

Cūlamāluṅkyasutta (Majjhima Nikāya Sutta No. 63)

1. Introduction
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4. Pali Text of Sutta

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1. Introduction

The interlocutor of the Buddha in this sutta is given as Mālakuṅya in the title but as his son (*putta*) in the body of the text. Whoever he was he appears to have been a person of a philosophical disposition.

In his discussions with the philosophers of his day the Buddha is represented as not giving categorical answers to some questions. These have been referred to as the unanswered or undetermined (*avyākata*) questions. The present short sutta the Māluṅkyā Sutta gives a classic statement of the ten questions and the reasons why the Buddha does not answer them. The reasons for the Buddha's "silence" on these questions have evoked considerable interest amongst those who have sought to understand the philosophy of the Buddha as a whole. This interest was revived when the views of the Buddha became known in the West where the dominant Abrahamic religions have also considered questions equivalent to some of the Buddha's unanswered questions, and given them categorical answers which are quite at variance with the general stance of the Buddha's teaching (*dhamma*). This has revived an interest in this question amongst Buddhist, generally as part of the Buddhist-Christian debate. Modern Western secular philosophy too has taken an interest on epistemological questions and several schools of thought have emerged on them. It has also evoked some interest amongst those who have tried to give a rational interpretation to the Buddha's teaching.

In modern Buddhist scholarship of the last 50 years interest in this problem was revived by Professor K. N. Jayatilleke in his masterly analysis of Buddhist epistemology *The Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*¹. Jayatilleke deals with this problem exhaustively not only placing it in the context of Indian religious and philosophical thought but also comparing them to categories of modern Western philosophical analysis. While many of Jayatilleke's views are acceptable from a rational point of view he does not present a completely rational treatment of the questions on which the Buddha is represented as being "silent".

The Ten Unanswered Questions

There is some debate on the exact number of questions which are considered as belonging to the category in question but they are generally taken as ten in number. These ten questions, as listed in Jayatilleke (*op. cit.*, §378) are as follows:

- (1) *sassato loko*, the world is eternal.
- (2) *asassato loko*, the world is not eternal.
- (3) *antavā loko*, the world is finite.
- (4) *anantavā loko*, the world is infinite.
- (5) *taṃ jīvaṃ taṃ sarīraṃ*, the soul is identical with the body.
- (6) *aññaṃ jīvaṃ aññaṃ sarīraṃ*, the soul is different from the body.
- (7) *hoti tathāgato param maraṇā*, the saint exists after death.
- (8) *na hoti tathāgato param maraṇā*, the saint does not exist after death.
- (9) *hoti ca na ca hoti tathāgato param maraṇā*, the saint does and does not exist after death.
- (10) *n'eva hoti na na hoti tathāgato param maraṇā*, the saint neither exists nor does not exist after death,.

These questions can be grouped into three areas: the nature of the world (Q1-Q4), the problem of the soul (Q5-Q6), and the

1. George Allen and Unwin, 1963. This work is a comprehensive analysis of philosophical views relating to the theory of knowledge prevailing in the sixth century BCE in India, and the problem of the unanswered questions is a minor part of the author's analysis

post-death existence of the “tathāgata” (Q7-Q10), a term whose meaning presents some difficulty but which Jayatilleke translates as ‘saint’, meaning by it the supremely liberated person in Buddhism or the *arhat*.

While the Buddha was silent when the ten particular questions relating to these areas were put to him there are many categorical statements relating to these three areas in other parts of the Buddha’s discourses from which the Buddha’s answer to these questions could be deduced. Yet these questions have not been approached from this point of view and there is little effort at deducing what could be the “correct” answer to these questions if we consider the whole of the Buddha’s teaching. After all the Buddha gave us a method of investigation as well as a body of doctrine.

It will also be noted that this issue is raised in discussions with monks or others who have embarked upon the path of the recluse. Such people may not be interested in mundane questions, especially those relating to the world, as they are concerned only with what is of immediate relevance to their quest. This is in fact one of the lines which the Buddha takes in explaining his silence. This is best illustrated in the sutta under consideration.

The Buddha’s Explanation for his Silence

The Buddha gives two reasons for his silence, firstly that they are not conducive to his principal quest which is the liberation from suffering, and secondly that they are speculative questions not admitting of a categorical answer. We may comment briefly on these two reasons.

The first reason is the one that is emphasized in this discussion with Māluṅkya(putta). But the Buddha has proclaimed views like his view on evolution (as in the Aggañña sutta) that are not strictly required for purposes of liberation. Certainly views on the soul is not unrelated to the question of liberation and therefore there is no reason for the silence on these questions.

The second reason is emphasized in other suttas, e.g. the Aggivaccagotta sutta, also in the Middle Length Collection. It is stated there that these questions are of a speculative nature and involve a “net of views”. This may imply that while the Buddha may have definite views on these questions there explanation even to those of a philosophical bent, let alone to parypersons would be difficult.

While these two reasons may explain the Buddha’s silence at in those early years when he was expounding the doctrine they may not suffice in the modern age. Thus the modern world may expect some kind of answer. What is important is that the Buddha did not give facile or dogmatic answers and thus close the door completely to later investigation. It is therefore necessary to see what the Buddha had said on the three areas covered by these questions.

Questions relating to the world

The term ‘world’ (loko) is used by the Buddha in two senses. In one he considers it as co-extensive with the body, e.g. his statement in the Rohitassa Sutta: “In this one fathom body I declare lies the world”. The other usage is the empirical universe which we see about us. While the first usage is relevant to the intense meditator seeing in their own body a microcosm of the world it the extensive meaning of the world as the physical and biological universe that needs some kind of explanation. It is generally agreed that in the case of Q1-Q4 it is the world as the empirical universe that is meant.

The Abrahamic religions have a simple explanation for Q1, i.e. whether the world is eternal. The Bible posits a definite moment of creation which some theologians have deduced to be about 4000 BCE. Thus the world is only about 6000 years old. As against this the Buddhist cosmology holds that the world has existed to countless billions of years, and has gone through a continuous cycle of destruction and reconstitution. Thus if ternal is taken to mean an inconceivable length of time the answer to the question of the eternity of the universe may be in the positive. Only the question of the absolute beginning and the absolute end of the universe is left unexplained.

On the question of the finitude of the universe the Abrahamic position is that the world is finite consisting of a flat earth covered by the dome of the sky. The location of heaven and hell may not be precisely specified but it is generally held that heaven is located in the dome about the earth while hell is located below the earth (as in Dante’s inferno).

The Buddhist view is that the universe consists of many planes even though the question may be left open whether these different planes are themselves located in the same earthly sphere.

Questions relating to the soul

On the question of the soul (*atta*) the Buddha took a definite stand – the notion of soul is a complete illusion brought about by the erroneous “I” and “Me” conceit (*sakkāyadiṭṭi*). Here the Buddha differs not only from the prevailing Vedic and Jain religions of his day but also from the Abrahamic religions which came later.

Because of the complete denial of a self or sould the question whether the ‘body’ and ‘soul’ are one and the same or are different does not arise. Thus both the questions Q5 and Q6 are based on a false premise viz. that a separate entity called the soul exists. Thus the Buddha was right in laying these two questions aside as they are based on a false surmise. But it

would have been better if the Buddha had reiterated his teaching on the soul in connection with these questions.

Questions relating to the Tathāgata

The translation of the term *tathāgata* has been controversial. The PTS Pali dictionary considers it to be an epithet of the Arahant, i.e. the supremely liberated person. Its translation as 'Saint' is quite inappropriate as this is a Christian term meaning a canonized person or one with 'holy' attributes. These connotations are inappropriate for Buddhism. However Buddhist texts do not usually refer to arahants as thathāgatas. The term is most commonly used by the Buddha in referring to himself. There is no instance where any other arhant, e.g. Sāriputta or Moggallāna are referred to as thathāgatas. Even pacceka Buddhas are not referred to by this term. Perhaps the term is used as a synonym for a sammā Sambuddha, i.e. one who has attained to the supreme truth by his own unaided efforts.

The matter has been complicated by the Commentators. They have claimed that this term when it occurs in Q7-Q10 can mean a *sattā* or a being (human or non-human). If this is the intended meaning it is not clear why this term should not have been used in relation to the unexplained questions.

If we take Tathāgata to mean the arhant then the question is what happens to the arahant when he dies. It is generally claimed that he has reached Nibbāna. So the question boils down to what is Nibbāna. This is a question which the Buddha has refused to explain and it could only be comprehended by a person who had already attained the state of arhantship. To such a person the meaning of Nibbāna would be clear.

If we take Tathāgata to mean an ordinary being (*sattā*) then the question boils down to what is meant by rebirth. This is a question which is not completely elucidated either. There are some hints in suttas like the Kālāma Sutta. It could be conceived as something akin to reincarnation or to a change of status within one lifetime. If the latter interpretation is taken the answer to what happens to a human being after death will be similar to the answer of the materialists (*uccedavādins*) – i.e complete annihilation.

Final Comments

There will always be unanswerable questions in any rational system of belief. Only dogmatic religions claim to give answers to every question. But these answers are invariably trite and impossible to prove. The classic case is the theory that the world was created by God, while the origin of God is conveniently left unexplained. The Buddha's genius is that he did not give trite answers to questions that are inherently too complex for human comprehension.

2. Shorter Discourse to Māluṅkyaputta

Translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi

1. THUS HAVE I HEARD. On one occasion the Blessed One was living at Sāvathī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's Park.

2. Then, while the venerable Māluṅkyaputta was alone in meditation, the following thought arose in his mind:

"These speculative views have been undeclared by the Blessed One, set aside and rejected by him, namely: 'the world is eternal' and 'the world is not eternal'; 'the world is finite' and 'the world is infinite'; 'the soul is the same as the body' and 'the soul is one thing and the body another'; and 'after death a Tathāgata exists' and 'after death a Tathāgata does not exist' and 'after death a Tathāgata both exists and does not exist' and 'after death a Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist.' The Blessed One does not declare these to me, and I do not approve of and accept the fact that he does not declare these to me, so I shall go to the Blessed One and ask him the meaning of this. If he declares to me either 'the world is eternal' or 'the world is not eternal'...or 'after death a Tathagata neither exists nor does not exist,' then I will lead the holy life under him; if he does not declare these to me, then I will abandon the training and return to the low life."¹

3. Then, when it was evening, the venerable Māluṅkyaputta rose from meditation and went to the Blessed One. After paying homage to him, he sat down at one side and told him:

"Here, venerable sir, while I was alone in meditation, the following thought arose in my mind: 'These speculative

1. Those who have wondered about the fate of the monk who almost left the Buddha to satisfy his metaphysical curiosity will be gladdened to know that in his old age Mālunkyautta received a brief discourse on the six sense bases from the Buddha went off into solitary meditation and attained to arahantship.

views have been undeclared by the Blessed One ... If he does not declare these to me, then I will abandon the training and return to the low life.' If the Blessed One knows 'the world is eternal,' let the Blessed One declare to me 'the world is eternal'; if the Blessed One knows 'the world is not eternal,' let the Blessed One declare to me 'the world is not eternal.' If the Blessed One does not know either 'the world is eternal' or 'the world is not eternal,' then it is straightforward for one who does not know and does not see to say: 'I do not know, I do not see.'

"If the Blessed One knows 'the world is finite,'...'the world is infinite,'...'the soul is the same as the body,'...'the soul is one thing and the body another,'...'after death a Tathāgata exists,' [428]...'after death a Tathāgata does not exist,'...If the Blessed One knows 'after death a Tathāgata both exists and does not exist,' let the Blessed One declare that to me; if the Blessed One knows 'after death a Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist,' let the Blessed One declare that to me. If the Blessed One does not know either 'after death a Tathāgata both exists and does not exist' or 'after death a Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist,' then it is straightforward for one who does not know and does not see to say: 'I do not know, I do not see'.

4. "How then, Māluṅkyaputta, did I ever say to you: 'Come, Māluṅkyaputta, lead the holy life under me and I will declare to you "the world is eternal"...or "after death a Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist"?' - "No, venerable sir." - "Did you ever tell me: 'I will lead the holy life under the Blessed One, and the Blessed One will declare to me "the world is eternal"..."after death a Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist"?' "No, venerable sir." - "That being so, misguided man, who are you and what are you abandoning?"

5. "If anyone should say thus: 'I will not lead the holy life under the Blessed One until the Blessed One declares to me "the world is eternal"...or "after death a Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist," [429] that would still remain undeclared by the Tathāgata and meanwhile that person would die. Suppose, Māluṅkyaputta, a man were wounded by an arrow thickly smeared with poison, and his friends and companions, his kinsmen and relatives, brought a surgeon to treat him. The man would say: 'I will not let the surgeon pull out this arrow until I know whether the man who wounded me was a noble or a brahmin or a merchant or a worker.' And he would say: 'I will not let the surgeon pull out this arrow until I know the name and clan of the man who wounded me; ... until I know whether the man who wounded me was tall or short or of middle height;... until I know whether the man who wounded me was dark or brown or golden-skinned; ... until I know whether the man who wounded me lives in such a village or town or city; ... until I know whether the bow that wounded me was a long bow or a crossbow; ... until I know whether the bowstring that wounded me was fibre or reed or sinew or hemp or bark; ... until I know whether the shaft that wounded me was wild or cultivated;... until I know with what kind of feathers the shaft that wounded me was fitted - whether those of a vulture or a crow or a hawk or a peacock or a stork; ... until I know with what kind of sinew the shaft that wounded me was bound -whether that of an ox or a buffalo or a lion or a monkey; ... until I know what kind of arrow it was that wounded me - whether it was hoof-tipped or curved or barbed or calf-toothed or oleander.' [430]

"All this would still not be known to that man and meanwhile he would die. So too, Māluṅkyaputta, if anyone should say thus: 'I will not lead the holy life under the Blessed One until the Blessed One declares to me: "the world is eternal"...or "after death a Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist," that would still remain undeclared by the Tathāgata and meanwhile that person would die.

6. "Māluṅkyaputta, if there is the view 'the world is eternal,' the holy life cannot be lived; and if there is the view 'the world is not eternal,' the holy life cannot be lived. Whether there is the view 'the world is eternal' or the view 'the world is not eternal,' there is birth, there is ageing, there is death, there are sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair, the destruction of which I prescribe here and now.

"If there is the view 'the world is finite,'...'the world is infinite,'...'the soul is the same as the body,'...'the soul is one thing and the body another,'...'after death a Tathāgata exists,'...'after death a Tathāgata does not exist,' the holy life cannot be lived... 1431 If there is the view 'after death a Tathāgata both exists and (I does not exist,' the holy life cannot be lived; and if there is the view 'after death a Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist,' the holy life cannot be lived. Whether there is the view 'after death a Tathāgata both exists and does not exist' or the view "after death a Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist,' there is birth, there is ageing, there is death, there are sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair, the destruction of which I prescribe here and now.

7. "Therefore, Māluṅkyaputta, remember what I have left undeclared as undeclared, and remember what I have declared as declared. And what have I left undeclared? 'The world is eternal' - I have left undeclared. 'The world is not eternal' - I have left undeclared. 'The world is finite' - I have left undeclared. 'The world is infinite' - I have left undeclared. 'The soul is the same as the body' - I have left undeclared. 'The soul is one thing and the body another' - I have left undeclared. 'After death a Tathāgata exists' - I have left undeclared. 'After death a Tathāgata does not exist' - I have left undeclared. 'After death a Tathāgata both exists and does not exist' - I have left undeclared. 'After death a Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist' - I have left undeclared.

8. "Why have I left that undeclared? Because it is unbeneficial, it does not belong to the fundamentals of the holy life,

it does not lead to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nibbāna. That is why I have left it undeclared.

9. "And what have I declared? 'This is suffering' - I have declared. 'This is the origin of suffering' - I have declared. 'This is the cessation of suffering' - I have declared. 'This is the way leading to the cessation of suffering' - I have declared.

10. "Why have I declared that? Because it is beneficial, it belongs to the fundamentals of the holy life, it leads to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nibbāna. That is why I have declared it.

"Therefore, Māluṅkyaputta, [432] remember what I have left undeclared as undeclared, and remember what I have declared as declared."

That is what the Blessed One said. The venerable Māluṅkyaputta was satisfied and delighted in the Blessed One's words.

3. Lesser Discourse to Māluṅkyā (Putta)

Translated by I. B. Horner (PTS)

Thus have I heard: At one time the Lord was staying near Sāvathī in the Jeta Grove in Anithapiṇḍika's monastery. Then a reasoning of mind arose to the venerable Māluṅkyaputta² as he was meditating in solitary seclusion, thus: " Those (speculative) views that are not explained, set aside and ignored by the Lord: The world is eternal, the world is not eternal, the world is an ending thing, the world is not an ending thing; the life-principle is the same as the body, the life principle is one thing, the body another; the Tathāgata³ is after dying, the Tathāgata is not after dying, the Tathāgata both is and in not after dying, the Tathāgata neither is nor is not after dying the Lord does not explain these to me. That the Lord does not explain these to me does not please me, does not satisfy me, so I, having approached the Lord, will question him on the matter. If the Lord will explain to me either that the world is eternal or that the world is not eternal or that the world is an ending thing ... or that the Tathāgata neither is nor is not after dying, then will I fare the Brahma-faring under the Lord. But if the Lord will not explain to me either that the world is eternal or that the world is not eternal ... or that the Tathāgata neither is nor is not after dying, then will I, disavowing the training, revert to secular life."

[427] Then the venerable Māluṅkyaputta, emerging from solitary meditation towards evening, approached the Lord; having approached, having greeted the Lord, he sat down at a respectful distance. As he was sitting down at a respectful distance, the venerable Māluṅkyaputta spoke thus to the Lord: " Now, revered sir, as I was meditating in solitary seclusion, a reasoning of mind arose to me thus: 'Those (speculative) views that are not explained, set aside, ignored by the Lord: The world is eternal . . . or that the Tathāgata neither is nor is not after dying, then will I, disavowing the training, revert to secular life.' If the Lord knows that the world is eternal, let the Lord explain to me that the world is eternal. If the Lord knows that the world is not eternal, let the Lord explain to me that the world is not eternal. If the Lord does not know whether the world is eternal or whether the world is not eternal, then, not knowing, not seeing, this would be honest, namely to say: 'I do not know, I do not see.' If the Lord knows that the world is an ending thing ... (*repeated in the case of each view as above*)... [428] ... If the Lord does not know whether the Tathāgata neither is nor is not after dying, then, not knowing, not seeing, this would be honest, namely to say: 'I do not know, I do not see.' "

" But did I ever speak thus to you, Māluṅkyaputta: 'Come you, Māluṅkyaputta, fare the Brahma-faring under me and I will explain to you either that the world is eternal or that the world is not eternal ... or that the Tathāgata, neither is nor is not after dying ?'

" No, revered sir."

" Or did you speak thus to me: 'I, revered sir, will fare the Brahma-faring under the Lord if the Lord will explain to me either that the world is eternal or that the world is not eternal ... or that the Tathāgata neither is nor is not after dying 'I"

" No, revered sir."

" So it is agreed, Māluṅkyaputta, that neither did I say: 'Come you, Māluṅkyaputta, fare the Brahma-faring under me and I will explain to you either that the world is eternal or that the world is not eternal ... or that the Tathāgata neither is nor is not after dying '; and that neither did you say: 'I, revered sir, will fare the Brahma-faring under the Lord if the Lord will

2. Two sets of verses are ascribed to him in Thag: 399-404 (ver. 404 speaking of drawing out the arrow, or dart, *salla*, see below, p. 99, and 794-817. For further references see *DPPN*.

3. 1 *MA*. iii. 141 explains Tathāgata by *satta*, being; cf. *MA*. ii. 117. At *IldA*. 340 Tathāgata is explained by *atī*.

explain to me either that the world is eternal ... or that the Tathāgata neither is nor is not after dying.' This being so, foolish man, who are you that you are disavowing?⁴

Whoever, Māluṅkyaputta, should speak thus: 'I will not fare the Brahma-faring under the Lord until the Lord explains to me whether the world is eternal or whether the world is not eternal ... or whether the Tathāgata neither is nor is not after dying' [429]-this man might pass away, Māluṅkyaputta, or ever this was explained to him by the Tathāgata. Māluṅkyaputta, it is as if a man were pierced by an arrow that was thickly smeared with poison and his friends and relations, his kith and kin, were to procure a physician and surgeon. He might speak thus: 'I will not draw out this arrow until I know of the man who pierced me whether he is a noble or brahman or merchant or worker.' He might speak thus: 'I will not draw out this arrow until I know the name and clan of the man who pierced me.' He might speak thus: 'I will not draw out this arrow until I know of the man who pierced me whether he is tall or short or middling in height.' He might speak thus: 'I will not draw out this arrow until I know of the man who pierced me whether he is black or deep brown or golden skinned.' He might speak thus: 'I will not draw out this arrow until I know of the man who pierced me to what village or market town or town he belongs.' He might speak thus: 'I will not draw out this arrow until I know of the bow from which I was pierced whether it was a spring-bow⁵ or a cross-bow.' He might speak thus: 'I will not draw out this arrow until I know of the bow-string from which I was pierced whether it was of swallowwort or of reed or sinew or hemp or a tree.'⁶ He might speak thus: 'I will not draw out this arrow until I know of the shaft by which it was pierced whether it was of reeds of this kind or that.'⁷ He might speak thus: 'I will not draw out this arrow until I know of the shaft from which I was pierced what kind of feathers it had: whether those of a vulture or heron or hawk or peacock or some other bird.'⁸ Or he might speak thus: 'I will not draw out this arrow until I know of the shaft from which I was pierced with what kind of sinews it was encased.. whether those of a cow or buffalo or deer or monkey.'⁹ He might speak thus: 'I will not draw out this arrow until I know of the arrow by which I was pierced whether it was an (ordinary) arrow or some other kind of arrow.'¹⁰ [430] Māluṅkyaputta, this man might pass away or ever this was known to him. In the same way, Māluṅkyaputta, whoever should speak thus: 'I will not fare the Brahma-faring under the Lord until the Lord explains to me either that the world is eternal or that the world is not eternal ... or that the Tathāgata neither is nor is not after dying,' this man might pass away, Māluṅkyaputta, or ever it was explained to him by the Tathāgata.

The living of the Brahma-faring, Māluṅkyaputta, could not be said to depend on the view that the world is eternal. Nor could the living of the Brahma-faring, Māluṅkyaputta, be said to depend on the view that the world is not eternal. Whether there is the view that the world is eternal or whether there is the view that the world is not eternal, there is birth, there is ageing, there is dying, there are grief, sorrow, suffering, lamentation and despair, the suppression¹¹ of which I lay down here and now. (*The same is repeated for each of the other speculative views: that the world is an ending thing, not an ending thing; that the life-principle and the body are the same and that they are different; that after dying the Tathāgata is, is not, both is and is not, neither is nor is not*) ... [431] ... The living of the Brahma-faring, Māluṅkyaputta, could not be said to depend on the view that the Tathāgata both is and is not after dying. The living of the Brahma-faring, Māluṅkyaputta, could not be said to depend on the view that the Tathāgata neither in nor is not after dying. Whether there is the view that the Tathāgata both is and is not after dying, or whether, Māluṅkyaputta, there is the view that the Tathāgata neither is nor is not after dying, there is birth, there is ageing, there is dying, there are grief, sorrow, suffering, lamentation and despair, the suppression of which I lay down here and now.

Wherefore, Māluṅkyaputta, understand as not explained what has not been explained by me, and understand as explained what has been explained by me. And what, Māluṅkyaputta, has not been explained by me? That the world is eternal has not been explained by me, Māluṅkyaputta; that the world is not eternal ... that the **world** is an ending thing ... that the world is not an ending thing ... that the life-principle and the body are the same ... that the life-principle is one thing and the body another thing ... that after dying the Tathāgata is ... is not ... both is and is not ... neither is nor is not has not been explained by me, Māluṅkyaputta. And why, Māluṅkyaputta, has this not been explained by me? It is because it is not connected with the goal, is not fundamental to the Brahma-faring, and does not conduce to turning away from, nor to

4. As at D. iii. 3. *Ko santo kaṃ paccācikkāsi* might also mean: being whom what am you disavowing?

5. This is a tentative translation of *capa*; cf. *capala*, wavering, trembling quivering. The word *cāpālikhinā* occurs at *Dhp.* 156.

6. *khiraṇṇim*, *Eulotropis gigantea*, a tree whose leaves contain milky map, in the Pali name indicates.

7. Two kinds are mentioned: *yadi vā kacchaṃ yadi vā ropimaṃ*. On the two kinds of *kaccha* mentioned at MA. iii. 142 (mountain and river) cf. SnA. 33. *Ropimaṃ* – it is explained at MA. iii. 142 as: making an arrow (or, reed) taken from a thicket of (*sara-*) reeds.

8. A specific kind of bird is mentioned, *sithilaihanu*.

9. *semhāra*, meaning conjectural, PED; but MA. iii. 142 gives *makkhaṭa*.

10. Together with *salla*, a usual word for arrow or dart, the text mentions five other kinds: *khurappa*, *vekaṇḍa*, *nārāca*, *vacchadanta*, *karavirapatta*. Not one is commented upon at MA. iii. 142.

11. *nighāta*, the destruction, overthrow, striking down.

dispassion, stopping, calming, super-knowledge, awakening nor to nibbāna. Therefore it has not been explained by me, Māluṅkyaputta. And what has been explained by me, Māluṅkyaputta? 'This is anguish ' has been explained by me, Māluṅkyaputta. ' This is the arising of anguish 'has been explained by me. 'This is the stopping of anguish' has been explained by me. 'This is the course leading to the stopping of anguish' has been explained by me. And why, Māluṅkyaputta, has this been explained by me ? It is because it is connected with the goal, is fundamental to the Brahma-faring, and conduces to turning away from, to dispassion, stopping, calming, super-knowledge, awakening and nibbāna. Therefore it has been explained by me. Wherefore, [432] Māluṅkyaputta, understand as not explained what has not been explained by me, and understand no explained what has been explained by me."

Thus spoke the Lord- Delighted, the venerable Māluṅkyaputta rejoiced in what the Lord had said.

4. Pali Text of Sutta

Cūḷamālukyasuttaṃ

122. Evaṃ me sutaṃ— ekaṃ samayaṃ bhagavā sāvatthiyaṃ viharati jetavane anāthapiṇḍikassa ārāme. Atha kho āyasmato mālukyaputtassa , rahogatassa paṭisallīnassa evaṃ cetaso parivitatko udapādi— “yānimāni diṭṭhigatāni bhagavatā abyākatāni ṭhapitāni paṭikkhittāni— ‘sassato loko’tipi, ‘asassato loko’tipi, ‘antavā loko’tipi, ‘anantavā loko’tipi, ‘taṃ jīvaṃ taṃ sarīraṃ’tipi, ‘aññaṃ jīvaṃ aññaṃ sarīraṃ’tipi, ‘hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’tipi, ‘na hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’tipi, ‘hoti ca na ca hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’tipi, ‘neva hoti na na hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’tipi— tāni me bhagavā na byākaroti. Yāni me bhagavā na byākaroti taṃ me na ruccati, taṃ me nakkhamati. Sohaṃ bhagavantaṃ upasaṅkamtivā etamatthaṃ pucchissāmi. Sace me bhagavā byākarissati— ‘sassato loko’ti vā ‘asassato loko’ti vā ...pe... ‘neva hoti na na hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti vā— evāhaṃ bhagavati brahmacariyaṃ (2.0090) carissāmi; no ce me bhagavā byākarissati— ‘sassato loko’ti vā ‘asassato loko’ti vā ...pe... ‘neva hoti na na hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti vā— evāhaṃ sikkhaṃ paccakkhāya hīnāyāvattissāmī”ti.

123. Atha kho āyasmā mālukyaputto sāyanhasamayaṃ paṭisallānā vuṭṭhito yena bhagavā tenupasaṅkami; upasaṅkamtivā bhagavantaṃ abhivādetvā ekamantaṃ nisīdi. Ekamantaṃ nisinno kho āyasmā mālukyaputto bhagavantaṃ etadvoca—

124. “Idha mayhaṃ, bhante, rahogatassa paṭisallīnassa evaṃ cetaso parivitatko udapādi— yānimāni diṭṭhigatāni bhagavatā abyākatāni ṭhapitāni paṭikkhittāni— ‘sassato loko’tipi, ‘asassato loko’tipi ...pe... ‘neva hoti na na hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’tipi— tāni me bhagavā na byākaroti. Yāni me bhagavā na byākaroti taṃ me na ruccati, taṃ me nakkhamati. Sohaṃ bhagavantaṃ upasaṅkamtivā etamatthaṃ pucchissāmi. Sace me bhagavā byākarissati— ‘sassato loko’ti vā, ‘asassato loko’ti vā ...pe... ‘neva hoti na na hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti vā— evāhaṃ bhagavati, brahmacariyaṃ carissāmi. No ce me bhagavā byākarissati— ‘sassato loko’ti vā, ‘asassato loko’ti vā ...pe... ‘neva hoti na na hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti vā— evāhaṃ sikkhaṃ paccakkhāya hīnāyāvattissāmīti. Sace bhagavā jānāti— ‘sassato loko’ti, ‘sassato loko’ti me bhagavā byākarotu; sace bhagavā jānāti— ‘asassato loko’ti, ‘asassato loko’ti me bhagavā byākarotu. No ce bhagavā jānāti— ‘sassato loko’ti vā, ‘asassato loko’ti vā, ajānato kho pana apassato etadeva ujukaṃ hoti yadidaṃ— ‘na jānāmi, na passāmī”ti. Sace bhagavā jānāti— ‘antavā loko’ti, ‘anantavā loko’ti me bhagavā byākarotu; sace bhagavā jānāti— ‘anantavā loko’ti, ‘anantavā loko’ti me bhagavā byākarotu. No ce bhagavā jānāti— ‘antavā loko’ti vā, ‘anantavā loko’ti vā, ajānato kho pana apassato etadeva (2.0091) ujukaṃ hoti yadidaṃ— ‘na jānāmi, na passāmī”ti. Sace bhagavā jānāti— ‘taṃ jīvaṃ taṃ sarīraṃ’ti, ‘taṃ jīvaṃ taṃ sarīraṃ’ti me bhagavā byākarotu; sace bhagavā jānāti— ‘aññaṃ jīvaṃ aññaṃ sarīraṃ’ti, ‘aññaṃ jīvaṃ aññaṃ sarīraṃ’ti me bhagavā byākarotu. No ce bhagavā jānāti— ‘taṃ jīvaṃ taṃ sarīraṃ’ti vā, ‘aññaṃ jīvaṃ aññaṃ sarīraṃ’ti vā, ajānato kho pana apassato etadeva ujukaṃ hoti yadidaṃ— ‘na jānāmi, na passāmī”ti. Sace bhagavā jānāti— ‘hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti, ‘hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti me bhagavā byākarotu; sace bhagavā jānāti— ‘na hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti, ‘na hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti me bhagavā byākarotu. No ce bhagavā jānāti— ‘hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti vā, ‘na hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti vā, ajānato kho pana apassato etadeva ujukaṃ hoti yadidaṃ— ‘na jānāmi na passāmī”ti. Sace bhagavā jānāti— ‘hoti ca na ca hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti, ‘hoti ca na ca hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti me bhagavā byākarotu; sace bhagavā jānāti— ‘neva hoti na na hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti, ‘neva hoti na na hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti me bhagavā byākarotu. No ce bhagavā jānāti— ‘hoti ca na ca hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti vā, ‘neva hoti na na hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti vā, ajānato kho pana apassato etadeva ujukaṃ hoti yadidaṃ— ‘na jānāmi, na passāmī”ti.

125. “Kiṃ nu , tāhaṃ, mālukyaputta, evaṃ avacaṃ— ‘ehi tvaṃ, mālukyaputta, mayi brahmacariyaṃ cara, ahaṃ te byākarissāmi— ‘sassato loko’ti vā, ‘asassato loko’ti vā, ‘antavā loko’ti vā, ‘anantavā loko’ti vā, ‘taṃ jīvaṃ taṃ sarīraṃ’ti

vā, ‘aññaṃ jīvaṃ aññaṃ sarīraṃ’ti vā, ‘hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti vā, ‘na hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti vā, ‘hoti ca na ca hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti vā, ‘neva hoti na na hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti vā’? “No hetam, bhante”. “Tvam vā pana maṃ evaṃ avaca- ahaṃ, bhante, bhagavati brahmacariyaṃ carissāmi (2.0092), bhagavā me byākarissati- ‘sassato loko’ti vā, ‘asassato loko’ti vā, ‘antavā loko’ti vā, ‘anantavā loko’ti vā, ‘taṃ jīvaṃ taṃ sarīraṃ’ti vā, ‘aññaṃ jīvaṃ aññaṃ sarīraṃ’ti vā, ‘hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti vā, ‘na hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti vā, ‘hoti ca na ca hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti vā, ‘neva hoti na na hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti vā’? “No hetam, bhante”. “Iti kira, mālukyaputta, nevāhaṃ taṃ vadāmi- ehi tvam, mālukyaputta, mayi brahmacariyaṃ cara, ahaṃ te byākarissāmi- ‘sassato loko’ti vā, ‘asassato loko’ti vā ...pe... ‘neva hoti na na hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti vā’; napi kira maṃ tvam vadesi- ahaṃ, bhante, bhagavati brahmacariyaṃ carissāmi, bhagavā me byākarissati- ‘sassato loko’ti vā ‘asassato loko’ti vā ...pe... ‘neva hoti na na hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti vā’? Iti. Evaṃ sante, moghapurisa, ko santo kaṃ paccācikkhasi?

126. “Yo kho, mālukyaputta, evaṃ vadeyya- ‘na tāvāhaṃ bhagavati brahmacariyaṃ carissāmi yāva me bhagavā na byākarissati- ‘sassato loko’ti vā, ‘asassato loko’ti vā ...pe... ‘neva hoti na na hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti vā’ti, abyākatameva taṃ, mālukyaputta, tathāgatena assa, atha so puggalo kālaṃ kareyya. Seyyathāpi, mālukyaputta, puriso sallena viddho assa savisenā gāḷhapalepanena. Tassa mittāmaccā ñāṭisālohita bhisakkaṃ sallakattaṃ upaṭṭhāpeyyuṃ. So evaṃ vadeyya- ‘na tāvāhaṃ imaṃ sallaṃ āharissāmi yāva na taṃ purisaṃ jānāmi yenamhi viddho, khattiyo vā brāhmaṇo vā vesso vā suddo vā’ti; so evaṃ vadeyya- ‘na tāvāhaṃ imaṃ sallaṃ āharissāmi yāva na taṃ purisaṃ jānāmi yenamhi viddho, evaṃnāmo evaṃgotto iti vā’ti; so evaṃ vadeyya- ‘na tāvāhaṃ imaṃ sallaṃ āharissāmi yāva na taṃ purisaṃ jānāmi yenamhi viddho, dīgho vā rasso vā majjhimo vā’ti; so evaṃ vadeyya- ‘na tāvāhaṃ imaṃ sallaṃ āharissāmi yāva na taṃ purisaṃ jānāmi yenamhi viddho, kāḷo vā sāmo vā maṅguracchavī vā’ti; so evaṃ vadeyya- ‘na tāvāhaṃ imaṃ sallaṃ āharissāmi yāva na taṃ purisaṃ jānāmi yenamhi viddho, amukasmim gāme (2.0093) vā nigame vā nagare vā’ti; so evaṃ vadeyya- ‘na tāvāhaṃ imaṃ sallaṃ āharissāmi yāva na taṃ dhanuṃ jānāmi yenamhi viddho, yadi vā cāpo yadi vā kodaṇḍo’ti; so evaṃ vadeyya- ‘na tāvāhaṃ imaṃ sallaṃ āharissāmi yāva na taṃ jiyāṃ jānāmi yāyamhi viddho, yadi vā akkassa yadi vā saṅghassa , yadi vā nhārussa yadi vā maruvāya yadi vā khīrapaṇṇino’ti; so evaṃ vadeyya- ‘na tāvāhaṃ imaṃ sallaṃ āharissāmi yāva na taṃ kaṇḍaṃ jānāmi yenamhi viddho, yadi vā gacchaṃ yadi vā ropimaṃ’ti; so evaṃ vadeyya- ‘na tāvāhaṃ imaṃ sallaṃ āharissāmi yāva na taṃ kaṇḍaṃ jānāmi yenamhi viddho, yassa patthehi vājitaṃ , yadi vā gijjhassa yadi vā kaṅkassa yadi vā kulalassa yadi vā morassa yadi vā sithilahanuno’ti; so evaṃ vadeyya- ‘na tāvāhaṃ imaṃ sallaṃ āharissāmi yāva na taṃ kaṇḍaṃ jānāmi yenamhi viddho, yassa nhārunā parikkhittaṃ yadi vā gavassa yadi vā mahiṃsassa yadi vā bheravassa , yadi vā semhārassā’ti; so evaṃ vadeyya- ‘na tāvāhaṃ imaṃ sallaṃ āharissāmi yāva na taṃ sallaṃ jānāmi yenamhi viddho, yadi vā sallaṃ yadi vā khurappaṃ yadi vā vekaṇḍaṃ yadi vā nārācaṃ yadi vā vacchadantaṃ yadi vā karavīrapattaṃ’ti- aññāṭameva taṃ, mālukyaputta, tena purisena assa, atha so puriso kālaṃ kareyya. Evameva kho, mālukyaputta, yo evaṃ vadeyya- ‘na tāvāhaṃ bhagavati brahmacariyaṃ carissāmi yāva me bhagavā na byākarissati- ‘sassato loko’ti vā ‘asassato loko’ti vā ...pe... ‘neva hoti na na hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti vā’- abyākatameva taṃ, mālukyaputta, tathāgatena assa, atha so puggalo kālaṃ kareyya.

127. “Sassato loko’ti, mālukyaputta, diṭṭhiyā sati brahmacariyavāso abhaviṣṣāti, evaṃ ‘no asassato loko’ti, mālukyaputta, diṭṭhiyā sati brahmacariyavāso abhaviṣṣāti, evampi ‘no sassato loko’ti vā, mālukyaputta, diṭṭhiyā sati, ‘asassato loko’ti vā diṭṭhiyā sati attheva jāti, atthi jarā, atthi maraṇaṃ, santi sokaparidevadukkhadomanassupāyāsā; yesāhaṃ diṭṭheva dhamme nighātaṃ paññapemi (2.0094). ‘Antavā loko’ti, mālukyaputta, diṭṭhiyā sati brahmacariyavāso abhaviṣṣāti, evaṃ ‘no anantavā loko’ti, mālukyaputta, diṭṭhiyā sati brahmacariyavāso abhaviṣṣāti, evampi ‘no antavā loko’ti vā, mālukyaputta, diṭṭhiyā sati, ‘anantavā loko’ti vā diṭṭhiyā sati attheva jāti, atthi jarā, atthi maraṇaṃ, santi sokaparidevadukkhadomanassupāyāsā; yesāhaṃ diṭṭheva dhamme nighātaṃ paññapemi. ‘Taṃ jīvaṃ taṃ sarīraṃ’ti, mālukyaputta, diṭṭhiyā sati brahmacariyavāso abhaviṣṣāti, evaṃ ‘no aññaṃ jīvaṃ aññaṃ sarīraṃ’ti, mālukyaputta, diṭṭhiyā sati brahmacariyavāso abhaviṣṣāti, evampi ‘no taṃ jīvaṃ taṃ sarīraṃ’ti vā, mālukyaputta, diṭṭhiyā sati, ‘aññaṃ jīvaṃ aññaṃ sarīraṃ’ti vā diṭṭhiyā sati attheva jāti ...pe... nighātaṃ paññapemi. ‘Hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti, mālukyaputta, diṭṭhiyā sati brahmacariyavāso abhaviṣṣāti, evaṃ ‘no na hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti, mālukyaputta, diṭṭhiyā sati brahmacariyavāso abhaviṣṣāti, evampi ‘no hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti vā, mālukyaputta, diṭṭhiyā sati, ‘na hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti vā diṭṭhiyā sati attheva jāti ...pe... yesāhaṃ diṭṭheva dhamme nighātaṃ paññapemi. ‘Hoti ca na ca hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti, mālukyaputta, diṭṭhiyā sati brahmacariyavāso abhaviṣṣāti, evaṃ ‘no neva hoti na na hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti, mālukyaputta, diṭṭhiyā sati brahmacariyavāso abhaviṣṣāti, evampi ‘no hoti ca na ca hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti, mālukyaputta, diṭṭhiyā sati, ‘neva hoti na na hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti vā diṭṭhiyā sati attheva jāti ...pe... yesāhaṃ diṭṭheva dhamme nighātaṃ paññapemi.

128. “Tasmātiha, mālukyaputta, abyākatañca me abyākatato dhāretha; byākatañca me byākatato dhāretha. Kiñca, mālukyaputta, mayā abyākatam? ‘Sassato loko’ti mālukyaputta, mayā abyākatam; ‘asassato loko’ti- mayā abyākatam; ‘antavā loko’ti- mayā abyākatam; ‘anantavā loko’ti- mayā abyākatam; ‘taṃ jīvaṃ taṃ sarīraṃ’ti- mayā abyākatam;

‘aññaṃ jīvaṃ aññaṃ sarīraṃ’ti— mayā abyākataṃ; ‘hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti— mayā abyākataṃ; ‘na hoti tathāgato paraṃ (2.0095) maraṇā’ti— mayā abyākataṃ; ‘hoti ca na ca hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti— mayā abyākataṃ; ‘neva hoti na na hoti tathāgato paraṃ maraṇā’ti— mayā abyākataṃ. Kasmā cetaṃ, mālukyaputta, mayā abyākataṃ? Na hetuṃ, mālukyaputta, atthasaṃhituṃ na ādibrahmacariyakāṃ na , nibbidāya na virāgāya na nirodhāya na upasamāya na abhiññāya na sambodhāya na nibbānāya saṃvattati. Tasmā taṃ mayā abyākataṃ. Kiñca, mālukyaputta, mayā byākataṃ? ‘Idaṃ dukkhaṃ’ti, mālukyaputta, mayā byākataṃ; ‘ayaṃ dukkhasamudayo’ti— mayā byākataṃ; ‘ayaṃ dukkhanirodho’ti— mayā byākataṃ; ‘ayaṃ dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā’ti— mayā byākataṃ. Kasmā cetaṃ, mālukyaputta, mayā byākataṃ? Etañhi, mālukyaputta, atthasaṃhituṃ etaṃ ādibrahmacariyakāṃ nibbidāya virāgāya nirodhāya upasamāya abhiññāya sambodhāya nibbānāya saṃvattati. Tasmā taṃ mayā byākataṃ. Tasmātiha, mālukyaputta, abyākatañca me abyakatato dhāretha; byākatañca me byakatato dhārethā”ti.

Idamavoca bhagavā. Attamano āyasmā mālukyaputto bhagavato bhāsitaṃ abhinandīti.

Cūḷamālukyasuttaṃ niṭṭhitaṃ tatiyaṃ.