

## Soṇa (Kolivīsa) Sutta

### The Soṇa Kolivīsa Discourse

**Viñūpam'ovāda Sutta** = The Discourse on the Admonition on the Veena Parable  
 [How to balance our spiritual practice]  
 (Ānguttara Nikāya 6.55/3:374-379)  
 Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2007

#### 1 Introduction

This is a classic story of keeping to the middle way. **Soṇa Kolivīsa Thera**, also called **Sukhumāla Sona**,<sup>1</sup> was born in Campā,<sup>2</sup> and his father was the seth Usabha. From the time of his conception, his father's wealth began to grow, and, on the day of his birth, the whole town celebrated in a festival. According to a pious legend, he had in a past life, given a ring, worth one hundred thousand pieces of money, to a pratyeka Buddha, he was reborn with his body like burnished gold.<sup>3</sup> Since he is called Kolivīsa, he is evidently a Koliya.<sup>4</sup>

It is said that his hands and feet were soft like a hibiscus flower,<sup>5</sup> and a fine down grew on them (to a height of four fingers wide on his feet) curved "like ear ornaments."<sup>6</sup> He lived in great luxury in three palaces, each having its own season. Hence, his sobriquet "Sukhumāla" ("delicate").<sup>7</sup> The rajah Bimbisāra, on hearing of him, wishing to see Soṇa's downy feet, sends for him, and Soṇa goes with eighty thousand fellow townsmen.

**The Vinaya** (Mv 5) gives details of Soṇa's visit to Bimbisāra at Mt Vulture's Peak. The rajah, being curious to see Soṇa's feet, sends for him. Along with his eighty-thousand village overseers (*gāmika*), Bimbisāra goes to see the Buddha, who then has **Sāgata** as his personal.

The overseers seems very impressed by Sāgata (probably mistaking him for the teacher), gazing at him and ignoring the Buddha. The Buddha thereupon asks Sāgata to show them his superhuman powers, which he does. After that, he bows and salutes the Buddha's feet declaring that the Buddha is his teacher (V 1:179 f).

Soṇa then seeks the Buddha alone and joins the order. After his ordination, he walks in meditation until his feet bleed, and his meditation walkway (*caṅkamana*) covered with blood "like a slaughter-house for oxen."<sup>8</sup>

According to **the Soṇa (Kolivīsa) Sutta** (A 6.55), while in Rājagaha, he hears the Buddha teaching, and, gaining faith, enters the order with his parents' consent. The Buddha gives him a meditation subject,

<sup>1</sup> AA 3:388; ThaA 2:266; ApA 478; cf UA 307 (distinguished from Soṇa Kuṭi,kaṇṇa).

<sup>2</sup> Or Campā,puṛī, capital of Aṅga, situated on the confluence of the river Campā (prob modern Candan) and the Ganges. Today is represented by the two villages of Campa,nagara and Campa,pura, 34 km (24 mi) east of modern Bhagalpur. The Buddha, when visiting Campā, often stays on the bank of the beautiful Gaggara Lake (named after an early queen of Campā), and where the renowned brahmin Soṇa,daṇḍa, has a well known dialogue with him (**Soṇa,daṇḍa S**, D 4/1:111-126).

<sup>3</sup> This is clearly a later commentarial story; for, even pratyeka-buddhas keep to the monastic precepts, and do not accept gold or silver.

<sup>4</sup> Ap 42.2/95.

<sup>5</sup> *Bandhu.jīvaka* (PED: Pentapetes phœnicea, but prob Hibiscus rosa-sinensis) (D 2:111; M 2:14; J 4:179; Vism 174; VvA 43, 161; DhsA 14). The hibiscus or red hibiscus, belongs to the Malvaceae family (a large group of dicotyledonous flowering plants), and is also called Chinese hibiscus or "shoe flower." The Sinhalese call it bandu. It is a shrub common in tropical Asia, now widely planted, frequently as a hedge. When crushed, the red flowers turn black, yielding a dark purplish dye that is used in India for blackening shoes. In China, the dye is used for the hair and eyebrows. It is also used to color liquor and to dye paper a bluish purple tint that reacts with litmus. Hawaiians eat raw flowers to aid digestion; the Chinese pickle and eat them.

<sup>6</sup> Ap 386.7/298.

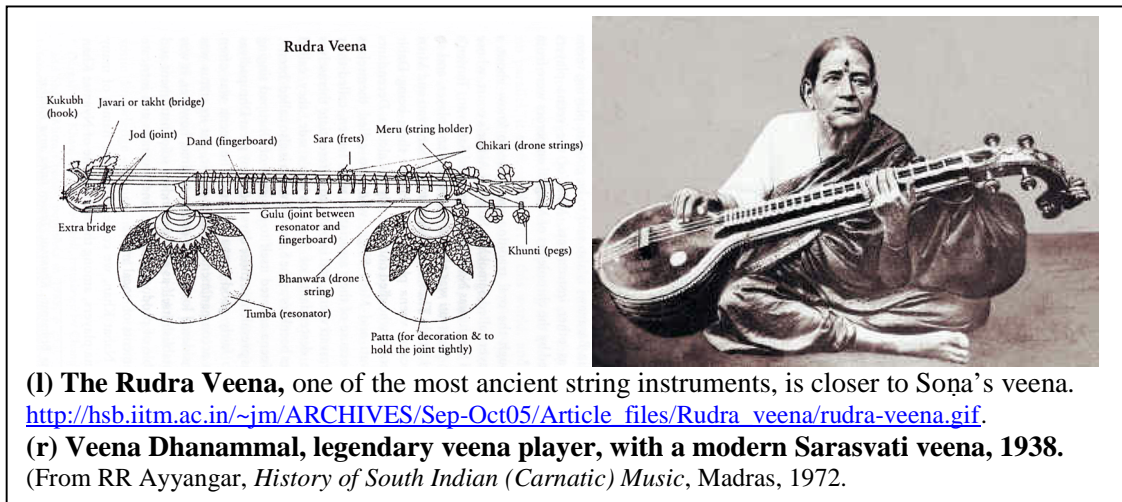
<sup>7</sup> AA 3:388; ThaA 2:266; ApA 478.

<sup>8</sup> Mv 5 = V 1:179-198 (passim).

and he retreats to the Cool Forest (Sīta,vana),<sup>9</sup> where many people visit him, so that he is unable to get mental concentration. He strives hard, and, through pacing up and down in meditation, painful sores grow on his feet, but failing to progress, he despairs. The Buddha sees this and visits him. The Buddha then teaches him how to balance energy with calmness, so that he puts forth fresh effort and attains arhathood (Tha 638 f).

According to the Vinaya, after Soṇa attains arhathood, the Buddha gives him permission to wear shoes with a single lining. Soṇa says that he has abandoned eighty cartloads of gold and a retinue of seven elephants. He does not wish, as a monk, to have any luxuries which his colleagues do not share. The Buddha then allows all monks to wear shoes with a single lining. (V 1:179-185)

The Soṇa (Kolivīsa) Sutta says that Soṇa was a skilled player of the Indian lute (*vīnā*) before he joined the Order.<sup>10</sup> It is Sona Kolivisa’s example that inspire Nandaka and his brother, Bharata, to renounce the world (ThaA 1:299). His verses of uplift are recorded as **the Soṇa Kolivīsa Thera,gāthā**. They generally summarize in verse what is related in prose in the Soṇa Kolivīsa Sutta, but with a lyrical beauty all their own.<sup>11</sup>



## 2 Sona’s past lives

In the time of Anoma,dassī Buddha, Soṇa was a very rich seth,<sup>12</sup> who, having gone with others to the vihara and heard the Buddha teach, decorated a meditation walkway for the Buddha and a long hall (*dīgha,sālā*) for the monks. On the walkway, he scattered various flowers, and, above it, he hung canopies.

In the time of Padum’uttara Buddha he was a seth of Haṁsa,vatī named Sirivaḍḍha. It was then that he resolved to win eminence as the foremost of those who strove energetically (*aggam āradḍha,viriyānam*), and in this he is successful (A 1:24).

<sup>9</sup> **Sīta,vana** is a sprawling and frightful forest cemetery (*bherava,susāna,vana*) just outside Rāja,gaha (SA 2:368; AA 1:236, 3:388; ThaA 1:48; cf Divy 264, 268), where Anātha,piṇḍika first meets the Buddha (V 2:155 f; SA 1:212). Once, when the Buddha is staying there, Māra invites him to pass away (D 2:116).

<sup>10</sup> Comy says that he was “an adept in the art of the gandharvas” (*gandhabba,sippe cheko*, AA ii.680).

<sup>11</sup> Tha 632-644 = SD 44.8.

<sup>12</sup> *Seṭṭhi* (Skt *śreṣṭhi*), a financial entrepreneur who functions like a modern banker in giving loans to large businesses and enterprises.

After the death of Kassapa Buddha, Soṇa was a householder in Benares, and built a hut by the river for a pratyeka Buddha, whom he looked after during the rainy season. He was king of the gods for twenty five world-cycles, and seventy-seven times king among humans by the name of Yasodhara.<sup>13</sup>

The **Apadāna** mentions an elder monk called **Soṇa Koṭi, vāsa**, evidently identical with the above. The name arose from the fact that he gave away wealth totalling twenty crores (*vāsa, koṭi*). His eminence is ascribed to the fact that, in the time of Vipassī Buddha, he made a cave (*leṇa*) for the Buddha and his monks, and spread it with rugs.<sup>14</sup> Buddhaghosa gives a variant of his name, calling him Koṭi, vessa, and explains this by saying that he belonged to a *vessa* (merchant) family worth a crore. (AA 1:232)

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## The Soṇa Kolivāsa Discourse

(A 6.55/3:374-379)

1 Thus have I heard.

### Sona struggles with his practice

At one time the Blessed One was staying on Mount Vulture Peak at Rājagaha. At that time, the venerable Soṇa was dwelling in the Cool Forest (Sīta, vana) near Rājagaha.<sup>15</sup>

Then, while the venerable Soṇa was alone in retreat, this thought arose in his mind:

**1b** “I am one amongst the Blessed One’s disciples who dwell putting forth effort. Yet my mind is not liberated by non-clinging from the mental influxes.<sup>16</sup>

Now, my family is wealthy, and I will be able to enjoy wealth and make merit. What now if I give up the training and return to the low life, enjoy wealth and make merit?”

### The Buddha intercedes

**1c** Then the Blessed One, knowing in his own mind, the mind of the venerable Soṇa, just as a strong man would stretch his bent arm, or bend his stretched arm, disappeared from Mount Vulture Peak, and appeared right before the venerable Soṇa in the Cool Forest near Rājagaha. The Blessed One sat down on the prepared seat.

The venerable Soṇa, having saluted the Blessed One, sat down at one side. Seated thus at one side, the Blessed One said this to the venerable Soṇa: [375]

“Now, Soṇa, when you were alone in retreat, did this thought arise in your mind:<sup>17</sup>

<sup>13</sup> ThaA 1:544 f; cf Ap 421-28/93-95, where he is called **Koliya, vessa**. The ApA confuses his story with that of Soṇa Kutī, kaṇṇa; see also AA 1:237 f, where the details are different, esp regarding the honour paid by Soṇa to the pratyeka Buddha. Once, on visiting the pratyeka Buddha’s cell, he noticed that the ground outside it was muddy. So, he spread on the ground a rug worth one hundred thousand, so that the pratyeka Buddha’s feet might not be soiled.

<sup>14</sup> Ap 386.1-14/298.

<sup>15</sup> See Intro (1) under Sīta, vana n.

<sup>16</sup> “**Mental influxes,**” *āsava*. The term *āsava* (lit “influxes”) comes from *ā-savati* “flows in or towards” (ie either “into” or “out” towards the observer). It has been variously tr as “cankers,” “taints” (“deadly taints,” RD), corruptions, intoxicants, biases, depravity, misery, evil (influence), or simply left untr. The Abhidhamma lists 4 *āsava*: the canker of (1) sense-desire (*kām’āsava*), (2) (desire for eternal) existence (*bhav’āsava*), (3) wrong views (*diṭṭh’āsava*), (4) ignorance (*avijjāsava*) (D 16.2.4, Pm 1.442, 561, Dhs §§1096-1100, Vbh §937). These 4 are also known as “floods” (*oghā*) and “yokes” (*yogā*). The list of 3 cankers (omitting the canker of views) is probably older and is found more frequently in the Suttas (D 3:216, 33.1.10(20); M 1:55, 3:41; A 3.59, 67, 6.63). The destruction of these *āsava* is equivalent to arhathood. See BDict under *āsava*.

‘I am one amongst the Blessed One’s disciples who dwell putting forth effort. Yet my mind is not liberated by non-clinging from the mental influxes.

Now, my family is wealthy, and I will be able to enjoy wealth and make merit. What now if I give up the training and return to the low life, enjoy wealth and make merit?’?”

“Yes, bhante.”

### The parable of the veena

**1d** “What do you think, Soṇa, were you skilled in playing the veena [lute]<sup>18</sup> before, as a house dweller?”<sup>19</sup>

“Yes, bhante.”

“What do you think, Soṇa, when the strings of your veena were too taut, was your veena well tuned or easy to play?”

“No, indeed, bhante.”

“What do you think, Soṇa, when the strings of your veena were too loose, was your veena well tuned or easy to play?”

“No, indeed, bhante.”

“What do you think, Soṇa, when the strings of your veena were neither too taut nor too loose, but tuned to an even pitch, was your veena well tuned or easy to play?”

“Yes, bhante.”

“Even so, Sona, if energy is put forth too forcefully, it will bring about *restlessness*;<sup>20</sup> if the energy is too slack, it will bring about *sloth [indolence]*.”<sup>21</sup> Therefore, Sona, apply your energy evenly, and keep the spiritual faculties balanced, and therein grasp the sign.”<sup>22</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Here we have a rare and interesting example where the Buddha actually expressly reads another’s mind to teach him the Dharma. Usually, the Buddha would question to reiterate the circumstances with the person concerned: see eg **Mahā Taṇhā,saṅkhāya S** (M 38.5/1:257 f) = SD 7.10.

<sup>18</sup> “Veena,” *vīṇā*, but this is not the modern veena. Indian Medieval paintings and temple sculpture often show a string instrument with two gourd resonators connected by a central shaft, possibly of bamboo, and held diagonally from lap to shoulder. The North Indian “rudra veena” and “vichitra veena,” technically zithers (whose strings do not extend over the soundbox), are probably closer to Soṇa’s *vīṇā*.

<sup>19</sup> Comy notes: “Seven notes, three scales, twenty-one tones, | forty-nine stops—such is the sphere of sounds” (*satta sarā tayo gāmā, mucchanā eka, vīsati | thānā ekūna, paññāsam icc’ete sara, maṇḍalaṃ*) (AA 3:390). Indian classical music has one of the most complex and complete musical systems ever developed. Like Western classical music, it divides the octave into 12 semitones of which the 7 basic notes (“seven sounds,” *sapta, śvara*) are Sa Re Ga Ma Pa Dha Ni Sa, in order, replacing Do Re Mi Fa Sol La Si Do. (In Anglo-Saxon countries, “sol” is often changed to “so,” and “si” was changed to “ti” by Sarah Glover in the 19<sup>th</sup> cent so that every syllable might begin with a different letter.) However, it uses the “just intonation” tuning. (“Just intonation” is any musical tuning in which the frequencies of notes are related by ratios of whole numbers. Any interval tuned in this way is called a “just interval”; in other words, the two notes are members of the same harmonic series.) Indian classical music is monophonic (melody without accompanying harmony) in nature and based around a single melody line which is played over a fixed drone. The performance is based melodically on particular mood (*rāga*) and rhythm (*tāla*, lit “clap”).

<sup>20</sup> **Uddhacca** (neut) [abstract n of *ud-dharati*, *ud* + √**DHR**, “to hold”; cf *uddhaṭṭa* & *uddhata*; BHS *auddhatya*. BHS *uddhava* seems to be alternative for *uddhacca*] (mental) restlessness, agitation, excitement, distraction, flurry (on its meaning, see D:RD 1:82; Dhs:R 119; Abhs:SR 18, 45, 83). As one of 5 *uddham, bhāgiyāni saṃyojanāni: rūpa, rāgo arūpa, rāgo māno ~am avijjā*: **D** 3:234,20 ≠ **S** 5:61,16 = 136,26 = **A** 4:460,4 = **Thī** 167 ≠ **Vbh** 377,10 = **Vism** 682,34 = **DhsA** 239,35. Other refs: **S** 5:277 f; **A** 1:256, 282, 3:375, 421, 449, 4:87, 5:142, 145, 148; **DhsA** 260; **SnA** 492 (ad Sn 702 *uṇṇata*); **Nm** 220,3 = **Dhs** 86,37 = 205,10 = **Vbh** 255,26 ≠ 168,25; **Nm** 501; **Pm** 1.81, 83, 2.9, 97 f, 119, 142, 145, 169, 176; **Vbh** 168, 369, 372, 377; **Dhs** 427, 429 (*cittassa*), 1159, 1229, 1426, 1482; **Pug** 18, 59; **Vism** 137, 469 (= *uddhata, bhāva*); **Sdhp** 459. As dvandva with *~kukkucca* (“worry, remorse”), listed as the 4th of the 5 *nīvaraṇā* & as the 9th of the 10 *saṃyojanā* (D 1:71, 246, 3:49, 234, 269, 278; S 1:99; A 1:3, 3:16, 5:30; Nc 379; Dhs 1486). For a discussion, see SD 44.8 Modern Comy on 364.

<sup>21</sup> **Kosajja** (neut) [from *kusīta*] “sloth, idleness, indolence”; expl at **Vbh** 369. See **V** 2:2; **S** 5:277-280; **A** 1:11, 16, 2:218, 3:375, 421, 5:146 f, 159 f, **A** 4:195 = Dh 241; Miln 351; **Vism** 132; **Nett** 127; **DhA** 3:347, 4:85; **DhsA** 146; **SnA** 21.

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Soṇa answered the Blessed One in assent.

When the Blessed One had thus advised the venerable Soṇa, he vanished from the Cool Forest and reappeared on Mount Vulture Peak just like that. [376]

### Sona awakens

**2a** Then, the venerable Soṇa, in due course, applied his energy evenly, and kept the spiritual faculties balanced [harmonious], and therein grasped the sign.<sup>23</sup>

Then, dwelling alone, aloof, diligent, exertive, and resolute, the venerable Soṇa, realizing it for himself through his own direct knowledge, in this very life, entered and dwelt in that unsurpassed goal of the holy life for the sake of which sons of family rightly go forth from the household life into homelessness.

He directly knew: “Birth is destroyed, the holy life has been lived, done what had to be done, there is no more for this state of being.”

And the venerable Soṇa became one of the arhats.<sup>24</sup>

**2b** Then it occurred to the venerable Soṇa who had attained arhathood,

“Let me now approach the Blessed One and declare final knowledge before him.”

### The six things an arhat is dedicated to

Then the venerable Soṇa approached the Blessed One and saluted him. Having saluted him, the venerable Soṇa said this to the Blessed One:

**3** “Bhante, a monk—an arhat, with mental influxes destroyed, lived the holy life, done his task, laid down the burden, attained the goal, utterly destroyed the fetters of existence, and is rightly liberated through direct knowledge—is intent on [dedicated to] six things. He is intent on renunciation, solitude, non-violence, the destruction of craving, the destruction of clinging, and non-confusion.

**4** (1) DEDICATION TO RENUNCIATION. It might be, bhante, that a certain venerable here might think, ‘Could it be that this venerable is intent on renunciation on account of mere faith alone?’<sup>25</sup>

But, bhante, it should not be seen thus.

A monk whose mental influxes are destroyed, lived the holy life, and done his task, does not see in himself anything more to be done, and anything else to be added to what has been done.

<sup>22</sup> *Evam eva kho Soṇa accāraddham viriyam uddhaccāya samvattati. Atilīnam viriyam kosajjāya samvattati. Tasmā-tiha tvam Soṇa, viriya,samataṃ adhiṭṭhaha, indriyānaṃ ca samataṃ paṭivijjha, tattha ca nimittaṃ gaṇhāhī ti.* Comy: “(Apply) energy evenly” (*Vīriya,samatham* [sic] *adhiṭṭhahā* ti) means apply calm jointly with effort, and yoke effort to calm. “Keep the spiritual faculties balanced” means establish the faculties beginning with faith, etc, in a balance: therein, when faith is yoked with wisdom, and wisdom with faith, when energy is yoked with concentration, and concentration with energy, then the balance of the faculties is maintained”: see *Vism* 4.45-49/129 f. “And therein grasp the sign” means when there is such a balance the sign arises like a reflection of a face in a mirror, then you should grasp the sign, be it a sign of calm, or insight, or the path, or the fruit. Thus did the Teacher, having attained arhathood, teach meditation. (AA 3:390 f). The “sign” (*nimitta*) is the meditation sign, usu in the form of a beautiful stable bright light: see *Nimitta* = SD 19.7.

<sup>23</sup> See *Nimitta & anuvyañjana* = SD 19.14.

<sup>24</sup> The passage, “Then dwelling alone, aloof...etc...became one of the arhats,” is stock: **Mahā Siha,nāda S** (D 8.24/1:176 f, Acela Kassapa), **Poṭṭhapāda S** (D 9.56/1:203, Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta), **Mahā Parinibbāna S** (D 16.5.-30/2:153, Subhadda), **Cakka,vatti Siha,nāda S** (D 26.26/3:77, Saṅkha); **Vatthūpama S** (M 7.22/1:40, Sundarika Bhāra,dvāja), **Kukkura,vatika S** (M 57.15/1:391 f, Seniya Kukkura,vatika), **Mahā Vaccha,gotta S** (M 73.26/-1:496, Vaccha,gotta), **Māgandiya S** (M 75.28/1:513), **Raṭṭha,pāla S** (M 82.14/2:61), **Aṅguli,māla S** (M 86.16/-2:103), **Sela S** (M 92.27/2:146 = Sn p112), **Bakkula S** (M 124.39/3:127); **S 1:140** (Brahma,deva), 161 (a Bhāra,-dvāja), 163 (Akkosaka Bhāra,dvāja), 170 (Sundarika Bhāra,dvāja), **2:22** (Acela Kassapa), **3:35** (a monk), 74 (a monk), **4:38** (Miga,jāla), 64 (Bāhiya), 76 (Māluṅkyā,putta), 302 (Acela Kassapa), **5:144** (a monk), 166 (Bāhiya), 187 f (a monk); **A 1:282** (Anuruddha), **2:249** (Māluṅkyā,putta), **3:70** (a monk), 217 (Gavesī), 376 (Soṇa), 399 (Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta), **4:235** (Anuruddha), 301 (a monk); **U 23** (Nanda); **Sn** p16 (Kasi Bhāra,dvāja), p112 (Sela = M 92): see *S:B* 433 n376. See also **Puṇṇ’ovāda S** (M 145.2/3:267); **S 2:244**, **3:35**, 36, 73, 187, 198, 199, **4:37**, 48, 54, 60, 63, 72, 145, **5:143**, 165, 166 (×2), 187, 188; **A 2:248**, **4:143**, 299.

<sup>25</sup> *Kevalam saddhā,mattakam nūna ayam āyasmā nissāya nekkhammādhimuttō ti.*

Since lust has been destroyed, his mind is rid of lust, he is intent on renunciation.

Since hate has been destroyed, his mind is rid of hate, he is intent on renunciation.

Since delusion has been destroyed, his mind is rid of delusion, he is intent on renunciation. [377]

5 (2) DEDICATION TO SOLITUDE. It might be, bhante, that a certain venerable here might think, ‘Could it be that this venerable is intent on solitude, hankering after gain, honour and reputation?’<sup>26</sup>

But, bhante, it should not be seen thus.

A monk whose mental influxes are destroyed, lived the holy life, and done his task, does not see in himself anything more to be done, and anything else to be added to what has been done.

Since lust has been destroyed, his mind is rid of lust, he is intent on solitude.

Since hate has been destroyed, his mind is rid of hate, he is intent on solitude.

Since delusion has been destroyed, his mind is rid of delusion, he is intent on solitude.

6 (3) DEDICATION TO NON-VIOLENCE. It might be, bhante, that a certain venerable here might think, ‘Could it be that this venerable is intent on non-violence, is backsliding from the spiritual core, clinging to rules and rituals?’<sup>27</sup>

But, bhante, it should not be seen thus.

A monk whose mental influxes are destroyed, lived the holy life, and done his task, does not see in himself anything more to be done, and anything else to be added to what has been done.

Since lust has been destroyed, his mind is rid of lust, he is intent on non-violence.

Since hate has been destroyed, his mind is rid of hate, he is intent on non-violence.

Since delusion has been destroyed, his mind is rid of delusion, he is intent on non-violence.

7 (4) DEDICATION TO THE DESTRUCTION OF CRAVING.

Because lust is destroyed, his mind is rid of lust, that he is intent on the destruction of craving.

Because hate is destroyed, his mind is rid of hate, that he is intent on the destruction of craving.

Because delusion is destroyed, his mind is rid of delusion, that he is intent on the destruction of craving.

8 (5) DEDICATION TO THE DESTRUCTION OF CLINGING.

Because lust is destroyed, his mind is rid of lust, that he is intent on the destruction of clinging.

Because hate is destroyed, his mind is rid of hate, that he is intent on the destruction of clinging.

Because delusion is destroyed, his mind is rid of delusion, that he is intent on the destruction of clinging.

9 (6) DEDICATION TO NON-CONFUSION.

Because lust is destroyed, his mind is rid of lust, that he is intent on the destruction of confusion.

Because hate is destroyed, his mind is rid of hate, that he is intent on the destruction of confusion.

Because delusion is destroyed, his mind is rid of delusion, that he is intent on the destruction of confusion.

### Wise attention

10 <sup>28</sup>Bhante, even if strong<sup>29</sup> **forms** cognizable by the eye were to come within the range of the eye of one whose mind is thus rightly liberated, they would not overpower his mind. His mind, unmixed with them, remains attained to the imperturbable—and he contemplates on [observes] their passing away. [378]

Bhante, even if strong **sounds** cognizable by the ear were to come within the range of the ear of one whose mind is thus rightly liberated, they would not overpower his mind. His mind, unmixed with them, remains attained to the imperturbable—and he contemplates on their passing away.

<sup>26</sup> *Lābha, sakkāra, silokaṃ nūna ayam āyasmā nikkāmayamāno pavivekādhimuttō ti.* That is, he takes being non-violent in a ritualistic or superstitious sense/

<sup>27</sup> *Sīla-b, bata, parāmāsaṃ nūna ayam āyasmā sārato paccāgacchanto abyāpajjhādhimutto hotī ti.*

<sup>28</sup> *Evam sammā, vimutta, cittassa, bhante, bhikkhuno bhūsā ce pi cakkhu, viññeyyā rūpā cakkhussa āpātham āgacchanti, n’ev’assa cittaṃ pariyādiyanti, amissī, katam evassa cittaṃ hoti, ʃhītam āneñja-p, pattam. Vayañ c’ass-ānupassati.*

<sup>29</sup> “Strong,” *bhusa*. Comys gloss *bhusā ti balavatiyo* (SA 1:78), *bhusā ti balavati* (SA 3:300), *bhusā ti balavan-*to (AA 3:392).

Bhante, even if strong **smells** cognizable by the nose were to come within the range of the nose of one whose mind is thus rightly liberated, they would not overpower his mind. His mind, unmixed with them, remains attained to the imperturbable—and he contemplates on their passing away.

Bhante, even if strong **tastes** cognizable by the tongue were to come within the range of the tongue of one whose mind is thus rightly liberated, they would not overpower his mind. His mind, unmixed with them, remains attained to the imperturbable—and he contemplates on their passing away.

Bhante, even if strong **touches** cognizable by the body were to come within the range of the body of one whose mind is thus rightly liberated, they would not overpower his mind. His mind, unmixed with them, remains attained to the imperturbable—and he contemplates on their passing away.

Bhante, even if strong **mind-objects** cognizable by the mind were to come within the range of the mind of one whose mind is thus rightly liberated, they would not overpower his mind. His mind, unmixed with them, remains attained to the imperturbable—and he contemplates on their passing away.

### Simile of the rocky mountain

**11** Suppose, bhante, there were a **rocky mountain** of singularly solid mass, with neither crack nor cleft.

Now even if strong [heavy] wind-blown rain were to come (from the east,) (from the west,) (from the north,) (from the south,) it would not be able to quake, shake or move it.

Even so, bhante, even if strong **forms** cognizable by the eye were to come within the range of the eye of one whose mind is thus rightly liberated, they would not overpower his mind. His mind, unmixed with them, remains attained to the imperturbable—and he contemplates on their passing away.

Bhante, even if strong **sounds** cognizable by the ear were to come within the range of the ear of one whose mind is thus rightly liberated, they would not overpower his mind. His mind, unmixed with them, remains attained to the imperturbable—and he contemplates on their passing away.

Bhante, even if strong **smells** cognizable by the nose were to come within the range of the nose of one whose mind is thus rightly liberated, they would not overpower his mind. His mind, unmixed with them, remains attained to the imperturbable—and he contemplates on their passing away.

Bhante, even if strong **tastes** cognizable by the tongue were to come within the range of the tongue of one whose mind is thus rightly liberated, they would not overpower his mind. His mind, unmixed with them, remains attained to the imperturbable—and he contemplates on their passing away.

Bhante, even if strong **touches** cognizable by the body were to come within the range of the body of one whose mind is thus rightly liberated, they would not overpower his mind. His mind, unmixed with them, remains attained to the imperturbable—and he contemplates on their passing away.

Bhante, even if strong **mind-objects** cognizable by the mind were to come within the range of the mind of one whose mind is thus rightly liberated, they would not overpower his mind. His mind, unmixed with them, remains attained to the imperturbable—and he contemplates on their passing away.

### Sona's verses<sup>30</sup>

Intent on renunciation,<sup>31</sup> and on mental solitude, too,  
intent on non-violence, and on clinging's destruction, **Tha 640**

intent on craving's destruction, and on non-confusion of mind:  
having seen the arising of the sense-bases, the mind is rightly released. **Tha 641**

For a monk who is rightly released, his mind is at peace;  
there is no more to add to the done, no more to be done.<sup>32</sup> **[379] Tha 642**

<sup>30</sup> These verses form the last 5 of the Soṇa Kolivāsa's 13 Thera, gāthā (Tha 632-644) = SD 44.8, where see the Modern Comy.

<sup>31</sup> **A 6.55:** Be Ce Ee Se *nekkhammaṃ*; **Tha 640a:** Be Ce Ee Se *nekkhamme*, Ke *nikkhame*.

<sup>32</sup> *Katassa paṭicayo n'atthi. karaṇīyaṃ na vijjati.*

Just as a solid mountain of rock is unmoved by the wind,  
even so, forms, tastes, sounds, smells, touches and all

**Tha 643**

states, desirable and undesirable, shake not such a one;  
and, his mind remaining unyoked, he observes its falling away.<sup>33</sup>

**Tha 644**

— evaṃ —

071001; 071128; 080902

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<sup>33</sup> *Ṭhitam cittam visaññutam vayanā c'assānupassatī ti.*