



Thānuttamo

The Five Moralities:
A Survey of the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*
and Pāli Commentaries

**The Five Moralities:
A Survey of the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* and Pāli Commentaries**

Ṭhānuttamo

Sri Jayanti Buddhist Temple, Kuala Lumpur

June 25, 2023

Abstract

Ven. Sāriputta's *Paṭisambhidāmagga* and some parts of Pāli literature as a whole contain a list and analyses of five types of morality that throw into relief aspects of the moral life that range from an ethical practice that needs to be improved upon and is limited via those forms that catalyze progress on the Buddhist path toward liberation to a form that constitutes full moral blossoming. Although these five types by themselves comprise only a relatively small division of the quite vast topic of Buddhist morality, they can, nevertheless, serve as a self-contained unit capable of covering the essentials of it.

Introduction

As part of the research on a forthcoming book on *sīla* ("morality"), I gathered and now present here – more or less exhaustively – a listing of the five types of morality (*pañca sīlāni*) that are found in Ven. Sāriputta's *Paṭisambhidāmagga* (Paṭis: 41; cf. Vsm I: 11), briefly explained already by this early canonical text itself and treated in more detail by the commentarial tradition. The relevant texts about the five types of morality contain valuable theoretical concepts and practical pointers for initiating and establishing the ethical bedrock on which all further development of the Buddhist path to awakening rests; however, this has not been showcased and systematically explained in any English-medium publication that I am aware of. The present research paper, therefore, aims to redress this state of affairs. Translations from the Pāli are my own, and all references are to the latest (2008) digital editions of the *Chaṭṭhasaṅgāyana* ("Sixth Buddhist Council"), issued by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Myanmar.

The first type of morality is a kind of morality that must be improved upon; the second, third and fourth types function as the cause for the attainment of

arahant-ship, and the fifth is the morality of those who have reached this very attainment. The five categories of morality – as per the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* – are as follows (Paṭis: 41; cf. Vsm I: 11):

1. Morality of delimited purity (*pariyantapārisuddhisīlaṃ*).
2. Morality of unlimited purity (*apariyantapārisuddhisīlaṃ*).
3. Morality of complete purity (*paripuṇṇapārisuddhisīlaṃ*).
4. Morality of non-misapprehended purity (*aparāmaṭṭhapārisuddhisīlaṃ*).
5. Morality of quieting-down purity (*paṭippassaddhipārisuddhisīlaṃ*).

Chapter 1: Morality of Delimited Purity

The first type of morality is “about the delimited training precepts of the unordained” (*anupasampannānaṃ pariyantasikkhāpadānaṃ*; Paṭis: 41), due to “the delimited boundary by means of counting” (*gaṇanavasena pariyanto paricchedo*; Paṭis-a I: 187; cf. Vsm I: 44), “or it [i.e., the purity] is delimited because of its delimited ending [...] for one having the morality of the unordained as a result of reaching the morality of the ordained [...]”¹ (Paṭis-a I: 187).

The commentary to the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* furthermore specifies two types of delimitations. The first **(a)** refers to the above-mentioned delimited training precepts and is called “delimitation of training precepts” (*sikkhāpada-pariyanto*). It states that “for male and female lay followers, according to whatever way there is an undertaking, there are one, two, three, four, five, eight or ten training precepts; for male and female novices as well as female probationers, there are ten”² (Paṭis-a I: 188). The second **(b)** is a “delimitation of time” (*kālapariyanto*). It refers to the undertaking of “a morality delimited to [a time of] serving meals” (*parivesanapariyantaṃ sīlaṃ*), “to [a time of going to] the monastery” (*vihārapariyantaṃ*) or any boundary of a duration of one, two, three or more nights and days (Paṭis-a I: 188).

Moreover, “there is a morality that is delimited by gain, fame, relatives, body parts and life”³ (Paṭis I: 42), which means that, “here, a certain [individ-

¹ [U]pasampannasīle patte anupasampannasīlassa [...] vā pariyanto avasānaṃ assā atthi pariyantā. This probably refers to the ending of the morality of the unordained person upon ordaining as a *bhikkhu* or *bhikkhunī*, taking up their type of morality.

² *Upāsakopāsikānaṃ yathāsamādānavasena ekaṃ vā dve vā tīṇi vā cattāri vā pañca vā atṭha vā dasa vā sikkhāpadāni honti, sikkhamānasāmaṇerasāmaṇerīnaṃ dasa sikkhāpadāni.*

³ *Atthi sīlaṃ lābhapariyantaṃ, atthi sīlaṃ yasapariyantaṃ, atthi sīlaṃ ñātipariyantaṃ, atthi sīlaṃ aṅgapariyantaṃ, atthi sīlaṃ jīvitapariyantaṃ.*

ual] – by cause of gain, under the condition of gain, by reason of gain – transgresses (*vītikkamati*) [i.e., ‘trespasses’ (*ajjhācarati*); Paṭis-a I: 200] a training precept [...]”⁴ (Paṭis I: 42). This means “there is a delimitation and breach (*bhedo*) of it on account of gain” etc. (Paṭis-a I: 199). One may say that, “alternatively, all [moralities], indistinctively, are torn, rent, blotched and mottled due to the fact of being impaired by evil things, such as the sevenfold bond of sexuality, rage and holding a grudge”⁵ (Paṭis-a I: 200; cf. AN II: 438–9 [AN 7.50]).

It is worth writing out the sevenfold bond of sexuality (*methunasamyogo*), a defiling agent for morality as mentioned. In each of the seven cases of torn, rent etc. moral behavior at large and celibacy in particular, a certain recluse (*samaṇo*) or Brahmin (*brāhmaṇo*) merely claims to be a proper celibate (*brahmacārī*). Firstly, although he doesn’t engage in actual intercourse with women, he still agrees to and enjoys, desires and is happy about being rubbed, massaged, bathed etc. by them. Secondly, although he does not engage in actual intercourse with women and even refrains from getting rubbed etc., he still cracks jokes, plays around and has a good laugh with them; thirdly – not engaging in each of the following cases and in the present one in the respective previous behavior – still flirts with them by gazing and looking into their eyes; fourthly, listens to their voices behind a wall or through a rampart as they laugh, talk, sing or weep; fifthly, remembers formerly laughing, talking and playing with them; sixthly, sees a householder or his son supplied and furnished with the five bonds of sensuality⁶ (*kāmaguṇehi*), enjoying them and, seventhly, aspires to attain a heavenly rebirth. It is said (Paṭis I: 42) that all “such moralities”⁷ (*evarūpāni sīlāni*) are:

⁴ *Idhekacco lābhahetu lābhapaccayā lābhakāraṇā [...] sikkhāpadaṃ vītikkamati.*

⁵ *Avisesena vā sabbānīpi sattavidhena methunasamyogena kodhūpanāhādīhi ca pāpadhammehi upahattā khaṇḍāni chiddāni sabalāni kammāsānīti.*

⁶ The reason why Pāli *guṇo* is rendered here as “bond” is due to the fact that the commentaries (e.g., Sv I: 334) gloss the term – occurring as part of the compound *kāmaguṇo* – with *bandhanaṃ* (“binding,” “tying up”). It can also be understood as “having the sense of group” (*rāsaṭṭho*; Mp-ṭ III: 139). It refers to those objects of the five senses that are wished for (*iṭṭhā*), beloved (*kantā*), pleasant (*manāpā*), endearing (*piyarūpā*), connected with sensuality (*kāmūpasañhitā*), enticing (*rajanīyā*; Nidd I: 331); they have been identified as “objective sensuality” (*vatthukāmo*) that is a condition for “the fetter of sensual lust” (*kāmarāgasamyojanaṃ*), which is internal (Mp-ṭ III: 139).

⁷ The moralities that are delimited by gain, fame etc., which “can be the moralities of lay persons (*gahaṭṭhasīlāni*) or those gone forth (*pabbajitasīlāni*)” (Paṭis-a I: 200).

1. Torn (*khaṇḍāni*).
2. Rent (*chiddāni*).
3. Blotched (*sabalāni*).
4. Mottled (*kammāsāni*).
5. Not freeing (*na bhujissāni*).
6. Not praised by the wise (*na viññuppasatthāni*).
7. Apprehended (*parāmaṭṭhāni*).
8. Not conducive to concentration (*asamādhisaṃvattanikāni*).

They are not [providing] the ground for (*na ...vatthukāni*):

9. Non-remorse (*avippaṭisāro*).
10. Joy (*pāmojjaṃ*).
11. Rapture (*pīti*).
12. Tranquility (*passaddhi*).
13. Mental pleasure (*sukhaṃ*).
14. Concentration (*samādhi*).
15. Knowing and seeing according to reality (*yathābhūtañāṇadassanaṃ*).

Furthermore, they do not conduce to (*na [...] saṃvattanti*):

16. Utter disenchantment (*ekantanibbidā*).
17. Dispassion (*virāgo*).
18. Cessation (*nirodho*).
19. Stillness (*upasamo*).
20. Direct knowledge (*abhiññā*).
21. Awakening (*sambodho*).
22. *Nibbāna*.⁸

1. Torn (*khaṇḍāni*): “When at their beginning or end one has been broken, they are torn like a cloak cut at the hem. [...] Some⁹ (*keci*) [say] that they are torn by

⁸ *Evarūpāni sīlāni khaṇḍāni chiddāni sabalāni kammāsāni na bhujissāni na viññuppasatthāni parāmaṭṭhāni asamādhisaṃvattanikāni na avippaṭisāravatthukāni na pāmojjavatthukāni na pītivatthukāni na passaddhivatthukāni na sukhavatthukāni na samādhivatthukāni na yathābhūtañāṇadassanavatthukāni na ekantanibbidāya na virāgāya na nirodhāya na upasamāya na abhiññāya na sambodhāya na nibbānāya saṃvattanti.*

⁹ In the context of introducing the opinion of others, “some” (*keci*) refers to individuals with lower qualifications than those possessed by the author (i.e., the commentator; Mingun Sayadaw, 1992: 105).

means of not having become established in wholesome qualities (*kusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ*) [...]”¹⁰ (Paṭis-a I: 200).

2. *Rent (chiddāni)*: “When in their center one has been broken, they are rent like a cloak pierced in the middle.”¹¹ They, too, are rent in this way (*chiddānītipi evaṃ*) by means of not having become established in wholesome qualities as just mentioned (Paṭis-a I: 200).

3. *Blotched (sabalāni)*: “When two or three of them have been broken in sequence, they are blotched like a cow having a certain body appearance, such as of black or red, by means of a discrepant coloring that has arisen on the back or belly in the shape of long spots etc. [...] Some [say] that they are blotched by means of causing discoloration [...]”¹² (Paṭis-a I: 200).

4. *Mottled (kammāsāni)*: “When one each has been broken here and there in between them, they are mottled like a cow speckled here and there with spots of discrepant coloring.”¹³ They, too, are mottled in this way (*kammāsānītipi evaṃ*) by means of causing discoloration as just mentioned (Paṭis-a I: 200).

5. *Not freeing (na bhujissāni)*: “They are not freeing due to not being the cause for the state of freedom from slavery, having liberated from the state of slavery;”¹⁴ as a matter of truth, again according to some, ““they are not freeing’ [has been said] due to the fact of having attained the state of slavery under craving”¹⁵ (Paṭis-a I: 200).

6. *Not praised by the wise (na viññuppasatthāni)*: “They are not praised by the wise due to the fact of not being praised by the wise that are Buddhas and so forth;”¹⁶ it is possible that, to refer here as well to the opinion of some, ““they

¹⁰ [Y]esaṃ ādimhi vā ante vā ekaṃ bhinnaṃ, tāni pariyante chinnaṣaṭṭako viya **khaṇḍāni**. [...] keci pana “khaṇḍānīti kusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ appaṭiṭṭhābhūtattā [...]”

¹¹ Yesaṃ vemaṃjhe ekaṃ bhinnaṃ, tāni majjhe vinividdhasaṭṭako viya **chiddāni**.

¹² Yesaṃ paṭipāṭiyā dve vā tīṇi vā bhinnāni, tāni piṭṭhiyā vā kucchiyā vā utṭhitena dīghavattādisaṅghānena visabhāgavaṇṇena kālarattādīnaṃ aññatarasarīravaṇṇā gāvī viya **sabalāni**. [...] Keci pana “[...] sabalānīti vivaṇṇakaraṇattā [...]”

¹³ Yesaṃ antarantarā ekekāni bhinnāni, tāni antarantarā visabhāgavaṇṇabinduvidicitrā gāvī viya **kammāsāni**.

¹⁴ Avisesena vā sabbānīpi sattavidhena methunasamyogena kodhūpanāhādīhi ca pāpa-dhammehi upahattattā khaṇḍāni chiddāni sabalāni kammāsānīti. Tānīyeva taṇhādāsabyato mocetvā bhujissabhāvākaraṇena **na bhujissāni**.

¹⁵ Na bhujissānīti taṇhādāsabyaṃ gatattā.

¹⁶ Buddhādīhi viññūhi na pasatthattā **na viññuppasatthāni**.

are not praised by the wise' [has been said] due to the fact of being criticized by those possessing wholesomeness [or 'skill,' 'competence']"¹⁷ (Paṭis-a I: 200).

7. *Apprehended (parāmaṭṭhāni)*: "They are apprehended due to the fact of being apprehended by craving and views (*taṇhādiṭṭhīhi*) or being able to be apprehended [or 'held'] by someone [in this manner]: "This is a defect of your moralities"¹⁸ (Paṭis-a I: 200).

8. *Not conducive to concentration (asamādhisaṃvattanikāni)*: "They are not conducive to concentration because they do not induce access or absorption or else path or fruition concentration"¹⁹ (Paṭis-a I: 200).

9. *Not [providing] the ground for non-remorse (na avippaṭisāravatthukāni)*: "[...] the meaning is that they are not the footing of non-remorse due to the fact of bringing forth remorse"²⁰ (Paṭis-a I: 200).

10. *Not [providing] the ground for joy (na pāmojjavatthukāni)*: "[...] not being the ground for weak joy that is born out of non-remorse due to the fact of not bringing it forth. In this way, also the remainder has to be constructed"²¹ (Paṭis-a I: 200).

11–15. Each member among Nos. 11–15 is born out of the respective preceding quality, and the morality of delimited purity doesn't provide a ground for engendering even one (Paṭis-a I: 200).

16. *Do not conduce to [...] utter disenchantment (na ekantanibbidāya [...] saṃvattanti)* [means]: "[...] to utter disenchantment: The construction is: They do not conduce to the benefit of utter disenchanting with regard to the round [of rebirths]. In this way, it should be applied also when it comes to the remainder [of the items here listed]."²² (Paṭis-a I: 201). Disenchantment can, moreover, also be understood as referring to insight (*vipassanā*) here, although specifical-

¹⁷ *Na viññuppasatthānīti kusalehi garahitattā.*

¹⁸ *Taṇhādiṭṭhīhi parāmaṭṭhattā, kenaci vā 'ayaṃ te silesu doso'ti parāmaṭṭhuṃ sakkuṇeyyatāya parāmaṭṭhāni.*

¹⁹ *Upacārasamādhīṃ appanāsamādhīṃ vā, atha vā maggasamādhīṃ phalasangāhīṃ vā na saṃvattayantīti asamādhisaṃvattanikāni.*

²⁰ *[...] vipaṭisāravahattā avippaṭisārasa patiṭṭhā na hontīti attho.*

²¹ *[...] avippaṭisārajāya dubbalapītiyā na vatthubhūtāni tassā anāvahattā. evaṃ sesesupī yojanā kātabbā.*

²² *[...] ekantanibbidāyāti ekantena vaṭṭe nibbindananatthāya na saṃvattantīti sambandho. evaṃ sesesupī yojetabbam.*

ly identified thus only in the context of the morality of unlimited purity (Paṭis-a I: 201).

17. *Do not conduce to [...] dispassion (na virāgāya [...] saṃvattanti)* [means]: “[...] for the benefit of separating from passion with regard to the round [of rebirths]” (*[...] vaṭṭe virajjanatthāya*; Paṭis-a I: 201). As with the previous item, dispassion can be understood in a further way, namely as path (*maggo*) – but again, in the context of the morality of unlimited purity (Paṭis-a I: 201).

18. *Do not conduce to [...] cessation (na nirodhāya [...] saṃvattanti)* [means]: “[...] for the benefit of the ceasing of the round [of rebirths]” (*[...] vaṭṭassa nirodhanatthāya*; Paṭis-a I: 201), which is, against the backdrop of the morality of unlimited purity yet again, the equivalent of *nibbāna* (Paṭis-a I: 201).

19. *Do not conduce to [...] stillness (na upasamāya [...] saṃvattanti)* [means]: “[...] for the benefit of the stilling of the round [of rebirths], that has ceased by means of [taking] furthermore no rebirth” (*[...] nirodhitassa puna anuppativasena vaṭṭassa upasamanatthāya*; Paṭis-a I: 201). Both the previous item and this one have been equated with *nibbāna*, as per the type of morality that is dealt with in the following section; that is, the one of unlimited purity (Paṭis-a I: 201).

20. *Do not conduce to [...] direct knowledge (na abhiññāya [...] saṃvattanti)* [means]: “[...] for the benefit of knowing the round [of rebirths]” (*[...] vaṭṭassa abhijānanatthāya*; Paṭis-a I: 201). Like the previously mentioned dispassion, it can also be understood as referring to the path (*maggo*), according to the explanations given for the morality of unlimited purity (Paṭis-a I: 201).

21. *Do not conduce to [...] awakening (na sambodhāya [...] saṃvattanti)* [means]: “[...] for the benefit of waking up from the round [of rebirths] by means of the going away of the sleep of the defilements” (*[...] kilesaniddāvigamena vaṭṭato pabujjhanatthāya*; Paṭis-a I: 201). It may alternatively thought of as path (*maggo*) as well, yet again within the context of the morality of unlimited purity (Paṭis-a: 201).

22. *Do not conduce to [...] nibbāna (na nibbānāya [...] saṃvattanti)* [means]: “[...] for the benefit of the deathless *nibbāna*” (*[...] amatanibbānatthāya*; Paṭis-a: 201), which may mean “only *nibbāna*” (*nibbānameva*), as the commentary explains for the morality of unlimited purity (Paṭis-a I: 201).

On the basis of the commentarial glosses here presented, we can thus see that this list of 22 attributes qualifying the morality of limited purity contains a number of synonyms, not unlikely for didactic purposes. Using different words, insight (*vipassanā*) is mentioned once, the path (*maggo*) twice and *nibbāna* three times, “but by means of an alternative way of speaking, all these are only synonyms for the path and *nibbāna*”²³ (Paṭis-a: 201).

Chapter 2: Morality of Unlimited Purity

This class of morality is “about the unlimited training precepts of the ordained” (*upasampannānaṃ apariyantasiikkhāpadānaṃ*; Paṭis: 41), “having set aside the good [or ‘virtuous’] ordinary persons (*kalyāṇaputhujjane*), the trainees (*sekkhe*) and the ones beyond training (*asekkhe*), of those ordained other than that”²⁴ (Vsm-mhṭ I: 75), with “unlimited” in the sense of the opposite of the above-mentioned “limited,” or “they are unlimited because there either is no delimitation for it [i.e., the purity] or [...] because of its advanced delimitation”²⁵ (Paṭis a I: 187). Although when expressed in numbers not actually being “unlimited,” the morality of the ordained is said to be astronomically high (by means of permutations and the inclusion of elided items):

Nine thousand crores,
one hundred eighty crores,
fifty hundred thousand,
and furthermore another thirty-six.

These are [the numbers of] the disciplines of constraint,
the trainings among the constraint of disciplines,
illustrated by the All-Enlightened One
[and] indicated by means of the headings of elided repetitions²⁶
(Paṭis-a I: 188; cf. Vsm I: 44).

Be that as it may, even these circumscribed moralities qualify as unlimited “[...] by means of the condition of an undertaking without exception; a delimitation that is not seen by cause of gain, fame, relatives, body parts and life

²³ *Pariyāyena pana sabbānipetāni maggavevacanānīpi nibbānavevacanānīpi hontiyeva.*

²⁴ *[T]hapetvā kalyāṇaputhujjanasekkhāsekkhe tadanñesaṃ upasampannānaṃ.*

²⁵ *[N]atthi etissā pariyantotipi apariyantā, vuddho etissā pariyantotipi apariyantā.*

²⁶ *Nava koṭisahasāni, asīti satakoṭīyo, paññāsa satasahasāni, chattiṃsa ca punāpare. ete saṃvaravinayā, sambuddhena pakāsītā, peyyālamukhena niddiṭṭhā, sikkhā vinayasaṃvare’ti.*

[i.e., there is ‘a non-transgression of morality’ – *sīlassa avītikkamo*; Vsm-mhṭ I: 76] and, further, the boundary of the morality to be protected [...]”²⁷ (Paṭis-a I: 188; cf. Paṭis: 42; cf. Vsm I: 44). Such kind of moralities are untorn, unrent, leading to concentration etc. (Paṭis: 42), that is, the direct opposite of the 22 attributes listed under the morality of delimited purity. The *Paṭisambhidāmagga* and the relevant commentaries even raise the standard here up to the level of mere thought:

Here, a certain [individual] – by cause of gain, under the condition of gain, by reason of gain [same pattern applies also for fame, relatives etc.] – doesn’t even give rise to a thought of transgressing a training precept as it has been undertaken; how then will he [actually] transgress?²⁸ (Paṭis I: 42; cf. Vsm I: 13).

Doesn’t even give rise to a thought: It has been said for the sake of showing the exceedingly purified state of a morality that is pure when it comes to the arising of a thought²⁹ (Paṭis-a I: 201).

How then will he [actually] transgress?: How can this be that he who doesn’t even give rise to a thought of transgressing will transgress by body or speech? The meaning is that this is not [the case]³⁰ (Vsm mhṭ I: 34; cf. Paṭis-a I: 201).

This kind of morality is like that of the mango-eating elder Mahātissa, resident of the Ciragumba monastery, characterized by this recollection of a good man (*sappurisānussati*):

One may give up wealth because of a sound limb;
guarding life, one may give up a limb;
but all [these] – limb, wealth and life –

²⁷ [...] *anavasesasamādānabhāvavasena lābhayasañāti-āṅgajivitaḥetu aditṭhapariyan-tabhāvavasena upari rakkhitabbasīlaparicchedābhāvavasena ca [...]*.

²⁸ *Idhekacco ñātiḥetu ñātipaccayā ñātikāraṇā yathāsamādinnaṃ sikkhāpadaṃ vītikka-māya cittaṃpi na uppādeti, kiṃ so vītikkamissati.*

²⁹ **Cittampi na uppādetīti** *cittuppādasuddhiyā sīlassa ativisuddhabhāvadassanattaṃ vuttaṃ, na pana cittuppādamattena sīlaṃ bhijjati.*

³⁰ **Kiṃ so vītikkamissatīti** *yo vītikkamāya cittaṃpi na uppādeti, so kāyavācāhi vītikka-missatīti kiṃ idaṃ, natthetanti attho.*

a person may give up, recollecting the dhamma³¹ (Vsm I: 44).

While engaging in this recollection, he attained arahantship, depending on the morality of unlimited purity (*apariyantapārisuddhisīlam nissāya*) at issue.

Chapter 3: Morality of Complete Purity

This morality is “of those good [or ‘virtuous’] ordinary persons (*puthujjanakalyāṇakānaṃ*), who are engaged in [the practice of] a wholesome *dhamma* [*kusaladhamme*, i.e., ‘the practice of insight’ – *vipassanācare*; Vsm-mhṭ I: 75], effecting the fulfilment of the delimitations of the trainee,³² of no concern regarding body and life, having abandoned life [i.e., the attachment to it to the extent that it could lead to a moral transgression]” (Paṭis: 41), which is “for the sake of further distinction” (*uparivisesādhigamattham*) and “the fulfilment (or ‘completion’) of morality” (*sīlapāripūriattham*; Vsm-mhṭ I: 75).

Moreover, “it [i.e., the purity] is complete, in the sense of not being deficient, due to the state of being untorn – beginning from the [the time of] undertaking [the training rules]³³ – having both made amends when [they] have been torn and being devoid of the dirt (*malena*) that is the mere arising of a thought (*cittam*), and due to the state of being purified (*parisuddhattā*) [‘state of being exceedingly purified’ – *atiparisuddhattā*; Vsm I: 45] – like a purified type of jewel (*parisuddhajātimaṇi*) and well-blown, well-prepared (or ‘well-polished’) gold – being the proximate cause of the noble path [‘even of arahantship’ – *arahattasseva*; Vsm I: 45]”³⁴ (Paṭis-a I: 187).

It may manifest as such kind of morality that no action is performed without mindfulness or unknowingly, as is reflected by the statement made by the elder Mahāsaṅgharakkhita: “Verily, friends, starting from the time of go-

³¹ *Dhanam caje aṅgavarassa hetu, aṅgam caje jīvitam rakkhamāno. aṅgam dhanam jīvitāñcāpi sabbam, caje naro dhammanussaranto’ti.*

³² This stands for the wholesome “qualities” (*dhammā*) “from the specification of mentality and materiality” (*nāmarūpaparicchedato*) up to the “change of lineage” (*gotrabhū*) stage or “the three worldly trainings that should be trained in, being the lower end” (*heṭṭhimantabhūtā sikkhitabbā lokiyā tisso sikkhā*; Vsm-mṭ I: 75).

³³ The *Visuddhimagga*, by and large congruent with the whole sentence here, also specifies that the morality of complete purity is that “morality of good ordinary persons, starting from [the time of] higher ordination (*upasampadato*) [...]” (*[p]uthujjanakalyāṇakānaṃ sīlam upasampadato paṭṭhāya [...]*; Vsm I: 45).

³⁴ *Samādānato pabhuti akhaṇḍitattā khaṇḍitāpi katapaṭikkammattā cittuppādamattakēnāpi malena virahitattā ca parisuddhajātimaṇi viya sudhantasuparikammakatasuvaṇṇam viya ca parisuddhattā ariyamaggassa padaṭṭhānabhūtā anūnaṭṭhena paripuṇṇā.*

ing forth, I do not see an action that was performed [by me] without mindfulness and knowing”³⁵ (Vsm I: 45). His morality being of such complete purity, it functioned – close to the time of his passing – as a proximate cause for the attainment of arahant-ship (Vsm I: 45).

Chapter 4: Morality of Non-Misapprehended Purity

This kind of morality is “of the seven trainees” (*sattannaṃ sekkhānaṃ*; Paṭi: 41), that is, “the pure morality of someone who isn’t capable of grasping by means of view-defilement [...]”³⁶ (Vsm-mhṭ I: 75); more elaborately, “due to the state of having given up by means of views [and] having not taken up, not grasped, with view-grasping”³⁷ (Paṭi-a I: 187). Besides likewise mentioning that it should be known as the morality of the trainees (not giving any number) “due to the fact of non-misapprehension by means of views” (*diṭṭhivasena aparāmaṭṭhattā*), the *Visuddhimagga* itself also specifies: “[...] or else, the by means of lust non-misapprehended morality of ordinary persons should be understood as morality of non-misapprehended purity”³⁸ (Vsm I: 46).

It may also function as the proximate cause for the attainment of arahant-ship, as the story of the elder Kuṭumbiyaputtatissa shows. These words have been attributed to him by the *Visuddhimagga* (Vsm I: 46) and the *Dīghanikāya* commentary (Sv II: 339): “I am incommoded and ashamed of dying with lust. Having, in this manner, reflected and properly grasped [with insight], I attained arahant-ship when dawn rose.”³⁹ With such attainment (as brought about by Nos. 2–4 or our present classification scheme of morality), the last type of the moralities at issue manifests itself; it is the focus of attention in the next, short chapter.

Chapter 5: Morality of Quieting-Down Purity

This last type of morality under discussion is “of the Tathāgata’s disciples, those with taints destroyed (*khīṇāsavānaṃ*), individual Buddhas (*paccekabudd-*

³⁵ [A]haṃ, āvuso, pabbajitakālato paṭṭhāya asatiyā aññāṇapakataṃ kammaṃ nāma na passāmi’ti.

³⁶ Diṭṭhisamkilesena aparāmasaniyato pārisuddhivantaṃ sīlaṃ [...].

³⁷ Diṭṭhiyā pahinattā diṭṭhiparāmāsenā aggahitattā **aparāmaṭṭhā**.

³⁸ [...] puthujjanānaṃ vā pana rāgavasena aparāmaṭṭhasilaṃ **aparāmaṭṭhapārisud-dhīti** veditabbaṃ.

³⁹ Aṭṭiyāmi harāyāmi, sarāgamaraṇaṃ aha’nti. evāhaṃ cintayitvāna, sammasitvāna yo-niso; sampatte aruṇuggamhi, arahattaṃ apāpuni’nti.

hānaṃ) [and] the Tathāgatas [themselves], which are worthy ones, perfectly self-enlightened Buddhas [...]”⁴⁰ (Paṭi: 41). This “quieting down is due to the quieting down of all anxiety at the moment of the fruition of arahant-ship”⁴¹ (Paṭi-a I: 187; cf. Vsm I: 47). Put another way, it is the “morality that is possessed of purity by means of altogether quieting down the defilements (*kilesānaṃ*)”⁴² (Vsm-mhṭ I: 75). Having analyzed this acme of morality, what remains are some concluding remarks to be given with the next chapter.

Conclusion

The aim of this research paper was to showcase the theoretical and practical importance of the five kinds of morality as taught and elaborated upon by the early-Buddhist *Paṭisambhidāmagga* and Pāli commentarial tradition at large. It has become apparent that – with the application of such a scaffolding of five classes – they are intended to reflect, by and large, progressive stages of moral development. Without noting the nuances here anew, in summary, this means the following:

- delimited training precepts of the unordained or forms of morality that are delimited by defilements such a desire for gain and fame, the sevenfold bond of sexuality etc.;
- unlimited training precepts of the ordained and forms that are not delimited by the mentioned defilements, even on the level of general thought purity;
- complete purity of morality belonging to those that have reached the proximity of the noble individuals that are trainees;
- non-misapprehended purity of morality of the seven trainees, even up to just right below arahant-ship;
- quieting-down purity of morality belonging to the enlightened ones.

With that and all the details provided in this publication, the scheme may assist us in accessing numerous leverage points to purify our own morality so that it can lead us further on the path that reaches from happiness in the here and now even up to the attainment of final *nibbāna*. However, it is still an open question how other traditional frameworks for presenting morality stand in

⁴⁰ *Tathāgatasāvakaṇaṃ khīṇāsavaṇaṃ paccekabuddhānaṃ tathāgatānaṃ arahantānaṃ sammāsambuddhānaṃ [...].*

⁴¹ *Arahattaphalakkhaṇe sabbadarathapaṭippassaddhiyā paṭippassaddhi.*

⁴² *Kilesānaṃ sabbaso paṭippassaddhiyā pārissuddhivantaṃ silaṃ paṭippassaddhipārisuddhisīlaṃ.*

relation to the classes introduced here, to be addressed with further publications on the topic of *sīla*. Another area of concern is the relatively widespread criticism of the Pāli tradition regarding the claim that the entire Tipiṭaka and large parts of the commentaries are an authoritative source of what the Buddha and his immediate disciples taught. This critique may raise the concern: “Why bother studying these later texts and practice accordingly?” However, I think from the standpoint of moral and philosophical depth as well as history, the mentioned claim of the tradition can well have a basis in truth, but with the conclusion of this paper, this is not the place to discuss matters of such nature.

Abbreviations

AN: *Aṅuttaranikāya*

Mp-ṭ: *Manorathapūraṇīṭikā (Sāratthamañjūsā IV; Aṅuttaranikāyaṭṭikā)*

Nidd I: *Mahāniddesa*

Paṭis: *Paṭisambhidāmagga*

Paṭis-a: *Paṭisambhidāmagga-aṭṭhakathā (Saddhammappakāsini)*

Sv: *Sumaṅgalavilāsini (Dīghanikāya-aṭṭhakathā)*

Vsm: *Visuddhimagga*

Vsm-mhṭ: *Visuddhimaggamahāṭṭikā (Paramatthamañjūsā)*

References

- Aṅuttaranikāyapāḷi* (Vol. II of III; PDF file) (2008) Ministry of Religious Affairs (Myanmar). <https://buddhispano.net/sites/default/files/cs/pali/16An02.pdf>
- Mahāniddesapāḷi* [PDF file] (2008). Ministry of Religious Affairs (Myanmar). <https://buddhispano.net/sites/default/files/cs/pali/24Khu07.pdf>
- Manorathapūraṇī* (Vol. III of III; PDF file) (2008). Ministry of Religious Affairs (Myanmar). <https://buddhispano.net/sites/default/files/cs/atthakatha/19AnA03.pdf>
- Mingun Sayadaw U Vicittasārābhivamsa (1992): *The great chronicle of Buddhas* (U Ko Lay & U Tin Lwin, Trans.; Vol. I [II]). Ti=Ni Publishing Centre
- Paṭisambhidāmaggapāḷi* (Vol. I of II; PDF file) (2008). Ministry of Religious Affairs (Myanmar). <https://buddhispano.net/sites/default/files/cs/pali/26Khu09.pdf>
- Paṭisambhidāmagga-aṭṭhakathā* (Vol. I of II; PDF file) (2008). Ministry of Reli-

gious Affairs (Myanmar). <https://buddhispano.net/sites/default/files/cs/atthakatha/46KhuA27.pdf>

Sumaṅgalavilāsinī (Vols. I–II of III; PDF files) (2008). Ministry of Religious Affairs (Myanmar). <https://buddhispano.net/sites/default/files/cs/atthakatha/07DiA01.pdf>; <https://buddhispano.net/sites/default/files/cs/atthakatha/08DiA02.pdf>

Visuddhimaggo (Vol. I of II; PDF file) (2008). Ministry of Religious Affairs (Myanmar). <https://buddhispano.net/sites/default/files/cs/atthakatha/51Vism01.pdf>

Visuddhimaggamahāṭīkā (Vol. I of II; PDF file) (2008). Ministry of Religious Affairs (Myanmar). <https://buddhispano.net/sites/default/files/cs/tika/25VsmT01.pdf>