

ABHIDHAMMA

The Discourse to Gods



**May the World be
Enlightened**

A Gift of Dhamma

Why this Discourse was delivered to Gods

Introduction:

This discourse, **Abhidhamma**, was the discourse given to the Gods in **Tavatimsa** heaven at the assembly of Gods presided over by his former mother **Mahamaya** reborn in Deva world as a male Deva by the name of **Matu Deva Putta**. It was in grateful gratitude to his former mother that he delivered this discourse, Abhidhamma, the higher teaching, in the course of three human months, the entire Lent. It is only proper for the readers to know that the discourse was given to Gods.

We need to understand why Buddha went to Tavatimsa heaven to deliver this discourse, the higher teaching, Abhidhamma. It was only proper for Buddha to repay his former mother in grateful gratitude with this higher teaching. When Bodhisatta ascetic Gotama was practicing the self-mortification, **Matu Deva Putta**, had appeared before Him and encouraged Him to persevere when he had fainted, weak from the practice of self-mortification. The Ascetic Gotama had practiced self-mortification to its fullest degree and reduced His meals to just one mustard seed a day. His flesh and muscle had withered and His skin had clung to His protruding bones. Weak with hunger, the Bodhisatta had fainted momentarily. His former mother had appeared before Him and encouraged Him in His Noble Quest.

The role of the mother of the Buddha is a sacred role that requires great effort. **Queen Maha Maya** aspired to be a mother of a Buddha one hundred thousand world cycles ago at the time of the **Padumuttara Buddha**, the fifteenth Buddha preceding our Gotama Buddha. She then performed meritorious deeds and kept the precepts for one hundred thousand world cycles to fulfill her aspiration.

After his enlightenment, on the seventh year of His enlightenment, the Buddha went to Tavatimsa Heaven to preach the Abhidhamma (Higher teaching) to His deva mother and also to observe the Vassana (**Rains Retreat**) for three months there. Many celestials, including a very large retinue headed by His deva mother, greatly benefited by attaining the various stages of Sainthood including Sotapanna (stream-winner), Sekadagami (Once-returner), Anagami. (Non-returner).

After His Abhidhamma lectures, the Buddha descended back to the human world at lake Anottata in the Himalaya Mountain, where the Venerable Sariputta waited to receive the daily briefing of His lectures. **Later the Venerable Sariputta would expound the same doctrine to his disciples, thereby spreading the Abhidhamma teaching of the Buddha in the human world. Thus how we come to learn the Abhidhamma, the higher teaching.**

Abhidhamma Day

The Lord Buddha spent his seventh Lent, the rain retreat at Tavatimsa heaven. For the entire lent, he delivered the higher teaching, Abhidhamma, to Gods for the benefit of Gods and men. At Tavatimsa heaven (The heaven of the thirty three), sitting on the brown emerald slab, "**Pandukambala**" the throne of Sakka, King of devas, he expounded the seven sections of Abhidhamma to his mother **Santussita deva (Matu Deva Putta.)** in the assembly of devas and Brahmas. The preaching of the Abhidhamma took the entire lent and ends in the full moon day of **Thadingyut - light festival**. In commemoration of this event, Buddhists all over the world celebrate this day as Abhidhamma day. At the end of the Lent, in the month of Thadingyut (October), our Lord Buddha descended from Tavatimsa heaven back to the human world. This day is commemorated by Buddhist as Abhidhamma day and Light festival is held to emulate the scene of the Buddha return from Tavatimsa heaven, annually as Thadingyut Light Festival.

The Thadingyut Light Festival

The day of his return to the human world, is commemorated by Buddhists as Abhidhamma day and to emulate the miraculous scene, an annual light festival is held in all Theravada countries. In Myanmar, the light festival is known as Thadingyut light festival. On his return to the human world, the **King of the Devas, Sakka**, created three stairways:

1. *one of gold on the right side for the devas,*
2. *one of silver on the left side for the Brahmas and*
3. *one in the middle of rubies for the Lord Buddha.*

Many deities accompanied the Lord Buddha. They held several celestial regalia.

- *Panca Thinkha deva on the right played the “Veluva” harp in praise of the Lord Buddha.*
- *Matali deva on the left carried flowers and fragrance to honor the Lord Buddha.*
- *Suyama deva carried the yak tail fly whisk,*
- *Santussita deva held the ruby-studded gold fan and*
- *Sakka deva blew the “Vizayuttara” Conch Shell to celebrate the occasion.*

All deities from the entire Universe gathered to pay homage to the Lord Buddha. The three stairways thus illuminated by the radiance from the Devas’ body lead the way to the gateway of the City of Sakassa on earth. When the Lord Buddha set foot upon the earth, the crowd that awaited at the city gate all paid obeisance to the Lord Buddha and a grand ceremony was held to welcome the blessed one. **The Buddha with his miraculous power opens the sight for the human to see the grandeur of the accompanying Devas and Brahmas.**

Thadingyut Light Festival

To commemorate this great event in the life of the Lord Buddha, which took place on the Full moon day of Thadingyut the Myanmar hold “**Tawedeintha**” (Tavatimsa) festival or “Myint Mo Festival” because Tavatimsa is said to be on the summit of Mt. Myint Mo (Mt-Meru)? In Myanmar, replicas of Myint Mo are constructed to represent the three stairways and candlelight lamps are lit in the Thadingyut festivals replicating the Lord Buddha descend from Tavatimsa heaven to the human world on this day of Thadingyut. Many made their offerings to shrines and pagodas and alms are given to the monks. Hymns are sung in praise of the Buddha and his teaching, the Dhamma.

Devotional Homage –Puja

The Puja is performed by laymen to worship or making devotional offering. In Buddhism there are **five infinite debts of gratitude** –

1. *the gratitude owed to the Buddha,*
2. *the gratitude owed to the his teachings i.e. the Dhamma,*
3. *the gratitude owed to the Sangha (the assembly of monks)*
4. *the gratitude owed to the parents and*
5. *the gratitude owed to the teachers.*

It is a religious obligation to worship and make **devotional offerings to Buddha, Dhamma, Samghas**, the **parents, teachers and the elders**... In addition those who are senior in age, rank, and position and those who have helped you while you are in difficulty should be respected, worshipped and given due puja.

I will now present to you the very well written book on Abhidhamma translated by Prof. Mehm Tin Mon.

A

BUDDHA ABHIDHAMMA

THE ULTIMATE SCIENCE

by

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A Gift of Dhamma

Chapter 6

RUPA

Compendium of Matter

Introductory

Of the four ultimate realities, (*paramatthas*) consciousness (*citta*) and mental factors (*cetasikas*) have been described in the first five chapters of this book. We have seen 89 or 121 types of consciousness, 52 mental factors, association of these factors with *cittas*, the dependence of *nàma* (mind) on sense objects (*arammana*). In addition, we have seen the physical bases (*vatthus*) the arising of cognitive processes to be aware of the sense objects, the 31 planes of existence and the types of persons who occupy them, the different types of *kamma* and their operation through their resultants such as rebirth-consciousness, life-continuum and death consciousness, and finally death and rebirth. Now in the present chapter, we shall deal with the two remaining ultimate realities, namely, *rupa* and *Nibbàna*.

What is Rupa?

Rupa has been translated as ‘matter’, ‘corporeality’, ‘material’, ‘body’, ‘form’, etc., but none is exact. To judge from the various aspects of *rupa*, ‘matter’ is the nearest equivalent. However, *rupa* comprises the characteristics of matter as well as those of energy. *Rupa* may change state, form and color because of heat and cold just as matter does. Although form, shape and mass become apparent when a lot of *rupa* has accumulated, in the ultimate sense *rupa* is formless, shapeless and massless just as energy is. Scientists now know that matter and energy are interconvertible and identical in the ultimate sense.

But, unlike the law of conservation of mass and energy, which states that matter and energy can neither be created nor destroyed, we find in Abhidhamma that *rupa* arises and perishes incessantly at very short intervals measured by “small instant” called small *khana*. *Rupa* is incessantly produced from four main sources namely, *kamma*, *citta*, *utu* (heat) and *àhàra* (nutriment). In addition, *rupa* is short lived – it endures only for 17 conscious moments. What is formed is almost instantly gone. It is very probable that the rate of formation and the rate of dissolution of *rupa* cancel each other making the law of conservation of matter and energy to hold as aggregates. In addition, *rupa* and *nàma* are interdependent. We shall understand *rupa* better by studying the various aspects of *rupa*, which are described below.

Rupa-samuddesa (Enumeration of Rupa)

First *rupa* is twofold namely,

- i *Bhuta-rupa* – essentials, and
- ii *Upàdàya-rupa* – derivatives.

The *bhuta-rupa* is more prominent than the *upàdàya-rupa*. Great masses like the earth and the sun are formed when a lot of *bhuta-rupa* has accumulated. Consequently, *bhuta-rupa* is also called *mahàbhuta* (great essentials).

Four Mahàbhutas (Four Great Essentials)

1 *Pathavi*

The element of extension with the characteristics of hardness and softness. Extension means occupation in space. Tri-dimensional extension gives rise to the idea of a solid-body. As no two bodies can occupy the same space at the same time, Buddhists derive the idea of hardness from *pathavi*. The dual characteristics of hardness and softness imply relativity. For example, a rock may be said to be ‘hard’ if compared with clay, but ‘soft’ if compared with iron. *Pathavi* serves as a support or nucleus for the other co-existing *rupas*.

2 *àpo* The element of cohesion with the characteristics of cohesiveness and fluidity. The *àpo* element makes different particles of matter cohere and hold them together. It is like the force of attraction between the positive charge and the negative charge of electricity. When we add a little water to flour, the flour-particles cohere into a

lump. If we add more water, the mixture becomes fluid and flows away.

3 Tejo the element of heat or heat energy with the characteristics of hotness and coldness. Vivacity (liveliness), maturity, hotness and coldness are due to *tejo*. Both heat and cold are the properties of *tejo* or heat-energy. When heat flows into our body, we feel hot; when heat flows out of our body to the surroundings, we feel cold.

4 Vāyo The element of motion or kinetic energy with the characteristics of pushing and supporting. When we blow air into a balloon, the air pushes the walls of the balloon outwards, and if there is no balancing force exerted by the walls of the balloon, the balloon will bust. Remember that there is action and reaction at every point. Motion, vibration, oscillation, rotation and pressure are caused by *vāyo*.

Notes:

The four great essentials are also known as the four great elements. *Dhātu* in Pāli means that which carries its own characteristics marks or attributes. Element is the closest equivalent for *dhātu*. Now *pathavi-dhātu* literally means the earth-element, *āpodhātu* the water-element, *tejo-dhātu* the heat element, and *vāyodhātu* the wind-element. However, *pathavi* is not the earth, neither is *āpo* water nor *vāyo* the wind.

The four great essentials are the fundamental material elements which exist together and which are inseparable. Every material substance, whether earth, water, fire or wind, ranging from the minutest particles to the most massive object, is made up of these four elements which possess specific characteristics s described above.

From this, one can easily see that Buddhists are not dealing with Thales' water, Anaximenes' air, Herakleitus' fire, or the Peripatetics' matter, of Greek philosophy. *Pathavi*, *āpo*, *tejo*, and *vāyo* are formless and massless in the ultimate sense. In insight meditation, we meditate only on their characteristics in the body, viz., hardness and softness, cohesion and fluidity, hot and cold, pushing and balancing.

24 Upàdà-rupas (*Twenty-four Derivatives*)

There are 24 derivatives or secondary material properties dependent on the four great essentials. Like the earth are the essentials; like trees are the derivatives that spring the earth. The 4 great essentials together with the 24 derivatives make up 28 kinds of *rupa* with different properties. They may be counted as 11 kinds of material qualities as follows:

1 Essential material qualities – *pathavi*, *āpo*, *tejo*, *vāyo*.

2 Sensitive material qualities – eye, ear, nose, tongue and body.

3 Material qualities of sense-objects – visible form, sound, odour, taste and tangibility.

4 Material quality of sex – femininity and masculinity.

5 Material quality of base – heart-base.

6 Material quality of life – vital force.

7 Material quality of nutrition – edible food.

8 Material quality of limitation – the element of space.

9 Material qualities of communication – bodily intimation and vocal intimation.

10 Material qualities of mutability – material lightness, pliancy, adaptability together with the two forms of intimation.

11 Material qualities of characteristics – material productivity, continuity, decay and impermanence.

Five Pasàda-rupas (*Sensitive Material Qualities*)

They are the sensitive parts of the organs – eye, ear, nose, tongue and body. They tend to clarify the co-existing material qualities.

They receive the impressions of the sense-objects.

1 *Cakkhu-pasàda*

Sensitive part of the eye; it spreads in 7 layers in the pupil of the eye where images appear.

2 *Sota-pasàda*

Sensitive part of the ear; it spreads in the place shaped like a ring inside the ear-holes.

3 *Ghàna-pasàda*

Sensitive part of the nose; it spreads in the place shaped like the leg of a goat inside the nostrils.

4 *Jivhà-pasàda*

Sensitive part of the tongue; it spreads in the middle upper surface of the tongue.

5 *Kàya-pasàda*

Sensitive part of the body; it spreads throughout the whole body sensitive to touch, excluding head-hair, body-hair, finger-nails and hard dried skin.

Seven Gocara-rupas (*Material Qualities of Sense Objects*)

They are the five sense-objects observed and frequented by *panca vinnàna*.

1. *Rupàrammana* – visible form (*vanna*)
2. *Saddàrammana* – sound (*sadda*)
3. *Gandhàrammana* – smell (*gandha*)
4. *Rasàrammana* – taste (*rasa*)
5. *Photthabbàrammana* – tangible object (*pathavi, tejo, vayo*)

Notes:

a The names in brackets are the essential elements of the five senses. Note that there are 7 elements in all.

b Owing to its subtlety, *àpo* cannot be felt by the sense of touch. For instance, when we put our hand in water, the cold felt is *tejo*, the softness is *pathavi*, and the pressure is *vayo*. Thus only these three fundamentals elements are regarded as tangible.

Two Bhàva-rupas (*Material Qualities of Sex*)

1 *Ithi-bhàva* – material quality that imparts femininity; it spreads all over the body of the female.

2 *Purisa-bhàva* – material quality that imparts masculinity; it spreads all over the body of the male.

Note:

These two *rupas* differentiate the male from the female.

Hadaya-vatthu (*Heart Base*)

Hadaya-vatthu is the heart-base, which spreads in the blood inside the heart. It is the seat of consciousness (*mano-vinnàna*). *Hadayavatthu* is not one – there are billions of *hadaya-vatthu* spreads in the blood of the heart.

Jivita-rupa (*Material Quality of Life*)

It is *jivitindriya-rupa*—the vital force of *kammaja-rupa* which spreads throughout the body. It should be noted that there is vitality in both mind and matter. The vitality of the mind is “*jivitindriya*”, which is one of the seven *sabbacitta-sàdhàrana cetasikas*. The vitality of matter is *jivita-rupa*. *Jivitindriya* may be regarded as psychic life and *jivita-rupa* as physical life.

àhàra-rupa/Ojà (*Material Quality of Nutrition*)

The gross food, which is taken in by making into morsels, is called *kabalikàràhàra*. Here *àhàra-rupa* means the nutritive essence (*ojà*) which sustains the body.

Pariccheda-rupa/àkàsa-dhātu

(*Material Quality of Limitation*)

Pariccheda-rupa is the inter-atomic or intra-atomic space that limits or separates material groups (*rupa-kalàpas*). As there is space between the eggs in a basket, so there is space between the *rupa-kalàpas* (very tiny particles) as they are produced by four causes – namely, *kamma, citta, utu* and *àhàra*. So *paricchedarupa* is assumed to be produced by the same four causes. *Pariccheda-rupa* is also called ‘*àkàsa-dhātu*’. *àkàsa* is space, which in itself is nothingness. *àkàsa* is a *dhātu* in the sense of a non-entity (*nijjiva*), not as an existing element like the four great essential elements. As one of the 28 *rupas*, *àkàsa-dhātu* means not so much the outside space as the inter-atomic space or intra-atomic space that separates *rupa-kalàpas*.

Two Vinnatti-rupas (*Material Qualities of Communication*)

Vinnatti-rupas are special behaviors of the body and the mouth, which one uses to communicate one’s ideas to another and by means of which one understands another’s intentions.

- 1 *Kàya-vinnatti* – action by hand, head, eye, leg, etc., which let others understand one’s intentions.
- 2 *Vaci-vinnatti* – movement of the mouth to produce speech to let others understand one’s intentions. *Kàya-vinnatti* and *vaci-vinnatti* are caused by the *vàyo-dhātu* produced by the mind, and they last only for one consciousnessmoment.

Five Vikàra-rupas (*Material Qualities of Mutability*)

Ledi Sayadaw explained ‘*vikàra-rupa*’ as ‘peculiar distinctive condition’. Venerable Narada took it as “changeability of *rupa*.” So we may regard ‘*vikàra-rupa*’ as special condition of *rupa*.

- 1 *Rupassa-lahutà* – physical lightness or buoyancy; it suppresses the heaviness in the body.
- 2 *Rupassa-mudutà* – physical elasticity; it removes stiffness in the body and is comparable to a well-beaten hide.
- 3 *Rupassa-kammannatà* – physical adaptability; it is opposed to the stiffness of the body, and is comparable to well-hammered gold.

These three *rupas* together with the two *vinnatti-rupas* make up five *vikàra-rupas*.

Four Lakkhana-rupas (*Material Qualities of Characteristics*)

There are three common characteristics of *rupa* and *nàma-viz.*, arising (*uppàda*), existing (*thiti*) and dissolving (*bhāṅga*). The *rupas* that denote these instants in real *rupas* are called *lakkhana-rupas*. ‘*Lakkhana*’ literally means ‘sign or symbol’.

- 1 *Upacàya-rupa* – arising of *rupa* now of conception, and continued arising of *rupa* till the required *rupas* in life are completely formed.
- 2 *Santati-rupa* – subsequent arising of *rupas* throughout the life-term.
- 3 *Jaratà-rupa* – *rupa* that denotes development and decay during the existing period of 15 conscious moments.
- 4 *Aniccatà-rupa* – *rupa* that denote dissolution at the dissolving moment of real *rupa*.

Notes:

- a *Upacàya* and *santati* are sometimes treated as *jāti* (birth). Then the number of *rupas* amounts to 27 instead of 28.
- b With the exception of the five *rupas-viz.*, two *vinnattis*, *jāti*, *jaratà* and *aniccatà*, all the remaining *rupas* last for 17 conscious-moments.
- c Strictly speaking there are only three *lakkhana-rupas*, namely, *jāti*, *jaratà* and *aniccatà*. *Jāti* refers to *rupa* at the arising instant, *jaratà* refers to *rupa* at the existing period, and *aniccatà* refers to *rupa* at the dissolving instant.

Eighteen Nipphanna-rupas

The eighteen *rupas* comprising 4 great essentials, 5 *pasàda-rupas*, 7 *gocara-rupas* (to be counted as 4 excluding tangibility), 2 *bhàvarupas*, *hadaya-vatthu*, *jivita-rupa* and *àhàra-rupa* are caused and conditioned by *kamma*, *citta*, *utu* (*tejo*) and *àhàra* (*ojà*). So they are called *nipphanna-rupas*. Each of these 18 *rupas* has their innate properties such as hardness for *pathavi* and heat for *tejo*. So they are also called *sabhàva-rupas*. Each of these 18 *rupas* also have the three *saikhàta-lakkhanas* (innate signs or marks) viz., *jāti* (birth), *jarà* (decay) and *aniccatà* (death). So they are also called *sa-lakkhana-rupas*. Because they may change in state, form and color, etc., due to heat and cold, etc., they are known as *rupa*.

Because they should be contemplated as *anicca* (impermanence), *dukkha* (unsatisfactoriness) and *anatta* (not-self), they are called *sammasana-rupa*.

Ten Anipphana-rupas

The ten *rupas* comprising *pariccheda-rupa*, 2 *vinnatti-rupas*, 3 *vikàrarupas* and 4 *lakkhana-rupas* are not caused and conditioned by *kamma*, *citta*, *utu* and *àhàra*. So they are known as *anipphanna-rupas*. They are also known as *asabhàva-rupas* because they do not have innate properties, *asalakkhana-rupas* because they do not have *saikhàta-lakkhanas*, as *arupa* because they are not changeable by heat or cold, etc., and as *asammasana-rupa* because they should not be contemplated in insight meditation.

Rupa-vibhàga (*Criticism on Rupa*)

All the *rupas* are just one in the following aspects:

- 1 *Ahetuka* – all are rootless;
- 2 *Sappaccaya* – all are related to the causes (*kamma*, *citta*, *utu*, and *àhàra*);
- 3 *Sàsava* – all serve as objects for defilements;
- 4 *Saikhàta* – all are conditioned by the four causes;
- 5 *Lokiya* – all are connected with the world of five aggregates of attachment;
- 6 *Kàmàvacara* – all come within the range of sense objects;
- 7 *Anàrammana* – not all perceive objects;
- 8 *Appahàtabba* – all are not eliminated by Maggas.

However, when *rupa* is distinguished as internal, or external, and so forth, *rupa* becomes manifold. Readers may consult the chart on *rupa* for a quick review of such criticism.

1 *Ajjhattika-rupa*

The five *pasàda-rupas* are called *ajjhattika* (internal), and the remaining 23 *rupas* are called *bàhira* (external), because the five sensitive organs are essential for seeing, hearing, smelling, etc. People value them highly. Without them, they are inanimate logs.

2 *Vatthu-rupa*

The five *pasàda-rupas* together with *hadaya-vatthu* are named *vatthu-rupa* while the rest are called *avatthu-rupa*. They act as seats of consciousness.

3 *Dvàra-rupa*

The five *pasàda-rupas* together with the two *vinnatti-rupas* are called *dvàra-rupas* while the rest are called *advàrarupas*. The five *pasàda-rupas* serve as doors which give rise to *panca-dvàra-vithis* whereas the two *vinnatti-rupas* are the places and the means for performing bodily actions (*kàya-kamma*) and verbal actions (*vaci-kamma*).

4 *Indriya-rupa*

The five *pasàda-rupas*, the two *bhàva-rupas* and *jivitarupa* together form eight *indriya-rupas* while the remaining 20 *rupas* are termed *anindriya-rupas*. ‘*Indriya*’ means ‘faculty’, which has controlling power in its sphere. For instance, *cakkhu-pasàda* controls seeing, *sota-pasàda* controls hearing, and so on. *Itthibhàva* controls femininity and *purisa-bhàva* controls masculinity.

5 *Olàrika-rupa*

The five *pasàda-rupas* and the seven *gocara-rupas* together form 12 *olàrika-rupas* while the remaining 16 *rupas*, are termed *sukhuma-rupas*. ‘*Olàrika*’ means ‘gross or coarse’; ‘*sukhuma*’ means ‘subtle or fine’. Because of their grossness and coarseness, the sensitive organs and the five sense objects can be easily seen or understood. And because they are easily understood, they are regarded to be close to the wisdom-mind. So the *olàrika-rupas* are also called *santike-rupas* (*santike* – near) whereas the *sukhuma-rupas* are called *dure-rupas* (*dure* – far).

Moreover, the sensitive organs and the sense objects can strike one another – the visual object strikes the eye-door, the audible sound strikes the ear-door, and so on. So the 12 *olàrika-rupas* are also called *sappatigharupas* whereas the 16 *sukhuma-rupas* are called *appatigharupas*. ‘*Sappatigha*’ literally means ‘with striking’ whereas ‘*appatigha*’ means ‘without striking’.

6 *Upàdinna-rupa*

The 18 *kammaja-rupas* are called *upàdinna-rupas*; the rest are termed *anupàdinna-rupas*. The 18 *rupas* produced by *kamma* are grasped by the *kamma* as it’s resultants in collaboration with craving (*tanhà*) and false view (*ditthi*).

7 *Sanidassana-rupa*

Rupàrammana (*vanna*) is called *sanidassana-rupa*, because it can be seen by the eye. The remaining *rupas* are called *anidassana-rupas*, because they cannot be seen by the eye.

8 *Gocaraggàhika-rupa*

The five *pasàda-rupas* can take external sense-objects as pasture. So they are called *gocaraggàhika-rupas* while the rest are called *agocaraggàhika-rupas*. Of the five sense organs, the eye and the ear cognize distant objects without any direct contact. We can see a flower without the flower meeting the eye. We can hear what a man says without

the man meeting the ear. On the other hand, the smell must meet the nostril, the taste must directly touch the tongue, and something must actually touch the body in order to cognize these senses.

Thus, *cakkhu-pasàda* and *sota-pasàda* are called *asampatta-gàhaka* whereas the remaining three *pasàdarupas* are called *sampatta-gàhaka*.

9 Avinibbhoga-rupa – The eight *rupas* comprising *pathavi*, *àpo*, *tejo*, *vàyo*, *vanna*, *gandhà*, *rasa* and *ojà* are bound together and are inseparable and indivisible. So they are called *avinibbhoga-rupas* whereas the rest are called *vinibbhoga-rupas*. The definition of ‘*avinibbhoga-rupa*’ sounds like the original definition of the ‘atom’. But atoms are later found to be divisible into electrons, protons and neutrons. According to Abhidhamma, these sub-atomic particles can be regarded as *avinibbhoga-rupas*. The four essentials and their innate four derivatives are produced together in nature as *kalàpas* which are fundamental units of matter. These *kalàpas* have about the same size as electrons. So, however small a particle may be, it is always made up of the *avinibbhoga-rupas* which are really invisible and inseparable.

Fire in Water and Water in Fire!

Now a dust particle or the whole earth is made up of *avinibbhogarupas*. So the earth must contain all the eight *rupas* viz., *pathavi*, *àpo*, *tejo*, *vàyo*, *vanna*, *gandhà*, *rasa* and *ojà*; of these *pathavi* is predominant. Similarly, water must also contain all the eight *avinibbhogarupas*, but here *àpo* is predominant. As water contains *tejo* – the element of fire, we may say there is fire in water. In the same way, fire must contain all the eight *avinibbhogarupas*, *tejo* being predominant. As fire contains *àpo* – the element of water, we may say that fire contains water.

The Abhidhamma statement that ‘water contains fire and fire contains water’ is not in disagreement with the facts of science. We know that water contains heat which is the same substance as fire. Also in burning of wood or paper, which is cellulose containing carbon, hydrogen and oxygen, heat is evolved due to the combination of carbon with oxygen forming carbon dioxide and due to the combination between hydrogen and oxygen forming water. The intense mass of heat appears as a flame which really contains water-vapour.

Rupa-samutthàna

(The Causes of Material Phenomena)

Four causes produce *rupa*. They are: *kamma*, *citta*, *utu* & *àhàra*.

1 Material Phenomena arising from Kamma

25 types of *kamma* produce *rupa* internally in the bodies of beings for their own continuity of material phenomena. The 25 types of *kamma* comprise 12 *akusala cetanà*, 8 *kàmàvacarà-kusala cetana* and 5 *rupàvacara-kusala cetanà*. These immoral and moral *kamma* produce *rupas* in the *kàma*-sphere and the *rupa*-sphere at every small instant starting from the arising instant of rebirth consciousness till death. The *rupa* produced by *kamma* is called *kammaja-rupa*. Note that *arupàvacara kamma* do not produce *rupas*.

2 Material Phenomena arising from Citta

The *cittas* that produce *rupa* number 75, excluding the 10 *dvi-panca-vinnàna cittas* and 4 *arupàvacara-vipàka cittas*. All *patibandhi-cittas* and the death-consciousness of *arahats* also do not produce *rupa*. Starting from the first *bhavaïga-citta* of the lifecontinuum till death, the 75 *cittas* mentioned above produce *cittaja-rupa* at every arising instant of the respective *cittas*. The *rupa* produced by *citta* is known as *cittaja-rupa*. Of the 75 *cittas*, the 26 *appanà-javana cittas* not only produce *cittaja-rupa* but also support the four bodily postures – viz., standing, sitting, lying and walking.

The 32 *cittas* comprising *mano-dvārāvajjana*, 29 *kàmàvacara javanas* and 2 *abhinnàs* (supernormal knowledge) produce *cittaja-rupa*, support the bodily postures and also produce two *vinnatti-rupas* for bodily actions and vocal actions. Of the 32 *cittas* mentioned above, the 13 *somanassa javanas* also produce smiles and laughters whereas the 2 *domanassa javanas*, i.e., the 2 *dosa-mula cittas*, produce moaning and weeping. *Hasituppàda* and 4 *somanassa-mahà-kiriya cittas* produce smiles in Buddhas and *arahats*. Two *lobha-mula-ditthigata-vipayutta-somanassa cittas* and 4 *somanassa-mahà-kusala cittas* produce smiles and laughters in *sekha*-persons i.e., *soṭàpannas*, *sakadàgàmis* and *anàgàmis*.

Four *lobha-mula-somanassa cittas* and 4 *somanassamahà-kusala cittas* produce smiles and laughters in

puthujjanas (worldlings). Three *mano-dhàtus*, 11 *tadàlambanas* and 5 *rupàvacara vipàka cittas* (totaling 19) produce only ordinary *cittajarupa*.

3 Material Phenomena arising from Utu

The heat-element, *tejo*, which comprises both cold and heat and which is present in all *rupa-kalàpas*, on reaching its static stage, produces *utuja-rupas* and continues producing *utuja-rupas* at every small instant both internally and externally.

4 Material Phenomena arising from àhàra

The nutritive essence, *ojà*, is present in all *rupa-kalàpas* both inside the body (internal) and outside the body (external). The external food, which is eaten, is digested in the stomach and dispersed through blood to all parts of the body. So the internal *ojà* and the external *ojà* meet in every part of the body. The time they meet is called the arising instant (*uppàda*). After this instant, the static instant (*thiti*) is reached. From this static instant, the combination of internal and external *ojàs* starts producing *aharaja-rupas* and goes on producing them at every small instant until the combination terminates.

Types of Rupa

Ekaja-rupa – *rupa* produced by a single cause

Dvija-rupa – *rupa* produced by two cause

Tija-rupa – *rupa* produced by three causes

Catuja-rupa – *rupa* produced by four causes

Anekaja-rupa – *rupa* produced by more than one cause or by many causes

1 Five *pasàda-rupas*, two *bhàva-rupas*, *hadaya-vatthu* and *jivita-rupa* (totaling 9) are produced by *kamma* alone. Two *vinnatti-rupas* are produced by *citta* alone. So the total number of *ekaja-rupas* is 11.

2 *Sadda* is the only *dvija-rupa* produced by *citta* and *utu*. Vocal sounds such as speech, laughter, moaning, crying, singing, and whistling are produced by *citta*. Non-vocal sounds such as thunder, musical notes from instruments, speeches from the radio, songs from cassettes, noises made by cars and trains, etc., are produced by *utu*.

3 There are three *tija-rupas* namely, *rupassa-lahutà*, *rupassamudutà* and *rupassa-kammannatà*. They are produced by *citta*, *utu* and *àhàra*. These *rupas* are responsible for the pleasant bouyant feeling we experience when our mind is clear, when the weather is pleasant, or after we have a light pleasant meal.

4 There are 9 *catuja-rupas* which are produced by all the four causes. They are the eight *avinibbhoga-rupas* and *àkàsa-dhàtu* which arises when material groups (*kalàpas*) of *avinibbhoga-rupas* are formed.

5 *Kammaja-rupas* (18) 9 *kammaja-ekaja rupas* + 9 *kammaja-ane-kaja rupas* (i.e. the 9 *catuja-rupas*)

6 *Cittaja-rupas* (15) 2 *cittaja-ekaja-rupas* + 13 *cittaja-ane-kaja rupas*. The 13 *cittaja-ane-kaja rupas* are the 9 *catuja-rupas* + 1 *sadda* + 3 *tija-rupas*.

7 *Utuja-rupas* (13) 13 *utuja-ane-kaja rupas* which are the same as the 13 *cittaja-ane-kaja- rupas*.

8 *àhàraja-rupas* (*àhàraja-ane-kaja rupas*) (12) 8 *avinibbhoga rupa* + 3 *tija-rupas*.

Notes:

1 The three *tija-rupas* viz., *lahutà*, *mudutà* and *kammannatà* are also called *lahutàdi-rupas*.

2 The four *lakkhana-rupas* are not produced by any cause.

They just denote the arising (birth), existing (decay) and dissolving (death) nature of real *rupas*.

Grouping of Material Qualities (Rupa-kalàpa)

The 28 types of *rupa* are not found separately in nature. They are produced by the four causes in the form of tiny material groups called *kalàpas*. *Kalàpas* have the following four features:

1 All the *rupas* in a *kalàpa* arise together, i.e. they have a common genesis.

2 They also cease or dissolve together, i.e. they have a common cessation.

3 They all depend on the four great essentials present in the *kalàpa* for their arising, i.e. they have a common

dependence.

4 They are so thoroughly mixed that they cannot be distinguished, i.e. they co-exist.

It should be noted that *kalâpas* are so small that they are invisible even under electronic microscopes. The size of *kalâpa* in the human realm is just a 10–5th of a *paramânu*, which is smaller than an atom. So *kalâpas* are comparable to electrons, protons and neutrons in size. There are 21 types of *kalâpas*—9 *kammaja kalâpas* + 6 *cittaja kalâpas* + 4 *utuja kalâpas* + 2 *âhâraja kalâpas*.

1 Nine Kammaja-kalâpas

These are formed from the 18 *kammaja-rupas*. In all *kalâpas*, the 8 *avinibbhoga-rupas* form the nucleus. All *kammaja-rupas* contain *jivita-rupa* which is the physical life. So a group of 8 *avinibbhogarupas* and *jivita-rupa* forms the simplest unit of *kammaja-rupa*. It is called *jivita-navaka-kalâpa* meaning ‘group of 9 *rupas* including *jivita*’. It may be shortened to ‘*jivita-nonad*’. By adding the remaining 8 *kammaja-ekaja-rupas* one at a time to this basic unit of ‘*jivita-nonad*’ we get the remaining 8 *kammajakalâpas*.

1 *Cakkhu-dasaka* (eye-decad) 8 *avinibbhoga-rupas* + *jivitarupa* + *cakkhu-pasâda*

2 *Sota-dasaka* (ear-decad) 8 *avinibbhoga-rupas* + *jivita-rupa* + *sota-pasâda*

3 *Ghâna-dasaka* (nose-decad) 8 *avinibbhoga-rupas* + *jivitarupa* + *ghâna-pasâda*

4 *Jivhâ-dasaka* (tongue-decad) 8 *avinibbhoga-rupas* + *jivita-rupa* + *jivhâ-pasâda*

5 *Kâya-dasaka* (body-decad) 8 *avinibbhoga-rupas* + *jivita-rupa* + *kâya-pasâda*

6 *Itthibhâva-dasaka* (female-decad) 8 *avinibbhoga-rupas* + *jivita-rupa* + *itthibhâva-rupa*

7 *Pumbhâva-dasaka* (male-decad) 8 *avinibbhoga-rupas* + *jivita-rupa* + *pumbhâva-rupa* (*purisabhâva*)

8 *Hadaya-dasaka* (heart-decad) 8 *avinibbhoga-rupas* + *jivita-rupa* + *hadaya-vatthu*

9 *Jivita-navaka* (vital-nonad) 8 *avinibbhoga-rupas* + *jivita-rupa*

Note: atthaka – 8; navaka – 9; dasaka – 10; ekâdasaka – 11; dvâdasaka – 12; terasaka – 13

2 Six Cittaja-kalâpas

They are formed by grouping the 14 *cittaja-rupas* (excluding *pariccheda-rupa*) together as may be required.

1 *Cittaja-suddhatthaka* (pure octad) 8 *avinibbhoga-rupas* produced by *citta*

2 *Kâyavinnatti-navaka* (bodily intimation decad) 8 *avinibbhoga-rupas* + *kâyavinnatti*

3 *Vacivinnatti-sadda-dasaka* (vocal intimation decad) 8 *avinibbhoga* + *vacivinnatti* + *sadda* (sound)

4 *Lahutâdi-ekâdasaka* (undecad of mutability) 8 *avinibbhogas* + *lahutâ* + *mudutâ* + *kammannatâ*

5 *Kâyavinnatti-lahutâdi dvâdasaka* (undecad of mutability) 8 *avinibbhoga* + *kâyavinnatti* + *lahutâdi-rupas*

6 *Vacivinnatti-sadda-lahutâdi-terasaka* (tridecad of mutability) 8 *avinibbhogas* + *vacivinnatti* + 3 *lahutâdi-rupas* + *sadda*

3 Four Utuja-kalâpas

They are formed by grouping the 12 *utuja-rupas* (excluding *pariccheda-rupa*) together as may be required.

1 *Utuja-suddhatthaka* (pure octad) 8 *avinibbhoga-rupas* produced by *utu*

2 *Sadda-navaka*(sound-decad) 8 *avinibbhoga-rupas* + *sadda*

3 *Lahutâdi-ekâdasaka*(undecad of mutability) 8 *avinibbhogas* + 3 *lahutâdi-rupas*

4 *Sadda-lahutâdi-dvâdasaka* (dodecad of sound and mutability) 8 *avinibbhogas* + *sadda* + 3 *lahutâdi-rupas*

4 Two âhâraja-kalâpas

They are formed by grouping together the 8 *avinibbhoga-rupas* and the 3 *lahutâdi-rupas* produced by *âhâra*.

1 *âhâraja-suddhatthaka*(pure octad) 8 *avinibbhoga-rupas* produced by *âhâra*

2 *Lahutâdi-ekâdasaka*(undecad of mutability) 8 *avinibbhoga-rupas* + 3 *lahutâdi-rupas*

Internal and External Kalâpas

All the 21 *rupa-kalâpas* mentioned above occur internally in living beings. *Itthibhâva-dasaka* does not occur in males. Similarly, *pumbhâva-dasaka* does not occur in females. For those who are born blind or deaf, *cakkhu-dasaka* or *sota-dasaka* should be eliminated.

(Note that of the 28 types of *rupa*, *itthibhàva-rupa* is absent in males and *purisabhàva-rupa* is absent in females. So only 27 types of *rupa* will be present in each species).

‘*Ajjhatta*’ refers to ‘internal or within the individual’.

‘*Bahiddha*’ refers to ‘external or outside the individual’.

Now in the external (*bahiddha*) world, only two *utuja-kalàpas* are found. All inanimate things such as trees, stones, earth, water, fire, corpses, etc., are made up of *utuja-suddhatthaka kalàpas*. The sounds produced by beating two sticks together or by rubbing of branches in the wind or by musical instruments such as violin, piano, radio, cassettes, etc., are *utuja-sadda-navaka kalàpas*.

Rupa-pavattikkama

(*Arising of Material Phenomena*)

Before reading this section, readers are advised to review the “four modes of conceiving” on page 196.

All the 28 material qualities occur undiminished, if circumstances permit, in an individual during a life-time in *kàmaloka* (sense-sphere).

But at the moment of rebirth (*patibandhi-kàla*), in *samsedaj a* persons and *opapàtika*-persons, at most seven *kammaja-kalàpas* comprising eye-decad, ear-decad, nose-decad, tongue-decad, bodydecad, sex-decad and heart-decad are manifested. However, eye, ear, nose, and sex-decads are sometimes not manifested. In *gabbhaseyaka*-persons (womb-born creatures) only three *kammaja-kalàpas* comprising body-decad, sex-decad and heartdecad are manifested at the moment of conception (*patibandhikàla*).

Here again the sex-decad may not be manifested in some particular individuals. After conception, during life (*pavatti-kàla*), the eye-decad and the rest are manifested slowly in due order. Of the groups of material qualities which are produced in four ways, *kammaja-rupa* starts to form at the moment of conception and it goes on forming incessantly at every minor-instant.

Cittaja-rupa begins to form from the second moment of consciousness, i.e. from the arising instant of the first *bhavaïga* which follows the rebirth-consciousness. *Cittaja-rupa* continues to be formed at every arising instant of the subsequent *cittas* for the whole life-time.

Utujarupa starts to form from the existing instant of rebirthconsciousness. The reason is that the *tejo-dhātu* (*utu*) present in the first *kammaja-kalàpas* comes to the static stage (*thiti*) at that instant. From that time onwards, the *tejo-dhātu* then produces *utuja-rupa* at every minor-instant. Since *tejo-dhātu* is present in every *kalàpa*, every *kalàpa*, from the time it reaches the static stage, produces new *utuja-kalàpas* at every minor instant. Add the new *utuja-kalàpas*, from the time they reach the static stage, again produce new *utuja-kalàpas* at every minor instant. So this process will go on forever.

Every *kalàpa* also contains the nutritive essence, *ojà*. But *àhàraja-rupa* starts to form when internal *ojà* meets external *ojà* at the time of diffusion of nutritive essence and the combination of internal and external *ojà* comes to the static stage. From that instant, *àhàraja-rupa* is also formed at every minor instant. As new groups of material qualities are incessantly produced, old groups dissolve and disappear when their lifetime of 17 conscious-moments is over. Thus, the material phenomena go on uninterruptedly in the sense-sphere till the end of life like the flame of a lamp, or the stream of a river.

Material Phenomena at Death

At the time of death, psychic life and physical life must cease together. This means that all *kammaja-rupa* which contains physical life must cease at the time of death. So at the arising instant of the seventeenth *citta* reckoned backward from the death-consciousness (*cuti-citta*), the last *kammaja-rupa* is formed. This last *kammaja-rupa* will cease at the dissolving instant of the death-consciousness.

Cittaja-rupa is formed till the arising instant of the *cuti-citta*. This last *cittaja-rupa* will have lasted for a conscious-moment at the dissolution of *cuti-citta*, and thus will perish in another sixteen conscious-moments which happens almost instantly. *àhàraja-rupa* is formed till the dissolving instant of the *cuticitta*, because the support required for the formation of *àhàraja-rupa* can be furnished by *citta* up to that time. So at death, that last-formed *àhàraja-rupa* has lasted for only one minor-instant.

However in another fifty minor instants (*rupa*-lifespan – 51 minor instants or 17 conscious-moments), that *àhàraja-rupa* also ceases. Thus at the time of death, *kammaja-rupa*, *cittaja-rupa* and *ahàraja-rupa* cease almost instantly.

But *utuja-rupa* goes on forming and dissolving till the corpse is converted into dust. A corpse consists of only *utuja-rupa*.

So when a person dies and is reborn in another life, material phenomena similarly arise starting from the instant of conception and go on arising till the time of death.

Arising of Material Phenomena in Rupa-planes

In the *rupa*-plane, nose-decad, tongue-decad, body-decad, sex decad and *àhàraja-kalàpas* do not arise. At the time of *opapàtika* rebirth, there arise four *kammaja-kalàpas* namely, eye-decad, eardecad, heart-decad and vital-nonad. During life, however, *cittajakalàpas* and *utuja-kalàpas* also arise. To the *Asannasatta brahmas*, eye-decad, heart-decad and sound-nonad (*sadda-navaka*) do not arise. Also, *cittaja-kalàpas* do not arise.

Therefore, at the time of their *opapàtika*-rebirth, only the vital-nonad (*jivita-navaka*) arises. During life, *utuja-kalàpas*, with the exception of the sound-nonad, arise in addition. Thus is *kàma-loka* and *rupa-loka*, the process of the arising of material phenomena should be understood in two ways, that is (1) at rebirth and (2) during life.

Summary of Material Phenomena

In summary, it should be noted that

1 all the 28 *rupas* arise in the *kàma*-sphere;

2 in the 15 *rupa*-plane, with the exception of *Asanna-satta*, 23 *rupas* arise (*ghàna-pasàda*, *jivhà-pasàda*, *kàya-pasàda*, *itthi-bhàva* and *purisa-bhàva* being excluded);

3 only 17 *rupas* arise in the *Asannasatta* plane; they are 8 *avinibbhogas*, *jivita*, *pariccheda*, 3 *lahutàdi*, 4 *lakkhana-rupas*;

4 no material arises in the *arupa*-planes;

5 eight *rupas* comprising *sadda*, five *vikàra-rupas*, *jaratàrupa* and *aniccatà-rupa*, do not arise at the moment of birth (*patibandhi-kàla*) whereas, during life time, there is no *rupa* which is not formed.

Practical Observations

All the material phenomena described in this chapter can be observed and verified by an interested person who will undertake tranquility meditation and insight meditation strenuously. Although *rupa-kalàpas* are invisible under powerful microscopes, they can be observed by *samàdhi*-eye which is the mind-eye accompanied by access-concentration or better by *jhàna*-concentration. One shall observe with *samàdhi*-eye that there are six types of *kalàpas* in the eye, namely, the eye-decad, the body-decad, the sex-decad and three pure octads produced by *citta*, *utu* and *àhàra*, respectively. In the same way one shall observe six types of *kalàpas* each in the ear, the nose, and the tongue – just substitute the eye-decad with the ear-decad, the nose-decad, the tongue-decad, respectively, in enumerating these *kalàpas*.

Note that *kàya-pasàda*, *bhàva-rupa*, *cittaja-rupa*, *utuja-rupa* and *àhàraja-rupa* spread all over the body, and so they will be present in the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue and in every part of the body. Observing *kalàpas* does not mean that one sees the ultimate *rupa*. If the *rupas* are observed in the form of particles, however small they may be, the *rupas* observed are not ultimate yet. The ultimate *rupa* is formless and massless. So one has to analyze each type of *kalàpa* to observe its contents just as one does a qualitative analysis of a brass sample to know its contents.

Ledi Sayadaw has written in Myanmar in the book entitled “Kammathan Kyan Gyi” on page 240 which says that:

“When one looks through a microscope or a telescope, one sees easily without troubles the originally invisible, subtle and far-away objects. In the same way if one develops *jhàna*, makes the *jhàna*-concentration the base and undertakes insight meditation, one can easily see without troubles the signs of impermanence, suffering and not-self, which are very deep, subtle, very far and very hard to see. Consequently, there arise *magga-nàna* and *phala-nàna* that can annihilate the four *àsavas* (cankers) completely. The Four Noble Truths and *Nibbàna*, which are very deep, subtle, very far and very hard to see, are also observed.”

Recently I have interviewed many *yogis* in International Buddha Sàsana Centres (Pa-Auk Meditation Centres) in

Myanmar, where *samatha-vipassanà*-meditation is taught according to *Visuddhi-Magga* and *Pitaka* Canons. I have the opinion that these *yogis* can observe the *kalâpas* and analyze them to the ultimate state. Of course, one could see the ultimate realities if one are properly guided by an able teacher.

Nibbàna

1 *Nibbàna* is *supramundane (lokuttara)*, that is, beyond the 31 planes of existence, beyond the world of mind and body (i.e. the five aggregates).

2 *Nibbàna* is realized through the knowledge belonging to the Four Paths and the Four Fruits. It is observed by *magga-nàna* and *phala-nàna*.

3 *Nibbàna* is the object of the four Paths and their Fruits.

4 When the cause of suffering, that is, defilements (*kilesas*) are completely eradicated by the 4 Path-wisdoms, suffering is also annihilated. Then only bliss (*piti*) and peacefulness (*santi*) exist in the mental stream. This unique bliss and peacefulness is called *Nibbàna*.

In Sanskrit, *Nibbàna* is called *Nirvāna* which is composed of ‘*nī*’ and ‘*vāna*’. ‘*Nī*’ implies ‘to be free from’, and ‘*vāna*’ means ‘weaving or craving’. It is this craving (*tanhā*) which acts as a cord to connect the series of lives of an individual in the course of his wanderings in *Saiisara* – the eternal cycle of birth and death. As long as one is entangled by craving, one accumulates fresh *kammās* which will give rise to new birth and death repeatedly. When all forms of craving are annihilated by the four Paths, kammic force ceases to operate and one escapes from the cycle of birth and death. Then one is said to attain *Nibbàna*.

The Buddhist concept of ‘Deliverance or Liberation’ is this escape from the ever-recurring cycle of birth and death and all the misery associated with them. By nature or intrinsically *Nibbàna* is peaceful (*santi*). As such, it is unique. Though it is single by *santi-lakkhana*, *Nibbàna* is viewed as twofold according to the way it is experienced before and after the death of an *arahat*.

1 Sa-upādisesa-Nibbàna

Sa – with, *upādi* – the five aggregates grasped by craving and false view; *sesa* – remaining.

In Buddhas and *arahats*, though all defilements (*kilesās*) have been annihilated, *vipāka-cittas* and their concomitants (together known as *vipāka-namakkhandha*) and *kammaja-rupas* still remain. Yet Buddhas and *arahats* can experience *Nibbàna* fully. The element of *Nibbàna* which is realized by Buddhas and *arahats* before death with *vipāka-namakkhandha* and *kammaja-rupas* remaining is called *sa-upādisesa Nibbàna-dhātu*.

2 Anupādisesa-Nibbàna

This is the *Nibbàna* experienced by Buddhas and *arahats* after death. The element of *Nibbàna* which is realized without any *vipāka-namakkhandha* and *kammaja-rupa* remaining is called *anupādisesa Nibbàna-dhātu*.

Sa-upādisesa Nibbàna = *Kilesa Nibbàna*, i.e. it is attained by the annihilation of *kilesās*.

Anupādisesa Nibbàna = *Khandha Nibbàna*, i.e. it is attained by the annihilation of the five aggregates.

Three Modes of Nibbàna

1 Sunnata-Nibbàna

Nibbàna is devoid of lust, hatred and ignorance; it is also devoid of groups of *rupa* and *nāma*. So it is called *Sunnata-Nibbàna*.

Sunna – void or zero; here it means that lust, hatred, ignorance, *rupa* and *nāma* are zero, but it does not mean that *Nibbàna* is ‘nothingness’.

2 Animitta-Nibbàna

Material groups, which are composed of *rupa-kalâpas*, have different forms and shapes. Mental groups consisting of *citta* and its concomitants may be assumed to have some kind of form for they can be seen by certain persons who have developed super-normal power (*abhinnās*). *Nibbàna*, however, has no form and shape at all. Thus, it is called *Animitta-Nibbàna*.

3 Appanihita-Nibbàna

Nibbàna has no *nàma* and *rupa* nor any form and shape to be longed for by *tanhà* (craving or lust). Is there neither any lust nor craving in *Nibbàna*. *Nibbàna* is also free from lust as well as from the hankerings of lust. So it is known as *Appanihita-Nibbàna*.

Some more Definitions of Nibbàna

Nibbàna may also be characterized by the following virtues.

1 *Accutaii* – It has past death, and thus no death occurs in *Nibbàna*.

2 *Accantaii* – It has past the end called death, so it is endless.

3 *Asaikhatai* – It is not conditioned by the four causes viz., *kamma*, *citta*, *utu* and *àhàra*. Hence, it is eternal and is neither a cause nor an effect.

4 *Anuttarai* – It is superior to and nobler than any Dhamma.

5 *Padaai* – It is an objective reality (*vatthu-dhamma*) that can be realized by *ariyas* (noble persons).