

Consciousnesses - mundane and supramundane

Reference of Discussion :

[Audio Thu 2 Aug 18 / Short Note](#)

[Audio Sun 5 Aug 18 / Short Note](#)

[Am Dienstag, den 19.06.2018, 18:36 +0000 schrieb](#)

The book "The Law of Dependent Arising" talks about these two consciousnesses. It just got my attention when it stated that there are two consciousnesses. I never thought of it that way.

1 - abhisaṅkhata- viññāṇa' ('the specifically prepared consciousness') also known as the deluded consciousness.

2 - sabbatopabha-viññāṇa' (non-manifestative consciousness') also known as lustrous consciousness.

So is the 2nd one nibbana? It doesn't say so in the book.

And then I assume that the Arahant has eliminated the 1st consciousness completely?

It also says that when light comes from all directions, consciousness becomes non-manifestative.

The book I think explains things very well. But I would love to hear more insights about this.

[On Wednesday, June 20, 2018, 11:31:15 AM GMT+1 Mirco wrote:](#)

Dhamma Greetings All,

Without context, I would render "sabba(to)pabha viññāṇa" as

- all / completely / entirely / from-every side / in every respect

-- radiating/radiant

---- mind (not consciousness)

"Sabbatopabha" is only found¹ three times in all the Suttas. Not much, eh? And it's only found¹ once in the connection with viññāṇa, that's in the **4th section of the 11th Sutta** of the *Longer Discourses*, the **Kevaṭṭa Sutta** [1]. So it has to be from this (**simile of the land-spotting bird**). It is **an interesting sutta** including a funny conversation between a monk and the Great Brahmā.

The **monk Kevatta** *wondered where all matter that ever came into being (bhūtapubba) comes to an end, ceases (nirujjhati)*. Since he knew how to visit the deva- and brahma-realms, he went there to ask the devas and gods (brahmas) and the rulers of the devas and gods. But no one knew the answer and they all sent him to the next higher beings, telling him they should know. Fourteen times he moved on through all realms until he met the highest of all, the Great Brahma. But like all the others before him, the Great Brahma also had to admit that he doesn't know the answer. He told the monk that he should go and ask the Buddha... :-D

If you ask me, this cessation of matter takes place with the cessation of perception, feeling and consciousness. That's what the Buddha said in the last verse:

**“Consciousness (mind) that’s invisible, (viññāṇaṃ anidassanaṃ)
Infinite, radiant all round (anantaṃ sabbatopabhaṃ)
Here’s where water and earth, fire and air find no footing;
Here’s where long and short, fine and coarse, beautiful and ugly;
Here’s where name and form cease with nothing left over —
With the cessation of consciousness, (viññāṇassa nirodhena)
That’s where this ceases (etthaṃ uparujjhatti)**

Here is the entire conversation [2]:

Then that mendicant, as easily as a strong person would extend or contract their arm, vanished from the Brahmā realm and reappeared in front of me. Then he bowed, sat down to one side, and said to me:

‘Sir, where do these four primary elements cease without anything left over, namely, the elements of earth, water, fire, and air?’

(4.1. The Simile of the Land-Spotting Bird)

When he said this, I said to him:

‘Once upon a time, mendicant, some sea-merchants set sail for the ocean deeps, taking with them a land-spotting bird. When their ship was out of sight of land, they released the bird. It flew right away to the east, the west, the north, the south, upwards, and in-between. If it saw land on any side, it went there and stayed. But if it saw no land on any side it returned to the ship. In the same way, after failing to get an answer to this question even after searching as far as the Brahmā realm, you’ve returned to me.

This is not how the question should be asked:

“Sir, where do these four primary elements cease without anything left over, namely, the elements of earth, water, fire, and air?”

This is how the question should be asked:

*“Where do water and earth, fire and air find no footing;
Where do long and short, fine and coarse, beautiful and ugly;
Where do name and form cease with nothing left over?”*

And the answer to that is:

***“Consciousness that’s invisible, infinite, radiant all round. --
Here’s where water and earth, fire and air find no footing;
Here’s where long and short, fine and coarse, beautiful and ugly;
Here’s where name and form cease with nothing left over --
With the **cessation** of consciousness, that’s **where this ceases.**”***

Much Metta,
Mirco

[1] I looked that up using the search function of the Digital Pali Reader, an excellent tool <https://pali.sirimangalo.org/>

Update: The DPR is no longer working with the latest version of Firefox. This will most likely NOT be fixed at this end. Please use Palemoon instead of Firefox until a better solution arises.

[2] Link to this translation: <https://suttacentral.net/dn11/en/sujato>

On Thursday, June 21, 2018, 3:41:53 AM GMT+8, Indu wrote:

Dhamma Greetings all,

Just to add to below. Maybe a bit more analytical in nature but hope this **motivates us** to practice more to realise these wonderful states.

Consciousnesses and **mind** are 2 **different** things. There is a **sutta** that says **mind in its pure state is luminous and bright**. Six consciousness are the **layers on top of mind** that start **to cloud it and also manifest things**. The Buddha called these consciousnesses as **magicians' tricks** which **manifest things for those who are untrained in the Dhamma**. Thus the **mind** that is **no more attached** with 6 consciousnesses is **radiant all around (sabbato pabbama)**, non-manifestative (**annidassanam**) and endless (**anantam**). This state of **perfection of mind** is also the **pinnacle of wisdom** and **is experienced by arahants** after all their defilements or fetters have been rooted out. But we may also experience some glimpses of such mind during TWIM practice.

The **sutta DN 11 contains very deep statements** by the Buddha about the nature of **consciousness** that **ordinary worldlings are accustomed to** and the **consciousness of an arahant**. Consciousness is **very much interleaved** with **our perception** of the world and material things. The interrelation between consciousness (vinnana) and Name and Form (nama rupa) is the **deepest point** in the **chain of dependent origination (co-arising)**. This **combination also called vortex or whirlpool or tangle (vatta)**, where we are stuck from the **beginningless time**. We cognise the **form (material form) or 4 great elements** by mentally formulating a name for each characteristic of forms with the help from sense consciousnesses. **Craving** comes into picture here too which **stitches form and name** while **ignoring consciousness** that **is the link between the two**. This is **not the big craving that follows after a feeling** but of a more subtle form that arises as long as sankharas or formations/preparations arise. And **craving (greed, hatred, delusion)** is the **maker of measurements that define things are long and short, big and small, beautiful and ugly**. When the **mind is free from craving**, the **6 consciousnesses also cease** and along with it the notion of long/short, etc **also ceases**.

Consciousness is one of the **nutriment** for maintenance of beings and as long as we have the **notion of our atta/self/solidity**, the consciousnesses are **not freed** from their bonds to Name and Forms. The **Buddha states that mind/consciousness that is freed** from name and form is where the **4 great elements find no footing**. So he is not saying that an objective world does not exist at all but inferring that when the mind is **released from consciousnesses to establish on name and form**, the **notion of form no more finds any ground**. So the Buddha's answer to the question was **when the 6 sense consciousnesses cease, all the notion of form too, ceases**. Quantum Mechanics actually has proven this observation.

We think that forms are actually something really existing and **are defined by space and time**. That was why that Bhikkhu went as far as Brahma world to find where the elements/forms cease and if there is any boundary. But as we know now that space and time are **not really truly existing things independent from sense consciousnesses**. They are there when mind is pulled by the 6 sense consciousness. Cosmologists are now saying that space may actually be infinite and there may be infinite number of universes. This kind of speculations or theories about the universe can go forever. **A wise person does not get involved with such**

thinking but makes an effort to understand what the limit of consciousness is and how they fit within the reality that is made of the impersonal process of dependent co-arising. So the bottom line is, we really need to practice the **complete 8 fold path to develop** the **wisdom** and **reach the state of mind that is free from all tangles.**

Metta Indu

On Thursday, July 26, 2018, 5:42:44 PM GMT+1, Sister Khema wrote:

Dhamma Greetings Indu.

I am way late reading this **but you did a great job** with this **Indu.**

I'm curious too here--- Did anyone talk about the **Co-joined** condition of Perception- Feeling- and Consciousness in this conversation as discussed by MN-43?

Sister Khema

On behalf of Indu Shakya Sent: 27 July 2018 18:52

Dhamma greetings Sister Khema,

Good to see you back after long. I *did not notice* a mention of MN-43 in our discussions, *but it is indeed a very important statement.* **Feeling, Perception and Consciousness** are **rejoined not disjoint** and it is *impossible to separate one from another.* So this make it even clearer that **dependent origination is not** strictly a **serial process of 12 links following** each other like a domino slabs one hitting another and so on.

Another very interesting statement in this Sutta is, **consciousness (vinnana) and wisdom (panna) are rejoined not disjoint.** I had a good insight into the two while I was sitting a few weeks ago. I am quoting my note below.

Not sure if these make sense to you?

Metta Indu

On 30 July 2018 at 12:20, Teoh Kian Koon wrote:

Dear Sister Eng Bee,

Following your **request** at our yesterday's WPCS Sunday dhamma class I am pleased to forward herewith the email relating to the sutta (**Kevatta sutta**) where the **4 elements find no footing** as per your request.

This sutta is very interesting and beautiful. To a certain extend it **was able** to explain what the **realisation of Nibbana** (a **state of realisation** where the **4 elements find no footing**) is?

Eng Bee - can u help print out this Kevatta sutta and this email for our sharing later?

Bye! and with metta always,

Teoh

