

Attachment

Attachment is one of the basic properties of the Universe. It is called Kāma in Pāali. There are five (5) cords of sensuality connected to the five senses.(pancha kāma)t to the 5 senses.

The Universe /Multi-verse is explained in the Dhamma as a continuing cycle of alternate construction and destruction. (Aggañña Sutta).

During each constructive phase, the Universe /r each Universe) emerges from a void where only basic energies could survive. Then, destruction sets in as a result of intense heat (Thējo).Energies develop more complexities.. Kamas or attachments originate.

It should be noted that there could be no beings in the lower realms up to this stage – only higher “Brahmas” could survive from one cycle of destruction to another. So, Kāma first arises as a part of the environment, not from inside a being. We still see this in many forms as when inanimate objects (atoms, molecules, etc.) tend to stick to each other).

Arising of Consciousness (Vinnana)

Attachments or sense desires cannot arise without the involvement of sense objects. That is why we could say that objects like rocks and sand are said to be without life. Although plants develop some form of life, they are not fully organized to cause the formation of consciousness (viññana).as all five sense organs are not developed. Yet plants could display some cords of attachments. It is only in life forms that have developed all five senses that consciousness could arise.(viññana). Senses resonate with external objects (rupa) and give rise to sensations that, in turn, activate cognition (sañña). Cognition gives rise to mental constructions/ formations (sankāra). These cognitive processes are the basis on which consciousness (viññana) comes into being. Beings with well developed sense organs are called sentient beings.

Basic life forms (tthvara satva) can only react to cosmic energies. By this stage of evolution, a significant development is noticeable. Such life forms have an awareness of their own existence: a sense of its ‘being’. As a result of such development, they display a ‘self’ concept or ego – that which we cannot discern in inanimate objects and plants. Life forms that display a self concept or ego tend to draw all forms of energy into themselves. ‘Self’ becomes the centre of all existence. ‘Self-ishness’ is a natural outgrowth. In order to attract objects physically separated from it, such life-forms develop mobility, as in the case of lower animal life forms, (thasa sathva). Development of such life forms over a very, very long period of time, through a process of ‘natural selection’ produced more and more complex life forms. Gender differentiation into male and female was the next stage of development. This continued process of ‘evolution’ resulted in the appearance of higher and higher life forms culminating in the appearance of ‘homo-sapiens’ or human beings as we discern them.

It is not easy for human beings like us to grasp the origin and nature of attachment – much less to wean ourselves away from gratification of sense desires (kāma).

This world of ours is often referred to as ‘Kāma Lōka’, full of lust, passion and intoxication.

Ravi Madanayake