

An Interpretation of Root of Pairs in Yamaka

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Received 19/08/2020; Revised 23/01/2021; Accepted 10/08/2021



ABSTRACT

Human actions of body, speech, and mind are shaped by the mental states that underlie them, whether wholesome (kusala) or unwholesome (akusala). According to the Abhidhamma, wholesome actions arise from consciousness (citta) rooted in non-greed (alobha), non-hatred (adosa), and non-delusion (amoha). In contrast, unwholesome actions stem from consciousness rooted in greed (lobha), hatred (dosa), and delusion (moha). A central question arises as to how these roots (hetu) are present or absent in particular states of mind. In the Mūla-Yamaka, one of the Yamaka treatises of the Abhidhamma, the Buddha's analytical method examines the relationship between roots and consciousness, clarifying how they condition and support each other.

This study examines the doctrine of roots as presented in the Abhidhamma Piṭaka and its commentaries. First, it investigates the conceptual framework of the pairs of roots and their significance in shaping mental states. Second, it analyzes the connection between wholesome and unwholesome words (kusala pada and akusala pada) to illustrate how roots function in practical life. Finally, it discusses methods for cultivating wholesome roots and eradicating unwholesome ones through the principles of nature and their intrinsic characteristics. By interpreting the pairs of roots within the Abhidhamma framework, this research highlights their relevance for ethical conduct, mental development, and the pursuit of liberation.

Keywords: Mūla-Yamaka; Root (hetu) in Abhidhamma; Nibbāna

Introduction

The article focuses on the Sixth book of *Abhidhamma*, which is called *Yamaka*, Book of Pairs. Which means questions and answers in pairs. There are questions in pairs. There are answers in pairs. The whole work, which, in its Siamese edition, consists of 2 large volumes of altogether 1,349 pages, is divided into 10 Chapters of such pairs of questions; and each chapter forms an inquiry into phenomena, by referring them to one special category, namely:

- (i). *Mūla-Yamaka*, the wholesome, unwholesome, and neutral ‘Roots’;
- (ii). *Khandha-Yamaka*, the 5 ‘Groups’ of existence;
- (iii). *Āyatana-Yamaka*, the 12 ‘Bases’
- (iv). *Dhātu-Yamaka*, the 18 ‘Elements’ of psycho-physical life;
- (v). *Sacca-Yamaka*, the four Noble ‘Truths’;
- (vi). *Saṅkhāra-Yamaka*, the bodily, verbal, and mental ‘Forma-tions’;
- (vii). *Anusaya-Yamaka*, the 7 evil ‘Biases’;
- (viii). *Citta-Yamaka*, ‘Consciousness’;
- (ix). *Dhamma-Yamaka*, the term dhamma, ‘phenomenon’;
- (x). *Indriya-Yamaka*, the 22 corporeal and mental ‘Faculties’¹.

It’s difficult to understand the essence of the book of pairs. If we just translate the books, which contain the teaching of Buddha without commentaries and the sub-commentaries, then it’s difficult to understand. We need a book that explains the method in the book of pairs. But it is not easy for that to work. Therefore, the article focuses on research about this book. However, it would be so much work to do in detail. So, it only presents the Pairs of Roots (*Mūla-Yamaka*), which is the first part of the book of Pairs. Greed, hatred, and delusion

¹Nyanatiloka Mahāthera, **Guide Through the Abhidhamma Piṭaka**, (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 2007), p. 117.

are the three unwholesome roots in us. Conversely, the wholesome roots are non-greed, non-hatred, and non-delusion. All our troubles and suffering derive from the bad roots while our joy and happiness come from the good roots. In *Dhammasaṅgani*, the Buddha said about the elimination of root cause in *Dassanatika*:

“*Dassanena pahātabbahetukā dhammā, Bhāvanāya pahātabbahetukā dhammā, Neva dassanena na bhāvanāya pahātabbahetukā dhammā*”².

“States the moral roots of which are to be put away by vision; by culture; by neither”³

States with root causes eliminated through by vision (*sotāpatti-magga*). States with root causes eliminated through the three higher maggas (by cultivation). States with root causes eliminated neither by vision nor through development. It is important to know and understand these roots if we are to make an end of suffering and attain true peace and happiness.

Therefore, this research aims to present in general the concept of the Pairs of Roots (*mūla-yamaka*) in Theravada Buddhism, analyzes the roots, and explains the principle of nature (*sabhāvadhamma*) as well as method of solving, roots in liberation, and giving special reference to Abhidhamma Piṭaka.

Concept of *Yamaka*

The Pāli word ‘*Yamaka*’ has its source coming from the Vedic term ‘*yama*’, which is derived from ‘*yam*’. According to PTS, the term ‘*yam*’ means ‘to combine’, and ‘*yama*’ is interpreted as ‘double, twin, or pair’. Just like when it was asked in *Yamaka-pāṭihīrañāñaniddesa* of *Pāṭisambhidā Magga* about

² Dhs. 1.

³ Rhys David (tr.), **A Buddhist Manual of Psychological Ethics** (*Dhammasaṅghaṇī*), (Oxford: PTS., 1997), p. m1.

“*tathāgatassa yamakapāṭihīre*”⁴, it is referring to the “twin” miracles of Lord Buddha.

In the commentary of *Yamaka*, Venerable Buddhaghosa said that:

*Kenaṭṭhena yamakanti? Yugaṭṭhena. Yugaṭṭhi yamakanti vuccati ‘yamakapāṭihāriyam, yamakasālā ’tiādīsu viya. Iti yugaṭṭasaṅkhātānam yamakānaṁ vasena desitattā imesu dasasu ekekam yamakam nāma. Imesam pana yamakānaṁ samūhabhāvato sabbampetam pakaraṇam yamakanti veditabbam.*⁵

Why call it ‘*Yamaka*’? (*kenaṭṭhena yamakanti*), he answers that it means ‘pair’. He set an example such as the miracle of the “double appearances” (*yamakapāṭihāriyam*), pairs of Sala tree (*yamakasālā*), etc. Therefore, all these ten groups, every group is called pair because it shows with the method of pairs. It means being presented in pairs.

The Approach to *Yamaka*

The first pair in this book enumerates 49 questions regarding the term ‘roots’ and supplies detailed explications to each of them. First pairs are called pairs of roots. Because in that pairs of roots, Lord Buddha puts question and answer following the roots. Those pairs of roots are divided into 2 parts. They are numerations (*uddesa*) and exposition (*niddesa*).

Roots are classified into four groups as three wholesome roots (absence of greed, absence of hatred, and absence of delusion), three unwholesome roots (greed, hatred, and absence), three indeterminate roots (non-greed, non-hatred, non-delusion), and nine mental roots which are taken from the first three groups. Each question contains a pair of teachings which are first phrased in a direct way,

⁴ M.I. 125.

⁵ Y.A. 1.

and later making the enquiries going through a regressive formulation. Questions follow the process of regular order (*anuloma*) and reverse order (*paṭiloma*). Each teaching is projected in two aspects; the first part presents a conclusive ascertainment (*sannīṭṭhāna*) while the latter part shows doubt (*samsaya*) by use of enquiring. The book of pairs examines the phenomenal states of individuals by the way of teachings in pairs, through direct and reverse formulation of enquiries in positive and negative dual groupings. That is how the title of the book derives its name.

In this *Uddesa*, the numeration means the questions that do not have the answer. Such as:

“(Ka) ye keci kusalā dhammā, sabbe te kusalamūlā? (Kha) ye vā pana kusalamūlā, sabbe te dhammā kusalā? All wholesome states; Are they all wholesome roots? These wholesome roots; Are they all wholesome states?”⁶

“The first pair of pairs of roots follows 3 methods.”⁷

- It is two kinds of meaning which is wholesome and unwholesome (*atthayamaka*).

- The second one is that it presents the teachings that follow the sequence of regular order (*anuloma*) and reverse order (*paṭiloma*). That is *dhammayamaka*. For instance:

(*Anuloma*) Ye keci kusalā dhammā, sabbe te kusalamūlā? (*Paṭiloma*) ye vā pana kusalamūlā, sabbe te dhammā kusalā? - (The sequence of regular order) All wholesome states, Are they all wholesome roots? (The sequence of reverse order) These wholesome roots, Are they all wholesome states?⁸

- Questions follow the process of regular order (*anuloma*) and reverse order (*paṭiloma*). All the rest of the pairs are the same.

⁶ Yam.I. 1.

⁷ YamA. 2.

⁸ Yam.I. 1.

In this pair of question, the first part presents a conclusive ascertainment (*sanniṭṭhāna*) while the latter part shows doubt (*samsaya*).

These pairs of roots analyze four methods with respect to the four states in terms of wholesome, unwholesome, indeterminate, and mental. There are 12 questions being examined in each method which are sub-divided into four parts. The first part, consisting of the first three questions, is enquire on ‘roots’ (*mūlā*); the next three questions which form the second part, enquire on ‘root-conditions’ (*mūlamūlā*); the three questions further next are referring to ‘having roots’ (*mūlakā*); and the last part refers the three questions to ‘having root-conditions’ (*mūlamūlakā*). And thus, we obtain in total 48 questions ($12 \times 4 = 48$) with regard to pairs on roots. The last section deals with pairs which take into account of the term ‘cause’ (*hetu*) and other terms which are closer in meanings to it but which are ‘states’.

Concept of Roots in Abhidhamma

“Greed is described as the root of unwholesome; this is what is called greed”⁹. This is the nature and characteristic of lobha according to the Dhammasaṅgani.

Mental factor of hatred is dissatisfaction, discomfort with the object (scene), so use physical actions, speech to destroy the object. Because of its strong contact with the object, vibrations arise, such as when two iron blocks touching each other will make a sound. Rude speech or expression (roughness) is one of the states of the element of hatred. It is easy to see: When the hatred mind is strong, this person, regardless of morality (mind), or when there is discomfort to someone, cannot have love for that person (the mind is rough). It should be noted

⁹ Ibid., pp. 254 - 260.

that: “When hatred arises, there cannot be love, but without love does not mean that it is aversion, a person who does not love strangers but is not necessarily upset with him.”¹⁰

Hatred is an unhappy feeling that is caused by hostility, and it is strong hostility. And hostility is called an abnormal feeling in the mind; it burns the mind like fire burning something strongly. This is the concept and characteristic of *Dosa*. Its role is to control the mind and not give it a chance to get normal. When the mental factor of hatred arises, there is always dissatisfaction with the object and a desire to destroy what it is not satisfied with. Because the mental factor of hatred does not cling to the object, it has no affection; the mental state of anger only sees the defect of the object, so “dissatisfaction” arises with the object. That is why “destroying the object” is part of the psychological mind of hatred, such as the person who sees a new outfit, but feels dirty, though a little bit, they don't want to wear it.

“Delusion (*moha*) is the last cause of demeritorious action. The term ‘moha’ here means stupidity, dullness of mind and soul, delusion, bewilderment, infatuation, etc.”¹¹ Moha leads one to the wrong way and makes one unable to know the truth of things. Therefore, in *Dhammasaṅgani*, it is said that:

What on the occasion is dullness? The lack of knowledge, of vision, which is on that occasion: the lack of co-ordination, of judgment, of enlightenment, of penetration: the inability to comprehend, ... the barrier of ignorance; the bias of ignorance, the obsession of ignorance, the barrier of ignorance, the dullness that is the root of badness, this is the dullness that there then is.¹²

¹⁰ Jotiya Dhirasekera and W.G.Weeraratne (ed.), **Encyclopaedia of Buddhism**, Vol. 4, (Sri Lanka: The Department of Buddhist Affairs Ministry of Buddhasasana, 2000), p. 665.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 603.

¹² David, Rhys (tr.), **A Buddhist Manual of Psychological Ethics (Dhammasaṅghaṇī)**, p. 94.

Moha arises because of ignorance, and it is the ignorance of the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path. Moreover, ignorance is like darkness of the night; it is difficult to move and find a way in the darkness without any light.

Non greed is not lust for the object, or there is no interest or passion for it. Like water droplets flowing down a lotus leaf without hindrance. Its function is not to hold tightly, it is detachment from the object. Non-greed is a virtue, its nature is always to share with everyone around, that is generosity, kindness, forgiveness. In *Dhammasaṅgani*, the Buddha teaches that:

What on that occasion is distinterreatedness (alobho)? – The absence of greed, of being greedy, of greediness, which there is on that occasion, the absence of infatuation, the feeling and being infatuated, the absence of covetousness, that absence of greed which is the root of good.¹³

Adosa is often translated as non hatred, meaning “no sorrow, no discomfort, friendliness, etc.”. However, “no sorrow”, “no discomfort” etc. not sure that is non-hatred. A person who is enjoying sensual pleasures with a craving mind, then doesn't feel uncomfortable, or annoyed. Is that non-hatred? When we are seeing good objects, satisfactory objects, the greedy mind arises, hatred is absent. And the absence of hatred doesn't mean that there is non-hatred, why? Because no hatred (adosa) is wholesome (kusala) and greed (lobha) is unwholesome (akusala); wholesome and unwholesome cannot coexist. “No harm (acaṇḍikka)”. When there is destruction to sentient beings or to destroy the object (ārammaṇa - scene), it means that hatred is displaying power. “No opposition (avirodha)” is also a state of no hatred, means not against the object. In *Dhammasaṅgani*, the Buddha says that:

¹³ Ibid., p. 19.

“What on that occasion is the absence of hate (adoso)? – The absence of hate, of hating, of hatred, which there is on that occasion, the absence of malice, of spleen, the absence of hate, which is the root of good.”¹⁴

Wisdom is likened to a sword because it cuts the ties tied to *samsāra*, the sword of wisdom. Wisdom is brought to the highest place like a castle, called “wisdom as a castle”. “Wisdom is like light”. When light shines, it banishes darkness, making other things visible. Also, when wisdom arises to eradicate or eliminate ignorance, it helps people with eyes see things clearly, so wisdom is like a light. “Wisdom is like glory”. Similar to light (*āloka*), but glory (*obhāsa*) also adds the meaning of “beautiful”, “splendor”. Sunlight only during the day, moon light only at night, the light of the fire (or light of the lamp) will meet the benefits when needed, such as cooking, illuminating the hidden place etc. All are not comparable with the light of wisdom.

The Characteristic in Forms of Questions and Answers in *Yamaka*

In this section, the content mentions about the pairs on the root of two-fold (of questions): And furthermore each of the question has two aspects that is: (1) certain word (first part or *sanniṭṭhāna*) in pair, and (2) uncertain (latter part or *samsaya*) word in pair. How certain? They are hereby explained. There are twenty-one wholesome consciousness and thirty-eight mental factors which are classified as wholesome states and must be understood as such. And now how are uncertain? Given below are three roots of wholesome consciousness: non-greed (*alobha*), non-hatred (*adosa*), and non-delusion (*amoha*). But it is Uncertain about their being wholesome or not. In the other two remaining, the pairs on the same root and pairs on the mutual root are similarly explained as pairs on the root.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 15.

To continue further in the question of its alternative is four-fold: (1) pure *pañhā* is questioned in the first part; (2) *pacchā pañhā* is questioned in the last part; (3) *paripuṇṇa pañhā* is questioned in complete (both) parts; and (4) *mogha pañhā* - question in vain. And the answer is five-fold, shown as follows: (1) *Pāli gati* is answer in *pāli* terms. (2) *Paṭi vacana* is answer in admission. (3) *Sarūpadassana* is answer in specification. (4) *Paṭisedha* is answer in preventing to the last part of uncertain words. (5) *Paṭikkhepa* is answer by rejecting the first half of the certain words.

If it is by questioning in the first part, then the answer is the reply in *Pāli* term. That means the question in the first part (*pure pañhā*) must be compatible with answer in *Pāli* terms (*Pāli gati*). If it is questioning in the last part then the answer is the reply in admission. That means the question in the last part (*pacchā pañhā*) must be compatible with answer in admission (*Paṭi vacana*).

If it is questioning a complete both parts the answers the reply in specification. That means the question in complete (both) parts (*paripuṇṇa pañhā*) must be compatible with answer in specification (*sarūpadassana*).

If it is by questioning the firstly in vain then the answer is the reply in negative. That means the question in vain (*mogha pañhā*) must be compatible with answer by rejecting the first part of the certain words (*paṭikkhepa*).

If it is by questioning the secondly in vain, then the answer is the reply in rejection. That means the question in vain (*mogha pañhā*) must be compatible with answer in preventing to the last part of uncertain words (*paṭisedha*).

Forms of Questions and Answers in Wholesome Words

“(Anuloma) Pucchā: Ye keci kusalā dhammā, sabbe te kusalamūlāti?”¹⁵
 Visajjanā: Tīneva kusalamūlāni. Avasesā kusalā dhammā na kusalamūlā.”¹⁶

(The sequence of regular order) Question: All wholesome states. Are they all wholesome roots?

Answer: Only three are wholesome roots (which are both wholesome states and wholesome roots). The remaining are wholesome states, not wholesome roots.

“(Paṭiloma) Pucchā: Ye vā pana kusalamūlā, sabbe te dhammā kusalāti? Visajjanā: Āmantā.”¹⁷

(The sequence of reverse order) Question: These wholesome roots. Are they all wholesome states? Answer: Yes (they are).

To display the principle of nature (*sabhāvadhamma*) and devision (*koṭṭhāsa*) in normal question (anuloma puccha), an analysis states:

The given term “*ye keci kusalā dhammā*” includes 21 wholesome minds (kusalacitta) and 38 mental factors.

The investigative term “*sabbe te kusalamūla*” includes only 3 wholesome roots.

So, this question is ‘*paripunṇapañhā*’. The Buddha explains that taking 3 wholesome roots is principle of nature (*sabhāvadhamma*), depending on the investigative term and the given term kept in the first portion which isn’t negative; that is ‘Only three are wholesome roots’. After that, he takes 21 wholesome minds and 35 mental factors (eliminate 3 wholesome roots) which are only principle of nature depending on the given term kept in the last portion, which is negative; that is ‘The remaining are wholesome states, not wholesome roots’.

This form of answer is the answer in specification and indirect analysis.

¹⁵ Yam.I. 3.

¹⁶ Yam.I. 3.

¹⁷ Yam.I. 3.

To display the principle of nature (*sabhāvadhamma*) and devision (*kotthāsa*) in reverse question (*paṭiloma puccha*), An analysis states:

The given term “*ye vā pana kusalamūlā*” includes: 3 wholesome roots.

The investigated term “*sabbe te dhammā kusalā*” include: Same [3 wholesome roots].

So, this question is ‘*pacchāpañhā*’. The Buddha explained by giving his answer in admission (*paṭivacana*) that ‘Yes’, which is the answer to confirm the principle of nature, depending on the given term. Because 3 wholesome roots are principle of nature in the given term, they are also wholesome states.

Forms of Questions and Answers in Unwholesome words

“(Anuloma) Pucchā: *Ye keci akusalā dhammā, sabbe te akusalamūlāti?* Visajjanā: *Tīṇeva akusalamūlāni. Avasesā akusalā dhammā na akusalamūlā.*”¹⁸

(The sequence of regular order) Question: All unwholesome states. Are they all unwholesome roots? Answer: Only three are unwholesome roots (which are both unwholesome states and unwholesome roots). The remainings are unwholesome states, not unwholesome roots.

“(Paṭiloma) Pucchā: *Ye vā pana akusalamūlā, sabbe te dhammā akusalāti?* Visajjanā: *Āmantā.*”¹⁹

(The sequence of reverse order) Question: These unwholesome roots. Are they all unwholesome states?

Answer: Yes (they are).

To display the principle of nature (*Sabhāvadhamma*) and devision (*Kotthāsa*) in normal question (*anuloma puccha*), the analysis states:

¹⁸ Yam.I. 3.

¹⁹ Yam.I. 3.

The given term “*ye keci akusalā dhammā*” includes: 12 unwholesome minds (*akusalacitta*), and 27 mental factors.

The investigative term “*sabbe te akusalamūla*” includes: Only 3 unwholesome roots.

So, this question is ‘*paripuṇṇapañhā*’. The Buddha explained it by taking 3 unwholesome roots which are principle of nature (*sabhāvadhamma*) depending on the investigative term and the given term kept in the first portion which isn’t negative. That is ‘Only three are unwholesome roots (which are both unwholesome states and unwholesome roots).’ After that, he takes 12 unwholesome minds and 24 mental factors (eliminate 3 unwholesome roots) which are only principle of nature depending on the given term kept in the last portion, which is negative. That is ‘The remaining are unwholesome states, not unwholesome roots’.

This form of answer is to answer in specification and indirect analysis.

To display the principle of nature (*Sabhāvadhamma*) and devision (*Koṭṭhāsa*) in reverse question (*paṭiloma puccha*), the analysis states:

The given term “*ye vā pana akusalamūlā*” includes 3 unwholesome roots.

The investigated term “*sabbe te dhammā kusalā*” includes the same 3 unwholesome roots.

So, this question is ‘*pacchāpañhā*’. The Buddha explained it by answering admission (*paṭivacana*) that ‘Yes’, which is the answer to confirm the principle of nature depending on the given term. Because 3 unwholesome roots are the principle of nature in the given term, they are also unwholesome states.

The Way to Cultivation of Wholesome Deeds by Bases of Meritorious Action (Puññakiriyavatthu)

Merit (puñña) is the purity of mind. Here, the meaning is the reference to good deeds that make the mind purity. Deed is the action to be taken. Vatthu is the foundation for development and flourishing in the states (dhamma). Therefore, when put together, it means that the good or meritorious deeds should be taken as basis for the achievement of prosperity and prosperity (puññakiriyavatthu). Or the foundation of the acts of merit. There are many actions that need to be taken to give birth to goodness.

Dāna is action that we give away something as a donation or gift. If one performs the charitable act with delicacy volition (*cetanā*) before, during and after the time of giving, without any attachment to the things which are being offered, and with a firm belief in karma and its results, that kind of giving away something is indeed greatly beneficial donation. While we are giving away something, the wholesome mind arises together with the mental factors. It includes 38 mental factors, but not always enough 38 factors. If the mind arises together with faith, then there are only 33 factors because of 3 subtracted abstinences (*virati*) and 2 illimitables (*appamaññā*). In those 33 factors, it has a root with no greed (*alobha*), no anger (*adosa*) and wisdom (*amoha*).

Offering (*dāna*) that relates to six objects (*ārammaṇa*): When offering flowers to the Buddha statues or stupas, the donor not thinking about what kind of flower, but only thinking about the color (*vanṇa*) of that flower. That is offering the visible object (*rūpārammaṇa*); The angel's musician (*Gandhabba*) plays songs to offer to the Blessed One when he returns from the Tāvatimsā heaven to the human world at the Saṅkassa's gate, that is offering the sound object (*saddārammaṇa*); Offering soap to monks to bath, or make perfume to worship stupas, called offering the good odor object (*gandhārammaṇa*); Offering food and drink is offering the taste object (*rasārammaṇa*); Offering items for monks to sit in peace, called offering the touch object (*phoṭṭhabbārammaṇa*); The

offering comes with a pure, non-greedy mind, it is offering the mind-object (*dhammārammaṇa*).

“*Sīla* refers to restraining one’s body and speech actions, maintaining good moral conduct”.²⁰ One who observes morality avoids doing evil actions either body or speech. We should try to keep five moral precepts well. It is essential that everyone can be endowed with good morality. So everyone should observe the five moral precepts. While one is restraining his body and speech actions, the wholesome mind arises together with the mental factors. It includes 38 mental factors, but not always enough 38 factors. If the mind arises together with right speech (*sammāvācā*) such as the deliberate abstinence from wrong speech, from slander, from harsh speech, and from frivolous talk; then there are only 34 factors because of subtracting 2 abstinences (*virati*) [that is right action and right livelihood] and 2 illimitables (*appamaññā*). If the mind arises together with right action (*sammākammanta*) such as the deliberate abstinence from wrong bodily action, from killing, from stealing, and from sexual misconduct; then there are only 34 factors because of subtracting 2 abstinences (*virati*) [that is right speech and right livelihood] and 2 illimitables (*appamaññā*). If the mind arises together with right livelihood (*sammā-ājīva*) such as the deliberate abstinence from wrong livelihood, such as dealing in poisons, intoxicants, weapons, slaves, and animals for slaughter; then there are only 34 factors because of subtracting 2 abstinences (*virati*) [that is right speech and right action] and 2 illimitables (*appamaññā*). While we keep the precepts, if there is consideration about the karma and the results of karma or pondering about that action, which is only mental, matter and five aggregates, not self. “At that time, wholesome minds had the root of wisdom. This mind has enough all 34 mental factors.”²¹ If there is no

²⁰ M.III. 142.

²¹ Bhikkhu Bodhi (ed.), **A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma**, p. 91.

thought about kamma or pondering about that action, which is only mental, matter and five aggregates, not self, then wholesome minds have no wisdom. Should the mind of goodness have only 33 mental factors? For other higher moral precepts (*uposatha sīla*), for bhikkhus (*monks*) there are 227 vinaya rules, the more one can observe them, the greater the benefits will be.

Practicing precepts (*sīla*) that relate to six objects as: When seeing good object (good scenes), the mind is interested but not touching. That is practicing the precept which relates to visible object; listening to others incite to do evil like killing, but refuse to do, that is practicing the precept which relates to the sound object; keeping the precepts of Uposatha, the seventh thing is not beautifying by making up with aromatic things, that is practicing the precept which relates to odor object; keeping the precepts of *Uposatha*, the sixth thing is ‘Don’t eat food at the wrong time’. That is practicing the precept which relates to taste object; no wrong conduct in sensual pleasure. That is practicing the precept which relates to touch object; always keep mindfulness (*sati*) present to guard the body, speech and thoughts so as not to fall into the unwholesome states. That is practising the precept which relates to the states object (*dhamma*).

Conclusion

The six roots, greed (lobha), hatred (dosa), delusion (moha), and their opposites non-greed (alobha), non-hatred (adosa), and non-delusion (amoha), form a foundational aspect of the Buddha’s teaching. They are directly connected to human happiness, peace, and the path to liberation. Unwholesome roots, when associated with unwholesome consciousness, give rise to defilements, fetters, and latent tendencies (anusaya), becoming the sources of moral downfall and social disharmony. Conversely, wholesome roots, when cultivated with wholesome

consciousness, manifest in generosity, morality, and meditation, serving as conditions for the growth of wisdom and liberation.

Unwholesome deeds such as killing, slander, and harsh speech originate in hatred; stealing, sexual misconduct, and lying in greed; and frivolous speech in delusion. These unwholesome roots are destructive forces that disturb individual well-being and global peace. By contrast, wholesome deeds are nurtured through the cultivation of their opposing roots, which arise from the absence of greed, hatred, and delusion. Acts of generosity, observance of moral precepts, and meditative practice strengthen these wholesome roots, gradually transforming the mind.

Within the framework of the four noble stages of realization, the weakening and eventual eradication of unwholesome roots mark spiritual progress. A stream-enterer (*sotāpanna*) is protected from rebirth in lower realms; a once-returner (*sakadāgāmī*) reduces sensual desire and hatred in their coarse forms; a non-returner (*anāgāmī*) overcomes them in their subtle forms; and an arahant eliminates all remaining traces of greed and delusion. Thus, the Abhidhamma's analysis of the pairs of roots provides not only a theoretical framework for understanding mental phenomena but also a practical guide for overcoming unwholesome tendencies and cultivating wholesome qualities. Ultimately, this process leads to the cessation of defilements and the realization of *nibbāna*, the final goal of Buddhist practice.

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