a thousand years later, in the fifth century C.E., the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XVII. 51) specifies "insatiability" as the mode of manifestation of *taṇhā* (*atitta-bhāva-paccupaṭṭhāna*).

At the same time, the *Upaniṣads* and the *Tipiṭaka* include terms like *kratu*, *saṁkalpa*/*saṅkappa*, and *cetanā* that convey motivating energy arising from cognitive processes of goal-oriented thought, purpose, and intention. Though *kratu*, *saṁkalpa*, and *cetanā* are often conditioned by desire, their link with the cognitive processes of purposive thought differentiates them from the primarily emotion-driven functioning of *kāma* and *taṇhā*. In both the *Upaniṣads* and the *Tipiṭaka*, the mutual conditioning of desire's drive towards objects and the predilection of the mind for intentions that become expressed in acts is regarded as the basic cause of the perpetuation of sorrow and rebirth. The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (M.U. III. 2.2) states that a person who desires objects that evoke desire and occupies the mind with them is reborn in this world on account of those desires. The *Praśna Upaniṣad* (P.U. III.10) says more generally that the course of rebirth is determined by whatever attitude of mind (*yaccittaḥ*) a person experiences at the hour of death. The role of mind as the motivating force in the process of rebirth (*saṁsāra*) is powerfully expressed in the *Maitrī Upaniṣad* (Mt.U. VI. 34). Here the realm of *karma* and rebirth (*saṁsāra*) is identified with the continuum of consciousness (*citta*). The *Upaniṣad* tells of an eternal mystery: one concretely becomes what one conceives in thought (*yaccittas tanmayo bhavati*).

The *Praśna Upaniṣad* (P.U. III. 10) states that a person's rebirth is conditioned by whatever thought may occupy the mind as death approaches. This passage goes on to reiterate that the transmigrating self moves on to whatever realm of rebirth the mind aspires towards, or resolves to attain (*yathā saṁkalpitam lokam*). Since the term *saṁkalpa* connotes not merely conceptualization but also resolve, aspiration, and intention, it is implied that the dying person not only thinks of, or imagines, a place of rebirth, but also aspires to be reborn there. This heartfelt aspiration or strong resolve should be seen in a ritual context. It was believed that certain rituals performed with proper intent (*saṁkalpa*) would lead to a felicitous rebirth. The aspiration at death would then be an echo of the aspiration and intention with which rituals and meditations were performed in the course of one's life.

Two very different ideas can be inferred from this statement in the *Praśna Upaniṣad* that one reaches the realm (*loka*) of rebirth that one resolves to attain. At the outset, this statement emphasizes the Upaniṣadic idea that a strong intention or resolve (*saṁkalpa*) has the power to "realize" its goal. This belief in the power of a determined mind is carried forward in Theravāda and expressed in the notion of "right resolve" (*sammā-saṁkappa*). A firm determination is considered to have the power to make the Eightfold Path a living reality. From another perspective, this statement in the *Praśna Upaniṣad* that one reaches the realm of rebirth that one resolves to attain reinforces the view that the course of *karma* depends, not solely on acts, but also on purposes and resolves of mind. The *Suttas* affirm the idea that one is reborn in the realm (*loka*) that one resolves to attain, especially at the hour of death. The *Sanikhārupapatti-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* (M. III, 99-103) is based on the notion that it is possible to attain a felicitous rebirth in any of the lofty cosmic realms by forming a firm resolve to be reborn there, and by

cultivating, through meditation, the happy and tranquil mental states that are appropriate to that realm.

The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (B.U. V. 15.3) and the *Īśā Upaniṣad* (17) contain an ancient chant that invokes *Agni*, the god of the ritual fire, to lead a person after death occurs along a good path towards a realm of prosperity. The following is a verse of the chant:

Aum krato smara, kṛtaṁ smara, krato smara, kṛtaṁ smara
(O *Kratu*, remember, remember the deed.)

In this verse, *Kratu* is an epithet of *Agni*.¹⁷ Nevertheless, the verse indicates the bond between the purposes (*kratu*) and the acts (*karma*) of the dying person. The verse suggests that *kratu* signifies the mind's capacity not only to form purposes and to initiate acts to fulfil those purposes, but also to remember those deeds and to "keep track" of those purposes.

This chant resonates with the sage Śāṇḍilya's teaching in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (C.U. III. 14.1). The crux of Śāṇḍilya's teaching is that a person is constituted of purpose (*kratumayaḥ puruṣaḥ*). Śāṇḍilya puts forward the view that what happens after death depends on the purpose (*kratu*) that a person affirmed while living in this world.¹⁸ He concludes with the admonition that one should make a purpose for oneself (*sa kratuṁ kurvīta*). Śāṇḍilya's statement about *kratu* is set in the context of his teaching that one should meditate on *Brahman* as the ultimate cause of all that exists and as the indwelling presence in every being, the tiniest as well as the greatest. Śaṅkarācārya interprets *kratu* in this context as the ardent sense of purpose with which one should undertake meditation on *Brahman* in the manner taught by Śāṇḍilya, especially as death approaches

(Jha 1942, 152). As noted above, the *Praśna Upaniṣad* declares that the process of rebirth is conditioned by whatever attitude dominates a person's mind at the hour of death. This notion is implied throughout the Upaniṣadic tradition. The notion of *kratu*, however, does not merely refer in a general way to the state of mind (*citta*) of the dying person. The focus is on the specific purposes that persist in the mind even at the hour of death. Furthermore, it is significant that in Śāṇḍilya's teaching, it is resolve or purpose (*kratu*), rather than action (*karma*), that is declared to be the crucial factor in determining future consequences. Thus Śaṅkara comments that the consequences to be experienced in the process of rebirth are commensurate with a person's purpose (*kratvanurūpam phalam*) (cited in Radhakrishnan 1953, 391).

It was shown above that the *Maitrī Upaniṣad* teaches that *saṁkalpa* with its processes of conceptualization and intention should be brought to cessation when the higher stages of *yoga* are attained. Although there is no direct reference to the cessation of *kratu* in the passages that give instruction in *yoga*, there are at least two passages where *kratu* is associated with bondage. The first of these occurs in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (K.U. I. 2.11) where Naciketas rejects the most magnificent riches and power that can be found in the realms of rebirth and chooses only the highest wisdom. Among the things that Naciketas rejects are the fulfilment of desire (*kāmasyāptim*) and the "endlessness of *kratu*" (*krator ānantyam*). Radhakrishnan takes *kratu* as the "fruit of rites" in this context (1953, 612). However, the "endlessness of *kratu*" could also be a reference to the capacity of the mind's purposes and volitions to expand infinitely. From the context it can be inferred that Naciketas rejects the infinite expansiveness of *kratu* because this expansiveness is rooted in *kāma*. The second reference which suggests that *kratu* ceases when ultimate liberation is attained comes from the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (S.U. III. 20).

Here the *ātman* is said to be untouched by *kratu* (*akratu*). In Śaṅkara's commentary, *akratu* is explained as a state of freedom from conceptualizations (*saṁkalpa*) that arise from the experience of objects.¹⁹

Since *kratu* occurs only a very few times in the *Upaniṣads*, it is not easy to arrive at a firm conclusion regarding its meaning in these texts. Śaṅkarācārya's commentary and the interpretation of modern scholars suggest that *kratu* signifies the coming together of a purpose that is held with conviction, and the mental power to translate that purpose into action. The references to the concept of *kratu* in the *Upaniṣads* are significant because they show that, according to the Upaniṣadic view, the moral quality of an act and its karmic fruition depend, not only on the act itself but also on the intention (*kratu*) that instigates the act. It was noted above that Yājñavalkya defines a human person as *kāma*maya (constituted of *kāma*). To get a complete picture of the Upaniṣadic view of a human person, however, Yājñavalkya's definition must be supplemented with another definition in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (C.U. III. 14.1). Here a human person is defined as *kratu*maya (constituted of *kratu*). This definition regards a human person as one who perpetually forms purposes (*kratu*) that seek to become realized in acts. It can be argued that though the term *kratu* drops away and is seldom found in later discourses on *karma*, the idea that a person is "constituted of purpose" leaves its mark on the cultural background in which Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism develop. The "ethicization of *karma*" can be traced back to the notion of *kratu*. In the thought of Yājñavalkya, *kratu* (purpose, intention, resolve) is the bridge between *kāma* (desire that impels a person to act) and *karma* (action that brings commensurate consequences). In the definition of *kamma* that the Buddha puts forward (A. III. 415), *cetanā* (purposive impulse) is the bridge between a specific state of mind (*citta*) and an act of body, speech, or mind in

which the dominant thought and emotion in that state of mind become expressed. In both cases, the emphasis is not solely on the drive to act (*kāma, tanhā*) or on the act itself (*karma/kamma*). Intention, resolve, purposive impulse (*kratu, cetanā*) is taken into account in explaining the significance of an act and its consequences.

Kratu and saṅkhāra

K.N. Jayatilleke argues that there are close parallels between the Upaniṣadic concept of *kratu* and the concept of *saṅkhāra* in the Pāli tradition (Jayatilleke 1949, 220-224). He maintains that the "Pāli *saṅkhāra* may be deemed to be the historical successor of Upaniṣadic *kratu*" (1949, 221). He points out that both terms are derived from the verb root *kr-* (to do or to make), and he holds that while *kratu*, like *saṅkhāra*, connotes "a voluntary decision made in the pursuit of ends," there is a difference between the two terms, because *saṅkhāra* includes actions as well as decision in its meaning. Furthermore, he says that the relationship between *kratu* and *karma* resembles the relationship between *saṅkhāra* and *kamma*. In the same vein, Jayatilleke argues that just as the Buddhist view maintains that the *saṅkhāra* of a dying person determines the nature of consciousness (*viññāṇa*) in the next birth, so also the Upaniṣadic tradition posits that the next birth will be commensurate with the *kratu* that a person upholds in this life. In this context, he translates *saṅkhāra* as "habitual volitional activities" and *kratu* as "purpose." Jayatilleke also maintains that the Buddhist view that all expressions of *saṅkhāra* cease in *nibbāna* resonates with the Upaniṣadic view (S.U. III. 20) that the *ātman* is free of *kratu* (*akratu*). Here he renders *saṅkhāra* as "purposive activities" and *kratu* as "purposive will." Finally, Jayatilleke holds that the Theravāda view that a "person" is nothing but an assemblage of processes of *saṅkhāra*

(*suddha-saṅkhāra-puñja*) has its parallel in the Upaniṣadic view (C.U. III. 14.1) that a human being consists of *kratu* (*kratumaya*). In this context, he translates *kratu* as "purpose" and *saṅkhāra* as "reflexes-and-dispositions or purposive activities."

There are only a very few occurrences of the term *kratu* in the *Upaniṣads* and it is not defined in any of the contexts where it is found. *Saṅkhāra*, on the other hand, is a prolific term in the Pāli texts. Furthermore, there are definitions of *saṅkhāra* both in the *Suttas* and in the *Abhidhamma* that offer some guidance in translating this term, even though its semantic range continues to baffle interpreters. Jayatilleke ignores these differences in usage when he seeks out parallels between *saṅkhāra* and *kratu*. *Saṅkhāra* in the Theravāda tradition represents the conative dynamism that produces goal-oriented acts. *Kratu* in the *Upaniṣads* is closer to *saṅkalpa/saṅkappa*: it conveys a firm intention or strong resolve that has the capacity to motivate action to "realize" that intention.

Furthermore there is no basis for Jayatilleke's contention that the Theravāda portrait of the "human person" as a mere bundle of *saṅkhārās* (*suddha-saṅkhāra-puñja*) (S. I. 135) resembles the Upaniṣadic view that the human person is constituted of *kratu* (*kratumaya*) (C.U. III. 14.1). The Theravāda notion of *saṅkhāra-puñja* is based on the notion that no being can claim to possess an autonomous and permanent "self" (*attā*). The Upaniṣadic notion of *kratumaya* conveys that within the rounds of rebirth, a human being is, by definition, shaped and developed through the intentions that are formed in the mind. The statement is made in a context where the idea of the *ātman* is affirmed.

Both *saṅkhāra* and *kratu* indicate the influence that the motivating power of desire has on the development of the personality. However, *kratu* in the *Upaniṣads* is closer to the thought processes of purposive deliberation and choice of goal, whereas *saṅkhāra* in

the *Suttas* is closer to the conative energies that put forth habitual acts of body, speech, and mind.

Conclusion

In concluding this chapter, I wish to clarify the distinctive features of *kāma* that separate it from terms which signify intention and purpose, such as *saṁkalpa* and *kratu*. In the *Aitareya Upaniṣad* (A.U. III. 1.2), for example, *saṁkalpa* and *kāma* appear separately in the list of mental states that are said to constitute the "heart." From a psychological perspective, it is necessary to seek out the criteria by which the *Upaniṣads* differentiate these two mental states: intention that may be turned either towards mundane goals or towards liberation, and the motivational impetus of *kāma* that inevitably leads to sorrow and to rebirth.

It was pointed out earlier that when Yājñavalkya states that *kāma* is the basis of *kratu* and *kratu* is the basis of *karma* (B.U. IV. 4.5), the term *kāma* does not signify a mental state that is necessarily morally reprehensible, but a motivational impetus that might lead equally to deeds of merit or to deeds of demerit. In the same vein, the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (K.U. I. 2.2) speaks of two types of goals: the pleasant (*preyas*) and the good (*śreyas*). Here the pleasant includes the things of the earth that are beautiful and powerful. The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* says that the ignorant (*manda*) choose the pleasant, while the wise (*dhīra*) aspire for the good. In this context, desire turned towards pleasant goals is deemed foolish, but it is not condemned as necessarily evil. In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (B.U. IV. 5.7), Yājñavalkya says that all the people and things that one cherishes here on earth will ultimately forsake (*parādāt*) a person who does not recognize the indwelling presence of *Brahman* in all that exists. Here also, love for the things and people of this

world is considered ultimately futile, but it is not held to be ethically evil by its very nature.

In the *Upaniṣads*, *kāma* is condemned, not because it is necessarily ethically bad or because it always causes acts of demerit (*pāpa*), but because it inevitably leads to sorrow (*duḥkha*) and to rebirth. From a psychological perspective, *kāma* causes sorrow in two ways: by functioning as a motivating drive that binds a person to think solely in terms of needs and their fulfilment; and by blocking purposive reflection and discernment. The pursuit of objects is perceived as futile because they are ephemeral by nature (*śvo-bhāva*) and subject to decay (K.U. I. 1.26-27). For this reason, the *Upaniṣads* do not teach that one group of objects is to be chosen over others, but that all the desires that dwell in the heart are to be renounced (B.U. IV. 4.7; K.U. II. 3.14). From a psychological perspective, the renunciation of the mental state of desire signifies liberation from the tunnel-vision where one can think only in terms of setting up targets and attaining them.

The blocking of purposive reflection and discernment that occurs when *kāma* dominates the mind is implied throughout the *Upaniṣads* and is most clearly spelt out in the *Maitrī Upaniṣad* (Mt.U. VI. 30). Here a person whose life is motivated by desires is described as unsteady (*asthira*), wavering (*cala*), confused (*lupyamāna*), full of covetousness (*sasṛṣṭha*), and agitated (*vyagra*). All these characteristics can be summed up in the term *moha* (delusion).

Though *kāma* is perceived as a powerful motivational drive in the *Upaniṣads*, it does not exclude other mental factors that initiate activity in the organism. There are indications in the *Upaniṣads* of another type of conative process where purposive deliberation or goal-oriented thought play a more dominant role. In those Upaniṣadic passages where there is a reference to purposive deliberation and decision making, it is

taken for granted that these cognitive processes have the capacity to initiate action. I have referred to the holistic view of consciousness in the *Upaniṣads*, and I have suggested that in the Upaniṣadic view volition is perceived, not as a separate faculty, but as a function of the mind (*manas*) as a whole. The mind's capacity to form purposes and initiate action to realize those purposes is conveyed in the *Chandogya Upaniṣad* (C.U. VII. 3). The phrase *manasā manasyati* conveys a person engaging the mind as a whole in a process of purposive deliberation and decision making. The use of direct speech sharpens the sense of governing oneself through one's mind. One makes up one's mind: "I should learn the sacred verses" (*mantrān adhīyāya*), "I should perform the sacrificial rites" (*karmāṇi kurvīya*), "I should desire children and cattle" (*putrāṁśca paśūṁśceccehya*). Though the power of desire and its motivational drives to confuse and infatuate the mind is stressed in the *Upaniṣad*, nevertheless, the mind is portrayed as capable of monitoring and renouncing needs in order to fulfil its purposes and express its decisions. Expressions of *sarīkalpa* can remain solely dominated by *kāma*, or they can be brought under the control of purposive thought. As the analogy of the chariot in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (K.U. I. 3.4-9) indicates, the contrast is between a trained mind that gradually increases its capacity to initiate action to realize its purposes, and the untrained mind that loses its capacity to form purposes and to direct the personality.

In the *Upaniṣads*, volition is a mode of functioning of the *citta* as a whole. There is no evidence of an autonomous principle of volitional energy or "will" that governs the *citta*. Though *manas* is often featured as a centre of decision making, "*manasyati*" connotes the entire *citta* operating in such a way as to form an intention and initiate action to achieve a chosen goal. It is significant that *manas* is perceived as the centre, not only of intention but also of cognition and emotion. Moreover, there is no indication of a

dichotomy between cognitive awareness and conative dynamism. Nowhere is it suggested that though the *manas* may form a decision, it is dependent on a separate dynamic principle (*śakti*) within consciousness to implement action and achieve its goal. Neither is *manas* dependent on *kāma* to provide motivational impetus; on the contrary, processes of purposive reflection are perceived to have the capacity to control or re-direct *kāma*.

Chapter II

Jaina and Buddhist Debates

On the Moral Significance of Intention in Relation to Act

The Buddhist *Suttas* contain several accounts of the Buddha's debates with the *samaṇa* community known as the Nigaṇṭhas (Sanskrit: Nirgrantha). They are the forerunners of the Jaina tradition and their leader, called Nātaputta in the *Suttas*, is known in the Jaina tradition as their great teacher Vardhamāna Mahāvīra, whose traditional dates are 599-527 B.C.E. It is difficult to assess to what extent one can rely on the Buddhist *Suttas* for an accurate account of early Jaina doctrines. The accepted practice in the Buddha's time of exaggerating and ridiculing the opponent's point of view in order to sharpen the argument accounts for some of the barbed statements against the Nigaṇṭhas. The debates between the Buddha and the Nigaṇṭhas that deal with the issues of human initiative and the capacity of choosing one's goals are the focus of this chapter. More specifically, the debates focus on the following questions: whether the mind can be controlled and purified by voluntarily accepting the pain of ascetic disciplines, whether intention or act carries greater moral significance, whether the theory of *kamma* leaves room for human initiative and moral responsibility, whether the concept of human initiative is viable unless it is based in the idea of an autonomous self that is the source of the energy of volition, and what is to be included under the term "act" (*kamma*). These debates are of utmost importance in investigating the Buddha's approach to the dynamics

In this chapter, I have used Pāli terms when discussing the Buddhist tradition and Sanskrit terms when discussing the Jaina tradition. When I address the concepts of both traditions together, I have used Pāli terms.

of volition, since he elaborates and clarifies his statements when he is questioned—and sometimes, ridiculed—by the Nigaṇṭhas.

Debate on the efficacy of ascetic endeavour in controlling the mind

The *Cūḷadukkhakkhandha-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* (M. I. 93) records the following teaching that Nātaputta (Mahāvīra) gives to his disciples. By practising severe austerities (*tapas*), they should annihilate (*nijjaretha*) the demerit of past evil *kamma* that they have accumulated, and by becoming restrained (*samvuta*) in body, speech, and mind, they should prevent any new *kamma* from accumulating.¹ It is implied that the Nigaṇṭhas believed that if the severe pain involved in the practice of austerities is voluntarily accepted, then these painful austerities will gradually wear away the demerit (*pāpa*) of the unwholesome *kamma* of the past and prevent its painful consequences from coming into effect. They evidently hoped to avoid the consequences of new acts (*nava kamma*) at the same time by restraining their actions of body, speech, and mind and causing no harm to living beings. Jacobi (1968, 2:xv-xvi) maintains that the *Cūḷadukkhakkhandha-sutta* gives an accurate statement of early Jaina teaching and quotes identical statements from the Jaina canonical text the *Uttarādhyayana* (Prakṛt: *Uttarajjhayaṇa*).

According to the account given in the *Cūḷadukkhakkhandha-sutta* (M. I. 93), the Buddha demonstrates to the Nigaṇṭhas that they could not affirm with any certainty that a specific amount of suffering—which accrued to them as the commensurate consequence of past morally wrong acts—has already been nullified by the practice of painful ascetic disciplines. The Buddha goes on to show them that they can neither verify the precise amount of suffering that still remains to be annihilated by ascetic discipline nor estimate that when a stipulated amount of suffering is annihilated, all painful consequences of past

kamma will be brought to an end. The crux of the Buddha's argument is that it is not possible to quantify *kamma* in such a way as to perfectly balance a sum of past actions (*kamma*) with a projected sum of commensurate consequences. The second argument that the Buddha advances in the *Cūḷadukkhakkhandha-sutta* (M. I. 93) is based on his criticism of the Nigaṇṭha view that whenever pleasure is gained, it is always as a consequence of pain endured in the past (*dukkhena kho sukhaṃ adhigantabbam*). Basing themselves on the dictum of "no pain no gain," the Nigaṇṭhas hold that the principle of *kamma* decrees that pleasure can never come as the consequence of pleasurable experiences (*na kho āvuso Gotama sukhena sukhaṃ adhigantabbam*).

In the *Mahāsaccaka-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* (M. I. 237-238), the Nigaṇṭha Saccaka opens the debate by distinguishing between those who pursue the training of the body (*kāya-bhāvanā*) without simultaneously training the mind, and those who focus exclusively on nurturing the mind (*citta-bhāvanā*) while neglecting the development of the body. He describes the former as those whose minds are totally overcome by anguish when they suffer physical illness. His verdict is that this mental breakdown occurs because the body holds sway over the mind (*kāyanvayaṃ cittaṃ hoti, kāyassa vasena vattati*) (M. I. 237). Saccaka then contrasts those who focus exclusively on physical fitness with those who nurture only their minds and find their bodies collapsing in situations of mental distress. According to Saccaka's diagnosis, the body collapses under those conditions because it is dominated by the mind and its moods (*cittanvayo kāyo hoti, cittassa vasena vattati*). With this preamble, the Nigaṇṭha Saccaka proceeds to challenge the Buddha with the accusation that his disciples train the mind exclusively and neglects the training of the body (M. I. 238).

When the Buddha asks the Nigaṇṭha for his definition of the training of the body (*kāyabhāvanā*), the latter refers to the method of some *samaṇa* teachers who practised the ascetic discipline of reducing their intake of food to an extremely small quantity. Evidently, the Nigaṇṭhas considered fasting to be a supreme form of controlling the mind and disciplining the body. The Buddha then presents his case (M. I. 239). He describes the noble disciples (*ariyasāvaka*) with well-trained bodies and minds (*bhāvita-kāya*, *bhāvita-citta*) as those who neither become enamoured of pleasure (*sukhasārāgī*) when they experience joy nor distraught and deluded (*sammoha*) when they are stricken by feelings of pain (*dukkha-vedanā*).² The Buddha says that the mark of a physically fit person is that pleasant feelings do not invade and occupy the mind; and the mark of a mentally mature person is that painful feelings do not infiltrate thought processes and take hold in the mind.³

The Buddha's reply to the Nigaṇṭha Saccaka's challenge is rich in nuances of meaning. The Nigaṇṭha makes no mention of pleasant feelings: his chief contention is that the mind is devastated by the experience of physical pain when the body becomes dominant, and that the body is wrecked by mental grief when the mind becomes sovereign. The Buddha, on the other hand, emphasizes the role of pleasure (*sukha*) as well as of pain (*dukkha*) in his approach to training. With reference to the training of the body, the Buddha focuses, not on the ability to endure deprivation, but on the capacity to remain non-attached to pleasure and retain the mind's equilibrium. With reference to the cultivation of the mind, the Buddha emphasizes, not only non-attachment to pleasure, but true strength and equanimity in situations of pain. The emphasis is shifted from voluntary sensory deprivation and ascetic endurance of pain to non-attachment as a sustained

mental attitude. The Buddha's concern in training is that neither pleasant nor painful feeling should envelop and take over the mind (M. I. 239-240).

Futhermore, the Nigaṇṭha Saccaka posits a dichotomy between the body and the mind when he declares that the crux of the training is to ensure that neither the body nor the mind should wield control over the other. The Buddha, on the contrary upholds the integral relationship of the body and the mind when he states that the body is well trained when pleasant sensations do not obsess and subjugate the mind. The Buddha presents the following three analogies to explain his holistic view of training (M. I. 241-242). He says that those who neither withdraw physically and mentally from objects of desire, nor inwardly (*ajjhataṃ*) quieten and cast away sensual desire, are comparable to waterlogged wood that cannot produce a fire. The Buddha maintains that such people cannot attain knowledge (*ñāṇa*), insight (*dassana*), and supreme enlightenment (*anuttara sambodhi*), whether they do or do not undertake painful ascetic disciplines. The Buddha compares those who have physically and mentally withdrawn from objects of desire, but have not inwardly quietened and renounced sensual desire, to wet wood that cannot produce fire even when carried to a dry place. He says that those who have not cultivated inward calm and renunciation are incapable of achieving enlightenment, regardless of whether they do or do not discipline themselves with severe ascetic training. Finally, the Buddha says that those who have both withdrawn from objects of desire and have inwardly pacified and renounced sensual desire are like dry wood found on dry land, which has the capacity to produce glowing heat. The Buddha maintains that such people are capable of attaining knowledge, vision, and supreme enlightenment, whether they do or do not undertake ascetic striving. It is implied here that physical and mental withdrawal from objects of

sensual desire, inward calming of desire, and inward renunciation constitute fruitful striving and effort. Without these, ascetic training is deemed fruitless.

A second debate in the *Mahāsaccaka-sutta* (M. I. 247-251) concerns how pleasant feelings affect the moral choices of a person who is pursuing a specific spiritual discipline. When the Nigaṇṭha teacher Nātaputta maintains that the evil *kamma* of the past is to be nullified through ascetic striving, he describes these endeavours as arduous labours (*dukkara-kārikā*) that are bitterly painful (*kaṭukā*) (M. I. 93). The implication is that the ascetic disciplines are efficacious in removing the consequences of past reprehensible *kamma* (*pāpa-kamma*) precisely because they are painful. By the same token, the Nigaṇṭhas hold that in the process of *kamma*, pleasurable activities always lead to painful consequences (M. I. 93), implying that pleasure is inevitably associated with morally blameworthy desire. From the above statements it can be concluded that the Nigaṇṭhas define the role of volition in the spiritual endeavour in terms of deliberately cultivating painful disciplines and renouncing pleasures.

In his criticism of the Nigaṇṭha attitude to pleasure and pain, the Buddha places the emphasis, not on the capacity to endure pain voluntarily and to remain unswerving in following a chosen discipline, but on the mind's ability to assess the consequences of a decision and to change courses, if necessary, in order to reach one's ultimate spiritual goal. The Buddha maintains that there are circumstances in which ascetic disciplines become futile and should be abandoned, whereas wholesome pleasures that facilitate progress in the spiritual path ought to be pursued. The core of the Buddha's teaching is non-attachment to both pleasure and pain.

In order to make his point, the Buddha describes the gruelling ascetic disciplines that he had undertaken in his quest for enlightenment, and explains why he had

abandoned such striving (M. I. 242-247). The Buddha tells the Nigaṇṭha Saccaka that as he took up more and more severe ascetic disciplines, the painful physical feeling did not overwhelm and take hold of his mind at any stage (*uppannā dukkhā vedanā cittaṃ na pariyādāya tiṭṭhati*). This repeated formula signifies that however severe the physical pain, the Bodhisatta retained the ability to assess his progress and to evaluate the efficacy of ascetic endeavour as a method that claimed to lead to liberation.

The narrative has a tone of gentle simplicity and candour as the Buddha tells Saccaka that when he was pondering whether there could be a path to liberation from ignorance and desire, other than ascetic endeavour, he remembered how, as a youth, he had spontaneously experienced the rapture of the first level of meditation as he sat in the cool shade of a rose-apple tree (M. I. 246). The Buddha explains that this recollection produced the conviction that the rapture of meditation was indeed the way to enlightenment (*eso va maggo bodhāya*) (M. I. 246). The Buddha then says that the crucial moment in his quest came when he decided that he would not be afraid of pleasure (*sukha*) that had nothing in common with sensual desire (*kāma*) and unwholesome mental states (*akusalā dhammā*).⁴

The Buddha says that as he moved towards his goal stage by stage, his mind was not unsettled by the pleasant feelings of meditation (*jhāna*) and the bliss of liberating knowledge (*ñāṇa*). Earlier in the narrative, as the Buddha describes each stage of ascetic striving, he repeats the statement that painful feelings did not invade his mind and dwell there. At the conclusion of the narrative, as the Buddha describes the stages leading to liberating knowledge, he adds the refrain that the newly arising pleasant feelings of each stage did not invade the mind and become established there (*uppannā sukhā vedanā cittaṃ na pariyādāya tiṭṭhati*).

Two very different concepts of how volitional effort is deployed in the spiritual quest can be extrapolated from the *Mahāsaccaka-sutta*. In the Nigaṇṭha view, the spiritual path takes the form of a series of vows that must be fulfilled. As a consequence, the Nigaṇṭhas perceive the role of volition as the sustained effort to persist in a resolve, whatever obstacle may arise. The idea of steadfastly keeping a vow is not absent in the Theravāda tradition. In the *Kīṭāgiri-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* (M. I. 481), it is said that those disciples who are naturally inclined to be guided by their attitude of faith (*saddhānusārī*) should make a vow to follow the Buddha's way, even if the effort causes the blood and the sinews of the body to dry up. The *Kīṭāgiri-sutta* teaches that energy (*virīya*) should be kept up until whatever can be gained through human stamina (*purisatthāma*), human energy (*purisa-virīya*), and human endeavour (*purisa-parakkama*) has been gained.⁵ The concept of *virīya* in the *Kīṭāgiri-sutta* resembles the Jaina concept of volition as resolute application of energy. According to Schubring's interpretation (1962, 172), "will" is conveyed in the Jaina canonical texts by the synonyms, "*uṭṭhāṇa kamma bala vīriya purisakkāra-parakkama*" (preparedness, action, energy, human vigour, valour).

Whereas the *Kīṭāgiri-sutta* perceives volitional effort in the religious quest as the unswerving deployment of energy in the fulfilment of a difficult vow, the *Mahāsaccaka-sutta* puts the emphasis on the mind's capacity of purposive reflection and decision-making. In this *Sutta*, volitional effort does not involve subjugating the body at any cost or resolutely pursuing a single method in all circumstances. The focus, rather, is on coordinating the application of energy with the mind's capacity to judge whether or not progress is being made through the method chosen for attaining a goal. The voluntary

endurance of pain is not the criterion of progress in the *Mahāsaccaka-sutta*, and pleasant feelings that are not inimical to the spiritual endeavour are not rejected.

The debate between the Buddha and the Nigaṇṭhas concerning the relationship between pleasant feelings and moral values is further developed in the *Devadaha-sutta* (M. II. 223-225). The primary contrast, for the Nigaṇṭhas, is between ascetic discipline (*tapas*) and pleasure (*sukha*). The former they consider to be painful but always morally good and beneficial; the latter they regard as a harbinger of moral evil and sorrow. The Buddha distinguishes between fruitful (*saphala*) and fruitless (*aphala*) striving, and challenges the Nigaṇṭhas with the idea that there is a place for pleasure that harmonizes with virtue (*dhammikaṃ sukhaṃ*) within fruitful striving. According to the Buddha's definition, in the fruitful way of striving one is not overwhelmed by pain, one does not overwhelm oneself with self-imposed pain, and one neither renounces pleasure that is in harmony with what is ethically good (*dhamma*), nor does one unduly cling to such wholesome and beneficial pleasure (M. II. 223).⁶ Furthermore, the Buddha maintains that striving can be designated as fruitful only if it is suited to the circumstances when it is applied. He points out that painful, disciplined striving is required when it serves to cleanse the mind of the type of unwholesome mental states (*akusalā dhammā*) that tend to multiply in pleasant circumstances (M. II. 225). However, the Buddha stresses that such painful striving becomes unnecessary after those unwholesome mental states have been removed.⁷ Here the Buddha gives a nice analogy: an arrowsmith heats an arrow to straighten it and make it workable. When he has achieved his purpose, he ceases to apply heat. A skilled worker and a skilled *samaṇa* know when to stop.

Debate on the relative moral significance of intention and act

Perhaps the best known of the debates between the Buddha and the Nigaṇṭhas occurs in the *Upāli-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* (M. I. 376-380). Here the Nigaṇṭha lay disciple Upāli upholds the view of his teacher Nātaputta that a misdeed of the body is more blameworthy (*mahāsāvajjatarāṇi*) than a misdeed of speech or thought, in causing morally wrong behaviour (M. I. 376). In other words, the Nigaṇṭha position, as presented in the *Upāli-sutta*, is that what is actually done carries greater moral significance than what is said or contemplated in thought (M. I. 372). The Buddha's position is that moral responsibility has its basis in mental action (*mano-kamma*) (M. I. 373).⁸ Although the Buddha does not use a term that directly conveys "purpose," "resolve," or "intention," it is obvious that *mano-kamma* includes these connotations. In the course of the debate with Upāli, the Buddha demonstrates that in actual practice, the Nigaṇṭhas themselves give greater moral weight to mental operations than to verbal functions (*vacī-kamma*) or physical actions (*kāya-kamma*).

The Buddha drives home his argument with concrete examples, of which the following one is the most telling. The Buddha puts forward the hypothetical case of a Nigaṇṭha who adheres strictly to the prescribed ethical restraints, but cannot avoid destroying innumerable minute living beings while walking (M. I. 377). The Buddha asks his opponent Upāli what consequences the Nigaṇṭha teacher Nātaputta (Mahāvīra) foresees for that particular harmful *kamma*. Upāli replies that Nātaputta does not consider an act that is done without prior intention (*asañcetanika*) to carry much moral blame. The Buddha then asks how Nātaputta would judge the case if the Nigaṇṭha were to intend (*sace pana . . . ceteti*) to kill those tiny living beings while walking. Upāli concedes that the harmful act would be judged as greatly reprehensible (*mahāsāvajjam*) if it is intended.

The Buddha then asks under what category of acts the Nigaṇṭha teacher Nātaputta would classify *cetanā* (*cetanāṃ . . . Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta kismim paññāpeti*). Upāli has to admit that Nātaputta would classify *cetanā* under the category of mental acts (*mano-kammasmim*). In this way, the Buddha makes the Nigaṇṭha householder Upāli see for himself that in concrete situations, the Nigaṇṭha teacher Nātaputta assigns greater moral significance to the mental act (*mano-kamma*) of intention (*cetanā*) than to the physical act (*kāya-kamma*) of stamping on small living beings.

The narrative context of the *Upāli-sutta* is very helpful in clarifying the meaning of *cetanā*. Although the term is not defined, the context indicates that it connotes intention or goal-oriented thought as contrasted with the physical act. The *Upāli-sutta* is also important because of the issues it raises concerning the Jain view of intention. These will be explored in the following sections.

One of the questions in interpreting the central concepts of Jainism is how much of a divergence there is between early Jainism,⁹ especially as taught in the Jain canon and described in the Buddhist *Suttas*, and Jainism as represented in the philosophical texts of a later period, starting with the *Tattvārtha-sūtra* of Umāsvāti. There is still much controversy regarding the date of the *Tattvārtha-sūtra*. According to W.J. Johnson, this text was composed between 150 C.E. and 350 C. E. (1995, 46). Padmanabh Jaini maintains that the main tenor of the Jain tradition remains unchanged through the ages. Johnson, however, argues in his *Harmless Souls* (1995, 4-40) that there is a considerable difference between the essentially ascetic teaching of the Jain canon and the reinterpretation of Umāsvāti who gives due weight to the legitimate concerns of lay followers. According to Johnson's interpretation, whereas in early Jainism injury (*hiṃsā*) to living beings is considered to be invariably evil and karmically binding regardless of

the intention and mental attitude of the agent, in later Jainism as propounded in the *Tattvārtha-sūtra* of Umāsvāti, the moral quality of an act is dependent on whether or not it is imbued with injurious passions (*kaṣāya*) and whether or not it is intended.

Jacobi maintains (1968, 2:xvii) that the Jaina canonical texts corroborate the statement in the *Upāli-sutta* that the Nigaṇṭhas regarded, not what was said (*vacī-kamma*) or contemplated in the mind (*mano-kamma*), but the actual physical act (*kāya-kamma*) as the basis of moral responsibility and the occasion for bondage to occur. Jacobi refers to the account given in the Jaina canonical work the *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* (Prakṛt: *Sūyagaḍaṅga*) (II. 4) of the radically opposed views held by the Jaina teacher Mahāvīra (Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta of the Buddhist *Suttas*) and the Buddhists. According to this Jaina text, Buddhists maintain that if a living being possesses only one sense organ (*ekendriya*) and has no mental faculty whereby it can become aware of actions in the organism and form intentions, then it cannot commit morally reprehensible *karma*. Mahāvīra, on the contrary, holds that even a creature with no mental awareness can perform acts that are morally evil since moral value resides in the actual physical act (Jacobi 1968, 2: 399-400).

To further highlight the view that early Jainism bases moral responsibility, not on the intention but on the act as such, Jacobi calls attention to the caricature of the Buddhist position in the *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* (Jacobi 1968, 2: 414-415). The Buddhists are described as holding that if a person thrusts a spit through a man, mistaking him for the corner of a granary that is vaguely shaped like a human form, or barbecues a baby, mistaking the figure for a large gourd, that person will not be guilty of murder. Johnson refers to the same passage and concludes that in the earliest Jaina texts moral responsibility is based

not on intention or lack of it but on whether or not the act involved injury to a living being (1995, 19).

It could be argued, however, that Jacobi and Johnson tend to overemphasize the moral significance that the Nigaṇṭhas place on the physical act and underestimate those Jaina canonical passages that give primacy to attitudes and the passions of the heart. Though Johnson does not alter his view that early Jainism considers intention to be irrelevant in judging moral responsibility, he refers to statements in the Jaina canonical texts that instruct a monk to cultivate an inner attitude that will save him from physical misdeeds (Johnson 1995, 18, 34-35). A typical passage in the *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* (II. 2. 51) instructs:

A monk should not be infatuated with sounds, colours, smells, tastes, and feelings of touch; he should abstain from wrath, pride, deceit, and greed, from love, hate, quarrel, calumny, reviling of others, aversion to control and delight in sensual things, deceit and untruth, and the sin of wrong belief. In this way a monk ceases to acquire gross Karman, controls himself, and abstains from sins. (trans. Jacobi 1968, 2:352)

The dangerous "passions": wrath, pride, deceit, and greed are mentioned frequently in the scriptural texts (Jacobi 1968, 1: 248, 302). In later Jaina philosophical texts, they are known collectively as the *kaṣāyās*.

These passages from Jaina scriptures that emphasize inner attitude give a different dimension of meaning to the debate between the Buddha and the Nigaṇṭhas concerning the relative moral significance of physical and mental *kamma*. The *Upāli-sutta* states that in the judgment of the Nigaṇṭha teacher Nātaputta, if a monk who carefully observes all the prescribed restraints unintentionally or unknowingly kills minute creatures while walking, that deed would not be greatly blameable.¹⁰ In his comments on the *Upāli-sutta*,

Johnson refers to the early Jaina discipline of "care in walking" (*īryā-samīti*) (1995, 41-42). The Nigaṇṭhas were taught to maintain at all times the attitude of carefulness (*apramāda*) and the intention not to harm any living beings (*ahiṃsā*).¹¹ According to Johnson's interpretation, since the Nigaṇṭha monk strictly adheres to the discipline of care in walking, if he happens to step on many minute living beings, this is not an act of carelessness, inattention or lack of knowledge. If at all times the monk upholds the intention not to harm any small creatures and remains carefully aware of that intention, he cannot claim that his act of injury was done unknowingly. He obviously knows that he cannot avoid killing some small living beings when he is walking. Johnson holds that according to the early Jaina teaching, unavoidable acts of harm that occur while a monk faithfully follows the monastic discipline is considered less reprehensible than injury caused by carelessness or lack of attention to the monastic restraints. Johnson adds:

Again, this is not the same thing as saying that monks are allowed to commit what might be normally understood as 'accidental' injury. The reference is to unavoidable injury done in highly controlled circumstances; this still has karmic consequences, but of a short-term, and thus manageable nature. (1995, 43)

Though the Buddha and the Nigaṇṭhas appear to be wide apart in their view of the relative moral significance to be assigned to purposive thought (*mano-kamma*) and concrete deed (*kāya-kamma*), nevertheless both parties agree that neither moral goodness nor spiritual insight can be attained without cultivating a mind that is free of dangerous passions, harmful intentions (*hiṃsā*), and carelessness or negligence (*pramāda*). It follows that both agree that behaviour cannot be changed without corresponding changes in mental attitude. In Theravāda, avoiding all forms of careless negligence (*pamāda*) in all the details of daily life becomes an important aspect of the discipline of mindfulness

(*satipatthāna*). Though the Buddha accords primacy to intention, he insists on thoughtful vigilance directed to one's words and actions; and though the Nigaṇṭhas give greater significance to the actual deed, they emphasize the need for a watchful mental attitude that seeks to be free of unwholesome passions.

Jaina view of the passions and the "influx" of *karma*

Whereas the actual process by which bondage to *karma* occurs is left unspecified in the Jaina canonical texts, the *Tattvārtha-sūtra* (VI: 1-4) takes the position that it is the presence of the passions in the soul that produces bondage. As Jaini explains (1979, 112), unlike any other school of thought in India, the Jaina view defines *karma* as a form of fine matter, and maintains that bondage (*bandha*) to *karma* occurs when there is an influx (*āsrava*) of particles of matter into the non-material soul (*jīva*). Derived from the verb root *śru-*, which means "to flow near or towards," the Sanskrit term *āsrava* indicates a flow of liquids or a discharge resulting from physical illness (S.E.D. 162, col. 1). In his *Early Jainism*, K.K. Dixit (1978, 9) maintains that the earliest canonical texts give little indication about the precise cause—whether physical or mental—that produces the influx of fine matter into the soul. Thus the cause and the process of bondage are left vague and undefined. The later philosophical manual, *Tattvārtha-sūtra*, maintains that while acts of body, speech, and mind provide the occasion for karmic matter to enter the soul, it is the inner attitude and intentions caused by the passions that make it possible for karmic matter to adhere to the soul.¹²

Two types of actions are distinguished in the *Tattvārtha-sūtra*. Acts that are motivated by the passions of anger, pride, deceit, and greed (*krodha, māna, māyā, lobha*) are designated as *sāmparāyika*. They are said to produce merit (*puṇya*) or demerit (*pāpa*)

and bring about different types of rebirth. In the *Tattvārtha-sūtra* (VI. 4), these four bondage-producing passions are collectively designated as *kaṣāyās*. Actions that are free of the *kaṣāyās* are known as *Īryāpatha karma*. The *Tattvārtha-sūtra* holds that their effect is short-lived and does not extend beyond the present life: they do not influence the course of rebirth (Johnson 1995, 48-50).

Vīrya and volition in Jainism

When the question regarding the ultimate source of volitional energy is raised, the Jaina view is that volition is rooted in the property of energy (*vīrya*) that is inherent in the *jīva*. The *jīva* is said to possess not only consciousness (*caitanya*, *cetanā*) and bliss (*sukha*) but also energy (*vīrya*). This energy is regarded as an autonomous quality in the *jīva*: it is not dependent on, or derived from, *caitanya* and *sukha* (Mehta 1955, 141). In Jaini's interpretation, not only all manifestations of conative dynamism, but all expressions of knowledge are said to be dependent on the deployment of *vīrya*. He explains:

This [*vīrya*] functions as a sort of meta-quality, an abstract force which energizes, as it were, the very operation of the knowledge and perception qualities. (1979, 105)

Mehta gives the same interpretation of *vīrya*:

The Jaina view of activity is that the self possesses an innate capacity of activity which is known as energy (*vīrya*). All our activities are necessarily connected with the manifestation of this property of the self. The occurrence of knowledge, the experience of feeling and emotion, the practice of concentration and meditation, the performance of self-discipline—all these activities are possible only on the proper manifestation of the innate energy of the self. To be precise, energy is the common cause of activity. (1955, 141)

Jaina's concept of *vīrya* in Jainism resembles what Mrs. Rhys Davids means by "will." For her, the will is essentially autonomous or "self-directing," and she maintains

that it would be meaningless to posit a self-directing capacity unless it is grounded in a self, "the willer" (1978a, 297-298). The concept of *vīrya* signifies that Jainism regards volitional energy as a quality that defines the very nature of the self (*jīva*). In Jaini's interpretation, the Jaina concept of *vīrya* represents the capacity that expresses what a person is and seeks to become. The Jaina tradition holds that *vīrya* can never be fully expressed as long as karmic matter obscures and hinders the soul's innate capacities.

It is worth noting that in the principal *Upaniṣads*,¹³ the *Yoga-sūtra* (I. 20, II. 38), and in the *Suttas*, *vīrya/viriya* signifies, not a "meta-quality" representing the very source of psychic energy in a person, but specific deployments of energy after the goal has been chosen.

Debate on whether the processes of *kamma* negate human initiative

The *Devadaha-sutta* (M. II. 220-221) maintains that the Nigaṇṭhas upheld the view that human volition and effort can do nothing to alter the processes by which *kamma* brings forth its consequences. In the course of their debate with the Buddha, they are put into the position of admitting that their gruelling ascetic practices cannot prevent the fruition of past *kamma* nor alter the circumstances in which its consequences will be experienced.

According to the *Devadaha-sutta*, the Nigaṇṭhas maintained that if the karmic effects of a particular deed are to be experienced in the present life (*diṭṭhadhamma-vedanīyam*), the processes of *kamma* cannot be changed by striving or exertion (*upakkamena vā padhānena vā*) so that the karmic effects are deferred till the next life. By the same token, they argued that the effects of *kamma* that are meant to be experienced in the next life (*samparāya-vedanīyam*) cannot be speeded up and brought to

fruition in the present life. They insisted that even ascetic striving cannot change the painful results (*dukkha-vedanīyam*) of past *kamma* into pleasant ones (*sukha vedanīyam*) or pleasant results into painful ones. And finally, they declared that a past deed whose effects must necessarily be experienced (*vedanīyam*) can never be changed into a deed that does not come to fruition and whose effects need not be experienced (*avedanīyam*). The technical terms used in the *Devadaha-sutta* suggest that debates regarding whether the consequences of *karma* are predetermined were common among the *samaṇa* communities.

In the *Suttas*, this account of the rigid stance of the Nigaṇṭhas is contrasted with the Buddha's flexible interpretation of *kamma*. McDermott argues in his work *Development in the Early Buddhist Concept of Kamma/Karma* (1984, 9-22) that the Buddha regarded a "person's moral character" as the crucial determining factor with regard to how the effects of past *kamma* will come to fruition and be experienced by that person. The *Mahākammavibhaṅga-Sutta* (M. III. 210-215) provides the main textual basis for McDermott's argument. Here the Buddha distinguishes the following four possibilities with regard to the fruition of *kamma* in order to demonstrate that the course of *kamma* is not rigidly determined. A person commits evil deeds and experiences a sorrowful rebirth. This is a case of *kamma* that is incapable of producing happy results and shows itself to be incapable of doing so (*kammaṃ abhabbam abhabbābhāsaṃ*). Another person, in spite of committing evil deeds, still enjoys a happy rebirth. In this case, *kamma* that is incapable of producing happy results appears to be capable of doing so (*kammaṃ abhabbam bhabbābhāsaṃ*). A third person, whose life is replete with good deeds, enjoys a happy rebirth. The Buddha says that this is a case where *kamma* that has the capacity to produce happy results shows itself to be capable of achieving such results (*kammaṃ*

bhabbañ c'eva bhabbābhāsañca). Finally, in spite of abstaining from evil and doing good deeds, a person experiences an unhappy rebirth. This is a case of *kamma* that has the capacity to produce happy results but gives the appearance of being incapable of doing so (*kammañ bhabbañ abhabbābhāsañ*) (M. III. 215).

In the *Mahākammavibhaṅga-sutta*, the Buddha maintains that though the four cases presented above do occur, none of them should be made the basis of general statements regarding the relationship between *kamma* and its mode of fruition. The Buddha emphasizes that it would be invalid if a person were to witness any one of the above cases and on that basis conclude: "this alone is true; anything else is false" (*idam eva saccam mogham aññanti*) (M. III. 210). It is implied here that those who maintain that good acts invariably lead to happy consequences and evil acts always bring unhappy results uphold a rigidly deterministic view of *kamma*; while those who deny any correlation between the moral quality of an act and its consequences adhere to a theory of pure chance.

In the *Mahākammavibhaṅga-sutta* (M. III. 214-215), the Buddha points out that during the interval of time between the performance of a specific deed and its fruition, other acts can occur that could either transform the character of the person who performed the deed or affect the manner in which that particular deed reaches karmic fruition and puts forth its consequences. The Buddha says that in the case of a happy rebirth occurring in spite of evil deeds, either those evil deeds were offset by good deeds (*kalyāṇa-kammañ sukha-vedanīyañ*) that preceded or followed them in time, or the person was able to make a commitment to the right view (*sammā-diṭṭi*) at the hour of death. Likewise, if a person of good deeds experiences a sorrowful rebirth, either evil deeds (*pāpa-kamma*) were done before or after the good deeds, or the person turned away

from the right view and became drawn to the wrong view (*micchā-diṭṭhi*) close to the time of death.

The commentary (MA. V. 20) gives the following explanation. When a great amount of unwholesome *kamma* has been accumulated, then a comparatively strong unwholesome deed will temporarily block weaker wholesome *kamma* and put forth its own unhappy consequences. If a person who has done many unwholesome deeds experiences a change of heart and does a strong good deed when death is approaching then that person may enjoy a happy rebirth and the unwholesome deeds will be temporarily prevented from attaining fruition. In the same way, when much wholesome *kamma* has been accumulated, a strong wholesome deed will temporarily block an unwholesome deed from putting forth painful consequences. Finally, a powerful morally wrong deed performed when death is close at hand may supersede the good consequences of previous wholesome *kamma*.

The *Mahākammavibhaṅga-sutta* itself offers no comment on the Buddha's analysis of *kamma*. The Buddha's stance indicates that whenever there appears to be a disparity between a deed and how its consequences are experienced, a better understanding can be reached by seeing the deed in question, not in isolation, but in relation to the agent's other deeds as well as the attitudes and views that accompany those deeds. The Buddha's explanation signifies that acts and their consequences function in accordance with the general principle of *paṭicca-samuppāda*. In other words, the Buddha maintains that the consequences of acts come into effect, not separately but through processes of mutual conditioning. It follows, then, that the mode of fruition of any *kamma* is conditioned, not only by the "character" of the agent, as McDermott holds (1984, 21), but also by the flow of events in that individual's life. From a practical perspective, the Buddha's analysis of

kamma in the *Mahākammapavibhaṅga-sutta* implies that since the mode of fruition of any *kamma* is not unalterably fixed, the manner in which the consequences of that *kamma* will arise and be experienced can be altered by paying attention to one's views and attitudes, and by fruitful effort and striving (*saphalo upakkamo, saphalaṃ padhānaṃ*).

McDermott also refers to the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (A. I. 250) where it is said that the wrong-doing committed by a person who generally lives a morally good life entails only a small amount of unhappy consequences that do not extend beyond the present life, but a similar wrong-doing committed by an immoral person produces extensive and acutely painful consequences—even rebirth in *Niraya* hell. The following analogy illustrates the point: a small amount of salt can make a glass of water undrinkable, but cannot alter the taste of the waters of the River Ganga.

Whereas the *Devadaha-sutta* (M. II. 220-221) ascribes a rigid and deterministic view of the fruition of *kamma* to the Nigaṇṭhas, modern interpreters emphasize that "Jainism is imbued with an emotional commitment to self-reliance" (Jaini 1979, 138). Jaini explains that in the Jaina theory of *karma*, the exact amount (*pradeśa*) of karmic matter that enters the soul depends on the "*degree of volition*" that drives the act,¹⁴ while the length of time that karmic matter adheres to the soul (*sthiti*) and the specific result (*anubhava*) of any given act depends on the strength or weakness of the passions (*kaṣāyas*) that motivates the act (1979, 113). Jaini's interpretation agrees with that of von Glasenapp (1942, 3) who explains that in the Jaina view, the duration of time that a specific *karma* remains latent in the *jīva*, and the intensity of its effect, depend on the "state of mind (*adhyavasāya*)" at the time when the act was done and karmic matter entered the *jīva*. Jaini's interpretation (1979, 139) also focuses on the wide-ranging powers that the Jaina tradition ascribes to the volitional energy (*vīrya*) of the soul with

regard to the fruition of *karma*. The Jaina tradition posits that the soul's volitional energy can either hasten or postpone the moment of fruition, either sharpen or diminish the intensity of the effect of a specific *karma*, and even render *karmas* incapable of having any impact whatsoever (Jaini 1979, 139).

Debates regarding the nature and ultimate basis of the capacity to initiate action

Though the Buddha and the Nigaṇṭhas disagreed with each other, both rejected the Ājīvaka view that "human volition" and "moral choice" are meaningless concepts because the life of every being is totally controlled by a principle of fate or destiny (*niyati*). In the Buddhist *Suttas* (M. I. 407, M. I. 516-517, D. I. 54), the deterministic view of Makkhali Gosāla, the Ājīvaka teacher, is called *ahetukavāda* (the doctrine of non-causality). The Buddha does not give a theoretical refutation of *ahetukavāda*: he focuses on the practical implications of believing that one's entire life is governed by unalterable fate (*niyati*). Makkhali Gosāla's view is rejected because it teaches that all beings are totally lacking in control, strength and energy (*sabbe jīvā avasā abalā aviriya*) (M. I. 407, D. I. 53).

The Buddha maintains that commitment to a deterministic view deprives people of all inducement for moral endeavour and spiritual discipline. He points out that from the perspective of *kamma*, determinism entails that the yogic practices of austerities (*tapas*) and purity of life based on sexual restraint (*brahmacariya*) are of no avail since one cannot, through voluntary effort, either cause the effects of past deeds to come to fruition or prevent their fruition (D. I. 54). The Nigaṇṭhas, like the Buddha, disagreed with the Ājīvakas and taught that it is possible to prevent a sorrowful future by voluntarily choosing a life of ascetic discipline.

The Nigaṇṭhas characterized their teaching as the very essence of *kriyāvāda* and the Buddha's view as a form of *akriyāvāda* (doctrine of non-action). *Kriyāvāda* is explained by Jacobi as the doctrine that the soul is both the agent of action and the recipient of the consequences of action; and *akriyāvāda* is interpreted as the view either that the soul does not exist or that *karma* has no impact on the soul (1968, 2:xxv). Folkert agrees with Jacobi's explanation of the term *kriyāvāda* in the Jaina texts, and he adds that *kriyāvāda* includes the following tenets: "the self exists, is involved in activity, and is ultimately responsible for its acts; in fact, it suffers karma-bondage in consequence of its careless activity" (1993, 263). Folkert maintains, however, that *kriyāvāda* only gradually acquired the meaning ascribed to it above. According to his analysis, *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* I. 12, where the principles of *kriyāvāda* are delineated, belongs to a later stratum of the Jaina canon (1993, 269-270).

In the *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* (I. 12), *kriyāvāda* is said to be the teaching that "misery is produced by one's own works, not by those of someone else" (Jacobi 1968, 2: 317). The *akriyāvādin* is defined as one who does not accept that the power of *karma* to put forth results can be manifested in future moments of time. Jacobi explains this definition of an *akriyāvādin* as a reference to the Buddhists who maintain that what exists in the present does not continue into the future (1968, 2:316, n.3). Furthermore, the Buddhists reject the Jaina idea that the capacity of the mind to initiate bodily action is ultimately based in a power of volition (*vīrya*) that is an inherent property of an autonomous self (*jīva*). The Buddha is branded as an *akriyāvādin* by Nātaputta in the story of Sīha the Nigaṇṭha householder who wishes to question the Buddha about his teaching (A. IV. 180).

In the Buddhist *Suttas* the teaching of the Buddha is called *kiriya-vāda* and the designation *akiriya-vāda* is reserved for the view of the *samaṇa* teacher *Pūraṇa Kassapa*,

who holds that moral distinctions are meaningless and invalid, and that good and bad acts do not lead to the accumulation of merit (*puñña*) and demerit (*pāpa*) (M. I. 406, M.I. 516-517; D. I. 58-53). The opposition to *Pūraṇa Kassapa* makes it clear that in Buddhist usage *kiriyaṇvāda* represents the doctrine that acknowledges the influence of *kamma*, affirms the human capacity to initiate action (*virīya*) and maintains that individuals have responsibility for their acts. Obviously, the Buddha does not accept the Nigaṇṭha view that the soul exists and is involved in action. As a consequence, the Buddha's definition of *kiriyaṇvāda* differs from the definition in the *Sūtrakṛtāṅga*. In opposing the *akiriyaṇvāda* of *Pūraṇa Kassapa* and the *ahetukavāda* of the Ājīvakas, the Buddha focuses, not on the theoretical premises of these doctrines, but on their practical implications (M. I. 405-409). The Buddha maintains that those who accept *akiriyaṇvāda* or *ahetukavāda* cannot uphold wholesome (*kusala*) states of good behaviour (*sucarita*) since they do not acknowledge that beings have the capacity to initiate acts that will make an impact on the future course of their lives.

In the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, (A. I. 286-287), while condemning the deterministic *ahetukavāda* of the Ājīvakas, the Buddha declares that the teaching of all the *arahants* and Buddhas of the past, as well as his own teaching as a fully awakened being, is *kammavāda*, *kiriyaṇvāda*, *virīyavāda*. In this context, *virīya* signifies the energy to initiate and pursue goal-oriented action; *kiriyaṇ* connotes action that proceeds from the conative energy (*virīya*) of an individual who is responsible for that action; and *kamma* indicates that such action (*kiriyaṇ*) arises from causes and conditions, has moral value, and produces commensurate consequences. *Ahetukavāda* is a denial of *kamma*, *kiriyaṇ*, and *virīya*.

The above definition points to important differences in the way the basic mental capacity of initiating action is conceived by three *samaṇa* groups: the Ājīvakas, the Jainas

and the Buddhists. The Ājīvakas maintain that, ultimately, human beings do not have the capacity to initiate any type of action, since all physical and mental processes are predetermined by an inexorable fate (*niyati*). According to the Jainas, the idea that human beings have the capacity to initiate action is meaningless and baseless unless this capacity is shown to be a manifestation of a volitional power (*vīrya*) that is grounded in the very nature of an autonomous self (*jīva*). The Buddhists hold that both the capacity of the mind to initiate bodily acts (*ārambha-dhātu*) and the energy (*virīya*) that is applied in carrying out an intention are observable mental factors (*dhammas*) that come into existence when appropriate causal conditions are present in the body and the consciousness continuum. In the Buddhist view, these mental factors are not rooted in a permanent self, and their capacity to initiate and sustain action is derived from the convergence of the conditions through which they come into being.

Comprehensive definition of action in early Jainism and in the *Suttas*

Both in the early Jaina tradition and in the *Suttas*, acts that carry moral values and bring about karmic consequences are said to be inclusive of three types: physical, verbal, and mental. In the *Upāli-sutta* (M. I. 371-372), the Nigaṇṭha Tapassī says that the Nigaṇṭha teacher Nātaputta classifies acts in terms of three types of *daṇḍa*¹⁵ (literally, "rod of punishment"): physical, verbal, and mental. The Buddha replies that whereas he prefers the term *kamma* to *daṇḍa*, he also classifies acts in the same way. Moreover, both traditions hold that these acts of body, speech, and mind can be committed in three ways: one can commit the act oneself, or instigate another to do so, or approve of the act when it is committed by someone else. In *Early Jainism* (1978, 88) Dixit maintains that the earliest "Jaina treatment of ethical problems" was to say of a wrong-doing that it was

either committed by oneself, or that one verbally instigated another to commit it, or that one mentally approved of it when it was done by another person. One of the oldest Jaina texts, the *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* says:

If a man kills living beings, or causes other men to kill them, or consents to their killing them, his iniquity will go on increasing.
(trans. Jacobi 2 : 236)

As in the Jaina tradition, in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (A. V. 305-307) also, unwholesome acts of body, speech, and mind are further classified as acts done by oneself (*attanā*), acts that one causes to be done by another (*parañ ca samādapeti*), and acts of which one approves (*samanuñño hoti*). The *Aṅguttara-nikāya* adds a fourth type: acts that one praises and implicitly recommends (*vaṇṇaṃ bhāsatī*). According to the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (A. V. 307-308), unwholesome acts of body, speech, and mind becomes fourfold, since in the case of each act, one can do it oneself, cause another to do it, give it one's seal of approval, or applaud it. Since these acts are designated as "unwholesome," it is evident that they are regarded as intentional acts that carry karmic consequences. The meaning of the term intention is extended to include appreciating a deed or expressing pleasure with regard to it (*anumodana*) and speaking of a deed as something beautiful or splendid (*vaṇṇaṃ bhāsatī*) so that another person is induced to undertake that deed.

Examples of this comprehensive use of the terms *sañcetanika* (intentional) and *sañcicca* (intentionally) are found in the *Vinaya-piṭaka*. Intention to kill, for example, is defined in such a way as to include: deliberately depriving a human being of life, prompting or instigating another to kill by expressing a determination, resolve, or wish (*aditthāya*) to cause death, inciting a person to commit suicide, and praising death as

something glorious with the intention of persuading a person to find a way to die (Vin. III. 73-76).

Primacy of intention upheld in the *Vinaya-piṭaka* and the *Kathāvatthu*

The *Vinaya-piṭaka* takes the position that moral value resides in the intention rather than in the act as such. It is said in the *Vinaya* (Vin. III. 12, 73, 112, IV. 290) that if a rule of the monastic community is broken intentionally, then it is regarded as an offence. An intentional offence (*sañcetanika vītikkama*) is defined as a wrong-doing that is done knowingly (*jānanto*) and with conscious awareness (*sañjānanto*), after thinking (*cecca*) and deliberating over it (*abhivitaritvā*) (Vin. IV. 290). If a rule is broken unintentionally, it is not regarded as a serious offence against the monastic community. "Unintentionally" (*asāñcicca*) is explained as an act that is done "without thinking" (*assatiyā*) by a person who does not know (*ajānantassa*), or is ill (*gilānassa*) or is mentally unstable (*ummattakassa*). The unintentional act is also regarded as not planned by oneself and not instigated by another person.

The term that is most difficult to interpret in the *Vinaya* definition of *asāñcicca* (unintentionally) is *assatiyā* (instrumental case of *asati*). The term does not occur frequently, and is mainly found in the *Vinaya-piṭaka*. Horner translates *assatiyā* as "without thinking" (Horner 1938-1965, 3: 186). *Sati* signifies not only recollection of the past but also having a "firm hold" on what is happening in the present. Thus *sati* signifies "intentness of mind, wakefulness of mind, mindfulness, alertness, lucidity of mind" (P.E.D. 672, col. 2). It follows that, in the definition of *asāñcicca*, *assatiya* conveys that the act is "unintentional" because the mind of the person who committed the act was not

fully attentive to what was happening in that situation. The act was done without alertness and attention and therefore, was not deliberately planned with a goal in view.

The following are two examples of unintentional acts. When the monks of Āḷavī were preparing a site for a monastery, a "badly held stone" slipped from the hand of a monk working at an upper level and fell on a monk standing below, causing his death (Horner 1938-1965, 1: 140). Horner's translation suggests that the monks did not have sufficient knowledge of construction work and that the tragic consequence was an accident. Another example is of a group of monks unknowingly administering an incorrect medical treatment to a sick monk and causing his death. Here again, the death is seen as the result of lack of sufficient knowledge on the part of those who committed the unintentional act. The emphasis in these two examples is on the term *ajānanto* (not knowing) in the definition of an unintentional act that does not constitute an offence against the monastic life.

The debate on the controversial point of whether the moral value of a deed is to be judged on the basis of the intention or the act itself is continued in the *Kathāvatthu* (Kvu. 593-595). In the debate, the opponents of the Theravādins maintain that there are five crimes so totally reprehensible that they lead immediately to retribution in the form of excruciatingly painful rebirth. These five crimes are: killing one's mother, father, or an *arahant*, shedding the blood of a Buddha, and causing a schism in the *Saṅgha*. The Theravādins maintain that even in these five cases, the act must be judged on the basis of the intention of the person who commits the act. They insist that the distinction that is made in the *Vinaya* between deliberate murder and accidental death extends also to cases where one is involved in the death of one's own mother, father, or an *arahant*. Furthermore, the Theravādins cite a passage in the *Vinaya* (Horner 1938-1965, 5: 287)

that distinguishes between those who intend to cause a schism in the *Saṅgha* and those who are mistaken with regard to the teaching of the Buddha and unintentionally cause a schism. The fact that this section of the *Kathāvatthu* is entitled *Asañcicca-kathā* leaves no doubt that the focus of the debate is not retributive justice for the five acts that were regarded as the most reprehensible, but the significance that should be given to intention in ascribing moral value to acts. McDermott (1984, 94) points out that the Theravādins insist on "the primacy of the intentional impulse in the case of all acts, including the five most heinous of crimes."

Although the Buddhist tradition considers intention to be primary in judging the moral significance of an act, like the Jainas, Buddhists also maintain that careful attention (*appamāda*) to all the concrete details of daily life is the basic discipline in the spiritual path. For example, in the *Cūḷagosiṅga-sutta* (M. I. 207), when the monks report to the Buddha that they are living a life guided by *appamāda*, he is interested in such details as keeping the dining room clean, keeping the waterjars filled, and emptying out the garbage carefully without causing harm to plants and living beings. In the *Cūḷagosiṅga-sutta*, this discipline of careful attention (*appamāda*) is seen as the basis for cultivating serenity and the levels of meditation (*jhāna*). Similarly, the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna-sutta* (D. II. 292) explains mindfulness as the practice of maintaining clarity of mind and uninterrupted awareness with regard to both one's mental states as well as the physical details that fill the day. It follows, therefore, that though the Buddhist tradition maintains that moral value rests in the intention that instigates the act, and not solely in the act, the *Suttas* and the *Vinaya-piṭaka* insist on the need for attention and scrupulous care with regard to all acts of body and mind.

Conclusion

When the Jainas call Buddhism a doctrine of non-action (*akiriyāvāda*) they are pointing to a crucial difference between their view of action and the Buddhist view. The Jainas maintain that the ultimate source of human volition and activity is the property of energy (*vīrya*) that is inherent in the soul (*jīva*). From the Jaina point of view, Buddhism is a doctrine of non-action because it does not accept the idea of a soul that is the source of energy (*vīrya*), consciousness (*caitanya/cetanā*),¹⁶ and bliss (*sukha*). According to the Buddhists, all intentions, all deployments of energy (*virīya*), and all acts of body, speech, and mind arise through causes and conditions: none of these factors can claim to be autonomous or capable of controlling the others.

The Buddha develops his concept of fruitful effort and striving (*saphala upakkama*, *saphalam padhānam*) in his debates with the Nigaṇṭhas. According to the Buddhist interpretation, the Nigaṇṭhas conceive of volitional effort in terms of unswerving fulfilment of intentions, decisions, resolves, and vows through the deployment of the energy that resides in the soul. Furthermore, according to the *Suttas*, the Nigaṇṭhas maintain that voluntary effort in bearing the physical pain resulting from austerities and ascetic practices is the surest way to develop mental strength and resolve. The Buddha, on the other hand, gives a greater role to the cognitive processes of assessing both pain and progress in any volitional effort. "Fruitful striving" signifies matching the volitional effort to the chosen goal by renouncing painful disciplines when they are not effective in reaching the goal, and embracing joy that is not associated with sensual desire or with unwholesome mental states that block progress towards the goal. The concept of fruitful striving implies that according to the Buddha, volitional effort has a cognitive component

that formulates the intentions and assesses the appropriateness of the methods, with regard to the goal.

The *Suttas*, the *Vinaya-piṭaka*, and the *Kathāvatthu* agree that the Theravādins maintain that moral value resides primarily in the intention that instigates an act. However, Theravādins do not go on to argue that moral value resides solely in the intention and that the physical or verbal act has no moral significance. In the *Suttas* and in the *Abhidhamma* texts, wholesome and unwholesome intentional acts (*sañcetanika kamma*) are conceived as concrete acts of body, speech, and mind. *Kamma* is defined as the purposive impulse (*cetanā*) becoming expressed in a concrete act of body, speech, or mind (A. III. 415). The purposive impulse and the act in which it becomes expressed are conceived as a single whole. It is this configuration of purposive impulse and act that is regarded as wholesome or unwholesome.

Chapter III

The Impact of Conditioned Origination on the Interpretation of *Cetanā*, *Saṅkhāra*, and *Citta*

In this transitional chapter, the focus is on three themes that open up three approaches to the concept of *cetanā* in the *Suttas* and the *Abhidhamma*. These three approaches to delineating the nature and function of *cetanā* are governed by the affirmation that the principle of conditioned origination is central to Theravāda. It is posited in Theravāda that all mental factors come into existence and function through causal conditions. The first theme focuses on the relationship of *cetanā* to *citta*. In Theravāda, consciousness is viewed as a continuum constituted of mutually conditioning processes. From the perspective of conditioned origination, cognition, emotion, and the capacity to initiate action are interpreted to be inseparable, interdependent processes. It follows that the relationship of *cetanā* to *citta* must be defined in terms of the view that consciousness functions as an organic whole. According to this view, all conscious processes condition each other, and consciousness as a whole interacts with its components.

The second theme focuses on the relationship of *cetanā* to *saṅkhāra*. From the perspective of conditioned origination, *saṅkhāras* are viewed as dynamic processes that manifest the mind's capacity to bring together physical and mental factors in such a way that they put forth goal-oriented acts of body, speech, and mind. In order to understand the relationship of *cetanā* to *saṅkhāra*, it is necessary to explore what role *cetanā* plays in the function of bringing together causal conditions and directing them towards a goal. Since *cetanā* connotes purposive impulse, explaining the precise nature of the relationship

of *saṅkhāra* to *cetanā* involves investigating whether there are passages in the *Tipiṭaka* where *saṅkhāra* is described in terms of a firm resolve to fulfil a purpose.

The third theme focuses on how *cetanā* functions in relation to the unwholesome underlying tendencies and mental corruptions that *āsavās* and *anusayas* represent. When *paṭicca-samuppāda* is affirmed, *āsavās* and *anusayas* must be interpreted not as fixed structures in the mind, but as the repeated convergence of similar unwholesome conditions in the continuum of consciousness. This approach seeks to define the nature and function of *cetanā* in the context of the pervasive unwholesome influence of *anusayas* and *āsavās*. The main question here is whether wholesome purposive impulses can arise and function in a mind pervaded by influences that corrupt and distort mental processes.

In the next three chapters, the relationship of *cetanā* to *citta* and to *saṅkhāra* is defined and the nature and function of *cetanā* are investigated, especially with regard to whether *cetanā* straddles both the decision-making process by which an intention is formulated and the implementing process by which action is initiated to fulfil that intention. I call this a transitional chapter because it is concerned with the preliminary task of defining *citta* and *saṅkhāra* in relation to conditioned origination. This clears the way for investigating how *cetanā* emerges out of these two factors and how it functions in relation to the cognitive and emotive features of the *citta* on the one hand, and to the action-producing function of *saṅkhāra* on the other.

The etymology of *cetanā* as well as its use in the Upaniṣadic, Yoga, and early Jaina traditions link it with *citta*. In the *Upaniṣads*, *cetanā* signifies consciousness taken as a whole (K.U. II. 2.13; S.U. VI. 13) or the basic sentience that vitalizes and moves the body (Mt.U. II. 6). In its sole occurrence in the *Yoga-sūtra* (YS. I. 29), *pratyak-cetanā* signifies a specific state of consciousness where there is direct perception of the inner

self. In the Sāṃkhya tradition, *cetanā* refers to the inviolable consciousness of the true self (*puruṣa*). Similarly, in the early Jaina Tradition *cetanā* refers to the innate capacity of the soul (*jīva*) to function as a knower (Johnson 1995, 125-126). However, the Jaina tradition holds that the soul's inherent capacity to know cannot be fully manifested as long as a person is bound to the course of rebirth. Pervaded by ignorance, *ajñāna-cetanā* is said to be obsessed with the notion of the "I" (*aham*) as the agent of activity and the recipient of the consequences of action, thereby manifesting as twofold: *karma-cetanā* and *karma-phala-cetanā* (Jaini 1979, 147-148). In this context, the term *cetanā* represents a specific state or mode of consciousness.

What distinguishes *cetanā* in Theravāda from the use of this term in the traditions mentioned above is that it becomes associated with the dynamism of *saṅkhāra*, and is attributed with the capacity to initiate intentional acts of body, speech, and mind. Whereas one might expect the action-producing capacities of *saṅkhāra* to be constituted of modalities of energy such as *virīya* (energy, vigour) or *chanda* (impulse to act), in the *Suttas* and the *Abhidhamma*, *saṅkhāra* is said to be formed of different classes of *cetanās*. Further evidence of the shift in the meaning of *cetanā* from basic sentience and conscious awareness in the *Upaniṣads* to conative energy in Theravāda is that *kamma* is defined, not in terms of *saṅkhārās* and their power to initiate goal-oriented acts, as one might expect, but in terms of *cetanā*, with which *kamma* becomes identified (A. III. 415).

Cetanā* in the holistic view of consciousness represented by *citta

Theravāda resembles the Yoga tradition in its use of *citta* as an "umbrella term" to cover all aspects of individual consciousness (Feuerstein 1980, 58). The distinctive feature of Theravāda, however, is that this holistic view of consciousness shared with the

Yoga tradition is transformed into a picture of change, displaying constellations of mutually conditioning mental states coming into being and passing away in accordance with conditioned origination. The concepts of *citta*, *manas*, and *viññāṇa* convey the idea that the mind is a continuum formed through processes of conditioning, aggregation, and mutual dependence. In the *Suttas* and *Abhidhamma* literature, *manas*, *viññāṇa*, and *citta* are regarded as synonyms (S. II. 94-95; Dhs. 10; Vbh. 87) denoting a continuous process of mental states arising and passing away in conformity with the principle of conditioned origination. However, these three terms do have specific meanings, since they indicate three different ways in which this process functions and manifests itself. *Manas* indicates the process of conscious awareness acting as the co-ordinator of the data of the five senses and also as the cognizer of "mental objects" (*dhammās*) consisting of concepts and mental images. It will be shown below that *manas* also represents thinking in a general and all-inclusive sense. *Viññāṇa* signifies the continuity of conscious awareness that makes all experience possible. The continuity is said to be preserved not only during a single life span, but also in the vast course of innumerable rebirths. The continuity between past and present states of conscious awareness is explained, however, not in terms of changeless stability, but in terms of the conditioning of every mental factor by causal influences from the past. The series of configurations of mental factors constitutes the continuum of consciousness. If *viññāṇa* represents continuity of conscious awareness, *citta* indicates a cross-section, as it were, of the continuum at any given time. The cross-section shows conscious awareness arising at any given time, conditioned by feeling, perception, emotion, and conative dynamism. *Citta*, as a state of mind, is a configuration of mental factors—such as energy, attention, thoughts, and emotions—conditioning each

other and conscious awareness. The “cross section” manifests a specific state of mind that exhibits particular dominant emotions and cognitive features.

In order to avoid confusion, it should be noted at the outset that the term *citta* is utilized in two ways in the *Abhidhamma*. On the one hand, *citta* as a specific configuration of mental factors signifies a state of mind that comes into being and passes away. On the other hand, *citta* also signifies a series of states of mind (*cittas*) forming an individual mental continuum. In this second sense, *citta* represents the continuum of *cittas*.

Mrs. Rhys Davids points out that whereas *manas* primarily indicates the mind as actively cognizing, assessing or valuing, *citta* often shows the mind affected by thoughts, feelings, and emotions. She further notes that *citta* is sometimes translated as "heart" to emphasize that the term frequently refers to the mind under the influence of a specific emotion (1978a, 238-239). In different contexts the *citta* is said to be *pariyādinna* (greedy, grasping), *khitta* (upset, unbalanced), *upakkiliṭṭha* (defiled), *kilanta* (weary), *santa* (peaceful), *alīna* (sincere, unstained), *pasanna* (clear, full of faith), *vasībhūta* (mastering, controlling), or *vimutta* (liberated).¹ These descriptions of *citta* refer to the mind as a whole exhibiting a dominant emotion, motivation, or cognitive capacity.

In the *Abhidhamma*, a distinction is made between *citta* and *cetasikas*. Literally, *cetasika* signifies "belonging to *citta*." *Cetasikas* are the wholesome and unwholesome mental factors that constitute the state of mind (*citta*) at any time. It follows that *citta* is not conceived as bare conscious awareness that can somehow be separated from mental coefficients, properties, and functions. On the contrary, *citta* signifies a transitory configuration of co-operating *cetasikas* (mental factors) interacting with *viññāṇa*

(continuum of conscious awareness).² In this scheme, *cetanā* is regarded as one of the *cetasikas* that is present in every state of mind.

In *Philosophy and Psychology in the Abhidhamma*, Guenther regards every transitory constellation of mental factors designated as *citta* to be an "attitude" of mind. This interpretation helps in understanding that every configuration of interacting mental factors manifests a dominant mood that can motivate future action. Guenther's interpretation also provides a reminder that the practical counterpart of *Abhidhamma* theory is to train the disciple in developing mental factors that facilitate wholesome attitudes that put forth wholesome motivations. Guenther writes:

The importance of attitude has so far escaped the notice of many scholars, and yet it alone provides a satisfactory explanation for such peculiar and complex psychological phenomena as those in which certain stimuli exercise a strong effect at one time, while their effect is rather weak or even absent at another. Having a certain attitude means to be ready for something, and this readiness for something is due to the presence of a certain subjective group-pattern, being a definite combination of many factors in the human psyche. (1976, 12)

Every *citta* configuration brings together certain mental dispositions, sensory perceptions, emotional qualities, and motives that fit into its dominant tone and leaves out factors that are not compatible. Guenther concludes that *citta* as "attitude" is "the determining element in our life, inasmuch as it moulds our actions and even our ideas down to the minutest details" (1976, 12).

In *The Path of Purification* (1964, 507, n. 35), Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli explains that in the *Abhidhamma*, *citta* signifies a "momentary type of situation" arising through the interplay of consciousness (*viññāṇa*) with the "tone" of co-arising mental factors. The definition of *citta* given in the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 63-65) validates the interpretations of Guenther and Ñāṇamoli, both of whom regard *citta* as an attitude or frame of mind. The

definition begins by saying that *citta* is that which thinks about (*cinteti*) or discerns (*viñānāti*) an object.³ But the definition soon demonstrates that *citta* is a far richer term than its etymological derivation from the verb *cinteti* would warrant. The *Atthasālinī* associates *citta* with the verb *cināti* ("to heap up, to collect, to accumulate") (P.E.D. 268, col. 2) and, as a pun, with the noun *citta* (Sanskrit: *citra*) meaning "that which is variegated" or, more simply, "picture." These associations are not etymological; they serve as didactic devices, and are for purposes of exegesis. The definition in the *Atthasālinī* states that the *citta* builds itself up as a series (*attano santānam cinoti*) through cognitive processes of perception and thought. From another perspective, the *citta* is said to be "built up" (*cita*) or perpetuated through the influence of the unwholesome mental states (*kilesas*) that cause the mind to crave future goals and the fruition (*vipāka*) of *kamma*.⁴ The *Atthasālinī* goes on to point out that *citta* is a generic term that represents a multitude of attitudes of mind that are variegated according to their contents and the circumstances in which they occur.⁵ Reading between the sentences of the *Atthasālinī*, one gets a sense of the splendour and wondrous quality of the *citta*. The Sanskrit term *citra* conveys "bright," "strange," and "wonderful," as well as "variegated" (S.E.D. 396, Col.1).

The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 63-65) says that the *citta* as a continuum manifests a vast variety of attitudes or transient states of mind through the varied configurations of mental factors, just as a master artist (*citta-kāra*) creates masterpieces with rich variations of colour and design. Attitudes of greed, aversion, and delusion, attitudes of generosity, friendship and understanding, attitudes characteristic of the realm of sensory experience, and states of mind that prevail at various levels of meditation are compared to variegated pictures painted by the mind. In this analogy of painting, the *citta* is both the creative

painter and the many-coloured pictures. As the artist creates many scenes, the *citta* creates its experiences in the many realms of rebirth and is itself constantly re-created through these experiences. In this context, the *Atthasālinī* refers to a passage of the *Samyutta-nikāya* (S. III. 151-152) where the Buddha puns on the word *citta*, declaring the *citta* to be more variegated (*cittataram*) than the paintings used by teachers to illustrate the various realms of rebirth. The *Atthasālinī* explains that the diversity of experiences in the diverse realms of rebirth is due to *kamma*, and it attributes the vast variations of acts that have karmic consequences to the endless creativity of the *citta*. Furthermore, the *Atthasālinī* insists that physical acts with karmic consequences—such as giving gifts, good conduct, injuring others, and behaving deceitfully—are performed, in the final analysis, by the *citta* (*citta-katam eva*) (Asl. 64).⁶ The purport of this statement is that various attitudes of mind displayed in the continuum of *cittas* precede and support corresponding physical and verbal acts.

The verb *ceteti* can now be interpreted in relation to *citta*. *The Pali-English Dictionary* gives the meaning of *ceteti* as "to think, to reflect, to be of opinion" (P.E.D. 269, col.1). In special contexts where *ceteti* is used with the dative case, it connotes "to set one's heart on, to think upon, strive after, desire." For example, *Vakkali . . . vimokkhāya ceteti* (S. III. 121) signifies "Vakkali has set his mind on liberation." Similarly, *ariyasāvako . . . pabbajjāya ceteti* (It. 75) can be rendered as "the noble disciple directs his mind to going forth (into the monastic life)." *Cetayitvā* (the gerund of the verb *ceteti*) occurs in the definition of *kamma* given by the Buddha (A. III. 415). The first part of this definition identifies *cetanā* (an action noun related to *ceteti*) with *kamma*. The second part holds that having performed the mental action indicated by the verb *ceteti* (*cetayitvā*), one proceeds to do deeds of body, speech, and mind. I take the position that

the meaning of *ceteti* and *cetayitvā* must be drawn from the holistic view of consciousness conveyed by the term *citta*. I take *cetanā* to indicate a purposive impulse or intention imbued with the impetus to act that expresses an attitude or general frame of mind in which all the *khandhas* are involved to a greater or lesser degree. The verb *ceteti* signifies that the function of deploying consciousness in goal-oriented impulses (*cetanā*) arises from a conditioned attitude of mind (*citta*). It will be shown in Chapter V that in the lists of mental factors given in the *Atthasālinī*, *Visuddhimagga*, and *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha*, *cetanā* is designated as a *cetasika*: that is to say, *cetanā* is integral to the configuration of interrelated mental states designated as *citta*, and partakes of the dominant mood manifested in the configuration.

The following examples illustrate the meaning of *ceteti*. On one occasion (S. I. 121) the Buddha is told that one of his disciples, tormented by pain and wishing to die, has set his mind on death (*maraṇaṃ cetayati*).⁷ In this context, the verb *cetayati*, which is another form of *ceteti*, can be interpreted as "to intend" since it is linked with *ākaṅkhati* ("to wish for, think of, desire; intend, plan, design") (P.E.D. 93, col.1). The relation between the act indicated by *ceteti* and a specific attitude of mind is well conveyed in the Buddha's statement that when one is beset by greed (*ratto*) or by ill-will (*duṭṭho*) or delusion (*mūḷho*), then one is intent on (*ceteti*) harming oneself, or others, or both oneself and others. The Buddha goes on to say that when greed, ill-will, and delusion are eliminated, then one no longer has the purpose of causing harm (S. IV. 339-340; A. I. 156-157).⁸ The person who "intends" or "is occupied with" (*ceteti*) causing harm is described as "overcome" (*abhibhūto*) by greed, ill-will, or delusion and "possessed of a *citta* that is subjugated" (*pariyādinnacitto*) (A. I. 156-157). The relationship between attitude of mind (*citta*) and *ceteti* is seen also in the statement that if

an untaught deluded person is intent on (*ceteti*) rebirth, that person will find that the future holds the shocks of bitter pain (S. IV. 201).⁹ The deluded person is described as one whose senses and mind are constantly pulled towards various objects. This passage shows that *ceteti* indicates the directing of thought towards a specific goal—in this case, rebirth. Bhikkhu Bodhi translates *ceteti* here as "sets his mind upon" (2000, 2:1258). This rendering conveys that the direction in which thought is oriented expresses the deluded person's attitude or frame of mind.

These examples show that *ceteti* refers to a process of purposive thought that expresses a certain attitude of mind. *Ceteti* signifies forming a purpose, and not the application of energy to fulfil that purpose. Nevertheless, cognition and the capacity to initiate action are not seen as disparate faculties in the *Suttas* and the *Abhidhamma*, but as processes that mutually condition each other and manifest a certain attitude or frame of mind.

Conflict and control in the *citta*

The reason for focusing on the *Theragāthā*, the *Therīgāthā*, the *Dhammapada*, and the *Sutta-nipāta* in this section is because the striking, and often lovely, verses in these texts offer personal descriptions of how the *citta* was perceived by those who were actually engaged in the disciplines of the Eightfold Path in the early period of Buddhism. K.R. Norman concludes that the verses compiled in the *Theragāthā* and the *Therīgāthā* belong to the period from the end of the sixth century B.C.E. to the middle of the third century B.C.E. (1969, xxix; 1971, xxxi). Von Hinüber draws attention to the beauty of these verses and points out that they "allow a unique glimpse at very early Indian poetry

otherwise completely lost" (1997, 53). The *Sutta-nipāta* is said to contain some of "the oldest Buddhist poetry known to us," perhaps going back to the time of the Buddha (Norman 1983, 63). The *Dhammapada* is an interesting text because some of its verses are found also in Jaina or brahmanical texts. Norman suggests that they "were taken from the general store of floating verses which seem to have existed in Northern India in early times" (1983, 58-59). It is possible that the verses from the *Dhammapada* on the nature of the mind quoted in this chapter reflect ideas that belonged to Indian culture in general, rather than to Buddhism in particular.

It should be possible to extrapolate from the personal accounts in the *Theragāthā* and the *Therīgāthā* a more intimate view of the concepts of *citta* and *cetanā*, to supplement the more formal statements in the *Suttas*. A recurrent theme in these intimate verses is how to control the *citta*. Of special interest in this regard is the remarkable poem attributed to *Thera* Tālapuṭa (Tha. 1091-1145). Addressing his own wayward *citta*, Tālapuṭa longingly asks when he will be able to overcome inclinations to desire, hatred, and delusion, quieten his mind with mindfulness, attain to the freedom of the sages, and feel the beauty of the woodlands. He reminds his *citta* that he did not leave his family and circle of friends because of ill-fortune, banishment, or lack of a livelihood, but because his *citta* had persistently urged him to consider the sorrow in impermanence, the emptiness of the self, and the misery of rebirth. He tells his *citta* that formerly he had followed its bidding when it had led him through countless rebirths. He chides his *citta* for straying from the discipline taught by the Buddha and resolves to tame and control it by meditation and the practice of mindfulness.

In other verses of the *Theragāthā*, the *citta* is called a "witch" and a "deceiver" (*cittakali*, *cittadubbhaka*) (Tha. 214, 356). Controlling the *citta* is compared to taming an

untamed elephant (Thi. 49) or to restraining an elephant with a hook (Tha. 77, 1130) and tying it firmly to a post. In the *Therīgāthā*, Uttamā laments that she lacks control over her *citta* (*citte avasavattinī*) (Thi. 42). Another *therī* attributes her inability to subdue her *citta* to her lack of systematic attention to objects (*ayoniso-manasikāra*), her passion for sensual pleasure (*kāma-rāga*), and her pride (*uddhaṭṭā*) (Thi. 77).¹⁰ Guttā warns herself not to fall under the sway of the *citta* (Thi. 163),¹¹ and another *therī* quietly declares that she has attained control over her own *citta* (Thi. 233).¹²

There is no word in these early texts that represents an overriding "will" that controls the *citta* and brings about a change of behaviour. The term *cetanā* does not fulfil that role in these verses. The term *saṅkappa* occurs in a few of the verses with the meaning of "intention" or "aspiration." One *thera* says that the intentions (*saṅkappā*) with which he entered his meditation hut have been carried out successfully (Tha. 60);¹³ another tells how the Buddha, understanding his intentions (*saṅkappam aññāya*), exhorted him to enter the training of the *Saṅgha* (Tha. 376);¹⁴ and a third *thera* declares with confidence that his intentions are fulfilled, like the moon attaining its fullness (Tha. 546).¹⁵ In these verses, the term *saṅkappa* conveys an "aspiration," "resolve," "purpose," or "intention" formed in the mind. However, the connotations of *saṅkappa* in these verses do not include the capacity to put forth energy to initiate action in fulfilment of that purpose. Though the need to exert great energy (*virīya*) in order to strive in the Eightfold Path is emphasized in the *Theragāthā* (Tha. 148, 167, 515),¹⁶ the meaning of *virīya* does not include purposive deliberation and the intention to pursue a chosen goal. *Virīya* is not perceived here as the function of purposive thought that decides on a goal and initiates physical and mental energy, but as the process of applying energy, once the resolve to do so has arisen in the *citta*. Neither *saṅkappa* nor *virīya* connotes will.

In the *Dhammapada*, the mind (*manas*) is said to be the forerunner and the leader with regard to both wholesome and unwholesome mental states (Dhp. 1-2).¹⁷ Here the term *manas* can be taken as a synonym of *citta*, and these verses can be interpreted to mean that it is one's mind-set or frame of mind that determines whether one's thoughts, emotions, purposes, and behaviour will be wholesome or unwholesome. The *Dhammapada* commences its set of verses on the *citta* by focusing on how immensely difficult it is to subdue the swiftly changing *citta* (Dhp. 33-36),¹⁸ and concludes by describing an ill-directed *citta* (*micchā-paṇītaṃ cittaṃ*) as one's worst enemy and a well-directed *citta* (*sammā-paṇītaṃ cittaṃ*) as one's truest friend (Dhp. 42-43).¹⁹ This description of the *citta* in the *Dhammapada* again evokes questions about how the change from "ill-directed" to "well-directed" occurs. In the *Therīgāthā*, the women attribute the redirection of the *citta* and the motivation to enter the Eightfold Path to the tragedies they had lived through.²⁰ In the *Theragāthā*, it is more often a direct encounter with the Buddha or with a competent teacher that is declared to be the cause of the fundamental reorientation of the *citta*.²¹ In both cases, the awareness of the transitoriness of all things and the experience of the pain of attachment bring about the resolve to enter the training and produce the energy necessary to carry out that resolve. The verses describe this awareness of transitoriness as an understanding that not only engages one's thought but strikes at the very core of one's being, causing a redirection of the *citta* towards different goals. The awareness of change everywhere and the redirection of the *citta*, however, do not happen without a cause, nor are they perceived to be the acts of an autonomous will: they are shown to be conditioned by the emotional reactions and the habit patterns that are dominant in the *citta* of the person who came to feel the ephemerality of all things.

In the *Theragāthā*, *Therīgāthā*, *Sutta-nipāta*, and *Udāna*, the "I" (*aham*) sometimes plays the role of the controller of the *citta*. For example, Uppalavaṇṇā claims "I have control over my mind" (*cittamhi vasībhūtāham*) (Thi. 233), and Tālapuṭa goes so far as to tell his *citta* that it will surely perish (*citta parābhavissasi*) while he roams as a sage on delightful mountaintops that are crowned with clouds (Tha. 1144). Even where the pronoun *aham* does not occur, the form of the verb indicates the first person singular in verses that suggest the control of the *citta* by the self (Tha. 355, 357, 358; Thi. 50). Similarly, a passage in the *Majjhima-nikāya* says that a bhikkhu exercises control over the *citta* (*bhikkhu cittam vasam vatteti*) and is not controlled by the *citta* (*no ca bhikkhu cittassa vasena vattati*) (M. I. 214). In other contexts in the *Sutta* literature the *citta* is said to be "protected" (*rakkhitam*), "tamed" (*dantam*), restrained (*samvutam*), and "controlled" (*guttam*) (A. I. 7, 262). However, the presence of the pronoun "I" should be taken, in these cases, merely as a convention of speech and not as the affirmation of a controlling self who is the agent of willing. Collins emphasizes in *Selfless Persons* that the use of the terms *aham*, *attā* (self), and *attānam* (oneself) to express aspects of Buddhist training where the mind examines its own contents is "simply a fact of Indo-Aryan syntax structure, which in no way conflicts with or compromises the Buddhist doctrine of *anattā*" (1990b, 75-76).

Nowhere in these early Buddhist texts do we find the injunction to cultivate the sense of self in order to gain mastery over the *citta* and to control its tendency to variegation. On the contrary, the idea of a permanent and separate self that owns the *citta*

is seen as the result of an underlying tendency of conceit (*mānānusaya*)

(Tha. 60, Thi. 20).²² There are several references to the problems caused by conceit

(Tha. 102, 427-428) and lack of vigilance (*appamāda*) (Thi. 36, 38, Dhp. 21-32).

Adhimutta rejoices that the thoughts "I have existed" (*ahosim*) and "I shall come to be"

(*bhavissāmi*) are no longer present in his mind (Tha. 715).²³ Another *thera* describes how

he climbed the "tower of mindfulness" and observed the ignorant common folk who

continued to rejoice in the sense of selfhood that previously he also had cultivated.

He tells of embarking on the boat that was bound for the "supreme landing place" without

clinging to the thought of oneself (*anadhiṭṭhāya attānam*). Changing his metaphor again,

he refers to the dangerous arrow that emerges from the sense of self and is forged by the

factors that lead to rebirth (Tha. 765-767). In the *Udāna* the removal of deceit and conceit

(*māna*) and freedom from the feeling of "mine" (*amama*) are counted as the qualities of

one deserving of the appellation *brāhmaṇa*, *samaṇa*, or *bhikkhu* (Ud. 29).²⁴ A person who

understands that disputations and debates based on speculative theories are causes of

bondage to rebirth is said to be released from the thought that "I" or "other" exists as the

autonomous agent of action (Ud. 70).²⁵ These statements make it clear that the occurrence

of the terms *aham* (I) and *attā* (self) should not be construed as an indication that these

texts support the practice of developing the idea of the self as the owner and controller of

the mind. The "I" that appears in these early texts is a convention of speech, and does not

represent an overriding "will" that is capable of controlling and redirecting the

inclinations of the mind.

The answer to the question regarding the identity of the "controller of the *citta*" is

that the *citta* as a whole, responding to external influences and internal impulses,

undergoes changes of attitude, thereby assessing, redirecting, and transforming its own

contents. To remain consistent with the principle of conditioned origination, it is necessary to preclude any suggestion that the *citta*—defined as a transitory configuration of mental factors (*cetasikas*)—is other than, or separable from, its constituents. For this reason, it would be better to say that the capacity to reflect upon itself and to make adjustments is a function that the configuration acquires through the interplay of its constituents. In accordance with this interpretation, the internal dialogues, so dramatically presented in the *Theragāthā* and *Therīgāthā*, are to be seen as portrayals of the tensions and adjustments in the conditioned series of configurations that are experienced as diverse "attitudes of mind."

The mind's capacity to know itself

Theravāda affirms the capacity of the *citta* to become aware of itself and to know its own contents. How this reflexive awareness originates and functions in the *citta* is not discussed at any length in the *Suttas*. There are passages that refer to the "luminosity" of the *citta* (D. I. 223, III. 223; A. I. 10). This idea of the natural radiance (*pabhassara*) of the *citta* has been the subject of much debate. What is relevant here is that, in the Buddhist tradition, the mind's capacity to become aware of objects and to know itself are always regarded as basic connotations of the metaphor of light when it is applied to the mind.²⁶

With reference to the Eightfold Path, the ability of the *citta* to observe the mental factors (*cetasikas*) that constitute it into an "attitude of mind" is conveyed by the term *paccavekkhaṇa*. In a general sense, *paccavekkhaṇa* signifies "looking at, consideration, regard, attention, reflection, contemplation, reviewing" (P.E.D. p.384, col.2).

Paccavekkhaṇa represents observation that deepens into insight, and it includes both observation of objects as well as contemplation of one's own mind. The instructions for

mindfulness of the body given in the *Visuddhimagga*, Buddhaghosa points to the difference between the self-aware mind and the parts of the body, which do not have the capacity of becoming aware of their mutual relationship (Vsm. XI. 48-80). For example, he notes that finger nails cannot know that they grow on finger tips, and finger tips do not know that nails grow on them: lacking basic sentiency (*acetana*), they are seen to be incapable of experiencing and observing each other (*aññamaññam ābhoga-paccavekkhaṇa-rahita*) (Vsm. XI. 50). Again, in the elucidation of the cultivation of the four levels of *rūpa-jhāna*, Buddhaghosa instructs that upon emerging from any of the three lower levels of meditation, a person should make the mind turn back, as it were, in order to review the mental factors that are characteristic of that level of meditation (Vsm. IV. 138, 152, 181). Buddhaghosa does not regard such review as a merely cognitive exercise: he points out that the review reveals the limitations of the level of meditation that has been cultivated and motivates a person to reach towards a higher level (Vsm. IV. 137, 151, 180, 199-201). The process of reviewing is taught as an essential condition for generating the intention to progress further in meditation and for initiating action towards that end.

The role of *paccavekkhaṇa* in the practice of mindfulness is explained in the teaching that the Buddha gives to Rāhula (M. I. 415-417). Rāhula is told that before, during, and after any act of body, speech, or mind, he should engage in repeated reflection²⁷ on whether the act is wholesome or unwholesome, and whether it can cause harm to oneself, to another being, or to both parties. Since the Buddha asks Rāhula to practise meticulous reflexive awareness (*paccavekkhaṇa*) with regard to these mental functions, he affirms that the mind has the capacity to know itself and to observe its contents. Furthermore, the Buddha's instructions to Rāhula implies that the mind's

awareness of a mental function can be simultaneous with that function. For this reason, the Buddha compares the mind to a reflecting mirror (M. I. 415).²⁸ The crux of the argument is that this capacity of reflexive awareness makes it possible for the mind to bring about internal adjustments and transformations. The Buddha concludes by telling Rāhula that *paccavekkhaṇa* will lead to wholesome behaviour. The whole discourse bears witness to the view that the mind is a self-assessing, self-adjusting organic system where discernment of objects and intentions regarding objects are perceived to be mutually conditioning mental functions. In this view, cognitive processes are held to be capable of motivating action.

The analysis of mental processes given above has affinities to Joanna Macy's interpretation of the *citta*. She describes the *citta* as a system of mutually conditioning constituents that has the capacity to observe its own contents and to make adjustments to its own processes in response to external impacts or internal tensions. The capacity to put forth variations in response to changing circumstances, like a master artist at work, (Asl. 64-65) and the capacity of reflexive awareness (*paccavekkhaṇa*) can be perceived as the twin functions by virtue of which the *citta* becomes a self-adjusting, self-transforming system. References to the "I" controlling the *citta* can be interpreted as the ability of the *citta* to monitor itself through the function of reflexive awareness. This self-monitoring capacity of the *citta* cannot be interpreted as a function that overrides the principle of conditioned origination. However, it can be posited that even though reflexive awareness is itself a conditioned process, it does make the mind directly aware of how conditioning works in mental processes.

This concept of *citta* precludes the notion that reason is a sovereign function that transcends, unifies, directs, and controls the other functions of the personality. It also

precludes the notion of “will” as an overriding and autonomous source of energy (*śakti*) that initiates all the functions of the personality. *Citta*, as a Theravāda concept embedded in the causal theory of *paṭicca-samuppāda*, entails the idea that cognitive awareness, the capacity to initiate action, and emotional excitation are interdependent, both in their origination and in their functioning. *Cetanā*, as one of the constituents of the *citta*, interacts with the other constituents and expresses the dominant mood of the *citta* in the form of purposive reflection and intention that leads to acts of body, speech, and mind. To isolate *cetanā* from the intricate network of mental factor that converge to form the attitude of mind represented by the *citta* is to strip *cetanā* of its significance as the dynamic mode of a specific attitude of mind.

Thought and volition as functions of *manas*

It was shown in Chapter I that in the *Upaniṣads* *manas*, like *citta*, refers to the mind as an organic whole constituted of interrelated functions. *Manas* in the *Upaniṣads*, indicates the capacity of consciousness to coordinate and direct the sensory and motor functions of the individual (B.U. I. 5.3; Ks. U. III. 7), it signifies the centre of discursive thought, and it represents agency with regard to desires (*kāma*) (B.U. III. 2.7) and intentions (*saṁkalpas*) (B.U. II. 4.11, IV. 5.12). There are passages in the *Upaniṣads* where *manas* connotes volition. In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (C.U. VII. 3:1), for example, *manasā manasyati* connotes, not only purposive deliberation leading to the choice of a goal, but also the capacity to initiate action to achieve that goal.

In the following examples taken from the *Sutta* literature, *manas* refers to the mind viewed as an internally coherent whole. The holistic significance of *manas* is perhaps best illustrated in the terms *somanassa* (pleasant or happy state pervading the whole mind) and

domanassa (uneasy or troubled state of the entire mind) (M. I. 313-315, III. 62, 217-218; D. III. 244-245). Similarly, *pītimana* signifies a glad or joyful state of mind (Sn. 766), *manopadosa* conveys anger or ill-will affecting the whole mind (D. III. 72; M. I. 377; Sn. 702), and *manopakopa* indicates anger filling the mind (Dhp. 233). *Maññati*, the verb to which *manas* is related, does not carry volitional or emotional overtones: it signifies "to think" or "to be of opinion," "to know," and "to imagine" (P.E.D. 515, col.2).

However, the examples given above show that *manas* is often viewed both as the home of emotions as well as the source of discursive thought.

Furthermore, both intention to pursue a goal and the capacity to initiate action towards that end fall within the range of *manas*.²⁹ The capacity of *manas* to initiate action becomes apparent in the use of the instrumental case of *manas* (*manasā*) to indicate an action performed by the mind as a whole, and also in the concept of mental act (*mano-kamma*). In the contexts where the instrumental case of *manas* occurs, it becomes almost impossible to delineate a distinction between "thought about an object" and "intention towards that object." For example, the distinction between cognizing an object and intending to achieve it is hardly recognizable in the *Diṭṭhi-samyuttam* (S. III. 204-216) where it is said that various views regarding the self and the world arise because of attachment to ephemeral objects that are "cognized, attained, searched for, and pondered over, by the mind (*manasā*)."³⁰ Similarly, statements about doing good and evil with the mind (*manāsā*) suggest that cognitive processes, emotions, and volitions are all involved in these deeds that are said to be governed by the mind (A. V. 294, 302).

In her work *Identity and Experience* (1996, 106-110) Hamilton argues that whereas the thought processes connected specifically with sensory cognition are the function of the *khandha* of perception (*saññā*), the thinking that is done by *manas* is more closely

linked to volition than to apperception (1996, 110).³¹ Furthermore she seeks to establish that "the distinction between willing and thinking become blurred"(1996, 108) in the activities of *manas*. Hamilton does not explain why this "blurring" is a feature of the description of *manas* in the *Sutta* literature. The argument presented in this chapter embraces three ideas: *manas*, like *citta*, represents the Theravāda view that consciousness functions as a system of mutually conditioning components; perception of objects, emotional responses to objects, thought about objects, and intention towards objects are regarded as inter-dependent functions of *manas*; and the cognitive processes of *manas* are regarded as having the capacity to motivate action. It follows that the "blurring" occurs because cognition, emotion, and the capacity to act are mutually dependent functions in the holistic view of consciousness that is affirmed in the *Suttas* and *Abhidhamma*. *Manas* is not merely the faculty that co-ordinates the data of the five senses and engages in various forms of thought: *manas* represents consciousness functioning as an organic whole in processes of intellection, in experiencing and expressing emotion, and in deploying energy to put forth acts. The instrumental case of *manas* (*manasā*) is used to indicate specific instances where the whole mind engages in an act in which emotional excitation, the capacity to know, and the capacity to act condition each other.

The mutual conditioning of cognition, emotion, and the capacity to initiate action in the functioning of *manas* becomes evident also in the three concepts of "mental deeds" (*mano-kamma*), "attention to objects" (*manasikāra*), and "wholesome and unwholesome thought" (*vitakka*). These are examined below. *Mano-kamma*, *manasikāra*, and *vitakka* are described as occasions when the *manas* exhibits its capacity not only to determine the characteristics of specific objects, but also to express its interest in those objects and its intentions towards them.

Two classifications of *kamma* are given in the *Sutta* literature. The first classification is in terms of how acts originate and manifest themselves. From this perspective, there is the threefold classification into acts of body, speech, and mind (*mano-kamma*). The second classification focuses on the moral quality of the act. From the karmic perspective, acts are classified into wholesome (*kusala*) *kamma* with consequences of merit (*puñña*) and unwholesome (*akusala*) *kamma* with consequences of demerit (*pāpa*). There are passages in the *Suttas* (M. III. 47-50; A. V. 292-299) where these two modes of classification are combined to produce a standard list of ten wholesome and ten unwholesome deeds. The relationship of *cetanā* to these ten wholesome and ten unwholesome acts is explored in the next two chapters. Here the emphasis is on how the holistic view of consciousness in the *Suttas* influences the concept of *manas* and the relationship of *manas* to acts of body, speech, and mind. There are instances in the *Sutta* literature where *cetas* is substituted for *manas* in the classification of *kamma* into acts of body, speech, and mind. For example, the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (A.I. 273) speaks of purity with regard to body, speech, and *cetas* (*ceto-sucī*), and the *Sutta-nipāta* (Sn. 232) refers to acts of demerit committed through the body, through speech, or through the *cetas*. Like *manas*, *cetas* represents individual consciousness interpreted to be an organic whole.

The detailed accounts of *kamma* in the *Majjhima-nikāya* (M. III. 209-210) and the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (A. V. 292-299) classify unwholesome *kamma* as follows: the three physical acts, consisting of taking life (*pāṇātīpāta*), stealing (*adinnādāna*), and sexual misconduct (*kāmesu micchācāra*); the four verbal acts comprising lying (*musāvācā*), malicious speech (*pisuṇā vācā*), harsh speech (*pharusā vācā*), and frivolous speech (*samphappalāpa*); and the three mental acts, namely, covetousness (*abhijjhā*), ill-will,

enmity or malevolence (*vyāpāda*), and wrong view (*micchā diṭṭhi*). Types of action that are specifically opposed to these unwholesome acts constitute the ten wholesome acts. It becomes immediately obvious that "mental act" (*mano-kamma*) is not defined as a cognitive process that is performed for its own sake. A wholesome or unwholesome mental act (*mano-kamma*) named in this list represents thought processes that affect the whole mind through their relationship to emotionally charged mental states such as covetousness or ill-will. The thought processes of a *mano-kamma* are affected in turn by other cognitive, emotive, and conative factors that may be present in the mind at the time when they arise. The descriptions given at M. III. 50 and A. V. 293-295 show that the thoughts that constitute each wholesome or unwholesome *mano-kamma* are expressive of a state of mind (*citta*) that is dominated by a specific emotion. For example, at A. V. 293 the unwholesome mental *kamma* of ill-will (*vyāpāda*) is said to arise in a person whose mind is pervaded by enmity (*vyāpanna-citto*) and whose intentions are expressions of a malevolent mind (*paduṭṭha-mana-saṅkappo*). This passage describes how intentions of enmity and friendliness arise as *mano-kamma* from corresponding states of mind. It follows that the concept of *mano-kamma* shows that *manas* is conceived as a system of mutually conditioning thoughts, emotions, and conative energies. The entire *manas* is involved in a wholesome or unwholesome *mano-kamma*.

A holistic approach to the processes of the mind is also the basis of the discipline of systematic attention. The explanation that the *Sabbāsava-sutta* gives of how views originate demonstrates that in the *Sutta* literature, any speculative theory or standpoint is regarded as the conceptual expression of a mental attitude that is dominated by a pattern of emotions seeking to motivate behaviour. Unwise, unsystematic attention (*ayoniso-manasikāra*) is specified as the reason why the mind becomes obsessed with questions

regarding the "I" and the manner in which the "I" exists in the past, present, and future. The conclusion is reached that these compulsive thoughts and speculations produce attachment to views regarding the nature and existence of the self. In *Selfless Persons*, Collins emphasizes the Buddhist position that views are rooted in the emotional investments of the mind and put forth patterns of conditioning that affect all aspects of the mind:

Views of self, then, are not merely castigated because they rest on supposedly untenable intellectual foundations; rather they are conceptual manifestations of desire and attachment, and as such need not so much philosophical refutation as a change of character in those who hold them. (1990b, 119)

It is held in the *Suttas* that the cognitive processes of wise and systematic attention (*yoniso-manāsikāra*) can not only cleanse the mind of speculative views, but also begin to eradicate the emotional roots of views and change the behaviour patterns in which views become manifest. In the *Anguttara-nikāya* (A. I. 200), systematic application of the mind is taught as a potent method in overcoming the unwholesome roots of action: sensual passion (*rāga*), hatred (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*). It is said here that when systematic attention is absent, the beauty in objects can arouse sensual passion, and their unattractive features can cause the mind to react with hatred. In the *Therīgathā* (Thi. 77) a *therī* laments that she has fallen prey to pride and passion and lacks control over her mind because of neglecting the cultivation of systematic attention. And in the *Theragāthā* (Tha. 269, 273, 301) *yoniso-manasikāra* is upheld as the crucial discipline that frees the mind from attachment to sensory objects and opens the way for dispassion (*nibbidā*). The importance given to the therapeutic value of wise and systematic attention implies that, because the *manas* is regarded as a system of mutually conditioning factors, the cognitive

processes of systematic attention can be perceived to be capable of influencing emotional responses, conditioning motivation, and changing patterns of behaviour.

This holistic view of the mind also underlies the description of *vitakka* and the classification of types of *vitakkas*. Though the connotations of *vitakka* in the *Suttas* include the initial application of thought to an object, reasoning, and thinking in general, the classification of *vitakkas* in the *Saṅgīti-sutta* (D. III. 215) regards *vitakkas* as complex mental states that are conditioned by emotions and carry moral values. In this classification, unwholesome applications of thought (*vitakkas*) are reckoned as sensual desire (*kāma*), ill-will or malevolence (*vyāpāda*), and cruelty (*vihiṃsā*). Wholesome *vitakkas* are said to comprise dispassion or renunciation (*nekkhamma*), absence of ill-will (*avyāpāda*), and non-cruelty (*avihiṃsā*). Wholesome and unwholesome *vitakkas* represent thought that is blended with emotion and is capable of producing intentions and influencing behaviour. The concepts of wholesome and unwholesome *mano-kamma*, systematic and unsystematic attention, and wholesome and unwholesome *vitakka* demonstrate the Theravāda position that thought, emotion, and the conative capacity to initiate action are interdependent processes of the mind (*manas*). Thought processes are regarded as having the capacity to motivate and change behaviour.

The relationship of *cetanā* to the "constructive activity" of *saṅkhāra*

The *Saṃyutta-nikāya* briefly states that the six classes of *cetanās* that arise when the five senses and the mind contact their respective objects are the factors that constitute the *saṅkhārās* (S. III. 60). Precisely how *cetanās* function as constituents of *saṅkhārās* is not made clear in the *Suttas*. *Saṅkhāra* remains a complex and elusive concept. In his work *Selfless Persons* (1990b, 202), Collins emphasizes that *saṅkhāra* covers both the

active sense of "forming" as well as the passive sense of what is "formed" or "constructed" (*saṅkhata*). In this context he refers to Frauwallner, who renders *saṅkhāra* as *Gestaltungen* (formations) and interprets the term to include also a reference to *gestaltet* (the formed) (Frauwallner 1973, 1: 159). Furthermore, Frauwallner maintains that the meaning of *saṅkhāra* developed from the idea of formation to the concept of willed constructive activity. He points out that *saṅkhāra* is derived from the verb root *kr-* which has the meaning of "to prepare," "to get ready," "to form," "to shape," and he holds that *saṅkhāra* came to connote "that something is put in a condition of readiness which further influences and operates" (1973, 1: 159). He suggests that this development in the meaning of *saṅkhāra* was influenced by the use of the term in "living speech." As evidence, he shows that the term *saṁskāra* is used in the *Sāṁkhya-kārikā* (Sk. 67) to signify the state of the wheel which the potter has rotated in such a way that it is ready to keep on revolving when he removes his hand. Similarly, in the *Rathakāra-vagga* of the *Anguttara-nikāya*, the term *abhisāṅkhāra* refers to the impetus that sets the wheel of a chariot in motion and keeps it moving until the range that the force of the impetus can cover has been covered (*yāvatikā-abhisāṅkhārassa gati*) (A. I. 112).

In the two examples of the potter's wheel and the chariot wheel given above, the terms *saṅkhāra* and *abhisāṅkhāra* refer, not to the motivating power of volition, but to the initiation of movement in the physical realm. However, Frauwallner's thesis is that *saṅkhāra* came to designate "an exertion of a mental influence or readiness," especially in the *Tipiṭaka* (1973, 1: 159). "Mental readiness" signifies being poised and set for a specific type of exertion. According to Frauwallner's interpretation, the state of "mental readiness" that is shown when a person decides upon a course of action is what is meant by *saṅkhāra* (1973, 1:159). Frauwallner holds that the six classes of *cetanās* that are said

to constitute *saṅkhāras* (S. III. 60) are the "attitudes of the will" or "impulses of will" that direct the five sense organs and the *manas* to their respective objects (1973, 1:160).

Collins bases his interpretation of *saṅkhāra*, not only on the work of Frauwallner, but more significantly, on Lilian Silburn's theories about how time and ritual were conceived in the Vedic tradition. In her *Instant et Cause* she maintains that time is described in the Vedic tradition, not as a primordial medium in which all things occur, but as something to be regularly produced and prolonged through the "constructive activity" of the ritual (1955, 41-48, 76-80). The view of *saṅkhāra* put forward by Collins follows from the theory that the Vedic tradition viewed the fire ritual (*yajña*) as the "constructive activity" by virtue of which both the sacrificer and the cosmos are regenerated, and a future time is ensured, wherein the sacrificer enjoys the fruition of merit that accrues from the ritual.

Collins maintains that the Buddhist concept of *saṅkhāra* is developed from the Vedic idea that after death the person who has acquired a store of merit by performing sacrifices is reborn into a happy "world" (*loka*) with a body that is "constructed" (*saṁskṛīyate*), part by part, as a result of the verses chanted by the priest (Collins 1990b, 55). According to this interpretation, *saṅkhāras* in Theravāda are "constructive activities" which, like the Vedic *yajña*, ensure the prolongation of time. *Saṅkhāras* are defined as acts of merit and demerit, entailing karmic effects that require the lengthening of time by means of rebirth, in order to reach proper fruition (*kamma-vipāka*). The crux of the argument put forward by Collins is that Buddhism "drew on" Vedic notions of regenerating life and lengthening time by means of constructive ritual activity to develop its own notion of constructive activity (*saṅkhāra*) as both the "producer of temporal continuity" and the vehicle of *kamma* (Collins 1990b, 223).

Silburn holds that in the *Suttas* the terms *saṅkhāra* and *abhisāṅkhāra* convey the convergence of voluntary and "unconscious tendencies" in such a way that they are poised or "prepared" to achieve a more or less consciously desired goal. According to her interpretation, *saṅkhāra* always implies interest in achieving a goal. She sees this goalward intention of *saṅkhāra* as a passage from the present to the future (1955, 201).

With regard to the relationship between *cetanā* and *saṅkhāra*, Collins offers both "volition" and "intention" as translations of *cetanā*, and he holds that the emphasis on the intention behind the constructive act in the Buddhist scriptures is a mark of "a very thorough ethicisation of the idea of *karma* " in the Buddhist tradition (1990b, 82, 201).

Collins gives a coherent and plausible interpretation of how the Buddhists may have been influenced by Vedic notions of ritual as efficacious constructive activity in developing their own concept of *saṅkhāra*. Nevertheless, the fact remains that ideas regarding the origin of *karma*, the Vedic view of time, and the purpose of the Vedic ritual continue to be matters for speculation. In this work I take a different approach by investigating, not the origins of the concept of *saṅkhāra*, but the differences in the connotations of *saṃskāra/saṅkhāra* as a psychological term in the *Yoga-sūtra* and the *Vyāsa-bhāṣya* on the one hand, and the *Suttas* and *Abhidhamma* on the other. The concept of *saṃskāra* in the Yoga tradition and the concept of *saṅkhāra* in Theravāda are aligned to two very different theories of causality: the idea that the cause contains the effect in a potential state (*satkāryavāda*) in the former case, and *paṭicca-samuppāda* in the latter.

***Saṅkhāras* as processes of combining and conditioning**

The meaning of *saṅkhāra* in Theravāda becomes clarified when it is set in the context of conditioned origination. It will be shown below that whereas in the Yoga tradition *saṁskāra* is interpreted to be a "subliminal impression" in the mind, in the context of conditioned origination it would be more appropriate to regard *saṅkhāra* as a conditioned process coming into being and passing away in the continuum of individual consciousness. In Theravāda, *saṅkhāra* represents both the coming together of physical or mental factors to form a configuration, as well as the configuration itself. Theravāda maintains that the compounding of factors is governed by conditioned origination. The *saṅkhārakkhandha* represents the mind's "constructive capacity" whereby it brings together mental factors to form acts of body, speech, and mind.

In the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (S. II. 86, 88), the Buddha illustrates conditioned origination as it is manifested in the process of rebirth with two telling analogies. The first focuses on the fact that an oil lamp burns only when the supply of oil remains constant and the wick is continually adjusted. The second points out that fertile soil cleared of weeds, sufficient water, light, and room for roots to expand are necessary conditions for the growth of a tender sapling. These analogies show that the causal theory of conditioned origination implies that the term "cause" (*paccaya*) refers to a set of conditions, all of which are necessary to produce the effect but none of which can claim to be sufficient on its own: it is the convergence and compounding of these factors that produces the effect. Thus conditioned origination differs radically from the Sāṃkhya and Yoga theory of *satkāryavāda*, where the cause is defined as that which already contains the effect in potential form. Furthermore, according to *satkāryavāda*, the cause has the

inherent capacity to produce the effect: other conditions "assist" by removing obstructions but are not strictly necessary for the production of the effect (YS. IV. 3).

In his work, *Causality: The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, Kalupahana explains the "early Buddhist theory" of conditioned origination as follows:

While recognising several factors that are necessary to produce an effect, it does not select one from a set of jointly sufficient conditions and present it as *the* cause of the effect. . . . Thus, although there are several factors, all of them constitute one system or event and therefore are referred to in the singular. Only if a cause includes all the necessary factors will it give rise to the effect. (1975, 59)

This view of the cause as "a set of jointly sufficient conditions" is fully developed in the *Visuddhimagga* (XVII. 16-20). Buddhaghosa begins his exposition by saying that *samuppāda* indicates that the effect arises when the causal conditions act "co-ordinately" (*saha*) and rightly (*sammā*), not singly (*ekekata*) or without a cause (*ahetuta*) (Vsm. XVII. 16).³² Next, he says that *samuppāda* refers to the idea that the causal factors form a combination (*hetu-samūha*) because they operate interdependently (*aññamaññena*), both in the sense of producing a common result, and of not exhibiting any deficiency or lack when they function jointly (Vsm. XVII. 18). Finally, Buddhaghosa says that *samuppāda* signifies that the conditions forming the cause act "equally" (*samam*) and jointly (*saha*)—not disparately, or one after another—in producing the effect (Vsm. XVII. 20).³³

In the causal theory of conditioned origination, it is the coming together of all the necessary causal factors that becomes the sufficient condition for the arising of the effect. *Paṭicca-samuppāda* does not posit any source of causal energy operating over and above the convergence of the causal conditions. In the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 58-59) the term *samaya*, interpreted as *samavāya* (coming together, combination), signifies the concurrence of the

causal conditions (*paccayānaṃ sāmaggī*) and their interrelated functioning in the production of the effect.³⁴ The *Atthasālinī* points out that the notion of a configuration of causes precludes the view that a single cause is sufficient to produce an effect (Asl. 59).³⁵

The idea that the capacity to produce an effect resides in the concurrence and combining of antecedent conditions is the basis of Stcherbatsky's interpretation of *saṅkhāra*. According to him, *saṅkhāra* connotes a "co-factor" that combines with other factors in producing the effect (1962, 1:127). Furthermore, he argues that "dependent origination" becomes synonymous with "combined origination," since it is the combining of antecedent factors that makes for the dependent arising of the effect (*saṃskṛtatvam = pratīya-samutpannatvam*) (1962, 1:127, n.6).

Stcherbatsky also stresses that Buddhists of all schools regard physical and mental factors, not as static substances but as burgeoning energies. He argues that *saṅkhāra* as "co-operator" is to be seen as a "synergy"³⁶ that combines with other energies to produce the effect. Stcherbatsky explains that the designation "synergies" or "co-operators" indicates that the energies invariably function "in mutual interdependence according to causal laws" (1962, 1:5). Before proceeding further, it should be noted that Stcherbatsky's interpretation is based on texts of the Sarvāstivāda School of Buddhism. According to his interpretation, the "central conception" of Buddhism is the idea that all physical and mental factors are constituted of irreducible and distinct elements (*dharma*s) that are fleeting energies manifesting only for a moment (*kṣaṇa*). Stcherbatsky stresses that the very nature of each *dharma* is causal energy (*kriyā*): it functions as a cause in the "point-instant" that is its duration in the present (1962, 1:119). He concludes that "the Buddhist theory of Causation is a direct consequence of the theory of Universal Momentariness" (1962, 1:119). Stcherbatsky has been faulted for extending the theory of momentariness

(*kṣaṇikavāda*) to all schools and periods of Buddhism. Kalupahana argues that the theory of momentariness does not appear in Theravāda before the time of Buddhaghosa (1975, 148). According to Kalupahana's interpretation, in the *Suttas* impermanence (*anicca*) signifies, not momentariness, but "arising and passing away, or birth and destruction" (1975, 84). In this thesis I follow Kalupahana's interpretation of conditioned origination and take the theory of momentariness to be a later development, in the *Abhidhamma*.

It is possible to reject Stcherbatsky's view that the theory of momentariness is a feature of all periods of Buddhism, yet accept his statement that "combined origination" is a synonym of "conditioned origination." When the Theravāda concept of *saṅkhāra* is set within the context of conditioned origination, it becomes clear why the two meanings— "combination" and "causal dynamism"—cohere in this term. It has been noted that one of the many problems in interpreting the term *saṅkhāra* is that it can be used in a general sense as well as in a specific psychological sense: the term can indicate any mental or physical phenomenon in the realm of rebirth, as well as mental factors linked in configurations that are capable of initiating wholesome or unwholesome action in the organism. When *saṅkhāra* is viewed as a correlate of *paṭicca-samuppāda*, it becomes clarified that, with regard to both physical processes as well as the processes of consciousness (*citta*), the term refers to a composite of mutually dependent conditions that cause change and produce effects just by their concurrence and combination.

"Subliminal impression" in the Yoga tradition and "mental formation" in Theravāda

In his work *A History of Indian Philosophy* (1922, 263, n.1), Dasgupta maintains that there is a crucial difference between *saṁskāra* in the Yoga tradition and *saṅkhāra* in

Theravāda. After reviewing the different meanings of *saṁskāra* put forward by Pāṇini, Dasgupta suggests that in the case of the Pāli term *saṅkhāra*, "the meaning of aggregation (*samavāya* of Pāṇini) is prominent." He continues:

The meaning of *saṁskāra* in Hindu philosophy is altogether different. It means the impressions (which exist sub-consciously in the mind) of the objects experienced. All our experiences whether cognitive, emotional or conative exist in sub-conscious states and may under suitable conditions be reproduced as memory (*smṛti*). (1922, 263, n.1)

Mrs. Rhys Davids makes the same point in a note in *The Book of Kindred Sayings* (1917-1930, 1: 158, n. 4). She takes *asaṅkhārāṇo* in a poem of the *Māra Suttas* to mean deeds of body, speech or mind, and she notes that she had not traced in Theravāda Buddhism any evidence that *saṅkhāra* carries the meaning of "predisposition" in the sense of *vāsanā* (subliminal tendency). In the same vein, Nyanatiloka maintains that it would be inappropriate to conceive of *saṅkhārās* as tendencies residing latently in the "subconscious" level of the mind. He writes:

In Western literature, in English as in German, *saṅkhāra* is sometimes mistranslated by 'subconscious tendencies'. . . . This misinterpretation derives perhaps from a similar usage in non-Buddhist Sanskrit literature, and is entirely inapplicable to the connotation of the term in Pali Buddhism. . . . (1980, 191-192)

Although it is made clear in the *Suttas* that *saṅkhārās* arise and produce effects in accordance with conditioned origination, there is no description of the stages by which a *saṅkhāra* is shaped and formed. A clearer picture emerges when *saṅkhāra* in the *Suttas* and the *Abhidhamma* is contrasted with *saṁskāra* in the *Vyāsa-bhāṣya*. The Yoga view of *saṁskāra* is based on the causal theory that whatever arises as an effect is previously present in a latent form in the cause. The *Vyāsa-bhāṣya* describes a *saṁskāra* as the residual impression of a past experience. The *saṁskāra* itself and the memory (*smṛti*) that it puts forth under appropriate conditions are said to have the same characteristics as the

experience that produced the *saṃskāra* (VB. I. 11). This idea of *saṃskāras* as subliminal impressions that "store" information from past experiences and produce memories in which that information is "retrieved" is supported by the causal theory of *satkāryavāda*. When it is affirmed that the effect is a potential residing in the cause, it can be accepted that the subliminal impression that is to be left on the mind is already a latent factor in the experience, the memory is contained in the subliminal impression as a potential awaiting release, and the overt behaviour put forth by the memory is concealed within it in embryonic form. The *citta* is conceived as the substratum from which subliminal impressions manifest their effects.

The concept of a subliminal impression that persists in the mind cannot fit into the causal theory of conditioned origination because the latter entails impermanence (*anicca*) and the absence of a self (*anattā*). It would not be valid to conceive of *saṃkhāras* as structures that are somehow fixed in the mind so that they are capable of producing repeated patterns of behaviour. In his work *Selfless Persons* (1990b, 187), Collins refers to passages in the *Milindapañha*, where the discussion focuses on how continuity can be maintained between a deed and its consequences when there is no enduring self and all physical and mental factors are impermanent. The answer is given that it is not possible to specify a "place" where deeds are "stored" till they produce their effects, just as one cannot point to the fruit of a tree that has not yet yielded fruit (Mil. 72).³⁷ This statement implies that though *saṃkhāras* are the medium through which the processes of *kamma* operate, they are not to be conceived as impressions, entities or structures that persist unchanged in the mind and contain the consequences of *kamma* in potential form.

In the *Suttas*, the term *saṃkhāra* carries multiple meanings, some of which are not easy to unravel. However, there is no ambiguity in the statements where *saṃkhāras*

connote acts that have karmic consequences. In the *Majjhima-nikāya* (M. I. 54) *saṅkhāras* are classified as *saṅkhāras* of body, speech, and mind, and in the *Saṅgīti-sutta* (D. III. 217) three types of *saṅkhāras* are specified: *saṅkhāras* of merit, *saṅkhāras* of demerit, and *āneñja-saṅkhāras*. It was believed that the third type would lead to rebirth in realms that have the same peaceful, immutable features as the higher levels of meditation. Clearly, here *saṅkhāras* are acts of body, speech, or mind conditioned by past experience; they carry moral values of "wholesome" or "unwholesome" and produce commensurate consequences. These same acts are also designated as *sañcetanika* acts of body, speech, and mind (S. II. 39-40; A. II. 157-159). This designation affirms the bond between *saṅkhāra* and *cetanā* and shows that these acts are considered to be instigated by the goal-oriented thoughts and impulses that constitute *cetanās*.

To interpret *saṅkhāras* as conditioned processes of body, speech, and mind is to place them in the context of the Middle Way. If *saṅkhāras* are conceived as subliminal impressions embedded in the *citta*, or as fixed structures through which sensory information is processed, a deterministic view of the relationship between *saṅkhāras* and their effects is entailed. If the effect is already present in the *saṅkhāra* in a latent state, then the nature of the effect is already determined. On the other hand, when conditioned origination is accepted, every act of body, speech, or mind is viewed as a set of dynamic conditions placed within a network of mutually conditioning personality factors and external influences. The Buddha's argument in the *Mahākammavibhaṅga-sutta* (M. III. 210-215) is along the above lines. Conditioned origination repudiates the notion that karmic consequences are already latent in the wholesome or unwholesome *saṅkhāras* and opens the way for the possibility of consequences arising from mutually dependent conditions that are continually subject to change.

An act representing a *saṅkhāra* configuration is not regarded as totally novel. It is posited that patterns of similarity continually occur in the dynamic processes formed by *saṅkhāra* configurations as they follow one another in accordance with conditioned origination. In psychological terms, these patterns of similarity are experienced as habits and dispositions. For example, when non-greed, non-hatred, and non-delusion are listed as the three "wholesome roots" (*kusala-mūla*), it is implied that they occur repeatedly as conditions in the continuum of consciousness and produce wholesome habitual behaviour.

It is necessary to consider why repeated patterns of conditioning occur in relation to *saṅkhāras* and how these patterns function. The answers to both these questions must be sought in the implications of conditioned origination. When configurations of mental factors, such as perceptions, emotions, and the energy to initiate action, constituting the *saṅkhārakkhandha* follow one another to form a dynamic process, these mental factors that form the configurations converge, not in a random manner, but in accordance with the conditions that prevail in the process at the time. If similar conditions occur over and over again, the configurations of mental states they bring about will exhibit similar characteristics. For example, the disciplines of the Eightfold Path ensure that repeated patterns of wholesome conditions are set up in the mind of the disciple. As a consequence, repeated wholesome *saṅkhāra* processes that are experienced as wholesome habits arise in the disciple's mind. Conditioning implies that the effect is commensurate—or at least, compatible—with the cause. Similar conditions produce similar effects. For this reason, repeated patterns tend to appear in a process governed by conditioned origination.

Furthermore, since conditioned origination implies impermanence (*anicca*) and the absence of any permanent and autonomous entity (*anattā*), these repeated patterns of conditions cannot be viewed as blueprints embedded in the mind or as lasting structures or predispositions superimposed on concrete processes. For purposes of conceptual analysis, the patterns of conditioning can be looked upon as separate from physical and mental processes, but they do not exist apart from the concrete processes that they condition. Given conditioned origination, habit patterns, underlying tendencies, and mental dispositions cannot be regarded as entities distinct from the concrete behaviour in which they are exhibited. *Saṅkhāra* configurations that manifest themselves as habits prevail over other conditions in the continuum of consciousness and cause similar configurations of physical and mental states to appear repeatedly. *Saṅkhāra* processes exhibiting as habits, therefore, are comparable to currents in a river. They participate in the flow and are affected by the conditions of the river, but they also direct its flow.

When *saṅkhāras* are said to be constituted of different types of *cetanās*, it follows that *cetanās* must be regarded as participants in the habit-forming and habit-manifesting functions of *saṅkhāra* processes. When *cetanās* function as intentions imbued with conative impulse, the cognitive content of the intentions as well as their capacity to initiate action must be seen to be conditioned by the habit patterns that are often at work in the *saṅkhāra* processes within which these intentions function. As constituents of *saṅkhāras*, *cetanās* often—but not invariably—arise as purposes that express the motivating power of habits. For example, in the context of the Eightfold Path, *cetanās* arise as wholesome purposive thoughts that are conditioned by wholesome habits that have been formed through *saṅkhāra* processes.

***Saṅkhāra* as intentional act**

There are passages in the *Suttas* where the term *saṅkhāra* clearly carries the meaning of an intentional act that is goal oriented. The examples of intentional acts given below include: instigated acts (*sasaṅkhārā*), "prior resolve" (*pubbe abhisāṅkhārā*) that sustains an act for a predetermined period, and intentionally done supernormal acts (*iddhābhisāṅkhārā*). These examples demonstrate the necessary conditions coming together (*abhisāṅkharonti*) in such a manner that they become directed towards an aim. In these examples, *saṅkhāra* signifies resolute effort that prepares and poises the organism for a goal-directed act in which the goal is attained through the converging of necessary conditions.

According to the commentarial literature, *saṅkhāra* has the meaning of "effort" or "exertion" in the compounds *sasaṅkhāra* (with *saṅkhāra*) and *asaṅkhāra* (without *saṅkhāra*). In several passages of the *Sutta* literature, the terms *sasaṅkhāra* and *asaṅkhāra* occur in relation to the designation *parinibbāyin* (one who attains *parinibbāna*). The *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (A. II. 155) gives the title of *sasaṅkhāra-parinibbāyī* to one who attains *parinibbāna* by virtue of difficult disciplines such as meditations focused on impermanence, death, and the unlovely factors present in the body. The person who attains *parinibbāna* by cultivating the calm and equanimity of the first four levels of meditation is said to be one who reaches this goal without strenuous effort (*asaṅkhāra-parinibbāyin*). The commentary (AA. III. 142) explains *sasaṅkhārena* as *sappayogena*. The term *payoga* connotes "means" as well as "exertion" and "preparation" (P.E.D. 418, col.1). *Sappayoga*, therefore, has the meaning of "with efficacious exertion." The designations *sasaṅkhāra-parinibbāyī* and *asaṅkhāra-parinibbāyī* also occur in the *Saṅgīti-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* (D. III. 237). The commentary to the *Dīgha-*

nikāya explains *sasaṅkhāra-parinibbāyī* as "one who has attained with difficulty, being fatigued with effort" (*sappayogena kilamanto dukkhena patto*) (DA. III. 1030).

Asaṅkhāra-parinibbāyī indicates one who has attained *parinibbāna* with ease, without being exhausted with effort (*appayogena akilamanto sukhena patto*).

In the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 156) *sasaṅkhāra* conveys both "with effort" and "with instigation." The commentator regards *sasaṅkhārena* to be a new term (*apubbam*) and explains it as *sa-ussāhena* (with energy), *sappayogena* (with exertion), *sa-upāyena* (with expedient means), and *sapaccaya-gahaṇena* (by grasping the cause). The concrete examples that are given to elucidate *sasaṅkhāra*, however, bring the meaning of the term closer to "with instigation" or "with prompting." The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 156) presents the case of a young monk who thinks of many excuses to avoid his duties of sweeping the courtyard of the shrine, serving an older monk, or listening to an exposition of the *dhamma*. However, he admonishes himself and sets about his duties, or he is counselled by another who points out the benefits of doing the tasks allotted to him, or he is simply told to carry out his responsibilities. In these three cases, a wholesome attitude of mind (*kusala citta*) is produced either through self-instigation or instigation by another.

Another instance where *saṅkhāra* signifies resolve correlated with effort is in the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XXIII. 12). Here the *Visuddhimagga* refers to instructions that the *Majjhima-nikāya* (M. I. 296-297) gives for attaining the level of meditation called "signless release of the mind." Among the requirements for attaining that level of meditation is *pubbe abhisāṅkhāra*. The *Visuddhimagga* explains this term as the prior commitment that a person makes to maintain a particular level of meditation for a specific period of time. According to the *Visuddhimagga*, it is precisely because the monk fixes, with a prior resolution, the time when he will get up from his seat of

meditation that he acquires the capacity to remain in that level of meditation for the entire predetermined period. The commentary to the *Visuddhimagga* explains *pubbe abhisāṅkhāra* (prior resolve) as *cittassa abhisāṅkharāṇa* (an act of mentally resolving) by which the monk commits himself to a period of time when he will remain in meditation. He does so with the thought: "I shall get up when the moon or the sun has moved so far in the sky" (VsmA. 3:1662).

Recalling Frauwallner's interpretation of *saṅkhāra* as putting something in a "state of readiness" that will continue to bring forth effects in the future, *pubbe abhisāṅkhāra* can be interpreted as a resolve that puts the mind in a state of readiness and determines the time period during which the impetus of that resolve will continue to be effective. A comparison can be made between the concept of *pubbe abhisāṅkhāra* and the reference in the *Anguttara-nikāya* (A. I. 111) to a chariot wheel which will travel up to the distance that is determined by the force of the impulse that sets it in motion (*yāvatikā abhisāṅkhārassa gati*). The mental resolve and the act of setting the wheel in motion are both designated as *abhisāṅkhāra* because they refer to a "state of readiness" which is goal oriented, and which determines the extent to which its impetus will continue. The commentary to the passage that describes the chariot wheel explains *abhisāṅkhārassa gati* as *payogassa gamanam* (AA. II. 181). Since *payoga* includes in its connotation "means," "preparation," and "exertion," it can be concluded that in this context *payogassa gamanam* expresses that the push given by the driver is the effective means which produces a specific span of movement. Similarly, the mental resolve is seen as the push to act, and the extent of the act's effectiveness is regarded as dependent on the strength and content of the resolve.

Another example from the *Suttas* where *abhisāṅkhāra* implies intention or resolve is where the word is associated with "supernormal powers" (*iddhi*) in the compound *iddhābhisāṅkhāra*. This term is usually found along with different forms of the verb *abhisāṅkharoti*. *Iddhābhisāṅkhāra*, refers to a specific feat of yogic power intentionally performed by the Buddha or by one of his disciples, with a goal in view. For example, we are told in the *Majjhima-nikāya* (M. II. 99) that when the Buddha was stalked by the bandit Aṅgulimāla on a lonely road, he confronted Aṅgulimāla with a feat of supernormal power (*iddhābhisāṅkhāram abhisāṅkhāsi*) so that it became impossible for Aṅgulimāla to catch up with him. The *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (S. IV. 289-290) narrates the story of Mahaka who, despite being the most junior among an assembly of monks, accomplished a feat of yogic power (*iddhābhisāṅkhāram abhisāṅkharī*), causing cool rain to fall suddenly on a day of relentless heat.

The outward feat of magic is preceded by resolute purpose in the mind of the person performing the feat. In this context, *abhisāṅkhāra* refers to both this mental resolve and to the act through which it is accomplished. The verb *abhisāṅkharoti* occurs outside the context of supernormal powers in a passage of the *Majjhima-nikāya* (M. II. 122) which describes how those who tried to defeat the Buddha in debate set about formulating tricky questions (*pañham abhisāṅkharonti*). The verb *abhisāṅkharoti* indicates that the questions are planned and formulated with an end in view. In these cases the term *saṅkhāra* includes both the intention that prepares a person to act, as well as the intended act.

The examples of *abhisāṅkhāra* given above include the "prior resolve" of a meditator, the impulse that sets a wheel in motion, the performance of a feat of supernormal power, and the framing of a clever question. What these disparate cases have

in common is that here the term *saṅkhāra/abhisāṅkhāra* has the specific meaning of a purposeful act planned and performed with an end in view.

The influence of *āsavas* and *anusayas* on the dynamics of motivation

Thus far in this chapter the focus has been on the relationship of intention to the attitudes of mind arising in the continuum of consciousness (*citta*) and to the constructive activity (*saṅkhāra*) whereby the mind assembles causal conditions and puts forth fresh effects. Attitudes of the *citta* are regarded as motivating factors out of which *cetanās* arise in the form of purposes and intentions. *Saṅkhāras* include both the impetus by which intentions and resolves become expressed as acts and the actual intentional acts. A third factor of motivation for forming intentions is constituted of *āsavas* and *anusayas* that become manifest as persistent unwholesome habits and underlying tendencies.

In the *Suttas*³⁸ there is frequent mention of four *āsavas*: desire for objects that please the senses and the mind (*kāmāsava*), the desire to prolong existence (*bhavāsava*), the need to uphold views (*diṭṭhāsava*), and ignorance (*avijjāsava*). A set of three *āsavas*, where *diṭṭhi* is omitted,³⁹ is considered to be older (P.E.D. 115, col.1). The Pāli term *āsava* is related to the Jaina term *āsrava*, which signifies the "influx" of fine karmic matter into the individual self (Jaini 1979, 112). *Āsava* carries both meanings of "inflow" and "outflow," and according to the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XXII. 56), the term *āsava* signifies that sensual desire, attachment to life, speculative views, and ignorance "ooze" out of the unrestrained senses of an ordinary person, like water out of a cracked pot.

Āsavas in Theravāda literature corresponds to the *kleśas* in the Yoga tradition. It is a basic postulate of the Sāṃkhya and Yoga traditions that the entirety of empirical life is based on a fundamental mistake. In the Yoga tradition, this fundamental error (*avidyā*) is

defined as a mistaken cognition (*khyāti*) whereby the products of *prakṛti*, which are transient, impure, afflicted by sorrow, and essentially different from the soul (*puruṣa*) are erroneously cognized as eternal, pure, pleasurable, and as identical with the soul (YS. II. 5). *Avidyā* (ignorance) is considered to be fundamental because it constitutes empirical consciousness and the very experience of being an individual person. *Avidyā* constitutes empirical consciousness by becoming the matrix of the other four *kleśas* which are: "I-am-ness" (*asmitā*), attachment (*rāga*), aversion (*dveṣa*), and tenacity in holding on to life (*abhiniveśa*).

There is an obvious resemblance between *kleśas* in the Yoga tradition and *āsava*s in Theravāda. However, Theravāda gives a psychological explanation of the nature of *avijjā*, whereas in the *Upaniṣads* and in the Yoga tradition the concept of ignorance is based on ontological ideas. In the *Sabbāsava-sutta* (M. I. 8-9) it is stated that ignorance arises because of lack of wise and systematic attention (*ayoniso-manasikāra*) to the conditioned origination of all things, and because of lack of restraint in experiencing sensory objects.

From the perspective of the disciplines of *yoga*, *kleśas* are the prime obstructions to liberating knowledge (*kaivalya*). Nevertheless, from the perspective of everyday life in time and space, *kleśas* are the makers of individual experience. The *kleśas* provide the basic motivations that sustain both individual experience and community life. In the final analysis, all history and culture, all art and science, are outgrowths of the *kleśas*. Feuerstein explains that the *kleśas* endow the body and mind with dynamic structures that support phenomenal consciousness and "urge the organism to burst into activity, to feel, to think, to want" (1980, 65). Likewise, in Theravāda the *āsava*s are the fundamental factors that bind individuals to life on earth and impel them towards the expansion and

enhancement of sensory and rational experience. They constitute empirical consciousness and make possible the dynamics of individual life within the realm of rebirth.

Though the *kleśas* and the *āsavas* fulfil the same fundamental role of constituting individual consciousness in the Yoga and Theravāda traditions respectively, nevertheless, the term *āsava* conveys more vividly than *kleśa* how the adherence to individual experience blocks enlightenment and ultimate liberation. The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 48)⁴⁰ says that the *āsavas* are so named because they flow (*savanti*) and move along (*pavattanti*) through the senses and the mind, spreading their unwholesome influence. Moreover, the *Atthasālinī* notes that the term *āsava* also refers to liquor that has been fermenting for a long time and compares the four *āsavas* to potent, addictive intoxicants. In psychological terms, *āsavas* are mental factors that powerfully condition mental processes and produce persistent habits of body, speech, and mind that infatuate the mind and cause it to ignore whatever contradicts the world-view of the *āsavas*. How fundamental the *āsavas* are for the perpetuation of rebirth and empirical consciousness is clarified in the *Sammādiṭṭhi-sutta* (M. I. 54-55). The usual practice in listing the twelve links of the chain of rebirth is to begin with *avijjā* (ignorance). The *Sammādiṭṭhi-sutta*, however, probes for a more fundamental cause of rebirth and finds it in the interdependence of the intoxicants (*āsavas*) and ignorance (*avijjā*) and their capacity to perpetually generate each other.⁴¹ The *Atthasālinī* stresses that the dangerous power of the *āsavas* circulates to the loftiest levels of the realms of rebirth (Asl. 48) and explains (Asl. 372) that the *āsavas* can only be removed gradually in the four stages of the path to liberation.⁴² It is said in this text that the *āsava* of speculative views is removed in the first (*sotāpatti*) stage, and the *āsava* of sensual desire can be decreased in the second stage and renounced in the third (*anāgāmi*) stage. The *āsavas* of attachment to life and ignorance are considered to be

capable of retaining their hold till the final (*arahatta*) stage. The fully enlightened *arahant* is deemed worthy of the appellation *anāsava*.⁴³

The description of the *āsavas* in the *Suttas*, the *Visuddhimagga*, and the *Atthasālinī* indicates that it is because of these "intoxicants" that even when the reasoning intellect affirms the idea of conditioned origination, life is not experienced in terms of transitoriness (*anicca*) and absence of autonomous individual entities (*anattā*). The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 226-230) correlates the four *āsavas* with the four "distortions" (*vipallāsas*) that are said to pervade the everyday experiences of ordinary people (*puthujjana*). The *āsava* of ignorance, which is regarded as the basis of the other *āsavas* (A. III. 414), is correlated with distorted perception because of which the impermanent is experienced as the permanent (Vsm. XIV. 229). This distortion entails that *paṭicca-samuppāda* is ignored by ordinary people who structure their experience in such a way that they perceive a universe of stable objects demarcated by recognizable identifying features. The *āsava* of attachment to life (*bhavāsava*) is correlated with the distorted view of perceiving pleasure in objects that are conditions for the arising of sorrow (Vsm XIV. 227). This *āsava* causes people to value their own lives supremely and to resist anything that obstructs the perpetuation and enhancement of the self. The *āsava* of passion for objects of sensory pleasure (*kāmāsava*) is correlated with the distorted vision that sees loveliness (*subha*) in objects that have basic unlovely features (*asubha*) (Vsm. XIV. 226). It is obvious that this *āsava* causes the average person to seek out more and more sensory experience and to dread sensory deprivation.

In explaining the *āsava* of predilection for views (*diṭṭhāsava*), the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XVII. 277) refers to a passage of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (S. III. 3) where Sāriputta explains that sorrow arises when a person experiences any one of the five aggregates

(*khandhas*) with the idea of identifying with that aggregate and seeking to possess it. It is stated in this *Sutta* that the sense of "I" is developed by thinking of oneself in terms of the body, feelings, perceptions and habits, and experiencing them as "mine." Through this *āśava*, experience becomes uniquely personal and one's relationship to objects comes to be defined in terms of a firmly held world-view (*diṭṭhi*).

It is in the above sense that the *āśavas* can be interpreted as the makers of empirical consciousness. If they did not operate, the average person would not ignore conditioned origination, and experience would not take the form of unique individual subjects personally relating to a stable world of clearly demarcated objects. Nor would there be a desperate urgency to multiply, preserve, and perpetuate this form of experience.

The arising of uncorrupted mental states

Since it is posited in the *Suttas* that *āśavas* and *anusayas* continually arise in the mind, an important question is how wholesome purposive impulses (*cetanās*) can arise and become established. The nuances in the concept of *anāśava* offer some clues as to how the *Suttas* approach this question. The two terms *sāśava* (conditioned by the *āśavas*) and *anāśava* (free of the *āśavas*) are dramatically opposed in a passage of the *Majjhima-nikāya* (M. III. 72-73). Here it is said that five of the eight factors of the Eightfold Path, namely, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, and right livelihood can be cultivated in either of two modes: *sāśava* or *anāśava*. For example, though right intention (*sammā-saṅkappa*) consists of the virtues of intentions based on renunciation (*nekkhamma*), non-hatred (*avyāpāda*), and non-violence (*avihiṃsā*), it is said to be *āśava* laden (*sāśava*) if the cultivation of these wholesome qualities is motivated by the desire for karmic merit (*puññābhāgiya*).⁴⁴ The consequence of *āśava*-laden right intention is

described as attachment that leads to rebirth (*upadhi-vepakka*). It is emphasized here that when right view, right intention, right speech, action, and livelihood are cultivated in the framework of the *āsava*s, though they may be beneficial, they still contain the danger of inducing the longing for personal merit, thereby prolonging greed, sorrow, and rebirth.

According to the vivid imagery of the text, right view, right effort, and right mindfulness "run around" (*paridhāvanti*) and protectively encircle the five factors named above and gradually release them from the motivating power of the *āsava*s. When right view, right intention, right speech, action and livelihood are no longer motivated by the *āsava*s, they are characterized as "supramundane" (*lokuttara*) factors of the Eightfold Path (*maggaṅga*). The term *lokuttara* signifies that these virtuous acts do not proceed from a sense of "I" and "mine" and are not motivated by the intention to achieve worldly gain or karmic merit.

The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. I. 32) also distinguishes between mundane (*lokiya*) and supramundane (*lokuttara*) practice of virtue (*sīla*), and specifies that only the supramundane is *anāsava*. Nevertheless, like the *Majjhima-nikāya* passage referred to above (M. III. 72-73), the *Visuddhimagga* also does not limit the term *anāsava* to the perfect liberation from *āsava*s experienced by the *arahant*, but includes the stages of "stream entry," "once-returning," and "never returning" which lead to the goal of liberation from sorrow. Each of these stages is attained by purifying the mind of certain unwholesome states. The term *anāsava*, therefore, is found in two different contexts. When applied to the *arahant*, *anāsava* signifies total freedom from the *āsava*s. On the other hand, when the stages of the Path are characterized as *anāsava*, the term connotes, not "without *āsava*s," but "leading to complete cessation of the *āsava*s." The stages of the

Path are called *lokuttara* (supramundane) because they do not lead to further accumulation of *kamma*, but bring about the cessation of *kamma*.

The brief description of mundane (*lokiya*) virtue in the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. I. 32) points to a tension in the motivations of those who ardently practise virtue (*sīla*) even though they are not free of the influence of the *āsava*s. According to the *Visuddhimagga*, these actions of mundane virtue have a double consequence: they bring about an excellent future rebirth (*bhava-visesa-vaha*); but simultaneously, they prepare the way for the total renunciation of future goals and future lives (*bhava-nissaraṇassa ca sambhāra*).

Unfortunately, the *Visuddhimagga* does not expand on this important statement; but it does provide, as an example of mundane virtue that is not exempt from *āsava*s, a standard account of the process by which a person cultivates the disciplines that lead, step by step, to the freeing of the mind from attachment to existence in the wheel of rebirth. The implication is that though mundane virtue expressed in acts such as generous giving of gifts (*dāna*) is not free of the *āsava*s, nevertheless, mindful dedication to virtuous acts leads one to experience the conditioned nature of all mundane virtue. It can be inferred that by gradually deepening a person's understanding of conditioned origination, these acts of mundane virtue lead to a gradual removal of the distorted perceptions spawned by the *āsava*s and bring about the renunciation of future lives and their fruitions (*bhava-nissaraṇa*). The wholesome intentions of mundane virtue produce wholesome goal-oriented acts (*saṅkhārās*). However, the non-greed, non-hatred, non-delusion that are present to some degree in mundane virtue gradually remove the yearning for future goals, so that action ceases to be impelled by intentions and purposes that look for future benefits. Wholesome goal-oriented *saṅkhārās* facilitate the cessation of all goal-oriented *saṅkhārās* and the emergence of wise and beneficent *anāsava* acts that are counted as

purely functional (*kiriya*) factors. Such acts leave no karmic traces. They are the acts of an *arahant*.

If the aggregates are drenched with the polluting flow of the *āsava*s, it becomes necessary to ask how the wholesome "roots" (non-greed, non-aversion and non-delusion) can sprout in the aggregates, and how the factors of the Eightfold Path can be cultivated. The answer to this question must be found within conditioned origination. The *āsava*s are neither primordial nor self-sustaining; they come into being through causes and conditions, and they function only when conditions are conducive for their perpetuation. In the *Sabbāsava-sutta* (M. I. 7) unsystematic, distracted attention (*ayoniso-manasikāra*) is said to produce the environment in which the *āsava*s come into existence and thrive.⁴⁵ Unwise, unsystematic attention is further explained as the ceaseless preoccupation with the nature of the "I" and the mode of its existence in the past, present, and future (M. I. 8).⁴⁶ Wise attention (*yoniso manasikāra*) is explained as thoughtful reflection on the nature of sorrow and the Four Noble Truths (M. I. 9).

The *Sabbāsava-sutta* does not explain either why *yoniso-manasikāra* has the capacity to combat the powerful motivating energy of the *āsava*s or how it is to be cultivated. *Yoniso-manasikāra* represents the cognitive process of focusing the mind and giving proper attention in order to know an object thoroughly (P.E.D. 521, col. 1). That *manasikāra* is an aspect of cognition and not of the conative capacity to carry out intentions becomes clear when the injunction to pay attention (*manasikarotha*) is coupled with the injunction to reason well (*vitakketha*) (A. I. 171; D. I. 214). In the commentary to the *Sabbāsava-sutta* (MA. I. 64), *manasikāra* is explained as the *citta* turning to the object (*āvaṭṭhanā*), reflecting on the object (*ābhoga*) and keeping the mind focused on pondering over the object (*samannāhāra*). *Ayoniso-manasikāra* is explained as attention

that is the wrong means (*anupāya*) and the wrong way (*uppatha*). According to the commentary, it is unsystematic attention because it perceives the permanent in the impermanent, pleasure in the painful, the self in what is not a self and beauty in that which is far from beautiful. Thus the commentary regards unsystematic attention to be the wrong means because it causes these four distortions (*vipallāsas*) of perception that constitute the *āsava* of ignorance. The distortions are regarded, not only as erroneous cognitions, but also as motivations for unwholesome intentions leading to unwholesome goal-directed acts (*saṅkhārās*). The conclusion can be drawn that *yoniso-manasikāra* functions as vigilant, sustained, and systematic attention to objects. *Yoniso-manasikāra* can overcome the *āsavas* because, in the organic whole of consciousness that *manas* represents, systematic attention becomes the leading condition for the arising of wholesome emotions and intentions. If the cognitive function of giving methodical attention to objects is regarded as the most effective antidote to the unwholesome motivations of the *āsavas*, again this is because cognition, emotion, and motivating energy are seen as mutually dependent functions in the holistic view of the mind.

Underlying tendencies as factors of motivation within conditioned origination

The term *anusaya* (underlying tendency) is related to the verb *anuseti*, which connotes "to lie down with" or "to cling to." The verb is regarded as indicating a state of dormancy (P.E.D. 44, col.1). *Anusaya* connotes the opposite of "support" or "condition" (*āsaya*) (C.P.D. 1.221, col. 2). *Anuseti*, then, can be taken to mean "resting on" or "proceeding from" a condition. At the same time, *anusayas* are described as the

underlying conditions for unwholesome obsessive states that are designated as "fetters" (*saṃyojanāni*). Several passages in the *Sutta* literature (D. III. 254, 282; S. V. 60; A. IV. 9) list the seven following *anusayas*: sensual passion (*kāma-rāga*), ill-will (*paṭigha*), predilection for speculative views (*diṭṭhi*), sceptical doubt (*vicikicchā*), conceit (*māna*) that produces the sense of a separate self, desire for continued existence (*bhava-rāga*), and ignorance (*avijjā*).

Anusaya is sometimes interpreted as a latent, not yet activated, state of existence. However, conditioned origination precludes the notion that something can remain unchanged over a period of time. In this regard, it is worth noting that the Yoga concept of *vāsanās* as residual potencies that reside in the subtle matter of the *citta* for vast periods of time has no equivalent in the *Sutta* and *Abhidhamma* literature.⁴⁷ There is no description in the *Suttas* of *anusayas* in a latent or unmanifest state, though the notion of latency is implied when *anusayas* and *āsava*s are mentioned. For example, although the *Mahāmālunkya-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* (M. I. 433-434) maintains that the underlying tendency to uphold the view of individual selfhood (*sakkāya-diṭṭhānusaya*) and the other *anusayas* lie within even a small child, there is no description of the form that *anusayas* take when they are not openly manifested, and no account of how they persist in the changing processes of the personality. The *Mahāmālunkya-sutta* opens with a discussion of how the unwholesome tendencies that constitute "the five lower fetters" (*orambhāgiyāni saṃyojanāni*) arise. These five lower fetters, which resemble the *anusayas*, are: the view that upholds the idea of self, doubt, obsessive adherence to rules and observances, desire for sensual pleasure, and ill-will. The Buddha holds that even though the lower fetters are not openly manifest, the *anusayas* lie within an infant. It is implied here that since the *anusayas* lie within the mind, there is the possibility for the

unwholesome tendencies that constitute the fetters to arise when the time is conducive. However, the Buddha does not explain precisely how the fetters are related to the *anusayas*. He does not say that the fetters are latent in the *anusayas*.

With the acceptance of the theory of momentariness in the *Abhidhamma*, the problem of explaining how the *āsava*s persist in the continuum of consciousness becomes more difficult.⁴⁸ Jaini (1959, 240) points out that in the *Abhidhamma*, momentariness was interpreted to mean that only one mental state (*citta*)—wholesome (*kusala*), unwholesome (*akusala*), or indeterminate (*avyākata*)—could occur at any given moment. Since *anusayas* are counted as unwholesome, if they are latently present in the mind, this would entail that no wholesome mental state can come into being. Jaini explains that for this reason, Buddhaghosa avoids the notion of latency with regard to the *anusayas*, both in the commentaries to the *Suttas* and in the *Visuddhimagga*. Buddhaghosa avoids attributing a state of latency to the *anusayas* by interpreting the difference between *anusayas* and their manifest effects (*pariyuṭṭhāna*) as obsessive emotions, in the following way. According to Buddhaghosa, it is these outwardly expressed obsessions that came to be known as the fetters (*saṃyojanāni*). He maintains that *anusayas* do not exist in any manner separate from their concrete obsessive operation (*pariyuṭṭhāna*) in the form of fetters (*saṃyojana*). In effect, Buddhaghosa holds that the same unwholesome mental state—for example, adherence to views (*dīṭṭhi*)—is called an *anusaya* because it is not renounced (*appahīnaṭṭhena*) through the disciplines of the Eightfold Path, and a "fetter" because it binds the mind to the process of rebirth (*bandhanaṭṭhena*) (M.A. III. 145).⁴⁹ In the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XXII. 60), Buddhaghosa defines *anusayas*, not as latent tendencies, but as mental factors characterized by, first, the capacity to stand their ground (*thāmagata*) against counteractive factors, and second, the causal power (*uppatti-hetu-*

bhāva) of putting forth, again and again (*punappunam*), effects that manifest as sensual passion and the other fetters.⁵⁰

In spite of Buddhaghosa's objections to the notion of latency, it is said in the later commentaries that impure states of mind (*kilesas*) occur in three stages: in the *anusaya* stage they are tendencies that are not yet activated, in the *pariyutthāna* stage they become openly active and are experienced as unwholesome mental states that fetter the mind, and in the *vītikkaṃa* stage they motivate reprehensible acts of body, speech, and mind (Ledi Sayadaw 1961, 80). It is in the third stage that *anusayas* can be seen as giving rise to corresponding *cetanās* that instigate unwholesome acts (*kamma*).

There is an obvious overlap between the *āsavas* and the *anusayas*. The difference between them may be summarized as follows. *Āsavas* are primary in the sense that they constitute empirical consciousness and produce the world-view of ordinary people (*puthujjana*), which is focused on notions of "I" (*aham*) and "mine" (*mama*). Nevertheless, in Theravāda, as in the Yoga tradition, consciousness that is focused on the notion of "I" is regarded as a "distortion" (*vipallāsa*, Sanskrit: *viparyāsa*) of the way things actually are (*yathā-bhūtam*). The *anusayas*, on the other hand, can be regarded as tendencies and stubborn habits within empirical consciousness that cause these distortions to persist in the mind and to be repeatedly experienced in the form of obsessive outward acts (*pariyutthānas*). *Anusayas* are more detailed versions of the distortions brought about by the *āsavas*.

The power of the *anusayas* is summed up in a passage of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (S. III. 35-37)⁵¹, which states that if a person has a persistent inclination (*anuseti*) or underlying tendency towards any of the five aggregates, then the personality is built up,

measured (*anumīyati*), and "reckoned" or "named" in terms of that aggregate (*tena saṅkharāṃ gacchati*). Bhikkhu Bodhi makes the following comment on this passage (2000, 1: 1053, n. 47). Driven by the tendency of sensual passion to focus on the body, one may be reckoned a "physical person." Obsessed by the tendency to adhere to views, one may focus on the aggregate of conscious awareness and be reckoned a "thinker." Or again, impelled by the tendency of passion for existence, one may give most importance to the aggregate of *saṅkhārās* and be reckoned "a person of action."

The conditioned arising of *anusayas*

Though the commentator Buddhaghosa is not comfortable with the notion of latency in relation to *anusayas*, the examples given below show that in the *Sutta* literature *anusayas* represent tendencies that somehow persist in the mind. However, these examples also show that the presence of *anusayas* in the mind does not predetermine behaviour. It is made clear that *anusayas* do not become activated if counteractive conditions are cultivated.

The verb *anuseti* is sometimes associated with objects of sensory experience and sometimes with the person who experiences these objects. When *anuseti* is associated with objects, the emphasis is on how feelings (*vedanā*) resulting from sensory stimulation become the conditions for the activation of tendencies, proclivities, or dispositions. When *anuseti* is associated with the experiencing subject, the verb connotes the obsessive reactions of persons to certain experiences. The emphasis is on a repetitive pattern of behaviour. Examples of both these ways in which *anusayas* operate are given below.

In the *Cūḷa-vedalla-sutta* (M. I. 303-305) the bhikkhūṇī Dhammadinnā explains that when pleasure, pain, and neutral feelings arise from sense contact, they awaken,

respectively, *anusayas* of sensual passion, aversion, and ignorance.⁵² The thrust of her argument, however, is that pleasure, pain, and neutral feelings do not invariably entail the activation of *anusayas* and their motivating capacities.⁵³ With fine precision she points out that the tendency to sensual passion does not underlie the serene pleasant feeling of the first level of meditation, the impulse of aversion does not underlie the pain of yearning for enlightenment that is characteristic of the second level of meditation, and the deluding dullness of ignorance does not underlie the tranquil feeling of neither pleasure nor pain that pervades the fourth level of meditation (M. I. 303-304). An analysis of Dhammadinnā's argument shows that in the first part, she stresses that *anusayas* are not primordial factors in the personality but acquire their ability to motivate habitual unwholesome responses through causes and conditions. She points out that the *anusayas* of sensual passion, aversion, and ignorance would not acquire the capacity of functioning as persistent proclivities without the conducive conditions provided by pleasant, painful, and neutral feelings. In the second part of her analysis, she argues that sensual passion, aversion, and ignorance do not necessarily function as underlying tendencies whenever pleasurable, painful, and neutral sensations are experienced. She demonstrates that it is possible to establish counteractive conditions to prevent the activation of *anusayas* when feelings are experienced.

Another passage of the *Majjhima-nikāya* (M.I. 40) emphasizes that it is the experience of objects that provides the conditions for speculative views to arise (*uppajjanti*). The passage goes on to say that the views become latent (*anusenti*) so that a persistent predilection for views is formed. The conclusion is reached that the underlying tendency towards such views then become expressed in habitual forms of behaviour (*samudācaranti*) that reflect the views. The commentary (MA. I. 182) explains that

uppajjanti refers to the arising of views that have not arisen before, and names the five aggregates as the "objects" upon which these views regarding the self are based. The term *anusenti* (underlie) is explained as the views becoming firmly established (*thāmagatā*) and unsubdued (*appaṭivinīṭā*) because one resorts to them again and again (*punappunam āsevitā*). It is implied here that frequent repetition strengthens the staying power (*thāma*) of *anusayas* and moulds them into persistent habits. *Samudācaranti* is explained as the views becoming expressed in acts of body and speech. Again, this passage clarifies that contact with objects does not necessarily entail the arising of views or the formation of a propensity for views. It is emphasized here that when one learns to see things as they actually are (*yathā-bhūtam*), without seeking to possess objects and without defining the "I" (*aham*) in terms of the *khandhas*, then the tendency to views begins to fade. The crux of the argument is that *anusayas* arise and cease through causes and conditions. In this passage, attachment to the aggregates is specified as the cause for the arising of speculative views regarding a self. To emphasize that *anusayas* are conditioned factors, and not primordial states, the *Kathāvatthu* insists that they are constituents of the *saṅkhārakkhandha* and that they always come into being in relation to objects (Kvu. 405-408).

The verb *anuseti* is often associated with the person who experiences objects rather than with the objects experienced. In these contexts, *anuseti* conveys "to obsess," "to fill the mind persistently," "to be continually cropping up" (P.E.D. 44, col. 2). A passage in the *Majjhima-nikāya* (M. III. 285) indicates that *anusayas* are activated, not solely because objects are capable of causing pleasure, pain, or neutral feeling, but because of the way a person reacts to sensory experience. If a person is delighted by a pleasant sensation, welcomes it, and covets it, then the underlying tendency of sensual passion is

present in that person (*tassa rāgānusayo anuseti*). When a painful sensation arises, if a person grieves, mourns, laments, weeps with anguish, and feels distraught, then the tendency to aversion is latent in that person (*tassa paṭighānusayo anuseti*). When a neutral feeling arises, if one does not understand, as it actually is (*yathā-bhūtam*), the origin, cessation, and future effects of that feeling, then the underlying tendency to ignorance exists in the mind (*tassa avijjānusayo anuseti*). It is not clear from the context whether the underlying tendency causes the person's emotional reaction to a specific sensory experience, or whether the repeated emotional outbursts (*pariyuṭṭhāna*) cause a corresponding tendency to somehow persist in the mind. It is plausible that *anuseti* here signifies both that the activation of a latent tendency produces the emotional reaction, and that the emotions displayed strengthen the capacity of the *anusaya* to remain latent and to persistently obsess the mind.

In another context (S. III. 131) *Thera Khemaka* illustrates the obduracy of *anusayas* with the analogy of a dirty cloth that retains a faint odour of detergent even after it has been washed clean. Through this analogy, *Thera Khemaka* explains how the subtle conceit of "I am," the desire expressed as "I am," and the underlying tendency to feel "I am," (*asmīti anusaya*) remain in a bhikkhu's mind even though he has achieved release from the five lower fetters.⁵⁴ *Thera Khemaka* finally says that just as the odour will leave the cloth if it is kept in a sweet-scented chest, so the subtle proclivity to feel "I am" will leave the bhikkhu's mind if he continues to contemplate "arising and passing away" in relation to the five aggregates.

These examples show that there is sufficient evidence to draw the conclusion that in the *Suttas*, *anusayas* represent causal conditions that somehow persist in the mind even when they do not "burst forth" as obsessions (*pariyuṭṭhānas*). The phrase *dīgharatta-*

anusayita (Tha. 768, 1275; Sn. 355, 649) suggests that *anusaya* signifies the presence of similar conditions in the mind over a period of time. However, it is also clarified in the *Suttas* that the presence of the *anusayas* in the mind does not predetermine behaviour: they do not become activated if counteractive conditions are cultivated, and they begin to lose their hold when the disciplines of the Eightfold Path are cultivated.

Buddhaghosa's explanation can be interpreted to mean that *anusayas* are the repeated convergence of unwholesome causal conditions in the continuum of consciousness. His explanation implies, from the point of view of conditioned origination, that when the causal factors converge, the effect will follow in due course, without the need for a third factor to act as a link between cause and effect. Buddhaghosa makes the point that an *anusaya* is not to be conceived as a latent factor that exists unchanged through time and links an unwholesome set of conditions and the unwholesome consequence. For example, *anusaya* is not to be conceived as a fixed habit pattern or mental structure that links past experiences of pleasure in contacting an object and the manifest passion that is experienced whenever that object is again encountered. According to Buddhaghosa, no such link is necessary when conditioned origination is affirmed.

Buddhaghosa's explanation is not fully convincing partly because he does not elucidate how memory functions if mental states are continually changing. Furthermore, he does not explain why certain patterns of thought tend to be repeated and how persistent habits of body and speech are formed. However, Buddhaghosa is correct in holding that, given conditioned origination, *anusayas* cannot be defined as subliminal tendencies like the *vāsanās* of the Yoga tradition.

Anusaya and cetanā

The verbs *ceteti* (to intend, to think purposefully), *pakappeti* (to plan, to arrange) and *anuseti* (to have an underlying tendency) are found together in three short sections of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (S. II. 65-67).⁵⁵ Each of them is entitled *cetanā*. These passages begin with the statement that what one intends, plans, and has an underlying tendency towards, becomes an object (*ārammaṇam*) for the mind, providing for the maintenance (*thiti*) of consciousness (*viññāṇa*) and causing it to develop towards future rebirth. This statement, however, is emended, and it is declared that even if a person does not intend (*ceteti*) or plan (*pakappeti*) but only has an underlying tendency (*anuseti*), this is sufficient to provide a support for consciousness and to direct it towards rebirth. Here the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* reiterates a basic Theravāda teaching that conscious awareness (*viññāṇa*) is neither self-sufficient nor permanent, but is dependent on contact with objects for its perpetuation (M. I. 258-259). The *Saṃyutta-nikāya* maintains that whereas consciousness is usually provided with objects through the functions of intending and planning, the mere presence in the mind of *anusayas* that cause inclinations towards specific objects is sufficient to ensure, not only the perpetuation of consciousness, but also its fecundity.

Some Theravāda notions regarding the relationship between *anusaya* and *cetanā* can be extrapolated from the passages of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (S. II. 65-67) mentioned above, though the main concern of these passages is the development of *viññāṇa* in the process of rebirth. The commentary (SA. II. 70) explains that the verb *ceteti* (to think, to intend) refers to all wholesome and unwholesome *cetanās*, and takes the position that the unwholesome goal-directed thoughts and impulses that constitute unwholesome *cetanās* are conditioned by the unwholesome habits and tendencies that *anusayas* represent.

Anuseti is explained in the commentary with the statement that *anusayas* support unwholesome *cetanās* based on greed (*lobha*) and views (*diṭṭhi*) in the two following ways. As "conascent conditions" (*sahajāta-paccaya*), *anusayas* arise together with *cetanās* and support them through a relationship of mutuality and interplay, just as the *khandhas* support each other. As "support conditions" (*upanissaya-paccaya*), *anusayas* are said to provide antecedent conditions for the arising of *cetanās* in the same way that the senses and the mind support the consequent arising of *viññāṇa* (cognitive awareness), when they make contact with objects. The commentary is obviously referring to the way activated *anusayas* instigate, condition, and support *cetanās*. *Anusayas* are not defined here in terms of latency or dormancy, and it is not implied that *anusayas* cause the arising of *cetanās* while remaining latent and unknown to the conscious mind. The point here is that in their manifest states, *anusayas* take the form of obsessive mental states (*pariyuṭṭhānas*) that can condition *cetanās* as well as outward behaviour.

The final section of this passage of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (S. II. 67) can be interpreted in such a way that it adds another dimension to the relationship between *anusaya* and *cetanā*. Here it is said that when a person intends (*ceteti*), plans (*pakappeti*), and adheres to tendencies (*anuseti*), then consciousness is supported and perpetuated by these functions in such a way that it "grows abundantly" (*viññāṇe virūlhe*) and develops a "bent" (*nati*) towards rebirth. The commentary (SA. II. 72) gives craving (*taṇhā*) as the synonym of *nati* and explains that the latter term signifies the "bending" of the mind towards objects that bring delight. In other contexts (S. IV. 59; M. III. 266) it is said that in the case of a person who relies on objects, restlessness, lack of tranquillity, further inclination towards objects (*nati*), and rebirth follow in sequence. *Anusayas*, therefore,

can be interpreted as mental factors that cause the *citta* to incline towards, or to crave for, certain goals, while they gain strength as the *citta* repeatedly ponders over those goals.

On the basis of these passages, a circular relationship can be posited between *anusayās* and the goal-directed thoughts and purposes of *cetanā*. *Anusayās* condition the arising of the unwholesome purposes and goal-oriented impulses that constitute unwholesome *cetanās* and produce in them an inclination towards rebirth. At the same time, these unwholesome purposes become the vehicles through which the unwholesome habits and tendencies that *anusayās* produce become expressed. *Anusayās* become strong and obdurate when they are repeatedly expressed as unwholesome *cetanās*. When these two factors increase and intensify, they produce a bent of mind expressive of craving, which further strengthens the *anusayās*. However, whereas *anusayās* are always regarded as unwholesome in their manner of functioning, *cetanās* can be either wholesome or unwholesome.

***Anusayās* and the question of "unconscious" motivation**

In his work *The Dynamic Psychology of Early Buddhism* (1979, 107-110), Rune Johansson argues that though, in the *Suttas*, *anusayās* are conceived as latent tendencies that may exist in the mind without the mind being aware of them, there are no *Sutta* passages that unequivocally spell out a theory of "unconscious motivation." In this context, Johansson refers to the Buddha's comments on the presence of *anusayās* in the mind of an infant (M. I. 432-433). According to Johansson's argument, the import of this passage is that though underlying tendencies are present in an innocent child, they do not become activated and motivate reprehensible behaviour until the child matures and conditions are appropriate for their activation. Johansson concludes that this passage

"proves that the *anusayā* may be dormant and unconscious but not that they can be active and influence activity in this state" (1979, 109). Johansson also refers to *Thera* Khemaka's statement that though a person has made progress in the Eightfold Path, subtle traces of the latent tendency to feel, "I am" may remain in the mind (S. III. 131). Here again, Johansson stresses that the passage gives no indication how this tendency of self-affirmation may influence the mind while it remains latent. He writes:

But in what ways will the tendencies affect our conscious life without our knowledge? Not at all? In that case, there would be no similarity to the Freudian unconscious. Or in the form of defence mechanisms, dreams, efforts, slips of the tongue? In that case there would be a similarity. The Buddha did not specify. Anyway, he had no theory about the influence of repressed drives and forgotten memories on our conscious life.
(1979, 110)

In a later article entitled "Defence Mechanism According to Psychoanalysis and the Pāli Nikāyas" (1983) Johansson changes his position somewhat. Here he argues that the *Suttas* contain passages where motivation and behaviour are analyzed in such a way as to suggest an awareness that people often adopt measures, consciously or unconsciously, to defend the ego (*aham*). In this article Johansson refers to two passages (D. III. 258, A. IV. 236), which enumerate the variety of reasons why people make gifts to monks. He notes that "private motives, like inferiority complexes, a wish to make a good impression, an expectation of rewards can remain unconscious" (1983, 17). He also refers to another passage (A. IV. 192-195), which describes, with a degree of wry humour, how monks of different temperaments react when their wrong conduct is brought to their notice and advice is given for future improvement. According to Johansson, the thrust of these passages is that when *āsava*s and *anusaya*s become manifest in acts of body and speech, they show themselves as addictive habits and persistent proclivities that can be interpreted in terms of defence mechanisms and ego inflations. However, he maintains

that these passages do not show conclusively that the Buddha and his followers viewed *anusayas* and *āsavas* as factors that act on the mind in such a way that the mind is unaware of their motivating influence. For example, while he seeks to demonstrate that the descriptions of the different reactions of monks when they are reproved for unwholesome behaviour may be interpreted in Freudian terms as repression, aggression, projection, regression, and compensation, he stresses that there is no attempt in the text itself to explain why the monks reacted as they did. He concludes:

We, see, then, that nearly all of the defence mechanisms discussed by psychoanalytic writers have actually been discovered and described, although not explained and named, in this passage. . . . So we have only descriptions of external reactions, but no explanations why the different monks behave in these ways. (1983, 19)

The thrust of Johansson's argument is that when *anusayas* and *āsavas* are activated, they manifest, respectively, as persistent proclivities and addictive habits that can be interpreted in terms of defence mechanisms and ego inflation. He does not conclude that in their dormant state *anusayas* affect thought and behaviour.

De Silva, on the other hand, holds quite emphatically that there are passages in the *Suttas* that clearly make a reference to an "unconscious component" in the mind (1973, 51-61, 1979, 72-77). He maintains that since the process by which dormant *anusayas* are activated "can occur without conscious awareness," this psychological process can be regarded as "unconscious motivation" (1979, 75). De Silva maintains that in the *Suttas* "unconscious motivation" is posited in the following three contexts: in the *Dīgha-nikāya* (D. III. 105) where reference is made to the "stream of consciousness" (*viññāṇa-sota*), in a passage of the *Anguttara-nikāya* (A. I. 171) where the yogic power of mind-reading is mentioned, and, more significantly, in the notion of a mental act performed by a person without deliberation or full comprehension (*asampajāno*). It will

be shown below that these passages are difficult to interpret, and that they do not state unequivocally that *saṅkhāras*, *anusayas*, or *āsava*s influence the mind while the mind remains unaware of their influence.

The reference to the "stream of consciousness" (*viññāṇa-sota*) is in a passage (D. III. 105) which focuses on the "four attainments of vision" (*dassana-samāpatti*). A person who has reached the third attainment is said to be able to perceive another person's "stream of consciousness" as a process that is established both in "this world" and in the "world beyond" and remains unbroken in both aspects (*ubhayato abbocchinnam*). The idea of being "stationed" in the next world (*paraloke patitṭhitam*) is interpreted in the commentary as a reference to factors present within consciousness that already act as causal conditions for future rebirth. The commentary (DA. III. 888) says that the stream of consciousness becomes established in this world through desire and passion (*chanda-rāga-vasena*), and that the same stream of consciousness, pulling along the factors of karmic existence (*kamma-bhavam*), becomes established in the "next world." Jayatilleke (1949, 216) interprets this passage to mean that the part of the stream of consciousness which is established in the next world consists of "dynamic *saṅkhāras*" that continue "in a state of flux in the Unconscious." Jayatilleke regards this dynamic stream of *saṅkhāras* within the present state of consciousness to be a powerful motivating influence on future behaviour and future rebirth. He obviously conceives of *saṅkhāras* as subliminal tendencies akin to *vāsanās* in the Yoga tradition. De Silva follows Jayatilleke's interpretation (1973, 54, n.42).

According to Jayatilleke's explanation, the reference to an aspect of the stream of consciousness that is directed towards a future existence even when a person is alive "implies the presence of a part of the stream of Consciousness of which the person is not

aware" (1949, 216). He interprets these dynamic *saṅkhāras* to be "impressions" of one's "volitional activities" that persist in a state of flux in the Unconscious, conditioning future behaviour and future rebirth. Jayatilleke's argument is not convincing. The term *kamma-bhava* in the commentary certainly is a reference to consciousness (*viññāṇa*) that is conditioned by *saṅkhāras* in such a way that it is poised for rebirth. However, neither the text nor the commentary refer to *saṅkhāras* as subliminal impressions. Nor do the texts suggest that *saṅkhāras* affect the mind in the form of subliminal dispositions, while the mind remains unaware of their influence.

The second passage (A. I. 171) says that a person who attains a certain level of calm concentration acquires the telepathic power to observe how mental *saṅkhāras* (habits of thought) are disposed in the mind of another and can predict what thoughts that other person will think in the future. Jayatilleke (1949, 216) maintains that the import of this passage is that the subject is not aware of the mental *saṅkhāras* constituted of thought formations that are so clearly observed by a person of telepathic powers. Jayatilleke, therefore, concludes that this passage contains "perhaps the earliest historical mention of unconscious mental processes." However, this passage does not say that the mental *saṅkhāras* are latent processes of which the subject is not aware. In other contexts (M. I. 390-391) the term *mano-saṅkhāra* conveys mental activity in the form of purposive deliberation or intention. This passage can be interpreted to mean that a person with telepathic powers observes how the intentions and purposes of another person are organized (*yathā imassa bhoṭa mano-saṅkhare paṇihitā*) and can predict what thought (*vitakka*) that person will think subsequently (*amun nāma vitakkam vitakkissati*). The commentary does not suggest that the subject is unaware of the patterns of thought (*mano-saṅkhāra*) that become known to another through telepathy.

The third passage (A. II. 157-158 = S. II. 39-40) on which de Silva bases his argument that the *Suttas* affirm the notion of "unconscious motivation" makes the point that acts of body, speech, and mind that are instigated by *cetanā* lead to commensurate consequences of personal pleasure and pain. This passage is important for an understanding of *cetanā*, and I will return to it in the next chapter. Here the focus is on one class of acts, namely, "undeliberate", which is reckoned among the classes of acts that are motivated by *cetanā* and lead to karmic consequences. *Asampajāna*, in this context, conveys that the acts are not premeditated or are done without consideration or without attention. Bodhi translates *asampajāna* as "undeliberate," (2000, 1:561) while Mrs. Rhys Davids, in her translation of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (1922, 2:31) prefers "unwitting." The commentary (SA. II. 58) explains *asampajāna* as a person acting without knowledge of the consequences of *kamma* and gives the example of children who imitate their parents in performing the rituals at a shrine without knowing the karmic consequence of their acts. De Silva, however, interprets *asampajāna mano-saṅkhāra* as a mental disposition or train of thought, which motivates action while its subliminal presence in the mind is not known to the person performing the act. He concludes:

The concept of *asampajāna mano-saṅkhāra* clearly implies the existence of unconscious tendencies. It does not imply the existence of a substrate called the "Unconscious," but rather the presence of certain dispositions, which can be described by the adjective unconscious. (1978, 56)

The term *asampajāna* is difficult to interpret. It is important to note that this passage is introduced by designating these acts as *sañcetanās*. This designation signifies that these acts are characterized by the goal-directed thoughts and impulses that *cetanās* represent. De Silva's argument can be interpreted to mean that when a person acts without deliberation, the mind is aware of arriving at an intention, but is unaware of the

underlying tendency through which such an intention arises in the mind. However, this is not the way *anusayas* are described. For example, a person who is acting under the influence of the *anusaya* of conceit or the *anusaya* of repulsion is said to be aware of the sense of self-pride or the feeling of dislike as well as the intentions they instigate. We have the case of *Thera Khemaka* (S. III. 131) who is aware that the *anusaya* that causes the sense of "I" operates in his mind, even though the five "lower fetters" have been broken. In other contexts (D. I. 70, II. 95), a person who acts deliberately and with proper attention and mindfulness is designated as *sampajānakārin*. Undeliberately performed *mano-saṅkhāra* is a mental act that proceeds from an intention, but is executed either without proper attention and deliberation, or without sufficient knowledge of the circumstances in which the act is done and the consequences that might follow.

The passages on which Jayatilleke and de Silva base their argument do not support their claim that Theravāda posits the notion of "unconscious motivation." There is little evidence that the *Suttas* put forward theories maintaining that *āsavas* and *anusayas* affect the mind without the mind's knowledge of their influence. Johansson has argued convincingly that the *Suttas* are concerned with the powerful and complex ways in which *āsavas* and *anusayas* affect the mind when they are activated and manifest themselves in acts of body, speech, and mind. It should be noted that *āsavas* and *anusayas* are not conceived as repressed memories or as self-activating impulses but as factors whose presence and perpetuation is governed by conditioned origination. Though *āsavas* and *anusayas* are powerful, they are not regarded as autonomous or as self-sustaining. Like everything else within conditioned origination, they arise when supported by conducive conditions and perish when these conditions are removed.

Since *anusayas* and *āsavas* are regarded as factors governed by conditioned origination, it is affirmed that they will cease when the conditions that perpetuate them are removed. The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm I. 13) says that whereas mental obsessions (*pariyuṭṭhānas*) that express underlying tendencies can be prevented from manifesting as acts of body and speech by the disciplines of calming, the prevention of *anusayas* from arising as obsessions requires sustained mindfulness leading to wisdom (*paññā*). There are several passages in the *Suttas* where instructions are given for the cultivation of mindfulness in order to remove *anusayas* (S. II. 252-253; III. 130; IV. 209-210, 212). It is to be noted that mindfulness is the practice of focusing on what is directly present to the senses and the mind. In passages where instructions are given for the practice of mindfulness, there is no reference to motivations that may be experienced without the mind being aware of the sources of those motivations and the mode of their arising. The practice of mindfully observing the continuum of consciousness (*cittānupassanā*) is never described as a process of bringing into awareness latent mental states that act upon the mind without the mind being aware of their presence and influence.

Conclusion

This chapter has been concerned with highlighting the Theravāda view that all operations of the *citta*, of *saṅkhāras*, and of *anusayas* are governed by conditioned origination. This chapter seeks to establish that according to Theravāda, whenever *cetanās* emerge from attitudes of the *citta*, or constitute the constructive activities of *saṅkhāras*, or interact with the underlying tendencies and obdurate habits that *anusayas* and *āsavas* manifest, causal processes govern these motivational contexts in which *cetanās* arise. Theravāda does not posit an over-riding "will" or sovereign reason to

explain how mental conflicts are resolved or how processes that constitute the continuum of consciousness are controlled. Consciousness is viewed as an organic system where the whole and part mutually condition each other. References to an "I" that acts as controlling agent must be interpreted to signify that according to Theravāda, the mind can function as a whole that exerts its conditioning influence on the processes that constitute consciousness.

Upholding the principle of conditioned origination, Theravāda avoids defining *saṅkhārās* as subliminal impressions of past experiences that already contain future effects in a latent state. In the *Sutta* and *Abhidhamma* literature, the *saṅkhārās* of the *saṅkhārakkhandha* are dynamic processes that express the mind's capacity to bring together causal conditions in such a way as to put forth fresh effects. These effects are configurations of factors that manifest both as deeds with karmic consequences and as the aggregates (*khandhās*) of physical and mental states that make up the individual. *Cetanās* are conceived as purposive thoughts and impulses that arise from sensory and mental contact with objects and take the primary role in the constructive activity by which *saṅkhārās* compose fresh configurations of mental factors. In keeping with conditioned origination, it is posited that the composing function of *cetanās* and *saṅkhārās* preserves both continuity with past conditions and the capacity to produce new effects through the cessation of some conditions and the grouping of other conditions in new ways. The important conclusion to be drawn is that *saṅkhārās* in Theravāda perform the same function of linking the past with the present and anticipating the future that *saṁskāras* perform in the Yoga tradition, even though *saṅkhāra* are not conceived as lasting imprints on the mind. In Theravāda, as in the Yoga tradition, it is because of *saṅkhāra* processes

that the habits of a cat are somehow preserved as conditioning factors in the continuum of consciousness, and the ways of a cat are resumed when rebirth as a cat occurs

(VB. IV. 9). *Saṅkhāra* processes are also “carriers” of karmic merit and demerit: through them a complex network of causes are formed linking the time when an act is performed and the time when the consequences of the act are experienced.

The *Kathāvatthu* (Kvu. 405-408) records a debate concerning *anusayas* where the Theravādins strongly uphold their position that *anusayas*, like other mental states, are conditioned by mental objects. The conclusion is drawn that *anusayas* are to be classified as *saṅkhāras*. Nevertheless, the descriptions in the *Suttas* suggest that there is a difference between *saṅkhāras* and *anusayas*: whereas *saṅkhāras* are dynamic processes constituted of concrete acts of body, speech, and mind, *anusayas* are conditions that operate within the dynamic processes of the *saṅkhārakkhandha* in a specific manner marked by repetition and persistence. *Anusayas* can be interpreted as specific unwholesome conditions, for example, the feeling of “I” and “mine,” that tend to produce conditions similar to themselves in such a way that the similarity keeps recurring in the continuum of consciousness. Whereas conditioned acts of body, speech, and mind tend to come into being and pass away, the repetition of similar conditions that an *anusaya* represents continues to recur through many life spans until the *anusaya* is removed through the practice of the Eightfold Path.

Chapter IV

Cetanā in the *Sutta* literature

Although I focus on the *Suttas* in this chapter and on some *Abhidhamma* texts in the next one, this division is only for the sake of convenience, and is not based on the theory that the concepts of *saṅkhāra* and *cetanā* are viewed differently in the earlier and later groups of texts. On the contrary, in this work I take the position that the *Sutta-piṭaka*, the *Abhidhamma-piṭaka* and the commentarial literature can be viewed as a single integral whole since they fall within a single scholarly tradition that came to be known as Theravāda. This chapter and the next are based on the premise that Theravāda seeks to preserve its own coherence and consistency throughout the texts in which these two multifaceted terms, *saṅkhāra* and *cetanā*, are deployed and interpreted. I will, therefore, refer to *Abhidhamma* texts or to the commentarial literature when they shed light on passages in the *Suttas* where *saṅkhāra* and *cetanā* occur.

Both the Theravāda tradition and modern scholarship agree that the commentaries to the first four *nikāyas*, which were composed by Buddhaghosa in Sri Lanka during the early part of the fifth century C.E., are based on ancient commentaries that were brought from India and translated into the Sinhalese language. Additions to these old commentaries were made till the first century C.E. by individual teachers, whose names and exegetical opinions are found in the old commentaries. By summarizing and translating this old commentarial literature, Buddhaghosa produced a commentary in Pāli for each of the first four *nikāyas*: the *Dīgha*, the *Majjhima*, the *Saṃyutta*, and the *Aṅguttara* (Warder 1970, 322; Norman 1983, 118-122; Hinüber 1997, 100-103). Although the commentaries to the first four *nikāyas* are based on ancient sources, they

show the influence of the theory of momentary *dhammas* and the *Abhidhamma* classification of physical and mental states. In some passages of the commentaries (SA. II. 78; MA. III. 104-105; AA. II. 274) *cetanā* is classified as wholesome or unwholesome exactly in accordance with the enumeration of wholesome and unwholesome *cittas* in the *Atthasālinī* and the *Visuddhimagga*. Therefore, in referring to the commentarial explanations of *Sutta* passages, one should keep in mind that the commentaries bear the influence of the theory of momentariness and the *Abhidhamma* method of classifying mental states.

The challenge in interpreting the concept of *cetanā* in the *Sutta* literature comes from the paucity of references to this term despite its obvious importance for understanding the Theravāda approach to both the concept of *kamma* and the concept of the Eightfold Path leading to liberation from *kamma*. The nuances of meaning in *cetanā* have to be drawn out from the passages in which the focus is on other concepts such as *kamma* and rebirth. Moreover, although *cetanā* is formed from the same verb root as *citta*, there is no passage in the *Suttas* that overtly links *cetanā* to the cognitive functions of intellection and purposive thought that are attributes of the *citta*. *Cetanā* is not defined in terms of deliberation over possibilities leading to the choice of a goal. The closest that we get to such an understanding of *cetanā* is in the final section of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (A. V. 292-303). From the description of wholesome and unwholesome acts given here, the inference can be drawn that an act characterized by *sañcetanā* is an act that emerges from, and expresses, a specific attitude of mind (*citta*). It is not surprising that the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 84-102) bases its lengthy explanation of the relationship between *cetanā* and *kamma* on this section of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*. Just as the relationship of *cetanā* to *citta* requires clarification, so also, precisely what function *cetanā* serves as a constituent

of *saṅkhāra* is left unexplained in the *Suttas*. The difficulty in interpreting the relationship of *cetanā* to *saṅkhāra* is compounded by the fact that the latter remains one of the most elusive terms in the *Sutta* literature.

At the risk of oversimplification, in the first part of this chapter four different features of *cetanā* are distinguished. The first of these features is that *cetanā* functions as a factor of basic sentience (*nāma*). A second feature of *cetanā* is its role as intention or purposive thought. The association of *cetanā* with *paṭṭhanā* (aspiration towards a specific goal) and *paṇidhi* (resolve) is emphasized in this context. A third feature of *cetanā* described in this chapter is the identification of *cetanā* with *kamma*. The two terms *abhisāṅkhāra* and *sañcetanā* are explored in order to demonstrate that purposive thought is the distinctive function of *cetanā* with reference to *kamma*, distinguishing it from *saṅkhāra*. This section of this chapter also investigates the role of *cetanā* as one of the "nutriments" that feeds the processes of *kamma* and perpetuates rebirth; and the section closes with the detailed definitions of *cetanā* that occurs in the *Milindapañha*, which was probably composed much later than the *suttas* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* and the *Majjhima-nikāya*. The term *cetanā* occurs only rarely in passages that describe the Eightfold Path. Nevertheless, there are passages where the Buddha speaks of a type of *cetanā* that renounces *kamma* and the fruits of *kamma*. This relationship to the Eightfold Path is the fourth feature of *cetanā* explored in this chapter.

The second part of this chapter distinguishes four perspectives on the dynamics of motivation that can be extrapolated from the *Sutta* literature. These provide the context for the interpretation of *cetanā*. The first of these perspectives focuses on "motivational sequences" in the *Suttas*. Rune Johansson has shown in *The Dynamic Psychology of Early Buddhism* (1979) that the *Sutta* literature often describes motivation as a gradual

process where each stage is marked by an attitude of mind that provides the motivating conditions for the emergence of the next stage. I refer to his interpretation in order to develop the point that in the *Suttas*, volition—in the sense of an intention or resolve that also carries the capacity to initiate goal-oriented action—is regarded as a mental factor that emerges from a specific state of mind (*citta*) and is conditioned by its cognitive and emotive dimensions. One does not find in the *Sutta* literature a concept of "will" as an autonomous or dominating energy (*śakti*) that controls motivation.

A second perspective on motivation comes from passages in the *Suttas* that view wholesome motivation as a struggle against unwholesome attitudes that prevail in the mind. The vivid imagery of heroic striving "against the current" seems to put forward the notion of volition as a dominant process that can change the orientation of the intellect and control emotions. An investigation of the passages where this notion of the motivational struggle is enunciated reveals, however, that according to the Buddha's teaching, wholesome motivation becomes efficacious only when it is supported by the disciplines of the Eightfold Path and a wholesome lifestyle that fits the personality and needs of the disciple. Wholesome motivation prevails against the unwholesome only because it "flows with the current" of the supporting disciplines of the Eightfold Path. In the final analysis, therefore, these passages confirm the interpretation that regards volition in the *Suttas* to be a mental process that is conditioned by attitudes of mind that arise from the interplay of cognitive, emotive, and conative factors.

A third perspective on the *Sutta* view of how the motivation to change mental processes occurs is based on the discourses on the cultivation of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*). The method of mindfulness does not depend on arousing a sovereign "will" or "conscience" that can direct the intellect and cleanse the emotions of

unwholesome factors. Mindfulness as a method of transforming the mind is based on the affirmation that the mind has the capacity to observe its own present contents and past processes. The practice of mindfulness confirms the idea that in the *Suttas*, consciousness is regarded as an organic whole that can assess its own processes and bring about internal changes and adjustments.

A fourth perspective on motivational processes in the *Suttas* focuses on the motivating capacity attributed to understanding (*paññā*). Not only is understanding defined as intellectual acumen and judgment that can develop into liberating wisdom, but it is also regarded as having the capacity to cleanse and calm the emotions and rouse energy (*virīya*) to initiate goal-oriented action. The concept of *paññā* shows that in the *Suttas*, cognition and volition are regarded as mutually conditioning processes, and that cognitive factors, such as attention and understanding, are endowed with the capacity to initiate action.

***Cetanā* as basic sentience**

Whereas there are several references in the *Suttas* to the quietening (*samatha*)¹ and the final cessation (*nirodha*)² of the *saṅkhāras*, the cessation of *cetanā* is never posited as a condition for the attainment of *nibbāna*. This is because *cetanā* is regarded as a basic and necessary factor for the maintenance of sentience. The *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (S. III. 143)³ describes death as a state where life (*āyu*), heat (*usmā*), and conscious awareness (*viññāṇa*) depart from the body and it is thrown away as a thing devoid of *cetanā* (*acetana*). Bodhi translates *acetana* in this context as "without volition" (2000, 1:953), but Woodward paraphrases the term as "senseless thing" in *The Book of Kindred Sayings*

(C.A.F. Rhys Davids and Woodward 1917-1930, 3:121). In his note to this verse Woodward refers to the *Dhammapada* (Dhp. 41) where the dead body is compared to a useless, burnt log of wood. The same analogy appears in the *Majjhima-nikāya* (M. I. 296) where a dead body is said to resemble a block of wood that is lacking in *cetanā* (*yathā kaṭṭham acetanam*). In these contexts *acetana* refers to an insentient thing that is lacking in the basic conscious awareness that makes any form of cognition, emotion, or conation possible. It is to be noted that this is the meaning that *acetana* conveys in the *Maitrī Upaniṣad* (Mt.U. II. 2) where the physical body is compared to a cart that cannot drive itself since it has no *cetanā* of its own. The fact that *acetana* signifies that which lacks basic conscious awareness or sentience, both in the *Upaniṣads* and the *Suttas*, should both not be taken as an indication that the concept of *cetanā* in the *Suttas* develops out of the Upaniṣadic tradition. Rudimentary awareness correlated with vitality is only one of the meanings assigned to *cetanā* in the *Suttas*. Furthermore, in the Upaniṣads *cetanā* does not carry the specific meaning of intention imbued with the capacity to initiate goal-oriented action.

The body-mind organism is sometimes referred to in the *Suttas* as *nāma-rūpa*. The standard definition of *nāma-rūpa* identifies *rūpa* as the physical aggregate (*rūpakkhandha*). *Nāma* is said to be constituted of the four non-physical aggregates: feeling (*vedanākkhandha*), perception (*saññākkhandha*) mental formation (*saṅkhārakkhandha*), and conscious awareness (*viññāṇakkhandha*) (Vsm. XIV. 11). However, an unusual definition of *nāma* occurs in a passage of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (S. II. 3-4), where *vedanā* (feeling), *saññā* (perception), *cetanā*, *phassa* (contact of the senses and the mind with their objects) and *manasikāra* (attention) are named as its

constituents. These factors are the basic requirements for any cognitive, emotive or conative experience in the *citta*.

As a factor of basic sentience (*nāma*), *cetanā* can be regarded as the stirring of conative energy that vitalizes and moves the body and mind to goal-oriented activity. As a primary factor present in all states of consciousness, *cetanā* can be viewed as the impulse that directs attention to objects and makes consciousness (*viññāṇa*) object directed. An often-quoted passage of the *Majjhima-nikāya* (M. I. 259) declares that consciousness arises dependently when the senses and the mind enter into contact (*phassa*) with their respective objects. The object plays its part, through its qualities, in capturing the attention of the mind; but because the mind is conditioned by past experience, it is motivated to turn towards certain objects and to avoid others. When *cetanā* is said to be present in all states of consciousness, it can be seen as the goal-oriented impulse that instigates the contact of the senses and the mind with their respective objects. At the same time, this dynamic impulse designated as *cetanā* must be seen as an activating impetus that is itself caused and conditioned by the other factors of *nāma*.

When *cetanā* functions as a basic mental factor present in all states of consciousness, it cannot be regarded as full-fledged volition in the sense of deliberately choosing a goal and initiating action to achieve that goal. Nevertheless, the concept of *nāma* implies that even when *cetanā* functions only as a rudimentary mental factor that stirs the psychophysical organism, it co-ordinates co-present physical and mental factors in such a way that they are purposefully inclined towards objects. In this sense, its function can be conceived to be goal-oriented even when it takes its place with the basic factors of sentience.

Contact with objects as the basis of *cetanā*

In several passages in the *Suttas*, *cetanās* are named among the mental states that are said to be produced by contact (*phassa*) between the sense organs and their respective objects. In this context, the mind (*manas*) is counted as one of the senses, and mental factors such as concepts, sensory data and mental images are reckoned among "mental objects" (*dhammas*). The *manas* is also described as the organ that co-ordinates and synthesizes the sensory data of the five senses. The mind is said to experience (*paccanubhoti*) and comprehend the sensory range of the other senses (M. I. 295; S. V. 218). It can be inferred that this co-ordinating function of the mind at the inception of the sensory process influences all the mental states that are said to be generated by sensory contact. In the *Saṅgīti-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* (D. III. 243-244), the mental factors that arise when the five senses and the mind make contact with their objects are named in the following order: six types of feeling (*vedanā*), six types of perception (*saññā*), six types of *sañcetanā*, and six types of craving (*taṇhā*). The six types of feeling are named in accordance with the respective sense organs where the sensory contact occurs,⁴ but the six types of perception (*saññā*), *sañcetanā*, and desire (*taṇhā*) are classified in terms of the respective objects to which they are related.⁵ These lists suggest that, whereas the emphasis is on the subjective pole of experience in the case of pleasure, pain, and neutral feelings (*vedanā*) that immediately follow sensory contact, objects become the controlling factor in the case of perception, *sañcetanā* and craving. The order in which these *phassa*-generated mental states are listed also suggests that *sañcetanā* is conditioned by sensory contact, feeling, and perception. By the same token, the list suggests that craving cannot occur without *sañcetanā* as its antecedent condition.

The *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna-sutta* (D. II. 308-309) has the following slightly expanded list. As in the *Saṅgīti-sutta*, the six types of *viññāṇa* and the six types of *vedanā* are named in terms of the five sense organs and the mind (*manas*). The above *phassa*-generated states are followed by the six types of perception (*saññā*), *sañcetanā*, craving (*taṇhā*), applied thought (*vitakka*) and sustained thought (*vicāra*). In the case of this group of mental states, the classification is in terms of the types of objects contacted by the sense organs and the mind. *Vitakka* plays a complex role here. There are passages in the *Suttas* where *vitakka* indicates discursive thinking.⁶ However, there are other contexts (M. I. 114, D. III. 215) where *vitakka* signifies wholesome and unwholesome thought processes that are the basis of intentions. Wholesome *vitakkas* are thoughts of renunciation, thoughts that are free of malevolence, and thoughts of abstaining from harming anyone. Unwholesome *vitakkas* are thoughts of sensual desire, thoughts of malevolence, and thoughts of doing injury.

The lists are important because they show that in the *Suttas*, cognitive processes such as basic cognitive awareness (*viññāṇa*) and perception (*saññā*), as well as action-producing impulses such as goal-directed thought (*cetanā*) and craving (*taṇhā*), are said to arise from a common source, namely sensory and mental stimulation. The interdependence that is posited between motivational and cognitive processes is traced to their common origination.

***Cetanā* as intention and impulse**

In the next two chapters it will be shown that the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 88-104) quite unequivocally describes *cetanā* as purposive thought or intention that has the capacity to initiate goal-directed acts of body, speech, and mind. Moving beyond analogies and

cryptic definitions, the *Atthasālinī* gives a full account of how *cetanā* bridges the cognitive function of purposive deliberation through which the goal is determined and the conative function of initiating action to achieve that goal. This exposition of the relationship between *kamma* and *cetanā* in the *Atthasālinī* can be read as a commentary to the chapter of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* entitled "The body generated by deeds" (*Karajakāya-vagga*) (A. V. 288-303). Here acts that are karmically operative are called *sañcetanika kamma* and are said to be caused by *sañcetanā* (*sañcetanā-hetu*) (A.V.294). In support of its position, the *Atthasālinī* also cites the definition of *kamma* given at A. III. 415, as well as the description of karmically operative acts at S. II. 39-40, which is repeated at A. II. 157-158. A further reference in the *Atthasālinī* is the statement on *kamma* at M. III. 208-209 which has its parallel in another passage at A. II. 230. These passages are significant, then, because the tradition finds in them support for the view that *cetanā* is the purposive impulse that instigates *kamma*.

The passage that the *Atthasālinī* cites from the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (S. II. 39-40) begins with the Buddha's statement that, since the body is a given fact, there are *sañcetanās* related to the body, and these bring about pleasure and pain, both of which are experienced "internally". The term "internally" (*ajjhātam*) signifies that the pleasure and pain are immediately and directly experienced as one's own mental states. The same statement is made with regard to *sañcetanās* of speech and mind.⁷ *Sañcetanā* is not defined in this passage, but the context in which the term appears and the link of *sañcetanā* with *ceteti* suggest that *sañcetanika* acts of body, speech, and mind are physical, verbal, and mental acts that arise as expressions of *cetanā* that functions as directed thought, purposive deliberation, or intention. The two terms *cetanā* and *sañcetanā* are regarded as synonyms (Dhs. 10).

In the passage referred to above (S. II. 39-40), there is an identification of the two terms *sañcetanika kamma* and *abhisañkhāra* such that both terms equally denote karmically operative acts of body, speech, and mind. These acts are said to be fourfold with reference to the way action is initiated: acts based on one's own initiative (*sāmam*), acts caused by others (*para*), acts that are done deliberately (*sampajāna*), and acts that are "undeliberate" (*asampajāna*).⁸ The category of "undeliberate action" was referred to in Chapter III in connection with Padmasiri de Silva's contention that *asampajāna* refers to an action influenced by "unconscious motivation."

There is a difference in emphasis with regard to the meaning of the two terms: *sañcetanika-kamma* and *abhisañkhāra*. This passage can be interpreted to mean that in the case of *abhisañkhāra*, the emphasis is on the mutual conditioning of the assembled factors and on the conditioned nature of the effect they produce. In the case of *sañcetanika* (characterized by *sañcetanā*) or *sañcetanā-hetu* (caused by *sañcetanā*), on the other hand, the emphasis can be placed on goal-oriented thought or intention because of the link of *sañcetanā* with the verb *ceteti* (to think, to intend).

The commentary (SA. II. 58) provides some help in explaining the meaning of *sañcetanika*. An act that is caused by others (*para*) is defined here as an act that is prompted or instigated (*sasañkhāra*).⁹ The *Atthasālinī* gives the example of a novice who carries out his duties when another person prompts him to do so. An act that is instigated by another can be regarded as intended (*sañcetanika*) when it includes the acquiescence of the person who actually performs the deed. The examples of *sasañkhāra* deeds provided by the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 156) suggest that this term refers to acts that are prompted, but are agreed to by the person who does the action. The term *asampajāno* is explained in the commentary as a person who knows how to perform the act but has no

understanding of its consequences.¹⁰ The example is given of children who imitate their parents in performing rituals at a shrine but have no understanding of the karmic consequences (*vipāka*) of such acts. However, *asampajāna* has other connotations that can be better understood by studying the meaning of its opposite, *sampajāna*, in other contexts. The term *sampajāna-musāvāda* signifies a deliberate lie, for example, at D. III. 45 where we have the description of a false ascetic (*tapassī*) who speaks a deliberate lie (*sampajāna-musā bhāsītā hoti*): he maintains that he approves of something when he does not, and holds that he disapproves of something when he actually approves of it. The *Āṅguttara-nikāya* (A. I. 128, V. 265) provides the example of a person who knowingly speaks a lie (*sampajāna-mūsā*) by giving false witness at a court. The term *sampajānakārin*¹¹ refers to one who acts with attention and understands the nature and consequences of the act. It follows, then, that *asampajāna* in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* passage (S. II. 40) can be interpreted as doing an act with intention, but without an understanding of what the act implies and what consequences are apt to arise from it. In the examples given in the *Atthasālinī*, the children intend to imitate their parents, but understand neither the full significance, nor the consequence, of their deeds of imitation.

In spite of the explanation given above, the interpretation of *asampajāna* continues to pose problems. Since *sampajāna* refers to a state of mind that is mindful and attentive, *asampajāna* could mean, not only "lack of understanding," but also "lack of attention." It is difficult to see how a person can be lacking in attention (*asampajāna*) and yet act with intention (*sañcetanā*), or how one can be inattentive yet act with understanding and with a sense of purpose. One solution would be to take note that both deliberate acts and acts done without proper attention can be based on habits. Responsibility for one's intentions must include responsibility for the attitudes of mind and the habits that condition and give

rise to those intentions. *Sampajāna* (deliberation, attentiveness, continual mindfulness) and *asampajāna* (lack of understanding and attention) are considered to be attitudes based on habits of mind that are cultivated over a period of time through past intentional acts. For this reason, these present acts are seen as factors that can be evaluated as wholesome and unwholesome, respectively, and they can be regarded as leading to karmic consequences of joy and sorrow, even when they are done out of habit, without due attention. One can be held responsible, for example, for mental habits of negligent carelessness (*pamāda*) or laziness and lethargy (*thīna-middha*), or obsessive worry (*vicikicchā*), which may lead to acts done inattentively, without due deliberation. The connotations of the term "intention" would then be expanded to include the habits of thought and way of life from which it arises.

In the passages related to *kamma* referred to above, *abhisāṅkhāras* and *abhisāñcetanika* acts of body, speech, and mind are usually described in terms of their ability to bring about commensurate karmic consequences. By comparison there are fewer passages where *cetanā* and *sañcetanā* imply decision-making processes of forming specific intentions or purposes that serve as motivating impulses. A passage at A. II. 159 can be interpreted as a reference to four types of intentions (*sañcetanās*) pertaining to four types of deeds. This passage states that when rebirth follows death, a new personality (*attabhāva*) is obtained in one of the four following ways. This can happen through one's own intention (*sañcetanā*) coming to karmic fruition, or through another person's *sañcetanā* becoming effective, or as the combined consequence of one's own and another person's *sañcetanās*, or without either one's own *sañcetanā* or another person's *sañcetanā* taking effect.¹² The short section of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* where this passage occurs is entitled *sañcetanika-vagga*. The same four ways of obtaining a fresh

personality as a result of death and rebirth are listed at D. III. 231. The usual teaching in the *Suttas* is that one is heir to one's own past intentional deeds.¹³ At A. II. 159, however, death and the consequent acquiring of a new personality through rebirth are said to be dependent, in some cases, on the intention of another (*para-sañcetanā*).

The following examples are given in the text and in the commentaries to explain these four ways of experiencing death and rebirth. To explain how the acquiring of a new personality can be due to one's own *sañcetanā*, the example is given of a certain class of gods who for aeons pursue sensual pleasure until they become tired and sated. They are no longer able to maintain their life-style and fall from their privileged status (AA. III. 147). Here the downfall of these gods is due to their own intentions to pursue more and more pleasure. In his translation of the *Dīgha-nikāya*, T. W. Rhys Davids says that death due to the intention of another (*para-sañcetanā*) is illustrated by the slaying of an animal by a butcher (1889-1921, 3:222, n.4). However, Rhys Davids does not discuss the problems posed by the notion that though the reprehensible intentional act is performed by the butcher, the consequence is borne by the animal. This goes against the principle that one inherits the consequences of one's own intentional acts. Although the immediate cause of death in this example given by Rhys Davids is the intention of the butcher, one way of interpreting this example would be to perceive the painful death as the karmic consequence of an act intentionally done sometime in the past by a person who was subsequently reborn as this unfortunate animal. This interpretation traces the karmic consequence of death at a butcher's hand to a person's own intention (*atta-sañcetanā*) with regard to a previous act of body, speech, or mind.

The commentary (AA. III. 148) suggests that in the cases of suicides and murdered people, death occurs due both to one's own intention (*atta-sañcetanā*) and the intentional

acts of another (*para-sañcetanā*). Here also the commentary does not explain how the intention of another person can be regarded as affecting one's own *kamma* and its fruition. In the case of a new personality being attained through neither one's own intention nor the intention of another, the text (A. II. 160) explains that this happens in the case of a person who continually cultivates the higher levels of meditation. The Buddha tells Sāriputta that if a person attains the meditational state called "neither-perception-nor-non-perception" and dwells in the peace and equanimity of that state, when death occurs, that person attains the cosmic level corresponding to that high state of meditation. If that person has not removed all the fetters that bind the mind to the realm of rebirth, after aeons of sojourn in that cosmic realm of peace, that person returns to the rounds of rebirth and acquires a new personality. If all fetters are removed, that person becomes a "non-returner" (*anāgāmi*) and does not return to the realm of rebirth. This passage suggests that there are no self-motivating intentions (*atta-sañcetanā*) in the mind of a person who cultivates and abides in the meditational level of "neither-perception-nor-non-perception." It appears, then, that in the case of those who are reborn in cosmic levels corresponding to the *jhāna* level of "neither-perception nor-non-perception" their rebirth is not the result of any form of intentional activity. Although there are problems in interpreting this passage, it is clear that *atta-sañcetanā* signifies one's own intention or purpose and *para-sañcetanā* signifies the intention of another. The commentary further assumes that *cetanā*, in association with other factors, acts as a motive for action.

***Cetanā*, aspiration, and resolve**

Other occasions where *cetanā* carries the meaning of "intention" occur when it is combined with *patthanā* (aspiration) and *paṇidhi* (resolve). The association of *cetanā* with these two terms in several *Sutta* passages¹⁴ has been interpreted by both Matthews and Hamilton as an indication that *cetanā* conveys not only purposive thought but also the capacity to initiate goal-oriented action.¹⁵ It is to be noted, however, that both *patthanā* and *paṇidhi* express an emotionally fervent affirmation of an intention, once that intention has been formed, rather than the actual process of forming an intention by deciding on a goal or deploying energy to achieve that goal. The central meaning of both the terms *patthanā* and *paṇidhi* is "aspiration," "request," "yearning" or "prayer." For example, at S. IV. 302-303 the *devatās* of the wooded parks urge the virtuous householder Citta to make a wish (*paṇidhehi*) for himself that in the course of rebirth he should become a "wheel-turning" monarch. As another example, the notion of wish or aspiration is dominant when the three terms—*cetanā*, *patthanā*, and *paṇidhi*—occur together in the imagery that illustrates the nutriment of *mano-saṁcetanā* (S. II. 99). The imagery portrays a man whose *cetanā* (intention), *patthanā* (yearning), *paṇidhi* (wish) is to flee as far away as possible, even as he is being relentlessly drawn to a fiery pit. The text speaks of the man's *āraṇṇavassa cetanā* (intention to get far away), *āraṇṇa patthanā* (yearning to get far away), *āraṇṇa paṇidhi* (wish to get far away). The man has the desperate wish to be released, even though he knows that he cannot initiate action to achieve his wish. Here the meaning of *cetanā* focuses on intention or goal-directed thought.

There are two other passages, both in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (A. I. 32, V. 212) where *cetanā*, *pattanā*, and *paṇidhi* are associated with acts of body, speech, and mind.

The central theme of these passages, however, is not the capacity of *cetanā* to produce goal-oriented acts, but the overarching power of speculative views (*diṭṭhi*) to condition mental attitudes and acts, and to determine the course of rebirth. At A. V. 212¹⁶ it is stated that in the case of a person of wrong view (*micchā-diṭṭhi*), all acts of body, speech, and mind that are undertaken and accomplished in accordance with that view, all *cetanā*, *patthanā* and *paṇidhi*, and all *saṅkhārās* will conduce to unhappy consequences and a sorrowful rebirth. By the same token, adherence to right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*) is said to generate *kamma*, *cetanā*, *patthanā*, *paṇidhi*, and *saṅkhārās* that bring about desirable, pleasant, and beneficial consequences, and a happy rebirth. Woodward nicely elucidates the nuances of *cetanā*, *patthanā*, and *paṇidhi* when he renders the three terms as "intentions, aspirations, resolves" in *The Book of Gradual Sayings* (1932, 1:28).

In the commentarial literature, however, these three terms are interpreted as stages of a single process of forming and implementing an intention. *Cetanā* is distinguished from *patthanā* and *paṇidhi* by attributing to it the capacity to initiate action with the purpose of carrying out an intention. *Patthanā* is explained in the commentary to the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* as the preliminary process of focusing the mind on the aspiration: "May such and such an event actually come about." And *paṇidhi* is explained as the subsequent process of making the mind to reflect fervently on a wish such as: "May I be reborn as this or that god."¹⁷ Unlike *patthanā* and *paṇidhi*, *cetanā* is explained in the commentary (AA. V. 69) in terms of its capacity to initiate action in body, speech, and mind (*tīsu dvāresu nibattita-cetanā va gahitā*). The three terms *cetanā*, *patthanā* and *paṇidhi* also occur together in the *Kathāvatthu* (Kvu. 380-381). The commentary to the *Kathāvatthu* (KvuA. 10) takes *patthanā* and *paṇidhi* to be equivalents of *cetanā*. *Patthanā* is said to represent *cetanā* in its preliminary stage of forming a purpose, while *paṇidhi* points to

cetanā in its subsequent stage of persistence in that purpose.¹⁸ The conclusion can be drawn that in the *Suttas*, as well as in the commentarial literature, *patthanā* and *paṇidhi* convey strong wish or aspiration, but do not include in their connotation the conative capacity to initiate goal-oriented action. When *cetanā*, *patthanā*, and *paṇidhi* occur together, *cetanā* signifies an intention or purpose in which the aspiration or wish is expressed.

There are two passages in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (S. II. 66-67), each entitled *cetanā*, where the verb *ceteti* can be taken to mean “to form a purpose,” or “to intend.” In these passages, *ceteti* is associated with two other verbs *pakappeti* and *anuseti*. *Pakappeti* signifies forming, arranging, designing or planning in the mind with a view to implementing the plan (P.E.D. 379, col. 2). *Anuseti* signifies having an underlying tendency. The passages say that when a person intends (*ceteti*), plans (*pakappeti*), or has an underlying tendency towards something, that that becomes an object (*ārammaṇam*) for the mind. The passages go on to say that the object becomes a basis for the development of the processes of conscious awareness and cognitive discernment (*viññāṇa*). The conclusion is made that this mode of developing conscious processes brings about the conditions that lead to rebirth. The association of *ceteti* with *pakappeti* and the thrust of the whole section imply that *ceteti* signifies forming and implementing purposes that cause conscious awareness to become occupied with future goals.

A more precise understanding of the sense in which the term "intention" applies to *cetanā* can be obtained from the descriptions of wholesome and unwholesome *kamma* found in the *Karajakāya-vagga* of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (A. V. 292-301). A fuller analysis of how the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* portrays the manner in which acts of body, speech, and mind arise is given in the next section of this chapter, where the focus is on *cetanā* as

kamma. The vivid descriptions of specific wholesome and unwholesome acts that the *Karajakāya-vagga* gives imply that, in every case, the intention to act arises from a specific attitude of mind. For example, the wholesome intentional act of abstaining from injuring living beings is regarded as having its base in a habitually compassionate attitude of mind. Furthermore, the descriptions indicate that these attitudes of mind are conditioned by habit. These habit patterns can be interpreted to be manifestations of the activity of *saṅkhāras*. It follows, then, that the intention that precedes and instigates a karmically operative act exhibits a twofold conditioning: it is influenced by the dominating factors in the attitude of mind (*citta*) from which it arises; and it is conditioned by the habit patterns that *saṅkhāras* proliferate.

Of special interest is the category of mental *sañcetanika* acts, which is included in the standard list of wholesome and unwholesome *sañcetanika* acts of body, speech, and mind. The category of *sañcetanika* mental acts throws further light on how intention is conceived in relation to acts that bring about karmic consequences. Such primarily cognitive mental acts as discursive thoughts, reasoning and judgment are not included in this category. According to the list, unwholesome *sañcetanika* mental acts are covetousness, ill-will, and wrong view. Wholesome *sañcetanika* mental acts comprise absence of covetousness and ill-will, and affirmation of right view. Each of the *sañcetanika* mental acts, such as absence of ill-will, is viewed as the end product of an intention that gives dynamic expression to a habitual attitude that involves the mind as a whole.

The formative role of *saṅkhāras* in the processes of kamma

In the *Sutta* literature, *saṅkhāra* is named as the mental function that works within the continuum of consciousness (*citta*) to bring together various factors and "form" them into configurations or "formations" that serve a purpose and put forth consequences. The way *saṅkhāras* operate in composing fresh effects by bringing together causal conditions is indicated by the verb *abhisāṅkharoti*, and the configurations are designated as *saṅkhāras* or *abhisāṅkhāras*. The configurations include the *khandhas* that constitute the individual, and acts of body, mind, and speech that have karmic consequences: *saṅkhāras* construct the personality continuum as a series of configurations, and they also construct, (as a dynamic series,) the goal-oriented activities through which a person finds enhancement and self-expression. Each configuration provides the conative energy and the conditions for the arising of a new configuration of mental states. The designation *saṅkhāra* is applied to a single configuration as well as to a series of configurations forming a process that is characterized by productivity and change, in accordance with conditioned origination. These configurations become manifest as acts of body, speech, and mind. In this sense, Johansson's interpretation of *saṅkhāra* as "dynamic process" is apt and appropriate (Johansson 1979, 44). Furthermore, the term *saṅkhāra* includes in its meaning the forming of patterns of habits. *Saṅkhāra* represents, not only a series of configurations of conditions manifesting as physical, verbal, and mental acts, but also the patterns of conditioning through which each act and series of acts are produced. These patterns of conditioning manifest as the tendency to form habits out of physical, verbal, and mental acts. For example, when truthful, well-chosen words are designated as wholesome verbal *saṅkhāra*, the designation includes the habits of mind that condition such speech.

The *Khandha-saṃyutta* (S. III. 63) defines the *saṅkhārakkhandha* with the statement that *saṅkhāras* are constituted of the six classes of *cetanās* that arise from sensory and mental stimulation. This statement implies that the activity by which *saṅkhāras* bring together physical and mental factors to form acts of body, speech, and mind is brought about by *cetanās*. Unfortunately, the *Khandha-saṃyutta* does not clarify precisely how *cetanās* constitute the constructive activity of the *saṅkhāras*.

The *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (S. III. 87) succinctly defines the function of *saṅkhāra* as "putting together or forming (*abhisankharoti*) that, which is formed (*sankhatam*)."¹⁹ It is said here that *saṅkhāras* form the five aggregates in such a manner that the specific nature of each aggregate—for example, the "physicality" of the physical body—is produced. This passage is significant because the rarely used abstract nouns physicality (*rūpatta*), "feeling-ness" (*vedanatta*), "perception-ness" (*saññānatta*), "*saṅkhāra*-ness" (*saṅkhāratta*), and consciousness (*viññāṇatta*) are found here. The use of the abstract noun signifies that the production of the specific nature of each aggregate is dependent on the functions of "bringing together" and "forming" that is performed by the mental factors of the *saṅkhārakkhandha*. The commentary (SA. II. 292) explains *abhisankharoti* with the analogy of cooking rice gruel or baking a cake.²⁰ This analogy implies that the effect of the blending of ingredients is a fresh product with its own specific nature. According to the commentary, each of the aggregates has its specific nature (*bhāva*) and is made in the same way that rice gruel is cooked for the purpose of making rice gruel or a cake is baked for the purpose of baking a cake. The commentary goes on to say that the aggregate of physical form (the body) is designated as compounded (*sankhatam*), because it is produced by the coming together of antecedent conditions (*paccayehi samāgantvā kata bhāvena sankhatam ti laddha nāma*). The statement is added that it becomes physical

form (*rūpa*) because it is "composed" (*abhisankhatam*) in such a way as to produce its nature of "physicality" (*rūpa-bhāvāya*). The arising of the specific nature of the other aggregates is similarly explained.

In interpreting the function of *saṅkhāra*, one should bear in mind that every *saṅkhāra* is an assembly of conditions, which assemble in such a way that they produce another assembly of conditions, just as all the conditions for the baking of a cake produce a baked cake. The commentary (SA. II. 292)²¹ explains *abhisankharoti* with three synonyms: *āyūhati* (to strive, to accumulate), *saṃpiṇḍeti* (to combine), and *nipphādeti* (to produce). *Āyūhati* conveys "to endeavour, strain, exert oneself" (P.E.D. 106, col.2), but in the commentarial literature *kammāyūhana* signifies the heaping up of wholesome and unwholesome *kamma*.²² *Saṃpiṇḍeti* connotes accumulating or amassing. The term means, literally, "to knead together" and form a ball (P.E.D. 692, col.2). However, the analogies of making rice gruel and baking a cake demonstrate that *abhisankharoti* signifies, not the mere accumulation of factors, but a synthesis that results in a new product that manifests its distinctive characteristic. For this reason, the commentary offers the third synonym *nipphādeti* which signifies "to bring forth, produce accomplish" (P.E.D. 361, col.1). The term *cetanā* is not found at S. III. 87 in the description of how the aggregates are "aggregated" by *saṅkhāra*. The commentary, however, refers to *cetayita* as the defining characteristic of *saṅkhāra*.²³ No synonyms of *cetayita* are offered in the commentary, and the meaning of this term is not clarified. It is to be noted that neither the text nor the commentary considers the process of producing the aggregates to be the result of the cognitive process of choosing a goal and resolving to pursue it. The emphasis is on the conative function of bringing together and combining factors in such a way that a new effect is produced. Nevertheless, the commentarial statement that *cetayita*

is the defining characteristic of *saṅkhāra* can be interpreted to mean that the "composing" (*abhisāṅkharoti*) is a goal-oriented function motivated by purposive thought and impulse (*cetanā*). To return to the analogy, cooking food is an intentional act directed towards a purpose.

Abhisāṅkharoti signifies "forming" *kamma* in a passage of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (A. I. 122) that speaks of three types of acts of body, speech, and mind: those that are characterized as harmful (*savyāpajjham*), those that are classified as not harmful (*avyāpajjam*) and those that are said to be both harmful and not harmful. The commentary (AA. II. 192) explains *abhisāṅkharoti* as the amassing of such acts. The synonyms of *abhisāṅkharoti* given here are *āyūhati* (strives, accumulates *kamma*), *rāsim karoti* ("forms a heap," amasses), and *piṇḍeti* ("kneads into a ball," composes). Both *saṅkhāra* and *cetanā* are terms whose meaning cannot be understood outside the context of *kamma*. Within the continuum of consciousness, *saṅkhārās* perform a twofold function: from a psychological perspective, they are vehicles of the patterns of conditioning through which individual characteristics are formed and displayed as habits, dispositions, and tendencies; and from the perspective of *kamma* they are the bearers of karmic merit and demerit. *Saṅkhāra* processes are karmic processes in the sense that they constitute the series of acts of body, speech, and mind in which wholesome and unwholesome conditions are "carried forward," as it were, in time. The consequences of these acts are experienced by persons whose physical and mental aspects are formed through the compounding activities of *saṅkhārās*.

From the perspective of *kamma*, *saṅkhārās* (goal-oriented acts) are classified in two ways. With reference to the "door of action" *saṅkhārās* are classified as acts of body, speech, and mind (*kāya-saṅkhāra*, *vacī-saṅkhāra*, *citta-saṅkhāra*) (M. I. 54). On the other

hand, with reference to the fruition of *kamma*, (*kamma-vipāka*), *saṅkhārās* are classified as "characterized by merit" (*puññābhisaṅkhāra*), "characterized by demerit" (*apuññābhisaṅkhāra*), and "pertaining to the imperturbable" *āneñjābhisaṅkhāra* (D. III. 217). The term *āneñjābhisaṅkhāra* refers to the attainment of the higher meditative states that are marked by serene equanimity and are characterized as "formless" (*arūpa*).²⁴ Since these meditative states are not free of ignorance (*avijjā*) and craving, they are said to produce karmic consequences consisting of rebirth in cosmic realms that correspond in their tranquil characteristics to those higher states of meditation (M. II. 262-265). The term *āneñja*, explained as "immovable," refers to the lucid stillness and imperturbability experienced in the higher levels of meditation (*arūpa-jhānas*).

All *abhisaṅkhāra* configurations exhibiting as acts of body, speech, and mind have *abhisaṅkhāra* as their defining characteristic: that is to say, the constituent factors are brought together in such a way that they are put in a state of readiness to produce a result. The commentary to D. III. 217 explains *saṅkhārās* as follows: "they bind together (*saṅkharonti*) co-arising conditioned factors with factors pertaining to karmic fruition in the future" (DA. III. 997). The co-arising conditioned factors (*saha-jāta-dhamme*) are the physical and mental states that come together to form an act that belongs to the present. Precisely how they are linked with factors of future karmic fruition (*samparāya-phala-dhamme*) is not explained in the commentary to the *Dīgha-nikāya*. Nevertheless, it is implied that the way conditions are brought together in a present act is efficacious and already anticipates future consequences. Conditioned origination implies that it is the assembling of conditions that produces the consequences. The conditions pass away, but in due course, the effect arises. The sound of an angry word ceases, but its consequences are felt in time.

It is implied in the *Nidāna-saṃyutta* (S. II. 82-83) that it is because of the eagerness to experience and prolong a range of feelings that one "puts together" (*abhisankharoti*) one's resources to produce goal-oriented acts. This passage goes on to explain that when a person, acting under the influence of ignorance, produces *sankhāras* of merit, *sankhāras* of demerit, or *sankhāras* pertaining to the imperturbable levels of consciousness, then, in the course of rebirth, that person's consciousness (*viññāṇa*) "proceeds" in the same direction as the *sankhāra*.²⁵ From the perspective of *kamma* this statement signifies that the type of goal-oriented acts (*sankhāras*) a person cultivates will determine the circumstances in which that person will be reborn. From the perspective of personality development, this passage stresses the mutual dependence of cognitive awareness (*viññāṇa*) and action-producing (*sankhāras*): goal-oriented acts are conditioned by the way consciousness discerns and experiences the world, these acts endow consciousness with its perspectives and standpoints. The *Nidāna-saṃyutta* gives the following description of the behaviour of a person whose mind is no longer beset with ignorance. When ignorance loses its hold, a person begins to perceive the impermanence of feelings and knows that one should not cleave to pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral states of mind, nor rejoice in such experiences.²⁶ When a person remains detached (*visaṇṇutto*) from the excitations and motivating capacities of feelings, then that person is said to be no longer in the grip of ignorance. This *Saṃyutta-nikāya* passage goes on to say that when a person is no longer ignorantly preoccupied with producing goal-oriented acts, (*anabhisankharonto, anabhisāñcetayanto*), then the mind is no longer in bondage to the future and is freed from rebirth. It is posited that when the mind is released from clinging (*na upādiyati*) and nervous excitement (*na paritassati*), then one directly experiences freedom from rebirth (S. II. 82).²⁷

The passage concludes with the statement that a *bhikkhu* whose *āsava*s are destroyed (*khīṇāsavo bhikkhu*) would no longer produce *abhisāṅkhāras* characterized by merit, demerit, or imperturbability since he no longer craves to prolong present experiences or produce new experiences. The proclivity to produce goal-oriented acts (*saṅkhāras*) is associated with people who delight in (*abhiramanti*) such acts in another passage of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (S. V. 449).²⁸ Again, this passage stresses that when a person has no understanding of the origin and cessation of suffering, then that person is impelled to proliferate *saṅkhāras* that lead to the varied experiences of rebirth. Here also *saṅkhāras* are seen to be generated by a mind that enjoys preparing and putting together goal-directed activities. And these activities (*saṅkhāras*) are interpreted to be the vital forces that keep alive the mind's delight in new modes of experience.

Saṅcetanika kamma: intentional act with karmic consequences

The meaning of the terms *cetanā* and *saṅcetanā* is further clarified in the *Saṅcetanika-vagga* of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (A.II. 157-158 = S.II. 39-40) where acts caused by *saṅcetanā* (*saṅcetanā-hetu*) and *saṅkhāra* have the same denotation. An act of speech caused by *saṅcetanā* is called a *saṅkhāra* of speech. Acts of body, speech, and mind that are expressions of *saṅcetanā* are also designated as *saṅcetanika kamma* (M.III.208-209; A.V. 293-295). These passages demonstrate that *saṅcetanika kamma* indicates a karmically operative act that is produced through the assembling of causal conditions. In the *Mahāvibhaṅga-sutta* (M. III. 208-209), the Buddha explains that *saṅcetanika-kammās* of body, speech, and mind lead to commensurate consequences that may be experienced as pleasure, pain, or neither-pain-nor-pleasure.²⁹ The text does not define *saṅcetanā*. The commentary explains *saṅcetanika-kamma*, not in terms of

intention, but merely as action that entails consequences (*sābhisandhikarī kammam*) (MA. V. 16). Clearly, in this context *sañcetanika*, like *abhisāṅkhāra*, is shown to be a term whose significance is drawn from *kamma* and its processes. *Sañcetanika kamma*, like *abhisāṅkhāra* signifies a goal-oriented act that is conditioned by the past, is reckoned as "meritorious," "non-meritorious," or "imperturbable," and produces commensurate consequences.

In the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (S. II. 64-65) the Buddha teaches that the body belongs neither to oneself nor to another.³⁰ The point here is that since there is no "self" (*attā*), the body cannot be regarded as belonging to anyone. The passage goes on to define the body as past *kamma* (*purāṇa kamma*). Two other qualifying terms, namely, *abhisāṅkhata* and *abhisāñcetaṇita* are appended to *purāṇa kamma*.³¹ However, this passage does not demonstrate how the two terms, *abhisāṅkhata* and *abhisāñcetaṇita* differ in meaning.

In another passage of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (S. IV. 132) the formula that links the body with past *kamma* (S. II. 64-65) is applied to the senses and the mind.³² As in the case of the body, the senses and the mind are also said to be old *kamma* (*purāṇa-kamma*) and are described as *abhisāṅkhata*, *abhisāñcetaṇita*. At S. IV. 132 the Buddha says that he teaches old *kamma* (*purāṇa-kamma*), new *kamma* (*nava-kamma*), the cessation of *kamma* (*kamma-nirodha*), and the way leading to the cessation of *kamma*. The senses and the mind are defined as old *kamma*, current acts of body, speech, and mind are described as new *kamma*, the attainment of liberation (*vimutti*) through the cessation of such acts is designated as cessation of *kamma* (*kamma-nirodha*), and the noble Eightfold Path is declared to be the way leading to the cessation of *kamma* (*kamma-nirodha-gāminī-paṭipadā*). The idea that the present body is past *kamma* can be interpreted to mean that it is the end product of a vast chain of causes and conditions that extends into an

immeasurable past. The Theravāda position is that the five aggregates of the personality arise together and condition each other. Consciousness (*viññāṇa*) and the five aggregates that constitute the mind and the body (*nāma-rūpa*) are said to be mutually conditioning like two bundles of reeds leaning on each other (S. II. 14). This implies that physical and mental factors continually condition each other in the processes of living, dying, and being reborn. The body, no less than consciousness, bears the characteristics of continuity and change. The goal-oriented thoughts and impulses (by which *cetanā* produces acts) influence, not only the mind, but also the changes that the body undergoes. When the body and senses are called "old *kamma*" this signifies that they are the recapitulation, the living testimony, of all the past intentions and purposes that have been articulated in the personality continuum. Just as the trunk of a tree has its rings, in the body are the marks of an ancient past. Furthermore, the "new *kamma*" formed by present acts of the body already reach forward to future consequences. The future body is already in the making. By designating the body as "old *kamma*" the Buddha signals that the body is as much a vehicle of karmic continuity as consciousness (*viññāṇa*) is declared to be.

Like the passage that describes the body as old *kamma* (S. II. 64-65), the passage that describes the senses and the *manas* as old *kamma* (S. IV. 132) also leaves *abhisañcetanā* undefined. The commentary (SA. II. 402) distinguishes between *abhisañkhatam* and *abhisañcetaṇitā* by defining the former as "that which has been brought about (*katam*) by causal conditions (*paccayehi*) when they have come together," and the latter as "that which is designed or planned (*pakappitam*) by *cetanā*."³³ *Pakappitam*, derived from the verb root *kṛp*, has the basic meaning of "to form" or "to arrange." However, the term also conveys "prepare, determine, plan" (P.E.D. 379, col.2). It follows, then, that by glossing *abhisañcetaṇitā* as *cetanāya pakappitam* (formed or

designated by *cetanā*), the commentary confers on *abhisāñcetaṇitā* a cognitive content and the sense of "directed thought" or "purposive reflection." These cognitive features distinguish *pakappita* from *katā*, the term, which the commentary links with *abhisāñkhatā*. Including in its meaning both "to make" and "to do," *katā* tends to convey that which is produced (*uppāditā*) through the capacity to initiate action (AA.V.84). Unlike *pakappita*, *katā* does not necessarily include in its meaning the cognitive processes of planning, designing, or determining. The two terms *abhisāñkharoti* and *abhisāñcetaṇiti* are distinguished in a similar manner in other passages of the commentarial literature. At MA. V. 57 *abhisāñkharoti* is explained as binding together (*rāsim karoti*) causal conditions and accumulating (*āyūhati*) *kamma*. *Abhisāñcetaṇiti* is explained as "forming" or "designing" (*kappeti*) a thought. Similarly, at AA. V. 84 *abhisāñcetaṇitā* is glossed with the two terms *cetita* (intended) and *kappita* (designed, planned). The Saṃskṛt term *kalpita* includes in its connotations "composed" and "invented" (S.E.D. 263, col.1).

The two terms *abhisāñkhatā* and *abhisāñcetaṇitā*, therefore, denote acts that carry karmic consequences, but they differ in their connotations. If the explanation given in the commentary is accepted, the designation "old *kamma*" which is applied to the body and the senses can be interpreted in the following way. Actions (*kamma*) are produced or wrought (*katā*) by the "congregating" (*abhisamāgantvā*) of causal conditions. The primary conditioning factor in the production of an act (*kamma*) is *cetanā*, the mental function that arranges, plans, or designs. Actions are planned (*pakappita*) by *cetanā*, and the body and senses come into existence as the fruition of past plans, designs and arrangements. The *Āṅguttara-nikāya* (A. V. 289-291) gives a graphic prediction of the type of body into which a person will be born in a future rebirth as a result of present

meritorious or demeritorious deeds. Here and in similar passages, the pleasant and painful characteristics of the present body are explained in terms of retributive justice. However, in the *Nidāna-saṃyutta* the emphasis is not on retributive justice but on the complex causal chains of physical and mental acts that link the present state of the body and mind with past acts.

Saṃcetanika kamma as bearer of moral values

In the *Karajakāya-vagga*³⁴ of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (A. V. 285-303) *saṃcetanā* expresses a complex mental function including: intending to pursue a specific goal, initiating action in the body and mind to fulfil that intention, and directing energy and action towards the goal. The *Karajakāya-vagga* shows that when *kamma* is identified with *cetanā* (A.III.415), this does not mean that *cetanā* by itself is *kamma*. A *saṃcetanika kamma* is an *abhisāṅkhāra*, that is to say, a goal-oriented act of body, speech, or mind that is produced by a compounding of causal conditions, carries moral value, and puts forth karmic consequences. *Kamma* is *cetanā* expressed in action. Furthermore, the *Karajakāya-vagga* shows that in the classification of *kamma* as wholesome and unwholesome, the criterion is not solely whether the intention or purposive impulse is wholesome. On the contrary, the intention or purposive impulse (*cetanā*) and the act (*abhisāṅkhāra*) that expresses it are taken as an integral whole, so that a wholesome bodily act, for example, signifies that both the intention and the act are wholesome. However, it is implied here that if the *cetanā* is wholesome, the act that it instigates will also be wholesome, in accordance with the governing principle of conditioned origination: in this sense, in the *Abhidhamma* system, *cetanā* is regarded as the causal condition of the act (*kamma-paccaya*).

The *Karajakāya-vagga* and the *Sāleyyaka-sutta* (M. I. 286-289) are most helpful in assessing the significance of *sañcetanika kamma* in the *Sutta* literature, since they provide concrete examples of the standard list of ten wholesome and ten unwholesome acts of body, speech, and mind. These became the commonly cited examples of such acts in the commentarial and *Abhidhamma* literature. Reading the *Karajakāya-sutta*, one gets the feeling that these examples of good and bad action are already familiar to the people whom the Buddha is said to have addressed. It was noted above that the *Atthasālinī* focuses on the *Karajakāya-vagga* in putting forward its interpretation of *cetanā* as intention imbued with the capacity to produce action at the three doors of body, speech, and mind. The three types of unwholesome acts of the body (injury to living beings, theft, and sexual misconduct) and the four types of unwholesome acts of speech (false, malicious, harsh, and idle speech) are said to be characterized by unwholesome *sañcetanā* (*akusala-sañcetanikā*).³⁵ The physical acts and speech of a person who abstains (*paṭivirato hoti*) from these unwholesome acts are regarded as wholesome. The descriptions of wholesome acts show that they manifest morally good characteristics that not only refrain from unwholesome behaviour, but actively oppose it. The three unwholesome mental *kamma* (covetousness, ill-will, and wrong view) and the three wholesome *kamma* (non-covetousness, good-will, right view) are shown to be complex mental states fuelled by emotions that form the basis of corresponding intentions and desires. For example, a person beset with covetousness is portrayed as wishing to possess what belongs to others, and a person of ill-will is described as having a malevolent mind-set (*vyāpanna-citta*). The intentions (*saṅkappa*) of a person of ill will are said to arise from a malignant frame of mind (*paduṭṭha-mana*).

The term *cetanā* does not occur in the *Karajakāya-vagga* (A. V. 285-303) and the *Sāleyyaka-sutta* (M. I. 286-289). From the descriptions of *sañcetanā* acts in these sections of the *Sutta* literature, the following inferences can be drawn: *sañcetanā* is an intention or goal-oriented impetus that emerges from a specific attitude of mind; the intentions are often conditioned by attitudes of mind that tend to be habitual and motivate acts that tend to form habits; it is assumed that the intentions function as conative impulses that have the capacity to initiate action. *Cetanā* is not conceived as an intention that may or may not have the capacity to initiate goal-oriented action: it is regarded as the dynamic mode of a specific attitude of mind (*citta*). *Cetanā* is attitude of mind (*citta*) becoming act (*kamma*) of body, speech, or mind.

The *Karajakāya-vagga* describes unwholesome acts of speech, for example, as acts "characterized by unwholesome *sañcetanā*," (*akusala-cetanikā*), sorrow-producing (*dukkhudrayā*) and "resulting in pain" (*dukkha-vipākā*). The text then describes concrete instances of dishonest speech, slander, harsh speech, and unwholesome frivolous chatter. In the description of a person who gives false witness before a council that seeks to uphold the law, the text strongly suggests that the person is a habitual liar. Motives are presented: we are told that the lie is spoken for the sake of personal benefit, the benefit of another, or for some material gain. The text clarifies that the lie is told intentionally or knowingly (*sampajāna-musā bhāsītā hoti*) (A.V. 293). The reader can infer that the motives given above and the person's habits of mind led to the intention to lie.

In the rest of the *Karajakāya-vagga* it is implied that the wholesome and unwholesome intentions are conceived as factors that are conditioned by the habitual wholesome and unwholesome states of mind out of which they arise. These examples demonstrate that in the holistic view of consciousness espoused by Theravāda, intentions

are seen to be conditioned aspects of a larger frame of mind. For example, a person is said to injure living being because of not having a compassionate heart towards all living beings (*adayāpanno sabba-pāṇa-bhūtesu*) (A. V. 289). A person who refrains from taking life is described as one who would be ashamed (*lajjī*) of doing wrong, who is compassionate (*dayāpanna*) and behaves with constant sympathy and concern for the welfare of all beings (*sabba-pāṇabhūta-hitānukampī viharati*) (A. V. 290). A person who engages in the unwholesome verbal *kamma* of slandering others is described as one who finds delight, joy, and merriment in discord (*vaggārāma, vagga-rata, vagga-nandī*) and a person who abstains from slander is said to rejoice in harmony (*samagga*) (A. V. 293, 296). These examples of wholesome and unwholesome *kamma* show that the intention to act is regarded as arising, not from an overriding "will," an overwhelming emotion, or sovereign reason, but from an attitude of mind in which cognitive, emotive, and conative factors are mutually dependent. Furthermore, the descriptions imply that these attitudes of mind and the acts with which they are correlated tend to become habitual.

The commentary (AA. V. 76) goes further than the text does in interpreting the relationship of *cetanā* to *citta* and to *kamma*. *Sañcetanika kamma* is explained here as that which is done after intending and planning (*cetetvā pakappetvā katam*). The use of the gerund *pakappetvā* clarifies that the planning precedes and motivates the action that is designated as *sañcetanika kamma*. It is interesting to note that the commentarial literature prefers *pakappeti* to *sañkappeti* in explaining *cetanā* and *ceteti*. There is a subtle difference between the two terms *pakappa* and *sañkappa*, though there is a significant overlap in their range of meanings. In the meaning of *sañkappa* the cognitive aspects of coming to a decision and expressing a firm intention, or strong resolve is predominant,

whereas in *pakappa* the initiating of action to actualize the thought that is formed in the mind comes to the fore. *Pakappa* is closer than *saṅkappa* to the idea of gathering, arranging, and preparing one's resources, and moving them towards a goal.

The description of wholesome and unwholesome intentional acts (*sañcetanika kamma*) in the *Karajakāya-vagga* is followed, appropriately, by instructions for the cultivation of the four *brahma-vihāras*: immeasurable friendship, compassion, joy in the success of others, and equanimity (A. V. 299-301). The text holds that a person who cultivates friendliness (*mettā*) is liberated from covetousness, ill-will, and delusion (*vigatābhijjho, vigata-vyāpādo, asammūlho*). It is affirmed as a matter of complete certainty that a person who cultivates meditation on the *brahma-vihāras* from a tender age will not engage in reprehensible acts of body, speech, and mind (A. V. 301). In the same vein, another passage of the *Anguttara-nikāya* (A. I. 261) states that while a well-guarded (*rakkhita*) *citta* will produce well-guarded, wholesome acts of body, speech, and mind, an ill-guarded *citta*, like a leaking roof, will produce acts dripping (*avassuta*) with greed. The emphasis, in this passage and in the *Karajakāya-vagga*, is on the cultivation of wholesome attitudes of the *citta* so that wholesome intentional acts (*sañcetanika kamma*) will follow from wholesome attitudes in accordance with conditioned origination. It has been noted above that the *Atthasālinī* looks to the *Karajakāya-vagga* for textual support in developing the idea that karmically operative acts of body, speech, and mind are expressions of *cetanā*.

Cetanā and the accumulation of kamma

In the *Karajakāya-vagga* of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (A. V. 281-303) the term *cetanā* is treated as integral to the vocabulary of *kamma*. The happy rebirth that follows from wholesome *kamma* is designated as *kusala-saṅcetanikā-hetu* (caused by wholesome *cetanā*) (A. V. 296) and the painful destiny that follows from unwholesome *kamma* is characterized as *akusala-saṅcetanikā-hetu* (caused by unwholesome *cetanā*) (A. V. 294). In this context, another often repeated statement emphasizes that *saṅcetanika* deeds done and "accumulated" cannot be annihilated without their consequences being experienced either in this very life or in some future rebirth (A. V. 292). Here *saṅcetanika-kamma* is linked with *upacīta*, a term that led to much debate among the early Buddhist schools of thought. The debate revolved around the question of whether the act (*kamma*) and its "accumulation" (*upacaya*) differ from each other. The question was raised because it was assumed that unless the act was somehow conserved and integrated into an individual's karmic process, it could not be reckoned as either meritorious or reprehensible, and could not come to fruition in the form of pleasant or unpleasant consequences.

The *Kathāvatthu* (Kvu. 520-522) maintains that when a person performs an act that is characterized by *cetanā* (*saṅcetanika kamma*), then, that act is invariably "conserved" or "accumulated" in that person's karmic process and produces effects at the appropriate time. In other words, the *Kathāvatthu* maintains that the capacity of a *saṅcetanika kamma* to put forth karmic effects is given with the act.³⁶ The opponents of Theravāda maintained that since the act and its effect are separated by a period of time, they must be connected by some factor that survives the act and persists until the effect is produced. For this reason, they posited "accumulation" (*upacaya*) as the factor that links the act that has

passed away and the effect that has not yet come to be. Dube, in his *Cross Currents in Early Buddhism*, (1980, 336) maintains that, since the followers of Theravāda hold that conditioned origination requires no intervening principle to connect cause and effect, they do not see the need to posit *upacaya* as a factor that persists after the *sañcetanika* act in order to link it with its consequence. According to Theravāda, an act and the continuation of its efficacy in the karmic process are indistinguishable: *sañcetanika kamma*, *upacaya*, and fruition of *kamma* are seen as entailing each other (Kvu. 522).

The relationship between *kamma* and *upacaya* continued to be debated in the Buddhist schools. The *Abhidharmakośa* (Abhk. IV. 120) makes a distinction between *kamma* and *upacaya*, and posits *sañcetanā* as one of the conditions for the arising of *upacaya*.³⁷ According to the *Abhidharmakośa*, the necessary conditions for the integration of a deed into the karmic process of an individual are: the association of *cetanā* with the deed (*sañcetanā*), the completion of the deed (*samāptatva*), the absence of remorse (*niṣkaukṛtya*) or any counteractive factor such as confession or repentance, the presence of factors that are the necessary accompaniments of the deed (*parivāram*), and the fruition (*vipāka*) of the deed in the form of pleasant and unpleasant consequences.³⁸ In this context, the *Abhidharmakośa* offers its definition of *sañcetanika karma*. An act is said to be characterized by *sañcetanā* when it is done after purposive deliberation (*sañcintya kṛtam*) and is not done hastily without intelligent assessment (*nābuddhipūrvam na sahasā kṛtam*).³⁹ Both the terms *sañcintya* and *buddhipūrvam* indicate that cognitive processes of reflection, directed thought, decision-making, and choice of goal precede the act. The term *buddhi* is obviously chosen for its connotations of assessment and judgment.

An analysis of why *Abhidharmakośa* makes a point of specifying that *sañcetanā* is a necessary precondition for an act to be “accumulated” or “conserved,” while Theravāda

does not even raise this issue, helps to further elucidate the Theravāda view of the relationship between intention, act and consequence of the act. In his work *Development in the Early Buddhist Concept of Kamma/Karma* (1984, 132-133) McDermott emphasizes that the Theravādins maintain that intention (*cetanā*) is identical with *kamma* and consider the karmically operative act to be inseparable and indistinguishable from intention. He points out that the *Abhidharmakośa* (IV. 1.), on the contrary, defines *cetanā* as mental *kamma* (*cetanā mānasam karma*) and distinguishes *cetanā* from physical and verbal acts on the grounds that these acts are born from *cetanā* (*tajjam vākkāya-karmaṇī*). According to the *Abhidharmakośa*, therefore, acts of body and speech differ from intention (*cetanā*) in two ways: they contain physical and vocal elements not present in the intention, and they are subsequent to the intention. McDermott expresses the difference between the Theravāda and the *Abhidharmakośa* views of *kamma* as follows:

In contrast to the Sarvāstivādin opinion on this point, the Pāli schools consider all *kamma* to be *cetanā*. Mental acts are pure intentional impulse. Acts of body and voice are intentional impulses, which put the body and voice in motion, and not simply the actions ensuant upon volition. (1984, 132-133)

Although the distinction that McDermott makes between the Theravāda and the *Abhidharmakośa* views of *kamma* is helpful, it would not be correct to say that Theravāda views *kamma* solely as *cetanā*. It would be a fairer assessment to hold that in the definition given at A. III. 415 and in the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 84, 87, 88) *kamma* is viewed as a complex process where *cetanā* on the one hand, and the physical, vital, or mental act, on the other, are distinguishable but integrated. *Cetanā* alone does not make *kamma*: *cetanā* is identified with *kamma* by virtue of becoming expressed in concrete acts of body, speech, and mind. Since *cetanā* and the actual physical, verbal, or mental act are held together in the Theravāda view of *kamma*, it could be argued that Theravāda

assumes *cetanā* to be a necessary condition both for the act to occur and for it to put forth consequences in an individual continuum of consciousness. Whereas Theravāda considers an act (*kamma*) to be the realization of an intention (*cetanā*) that has the capacity to initiate action, and considers *cetanā* and *kamma* to be an inseparable whole designated as *sañcetanika kamma*, the *Abhidharmakośa* regards the act as a consequent of intention and, therefore, separable from intention. Having separated the two, the *Abhidharmakośa* posits that intention is a necessary condition to bring forth consequences in the processes of *kamma*. Moreover, whereas Theravāda holds that when all the conditions that make up a *sañcetanika* act are present, the act is a dynamic configuration (*abhisāṅkhāra*) with the capacity to produce (*abhisāṅkharoti*) consequences, the *Abhidharmakośa* separates the act and its consequences and posits a special factor of “accumulation” to ensure the preservation of the potency of the act until the consequences are produced. Just as Theravāda does not separate *cetanā* (intention) and *kamma* (act), neither does it separate intentional act (*sañcetanika kamma*) and its capacity to put forth commensurate consequences (*kamma vipāka*). According to Theravāda, the very fact that a wholesome or unwholesome intentional act is done entails consequences in the consciousness continuum of the doer and no further factor, such as “accumulation” is necessary to ensure its effectiveness.

***Cetanā* as driving force for rebirth**

The powerful notion of “food” (*āhāra*) in the *Sutta* literature stresses that all living beings are vulnerable and will perish unless body and consciousness are constantly nourished and re-vitalized. “All beings subsist by nutriment (*āhāraṭṭhīkā*), all subsist

through processes of conditioning (*saṅkhārāṭṭhitikā*)" says the *Dīgha-nikāya* (D. III. 211). The commentary (DA. III. 975) defines *āhāra* (nutriment) as *paccaya* (causal condition) and explains it as "that which produces results."⁴⁰ Four "nutriments" are specified as necessary conditions for the perpetuation of life and rebirth: food that is eaten preserves the body; contact with objects engenders pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral feelings (*vedanā*) which motivate further acts; intentions and purposes in the mind (*mano-saṅcetanā*) produce the acts (*kamma*) that lead to different types of existence and experience; and consciousness is the condition for the arising of the psycho-physical organism (*nāma-rūpa*) at the time of rebirth (SA. II. 25). In this context, there appears to be little difference between *saṅcetanā* as *kamma* and *mano-saṅcetanā* as "food." *Mano-saṅcetanā* is a purposive impulse that instigates an act of body, speech, or mind. As in the case of the other "nutriments," the description of *mano-saṅcetanā* is cast in the language of *kamma* and rebirth. Like the other nutriments, *mano-saṅcetanā* is regarded as a "danger" to be feared because it keeps a person bound to the sorrow of desire, death, and painful rebirth. Nevertheless, from a psychological perspective, *mano-saṅcetanā* signals creativity, growth, and enhancement. *Mano-saṅcetanā* is nothing other than the impetus that drives the mind to seek out one goal after another in the pursuit of what is regarded as advantageous for oneself and for society.

Engaging in a play-on-words, the commentary to the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (SA. II. 22) interprets nutriments (*āhāra*) as causal conditions (*paccayā*) and explains that conditions are designated as *āhārā* because they "bring" (*āharanti*) their own results.⁴¹ In the same context the explanation is given that although there are other conditions through which beings are born and are sustained, just these four are called nutriment because they serve as the special conditions through which any given personal continuum (*ajjhattika-santati*)

is maintained.⁴² That every being depends for its coming-to-be on the nutriment suited to its specific need (*tadāhāra-sambhavam*)⁴³ and that all beings cease-to-be when their food is taken away is said to be at the core of the teaching of conditioned origination (S. II. 48-49, M. I. 260). The Buddha teaches that when a disciple understands that all beings are dependent on regular intake of nutriment and, therefore, are impermanent, then that disciple will not cling to fragile nutriment-dependent beings, and will become liberated through non-clinging (*anupāda-vimutto*) (S. II. 49). In the *Nidāna-saṃyutta* (S. II. 12) where the links of the chain of rebirth are delineated, the nutriments are said to have craving as their cause (*taṇhā-nidānā*).⁴⁴ The *Majjhima-nikāya* (M. I. 48, 261) also stresses the inseparable link that is forged between craving and nutriment. It is said at M. I. 48 that the nutriments arise when craving arises and ceases when craving ceases.⁴⁵ It is implied here that food is a danger because, just by nourishing it sets up the conditions for further hunger. Paradoxically, food that satisfies becomes synonymous with insatiability.

The idea that food is the basis of all life can be traced back to the Vedic tradition. The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (T.U. II. 2.1) celebrates food in a verse, which says that all the beings that inhabit this earth are born from food, live by food, and pass into food when life ends.⁴⁶ The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (S.U. V. 11) teaches that the birth and growth of the living individual come to be through the efficacy of ritual offerings consisting of intention (*saṃkalpana*), touch (*sparsana*) and sight (*dṛṣṭi*), and also by means of food, drink and impregnation.⁴⁷ *Saṃkalpa*, like *mano-saṃcetanā*, ensures growth by providing the mind with new aspirations and fresh goals. At the same time, *saṃkalpa* is regarded as a cause of sorrow because it is associated with an ignorant sense of an autonomous “I”

(*ahaṅkāra*) and urges the mind to aspire for rebirth in future realms of new experience (Mt. U. II. 5; P. U. III. 10).

In the commentarial literature (SA. II. 27) the danger associated with the four nutriments is spelt out. Desire (*nikanti*) is the danger in edible food, approaching and engaging with (*upagamanam*) sense objects is the danger in sensory contact (*phassa*), putting forth and accumulating (*āyūhana*) wholesome and unwholesome *kamma* that entails rebirth is the danger in *mano-sañcetanā* and continual "rebirth-linking" (*paṭisandhi*) is the danger in conscious awareness (*viññāṇa*). The *Majjhima-nikāya* (I. 48) associates the four nutriments with the underlying tendencies of sensory passion (*rāgānusaya*), aversion (*paṭighānusaya*), and the speculative view and conceit of "I am" (*asmīti diṭṭhi-mānānusaya*), as well as ignorance (*avijjā*). The *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (S. II. 98-99) provides terrifyingly vivid analogies to illustrate the danger in each of the nutriments. *Mano-sañcetanā* is described as a fiery pit towards which two strong men are dragging a helpless person. The commentary (SA. II. 112-113) explains the imagery as follows: the fiery pit is the course of rebirth; the victim is the ignorant person infatuated by the gains of the realm of rebirth; the two strong men who drag the victim to the fire are wholesome and unwholesome *kamma*; the grip of the two men as they drag their victim represents the time when *kamma* is performed and accumulated (*kammāyūhana-kālo*). This analogy is considered apt because it portrays continually accumulating *kamma* dragging behind it a chain of inescapable consequences. *Mano-sañcetanā* is dangerous because every act that it produces is an *abhisankhāra* coming into being as an aggregate of causal conditions that is endowed with the capacity to put forth goal-driven acts of body, speech, and mind. *Mano-sañcetanā* needs the future so that the goals of the acts that it produces may come into existence and be experienced. *Mano-sañcetanā* can be

either wholesome or unwholesome, depending on the moral quality both of the attitude of mind (*citta*) from which it arises and the act (*kamma*) that it produces. However, wholesome *mano-saṅcetanā*, like unwholesome *mano-saṅcetanā* can cause the mind to succumb to the lure of living for future goals.

Such renderings as "intention" and "purposive deliberation" do not even begin to convey the Theravāda view of the powerfully creative, and ultimately tragic, influence of *mano-saṅcetanā* as motivating energy in the lives of individuals and societies.

Nyanaponika Thera writes:

The nutriment Volitional Thought manifests itself in man's incessant urge to plan and to aspire, to struggle and conquer, to build and to destroy, to do and to undo, to invent and to discover, to form and to transform, to organize and to create. . . .

. . . It is Volitional Thought that has to go foraging to provide man with the other kinds of nutriment he craves for. It is an incessant task, yielding a conquest of but short duration, and one that again and again ends in defeat.

In Volitional Thought, the world appears as Will and Power, and as creative force. (1967, 12-13)

In Theravāda, *mano-saṅcetanā* is viewed as the motivating impulse that transforms the continuum of consciousness (*citta*) into a dynamic personal series (*ajjhātika-santati*) in which the aggregates of the personality, goal-oriented acts, and the pleasure and pain that ensue from such acts are constantly being made and re-made. Impelled by the purposive impulses of *mano-saṅcetanā*, the *citta* becomes a master-artist (*citta-kāra*) aspiring for creative self-expression. The term *abhisāṅkhāra-viññāṇa* represents consciousness that is conditioned by the compounding, composing, and constructing function of *saṅkhāra* and is poised for the prolongation of life and the furtherance of rebirth. Mrs. Rhys Davids translates *abhisāṅkhāra-viññāṇa* as "constructing, storing consciousness" in *Buddhist*

Psychological Ethics (1974, 241, n.1). Nyānaponika Thera renders the term as "*kamma*-forming consciousness."⁴⁸ The *Nidāna-saṃyutta* (S. II. 13) can be interpreted to mean that consciousness functioning as nutriment (*āhāra*) for the prolongation of life and rebirth is identical with *abhisankhāra-viññāṇa*. The descriptions of the four nutriments carry the implication that consciousness becomes a nutriment for the perpetuation of rebirth when it is pervaded by the motivating impulse of *mano-saṃcetanā*. Nyānaponika Thera (1976, 49, n.8) quotes the sub-commentary to S. II. 12-14 where *viññāṇa* as *āhāra* is equated with *abhisankhāra-viññāṇa*.

In the commentarial literature, consciousness made of nutriment is explained as consciousness charged with the karmic conditions that links one life with the next. In the *Anguttara-nikāya* (A. I. 224) *kamma* is compared to a farmer's field, consciousness (*viññāṇa*) ready for rebirth to a seed ready to sprout, and craving to the moisture that nourishes the seed and causes it to sprout. The passage goes on to say that consciousness, when it is obstructed by ignorance (*avijjā-nīvaraṇam*) and fettered by craving (*taṇhā-saṃyojanam*), will become established (*patitṭhitam*) in a realm of rebirth that matches the meritorious and reprehensible *kamma* that it has accumulated. The commentary (AA. II. 334)⁴⁹ says that this portrayal of consciousness in a seed-like state ready for germination signifies *kamma*-forming consciousness (*abhisankhāra-viññāṇa*) in a state of "maturity" (*virūhana*). The "germinating process" within consciousness happens when wholesome and unwholesome acts that consciousness has performed are "mature" or ready to produce results in the rebirth process. From a psychological perspective, the "germinating process" can be interpreted to mean that when the cognitive processes of *viññāṇa* are conditioned by the goal-oriented thoughts and the action producing dynamism of *mano-saṃcetanā*, then consciousness begins to operate as constructive

consciousness (*abhisāṅkhāra-viññāṇa*) and to construct plans and purposes that cause it to become focused on the future.

Kamma-forming constructive consciousness (*abhisāṅkhāra-viññāṇa*), therefore, is consciousness conditioned by wholesome and unwholesome motivating energies. It is poised to co-ordinate the personality's physical and mental factors in such a way as to form or construct (*abhisāṅkharoti*) fresh goal-oriented acts that correspond to the conditioning that characterizes its processes. The notion of *abhisāṅkhāra-viññāṇa* shows that Theravāda does not perceive consciousness to be self-supporting and self-perpetuating, but regards it as a process that invariably requires an object or "basis" (*ārammaṇam*) that supports it and guarantees its perpetuation. Consciousness is always in the making, and *mano-saṅcetanā* guarantees its maintenance by providing support. The support can be an object or a mode of experience where constructive consciousness can exercise its capacity of putting forth goal-oriented thoughts, and perpetuate itself by seeking new goals. The term *patiṭṭhitam* (supported, established) is not only related to *ṭīthi* but also to *patiṭṭhā*. The former term conveys "continuity" or "persistence," and the latter term indicates "support, resting place, stay, ground, help" (P.E.D. p. 405, col.2). *Patiṭṭhitam* conveys the sense of persisting by being supported. Following this line of interpretation, it can be said that consciousness as nutriment nourishes the rebirth process by constantly needing an object of which it can become aware. By becoming aware of objects, consciousness is maintained and perpetuated. *Mano-saṅcetanā* (the impetus of goal-oriented thought, purposive reflection, intention) nourishes rebirth by providing consciousness with ever-fresh goals that are objects (*ārammaṇam*) on which it can exercise its capacities of awareness, discernment, and reflection. These goals not only provide objects through which consciousness is supported and perpetuated, but they also

cause consciousness to crave for a future in which it can experience more objects and fresh goals.

It is significant that the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* considers, not only consciousness as a whole, but more specifically, *cetanā* and *patthanā* (aspiration) to be "stationed" (*patiṭṭhitam*) in a realm of rebirth (A. I. 224).⁵⁰ This statement brings into focus the Theravāda view that the purposive impulses that constitute *cetanās* cannot survive or be perpetuated unless they are supported by a realm of objects to which they are attuned. By the same token, the objects are co-ordinated and form a coherent realm of experience by becoming the goals towards which the purposive impulses of *cetanās* are directed. The text says that intention (*cetanā*) and aspiration (*patthanā*) become established in the "lower realm" (*hīnā dhātu*), intermediate realm (*majjhimā dhātu*) or "most excellent realm" (*paṇitā dhātu*). The commentary (AA. II. 334) explains these three realms respectively as the world of sense-desire (*kāma-dhātu*), the realm of form (*rūpa-dhātu*), and the formless realm (*arūpa-dhātu*).⁵¹ In the present life these three realms correspond to three modes of experience: ordinary sensory and mental processes, the lower states of meditation designated as "meditation-with-form" (*rūpajjhāna*), and the higher states of meditation known as "formless" (*arūpajjhāna*). Those who habitually cultivate disciplines of meditation are said to experience, even in the course of the present life, the exalted atmosphere of the cosmic realms to which the levels of meditation correspond. Since the intentions and the aspirations of those who cultivate these levels of meditation are already in harmony with the higher cosmic realms, it is posited that after death they attain rebirth in those realms. The commentary (AA. II. 334) designates the *cetanā* and *patthanā* that become established (*patiṭṭhita*) and persist in a specific realm of experience as *kamma-cetanā* and *kamma-patthanā*. Nyanaponika (1980, 157, 34) renders *kamma-*

cetanā as "karmic volition" and explains it as the intention imbued with impetus that motivates a wholesome or unwholesome action carrying, respectively, merit or demerit. In this context, *kamma-cetanā* is synonymous with *mano-saṅcetanā* functioning as nutriment for rebirth.

The commentary to the *Samyutta-nikāya* (SA. II. 259) uses the term *abhisankhāra viññāṇa* in commenting on a passage (S. III. 9-10) where it is said that consciousness finds its home in the other four aggregates and is bound by passion (*rāga-vinibaddha*) for these aggregates.⁵² The commentary says that the other four aggregates serve as objects (*ārammaṇam*) for consciousness, which persists by finding in them a support (*thiti*) for itself. In this context, the consciousness that constantly looks to the other aggregates and desires them is designated as *kamma-forming consciousness* (*abhisankhāra-viññāṇa*).⁵³ The passion that consciousness is said to feel towards all the physical and mental processes of the personality causes it to generate intentions and purposes (*mano-saṅcetanā*) to nourish and enhance the other aggregates, and the physical and mental processes of the other aggregates in turn, nourish and perpetuate the continuum of consciousness. The purposive impulses that constitute *cetanās* not only perpetuate consciousness (*viññāṇa*), but affect all the other aggregates that constitute the individual. The body responds to the purposes of the mind, feelings (*vedanā*) of pleasure and pain are experienced, new perceptions (*saññā*) are developed, and the mind's capacity to assemble its resources and put forth goal-directed acts (*saṅkhārās*) gains a new impetus. At the same time, these physical and mental processes that constitute the aggregates become occasions for the development of new purposive impulses (*cetanās*). Since *abhisankhāra viññāṇa* is consciousness conditioned by *mano-saṅcetanā* as nutriments for rebirth, the

Atthasālinī implies that sorrowful rebirth can never cease until the purposive impulses of *cetanā* that cause enslavement to future goals are finally laid to rest.

The *Dhammasaṅgani* (Dhs. 183-184) maintains that only unwholesome states of mind (*akusala dhamma*) can be renounced and removed by means of mental training (*bhāvanā*) and insight (*dassanā*).⁵⁴ The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 236, 357) explains that wholesome states (*kusala dhamma*), and the aggregates cannot cease for any individual until the *kamma*-forming consciousness (*abhisāṅkhāra-viññāṇa*) gradually ceases to function, as the mind moves towards the perfect enlightenment of the *arahant*.

Cetanā* defined as *kamma* in the *Milindapañha

Detailed definitions of *cetanā* are found in the *Milindapañha* (Mil. 61-62) the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 135) and the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 111-112). Of these, the *Milindapañha* definition is analyzed here and the other two are reserved for Chapter VI. The significant question with regard to these definitions is whether they view *cetanā* primarily as a cognitive function of assessing possibilities and determining a goal, or as a conative function of initiating action in the organism in response to a stimulus.

The *Milindapañha* was probably much shorter in its original form and was composed, not in Pāli, but perhaps, in Gandhārī (von Hinüber 1997, 83). It is usually held that the *Milindapañha* is a composite text, of which the earliest part was compiled between 100 B.C.E. and 200 C.E. (von Hinüber 1997, 85), while the latest part must have been completed by the fifth century since it is quoted by Buddhaghosa (Norman, 110-111). The *Milindapañha* is included among the texts of the *Khuddakanikāya* in the Burmese tradition, but this is not the case in Sri Lanka. The material contained in the Chinese translation is regarded as the earliest section of the

Milindapañha. The definition of *cetanā* is found in this section (von Hinüber 1997, 84). Since large parts of the *Sutta* literature were composed before the *Milindapañha*, the definition of *cetanā* in this text shows what had come to be accepted as the meaning of this term when the earliest section of the *Milindapañha* was composed. The fact that the *Milindapañha* definition is not different in any significant sense from the definition of *cetanā* in the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Atthasālinī* attests to the unity of the Theravāda tradition.

At the core of the definition of *cetanā* in the *Milindapañha* (Mil. 61-62) is the statement that *cetanā* has two defining characteristics: *cetayita lakkhana* and *abhisankharaṇa lakkhana*. The term *cetayita* is related to the verb *ceteti*, and because of the link to this verb, it conveys that which has been thought about, planned, intended, or purposefully conceived. The other defining characteristic, *abhisankharaṇa*, associates *cetanā* with the action-producing energy of *saṅkhāra*. A puzzling feature of this definition is that, despite declaring *cetayita lakkhana* to be one of the defining characteristics of *cetanā*, the definition does not explicitly associate *cetanā* with the cognitive process of assessing choices and arriving at a decision. *Cetanā* is not explicitly defined in terms of intention or purposive thought. In this matter, it is instructive to contrast the definition of *cetanā* in the *Milindapañha* with a statement regarding *sañcetanika-kamma* in the *Abhidharmakośa* (Abhk. IV. 120). It was pointed out earlier in this chapter that the *Abhidharmakośa* interprets *sañcetanika kamma* as an act that is performed, not hastily and without the deployment of the intellect, but after due consideration (*buddhi-pūrvam*). By employing the term *buddhi* in this context, the *Abhidharmakośa* leaves no doubt that it links *sañcetanika kamma* with the processes of discernment, assessment and judgment. There is no such overt reference to processes of judgment and purposive thought in the

definition of *cetanā* that the *Milindapañha* offers. It will be shown below that the *Milindapañha* gives greater prominence to *abhisankharaṇa* and does not bring out the difference in meaning between *cetayita* and *abhisankharaṇa*.

The *Milindapañha* explains the relationship of *cetanā* to *kamma* by stating that when one has applied *cetanā* in an unwholesome act (*akusalaṃ kammaṃ cetanāya cetayitvā*) one suffers a painful destiny after death, and when one has applied *cetanā* in a wholesome act (*kusalaṃ kammaṃ cetanāya cetayitvā*) one enjoys a happy rebirth. The function of *cetanā* in the process of *kamma* is elucidated with analogies:

It is analogous to the case of a man who, having prepared poison (*visam abhisankharitvā*), may drink it himself and cause others to drink it. He would experience pain and so would they. In the same way, a certain person, having applied *cetanā* in an unwholesome act (*akusalaṃ kammaṃ cetanāya cetayitvā*), would fall into a sorrowful state and be reborn in *Niraya*-hell, and so would those who followed his instruction. (Mil. 61)

The *Milindapañha* goes on to say that when a person applies *cetanā* towards performing a wholesome act, then that person enters a happy destiny and reaches a celestial abode. The analogy is given of a person who prepares a healthy drink by bringing together (*ekajjham abhisankharitvā*) wholesome and delicious ingredients, drinks of it, and gives it to others. The one who prepares the drink and those who share it would experience pleasure.

The problem in interpreting this passage is that whereas one of the key terms, *abhisankharitvā*, appears with both of the analogies, the other key term, *cetayitvā*, is associated with the wholesome and unwholesome deeds that the analogies are meant to elucidate. What is not clear is precisely how the analogies apply to the term *cetayitvā*. It cannot escape the reader's notice that the analogies focus on the preparatory process of assembling the necessary means to produce a result. While the decision-making function of choosing the goal is implied, this is not the core of the analogy. In the case of the

nourishing drink, the choice ingredients are actually named, and the emphasis seems to be, not so much on why the drink is prepared, as on how it is blended. In fact, the purpose it serves seems to follow as a matter of course from the nature of the drink. The quality of *abhisankharaṇa* is associated with the preparation of the drink and the quality of *cetayita* is connected with the act that is capable of producing karmic consequences. If the blending of the drink is analogous to generating a karmically operative act, then the meaning of *cetayita* becomes parallel to the meaning of *abhisankharaṇa*. On the basis of the analogy, it would be possible to interpret *cetāyita* to mean gathering and organizing physical and mental resources in such a manner that an efficacious deed ensues.

It is puzzling that the definition in the *Milindapañha* makes so little of the link of *cetanā* with the verb *ceteti* and the important connotations of "purposive reflection" and "intention" that can be attributed to *cetanā* on the basis of its etymological roots. An answer to this puzzle begins to emerge when the definition of *cetanā* in the *Milindapañha* is compared with the definitions in the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 111-112) and the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 135). Only *cetayita* is given as the characteristic (*lakkaṇa*) of *cetanā* in the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Atthasālinī*, and the latter text explains that all *cetanās* without exception have *cetayita* as their defining quality. Earlier in this chapter it was shown that *cetanā* is a necessary factor for consciousness to function even in a rudimentary manner. *Cetanā* is also reckoned among the mental factors that arise when the sense organs and the mind make contact (*phassa*) with sensory and mental objects. It will be shown in Chapter V that the detailed analysis of the cognitive process (*citta-vīthi*) presented in the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Atthasālinī* makes it clear that when *cetanā* occurs in the rudimentary stages of perception, it does not take the form of a fully developed purposive impulse and does not produce wholesome and unwholesome deeds. Since *cetanā* does not

invariably arise as a fully developed intention or purpose, the *Atthasālinī* explains that *cetayita* signifies only that *cetanā* always has the characteristic of co-ordinating mental states and adverting them towards an object. Even in the most basic states of consciousness *cetanā* performs the function of causing the mind to attend to an object. The *Atthasālinī* is a later text than the *Milindapañha*, and the definition of *cetanā* in the *Atthasālinī* is more coherent and shows more thorough analysis than the definition in the *Milindapañha*. Though *cetanā* has a link to the verb *ceteti*, according to the explanation given in the *Atthasālinī*, it is only in cases where a *sañcetanika-kamma* (intentional deed) is produced that *cetanā* connotes purposive impulse, involving processes of assessment and decision.

The definition of *cetanā* that the *Milindapañha* presents is confusing because, of the two characteristics that it attributes to *cetanā*, *abhisankharana*, in fact, is restricted to cases where *cetanā* manifests as a purposive impulse that brings together causal conditions and produces (*abhisankharoti*) an act with karmic consequences. The other characteristic, *cetayita*, can apply to all cases where *cetanā* arises only if it is defined, not as purposive impulse or intention, but as a quality that is recognizable even when *cetanā* functions as a factor of basic conscious awareness in the preliminary stages of perception.

***Cetanā* and the Eightfold Path: *magga-cetanā*:**

The term *cetanā* does not have a prominent role in the passages of the *Sutta* literature that describe the disciplines of the Eightfold Path. *Viriya* (energy), *chanda* (impetus to act), and *padhāna* (effort) are the terms that most frequently convey the ardent effort that pertains to the Eightfold Path. *Saṅkappa* is the term that expresses a firm intention to pursue the Path. *Cetanā* is conspicuously absent. However, there are two

passages that comment on the role of *cetanā* in directing the mind towards liberation. The first of these is set in the context of *kamma* and refers to a special *cetanā* of renunciation (*kammaṃ pahanāya cetanā*) that abandons *kamma* and opens up the Path that leads to liberation. The second passage is significant because it declares that in the course of the Eightfold Path special interventions of *cetanā* are not necessary (*na cetanāya karaṇīyam*) since each stage, when properly cultivated, naturally leads to the next.

The definition of *kamma* at A. III. 415 states that karmically operative acts of body, speech, and mind are expressions of *cetanā*. This definition implies that bondage to the course of *kamma* and rebirth arises from the wholesome and unwholesome goal-directed thoughts and impulses (*cetanās*) that fill a person's waking hours. However, in the course of distinguishing different types of *kamma* the Buddha refers to a type of *cetanā* that is called *kamma* but actually represents the renunciation of all acts and fruitions of *kamma*. In the *Sutta* literature (A. II. 230-231; D. III. 230; M. I. 389-391) *kamma* is said to be of four types: "dark" *kamma* with "dark" consequences, "bright" *kamma* with a "bright" outcome, "dark and bright" *kamma* with mixed "dark and bright" consequences, and finally, *kamma* that is "neither dark nor bright" and leads to consequences that are "neither dark nor bright." "Dark" acts are defined as harmful, injurious (*savyāpajjham*) acts that cause rebirth in a harmful realm where one endures harmful sensory contacts that produce harmful feelings and extreme sorrow. "Bright" acts are said to be free of harm or injury (*avyāpajjham*). Deeds that are "both dark and bright" are described as acts that are both injurious and non-injurious, depending on the perspective from which they are assessed. The phrase *saṅkhāram abhisāṅkharoti* occurs in relation to these three categories of deeds. The commentary (AA. III. 212) employs the two terms *āyūhati* and *sampiṇḍeti* to explain *abhisāṅkharoti*. *Āyūhati* conveys the

deployment of energy in generating and accumulating *kamma*, and *sampiṇḍeti* indicates the process of bringing together several factors to produce each karmically operative deed

The phrase *saṅkhāram abhisāṅkharoti* does not occur in relation to the fourth type of *kamma*, which is described as the *kamma* that conduces to the waning away of *kamma* (*kammakkhayāya saṁvattati*). In accordance with the definition of *kamma* at A. III. 415 where all *kamma* without exception is said to be identical with *cetanā*, this fourth category of *kamma* also is identified as a type of *cetanā*. This *cetanā* is said to have the purpose of renouncing (*pahānāya*) the first three types of *kamma* and the effects they produce. The commentary to the *Majjhima-nikāya* (MA. III. 103-105) takes care to define these four categories of *kamma* in terms of different types of *cetanā*, although in the text the word *cetanā* does not appear in relation to the first three types of *kamma*. The commentary defines "dark" *kamma* as unwholesome *cetanā*, bright *kamma* as wholesome *cetanā* and *kamma* that is neither dark nor bright as *cetanā* that pertains to the path of liberation (*magga-cetanā*).⁵⁵

The *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (A. II. 236-237) describes *kamma* that is "neither dark nor bright" as the Eightfold Path and the seven "factors of wisdom" (*bojjhaṅgas*), namely, mindfulness, investigation of the *dhamma*, energy, rapture, tranquillity, concentration, and equanimity. It follows, therefore, that this fourth type of *cetanā* also—like *cetanā* that is wholesome, unwholesome, or both wholesome and unwholesome—is conditioned by, and rises within, a specific frame of mind (*citta*). This *cetanā* that renounces *kamma* and the fruition of *kamma* has its basis in the frame of mind that is characteristic of a person who cultivates the disciplines of liberation. The training can be described in terms of forming habitual patterns of wholesome acts (*saṅkhārās*) that are distinctive to the Eightfold Path. In this sense, *magga-cetanā* is conditioned by the cognitive features of the

Eightfold path, such as right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*), as well as by the action-producing dynamism of the wholesome *saṅkhāras* (habitual acts of body, speech, or mind) that are the vehicles through which the disciplines are cultivated and conserved.

***Cetanā* and the way of nature**

A remarkable passage in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (A. V. 2) states that there is no need for any special application of *cetanā* when the stages of the path of liberation develop naturally in due order, in accordance with the principle of conditioned origination: "This being present, that comes into being" (*imasmiṃ sati, idaṃ hoti*).⁵⁶ The passage at A. V. 2⁵⁷ begins with the statement that a person who is virtuous (*sīlavant*) and well endowed with virtue, need not apply *cetanā* (*na cetanāya karaṇīyam*) to produce the goal-oriented thought: "May freedom from regret (*avippaṭṭisāra*) arise in me." It is explained that there is no need for a special intervention of *cetanā* since it is but natural (*dharmatā esā*) that freedom from regret would develop in a person who is virtuous.

In an article entitled "Wrong Notions of Dhammatā (Dharmatā)" (1974), Walpola Rahula explains:

In simple language *dharmatā* means "it is so", "it happens this way", "it is natural". *Dharmatā* is not some thing or some power that stands behind these happenings. (ed. L. Cousins et al., 1974, 184)

Rahula shows that *dharmatā* corresponds to two other terms: *dharmatṭhitatā* and *dharmma-niyāmatā* which he renders as "stability of nature" and "way of nature." These two terms are found in the *Nidāna-samyutta* (S. II. 25), where it is stated that the conditioned arising of things continues uninterruptedly, whether or not Buddhas are born into our world. Conditioned origination is identified with *dharmma* in the statement that a person who sees *paṭicca-samuppāda* sees *dharmma*, and a person who sees *dharmma* sees

paṭicca-samuppāda (M. I. 191). It follows, then, that "it is natural" (*dhammatā*) means "it is in accordance with conditioned origination." Rahula emphasizes that in the concrete instance of freedom from regret arising in a person whose life is established in virtue, *dhammatā* and the arising of freedom from regret are not two things: the arising of freedom from regret is itself *dhammatā* (natural).

In the passage of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* referred to above, the stages of mental development (*bhāvanā*) leading to liberation from sorrow are set forth, with each stage arising naturally as a consequence of the conditions set up in the previous stages (See Chart IV. 1). As each stage is named, the refrain is repeated that there is no need to deploy *cetanā* (*na cetanāya karaṇīyam*) since it is natural (*dhammatā esā*) that the next stage should follow. The passage concludes⁵⁸ with the statement that each stage entails (*abhisandeti*) the next, each stage fulfils (*paripūrenti*) the next, so that one may go from "here" (*apara*) to the "beyond" (*pāram*). The commentary explains *apara* as circling in the realms of rebirth and *pāram* as *nibbāna* (AA. V. 2). The commentary (AA. V. 1) explains *na cetanāya karaṇīyam* as "not to be brought about (*katabbam*) as a consequence of conceptualization (*kappetvā*) and planning (*pakappetvā*)."⁵⁹ *Dhammatā* is explained as "natural state" (*dhamma-sabhāva*) and as "causal order" (*kāraṇa-niyama*) (AA. V. I). The statement that the stages of the Eightfold Path develop naturally, each preparing the conditions for the emergence of the next, elucidates what the term *bhāvanā* comes to mean in the *Suttas*. *Bhāvanā* conveys making the mind gradually develop calm concentration through meditation (*jhāna*) and lucid attention through mindfulness (*sati*). By saying that special interventions of purposive impulse are redundant, the *Aṅguttara-nikaya* expresses the idea that when the disciplines are followed faithfully, the mind develops naturally, according to its own processes of growth. Though there are many

passages in the *Suttas* that stress the need for strenuous effort in cultivating the disciplines of the Eightfold Path, in this passage of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, *cetanā* is shown withdrawing, as it were, in order to allow *bhāvanā* to proceed according to its own inner impulse, with each stage emerging as the consequence (*abhisandeti*) of the conditions in the previous stage and fulfilling (*paripūreti*) all that has gone before.

The commentary to the *Dīgha-nikāya* (DA. II. 432) explains *dharmatā* as "order" or "causal uniformity" (*niyama*) and specifies five types of *niyama*: "the order of kamma" (*kamma-niyama*) manifested in the fact that wholesome and unwholesome acts produce commensurate results, "the order of the seasons" (*utu-niyama*), "the order of the seeds" (*bīja-niyama*) whereby each seed produces a plant that is of the same species as itself, "the order of mental processes" (*citta-niyama*),⁶⁰ and "the order of *dharmā*" (*dharmā-niyama*) which indicates ordered sequences of events in the life of the Buddhas. Although *citta-niyama* is a term that belongs to the commentarial literature, the notion that mental processes proceed, not in a random fashion but in accordance with conditioned origination, is taken for granted in the *Suttas*. The commentary explains *citta-niyama* as the ordered sequence of mental states with each mental state providing the conditions that cause the arising of the next.

The following *Sutta* passages echo the notion that when the cultivation (*bhāvanā*) of the mind proceeds gradually, stage by stage, there is no need for special applications of *cetanā*. In the *Cūḷavedalla-sutta* (M. I. 301-30) Dhammadinnā is asked how the level of meditation that is characterized by the cessation of the processes of perception and feeling (*saññā-vedayita-nirodha*) is attained. This level of meditation is regarded in the *Suttas* as the culmination of calm concentration, attained only after a person has cultivated the four levels of "meditation with form." (*rūpajjhāna*) and the four "formless

meditations" (*arūpajjhāna*). Dhammadinnā states that a person who attains this exalted level of meditation does not think: "I shall attain," or "I am attaining," or "I have attained." She goes on to explain that the person's mind (*citta*) has previously been developed (*bhāvitam*) in such a manner that it leads to that level of meditation.⁶¹ The gist of her statement is that the attainment follows from the training, and is not dependent on intentions of attainment that are focused on the idea of the self as the "attainer." The term *cetanā* does not occur in Dhammadinnā's discourse. However, goal-oriented reflection or purpose is indicated in the thought that the self as agent is attaining, or shall attain, a state of meditation.⁶²

The idea that training leads naturally from cause to effect is found also in a passage of the *Saṃyutta-nikaya* (S. III. 153). Here it is said that the *āsava*s that bind a person to ignorance and sorrow are not removed by thinking: "I wish that my mind were released from the *āsava*s and free of clinging," but by the training.⁶³ The same passage also says that in the case of a person who does not train and develop the mind, mere wishing will not bring liberation from the *āsava*s. The term *cetanā* does not appear in this passage either, but the thrust of this passage is clearly that intention is fruitless without practice and when the practice is well established, the intention to attain a goal becomes superfluous. Three analogies are included in this passage.⁶⁴ The first is of a hen that hatches her eight, ten, or dozen eggs by sitting over them properly, providing proper warmth, and caring for them. Even though the hen may not have the thought, "May my chickens hatch safely," when the time is right, the chickens do hatch safely because the hen has done her work properly. The second is of a carpenter who knows that the handle of his axe is wearing away. He may not note how much of the handle is worn down each day, but he knows when it has completely worn away. A *bhikkhu* who devotes himself to

the cultivation of the mind (*bhāvanā*) is said to resemble this carpenter. Though he does not know how much of the *āsava*s that bind him are removed each day, he knows when he is released from bondage. The third analogy is of an abandoned ship whose riggings are gradually worn away by the forces of nature, even though no one intends that the ship should collapse.

Similarly, the analogy of the relay of chariots in the *Rathavinīta-sutta* (M. I. 146-151) expresses the idea that the movement towards *nibbāna* is a gradual process where each stage prepares the conditions for the arrival of the next.⁶⁵ This analogy compares the way to *nibbāna* to a king's journey from one city to another where he has to attend to some urgent business. To facilitate the king's journey, seven relays of chariots are kept ready for him; at each stage he dismounts from one chariot and enters the next, till the seventh chariot races to its destination. None of the seven chariots can claim to have brought the king to his destination by itself, yet the king would not have reached his destination without the service provided by each single one of the seven chariots. The *Rathavinīta-sutta* (M. I. 150-151) explains that as the disciplines of each stage of the path to *nibbāna* are being cultivated, these disciplines become the conditions for the arising of the next stage: if the conditions are present, there is no need for goal-oriented thoughts to ensure the next stage; the reaching of the next stage is guaranteed by the simple fact that all the steps towards it have been traversed. Each of the chariots in the relay is responsible only for covering the distance to the place where the next chariot is ready and waiting. Similarly, the disciplines of each stage are sufficient to ensure the next stage. The preliminary discipline entitled "purification of virtue" (*sīla-visuddhi*) is not sufficient for the attainment of the goal, but it is sufficient to guarantee the coming into being of the next stage, namely, "purification of the mind" (*citta-visuddhi*). These

disciplines of the beginner are not sufficient for the attainment of *nibbāna*, but *nibbāna* cannot be attained unless the beginner practises the preliminary disciplines with whole-hearted devotion.

These analogies of the relay of chariots and the hen incubating her eggs can serve as guides in the interpretation of the passage in the *Anguttara-nikāya* (A. V. 2-3) where the assurance is given that each stage of the path follows the previous one naturally, without the need for the special intervention of the purposive impulses of *cetanā* (*na cetanāya karaṇīyam*). The analogy of the relay of chariots can be interpreted to show that at each stage of the journey, the eyes of the charioteer are on a stretch of a road that the wheels are covering. On the basis of the analogy of the chariots, *bhāvanā* can be interpreted as a process of cultivation where the focus is on the present time in which a specific discipline is being mindfully developed. *Cetanā*, on the contrary, is defined as a forward-looking goal-oriented function. In this sense, every act of *cetanā* that is not *magga-cetanā* and does not fall within the Eightfold Path can be regarded as bondage to the future. As a consequence, when one discovers, at every stage of *bhāvanā*, that there is no need for the intervention of the goal-oriented purposes of *cetanā*, to that extent one is released from the bondage to the future that *cetanā* represents. *Bhāvanā* signifies that when each step of the journey is mindfully traversed, then journey's end comes about through the natural course of events (*dhammatā esā*). *Nibbāna* is experienced, not as a goal to be grasped, but at the point where the goal-oriented aspiring of *cetanā* comes to rest and the steps of the Path reach their final home.

Motivational sequences in the *Suttas*

In his work *The Dynamic Psychology of Early Buddhism*, Rune Johansson shows that in the *Suttas* motivation is regarded as a causal process where one mental state produces another in accordance with conditioned origination, leading finally to an intended goal. He does not, however, focus on the question of what role is to be assigned to intentions and purposive impulses, if motivation is to be regarded as a process where each stage conditions the next. According to Johansson's interpretation in the *Suttas* motivation is viewed as a sequence of dynamic stages impelled by a sense of physical or mental need in the organism. He presents his interpretation in the form of helpful charts that illustrate "motivational sequences" in the *Suttas* (1979, 184, 209, 211). His interpretation of motivation in the *Suttas* is based on his view that all forms of motivation can be reduced to "needs" that are experienced in different dimensions of life (1979, 99-100). His notion of motivational sequences, therefore, imply that whereas each stage fulfils some of the needs that are experienced in previous stages, it also sets up further needs that impel the process forward. His concept of motivational sequences is presented here, but with certain reservation concerning his view that all motivation is driven by needs. His theory of motivational sequences does not neatly correlate with what is said in the *Suttas* about mindfulness (*sati*), systematic attention (*yoniso-manasikāra*) and understanding (*paññā*) functioning as factors that have the capacity to rouse energy, initiate action, and transform the mind.

Johansson's notion of motivational sequences is introduced here to show that the central principle affirmed in the *Suttas* is that all changes in the body and mind occur in accordance with conditioned origination. Especially the passages that speak of

motivational stages leading to sorrow and conflict (for example, D. III. 288-289; A. IV. 400-401) utilize the vocabulary of the formula of conditioned origination in order to demonstrate that each stage in the process of unwholesome motivation occurs by depending on (*paṭicca*) the confluence of conditions in the previous stage. Conditioned origination entails that the motivational cause is not a single necessary and sufficient factor—whether it be conceived as a dominant “will” or an over-riding need—but a configuration of mutually dependent conditions.

Mindfulness and understanding can be interpreted as motivational factors related to “needs”, since they bring about a sense of insufficiency and sorrow, and impel the individual to strive towards the goal of removing those needs. However, both mindfulness and understanding act as motives precisely by causing a person to re-examine experiences of “need,” “lack,” “insufficiency,” and “craving,” as the accounts of “motivational sequences” related to the Eightfold Path show (for example, A. V. 2). The standard descriptions of the disciplines of the Eightfold Path point to a stage when the cultivation of virtue (*sīla*), meditation, and mindfulness lead to a sense of disenchantment (*nibbidā*) and dispassion (*virāga*) towards worldly objects (Charts IV, 1 and 2). Dispassion towards objects and goals must include a re-examination of the intentions and purposive impulses (*cetanās*) that cause a person to form future goals and make them the focus of one’s life. When dispassion extends to include the very stages of the Eightfold Path, then a person wisely sees that the goal-oriented thrusts of *cetanā* are not necessary (*na cetanāya karaṇīyam*) because the stages of the Path develop naturally, with each stage providing the supporting conditions for the emergence of the next (A. V. 1-2).

One example of a motivational series that Johansson (1985-209) outlines is taken from the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (A. I. 264-265) (Chart IV. 3). The first part of this passage

describes the series of motivational conditions that produces acts with karmic consequences. The second part describes another type of motivational sequence through which *paññā* (wisdom) causes the attachment to objects of desire to cease. In the first part, the motive is passionate desire (*chanda-rāga*) for things. The Buddha explains that when a person thinks about (*anuvitakketi*) and mulls over (*anuvicāreti*) objects towards which there is passionate desire (*chanda-rāga*), then the impetus to act (*chanda*) arises and causes a person to become attached to these things (*tehi dhammehi saññutto hoti*). In this manner, an act with karmic consequences is shown to be initiated through a sequence of motivational conditions. In the second case, wholesome behaviour is motivated by understanding (*paññā*), which is said to arise from insight into the bitter consequences of pursuing objects of desire. Understanding causes a person to aspire for release from attachment to worldly things. The Buddha explains that insight causes a person to withdraw from these things, to feel no desire for them, to re-evaluate them through understanding, and to see them clearly.

Another unwholesome motivational sequence is given in the *Madhupiṇḍika-sutta* (M. I. 111) (Chart IV. 4). In this case, the Buddha identifies the motivating factor behind violent confrontations in society as the mind's craving to proliferate and magnify concepts and mental image. The discourse begins with the statement that quarrels and violence is incited by the arousal of the underlying tendencies (*anusayas*) of sensual passion (*rāga*), aversion (*paṭigha*), views (*diṭṭhi*), perplexity and constant worry (*vicikicchā*), conceit (*māna*), passion for continuance of life (*bhava-rāga*), and ignorance (*avijjā*). The Buddha goes on to say that these *anusayas* become manifest because a person enjoys, welcomes, and adheres to the causes that give rise to perceptions that provide the impetus for the mind to proliferate concepts (*papañca-saññā-saṅkhā*). Later,

Mahākaccāna, explaining the Buddha's words, defines the source of these perceptions that are worked upon by the mind's tendency of conceptual elaboration. He gives the following picture of the sequence of mental processes that lead to quarrels and violence. When the eye, visual consciousness, and visual object come together in sensory stimulation, there is visual perception, followed by feeling. When one feels (*vedeti*) something, one then perceives (*sañjānāti*) the object that caused the feeling, and proceeds to think (*vitakketi*) about it. Concepts and images of the visual object that preoccupies a person begin to diversify and grow in the mind, with the consequence that swiftly multiplying thoughts and images featuring visual objects of the past, the future, and the present begin to assail the mind. The whole process leads to unwholesome action with unhappy results. The same motivational sequences are presented in the *Majjhima-nikāya* with regard to the objects of the other sense organs and mental objects.

The narrative portions of the *Suttas*, especially the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* (D. II. 71-84), show that the Buddhist *Saṅgha* came into existence in the midst of political conflict and social unrest (Gombrich 1988, 49-59). The motivational series outlined above is significant because here the Buddha addresses the social and political violence that he witnessed around him. Here he makes the point that a language of violence based on the mind's craving to multiply concepts, ideas, and mental images leads, stage by stage, to cycles of personal and social violence.

Another motivational series in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (S. II. 143-149), like the one analyzed above, stresses the influence of the cognitive aspects of consciousness on the conative capacity to initiate action (Chart IV. 5). Here the Buddha maintains that the mind's desire to experience more and more objects is the impetus that causes people to constantly increase their feverish quests for more and more possessions. The motivational

series is presented as follows: owing to the diversity of elements (*dhātus*) in the natural universe, there is a diversity of perceptions, ideations or concepts (*saññā-nānattam*); depending on this diversity of perceptions, there arises a diversity of intentions or purposive thoughts (*saṅkappa-nānattam*); depending on the diversity of intentions, there arises a diversity of action-oriented impulses (*chanda-nānattam*); depending on the diversity of the impulse to act, there arises a diversity of feverish passions (*pariḷāha-nānattam*); depending on the diversity of obsessive passions, there is a diversity of quests for objects (*pariyesanā-nānattam*). The *Saṃyutta-nikāya* emphasizes that the sequence of factors in this motivational series is based on the principle of causal order implicit in conditioned processes: each factor arises because of the conditions at work in the previous factor. It is pointed out at S. II. 144-145 that the causal conditions that form this motivational series follow one another in an order that cannot be reversed. Both in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* and in the *Dīgha-nikāya* (D. III. 289), this motivational series that demonstrates the stages by which a diversity of quests arises is put forward in the same terminology that occurs in the formula of conditioned origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*). It is said here that each factor in the motivational series arises by depending on (*paṭicca*) the previous one.

These examples of motivational sequences leave unanswered the question why *cetanā* does not occur among the motivating factors. From the *Abhidhamma* perspective, this question is answered by pointing out that in the *Abhidhamma* lists of mental states, *cetanā* is held to be a basic capacity of initiating action in the organism that is present in all mental states. From this perspective, the answer is given that *cetanā* is an element of every motivational condition in any motivational sequence. By extrapolating from passages that refer to how *cetanās* arise and function, the inference can be drawn that in

the *Suttas* it is also implied—though not overtly stated, as in the *Abhidhamma* literature—that *cetanā*s are present in all states of mind. It was noted earlier in this chapter that in the *Suttas* (S. II. 3-4), *cetanā* is regarded as a factor of basic sentence (*nāma*) functioning in conjunction with vitality to initiate rudimentary goal-oriented functions in the body and mind. When *cetanā* functions at this basic level of consciousness, obviously it does not put forth fully formed intentions and goal-oriented thoughts. Reference was also made earlier in this chapter to passages in the *Suttas* (D. II. 308-309, III 243-244) that define *cetanā* as a mental factor that arises, together with cognitive factors such as thought (*vitakka*) and conative factors such as desire (*taṇhā*), whenever contact with a sensory or mental object produces a perception (*saññā*). It can be inferred, therefore, that at every stage of a motivational series, *cetanā* functions as an intention imbued with the capacity to initiate action. Nevertheless, *cetanā* does not function autonomously, does not take a controlling role, and does not introduce a novel element into the motivational process. The function of a *cetanā* is to manifest a purposive impulse that corresponds to the dominant thoughts and emotions that constitute a specific stage of a motivational series. *Cetanā* also has the capacity to instigate an act of body, speech or mind that expresses any specific stage of a motivational process.

Earlier in this chapter it was shown that Theravāda maintains that intention (*cetanā*), aspiration (*paṭthanā*) and resolve (*paṇidhi*) arise and function within a universe of experience characterized by a specific world-view. Reference was made to passages in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (A. I. 32, V. 212), which state that the view (*diṭṭhi*) that a person holds casts its influence on intention, aspirations, resolves, and all acts of body, speech, and mind. Though the motivational processes examined above describe mental needs that motivate action—such as the need to multiply and diversify sensory experience, and the

craving to proliferate concepts and mental images—these needs and tendencies are not defined as self-perpetuating processes that are inherent to the continuum of consciousness. On the contrary, they are said to be conditioned by a person's view of the world and way of life. In the same way, though understanding (*paññā*) is regarded as a strong motivating force, unlike the Jainas for example, Theravādins do not consider knowledge (*ñāṇa*) to be an inherent characteristic of consciousness. Understanding (*paññā*) is regarded as a motivating factor that arises through the experiences of one's life, and is nourished and brought to dominance through careful attention and practice of mindfulness.

The motivational processes illustrated above depict the cognitive, emotive and conative aspects of the mind inclining, stage by stage, towards a certain mode of behaviour. The phrase *cittaṃ namati* (inclines the mind) conveys the idea that motivation is a process of causing the entire mind to gradually incline towards a specific goal by providing conditions that are conducive to that inclination. It is assumed that in the cases of both wholesome and unwholesome motivation, the direction in which the mind bends is dependent on the conditions that come together in the motivational process. An example of wholesome bending of the mind is in the *Caṅkī-sutta* (M. II. 171-174). Here the Buddha explains that a householder chooses a teacher in the following way. When the householder approaches a teacher, he first tests or investigates (*samannesati*) that teacher to make sure that he is free from greed (*lobha*), enmity (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*). Having made sure of the purity of the teacher's character, the householder places faith (*saddhā*) in the teacher. He then listens to the teaching, remembers it, examines the meaning of the teaching and finds pleasure in understanding its contents. Then zeal arises in him (*chandaṃ jāyati*), and he exerts himself (*ussahati*), examines (*tuleti*) the teaching

and strives (*padahati*) until he attains wisdom (*paññā*). The passage goes on to emphasize that the conditions present at each stage greatly aid (*bahu-kāra*) the arising of the next stage. It is said that in the course of the training an understanding of the teaching is very helpful (*bahu-kāra*) for the arising of the impetus to act (*chanda*), the latter for the exertion of energy (*ussāha*), the exertion of energy for careful examination of the teaching (*tulanā*), and attention to the teaching for intense striving (*padhāna*).

A typical example of a motivational sequence where the mind gradually inclines towards an unwholesome goal is given at D. III. 289 and is repeated at A. IV. 400-401 (Chart IV. 6). This motivational sequence demonstrates how craving (*taṇhā*) directs the mind towards conflict and violence by pursuing and acquiring objects. According to the account given here, acquisition leads to processes of decision-making that become occasions for the arising of desire and passion (*chanda-raga*); attachment, avarice, and arrangements to safeguard possessions follow in sequence from desire and passion; and the final consequence is conflict and violence for the purpose of protecting one's possessions. The terminology of conditioned origination is evident in this passage: each stage is said to arise by depending on (*paṭicca*) the one previous to it.

The above passages from the *Sutta* literature do not describe motivation as a process where either the intellect or emotions or volition play a controlling role in directing the personality. On the contrary, both wholesome and unwholesome motivations are described as processes where the entire mind is shown to incline (*namati*), stage by stage, towards a specific goal. At each stage, discursive thoughts, emotional attitudes, and conative energies condition each other in such a way that the entire mind comes to be in accord with the goal.

Motivation that goes "against the current"

The passages of *Sutta* literature referred to above depict motivation as a "natural" process where each stage produces the next, in accordance with conditioned origination. However, there are other passages where the emphasis is on the deployment of energy towards a goal that is in sharp contrast to one's bent of mind. The idea that the practice of the Buddha's teachings goes against the ordinary motivations that focus on thoughts of "I" and "my world" is illustrated in the imagery of "going upstream" and "moving against the current" (*paṭisota-gāmi*) (M. I. 168; S. I. 136; A. II. 5).⁶⁶ In such contexts, *chanda* (impetus to act), *virīya* (energy), and *padhāna* (striving, exertion) are the preferred terms to convey the struggle against the unwholesome impulses that prevail in the mind. These terms differ from *cetanā* and *saṅkappa* in that their meaning does not focus on the cognitive features of purposive reflection or intention, but emphasizes the application of conative energy to initiate and direct action.

Of all the Pāli terms signifying conation, *chanda* is the one that covers the widest range and comes most readily to mind as the equivalent of "initiation of action." In a basic sense, *chanda* signifies the excitation or stimulation of the entire *citta*. In the introduction it was shown that Mrs. Rhys Davids, and decades later, Rune Johansson, gave much importance to the fact that *cetanā*, *saṅkappa* and *chanda* can function either as wholesome or as unwholesome motivational impulses. When *chanda* represents an unwholesome state of mind, its closest equivalent is *rāga* (passion) or *kāma* (desire). In this sense, *chanda* joins with *dosa* (aversion), *moha* (delusion), and *bhaya* (fear) to form four motives for wrong ways of behaviour (D. III. 228; A. II. 18). Other examples of *chanda* as unwholesome motivation include passionate desire (*chanda-rāga*) for that

which is impermanent, sorrowful, and non-self (S. III. 178) and the impulse to act based on the notion of an autonomous self (*asmīti chanda*) (S. III. 131).

As a virtue *chanda* manifests in the form of zeal to follow what is wholesome and right (*kusala dhamma-chanda*) (A. III. 441). Qualified by the adjective *tibba* (keen, eager), *chanda* represents the keen aspiration of a *bhikkhu* to cultivate higher virtue, higher thought, higher insight (A. I. 229). "Right effort" (*sammā-vāyāma*) as an aspect of the Eightfold Path is defined as applying energy against the stubborn inclinations of a mind that is motivated by the unwholesome mental states that are called the "defilements" (*kilesas*). A person who cultivates right effort generates zeal (*chandaṃ janeti*), puts forth energy (*viriyam ārabhati*) and exerts the mind in order to prevent the arising of unarisen unwholesome states, to overcome unwholesome states that have already arisen, to produce wholesome states that have not yet arisen, and to nourish the wholesome states that are beginning to arise (M. III. 25). The imagery of striving against the current and the description of "right effort" in the Eightfold Path signify that powerful zeal is generated, and heroic energy is exerted, by a volitional act that can counteract the defilements of the mind. However, the exertion of energy to renounce unwholesome states is set in the context of the Eightfold Path and is supported by "right view" (*sammā-dhiṭṭhi*) and "right resolve" (*sammā-saṅkappa*). Right effort goes against the defilements (*kilesas*) in the mind but is in harmony with the Eightfold Path. In this sense, "right effort" is conditioned by all the other aspects of the training. Although it goes against the current of the defilements, it goes along with the current of the Eightfold Path. Right effort, right resolve, and *dhamma-chanda* are able to go against the conditioning of worldly goals only because they are supported by the conditioning influence of the wholesome factors of the Eightfold Path. In this context, right effort is seen as a wholesome condition within

a larger process of conditioning that inclines the mind towards the disciplines and goals of the Eightfold Path. Earlier in this chapter reference was made to the *cetanā* of the Path (*magga-cetanā*) that arises through the cultivation of the mind (*bhāvanā*) and is attuned to the wholesome attitudes of the Path.

The term *virīya* is widely used in the *Suttas* to signify "vigour, effort, energy, exertion" (P.E.D. 634, col.2). In the *Samyutta-nikāya* (S. II. 131-132) the following factors are said to be essential in the training of a *bhikkhu*: *yoga* (discipline, uninterrupted practice), *chanda* (enthusiasm, zeal), *ussolhi* (exertion), *appaṭivāṇi* (not turning back), *ātappam* (ardour), *virīya* (energy), *sātaccam* (perseverance), *sati* (mindfulness), *sampajaññam* (clear comprehension or discernment) and *appamāda* (putting away negligence or carelessness). In the same vein, the *Majjhima-nikāya* (M. I. 356) counts *virīya* among the qualities of a person who has entered the Buddha's discipline and puts forth energy in order to give up unwholesome mental states and cultivate wholesome states. The disciple is described as steadfast in persevering (*thānavān*), capable of steady striving (*daḍha-parakkama*) and not one to shrink from responsibility in cultivating wholesome states (*anikkhitta-dhuro*).⁶⁷ *Virīya* is defined as the quality of the hero (*vīra*), and the one who has attained enlightenment is called a *vīra* (S. III. 84).

Virīya is often combined with the terms *ārambha*, *āraddha*, and *ārabbha*. These terms start with the root meaning of "beginning" and widen their connotation to include "undertaking," "effort," "attempt," and "inception of energy" (P.E.D. 107, col.2). The term *ārabbha-vatthu* signifies an occasion when one should exert and make the resolve: "Let me put forth energy to attain what has not been attained to achieve what has not been achieved, to realize what has not been realized" (D. III. 256 = A. IV. 334-335).⁶⁸

The Buddha explains that the application of energy can be successful in overcoming unwholesome mental states only when it is supported by wholesome conditions. For example, when the bhikkhu Meghiya is troubled by thoughts of sensual pleasure, hatred, and cruelty, the Buddha tells him that five conditions liberate the minds of those who are beginners in the monastic training: seeking out a good friend (*kalyāṇamitta*), living by the precepts and restraints of monastic life, helpful discussion, putting forth energy (*āradḍha viriya*), and cultivating wisdom (*paññā*) (A. IV. 357).⁶⁹ Similarly, the *Anaṅgaṇa-sutta* (M. I. 32) explains at length that the attitude of mind and life-style of a person should be free from the hold of deceit, carelessness, laziness, lack of energy, and lack of concentration, if energy is to be efficaciously deployed. According to this teaching, the arduous effort of overcoming the unwholesome cannot be effective unless it is supported by one's entire way of life.

“Subduing the mind by the mind”

Theravāda Buddhism shares with the Upaniṣadic, Jaina, and Yoga traditions the unhesitating confidence that it is possible to cause unwholesome mental states to cease and to develop wholesome attitudes. In the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, the Buddha assures his disciples that one can indeed rid oneself of the unwholesome⁷⁰ and cultivate the wholesome.⁷¹ He tells them that he would not expect them to embark on an impossible or futile quest (A. I. 58). At the same time, the Theravāda tradition leaves the disciple with no illusions regarding the sheer magnitude of the effort called for. This section of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* presents to the student, as a model of the determined exertion required, the Bodhisatta's vow that he would not rise from his seat of meditation with his goal unattained, even if his body withered away (A. I. 50).⁷² The Bodhisatta vow exemplifies

untiring effort to attain the goal of purity. The Buddha says that he has understood two things: not to rest contented with wholesome states (*asantuṭṭhitā kusalesu*) that already have been attained or to be turned back from the effort (*appaṭivāṇitā padhānasmim*) of attaining the goal. The process of removing unwholesome mental states and cultivating wholesome factors is compared to the stages by which gold is refined (A. I. 253-254).

Although, for the most part, the cultivation (*bhāvanā*) of the mind through the disciplines of the Eightfold Path is seen as a gradual process, like a tree coming to fruition (A. IV. 99) or mountain streams gathering to form the rivers that swell the ocean (A. V. 115-116), there are other passages in the *Suttas* where the emphasis is on the relentless effort to subdue a rebellious and unwholesome mind.

The *Vitakkasaṇṭhāna-sutta* (M. I. 118-122) offers the following ways of dealing with thoughts growing out of the three unwholesome roots: greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*). The first is a strategy of substitution whereby a person attends to what is wholesome until the unwholesome ceases to trouble the mind. If substitution does not work, the next method is to examine the danger that arises from unwholesome thoughts (*ādīnava upaparikkhitabbo*). If this investigation of the sorrowful consequences of unwholesome thoughts does not cause them to wane, the next technique is not to keep remembering those unwholesome thoughts and not to give them attention (*asati-amanasikāram āpajjitabbo*). If none of the above methods work, the next technique is to quieten the mind. This technique consists of practising meditation to still the "series of thought configurations" (*vitakka-saṅkhāra-saṇṭhāna*) that manifest as unwholesome thoughts. If unwholesome thoughts still beset the mind, a person is advised to proceed, with clenched teeth and tongue pressed to the palate, to "control the mind by means of the mind," as a strong person may subdue one who is weak. The text says that the mind

(*citta*) is to be restrained (*abhiniggaṇhitabbam*), crushed (*abhinippīletabbam*), and subjugated (*abhisantāpetabbam*) by means of the mind (*cetasā*).

This technique of controlling the mind (*citta*) by the mind (*cetasā*) in the *Vitakkasaṇṭhāna-sutta* resonates with the statements in *Therīgāthā* and the *Theragāthā* about bringing the mind under one's own control. This technique of clenched teeth and tongue pressed to the palate, and the idea that the mind is "crushed" and "subjugated" recall the imagery of striving against the current and moving upstream. This technique, however, is not put forth in such a way as to suggest a division of consciousness into a controlling component and one that is controlled. Neither do we have the picture of a *citta* where one "part" has become vitiated and unwholesome. Rather, the *citta* is pictured as a network of interacting processes; and the transformation is regarded as taking place in the *citta* as a whole, through the interaction of thoughts, emotions, and conative energies. The instructions in the *Vitakkasaṇṭhāna-sutta* are given to monks who are following the inter-related techniques of the Eightfold Path, which simultaneously addresses the views, the emotional tensions, and the intentions in the mind of the monk. Similarly, the *Sabbāsava-sutta* (M. I. 6-12) shows a comprehensive approach to training the mind. According to this *sutta*, in order to overcome the multiple distortions of the mind that are caused by the *āsava*s, it is necessary to cultivate disciplines that simultaneously energize the mind with a strong resolve, clarify and sharpen thought processes, and calm emotional tensions through the cultivation of patience and fortitude. Neither the *Sabbāsava-sutta* nor the *Vitakkasaṇṭhāna-sutta* put forward the idea that a powerful "will" or reason imbued with the capacity to initiate action can take control and subdue incorrect or wayward thought processes and unwholesome emotions.

Mindfulness and the transformation of mind

The description of the Foundations of Mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*) in the *Suttas* (D. II. 290-315, M. I. 56-63) shows that the practice is based on the view that the mind has the capacity of reflexive awareness (*paccavekkhaṇa*), which enables it to know its own processes at the time when they are occurring, and also to review them retrospectively. In the context of training and developing the mind, mindfulness signifies "bearing in mind" (*dhāraṇatā*) currently occurring physical and mental processes as well as "recollecting" or "reviewing" a physical or mental process that has just occurred (Dhs. 11). The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 133) lists mindfulness among the factors that are found in all wholesome states of mind and regards its defining characteristic to be the capacity to hold an object steadily in the mind in order to remember it, without allowing the object to "wobble" in the mind, like a pumpkin bobbing up and down in water (Ñāṇamoli 1964, 524, n.64).

The practice of mindfulness includes mindful observation of one's feelings (*vedanānupassanā*) and states of mind (*cittānupassanā*) (D. II. 298-299; M. I. 59-60). The disciple is instructed first to observe feelings and states of mind "internally" (*ajjhātam*). This implies becoming aware that these processes are private and intimate. Next, feelings and states of mind are observed "externally" (*bahiddhā*). The focus here is on becoming mindful that these processes are shared, in the sense that similar processes occur in other minds. The next step is to observe feelings and states of mind in the light of the principle of conditioned origination. One becomes aware that feelings and mental states pass from being "arising states" (*samudaya-dhammā*) to becoming "decaying states" (*vaya-dhammā*). And finally, one observes mental states solely as present facts, with the

awareness that a certain feeling is present in the mind (*atthi vedanā*) or a certain state of mind comes into existence (*atthi cittaṃ*).

Mindfulness of states of mind (*cittānupassanā*) is described as precise and focused reflexive awareness of whether or not the mind is affected by passion (*rāga*), hatred (*dosa*), or delusion (*moha*), and whether or not the mind has "expanded" (*mahaggatam*) by entering into a level of meditation (*jhāna*) (D. II. 300; M. I. 59). There is nothing in these instructions to suggest that mindfulness includes processes of volition whereby one makes a decision and deliberately initiates action either to produce wholesome states or to eradicate unwholesome states. Yet, both of the *Satipaṭṭhāna-suttas* (D. II. 315; M. I. 64) conclude with the statement that the practice of mindfulness leads to the purification of beings (*sattānaṃ visuddhiyā*), the overcoming of sorrow and anguish, the cessation of suffering and sadness, and the attainment of *nibbāna*.

The instructions for the practice of mindfulness do not include a description of the process by which the mind is cleansed of unwholesome mental states and wholesome states are established. However, some clues are offered. The *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* (D. II. 279-297; M. I. 59-63) instructs the person who is engaged in mindfully observing feelings and states of the *citta* to become aware that mental states arise and cease in accordance with conditioned origination. It is clear that the emphasis here is not merely on becoming aware of mental states as factors of consciousness, but on observing them from the perspective of universal change and conditioning. According to the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta*, it is the direct experience of the body and mind in terms of change that causes what could be designated as a "shift" in mental attitude or, in the language of the *Suttas*, an alteration in the way the *citta* "inclines" (*namati*). It can be inferred that the idea of conditioned origination gives to persons who are practising mindfulness a

perspective from which they can directly observe, review, classify, and bear in mind physical and mental states. At the same time, conditioned origination evidently ceases to be a mere idea and becomes a directly experienced fact for those who observe the fleeting nature of feelings and mental states. Through the practice of mindfulness, processes of change and conditioning become immediate and intimate experiences. The *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* maintains that the mindful observation of dependently arising, fragile, and impermanent physical and mental states leads to a radical change in attitude, so that those who devote themselves to the practice learn to live without seeking security in changing things (*anissito ca viharati*) and without clinging to anything in the world (*na ca kiñci loke upādiyati*).

Like the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta*, the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 129) also maintains that mindful awareness of conditioned origination will bring about changes in attitude, followed naturally, by changes in behaviour. The direct awareness of change becomes the condition for transformations in the mind. No special interventions of reason, or resolve are deemed necessary for these transformations to occur. According to the *Atthasālinī*, when a person becomes aware that all physical and mental states are impermanent, lacking in selfhood or autonomous individuality, and liable to cause sorrow, then a change in attitude comes about: greed, aversion, and delusion begin to be replaced by generosity, friendliness, and understanding. The *Atthasālinī* asks: "Knowing a thing to be impermanent, who would become attached to it? Knowing all conditioned things to be capable of causing sorrow, who would increase sorrow by reacting to them with sorrow-producing hatred? Knowing things to be empty of permanent selfhood, who would be deluded by them?" It can be inferred that both the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* and the *Atthasālinī* view these changes in attitude to be the fruits, not of volitional effort, but of suspending

purposive thoughts and goal-oriented acts in order to view physical and mental processes as facts of existence (*dharmā*) that come into being and pass away. The method of mindfulness requires steadfast application of energy; but the energy is directed on attentively observing one's own bodily and mental processes. The focus is not on deliberately repressing or changing these processes through strong resolve or sustained energy.

Wisdom and Motivation

The *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* develops a method where the "rise and fall" of mental states is noted with precision. The method of mindfulness is based on the understanding that the direct experiences of change, conditioning, and sorrow in the processes of the mind and the body will gradually condition consciousness in such a way as to make mental attitudes wholesome and behaviour beneficent. There are other passages in the *Suttas*, however, where *paññā* (wisdom) and *virīya* (energy) are juxtaposed, and understanding the teachings of the Buddha is regarded as the motivation for putting forth energy and deliberate effort to cleanse the mind of unwholesome habits of thought.

The bond between wisdom and energy that is posited in Theravāda follows from the fact that in this tradition wisdom is defined, not merely as the goal of the Eightfold Path, but as a mental function that exhibits a continuity with perception (*saññā*) and cognition (*viññāṇa*), and functions as reasoning and intellectual acumen in daily life.⁷³ In the course of the training, both *virīya* and *paññā* become "controlling faculties" that have a dominant influence over the development and orientation of the *citta*. However, *paññā* represents more than well-deployed intelligence. "Wisdom" signifies coming to see the world in terms of conditioned origination, and a commitment to the Eightfold Path that

involves clarification of thought processes, purification of emotional responses, and a re-directing of conative energies towards the goal of freedom from sorrow.

The relationship that Theravāda posits between *paññā* and processes of emotion can be seen in the identification of ignorance with the unwholesome "root" of delusion (*moha*), and the association of wisdom with non-delusion. *Moha* signifies, not only a confused, bewildered, inattentive or careless state of mind that is unable to come to terms with the impermanent and conditioned nature of all objects, but also an infatuation with specific objects. *Paññā* signifies a calm and joyous state of mind that is free of enticements. Serenity and freedom from unhappy emotions are considered to be as much marks of wisdom as lucidity of thought. Wisdom is described as understanding that leads to complete freedom from suffering (S. V. 197, 200; M. II. 95). The wise understanding that all things are subject to change is associated with a happiness (*somanassa*) that is the fruit of the renunciation (*nekkhamma*) of the desire to possess objects. The Theravāda view that wisdom does not arise suddenly, but blossoms out of processes of cognition and emotion, once again demonstrates the holistic view of consciousness that this tradition upholds.

The relationship between *paññā* that begins to exert its influence on the mind and energy (*virīya*) deployed in overcoming unwholesome mental states is demonstrated in the *Anumāna-sutta* (M. I. 97-100) and the *Dvedhāvitakka-sutta* (M. I. 114-118). These two *suttas* are examined below to determine how they bring together the cognitive features of *paññā* and the conative dynamism of *virīya*. In the *Anumāna-sutta*, the senior monk Mahā Moggallāna instructs the monks in his care that a monk should first "review himself" (*attanā va attānam evaṃ paccavekkhitabbam*), and then put forth effort (*vāyamitabbam*) to remove the unwholesome factors that he sees in himself (M. I. 98).

Paccavekkhaṇa is compared to the process of examining oneself in a mirror. It is to be noted that there is a difference between the method that is taught in the *Anumāna-sutta* and the method of mindfulness, though both begin with the practice of reviewing (*paccavekkhaṇa*) the contents of the mind. In the method of mindfulness goal-directed thoughts and volitional efforts are deliberately suspended, and no deliberate effort is made to uproot unwholesome thoughts. Transformations of the mind are allowed to come about “naturally” according to conditioned origination. The instruction given in the *Anumāna-sutta* is that the cognitive process of holding up a mirror to the mind should be a prelude to intense voluntary effort to remove unwholesome states. In the *Dvedhāvitakka-sutta*, the Buddha tells his disciples of a method that he practised to clean the mind of unwholesome thoughts, when he was striving for enlightenment. The *Dvedhāvitakka-sutta* has the following steps: one should remain vigilant (*appamatta*), and fervent (*ātāpi*); thoughts, as they arise, should be divided into categories of wholesome and unwholesome; one should realize that whenever the mind constantly thinks about (*anuvitakketi*) and ponders over (*anuvicāreti*) an object, then the mind inclines (*namati*) towards that object; and finally, one should realize the unhappy consequences of unwholesome thoughts and put forth energy to purify the mind.

Both the technique taught by Mahā Moggallāna in the *Anumāna-sutta* and the method devised by the Bodhisatta for the removal of unwholesome thoughts begin with the cultivation of *paññā*. Both rely on clear discernment and coherent reasoning. In both cases thought processes are trained and developed into wisdom that affirms the world-view and the goals put forward in the teaching of the Buddha. The Bodhisatta’s method relies on developing the ability to discern the characteristics of things and to distinguish between two things that fall under the same general category. Both this method and the

method of the *Anumāna sutta* are considered to be based on the cultivation of understanding (*paññā*). Mahā Moggallāna's method is designated as "valid inference" (*anumāna*). A monk infers that if certain patterns of behaviour are harmful and displeasing when they are found in others, he should not emulate such behaviour, since it would bring sorrow and harm to himself. The monk is instructed that he should strive to remove such morally wrong and unwholesome states if he finds them in his own mind. It is implied here that wise understanding itself becomes the instigation for the arousing of energy.

Neither the mind's capacity to reflect on its own processes nor understanding can claim to transcend processes of conditioning: both come into being through the support of a network of thoughts, emotions, and conative efforts. Nevertheless, by reflecting on its own contents, the mind becomes aware of how the networks of mental conditioning operate. The therapeutic value of reflexive awareness is referred to by Macy in her work *Mutual Causality in Buddhism and General Systems Theory* (1991). She points out that in the practice of mindfulness, attention is directed "not to the things we see but to how we see them, the dependently co-arising nature of feelings, thoughts, and perceptions" (1991, 136). Wise insight into the processes of change and mutual conditioning in one's own mind does not set aside, negate, or transcend the processes of conditioning. According to Theravāda, the conditioned order of mental processes (*citta-niyama*) is a given fact. However, when the mind becomes aware of its own conditioning, this wise awareness becomes a dominant conditioning influence that works on all the other processes of conditioning that constitute the mind. The source of the motivating power of *paññā*, therefore, is the capacity of the mind to "hold a mirror" to its own processes of conditioning, as the Buddha tells Rāhula (M. I. 415).

Furthermore, in Theravāda *paññā* (understanding) is regarded, not as a virtue that functions autonomously but as a participant in a constellation of mutually conditioning mental powers. Thus *paññā* is perceived to be one of the "controlling faculties" (*indriyas*), faith (*saddhā*), energy (*virīya*), mindfulness (*satī*), concentration (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*paññā*). These five are also known as the five "powers" (*balas*). The tradition emphasizes the need for balance in the mutual relationships of these five controlling faculties (*indriya-samatta*). In the practice of mindfulness, faith provides a counterbalance to wisdom and prevents the latter from anything approaching mere sophistry. Similarly, the calming power of concentration prevents energy from becoming a form of restlessness (Nyanatiloka 1980, 79). These five virtues are chosen out of an array of wholesome mental states and grouped together in this way because, separately and together, they are perceived to be capable of including in their controlling influence thoughts, emotions, and the mind's capacity to initiate action. Since Theravāda perceives the mind to be an organic whole of mutually conditioning cognitions, emotions, and conative energies, the disciplines of the Eightfold Path are based on the idea that wholesome changes in any function of the mind will have a pervasive good influence on many other mental processes. Throughout the Eightfold Path, the emphasis is neither on cultivating a sovereign capacity of reasoning nor on establishing a controlling power of volition. The Eightfold Path aims at setting up helpful conditions so that wholesome states of mind follow one another in the continuum of consciousness. The training is based on the affirmation that when the state of mind (*citta*) is wholesome, the purposive impulse (*cetanā*) that arises from it will also be wholesome. The wholesome purpose motivates other mental factors to come together to form a wholesome configuration of conditions (*abhisankhāra*) that becomes expressed in a wholesome act.

Conclusion

The concept of *cetanā* in the *Sutta* literature follows from a consistently held holistic view of the mind and a commitment to the idea of conditioned origination. This chapter shows that in the *Suttas* *cetanā* is conceived as purposive thought imbued with the capacity to initiate action aimed at achieving that purpose. *Cetanā* can be designated as “volition” in the sense that it fulfils three functions: intending to achieve a goal, initiating bodily and mental action, and directing that action towards the goal. However, according to the *Sutta* literature, *cetanā* never functions independently but is conditioned by processes of perception (*saññā*) and discernment (*viññāṇa*) as well as by the mind’s capacity to bring together mental factors and produce goal-oriented acts (*saṅkhāras*).

It is affirmed in the *Suttas* that the function of *cetanā* is not uniform but complex and multi-faceted. *Cetanā* is included among the factors that are considered to be necessary for the most rudimentary functioning of conscious awareness and vitality (S. II. 3-4). Sensory and mental stimulation through contact (*phassa*) with objects is regarded as the matrix for the arising of *cetanā* (D. II. 308-309; D. III. 243-244). *Cetanā*, therefore, is considered to be related to other mental factors, such as perception (*saññā*), thought (*vitakka*), reflection (*vicāra*) and desire (*taṇhā*), which arise through the contact of the senses and the mind with their respective objects. With regard to the processes of *kamma*, *cetanā* functions as the link between thought and action by rendering thought into purposive reflection and instigating action to achieve that purpose. The acts that *cetanā* produces in this way are designated as wholesome or unwholesome intentional acts (*sañcetanika-kamma*) (A.V. 285-303). However, the accounts of *kamma* include a reference to a specific type of *cetanā* as the mental factor that renounces goal-oriented

thoughts related to the fruits of *kamma* and prepares the way for cultivating the disciplines of the Eightfold Path (A. II. 203-231; D. III. 230).

There are no passages in the first four *nikāyas* where *cetanā* is explicitly defined as the function of choosing between alternatives and deciding on a goal. However, there are passages where it is clearly implied that *cetanā* signifies purposive impulse or intention that has the capacity to initiate goal-oriented action. It can be inferred that *cetanā* connotes intention in the *Upāli-sutta* (M.I. 377) where the Buddha points out that *cetanā* is included under mental action, and that mental action carries greater significance than physical action in assessing the moral value of any specific act. The association of *cetanā* with *pathanā* (aspiration) and *paṇidhi* (resolve) implies that *cetanā* connotes intention (S. II. 99; A. I. 32, V 212).

It is in the passages where wholesome and unwholesome acts are designated as *sañcetanika-kamma* (A.V. 288-303) or as *sañcetanā-hetu-kamma* (A.II. 157-158) that it becomes most clear that *cetanā/sañcetanā* implies intention or purposive thought that is endowed with the impetus to initiate action. The examples of acts of body, speech, and mind given in the *Karajakāya-vagga* (A.V. 288-303) illustrate that the purposive impulse (*sañcetanā*) that instigates an act with karmic consequences is always supported by a specific wholesome or unwholesome attitude of mind. Furthermore, *cetanā* is not described as an intention or purposive impulse that is unconditioned and completely novel. On the contrary, in these passages the attitudes of mind that condition the purposive impulses of *cetanās* are described in terms of well-established mental habits.

The definition of *kamma* that the Buddha gives identifies *cetanā* with *kamma* (A. III. 415). This definition of *kamma*, can be analysed into two parts. In the first part, where the Buddha declares that it is *cetanā* that he calls *kamma*, no difference whatsoever

is posited between *kamma* and *cetanā*. The second part, where the Buddha says that a person performs *kamma* after having applied *cetanā* (*cetayitvā*) can be taken to mean that *cetanā*, in the form of intention, precedes and instigates acts of body, speech, and mind. However, when acts that are karmically operative are designated as *sañcetanika kamma*, this designation signifies that the acts are not consequents of a mental act of intention but are concrete expressions of intention, and in no way separate from intention. *Cetanā* and *kamma* are viewed as an integral whole.

The function of *cetanā* in the processes of *kamma* is most clearly seen when *saṅkhāras* are said to be constituted of *cetanās* (S. III. 63). In the *Sañcetanika-vagga* of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (A. II. 158) the two terms *sañcetanā-hetu-kamma* (act that has intention as cause) and *saṅkhāra* denote an act of body, speech, or mind that has moral value and produces karmic consequences. However, these two designations differ in connotation. *Sañcetanika-kamma* and *sañcetanā-hetu kamma* signify that the act is an expression of purposive thought or intention. *Saṅkhāra* and *abhisāṅkhāra* signify that the act is produced by a configuration of causal conditions and that the act itself, as a product, is a configuration of many physical and mental factors.

The conclusion can be drawn that with regard to the processes of *kamma*, *cetanā* is viewed as a purposive impulse that activates the mind's resources and produce acts that have the aim of fulfilling a purpose or achieving a goal. At the same time, the linking of *cetanā* with *saṅkhāra* entails that purposive impulses and intentions (*cetanās*) are conditioned by the habit-forming function of *saṅkhāras*. Intentions often arise from bodily and mental habits.

There are passages where the process of motivation is interpreted to be a sequence of stages, and each stage is conceived as an attitude of mind that can provide the

conditions for the emergence of the next. The vocabulary of conditioned origination is utilized to show that each stage arises by depending (*paṭicca*) on the previous stage. It is also shown that the sequence cannot be reversed (S. II. 143; D. III. 289; A. IV. 400). In this context, the disciplines of the Eightfold Path are viewed as a gradual process of training where each stage will lead to the next when properly cultivated in accordance with conditioned origination, which is the order of nature (*dhamatā*). No interventions of purposive impulses (*cetanās*) are seen to be necessary, since each stage naturally leads to the next (A. V. 1-2).

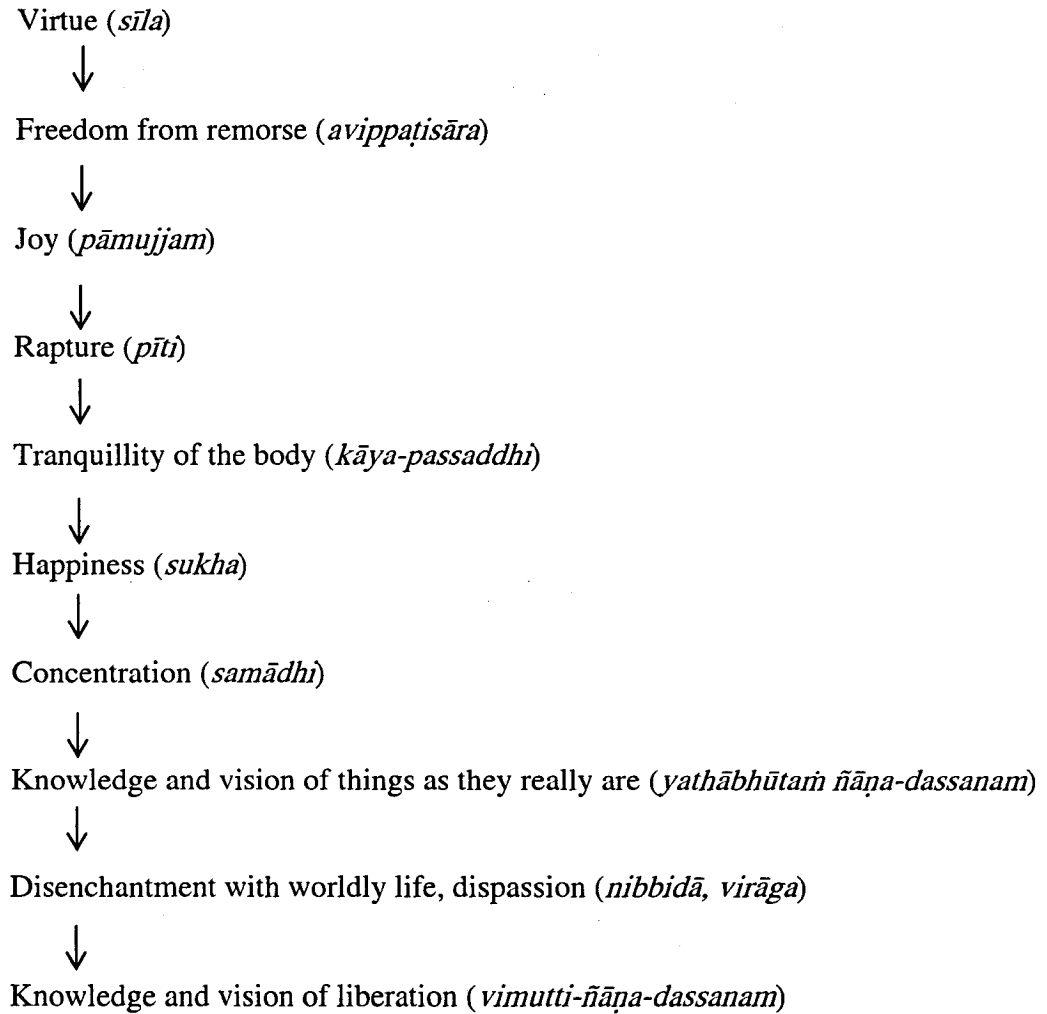
The imagery of “striving against the current” (M. I. 168; S.I. 136; A. II. 5) and the instruction to “subdue the mind by the mind” (M. I. 120-121) must be seen in the contexts in which they occur. Any effort to purify the mind of unwholesome mental states is regarded as fruitless unless it is supported by a set of conditions that will bring about the change. It is not posited that some “part” or “level” of the mind can take a controlling role. Both the wholesome “roots” of action (non-greed, non-hate, and non-delusion) as well as the unwholesome roots that oppose these wholesome mental states include thought processes, emotions, and the conative capacity to initiate action. The idea of “mind controlling the mind” represents processes of transformation that occur through the mutual conditioning of all the aspects of the mind. The effort to cleanse the mind is supported on one side by a system of ideas including conditioned origination and the Four Noble Truths, and on the other side by practices of meditation and mindfulness that calm the mind and make it flexible.

Theravāda, like the Yoga tradition holds that the mind has the capacity to view itself reflexively and assess its own contents. Cultivating this capacity of the mind to observe and review itself (*paccavekkhaṇa*) is not regarded as a release from conditioning,

but as a method of becoming aware of how the processes of conditioning affect mental states. In the practice of mindfulness no deliberate volitional effort is made to remove unwholesome thoughts and emotions. It is a method of simply giving attention to what is happening in the mind. The direct awareness of processes of conditioning in one's own mind becomes the starting point of wholesome changes that happen "naturally," in accordance with conditioned origination. In the *Suttas*, understanding (*paññā*) is defined, not only as the wisdom that ultimately liberates the mind from sorrow, but as a motivating "power" (*bala*) that is gradually developed through clarifying one's thought, purifying the emotions, and making the mind calm and attentive through meditation and mindfulness. Wise understanding of how processes of conditioning occur in oneself and others introduces fresh, wholesome conditions that gradually come to dominate over other conditioning factors. Wisdom and energy become mutually conditioning factors in the effort of understanding how unwholesome mental states occur and uprooting them. Fruitful effort is the method of setting up wholesome conditions to facilitate wholesome changes. Transformations in the mind and the acceptance of wise goals are explained in this way.

Chart IV. 1

Stages in the cultivation (*bhāvanā*) of the disciplines of the path of liberation. The stages develop "naturally" in accordance with conditioned origination (A. V. 2).



* All charts for Chapter IV are modelled after those found in R.E.A. Johansson, *The Dynamic Psychology of Early Buddhism* (Scandinavian Institute of Asian Studies Monograph Series, no. 37, London: Curzon Press Ltd., 1979). See Figures 4, 14, and 15.

Chart IV. 2

Stages of the path of liberation developing "naturally" in accordance with conditioned origination (A. IV. 99).

shame at doing wrong and fear of the consequences of harmful acts (*hiri-ottappa*)



restraint of the senses (*indriya-samvara*)



virtue (*sīla*)



right concentration (*sammā-samādhi*)



knowledge and vision of things as they actually are (*yathābhūta-ñāṇa-dassana*)



disenchantment at worldly life and dispassion (*nibbidā-virāga*)



knowledge and vision of release (*vimutti-ñāṇa-dassana*)

Chart IV. 3

The motivational process: one where the series of conditioning causes the *citta* to incline towards acts with karmic consequences, and one where such action is avoided (A. I. 264).

<p>A <i>bhikkhu</i> ponders over (<i>anuvitakketi</i>) and reflects on (<i>anuvicāreti</i>) objects that cause desire and passion (<i>chanda-rāga</i>).</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Desire is produced (<i>chando¹ jāyati</i>).</p> <p>↓</p> <p>He is fettered (<i>saññutto hoti</i>) by these things.</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Acts with karmic consequences originate (<i>kammānaṃ samudaya</i>).</p>	<p>A <i>bhikkhu</i> understands the future consequences of objects that cause desire and passion (<i>āyatim vipākaṃ pajānāti</i>).</p> <p>↓</p> <p>He turns away from such objects (<i>abhinivatteti</i>).²</p> <p>↓</p> <p>He becomes detached towards them (<i>abhivirājeti</i>).</p> <p>↓</p> <p>He understands the objects thoroughly and sees them clearly (<i>paññāya ativijjha passati</i>).</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Desire is not produced (<i>chando na jāyati</i>).</p>
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¹ In this context *chanda* is not a morally "neutral" term indicating impetus to act, but is closer to *rāga* (sensual pleasure).

² The text has *abhinivaddheti*, but the commentary gives *abhinivatteti* [F. L. Woodward and E. M. Hare, trans. *The Book of Gradual Sayings* (London P.T.S. 1932-1936) 1:243].

Chart IV. 4

Mental processes leading in stages to discord and violence (M. I. 111-113).

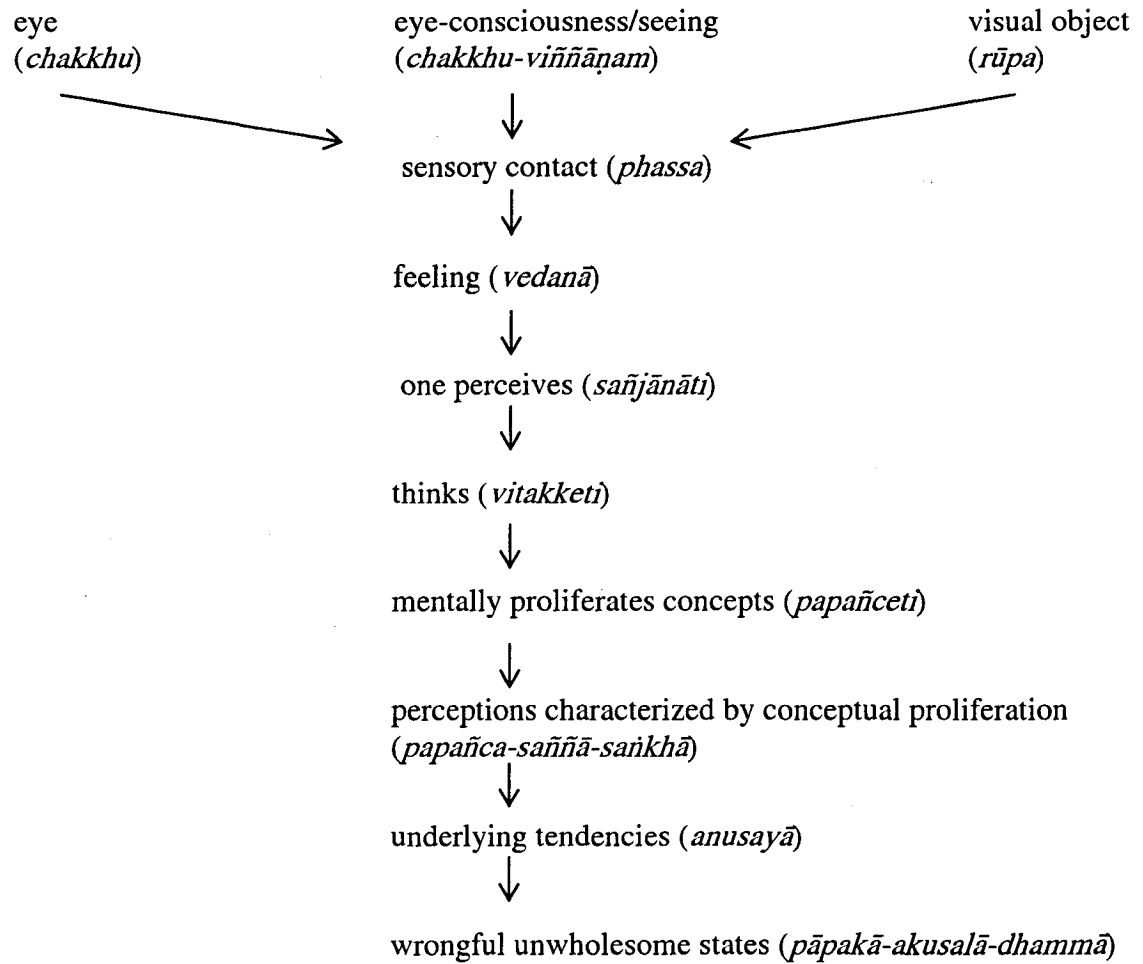


Chart IV. 5

Chart illustrating the place of *saṅkappa* and *chanda* in a motivational series leading to a variety of quests for objects. *Cetanā* is not specifically mentioned as a separate factor in this motivational process (S. II. 142-143; D. III. 289). Each stage in the sequence arises by depending on the preceding one (*paṭicca uppajjati*).

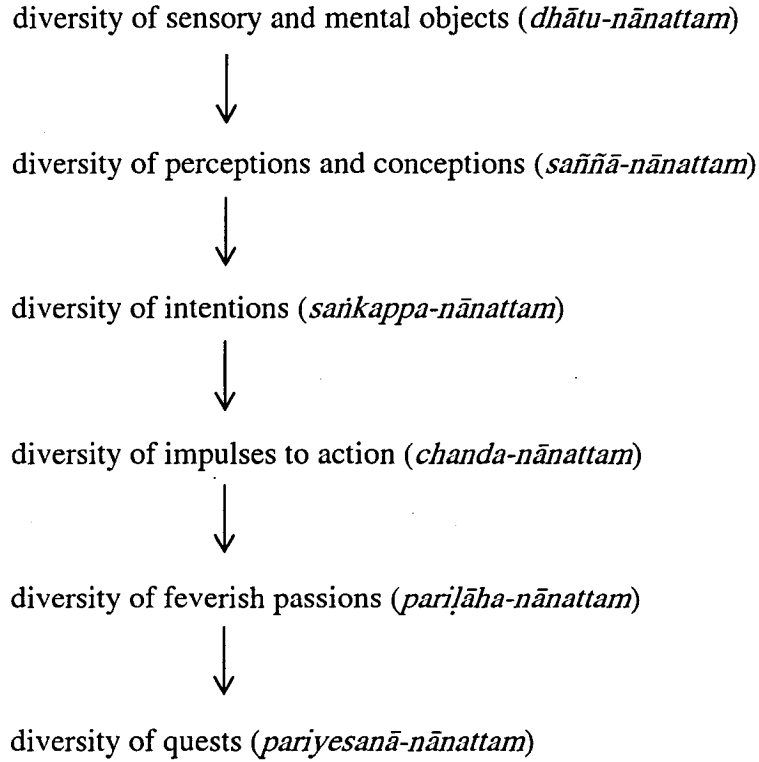
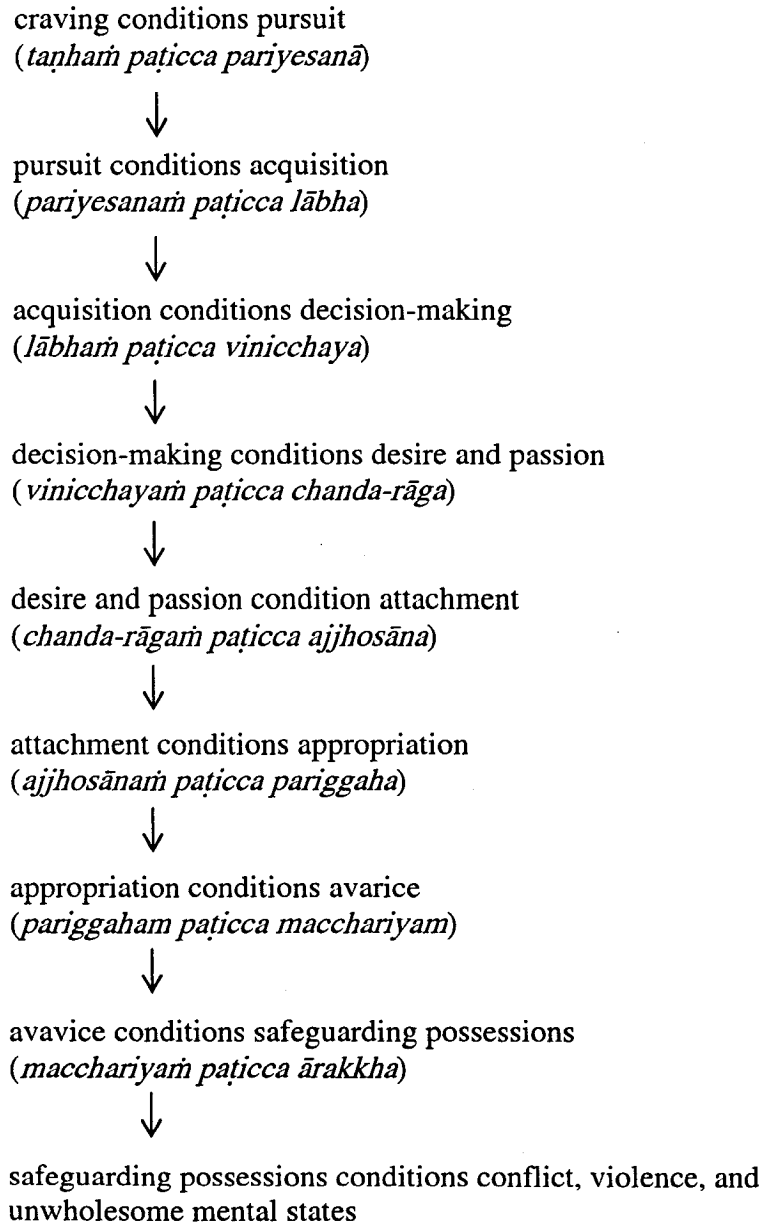


Chart IV. 6

The terminology of conditioned origination is evident in the following motivational series (D. III. 288-289; A. IV. 400-401). *Cetanā* does not occur here to indicate a specific stage in the motivational process.



Chapter V

Cetanā in the Atthasālinī and the Visuddhimagga

Any student of *Abhidhamma* is required to pore over, and reflect upon, the lists of mental factors that are presented in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, the *Atthasālinī*, and the *Visuddhimagga*. Through the very format of these lists, these texts present their theory of consciousness. At the outset, these lists show that according to the *Abhidhamma* view, consciousness is constituted of a series of momentary "mind sets" (*cittas*). It was pointed out in Chapter III that Guenther (1976, 12-15) characterizes these momentary mind-sets as "attitudes" of mind. These momentary poises of consciousness are regarded as neither simple nor homogeneous: each mind-set is portrayed as a composite of several types of mental factors (*cetasikas*), and its specific nature is said to be constituted by their confluence. The *cetasikas* that make up a wholesome *citta*, for example, include: mental factors that make cognition possible, mental factors that can be characterized as wholesome emotions and sentiments, and mental factors like flexibility, buoyancy, and capacity for work, which make for facility and ease in initiating goal-oriented action (Chart V. 1).

Furthermore, despite upholding the theory that every physical and mental state is momentary, the *Abhidhamma* system of classification affirms a holistic view of consciousness. Every momentary state of mind (*citta*) is seen as an organic whole of mutually dependent mental factors, characterized by a dominant attitude—wholesome, unwholesome, or morally indeterminate—that emerges precisely through the confluence and inter-relationships of its constituents (*cetasikas*). Each list, in fact, can be shaped into a *maṇḍala* where mental factors are assembled in such a way as to portray the coming

together and mutual conditioning of cognitive awareness, emotional tones, and conative energies. The *Abhidhamma* system of classifying mental states is based on the notion that the nature of any physical or mental factor is dependent on its function, and its function is dependent on its inter-relationships with concomitant factors. It is implied that the more detailed the classification and the more minute the description of the inter-relationships, the better the nature/function of any factor can be understood. The imagery of a *maṇḍala* is appropriate because the elements of a *maṇḍalas* are understood to be, not static but in vibrant motion, forming and changing relationships. The way any element manifests depends on the strength and variety of its inter-relationships. Consciousness is like a large *maṇḍala* exhibiting smaller *maṇḍalas* within *maṇḍalas*. In the lists of mental factors, there are sub-sets within sub-sets showing intricate cross-relationships (Govinda 1961, 123-125).

Moreover, these lists demonstrate that according to the *Abhidhamma* view, each state of mind (*citta*) in the continuum of consciousness is conceived, not as a closed system, but as an organic whole that is responsive to fresh influences. In fact, it is posited that each state of mind arises, together with the mental factors that constitute it, through a specific moment of contact with an object that stimulates the senses and the mind. The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 63-64, 112), defines *citta* as that which thinks of (*cinteti*), or cognizes (*vijānāti*), its object (*ārammaṇam*). In this context, the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 64) portrays consciousness as a master-artist (*citta-kāra*) who is capable of endless creativity. The states of mind are said to be abundantly variegated in accordance with the diversity of objects and the diverse circumstances in which the processes of perception take place.

In order to understand the role of *cetanā*, it is important to note that the lists of mental factors in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*, the *Atthasālinī*, and the *Visuddhimagga* are put

together in such a way as to posit a continual mutual conditioning between the cognitive processes (*viññāṇa*) and the action-producing processes (*saṅkhārās*) in the series of momentary states of mind (*cittas*). A study of these lists shows that the very same mental factors that occur as *cetasikas* in a *citta* configuration also occur as the constituents of the *saṅkhārakkhandha*. It is posited that in their function as *cetasikas*, the mental factors arise through sensory contact and constitute a state of mind (*citta*) whose chief feature is cognitive awareness. These same mental factors come together to form the configurations (*saṅkhārās*) of causal conditions (*paccayā*) that produce acts of body, speech, and mind. For this reason, the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 131-184) lists them as factors of the *saṅkhārakkhandha*. *Cetanā*, for example, is regarded both as a *cetasika* (mental factor) in a *citta* configuration and as a causal condition in a dynamic formation (*saṅkhāra*). According to the *Abhidhamma*, *cetanā* directs the mind's attention towards objects. In this role *cetanā* becomes associated with other *cetasikas* in the process of cognizing objects. As the primary constituent of the *saṅkhārakkhandha*, *cetanā* deploys its goal-oriented function to bring together concomitant mental factors and "compose" (*abhisāṅkharoti*) acts (*kamma*) of body, speech, and mind. Like *cetanā*, all the mental factors in the lists of wholesome and unwholesome *cittas* are regarded as factors with a twofold function: they condition cognitive processes, and they also bring about the continual "composing" (*abhisāṅkharāṇa*) activity by which configurations of causal conditions are "composed" (*abhisāṅkhata*) within consciousness.

In this chapter, the function of *cetanā* is described from three perspectives: first, the function of *cetanā* within the *citta* is analyzed; second, the influence of *cetanā* in various phases of the process of perception (*citta-vīthi*) is portrayed in detail; and third, the *kamma*-forming activity of *cetanā* in the *saṅkhārakkhandha* is brought into focus.

Cetanā is shown to be a complex mental function that links the cognitive features of purposive thought with the conative capacity to initiate and sustain goal-directed action.

Continuity between *Sutta* and *Abhidhamma* texts in the interpretation of *cetanā*

It is generally agreed that the texts of the *Abhidhamma* were developed from summaries of topics (*mātikās*) that were considered to be central to the teachings of the Buddha (Warder 1970, 10, 219; Norman 1983, 96). *Mātikās* are found in all the books of the *Abhidhamma* except the *Kathāvatthu*. For example, an extensive *mātikā*, functioning as a table of contents occurs at the beginning of the *Dhammasaṅgani* (Dhs. 1-8). It is conjectured that these *mātikās*, along with additional explanations of the key terms that they contain, were already extant at the time of the third council, which was held during the time of the Mauryan emperor Aśoka, according to the Theravāda tradition (Warder 1970, 273). The probable period of Aśoka's reign is 268-239 B.C.E. (Gombrich 1988, 128).¹

The main distinction between the *Sutta* and *Abhidhamma* texts is the development of the theory of momentary *dharmas*. However, the idea of conditioned origination continues to be upheld, and every momentary *dhamma* is defined as a physical or mental state linked to the past and the future through processes of conditioning. The distinction between the *Sutta* method of analysis (*Suttanta-bhājanīya*) and the *Abhidhamma* method of analysis (*Abhidhamma-bhājanīya*) is not radical, but stems only from the more detailed classification and the technical vocabulary that is characteristic of the *Abhidhamma* (Thittila 1969, xviii). In interpreting *cetanā*, continuity between *Sutta* and *Abhidhamma* texts is provided along the following lines: as in the *Suttas*, *cetanā* is said to arise as a constituent of a state of consciousness (*citta*) in the context of sensory or mental

contact (*phassa*) with an object (*ārammaṇa*); *cetanā*s are defined as constituents of *saṅkhārās*; *cetanā* is identified with *kamma*; and *cetanā* is given primary over the karmically operative act that it instigates when the moral value of an act is assessed. The difference between the *Suttas* and the *Abhidhamma* is that in the *Abhidhamma* system of analysis, *cetanā*, *citta*, *phassa*, *ārammaṇa*, and *saṅkhāra* are regarded as momentary states.

The theory of momentary *dhammas* and the characterization of *cetanā* as a momentary *dhamma* arising as a participant in a momentary *citta* are presented in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*. This text is a compilation of all the *dhammas* (physical and mental states) recognized by the Theravāda tradition. The term *dhamma* includes material quality (*rūpa*), the four primary material elements (*mahābhūtas*) consisting of fire, water, earth, and air, dependent material qualities (*upādāya-rūpas*), discrete states of consciousness (*cittas*), mental factors (*cetasikas*) that constitute the states of consciousness, and *nibbāna*, which is designated as the sole "unconditioned dhamma" (*asaṅkhata dhamma*).

Dhammas, therefore, are the basic mental and physical factors that constitute the universe. *Cetanā* is regarded as a *dhamma* that is included in the category of *cetasikas*.

The *mātikā* of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* places all *dhammas* in a system of classification consisting of twenty-two triads and one hundred dyads. A dyad is a pair of terms indicating a simple class and its contradictory. Two examples of dyads are: *dhammas* that function as causes and those that do not, or *dhammas* that function as roots of action that can be morally evaluated and those that do not. The first of the triads—and the most important—classifies *dhammas* as wholesome (*kusala*), unwholesome (*akusala*), and morally indeterminate (*avyākata*). Theravāda posits that only states of consciousness can be classified as wholesome or unwholesome and includes under the morally indeterminate class of *dhammas* not only certain types of rudimentary states of

consciousness, but also material form (*rūpa*) and *nibbāna* (Warder 1970, 307). The *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* considers *cetanā* to be a constituent of every single one of the eighty-nine *cittas* that it enumerates.

The relationship of *cetanā* to *saṅkhāra* is delineated in the *Vibhaṅga*, utilizing the *Abhidhamma* method of analysis. The *Vibhaṅga* mentions *cetanās* in its account of the two roles of *saṅkhāra*: as a *khandha* (Vbh. 7, 8, 40-53) and as a cause (*paccaya*) in the process of rebirth (Vbh. 144). *Cetanā* is also mentioned in its account of the five precepts (Vbh. 285-287). Following the *Sutta* method of analysis, the *Vibhaṅga* defines the *saṅkhārakkhandha*, as well as *saṅkhāra* in the rebirth process, as that which is constituted of the different types of *cetanās* that arise when the senses and the mind make contact with their respective objects (Vbh. 40).

The *Vibhaṅga* also stresses the role of *cetanā* with regard to the five precepts, which are defined in Theravāda as five modes of abstaining (*virati*): abstaining from taking life, stealing, lying, sexual misconduct, and imbibing intoxicants. This text (Vbh. 285-292) defines each of the five precepts as the manifestation of a purposive impulse (*cetanā*) that brings about a specific wholesome act of abstaining. The purposive impulse itself is regarded as a constituent of a correspondingly wholesome state of mind (*citta*). The *Abhidhamma* classifies wholesome states of mind into several different types. The *Vibhaṅga* maintains that each type of wholesome state of mind can produce each of the five acts of abstaining, in accordance with its own special configuration of wholesome mental factors (*cetasikās*). According to the *Vibhaṅga*, each act of abstaining (*virati*) is identical with a wholesome purposive impulse (*cetanā*) that arises within a wholesome state of mind (*citta*). For example, the precept of not killing is defined as the *cetanā* (purposive impulse) of one who abstains from killing and whose *citta* (attitude of

mind) is wholesome (*pāṇātipātā viramantassa yā tasmin samaye cetanā . . . idaṃ vuccati pāṇātipātā veramaṇī sikkhāpadam*) (Vbh. 285). Here the gerund *cetayitvā* (having applied *cetanā*) does not appear, so that there is no suggestion that *cetanā* precedes the act and is separate from it. The grammatical form in which this definition of the precept to abstain from taking life is cast makes it clear beyond a doubt that the act of abstaining is not the consequent of the purposive thought that constitutes *cetanā* and is not separated from *cetanā*, but is the manifest expression of the purposive thought and is identical with it. The *Vibhaṅga* affirms the *Sutta* position that *kamma* is to be defined in terms of *cetanā* but avoid the gerund *cetayitvā* that occurs in the *Sutta* definition (A. III. 415). The rest of the mental factors (*avasesa-dhammā*) that occur at the time of abstaining from killing are also identified with the precept of not taking life, because they are associated with the *cetanā* (*cetanāya sampayuttā*) that initiates this wholesome act of abstaining.

The *Sutta* view that the moral value of a deed is to be assessed primarily—though not solely—on the basis of the purposive thought or intention that investigates it is reiterated in the *Kathāvatthu*, which is another of the *Abhidhamma* texts. The *Kathāvatthu* records debates where the Theravādins uphold the view that *kamma* signifies, not merely any activity of body, speech, or mind, but activity that is produced as a physical, verbal, or mental expression of a specific purposive impetus (*cetanā*). For example, a point of debate was whether mere physical acts—such as movements of the body and the lips that arise from wholesome states of mind—are to be regarded as wholesome acts in their own right, as distinct from intentions (Kvu. 380-394). The Theravādins quote the Buddha's definition where *cetanā* is made synonymous with *kamma* (A. III. 415) in order to substantiate their argument that if the physical aspects involved in an act of body or speech are separated from the totality of the act, they cannot

carry moral import. According to the Theravādins, an act cannot be evaluated as morally good or bad if it is devoid of a mental object and the mental attributes on the basis of which such an evaluation can be made. The mental attributes that the *Kathāvatthu* (Kvu. 380) names in this context are: adverting (*āvaṭṭanā*) the mind to the object, experiencing the object (*ābhoga*), concentrating on the object (*samannāhāra*), attending to the object (*manasikāra*), forming a purposive impulse (*cetanā*), wishing for a goal (*patthanā*), and aspiring to attain the goal (*paṇidhi*).

In another controversy that revolves around the question of the merit that accrues from the giving of gifts (*dāna*), the Theravādins further emphasize their view that the moral value of an act stems, not from the act as such, but from the act as the manifest expression of a wholesome or unwholesome purposive impetus (Kvu. 339-347). The opponents maintain that the merit that is generated by the giving of gifts increases with increase in the enjoyment that the gift brings to the recipient. The Theravādins argue that merit does not accrue to the giver if the act of giving is not characterized by the mental attributes named above, including attention to the act of giving, a purposive impulse (*cetanā*) directed towards making a gift, the wish (*patthanā*) to give, and the aspiration (*paṇidhi*) to express generosity. Furthermore, the Theravādins demonstrate that the view of the opponents entails the untenable position that karmic merit can be gained by a giver of gifts who harbours unwholesome thoughts (*akusala vitakkas*) of sensual passion, malevolence, and cruelty (Kvu. 344).

The debate concerning what constitutes the giving of gifts (*dāna*) establishes, on the other hand, that Theravādins do not accept the idea that *kamma* can be defined solely in terms of purposive thought (*cetanā*) without any reference to physical, verbal, or mental activity. For this reason, they rejected the view of their opponents who held that

dāna denoted, not the material gift, but just the generosity in the mind of the giver. The *Kathāvatthu* seeks to establish that the giving of gifts (*dāna*) includes both the mental state of generosity and the thing that is to be given (*deyya-dhamma*). The commentary goes much further in showing the bond between the mental state (*citta*) of generosity, the purposive impulse (*cetanā*) that initiates the act of giving, and the gift itself. The commentary (KvuA. 95-96) interprets *dāna* to be threefold (*tividham*): the goal-directed impulse to renounce or part with something (*cāga-cetanā*), the act of abstaining (*virati*) that implies cutting off (*dātī*) the goal-directed impulse that initiates morally bad behaviour (*dussīlya-cetanā*), and the actual gift (*deyya-dhamma*). The commentary then reduces these three factors to two: the mental state (*cetasika*) and the gift. The conclusion to the argument is that the opponent incorrectly defines the giving of gifts solely in terms of the intention of giving while ignoring the significance of what is actually given.

The commentary goes on, however, to emphasize the primacy of the mental factors involved in the act of giving by pointing out that even the giving of an unpleasant thing—for example, bitter medicine—must be regarded as a morally good act, provided that it has its source in a beneficent state of mind (*hita-citta*). According to the commentary, if the act of giving is initiated by the purposive impulse of giving away something for the sake of the benefit of others (*hita-pharaṇa-cāga-cetanā*), then it must be regarded as a wholesome act that brings about good consequences, even if the recipient does not get immediate pleasure out of the gift. Here the commentary to the *Kathāvatthu* seeks to establish that the *cetanā* that initiates the act of bringing benefit to others is conditioned by, and emerges from, a correspondingly beneficent *citta*.

***Cetanā* regarded as common to all states of mind**

Like the *Visuddhimagga*, the *Atthasālinī* continues the *Abhidhamma* method of analyzing physical and mental processes in terms of discrete and momentary *dhammas*. In the *Suttas*, the flexible term *samaya* (occasion) specifies the period of time during which an event occurs. In the *Abhidhamma*, the precise term *khaṇa* (moment) is the basic unit of time for measuring the occurrence of events.

The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 39) defines a momentary *dhamma* as that which carries its own nature (*attano pana svabhāvaṃ dhārenti*), but immediately qualifies this definition of *dhamma* by adding that this specific nature (*sabhāva*) is inherent to the *dhamma* and is obtained through causal conditions (*dhāriyanti vā paccayehi dhāriyanti vā yathā sabhāvato*). According to Warder (1970, 323), this statement signifies that physical and mental factors have their own characteristics according to their own nature (*yathā sabhāvato*) through causal conditions (*paccayehi*). Warder's interpretation suggests that each momentary physical or mental state (*dhamma*) has its own specific nature (*sabhāva*) because of the unique relationships that it has to other *dhammas*. He regards this definition of *dhamma* in terms of distinct nature (*sabhāva*) to be a new development of the *dhamma* theory in the commentaries. The statement in the *Atthasālinī* is remarkably ambiguous. The idea is affirmed that each physical and mental state has its own intrinsic nature (*sabhāva*). At the same time the *Atthasālinī* seeks to hold on to the principle that every characteristic arises through causes and conditions. The statement is confusing because the idea that a physical or mental state possesses its inherent unique nature (*sabhāva*) goes against the Theravāda principle that all characteristics arise through causes and conditions.

The *dhamma* theory posits that each momentary *citta* is different from others because it arises through a different moment of contact (*phassa*) with an object. The implication is that each *citta* is the product of a different moment of sensory and mental stimulation. However, *cittas* are seen to be linked into a series through processes of conditioning.

The relationship between *citta* and *cetanā* is most clearly expressed in the *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha*, a late eleventh or early twelfth century student manual of *Abhidhamma* categories. In the *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* (Bodhi 1993, 76-77), *cetasikas* are defined as mental factors that arise and perish together with a state of consciousness. The definition goes on to say that *cetasikas* are linked with the *citta* by having the same object and the same "base" (*vatthu*). This definition of *cetasikas* reinforces the statement in the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 112-113) that consciousness always arises in relation to an object. The term "base" in the definition of *cetasika* refers to the sensitive area of the sense organ where sensory stimulation occurs (Bodhi 1993, 144-145). For example, when a beautiful visual object is seen, the conscious experience of seeing (*cakkhu-viññāṇa*) arises together with perception (*saññā*), pleasant feeling (*sukha-vedanā*), a set of rudimentary mental factors including *cetanā* that maintain basic sentience, and an array of other wholesome or unwholesome factors (*cetasikas*). All these concomitant factors, including perception and feeling, interact with this specific experience of seeing (termed "eye-consciousness") to produce a specific state of consciousness (*citta*) that can be evaluated as ethically wholesome, unwholesome, or indeterminate.

The *Milindapañha* (Mil. 56), the *Dhammasaṅgāṇi* (Dhs. 17-18, 84-85, 118), the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV 133-180), the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 107-112, 248) and the *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* (Bodhi 1993, 77) list *cetanā* with the basic mental factors that

constitute basic conscious awareness and vitality. Among these basic *cetasikās*, *cetanā* takes its place as the fundamental capacity in the mind that makes all goal-oriented action possible.

The *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* regards only four *cetasikās* as mental factors that are common to all states of consciousness. To these four, the *Atthasālinī* adds *citta* to form the following list of basic mental factors:

sensory contact	(<i>phassa</i>)
feeling	(<i>vedanā</i>)
perception	(<i>saññā</i>)
purposive impulse	(<i>cetanā</i>)
consciousness	(<i>citta</i>)

H.V. Guenther (1976, 31, n.2) points out that the term *citta* is "rather ambiguous" in this list of fundamental factors. He explains that *citta* has been replaced in the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* by the more precise term *manasikāra* (attention), and he notes that all schools of Buddhism maintain that the other four are rudimentary mental factors that occur in all states of consciousness. The *Milindapañha* (Mil. 56) and the *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* (Bodhi 1993, 77) leave out *citta* and add three more basic *cetasikās* to the first four named above. These are:

one-pointed concentration	(<i>ekaggatā</i>)
vitality	(<i>jīvitindriya</i>)
attention	(<i>manasikāra</i>)

In the *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* (Bodhi 1993, 77) these seven are designated as *cetasikās* that are "common to all types of consciousness" (*sabba-citta-sādhāraṇa*). The presence of

cetanā in this list of seven basic *cittas* implies that a rudimentary sense of a goal correlated with an equally rudimentary impulse to initiate goal-oriented action characterizes even those basic states of consciousness where there is no fully developed affirmation of an intention.

In *The Psychological Attitude of Early Buddhist Philosophy* (1961, 116), Lama Govinda elucidates the role of *cetanā* in the *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* list of the seven invariably present *cetasikas* by interpreting the seven to be a constellation of mutually conditioning mental coefficients. The presence of *cetanā* in this class of mental factors that operate in all states of consciousness implies that *cetanā* functions even at the initial stage of the process of perception. It is posited that at this stage, sensory contact (*phassa*) occurs, but the object is not yet recognized. Sensory stimulation is said to cause the preliminary arising of a feeling (*vedanā*) that is either pleasant (*sukha*), or painful (*dukkha*), or neither pleasant nor unpleasant. The feeling that accompanies any sensory contact is regarded as conditioned, not only by the object, but also by past experiences of emotions and cognitions pertaining to wholesome and unwholesome acts of body, speech, and mind. Lama Govinda (1961, 116) maintains that *cetanā* arises in the preliminary stages of sensory stimulation, not as a full-fledged "free will," but as "an instinctive volition bound by previous causes." These causes that bind *cetanā* in this initial stage of perception, according to Lama Govinda's interpretation, are features of the perceiver's "character." He obviously means that the manner in which *cetanā* first functions in response to the object is conditioned, not only by the nuance of feeling (*vedanā*) that dominates this initial phase of perception, but primarily by the habits of mind (*mano-saṅkhārās*) that the subject brings from past experiences.

Lama Govinda seeks to demonstrate that even in the initial stages of perception, *cetanā* fulfils its defining role of co-ordinating (*abhisankharāṇa*) the functions of concomitant *cetasikas*, such as concentration and attention, and directing their energies towards the object. According to Lama Govinda's interpretation, one-pointed concentration (*ekaggatā*) demarcates the object as the focus of mental activity, while attention (*manasikāra*) adverts the mind to apply itself to that focal point. He stresses that at the initial stage of perception, *manasikāra* manifests as a "spontaneous attention" that is aroused, not by an ethical choice, but by the "pull" exerted by the dominant qualities of the object.

Following a similar line of interpretation, Bhikkhu Kashyap (1982, 46) maintains that at the initial stage of perception, *cetanā* functions as a "motiveless inclination" towards the object. Bhikkhu Kashyap's statement is brief, but it implies that *cetanā* does not take the form of purposive deliberation or of a fully formed intentional impulse but functions as a rudimentary tendency or inclination (*nati*) towards an object, based on past experience. When *cetanā* is associated with *cittas* that have moral value as wholesome or unwholesome, it manifests as a fully developed intention with capacity to initiate action.

It has been noted above that *cetanā* functions differently in different circumstances. This variation in function points to what the *Abhidhamma* scholar Aung describes as "the protean character of each *cetasika*" in *The Compendium of Philosophy* (1910, 238). By the term "protean" he means that each *cetasika* is viewed in the *Abhidhamma* as a mental factor whose basic characteristic (*lakṣhaṇa*) remains the same, but whose mode of functioning varies according to the object with which it is associated or the circumstances in which it arises. Though *cetanā* functions by merely adverting the

mind to objects in the preliminary stages of perception, it can also manifest as a fully developed purposive impulse or intention and put forth acts that carry karmic consequences. Furthermore, *cetanā* can function as the resolve to give up all karmic fruitions and become “the *cetanā* of the Path” (AA. III. 213).

The *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* (Bodhi 1993, 307) gives the following account of how *cetanā* fulfils its role of being the primary condition in producing karmically operative acts. It is stated that *cetanā* functions either as conascent *kamma* condition (*sahajāta-kamma-paccaya*) or as asynchronous *kamma* condition (*nānākkhapika-kamma-paccaya*).² In the former case, the consequences of the intentional impetus provided by *cetanā* are experienced immediately in the form of psychosomatic changes. In the latter case, the results of the act instigated by *cetanā* are manifested later in the present life or in some future rebirth.

This classification of *cetanā* into conascent *kamma* condition and asynchronous *kamma* condition can be interpreted to mean that *cetanā* always functions as the mental factor that arouses concomitant mental factors to direct their activities towards an object. In the preliminary stages of perception, this action of *cetanā* operates as a mere inclination towards the object, conditioned by past habits and present feeling. When *cetanā* functions in this way, it does not bring about karmically significant acts. However, when *cetanā* acts upon concomitant physical and mental factors as a conative impulse with some sense of purpose, then it becomes a conascent *kamma* condition and produces immediate results in the body and mind. If the concerted action of *cetanā* and its concomitants produces wholesome or unwholesome acts with consequences that are experienced at a future time in this life or in a future rebirth, then *cetanā* becomes an asynchronous *kamma* condition.

Definition of “Wholesome”

The criteria for classifying acts as wholesome (*kusala*), unwholesome (*akusala*), or ethically indeterminate (*avyākata*) are discussed at some length in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* and the *Atthasālinī*. Once again, it cannot be forgotten that certain processes that remain purely mental are included under the category of "deeds" (*kamma*). Thus covetousness, malevolence, and wrong view are classified as unwholesome mental deeds (*mano-kamma*) and the opposites of these are regarded as wholesome. In the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* (Dhs. 180), wholesome factors (*kusalā dhammā*) are defined as those that have as their "roots" (*mūlāni*) the absence of greed, hatred, and delusion (*alobha, adosa, amoha*). The four non-physical *khandhas* comprising feelings, perceptions, mental formations (*saṅkhāra*), and conscious awareness are said to be wholesome when they are associated with these roots. Likewise, all acts (*kamma*) of body, speech, and mind that have originated from these roots are regarded as wholesome. In the same vein (Dhs. 180), physical, verbal, and mental acts are defined as unwholesome when they spring from the three unwholesome roots: greed, hatred, and delusion. In turn, the non-physical aggregates are considered unwholesome when they are associated with these three unwholesome roots. Ethically indeterminate (*avyākata*) mental states are those that cannot be categorized as either wholesome or unwholesome, do not contain wholesome or unwholesome causal conditions designated as “roots” and therefore, do not bring about consequences that are either pleasant, painful, or neither pleasant nor painful (Nyanatiloka 1980, 32). It follows, then, that the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* bases the criteria for moral evaluation both on the characteristics manifested by deeds and on the consequences they entail. The consequences appear to be rather narrowly defined in

terms of individual experience. Furthermore, the consequences are described solely in terms of physical pleasure or pain and mental feelings classified as joy, sorrow, or a neutral state unaffected by joy or sorrow. However, Theravāda does hold that feelings take on a range of emotional tones depending on the subject's interaction with other persons and things. Moreover, joy and sorrow are regarded as relative to whether a person inhabits the realm of sensory experience, or abides in the lower levels of meditation, or ascends to the highest "formless" levels of meditation.

The *Atthasālinī* gives more details than the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, but accepts the criteria that the latter presents for the moral evaluation of deeds. The *Atthasālinī* defines "root" of action as "cause (*hetu*), condition (*paccaya*), process of production (*pabhava*), and that which has the capacity of generating (*janaka*), originating (*samuṭṭhāpaka*), or bringing into existence (*nibbattaka*)" (Asl. 344). The text then declares that since there can be nothing whatsoever dissociated from the three wholesome roots that can be called "wholesome," there is nothing in the various realms of rebirth or in the supramundane Path that is not included in the definition of wholesome given in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* (Dhs. 180). In the same way, the *Atthasālinī* maintains that there is nothing unwholesome that is not associated with the three unwholesome roots.

The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 38) explains that the term *kusula*, which is usually translated as "wholesome," has as its connotations: "good health" (*ārogya*), "faultless" (*anavajja*), "skilful" or "dextrous" (*cheka*), and "productive of felicitous consequences" (*sukha-vipāka*). Here good health or vitality is interpreted to mean absence of the disease of mental defilements (*kilesa-vyādhi*) (Asl. 62-63), and "faultless" is explained as freedom from the fault, the blemish, and the distress of the same mental defilements. The text goes on to say that in the context of distinguishing *kusala*, *akusala*, and *avyākata* mental states,

the term *kusala* does not carry the meaning of "skilful" or "dextrous," as it does in describing the actions of a chariot-maker skilled in crafting the different parts of a chariot or trained performers skilful in singing and dancing. However, in another passage (Asl. 63), the *Atthasālinī* holds that the meaning of "skilful" does apply in the case of wholesome mental states, provided "skill" is taken in the sense of "understanding" (*paññā*).³

The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 63), therefore, adds a new dimension to the definition of *kusala* in the *Dhammasaṅgani* by interpreting skill (*kosallam*) as understanding (*paññā*) in this context. Furthermore, according to the *Atthasālinī*, the wholesome has systematic and thorough attention (*yoniso-manasikāra*) as its proximate cause. The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 39) utilizes the delightful didactic method of play on words to draw out the connotations that have gathered around the term *kusala*. It is stated that *kusala* mental states have that name because they cause bad (*ku*) mental factors to tremble (verb root *sal-*), shake, be agitated, and finally annihilated. Or *kusala* signifies bad (*ku*) states of mind being cut off, chopped off (verb root *lū-*). Or knowledge (*ñāṇa*) can be called *kusa* because, through knowledge, reprehensible (*ku*) mental states are curtailed (verb root *so-*), and *kusala* indicates that things should be taken (verb root *lā-*), grasped, set in motion by that knowledge (*kusa*). Or *kusala* factors are so named because, just as *kusa* grass can cut (verb root *lū-*) one's hand with both its sharp edges, so wholesome states cut off both unwholesome states that have already arisen and those that have not yet arisen (Pe Maung Tin 1920-1921, 50; Guenther 1976, 7).

It follows, then the *kusala* carries all the connotations of "well" in "well-being", and more. *Kusala* connotes: mental health that frees the mind from emotional stress and prepares the way for personal growth and development; felicity based on the conviction

that the mind is directed towards beneficial goals; and moral goodness resulting from renouncing morally wrong mental states that distort one's perceptions and produce sorrow. By including understanding (*paññā*) to the connotations of *kusala*, the *Atthasālinī* maintains that moral goodness, at its best, includes an awareness of conditioned origination and the causes of sorrow. As a commonly used term in ordinary parlance, *kusala* signifies, not only good health, but also skill in human relationships, and wisdom in choosing both goals and the methods of attaining them.

Though the *Atthasālinī* links the wholesome (*kusala*) with understanding (*paññā*) and with knowledge (*ñāṇa*), the text concedes (Asl. 63) that in the classification of *cittas*, wholesome *cittas* are of two types: those associated with knowledge (*ñāṇa-sampayuttam*) and those dissociated from knowledge (*ñāṇa-vippayuttam*) (Dhs. 26-27). Wholesome states associated with knowledge are wholesome in three senses: salutary (*ārogya*), faultless (*anavajja*), and skilful (*kosallam bhūta*). Here "skill" represents understanding. When dissociated from knowledge, wholesome states lack skill, though they are marked by good health and freedom from fault. Here "lack of skill" conveys that a wholesome act dissociated from knowledge (*ñāṇa*) is not well thought out and is not supported by reasoned judgment, though it is free of harmful intentions.

The term *ñāṇa* does not necessarily represent the developed wisdom that leads to enlightenment, when the reference is to the category of wholesome mental states associated with *ñāṇa* (*ñāṇa-sampayutta-kusala-dhammā*). In *The Compendium of Philosophy* (1910, 41), Aung explains that in the *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* the three terms *paññā*, *ñāṇa*, and *amoha* (non-delusion) are not different in meaning. He interprets the term *ñāṇa* in the designation "wholesome mental-states associated with *ñāṇa*" to mean the "intellectual" element expressed in processes of "comparison and discrimination,"

especially in the "reasoning processes (*takka-vīthi*).\" According to Aung's interpretation, wholesome mental states categorized as "associated with *ñāṇa*" are not only characterized by non-greed, non-aversion, and non-delusion, but also include a measure of judgment, reasoning, or purposive reflection. He adds that *paññā* can be applied in a range of ways: as a reasoning process in simple, practical (*lokiya*) matters, as logical reasoning in scientific arguments, as discursive thought in various branches of knowledge, and as understanding blossoming into wisdom (*lokuttara paññā*) through the disciplines of the Eightfold Path.

The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 63) gives the following definition of *kusala* in accordance with the *Abhidhamma* method of analysis:

<i>lakkhaṇa</i> characteristic	<i>anavajja-sukha-vipāka</i> Wholesome states have the characteristic of bringing about faultless, felicitous results.
<i>rasa</i> function	<i>akusala-viddhamāsa-rasa</i> They have the function of destroying the unwholesome.
<i>paccupaṭṭhāna</i> mode of manifestation	<i>vodāna-paccupaṭṭhāna</i> Purification is their mode of manifestation.
<i>padaṭṭhāna</i> proximate cause	<i>Yoniso-manasikāra-padaṭṭhāna</i> They have systematic attention as proximate cause.

It is evident that the *Atthasālinī* perceives cognitive, emotive, and conative aspects of the mind to be engaged interdependently in producing a wholesome state of consciousness. The honing of cognitive processes in the cultivation of careful attention (*yoniso-manasikāra*) is not considered possible if the mind's capacity for understanding (*paññā*) is vitiated by unwholesome emotions. At the same time, this definition of *kusala* implies that the mind cannot be purified of unwholesome emotions unless its cognitive

capacity of attentiveness is empowered by conative energies (*virīya*) to initiate and sustain acts of purification. By the same token, according to this definition, the function of destroying unwholesome states is set in motion, not through practical purposes and intentions of achieving future beneficial goals, but through focusing attention on the mind and its objects in the present situation. Purification (*vodāna*) implies that the mind has the capacity to pay attention (*manasikāra*) to its own contents in such a way as to separate the wholesome from the unwholesome.

The *Atthasālinī* and the *Visuddhimagga* make it clear that wholesome states of consciousness occur in the ordinary (*lokiya*) everyday life that is designated as the sense sphere (*kāmaṇvacara*). Wholesome mental states are said to be experienced by ordinary people, who are not free of unwholesome underlying tendencies or the four *āsavas* comprising: desire for sense experience (*kāma*), the desire for perpetuation of life and rebirth (*bhava*), the predilection for wrong views (*diṭṭhi*), and the fundamental ignorance (*avijjā*) that prevents one from understanding that all things are marked by impermanence (*anicca*), lack of any separate or permanent nature (*anattā*), and the capacity to cause sorrow (*dukkha*). It follows, then, that *kusala* is not necessarily *anāsava*: the wholesome does not imply entire absence of the unwholesome, and the defining characteristic of the wholesome is not fully accomplished purity but participation in the dynamic process of purifying (*vodāna*) the mind of the causes of sorrow. When *cetanā* is associated with a wholesome frame of mind, it represents purposive thought and conative impulse directed towards that process of purification. If the wholesome *citta* is associated with a degree of knowledge (*ñāṇa-sampayutta*), the wholesome purposive thought and impulse (*cetanā*) emerging from that wholesome *citta* becomes conditioned by cognitive processes of discriminative judgment and discernment.

Wholesome and unwholesome "roots"

Despite their designation, the three unwholesome "roots" (greed, hatred, and delusion) and the three wholesome "roots" (non-greed, non-hate, and non-delusion) are not conceived as stationary elements fixed within consciousness. Their mode of functioning is similar to that of the underlying tendencies (*anusayas*) in that they arise as conditions, again and again, in the continuum of consciousness and produce behaviour that is marked by repeated patterns of habits. The inclusion of the roots of action among the *cetasikas* (Dhs. 9, 76, 83; Vsm. XIV. 133, 159, 170; Bodhi 1993, 79) signals that whenever a root—for example, non-greed—manifests as a mental factor (*cetasika*) in a specific state of consciousness (*citta*), it originates from the same sensory stimulation (*phassa*) that produces the *citta*, and ceases with the *citta*. It follows then, that in the *Abhidhamma*, greed and non-greed, aversion and non-aversion, and delusion and non-delusion are conceived as conditionally produced mental factors that come into being and pass away as the dominant constituents of a series of momentary states of mind (*cittas*). Although the roots are included among the *cetasikas*, it is acknowledged in the *Abhidhamma* that their capacity to affect the inner dynamics of a *citta* exceeds that of other *cetasikas*. Each root not only conditions the attitude of the entire *citta* complex, but also determines what *cetasikas* co-arise under its influence.

Of the three unwholesome roots, greed (*lobha*) and hate (*dosa*) represent, respectively, the polarity of attraction to the desirable and aversion to the undesirable: they cannot coexist in the same *citta*. Delusion (*moha*), on the contrary, is regarded as the mental factor that sustains and puts its mark on all unwholesome *cittas*. Without delusion,

greed and hate are said to be incapable of fulfilling their function as roots (Bodhi 1993, 33), but delusion is considered, not only capable of functioning without the co-operation of greed and hate, but of developing into intense delusion (*momūha*) when it functions as the sole root. The definition of greed (Asl. 248-249; Vsm. XIV. 162) says that the characteristic of greed is to grasp objects. Its function of clinging to objects is compared to meat sticking to a hot pan. Its mode of manifestation is described as not renouncing or not letting go (*apariccāga*) any physical or mental subject, and its proximate cause is held to be the perception of enjoyment in objects that become, in the end, causes of bondage. According to the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 171), hate has the characteristic of ferocity and the function of spreading and destroying, like raging fire or like a drop of poison, the entire organism in which it finds its support. Delusion (*moha*) is shown to be much more complex in its functioning than greed or hatred (Asl. 249; Vsm. XIV. 163). The definition of delusion in the *Visuddhimagga* gives its characteristic as opposition to understanding (*aññāṇa*) and its function as hiding the specific nature (*sabhāva*) of the object. It is said that delusion manifests itself as the attitude that prevents one from entering the right Path. The proximate cause of delusion is specified as lack of thorough, systematic attention (*ayoniso-manasikāra*). *Moha* is defined as the root cause of all unwholesome attitudes of mind (*sabba-kusalānaṃ mūlam*) (Asl. 249).

In the *Anguttara-nikāya* (A. I. 194), the Buddha identifies delusion with the *āsava* of ignorance (*avijjā*). *Moha* is conceived as a mental state that vitiates clear understanding and motivates unwholesome action. The statement that *moha* hides the specific nature (*sabhāva*) of objects indicates that by confusing the mind, delusion prevents a person from seeing that all objects come into being through causal conditions and carry the three marks (*tilakkhaṇa*): they are impermanent, lacking in autonomous

selfhood, and are liable to cause sorrow. Furthermore, *moha* also connotes "infatuation" (P.E.D. 543, col. 1). Delusion not only distorts one's understanding of things, but also perverts the emotions. The lists of unwholesome mental states, therefore, give a strong indication of the *Abhidhamma* view that the greatest danger to a person lies, not at the polarities of desire and aversion, but in the pervasive, not clearly definable, state of *moha*.

The definition of the three wholesome roots in the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 143) and the exposition in the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 127-129) make it clear that the terms non-greed (*alobha*), non-hatred (*adosa*), and non-delusion (*amoha*) do not connote the entire absence of greed, hate, and delusion, respectively, but rather, the presence of the opposites of greed, hate, and delusion. The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 127) says that non-greed and non-hate are the opposites (*paṭipakkha*), respectively, of the impurities of avarice or stinginess (*macchera-mala*) and bad conduct (*dussīlya-mala*). Non-delusion is said to oppose the non-cultivation of wholesome mental factors (*kusalesu dhammesu abhāvanā*). The three wholesome roots are described as the causes (*hetu*), respectively, of generous giving (*dāna*), virtue (*sīla*), and the cultivation (*bhāvanā*) of the disciplines of the Eightfold Path. The list of mental states that fall under the category of "wholesome mental states of the sensory realm" (Chart V. 1), therefore, shows that the *Abhidhamma* confirms the view of the *Suttas* that wholesome mental states can arise, even though the *āsavās* continue to condition thoughts, emotions, and acts.

It bears repeating that in the classifications of mental states, non-greed, non-hate, and non-delusion are shown as mental factors arising in the states of consciousness of ordinary people, who are not yet free of the *āsavās* and unwholesome underlying tendencies. In Theravāda, ethical goodness (*kusala*) is conceived in two ways: on the one hand, it is an ideal to be attained; on the other hand, it is a vibrant motivating energy

arising through causes and conditions in the continuum of consciousness. The stages of the path of purification (*vodāna*) can be interpreted as the transformation of non-greed that is identified as generosity (*dāna*), non-hate that manifests as friendship (*mettā*), and non-delusion that is the same as understanding (*ñāṇa*) into the entire absence of greed, hatred, and delusion. This interpretation of the stages of purification implies that whereas generosity, friendship, and understanding and the unwholesome factors that are opposed to them can arise at different moments in the consciousness continuum of a beginner in the Eightfold Path, the unwholesome roots are entirely eradicated in the life of an *arahant*. The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 129) makes the profound statement that the cultivation of non-greed, non-hate, and non-delusion produce, respectively, insight into impermanence (*anicca-dassana*), insight into the sorrow experienced by all beings (*dukkha-dassana*), and insight into the absence of a separate and permanent self (*anatta-dassana*). These insights, in turn, are regarded as nourishment for the further development of non-greed, non-hate, and non-delusion. Here the *Atthasālinī* affirms a principle that is regarded as fundamental to all disciplines of *yoga*: wholesome attitudes and acts are regarded as the vehicles through which liberating wisdom is ultimately attained. Acts of friendship, for example, are seen as concrete expressions of insight into the sorrow (*dukkha*) that all beings feel, and such insight is perceived to be impossible to attain without experiencing non-hate in one's life. This passage in the *Atthasālinī* resonates with a statement in the *Samyutta-nikāya* (S. IV. 261) where Sāriputta defines *nibbāna* as the complete cessation of passion (*rāgakkhaya*), hate (*dosakkhaya*), and delusion (*mohakkhaya*). When non-greed, non-hate, and non-delusion become manifest not only as generosity, friendship, and wholesome attitudes, but as the entire absence of greed, hate, and delusion, then *nibbāna* is attained.

***Cetanā* and the “roots” of action**

The relationship between the roots and *cetanā* can be extrapolated from the concept of wholesome and unwholesome mental *kamma*. Of the three unwholesome mental acts, covetousness (*abhijjhā*) is connected with the unwholesome root of greed, and ill-will (*vyāpāda*) is said to be rooted in hate (Asl. 101). Greed and delusion are regarded as the double root of wrong view (*micchā-diṭṭhi*) (Asl. 102). In the same vein, the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 129) maintains that the three wholesome mental acts of non-covetousness, absence of ill-will, and non-delusion are but other "names" (*nāmāni*) for the three wholesome roots of non-greed, non-hate, and non-delusion. The correlations between roots of action and mental *kamma* instigated by *cetanā* are as follows:

<u>mental <i>kamma</i></u>	<u>root of action</u>
covetousness (<i>abhijjhā</i>)-----	greed (<i>lobha</i>)
ill-will, malevolence (<i>vyāpāda</i>)-----	hate (<i>dosa</i>)
wrong view (<i>micchā-diṭṭhi</i>)-----	delusion and greed (<i>moha</i>)
absence of covetousness-----	non-greed
absence of ill-will-----	non-hate
right view-----	non-delusion

From the perspective of *kamma*, when *cetanā* functions as the purposive thought and impulse that becomes expressed as a friendly attitude of mind, this wholesome attitude can be regarded as an instance of the mental act (*mano-kamma*) of absence of malevolence (*avyāpāda*). Such an act carries merit (*puñña*) and brings good karmic consequences. From the perspective of the roots of action, and a person's psychological development, the mental act of benevolence or the absence of ill-will is regarded as the

manifest effect of the root of non-hate (*adosa*). *Cetanā* is the purposive impulse through which the roots of action germinate into concrete mental functions that carry moral value and produce karmic consequences.

Furthermore, according to the interpretation given in the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 88-89), wholesome and unwholesome acts of mind (*mano-kamma*) have a special relationship to *cetanā* that distinguishes them from physical and verbal *kamma*. It is posited that covetousness and non-covetousness, ill-will and good-will, wrong view and right view have the capacity to become associated with *cetanā* in the motivation of karmically operative acts of body and speech. For this reason, these attitudes of mind that constitute *mano-kamma* are designated as "factors associated with *cetanā*" (*cetanā-sampayutta-kamma*).⁴ In other words, mental *kamma*, such as covetousness and non-covetousness are constituted of cognitive and emotive factors that condition the purposive impulses of *cetanā* in producing acts of body and speech. They are regarded as coefficients of *cetanā* in the production of goal-oriented physical behaviour and verbal communication. Acts of body and speech, on the other hand, are regarded as direct expressions of *cetanā*. Since wholesome and unwholesome *mano-kamma* are regarded as manifestations of wholesome and unwholesome roots as shown above, it follows that when the mental attitudes constituting mental *kamma* function as factors associated with the purposive impulses of *cetanā* in the instigation of goal-oriented physical and verbal acts, then the roots of action become active as *mano-kamma* and exert their influence on a person's present behaviour and future destiny. For example, when the mental *kamma* of right view becomes associated with *cetanā* in producing wholesome acts of body and speech, then the wholesome root of non-delusion is conditioning *cetanā*, since right view is an expression of non-delusion.

The composition of wholesome states of mind

The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 133) holds that there are thirty-six possible mental factors that can enter into the composition of different types of wholesome states of consciousness (*cittas*). Each *cetasika* can be viewed as a "nuance in consciousness"—to borrow a phrase from Aung (1910, 230, 242)—that interacts with its concomitants to form a wholesome attitude of mind (Chart V. 1). The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 133) divides the *cetasikas* of a wholesome *citta* into three groups: the "constant" (*niyata*) factors, the supplementary (*yevāpanaka*)⁵ factors, and the "inconstant" (*aniyata*) factors.

The "constant" (*niyata*) *cetasikas* are so named because it is held that they are mentioned regularly as "factors of consciousness" in the texts (*cittaṅgavasena pāli-ārūlhā*) (Asl. 132; Ñāṇamoli 1964, 521). For the sake of clarification, the twenty-seven *cetasikas* of this group can be divided into three sub-groups. First, there is the triad of sensory contact (*phassa*), goal-oriented thought imbued with the capacity to initiate action (*cetanā*), and vitality (*jīvitindriya*). These three are considered basic factors of sentience in the *Visuddhimagga* and appear in all classes of consciousness: wholesome, unwholesome, and ethically indeterminate. Next, there are a group of five *cetasikas*, some or all of which appear also in unwholesome *cittas*. For this reason, it can be inferred that these *cetasikas* are ethically "neutral" and become wholesome or unwholesome according to the *citta* of which they are participants. These are: initial application of thought (*vitakka*), sustained thought (*vicāra*), zest, interest, or delight in the object (*pīti*), energy or exertion (*virīya*), and concentration on the object (*samādhi*). Of these *cetasikas*, *virīya* is the closest to *cetanā* since it shares the latter's purposive thrust.

Finally, the "constant ones" include a group of mental factors that can be regarded as morally decisive since they specifically oppose unwholesome factors and give to the *citta* its wholesome quality. The first of these, faith (*saddhā*) is described as having the function of cleansing the mind of pollutants and bringing calm commitment to a goal, understanding, and trust. Faith is said to manifest itself as the resolve (*adhimutti*) that motivates and empowers a person to undertake difficult tasks (Vsm. XIV. 140; Asl. 120). The next two wholesome *cetasikas*, shame (*hiri*) in doing wrong and dread (*ottappa*) of evil, show the influence of social and cultural ideals on concepts of wholesome and unwholesome in the *Suttas* and in the *Abhidhamma*. These two mental factors are invariably present in all wholesome states of mind. *Hiri* is defined as conscientiousness based on training and a sense of respect for oneself and others; *ottappa* is said to be based on a healthy fear of the consequences of evil (Vsm. XIV. 142). The next three "constant" *cetasikas* are the three wholesome roots of action, namely, non-greed, non-hate, and non-delusion; and they are followed by a group of *cetasikas* that ensure tranquillity (*passaddhi*), buoyancy (*lahutā*), flexibility (*mudutā*), adaptability (*kammaññatā*), proficiency (*pāguññatā*), and rectitude (*ujjukatā*) with regard to the mind and its processes (Vsm. XIV. 144-149). This group of *cetasikas* demonstrates that the wholesome (*kusala*) is conceived as a blending of physical and mental health, moral goodness manifested in body and mind, and skilfulness based on understanding. Guenther (1976, 84) explains that the "functional ease" that arises from this group of mental factors is regarded as an inseparable feature of a wholesome attitude of mind.

The supplementary, or *yevāpanaka* states are so named because, though their status as mental factors is not "fixed" in the texts, they are mentioned in various passages in the *Suttas* (Asl. 132). The five supplementary *cetasikas* in the wholesome *cittas* are:

impetus to act (*chanda*), resolution or decision (*adhimokkha*), attention (*manasikāra*), and equipoise (*tatra-majjhataṭṭā*). Of these five states, impetus to act, resolution, and attention or adverting of the mind to the object are also found in unwholesome *cittas*. It follows that these *cetasikas*—like the "constant" factors of applied thought, sustained thought, delight in the object, energy, and concentration—become wholesome or unwholesome, according to the *citta* to which they belong. It is to be noted that the supplementary (*yevāpanaka*) mental factors of impetus to act (*chanda*) and resolve (*adhimokkha*) resemble the "constant" factor of energy (*virīya*) in bearing a relationship to the purposive thought and conative impulse of *cetanā*. *Chanda* manifests as zeal in pursuing an object. In its simplest form, *adhimokkha* is the personal inclination that causes the mind to focus on one object rather than on others in the environment (Vsm. XIV. 151); but in a more developed form, this inclination becomes the manifestation of strong faith and strong resolve (Vsm.XIV. 140). *Adhimokkha* sustains the intention to pursue a chosen goal. Similarly, the basic impetus to act grows into either the unwholesome conative energy directed to objects of pleasure (*kāmacchanda*) or the wholesome resolve to follow the teachings of the Buddha (*dhammacchanda*) (Aung 1910, 244, n. 2.).

The five inconstant (*aniyata*) *cetasikas* in wholesome *cittas* are connected with the Buddhist practice of meditating on friendship and compassion, and three aspects of the Eightfold Path: right action, right speech, and right livelihood. Their designation as "inconstant factors" signifies that they are not invariably present in wholesome *cittas* but arise with the cultivation of the specific disciplines to which they are related. Nevertheless, it is the presence of one or more of them in a wholesome mental state that renders it specific to a particular set of circumstances.

Eight types of wholesome *cittas* and *cetanās*

The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 156) classifies wholesome *cittas* into eight types (Chart V. 5). It is posited that these eight types of wholesome *cittas* condition the corresponding eight types of wholesome *cetanās* that arise in the realm of sense experience (*kāmāvacara*) and produce karmically operative deeds. In the classification into eight wholesome *cittas* (Vsm. XIV. 83-85), the variables are: whether the *citta* is prompted (*sasaṅkhāra*) or not prompted (*asaṅkhāra*); whether or not the *citta* is associated with knowledge (*ñāṇa*); and whether the *citta* is conjoined with joy (*somanassa*) or with a neutral state (*upekkhā*). The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 84) succinctly explains prompting as prior exertion (*pubba-payoga*) on the part of oneself or another, depending on whether the instigation comes from oneself or from another. *Somanassa* is explained as a mental feeling of pleasure that is not calm but stimulated (Aung 1910, 277). In the *Abhidhamma*, wholesome *cittas* are perceived to be conjoined with joy (*somanassa*) or with equanimity (*upekkhā*), but never with mental displeasure. This reflects the Theravāda view that what is wholesome is in harmony with the aspiration of all beings to be at ease and free of sorrow. Wholesome *cittas* do not cause a rift in the mind, since they are free of regret and agitation. In this context *upekkhā* signifies, not the serenity that is cultivated through the disciplines of the Eightfold Path, but a "neutral" feeling that is neither joy nor displeasure. In this classification of wholesome *cittas* into eight types, the other variable, knowledge (*ñāṇa*), represents a degree of understanding about the nature of the act and its consequences.

The *Visuddhimagga* (XIV. 84-85) gives the following examples of the eight types of wholesome *cittas*. When an appropriate gift is made to the right person without instigation and with an understanding of right view, then the consciousness of the giver is

associated with knowledge (*ñāṇa*) and with joy (*somanassa*), and is unprompted (*asaṅkhāra*). Right view signifies awareness of the conditioned and ephemeral nature of all beings. On the other hand, when a gift is made in the same manner as above, but with some prompting, the mind of the giver is associated with knowledge and joy, but is prompted (*sasaṅkhāra*). When children, imitating their parents, give gifts spontaneously, without understanding right view or the significance of giving, their manner of giving is associated with joy, but is dissociated from knowledge, and is unprompted. In the case of children who are prompted to give gifts, and do so happily but without understanding, the act of giving is associated with joy but dissociated from knowledge and is prompted. If joy is replaced by a state of neither pleasure nor displeasure (*upekkhā*) in the four instances given above, then we have four corresponding types of wholesome *cittas* imbued with a neutral feeling rather than joy. In the case of any of these *cittas*, its practical application occurs through the purposive impulse of *cetanā*. In the examples given above, *cetanā* combines the intention to give and the capacity to initiate the act of giving in a manner that matches the dominant features of the wholesome attitude of mind (*citta*) within which it arises.

The inner dynamics of unwholesome states of mind

Unwholesome states of mind are classified as those dominated by either greed, or aversion, or delusion. The *Visuddhimagga* (XIV. 159) reckons thirteen "constant" (*niyata*) mental factors and four supplementary (*yevāpanaka*) states to be the ingredients that constitute unwholesome *cittas* dominated by greed (Chart V. 2). Of the thirteen constant factors, eight ensure the continuance of conscious awareness and the efficient working of consciousness in relation to objects. These are: sensory contact, *cetanā*,

vitality, initial application of thought, sustained thought, pleasurable interest in the object, energy, and concentration on the object. These factors occur also in wholesome *cittas*. The morally decisive states that oppose wholesome factors and render consciousness unwholesome are: dishonourable lack of shame in doing wrong deeds (*ahirika*), absence of fear of the consequences of evil (*anottappa*), greed (*lobha*), delusion (*moha*), and wrong view (*micchā-diṭṭhi*). Unscrupulous lack of shame at doing wrong and lack of fear regarding the consequences of evil are mental states that are regarded as socially conditioned. Every *cetanā* that arises as a purposive impulse in these unwholesome attitudes is considered to be conditioned by these two mental states and by a deluded outlook on life.

The list of supplementary, "or-whatever" states in unwholesome *cittas* of greed consists of: impetus to act (*chanda*), resolution or decision (*adhimokkha*) in focusing the mind on an object, attention (*manasikāra*) to the object, and restlessness or agitation (*uddhacca*). It is postulated that under the influence of deluded desire and restlessness, the ethically neutral mental factors of *chanda*, *adhimokkha*, and *manasikāra* manifest, respectively, as impetus to pursue sensory pleasure (*kāmacchanda*), weakness and wavering in deciding to focus on an object, and unsystematic, unwise attention (*ayoniso-manasikāra*).

The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 167-168) goes on to say that there are two inconstant factors that can affect the entire emotional colour of a greedy state of consciousness when they are present. The first of these is a combination of sluggish dullness (*thīna*) and lethargy or laziness (*middha*), which arises from unsystematic, unwise attention (*ayoniso-manasikāra*). According to the *Visuddhimagga*, a lazy mind does not act without being prompted. The second is conceit (*māna*) that is said to

manifest as obsessive concern with one's self-image, and is compared to mental derangement.

According to the *Abhidhamma* method of classification, greed (*lobha*) and hate or aversion (*dosa*) cannot co-exist in the same momentary mental state (*citta*) because they are polar opposites: greed is based on attraction to the object and desire to acquire it, while aversion is based on rejection and repulsion that wishes to harm the object.

The account given below shows that the *Vissuddhimagga* regards a disturbed state of mind to be common to both greed and hate (*dosa*) and points to envy, avarice and worry based on blaming oneself as the distinctive impelling forces of hate. Aversion (*paṭigha*) in the sense of rejection stemming from ill-will, and a wish to cause injury is regarded as the mark of hate (Bodhi 1993, 37). The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 170) lists eleven "constant" (*niyata*) factors, four supplementary "or-whatever" factors, and three "inconstant" (*aniyata*) factors as the constituents of *cittas* dominated by hate (Chart V. 3). The factors that maintain sentience and guarantee the basic cognitive and conative functions of consciousness are present among the "constant" *cetasikas* of the *cittas* dominated by hate. The same *cetasikas* occur in *cittas* of greed. However, zest or delight (*pīti*) in experiencing an object is considered compatible with greed, but incompatible with hate. The four supplementary states (impetus to act, decisiveness in turning to an object, attention, and a disturbing restlessness) are the same in the lists of *cittas* rooted in greed and in hate. It is evident that the *Visuddhimagga* regards agitation, restlessness, or disturbance of mind (*uddhacca*) to be a feature of both greedy and hate-ridden frames of mind. Three *cetasikas* are listed as *aniyata* (inconstant) factors that may arise together or separately on specific occasions as distinctive features of mental states dominated by hate. These three are: envy (*issā*) marked by jealousy at the success of

others, avarice (*macchariya*) manifested as shrinking from the very thought of sharing one's gains with others, and worry (*kukkucca*) that leads to regret and self-castigation regarding what one has done and left undone (Vsm. XIV. 172-174; Asl. 373-376).

The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 175) goes on to say that a state of consciousness rooted in hate will manifest differently if a combination of dullness and laziness (*thīna-middha*) arises as an inconstant mental factor and enters into its constitution: a hateful mind will then be pervaded by sluggish lethargy, and will produce action only when prompted (*sasaṅkhārika*).

Like the Upaniṣadic and Yoga traditions, Theravāda regards delusion (*moha*) to be the fundamental cause of unwholesome attitudes of mind. It is worth emphasizing that *moha* includes both ignorance (*avijjā*) manifested as a wrong view of life (*micchā-diṭṭha*), and a passionate infatuation towards some objects that makes a person ignore the totality of a situation. The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 176, 178) holds that states of consciousness rooted in delusion (*moha*) can manifest in two ways: they can be marked either by indecision (*vicikicchā*) or by agitated restlessness (*uddhacca*). In this way, the *Visuddhimagga* reduces the range of nuances in the motivating capacity of delusion to the occurrence within deluded states of consciousness of either perplexed indecision or unsettling agitation. However, since the influence of delusion is wide-ranging, it follows that when delusion manifests as perplexity, it must include confusion or bewilderment caused by obsessive infatuation with an object, person, or concept. Similarly, restlessness covers degrees of agitation, or turbulence stemming from infatuation based on ignorance. Both perplexity and restlessness prevent systematic attention (*yoniso-manasikāra*) to the network of causes and conditions that impinge on any situation, thereby intensifying delusion.

In the *Visuddhimagga* classification (Vsm. XIV. 176), eleven "constant" mental factors and two supplementary "or whatever" mental factors are listed as possible components of deluded states of mind associated with perplexity (Chart V. 4). As in the case of wholesome *cittas* and *cittas* rooted in desire and in hate, *cittas* rooted in delusion include among the constant factors, several mental factors that ensure basic conscious awareness and the continuous functioning of consciousness. These are: sensory contact, *cetanā*, initial application of thought, sustained thought, energy, and vitality. Again, zest or delight in the object (*pīti*) does not occur in *cittas* rooted in delusion: hatred is regarded as a state of mind marked by unhappiness (*domanassa*), and delusion is said to be pervaded by a neutral feeling (*upekkhā*) experienced as neither joy nor displeasure. The constant factors of mental states rooted in delusion include the two that are considered signposts of unwholesome states of consciousness: dishonourable lack of shame (*ahirika*) at wrongdoing and lack of fear (*anottappa*) of the consequences of wrongdoing. It was noted above that deluded states of mind are considered to be dominated by either indecision (*vicikicchā*) or restlessness (*uddhacca*). The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 176) maintains that the mental factor of concentration (*samādhi*) on an object cannot occur in states of mind beset by the unsteadiness of indecision. Only very brief and weak spans of concentration (*cittatṭhiti*) are considered capable of co-existing with perplexity. Any decisiveness (*adhimokkha*) regarding the nature of the object is said to be inhibited by the doubt-ridden state of perplexity.

According to the *Visuddhimagga* classification (Chart V. 4), indecision or perplexity (*vicikicchā*) is not present in deluded states of mind associated with restlessness (*uddhacca*). This restless state of mind is considered to be capable of accommodating the mental functions of decisiveness (*adhimokkha*) regarding the object

to be attended to, adverting of attention (*manasikāra*) to the object, and stronger concentration (*samādhi*) on the object than is possible in a state of indecision.

Twelve unwholesome *cittas* and *cetanās*

The *Visuddhimagga* classifies unwholesome *cittas* that arise in the realm of sensory experience (*kāmāvacara*) into twelve types: eight rooted in greed, two rooted in hate, and two rooted in delusion (Chart V. 6). With regard to the processes of *kamma* and rebirth, the *Visuddhimagga* holds that these same *cittas* condition twelve corresponding types of goal-directed thoughts (*cetanās*) that have the capacity to initiate action. According to the interpretation given in the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XVII. 44, 60), these *cetanās* become expressed in goal-driven physical, verbal, and mental acts (*abhisankhāras*) that are characterized by demerit and produce commensurate unpleasant consequences through the processes of *kamma*.

In the list of the eight unwholesome *cittas* rooted in greed, the variables are listed as: joy (*somanassa*), a neutral feeling (*upekkhā*), view (*diṭṭhi*), and prompting (*sasāṅkhāra*) (Vsm. XIV. 90). The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 91) gives the following examples of these eight types of states of consciousness rooted in greed. When a person who is in a happy (*somanassa*) frame of mind but is controlled by wrong views (*micchā-diṭṭhi*) spontaneously and without prompting (*asaṅkhāra*) greedily seeks out sense pleasures, then the first type of greedy consciousness arises. The second type of greedy mind is identical with the first, except that it is characterized by dullness and sluggishness (*thīna-middha*) and, therefore, requires prompting (*sasāṅkhāra*). When a person is joyful (*somanassa*) and uninfluenced by wrong view but, nevertheless, engages in wrong and unwholesome greedy behaviour without being prompted (*asaṅkhāra*), the third

unwholesome *citta* arises. If greedy acts proceed from a happy but sluggish frame of mind, with prompting (*sasaṅkhāra*), but without the influence of wrong view, then the fourth type of consciousness arises. When joy is absent in the four instances given above and is replaced by a neutral feeling (*upekkhā*) without either joy or displeasure, then the remaining four types of unwholesome states of mind rooted in greed arise. According to the analysis given in the *Visuddhimagga* (XIV. 168), a greedy mind is motivated by either wrong view or by conceit (*māna*). A mind that is afflicted by a wrong view of life is regarded as prone to greed because of not acknowledging the transitory and conditioned nature of things. A person who does affirm conditioned origination may still be motivated by greed because of conceit that develops into a self-centred approach to life.

The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 92) describes states of consciousness rooted in hate (*dosa-mūla*) as those that bear the distinct marks of association with cheerlessness or displeasure (*domanassa*) and with aversion (*paṭigha*). They are classified into two types: those that are characterized by a dull, depressed state of sluggish drowsiness (*thīna-middha*) and are prompted; and those that are characterized by restless agitation (*uddhacca*) and arise unprompted.

States of consciousness rooted in delusion (*moha-mūla*) are said to be twofold: deluded states of mind that are characterized by indecision (*vicikicchā-sahagata*) and those that are characterized by restlessness (*uddhacca-sahagata*). The *Visuddhimagga* emphasizes that each of these twelve unwholesome attitudes of mind is capable of becoming expressed in a corresponding type of purposive impulse (*cetanā*).

Relationship between feeling (*vedanā*) and *cetanā*

The *Dhammapada* (Dhp. 131-132) declares that all beings wish for happiness. This Theravāda principle has a profound influence on how the *Atthasālinī*, the *Visuddhimagga*, and the *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* view the relationship between different types of feelings and *cetanās*. These texts take the position that wholesome *cittas* are never conjoined with mental displeasure because their inner content and the goal-oriented *cetanās* that emerge from them are in accord with the aspiration for happiness that all beings share. Among the *cetasikas* that constitute wholesome *cittas* are factors that make for tranquillity (*passaddhi*), buoyancy (*lahutā*), and flexibility in the *citta* and in the aggregates of feelings, perceptions, and mental formations. It follows that *cetanās* proceeding from wholesome *cittas* must reflect a felicitous state of mental health as well as moral goodness. At the same time, the idea that all conditioned things are capable of producing sorrow is a central tenet of Theravāda. From this emphasis on sorrow follows the practical teaching that one's attitude of mind can remain serene and one's purposes wholesome even when the body is racked with pain, and awareness of sorrow pervades the mind. In the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* (D. II. 102, 105-106, 129-130), one has the example of the Buddha whose luminous calm does not diminish as he faces physical weakness and dehydration, the knowledge of possible warfare in his home town, and the awareness of death approaching.

It is held that *cittas* rooted in sheer delusion (*momūha*) are always conjoined with a neutral feeling (*upekkhā*) of neither joy nor mental displeasure. Bhikkhu Bodhi (1993, 38) explains that, according to the *Abhidhamma*, the attitudes of restlessness (*uddhacca*) and doubt (*vicikicchā*) that beset delusion-based states of consciousness prevent a person from appreciating the actual nature of an object and responding to it

with either joy or displeasure. It follows that purposive impulses (*cetanās*) that emerge from deluded *cittas* are conditioned by either restlessness (*uddhacca*) or indecision (*vicikicchā*) and are conjoined with neutral feelings (*upekkhā*) of neither pleasure nor displeasure. Restless agitation and indecision are seen as factors that can vitiate a person's entire life. Restlessness is regarded as having such a grip on the mind that its last traces are removed only at the final stages of the Path of liberation from sorrow (Bodhi 1993, 362). The idea that displeasure (*domanassa*) invariably accompanies *cittas* and *cetanās* rooted in hate can be interpreted as an indication that, according to the *Visuddhimagga* and *Atthasālinī*, *cetanās* arising as purposive impulses based on hate go against the natural aspiration of beings for happiness.

According to the *Visuddhimagga*, the *cetasika* of zest or pleasurable interest (*pīti*) in an object is missing both in *cittas* based on hate (Vsm. XIV. 170) and in *cittas* based on delusion (Vsm. XIV. 176). *Pīti* associated with wholesome sense-sphere *cittas*, is said to blossom into various forms of refreshing joy and delight. Guenther (1976, 56) points out that in the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 143), *pīti* is associated with the state of mind designated as *attamanatā*. The term means literally "the state of being one's own mind." The *Atthasālinī* gives the explanation that in the absence of delight the mind becomes the proximate cause of pain (*dukkha*) and is not "one's own mind." A mind that is suffused with satisfaction or delight is regarded as the proximate cause of mental ease (*sukha*) and is described as "one's own mind." According to Guenther's interpretation, lack of *attamanatā* refers to a sense of alienation from one's own mind. *Cetanās* that arise from *cittas* rooted in hate or delusion are perceived in the *Abhidhamma* as purposive impulses that lack delight and lead to inner discord.

Pīti, however, is regarded as a "neutral" mental state: it is found, not only in wholesome *cittas*, but also in *cittas* rooted in greed and conjoined with joy. *Cetanās* arising from such greedy *cittas* are conditioned by joy (*somanassa*) and pleasurable interest in the object (*pīti*); but they are regarded as causes of future unhappiness just as much as joyless *cittas* and *cetanās* rooted in hate and lacking in *pīti*.

The concept of “ethically indeterminate”

The *Abhidhamma* inherits from the *Sutta* literature traditional ideas of an ascending order of cosmic realms into which beings are reborn and where they carry out their lives. The *Suttas* also hand down concepts developed by practitioners of *yoga* regarding ascending planes of consciousness to be attained through meditation. The *Abhidhamma* subscribes to the notion expressed in the *Suttas* that there are correlations between the ascending order of cosmic levels and the ascending planes of consciousness, such that a person who attains to a certain plane of consciousness through meditation can commune, in this very life, with a corresponding cosmic plane. Though the cosmic planes are described in *Abhidhamma* texts (Bodhi 1993, 185-219), the emphasis is not on trying to explain how these cosmic planes become realms of individual rebirth, but on classifying states of consciousness and defining the mental factors that are considered to be in tune with each cosmic plane. It follows that the concept of the ascending cosmic realms becomes a frame that holds together various *Abhidhamma* classifications of types of consciousness.

The *Suttas* and the *Abhidhamma* distinguish three spheres of rebirth: the sense sphere (*kāmāvacara*), the sphere of fine matter (*rūpāvacara*), and the non-material sphere (*arūpāvacara*). These spheres contain cosmic planes where beings are reborn and where

they live out their lives. Each of these three spheres is also considered to be the proper home, as it were, of certain types of consciousness. The *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* (Dhs. 223-224) describes the cosmic realms and types of beings that belong to the sense sphere and goes on to say that the five aggregates, the sense organs, and their objects belong to the sense sphere. Similarly, after referring to the celestial realms that comprise the fine material sphere and the divine beings that live there, the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* (Dhs. 224) says that the states of mind of those who have attained the lower planes of meditation (*jhānas*) belong to this sphere. The immaterial sphere is said to include exalted cosmic planes as well as the states of mind of those who have cultivated the higher planes of "formless" meditation.

States of consciousness (*cittas*) are classified as *kāmāvacara cittas*, *rūpāvacara cittas*, and *arūpāvacara cittas* (Vsm. XIV. 83-88). It follows, then, that these three "spheres" become categories for classifying types of consciousness, whereas the cosmic planes are regarded as planes of existence where beings dwell (Bodhi 1993, 29-31). To these three spheres of consciousness that are considered "mundane" (*lokiya*) the *Suttas* and the *Abhidhamma* texts add a fourth which is designated "the supramundane" (*lokuttara*) (Dhs. 193, Vsm. XIV. 88). According to the definition in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*, the supramundane comprises the four Paths culminating in enlightenment, namely, the Paths of "stream entry," "once-returning," "non-returning," *arahatta*, the fruits of these Paths, and *nibbāna*. The states of consciousness of those who experience the stages of purification⁶ and the gradual liberation from sorrow achieved in these Paths are designated as *lokuttara cittas*.

The notion of a vast cosmos of ascending planes of rebirth has a profound influence on those who grow up in the Buddhist tradition and are familiar with stories of

the past lives of the Buddha. The wholesome and unwholesome states of mind that a person experiences and the intentions that govern a person's life are viewed as having very significant connections with beings who can be close by or far away in a vast and wondrous cosmos.

With regard to the processes of rebirth, *cittas* are classified into four types: wholesome (*kusala*), unwholesome (*akusala*), resultant (*vipāka*), and purely functional (*kiriya*). Corresponding to these, there are four types of *cetanās*. Both wholesome and unwholesome states of consciousness condition goal-directed thoughts (*cetanās*) that instigate goal-oriented acts capable of producing commensurate karmic consequences. Resultant *cittas* arise as consequences of wholesome and unwholesome *kamma* and they are experienced as pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral feelings. In the debates with their opponents, the Theravādins took the position that the term *vipāka* (karmic fruition) can be applied properly only to the subjective experiences resulting from *kamma*.⁷ Aung and Mrs. Rhys Davids explain in the *Points of Controversy*:

Kamma-vipāka, or result of action was, in its ultimate terms, conceived as *feeling* experienced by the agent in this life, or by the resultant of him in another life (1915, 205, n.3).

The fourth class of *cittas* designated *kiriya* cannot be classified either as constitutive of *kamma* or as constituted by *kamma*: they are neither *kamma*-producing wholesome and unwholesome *cittas* nor are they *kamma*-produced *vipāka cittas*. They are called *kiriya* or functional *cittas* because they arise, perform a function, and pass away without setting up any conditions for producing karmic consequences. The beneficent acts of an *arahant* fall under the category of *kiriya*. When the eight wholesome sense-sphere *cittas* (Chart V. 5) arise in ordinary folk or in those who are trainees in the

Eightfold Path, these *cittas* carry goal-oriented impulses and produce pleasant consequences. It is posited in the *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* that *arahants* do experience eight types of purely functional states of mind that are parallels of the wholesome *cittas* of ordinary folk. When they arise in the mind of an *arahant*, however, they do not produce goal-oriented impulses. These *cittas* of *arahants* are called "functional" because they merely fulfil a beneficent task and leave no traces that can give rise to karmic consequences (Bodhi 1993, 50).

Resultant (*vipāka*) *cittas* and functional (*kiriya*) *cittas* are classified as indeterminate (*avyākata*) strictly in the sense that they cannot be assessed as either wholesome or unwholesome and they are not the source of karmic results that are characterized by pleasure, pain, or neutral feeling. The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 39)⁸ says that whereas wholesome states of consciousness produce blameless pleasant results, and unwholesome *cittas* put forth reprehensible unpleasant results, morally indeterminate *cittas* have the defining characteristic of producing no consequences (*avipāka-lakkhaṇa*). The *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* (Dhs. 180) classifies the following as indeterminate: the results (*vipāka*) of previous wholesome and unwholesome acts, the four Paths of enlightenment and the fruits of the Paths, the non-physical aggregates (*vedanā, saññā, saṅkhāra, viññāṇa*), purely functional (*kiriya*) *cittas*, all material form (*rūpa*), and the "Unconditioned element," namely, *nibbāna*. It is important to note that ethically indeterminate factors became, for the Theravādins, a bulwark against deterministic interpretations of *kamma*. Against their opponents, the Theravādins argued (Kvu. 357-358) that if the results (*vipāka*) of past *kamma* became the causes (*hetu*) of future *kamma*, there will be an endless chain of cause and effect, so that all hope of release from rebirth will become futile. For this reason, they maintained that resultant

states are indeterminate and produce no further results.⁹ In the same vein, by maintaining that the four non-material *khandhas* arise as resultant states that do not produce further *kamma* (Dhs. 180), Theravāda sought to avoid the deterministic view that one's future is determined by the type of *khandhas* one has: moral values pertain to the acts that are performed through the *khandhas* and not to the *khandhas* themselves. And by regarding the wholesome acts of an *arahant* as purely functional (*kiriya*), the Theravādins upheld the view that neither merit nor demerit accrues to an *arahant* (Kvu. 542-543) and that an *arahant*, therefore, is not bound to future rebirth.

There is one more debate with their opponents where the Theravādins resort to the concept of the indeterminate (*avyākata*) in order to avoid deterministic conclusions. The pivotal question in this debate is how it could be posited that wholesome roots can develop in a personality continuum, given that it is a cardinal teaching of the *Suttas* that the unwholesome roots and the *āsava*s persist until the attainment of liberating knowledge (Jaini 1959, 238). All parties upheld the principle that *paṭicca-samuppāda* implies a measure of homogeneity and compatibility between two coexisting states as well as between cause and effect. For this reason, all agreed that wholesome and unwholesome *cittas* can neither coexist nor follow each other in a causal series. In this debate, the Theravādins held that an ethically indeterminate (*avyākata*) mental state of the resultant (*vipāka*) category invariably intervenes between an unwholesome and a wholesome state of consciousness, so as to prepare the way for the arising of the latter (Jaini 1959, 238). The *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* (Bodhi 1993, 174-175), for example, postulates that *cittas* accompanied by neutral feeling must arise and provide a buffer between *cittas* rooted in hatred that are invariably accompanied by displeasure (*domanassa*) and *cittas* that are conjoined with joy (*somanassa*). The Theravāda position remains problematic because

indeterminate states cannot provide the causal conditions for wholesome motivation. What is of importance, however, is that Theravāda avoids the deterministic view that precludes all initiative for wholesome motivation within the *āśava*-ridden conditions of rebirth.

The commentary to the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (AA. II. 274) lists four classes of *cetanās* (*cattāro cetanā-rāsayo*) corresponding to the four classes of *cittas*. These are wholesome *cetanās*, unwholesome *cetanās*, resultant *cetanās*, and functional *cetanās*. The commentary (AA. III. 144-145) also explains that eight types of wholesome *cetanās* and twelve types of unwholesome *cetanās* of the sense sphere instigate acts (*kamma*) at the three doors of action (body, speech, and mind) and become the causes of pleasant and unpleasant consequences.¹⁰ These *cetanās* obviously correspond to the wholesome and unwholesome *cittas* of the sense sphere (Charts V. 5, 6). The commentary (AA. III. 144) clarifies that it is the *cetanā* becoming expressed in the physical, verbal, or mental act, and not just the act, that is the cause (*paccaya*) of painful or pleasant consequences.¹¹ Similarly, the commentary to the *Majjhima-nikāya* (MA. III. 105) defines "dark" *kamma* in terms of the twelve types of unwholesome *cetanās* of the sense sphere. "Bright" *kamma* is associated with the wholesome *cetanās* of the three spheres of rebirth: sense sphere, sphere of fine matter, and non-material sphere. *Kamma* that is "neither dark not bright" is identified as the *cetanā* that pertains to the Eightfold Path (*magga-cetanā*).¹² The above examples demonstrate that in the commentarial literature, *cetanās* are regarded as the purposive and dynamic counterparts of *cittas*. With regard to different modes of experiencing the world, like *cittas*, *cetanās* are associated with sense-experience or with the lower and higher levels of meditation (*jhānas*). Furthermore, with regard to "moral causality" in the course of life and rebirth, like *cittas*, *cetanās* are classified as:

wholesome (*kusala*) or unwholesome (*akusala*) *cetanās*, resultant (*vipāka*) *cetanās* that are karmically inoperative, and purely functional (*kiriya*) *cetanās*.

The above lists confirm the *Abhidhamma* position that there is a complete one-to-one correspondence between states of mind (*cittas*), and purposive impulses (*cetanās*): there can be no manifestation of consciousness that is not associated with at least a rudimentary purposive impulse towards an object. The counterpart of this notion that *cetanā*—functioning as the adverting of the mind to an object—is present in all states of mind is the idea that consciousness can neither come into being nor continue, unless it is supported (*patit̥ṭhita*) by an object provided by *cetanā*. The lists show, furthermore, that the designations wholesome, unwholesome, resultant, and functional can be applied equally to attitudes of mind (*cittas*), purposive impulses (*cetanās*) and acts (*kamma*). The fact that these designations can be utilized in this manner does not signify, however, that *citta*, *cetanā*, and *kamma* are actually inseparable, though they are conceptually distinguishable. Ultimately, it is the integral whole of attitude, purposive impulse and act that can be designated as wholesome, unwholesome, resultant, or functional.

***Cetanā* and the cognitive process**

In the *Abhidhamma* system, cognitive processes are described in terms of ordered sequences of states of mind (*cittas*), where each conditions the following one to produce a distinctive type of experience. Not only the perception of pleasant and unpleasant objects, but the process by which a level of meditation (*jhāna*) is established, “entry” into the four Paths of liberation culminating in the Path of an *arahant*, the process of dying, and the rebirth process are all defined as a courses charted by sequences of *cittas* arising and passing away one after another (Bodhi 1993, 149-173). In this section the focus is on the

cetanās that participate in the states of mind (*cittas*) that form the processes of perception. In the *Suttas* and *Abhidhamma* texts, perception is not regarded as a process in which the mind always passively receives the impact of an object and merely reacts to its pleasant and unpleasant features. Though that can happen when the object is regarded as insignificant, every process of perception is considered to be an occasion when the *cittas* can begin to actively respond to the object on the basis of their own wholesome or unwholesome inner dynamics. In the *Abhidhamma* terminology, *citta-vīthi* represents the process by which any sensory or mental object is cognized (Chart V. 7). The term *vīthi* literally signifies the road on which a traveller proceeds by well-marked stages: cognition is conceived as the occurrence of a series of *cittas* that proceed, not randomly, but as "phases in a series of discrete cognitive events leading one to the other in a regular and uniform order" (Bodhi 1993, 151). The term *citta-niyama* refers to the fixed order in which the *cittas* follow one another in the cognitive process.

With regard to the functioning of *cetanā* and the putting forth of *kamma*, the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 271-272) explains, with the help of several analogies, that the cognitive process consists of two stages: a preliminary stage when the object is received into the cognizing medium of the mind so that its nature is determined, and a second stage, designated as *javana*, when the mind cognizes the object fully and actively responds to it. It is at the stage of *javana* that wholesome and unwholesome *cittas* and *cetanās* originate and *kamma* is put forth. *Cetanā* operates as "*kamma*-condition" (*kamma-paccaya*) only in the *javana* stage. In the preliminary stage of the process of perception, *cetanā* co-ordinates concomitant states and inclines them towards the object; but it is not motivated by greed, hatred, and delusion or by wholesome roots of action, and its function cannot be classed as ethically wholesome or unwholesome.

The *citta* moments of the *citta-vīthi* and the dynamics of the process by which a sensory object is cognized are delineated in the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 270-271), the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 115-122), and in the fourth chapter of the *Abhidhammattha saṅgaha*. According to the explanation given in these texts, the cognitive-process (*citta-vīthi*) comes into being through the "arrest" and interruption of the life-continuum (*bhavaṅga*).¹³ It is posited (Vsm. XIV. 114) that the life continuum arises moment by moment when there are no cognitive processes—for example, in deep sleep—and continues as long as no mental processes interrupt its continuity. When sensory contact (*phassa*) occurs, the *bhavaṅga* process is "arrested" and interrupted; then the appropriate sense organs and the mind attend to the object and perception occurs. At the conclusion of the process of perception, the life continuum begins to arise again.

The cognitive process that occurs when an object is perceived by the senses and the mind is described in the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 115-122) as follows (Chart V. 7).¹⁴ The entire process lasts for seventeen "thought moments." When sensory contact occurs, the first three moments represent the impingement of the object on the flow of *bhavaṅga*: one moment of the *bhavaṅga* rises and passes away, in the second moment, the *bhavaṅga* "vibrates" with the impact of the object, and *bhavaṅga* is "arrested" in the third moment, giving way to an ordered cognitive process (*citta-vīthi*). The next phase consists of attending to, and recognizing, the object. In the fourth moment the appropriate sense organ attends to the object. This is designated as the moment of "five-door advertence" (*pañca-dvārāvajjana*). In the fifth moment one of the five types of sensory consciousness (*pañca-viññāṇa*) arises. For example, if the ear has made contact with a sound, auditory consciousness (hearing) arises. In the sixth moment the object is passively received into the cognitive process. This moment of reception (*sampaticchana*)

is followed by a moment of investigation (*santīraṇa*) when the object is rapidly examined by the mind. The eighth is a decisive moment of "determination" (*voṭṭhapana*) when the nature and specific characteristics of the object are determined. The object is distinguished from its surroundings and defined. This is done by organizing the data in such a manner that a definite object is discerned (Aung 1910, 29). All these moments of the *citta-vīthi* including the eighth are reckoned as karmically inoperative and incapable of producing karmic consequences.

In the active, karmically operative phase of the *citta-vīthi*, the subject interprets the sense-data, and begins to react to the object with personal responses. Seven moments—starting with the ninth and ending with the fifteenth—constitute a process of karmically effective impulsion designated as *javana*. This is the stage when cognition becomes *kamma* that can be evaluated as wholesome or unwholesome and entails moral responsibility. The cognitive process is completed in the sixteenth and seventeenth moments through a process of "registration" (*tadārammaṇa*). During these two moments, the object that has been fully cognized by the *javana* phase is identified and retained in consciousness. Registration occurs only if the stimulus is sufficiently strong. The term *javana* literally signifies "swift going" and, in this context, "going" refers to the cognitive process (P.E.D. 250, col. 1).

The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 271-272)¹⁵ illustrates the cognitive process with an apt analogy. A man sleeps under a mango tree, his head covered. A ripe mango falls, striking him. Aroused from sleep, he removes his head covering, picks up the mango and examines its distinctive smell, shape, and green-gold colour. Knowing it to be a mango, he eats it all and registers the taste it leaves in his mouth. Pulling back his head covering, he falls back to sleep. The sleeping man represents the moment of the life continuum that

passes just before the object makes its impact. The mango striking the man is like moments two and three when the life continuum “vibrates” and is arrested. The awakening from sleep is comparable to the adverting of the mind to the object at moment four; and the removal of the head cover is like consciousness operating at one of the senses at moment five. Picking up the fruit is analogous to the reception (*sampatcchana*) of the object into the cognitive process at moment six; and examining it resembles the rapid investigation (*santīraṇa*) of the object at the seventh moment. The crucial moment of recognizing it as a mango represents moment eight, which marks the determining (*voṭṭhapana*) of the object’s nature. Eating the mango and reacting to its flavour and texture stands for the *javana* process that covers moments nine to fifteen. Identifying and retaining the mango flavour in the mind is like the registration of the object at moments sixteen and seventeen. If the sensory and mental stimulation has been sufficiently strong, then the object that has been perceived through the cognitive process is known with clarity and certainty to be that object. The certainty that comes with the registering includes not only the object that has just been perceived but also the subjective reactions of the *javana* moments (Bodhi 1993, 124, 175).

The transition between passively receiving the mango from the tree’s bounty and actively biting into it aptly illustrates the transition that the *Abhidhamma* texts posit between the two phases of the cognitive process: the preliminary phase when the mind remains mostly in a receptive mode, so that the thought moments are determined by the nature of the object, and the *javana* phase when the mind becomes active and puts forth processes that become mental *kamma* and condition the future of the consciousness continuum.¹⁶ The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XX. 44) maintains that all the *cittas* that

constitute the *citta-vīthi* are ethically indeterminate, except the seven *javana* moments of karmically operative impulsion. Likewise, the *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* (Bodhi 1993, 124-129) states that all the moments of the *citta-vīthi*, except the *javana* moments, consist of karmically inoperative resultant (*vipāka*) or functional (*kiriya*) *cittas*.

Javana moments are defined as either wholesome, or unwholesome, or fruitional (*phala*), or purely functional (*kiriya*) *cittas*. The wholesome and unwholesome *javana* moments constitute the *kamma*-forming processes (*kamma-bhava*) of the rebirth continuum; the fruitional (*phala*) *javana cittas* are resultant (*vipāka*) states and are experienced as the fruits of the stages of the Path that culminates in liberating wisdom; and functional (*kiriya*) *javana cittas* are experienced only by the liberated one (*arahant*) whose actions perform a beneficent function without leaving any karmic traces. Neither the cognitive processes that arise as the fruits of the stages of the Path of liberation nor the cognitive processes of an *arahant* have karmic significance. The *cetanās* that arise in fruitional and functional *javana* process perform their basic function of energizing and co-ordinating concomitant mental factors and directing them towards objects. However, these *cetanās* do not have the form of purposive impulses that aspire for future goals and they do not carry karmic merit or demerit. It follows that, whereas *cetanās* are present in all the states of mind that constitute a cognitive sequence, only the *cetanās* that occur in the *javana* stage of the cognitive process can have the form of fully developed purposive impulses or intentions attributed with the capacity to initiate goal-directed action. At the *javana* stage, wholesome or unwholesome thoughts (*vitakkas*) and reflections (*vicāra*) enter the cognitive process as the subject's personal reactions to the object.

The presence in the cognitive process of resultant states of consciousness (*vipāka-cittas*) that are associated with joy (*somanassa*), sadness (*domanassa*), or neutral feeling

(*upekkhā*) is interpreted to be the effect of past *kamma* on present experience. Though resultant *cittas* condition present experience with variations of pleasant and unpleasant feeling, they do not produce future results. The *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* (Bodhi 1993, 172) explains that whether a person experiences an undesirable (*aniṭṭha*), moderately desirable (*ṭṭha*), or extremely desirable (*ati-ṭṭha*) object at any time depends on the fruition of past *kamma*. These experiences and the feelings they invoke are not in themselves karmically significant, although a person's wholesome or unwholesome reactions to these objects and to feelings of joy and sadness result in karmic consequences.

Once *javana* is attained, *cetanā* can operate in one of two ways: as conascent *kamma* condition, by causing concomitant physical and mental factors to carry out their respective functions and put forth karmic consequences at the present time; or as asynchronous *kamma* condition, by producing future results (Bodhi 1993, 307). When *cetanās* operate as conascent *kamma* condition, they produce psychosomatic changes that become the causes of pleasant or painful feelings at the present time. As asynchronous *kamma* condition, *cetanās* produce resultant (*vipāka*) mental states in the future, which are experienced as sorrowful or joyful. To designate *cetanā* as *kamma*-condition implies that its operation can be evaluated as morally wholesome or unwholesome and as productive of commensurate consequences.

Wholesome and unwholesome roots of action in cognitive processes

Modern interpreters of the *Abhidhamma* emphasize that *javana* is to be perceived, not merely as a cognitive process, but as a manifestation of the active dimension of life (*kamma-bhava*) where deeds burgeon, generated by the contacts of the senses and the

mind with their respective objects and shaped by the purposive thrust of *cetanā*. That which is produced by this active dimension of the rebirth process is future existence through rebirth (*upapatti-bhava*). Aung comments:

Buddhist writers often, in using the word *javana*, are referring to the active or conative factor (*cetanā*) in the act of cognition rather than to the intellective side of the process (1910, 247).

In her response to this comment, Mrs. Rhys Davids notes that teachers in Sri Lanka associated *javana* with the term "dynamic." She further remarks that the "dominant interest" of *javana* for Western psychologists is "the fusion of intellect and will in Buddhist psychology" (Aung 1910, 249, n.1). Her statement balances Aung's by drawing attention to the fact that at every point in the *javana* process *cetanā* is not a purely conative action-producing function, but emerges from a *citta* that includes cognitive and emotive features in its constitution.

Aung himself, while stressing the active role of *cetanā* in the *javana* process, shows that the *kamma*-producing capacity of *cetanā* to instigate goal-oriented acts is circumscribed by the conditioning influence of the unwholesome and wholesome emotive roots: greed, hate, and delusion; non-greed, non-hate, and non-delusion. Aung draws on the distinction that is made in the *Abhidhamma* (Bodhi 1993, 307, 312) between root-condition (*hetu-paccaya*) and *kamma*-condition (*kamma-paccaya*) in order to explain the *Abhidhamma* view of the relationship between the emotion-based roots of action and the purposive impulses of *cetanā* in the production and fruition of *kamma*. Because it perpetuates life, *kamma* is compared to a seed. Extending this analogy, Aung interprets the root to be the principal condition that affects the seed with respect to its germination, growth, and fruition. He takes the root-condition (*hetu paccaya*)—for example, greed—to

be the dominant factor that affects the manner in which *cetanā* (the *kamma*-condition) becomes expressed as a karmically operative act of body, speech, or mind. The analogy of the seed and the root implies that just as the root supports the germination of the seed and conditions the direction of the plant's growth, so also the motivating energies of the roots of action (greed and non-greed, hate and non-hate, delusion and non-delusion) support the purposive thrust of *cetanā*, give orientation to that purpose, and limit the effect that other conascent states have on *cetanā*. For example, a person may arrive at the purpose of making a gift, but the manner in which the purposive impulse (*cetanā*) is carried out and the act (*kamma*) in which it becomes expressed are influenced by the wholesome or unwholesome root-condition that influences the purpose. The gift can be given with genuine generosity rooted in non-greed, or the giving can be conditioned by the greedy hope of attaining worldly honour and karmic merit. The states of consciousness that arise in the cognitive process prior to *javana* are not conditioned by any of the six root-conditions—greed, hatred, delusion, and their opposites—in such a manner as to generate karmically significant acts. The states of consciousness that constitute *javana*, however, are fecund with roots.

Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli (1964, 131, n.13) suggests that the origins of the notion of *citta-vīthi* (cognitive series) could perhaps be found in such *Sutta* passages as the description of the process of perception in the *Madhupiṇḍika-sutta* (M.I. 112). The argument in this discourse begins very simply by showing that "eye-consciousness" (seeing), for example, arises through the coming together of consciousness, the eye, and a visual object. This meeting of the three factors named above is defined as contact (*phassa*). With contact as condition, feeling (*vedanā*) is said to arise. The passage then goes on to say that what one feels (*vedeti*) one also perceives (*sañjānāti*), what one

perceives one thinks about (*vitakketi*); and finally, what one thinks about one diversifies in thought, producing a proliferation of concepts (*papañceti*). The *Madhupīṇḍika-sutta* presents here an ordered series of states of consciousness. The concept of regular and uniform order (*citta-niyama*) in the arising of *cittas* in the *citta-vīthi* perhaps harkens back to passages such as this one.

In his work *Concept of Reality* (1976, 5-6), Bhikkhu Ñāṇananda points out that the description of the process of perception in the *Madhupīṇḍika-sutta* falls into two parts: in the first part—up to the mention of the arising of feeling (*vedanā*)—perception is presented as an "impersonal process" where the visual object is passively received into the cognizing medium of the mind; but in the second part, the verbs take on personal endings, suggesting that the mind begins to adopt an active, deliberate role. This division of the process of perception into a passive and an active stage in the *Madhupīṇḍika-sutta* anticipates the division of the cognitive processes into a preliminary receptive stage and a dynamic *javana* stage. In the *javana* stage, *cetanā* comes into its own by becoming a *kamma*-condition, and *javana-cittas* follow suit by switching to a dynamic, creative mode.

Moreover, the route of the process of perception is traced in the *Madhupīṇḍika-sutta* with the purpose of showing at which point unwholesome factors sabotage the cognitive process. The argument here is that when one makes the perceived object the starting point of conceptual expansion (*papañceti*), then the mind is assailed by perceptions and reckonings based on proliferation (*papañca*).¹⁷ The *Madhupīṇḍika-sutta* (M.I. 114) maintains that conceptual proliferation leads one to delight in, welcome, and covet the object so that the underlying tendencies (*anusayas*) of passion for sensual pleasure (*rāga*), aversion (*dosa*), views (*diṭṭhi*), doubt (*vicikicchā*), conceit (*māna*),

attachment to life (*bhava*), and basic ignorance (*avijjā*) become outwardly manifest. The conclusion to the argument is that the fundamental cause for quarrelling and violence is to be found in conceptual proliferation. *Papañca* is viewed as an ever-present danger in every cognitive process.

On the basis of the argument in the *Madhupiṇḍika-sutta*, it can be said that the unwholesome root conditions—greed, hate, and delusion—affect the purposive impetus of *cetanā* in such a manner that the states of consciousness in the *javana* process become occasions for conceptual proliferation and the overt activity (*pariyuṭṭhāna*) of the underlying tendencies. By the same token, it can be posited that wholesome roots condition *cetanā* in such a way as to exclude both greed and hatred towards objects and a deluded frame of mind from the purposive impulse of *cetanā*. The underlying tendencies cannot become active in the presence of wholesome roots. The account of *javana* in the *Abhidhamma*, therefore, carries the implication that to see well is to see, not only correctly, but also in a wholesome manner. Seeing the object as it actually is (*yathābhūtam*) implies reacting to it without unwholesome purposes (*cetanās*), so that no sorrow is entailed. Cognition and purpose are conjoined in *javana*.

Cetanās in the classification of saṅkhārās

In Chapter IV, the quest for *Sutta* passages that clarified the relationship between *saṅkhārās* and *cetanās* led to the *Saṅcetanika-vagga* of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (A. II. 157-158) where the two terms *saṅcetanā-hetu-kamma* and *saṅkhāra* denote the same fact, namely, an act of body, speech, or mind that carries moral values and produces karmic consequences. A karmically operative bodily act, for example, bears two designations: *kāyacetanā-hetu-kamma* and *kāyasaṅkhāra*. The argument was made that

these two designations differ in connotation. *Kāyasañcetanā-hetu-kamma* signifies a bodily act that is motivated by a *cetanā* functioning as a purposive impulse, that is to say, an intention that has the capacity to initiate action. *Kāyasañkhāra* signifies that the act comes into being through a configuration of causal conditions and is itself a configuration of physical and mental factors.

Reference was also made in Chapter IV to passages where the two terms *abhisāṅkhara* and *abhisāñcetaṇita* are applied to the same karmically operative act. Besides those mentioned in Chapter IV, there are other passages where states of meditation (*jhānas*) and speculative views (*diṭṭhi*) are characterized as *abhisāṅkhata* and *abhisāñcetaṇita*. With reference to states of meditation (M. I. 350-352; A. V. 343-346), *abhisāṅkhatam* indicates that several mental factors come together to form a plane of consciousness. At S. IV. 217, the mental functions that cease as each level of *jhāna* is attained are referred to as *sañkhārās*. When applied to levels of meditation, *abhisāñcetaṇitam* signifies that these states of consciousness are achieved through processes of intention and purposeful thought. Similarly, speculative views are regarded as mental acts that are composed (*sañkhatam*) of ideas, and purposefully conceived (*cetaṇitam*) (A. V. 187). An *arahant* is described as one who is no longer constructing (*anabhisāṅkharonto*) acts with karmic consequences nor engaging in goal-oriented thoughts (*anabhicetaṇanto*) (S. II. 82; M. III. 244). The thrust of these passages is to demonstrate that mental activities like meditation and speculative views are impermanent (*anicca*) and subject to cessation (*nirodha-dhamma*) for two reasons: they are composed through the coming together of certain conditions and they are the products of goal-oriented thoughts.

These passages do not clarify precisely how *cetanās* produce the configurations (*saṅkhārās*) that manifest as karmically operative acts, levels of meditation, or speculative views. The *Visuddhimagga*, however, utilizes its methods of classification to show how *cittas*, *cetanās*, and *saṅkhārās* coincide in the continuum of consciousness.

The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XVII. 44-46) classifies *saṅkhārās* into four types: (1) *saṅkhārās* characterized as "formed," (2) *saṅkhārās* that are formed by *kamma*, (3) *saṅkhārās* that actively form *kamma*, and (4) *saṅkhārās* that consist of impetus or activating impulse.

1. *Saṅkhārās* characterized as "formed" (*saṅkhata saṅkhāra*) is the widest category. It includes all physical and mental factors that are produced through causal conditions (*sappaccayā dhammā*) and are subject to change and decay (Vsm. XVII. 46). It is significant that here the *Visuddhimagga* construes *saṅkhata* to indicate, not the composite (*abhisāṅkhata*) nature of *saṅkhārās*, but their status as conditioned (*sapaccaya*) phenomena. The *Visuddhimagga* adds that this widely inclusive category of *saṅkhārās* is referred to in such *Sutta* statements as: "*Saṅkhārās*, indeed, are impermanent" (S.I. 158; D. II. 157). *Saṅkharas* of this type can come into existence in situations that are outside the processes of *kamma*. Processes in the physical world are *saṅkhārās*, but they do not produce *kamma*.

2. *Saṅkhārās* formed by *kamma* (*abhisāṅkhata-saṅkhāra*) are described as the consequences of past *kamma*. They come into existence forming the physical and mental factors that constitute the three realms of rebirth: the realm of sensory experience (*kāma-dhātu*), the realm of fine matter (*rūpa-dhātu*), and the non-material realm (*arūpa-dhātu*) (Vsm. XVII. 44, 46). The body and the senses, for example, are the consequences of "old *kamma*" (*purāṇa kamma*) and fall under the category of *abhisāṅkhata-saṅkhārās*. The

Visuddhimagga regards this class as a subset of the large class of *saṅkhārās* that are characterized as "formed" (*saṅkhata-saṅkhārās*). However, the distinct features of this category of *saṅkhārās* are: they are characterized by ignorance (Vsm. XVII. 44), they come into existence dependent on past *kamma*, and they constitute the realms of rebirth. The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XVII. 46) makes the interesting point that there is no passage in the texts where *kamma*-formed *saṅkhārās* are distinguished as a specific category.

3. *Saṅkhārās* that actively form *kamma* (*abhisaṅkharāṇa-saṅkhāra*) are conditioned and composite like all *saṅkhārās*. However, their ability to take on the karmic values of merit (*puñña*) and demerit (*pāpa*)—which enables them to produce commensurate karmic consequences—constitutes them into a special category (Vsm. XVII. 46). The *Visuddhimagga* makes it clear that these dynamic *kamma*-forming *saṅkhārās* are constituted of the *cetanās* that arise as *cetasikas* in wholesome and unwholesome *cittas* (Vsm. XVII. 60-61).

4. *Saṅkhāra* that consists of the impulse that produces activity (*payoga-saṅkhāra*) is explained in the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XVII. 46) as bodily and mental energy (*kāyika-cetasika-viriya*). In order to explain the meaning of *payoga*, the *Visuddhimagga* refers to the extended simile of the perfectly cast chariot wheel: the wheel moves as far as the impetus that sets it in motion propels it (*yāvatikā abhisaṅkhārassa gati*), and then stops, standing perfectly upright and motionless (A. I. 112). The commentary to the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (AA. II. 181) explains *abhisaṅkhārassa gati* as *payogassa gamanam* (the movement produced by the application of energy). Similarly, in the commentarial literature (AA. III. 142; DA. III. 1030; Asl. 156), the term *sasaṅkhāra* (prompted or instigated) is explained as *sappayoga* (with application of energy, with impetus). *Payoga*-

saṅkhāra, therefore, connotes *saṅkhāra* consisting of the impetus, motivating energy or "push" that brings about goal-oriented action.

It is evident that *vipāka-cittas* (resultant states of mind), *vipāka-cetanās* and *kamma*-formed *abhisāṅkhata-saṅkhāras* coincide. All three are characterized as consequences of *kamma*. They are ethically indeterminate (*avyākata*) and do not produce karmically operative acts of body, speech, or mind. *Vipāka cittas* come into existence, for example, in the preliminary stages of the cognitive process, manifesting as rudimentary mental feelings of pleasure and displeasure in response to sensory stimulation. *Cetanās* that arise as constitutive factors of these basic feelings of pleasure and displeasure do not have the form of fully developed intentions and do not bring about wholesome and unwholesome acts.

The wholesome and unwholesome *cittas* and *cetanās* of *javana* processes coincide with *abhisāṅkharāṇa-saṅkharas*. The *cittas* of the *javana* process manifest the personal reactions of the subject: they are conditioned by wholesome and unwholesome roots of action and they become occasions for the distorting influences of the *āsavas* and the obsessive behaviour caused by the underlying tendencies (*anusayas*). Wholesome and unwholesome *cetanās* that arise as constituents of the mental states that form the *javana* process are fully developed and affirmed purposive thoughts. They produce acts with karmic consequences.

Finally, *cetanā* can be identified as the impetus (*payoga*) that produces activity in the case of configurations (*saṅkhāras*) of physical and mental factors. In the case of configurations of mental factors that pertain to basic conscious awareness or to rudimentary stages of perception, *cetanā* as *payoga* merely directs the attention of these mental factors towards objects. In the case of wholesome and unwholesome acts of body,

speech, and mind, *cetanā*, manifesting as a fully developed intention, becomes the *payoga* (impetus) that seeks out future goals.

Correlations between *cittas*, *cetanās*, and *saṅkhāras*

The *Visuddhimagga* (XVII. 60-61), very precisely identifies bodily *saṅkhāra* with bodily *sañcetanā*, verbal *saṅkhāra* with verbal *sañcetanā*, and mental *saṅkhāra* with mental *sañcetanā*. Furthermore, the *Visuddhimagga* gives very specific details regarding the *cetanās* of the levels of meditation as well as the wholesome and unwholesome *cetanās* that constitute, respectively, the *saṅkhāras* of merit and the *saṅkhāras* of demerit that become manifest as acts of body, speech, and mind.¹⁸ It should be kept in mind that both in the *Suttas* and in the *Abhidhamma* literature, acts of body, speech, and mind are regarded as *saṅkhāras* (configurations) in the sense that they are produced through the coming together of causal conditions, and are themselves composites of physical and mental factors. The *Visuddhimagga* equates *saṅkhāras* of merit and demerit with wholesome purposive impulses (*cetanās*) that arise in wholesome states of mind (*cittas*) and unwholesome purposive impulses that are conditioned by unwholesome attitudes of mind (Charts V. 5 and 6). The equation that the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XVII. 60-61) makes between acts (*saṅkhāras*) and wholesome and unwholesome purposes (*cetanās*) confirms the Theravāda interpretations of the Buddha's definition of *kamma* (A. III. 415). According to Theravāda, this definition signifies that acts are the very manifestations of purposes and therefore, to be equated with purposes. The *Visuddhimagga* defines a wholesome bodily act, for instance as the purposive impulse (*kusala-cetanā*) of a wholesome state of mind coming into effect in the body (*kāya-dvārato pavattā . . . kusala-cetanā*).

It could be claimed that *saṅkhāra* and *citta* refer to two very different—even incompatible—features of the continuum of consciousness. *Saṅkhāra* manifests the governance of conditioned origination and the inescapability of conditioning in all conscious processes. *Saṅkhārās* of body, speech, and mind are conditioned acts that manifest as habit patterns. On the other hand, it could be argued that the term *citta* conveys the mind's function of producing endlessly variegated intentions and purposes in accordance with its two unique capacities: the ability to become aware of its own contents (*paccavekkhaṇa*) and the power to manifest itself in a vast diversity of attitudes in diverse circumstances, like a master-artist (S. III. 151). In brief, *citta* is the mind as master artist, and *saṅkhāra* is the mind as habit maker. In their most limited manifestations, *saṅkhārās* function within the closed circuits of habit formations. *Cittas*, on the contrary, are open to new influences, since they can only come into manifestation through sensory or mental stimulation. Though the definition of *saṅkhāra* in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (S. III. 60) says that *saṅkhārās* are constituted of *cetanā*s, it is also clear that *cetanā* is linked to the cognitive processes of the *citta*, which include discerning the nature of objects, reasoning, and planning for the future. Precisely how *cetanā* straddles the cognitive features of the *citta* and the constructive activity of the *saṅkhārakkhandha* is not clarified in the *Suttas*.

The *Visuddhimagga* and the *Atthasālinī* conceive of *cetanā* as a complex mental factor that combines the capacity of goal-oriented thought that belongs to the cognitive processes of the *citta* with the conative dynamism of *saṅkhāra*. The lists of mental states in the *Dhammasaṅgāṇi*, the *Atthasālinī*, and the *Visuddhimagga* show that *cetanā* arises among the configuration of mental factors (*cetasikas*) that constitute a specific attitude of mind or mind-set (*citta*) in the continuum of consciousness. This entails that *cetanā*,

together with the *citta* and all constituents, arises through sensory contact. *Cetanā* aids the *citta* in the processes of cognition and purposeful engagement with the object. At the same time, *cetanā* belongs within the attitude of mind portrayed by the *citta*, whether it be wholesome, greedy, malevolent or totally deluded. And *cetanā* also takes on the emotional colours and subtle shading of sentiments that enliven that attitude of mind. It follows that *cetanā*, functioning as goal-directed thought and impulse, participates in the capacity of the continuum of consciousness to respond to new objects, to manifest variously in diverse experiences, and to become aware of its own varied functions and manifestations.

All the mental factors that are listed as *cetasikas* in the lists of wholesome and unwholesome *cittas* are reckoned as components of the *saṅkhārakkhandha*. As factors of the *saṅkhārakkhandha*, they come into existence through the confluence of causal conditions; and they become manifest in repeated patterns of wholesome and unwholesome habits displayed in bodily behaviour, speech, and mental activities. The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 135) and the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 111-112) define *cetanā* as a leader among the factors of the *saṅkhārakkhandha* that energizes concomitant mental states and co-ordinates their functions to form goal-directed acts of body, speech, and mind. This definition of *cetanā* can be interpreted to mean that *cetanā*, emerging as an intention or purposive impulse conditioned by a specific attitude of mind, directs the conative capacities of the organism in purposeful acts. However, the capacity of *cetanā* to initiate action in pursuit of intended goals is derived from its participation in the constructive activity of the *saṅkhārakkhandha*. This entails that the purposeful activity of *cetanā* is conditioned by the tendency to form habit patterns that is characteristic of the dynamic processes of the *saṅkhārakkhandha*. This conditioning of the purposive impulses

of *cetanā* by the habit-forming functions of the *saṅkhāras* entails: first, that the purposes and intentions of *cetanā* are shaped to a greater or lesser degree by mental habits, and second, that the implementation of any purposive impulse can be blocked or curtailed by habitual modes of thought and behaviour.

The lists of *cittas* and *saṅkhāras* in the *Visuddhimagga* imply that the purposive impulses of *cetanās* become the medium through which the cognitive processes and emotions of *cittas* and the capacity of *saṅkhāras* to produce acts and form habits condition each other. Since the purposes and intentions manifested by *cetanās* are conditioned by habits, they direct thought processes to some objects rather than to others. Habitual acts (*saṅkhāras*) of body, speech, and mind restrict the range of interests and goals exhibited by one's intentions and purposes (*cetanās*), and as a consequence, limit the range of the discursive thoughts and emotional responses in the states of mind (*cittas*) of the continuum of consciousness. At the same time, it is posited both in the *Suttas* and in the *Abhidhamma* literature that these states of mind continually make contact (*phassa*) with new objects and are capable of vastly diverse responses. As a consequence, the purposive impulses that arise from these states of mind and the goal-oriented acts produced by the purposive impulses are conditioned by these new influences. In this way the restrictive propensities of habits begin to be counteracted.

***Cetanā* and the process of rebirth**

In the *Sutta* literature, the way *kamma* operates to perpetuate rebirth is explained in terms of a chain of causation with twelve causal conditions (*paccaya*). Each *paccaya* represents a distinctive or compelling factor among the set of causal factors necessary to

bring about an effect.¹⁹ The *Visuddhimagga* arranges the twelve links in such a way as to cover three successive lives (Chart V. 8).

According to the interpretation given in the *Visuddhimagga*, the twelve links of the chain of causation exhibit the interplay of two dimensions in the rebirth process: the active *kamma*-generating dimension (*kamma-bhava*), and the passive *kamma*-generated dimension. The dynamic *kamma*-forming dimension is said to be brought about by five causal conditions: ignorance (*avijjā*), dynamic configurations (*saṅkhāra*) of mental factors, which produce karmically operative acts and the five aggregates that constitute the body and mind, craving (*taṇhā*) for future goals, clinging (*upādāna*) to factors that cause rebirth, and the process of rebirth (*bhava*). These causal conditions generate goal-oriented thoughts endowed with conative impetus (*cetanās*) that motivate consciousness to project itself into the future through intentions, plans, and eager anticipations (*cetanā, patthanā, paṇidhi*). These *cetanās* are associated with wholesome and unwholesome roots and become expressed in acts that carry moral values and produce commensurate consequences (*kamma-vipāka*) in due course. Wholesome and unwholesome *cetanās* are integral to the dynamic, *kamma*-forming dimension of the rebirth process. *Mano-saṅcetanā* is the primary nutriment (*āharā*) that feeds this process.

The rebirth process (*upapatti-bhava*) is correlated with the *kamma*-generated aggregates (*khandhā*) of the personality that make it possible to experience the mental pleasure (*somanassa*) and displeasure (*domanassa*) of a specific sphere of experience (Vsm. XVII. 253). For example, the *khandhās* that make up a *deva* body and mind are necessary conditions for the celestial experiences of the *deva* realm. In the chain of causation, the following causal conditions are regarded as factors of the resultant *kamma*-formed dimension (*upapatti-bhava*): consciousness (*viññāṇa*), mind-and-body (*nāma-*

rūpa), the six senses (*saḷāyatana*), sensory contact (*phassa*), and feeling (*vedanā*). All these factors of *upapatti-bhava* are constituted by the fruition of *kamma* (*kamma-vipāka*). The concept of *kamma*-produced process (*upapatti-bhava*) resonates with the passages in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* where the body (S. II. 65) and the sense organs (S. IV. 132) are said to be produced as consequences of past *kamma* (*purāṇa kamma*). In these passages the body and the sense organs are designated as *abhisāṅkata* and *abhisāñcetaṇita*. *Abhisāṅkhata* conveys that they are composed and conditioned by past *kamma*. The idea that they are the consequences of acts (*kamma*) that were produced through purposive thought and impulsion (*sañcetanā*) is expressed by the term *abhisāñcetaṇita* (SA. II. 402). The concept of *kamma*-produced process (*upapatti bhava*) in the description of rebirth corresponds to *kamma*-formed *saṅkhārās* (*abhisāṅkhata-saṅkhāra*) in the classification of *saṅkhārās*. The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XVII. 46) defines *abhisāṅkhata-saṅkhārās* as the material and non-material factors of the realms of rebirth that are produced by *kamma*.²⁰

Although *cetanā* is not specifically mentioned among the twelve causal links in the chain of rebirth, two of the links, namely, *saṅkhāra* and *bhava*, are defined in terms of *cetanā*. The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XVII. 177-184) explains that in the context of the chain of rebirth, the term *saṅkhāra* represents the wholesome and unwholesome *cetanās* that constitute the *saṅkhārās* (acts) of merit, *saṅkhārās* of demerit, and the imperturbable mental *saṅkhārās* of the higher levels of meditation. *Kamma*-formed *saṅkhārās* (*abhisāṅkhata-saṅkhārās*) are correlated with resultant (*vipāka*) *cittas* and resultant *cetanās*. The body, mind, and senses that are acquired through rebirth are regarded as configurations of physical and mental states that are produced as consequences of past wholesome and unwholesome *kamma* (*abhisāṅkhata-saṅkhārās*). The body and mind acquired in this way become the basis for feelings of mental pleasure and displeasure, and

the states of mind in which these feelings of pleasure and displeasure are experienced fall in the category of resultant (*vipāka*) states.

The other causal link in the rebirth process with which *cetanā* is identified is *bhava* (Nyanatiloka 1972, 158). The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XVII. 270) explains that in contexts where *bhava* is said to be the causal condition for rebirth (*jāti*), the meaning of *bhava* should be limited to *kamma-bhava*, the dynamic, *kamma*-producing dimension of life. The *Vibhaṅga* (Vbn. 137) is quoted by the *Visuddhimagga* to show that *kamma-bhava* is constituted of *saṅkhāras* of merit and demerit and those pertaining to the imperturbable calm of the higher levels of meditation. The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XVII. 177, 177, 180, 181, 252) makes the following equations between the wholesome and unwholesome *kamma*-generating *saṅkharas* (*abhisāṅkharapa saṅkhāras*) that constitute the *kamma*-forming (*kamma-bhava*) aspect of the rebirth process and wholesome and unwholesome *cetanās* that produce acts with karmic consequences.

<i>Saṅkhāra</i> of body	=	<i>Sañcetanā</i> of body
<i>Saṅkhāra</i> of speech	=	<i>Sañcetanā</i> of speech
<i>Saṅkhāra</i> of mind	=	<i>Sañcetanā</i> of mind
<i>Saṅkhāras</i> of merit	=	<i>Cetanās</i> in the 8 wholesome <i>cittas</i> of the sphere of sensory experience (chart V. 5) and <i>cetanās</i> in the 5 wholesome <i>cittas</i> of the fine material sphere (corresponding to five lower levels of meditation).
<i>Saṅkhāras</i> of demerit	=	<i>Cetanās</i> in the 12 unwholesome <i>cittas</i> of the sphere of sensory experience rooted in greed, aversion, and delusion (chart V. 6).

Imperturbable *saṅkhārās* = *Cetanās* in the 4 wholesome *cittas* of the non-material sphere (corresponding to the four higher levels of meditation).

According to the *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* (Bodhi 1993, 54, 62) when people who are still ignorant of conditioned origination and the four Noble Truths cultivate the lower and higher levels of meditations, they experience wholesome *cittas* of serene concentration, but are not cleansed of purposive impulses and intentions that direct the mind to present benefit and future goals. Since they have not renounced the aspirations for future goals, they will be reborn in a cosmic realm that corresponds to the level of meditation that they have cultivated. Liberated *arahants*, who know that even these magnificent planes of consciousness are impermanent configurations of mental states, experience only functional states of mind (*kiriya-cittas*) that have no karmic traces when they enter into meditation. They know the bliss of meditation, but are not captivated by it.

The *Anupada-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* (M. III. 25-29) states that all the levels of meditation, except the fourth of the higher levels known as “neither perception nor non-perception,” have the following mental factors: contact (*phassa*) with an object, feeling (*vedanā*), perception (*saññā*), purposive impulse (*cetanā*), conscious awareness (*citta*), zeal (*chanda*), decisiveness (*adhimokkha*), energy (*virīya*), mindfulness (*sati*), equanimity (*upekkhā*) and attention (*manasikāra*). These mental factors, including *cetanā*, are regarded as necessary to maintain the smooth working of the mind and ensure continued calm concentration.

The wholesome and unwholesome *cetanās* listed above constitutes the dynamic, *kamma*-producing dimension of the rebirth process. It is an important principle of the *Abhidhamma* that the results of these *kamma*-producing processes are inoperative and do

not produce further results (Kvu. 357-358). By postulating that the *kamma*-formed aspect of rebirth is constituted of karmically inoperative physical and mental states, the *Visuddhimagga* seeks to maintain that the dynamic and the passively receptive aspects of life are related to each other by mutual conditioning, but not by processes that entail strict determinism. The wholesome and the unwholesome *cetanās* that constitute the *kamma*-forming dimension of the present life arise in the present body and mind. However, it is postulated that the body and mind are not, in themselves, capable of producing further *cetanās* and perpetuating their own wholesome or unwholesome characteristics since they belong to the resultant, *kamma*-produced (*vipāka*) dimension of life. It is only when the *kamma* producing factors of ignorance (*avijjā*), mental formations (*saṅkhārās*) that exhibit habit patterns, craving (*taṇhā*), clinging (*upādāna*), and the processes of becoming (*bhava*) are present that the body and mind become the matrix where wholesome and unwholesome *cetanās* are produced. By the same token, *cetanā* will not produce acts with karmic consequences if *kamma*-producing conditions are removed. Purposive impulses lapse into inoperative resultant states after performing their function. *Cetanās* do not have the characteristic of generating further *cetanās*.

Conclusion

The three most inclusive categories in the system of classifying mental states put forward by the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*, the *Atthasālinī*, the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* are *kusala* (wholesome), *akusala* (unwholesome) and *avyākata* (ethically indeterminate). The title that Mrs. Rhys Davids chooses for her translation of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*, *Buddhist Psychological Ethics*, aptly indicates that in the *Abhidhamma* system of classification, mental states are interpreted in terms of their

ethical import, and ethical questions are discussed in terms of basic psychological processes such as perception and conceptualization, emotion, and the conative capacity in the mind to initiate goal-oriented action. The mutual relationship of psychological categories and ethics affirmed in Theravāda leads to an inclusive definition of ethical goodness. *Kusala* is regarded, not only as moral goodness, but also as emotional health (*ārogya*), ease in functioning, and “skill” in the sense of understanding (*paññā*) (Asl. 38-39). All *cetanās* are classified as wholesome, unwholesome, or ethically indeterminate, and a wholesome *cetanā* is interpreted to be a purposive impulse that is characterized by all that *kusala* includes.

This chapter has shown that the *Abhidhamma* method of classification corroborates the descriptions of *cetanā* in the *Suttas* as a mental factor that arises through sensory or mental stimulation and activates the mind’s capacity to assemble its resources and produce goal-oriented acts. In Chapter IV this description was interpreted to mean that *cetanā* comes into being when the mind makes contact with an object, manifesting as purposive awareness that displays interest in the object. Arising as basic purposive awareness, *cetanā* becomes an impetus that instigates the mind to put forth action to engage with an object of interest. In the *Sutta* literature, both the mind’s capacity to assemble the causal conditions to produce acts of body, speech, and mind, and the acts that are produced in this way are referred to as *saṅkhārās*.

In the *Abhidhamma* lists of mental factors, *cetanā* is included in two major psychological categories: *citta* and *saṅkhāra*. *Cittas* are regarded as momentary states of mind that arise in a series, each conditioning the following one. Though *cittas* are regarded as momentary states, each *citta* is viewed as an organic whole of mutually conditioning factors of cognition, emotion, and conation that arise together when the

mind makes contact with an object. The description of the *saṅkhārakkhandha* in the *Visuddhimagga* makes it clear that the very same factors that constitute the cognitive and emotive factors of *cittas* also constitute the action-producing factors of *saṅkhāras*. The constituents of a *citta* include: factors like the capacity to contact objects (*phassa*), *cetanā*, and vitality, which make it possible for consciousness to function even in a rudimentary way; conative factors like energy (*virīya*) and the impetus to act (*chanda*), which constitute the mind's capacity to initiate action; and factors such as greed (*lobha*), non-greed (*alobha*), and the other "roots of action" that give any state of mind its moral quality as wholesome or unwholesome. When these mental factors become constituents of *saṅkhāras* they function as configurations of causal conditions whose coming together produces acts that have karmic consequences.

The lists of mental factors that constitute *cittas* show that *cetanā* is a constant (*niyata*) factor that is present in every *citta*. The descriptive definition of *cetanā* in the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 111-112) maintains that *cetanā* is the leading factor in co-ordinating concomitant mental states and directing their functions towards an object. It can be inferred that *cetanā* arises as a purposive impulse in a specific state of mind (*citta*) and facilitates the coming together of mental factors to produce wholesome or unwholesome acts (*saṅkhāras*). The act matches the attitude of mind (*citta*) that conditions and supports the purposive impulse (*cetanā*).

According to the *Visuddhimagga*, *cetanās* have the form of fully developed and affirmed intentions or goal-oriented thoughts only when they are associated with *kamma*-forming (*abhisāṅkharāṇa*) *saṅkhāras*. The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XVII. 60-61) identifies the wholesome and unwholesome acts that comprise *kamma*-forming *saṅkhāras* very precisely with the wholesome and unwholesome *cetanās* that arise as purposive impulses

in different types of wholesome and unwholesome states of mind. Through these lists of *cittas*, *cetanās*, and *saṅkhārās*, the *Visuddhimagga* presents the *Abhidhamma* view that attitudes of mind (*cittas*) and the mind's capacity to initiate goal-oriented acts (*saṅkhārās*) are linked with each other and condition each other through purposive impulses, goal-directed thoughts, and intentions (*cetanās*).

The lists show that every purposive impulse is the dynamic mode of a specific attitude of mind. A purposive thought or intention of greed for example is seen to be conditioned by the entire set of mental factors (*cetasikas*) that constitute an unwholesome mind dominated by greed. Factors such as delusion (*moha*), lack of shame in doing wrong, and lack of fear of the consequences of wrong-doing are regarded as integral to a greedy attitude of mind. These factors are viewed as conditions that influence the arising of a purposive impulse (*cetanā*) of greed. In this way, a specific attitude of mind (*citta*), the purposive impulse (*cetanā*) that the attitude projects, and the goal-oriented act (*saṅkhāra*) in which the purpose become realized are regarded as forming a single process of interdependent factors. The moral values of wholesome, unwholesome, and ethically indeterminate are applied to the process taken as a single whole.

Cetanās are conditioned not only by the attitudes of mind within which they arise, but also by the fact that the acts that they instigate tend to become habitual. Habits of greed, for example, are regarded as factors that can give rise to greedy attitudes of mind and greedy intentions.

Theravāda attributes to the continuum of consciousness the capacity to respond in diverse ways to a variety of objects and the ability to observe its own processes. These attributes of the mind are regarded as factors that can counteract the tendency of

conditioned acts (*saṅkhārās*) to become habits. By regarding *cetanās* as constituents of both *cittas* and *saṅkhārās*, the *Visuddhimagga* presents the purposive impulses of *cetanās* as the means through which attitudes of mind can influence the conative processes that initiate acts and the goals towards which acts are directed. When new conditions are developed through processes of training, attitudes of mind (*cittas*) begin to change, bringing about corresponding changes in goal-directed impulses (*cetanās*), and in the acts (*saṅkhārās*) that they initiate.

The *Visuddhimagga* and the *Atthasālinī* also describe the role of *cetanās* in various types of cognitive processes. Some modern interpreters of Theravāda have maintained that *cetanās* become manifest as factors of free will in the advanced (*javana*) stage of a cognitive process (*citta-vīthi*) where subjective responses to the object begin to take effect. In their interpretation of the *citta-vīthi*, Aung (1910, 248), Nārada (1975, 33), Kashyap (1982, 3), and Govinda (1961, 137) emphasize that *javana* is not only characterized by the capacity to create *kamma*, but is also associated with "free will." Aung maintains that *javana* is "a determining, free, causal act" (1910, 248). Nārada (1975, 33) maintains that free will "plays its part" at the stage of determining the nature and qualities of the object (*voṭṭhapana*). He interprets this stage of the *citta-vīthi* to be the "gateway to a moral or immoral thought process" (1975, 167). Govinda (1961, 137) also holds that, since *javana* is a *kamma*-forming process, it must exhibit some measure of free will. He emphasizes that *kamma* implies responsibility for one's acts and that lack of freedom would make a travesty of moral responsibility.

However, Aung, Nārada, and Govinda qualify their claim that *javana* is a process of free will by defining what they mean by "freedom" in this context. Aung explains that by "free" he does not mean that any *javana* can be free of the influences of past *kamma*

and present circumstances, the exception being *javanas* experienced by an *arahant*. Aung limits the term "free" to "free by reason of the balance of motives or conditions" (1910, 43). He holds that when *cetanā* emerges from the earlier stages of the cognitive series and becomes "asynchronous"—capable not only of influencing nascent mental factors but also of producing future consequences—then its scope widens, so that its capacity to determine rather than being determined increases. Aung holds that as a result of this expanding capacity at the *javana* stage, *cetanā* reaches a point in its function of goal-oriented purpose when it is no longer constrained either by the wholesome root-conditions of non-greed, non-hatred, and non-delusion nor by the unwholesome root-conditions of greed, hatred, and delusion. According to Aung's interpretation, when *cetanā* enters the *javana* stage of the *citta-vīthi*, it is equally affected by both wholesome and unwholesome root-conditions; and therefore, in this restricted sense, it is not compelled by either wholesome or unwholesome motivation (1910, 43). He does not explain how this "balance of motives or conditions" is achieved in spite of the multiple processes of conditioning that are present in the a state of mind at any time.

Another argument that Aung puts forward in support of "free will" in the *javana* process is more convincing. Aung argues that since a disagreeable object can come to be viewed with pleasure while a pleasant object can be rejected with displeasure, such "reversal of *javana*" demonstrates that *javana* is a "free" act, whereas the resultant states of consciousness in the preliminary stage of perception are "fixed" (1910, 249). He adds a simile: *javana* can be compared to an alligator with the capacity to swim against the current of habits while *vipāka citta*s are like inanimate objects floating with the tide.

Nārada's line of argument is similar to Aung's. He holds that at the *voṭṭhapana* stage, free will comes into play: if the object is viewed with systematic, rightly-deployed

attention (*yoniso-manasikāra*), a wholesome *javana* will ensue; but careless unsystematic attention (*ayoniso-manasikāra*) will result in an unwholesome *javana* (1975, 33).

Govinda, on the other hand, holds that *javana* is not a totally free, unconditioned act, but is less bound by the habit patterns of *saṅkhārās* than the *vipāka citta*s of the preliminary stages of perception. In spite of the arguments put forward by Aung and Nārada, it is difficult to see how *cetanā* can become free of the constraints and compulsions of mental habits, underlying tendencies, and root conditions in the *citta* processes of ordinary persons.

In yet another vein, without claiming that *javana* is an expression of free will, Bodhi (1993, 173) elaborates on Aung's statement regarding "the reversal of *javana*." In this context, Bodhi refers to the Buddhist position that cognitive processes can be controlled and changed through sustained cultivation (*bhāvanā*) of the mind. According to Bodhi's interpretation, the same object can be perceived differently by different viewers, depending on differences in "temperament and proclivities," with the result that their *javanās* can show startling variations even though they are viewing the same object.²¹ Though the tenacity of unwholesome proclivities, underlying tendencies, and root-conditions is emphasized in the *Sutta* literature and the *Abhidhamma*, the thrust of the teaching is that these unwholesome factors and the *javanās* they govern can be changed through persistent practice. In this context, Bodhi refers to the *Indriya-bhāvanā-sutta* (M. III. 301-302) where the Buddha tells Ānanda that the *arahant*, because of constant mindfulness (*satī*) and clear comprehension (*sampajañña*), is able to see what is repulsive as unrepulsive and what is unrepulsive as repulsive, or remain in a state of

equanimity, avoiding both the repulsive and the unrepulsive. In the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (A. III. 169-170), the Buddha teaches young monks the method of mindfully changing the *javana* that occurs in relation to an object by mindfully changing one's attitude and perspectives. They are taught that by shifting one's frame of mind, it is possible to view what is distasteful (*paṭikkula*) as not distasteful and what is not distasteful as distasteful. The point of this exercise is to uproot unwholesome roots by filling the mind with the thought: "May I not feel sensual passion (*rāga*) for things that arouse passion, may I not feel hatred (*dosa*) for things that excite hatred, and may I not feel delusion (*moha*) towards things that delude."

In order to explore the Theravāda view that *javana* can be changed through training, it is necessary to probe more deeply into the blending of cognition, emotion, and conation in *javana*. Mrs. Rhys Davids refers to a fascinating discussion between Aung and herself regarding the nature of *javana* and the difficulties of translating the term *javana* (Aung 1910, 247-248). Aung finds the rendering of *javana* as "apperception"²² inadequate because this term would emphasize the cognitive side of *javana* but would not convey its capacity of instigating goal-oriented acts. He maintains that *javana* refers to the purposive thrust that *cetanā* deploys within the cognitive process. In other words, the purposive impulse or orientation towards a goal is regarded, not as a factor added to the *citta-vīthi*, but as internal to the cognitive process. On the other hand, Aung finds the translation of *javana* as "conative impulse" inadequate because it fails to do justice to the capacity of the *javana citta*s to cognize the object. It is in this context that Mrs. Rhys Davids concludes that *javana*, like *cetanā*, demonstrates the blending of "intellect and will" in Buddhist psychology (Aung 1910, 248-249, n.1).

Javana is a complex process with cognitive and conative dimensions because the *citta-vīthi* comes into effect through the mutual interplay of *citta* and *saṅkhāra*. Neither the cognitive nor the conative dimensions of *javana* can claim to be free of conditioning. The discriminating, defining, and discerning functions of the *citta* and the purposive impulse of *cetanā* are both conditioned by the emotion-charged influences of the root conditions and by the habit patterns generated by *saṅkhāras*. Nevertheless, a sound case can be made that the *cittas* that constitute the *javana* process exhibit an expansion in cognitive and conative capacities when compared with the pre-*javana vipāka cittas*. In spite of the influence of underlying tendencies and habits, the *cetanās* in the *javana-cittas* are regarded as being capable of a sense of purpose and intention towards the object that earlier *cetanās* in the preliminary stage of perception lack. Likewise, it can be argued that the *javana-cittas* display an expansion in the capacity to know the object and experience its characteristics.

According to the *Abhidhamma*, the *citta* has the capacity to become aware of its own processes (Bodhi 1993, 136).²³ *Javana* can be interpreted to be that point in the cognitive process where the *citta* exhibits a greater capacity to become aware of itself and cognize its contents. This does not imply freedom from conditioning. Nor does it entail a "balancing" of the motivating impulses of wholesome and unwholesome root-conditions, as Aung avers (1910, 43). However, the instruction that is given in the *Suttas* for the "reversal of *javana*" can be interpreted to mean that Theravāda upholds the view that the mind has the capacity to become retrospectively aware of *javana* processes and the forms of conditioning that beset the *cittas* of any specific *javana* process. When the mind begins to see into the patterns of conditioning in any *javana* stage of perception, then it becomes possible to set up conditions to alter or "reverse" that *javana* process. The mind's capacity

to observe its own features can become a dominant condition that influences the contents and orientation of the *janava* stage of a cognitive process.

First sense-sphere wholesome consciousness: unprompted
Kamāvacara-kusala-asāṅkhārika

Twenty-seven "constant" factors (*niyata-cetasikas*)

- | | |
|--|---|
| (1) contact with the object (<i>phassa</i>) | (17) tranquillity of the mind (<i>citta-passaddhi</i>) |
| (2) purposive impulse (<i>cetanā</i>) | (18) buoyancy of the mental group (<i>kāya-lahutā</i>)* |
| (3) initial application of thought (<i>vitakka</i>) | (19) buoyancy of the mind (<i>citta-lahutā</i>) |
| (4) sustained thought (<i>vicāra</i>) | (20) flexibility of the mental group (<i>kāya-mudutā</i>)* |
| (5) zest, joyful interest in the object (<i>pīti</i>) | (21) flexibility of the mind (<i>citta-mudutā</i>) |
| (6) energy (<i>virīya</i>) | (22) adaptability of the mental group (<i>kāya-kammaññatā</i>)* |
| (7) vitality, faculty of life (<i>jīvitindriya</i>) | (23) adaptability of the mind (<i>citta-kammaññatā</i>) |
| (8) concentration (<i>samādhi</i>) | (24) proficiency of the mental group (<i>kāya-pāguññatā</i>)* |
| (9) faith (<i>saddhā</i>) | (25) proficiency of the mind (<i>citta-pāguññatā</i>) |
| (10) mindfulness (<i>sati</i>) | (26) rectitude of the mental group (<i>kāyujjukatā</i>) |
| (11) shame at doing wrong (<i>hiri</i>) | (27) rectitude of the mind (<i>cittujjukatā</i>) |
| (12) fear of wrongdoing (<i>ottappa</i>) | |
| (13) non-greed (<i>alobha</i>) | |
| (14) non-hate (<i>adosa</i>) | |
| (15) non-delusion (<i>amoha</i>) | |
| (16) tranquillity of the mental group (<i>kāya-passaddhī</i>)* | |

Four supplementary "or-whatever" factors (*vevāpanaka-cetasikas*)

- | | |
|---|---|
| (28) impetus to act (<i>chanda</i>) | (30) attention (<i>manasikāra</i>) |
| (29) decisiveness (<i>adhimokkha</i>) | (31) balance of the mind, equanimity (<i>tatra-majjhataṭṭā</i>) |

Five inconstant factors (*nitya-cetasikas*)

- | | |
|---|---|
| (32) compassion (<i>karuṇā</i>) | (35) abstaining from verbal misconduct (<i>vacī-duccarita-virati</i>) |
| (33) appreciative joy (<i>muditā</i>) | (36) abstaining from wrong livelihood (<i>micchājīva-virati</i>) |
| (34) abstaining from bodily misconduct (<i>kāya-duccarita-virati</i>) | |

* The term *kāya* is used here in the sense of "group" or "collection." Here the term refers to three of the mental aggregates: *vedanā*, *saññā*, and *saṅkhāra* (*Kāyo ti c'ettha vedanādayo tayo khandhā*) (Vsm. XIV. 144).

The term "constant" (*niyata*) is explained as "mentioned [in the texts] in their veritable form, as they actually are" (*sarūpena āgatā*). Nāṇamoli (1964, 521) translates "given in the texts as such."

The *Visuddhimagga* (XIV. 83, 156) enumerates eight types of sense-sphere wholesome states of consciousness (Chart VII. 5).

First unwholesome consciousness rooted in greed: unprompted
Akusala-lobhamūla-asāṅkhārika

Thirteen "constant" factors (*nivata-cetasikas*)

- | | |
|---|---|
| (1) contact with object (<i>phassa</i>) | (7) vitality, faculty of life (<i>jīvitindriya</i>) |
| (2) purposive impulse (<i>cetanā</i>) | (8) concentration (<i>samādhī</i>) |
| (3) initial application of thought (<i>vitakka</i>) | (9) lack of shame at doing wrong (<i>ahirika</i>) |
| (4) sustained thought (<i>vicāra</i>) | (10) lack of fear at doing wrong (<i>anottappa</i>) |
| (5) zest, joyful interest in the object (<i>pīti</i>) | (11) greed (<i>lobha</i>) |
| (6) energy (<i>virīya</i>) | (12) delusion (<i>moha</i>) |
| | (13) wrong view (<i>micchā-dīṭṭhī</i>) |

Four supplementary "or-whatever" factors (*yevāpanaka-cetasikas*)

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| (14) impetus to act (<i>chanda</i>) | (16) restlessness (<i>uddhacca</i>) |
| (15) decisiveness (<i>adhimokkha</i>) | (17) attention (<i>manasikāra</i>) |

The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 166-169) classifies *cittas* associated with greed into eight types (Chart V. 6).

Cittas associated with greed that are prompted (*asaṅkhārika*) are said to include sluggishness (*thīna*) conjoined with lethargy (*middha*) among the inconstant factors.

Cittas associated with greed but dissociated from wrong view (*micchā-dīṭṭhī*) are described as having conceit (*māna*) among the inconstant states. The *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* (Bodhi 1993, 95-96) explains that wrong view and conceit are incompatible and cannot coexist. One of them becomes dominant and leaves no room for the other.

First unwholesome consciousness rooted in hatred: unprompted
Akusala-dosamūla-asāṅkhārika

Eleven "constant" factors (niyata-cetasikas)

- | | |
|---|--|
| (1) contact with objects (<i>phassa</i>) | (7) concentration (<i>samādhi</i>) |
| (2) purposive impulse (<i>cetanā</i>) | (8) lack of shame at doing wrong (<i>ahirika</i>) |
| (3) initial application of thought (<i>vitakka</i>) | (9) lack of fear at doing wrong (<i>anottappa</i>) |
| (4) sustained thought (<i>vicāra</i>) | (10) hate (<i>dosa</i>) |
| (5) energy (<i>virīya</i>) | (11) delusion (<i>moha</i>) |
| (6) vitality, faculty of life (<i>jīvitindriya</i>) | |

Four supplementary "or-whatever" factors (yevāpanaka-cetasikas)

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| (12) impetus to act (<i>chanda</i>) | (14) restlessness (<i>uddhacca</i>) |
| (13) decisiveness (<i>adhimokkha</i>) | (15) attention (<i>manasikāra</i>) |

Three inconstant factors

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| (16) envy (<i>issā</i>) | (18) worry (<i>kukkucca</i>) |
| (17) stinginess, avarice (<i>macchariya</i>) | |

The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 166-167) classifies *cittas* associated with hate into two types (Chart VI. 6). The second differs from the first in being prompted (*sasāṅkhārika*). Like prompted *cittas* associated with greed, this second type of *cittas* associated with hate have sluggishness (*thīna*) conjoined with lethargy (*middha*) as an inconstant factor.

The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 92) holds that *cittas* rooted in hate are always associated with the attitude of aversion (*paṭigha*) and conjoined with the feeling of displeasure (*domanassa*). Bhikkhu Bodhi (1993, 36-37) explains that, according to the *Abhidhamma*, displeasure is conjoined only with hate. This entails that, whereas displeasure is not associated with *cittas* rooted in greed or delusion, hate is always accompanied by the mental feeling of unpleasantness. In the *Abhidhamma* this feeling of displeasure is considered unwholesome.

First unwholesome consciousness rooted in delusion: conjoined with indecision
Mohamūla vicikicchā-sampayutta

Eleven "constant" factors (*niyata-cetasikas*)

- | | |
|---|--|
| (1) contact with objects (<i>phassa</i>) | (7) [mere] steadiness of consciousness (<i>cittat̥thitī</i>) |
| (2) purposive impulse (<i>cetanā</i>) | (8) lack of shame at doing wrong (<i>ahirika</i>) |
| (3) initial application of thought (<i>vitakka</i>) | (9) lack of fear at doing wrong (<i>anottappa</i>) |
| (4) sustained thought (<i>vicāra</i>) | (10) delusion (<i>moha</i>) |
| (5) energy (<i>virīya</i>) | (11) indecision (<i>vicikicchā</i>) |
| (6) vitality, faculty of life (<i>jīvitindriya</i>) | |

Two supplementary "or-whatever" states (*yevāpanaka-cetasikas*)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| (12) restlessness (<i>uddhacca</i>) | (13) attention (<i>manasikāra</i>) |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|

The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 178) classifies *cittas* associated with delusion into two types (Chart VI. 6). The second differs from the first in being conjoined with restlessness (*uddhacca*) rather than indecision (*vicikicchā*). Since indecision is absent in *cittas* that are associated with delusion and conjoined with restlessness, decisiveness (*adhimokkha*) arises as a supplementary "or-whatever" (*yevāpanaka*) state. With the arising of decisiveness, mere steadiness of consciousness (*cittat̥thitī*) is strengthened and becomes concentration (*samādhi*).

Eight types of sense-sphere wholesome consciousness

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>(1) Accompanied by joy (<i>somanassa</i>), associated with knowledge (<i>ñāṇa</i>), unprompted (<i>asāṅkhārika</i>).</p> <p>(2) Accompanied by joy, associated with knowledge, prompted.</p> <p>(3) Accompanied by joy, dissociated from knowledge, unprompted. Non-delusion (<i>amoha</i>) does not arise among the constant factors.</p> <p>(4) Accompanied by joy, dissociated from knowledge, prompted. Non-delusion does not arise.</p> | <p>(5) Accompanied by equanimity (<i>upekkhā</i>),* associated with knowledge, unprompted. Zest or joyful interest in the object (<i>pīti</i>) does not arise.</p> <p>(6) Accompanied by equanimity, associated with knowledge, prompted. Joyful interest in the object does not arise.</p> <p>(7) Accompanied by equanimity, dissociated from knowledge, unprompted. Joyful interest in the object does not arise. Non-delusion does not arise.</p> <p>(8) Accompanied by equanimity, dissociated from knowledge, prompted. Joyful interest in the object does not arise. Non-delusion does not arise.</p> |
|---|---|

* *Upekkhā* here represents, not the serene balance of mind that is attained by cultivating the Eightfold Path, but feeling characterized as "neither pleasure nor pain."

Twelve types of unwholesome consciousnessEight types rooted in greed

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>(1) Accompanied by joy (<i>somanassa</i>), associated with wrong view (<i>diṭṭhi</i>), unprompted.</p> <p>(2) Accompanied by joy, associated with wrong view, prompted. Sluggishness (<i>thīna</i>) conjoined with lethargy (<i>middha</i>) is present.</p> <p>(3) Accompanied by joy, dissociated from wrong view, unprompted. Wrong view is absent. Conceit (<i>māna</i>) is present among the inconstant factors.</p> <p>(4) Accompanied by joy, dissociated from wrong view, prompted. Wrong view is absent. Sluggishness conjoined with lethargy is present. Conceit is present among the inconstant factors.</p> <p>(5) Accompanied by equanimity (<i>upekkhā</i>),* associated with wrong view, unprompted. Zest or pleasurable interest (<i>pīti</i>) in the object is absent.</p> | <p>(6) Accompanied by equanimity, associated with wrong view, prompted. Zest or pleasurable interest in the object is absent. Sluggishness conjoined with lethargy present.</p> <p>(7) Accompanied by equanimity, dissociated from wrong view, unprompted. Zest or pleasurable interest in the object is absent. Conceit is present among the inconstant states.</p> <p>(8) Accompanied by equanimity, dissociated from wrong view, prompted. Zest or pleasurable interest in the object is absent. Conceit is present among the inconstant states. Sluggishness conjoined with Lethargy is present.</p> |
|---|--|

Two cittaṣ rooted in hate (*dosa*)

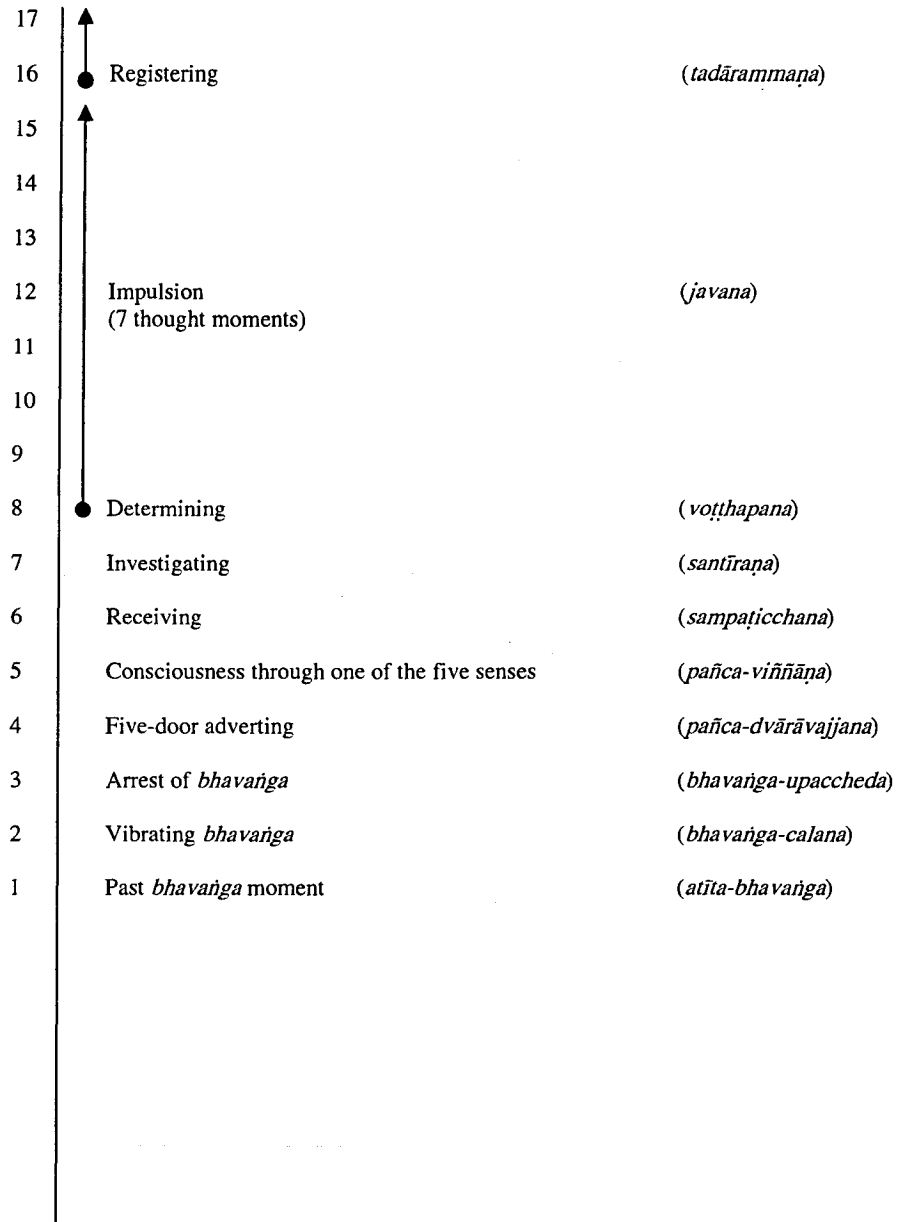
- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>(9) Accompanied by displeasure (<i>domanassa</i>), conjoined with aversion (<i>paṭigha</i>), unprompted.</p> | <p>(10) Accompanied by displeasure (<i>domanassa</i>), conjoined with aversion, prompted. Sluggishness conjoined with lethargy is present as an inconstant state.</p> |
|---|---|

Two cittaṣ rooted in delusion (*moha*)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>(11) Accompanied by equanimity (<i>upekkhā</i>), associated with indecision (<i>vicikicchā</i>). Concentration (<i>samādhi</i>) is weak and takes the form of mere steadiness of consciousness (<i>cittatṭhiti</i>).</p> | <p>(12) Accompanied by equanimity, associated with restlessness (<i>uddhacca</i>). Concentration is stronger because of the presence of decisiveness (<i>adhimokkha</i>) among the supplementary <i>yevāpanaka</i> states.</p> |
|---|--|

* *Upekkhā* associated with unwholesome *cittaṣ* is not a serene balance of mind, but feeling that is neither pleasant nor unpleasant (*adukkhamasukhā vedanā*). A *citta* that is pervaded by indecision (*vicikicchā*) is considered incapable of concentration. "Mere steadiness" is explained in the commentary as stability at the present moment, with no guarantee of steady continuity (Ñāṇamoli 1964, 533, n.70).

Cognitive process when an object is presented to the mind through one of the senses.



Three successive lives in the rebirth process.

PAST LIFE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ignorance (<i>avijjā</i>) 2. mental formations (<i>saṅkhāra</i>) 	<i>kamma</i> -process (<i>kamma-bhava</i>) 5 causes: 1, 2, 8, 9, 10
PRESENT LIFE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. consciousness (<i>viññāṇa</i>) 4. mind-and-body (<i>nama-rūpa</i>) 5. six senses (<i>āyatana</i>) 6. sense-contact (<i>phassa</i>) 7. feeling (<i>vedanā</i>) 	rebirth-process (<i>upapatti-bhava</i>) 5 results: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. craving (<i>taphā</i>) 9. grasping (<i>upādāna</i>) 10. becoming (<i>bhava</i>) 	<i>kamma</i> -process (<i>kamma-bhava</i>) 5 causes: 1, 2, 8, 9, 10
FUTURE LIFE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. rebirth (<i>jāti</i>) 12. old age and death (<i>jarā-maraṇa</i>) 	rebirth-process (<i>upapatti-bhava</i>) 5 results: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 occurring between birth and death

Chapter VI

Defining *Cetanā*

In the Introduction it was pointed out that the key definitions of *cetanā* in the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 111-112) and the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 135) support the interpretation of modern scholars of Theravāda who view *cetanā* as a conative impetus that initiates activity in the body and mind. These interpretations emphasize the relationship of *cetanā* to *saṅkhāra*. *Cetanās* are interpreted to be the primary factors in instigating the mind to bring together its resources in such a way as to initiate goal-oriented acts (*saṅkhārās*). Initiation of action is regarded as the distinctive feature of *cetanās* when they are viewed as constituents of *saṅkhārās*. Mrs. Rhys Davids explains in an editorial note (Aung 1910, 236, n. 3) that it was largely because of these definitions in the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Atthasālinī* that she was persuaded by Burmese *Abhidhamma* scholars to render *cetanā* by "will" or "volition," despite the hesitations which she had expressed in her article "On the Will in Buddhism" (1898). It was also shown in the Introduction that mainly from these definitions, H.V. Guenther (1976, 44) draws the conclusion that *cetanā* signifies a "stimulus, motive, or drive" that arouses and sustains "mass activity" in the organism.

Whereas the definitions cited above connect *cetanā* with the dynamic processes by which conditioned acts produce further conditioned acts, there is another section in the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 84-106) that stresses the relationship of *cetanā* to *citta* and describes the *kamma*-forming function of *cetanā* in such a way as to convey its association with the cognitive aspects of purposive thought or decision making in the *citta*. This section of the *Atthasālinī* comprises discourses on the three "doors of action," on *kamma*, and on the

courses of wholesome and unwholesome action. These discourses can be read as a commentary to passages in the *Suttas* where the lists of ten wholesome and ten unwholesome *kammās* of body, speech, and mind are delineated (M. III. 209-210; A.V. 292-301). Furthermore, it is important to note that the discourse on *kamma* and on the doors of action in the *Atthasālinī* can be regarded as a full elaboration of A. III. 415, where the Buddha declares that it is *cetanā* that he calls *kamma*, because one enacts *kamma* with body, speech, and mind after engaging in a process of *cetanā* (*cetayitvā*). The definitions of bodily, verbal, and mental *kamma* in the *Atthasālinī* are accompanied by descriptions of how wholesome and unwholesome acts arise. In these concrete descriptions one gets a sense of how *cetanā* functions when it precedes and instigates these acts. It becomes apparent that in each occurrence *cetanā* emerges from a specific frame of mind (*citta*) and functions as a goal-directed thought that becomes expressed as a karmically significant act of body, speech, or mind.

Definitions of *cetanā* in the *Atthasālinī* and the *Visuddhimagga*

The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 111-112) defines *cetanā* as follows, adopting the standard *Abhidhamma* procedure of listing the characteristic, the function, the mode of manifestation, and the proximate cause of the factor that is to be defined.

lakkhaṇa
(characteristic)

cetayita-lakkhaṇā
Cetayita is explained as the co-ordinating (*atisandahati*) of associated factors and the directing of them towards an object.

rasa
(function)

āyūhana-rasā
Āyūhana means "exertion of energy" and "bringing forth of *kamma*."

paccupaṭṭhāna
(manifestation)

saṁvidahana-paccupaṭṭhānā
Saṁvidahana connotes arranging and
activating (associated states).

padaṭṭhāna
(proximate cause)

not given.

In the *Visuddhimagga* definition of *cetanā* (Vsm. XIV. 135), the characteristic of *cetanā* is indicated by *abhisandahati*,¹ which is a more correct form of the verb than *atisandahati* (Pe Maung Tin 1920-21, 147). Like the *Atthasālinī*, the *Visuddhimagga* also specifies *āyūhana* as the function and *saṁvidahana* as the mode of manifestation of *cetanā*. Neither the *Atthasālinī* nor the *Visuddhimagga* refer to the *padaṭṭhāna* (proximate cause) of *cetanā*, though *Abhidhamma* definitions usually include four factors: the distinctive characteristic, function, mode of manifestation, and proximate cause of that which is defined. However, the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* postulates that *cetanā* arises through the contact of cognitive processes with the object.²

Derived from the verb *dahati* (to place, to set up), *abhisandahati* seems closer to the mind's capacity to initiate action than to thought. Its range of meanings includes "to aim at," "to direct towards," "to accord to," and "to put together again" (C.P.D. 1:376, col. 2). The *Atthasālinī* gives us the key to interpreting its definition of *cetanā*: the defining characteristic, namely, *cetayita*, is found in all cases of *cetanā*, but the function of bringing forth *kamma* (*āyūhana-rasa*) is restricted to wholesome and unwholesome *cetanās* (Asl. 111). It follows, then, that the *Atthasālinī* explains the term *cetayita* in such a way as to extend its applicability, not only to *kamma*-producing *cetanās*, but also two other classes of *cetanās*: the resultant (*vipāka*) *cetanās* of the preliminary stages of perception that advert the mind to an object, but do not have the form of fully developed intentions and do not produce *kamma*; and the functional (*kiriya*)

*cetanā*s of liberated *arahants* whose thoughts are not bound to future goals and do not produce *kamma*. Since *cetanā* functions as fully developed purposive impulse or intention only in cases where wholesome or unwholesome *kamma* is produced, *cetayita* cannot be explained as a cognitive process involving assessing possibilities and choosing one's goals. *Cetayita* cannot be explained in this manner if it is held to be the defining characteristic found in all cases of *cetanā*. The *Atthasālinī*, therefore, makes *cetayita* synonymous with *atisandahati/ abhisandahati* and explains the latter term in such a way that it is applicable to all cases of *cetanā*.

The *Atthasālinī* interprets *abhisandahati* as follows: "It [*cetanā*] connects (*abhisandahati*) associated mental states to itself as objects."³ The import of this statement is that *cetanā* co-ordinates associated mental states with itself by making them the objects of its action. The term *sampayutta-dhammā* (associated mental states) refers to mental factors that arise together as constituents of the same momentary mental state (*citta*), are causally associated with each other, and have the same object, though they differ from each other in their characteristics (Narada 1975, 378; Bodhi 1993, 307). The *Atthasālinī* goes on to say that this characteristic of *cetayita*—which has been explained as "co-ordinating" (*abhisandahati*) associated mental factors—is present in all *cetanā*s of all the planes of consciousness (plane of sensory experience, the two planes of the lower and higher levels of meditation and the "supramundane" plane comprising the stages of liberation from ignorance and sorrow).⁴ Since *cetanā* is said to be present as a factor in all states of consciousness, this statement implies that wherever consciousness exists, the function of co-ordinating concomitants and adverting the mind to an object is present as the defining characteristic of *cetanā*.

It is not easy to determine the precise meaning of *abhisandahati*. The commentary to the *Visuddhimagga*, the *Paramattha-mañjūsā*, (VsmA. 2:1035) explains *abhisandahati* with two terms: *pabandhati* (to bind, combine, prepare, put together) and *pavatteti* (to send forth, set in motion). When these two terms are combined, they yield the meaning that the action of *cetanā* connects concomitant states to itself by directing its own action towards them and setting them in motion. Clearly, the explanation of *abhisandahati* given in the commentary moves away from the etymological roots of *cetayita* and interprets this term to signify motivational impulse and the capacity to initiate action in the organism. Furthermore, the commentary to the *Visuddhimagga* (VsmA. 2:1035) goes on to summarize the nature of *cetanā* as *vyāpāra-bhāva*. The term *vyāpāra* conveys "occupation, business, service, work" (P.E.D. 654, col. 1). By deploying this term to elucidate the very nature (*bhāva*) of *cetanā*, the commentary holds that the distinctive characteristic of *cetanā* is to engage itself in goal-oriented action.

In his translation of the *Atthasālinī* Pe Maung Tin (1920-1921, 147-148) follows the commentary to the *Visuddhimagga* and renders the statement in which the term *abhisandahati* occurs to signify that *cetanā* "closely binds" concomitant states to itself and makes them the objects of its action. In his work *Philosophy and Psychology in the Abhidharma* (1976, 42), Guenther interprets *abhisandahati* as the function by which *cetanā* "aims at associated factors" and treats them as its objects. He emphasizes that in the *Atthasālinī* *cetanā* is viewed as the mental factor that acts upon, and activates, concomitant states. Of the two terms—*pavatteti* and *pabandhati*—that the commentary to the *Visuddhimagga* presents in order to elucidate the meaning of *abhisandahati*, Guenther's interpretation is closer to *pavatteti* (to set in motion). By preferring

pabandhati (to bind), Pe Maung Tin associates *abhisandahati* with the function of bringing together factors to produce an effect.

By naming *abhisandahati* as the defining characteristic, the *Atthasālinī* and the *Visuddhimagga* attribute concerted, goal-directed effort to *cetanā* as its distinguishing mark. Having *abhisandahati* as its distinctive quality signifies that *cetanā* is invariably characterized by a purposive thrust. When the *Atthasālinī* and the *Visuddhimagga* make *abhisandahati* synonymous with *cetayīta*, and by implication, with *ceteti*, these texts affirm that *cetanā* possesses purposive impulse or goal-oriented impetus as its characteristic mark precisely by virtue of its relationship to the states of mind (*cittas*) in the continuum of consciousness. Every state of mind arises through contact with an object, and *cetanā* is the goal-directed impulse or interest in an object that guarantees the arising of the next *citta* and the perpetuation of the continuum of consciousness. Through the functioning of *cetanā*, awareness of the object becomes interest in the object. At the same time, according to the texts, the purposive impulse is not self-perpetuating, but is dependent on the capacity of the continuum of consciousness to cognize objects. The capacity to know (*ceteti*) and the capacity to convert that knowledge into a purposive impetus (*cetanā*) are interdependent. The function of assembling mental resources and getting them ready (*abhisandahati*) for goal-oriented effort is dependent on the mind's cognitive capacity. Even when *cetanā* becomes associated with basic life energy (*jīvitindriya*) and manifests as the most rudimentary adverting of the body and mind to an object, this function of *cetanā* is seen to be based on the fundamental capacity of conscious awareness (*citta*) to become aware of objects and respond to them.

The *Visuddhimagga* gives *āyūhana* as the function (*rasa*) of both *cetanā* (Vsm. XIV. 135) and *saṅkhāra* (Vsm. XIV. 132), thereby affirming the bond between these two factors in the personality. *Āyūhana* is a complex term covering in its range of meaning two notions: "to strive or exert oneself" and "to accumulate *kamma*" (C.P.D. 2:140, col. 2). It will be shown below that in the *Atthasālinī* and the *Visuddhimagga* *āyūhana* signifies striving to perform acts of body, speech, and mind that carry moral values and entail commensurate karmic consequences. According to the Theravāda interpretation of *kamma*, wholesome and unwholesome acts, by the very fact that they are performed, become conditions that affect the future of the person who performs such acts. The consequences of the acts are experienced in the consciousness continuum. Since the acts themselves are regarded as impermanent in every sense, "accumulation" as a connotation of *āyūhana* cannot be construed to mean that they are "stored" in the mind.

The definition of *cetanā* in the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 111-112) proceeds to say that whereas the characteristic of *abhisandahati* is found in all occurrences of *cetanā*, the function of *āyūhana* is confined to the role of *cetanā* in producing wholesome and unwholesome *kamma*.⁵ The *Atthasālinī* stresses that the co-arising mental factors that are associated with *cetanā* (*sampayutta-dhammā*) in the *citta* have but a restricted role, when compared with *cetanā*, in the deployment of goal-oriented effort (*āyūhana*) to bring forth wholesome and unwholesome *kamma*. The following analogy is given in the *Atthasālinī* to illustrate what it declares to be the surpassing energy (*atireka-vāyāma*) of *cetanā*. The analogy portrays a landowner who takes fifty-five strong men and goes to the field to reap a crop of grain. He puts forth double effort (*diguṇa-ussāha*) and double exertion (*diguṇa-vāyāma*) by instructing the labourers, encouraging them with food, drink, and

rewards, while completing his share of the work. The land-owner is compared to *cetanā*, the fifty-five strong labourers are likened to the fifty-five wholesome mental states that originate as factors of consciousness (*cittaṅga-vasena*) in the putting forth of a wholesome act, and the time of the doubling of energy and effort by the land-owner is considered to resemble the redoubled energy expended by *cetanā* in carrying out its function of *āyūhana* with reference to wholesome and unwholesome *kamma*. The *Atthasālinī* expects the reader to understand that the mental states that arise in relation to unwholesome acts differ from the fifty-five mental states that are connected with wholesome acts.

It was mentioned above that the definition makes a distinction between the characteristic (*lakkaṇa*) of *cetanā* that is indicated by the verb *abhisandahati* and its function (*rasa*) of *āyūhana*. It is postulated that, whereas the distinctive characteristic of fitting concomitant states closely to itself in its goal-oriented action is found in all *cetanās*, the function of *āyūhana* is restricted to *cetanās* that are engaged in the putting forth of wholesome and unwholesome deeds. This distinction correlates with the distinction between *cetanā* as a karmically neutral factor of basic sentient awareness found in all states of consciousness and *cetanā* as synonymous with *kamma* in bringing about wholesome and unwholesome acts. *Cetanā* functions in all *cittas* including the most basic states of perception in such a way as to connect (*abhisandahati*) concomitant factors to itself and incline their activities towards an object of interest. As a mental factor in a wholesome or an unwholesome state of mind (*citta*), the mode of operation of *cetanā* is to instigate acts of body, mind, or speech that express the dominant features of that *citta*. This is the function of *āyūhana* attributed to *cetanā*.

In the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Atthasālinī* the mode of manifestation of *cetanā* is defined as *saṁvidahana*. This term, like *abhisandahati*, is derived from the verb root *dhā-* and signifies "to arrange," "to prepare," "to provide" (D. I. 61; A. II. 35).⁶ The role of *cetanā* with regard to associated mental states is compared to that of a head pupil in relation to other pupils, a chief woodcutter in relation to other woodcutters, and a general in relation to his soldiers. Each of them not only does his own work but instigates those under his supervision to do their work. The *Atthasālinī* explains that when *cetanā* begins its work by engaging itself with an object, it motivates each of the associated mental states to perform its own function, with the result that when *cetanā* starts its own task, the concomitant states also become activated and perform their tasks.

The analogies in the *Atthasālinī* indicate that *saṁvidahana* is to be interpreted as a term that conveys the capacity of *cetanā* to instigate activity in several factors of consciousness and to direct all this activity towards a goal. The following differences in meaning between *āyūhana* and *saṁvidahana* can be inferred from the analogies.

Āyūhana focuses on the *ussāha* (power, energy, strength) and the *vāyāma* (endeavour, effort, striving) that *cetanā* itself puts forth in straining towards a goal. *Saṁvidahana* conveys that *cetanā* sets in motion concomitant mental states by causing them to function energetically (*ussāhana-bhāvena*) in such matters as remembering an urgent task. In accordance with these analogies, Pe Maung Tin renders *saṁvidahana* as "directing" in his translations of the *Atthasālinī* (1920-21, 148) and the *Visuddhimagga* (1923-31, 542). In Ñāṇamoli's *Path of Purification* (1964, 523) *saṁvidahana* is translated as "co-ordinating" and is linked to the notion of "marshalling" or "driving" associated factors to attend to their tasks.

Connotations of *āyūhana* in the definitions of *cetanā* and *saṅkhāra*

The *Visuddhimagga* defines *saṅkhāra* twice with reference to its two roles: as *saṅkhārakkhandha* (Vsm. XIV. 131-132) and as a causal link (*paccaya*) in the chain of rebirth (Vsm. XVII. 51). In the latter definition, *cetanā* appears as the mode of manifestation of *saṅkhāra*. The definition of *saṅkhāra* as *khandha* is as follows:

lakkhaṇa
(characteristic)

abhisāṅkharāṇa-lakkhaṇa
Abhisāṅkharāṇa is explained as "composing" or "combining into a mass."

rasa
(function)

āyūhana-rasa
Āyūhana has two meanings: "striving" and "bringing forth *kamma*."

paccupaṭṭhāna
(manifestation)

vipphāra-paccupaṭṭhāna
Vipphāra / *vyāpāra* is explained as "engaging in work."

padaṭṭhāna
(proximate cause)

sesakkhandhattaya-padaṭṭhāna
The other three non-material aggregates (feeling, perception, and consciousness) are said to constitute the proximate cause of *saṅkhārakkhandha*.

The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 131) glosses *abhisāṅkharāṇa* as *rāsi-karaṇa* (literally, "to pile up," "make a heap," or "form an aggregate"). It was shown in Chapter IV that the *Milindapañha* (Mil. 61-62) considers *abhisāṅkharāṇa* to be the characteristic of *cetanā* and explains *abhisāṅkharāṇa* as the bringing together of physical and mental factors in such a way as to produce an act that has karmic consequences. It can be assumed that *abhisāṅkharāṇa* has the same meaning when it is named here as the defining characteristic of *saṅkhāra*.

The unusual term *vipphāra* by which the *Visuddhimagga* indicates the mode of manifestation of *saṅkhāra* is changed in the commentary (VsmA. 2:1032) to *vyāpāra*

(work, occupation). It is to be noted that the commentary also holds that the nature (*bhāva*) of *cetanā* can be described as "being engaged in work" (*vyāpāra-bhāva*) (VsmA. 2:1035). In other contexts in the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. IV. 89), *vipphāra* connotes the "vibrating" or stimulation of the mind that occurs, for example, when consciousness attends to an object through its function of initial application of thought (*vitakka*). *Vipphāra* indicates the power of *saṅkhāra* to initiate activity in the organism. *Saṅkhāra* is considered to be the capacity to set the organism "vibrating," "pulsating," or "throbbing" with incipient activity and to extend that activity until it becomes displayed in a fully developed goal-oriented act.

Āyūhana is a rare term in the *Suttas*. However, in a striking poem of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (S. I. 1), the Buddha says that he crosses the river of sorrow without support (*appatiṭṭha*) and without striving or straining (*anāyūha*). The term *appatiṭṭha* signifies that the *arahant* does not seek out objects. The mind of the enlightened one does not need objects as supports for plans and intentions: it does not seek to project thought processes towards future goals in order to prolong itself by becoming the agent who executes various plans of action and experiences their goals. Another passage in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (S. III. 54-55) describes supported consciousness (*patiṭṭhita viññāṇa*) as consciousness that "establishes itself" in the other aggregates in such a way that it "expands" and develops towards rebirth. The implication is that the other aggregates (the body, feelings, perceptions, and mental formations) become the factors that instigate and support the intentions and goals of consciousness. The *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (S. III. 55) goes on to say that when consciousness ceases to look upon the other aggregates of the personality as supports for its own activation and future development, (*apatiṭṭhita*

viññāṇa), and when it no longer produces goal-oriented acts (*anabhisaṅkharāṇa*), then it is released from sorrow (*vimutta*).

In these passages of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* the three terms *paṭiṭṭhā*, *āyūhana*, and *abhisaṅkharāṇa* have associated meanings. *Āyūhana* connotes straining towards a goal. *Abhisaṅkharāṇa* emphasizes bringing together the necessary conditions to put forth a goal-oriented act. It is postulated that the striving and the goal-oriented acts of body, speech, and mind serve as supports (*paṭiṭṭhā*) for the proliferation of intentions, plans, and purposes through which consciousness projects itself into the future.

In the commentaries to the *Suttas* (MA. V. 57; AA. II. 192, 318, III. 212; SA. II. 292) the meaning of *āyūhana* shifts from "striving" to "accumulating" or "collecting." In these contexts, the verb *āyūhati* is conjoined with *rāsiṃ karoti* "forms a heap" and *sampiṇḍeti* "combines"; and these three terms are brought together to explain *abhisaṅkharāṇa*. *Āyūhati* represents the function by which *saṅkhāra* "builds up" or "amasses" conditioned acts (Bodhi 2000, 1: 1072). The commentary to the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (SA. II. 292), for example, explains that it is the function of *saṅkhāra* to bring together, combine, and "pile up" the appropriate physical and mental factors in order to construct each of the aggregates (*khandhā*) of the personality. In the passages where *āyūhana* is linked with terms that signify "heaping up" or "composing," these functions are viewed, not as ends in themselves, but as efforts aimed at producing an effect. In this sense, *āyūhana* retains its connotation of striving towards a goal.

In the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, *āyūhana* is given as one of the synonyms of greed (*lobha*) (Dhs. 189) and of covetousness (*abhijjhā*) (Dhs. 201). Likewise, in the *Vibhaṅga* (Vbh. 361), *āyūhana* occurs as one of the terms by which *lobha* is explained. Clearly, in these contexts, *āyūhana* signifies, not the putting together of suitable physical and mental

factors to form dynamic aggregates, nor the accumulation in the personality continuum of acts that have karmic consequences, but an emotion-charged conative impulse that initiates action and impels it towards a goal. When *āyūhana* is linked with craving or covetousness, it is regarded as goal-oriented striving driven by the impulse to remove the tension in the organism caused by a need. The meaning assigned to *āyūhana* in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* and the *Vibhaṅga* resonates with the connotations the term carries in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* poems (S. I. 1.) celebrating the release of the *arahant* from *āyūhana*. In both cases, *āyūhana* conveys straining towards a goal. The difference is that the poems do not perceive the goal-oriented effort expressed by *āyūhana* to be necessarily motivated by an unwholesome greed-driven impulse.

The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XXI. 38) defines *āyūhana* as *āyatim paṭisandhi-hetubhūtam kammam* (the *kamma* that causes future rebirth). In his translation of this section of the the *Visuddhimagga* Pe Maung Tin (1923-1931, 793) gives to *āyūhana* the meaning of “exerting” to put forth the type of action that becomes the condition for rebirth. Ñāṇamoli (1964, 757) translates *āyūhana* as “accumulating” *kamma*. Although he does not explain what connotation he gives to “accumulating,” this term can be understood as the “piling up” (*rāsim karoti*) of wholesome and unwholesome acts (*saṅkhāras*) in such a way that they form a set of conditions that helps to bring about rebirth. Neither rendering, however, captures the full significance of *āyūhana*: “exerting” does not indicate that the exerting produces action that brings about karmic consequences and “accumulation” does not cover the urgency to perform such action. Both of these notions are fundamental to the meaning of *āyūhana*, especially when the term represents the function (*rasa*) of *saṅkhāra* and *cetanā*. The *Visuddhimagga* again names *āyūhana* as the synonym of *saṅkhāra* in passages (Vsm. XVII. 292, XIX. 13) that list ignorance (*avijjā*), *saṅkhāra*,

and craving (*taṇhā*) among the causes that bring about the dynamic, karma-forming dimension of the course of rebirth.⁷ Chapter IV included a description of how *mano-saṅcetanā* functions as a “nutriment” for rebirth. When the processes of cognitive awareness (*viññāṇa*) and discernment of objects are conditioned by the impetus of the intentions and purposes of *mano-saṅcetanā*, then the mind craves to initiate more and more goal-oriented wholesome and unwholesome acts (*saṅkhāras*). In the commentarial literature, cognitive awareness conditioned by *mano-saṅcetanā* is designated as *abhisāṅkhāra-viññāṇa* (kamma-forming consciousness). When the definitions state that *āyūhana* is the function of both *cetanās* and *saṅkhāras*, this term indicates the urgency to produce wholesome and unwholesome deeds that the mind experiences because of the purposive impulses of *cetanā*. These purposive impulses impel the mind to assemble the causal conditions necessary for the production (*abhisāṅkharapa*) of conditioned acts (*saṅkhāras*) that have karmic consequences. *Āyūhana* has the same connotations as *abhisāṅkharapa* in the definition of *cetanā* that the *Milindapaṇha* (Mil. 61-62) gives.

The translation of *āyūhana* as “accumulation” is misleading because it suggests that the connotations of *upacaya* are transferred to *āyūhana*. It was shown in Chapter IV that the opponents of Theravāda postulated that a special factor of “accumulation” (*upacaya*) is needed to ensure that every karmically operative act is “accumulated” and conserved in the personality continuum until the time is appropriate for it to come to fruition (Kvu. 520-522). The Theravādins argued that no such factor of “accumulation” is required to connect the cause (*kamma*) with its effects (*kamma-vipāka*). The *Atthasālinī* and the *Visuddhimagga* do not conceive of *āyūhana* as a function that guarantees the preservation and “storing” of *kamma* and ensures its fruition.

In the *Atthasālinī*, the phrase *kamme āyūhite* refers, not to the storing of *kamma*, but to the effort of actually performing acts that have karmic consequences. For example, it is stated in the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 261) that when *kamma* is put forth by any one of eleven types of unwholesome states of mind (*cittas*), the consequence is a painful rebirth. The text then explains that out of the twelve types of unwholesome *cittas* (Chart V. 6), those characterized by agitation (*uddhacca*) lack the stability and causal power to bring about rebirth. The conclusion is then reached that when acts are put forth (*āyūhite kamme*) as expressions of the other eleven types of unwholesome *cittas* (states of mind), because of the *cetanā* (purposive impulse) involved in these acts (*tāya cetanāya*), rebirth occurs in a realm of sorrow.⁸ This statement in the *Atthasālinī* is significant because it connects the putting forth of karmically operative acts (*kammāyūhana*) with purposive impulses (*cetanās*) that emerge from, and express, specific wholesome or unwholesome frames of mind (*cittas*). The impetus to perform a wholesome or unwholesome act is traced back, beyond a purposive impulse, to a state of mind. A wholesome *cetanā* could not arise without the arising of a wholesome *citta*. The wholesome or unwholesome frame of mind (*citta*), purposive impulse (*cetanā*), conative effort in generating an act that carries moral value (*kammāyūhana*), and fruition of the intentional act (*kamma-vipāka*) are shown to be linked as a chain of events governed by conditioned origination.

In the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XVII. 173-174), the mere enacting of a karmically significant act is regarded as a sufficient cause to bring forth commensurate consequences.⁹ It is implied here that once a karmically operative act is committed, a further act of "accumulation" is not necessary to ensure that consequences follow. The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 291) makes a distinction between *āyūhana-kāla* and *vipaccana-kāla*.¹⁰ In this context, *āyūhana-kāla* refers to the time when an act of body, speech, or mind is

performed, and *vīpaccana-kāla* refers to the time when the consequence of that act become manifest. The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XVII. 61) defines the "moment of *āyūhana*" (*kammāyūhanakkhaṇa*) as the point in time when a *saṅkhāra* of merit, a *saṅkhāra* of demerit, or a *saṅkhāra* pertaining to the immutable level of meditation is performed.¹¹ These three types of *saṅkhārās* are defined as acts motivated by *cetanā* that become manifest at the "three doors": body, speech, and mind (*kāya-saṅcetanā*, *vacī-saṅcetanā*, *mano-saṅcetanā*). It can be concluded that *āyūhana* signifies urgency to put forth goal-oriented acts that inevitably carry karmic consequences.

The nature of *cetanā* in the *Atthasālinī* and *Visuddhimagga* definitions

Cetanā is linked to the cognitive processes of thinking, intending, and planning that are indicated by the verb *ceteti*, from which it is derived. Nevertheless, the descriptive definitions of *cetanā* in the *Milindapañha* (Mil. 61-62), *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 111-112), and *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 135) reveal that the meaning of *cetanā* cannot be grasped solely from its etymological roots. It becomes evident from these definitions that through usage, *cetanā* and *cetayita-lakkhaṇā* had acquired the sense of the capacity to initiate action and direct it towards a goal. The analogies that are integral to the definition of *cetanā* in the *Milindapañha*, the *Atthasālinī*, and the *Visuddhimagga* make it clear that *āyūhana* and *samvidahana*—specified, respectively, as the function and mode of manifestation of *cetanā*—are to be understood in terms of conative energy.

An analysis of the definitions of *cetanā* in the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Atthasālinī* shows that though these definitions utilize the method of classification and the technical vocabulary developed in the *Abhidhamma* texts, their portrayal of *cetanā* closely follows the statements pertaining to *cetanā* in the *Suttas*. According to the *Suttas*, *cetanā*

manifests in two different modes: as a factor of *nāma*, together with sensory stimulation, feeling, perception, and attention, *cetanā* makes the functions of conscious awareness possible; and as *kamma*, *cetanā* manifests as acts that bear moral values and bring forth commensurate consequences. The difference between these two modes of manifestation is that whereas *cetanā* invariably has the form of a fully developed and affirmed purposive thought when it instigates *kamma*, it can function as only a rudimentary seeking of an object when it manifests as a factor of basic sentience. Two features are common to both modes of manifestation: *cetanā* is always related to cognitive awareness, and *cetanā* is always goal-oriented in the sense that it always activates the mind by directing mental process to an object.

The definitions in the *Atthasālinī* and the *Visuddhimagga* make a distinction between the characteristic of *cetayita*, which *cetanā* invariably possesses, and the function of *āyūhana* which *cetanā* takes on only when it becomes manifest in wholesome and unwholesome acts of body, speech, and mind. *Cetayita* is defined as the function of coordinating mental factors and directing them to an object. However, this function implies quickening the mind and setting it in motion. The function of putting forth karmically operative acts (*āyūhana*) develops out of the capacity to activate the mind and make consciousness goal-oriented, which is the distinctive feature (*lakkaṇa*) of *cetanā*. The descriptive definition of *cetanā* that the *Atthasālinī* presents and the analogies that it includes imply that the powerful function of initiating wholesome and unwholesome acts grows out of the basic function of stirring the mind and making consciousness responsive to the environment, which *cetanā* invariably exhibits.

It was shown in Chapter IV that in the *Suttas*, *cetanā* is associated with the basic vitality and sentient awareness that makes the organism a living being. When vitality

(*āyu*), heat (*usmā*), and consciousness (*viññāṇa*) depart from the body at death, then the body is said to be lifeless and bereft of *cetanā* (*acetana*) (S. III. 143). It was also noted that this concept of *cetanā* as basic sentience that animates the organism and endows it with the capacity to move its limbs and begin to respond to the environment can found in the *Maitrī Upaniṣad* (Mt.U II. 6). The function of *āyūhana*, which enables *cetanā* to energize and co-ordinate concomitant physical and mental factors and direct their activity towards a goal, can be seen as a developed form of the function of animating the organism with rudimentary sentient awareness. Furthermore, the interpretation given in the commentary to the *Visuddhimagga* (VsmA. 2:1035) shows that *cetanā* had come to be conceived as the capacity to energize the organism and move it to goal-oriented action. Not only does the commentary describe the nature of *cetanā* as *vyāpāra-bhāva* (being engaged in purposive activity), but it also presents the two terms *āyūhanam* and *cetayana* as synonyms and explains them as *īriyanam*. The commentary goes on to say that *āyūhana* is to be understood as *ussāhana* (energy, endeavour). It follows, then, that by making *āyūhana* and *cetayana* cognate terms, the commentary indicates that *cetayana* is to be understood as conative energy (*ussāhana*) deployed in striving towards a goal. *Iriyanā* conveys "moving forward" and the verb root *īr-* carries the meaning of "to set in motion, to stir" (P.E.D. 122, col. 2). This term is used in the *Dhammasaṅgani* (Dhs. 11-12) to define *jīvitindriya*, the faculty of life that vitalizes and makes possible the most rudimentary ongoing movement (*īriyanā*) of physical and mental factors. By explaining *cetayana* as *īriyanā*, the commentary to the *Visuddhimagga* interprets the defining characteristic of *cetanā* as the capacity to activate consciousness (*citta*) and to ensure that it keeps on functioning. By making *āyūhana*, *cetayana* and *īriyanā* cognate terms, the commentary interprets the function of putting forth wholesome and

unwholesome acts to be a specialized development from the basic function of enlivening the mind and setting it in motion.

Guenther (1976, 42, n. 2) maintains that all the schools of Buddhism “are unanimous” in holding that *āyūhana* is the primary function of *cetanā*. However, Guenther interprets *āyūhana* as the basic function of energizing concomitant mental states and making them effective in relation to an object. In this context he refers to Yaśomitra’s commentary on the *Abhidharma-kośa* (Abhk. II. 24). The commentary explains *cetanā* as *citta-praspana*.¹² The term *praspana* refers to a rudimentary movement in the form of a “vibration” or “pulsation.” This explanation of the function of *cetanā* corresponds to the idea that *cetanā* is an aspect of the basic sentient awareness (*nāma*) that animates an organism and renders it capable of rudimentary goal-oriented responses to its environment. Aruna Haldar (1981, 84) explains *citta-praspana* as “psychic inception or initial process of consciousness” that occurs as the precursor of any conative function. She further comments that *cetanā* probably represents the “first stage of all conative functions which has not yet been shaped into a goal-directed drive” (1981, 84). *Citta-praspana*, therefore, signifies activating the *citta* and making it capable of putting forth effects.

Shwe Zan Aung’s notion of the “protean character of each *cetasika*” (1910, 237) can illuminate how this wide range of functions—from basic sentient awareness to the instigation of purposive action—can be attributed to *cetanā*. He argues that the meaning attached to a given *cetasika* (mental factor) in the *Abhidhamma* differs in accordance with the varying circumstances in which that *cetasika* is regarded as functioning, and the varying objects to which it is held to be related. When Aung’s idea that varying meanings accrue to each *cetasika* is applied to *cetanā*, this entails that, although the function of

cetanā is invariably to co-ordinate concomitant states and cause their actions to "incline" towards a goal, the specific meaning attached to the term *cetanā* varies in accordance with the way it manifests in varied circumstances. It is held that the term *cetanā* differs in meaning when it indicates a factor of basic sentient awareness (*nāma*) and when it refers to the factor of consciousness that instigates *kamma* intentionally and with a fully developed sense of purpose.

Whereas the definitions in the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Atthasālinī* present *cetanā* as a conative function that manifests itself as a capacity to initiate and direct action, the discourses on *kamma* and the "doors of action" in the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 84-106) stress the relationship of *cetanā* to the cognitive functions of the *citta*. In these discourses, *cetanā* is defined as goal-oriented thought that becomes expressed at the three doors of action: body, speech, and mind.

***Cetanā* as purposive thought expressed in acts**

The many examples given in the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 77) demonstrate that "door of action" indicates the medium through which a purposive thought becomes expressed in action. One of the examples is meant to demonstrate that the wholesome act of making an offering to the Three Jewels of Buddhism may be accomplished at any of the three venues of action: body, speech, and mind. The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 77) holds that the offering may be made in three ways: through the physical act (*kāya-kamma*) of presenting it with one's own hands; through the verbal act (*vacī-kamma*) of instructing another to act on one's behalf; or solely through the mental act (*mano-kamma*) of resolving to make an offering before actually accomplishing the act. The moment when

the mind thinks of making an offering (*manasā cintita-kāla*) is reckoned to be an act of thought, which can be judged as wholesome.

Moreover, the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 77) takes the position that purposive deliberation or intention is the defining factor that distinguishes an act that has karmic consequences. With regard to the giving of gifts, for example, the *Atthasālinī* distinguishes between the views of the *Vinaya* and the *Abhidhamma* as follows: the *Vinaya* maintains that the defining factor of an act of giving (*dāna*) consists of a verbal declaration of the resolve to give; but the *Abhidhamma* position is that the wholesome act of giving arises when a person has the intention, "I will give this object." The *Atthasālinī* goes on to say that whatever act of body or speech one does to complete the act of giving is regarded by the *Abhidhamma* as a consequence following from the primary mental act of intending to give.¹³ Furthermore, the importance that the *Atthasālinī* gives to the motive underlying an act is apparent also in the following classification of acts of giving (Asl. 77-78). When an object is offered solely with the purpose of making a gift, the *Atthasālinī* calls that an act that is of the nature of giving (*dānamaya*). When one remembers the tradition of virtue (*sīla*) passed down in one's family and offers gifts out of a sense of duty, the *Atthasālinī* considers that act to have the nature of virtue (*sīlamaya*). When a person is engaged in mental training (*bhāvanā*) that is in accordance with the teaching of the Buddha and makes the gift with the profound reflection that the gift, like everything else that comes into being, is subject to change and decay, then the *Atthasālinī* holds that the act of giving has the nature of cultivation of the mind (*bhāvanāmayā*). Through this threefold classification of acts of giving, the *Atthasālinī* puts forward the view that the nature of an act is to be judged by the purpose or attitude of mind that motivates the act.

The *Atthasālinī* phrases its definitions of *kamma* in such a way as to convey unambiguously that the act does not come into existence as the consequence of *cetanā*, but is the manifestation of *cetanā* at one of the “doors of action” and, therefore, is inseparable from *cetanā*. The Buddha’s definition of *kamma* (A. III. 415) can be interpreted to mean that *cetanā* precedes and motivates acts of body, speech, and mind, since one performs these acts after having applied *cetanā* (*cetayitvā*). It was pointed out in Chapter V that the *Vibhaṅga* (Vbh. 285) avoids the grammatical form *cetayitvā* in its definitions of the five wholesome acts that are specified in the five precepts (abstaining from: taking life, stealing, dishonesty, drinking intoxicating liquor, and sexual misconduct). The *Vibhaṅga* defines the precepts in such a way that in each case, the wholesome act is identified with a specific *cetanā*. For example, the act of abstaining from lying is identified with the intention (*cetanā*) of abstaining from lying, and the intention itself is shown to be the expression of a wholesome state of mind (*citta*).

Like the *Vibhaṅga*, the *Atthasālinī* eschews the grammatical form *cetayitvā* and formulates the definition in such a way as to render the act identical with the intention to which it gives concrete expression. The definition of bodily *kamma* in the *Atthasālinī* says: “When *cetanā* becomes effective (*siddhā*) at the bodily door so that one injures living beings, steals, engages in sexual misconduct or refrains from such acts, then that *cetanā* is said to be an act of the body” (Asl. 84).¹⁴ The definition of verbal *kamma* is similar: “When *cetanā* becomes effective at the door of speech, causing a person to engage in false, harsh, malicious, and frivolous speech, or to refrain from such speech, then that *cetanā* is called a verbal act” (Asl. 87).¹⁵ Likewise, the definition of a mental act says: “When *cetanā* becomes effective at the mind door, causing one to engage in covetousness, ill-will, and wrong views or non-covetousness, absence of ill-will, and

right views, then that *cetanā* is known as mental act" (Asl. 88).¹⁶ According to these definitions when a person abstains from (*viramati*) certain forms of unwholesome physical, verbal, and mental acts, that abstaining is also included under the category of *kamma*. It is implied here that abstaining from unwholesome acts is not to be regarded as mere non-performance of certain acts. The examples given in the *Atthasālinī* show that refraining from an unwholesome act signifies performing a wholesome act that is opposed to the unwholesome.

Like the *Atthasālinī*, the commentarial literature also defines *cetanā* as that which becomes effective and produces action at the three doors. Thus, at AA. V. 69, in order to distinguish *cetanā* from *patthanā* and *paṇidhi*, the commentary defines *cetanā* as that which is "brought forth" or made manifest at the three doors of action (*tīsu dvāresu nibbattita-cetanā*). At AA. III. 212 a conditioned and composite act of the body (*kāya-saṅkhāra*) is defined as *cetanā* that is associated with the body door (*kāya-dvāra-cetanā*). This passage implies that the body provides the medium for action to occur and *cetanā* is that which is expressed through bodily action. Similarly, in order to explain the Buddha's statement (A. III. 415) that he designates *cetanā* as *kamma* since a person acts through body, speech, or mind after applying *cetanā* (*cetayitvā*), the commentary (AA. III. 408) elucidates *cetayitvā* as *cetanā* that comes into effect at a door of action (*dvārappavatta-cetanā*).

Another section of the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 159-160) posits that *cetanā* supports all phases of an act: the prior *cetanā* (*pubba-cetanā*) is the intention that motivates the act, the accompanying *cetanā* initiates and supports the act, and the subsequent *cetanā* reflects (*paccavekkhati*) on the act and affirms its completion. The *Atthasālinī* maintains that *cetanā* operates in these three modes of intending, initiating, and completing action with

respect to a whole range of meritorious acts. For example, the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 159) says that the act of giving (*dāna*) occurs when a person has the intention of offering a gift, when the offering is actually made, and when the person reflects that the giving has been accomplished.¹⁷ The prior *cetanā* that consists of the intention to give, the *cetanā* that initiates the giving, and the *cetanā* that confirms that the act of giving has been accomplished are regarded as three phases of *cetanā* that come together. And it is posited that when these three *cetanās* become one (*ekato katvā*), then the act of giving comes into being.

The *Atthasālinī* goes on to say that these three modes of *cetanā* can also be distinguished in relation to the practice of virtue (*sīla*), the cultivation of the mind (*bhāvanā*), the discipline of listening to the *dhamma*, the establishing of right view, and other wholesome acts.¹⁸ It is posited that *sīla* (virtue), for example, is realized when one intends to fulfil the precepts, when the precepts are being practised, and when one reflects that the precepts have been fulfilled. The *Atthasālinī* concludes that the three modes of *cetanā* that become expressed in these three phases of the cultivation of *sīla* unite to constitute *sīla*.

The influence of mental *kamma* on bodily and verbal acts

The lists of ten wholesome and ten unwholesome deeds in the *Sutta* literature specify that covetousness (*abhijjā*), ill-will or malevolence (*vyāpāda*), and wrong view (*micchā-dīṭṭhi*) constitute unwholesome mental acts. The removal of covetousness, the removal of ill-will, and right view are regarded as the factors of wholesome mental action. Mental acts that have karmic consequence, therefore, are emotion-charged patterns of mental behaviour. The *Atthasālinī* argues that mental *kamma* functions

differently than *kamma* of body and speech. All three types of karmically operative acts arise as expressions of purposive impulses. However, the *Atthasālinī* holds that only mental *kamma* can directly influence future acts of body and speech. Wholesome and unwholesome acts of body and speech can influence future behaviour only by causing purposive impulses to arise. For example, if one experiences the wholesome mental *kamma* of generous non-covetousness, that mental experience directly affects one's body, speech, and state of mind. However, if a person engages in the wholesome verbal *kamma* of honest speech, that wholesome *kamma* of speech can influence that person's future behaviour only by causing further purposive impulses (*cetanās*) to arise in the mind.

The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 90) takes the position that whereas both bodily *kamma* and verbal *kamma* can manifest only through the two venues of bodily behaviour and speech, mental *kamma* can be produced at all three doors, taking the form of physical acts, verbal expressions, and mental modalities. To illustrate how an unwholesome physical act can occur at the door of speech, the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 90) gives the example of a person inciting another, through persuasive speech, to kill, steal, or engage in sexual misconduct. Theravāda maintains (A. V. 305-307) that a person who instigates another to act bears moral responsibility for that act. It is postulated that the unwholesome *kamma* finds its place in the consciousness continuum of the instigator and will produce commensurate consequences. As an example of how unwholesome verbal *kamma* can be performed through the body, the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 92) gives the illustration of a person communicating falsehood, slander, harshness, or frivolity, not through speech, but through physical gestures and body language.

The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 92-94) then proceeds to give the following explanation of how mental *kamma* can be effected through bodily behaviour, verbal expression, or

solely through mental processes. An unwholesome physical act, such as stealing, may be accompanied by the unwholesome mental states—covetousness, ill-will, and wrong view—that constitute unwholesome mental *kamma*. These mental states would then function as causal conditions accompanying the unwholesome *cetanā* that motivates the act of stealing. Similarly, wholesome mental *kamma* consisting of non-covetousness, good-will, and right view may become associated with a *cetanā* that produces the wholesome physical act of restraining oneself from stealing. By the same token, wholesome and unwholesome mental *kamma* may condition and aid specific *cetanās* that produce wholesome or unwholesome speech. The *Atthasālinī* goes on to explain how mental *kamma* can be expressed solely in thought, without the intervention of physical acts or words. The example is given (Asl. 90) of the intention to kill (*vadhaka-cetanā*) arising in a person's mind. The *Atthasālinī* maintains that the mere intention to kill is to be judged as unwholesome *kamma*, even if it does not lead to actual killing, because, in this case, the intention is manifested through the unwholesome mental *kamma* of ill-will (*vyāpāda-vasena*) and not through the act of taking life (*na pāṇātipāta-vasena*).¹⁹ In the same vein, the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 95) says that when a person sits alone without engaging in physical activity or speech and only fills the mind with thoughts of generosity and non-covetousness (*anabhijjhā*) that should be regarded as wholesome mental *kamma* enacted solely at the mind-door.

The problem of "two *cetanās*"

There are statements in the *Atthasālinī* that seem to attribute to the six mental states constituting mental *kamma* (covetousness, ill-will, wrong-view; non-covetousness, good-will, and right view) the same capacity to motivate wholesome and unwholesome

kamma that is attributed to *cetanā*. The most striking evidence of the close connection that the *Atthasālinī* posits between mental *kamma* and *cetanā* is that it attributes the same functions to both of them (Asl. 87-88). It was shown above that the *Atthasālinī* endows the six mental attitudes that constitute wholesome and unwholesome mental *kamma* with the capacity to become manifest in bodily behaviour, in speech, or solely in thought. The function of *cetanā* is defined, similarly, as that which becomes expressed in acts of body, speech, and mind. The *Atthasālinī* first interprets the function of covetousness, non-covetousness, and every other factor of mental *kamma* as follows: "It strains to produce *kamma* (*āyūhati*), produces goal-oriented acts that have karmic consequences (*abhisāṅkharoti*), combines and composes physical and mental factors (*piṇḍam karoti*), puts forth goal-oriented thought and impulsions (*ceteti*), makes and arranges (*kappeti*), plans and designs (*pakappeti*)." The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 88) then proceeds to attribute these very same functions to *cetanā*, and names the mental factors (*cetasikās*) that arise together with *cetanā* in a *citta* (*sahajāta-dhammā*) as the objects towards which these functions of *cetanā* are directed.

The nature of the relationship between mental *kamma* and *cetanā* became a topic of controversy among the early Buddhist schools (Jaini 1959, 237-238). The problem arises because the mental states that constitute mental *kamma* are regarded as capable of becoming manifest through bodily behaviour and verbal expression, as well as through thought processes. At the same time, these factors of mental *kamma*, like all manifestations of *kamma*, are held to be expressions of specific wholesome and unwholesome *cetanās*. Since the Buddha has declared *cetanā* to be identical with *kamma* (A. III. 415), it follows that factors of *mano-kamma*, such as covetousness and non-covetousness, are to be identified with the specific *cetanās* from which they stem. When a

mano-kamma becomes expressed in a bodily or verbal act, it takes on the instigating role of *cetanā*. For example, when covetousness (*abhijjā*) becomes expressed in the unwholesome bodily act of stealing, it functions like *cetanā* by intending and initiating the stealing. At the same time, each given act (*kamma*) is said to be instigated by a specific *cetanā* that functions as goal-directing thought and impulse in relation to that act. In the example given above, it is posited that the specific act of stealing is instigated by a specific "*cetanā* of stealing" (*theyya-cetanā*) (Asl. 97-98; SA. II. 145). It would follow, then that two *cetanās* operate with relation to this act of stealing: the specific *cetanā* that instigated the act of stealing (*theyya-cetanā*) and the *mano-kamma* of covetousness that becomes expressed in this bodily act of stealing. Since covetousness is classified as a mental *kamma*, by definition (A. III. 415) it is identified with the *cetanā* that instigates it, and is defined in terms of *cetanā*.

Jaini makes the point that some of the early Buddhist schools, such as the Vaibhāṣikas, maintained that the concept of *mano-kamma* was untenable because it led to conclusions that went against the *Abhidhamma* teaching that two *cetanās* do not operate simultaneously. In order to avoid the problem of two *cetanās*, the Vaibhāṣikas accepted only two categories of *kamma*: bodily *kamma* and verbal *kamma*. They did not define covetousness, ill-will, and wrong view as factors of *mano-kamma* that are identical with the *cetanās* of which they are manifest expressions. On the contrary they described them as *kilesas* (unwholesome passions) that condition unwholesome physical and verbal acts (Jaini, 1959, 237). The way Theravāda defines and distinguishes the relationship between *mano-kamma* and *cetanā* is discussed below.

Kamma* defined as *cetanā* and factors associated with *cetanā

The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 88-89) introduces the notion of factors associated with *cetanā* (*cetanā-sampayutta-dhammā*) to convey the intricate relationship that it posits between *cetanā* and mental *kamma*, as well as to offer a solution to the problem of two *cetanās*. Unlike the Vaibhāṣikas who accepted only bodily *kamma* and verbal *kamma*, the *Atthasālinī* affirms that covetousness, ill-will, wrong-view, non-covetousness, absence of ill will, and right view constitute a viable third category, namely, mental *kamma*. By classifying the above six complex, emotion-powered mental states as *mano-kamma*, the *Atthasālinī* stresses that they carry moral values based on wholesome and unwholesome qualities and produce commensurate karmic consequences, just as karmically operative bodily and verbal acts do. However, the *Atthasālinī* holds that whereas bodily and verbal *kamma* are instigated by *cetanā* and arise as expressions of *cetanā*, the six mental states that constitute mental *kamma* arise as factors associated with *cetanā* (*cetanā-sampayuttakā-dhammā*) in the same *citta*, and influence the manner in which *cetanā* produces bodily and verbal *kamma*.

The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 88) defines *kamma* as twofold:²⁰ *kamma* comprises *cetanā* itself, and *kamma* also comprises certain factors associated with *cetanā* (*cetanā-sampayuttakā-dhammā*). It can be concluded that the *Atthasālinī* seeks to avoid the problem of two *cetanās* functioning simultaneously by making it clear that covetousness, non-covetousness, and the other mental states that constitute mental *kamma* do not function independently of *cetanā*. Only specific *cetanās*, for example, the "*cetanā* of giving" (*dāna-cetanā*) or the *cetanā* of stealing (*theyya-cetanā*) are assigned the capacity to become "effective" (*siddhā*) and bring about corresponding behaviour. At the same time, the *Atthasālinī* affirms that the "factors associated with *cetanā*," such as factors of

mano-kamma, arise together with a specific *cetanā* and cast their influence on the process by which it instigates an act of body or speech. It is implied that covetousness, ill-will, and the other factors that constitute mental *kamma* become expressed not only in mental activity but also in acts of body and speech by becoming associated with specific *cetanās*. By classifying *cetanā-sampayutta-dhammā* as mental *kamma* the *Atthasālinī* maintains that *cetanā* itself conditions and brings into existence these factors that become associated with the conative dynamism of *cetanā*.

The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 88-89) expands the category of *cetanā-sampayutta dhammā* to include the eight aspects of the Noble Eightfold Path and the seven factors of wisdom (*bojjhaṅgas*).²¹ In this context, the *Atthasālinī* refers to the familiar classification of *kamma* into four types: "dark" *kamma*, "bright" *kamma*, *kamma* that is "both dark and bright," and *kamma* that is "neither dark nor bright." The discourse on *kamma* in the *Anguttara-nikāya* (A. II. 232, 233) defines the fourth type of *kamma* as the *cetanā* that renounces the other three types of *kamma* along with the consequences they entail. The *Anguttara-nikāya* (A. II. 236, 237) goes on to say that the *cetanā* of renunciation that constitutes the fourth type of *kamma* can be described in terms of the eight aspects of the Noble Eightfold Path and the seven factors of wisdom (*bojjhaṅgas*). The *Atthasālinī* includes the eight aspects of the Noble Eightfold Path and the seven factors of wisdom together with the six mental states that comprise mental *kamma* in its list of factors associated with *cetanā* (*cetanā-sampayutta-dhammā*). This designation signifies that these twenty-one factors condition the manner in which *cetanā* operates in bringing about acts of body, speech, and mind that have a bearing on the course of *kamma* (Asl. 89). The seven factors of wisdom (*bojjhaṅgas*) are: mindfulness, investigation of the teaching of the Buddha, energy, rapture experienced especially in meditation, tranquillity,

concentration, and equanimity. The concept of “factors associated with *cetanā*” emphasizes again that purposive impulses are conditioned by wholesome and unwholesome emotions, by education, and by the many-sided disciplines of the Eightfold Path.

Cetanā-kamma and cetasika-kamma in the Nettippakaraṇa

In the introduction to his translation of the *Nettippakaraṇa*, Ñāṇamoli explains that this text puts forward a systematic method for interpreting the *Tipiṭaka* (1962, vii-x). Buddhaghosa followed the method of interpretation given in the *Nettippakaraṇa*. The *Nettippakaraṇa* instructs the commentator that the explanation of any individual “thread” (*sutta*) of the Buddha’s teaching must be in agreement with the teaching as a whole, and must be true to the final aim of liberation from suffering. Elaborate details of procedure are laid out to guide the commentator in this method of interpretation (Norman 1983, 109). On the basis of the metre of verses in the *Nettippakaraṇa*, it is suggested that at least the portioning of the text that contain verses were composed in North India “before the beginning of the Christian era” (Norman 1983, 110).

Like the *Atthasālinī*, the *Nettippakaraṇa* (Nt. 43, 96) holds that the complex, emotion-charged factors of mental *kamma* cast their influence on the formation of physical and verbal *kamma*. Ñāṇamoli notes in *The Guide* (1962, 68, n. 239/1) that the *Nettippakaraṇa* adopts the unique method of classifying *kamma* into *cetanā-kamma* and *cetasika-kamma*. The *Nettippakaraṇa* does not classify *kamma* as acts of body, speech, and mind. According to the classification in the *Nettippakaraṇa*, *cetanā-kamma* comprises the seven wholesome and seven unwholesome acts of body and speech, and *cetasika-kamma* is constituted of the three wholesome and three unwholesome factors of mental

kamma. Acts of body and speech are designated as *cetanā-kamma* in order to show that they are concrete expressions of corresponding wholesome and unwholesome *cetanās*. The six wholesome and unwholesome factors of *mano-kamma* are designated as *cetasikas* to show that they arise together with a specific *cetanā* as constituents of the same *citta*. By definition, all the *cetasikas* that constitute a *citta* are regarded as originating from the same sensory stimulation (*phassa*), and their inter-related activities are said to be directed to the same goal. It follows, then, that the *Nettipakaraṇa* classification regards covetousness, non-covetousness, and the other factors of mental *kamma* as mental states to which *cetanā* is related by processes of mutual conditioning.

The *Nettipakaraṇa* maintains that the factors of mental *kamma* have a potent influence on the manner in which specific *cetanās* function in bringing forth acts of body and mind. According to the *Nettipakaraṇa* (Nt. 43), the factors of mental *kamma* condition *cetanā* by virtue of their identification with the "roots" (*mūlāni*) of wholesome and unwholesome action. The *Nettipakaraṇa* identifies covetousness with the unwholesome root of greed (*lobha*), and ill-will with the root of hate (*dosa*). Wrong view is identified with wrong path (*micchā-magga*). The text goes on to say that the unwholesome deeds of killing living beings, slander, and harsh speech are rooted in hate (*dosa*); stealing, sexual misconduct, and lying spring from greed (*lobha*); and frivolous speech is an outgrowth of delusion (*moha*). This bare list encodes many dimensions of Theravāda's "psychological ethics." It is implied that the roots of hateful behaviour are fed by purposive impulses that are strengthened by the thoughts and emotions that take shape in the mind as the mental *kamma* of malevolence, ill-will, repulsion (*vyāpāda*). Greedy behaviour is seen to be supported by purposive impulses that become expressed in the emotion-charged thoughts that form the mental *kamma* of covetousness (*abhijjhā*).

And all forms of deluded, infatuated, confused behaviour are linked with purposive impulses that become expressed in the emotion-fuelled thought processes that form the mental *kamma* of a deluded, poorly reasoned view of life (*micchā-diṭṭhi*). One can presume that the *Nettipakaraṇa* adopts the method of classifying mental *kamma* as *cetasika-kamma* in order to avoid the problem of two *cetanās* functioning simultaneously in the instigation of any specific act of body or speech. At the same time, like the *Atthasālinī*, this text affirms that *cetanā* is not an autonomous function but stands in mutual relationship with a network of cognitive and emotional processes.

Purposive impulse as the dynamic mode of an attitude of mind

The definitions in the *Milindapañha* (Mil. 61-62), the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 135), and the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 111-112) describe how wholesome and unwholesome *cetanās* co-ordinate concomitant mental factors and direct their functions towards wholesome and unwholesome goals; but these definitions do not explain how *cetanās* arise as purposive impulses and acquire their wholesome or unwholesome characteristics. A clearer picture of how wholesome and unwholesome *cetanās* originate emerges, however, from the “discourse on the course of unwholesome action” (*akusala-kamma-patha-kathā*) and the “discourse on doors of action” (*dvāra-kathā*) in the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 87-105). These discourses describe each wholesome or unwholesome *cetanā* as a purposive impulse that gives a dynamic turn to the cognitive and emotive contact of a specific attitude of mind.

The *Atthasālinī* states its view of the bond between attitude of mind, purposive impulse, and act most clearly in the discourse on unwholesome acts that have karmic consequences (Asl. 97-106). Chapter IV included an analysis of the ten wholesome and

ten unwholesome types of *kamma* in the *Karajakāya-vagga* of the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* (A. V. 292-303). Each of these acts is designated as a *sañcetanika-kamma* of body, speech, or mind in the *Karajakāya-vagga* and though the discourse does not specify precisely what constitutes a *cetanā* or *sañcetanā*, the narrative portions include statements of intentions, wishes, and aspirations that motivate the act. The example is given of deliberate lies (*sampajāna musā*) spoken to serve one's own ends (*atta-hetu*) or the purposes of another (*para-hetu*). The discourse describes malicious speech spoken with the motive of dividing people (*bhedāya*), covetousness based on the longing to possess what belongs to others, and ill-will based on the evil wish to see others suffer.

The *Atthasālinī* identifies each of the three types of unwholesome physical acts and the four types of unwholesome acts of speech with a corresponding purposive impulse. Moreover, each purposive impulse is shown to be conditioned by a corresponding state of mind. The purposive impulse that produces wholesome and unwholesome acts can be described as an intention imbued with the impetus to initiate action. The following list can be drawn out from the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 97-101):

The unwholesome physical act of taking the life of living beings is identified with the purposive impulse to kill (*vadhaka-cetanā*), based on a state of mind that thinks of killing (*vadhaka-citta*).

The unwholesome physical act of appropriating the property of another is identified with the purposive impulse to steal (*theyya-cetanā*), based on a state of mind that thinks of stealing (*theyya-citta*).

The unwholesome physical act of sexual misconduct is identified with the purposive impulse to trespass (*vītikkaṃma-cetanā*), based on a state of mind that contemplates morally wrong and unlawful conduct (*asaddhammādhippāya*).

The unwholesome act of lying is identified with the purposive impulse to deceive others (*para-visaṃvādaṃ cetanā*), based on a state of mind that contemplates deceit (*visaṃvādanādhippāya*).

The unwholesome act of malicious speech is identified with the purposive impulse (*cetanā*) that initiates bodily movement and speech with the purpose of causing division (*paresam bhedāya*). Malicious purpose is said to be conditioned by a corrupt state of mind (*saṅkiliṭṭha citta*).

The unwholesome act of harsh speech is identified with the purposive impulse to be entirely harsh (*ekanta-pharusa-cetanā*), based on harshness of mind (*citta-pharusatā*).

The unwholesome act of frivolous talk is identified with the unwholesome purposive impulse (*akusalā cetanā*) that initiates physical movement and speech to communicate useless things.

The three unwholesome mental acts are associated with the three unwholesome roots of action: covetousness with greed, (*lobha*), ill-will with aversion (*dosa*), and wrong view with greed and delusion (*lobha, moha*).

Confluence of purpose and conative impetus in *cetanā*

The significance that the *Atthasālinī* gives to the conditioning influence of a mental attitude on the mind's capacity to initiate action can be seen in its delineation of the five constituents of an unwholesome act (Asl. 97). These are: the presence of the object or person affected by the misdeed, knowledge of the nature of that object or person thus affected, the attitude of mind or intention that motivates the misdeed, the effort of enacting it, and finally its evil consequence. The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 97) gives the following analysis of the act of killing: the presence of a living being (*pāṇa*), knowledge that the being is alive (*pāṇa-saṇṇitā*), a state of mind that entertains killing (*vadhaka-citta*), carrying out the act (*upakkama*), and death caused by that act (*tena maraṇam*). Similarly, the constituents of the act of stealing are enumerated as: the presence of the property of another, awareness that it belongs to another, a state of mind intent on stealing (*theyya-citta*), carrying out the act (*upakkama*), and theft as a consequence of that act (*tena haraṇam*) (Asl. 98). In both of these cases of unwholesome physical acts, *cetanā* is the purposive impulse that links a specific attitude of mind (*citta*) with the carrying out of the

act (*upakkama*). Without this link to the cognitive content of the state of mind, the act would not have the nature of a goal-oriented purposive movement. At the same time, without the link to the wholesome or unwholesome sentiment, for example, greed or non-greed, hate or non-hate, present in the attitude of mind in the form of “roots of action,” the act would not have moral value. By carrying the content of the specific state of mind into the production of the act, *cetanā* gives active expression to the cognitive and emotive content of the state of mind and “actualizes” or makes concrete the moral values that reside in the state of mind.

The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 99) holds that lying is constituted of four factors: that which is untrue, an attitude of mind that is intent on deceiving (*visamvādana-citta*), the corresponding deployment of effort, and purposeful communication of the lie to others. An essential component of slander is said to be the intention to cause disharmony or to win affection for oneself by maligning others (Asl. 100); likewise, speech considered to be genuinely harsh only when it expresses a harsh frame of mind (*citta-pharusatā*) (Asl. 100).²² In this context, the *Atthasālinī* relates the charming story of a mischievous child who insisted on running into the forest to play. Unable to stop him, his mother said, “Alright, let the wild buffalo chase you.” As the child ran into the forest, he saw the wild buffalo coming towards him. Being as intelligent as he was mischievous, the boy concentrated on the thought: “Let what my mother really intended in her mind come to pass; let not what my mother said in words happen.” Immediately, the wild buffalo stood absolutely still. The *Atthasālinī* maintains that the mother’s words cannot be reckoned as harsh speech since her mind is tender. The conclusion reached is that just as spoken words cannot be judged as harsh if the heart is gentle, so also speech cannot be characterized as gentle if the mind of the speaker is cruel. The *Atthasālinī* points out that

if a murderer with cruel intent gently tells the victim to rest comfortably, those words can hardly be characterized as free of harshness.

It has been shown above that, according to the *Atthasālinī*, every wholesome or unwholesome *cetanā* is characterized by a sense of purpose or intention because it is inseparably linked to the cognitive and emotive content of a specific state of mind (*citta*). The *Atthasālinī* is equally emphatic that every *cetanā* is a conative impetus with the capacity to initiate action of a body, speech, or mind. The main trend in the discourses of the *Atthasālinī* where specific acts are analyzed is to view *cetanā* as an intention or purposive thought that contains, as integral to itself, the capacity to initiate action. The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 97-98)²³ states quite unambiguously that the *cetanā* of stealing (*theyya-cetanā*) includes two aspects: the intention to steal, and the capacity to initiate action in order to carry out that intention. Thus the *cetanā* of stealing is regarded as having two defining characteristics: first, the *cetanā* includes the awareness that the object to which the intention to steal is directed belongs to another person (*para-pariggahīta-saññitā*); and second, the *cetanā* initiates the act of appropriating that object (*tadādāyaka-upakkama-samuṭṭhāpikā*). Lying is defined as the *cetanā* that aims at deceiving others (*paravisamvādakā*) and is capable of putting forth effort of body and speech (*kāya-vacīppayoga-samuṭṭhāpikā*) in order to achieve its goal (Asl. 98-99).²⁴ Slander is defined as the *cetanā* that intends to cause a rift between two parties or to gain the favour of one party by maligning another. As its other aspect, the *cetanā* that is related to slander is regarded as capable of initiating acts of body and speech to achieve its goal. This *cetanā* that instigates slander is said to be related to a corrupt frame of mind (*saṅkiliṭṭha citta*) (Asl. 99).²⁵

In the analysis of individual acts of body and mind given above, the *Atthasālinī* conveys the capacity of *cetanā* to initiate action by applying to *cetanā* the designation: "that which sets up effort of body and speech" (*kāya-vacī-payoga-samuṭṭhāpikā*). This phrase occurs in relation to the *cetanās* that become expressed as lying (Asl. 98), slander (Asl. 99), harsh speech (Asl. 100), and frivolous talk (Asl. 100). A similar designation "that which sets up action" (*upakkama-samuṭṭhāpikā*) occurs in the description of the *cetanās* that becomes expressed in the unwholesome acts of killing living beings (Asl. 97) and stealing (Asl. 98). The *Atthasālinī*, therefore, not only maintains that every *cetanā* originates from a specific state of mind, but also emphasizes that every *cetanā* functions as an impetus that initiates action in the organism and directs that action towards a goal.

Conditions for the arising of wholesome states of mind

In the introductory section of the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 74-75), where an analysis of some of the key terms used in the text is provided, the question is raised regarding the circumstances in which a beautiful object would produce a wholesome *citta* rather than a greed-ridden unwholesome *citta*. The answer is given that the nature of the *citta* that arises when sensory stimulation occurs depends on: the constraint or control imposed on the *citta* (*niyamita-vasena*), the bent or inclination of the *citta* (*parinata-vasena*), the training that a person has undertaken (*samudāvata-vasena*) and the experiences and ideas that engage the *citta* (*ābhuñjita-vasena*). The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 75) explains that the *citta* is controlled and directed towards doing a wholesome act when a person thinks: "I ought to do what is wholesome." *Niyama* includes in its range of meaning "restraint, constraint, training, self-control" (P.E.D. 368, col. 2). The inclination towards what is wholesome is regarded as the result of turning away from the unwholesome, and training is described as

continuously repeated (*abhiñham*) practice of wholesome ways. The *Atthasālinī* emphasizes that wholesome thoughts begin to engage the mind through such wholesome influences as studying the *dhmma* and associating with good people. The moral imperative expressed in the thought that one ought to do what is wholesome (*kusalam eva mayā kattabbam*) appears to entail the affirmation of the controlling and directing role of reason. However, the *Atthasālinī* does not take the position that reason can over-ride habit and emotion in the production of purposive impulses. The emphasis in the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Atthasālinī* is always on the processes of wholesome conditioning and wholesome habit formation through which various aspects of training can be securely established. The inference can be made that the moral imperative is established in the mind as a result of training. In this context, it is instructive to consider what the *Atthasālinī* says about the wholesome mental attitude of “shame in doing wrong” (*hiri*). The *Atthasālinī* maintains that the wholesome sense of shame at the thought of doing wrong has a “subjective origin” (*ajjhata-samuṭṭhānā hiri*) since it arises from training in virtue that has become thoroughly internalized (Asl. 125). In this case, the imperative comes from oneself to not pursue what is dishonourable and goes against one’s sense of self-respect. It is based on the cultivation of virtue and mindfulness.

The *Atthasālinī* further maintains that the states of mind that produce wholesome and unwholesome *kamma* arise, respectively, from restraint (*samvara*) and absence of restraint (*asamvara*). Restraint is said to be based on virtue (*sīla*), mindfulness (*sati*), knowledge (*ñāṇa*), patience (*khanti*), and energy (*virīya*) (Asl. 95-97). All these factors involve the setting up of wholesome habits through processes of conditioning as well as through systematic attention (*yoniso-manasikāra*), clarity of thought, and the application of energy. It is implied here that wholesome emotions that involve the cultivation of

patience and forbearance, conative dynamism that manifests as energy and perseverance, and the cognitive processes of undeluded reasoning and mindfulness interact to produce wholesome *cittas*. Similarly, the *Atthasālinī* holds that lack of restraint leading to unwholesome *cittas* is based on five factors: bad conduct (*dussīlyam*), careless negligence with regard to mindfulness (*muṭṭha-saccam*), lack of knowledge (*aññāṇam*), lack of patience (*akkhanti*), and laziness (*kosajjam*). These factors that produce lack of restraint involve unwholesome habits, flawed and deluded cognitive processes, lack of systematic attention, and the blocking of energy in the body and mind. It is implied that this network of mutually interacting unwholesome conditions produces unwholesome *cittas*. The *Atthasālinī*, therefore, remains consistent in affirming that wholesome and unwholesome states of mind arise through a set of interacting conditions. Neither a sovereign reason nor a controlling “will” is posited as the cause of wholesome *cittas*. By the same token, no single cause is considered to be sufficient to produce an unwholesome state of mind.

***Cetanā* compared with terms that signify intention to pursue a goal**

The *Suttas* and the *Abhidhamma* put forward a variety of terms that indicate the nuances in consciousness that relate to the mind’s capacity to form intentions and pursue them. Here the focus is on two sets of conative terms: those that signify intention or resolve to pursue a goal, and those that indicate the capacity to initiate action directed towards a goal. A comparison of these terms with *cetanā* will demonstrate the distinctive features of *cetanā*.

This survey of terms related to the mind’s capacity to initiate action shows once again that according to Theravāda, no single mental factor is considered to be capable by itself of initiating acts of body, speech, or mind. Only a confluence of necessary factors is

regarded as sufficient for the initiation of action. A comparison between *cetanā* and other Pāli terms related to the initiation of action shows that *cetanā* has the fundamental function of turning conscious awareness towards an object and rendering it dynamic. By doing so, *cetanā* aids other mental factors in directing their functions towards the object. *Cetanā* is compared here with four Pāli terms that signify intention to pursue a goal: *adhimokkha*, *chanda*, *saṅkappa* and *ārambha-dhātu*.

In the *Suttas*, the verb *adhimuccati* has a range of meanings: "to feel attached to," "to become settled," "to make up one's mind," "to become clear about," "to have faith" (P.E.D. 29, col. 2). *Adhimuccati* is linked with trusting (*saddahati*) to convey making a firm commitment or having firm faith in the teaching (*dhamma*) of the Buddha (S. III. 225). *Adhimuccati* can also connote a strong unwholesome inclination towards a pleasant sense object (S. IV. 185). *Adhimokkha* signifies a strong personal inclination towards an object and the commitment to pursue it.

In the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 133) and the *Visuddhimagga* (XIV. 151), *adhimokkha* is defined as follows:

lakkhaṇa
(characteristic)

sanniṭṭhāna-lakkhaṇa
Its defining characteristic is ascertainment, conviction.

rasa
(function)

asaṁsappana-rasa
Its function is to avoid [indecisive] "crawling."

paccupaṭṭhāna
(mode of manifestation)

nicchaya-paccupaṭṭhāna
It manifests as conviction.

padaṭṭhāna
(proximate cause)

sanniṭṭhātabba-dhamma-padaṭṭhāna
Its proximate cause is the presence of something to be ascertained.

The definition goes on to compare the decisiveness (*nicchaya*) of *adhimokkha* to the unshakeable (*niccala*) nature of a stone pillar demarcating a boundary. The commentary to the *Visuddhimagga* (VsmA. 2:1043) explains that the function of *adhimokkha* is to free the mind of perplexity (*vicikicchā*). The definition states that the function of *adhimokkha* is to avoid zigzagging from side to side like a creeping serpent. The commentary says that the snake's movement symbolizes childish indecision regarding the nature of an object and inability to decide whether to act or not to act.

In its rudimentary form²⁶ *adhimokkha* is a constituent of the states of consciousness that form the preliminary stages of the cognitive process. In this context, *adhimokkha* functions, not as a full-fledged certainty based on judgment, but as a preliminary freeing of the mind from uncertainty when faced with a plurality of objects. The functioning of *adhimokkha* enables the mind to begin to advert to one object and to set the others aside. In its developed form, *adhimokkha* shows itself as firm faith and commitment to a chosen goal. It then takes the form of a conviction based on discipline and cultivation of the mind, and becomes expressed in wholesome action. *Adhimutti*, when it functions as trust in the Eightfold Path and unswerving commitment to the goal, is defined as the mode of manifestation (*paccupaṭṭhāna*) of faith (Vsm. XIV. 140). However, *adhimutti* remains a neutral term and can also be used in relation to worldly life. It then signifies "being intent on" or "devoted to" worldly affairs (*lokāmisādhimutti*) (M. II. 253).

The meaning that *adhimokkha* came to acquire in Buddhist circles and its association with conviction in the pursuit of a goal can be seen in Yaśomitra's commentary to the *Abhidharmakośa* (AbhkA. 1:187).²⁷ Here *adhimukti* is explained as *ruci* (inclination, liking). The term *ruci* signifies that in the preliminary stages of a

cognitive process (*citta-vīthi*), *adhimukti* is the function by which the mind's attention is drawn to, and inclines towards, the qualities of an object. The commentary proceeds to say that *adhimukti* develops into strong conviction that enables a person to make a commitment to follow the disciplines that lead to liberation from sorrow.

The term *chanda* is much more directly related to the initiation of action than *adhimokkha*. Of all the Pāli terms signifying conation, *chanda* is the one that covers the widest range and comes most readily to mind as the equivalent of "initiative to act."

Chanda is related to the Sanskrit verb root *skandh-* "to jump," and signifies "impulse, excitement; intention, resolution, will; desire for, wish for, delight in"

(P.E.D. 274, col. 2). *Chanda* is a neutral term signifying basic conation spanning intention to act and capacity to initiate action. When *chanda* is linked with qualifying terms, it can signify either wholesome or unwholesome conation. When associated with *rāga* (passion, greed), *chanda* acquires the sense of unwholesome excitement of desire. Unwholesome *chanda* is said to be the root of sorrow (*chando hi mūlaṃ dukkhassa*) (S. IV. 328).

Wholesome *chanda* functions as zeal, ardour or eagerness in initiating wholesome action. The role of *chanda* in wholesome motivation is best seen in the definition of right effort (*sammā-vāyāma*). A monk's ardent effort to cultivate wholesome mental states and uproot what is unwholesome is described as follows: *chandaṃ janeti* (he arouses zeal), *vāyamati* (strives), *viriyam ārabhati* (puts forth energy), *cittaṃ paggaṇhāti* (exerts his mind), *padahati* (and endeavours) (D. II. 312). In this context, *chanda* signifies ardour, fervour, zeal, or enthusiasm pervading the impulse to initiate an action. *Chanda* carries this meaning of zeal in wholesome motivation also at S. II. 132 where the exertion that is required of a disciple in training is described. In this context, *chanda* is associated with

ussolhi (exertion), *appaṭivāni* (unflagging effort), *ātappa* (ardour), *virīya* (energy), and *sātacca* (perseverance).

The definition of *chanda* in the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 150) is as follows:

<i>lakkhaṇa</i> (characteristic)	<i>kattukāmatā-lakkhaṇa</i> The defining characteristic is "wish-to-do."
<i>rasa</i> (function)	<i>ārammaṇa-pariyesana-rasa</i> Its function is searching for an object.
<i>paccupaṭṭhāna</i> (mode of manifestation)	<i>ārammaṇena-atthikatā-paccupaṭṭhāna</i> It manifests as need for an object.
<i>padaṭṭhāna</i> (proximate cause)	<i>tad ev' assa padaṭṭhānam</i> That same object functions as its proximate cause.

The definitions of *chanda* in the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 132-133) are identical. In both definitions, the mental act of grasping an object is compared to the physical act of stretching a hand (*hatthappasāraṇam*) to grasp a thing.

The following differences between *cetanā* and *chanda* emerge from the definitions of the two terms. At the outset it can be seen that *cetanā*, unlike *chanda*, is posited as a basic mental factor essential for the maintenance of even the most rudimentary sentient awareness. In the *Atthasālinī* and the *Visuddhimagga* lists of mental factors, *cetanā* appears among those factors that are fundamental and constantly present in all states of consciousness. Thus, *cetanā* is considered to be present in the earliest stages of the cognitive process when the object enters the receptive process of the mind. From what is said in the *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* (Bodhi 1993, 93)²⁸ it can be inferred that *chanda* is regarded as a function that operates only in states of mind where there is some sense of the nature of the object, and where no perplexity or restlessness rooted in delusion (*moha*) prevents the mind from directing itself towards the chosen object.

Moreover, the definitions show that though both *cetanā* and *chanda* are goal-oriented impulses, there is a difference in their manner of functioning. *Cetanā* is the purposive impulse that links the capacity to initiate action to an attitude of mind. *Chanda* is the eager wish to act when that link between attitude and action has been established by *cetanā*. Furthermore, the function of *cetanā*, as the analogies demonstrate, is to rouse concomitant states to perform their functions in relation to the goal. In other words, *cetanā* instigates activity in different aspects of the mind and directs all the efforts garnered in this manner towards the object. The function of *chanda* is to maintain the orientation of the mind towards the goal and to strengthen the mind's enthusiasm in pursuing the goal. For this reason, unwholesome *chanda* becomes passionate desire (*chanda-rāga*) for the goal and wholesome *chanda* becomes a noble zeal in cultivating the disciplines of the Eightfold Path (*dhamma-chanda*). The commentary to the *Visuddhimagga* (VsmA. 2. 1042) explains that the main function of *chanda* is in relation to the object. The commentary defines *chanda* as the function that turns associated mental factors towards the object and maintains their relationship to the object.

Furthermore, *chanda*, functioning as intention to pursue a goal, becomes one of the four dominant factors (*adhipatis*) that determine the manner in which the disciplines of the Eightfold Path are pursued. The four dominants are *chanda* in the aspect of zeal in following the *dhamma* (*dhammacchanda*), energy (*virīya*), the *citta* itself, and wisdom in its aspect of investigation (*vīmaṁsā*). Any one of them can dominate the entire *citta* in taking up and persevering in a difficult task especially in relation to the Eightfold Path (Dhs. 56; Bodhi 1993, 274). The commentary to the *Visuddhimagga* (VsmA. 2:1042) points out that whereas the defining characteristic of *chanda* always centres on the wish to act (*kattukāmatā vuccati karaṇicchā*), under some circumstances *chanda* functions as

unwholesome craving (*taṇhā*) and in other circumstances as the capacity to initiate action in a noble endeavour. It is interesting to note that the term *cetanā* hardly ever connotes ardent zeal in preserving towards an ethical goal as *chanda* does. On the other hand, *cetanā* is identified with the processes of *kamma* in a way that *chanda* is not. In brief, *chanda* is the enthusiasm in pursuing the object, which comes after *cetanā* has established the initial connection between the mind and an object.

Whereas *adhimokkha* functions as an inclination towards an object and *chanda* functions as the wish to pursue an object, *saṅkappa* functions as intention based on cognitive processes. Whereas the impetus to act represented by *chanda* is conditioned by the nature and qualities of the object, the intention or resolve that constitutes *saṅkappa* is governed by the cognitive processes and emotions that are dominant in the continuum of consciousness. A passage in the *Dīgha-nikāya* (D. III. 289) delineates a chain of causes that clarifies the place of *saṅkappa* and *chanda* in the process of motivation. This passage seeks to explain why different people engage in different types of quests and end up with different kinds of gains. Here differences in *saṅkappa* (intention, purposive thought) and *chanda* (impetus to act) are traced to differences in *phassa* (sensory contact), *vedanā* (feeling), and *saññā* (perception), ideation. This statement implies that both intention and impetus to act originate from perception and ideation. Because people perceive objects differently, there are wide differences in the intentions (*saṅkappas*) they form. Differences in intentions lead to differences in the initiative to act (*chanda*). Differences in *saṅkappa* and *chanda* are regarded as causes leading to differences in *pariḷāha* (obsessive pursuit of objects), differences of *pariyesanā* (quest), and differences in *lābha* (what is gained). The causal bond that this passage posits between *saṅkappa* and *chanda* entails that *saṅkappa* in its role of purposive deliberation or intention opens the way for

the goal-oriented impetus of *chanda* to come into effect. The causal chain traces motivation to its roots in the processes of sensory contact and sensation, and postulates that the coming together of intention (*saṅkappa*) and the impetus to act (*chanda*) leads to pursuit of the object (*pariyesanā*) in which one is interested.

The relationship posited between *saṅkappa* and *vitakka* (thought), both in the *Suttas* and in the *Abhidhamma*, shows that *saṅkappa* is closer to purpose, design, intention, and goal-oriented thought than to the conative impulsion that actually implements the purpose. In the *Saṅgīti-sutta* (D. III. 215) it is shown that both *saṅkappa* and *vitakka* carry moral values and can be classified as wholesome or unwholesome. Unwholesome *saṅkappas* and *vitakkas* are both said to be constituted of manifestations of sensual desire (*kāma*), ill-will (*vyāpāda*), and cruelty (*vihiṃsā*). Both wholesome *saṅkappas* and *vitakkas* are regarded as expressions of renunciation (*nekkhamma*), non-aversion (*avyāpāda*), and absence of cruelty (*avihiṃsā*). In the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* the same definition serves both *sammā-saṅkappa* (right resolve) (Dhs. 12) and *vitakka* (thought, applying the mind) (Dhs. 10): both are defined in terms of "fixing and focusing" (*appanāvyappanā*), and "applying the mind" to the object (*cetaso abhiniropanā*).²⁹ In *Buddhist Psychological Ethics*, Mrs. Rhys Davids comments that *abhiniropanā* signifies, not only "attending to the object" in order to discern its defining characteristic, but also the expression of "aspiration, intention, purpose, design" in relation to the object (1974, 17, n. 4). Although *vitakka* includes in its meaning ratiocination and discursive thought, this term, like *saṅkappa*, can also connote intention or purpose. When thought becomes goal-directed, it becomes conditioned by emotions that arise in relation to the object, and it takes on moral values of wholesome and unwholesome. The unwholesome *saṅkappas* of desire (*kāma*) and ill-will (*vyāpāda*) are obviously related to the

unwholesome mental *kamma* of covetousness (*abhijjha*) and ill-will or malevolence (*vyāpāda*). Intentions characterized by desire and ill-will are associated with the unwholesome roots of action: greed (*lobha*), aversion (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*).

The definition of *saṅkappa* in the *Vibhaṅga* (Vbh. 237, 238) is identical with the definition in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* (Dhs. 10).³⁰ In both cases, the definition begins by characterizing *saṅkappa* as *takka*, *vitakka*. These two terms signify "ratiocination," "discursive thought," "reasoning." On the other hand, the description of *cetanā* in the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 111-112) shows it to be a combination of intention and the capacity to initiate action directed towards a goal. At first glance it appears that *saṅkappa* and *cetanā* can be distinguished by holding that the former functions as resolve based on purposive deliberation and the latter as a combination of intention and the capacity to initiate action to pursue that intention. However, especially when *saṅkappa* functions as an aspect of the Eightfold Path, it acts as a resolve that has the motivating power to express itself through body, speech, and mind. The main difference between *saṅkappa* and *cetanā* is that whereas *cetanā* is regarded as a basic factor that is present even in the most rudimentary states of conscious awareness, *saṅkappa* develops out of conceptualization and discursive thought. *Saṅkappa* is the preferred term in the *Suttas* and the *Abhidhamma* to convey a resolve based on ethical values and a worldview (*ditṭhi*). The intention that *saṅkappa* represents can come to dominate a state of mind. Nevertheless, its implementation is dependent on the more basic function of *cetanā* to co-ordinate the resources of the state of mind and direct them towards a goal. *Cetanā* is conceived as a purposive impulse that makes an attitude of mind into an effective act. *Saṅkappa* is regarded as an intention based on thought that does not necessarily become translated into action.

***Cetanā* compared with terms that indicate capacity to initiate goal-oriented action**

It is not *cetanā* or *chanda* but the special term *ārambha-dhātu* (capacity to initiate action) that the Buddha chooses in arguing against the deterministic view of human nature put forward by the Ājīvakas. Against their rigid determinism, the Buddha argues that all individuals are endowed with the capacity to bring about an inception of energy (*ārambha-dhātu*) in the body. The Buddha maintains that this capacity enables people to initiate such acts as stepping forth, stepping forward, halting, standing, and stepping towards any object (A. III. 337-338).³¹ The Ājīvaka teacher Makkhali Gosāla taught (D. I. 53) that there is neither "self agency" (*atta-kāra*), nor "other agency," (*para-kāra*), nor "human agency" (*purisa-kāra*) of any kind. He also denied that there were such qualities as strength (*bala*), energy (*virīya*), human stamina (*purisa-thāma*), and human vigour (*purisa-parakkama*). The commentary (DA. I. 161) interprets *atta-kāra* as action done by oneself (*attanā kata kamma*) and *para-kāra* as action based on the admonishing and instruction of another (*parassa ovādānusāsani*). The Buddha teaches that because all people have the *ārambha-dhātu* as a constituent of the *citta*, initiating one's own action and acting on the advice of another become viable possibilities.

There are other contexts (S. V. 66, 104) where *ārambha-dhātu* does not signify initiative to act in a general sense, but is specifically linked to the development of energy (*virīya*) as an aspect of wisdom (*bojjhaṅga*). The *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (S. V. 66) names the three factors of inception of energy (*ārambha-dhātu*), exertion (*nikkama-dhātu*), and striving (*parakkama-dhātu*) as the "nutriments" or conditions for the arising of energy (*virīya*) in its role of a factor of wisdom (*bojjhaṅga*). The commentary (SA. III. 141) interprets *ārambha-dhātu* as the arousal of energy and the other two factors as the intermediate and fully developed stages in the application of energy in the Eightfold Path.

Similarly, in the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. IV. 53) *ārambha-dhātu* is interpreted to mean the initial arousal of energy (*paṭhama viriya*) deployed in the cultivation of systematic attention (*yoniso-manasikāra*).

Ārambha-dhātu is not given the status of a separate factor of consciousness (*cetasika*) in the *Abhidhamma*. The passages where the term occurs do not clarify how *ārambha-dhātu* functions in the more complex processes of choosing one's goals and intending to pursue them. Although this term is introduced into the vocabulary of conation, there are no details regarding how the mental factor of *ārambha-dhātu* functions either in forming intentions or in directing action towards a goal. *Viriya* is the Pāli term that most clearly indicates the arousal and application of energy. Whereas *saṅkappa* represents intention to pursue a goal that can develop into a strong resolve, and *chanda* conveys zeal in the act of pursuing a goal, *virya* is the term that is most often utilized to indicate the application of energy to initiate and sustain an act. The term *viriya* covers energy in initiating an act and perseverance in directing activity towards a goal. Courage and unflagging determination are associated with *viriya*. The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 146) explains that *viriya* is exemplified in the words of the Bodhisatta when he vowed that he would not get up from his seat under the Bodhi tree until he attained his goal, even if his skin, his sinews, and his bones withered away (S. II. 28). When a *bhikkhu* has put away mental hindrances and his energy is aroused, when his body is calmed and his mind is concentrated, then he is said to be "ardent, conscientious, constantly and consistently putting forth energy (*satatam samitam āradha-viriyo*), and resolute in mind" (A. II. 14-15). In the *Suttas*, when *viriya* is conjoined with strong endeavour (*vāyāma*), vigorous exertion (*padhāna*), and eager striving (*ussāha*), then this term has the meaning of steady perseverance in seeking a chosen goal. Wholesome *viriya* is defined

(A. IV. 363) as the effort that one puts forth to remove unwholesome mental states and cultivate wholesome ones. *Viriyārambha*, *uṭṭhāna-viriya*, and *āradḍha viriya* convey initiating vigorous effort and rousing energy (A. II. 14-15, III. 4, IV. 282).

In the *Visuddhimagga* list of mental states, *viriya* appears among the basic mental factors that participate in both wholesome and unwholesome mental attitudes (Vsm. XIV. 170, 176). In the *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* (Bodhi 1993, 81), *viriya* is included among the list of secondary mental states (*pakīṇṇaka*) that become wholesome or unwholesome, depending on the moral quality of the state of consciousness in which they participate. In the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 120), *viriya* is defined as "that which is to be set in motion (*īrayitabbam*) or brought into effect through an appropriate method (*nayena*) or by skilful means (*upāyena*).” This definition shows the relationship that Theravāda posits between vigorous energy and discipline. Though vigour (*viriya*) is celebrated as the nature of a hero (*vīra*), vigour is also defined as a quality that can be cultivated by a *bhikkhu* or *bhikkhunī* through disciplined means. Rightly deployed vigour, in its turn, is regarded by the *Atthasālinī* as the basis of all achievements (Asl. 121).

In the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 121) *viriya* is again defined as follows:

lakkhaṇa
(characteristic)

ussāhana-lakkhaṇa
It is endowed with energizing as defining characteristic.

rasa
(function)

sahajātānam upatthambhana rasa
Its function is to uphold conascent mental states.

paccupaṭṭhāna
(mode of manifestation)

asaṁsīdana-bhāva-paccupaṭṭhāna
It manifests as absence of dejection.

padaṭṭhāna
(proximate cause)

saṁvega padaṭṭhāna
Its proximate cause is a feeling of urgency (*saṁvega*) or an occasion that calls for the arousal of energy (*viriyārambha-vatthu vā*).

The definition of *virīya* in the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 137) is identical. The *Atthasālinī* compares the revitalizing role of *virīya* to a king sending reinforcements to a small besieged army, or to a householder buttressing an old home with supporting pillars. The commentary to the *Visuddhimagga* (VsmA. 2:1036) says that *virīya* prevents concomitant mental states from falling into laziness (*kosajja*), and provides them with support (*dhāraṇam*), additional strength, and upliftment.

There are two basic differences between *cetanā* and *virīya*. Wholesome and unwholesome *cetanās* include purposive thought and the intention to pursue a specific goal. The function of *virīya* is concerned, not so much with forming a purpose, as with resolve, energy, and perseverance in pursuing the purpose that has been formed. Moreover, the analogies of the landlord's role at harvest time and the head pupil's role in the classroom demonstrate that the function of *cetanā* is to initiate activity in concomitant mental states and direct that activity towards a wholesome or unwholesome end. The role of *virīya* is to ensure the continuance of that activity, once it has been initiated. Similarly, *vāyāma* (endeavour), *padhāna* (exertion), and *ussāha* (striving) ensure steady application of effort and enthusiasm in pursuing a goal.

Differentiating craving (*taṇhā*) from *cetanā*

Cetanā arises as a purposive impulse within a specific state of mind. It is linked to the thought of a goal that exerts a teleological "pull" on the continuum of consciousness. Craving (*taṇhā*), by contrast, is closer to the experience of hunger or thirst. It is caused by the sense of a need that impels the mind towards an object that it feels will assuage that need. Craving is associated with emotional tensions that persist until the need is temporarily satisfied. According to the *Abhidhamma* analysis of mental states, the

proximate cause of craving is a feeling (*vedanā*) of pleasure or pain arising from sensory or mental stimulation (Vsm. XVII. 51). By contrast, *cetanā* is considered to be conditioned by a state of mind that includes thought processes. For this reason, wholesome and unwholesome *cetanās* exhibit a sense of purpose, and are not governed solely by the need to satisfy a feeling or remove an emotional tension.

In the *Dīgha-nikāya* (D. II. 308), craving is defined as that which leads to rebirth (*ponobhavikā*), is characterized by delight and passion (*nandi-rāga-sahagatā*), and finds jubilation in objects, now here, now there (*tatra-tatrābhinandinī*). Terms connoting delight, merriment, or sensual excitement, for example, *nandi-rāga* and *abhinandana*, do not appear in the definitions of conative terms such as *cetanā* and *virīya*. *Chanda* is sometimes associated with *rāga*, but *chanda* can also function as basic impetus to act (*kattu-kāmatā-chanda*), or participate in the Eightfold Path in the role of *dhmma-chanda* (zeal in following the teaching of the Buddha). *Nandi* signifies "joy, enjoyment, pleasure, delight" (P.E.D. 346, col. 2) and *rāga* conveys excitement or sensual passion (P.E.D. 567, col. 2). This sense of sheer pleasure, excitement, or sensual passion is not necessarily associated with the basic conative capacity to initiate action that characterize *cetanā* and *chanda* in its role of a simple wish to act (*kattu-kāmatā-chanda*). Neither is pleasure or enjoyment a necessary element of the function attributed to *virīya* of energizing and sustaining goal-directed activity.

In the definition of *taṇhā* (craving) put forward in the *Visuddhimagga* (XVII. 51), "being the cause" (of suffering) is regarded as its defining characteristic. The function of *taṇhā* is said to be "enjoying" or "taking delight" (*abhinandana-rasa*). The mode of manifestation of *taṇhā* is described as "being devoid of satisfaction" or "insatiability" (*atitta-bhāva-paccupaṭṭhāna*). Feeling (*vedanā*) is considered to be the proximate cause of

craving. The term *atitta* conveys that craving, by definition, is that which cannot be fulfilled or satisfied. The definition of *greed* (Asl. 249; Vsm. XIV. 161) puts the emphasis on the tenacious grasping of the object (*ārammaṇa-gahaṇa*), whereas the definition of craving stresses insatiability (*atitta-bhāva*). Greedy adherence to an object is compared to meat sticking to a hot frying pan, and greed manifesting itself as "not letting go" (*apariccāga*) is likened to the irremovable quality of dye prepared from lamp-black. The fixation attributed to greed and the insatiability attributed to craving indicate that addiction to an object is regarded as the basic nature of both of these mental states.

The *Mahānidāna-sutta* (D. II. 58-59), in the midst of its lofty discussion of the great chain of causation related to rebirth, pauses at the causal link of craving to offer a very down-to-earth excursus on the everyday chain of motivation leading from craving to cruel combat. The *Sutta* explains that craving (*taṇhā*) conditions searching (*pariyesanā*), searching conditions acquisition (*lābha*), acquisition conditions decision (*vinicchaya*) regarding what has been acquired, decision conditions sensual passion (*chanda-rāga*), sensual passion conditions attachment (*ajjhosaṇa*), attachment conditions appropriation (*pariggaha*), appropriation conditions avarice (*macchariyam*), avarice conditions guarding (*ārakkha*), and guarding of possession brings about quarrel, strife, and combat (Chart IV. 6). The commentary to the *Dīgha-nikāya* (DA. II. 499) maintains that craving can be regarded from two different points of view: craving functions as a causal link in the chain of causation related to rebirth (*vaṭṭa-mūla-bhūtā purima-taṇhā*), and craving also affects habitual behaviour or conduct (*samudācāra-taṇhā*). The commentary goes on to say that when craving conditions conduct in the course of one's daily life, it does so both by motivating one's search (*esana-taṇhā*) for a desired object, and by energizing one's action in holding on to what has been searched for (*esita-taṇhā*) and gained.

An analysis of the definitions of *cetanā* and *taṇhā*, point to some clear differences that Theravāda maintains between these two mental functions. At the outset, it is posited that craving, in its role of a causal link in the chain of rebirth (*vaṭṭa-mūla-bhūtā purima-taṇhā*), continues to condition the consciousness continuum, along with ignorance, as long as the factors that cause bondage to *kamma* and rebirth are present. However, the *Abhidhamma* method of classifying momentary wholesome and unwholesome mental states posits that craving, in its role of a pre-eminent influence in an individual's current conduct and life style (*samudācāra-taṇhā*), operates only in those *cittas* that are dominated by greed (*lobha*). The definitions of greed in the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 249) and in the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 161) contain the identical statement that greed swells into the river of craving and carries beings into sorrowful states of rebirth. Unlike craving which is regarded as a mental factor that is specific to certain unwholesome states of consciousness (*cittas*), *cetanā* is said to occur in all *cittas*: wholesome, unwholesome, resultant (*vipāka*), and purely functional (*kiriya*).

The definition in the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 161) states that the proximate cause of greed is perceiving enjoyment in things that bind a person to rebirth and are classified as fetters (*saṃyojanāni*). The definition of craving in its role of causal link in the chain of rebirth names *vedanā* (feeling) as the proximate cause of craving. The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XVII. 238), however, stresses that though feeling is the condition for the arising of *taṇhā*, without the operation of the underlying tendencies (*anusayas*) craving will not arise. The definitions posit that greed and craving are caused by feelings of enjoyment that become linked to underlying tendencies. It is posited that when pleasant feelings become vitiated by the *anusayas*, then a person clings to the object of enjoyment and ultimately suffers because the craving for the enjoyable feelings remains

insatiable. By contrast, the lengthy discussion on the relationship between *cetanā* and *kamma* in the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 84-104) shows that feelings and emotions are not considered to be the sole cause, or even the primary cause, of *cetanā*. The examples given in the *Atthasālinī* demonstrate that specific *cetanās* that become expressed in wholesome and unwholesome acts arise as impulsions related to intentions that are conditioned in a holistic manner by the dominant features of the cognitive processes, emotions, and conative energies of the attitudes of mind to which they are related. A sense of purpose derived from its association with the cognitive processes of a state of mind characterizes *cetanā*. Craving, on the contrary, is linked to feelings and emotions and is motivated by the sense of a need.

Greed and craving are regarded as factors that bind a person to the course of *kamma* and rebirth. *Cetanā*, on the contrary, is held to be a mental function that can either bind a person to *kamma* or facilitate the processes of release from *kamma* and sorrowful rebirth. It is posited in the *Suttas* that *cetanā* can be associated with four types of *kamma*. The first three types of *kamma* are described as acts that are wholesome, unwholesome, or of mixed wholesome and unwholesome features. Acts conditioned by craving are regarded as unwholesome *kamma* leading to sorrowful consequences. The *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (A. II. 232) stresses that when *cetanā* becomes identified with the fourth type of *kamma*, it takes the form of the intention to renounce the effects of the three previous types of *kamma*. It follows, then, that whereas craving is regarded as a factor that binds a person to the course of acts and consequences, *cetanā* can either bind or bring about release from such bondage.

Conclusion

The definitions of *cetanā* in the *Sutta* and *Abhidhamma* literatures show the following to be its principal features: *cetanā* is always associated with a specific state of mind (*citta*) that arises through the confluence of causal conditions in the continuum of consciousness; *cetanā* always functions as a conative impulse with the capacity to co-ordinate the functions of concomitant mental states and direct them towards a goal; *cetanā* is made synonymous with *kamma* in such a way that wholesome and unwholesome acts are defined, not as consequents of corresponding purposive impulses from which they are separable, but as concrete expressions of purposive thoughts and intentions, with which they are identical.

The definitions of *cetanā* given in the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 111-112) and the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 135) make an important distinction between its defining characteristic of *cetayita*, which is attributed to all cases of *cetanā*, and its function of putting forth *kamma* (*āyūhana*), which is said to be limited to *cetanās* that arise in association with wholesome and unwholesome states of mind and find concrete expression in wholesome and unwholesome acts of body, speech, and mind. The *Atthasālinī* explains *cetayita* as the function by which *cetanā* co-ordinates (*abhisandahati*) concomitant mental factors by linking them to itself. Strictly speaking, the meaning of *cetayita* is not derived from the verb *ceteti*, but rather, from the concept of *cetanā* as that which animates the organism and endows it with conscious awareness. This idea is found in the *Upaniṣads* (Mt. U. III. 3-6) and is implied in passages in the *Suttas* where a dead body is said to be lacking in *cetanā* (S. III. 143; M. I. 296). Following the same line of interpretation, the commentary to the *Visuddhimagga* (VsmA. 2: 1035) gives as the

synonyms of *abhisandahati*, not only *pabandhati* (to bind or co-ordinate), but also *pavatteti* (to set in motion, to activate).

According to the *Abhidhamma* method of classification, every type of state of mind (*citta*) includes a corresponding purposive impulse (*cetanā*). In the preliminary stages of a cognitive process (*citta-vīthi*), when the states of mind arise as consequences of past *kamma* (*kamma-vipāka*) and are experienced as feelings based on reaction to the object, *cetanās* merely direct the states of mind and their constituent factors to the objects. In the *javana* stage of a cognitive process, the states of mind begin to register the personal responses of the subject and become capable of carrying moral values. The corresponding *cetanās* function as fully developed purposive impulses, manifesting as intentions that have the impetus to produce wholesome and unwholesome acts. The states of mind of the liberated ones (*arahants*) are classified as purely functional (*kiriya*) because, though these enlightened states of mind are efficacious, they are neither motivated by the intention to produce goal-oriented acts nor related to the pleasant and unpleasant consequences of such acts. The *cetanās* that are associated with *kiriya cittas* function as the dynamic mode of these purely functional states of mind. *Kiriya cetanās* produce beneficent acts in accordance with the order of nature (*dhammatā*), like the rain that refreshes the earth, but such *cetanās* are not goal-oriented impulses that afflict the mind with desire for further goals.

The association of *cetanās* with *cittas* signifies that every *cetanā* arises as a purposive impulse that reflects the dominant cognitive and emotive features of the state of mind of which it is a constituent. Every *citta* manifests an attitude of mind because of the way the mental factors that constitute it interact; and *cetanā* is the purposive impulse that activates the entire attitude of mind and directs it towards a goal. Conditioned

origination entails that every purposive impulse is conditioned by the entire configuration of mental factors that makes up an attitude of mind. For example, a wholesome purposive impulse is conditioned not only by the wholesome roots of non-greed, non-hate, and non-delusion, but also by the set of mental factors like flexibility and proficiency that make for ease of functioning (Chart V. 1). An intention to hurt another person is not only rooted in aversion (*dosa*), but is also conditioned by delusion, and could be affected by agitation, envy, avarice, or worry (Chart V. 3). In this manner, because of its association with a specific attitude of mind, every *cetanā* that function as a wholesome or unwholesome purposive impulse carries many cognitive and emotive nuances.

The definitions in the *Atthasālinī* and the *Visuddhimagga* emphasize that the function of *cetanā* is to activate conscious awareness and render it effective in relation to an object. *Cetanā*, therefore, functions as a purposive impulse or impetus with the capacity to initiate and sustain goal-oriented activity in the body and mind. These definitions distinguish two ways in which *cetanā* activates the continuum of consciousness: whenever *cetanā* arises, it co-ordinates (*abhisandahati*) concomitant mental factors and makes them attend to an object; when *cetanās* are conditioned by wholesome or unwholesome attitudes of mind, however, the way in which they activate the continuum of consciousness leads to the production of karmically operative acts of body, speech, and mind (*kammāyūhana*).

Abhisankharoti (assembling the conditions for producing an act) and *āyūhati* (putting forth acts that carry karmic merit and demerit) are the two verbs that point to the capacity of *cetanā* to initiate action in the body and mind. Both of these verbs link *cetanās* to *saṅkhāras*. In the *Milindapañha* (61-62), *abhisankharana* and *cetayita* are given as the defining characteristic of *cetanā*, and in the *Visuddhimagga*, *āyūhana* is regarded as the

function of both *saṅkhāra* (Vsm. XVII. 51), and *cetanā* (Vsm. XIV. 135). The association of *cetanā* with *saṅkhāra* signifies that *cetanā* participates in the mind's capacity to bring together the functions of concomitant mental factors in such a way that they produce goal-oriented activity. According to the definitions in the *Atthasālinī* and the *Visuddhimagga*, *cetanā* as purposive impulse plays the leading role in forming the functions of concomitant mental states into a configuration of causes that produces a wholesome or unwholesome act.

The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 261) states that when unwholesome *kamma*, for example, is put forth (*āyūhite kamme*), because of the *cetanās* associated with the twelve types of unwholesome states of mind (Chart VI. 6), a person experiences suffering. Here the *Atthasālinī* illustrates the causal links between unwholesome states of mind, unwholesome purposive impulses, the putting forth of unwholesome *kamma*, and sorrowful consequences. Similarly, the *Visuddhimagga* upholds the identification of purposive impulse with attitude of mind, and act with purposive impulse. The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XVII. 60-61) shows that *cetanā* as purposive impulse has the distinctive function of linking a wholesome or unwholesome attitude of mind (*citta*) that arise in the continuum of consciousness with the capacity within conscious processes to bring together causal conditions in such a way as to produce wholesome and unwholesome acts (*saṅkhārās*).

The commentary to *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. 2: 1035) emphasizes the activating role of *cetanā*, maintaining that the very nature of *cetanā* is to be engaged in goal-oriented activity (*vyāpāra bhava*). Furthermore, by taking *cetayana*, *āyūhana* and *iriyānā* (rudimentary forward movement) to be synonyms, this commentary suggests that the capacity to produce *kamma* (*āyūhana*) is developed from the basic function through

which *cetanā* vitalizes consciousness by causing it to engage with the environment. The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 98-99) makes it clear that when *cetanā* puts forth *kamma* through its function of *āyūhana*, it shows itself to be constituted of two aspects: it manifests as an intention or purposive thought that reflects a specific attitude of mind (*citta*); and it displays itself as an energizing impulse that arouses activity in the body and organs of speech (*kāya-vacīppayoga-samuṭṭhāpikā*).

When the definition of *cetanā* in the *Abhidhamma* literature is compared with the definition of *saṅkappa* (Dhs. 12), *chanda* (Vsm. XIV. 150) and *virīya* (Asl. 121), it becomes evident that the distinctive feature of *cetanā* is its basic function of giving a dynamic form to a state of mind (*citta*) and causing it to engage with the environment. *Saṅkappa* is closely associated with thought (*vitakka*) and the definition in the *Dhammasaṅgani* does not attribute to *saṅkappa* the capacity to initiate action. *Saṅkappa* is purposive thought, not purposive impulse. *Virīya* and *chanda* represent, respectively, energy and zeal in pursuing an object; but the definitions do not attribute to *virīya* and *chanda* purposive thought and participation in the cognitive process of choosing a goal. By contrast, as the *Atthasālinī* shows, when *cetanā* puts forth wholesome and unwholesome *kamma*, it functions as a purposive impulse that is governed by the cognitive processes and emotions of a corresponding state of mind.

The definitions also show that the purposive impulse of *cetanā* is not to be confused with the motivating drive of craving (*taṇhā*). Insatiability (*atitta-bhāva*) and attachment that will not give up objects are regarded as the basis of the capacity of greed (*lobha*) and craving to initiate action (Vsm. XVI. 51, XIV. 161). It is to be noted that the definitions of *cetanā* do not regard emotional tensions or attachment to objects, or the experience of need, to be the proximate cause for the arising of *cetanā*. The activism

(*vyāpāra-bhāva*) of *cetanā*, is regarded as a display of the mind's capacity to compose configurations of causal conditions and put forth conditioned acts (*saṅkhāras*). In the final analysis, this capacity in the mind must be seen as the order of nature, conditioned origination, becoming manifest within consciousness. According to Theravāda, it is the order of nature (*dharmatā*) that physical or mental factors converge in such a way that corresponding effects are produced. Conditioned acts tend to form habits that further influence the mind's capacity to initiate action in the organism and produce acts of body, speech, and mind.

The Buddha's definition of kamma (A. III. 415) could be interpreted to mean that though *cetanā* as purposive impulse instigates wholesome and unwholesome acts so that *kamma* is identical with *cetanā*, nevertheless, the purposive impulse precedes the act, from which it is separable. The *Abhidhamma* explicitly rejects the above interpretation of this definition. According to Theravāda, this definition signifies that the act is but the concrete expression of the purposive impulse. The concept of *sañcetanika kamma* (intentional act) in the *Suttas* and *Abhidhamma* signifies that purpose and act constitute an inseparable whole. The definitions of karmically operative acts of body, speech, and mind are stated in such a way as to identify act and purposive thought. The definitions in the *Abhidhamma* literature and the commentaries to the *Suttas* deliberately avoid the phrase "having applied *cetanā* (*cetayitvā*) one performs acts of body, speech, and mind." The grammatical form *cetayitvā* suggests that the purposive impulse is the cause and the act is the consequence. The definitions in the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 84, 87, 88), precisely identify wholesome and unwholesome acts with *cetanās* that become effective (*siddhā*) at a specific "door of action": body, speech, or mind.

The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XVII. 60) makes acts of karmic merit (*puññābhisaṅkhāra*) identical with wholesome purposive impulses (*kusala-saṅcetanā*) that are set in motion (*pavattā*) through the practice of virtue (*sīla*) and the cultivation (*bhāvanā*) of the mind. Acts of karmic demerit (*apuññābhisaṅkhāra*) are defined as unwholesome *cetanās* set in motion in unwholesome acts. Acts that are characterized by immutable serenity (*āneñjābhisaṅkhāra*) are identified with the wholesome *cetanās* of the higher levels of meditation that are set in motion through the cultivation (*bhāvanā*) of the mind. Since the *Visuddhimagga* maintains that each *cetanā* arises as a constituent of a specific state of mind (*citta*), these definitions entail that the act is identified not only with a corresponding purposive impulse but also with a corresponding attitude of mind that governs and nourishes the purposive impulse. In the same vein, in the discourse on unwholesome *kamma*, the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 97-100) identifies each unwholesome act with a corresponding intention that not only expresses an unwholesome state of mind, but also initiates acts of body and speech, bringing that state of mind into concrete manifestation. For example, the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 100) makes it clear that the unwholesome act of harsh speech (*pharusa-vācā*) entails not only the intention to speak harshly (*pharusa-cetanā*), but also a harsh attitude of mind (*citta-pharusatā*). If the words are harsh but the heart is tender, this is not categorized as the unwholesome *kamma* of harsh speech. Through the purposive impulse attitude become act. The *Visuddhimagga* and *Atthasālinī*, therefore, view *citta*, *cetanā*, and *kamma* as an integral whole and affirm that moral value resides in this inseparable whole.

Conclusion

The purpose of this work, as stated in the Introduction was to explore, mainly through a contextual and comparative study of passages in the *Suttas*, the *Abhidhamma*, and the commentarial literature, whether, within the boundaries of conditioned origination, *cetanā* performs the three following functions: forming an intention, initiating action to pursue the goal specified by that intention, and directing action towards that goal. For the purposes of this thesis, in the Introduction "volition" was defined as a complex mental function comprising: intending, initiating action, and directing action towards the intended goal. The investigation of whether *cetanā* performed these three functions led to a full delineation of the relationship of *cetanā* to the cognitive processes of purposive reflection in the *citta* and to the conative dynamism of the *saṅkhārakkhandha*. Further focus for the work was provided by the Buddha's definition of *kamma*: "It is *cetanā* that I call *kamma*; having applied *cetanā* one performs action through body, speech, and mind" (A. III. 415).

In describing the relationship of *cetanā* to the *citta*, it is shown in this work that in accordance with the holistic view of consciousness affirmed in the *Upaniṣads*, the *Yoga-sūtra*, and the *Suttas*, the term *citta* refers to consciousness as a whole constituted of the interaction of cognitive processes, emotions, and conative energies. In the *Abhidhamma*, the *citta* is conceived as a momentary state of mind or mental attitude composed of an array of cognitive, emotive, and conative mental factors (*cetasikās*). Their mutual conditioning and their interactions with the state of mind as a whole renders the latter ethically wholesome (*kusala*), unwholesome (*akusala*), or indeterminate (*avyākata*).

Although the term *cetanā* is etymologically related to *citta*, in the *Suttas* it is the *saṅkhārās* that are said to be constituted of *cetanās*. In this thesis *saṅkhārās* are defined as the compounding and composing activities in the continuum of consciousness through which mental states are brought together as causal conditions to form configurations. The configurations that are formed through the compounding of causal conditions are the aggregates (*khandhas*) that constitute the "person" and the acts (*saṅkhārās*, *abhisāṅkhārās*) that are put forth through the body, speech, and mind. Thus the factors that make up a "person" and the acts that are expressions of that "person" are both produced by the compounding activity in the continuum of consciousness.

Given conditioned origination, it follows that the series of states of mind that arise in the continuum of consciousness cannot claim an existence apart from the mental factors of which they are constituted. Similarly, the compounding activity in the continuum of states of mind cannot claim to be an autonomous energy that can flourish apart from the concrete acts of composing (*abhisāṅkharāṇa*) configurations of causal conditions and the composed (*abhisāṅkhata*) acts (*abhisāṅkhārās*) of body, speech, and mind. Since conditioned origination entails compatibility, if not resemblance, between the causal conditions that are assembled and the effects that are produced through the processes of assembling, certain patterns of similarity begin to be exhibited, both in the processes of causal conditioning and in the conditioned effects that are produced. These similarities take the form of habits of body and speech as well as mental dispositions.

In Theravāda, most especially in the *Abhidhamma*, *cetanā* functions as the link between the cognitive processes and the composing activities of the continuum of consciousness. Through this linking function, *cetanā* becomes a participant in the attitude of mind manifested by the *citta*. At the same time, as the primary constituent of the

constructive activities of the mind (*saṅkhāras*), *cetanā* displays its defining characteristic of co-ordinating (*abhisankharāṇa*) mental states as causal conditions to form goal-oriented acts. This amounts to saying that in *Abhidhamma* terminology, a *cetanā* arises as a purposive impulse in a specific state of mind and initiates action by co-ordinating the mind's conative capacities. A sense of purpose as such can remain as a mental aspiration (*paṭthanā*) or as a resolve (*paṇidhī*) in the mind; in *cetanā* the cognitive processes of purposive thinking are integrated with the conative capacity to initiate action.

The bond with the cognitive processes of the *citta* and with the conative energies of *saṅkhāras* endows the purposive impulse of *cetanā* with the capacity to direct the activity that it arouses in the organism towards the intended goal. Purposive thought formulates an intention that provides a plan or image of the future and this image acts as a teleological "pull" on the action initiated by *cetanā*. However, a motivating energy that may limit or go against the capacity of *cetanā* to direct action towards an intended goal comes from the habitual ways of thinking, acting, and speaking that mark the conditioning and conditioned activities of *saṅkhāras*. *Cetanā* as purposive impulse, therefore, does have the capacity to direct action towards an intended goal, but it is not always successful in applying this capacity. The goal-directed impetus of *cetanā* can be frustrated when there is a conflict between the aspirations that arise through purposive reflections and the limiting power of habits.

It follows, then, that *cetanā* can be called "volition" in terms of the definition put forward in the Introduction, since it performs the combined functions of intending, initiating action, and directing action towards the fulfilment of the intention. However, the capacities and the mode of functioning of *cetanā* are governed by conditioned origination. For this reason, *cetanā* cannot function as "will" in the sense of an

autonomous, controlling power. In this context, it is significant that the early Jainas categorized the teaching of the Buddha as a form of *akriyāvāda* (doctrine of non-action). Jacobi (1968, 2:xxv) explains that the early Jainas defined *kriyāvāda* as the view that affirms the self to be both the agent of action and the recipient of the fruits of ethically good and bad action. Since there is no room in Buddhism for an autonomous self with the inherent powers of agency and control, the early Jainas regarded the Buddha's teachings as a doctrine of non-action. In Chapter II it was shown that the Jainas attribute to the self an energy (*vīrya*) that is the ultimate source of all the capacities and functions that operate in the body and mind, including the capacity to know and be aware (Jaini 1979, 105). In *Harmless Souls* (1995, 99) Johnson interprets the Jaina concept of *vīrya* as the "will" that the self possesses to express in action its own nature of consciousness (*caitanya*) and bliss (*sukha*). Thus in the Buddha's time the early Jainas voiced the same opinion that Mrs. Rhys Davids reached in the nineteenth century: Buddhism cannot have an adequate concept of "will" and agency, since "will" presupposes the self as "willer."

In his refutation of the view that Buddhism is lacking in an adequate concept of will, Kalupahana (1995, 49-53) maintains that in Buddhism the "dispositions" (*saṅkhārās*) are at the basis of all decision-making functions. He argues that in the *Suttas*, the decision to perform a goal-directed act involves two factors: volition (*cetanā*) represents the immediate decision to act, but the choice of action involves the "character" of a person, which has been gradually shaped, over a period of time, by dispositions or habits of mind. Kalupahana is quick to add that the dispositions themselves are generated by acts that proceed from "volitions" (*cetanā/saṅcetanā*). In the *Principles of Buddhist Psychology* (1987, 89), Kalupahana focuses on what he calls the function of "selectivity" performed by mental dispositions (*saṅkhārās*) in the processes of perception. The thrust

of his argument is that due to the conditioning of the mind by the dispositions, consciousness selects objects that it finds to be of "interest." According to Kalupahana's interpretation, Buddhism maintains that the ability of a human person to "choose, think and act" arises from this "selectivity in consciousness."

Kalupahana interprets *cetanā* to be the volition or immediate decision to act that is conditioned by the mental dispositions that have been formed over a period of time. He does not take into account the connection that *cetanā* is regarded as having to the processes of intellection, discernment, and reflection that arise in the state of mind (*citta*) to which it belongs. The descriptions of the Eightfold Path emphasize the transforming influence that the cognitive processes of systematic attention (*yoniso-manasikāra*), mindfulness (*satī*), and understanding (*paññā*) have over the processes of decision making. If volition is interpreted primarily in terms of habit-forming tendencies in the composing and conditioning activities of the mind, it becomes difficult to explain the Theravāda view that cognitive processes directed by mindfulness and understanding (*paññā*) can bring about changes in the mind. While the principle of conditioned origination precludes the notion of an autonomous will that can control all the processes of consciousness, it would not be correct to say that in Theravāda the mental function of making decisions is explained solely in terms of mental dispositions or habits of thought.

The *Karajakāya-vagga* of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (A. V. 292-297) indicates the *Sutta* view of how a decision to act emerges from a state of mind or mental attitude (*citta*). This section of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* links specific wholesome and unwholesome acts of body, speech, and mind with corresponding attitudes of mind. Whereas the term *cetanā* does not occur in the *Karajakāya-vagga*, the wholesome and unwholesome acts are designated as acts instigated by *sañcetanā* (*sañcetanika kamma*). The relationship

between attitude and act is illustrated, for example, in the case of a person who does not injure living beings. Such a person is described in the *Karajakāya-vagga* as one who feels compassion towards all that lives and breathes. Since this person is described as habitually compassionate, the influence of the habit-forming *saṅkhārās* in the mind is clearly implied. Nevertheless, a difference is maintained in the *Suttas* and *Abhidhamma* between consciousness as a continuum of thoughts, emotions, and conative energies that is constantly responding to fresh sensory and mental stimulations and mental habits that delimit the mind's reactions. In the specific example given above, the compassionate state of mind is not reduced to mental habits conditioned by past experiences. The *Suttas*, the *Atthasālinī*, and the *Visuddhimagga* emphasize that wholesome attitudes need to be sustained by systematic attention, mindfulness, and wisdom. These cognitive disciplines of mindfulness and wisdom are also regarded as powerful motives for the cultivation of wholesome attitudes.

In the *Vinaya-piṭaka* (Vin. III. 73), the close correspondence between a state of mind (*citta*) and the purposive thought that expresses the dominant cognitive and emotive features of that state of mind is expressed in the phrase *iti-citta-mano*. Horner translates: "as the mind so the thought" (1938-1996, 1:127). This phrase is put forward to explain the deliberately committed offence of a monk who incites a lay follower to commit suicide by describing death as a far happier state than life on earth. The offence is said to be deliberately committed because the state of mind (*citta*) of the monk who commits the offence and his purposive thought or intention (*mana*) correspond perfectly to each other: both the state of mind and the purposive thought are focused on causing death. Horner quotes the commentary to the *Vinaya-piṭaka*, where it is emphasized that in the case of a deliberate act, there is no disparity whatsoever between the state of mind (*citta*) and the

purposive thought that instigates the act. The commentary goes on to say that the two are as one and that the purposive thought expresses the state of mind (Horner 1938-1966, 1:126, n.1). Conversely, it is implied that no such match between a specific state of mind and a purposive thought or intention can be shown in the case of an act that is done without attention or without full awareness.

The correspondence between a specific state of mind (*citta*), the purposive impulse (*cetanā*) that emerges from that state of mind, and the goal-oriented act (*kamma*) that the purposive impulse instigates is lucidly stated in the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 95-106). This section of the *Atthasālinī* can be read as a commentary on the *Karajakāya-vagga* of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* and other discourses in the *Suttas* on the ten unwholesome and ten wholesome acts. The *Atthasālinī* interprets the act (*kamma*) to be an expression of a purposive impulse (*cetanā*), and the purposive impulse to be an expression of a specific wholesome or unwholesome state of mind (*citta*) that rises in the continuum of consciousness. The three are seen as aspects of a single process with no disparities or contradictions between them.

When a contradiction can be perceived between intention and act, the *Atthasālinī* upholds the primacy of intention. For example, the *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 100) interprets the unwholesome act of harsh speech in terms of correlations between harshness in the state of mind (*citta-pharusatā*), the intention to express harshness (*pharusa-cetanā*), and the concrete act of speaking harshly (*pharusā vācā*). When a person speaks rough words to prevent a child from a dangerous act, the *Atthasālinī* does not categorize those rough words as harsh speech, since they do not proceed from an unkind or harsh attitude of mind. According to the *Atthasālinī*, therefore, *cetanā* has two distinctive characteristics: *cetanā* is neither autonomous nor uncaused but arises from, and expresses, a specific state

of mind; and in contradistinction to cognitive functions such as resolve (*saṅkappa*) and thought (*vitakka*), *cetanā* has the capacity to initiate action to carry out an intention.

The *Atthasālinī* identifies purposive impulse (*cetanā*) and act (*kamma*) by defining acts as expressions and not mere consequences of purposive impulses (Asl. 84, 87, 88). In the definition of bodily *kamma* for example, the *Atthasālinī* does not resort to the formula that occurs in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (A. III. 415): "having formed a purposive thought (*cetayitvā*), one performs action through the body (*kammaṃ karoti kayena*)." Instead, the definition in the *Atthasālinī* makes it clear that the very *cetanā* (*yā cetanā*) by which (*yayā*) one performs unwholesome bodily acts or refrains from doing so is identical with the act performed by the body (*idaṃ kāya-kammam*). Acts of speech and mind are similarly defined as expressions or manifestations of *cetanā*.

The introductory chapter of this thesis contains references to the view that the Buddha "ethicized" *kamma* by maintaining that the ethical value of an act lies in the intention (*cetanā*) that instigates the act. However, the descriptions of the *citta* in the *Sutta* literature and the definitions that are given in the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Atthasālinī* demonstrate that *cetanā* neither arises autonomously nor functions as a controlling factor in its role of purpose imbued with conative capacity. Since the purposive impulse (*cetanā*) always arises through participation in a state of mind (*citta*) and is conditioned by concomitant mental factors, the ethical quality of the intention is not intrinsic to it but is derived from the state of mind to which it belongs. It follows that the moral quality of the act depends, not solely on the moral quality of the intention that instigates it, but also on the moral quality of the state of mind (*citta*) from which the intentional impulse is derived. The state of mind from which the intentional impulse emerges is conditioned, not only by one's own emotions and thought processes but also by social influences, the

example of friends, and by training. The evidence does not support Gombrich's contention that by defining *kamma* in terms of *cetanā*, the Buddha taught a "religious individualism" (1988, 72).

A clear picture of the relationship between *citta*, *cetanā*, and *saṅkhāra* can be obtained from studying the lists of wholesome, unwholesome, and ethically indeterminate states of mind (*cittas*) in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, the *Atthasālinī*, and the *Visuddhimagga*. At the outset, it becomes clear that every state of mind (*citta*) obtains its moral value from the mental factors that constitute it. A wholesome mental-state, for example contains, besides the factors of basic sentience, the "roots of wholesome action" (non-greed, non-aversion, and non-delusion), the two factors that ensure good behaviour (shame at doing wrong and fear of the consequences of evil action), and a range of mental factors such as buoyancy, flexibility, resilience, and straight-forwardness, which provide mental ease and the facility to function well.

The lists of wholesome, unwholesome, and indeterminate *cittas* reveal that *cetanā* is present in every mental state. From the definitions of *cetanā* and the descriptions of processes of perception and motivation it becomes clear that the mode of functioning of *cetanā* differs according to the dominant characteristics of the state of mind within which it arises. In every mental state, *cetanā* is present as a factor of basic sentience. The other basic factors are: contact with an object (*phassa*), rudimentary feelings (*vedanā*), and vitality (*jīvitindriya*). In the preliminary stages of perception when the mind is guided by the qualities of the object and its own habitual reactions, *cetanā* functions as the mental factor that co-ordinates and energizes concomitant mental states and inclines the mind towards the object. In the secondary stage of perception (*javana*) when the mind begins to respond to the object with wholesome or unwholesome attitudes, *cetanā* assumes the role

of full-fledged purposive impulse and instigates goal-oriented acts (*kamma*) of body, speech, and mind in relation to the object. Conditioned by the *āsava*s, *cetanā*s take the form of purposive impulses that become a "nutriment" for the processes of rebirth. Under the influence of the *āsava*s, *cetanā* prolongs the processes of rebirth by providing the continuum of consciousness with newer goals and more exciting purposes. Finally, when the mind turns towards the Eightfold Path, *cetanā* arises as the purposive impulse that pertains to the Path (*magga-cetanā*). In this role *cetanā* manifests as the intention to renounce the processes and the fruits of *kamma*.

In all these modes of functioning, *cetanā* exhibits its two distinctive characteristics: it takes on the attitude and the dominant features of the state of mind within which it arises, and it engages in co-ordinating (*abhisankharapa*) concomitant mental states and directing their energies towards acts of body, speech, and mind. In all of its varied roles *cetanā* invariably manifests as purposive thought that is imbued with capacity to initiate goal-directed action. The many modes in which *cetanā* functions invariably involve the effort of straining towards a goal (*āyūhana*).

The lists of wholesome and unwholesome *cittas* show how *cetanā*s link *cittas* with *saṅkhāras*. A *cetanā* arises in each *citta* as a purposive impulse that is conditioned by the dominant features of the *citta*. A state of mind rooted in non-greed, for instance, may produce a purposive impulse that is characterized by the thought of offering a gift to a friend. According to the *Atthasālinī* and the *Visuddhimagga*, these same purposive impulses arising in wholesome and unwholesome *cittas* constitute wholesome and unwholesome *saṅkhāras*. *Saṅkhāras* are classified as wholesome or unwholesome on the basis of the moral quality of the *cetanā*s of which they are constituted. In the classification given in the *Visuddhimagga*, for example, the twelve types of

unwholesome *cittas* rooted in greed, hatred, and delusion correspond exactly with the twelve unwholesome types of *saṅkhārās*. The idea that comes through this classification is that purposive impulses arising in different types of attitudes of mind instigate corresponding types of goal-oriented acts that tend to become habits. In the example given above, the intention to make a gift arising in an attitude of mind that is inspired by non-greed provides the impetus for the mind to co-ordinate thought processes, emotions, and conative capacities in such a way as to produce the concrete act of making a gift.

The correspondences between the lists of *cittas* and the lists of *saṅkhārās* demonstrate most clearly the mutual conditioning that is posited between the attitudes of mind manifested in the *cittas* and the habit-forming activities manifested in the *saṅkhārās*. The cognitive processes, emotions, and conative capacities that compose the wholesome and unwholesome states of mind are conditioned by the constructive activities of the mind that assemble mental factors to produce acts of body, speech, and mind that tend to become habits. The cognitive processes of the mind by which a person formulates a view of life (*diṭṭhi*), for example, are conditioned by the wholesome and unwholesome habits that constitute a person's way of life. However, the lists of *cittas* and *saṅkhārās* in the *Visuddhimagga* also show that the habit-making activities of the *saṅkhārās* are continually influenced by the cognitive processes and emotions that prevail in the states of mind. The continuum of consciousness that is constituted of the series of mental states (*cittas*) is compared to an artist who responds to fresh stimulations by putting forth new works of art. The habit-forming activities of the mind are challenged by the mind's capacity to vary its emotional responses and its thought processes.

The lists of *cittas* and *saṅkhārās* show that according to Theravāda, purposive impulses are shaped both by the decision-making capacities in the cognitive processes of

the mind and by the habit-forming tendencies in the mind's conditioning and composing activities. The purposive impulses of *cetanā* are regarded as the focal points where habitual acts influence attitudes of mind displayed by the *cittas*, and the thought processes and emotional features in the attitudes of mind influence the habit-forming activities. For example, the intentions and goal-oriented impulses of *cetanā* are regarded as occasions for cognitive processes such as systematic attention (*yoniso-manasikāra*), mindfulness (*sati*), and understanding (*paññā*) to influence the habit-forming capacities of *saṅkhāras*. By the same token, the purposive impulses of *cetanā* provide the opportunities for the habit-forming tendencies of the *saṅkhāras* to exert their influence on the cognitive processes and the manifestations of emotion in the *citta*. Wholesome habits of body and speech aid the development of mindfulness and wisdom.

While upholding conditioned origination as its central principle, Theravāda affirms that it is possible to cleanse, train, and transform the mind so that the causes of sorrow cease. Theravādins reject those forms of determinism that they regard as inimical to the idea that liberation from sorrow can be achieved. They maintain in the *Kathāvatthu* that determinism cannot be supported by logical reasoning without jettisoning the idea that liberation from the causes of sorrow can be achieved. At the outset, the idea that present experiences are determined by past deeds (*pubbe-kata-hetu*) is rejected by the Buddha (A. I. 173). From a theoretical perspective, conditioned origination opposes the *Sāṃkhya* view that the effect is already potentially present in the cause. However, the Buddha rejects the view that the past acts are the only factors that determine present behaviour on the practical grounds that it leads to attitudes of mind where there is neither the impetus to act (*chanda*), nor striving (*vāyāma*) nor the sense that one should perform certain deeds and refrain from other deeds. It is implied here that intentions arise from the

interaction between influences from the past and fresh stimulations from present experiences. The verses of the *Theragāthā* and *Therīgāthā* show that present experiences of joy and sorrow, the presence or absence of beneficent friends (*kalyāṇa-mitta*), and training in virtue (*sīla*) or the lack of it were considered to be crucial present factors that interacted with past experiences in shaping the course of one's life.

Theravāda also rejects the view that thought processes and behaviour are determined by latent tendencies in the mind. Chapters III and IV show that it is difficult to find passages in the *Suttas* and the *Abhidhamma* texts to substantiate the idea of "unconscious motivation." Padmasiri de Silva maintains that *anusayas* and *āsavās* are latent tendencies in the sense that they can act upon the mind without the mind being aware of their motivating influence. De Silva's interpretation of latent tendencies of sensual passion (*ragānusaya*) and repugnance (*paṭighānusaya*), for example, implies that these tendencies can produce attitudes of mind (*cittas*) and intentional impulses (*cetanās*) without the mind being aware that it is under the influence of sensual passion or tendencies of repugnance. The debates in the *Kathāvatthu* show that Theravādins did not find it easy to explain how *anusayas* and *āsavās* can repeatedly and obsessively influence the continuum of consciousness, without accepting the idea that they somehow remain latent and intact in the midst of changing mental processes. Nevertheless, Theravādins concluded the debate by asserting their position that *anusayas* are *saṅkhārās* that arise repeatedly, conditioned by contacts with mental objects (Kvu. 405-408). The *Visuddhimagga* and the *Atthasālinī* reject the notion of latency. As this debate continues among modern scholars of Theravāda, Johansson (1979, 110) makes a strong case for the position that there is no evidence that the Buddha viewed *anusayas* and *āsavās* as dormant

factors that motivate the mind while the mind remains unaware of them as sources of motivation.

One can find support for Johansson's view of how *anusayas* function in the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta*. The instructions for the practice of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*) do not demonstrate a concern to discover and dismantle hidden sources of motivation. The discipline of mindfully observing mental processes includes the continual awareness that past experiences are among the many and diverse conditions that cause the arising of present mental states. However, no attempt is made to causally connect a particular mental syndrome that pertains to the present with a specific significant event in the past. In the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta*, *sati* is interpreted as "bearing in mind" what is currently occurring and not allowing the present to go unheeded. In the context of the Eightfold Path, mindfulness does not imply remembering past events and discovering their motivating influences on present purposes.

Another form of determinism that Theravāda rejects is the view that wholesome and unwholesome mental states cannot arise in the same continuum of consciousness. The *Abhidhamma* seeks to avoid the notion that wholesome *cittas* cannot be produced in a continuum of consciousness where *āsavās* and *anusayas* operate. Since all schools of Buddhism accepted conditioned origination, there was general agreement that wholesome and unwholesome *cittas* cannot co-exist because they are incompatible, and cannot succeed each other because neither can produce the conditions for the arising of the other. If *āsavās* and *anusayas* are not brought to cessation until the utter purity of an *arahant* is attained, it becomes a problem to explain how wholesome *cittas* can arise in an ordinary person's continuum of consciousness. Theravādins avoided this problem by maintaining that an ethically indeterminate (*avyākata*) *citta* can follow an unwholesome *citta*, act as a

buffer, and prepare the way for the arising of a wholesome *citta* (Jaini 1959, 236-238).

The Theravāda position can be shown to be inconsistent, since an ethically indeterminable *citta* cannot facilitate the arising of a wholesome *citta*. Nevertheless, Theravādins refused to give up their idea that wholesome states can arise when wholesome conditions are nurtured, even if the mind is beset by unwholesome factors or confused by conflicting emotions or dulled by ignorance.

Theravāda does not uphold the view that *cetanās* can arise in such a way as to set aside or negate processes of conditioning. However, there is a powerful affirmation in Theravāda that the processes of consciousness can be changed so as to provide the conditions for the arising of a series of wholesome *cetanās*. It is made clear in the *Suttas* and *Abhidhamma* texts that in themselves *cetanās* are neither wholesome nor unwholesome: they arise as purposive impulses in all *cittas* and their ethical quality depends on whether the *cittas* in which they participate are wholesome or unwholesome. Theravādins maintain that the ethical quality of the purposive impulses displayed by *cetanās* can be changed by changing the attitudes of mind manifested by the *cittas* within which they arise. Mental attitudes can be changed because *cittas* do not have a fixed nature: each *citta* is a constellation of cognitive states, emotions, and conative energies, and the attitude of mind that it manifests is a product of their mutual conditioning. The Theravāda view is that attitudes of mind can be cleansed, educated, and transformed by changing the conditions of their arising.

The processes by which tensions are resolved and changes are effected in the continuum of consciousness are sometimes described in terms of the *citta* as a whole acting upon those of its constituents that cause tension and conflict. However, when it functions as an organic whole, the *citta* does not acquire a controlling energy (*śakti*) that

it can exert over the cognitive processes, emotions, and conative energies of which it is formed. Any transformation that takes place in the continuum of consciousness, therefore, must occur through adjustments in the mutual conditioning of thoughts, emotions, and conative energies. The phrase: "the mind should be subjugated by the mind" (*cetasā cittaṃ abhiniggaṇhitabbam*) does not mean that the continuum of consciousness develops into a "willer" possessing "will power" by which it can control its processes.

It was shown in Chapter III that Theravāda conceives of every process of motivation in the continuum of consciousness as an ordered series where one state of mind follows another, in accordance with conditioned origination. In the *Suttas*, there are several examples of motivation described as an ordered series, especially in relation to the disciplines of the Eightfold Path. These examples emphasize that when a particular stage in the motivational series is well developed, it becomes a condition for the arising of the next. The motivational series shows the gradual inclination of the mind, stage by stage towards a chosen goal. In the *Suttas* (M. I. 115; S. II. 67), the term *nati* conveys the "inclination" of the mind towards objects of desire and attachment. Thus *nati* is the "bending" of the mind in the direction of sorrow and rebirth. The three sections of the *Nidāna-samyutta* (S. II. 66-67) that bear the title *cetanā* make the statement that when purposive impulses, plans, and underlying tendencies operate in the mind, there is an "inclination" (*nati*) that directs the mind towards the sorrow of rebirth. In the motivational processes that pertain to the Eightfold Path, however, the conditions are provided to cause the mind to "incline" towards release from sorrow. *Cetanā* does not appear as a separate factor in the motivational processes that are delineated in the *Suttas*. From an *Abhidhamma* perspective, however, it can be said that *cetanā* arises as a purposive

impetus in each *citta* of a motivational series and brings about the transition to the next *citta*. *Cetanās* can be regarded as goal-directed thoughts with conative energy functioning at each stage of a motivational series to ensure that the continuum of consciousness inclines (*cittam namati*) towards the chosen goal.

It was pointed out in Chapter III that the *Majjhima-nikāya* (M. III. 72-73) takes the position that a person can begin to cultivate the wholesome *cittas* of the Eightfold Path even when the mind is under the influence of the *āsava*s. According to the *Majjhima-nikāya*, a person whose mind is conditioned by the *āsava*s of sensual passion, attachment to life, wrong view, and ignorance will practise the ethical disciplines (*sīla*) of the Eightfold Path with the hope of gaining karmic merit and a happy rebirth. Nevertheless, the endeavours of such a person are not rejected outright as opposed to the attitude of non-attachment, which is a prerequisite for advancement in the Eightfold Path. The *Majjhima-nikāya* says that when that person continues to persevere in the cultivation of right mindfulness, and right view, the mind will gradually be freed of the *āsava*s. Similarly, the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. I. 32) maintains that one can begin to cultivate the ethical disciplines of the Eightfold Path even when the mind is corrupted and disturbed by the *āsava*s. Like the *Majjhima-nikāya*, the *Visuddhimagga* accepts that aspirations for beneficial consequences and karmic merit motivate a person who seeks to practise virtue when the mind is *āsava* laden (*sāsa*va). Nevertheless, the *Visuddhimagga* regards mundane virtue cultivated under the polluting conditions of the *āsava*s to be a preparation and prerequisite for the attainment of total freedom from the longing to prolong life and achieve future goals. In the path of gradual purification, *āsava*-laden virtue is seen as a transition from an unwholesome life conditioned by purposive impulses (*cetanās*) and

mental habits (*saṅkhārās*) that strain (*āyūna*) towards more, and newer, objects to a life of mindfulness and wise non-attachment to future goals and aspirations.

From a psychological perspective, the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (S. IV. 251, 261) defines *nibbāna* as complete liberation from the three unwholesome roots of action: greed (*lobha/rāga*), hatred (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*). It was shown above that Theravādins strongly affirm that non-greed, non-hatred, and non-delusion can function as wholesome roots of action and generate wholesome *cittas* in a continuum of consciousness that is still conditioned by the corrupting influence of the *āsava*s and the obsessive urges of the *anusaya*s. The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 127-129) lays out the Theravāda view of how non-greed, non-hatred, and non-delusion function in a mind still stricken by the *āsava*s and gradually free the mind from their corrupting influence. According to the *Atthasālinī*, non-greed inhibits covetousness, encourages generosity, and opens the mind to the impermanence (*anicca*) of all physical and mental states; non-hate renders friendship (*mettā*) possible and makes a person see the sorrow (*dukkha*) of others; non-delusion prepares the way for the cultivation (*bhāvanā*) of mindfulness and brings insight into the absence of permanent and autonomous selfhood (*anattā*) in conditioned physical and mental states. This statement in the *Atthasālinī* signifies that though *cittas* of greed, hatred, and delusion do arise even when one is practising generosity, friendship, and mindfulness, this practise gradually leads to the cessation of the corrupting influence of the *āsava*s and to the total absence in the mind of greed, hatred, and delusion.

In the *Abhidhamma* method of classification, the states of mind of an *arahant* are designated as "functional" because they are not the results of past *kamma* and they do not produce acts with karmic consequences. They are "functional" in the sense that they are effective in accomplishing a task. Bhikku Bodhi explains that the functional states of

mind of an *arahant* resemble the wholesome states of mind of ordinary people, which are motivated by non-greed, non-hate, and non-delusion (1993, 50). These wholesome states of mind are marked by generosity, friendship, and mindfulness. The difference is that, whereas the wholesome mental states of ordinary people are directed towards future goals, the beneficent mind of an *arahant* is entirely free from the desire for results and entirely at ease. According to the *Abhidhamma*, no category of *citta* can arise without *cetanā* as a constituent. The functional *cetanās* in functional *cittas* merely perform their function of co-ordinating (*saṁvidahana*) the energies and operations of concomitant states in order to direct them to appropriate objects. In wholesome and unwholesome states of mind *cetanās* function as purposive impulses that put forth effort (*āyūhana*) in producing acts of body, speech, and mind. *Kiriya-cetanās* are free of any form of straining (*anāyūhana*).

According to Theravāda, the continuum of consciousness is able to liberate itself from unwholesome roots of action, obdurate underlying tendencies (*anusayās*), and the long-lasting corrupting influences of the *āsavās* because of its two unique capacities: the capacity of variegation and the capacity of self-awareness. The capacity of the *citta* to "colour" itself variously—with a variety of feelings, emotions, ideas, and conative energies—by diversifying its responses to diverse external influences and internal tensions is compared to the skill of a master-artist (S. III. 151; Asl. 63-64). This capacity for variegation implies that the continuum of consciousness does not merely react to situations, but is capable of responding creatively by varying the patterns of mutual conditioning in the processes of which it is constituted. For example, though non-delusion is a factor in every wholesome state of mind, the strength of its manifestation and the mode of its interaction with concomitant mental factors shows wide variations.

This capacity to manifest in diverse ways marks every wholesome mental factor that constitutes a wholesome *citta*. The *Madhupiṇḍika-sutta* (M. I. 109-110) describes how this capacity in the mind to multiply and vary mental factors produces perceptions and ideas conditioned by conceptual proliferation (*papañca-saññā-saṅkhā*) that result in sorrow for the individual and conflict among peoples. Nevertheless, this same capacity for variegation can free the mind from bondage to habits and open the way for fresh influences of non-greedy liberality, non-combative friendship, and non-deluded understanding.

This capacity for diversity makes it possible for the continuum of consciousness to vary its purposive impulses (*cetanās*) and its goal-oriented projects (*saṅkhārās*). The artist-like flexibility of the *citta*, therefore, counteracts the tendency of *saṅkhārās* to manifest as habits of greater or lesser inflexibility. This concept of the *citta* as a master artist capable of richly varied responses to changing conditions makes it possible for Theravāda to affirm that transformations can occur in the continuum of consciousness, without violating its central principle of conditioned origination.

Theravāda offers the techniques of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*) and insight (*vipassanā*) as the methods by which the mind can liberate itself from greed, hatred, and delusion. These disciplines are based on the affirmation that the mind has the capacity of reflecting (*paccavekkhaṇa*) on its own contents. This reflexive awareness does not prevent processes of conditioning from occurring in the mind, but makes the mind aware of how the networks of conditioning are formed. *Saṅkhārās* continue to produce fresh configurations of conditioning factors, but the *citta* becomes aware how these configurations follow each other and form dynamic processes. Moreover, according to Theravāda, through the capacity of reflexive awareness, the *citta* becomes directly aware

that the configurations (*saṅkhārās*) of mental states are impermanent (*anicca*) without any claim to autonomous selfhood (*anattā*) and liable to cause sorrow (*dukkha*). Theravāda affirms that the conditioning influence of these insights begin to weaken unwholesome purposive impulses (*cetanās*) marked by greed, hatred, and delusion.

It follows, then, that Theravāda views the mind's capacity for reflexive awareness, not as a device by which processes of conditioning can be inhibited, but as a powerful influence that can begin to condition and transform all the processes of the continuum of consciousness. The idea that cognitive processes (*jāvanas*) can be "reversed" is based on the affirmation that the capacity to see into its own processes can influence and change the way the mind responds to objects. A *javana* process marked by purposive impulses (*cetanās*) to possess an object can be reversed, so that it becomes a *javana* process of joyful appreciation of the object.

The *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (A. V. 2-3) declares that when a motivation series begins to occur in the Eightfold Path, there is no need for special interventions of *cetanā* to "pull" the mind from one stage to the next. Purposive impulses, goal-oriented thoughts, and resolves become redundant. The mind's need to strain for achievements begins to cease. It is affirmed that the wholesome stages will follow naturally, one from the other, in accordance with conditioned origination. At the beginning of this work, reference was made to a verse of the *Dhammapada* (Dhp. 183) that emphasized the need for volitional effort in the pursuit of cleansing the mind from greed, hatred, and delusion. It is appropriate to close this work with the affirmation made in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* that the cultivation of mindfulness leads naturally to release from volitional effort. In the beautiful words of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, there is no need to put forth the impetus of

intention (*na cetanāya karaṇīyam*) because it happens naturally (*dhammatā esā*) that one wholesome stage leads on to the next.

Notes

Introduction

1. *sabbapāpassa akaraṇaṃ,
kusalassa upasampadā,
sacittapariyodapanam,
etaṃ buddhāna sāsanaṃ* (Dhp. 183)

2. The *Pātimokkha* is a set of 227 rules for *bhikkhus* and 311 for *bhikkhuni*s. These rules were for the purpose of training them in the monastic life. The *Pātimokkha* was recited twice a month on the nights of the new moon and the full moon.

3. The last section of the *Vinaya-piṭaka*, called the *Parivāra* contains a list of *Vinaya* teachers, some of whom belonged to Tambapaṇṇi (Sri Lanka). For this reason, some scholars maintain that this part of the *Vinaya* was added in Sri Lanka (Norman 1983, 26).

4. Mrs. Rhys Davids holds very strong opinions about what she calls "the Sakyan, or original 'Buddhist' teaching" (1978a, 43). She believes that the main teaching of the original Buddhism was the Way of Becoming (1978b, 18). According to her, whereas the *Upaniṣads* teach that the *ātman* is the eternal changeless Self, the Sākyan teaching is that the self is always growing into the "More" (*bhūyas*). She explains, "For Gotama it was, not so much a 'being That', as a 'This that one ought to become'. For the static he substituted the dynamic" (1978b, 21).

Mrs. Rhys Davids came to reject, as later additions made by the *Saṅgha*, those Buddhist doctrines that did not harmonize with her "original Buddhism." She maintained that the concept of *anattā* and the analysis of the human being into five aggregates (*khandha*) were later additions (1978a, 200-203).

Jayatilke voices the problems that critics have with the method of interpretation that they attribute to Mrs. Rhys Davids:

Her whole theory has to be dismissed on methodological grounds. She starts with certain *a priori* assumptions as to what Original Buddhism ought to have taught, picks out what appears to support her views (after a good deal of misinterpretation at times) and dismisses the great bulk of the material as monkish editing. (1963, 456)

It is true that Mrs. Rhys Davids is influenced by her theory of "original Buddhism" when she asserts that there is no concept of will in Theravāda. Nevertheless, her analysis of specific Pāli terms with psychological import, like *cetanā* and *saṅkappa*, is extensive and penetrating, and merits careful consideration. There are three aspects to her method of interpreting these terms. She places the terms in historical context by giving a detailed discussion of their occurrence in the *Upaniṣads*. She makes note of the Sāṅkhya and Yoga ideas in the *Upaniṣads* and discusses the impact of these ideas on terms like *citta*, *manas*, and *saṅkalpa*. In the introductory chapter of *The Birth of Indian Psychology*, she points out the need for studies devoted to historical surveys of psychological concepts in the religious literature of India. The second aspect of her method is to discuss some significant contexts in the Pāli texts where a specific psychological term occurs. Here, her vast knowledge of the *Sutta* and *Abhidhamma* literature gives weight to her interpretation. The third aspect of her method is to look for the etymological root of a word, to see if that throws light on its semantic range. She also refers to the meaning assigned to the term by other translators.

5. Mrs. Rhys Davids regards "desire" as a psychological term signifying "a blend of will with idea and feeling." She does not see it as a term that necessarily expresses moral value. For this reason, she considers it appropriate to render *chanda* as "desire." (Rhys Davids 1978a, 278)

6. More recent interpreters of the Pāli tradition generally acknowledge the distinction between psychological terms expressing basic conation and ethical terms signifying volition with moral import. Rune Johansson, for example, classifies Pāli terms expressing moral values into three types: "negative terms" signifying motivations that lead to "bad" psychological and moral consequences; "positive terms" connoting psychologically healthy and morally "good" motivations; and "neutral terms" such as *saṅkappa*, *chanda*, and *icchā*, which he renders as "intention," "ambition," and "wish", respectively (Johansson 1979, 103-114). The "neutral terms" in Johansson's classification coincide with what Mrs. Rhys Davids calls terms of simple or basic conation.

7. "Will is the man alive, will is man under the aspect of action: action not alone overt, but as mind too, as feeling, for these are both modes of will" (C.A.F. Rhys Davids 1978b, 21).

8. The Theravāda position is that various physical and mental phenomena come together in accordance with the principle of *paṭicca samuppāda* (conditioned co-arising), and form the continuum that is designated as "individual personality." The human being is analyzed into five "groups" or "aggregates" (*khandha*) of physical or mental processes: namely, body (*rūpa*), feelings (*vedanā*), perceptions and mental conceptions (*saññā*), purposive activities based on habit (*saṅkhāra*), and awareness leading to cognitive discernment (*viññāṇa*).

9. Johansson's interpretation of Theravāda revolves around two central themes that have aroused strong disagreement from other interpreters, for example Peter Harvey (1995, 81) and Sue Hamilton (1996, xxv-xxvi, 111). The first is his idea that Theravāda does not make a clear distinction between "material reality" and mental image

(Johansson 1985, 26-28). He says, "The objective world, according to Buddhism, is no different from the experienced world: it simply consists of the subjective world projected by our mind. . . " (1979, 83). Although Johansson emphasizes that "the Buddha was no idealist" (1979, 85), he seems to attribute to Theravāda an idealist ontology, especially in his discussion of the Theravāda concept of *loka* (1979, 27-29). The second controversial theme is Johansson's interpretation of *citta* in the *Sutta* texts. He considers *citta* to be a profound dimension of consciousness that can separate itself from the aggregates, and can thus experience *nibbāna* (1979, 161-162). He also maintains that the *citta* of an *arahant* survives death (Johansson 1970, 57-58).

Johansson's interpretation of motivation is influenced by his notion that in Theravāda the world is conceived as "a dynamic process, constantly being produced and deliberately constructed by our senses, our thoughts, and our desires" (1979, 28-29). According to his interpretation, the manner in which a person perceives and constructs a world of objects conditions what objects attract that person, and what objects cause aversion. According to Johansson's interpretation, attraction (*rāga*) and aversion (*dveṣa*) are the basis of motivational needs (1979, 95-96, 104, 114-116). By the same token, motivational needs condition perception and the process of constructing the world. With the growth of wisdom, motivations are reduced and the world-constructing activity ceases (1979, 130).

10. Johansson's concept of needs has an affinity with that of Henry Murray. For Murray, a need is a drive that provokes a tension in the organism. He connects all needs with neurological processes located in the brain, and he defines a need as a process in the brain that organizes and impels perceptions, thoughts, and actions in such a way that a situation of tension is transformed into goal-oriented motivation. He posits two kinds of needs: biological or "viscerogenic" needs and mental or "psychogenic needs," both of which have their basis in biological states, though they function in the mind (Ewan 1984, 295).

11. Johansson accepts Allport's classification of six types of values: theoretical, economic, aesthetic, social, political, and religious values (Allport 1961, 266-299). In Johansson's view, they are values because they fulfil motivational urges (Johansson 1979, 99).

12. Padmasiri de Silva's interpretation of Theravāda is set in the framework of Freudian psychology. His allegiance to Freud is most clearly seen in his explanation of *taṇhā*. He interprets *kāma-taṇhā*, *bhava-taṇhā*, and *vibhava-taṇhā* as craving for sensuality, for self-preservation, and for annihilation. He takes these three forms of craving to be primary determinants of behaviour, comparable to the Freudian concept of drives. He points to certain correlations between *kāma-taṇhā* and Freud's "pleasure" principle or libido, between *bhava-taṇhā* and the instinct that strives for the preservation of the ego, and between *vibhava-taṇhā* and the death instinct (1973, 172-178). In the case of *vibhava-taṇhā*, he says that though Theravāda does not posit a "death-wish," there are passages in the *Sutta* texts showing how aversion (*doṣa*) and dormant hatred (*patighānusaṃsa*) can exhibit as aggression towards oneself (1979, 68-71). De Silva's Freudian bias is also seen in his interpretation of the concepts of *anusaya* and *āsava*. He

sees in them evidence that Theravāda posits an unconscious dimension of the mind (1973, 56-62; 1979, 72-75).

13. Joanna Macy is well aware of the dangers of presenting Theravāda Buddhism as if it were an earlier form of general systems theory. She keeps in mind the vastly different cultural backgrounds of these two systems of thought, and she notes that they "differ in method as well as in purpose" (Macy 1991, 20). She seeks to develop a "reciprocal hermeneutic" by creating a dialogue between the perspectives of Theravāda Buddhism and general systems theory (1991, 19). Her aim is to utilize this reciprocal hermeneutic to enter more deeply into an analysis of the interdependence of causes and effects, which is the central subject of her study. She summarizes the "inherent characteristics" of a system as follows: any change in any part of the system will affect other parts of the system and the system as a whole; the system constantly stabilizes itself by reducing any deviation between goal and performance; the system will restructure itself by developing new patterns if it finds that previously established internal codes no longer function well; and the system is part of a larger whole with which it constantly interacts. Macy develops her reciprocal hermeneutic with reference to these four systemic features (1991, 76-77).

14. The Theravāda theory of dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) is the basis of the idea that all physical and mental states are impermanent (*anicca*), and that they cannot claim a permanent essence or self. Dependent origination affirms that all physical and mental states arise through the coming together of appropriate causes and conditions (*paccaya*). According to this causal theory, all the required conditions must come together to bring about the effect. No sub-set of conditions can claim to be sufficient: it is the coming together of all the conditions that produces the effect. Macy presents an impressive selection of references from the *Sutta* literature, from the *Abhidhamma*, and from the *Visuddhimagga* to substantiate her argument that *paṭicca-samuppāda* signifies the interdependence of cause and effect and not a temporal sequence of causes and effects (Macy 1991, 48-58). Perhaps the most important reference is to S. II. 113, where Sāriputta compares the relationship between *viññāṇa* as cause and *nāmarūpa* as effect to two sheaves of reeds leaning on each other.

15. Charles Tart, follows a "systems approach" in his work *States of Consciousness*. He writes:

I call this framework for studying consciousness a *systems approach* because I take the position that consciousness, as we know it, is not a group of isolated psychological functions but a *system* of an interacting, dynamic configuration of psychological components that performs various functions in greatly changing environments. While knowledge of the nature of the components is useful, to understand fully any system we must also consider the environments with which it deals and the goals of its functioning. So in trying to understand human consciousness, we must get the feel of the whole system as it operates in its world, not just study isolated parts of it. (Tart 1983, 14)

16. Macy's interpretation is based on S. II. 39-40 translated in *Kindred Sayings* (C.A.F. Rhys Davids and F.L. Woodward 1917-1930, 2 :31) as follows:

Where there have been deeds, Ānanda, personal weal and woe arise in consequence of the will there was in the deeds. Where there has been speech—where there has been thought, personal weal and woe arise in consequence of the will there was in the speech—in the thought.

Macy does not question whether "will" is the most appropriate translation of the term *sañcetanā* in this context. Nor does she offer a precise definition of "will," as it occurs in this translation.

17. In his *Principles of Buddhist Psychology* (1987) David Kalupahana's central aim is to show that "there is no need to assume any form of transcendence or absolutism in reading the Buddhist texts" (1987, xii). Kalupahana argues that the Buddha was able to develop his thought in a radically different direction than the Indian traditions of his day because he made psychology the cornerstone of his philosophical enterprise. Kalupahana maintains that fruitful comparisons can be made between the radical empiricism of William James and the teachings of the Buddha. The thrust of his argument is that a psychological approach to philosophical reflections enabled the Buddha and William James to eschew not only substantialism and essentialism but also any theory of *a priori* forms and categories that resemble the "structures of knowledge" put forward by Immanuel Kant (1987, 8-11). Kalupahana maintains that the psychological focus of the Buddha and William James enabled them to re-examine the epistemological theories of their time, "thereby freeing themselves from blind faith, preference, revelation, and reflection on forms as well as dogmatic acceptance of views" (1987, 11).

The most significant problem that I see in Kalupahana's interpretation is his outright refusal to acknowledge that the cultural and religious setting into which the Buddha was born must have exerted some influence on his his psychological views. The tone of Kalupahana's work gives the impression that he is casting the ancient teachings of the Buddha in the mould of modern radical empiricism. He is not equally willing to discuss the differences between Theravāda and the psychological principles of William James.

18. Selectivity in the process of perception is one of the concepts where Kalupahana posits a correspondence between the teachings of the Buddha and the psychology of William James. This concept is developed by William James in *The Principles of Psychology*, 1: 284-290.

Chapter I: Approaches to the concept of volition in the Upaniṣads

1. Olivelle (1998, 220) translates:

This very breath is the self consisting of intelligence; it is bliss, unageing, and immortal. It does not become more by good actions or in any way less by bad actions, for it is the one that makes those people

perform good actions whom it wants to lead up from these worlds and makes those people perform bad actions whom it wants to push down from these worlds. He is the ruler of the world. He is the sovereign of the world. He is the lord of the world. One should realize: "He is my self (*ātman*)."

 (Ks.U. III. 8)

2. Radhakrishnan (1953, 806) translates:

Borne along and defiled by the stream of qualities, unstable, wavering, bewildered, full of desire, distracted, he gets to the state of self-love [*abhimāna*]. Thinking, "I am he," "This is mine," he binds himself with his self like a bird in a snare. (Mt.U. III. 2)

3. It will be shown in Chapter VI that, in the *Abhidhamma*, *javana* signifies the swift movement of the mind in the process of perception. The concept of *javana* is fascinating because it brings into focus the Theravāda view of the mutual conditioning between perception and conative dynamism.

4. Reat cites the following verses from Griffith's translation of the *R̥gveda* to show how the verb root *cit-* is used.

May he who knows [*vidvān*] distinguish [*vicinavat*] sense [*citti*] and folly [*acitti*] of men, like straight and crooked backs of horses. (R̥g. IV. 2.11)

Ensign of sacrifice from of old, Agni well knoweth with his thought [*agnirdhiyā sa cetati*]

To prosper this man's aim and hope. (R̥g III. 11.3)

That *Agni*, wise High-Priest, in every house takes thought for sacrifice and holy service, yea, takes thought, with mental power, for sacrifice. [*kratvā yajñasya cetati*]. (R̥g. I. 128.4)

5. *Yatraitat puruṣa ārto marīṣyanābalyam etya sammoham eti, tam āhur udakramīt cittam, na śṛṇoti, na paśyati, na vācā vadati, na dhyāyati. . .* (Ks.U. III. 3)

Olivelle (1998, 217) translates:

When a man is sick and about to die, he becomes extremely weak and finally loses consciousness. People then say: "Has his breath, perhaps, already left him?" At this point, he ceases to hear, he ceases to see, he ceases to speak with his speech, and he ceases to think. (Ks.U. III. 3)

6. Griffith translates:

At the Tṛkadrukas the Gods span sacrifice that stirred the mind:
[*Trikadrukeṣu cetanaṁ devaso yajñamatnata*] (Ṛg. VIII. 13.18, repeated
at Ṛg. VIII. 92.21)

7. Reat stresses the "creative power of the manas" in the *Rgveda*, and he gives the example of the mind-made chariots of the gods (*manoratha*). He refers to Ṛg X. 85.12, where these chariots are said to be "made by mind" (*manasmaya*). On the basis of passages in the *Rgveda* and the *Upaniṣads* that stress the mind's power to produce mental images, Reat takes the extreme position that the *Upaniṣads* subscribe to a form of *dṛṣṭi-srṣṭi-vāda*, "the theory that perception is creation" (1990, 226, 232). According to this view, the universe is projected through the mind's act of perception, and has no existence apart from the mind's creative capacity.

8. *anyatra manā abhūvaṁ nādarśam, anyatra manā abhūvaṁ nāśrauṣam iti, manasā hy eva paśyati, manasā śṛṇoti* (B.U. I. 5.3).

9. *mano vai grahaḥ sa kāmēnātigrāheṇa grhītaḥ, manasā hi kāmān kāmāyate* (B.U. III. 2.7).

The idea that the sense organ is somehow "grasped" by the object negates Reat's position that though the *Upaniṣads* posit the reciprocity of the sense faculties and their objects, the former are viewed as "more essential" (Reat 1990, 235).

10. The *Maitrī Upaniṣad* upholds a Sāṃkhya view of cosmology. Accordingly, it is said here that the psychological factors of cognitive awareness (*buddhi*), ascertainment of objects and and resolve to pursue goal-oriented acts (*adhyavasāya*), the sense of individual selfhood (*abhimāna*), the five senses, and the organs of action evolve in order that the manifold world may be experienced (Mt.U. VI. 10).

11. The term *moha* signifies that the mind becomes so exclusively focused on one object or set of objects that it remains ignorant of other objects. As a consequence it falls into a state of bewilderment and confusion. *Moha* expresses a constellation of mental states that affect both cognition and volition. These include: infatuation, the bewilderment that follows, and the resultant tendency to fall into folly and error (S.E.D. 836, col. 1).

12. Although *saṁkalpa* is sometimes associated in the *Upaniṣads* with desire (*kāma*) that causes bondage to sorrow and rebirth, there are passages in the *Upaniṣads* that refer to *satyakāma* (desire for the ultimately real) and *satyasamkalpa* (intention directed to the ultimately real) (C.U. III. 14.2, VIII. 1.5, VIII. 7.1).

13. *Yathākārī yathācārī tathā bhavati, sādhuḥkārī sādhuḥ bhavati, pāpakārī pāpo bhavati; . . . athau khalv āhuḥ: kāmamaya evāyam puruṣa iti, sa yathākāmo bhavati tat kratur bhavati, yat kratur bhavati tat karma kurute, yat karma kurute, tat abhisampadyate* (B.U. IV. 4.5).

Radhakrishnan translates:

According as one acts, according as one behaves, so does he become. The doer of good becomes good, the doer of evil becomes evil. . . . Others however say that a person consists of desires. As is his desire so is his will; as is his will, so is the deed he does, whatever deed he does, that he attains (1953, 272).

14. Abel Bergaigne writes about *kratu*:

In the Vedic hymns it [*kratu*] appears to denote intellectual or moral force, either in potentiality or in actuality. It may therefore be translated according to the individual cases as "intelligence, will, idea, resolution" or simply "desire" (Abel Bergaigne 1973, 3: 312).

Griffith says that *kratu* covers in its meaning both act (*karma*) and wisdom (*prajñā*) (1973, 3, n.8). However, he translates *kratūyanti kratavo hṛtsu dhīyato* (Rg X. 64.2) as "The will and thoughts within my breast exert their power."

15. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* 4.1.4.1, translated and cited in A. B. Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads* (Harvard University Press, 1925, 484).

16. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (C.U. V.10.7) says that those whose way of life has been good (*ramaṇīya-caraṇāḥ*) will be born into the three upper castes, whereas those who have lived bad lives (*kapūya-caraṇāḥ*) will be born into the *cāṇḍāla* caste or into the lowest levels of the animal realm. The *Kuṣītaki Upaniṣad* (Ks.U. I. 2) says that rebirth occurs in accordance with a person's deeds and knowledge (*yathā-karma, yathā-vidyam*). Some will be born as insects, worms, birds, fish or animals. There are passages in the *Sutta* literature where the fruition of *kamma* is interpreted in terms of retributive justice (for example, A. V. 289-290).

17. Radhakrishnan translates *kratu* as Intelligence, in the context of the chant. Following the commentary of Śaṅkara, Radhakrishnan notes that this Intelligence is *saṁkalpātmaka*, characterized by resolves and plans (Radhakrishnan 1953, 304). Śaṅkara's commentary explains that the dying person is praying to *Agni*, the God of the sacrificial fire, who presides over the mind of the dying person and is identified with the deliberations and purposes in the mind (Mādhavānanda 1965, 862-863).

18. *Yathā-kratur asminl loke puruṣo bhavati tathetaḥ pretya bhavati* (C.U. III. 14.1).

19. *Viśaya-bhoga-saṁkalpa-rahitam*. From Śaṅkara's commentary, cited in Radhakrishnan 1953, 730.

Chapter II: Jaina and Buddhist Debates on the Moral Significance of Intention in Relation to Act

1. *Atthi kho vo nigaṇṭhā pubbe pāpaṃ kammaṃ kataṃ. Taṃ imāya kaṭukāya dukkarakārikāya nijjaretha; yaṃ paṇ' ettha etarahi kāyena saṃvutā vācāya saṃvutā manasā saṃvutā taṃ āyatim pāpassa kammaṃ akaraṇaṃ; iti purāṇānaṃ kammānaṃ tapasā byantibhāvā navānaṃ kammānaṃ akaraṇā āyatim anavassavo, āyatim anavassavā kammakkhayo, kammakkhayā dukkhakkhayo, dukkhakkhayā vedanākkhayo, vedanākkhayā sabbaṃ dukkhaṃ nijjiṇṇaṃ bhavissatīti.* (M. I. 93)

2. *Kathaṇ-ca Aggivessana bhāvitakāyo ca hoti bhāvitacitto ca: Idha Aggivessana sutavato ariyasāvakaṃsa uppajjati sukhā vedanā, so sukhāya vedanāya phuṭṭho samāno no sukhasārāgī hoti, . . . so dukkhāya vedanāya phuṭṭho samāno na socati, na kilamati, na paridevati, . . . na sammohaṃ āpajjati.* (M. I. 239)

2. *Tassa kho esā Aggivessana uppannā pi sukhā vedanā cittaṃ na pariyādāya tiṭṭhati bhāvitattā kāyassa. Uppannā pi dukkhā vedanā cittaṃ na pariyādāya tiṭṭhati bhāvitattā cittassa.* (M. I. 239)

4. *Tassa mayhaṃ Aggivessana etad-ahosi: Na kho ahaṃ tassa sukhassa bhāyāmi yaṇ-taṃ sukhaṃ aññatr' eva kāmehi aññatra akusalehi dhammehīti.* (M. I. 247)

5. *Saddhassa bhikkhave sāvakaṃsa satthu sāsane pariyogāya vattato ayam anudhammo hoti: . . . yaṇ-taṃ purisatthāmena purisaviriyena purisaparakkameṇa pattabbaṃ na taṃ apāpuṇitvā viriyassa santhānaṃ bhavissatīti* (M. I. 480-481).

6. *Kataṇ ca, bhikkhave, saphalo upakkamo hoti saphalaṃ padhānaṃ? Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu na heva anaddhabhūtaṃ attānaṃ dukkhena addhabhāveti, dhammikaṇ ca sukhaṃ na paricajjati, tasmiṇ ca sukhe anadhimucchite hoti* (M. II. 223).

The term *addha* means literally, "soiled, wet" and figuratively, "attached to, intoxicated with." (P.E.D. 26, col. 1). Bhikkhu Bodhi points out that this passage refers to the Buddha's teaching of the Middle Way (1995, 1302). In the fruitful way of striving, one does not urge oneself obsessively to practice painful ascetic disciplines, nor does one indulge (*adhimuccati*) in objects of pleasure.

7. *So dukkhāya attānaṃ padahati, tassa dukkhāya attānaṃ padahato akusalā dhammā parihāyanti kusalā dhammā abhivaḍḍhanti. So na apareṇa samayena dukkhāya attanaṃ padahati* (M. II. 225-226).

8. *Imesaṃ . . . tiṇṇaṃ kammānaṃ . . . manokammaṃ mahāsāvajjatarāṇaṃ paññāpemi pāpassa kammaṃsa kiriyāya pāpassa kammaṃsa pavattiyā, no tathā kāyakkammaṃ no tathā vacī-kammaṇ-ti* (M. I. 373).

9. Johnson (1995, 4) takes the following to be the earliest texts of the Jaina canon: (1) *Ācārāṅga-sūtra* (*Āyāraṅga*), (2) *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* (*Sūyagaḍaṅga*),

(3) *Daśavaikālika* (*Dasaveyāliya*), and (4) *Uttarādhyayana* (*Uttarajjhayana*). He designates the teaching that is given in these texts as "early Jainism." Whereas precise dating of these texts is not possible, Jacobi suggests that the collection of the Jaina canon must have taken place sometime during the end of the fourth or the beginning of the third century B.C.E. (Jacobi 1968, 1: xliii)

10. The Nigaṇṭha who walks with care practises four restraints (Jaini 1979, 15-21). Jaini explains that the four restraints involve abstaining from the following: injuring living beings, engaging in what is not true, taking what is not given, and possessing goods. It is obvious that these restraints imply not merely carefulness in physical acts but also the cultivation of an inner attitude of vigilance and the intention to preserve a chosen way of life.

11. The five *samitis* or occasions for observing carefulness are enumerated in the *Uttarādhyayana* (XXIV. 1). These are (1) *īryā-samiti* (carefulness in walking), (2) *bhāṣā-samiti* (care in speaking), (3) *eṣaṇā-samiti* (carefulness in receiving alms), (4) *ādāna-samiti* (carefulness in receiving and using the things necessary for the monastic life), (5) *utsarga-samiti* (carefulness in excreting) (Jacobi 1968, 2 :129).

12. The *Tattvārtha-sūtra* (vi. 1-4) states that activity of body, speech, or mind provides the occasion for the influx of fine karmic matter into the soul (*jīva*). Whereas, in Theravāda, the term *āsava* always refers to mental taints or corruptions of the mind, the *Tattvārtha-sūtra* holds that the influx (*āsrava*) of karmic matter can be linked with either morally good acts or with morally bad acts. The *Tattvārtha-sūtra* goes on to say that souls affected by the four passions of anger, pride, deceit, and greed experience inflows of karmic matter that cause the perpetuation of rebirth. The karmic inflows of those who are free of the passions are regarded as transient or fleeting because they do not prolong rebirth (Jaini 1974, 124-125).

13. The term *vīrya* seldom appears in those passages in the *Upaniṣads* that give instruction in *yoga*. The one significant reference to *vīrya* is at B.U. I. 2.6, where it signifies vigour or life-energy connected with the vital breaths.

There are two references to *vīrya* in the *Yoga-sutra* (YS. I. 20, II. 38). In the first of these *vīrya* is one of a pentad of qualities: *śraddhā* (faith), *vīrya* (energy), *smṛti* (recollection), *saṁādhi* (concentration) and *prajñā* (understanding). This pentad is known as the "five faculties" in Buddhism. *Vīrya* connotes vigour or energy at Y.S. II. 38. Here it is said that *vīrya* can be attained through the practice of *brahmacarya* (sexual restraint).

14. In this context, Jaini (1979, 113) cites the *Tattvārtha-sūtra* (VI. 6). *Tīvra-manda-jñātājñāta-bhāvādhikaraṇa-vīrya-viśeṣebhyas tad viśeṣaḥ*. The import of this aphorism is that there can be differences in the influx (*āsrava*) of karmic matter when the same deed is done by different persons. It is stated that the difference depends on whether the desire that accompanies the act is strong or weak, whether the act is done knowingly or not, and the degree of volitional energy (*vīrya*) that is expended in the act. The intentional character of an act is indicated by the term *jñātabhāva*.

15. In his work *Harmless Souls* (1995, 12) Johnson suggests that in characterizing deeds of body, speech, and mind as *daṇḍa*, the Nigaṇṭhas give a negative connotation to the very notion of activity. According to Johnson's interpretation, the Nigaṇṭhas held that all activity involves the danger of harming living beings; and therefore, they taught that all acts of body, speech, and mind can produce painful karmic consequences. In this sense, all acts are "punishing rods" (*daṇḍas*). Jacobi (1968, 2 : xvii), however, points out that both the terms *kamma* and *daṇḍa* occur with almost equal frequency in the Jaina canonical texts.

16 It was pointed out earlier in this chapter that the term *cetanā* is found in the *Upāli-sutta* (M. I. 377) and that both the Buddha and his Nigaṇṭha opponent agree that *cetanā* is a manifestation of *mano-kamma* (mental kamma). The narrative context suggests that both parties in the debate agree that *cetanā* signifies intention or purpose. Nevertheless, *cetanā* does not convey intention, purpose or conative impulse in the Jaina tradition. The term is found in two different contexts. *Caitanyā* or *cetanā* (consciousness), *sukha* (bliss) and *vīrya* (energy) are named as the three innate qualities of the *jīva* (Johnson, 1995, 125-126). *Caitanyā* or *cetanā* is defined as that quality that enables the soul to become a knower (Jaini 1979, 104). Consciousness can manifest in two ways: as *karma-cetanā* and *jñāna-cetanā* (Bhargava 1968, 33). As long as a person is bound by *karma*, consciousness dwells on activities of body, speech, and mind. Consciousness that is ignorant of the true nature of the *jīva* and is dominated by the idea that it can bring about changes in others is called *karma-cetanā*. In the case of a person who awakens to the innate qualities of the *jīva* and no longer seeks to grasp objects or to manipulate others, consciousness functions as *jñāna-cetanā*. The description given by Jaini (1979, 147-148) suggests that in this context, *cetanā* signifies an attitude or orientation of consciousness, which functions as the basis of behaviour. At any rate, it becomes clear that the Jaina tradition does not ascribe to *cetanā* the sense of intention, purpose or volition.

Chapter III: The Impact of Conditioned Origination on the Interpretation of *Cetanā*, *Saṅkhāra* and *Citta*

1. The following descriptions of the *citta* occur in various contexts: *pariyādāya ṭhassati pariyādinno, pariyādāya tiṭṭhati* (S. II. 226, 228; A. IV. 160; D. III. 249), *khitta* (A. II. 52), *upakkiliṭṭha, samkiliṭṭha* (S. I. 179, III. 151), *kilanta* (D. I. 20, III. 32), *santa, upasanta* (D. III. 49, S. I. 141, Sn. 746), *alīna* (A. V. 149, Sn. 68, 717), *pasanna* (Sn. 316, 403, 690), *vasībhūta* (S. I. 132; A. I. 165), *vimutta* (S. I. 28, 29, 46; A. III. 245, V. 29; Sn. 23).

2. Guenther (1976, 47) maintains that the author of the *Atthasālinī* favours a theory of the mind that resembles Yogācāra. According to Guenther, the *Atthasālinī* posits that the *citta* is different from the *cetasikas* and maintains its own identity. He quotes the following passage from the *Atthasālinī*:

*Yathā hi rūpādīni upādāya paññattā suriyādayo na atthato rūpādīhi
aññe honti ten'eva yasmim samaye suriyo udeti tasmim samaye tassa teja-*

saṅkhātāṃ rūpāṃ pīti evaṃ vuccamāne pi na rūpādīhi añño suriyo nāma atthi. Tathā cittaṃ phassādayo dhamme upādāya paññāpiyati. Atthato paṇ'ettha tehi aññaṃ eva. (Asl. 113)

The *Atthasālinī* begins by saying that the sun and other phenomena come to be known through their physical form and other qualities. According to the *Atthasālinī*, the sun and other phenomena are not actually different from their qualities (*na aññe hontī*). Though it can be said that when the sun rises, at that time its qualities such as its physical form also come into existence, nevertheless, the sun is not different from its qualities. The *Atthasālinī* then proceeds to say that though the *citta* also is known from mental factors (*dhammā*) such as sensory contact, in actual fact the *citta* is different from these mental factors (*tehi annaṃ eva*).

The edition to which Guenther refers is different from the Pali Text Society edition quoted above at a crucial point. He renders the text as follows: *na tatha cittaṃ; passādayo dhamme upādēya paññāpiyati; atthato paṇ'etam tehi aññaṃ eva* (1976, 47, n.3). According to this edition, whereas the sun is known through its radiance and other qualities, the case of the *citta* is not analogous (*na tatha cittaṃ*). The problem, however, arises with the very last part of the quotation, where the *Atthasālinī* says that *citta* is different (*aññaṃ*) from its components. If the word "different" is taken to mean that consciousness is somehow autonomous and independent of its properties (*cetasikā*), as Guenther's interpretation would suggest, that would go against the idea of conditioned origination. In fact, the *Atthasālinī* offers a clarification of the statement quoted above (Asl. 114). The *Atthasālinī* explains that the term *citta* can be used inclusively (*saṅkhepato*) in order to show consciousness conditioned by the mental states that arise together with it; and exclusively, by distinguishing the specific quality of each mental state (*sārūpena pabhedato*), so as to indicate that every component of the totality, for example, sensory contact (*phassa*), exhibits different characteristics and functions and is different from *citta*. In the second case, *citta* is distinguished from its components. This explanation signifies that although consciousness cannot originate or function independently of the other *khandhas*, nevertheless for purposes of analysis and classification, it can be distinguished from them. The *Dhammasaṅgani* (Dhs. 209) specifies that the *vedanākkhandha*, *saññākkhandha*, and *saṅkhārakkhandha* constitute the *cetasikā*. The *citta* neither arises nor functions apart from these *khandhas*.

3. *Cittan ti ārammaṇaṃ cintetī ti cittaṃ vijānātī ti attho (Asl. 63).*

4. *javana-vīthivasena attano santānaṃ cinotī ti cittaṃ. Vipākāṃ kammakilesehi citam ti cittaṃ (Asl. 63).* I follow Pe Maung Tin's translation in *The Expositor* (1920-21, 85).

5. *cittakaraṇatāya cittaṃ ti evaṃ p'ettha attho veditabbo (Asl. 63).*

6. *cittakatam eva kāyakammādhedāṃ dāna-sīla-himsā-theyyādinayappavattam (Asl. 64).*

7. *Sāvako te mahāvīra maraṇaṃ maraṇābhībhū ākaṇkhati cetayati taṃ nisedha jutindhara (S. I. 121).*

8. *Ratto kho brāhmaṇa rāgena abhibhūto pariyādinna-citto atta-vyābādhāya pi ceteti para-vyābādhāya pi ceteti ubhaya-vyābādhāya pi ceteti cetasikaṃ pi dukkhaṃ domanassaṃ paṭisaṃvedeti. Rāge pahīne n'eva atta-vyābādhāya pi ceteti . . . na cetasikaṃ dukkhaṃ domanassaṃ paṭisaṃvedeti* (A. I. 156-157).

The same is said for *dosa* and *moha*.

9. *Sace so bhikkhave assutavā puthujjano āyati-punabbhavāya ceteti. Evaṃ hi so bhikkhave moghapuriso suhatataro hoti* (S. IV. 201).

10. *Ayoniso-manasikārā kāma-rāgena additā ahoṣiṃ uddhaṭṭā pubbe cite avasavattinī* (Thi. 77).

11. *mā cittassa vasaṃ gami* (Thi. 163).

12. *cittamhi vasībhūtāham* (Thi. 233).

13. *Te me ijjhimsu saṃkappā yadattho pāvisiṃ kuṭim* (Tha. 60).

14. *Mama saṃkappam aññāya codesi naraśārathi* (Tha. 376).

15. *So'haṃ paripuṇṇasaṃkappo cando pannaraso yathā* (Tha. 546).

16. *niccam āraddha-viriyehi paṇḍitehi sahāvase'ti* (Tha. 148). *nāvarajjhissam, passa viriya-parakkamam* (Tha. 167, 515).

17. *Manopubbaṅgamā dhammā manoseṭṭhā manomayā* (Dhp. 1, 2).

18. *Phandanam capalam cittam dūrakkham dunnivārayam ujum karoti medhāvī usukāro va tejanam* (Dhp. 33). *Dunnigghassa lahuno yatthakāmanipātino cittassa damatho sādhu, cittam dantam sukhāvaham* (Dhp. 35).

19. *micchāpaṇihitam cittam pāpiyo naṃ tato kare* (Dhp. 42). *sammāpaṇihitam cittam seyyaso naṃ tato kare* (Dhp. 43).

20. The therā Ubbirī tells of her unbearable sorrow at the death of her daughter Jīvā (Thi. 51-53); Candā relates the daily pain of living as a widow (Thi. 122-123); Pañcasatā Paṭācārā and Vasiṭṭhī recall the grief of cremating a beloved son (Thi. 127, 133-134); Kisāgotamī and Uppalavaṇṇā speak of the torment of a young wife in an extended family that takes advantage of her weakness (Thi. 213-223, 224-225).

21. Tha. 69, 175-176, 287-290, 330, 375-376, 424-428, 429-434, 480-486, 510-512, 557-560, 620-625, 638-639.

22. *vijjā vimuttiṃ paccassaṃ mānānusayam ujjahan ti* (Tha. 60). *animittaṃ ca bhāvehi mānānusayam ujjaha* (Thi. 20).

23. *na me hoti aho sin ti, bhavissan ti na hoti me* (Tha. 715).
24. *Yamhi na māyā vattati na māno, yo khīṇalobho amamo nirāso . . . so brāhmaṇo so samaṇo sa bhikkhū ti* (Ud. 29).
25. *aharū karomī ti na tassa hoti, paro karotī ti na tassa hoti* (Ud. 70).
26. For further discussion of the luminous quality of the *citta* see Hamilton, 1996, 98-101, 113-114; Bhikkhu Ñāṇananda, 1976, 59-64.
27. *Yad-eva tvaṃ Rāhula kāyena kammaṃ kattukāmo hosi tad-eva te kāyakammaṃ paccavekkhitabbaṃ. . . Karontena pi te Rāhula kāyena kammaṃ tad-eva te kāyakammaṃ paccavekkhitabbaṃ. . . Katvā pi te Rāhula kāyena kammaṃ tad-eva te kāyakammaṃ paccavekkhitabbaṃ* (M. I. 415-416). The same is said for verbal and mental acts.
28. *Taṃ kim-maññasi Rāhula: kimatthiyo ādāso ti—Paccavekkhanattho bhante ti.—Evam-eva kho Rāhula paccavekkhitvā paccavekkhitvā kammaṃ kattabbaṃ . . .* (M. I. 415).
29. In her work *The Birth of Indian Psychology and its Development in Buddhism* (1978a, 237-278), first published in 1914, Mrs. Rhys Davids points out that the activities of *manas* include not only getting to know an object but also "valuing, measuring, appraising," "purposing," and "intending."
30. *Yaṃ pi daṃ diṭṭhaṃ sutam mutaṃ viññātam pattam pariyesitam anuvicaritam manasā tam pi niccaṃ vā aniccaṃ vā ti* (S. III. 203, 206, 208, 209).
31. In this work I take the position that perception and the capacity to initiate action are seen in Theravāda as functions that condition each other within the *citta*. The specific function of *manas* in co-ordinating sensory data and the general function of *manas* as faculty of thought fall within the organic whole of interconnected activities that is consciousness. This whole is designated as *viññāṇa* or *citta* or *manas* (S. II. 95; Vsm. XVI. 82).
32. *Uppajjamāno ca, saha sammā ca uppajjati, na ekekato, nāpi ahetuto ti samuppādo* (Vsm. XVII. 16).
33. *Tasmā paṭicca samaṃ saha ca, na ekekadesaṃ, nāpi pubbāpara-bhāvena ayaṃ paccayatā dhamme uppādeti* (Vsm. XVII. 20).
34. *samavāyo ca nāma sādharma-phala-nipphādane aññamaññāpekkho hoti* (Asl. 59).
35. *Etesu hi samavāya-saṅkhāto samayo anekahetuto vuttiṃ dīpeti tena ekakāraṇavādo paṭisedhito hoti* (Asl. 59).

36. C.A.F. Rhys Davids translates *saṅkhārās* as "synergies" in *Buddhist Psychological Ethics* (1974, lxxxi, 25, 31, 35). She says that she came to prefer "synergies" to her earlier rendering of *saṅkhārās* as "syntheses" (1974, lxxxi, n.4).

37. *Taṃ kiṃ-maññasi mahārāja : yān' imāni rukkhāni anibbatta-phalāni sakkā tesam phalāni dasseturū. . . . Evam-eva kho mahārāja abbocchinnāya santatiyā na sakkā tāni kammāni dassetum . . .* (Mil. 72)

Here Nāgasena tells King Milinda that just as one cannot show the fruit of a tree that has not yet produced fruit, so also, one cannot point to the fruition of *kamma* in a future life as long as the continuum of the present life has not been cut off by death.

38. For example, at D. II. 81, 84, 91, 98, 126.

39. The list of three *āsavās* is found more frequently in the *Suttas*—for example, at M. I. 55; A. I. 165, III. 414; S. IV. 256.

40. *Chakkhuno pi . . . pe . . . manato pi sandanti pavattanti ti vuttam hoti. . . . Cīrapārivāsiyaṭṭhena madirādayo āsavā viyā ti pi āsavā* (Asl. 48).

41. *Āsavasamudayā avijjāsamudayo āsavanirodhā avijjānirodho . . .* (M. I. 54)
Avijjāsamudayā āsavasamudayo avijjānirodhā āsavanirodho (M. I. 55).

The *Majjhima-nikāya* says that the arising of *āsavās* leads to the arising of ignorance, and the cessation of *āsavās* leads to the cessation of ignorance. Similarly when *avijjā* arises then *āsavās* arise, and when *avijjā* ceases, *āsavās* cease. In this way, *āsavās* and *avijjā* generate each other.

42. The "stream-winner" (*sotāpanna*) is no longer a worldly person (*puthujjana*) but is regarded as a noble disciple (*ariya*). On reaching this first stage of the Noble Path, the first three fetters (*samyojana*) that bind a person to rebirth are removed. These three are: the view that upholds the notion of a permanent self (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*), doubt (*vicikicchā*), and attachment to rituals and ceremonies (*sīlabbata-parāmāsa*). In the second stage of the Path, the noble disciple is called the "once-returner" (*sakadāgāmī*). This stage is reached by the attenuation of two of the remaining fetters. These are: sensual passion (*kāma-rāga*) and ill-will (*paṭigha*). The third stage, that of the "non-returner" (*anāgāmī*), is attained by the total eradication of sensual passion and ill-will. In the stage of the "non-returner" the remaining five fetters are removed. These are: attachment to the realm of form (*rūpa-rāga*), attachment to the formless realm (*arūpa-rāga*), pride (*māna*), restlessness (*uddhacca*), and ignorance (*avijjā*). When all these fetters and *āsavās* are removed, the stage of the *arahant* is finally attained (Nārada, 1975, 430-432).

43. For example, Dh. 126, 386; Sn. 1133.

44. *Sammā-saṅkappaṃ p'aharū bhikkhave, dvayaṃ vadāmi. Atthi, bhikkhave, sammā-saṅkappo sāsavo puññābhāgiyo upadhivepakko; atthi, bhikkhave, sammā-saṅkappo ariyo anāsavo lokuttaro maggaṅgo* (M. III. 73).

45. *Ayoniso bhikkhave manasīkarato anuppannā c'eva āsavā uppajjanti uppannā ca āsavā pavaddanti* (M. I. 7).

46. The person who lacks systematic attention wonders: "Did I or did I not exist in the past? What (*kim*) was I in the past? How (*katham*) was I in the past? Having existed as what, what further did I become in the past?" The same questions are said to preoccupy this person with regard to the present and the future (M. I. 8).

47. The phrase *pubbe vāsita-vāsanā* is found in the *Milindapañha* (Mil. 263). In the *Sutta-nipāta* (Sn. 1009) we find *pubba-vāsana-vāsita*, and in the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. VI. 43) there is the phrase *vāsita vāsano*. In these passages the reference is to people who carry the influence of merit from past lives. In the *Nettipakaraṇa* (Net. 159), *vāsanā* is used in the very specific sense of "bright deeds with bright consequences" (*kammaṃ sukkarī sukkavipākam*) mentioned at A. II. 230-233. It is significant that both in the *Visuddhimagga* and in the *Nettipakaraṇa*, *vāsanā* has come to connote the felicitous fruition of wholesome, "bright" acts. In *The Guide* (1962, 212) Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli translates *vāsanā-bhāgiyaṃ suttam* as "Thread dealing with morality." None of these passages explains why the phrase *vāsita vāsanā* does not include persons who carry the influence of karmic demerit (*papa*) from past lives.

Although, in the passages mentioned above, *vāsanā* carries the meaning of a residual influence from a past deed, the concept of *vāsanā* does not have the central role in Theravāda that it does in the Yoga tradition. In the *Abhidhamma* the *citta* is described in terms of co-present mental states rather than as the repository of subliminal impressions (*vāsanās*). The Theravāda tradition does not develop a theory whereby present mental states are regarded as manifestations of residual potencies.

48. From what is said in the *Kathāvatthu* (Kvu. 405-408) regarding *anusaya*, it is apparent that much controversy surrounded this subject among early Buddhist sects. The *Kathāvatthu* holds that *anusayas* are to be included under the *saṅkhārakkhandha* and that they always function in relation to objects. In this way, the Theravādins maintain that *anusayas* are not self-perpetuating, but arise through causes and conditions.

49. *Anuseti ti appahīnatāya anuseti anusayamāno saṃyojanaṃ nāma hoti* (MA. III. 144). *Evaṃ laddhikattā ti vitthāritam tasmā so yeva kilesa bandhanaṭṭhena saṃyojanaṃ appahīnatṭhena anusayo ti idam attham sandhāya* (MA. III. 145).

It is said here that, for example, the very same mental affliction (*kilesa*) that is specified as "speculative view" is designated as "fetter" (*samyojana*) because it causes bondage to the mind, and as *anusaya* because it has not been renounced.

50. *Te hi, thāmagatattā punappunam kāmārāgādīnam uppatti-hetu-bhāvena anuseti yevā ti anusayā* (Vsm. XXII. 60).

51. *Yaṃ kho bhikkhu anuseti tena saṅkham gacchati. Yaṃ nānuseti na tena saṅkham gacchati* (S. III. 35).

52. *Sukhāya . . . vedanāya rāgānusayo anuseti, dukkhāya vedanāya paṭighānusayo anuseti, adukkhamasukhāya vedanāya avijjānusayo anuseti* (M. I. 303).

53. *Na kho . . . sabbāya sukhāya vedanāya rāgānusayo anuseti, na sabbāya dukkhāya vedanāya paṭighānusayo anuseti, na sabbāya adukkhamasukhāya vedanāya avijjānusayo anuseti* (M. I. 303).

54. *Evam eva . . . ariyasāvakssa pañcorambhāgiyāni saññojanāni pahīnāni bhavanti. Atha khvassa hoti yo ca pañcasu upādānakkhandhesu anusahagato Asmīti māno Asmīti chando Asmīti anusayo asamūhato* (S. III. 131).

55. *Yañca kho bhikkhave ceteti yañ ca pakappeti yañca anuseti ārammaṇam etaṃ hoti viññāṇassa tṭhiyā. Ārammaṇe sati paṭiṭṭhā viññāṇassa hoti. Tasmim paṭiṭṭhite viññāṇe virūlḥe āyatim punabbhavābhiniḥḥatti hoti* (S. II. 65).

Chapter IV: *Cetanā* in the Sutta literature

1. For example, in the formula which states that the Tathāgata teaches the *Dhamma* for the removal of all sorrow-producing views (*diṭṭhi*) and underlying tendencies (*anusayas*), as well as for the stilling of all *saṅkhārās* (*sabba-saṅkhāra samathāya*) (M. I. 136, 167, 436).

2. For example, *saṅkhārānaṃ nirodhena n'atthi dukkhassa sambhavo* (Sn. 731).

3. *Āyu usmāca viññāṇaṃ yadā kāyam jahantimaṃ apaviddho tadā seti parabhattam acetanaṃ* (S. III. 143).

3. *Cha vedanā-kāyā. Chakkhu-samphassajā vedanā, sota-samphassajā vedanā, ghāna-samphassajā vedanā, jivhā-samphassajā vedanā, kāya-samphassajā vedanā, mano-samphassajā vedanā* (D. III. 243-244).

5. For example, *Cha sañcetanā-kāyā. Rūpa-sañcetanā, sadda-sañcetanā, gandha-sañcetanā, rasa-sañcetanā, poṭṭhabba-sañcetanā, dhamma-sañcetanā* (D. III. 244).

6. For example, at S. IV. 216 a bhikkhu mentions the reflection on the teaching of the Buddha that arose in his mind when he was meditating alone (*evaṃ cetaso parivītakko udapādi*).

7. *Kaye . . . sati kāyasañcetanā-hetu uppajjati ajjhataṃ sukha-dukkham.* The same statement is made regarding *vacī-sañcetanā* and *mano-sañcetanā* (S. II. 39-40).

8. *Avijjāpaccayā va sāmāṇi vā tam Ānanda kāya-saṅkhāram abhisāṅkharoti yaṃ paccayāssa tam uppajjati ajjhataṃ sukha-dukkham. Pare vāssa tam Ānanda kāya-saṅkhāram abhisāṅkharonti Sampajāno vā tam Ānanda kāya-saṅkhāram abhisāṅkharoti Asampajāno vā tam Ānanda kāya-saṅkhāram abhisāṅkharoti . . .* (S. II. 40).

The same statement is made with regard to *vacī-saṅkhāram* and *mano-saṅkhāram*.

9. *parehi anussāhito sāmam asaṅkhārika-cittena karoti, parehi kariyamāno sasaṅkhārika-cittena pi karoti* (SA. II. 58).

10. *mātāpītusu cetiya-vandanādīni karontesu anukarontā dārakā viya kevalaṃ kammam eva jānanto imassa pana kammassa ayaṃ vipāko ti ajānanto pi karoti* (SA. II. 58).

11. For example, A.V. 206, A. II. 210; D. I. 70, II. 95. In all these examples *sampajānakārī* refers to a monk who guards the senses and continually remains attentive and mindful, whatever he is doing. In this case *asampajāna* would refer to an act that is done without paying attention, perhaps from force of habit.

12. *Atthi bhikkhave atta-bhāva-paṭilābho yasmin atta-bhāva-paṭilābe atta sañcetanā kamati no para-sañcetanā. . . . parasañcetanā kamati no atta-sañcetanā. . . . attasañcetanā ca kamati para-sañcetanā ca. . . . n' ev' atta-sañcetanā kamati no para-sañcetanā* (A. II. 159).

13. For example, A. III. 72, V. 88; M. III. 203.

14. A. I. 32. 224, V. 212; S. II. 99, 154.

15. For example, Matthews (1983, 57) and Hamilton (1990, 77).

16. *Micchā-diṭṭhikassa . . . yaṃ c'eva kāya-kammaṃ . . . vacī-kammaṃ . . . mano-kammaṃ yathā-diṭṭhi-samattaṃ samādiṇṇaṃ yā ca cetanā yā ca patthanā yo ca paṇidhi ye ca saṅkhārā, sabbe te dhammā aniṭṭhāya . . . ahitāya, dukkhāya saṃvattanti* (A. V. 212).

The passage goes on to say that *sammā-dhiṭṭhi* has the opposite effect on *cetanā*, *patthanā*, and *paṇidhi*, leading them towards happiness.

17. *Cetanā ti tīsu dvāresu nibbattita-cetanā va gahitā. Patthanā ti 'evarūpo siyan' ti evaṃ satipatthanā. Paṇidhī ti 'devo vā bhavissāmi devaññataro vā ti cittaṭṭhapanā* (AA. V. 69-70).

18. *Kusalena cittena samuṭṭhitan ti. . . . Tatta patthanā paṇidhī ti cetanāy' ev' etaṃ vevacanaṃ. Kusalacetanāy' eva hi pakappayamānā patthanā ti pakappana-vasena ṭhitattā paṇidhīti ca vuccati* (Kvu.A. 110).

19. *Kiñca bhikkhave saṅkhāre vadetha? Saṅkhatam abhisāṅkharontīti bhikkhave tasmā saṅkhārā ti vuccanti. Kiñca saṅkhatam abhisāṅkharonti? Rūpaṃ rūpattāya saṅkhatam abhisāṅkharonti, vedanaṃ vedanattāya saṅkhatam abhisāṅkharonti, saññāṃ saññattāya saṅkhatam abhisāṅkharonti, saṅkhāre saṅkhārattāya saṅkhatam abhisāṅkharonti, viññāṇaṃ viññāṇattāya saṅkhatam abhisāṅkharonti* (S. III. 87).

20. *Yathā yāgum eva yāgu'tthāya pūvam eva pūv'atthāya pacati nāma, evaṃ accayehi samāgantvā kata-bhāvena saṅkhatan ti laddha-nāmaṃ rūpam eva rūpatthāya yathā abhisāṅkhatam rūpam nāma hoti* (SA. II. 292).

21. *Tathā tad-atthāya rūpa-bhāvāya abhisāṅkharoti, āyūhati, sampiṇḍeti ipphādeti ti attho* (SA. II. 292).

22. For example, in the *Milindapañha* (Mil. 214) Devdatta is said to have accumulated for himself *kamma* that would endure for an aeon (*kappatthiyam kammam āyūhi*). *Āyūhati* has the meaning of "to strain, to strive" in the following contexts. In the *Majjhima-nikāya* (M. I. 116) the Buddha, when he was still a Bodhisatta practising meditation, came to the realization that excessive thought and reflection tire the body with the result that the mind becomes strained (*kāye kilante cittaṃ ūhaññeyya*). He also realized that a straining mind is far from concentration (*ūhate citte ārā cittaṃ samādhimhā ti*). In the *Milindapañha* (Mil. 326) *āyūhati* appears in a sentence that tells of striving in the path of liberation (*so appavattāya maggam āyūhati*) and in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (S. I. 48) the Buddha says that a wise brāhmaṇa who has attained the end of rebirth need not strain any further (*nāyūhati pāragato hi so ti*).

23. *Idhāpī Bhagavā cetayita-lakkhaṇassa saṅkhārassa paccatta-lakkhaṇam eva bhājetvā dassesi* (SA. II. 292).

24. *Tayo saṅkhārā ti saha-jāta-dhamme c'eva samparāya-phala-dhamme ca saṅkharonti rāsiṃ karontī ti saṅkhārā* (DA. III. 997). The commentary explains that *puññābhisāṅkhārās* are constituted of the wholesome *cetanās* belonging to the realm of the senses (*kamāvacara*) and the four lower states of meditation known as "meditation-with-form" (*rūpāvacara*). These wholesome *cetanās* are said to be of three types, pertaining to generosity (*dāna-maya*), to morality (*sīla-maya*), and to spiritual development (*bhāvanā-maya*). *Abhisāṅkhārās* characterized by demerit (*apuñña*) are said to be constituted of unwholesome *cetanās* of the realm of the senses. "Imperturbable" *abhisāṅkhārās* are identified as the wholesome *cetanās* of the states of "formless meditation" (*arūpāvacara*).

25. *Avijjāgato yaṃ bhikkhave purisapuggalo puññaṃ ce saṅkhāram abhisāṅkharoti, puññūpagam hoti viññāṇam. Apuññaṃ ce saṅkhāram abhisāṅkharoti, apuññūpagam hoti viññāṇam. Āneñjaṃ ce saṅkhāram abhisāṅkharoti āneñjūpagam hoti viññāṇam* (S. II. 82).

26. *So sukhaṃ ce vedanaṃ vediyati. Sā aniccāti pajānāti, anajjhositā ti pajānāti anabhinanditāti pajānāti*. The same statement is made with regard to a painful mental state and a mental state that is neither painful or pleasant (S. II. 82).

27. *Anabhisāṅkharonto anabhisāñcetayanto na kiñci loke upādiyati. Anupādiyam na paritassati. Aparitassam paccattaññeva parinibbāyati* (S. II. 82).

28. *Te jātisaṃvattanikesu saṅkhāresu abhiratā . . . soka-parideva-dukkha-domanassupāyāsa-saṃvattanike pi saṅkhāre abhisāṅkharonti* (S. V. 449).

29. *Sañcetanikam . . . kamman katvā kāyena vācāya manasā sukha-vedanīyaṃ, sukhaṃ so vediyati. Sañcetanikaṃ . . . kamman katvā kāyena vācāya, manasā dukkha-vedanīyaṃ dukkhaṃ so vediyati. Sañcetanikaṃ . . . kamman katvā kāyena vācāya, manasā adukkhamasukha-vedanīyaṃ adukkhamasukhaṃ so vediyatīti* (M. III. 209).

30. *Nāyaṃ bhikkhave kāyo tumhākaṃ na pi aññesam. Purāṇam idam bhikkhave kammam abhisañkhatam abhisāñcetaṃ vedaniyaṃ dāṭṭhabbam* (S. II. 64-65).

31. *abhisāñkhatam* and *abhisāñcetaṃ* are past participles of the verbs *abhisāñkharoti* and *abhisāñceti*.

32. *Cakkhum bhikkhave purāṇakammam abhisāñkhatam abhisāñcetaṃ vedaniyaṃ dāṭṭhabbam* (S. IV. 132). The other senses are described similarly.

33. *Abhisāñkhatan ti paccayehi abhisamāgantvā katam: abhisāñcetaṃ ti cetanāya pakappitam* (SA. II. 402).

34. The term *kara-ja* signifies "born of *kamma*." The epithet *karaja-kāya* refers to the body as that which is generated from past *kamma*. Always used as a pejorative expression, *karaja-kāya* refers to the idea that the body is "impure" (*asubha*) (P.E.D. 195, col.2).

35. *Tatra bhikkhave tividhā kāya-kammanta-sandosa-vyāpatti akusala-sāñcetanikā dukkhuḍḍayā dukkha-vipākā hoti* (A. V. 292). Similar statements are made about unwholesome acts of speech and mind (A. V. 292-293).

36. *Attanā ca pāṇātipātī hoti paraṃ ca pāṇātipāte samādapeti, pāṇātipāte ca samanūñño hoti*. (A. V. 305). The threefold characterization of deeds as "doing a deed," "instigating another," or "approving the deed" occurs with regard to each one of the basic list of wholesome and unwholesome acts. *Samādapeti* (literally, "cause to take") signifies "to incite, to arouse" (P.E.D. 684, col.2). *Samanūñña* is derived from the verb *samanujānāti*, "to approve" (P.E.D. 683, col. 1).

37. In the *Points of Controversy*, the translators S. Z. Aung and C. A. F. Rhys Davids render *upacaya* as "conservation of karmic energy" (1915, 301). Guenther interprets *kammūpacaya* as the "heaping up" of potential energy and *kamma-vipāka* as the development of this potential energy towards the putting forth of commensurate consequences of pleasure and pain (1976, 19-20). The *Points of Controversy* clarifies the argument put forward by the Theravādins. They maintain that the position of the opponents is untenable because they agree with the Theravādins that both *kamma* and the fruition of *kamma* are co-existent with consciousness and are dependent on a mental object in order to come into effect, but maintain that *upacaya* is automatic and proceeds by its own energy (Aung and C.A.F. Rhys Davids 1915, 301). The Theravādins hold that

there is no difference between *kamma*, the accumulation of *kamma*, and the fruition of *kamma* (Kvu. 522).

38. *saṁcetanasaṁāptibhyāṁ niṣkaukr̥tya vipakṣataḥ parivārādvipākācca karmopacitamucyate.* (Abhk. IV. 120)

39. *katham saṁcetanāḥ? saṁcintya kṛtam bhavati nābuddhipūrvam, na sahasā kṛtam* (Abhk. IV. 120). The verb *saṁcintayati* signifies "to think about, think over, consider carefully, reflect about," as well as "to design, intend" (S. E. D. 1132, col.2). *Nābuddhipūrvam* conveys that the act is not done hastily (*na sahasā kṛtam*), without prior thought. The term *buddhi* indicates intelligence and rational thinking.

40. *sabbe sattā āhāra-t̥thitikā, sabbe sattā saṅkhāra-t̥thitikā* (D. III. 211). The first part of this statement: *sabbe sattā āhāra-t̥thitikā* occurs also at A. V. 50.

41. *Idha pana pariyyāyena paccayo āhāro ti vutto. . . . So ca yaṁ yaṁ phalaṁ janeti, taṁ taṁ āharati nāma. Tasmā āhāro ti vuccati* (DA. III. 975). *Phalassa karaṇato saṅkharaṇato saṅkhāro ti vutto. Iti heṭṭha-āhāra-paccayo kathito. Idha saṅkhāra-paccayo ti* (DA. III. 976). *Āhārā ti paccayā. Paccayā hi āharanti attano phalaṁ, tasmā āhārā ti vuccanti* (SA. II. 22).

42. *Etth' āta: Yadi paccay' aṭṭho āhār' aṭṭho atha kasmā aññesu pi sattānaṁ paccayesu vijjamañesu ime yeva cattāro vuttā ti? Vuccate: Ajjhattika-santatiyā visesa paccayattā* (SA. II. 25).

43. I follow Bhikkhu Bodhi's interpretation of the phrase *tadāhāra-sambhavam* (2000, 1:752, n.91).

44. *Ime cattāro āhārā taṇhā-nidānā, taṇhā-samudayā, taṇhā-jātikā, taṇhā-pabhavā* (S. II. 12).

45. *Taṇhā-samudayā āhāra-samudayo, taṇhā-nirodhā āhāra-nirodho, ayameva ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo āhāra-nirodha-gāminī-paṭipadā* (M. I. 48).

46. *annād vai prajāḥ prajāyante, yāḥ kās ca pṛthivīm śritāḥ atho' nnaiva jīvanti athainadapiyantyantataḥ* (T.U. II. 2.1).

47. *saṁkalpana-sparśana-dr̥ṣṭi mohair grāsāmbu-vṛṣṭyātma vivṛddhi janma* (S.U. V. 11). A variant reading has *homaiḥ* instead of *mohaiḥ*. I follow Patrick Olivelle (1998, 262) in my interpretation of this verse.

48. In the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XVII. 296) the process of existence is divided into two aspects: the *kamma*-forming process (*kamma-bhava*) and the *kamma*-formed rebirth process (*upapatti-bhava*). The *kamma*-forming process is the cause, and the *karma*-formed process is the effect. Acts of thought, word, and deed characterized by merit and demerit are done and *kamma* is accumulated in the *kamma*-forming process.

Consciousness as nutriment conditioned by *mano-sañcetanā* can be interpreted as taking the lead in the *kamma*-forming process.

49. *Kammaṃ khettaṃ ti kusalākusala-kammaṃ virūhanaṭṭhānaṭṭhena khettaṃ. Viññāṇaṃ bījaṃ ti sahajātaṃ abhisankhāra-viññāṇaṃ virūhanaṭṭhena bījaṃ. . . . Viññāṇaṃ patitṭhitaṃ ti abhisankhāra-viññāṇaṃ patitṭhitaṃ* (AA. II. 334).

50. Iti kho Ānanda kammaṃ khettaṃ viññāṇaṃ bījaṃ taṇhā sineho *avijjā-nivāraṇānaṃ sattānaṃ taṇhā-samyojanānaṃ hināya dhātuyā cetanā patitṭhitā patthanā patitṭhitā. Evam āyatim punabbavābhiniḍḍatti hoti* (A. I. 224). The same statement is repeated with *majjhimā dhātu* and *paṇītā dhātu*.

51. *Hināya dhātuyā ti kāma-dhātuyā. Majjhimāya dhātuyā ti rūpa-dhātuyā. Paṇītāya dhātuyā ti arūpa-dhātuyā* (AA. II. 334).

52. *Rūpa-dhātu kho gahapati viññāṇassa oko, rūpa-dhātu-rāga-vinibaddhañca pana viññāṇaṃ okasārīti vuccati* (S. III. 9).

It is stated here that the body is the home of conscious awareness (*viññāṇa*), and consciousness is described as one that which seeks to make its home in the body because it is bound by passionate desire to the body. The same statement is made with regard to *vedanā*, *saññā*, and *saṅkhāra* (S. III. 9-10).

53. *Api ca ārammaṇa-vasena catasso abhisankhāra-viññāṇa-ṭṭhitiyo vuttā ti, tā dassetum idha viññāṇaṃ na gahitaṃ* (SA. II. 259).

54. According to the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* (Dhs. 183) the following factors are among those that are not removed by *bhāvanā* and *dassanā*: wholesome states of *kāma-dhātu*, *rūpa-dhātu*, and *arūpa-dhātu*; the four non-material aggregates; and all material forms of the physical universe.

55. *Idaṃ pana kamma-catukkaṃ patvā dvādasa akusala-cetanā kaṇhā nāma. Tebhūmaka-kusala-cetanā sukkā nāma, magga-cetanā akaṇha-asukkā ti āgatā* (MA. III. 105).

Pahānāya yā cetanā ti ettha vivattaḡāminī maggacetanā veditabbā; sā hi kammakkhayāya samvattatī ti. (AA. III. 213)

56. This statement occurs at M. I. 262-263, III. 63; S. II. 28.

57. The passage at A. V. 2-4 begins as follows: *Sīlavato bhikkhave sīlasampannassa na cetanāya karaṇīyam 'avippaṭisāro me uppajjatu' ti. Dhammatā esā bhikkhave, yaṃ sīlavato sīlasampannassa avippaṭisāro uppajjati* (A. V. 2.).

The entire passage is repeated at A. V. 312-313. It is quoted in the *Nettipakaraṇa* (Nt. 144) with the following changes: *na cetanā karaṇīyā* for *na cetanāya karaṇīyam* and *jāyeyya* for *uppajjatu* of A. V. 2-4. All the verbs in the *Nettipakaraṇa* are in the optative mood.

58. *Iti kho bhikkhave dhammā' va dhamme abhisandenti, dhammā' va dhamme*

paripūrenti, aparā param gamanāyā ti (A. V. 3-4).

59. *na cetanāya karaṇīyaṃ ti na cetetvā kappetvā pakappetvā kātabbam* (AA. V. 1).

60. The commentary to the *Dīgha-nikāya* (DA. II. 432) explains *citta-niyama* with the statement that mental factors condition the arising of immediately following mental factors. It is posited that mental factors do not arise in a random fashion but follow one another in accordance with conditioned origination. The commentary says: *Purimā purimā citta-cetasikā dhammā paccimānaṃ paccimānaṃ citta-cetasikānaṃ dhammānaṃ upanissaya-paccayena paccayo ti*. It is said here that each preceding mental factor becomes the supporting condition for the one that follows. In this way, conditioned origination becomes the governing principle in the continuum of consciousness.

61. *atha khvāssa pubbe va tathā cittaṃ bhāvitam hoti yam-tam tathattāya upanetīti* (M. I. 301).

62. *Na kho . . . saññā-vedayita-nirodham samāpajjantassa bhikkhuno evaṃ hoti: aham saññā-vedayita-nirodham samāpajjissan-ti vā, aham saññā-vedayita-nirodham samāpajjāmīti vā, aham saññā-vedayita-nirodham samāpanno ti vā. . .* (M. I. 301)

63. *bhāvanānuyogam anuyuttassa bhikkhave bhikkuno viharato kiñcāpi na evam icchā uppajjeya Aho vata me anupādāya āsavehi cittaṃ vimucceyyā ti. Atha kvassa anupādāya āsavehi cittaṃ vimuccati* (S. III. 154).

64. The same *sutta* with the three analogies occurs at A. IV. 125-127.

65. The *Rathavinīta-sutta* (M. I. 145-151) is cast in the form of a dialogue between one of the, Buddha's most advanced disciples, Sāriputta, who often appears in the role of instructor to other monks and another much respected monk, Puṇṇa Mantāniputta, described as one who is skilled in instructing and motivating his companions. This *sutta* is described as a skilful dialogue between two "great beings" (*mahā-nāgā*) enjoying each other's understanding of the *Dhamma*.

66. For further discussion of this imagery of going "against the stream" see Collins (1990b, 250).

67. *anikkhitta-dhuro* means, literally, "one who has not put down the yoke." Figuratively, the yoke symbolizes responsibility and steadfast labour (P.E.D. 342, col. 2).

68. *handāham viriyam ārabhāmi appattassa pattiya anadhigatassa adhigamāya asacchikatassa sacchikiriyāyāti* (D. III. 256). The following list of eight occasions for exerting energy provides concrete examples of the Theravāda practice of "cultivating the mind" (*bhāvanā*). (a) When one has time, before starting a task. (b) When one has completed a task and has some time. (c) When one has time prior to starting a journey. (d) After the journey is completed. (e) If a monk did not receive sufficient almsfood, he

should not complain but think that he can exert more energy when his stomach is not too full. (f) If a monk gets sufficient food, he should think that his body is strong and able to exert itself. (g) If one is indisposed, one should exert oneself before the illness gets worse. (h) When one has recovered, one should put forth energy. It is obvious that a life that is in accordance with the teaching of the Buddha is a life of energy (*virīya*).

69. A similar statement occurs at A. IV. 352.

70. *Sakkā bhikkhave akusalaṃ pajahitum. No ce taṃ bhikkhave sakkā abhaviṣṣa akusalaṃ pajahitum nāham evaṃ vadeyyaṃ "akusalaṃ bhikkhave pajahathā" ti* (A. I. 58).

71. *Sakkā bhikkhave kusalaṃ bhāvetum* (A. I. 58).

72. The vow to persevere in the path of liberation is also found at M. I. 480-481 and S. II. 28.

73. The *Visuddhimagga* (XIV. 3-4) holds that whereas perception (*saññā*), consciousness (*viññāṇa*), and *paññā* are related because the cognitive function of *viññāṇa* presupposes the perceptual processes of *saññā* and the wise understanding of *paññā* develops from the cognitive discernment of *viññāṇa*, nevertheless they are distinguishable since each of them approaches and knows the object differently. *Saññā* is like a child who perceives a coin but does not realize its monetary value. *Viññāṇa* is like a villager who knows that a coin is used in commerce, but cannot tell whether it is counterfeit or genuine. *Paññā* functions like a money-changer who knows what the child and the villager know about the coin but can also discern whether or not it is genuine. According to Buddhaghosa's explanation, *saññā* grasps the outward features of an object, for example, whether it is blue or yellow. *Viññāṇa* includes what is known through perception, but also grasps the three characteristics of impermanence, liability to cause suffering, and absence of a self in the object. *Paññā* not only thoroughly understands these three characteristics, but makes the Eightfold Path a manifest fact in the life of an individual by means of striving (*lakkhana-paṭivedaṇca pāpeti ussakitvā magga-pātubhāvaṇca pāpeti*). It is to be noted that here Buddhaghosa links the functioning of *paññā* with the deployment of energetic endeavour.

Chapter V: *Cetanā* in the *Atthasālinī* and the *Visuddhimagga*

1. Warder suggests that the third council was held towards the end of Aśoka's reign, probably in 237 B.C.E. (1970, 273). Whereas the first two councils are accepted by all Buddhist traditions, splits in the *Saṅgha* begin to occur after the second council, and only the Theravādins maintain that the third council was held during the time of Aśoka. It is probable that this council concerned only the Theravādins and that it ended with the Sarvāstivādins breaking away to form their own sect.

The third council provides a landmark for dating the Pāli *Abhidhamma* texts. The commentary to the *Kathāvatthu* (KvuA. 1) records a tradition that the *Kathāvatthu* was compiled by Moggaliputta Tissa during the reign of Aśoka and recited to the monks at

the third council. In the preface to *Points of Controversy* (Aung and C.A.F. Rhys Davids 1915, xxix-xxx), Mrs. Rhys Davids notes that the *Kathāvatthu* includes quotations from the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* and the *Vibhaṅga* as well as references to topics that are treated in the *Paṭṭhāna*. This leads to the conclusion that large portions of these three *Abhidhamma* texts were available before the third council and that they were held to be "orthodox" works by the compiler of the *Kathāvatthu*. There are no references to the *Dhātukathā* in the *Kathāvatthu*. On the basis of linguistic evidence, Norman (1983, 103-105) argues that the compiler of the *Kathāvatthu* was using an old and stereotyped framework that is cast in the form of a dialogue between opponents. According to Norman, this framework and the oldest debates "perhaps did in fact go back to the time of the Buddha, or at least to the second council" (1983, 105).

The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 6) maintains that a section of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* is a commentary (*aṭṭhakathā*) on an earlier chapter in the same text. This leads to the assumption that the chapter which is commented on must be considerably older, and that large portions of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* must have been completed before the third council (Norman 1983, 97).

The method of analysis in terms of *dharmas* that the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* sets forth in great detail is further elaborated in the *Vibhaṅga*. In the introduction to his translation of the *Vibhaṅga*, Sayadaw U Thittila states that the aim of this text is to show that a statement of "general truth" could also be a statement of "particular truth" (1969, xviii). In this regard, the *Vibhaṅga* makes a distinction between the analytical methods and definitions that are found in the *Suttas* (*Suttanta-bhājanīya*) and the more detailed analysis in terms of the technical vocabulary of the *Abhidhamma* (*Abhidhamma-bhājanīya*).

The *Kathāvatthu* differs from the other canonical *Abhidhamma* texts since it is concerned, not with the definition and classification of *dharmas*, but with the refutation of views within the Buddhist community that conflict with the teachings of Theravāda. The *Kathāvatthu* does not specify the schools that held the views that it opposes, but the commentary to the *Kathāvatthu* refers to them by name. It has been noted that several of these schools originated after the time of Aśoka (Law 1940, v-vi). It is possible, however, that many of the views refuted in the *Kathāvatthu* were current before the third council, though they had not been categorized as the doctrines of well-defined schools.

The *Kathāvatthu* employs a strictly logical method (Aung and C.A.F. Rhys Davids 1915, xlviii-xlix). The refutations are meant to demonstrate that the views introduced by the opponent are inconsistent with concepts accepted by all Buddhist schools and go against statements that all accept as the words of the Buddha. The argument makes the point that it is unreasonable of the opponent to accept a certain proposition, only to deny what that proposition so obviously entails.

The *Visuddhimagga*, majestic in the vastness of its scope and in the depth of its interpretation, was composed by Buddhaghosa in Sri Lanka during the early part of the fifth century (Ñāṇamoli 1964, xiv). Though the *Visuddhimagga* is not part of the Theravāda canon, its influence on the tradition has been continuous and profound. The commentary to the *Visuddhimagga*, called the *Paramattha-maṇḍīsā*, was composed by Dhammapāla in South India within two hundred years after the death of Buddhaghosa (Ñāṇamoli 1964, xxx).

At the beginning of the commentaries to each of the first four *Nikāyas*, Buddhaghosa states that he will not refer to certain matters since they have already been

expounded in the *Visuddhimagga*. He goes on to say that the *Visuddhimagga* is placed in the middle of the four *Nikāyas* (DA. I. 2; MA. I. 2; SA. I. 2; AA. I. 2). The *Visuddhimagga* can be perceived as a detailed manual of meditation elaborated under the three headings of *sīla*, *samādhi*, and *paññā*. The four foundations of mindfulness, the levels of *jhāna* and the stages in the cultivation of *paññā* are minutely described and skilfully linked with extended explanations of the five *khandhas*, the process of perception, conditioned origination, and the implications of *kamma*. Detailed enumerations of wholesome, unwholesome, and morally indeterminate *cittas*, and the mental factors that constitute them are included in the descriptions of the *saṅkhārakkhandha* and the *viññāṇakkhandha*. The *Visuddhimagga* follows the *Abhidhamma* method of analyzing things and persons in terms of irreducible, momentary *dhammas*. The system of classification of physical and mental states is based on the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* and the *Vibhaṅga*.

There is general agreement that Buddhaghosa is the author of the *Atthasālinī* as well as the *Visuddhimagga*, although this matter has been disputed (Norman 1983, 123-125; von Hinmber 1997, 151). It is important to note that both the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Atthasālinī* insist upon the continuity of the Theravāda tradition by quoting from the old Sinhalese commentaries (Hinmber 1997, 125, 152). These commentaries were probably brought to Sri Lanka from India, translated into Sinhalese, and augmented with comments by Sri Lankan scholars. Additions to the commentaries probably ended after the first century C.E. (Ñāṇamoli 1964, xiii; Warder 1970, 322).

Short manuals of *Abhidhamma* continued to be written from the fifth century onwards. The most popular of these is the *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* composed at the end of the eleventh or the beginning of the twelfth century (Norman 1983, 151). I have referred to the *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* several times in this chapter and the next in order to elucidate what is said in the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Atthasālinī*.

2. *Sahajātā cetanā saṃjātānaṃ nāma-rūpānaṃ; nānākkhanikā cetanā kammābhiniṃbattānaṃ nāma-rūpānaṃ kammavasena* (Bodhi, 1993, 307). The gist of this statement is that whereas conascent *cetanā* affects the present body and mind, asynchronous *cetanā*, through the processes of *kamma*, affects the future body and mind that will be generated through *kamma*.

3. *Kosallaṃ vuccati paññā* (Asl. 63).

4. The concept of *cetanā-sampayutta-kamma* will be developed more fully in the next chapter.

5. The term *yevāpanaka* has the literal meaning of "or whatsoever" and is an abbreviation for a phrase which recurs in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* (for example, Dhs. 9, 17). This phrase signifies: "Or whatever other non-physical, conditionally originated states there may exist on that occasion." This suggests that a class of *cetasikas* is not limited to those named in the list but also includes an indefinite number of other such *cetasikas* that might arise in a wholesome, unwholesome, or ethically indeterminate *citta* in any given situation. The phrase *yevāpanaka* can be interpreted to mean: "and other such mental states that may occur in a particular situation."

6. The *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* (Dhs. 193) defines the Supramundane as follows: *Katame dhammā lokuttarā? Apariyāpannā maggā ca maggaphalāni va asaṅkhatā ca dhātu—ime dhammā lokuttarā.*

The four Paths are described in terms of the unwholesome states that are removed through the cultivation of the disciplines that pertain to each Path. From a psychological perspective, the four Paths are interpreted to be stages in the purification of the mind and its development (*bhāvanā*) through the disciplines of meditation and mindfulness.

7. The *Kathāvatthu* (Kvu. 353-355) records a debate between the Theravādins and their opponents where the latter maintain that old age and death can be taken as *kamma-vipāka*. The Theravādins argue that old age and death cannot be reckoned as *kamma-vipāka*, since only conscious states (*cittas*) that experience the results of past *kamma* are included under *kamma-vipāka*. The commentary to the *Kathāvatthu* (Kvu A. 101) explains that old age and death cannot be regarded as *kamma-vipāka* since they are not entirely mental experiences but occur, at least in part, as results of natural order (*utu*). The commentary concludes by holding that though a causal relation (*paccaya*) can be posited between unwholesome *kamma* and physical decay, the term *vipāka* refers solely to the mental states that result from *kamma* (McDermott 1984, 87).

8. *Tesu anavajja-sukha-vipāka-lakkhaṇā kusalā, sāvajja-dukkha-vipāka-lakkhaṇā akusalā, avipāka-lakkhaṇā avyākatā* (Asl. 39).

9. In the *Kathāvatthu* (Kvu. 357-359) the position of the opponents is summed up in the statement: "*vipākas* entail further *vipākas*" (*vipāko vipākadhammo ti*). The Theravādins point out that if karmic results were to become the causes of further karmic results in an endless series, there can be no cessation of sorrow (*n'atthi dukkhassa anta-kiriya*), no cutting off of the round of rebirth (*n'atthi vaṭṭupacchedo*), and no attainment of *parinibbāna* without residual causes of rebirth (*n'atthi anupāda-parinibbāna*) (Kvu. 357).

10. *Kāya-saṅcetanā nāma kāya-dvāre cetanā-pakappanā; sā aṭṭha-kāmāvacara-kusalavasena aṭṭha-vidhā, akusalavasena dvādasa-vidhā ti vīsati-vidhā. Tathā vacī-saṅcetanā, tathā mano-saṅcetanā* (AA. III. 144).

11. *avijjā . . . tīsu dvāresu sukha-dukkhānaṃ paccaya-bhūtā cetanā uppajjati* (AA. III. 144).

12. *Idaṃ pana kammacatukkaṃ patvā dvādasa akusala-cetanā kaṇhā nāma. Tebhūmaka-kusala-cetanā sukkā nāma. Magga-cetanā akaṇha-asukkā ti āgatā* (MA. III. 105).

13. *Bhavaṅga* can be described as "subliminal" in the sense that it cannot be perceived by the senses or grasped by the ordinary processes of the mind. However, it is not postulated in the *Abhidhamma* that *bhavaṅga* is a "sub-plane" operating beneath the threshold of consciousness (Aung 1910, 11; Nārada 1975, 163-165). Thus *bhavaṅga* differs from the *ālayavijñāna* of *Vijñānavāda* and the subliminal level of the *citta* in the Yoga tradition: it does not function as the repository of *vāsanās* from which *cittas* and *cetanās* arise and into which impressions lapse. The explanation given by Collins

(1990b, 243-244) is that *bhavaṅga* processes alternate with *citta-vīthi*s to constitute the continuity of individual existence. He stresses that *bhavaṅga* differs from the Unconscious of Freudian psychology since it is not conceived as an underlying "level" of consciousness. Nārada gives the following explanation of *bhavaṅga*:

Bhavaṅga is so called because it is an essential condition for continued subjective existence.

Whenever the mind does not receive a fresh external object, one experiences a *bhavaṅga* consciousness. Hence it is called *vīthimutta*—process-freed. Sometimes it acts as a buffer between two thought processes. (1975, 165)

14. This is the basic cognitive process delineated in the *Visuddhimagga* XX. 44, XIV. 114-122 and the fourth chapter of the *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha*. Differences occur in the process, for example, depending on whether the object is very clear, clear, obscure, or very obscure (Bodhi 1993, 163-166). *Citta-vīthi*s related to the stages of meditation, the four Paths and their fruition, dying, and rebirth differ from this basic cognitive process.

15. This extended simile is cited by Aung (1910, 30), Mrs. Rhys Davids (1924, 180-181), Jayasuriya (1963, 42-43), Govinda (1961, 134-135), and Collins (1990b, 242-243). The version given by Aung differs in some details from the *Atthasālinī* version.

16. The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XIV. 115-123, XX. 44) gives the following details regarding the types of *cittas* that perform the following functions in the *citta-vīthi*:

adverting (<i>pañca-dvārāvajjana</i>)	functional without root (<i>ahetuka kiriya</i>)
sense consciousness (<i>pañca-viññāṇa</i>)	resultant without root wholesome or unwholesome (<i>ahetuka vipāka: kusala</i> or <i>akusala</i>)
receiving (<i>sampaticchana</i>)	resultant without root wholesome or unwholesome (<i>ahetuka vipāka: kusala</i> or <i>akusala</i>)
investigating (<i>santīraṇa</i>)	resultant without root wholesome or unwholesome (<i>ahetuka vipāka: kusala</i> or <i>akusala</i>)
determining (<i>voṭṭhapana</i>)	functional without root (<i>ahetuka kiriya</i>)

javana

wholesome, unwholesome,
fruitful, or functional
(*kusala, akusala, phala, kiriya*)

registering
(*tadārammaṇa*)

resultant wholesome or unwholesome
(*vipāka: kusala or akusala*)

17. Bhikkhu Ñāṇananda (1976, 4-6) notes that *papañca* conveys "spreading out," "expansion," "diffusion," and "manifoldness." He translates *papañca-saññā-sankhā* as "concepts characterized by the prolific tendency." *Papañca* also connotes obsession with the concepts that have been proliferated and the tendency to give free rein to one's imagination. Collins (1990b, 141) translates *papañca-saññā-sankhā* as "imaginings, ideas and estimations." I have followed Bodhi (1995, 202) who renders *papañca-saññā-sankhā* as "perceptions and notions tinged by mental proliferation."

18. The lower levels of meditation (*rūpa-jhānas*) are often classified as four in number (D. I. 74-75). However, the *rūpa-jhānas* are classified as fivefold when the *cittas* of the realm of fine matter (*rūpāvacara-cittāni*) are enumerated (Vsm. XIV. 86; Bodhi 1993, 52). There are five wholesome *rūpāvacara cetanās* corresponding to the *cittas*. The wholesome *cittas* and *cetanās* of the non-material realm are four in number.

19. For example, the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XVII. 108) gives the following explanation of why ignorance (*avijjā*) is given as the *paccaya* of *saṅkhāra* in the chain of rebirth. It is said here that though other causes of *saṅkhāras* such as the physical basis of each sense faculty (*vatthu*), objects (*ārammaṇam*), and conascent factors (*sahajāta-dhammā*) are actually present when *saṅkhāras* are produced, still *avijjā* is regarded as the cause of *saṅkhāras* because it is the most evident condition (*pākaṭattā*).

20. *Kamma-nibbattā tebhūmakā rūpārūpa-dhammā abhisāṅkhata-saṅkhārā nāma* (Vsm. XVII. 46).

21. However, the Theravādins differ from the Yogācārins, who use the argument that different people perceive the same thing differently to support their view that all objects are mind-created manifestations of subliminal *vāsanās* contained in the *ālaya-vijñāna*. (Conze 1967, 256).

22. In an editorial note (Aung 1910, 248-249, n.1), Mrs. Rhys Davids explains that the term "apperception" is used, in this context, in the sense of "a fuller or more complete cognition than perception." She says that she is assigning this meaning to apperception on the basis of the works of Leibniz and Wilhelm Wundt. She points out that for Leibniz "perception" conveys, "I know," and "apperception" signifies, "I know that I know," while Wundt, on the other hand, defines "apperception" as a more distinct and detailed perception achieved through "an effort of will called attention." She concludes by saying that "apperception" does not entirely fit *javana* since the former term, as used in the West, focuses on the "afferent stage" of the cognitive process, while *javana* conveys the "efferent mystery" that goes with the notion of *kamma*.

23. In the *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* (Bodhi 1993, 135-136) objects that are directly perceived by the mind are enumerated as: sensitive receptive matter (*pasāda*) that each sense organ possesses, which makes sensory stimulation possible, subtle matter (*sukhuma-rūpa*), consciousness (*citta*), mental factors (*cetasika*), *nibbāna*, and concepts (*paññatti*). Bhikkhu Bodhi states, in his explanatory notes, that a given momentary state of mind (*citta*) cannot be directly apprehended, since the cognizer cannot simultaneously become the cognized. However, Bhikkhu Bodhi goes on to explain that according to the *Abhidhamma*, a *citta* can review earlier *cittas* in the same mental continuum or a *citta* in another being.

Chapter VI: Defining *Cetanā*

1. *Cetayati ti cetanā, abhisandahati ti attho* (Vsm. XIV. 135).

2. *Yā tasmin samaye tajiā mano-viññāṇa-dhātu-sampassajā cetanā sañcetanā sañcetayitattam—ayaṁ tasmin samye cetanā hoti* (Dhs. 10). In the *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* (Bodhi 1993, 109), *mano-dhātuttika* is a collective term which includes three types of *cittas* that occur in the pre-*javana* stage of a cognitive series (*citta-vīthi*). These are: the state of consciousness that occurs when the mind first begins to attend to the stimulation of any of the five senses (*pañca-dvārāvajjana*), and two types of receiving consciousness (*sampaticcana*) consisting of the wholesome resultant *citta* (*kusala-vipāka*) that occurs when a desired (*iṭṭha*) object is received into the cognitive process, and the unwholesome resultant *citta* (*akusala-vipāka*) that occurs when an undesired (*aniṭṭha*) object is taken into the *citta-vīthi*. These states of consciousness are said to be devoid of roots (*ahetuka*) since they do not give rise to wholesome motivations based on non-greed, non-hatred, and non-delusion or to unwholesome motivations stemming from greed, hatred, and delusion. It follows that the *cetanās* that belong to these *cittas* do not produce wholesome or unwholesome *kamma*. The function of *cetanā* in these *cittas* is limited to causing concomitant states to incline towards the object (Bodhi 1993, 40-42, 171). Contact with objects occur through these *cittas*. *Kamma*-producing *cetanās* develop from the basic contact (*sampassa*) with objects.

3. *Cetayati ti cetanā. Saddhiṁ attanā sampayutta-dhamme ārammaṇe atisandahati ti attho* (Asl. 111).

4. *catu-bhūmaka-cetanā hi no cetayita-lakkhaṇā nāma n'atthi* (Asl. 111).

5. *Sabbā cetayita-lakkhaṇā va āyūhana-rasatā pana kusalākusalesu eva hoti* (Asl. 111).

6. Commenting on the phrase at A. II. 35: "what is proper to do, what is proper to arrange" (*alaṁ kātum alaṁ saṁvidhātum*), the commentator maintains (AA. III. 247) that whereas *kātum* signifies what is to be done by oneself (*attanā kātum*), *saṁvidhātum* conveys an act that one causes to be done by another person (*parehi karāpetum*). This explanation of the verb *saṁvidahati* is helpful because it corroborates the meaning

assigned to *saṁvidahana* in the *Atthasālinī* definition of *cetanā*. The definition says that when *cetanā* begins to engage itself with the object, it causes the concomitants (*cetasikās*) to commence their own work (*esā pi attano kiccena ārammaṇe vattamānā aññe pi sampayutta-dhamme attano attano kiriyāya pavatteti*) (Asl. 112).

7. The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XVII. 292, XIX. 13) quotes the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* (Ps. I. 52) where the five causes from previous *kamma*-forming processes (*purima- kammabhava*) that give rise to the *kamma*-formed resultant states that manifest as the body and mind of the present life are defined as follows: ignorance (*avijjā*) is defined as delusion (*moha*), *saṅkhārā* as *āyūhana*, craving (*taṇhā*) as desire (*nikanti*), clinging (*upādāna*) as grasping (*upagamana*), and perpetuation of the process of rebirth (*bhava*) is identified with wholesome and unwholesome *cetanās*. These *cetanās* instigate acts that have karmic consequences.

8. The twelve types of unwholesome *cittas* are listed in the *Atthasālinī*, *Visuddhimagga*, and *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* (Chart V. 6). The unwholesome type of *citta* rooted in delusion (*moha*) and accompanied by restlessness (*uddhacca*) is regarded as too weak to carry out the function of generating rebirth (Bodhi, 1993, 211). The other eleven types of unwholesome *cittas* bring about rebirth.

9. In interpreting conditioned origination as it operates in the course of rebirth, the *Visuddhimagga* (XVII. 173-174) holds that *saṅkhārās* of body, speech, and mind become conditions for their own fruition (*saṅkhārā attano phalassa paccayā honti*) solely because they have been performed (*kattatā yeva*) and neither because they continue to exist nor because they cease to exist. The notion of *upacaya* (accumulation) entails that the act is somehow conserved in the consciousness continuum until the time that it comes to fruition. Theravāda finds the notion of the continued existence and preservation of an act untenable. The *Visuddhimagga* gives the following analogy: performing a transaction, such as signing a contract, leads to the completion of the business. The act of performing the transaction need not continue as a condition for the business to come to fruition and yield results. It is not necessary, for example, that the actual act of signing the contract must somehow continue to exist (Vsm. XVII. 174) to ensure that the parties to the contract will abide by it. (This analogy is not suitable because the signed contract does continue to exist.)

10. The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 291) makes a distinction between wholesome acts performed in the three realms of rebirth (*tebhumaka-kusalāni*) and acts that pertain to the "transcendental" Path (*lokuttarāni*). In the case of wholesome acts, there can be a lapse of time between the acts and its result; but the factors of the Path, such as faith (*saddhā*), energy (*virīya*), mindfulness (*sati*), concentration (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*paññā*), are immediately followed by results.

11. The *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm. XVII. 61) says that at the moment of *āyūhana*, the *saṅkhārās* of body, speech, and mind become manifest at the "doors of action" as *saṅkhārās* of merit, *saṅkhārās* of demerit, and immutable *saṅkhārās*: *Ayaṁ tiko kammāyūhanakkhaṇe puññābhisāṅkhārādīnaṁ dvārato pavatti-dassanattamaṁ vutto*. The

import of this statement is that when wholesome and unwholesome acts of body, speech, and mind are enacted, processes of karmic merit and demerit begin to take effect.

12. Yaśomitra makes the following comment on *Abhidharmakośa* II. 24: *Cetanā cittābhisamskāra iti citta-praspanḍaḥ. Praspanḍa iva praspanḍa ityarthah* (AbhkA. 1:187).

13. *Abhidhamma-pariyāyaṃ patvā pana vijjānānaka-vatturū ārabba dassāmi ti manasā cintita-kālato paṭṭhāya kusalaṃ hoti apara-bhāge kāyena vā vācāya vā kattaḅbaṃ karissatī ti vuttaṃ* (Asl. 77).

14. *Yā pana tasmim dvāre siddhā cetanā yāya pāṇaṃ hanti adinṇaṃ ādiyati micchā carati pāṇātipātādīhi viramati, idaṃ kāya-kammaṃ nāma* (Asl. 84).

15. *Yā pana tasmim vacī-dvāre siddhā cetanā yāya musā katheti, pesuññaṃ katheti pharusāṃ katheti samphappalapati musā-vādādīhi viramati idaṃ vacī-kammaṃ nāma* (Asl. 87).

16. *Yā pana tasmim mano-dvāre siddhā cetanā yāyaṃ abhijjā-vyāpāda micchādassanāni c'eva anabhijjā-avyāpāda-sammādhassanāni va gaṇhāti idaṃ mano-kammaṃ nāma* (Asl. 88).

17. The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 159) maintains that the meritorious act that has the nature of giving (*dāna*) arises on three occasions: '*dānaṃ dassāmi ti*' *cintentaṃ uppajjati, dānaṃ dadato uppajjati, 'dinnāṃ me ti' paccavekkhantaṃ uppajjati*. The text then goes on to say that when these three *cetanās* become one, then the act of giving comes into existence: *Evam pubba-cetanā muñcana-cetanā ti tisso pi cetanā ekato katvā dānamayaṃ puñña-kiriya-vatthu nāma hoti*.

18. The *Atthasālinī* (Asl. 157-160) maintains that the three phases of *cetanā* (prior *cetanā*, *cetanā* at the time of acting, subsequent *cetanā*) come into play in ten meritorious acts: (1) charity, (2) virtue, (3) cultivating the mind, (4) respect for elders, (5) dutifulness, (6) sharing of merit, (7) giving thanks, (8) teaching, (9) learning the dhamma, and (10) establishing right views (Pe Maung Tin, 1920-1921, 209).

19. *Mano-dvāre pana vadhaka-cetanāya uppanna-mattāya eva kamma-patha-bhedo hoti, so va kho vyāpāda-vasena na pāṇātipāta-vasena* (Asl. 90). The *Atthasālinī* here emphasizes that the mere arising of the intention to kill in the mind is sufficient to constitute *kamma*, by reason of the mental state of ill-will, not because murder has been actually committed.

21. *Kim pan' etaṃ kammaṃ nāma? Cetanā c'eva ekacce va cetanā-sampayuttakā dhammā* (Asl. 88).

21. In the *Aṅguttara-nikaya* (A. II. 236, 237) the eight aspects of the Eightfold Path and the seven *bojjhaṅgas* are described as "*kamma* that leads to the waning away of *kamma*." *Cetanā-sampayutta-dhammā* are reckoned as twenty-one in number: six factors of mental *kamma*, seven *bojjhaṅgas*, and eight aspects of the Eightfold Path (Asl. 89).

22. The *Atthasālinī* is emphatic that gently spoken words cannot necessarily be classified as "absence of harsh speech": *Yathā ca citta-saṇhatāya pharusavācā na hoti evaṃ vacana-saṇhatāya aphaṇusavācā pi na hoti* (Asl. 100). The point is made here that absence of harsh speech is to be defined in terms of a gentle attitude of mind (*citta-saṇhatā*).

23. *Tasmin pana parapariggahīte saññīno tadādāyaka-upakkama-samuṭṭhāpikā theyya-cetanā adinnādānam* (Asl. 97-98). Theft is defined as the purposive impulse that produces the conative effort to steal in one whose attitude of mind is fixed on stealing.

24. *Visaṃvādanādhīppāyena pan' assa paravisaṃvādakā kāya-vacīppayoga samuṭṭhāpikā cetanā musāvādo* (Asl. 98-99).

25. *Tattha saṅkiliṭṭhassa cittassa paresaṃ vā bhedāya attapīyakamyatāya vā kāya vacī-payoga-samuṭṭhāpikā cetanā pisuṇā vācā* (Asl. 99).

26. The *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* (Bodhi 1993, 93) holds that *adhimokkha* is a constituent of all *cittas* except the rudimentary state of consciousness when the object is first cognized through one of the senses (*pañca-viññāṇa*) and the unwholesome state of consciousness rooted in delusion and accompanied by perplexity (*vicikicchā*).

27. *Adhimuktistadāmbanasya guṇato' vadhāraṇam. Rucirīyanye. Yathāniṣcayam dhāraṇeti yogācārācittāḥ* (AbhkA. 1:187).

28. The *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* (Bodhi 1993, 93) states that *chanda* does not arise in *cittas* that do not produce the roots of wholesome and unwholesome action (*ahetuka*) and in unwholesome *cittas* that are motivated by the sole root of delusion (*momūha*) and manifest as states associated with perplexity (*vicikicchā*) or with restlessness (*uddhacca*). The rootless states include resultant (*vipāka*) states arising as consequences of past wholesome or unwholesome *kamma* and purely functional (*kiriya*) states that are not caused by past acts and do not cause subsequent effects. Consciousness functioning at the five senses, "reception" (*sampaticchana*) of the object into the cognitive process, and the preliminary examination (*santīraṇa*) of the object are counted as resultant states where *chanda* is not present. Determining (*voṭṭhapana*) the nature of the object is performed by a purely functional *citta*. It follows then that *chanda* is not present in the *voṭṭhapana citta*. *Cetanā* is present in all these preliminary stages of the cognitive process where contact with the object is established.

29. The *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* gives the following definition of *saṅkappa*: *Katamo tasmim samaye sammā-saṅkappo hoti? Yo tasmim samaye takko vitakko saṅkappo appanā vyappanā cetaso abhiniropanā samma-saṅkappo—ayaṃ tasmim samaye samma-saṅkappo hoti*. (Dhs. 12) The definition of *vitakka* (Dhs. 10) is identical.

30. *Yo takko vitakko saṅkappo appanā vyappanā cetaso abhiniropanā . . . ayam vuccati sammā saṅkappo* (Vbh. 237).

31. *Yam kho brāhmaṇa arabbhadhātuyā sati ārabbhavanto sattā paññāyanti, ayaṃ sattānam attakāro, ayaṃ parakāro* (A. III. 338). The Buddha points out that since there is such a factor as the capacity to initiate action, and living beings are known to possess this capacity, it follows that people have the capacity to initiate their own actions and to instigate others to act.

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