MN 147 — Cula-Rahulovada Sutta: The Shorter Exposition to Rahula

English translation by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.

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Changes: Presentation only: original HTML markup reflowed into plain text; wording, numbering and source repetitions retained. No repetitions expanded.

Completeness: ABBREVIATED. Every source-unit character is preserved, including introductions, notes and verse structure. Thanissaro's collection-level note explicitly states that repetitions were cut: https://www.dhammatalks.org/suttas/about.html. This is evidence about the translation method, not an assertion that every individual unit contains an omission; no repetitions reconstructed.

Text

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying at Savatthi, in Jeta's Grove, Anathapindika's Monastery. Then, as he was alone in seclusion, this line of thinking arose in the Blessed One's awareness: "The mental qualities that ripen in release have ripened in Rahula. What if I were to lead Rahula further to the ending of the mental fermentations?"

Then the Blessed One, early in the morning, put on his robes and, carrying his bowl & outer robe, went into Savatthi for alms. Having gone for alms in Savatthi, after the meal, returning from his alms round, he said to Ven. Rahula, "Fetch your sitting cloth, Rahula. We will go to the Grove of the Blind to spend the day."

Responding, "As you say, lord," to the Blessed One, Ven. Rahula, carrying his sitting cloth, followed behind the Blessed One. Now at that time, many thousands of devas were following behind the Blessed One, [thinking,] "Today the Blessed One will lead Ven. Rahula further to the ending of the mental fermentations."

Then the Blessed One, having plunged into the Grove of the Blind, sat down on a seat made ready at the foot of a tree. Ven. Rahula, having bowed down to the Blessed One, sat

to one side.

As he was sitting there, the Blessed One said to him, "What do you think, Rahula — is the eye constant or inconstant?"

"Inconstant, lord."

"And is that which is inconstant easeful or stressful?"

"Stressful, lord."

"And is it fitting to regard what is inconstant, stressful, subject to change as: 'This is mine. This is my self. This is what I am'?"

"No, lord."

"What do you think — are forms constant or inconstant?"

"Inconstant, lord."

"And is that which is inconstant easeful or stressful?"

"Stressful, lord."

"And is it fitting to regard what is inconstant, stressful, subject to change as: 'This is mine. This is my self. This is what I am'?"

"No, lord."

"What do you think — is consciousness at the eye constant or inconstant?"

"Inconstant, lord."

"And is that which is inconstant easeful or stressful?"

"Stressful, lord."

"And is it fitting to regard what is inconstant, stressful, subject to change as: 'This is mine. This is my self. This is what I am'?"

"No, lord."

"What do you think — is contact at the eye constant or inconstant?"

"Inconstant, lord."

"And is that which is inconstant easeful or stressful?"

"Stressful, lord."

"And is it fitting to regard what is inconstant, stressful, subject to change as: 'This is mine. This is my self. This is what I am'?"

"No, lord."

"What do you think — whatever there is that arises in dependence on contact at the eye as a mode of feeling, a mode of perception, a mode of fabrication, or a mode of consciousness:[1] Is it constant or inconstant?"

"Inconstant, lord."

"And is that which is inconstant easeful or stressful?"

"Stressful, lord."

"And is it fitting to regard what is inconstant, stressful, subject to change as: 'This is mine. This is my self. This is what I am'?"

"No, lord."

"What do you think, Rahula — is the ear constant or inconstant?"

"Inconstant, lord" ...

"What do you think, Rahula — is the nose constant or inconstant?"

"Inconstant, lord" ...

"What do you think, Rahula — is the tongue constant or inconstant?"

"Inconstant, lord" ...

"What do you think, Rahula — is the body constant or inconstant?"

"Inconstant, lord" ...

"What do you think, Rahula — is the intellect constant or inconstant?"

"Inconstant, lord."

"And is that which is inconstant easeful or stressful?"

"Stressful, lord."

"And is it fitting to regard what is inconstant, stressful, subject to change as: 'This is mine. This is my self. This is what I am'?"

"No, lord."

"What do you think — are ideas constant or inconstant?"

"Inconstant, lord."

"And is that which is inconstant easeful or stressful?"

"Stressful, lord."

"And is it fitting to regard what is inconstant, stressful, subject to change as: 'This is mine. This is my self. This is what I am'?"

"No, lord."

"What do you think — is consciousness at the intellect constant or inconstant?"

"Inconstant, lord."

"And is that which is inconstant easeful or stressful?"

"Stressful, lord."

"And is it fitting to regard what is inconstant, stressful, subject to change as: 'This is mine. This is my self. This is what I am'?"

"No, lord."

"What do you think — is contact at the intellect constant or inconstant?"

"Inconstant, lord."

"And is that which is inconstant easeful or stressful?"

"Stressful, lord."

"And is it fitting to regard what is inconstant, stressful, subject to change as: 'This is mine. This is my self. This is what I am'?"

"No, lord."

"What do you think — whatever there is that arises in dependence on contact at the intellect as a mode of feeling, a mode of perception, a mode of fabrication, or a mode of consciousness: Is it constant or inconstant?"

"Inconstant, lord."

"And is that which is inconstant easeful or stressful?"

"Stressful, lord."

"And is it fitting to regard what is inconstant, stressful, subject to change as: 'This is mine. This is my self. This is what I am'?"

"No, lord."

"Seeing thus, Rahula, the instructed disciple of the noble ones grows disenchanted with the eye, disenchanted with forms, disenchanted with consciousness at the eye, disenchanted with contact at the eye. And whatever there is that arises in dependence on contact at the eye as a mode of feeling, a mode of perception, a mode of fabrication, or a mode of consciousness: With that, too, he grows disenchanted.

"He grows disenchanted with the ear...

"He grows disenchanted with the nose...

"He grows disenchanted with the tongue...

"He grows disenchanted with the body...

"He grows disenchanted with the intellect, disenchanted with ideas, disenchanted with consciousness at the intellect, disenchanted with contact at the intellect. And whatever there is that arises in dependence on contact at the intellect as a mode of feeling, a mode of perception, a mode of fabrication, or a mode of consciousness: With that, too, he grows disenchanted. Disenchanted, he becomes dispassionate. Through dispassion, he is fully released. With full release, there is the knowledge, 'Fully released.' He discerns that 'Birth is depleted, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.'"

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, Ven. Rahula delighted in the Blessed One's words. And while this explanation was being given, Ven. Rahula's mind, through no clinging (not being sustained), was fully released from fermentations. And to those many thousands of devas there arose the dustless, stainless Dhamma eye: "Whatever is subject to origination is all subject to cessation."

Note

1.

The Buddha's basic approach in this discourse is to take a line of questioning that he usually applies to the five aggregates (see SN 22.59) and to apply it to the framework of the six sense media as given in SN 35.28. This phrase, however, is the one point where this

sutta deviates from that framework. The corresponding phrase in SN 35.28 focuses exclusively on feelings. The passage here — vedanagatam, saññagatam, sankharagatam, viññanagatam — focuses on all four mental aggregates. For another example of translating –gatam as "mode," see the phrase "mode of perception" (saññagatam) in MN 121.

See also: MN 61; MN 62.