

suddenly *change one's mind*, giving up the celibate life to submit to the charms of the woman.

- 46 *Pabhassaram idam bhikkhave cittaṃ*. The exact meaning of this statement has been a matter of contention that has spawned conflicting interpretations. Mp identifies the "luminous mind" with the *bhavaṅgacitta*, an Abhidhamma concept denoting the type of mental event that occurs in the absence of active cognition. It corresponds, very roughly, to the subconscious or unconscious of modern psychology. The word *bhavaṅga* means "factor of existence," that is, the factor responsible for maintaining continuous personal identity throughout a given life and from one life to the next. However, the *bhavaṅga* is not a persistent state of consciousness, a permanent self. It is a series of momentary acts of mind that alternate with active cognitive processes (*cittavithi*), sequences of cognition when the mind consciously apprehends an object. Hence the texts sometimes use the expression *bhavaṅgaṣoṭa*, "stream of *bhavaṅga*," to highlight the fluid nature of this type of mental process. The occurrence of the *bhavaṅga* is most evident in deep, dreamless sleep, but it also occurs countless times in waking life between cognitive processes.

The most important events in the cognitive process are the *javanacittas*, ethically determinate occasions of consciousness that create kamma. The *javanas* may be either wholesome or unwholesome. It is in the *javana* phase that the defilements, dormant in the subconscious *bhavaṅga*, infiltrate mental activity and defile the mind. For a fuller discussion of the *bhavaṅga*, see CMA 122–29, where it is rendered "life-continuum." Harvey (1995: 166–79) has an interesting exploration of the relationship between the *bhavaṅga* and what he calls "the brightly shining mind."

Mp explains: "The *bhavaṅgacitta* is called luminous, that is, pure (*parisuddha*), because it is without defilements (*nirupakkilesatāya*). It is defiled by adventitious defilements—by lust, etc.—which arise later [after the *bhavaṅga*] at the moment of *javana*. How? In the way that virtuous, well-behaved parents—or preceptor and teacher—get to be criticized and blamed on account of their undisciplined, badly behaved children or pupils, [as when people say]: 'They don't punish, train, exhort, or instruct their own children or pupils.' Well-behaved parents, or preceptor and teacher, are like the *bhavaṅgacitta*, while the blame falling on the parents because of their children [or on the preceptor and teacher on account of their pupils] is like the naturally pure *bhavaṅgacitta* being defiled at the *javana* moment by the adventitious defilements that arise

in states of mind associated with greed, etc., which cause lust, hatred, and delusion to infect it."

Though I quote Mp in full here, I find this explanation problematic on at least two grounds. The first is that the very concept of the *bhavaṅgacitta*, and the corresponding notion of the cognitive process, are not found in the Nikāyas but first emerge in a later period when the Abhidhamma was taking shape. Even the term *bhavaṅga*, though crucial to the Theravāda Abhidhamma system, occurs only in the last book of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka, the *Paṭṭhāna*. It is found much more often in the Abhidhamma commentaries.

The second reason I find Mp's explanation problematic is that the text flatly states "*this mind* is luminous," without qualification. This suggests that luminosity is intrinsic to the mind itself, and not to a particular type of mental event. Moreover, if the *bhavaṅga* is luminous, it should always remain so; it becomes incoherent to speak of it being defiled by the *javanās*. The simplest interpretation of this statement, so far as I can see, is that luminosity is an innate characteristic of mind, seen in its capacity to illuminate its objective field. This luminosity, though inherent, is functionally blocked because the mind is "defiled by adventitious defilements" (*āgantukehi upakkilesehi upakkiliṭṭham*). The defilements are called "adventitious" because, unlike the luminosity, they are not intrinsic to the mind itself. Of course, as 10:61 and 10:62 assert, there is no "first point" to ignorance and craving (and other defilements). But these defilements can be removed by mental training. With their removal, the mind's intrinsic luminosity emerges—or, more precisely, becomes manifest. The statement just below that the noble disciple understands the mind to be luminous implies that this insight into the intrinsic luminosity of the mind serves as the basis for further mental development, which liberates the mind from the defilements. With the complete removal of defilements, the mind's intrinsic luminosity shines forth unobstructed.

At 3:102, I 257,7 the word *pabhassara* is used to describe the mind (*citta*) that has attained concentration (*samādhi*). It thus seems that it is in deep *samādhi* that the intrinsic luminosity of the mind emerges, at least temporarily. 5:23, III 16,29–17,2 says explicitly that the mind freed from the five hindrances is luminous (*pabhassara*) and properly concentrated for the destruction of the taints. See too MN III 243,11–12, where it is equanimity (*upekkhā*), presumably of the fourth jhāna, that is described as luminous.

47 *Cittabhāvanā natthi*. Mp: "There is no stability of mind, no

comprehension of mind" (*cittatṭhiti cittapariggahā natthi*). Mp-t: "The development of mind [called] 'stability of mind' (*cittatṭhiti*) is the practice through which one can accurately understand defilement of the mind and liberation from it. The development of insight (*vipassanābhāvanā*), which occurs based on the stabilization [of the mind] by fully concentrating it on a single object, is what is known as comprehension of the mind (*cittassa pariggaha*); [this occurs] together with the associated [mental] factors based on that object. It is through this that one can accurately understand the meaning stated."

The Nikāyas often set up a contrast between the "uninstructed worldling" (*assutavā puthujjana*), the common person of the world who lacks training in the Buddha's teaching, and the instructed noble disciple (*sutavā ariya sāvaka*), who has learned the teaching and undertaken the training. More broadly, a *puthujjana* is anyone who has not yet reached the path of stream-entry (*sotāpatti*). An *ariyasāvaka* is not necessarily a "noble one" in the technical sense, but any disciple, monastic or layperson, who has learned the teaching and earnestly takes up the practice.

- 48 Mp: "In this sutta powerful insight (*balavavipassanā*) is discussed; but some say tender insight (*taruṇavipassanā*)." Here, "tender insight" refers to the early stage of knowledge of rise and fall, while "powerful insight" to the mature stage of knowledge of rise and fall and the higher insight knowledges.
- 49 Mp says that by "pursues a mind of loving-kindness" (*mettācittam āsevati*), the text refers to the mere pervasion of all beings with a wish for their well-being. Thus it seems that here "not devoid of jhāna" (*arittajjhāno*) does not necessarily mean that the monk actually attains one of the four jhānas but that he earnestly engages in meditation. The phrase "does not eat the country's almsfood in vain" means that by practicing meditation, the monk is worthy to receive almsfood from laypeople. He enables the donors to acquire merit and uses the almsfood properly to support the spiritual life.
- 50 *Sabb'ete manopubbaṅgamā*. Mp interprets this in line with the Abhidhamma doctrine that mind (*citta*) and its concomitants (*cetasikas*) occur simultaneously: "These [factors] arise together with mind (*mano*); they have a single arising, basis, cessation, and object. But because mind is what arouses, produces, generates, and originates them, they are said to have mind as their forerunner." Again, Mp reads this statement through the lens of the Abhidhamma analysis of mind. Understood in line with Dh 1 and 2, the text probably means simply that before one commits any unwholesome bodily or verbal deed, one first decides to act