

ON ANATTA/ANATMAN in fact and doctrine. Against modern so-called Buddhism's non-doctrinal insanity
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The greatest fool in Buddhist doctrine was one who "saw Self (atman) in (mere) self (anatta)" ("anattani ca attati") [AN 2.52], certainly one of the most common refrains in Buddhist sutta. Some of the greatest harbingers of the incapacity to differentiate the empirical (namo-rupic) self from The Self are most certainly the 'Buddhists' who never end in revelry of quoting Gotama to the effect that all 'phenomena are Selfless (anattoti)'. The empirical self is = anatta, [SN 3.196], that very khandic (namo-rupic) self which modern 'Buddhism' alone acknowledges, but not that other Self which is the "light and refuge" [DN 2.154].

What has Buddhism to say of the Self? "That's not my Self" (na me so atta); and the term "non Self-ishness" (anatta) are predicated of the world and all "things" (sabbe dhamma anatta); identical with the Brahmanical "of those who are mortal, there is no Self/Soul", (anatma hi martyah), [SB., II. 2. 2. 3]). [KN J-1441] "The Soul is the refuge that I have gone unto". For anatta is not said of the Self/Soul but what it is not. There is never a 'doctrine of no-Soul', but a doctrine of what the Soul (The Self) is not (form is anatta, feelings are anatta, etc.). It cannot be denied that what is anatta is indeed the mere and petty self for [SN 3.196], and countless other passages, the mere self of psycho-physicality is = anatta = khandhas; that same self which the disciple is instructed to have his will (atta) reject in the face of illumination and insight.

Of the Metaphysician, the common-fool (puthujjana) who knows "only of his self, is fated to most certainly die when his time comes", but of that noble sage who has claimed the summit of wisdom and is "freed the will/nous (cittavimuttati)", he is a "dead man walking"; meaning he has "died to that mere self and lives in The Self". Such a person in quest for same is commanded "die before ye die!", or that before physical death come and lest you still suffer the delusion of The Self to be this (foul) self of flesh and bone you have dispirited and disobjectified the will (Self-assimilation = Atman) in upon itself (samadhi, liberation).

The common fool who ruminates over immortality envisages the survival of the personality (of person so-and-so; Bob, Sue); confusing the empirical self of "flesh, urine, blood, bone, feces" [Dhm] with the Spirit (atman). This empirical self is in doubt by none, that very same self "headed to the grave" and which "goes in its own time". The Metaphysician knows that any 'self' created in time must also perish in those same ("fires of") time. [Dhm. 147] "Behold! That painted puppet this body, riddled with oozing sores, an erected façade. Diseased heap that fools fancy and swoon over"; of which Buddhism in no way quarrels with modern and corrupt 'Buddhism', that of which this very self, the temporal phenomena of that person so-and-so is equally as much 'dukkha, anicca, and anatta'.

The 'reflexive position' taken by illogical modern 'Buddhism' proclaims the Pali term Attan (Skt. Atman, Self) to be merely a reflexive term meaning "oneself, himself, herself", however the reflexive and empirical mere self is, regardless of translation, "anatta" i.e. "na me so atta" (not my Soul), or also "eso khandhassa na me so atta" (these aggregates [forms, feelings, perceptions, experiences, consciousness = mere self] are no the Self, the Soul). As pertains the reflexive self, of who proclaim "myself, himself, herself" we are referring to "that person so-and-so (Larry, Sue, etc.)", the empirical and psycho-physical (namo-rupa) self of blood and sinew which is "doomed to fall into the grave at long last", the very same self the poetic dead are said to cry out to the living "what you are, we (the dead) once were, what we are you shall be!". Even more illogical is the double standard of commentarialist and sectarian 'Buddhists' who desire anatta to mean 'no-Soul' as well as atta to mean simply 'myself, himself, herself'; wherein illogically atta in the adjective anatta is, to their ignorant minds = Soul ('no-soul'), but atta in standalone = 'myself'. As illogical an end result, modern Buddhism has proclaimed atta = anatta! Its quite hard to fathom any position more senseless than this, however this is one of the countless reasons modern 'Buddhism' is illogical without end. However doctrinally and logically so, what IS anatta (the five psycho-physical aggregates of the mere self) are indeed 'myself', in so meaning the mortal (mata) self composed of the bodily humors which is fated to death. That mere self is never implied nor meant when Buddhism speaks of immortality and the path leading to same (amatagamimaggā) [SN 5.9], of which "the body cannot pass that gate to fare beyond...only the Soul (The Self)" - Homer

The great dictum of the Upanishads is "That (Brahman) thou art" (tat tvam asi). "That" is here, of course, the Atman or Spirit, Sanctus Spiritus, the Greek pneuma; this Atman is the spiritual essence, impartite whether transcendent or immanent; and however many and various directions to which it may extend or from which it may withdraw, it is the unmoved mover in both intransitive and transitive senses. It lends itself to all modalities of being but never itself becomes anyone or anything. That than which all else is vexation- That thou art. "That", in other words, is Brahman, or Godhead in the general sense of Logos or Being, considered as the universal source of all Being. That which is "in" him as the finite (1) in the infinite (2-infinity, i.e. phenomena, namo-rupa), though not a "part" of him.

Referring back to "of those who are mortal, there is no Self/Soul", the common fool doesn't 'have' an atman as such that we might agree with heretical modern 'Buddhism' which denies Selfhood in the absolute; for those same peoples who, in the grand bloom of ignorance, accept the foul self and deny the Great-Self, they are objectively (self-khandhas) assured that no underlying Subject (The Self) is immanent, or transcendent. Just as a man might have gold on his land, undiscovered and unknown, he has no gold, no wealth, even though it be his by measure of being present upon his very lands; so too those common fools (puthujjana), the 'Buddhists' who are certain and proud in their ignorance that this temporal personality, this self, is all there is. Theravada, in great illogic, goes one further to say that Gotama's denial of nihilism (ucchedavada) was aimed at meaning that even the empirical self, since it itself was merely a composite and temporal construct, had no existence to be annihilated; thereby subverting the doctrinal 'heresy of nihilism' to be placed upon the view of denying the empirical self rather than The Self, the Atman. Of course, to 'have an atman' implies possession, and certainly so the immanent Subject, The Self, is a possession by nothing and by nobody; in this too the wiseman agrees with the common materialist who ignorantly proclaims "I don't have an atman/Soul", most certainly that foul self does not 'have' The Self any more so than that object which is illuminated from afar 'has (of itself) light'.

"There are two within us" [Plato's Republic 439d, 604b]; in the expression of "self-control" implying that there is one that controls and the other (self) subject to control, for we know that "nothing acts upon itself"; for the one self "becomes", and the other self "is".

“The ‘fair’ self (kalyanam attanam)...the ‘foul’ self (papam attanam)” [AN 1.149]; i.e. the “great Self” (mahatta) and the “petty” (appatumo) [AN 1.249], or that “self whose Lord is the Self” [Dhm 380]. In that modern so-called Buddhism has denied The Self, it has constructed an illogical impossibility in thereby positing empirical purity of which the doctrine of Buddhism itself, not to mention logic alone most heartily protests, for there is no possibility of empirical purity within the teachings of Buddhism.

It is of course true that the Buddha denied the existence of the mere empirical “self” in the very meaning of “my-self” (this person so-and-so, namo-rupa, an-atta), one might say in accordance with the command ‘denegat seipsum, [Mark VII.34]; but this is not what modern so-called Buddhism means to say, or are understood by their readers to say; what they mean to say is that the Buddha denied the immortal (amata), the unborn (ajata) and Supreme-Self (mahatta’) of the Upanishads. And that is palpably false, for he frequently speaks of this Self, or Spirit (mahapurisha), and nowhere more clearly than in the too often repeated formula ‘na me so atta’, “This/these are not my Soul” (na me so atta’= anatta/anatman), excluding body (rupa) and the components of empirical consciousness (vinnana/ nama). “What of this short-lived body which is clung to by means of craving? There is nothing in it to say ‘I’ or ‘mine’ or ‘me’.” [MN 1.185]. “What do you suppose, followers, if people were carrying off into the Jeta grove bunches of sticks, grasses, branches, and leaves and did with them as they wished or burned them up, would it occur to you: These people are carrying us off, are doing as they please with us, and are burning us? No, indeed not Lord. And how so? Because Lord, none of that is our Soul.” [MN 1.141]. “What do you think, is form lasting or impermanent? Impermanent Gotama. Is that which is impermanent suffering or blissful? Indeed its suffering Gotama. Is that which is impermanent and suffering and subject to perpetual change; is it fit to declare of such things ‘this is mine, this is what I am, this is my Soul? Indeed not Gotama!” [MN 1.232].

Buddhism’s command, same as that of Plotinus and the Pythagoreans before him, was the utter disobjectification of the will by inversion of that primordial attribute which is uncaused and without beginning (attribute/avijja). For only the wise and illuminated fully know the two selves, differentiate the two by means of wisdom with which they are endowed, and certainly do not see “Self in what is (mere) self (anatta)”.

The Buddhist term Anatman (Sanskrit), or Anatta (Pali) is an adjective in sutra used to refer to the nature of phenomena as being devoid of the Soul, that being the ontological and uncompounded subjective Self (atman) which is the “light (dipam), and only refuge” [DN 2.100]. Of the 662 occurrences of the term Anatta in the Nikayas, its usage is restricted to referring to 22 nouns (forms, feelings, perception, experiences, consciousness, the eye, eye-consciousness, desires, mentation, mental formations, ear, nose, tongue, body, lusts, things unreal, etc.), all phenomenal, as being Selfless (anatta). Contrary to countless many popular (=profane, or = consensus, from which the truth can ‘never be gathered’) books (as Buddhologist C.A.F. Davids has deemed them ‘miserable little books’) written outside the scope of Buddhist doctrine, there is no “Doctrine of anatta/anatman” mentioned anywhere in the sutras, rather anatta is used only to refer to impermanent things/phenomena as other than the Soul, to be anatta, or Self-less (an-atta).

Specifically in sutra, anatta is used to describe the temporal and unreal (metaphysically so) nature of any and all composite, consubstantial, phenomenal, and temporal things, from macrocosmic to microcosmic, be it matter as pertains the physical body, the cosmos at large, including any and all mental machinations which are of the nature of arising and passing. Anatta in sutra is synonymous and interchangeable with the terms dukkha (suffering) and anicca (impermanent); all three terms are often used in triplet in making a blanket statement as regards any and all phenomena. Such as: “All these aggregates are anicca, dukkha, and anatta.” It should be further noted that, in doctrine, that the only noun which is branded permanent (nicca), is obviously and logically so, the noun attan [Skt. Atman], such as passage (SN 1.169).

Anatta refers specifically and only to the absence of the permanent soul as pertains any or all of the psycho-physical (namo-rupa) attributes, or khandhas (skandhas, aggregates). Anatta/Anatman in the earliest existing Buddhist texts, the Nikayas, is an adjective, (A is anatta, B is anatta, C is anatta). The commonly (=profane, consensus, herd-views) held belief to wit that: “Anatta means no-soul, therefore Buddhism taught that there was no soul” is an irrational absurdity which cannot be found or doctrinally substantiated by means of the Nikayas, the suttas (Skt. Sutras), of Buddhism.

The Pali compound term and noun for “no soul” is natthatta (literally “there is not/no[nattha]+atta’[Soul]), not the term anatta, and is mentioned at Samyutta Nikaya 4.400, where Gotama was asked if there “was no-soul (natthatta)”, to which Gotama equated this position to be a Nihilistic heresy (ucchedavada). Common throughout Buddhist sutra (and Vedanta as well) is the denial of psycho-physical attributes of the mere empirical self to be the Soul, or confused with same. The Buddhist paradigm (and the most common repeating passage in sutta) as regards phenomena is “Na me so atta” (this/these are not my soul), this most common utterance of Gotama the Buddha in the Nikayas, where “na me so atta” = Anatta/Anatman. In sutta, to hold the view that there was “no-Soul” (natthatta) is = natthika (nihilist). Buddhism differs from the “nothing-morist” (Skt. Nastika, Pali natthika) in affirming a spiritual nature that is not in any wise, but immeasurable, inconnumerable, infinite, and inaccessible to observation; and of which, therefore, empirical science can neither affirm nor deny the reality thereof of him who has ‘Gone to That[Brahman]” (tathatta). It is to the Spirit (Skt. Atman, Pali attan) as distinguished from oneself (namo-rupa/ or khandhas, mere self as = anatta) i.e., whatever is phenomenal and formal (Skt. and Pali nama-rupa, and savinnana-kaya) “name and appearance”, and the “body with its consciousness”. [SN 2.17] ‘Nonbeing (asat, natthiti [views of either sabbammatthi ‘the all is ultimately not’ (atomism), and sabbam puthuttan ‘the all is merely composite’ [SN 2.77] both of this positions are existential antinomies, and heresies of annihilationism)”. In contrast it has been incorrectly asserted that affirmation of the atman is = sassatavada (conventionally deemed ‘eternalism’). However the Pali term sasastavada is never associated with the atman, but that the atman was an agent (karmin) in and of samsara which is subject to the whims of becoming (bhava), or which is meant kammavada (karma-ism, or merit agencyship); such as sassatavada in sutta = “atta ca so loka ca” (the atman and the world [are one]), or: ‘Being (sat, atthiti [views of either sabbammatthi ‘the all is entirety’, and sabbamekattan ‘the all is one’s Soul’ [SN 2.77] both are heresies of perpetualism)]. Sasastavada is the wrong conception that one is perpetually (sassata) bound within samsara and that merit is the highest attainment for either this life or for the next. The heretical antinomy to nihilism (vibhava, or = ucchedavada) is not, nor in sutta, the atman, but bhava (becoming, agencyship). Forever, or

eternal becoming is nowhere in sutta identified with the atman, which is “never an agent (karmin)”, and “has never become anything” (=bhava). These antinomies of bhava (sassatavada) and vibhava (ucchedavada) both entail illogical positions untenable to the Vedantic or Buddhist atman; however the concept of “eternalism” as = atman has been the fallacious secondary crutch for supporting the no-atman commentarialists position on anatta implying = there is no atman.

Logically so, according to the philosophical premise of Gotama, the initiate to Buddhism who is to be “shown the way to Immortality (amata)” [MN 2.265, SN 5.9], wherein liberation of the spirit/mind [Greek = nous] (cittavimutta; Greek = epistrophe) is effectuated thru the expansion of wisdom and the meditative practices of sati and samadhi (assimilation, or synthesis, complete disobjectification with all objective [unreal] 'reality'), must first be educated away from his former ignorance-based (avijja) materialistic proclivities in that he (the common fool) “saw any of these forms, feelings, this body in whole or part, to be my Self/Atman, to be that which I am by nature”. Teaching the via negativa methodology of anatta in sutta pertains solely to things phenomenal, which were: “subject to perpetual change; therefore unfit to declare of such things ‘these are mine, these are what I am, that these are my Soul’” [MN 1.232]. The one scriptural passage where Gotama is asked by a layperson what the meaning of anatta is as follows: [Samyutta Nikaya 3.196] At one time in Savatthi, the venerable Radha seated himself and asked of the Blessed Lord Buddha: “Anatta, anatta I hear said venerable. What pray tell does Anatta mean?” “Just this Radha, form is not the Soul (anatta), sensations are not the Soul (anatta), perceptions are not the Soul (anatta), assemblages are not the Soul (anatta), consciousness is not the Soul (anatta). Seeing thusly, this is the end of birth, the Brahman life has been fulfilled, what must be done has been done.”

Anatta as taught in the Nikayas has merely relative value as it is directly conducive to Subjective awakening, or illumination; it is not an absolute one. It does not say or imply simply that the Soul (atta, Atman) has no reality, but that certain things (5 aggregates), with which the unlearned man (fool = puthujjana, as is always implied in spiritual texts, a materialist) identifies himself, are not the Soul (anatta) and that is why one should grow disgusted with them, become detached from them and be liberated. This principle of the extremely abused and misunderstood term anatta does not negate the Soul as such, but denies Selfhood to those things that constitute the non-self (anatta), showing them thereby to be empty of any ultimate value and to be repudiated; instead of nullifying the Atman (Soul) doctrine, it in fact compliments and affirms it in the most logical method by which Subjective gnosis is initially gained; that by and thru objective negation. It has been said that: ‘No Indian school of thought has ever regarded the human soul (another error, since the soul is not a possession of, nor is of the nature of the persona, or 'human') or the carrier of human personal (persona [Bob, Larry, Sue] is never confused by the Metaphysician, with the Person/Atman/Purisha) identity as a permanent substance (literally meaning, absurdly "permanent impermanence [substance]"), which is certainly true when referring to the empirical persona (mere self [aggregates/namorupa], as opposed to the Person, spirit, atman), that ‘ensouled’ being, as was common in old English to say: “late at night, not a soul (mere person) was to be seen walking about”. That the atman is not to be understood as a cartesian thinking substance, phenomena, or eternal soul, is certainly the case, and logically cannot be otherwise.

It cannot be missed that in so discussing the commentarialist’s position of a ‘doctrine of anatta’ that anatta is merely a qualifier of something else and that anatta in and of itself in standalone is utterly meaningless and untenable to speak or make mention of an ‘anatta doctrine’ without qualification of what, and in what context, anatta is being qualified of X (the afore mentioned 22 things of which anatta is said to equal) i.e. that which is defacto equivalent to or with anatta. That anatta in doctrine is aught but ever equivalent to what is evil, foul, disgusting, phenomenal and repulsive, to therefore make declaration that, as many fool "buddhists" (in name only) have done, “anatta is a core tenant of Buddhism” cannot be enjoined, since the principle upon which Buddhism was founded is the quest for the immortal (amatagamimagga SN 5.9), and the unceasing bliss as gained by and thru liberation in wisdom’s culmination. Anatta is, obviously so, a key principle in the doctrine of Buddhism (and other via negativa systems, of which Advaita also makes extensive use of the term anatman) and the metaphysics thereof quantify anatta and being meant all physical and mental consubstantial and temporal objectivity; all compounded things either in simplex (matter, hyle) or complex (mental). As an-atta is meant not-Subject (=object [phenomena]), those things, as Buddhism declares “the unlearned fool bemuses himself as being (those things)”. “What do you suppose, followers, if people were carrying off into the Jeta grove bunches of sticks, grasses, branches, and leaves and did with them as they wished or burned them up, would it occur to you: These people are carrying us off, are doing as they please with us, and are burning us? No, indeed not Lord. And how so? Because Lord, none of that is our Soul, nor what our Soul subsists upon! Just so followers, what is not who you are, do away with it, when you have made done with that, it will lead to your bliss and welfare for as long as time lasts. What is that you are not? Form, followers, is not who you are, neither are sensations, perceptions, experiences, consciousness” [MN 1.141]. Just as ‘disgusting (anatta) doctrine’ cannot make logical sense, neither does ‘anatta doctrine’ bring light to students of Buddhism what anatta is contextually or its philosophical importance as being merely a qualifier of that which is evil, foul, disgusting, phenomenal and repulsive (= anatta). Anatta is of course a doctrinal tenant within Buddhism used to earmark phenomena, however as conventionally and irrationally conceived, there is absolutely no such creature in Buddhism as a "no-Soul doctrine".

What has Buddhism to say of the Self? "That's not my Self" (na me so atta); this, and the term "non Self-ishness" (anatta) predicated of the world and all "things" (sabbe dhamma anatta); Identical with the Brahmanical "of those who are mortal, there is no Self/Soul", (anatma hi martyah [SB., II. 2. 2. 3]). [KN J-1441] “The Soul is the refuge that I have gone unto”. For anatta is not said of the Self/Soul but what it is not. There is never and nowhere in sutra, a ‘doctrine of no-Soul’, but a doctrine of what the Soul is not (form is anatta, feelings are anatta, etc.). It is of course true that the Buddha denied the existence of the mere empirical “self” in the very meaning of “my-self” (this person so-and-so, namo-rupa, an-atta, i.e. Bob, Sue, Larry etc.), one might say in accordance with the command ‘denegat seipsum, [Mark VII.34]; but this is not what modern and highly unenlightened writers mean to say, or are understood by their readers to say; what they mean to say and do in fact say, is that the Buddha denied the immortal (amata), the unborn (ajata), Supreme-Self (mahatta’), uncaused (samskṛta), undying (amara) and eternal (nicca) of the Upanishads. And that is palpably false, for he frequently speaks of this Self, or Spirit (mahapurisha), and nowhere more clearly than in the too often repeated formula 'na me so atta’, “This/these are not my Soul” (na me so atta’= anatta/anatman), excluding body (rupa) and the components of

empirical consciousness (vinnana/ nama), a statement to which the words of Sankhara are peculiarly apposite, “Whenever we deny something unreal, is it in reference to something real” [Br. Sutra III.2.22]; since it was not for the Buddha, but for the nihilist (natthika), to deny the Soul. For, [SN 3.82] “yad anatta...na me so atta, “what is anatta... (means) that is not my Atman”; the extremely descriptive illumination of all thing which are Selfless (anattati) would be both meaningless and a waste of much time for Gotama were (as the foolish commentators espousing Buddhism’s denial of the atman) to clarify and simplify his sermons by outright declaring ‘followers, there is no atman!’, however no such passage exists. The Pali for said passage would be: ‘bhikkhave, natthattati!’; and most certainly such a passage would prove the holy grail and boon for the Theravadin nihilists (materialists) who have ‘protesteth too much’ that Buddhism is one in which the atman is rejected, but to no avail or help to their untenable views and position by the teachings themselves.

Outside of going into the doctrines of later schisms of Buddhism, such as Sarvastivada, Theravada, Vajrayana, Madhyamika, and lastly Zen, the oldest existing texts (Nikayas) of Buddhism which predate all these later schools of Buddhism [The Sanchi and Bharut inscriptions (aka the Pillar edicts) unquestionably dated to the middle of the second century B.C.E. push the composition of the 5 Nikayas back to a earlier date by mentioning the word “pañcanekayika” (Five Nikyas), thereby placing the Nikayas as put together (no later than) at a period about half way between the death of the Buddha and the accession of Asoka (before 265 B.C.), as such the 5 Nikayas, the earliest existing texts of Buddhism, must have been well known and well established far earlier than generally perceived. Finally proving the majority of the five Nikayas could not have been composed any later than the very earliest portion of the third century B.C.E.], anatta is never used pejoratively in any sense in the Nikayas by Gotama the Buddha, who himself has said: [MN 1.140] “Both formerly and now, I’ve never been a nihilist (vinayika), never been one who teaches the annihilation of a being, rather taught only the source of suffering (that being avijja, or nescience/agnosis), and its ending (avijja).” Further investigation into negative theology is the reference by which one should be directed as to a further understanding of this ‘negative’ methodology which the term anatta illuminates. It should be noted with great importance that the founder of Advaita Vedanta, Samkara used the term anatman lavishly in the exact same manner as does Buddhism, however in all of time since his passing, none have accused Samkara of espousing a denial of the Atman. Such as: “Atma-anatma vivekah kartavyo bandha nuktaye”-“The wiseman should discriminate between the Atman and the non-Atman (anatman) in order to be liberated.” [Vivekacudamani of Samkara v. 152], “Anatman cintanam tyaktva kasmalam dukkah karanam, vintayatmanam ananda rupam yan-mukti karanam.”-“Give up all that is non-Atman (anatman), which is the cause of all misery, think only of the Atman, which is blissful and the locus of all liberation.” [Vivekacudamani of Samkara v. 379], “Every qualifying characteristic is, as the non-Atman (anatman), comparable to the empty hand.” [Upadisa Sahasri of Samkara v. 6.2], “the intellect, its modifications, and objects are the non-Atman (anatman).” [Upadisa Sahasri of Samkara v. 14.9], “The gain of the non-Atman (anatman) is no gain at all. Therefore one should give up the notion that one is the non-Atman (anatman).” [Upadisa Sahasri of Samkara v. 14.44]. In none of the Buddhist suttas is there support for “there is no-atman” theories of anatta . The message is simply to cease regarding the very khandhas in those terms by which the notion of atman has, itself, been so easily misconstrued. As has been shown, detaching oneself from the phenomenal desire for the psycho-physical existence was also a central part of Samkara’s strategy. There is, hence, nothing in the suttas that Samkara, the chief proponent of Advaita Vedanta, would have disagreed with.

Due to sectarian (and secular) propagation of commentary over that of doctrine, and more still a nominalized, or neutered mistranslation of the original Pali texts, a general acceptance of the concept of “A Doctrine of Anatta” exists as a status quo, however there exists no substantiation for same in sutta for Buddhism’s denial of the atman, or in using the term anatta in anything but a positive sense in denying Self-Nature, the Soul, to any one of a conglomeration of corporeal and empirical phenomena which were by their very transitory nature, “impermanent (anicca), suffering (dukkha), and Selfless (anatta)”. The only noun in sutra which is referred to as “permanent (nicca)” is the Soul, such as Samyutta Nikaya 1.169. Buddhism’s ‘na me so atta’ is no more a denial of the Atman than is Socrates’ ‘to...soma...ouk estin ho anthropos’ (the body is not the Man [Aniochus 365]) is a denial of the Man. Young men asked Gotama as to the whereabouts of a woman they were seeking to which he replied “What young men do you think, were it not better for you to seek the Atman (atmanam gavis) than a woman?” [Vin 1.23]. In fact the term “Anatmavada” is a concept utterly foreign to Buddhist sutta, existing in only non-doctrinal Theravada, in some Mahayana, and Madhyamika commentaries. As the truism holds, a “lie repeated often enough over time becomes the truth”. Those interested parties incident to learning of Buddhism are most often incapable of pouring through endless gigantic piles of Buddhist doctrine, and have therefore defacto accepted the commentarial-based trash, the notion of a “doctrine of anatta (or often said “no soul doctrine”)” as key to Buddhism itself, when in fact there exists not one citation of this untenable and irrational concept in either the Digha, Majjhima, Samyutta, Anguttara, or Khuddaka Nikayas. Unless evoking a fallacy, we who seek out Buddhism sans the commentarialists slants and opinion-based musings, must stick strictly to sutta as reference, wherein the usage of anatta never falls outside of the parameter of merely denying Self or Soul to the profane and transitory phenomena of temporal and samsaric life which is “subject to arising and passing”, and which is most certain not (an) our Soul (atta). Certainly the most simple philosophically based logic would lead anyone to conclude that no part of this frail body is “my Self, is That which I am”, is “not my Soul”, of which Gotama the Buddha was wholeheartedly in agreement that no part of it was the Soul i.e. was in fact anatta. The spiritual and metaphysical adept is one who must be the “dead man walking” who has followed the commandment: “die before ye die!”, and is one who has died to that (mere) self and lives in the Spirit, or the Self. This is the discernment between the Great Self (mahatta) and little self (alpatman); or the fair Self (kalyanatta) from the foul self (papatta).

The perfect contextual usage of anatta in sutta: “Whatever form, feelings, perceptions, experiences, or consciousness there are (the five aggregates), these he sees to be without permanence, as suffering, as ill, as a plague, a boil, a sting, a pain, an affliction, as foreign, as otherness, as empty (suññato), as Selfless (anattato). So he turns his mind (citta) away from these and gathers his mind/will within the realm of Immortality (amataya dhatuya). This is tranquility; this is that which is most excellent!” [MN 1.436]. The Buddha never considered the atman to be micchaditthi (wrong view). If the Buddha disbelieved in an atman (soul) why did he not deny the

atman unambiguously? There is no such denial.

By denying outright the soul, by default, the Theravadins, western 'scholars' examining Buddhism, and modern "buddhists" imply that the five aggregates are ultimate. This of course is absurd. They have merely shifted Buddhism to an empiricism by ignoring pro-atman statements. According to them, what is real is what makes sensory knowledge possible, namely, the five aggregates which, ironically, according to the canon, are = Mara, or evil (papa); [SN 3.195] "Mara = five khandhas (empirical self)". It begs the question to assume that the no-soul doctrine had been established at the beginning of the Buddha's ministry and that the atman (soul) was, in every respect, an abhorrent term. Still, for such a supposedly abhorrent term, there are innumerable, are countless positive instances of atman used throughout the Nikayas, especially used in compounds which are easily glossed over by a prejudicial commentator and nominalist translators. In meeting these instances, not surprisingly, these same prejudicial translators have erected a theory that the atman is purely a reflexive pronoun. The lexical rule that atman (Pali: attan) is to be used strictly in a pronominal fashion, or simply should be used as a signifier for the finite body, is unwarranted. Scholars like C.A.F. Davids, Conze, Humphrey, Schrader, Horner, Pande, Coomarswamy, Radhakrishnan, Sogen, Suzuki, Julius Evola, and Nakamura, just to name some important scholars, disagree with the claim that Buddha categorically denied an eternal (nicca) soul, whose teachings then, would be classified as Annihilationist and Materialist. In fact there are utterly none living or dead who have examined the original texts in detail whilst refraining from sectarian and commentarial explanations and concluded Buddhism has in any way denied the atman thru and by means of the usage of the term anatta or otherwise. The fatally determined conglomeration which comprises the temporal body "headed for the grave" is not in dispute and is what is meant by anatta. To this there can be no opposition since all forms of metaphysics cry out for a "freedom from (that mere) self", as Buddhism is in full agreement: [Dhm. 147] "Behold! That painted puppet this body, riddled with oozing sores, an erected façade. Diseased heap that fools fancy and swoon over; True Essence is not part of it! For the body befalls utter destruction, [Dhm. 148] "This body is soon worn out. It is that very same abode for disease and sicknesses that is broken apart. The body is soon cast away, that very putrid heap. It is always in death that life meets its end!", [Dhm. 150] "Behold! This city of bones, plastered together with flesh and blood. Within its walls are old age and death. Pride, arrogance, and hypocrisy are its townsfolk!", [MN 1.185] "What of this short-lived body which is clung to by means of craving? There is nothing in it to say 'I' or 'mine' or 'me'."

The term anatman is found not only in Buddhist sutras, but also in the Upanishads and lavishly so in the writings of Samkara as mentioned earlier. Anatman is a common via negativa (neti neti, not this, not that) teaching method common to Vedanta, Neoplatonism, Buddhism, early Christian mystics, and others, wherein nothing affirmative can be said of what is "beyond speculation, beyond words, and concepts" thereby eliminating all positive characteristics that might be thought to apply to the Soul, or be attributed to it; to wit that the Subjective ontological Self-Nature (svabhava / atman) can never be known objectively, but only thru "the denial of all things which it (the Soul) is not"- Meister Eckhart. This doctrine is also called by the Greeks Apophasis. Via negativa can only go so far, such that the Subject (Witness/Atman) cannot be negated (Subject precedes any object of negation, even and also false attempts at Subject/Witness negation [=nihilism]). Objective negation culminates in Subjective gnosis and liberation, not to mention is the most expedient means to Atman-realization (atmanbodhi, cittavimutta, pannavimutta, etc.). Just as a fool might, for hundreds of hours, pick thru a pile of straw (phenomena) in search of a needle (atman), the wisest of men, in mere seconds, lights a match to the phenomena (straw) which quickly burns and blows away, leaving before his feet the needle sought; and this is of course part of the expediency as core to the via negativa methodology.

Modern Buddhism (so-called, not that it is Buddhism in any way) labors under the heinous delusion that from the outset there is no immaterial and ontological soul, or atman in the system of Buddhism and therefore the only logical conclusion from this false premise is that Buddhism is merely a profane moral Humanism based in compassionate empirical idealism, 'liberation but no Liberant', and this is palpably false. Under the guise of a more polished form of physicalism or rather, Atheism, a mere qualifier of objective phenomena, anatta, has overrun a noetic metaphysics, Buddhism, based in extracting the nous (spirit, citta, Self) from the objective cosmos (=anatta) wherein it has been miserably immersed since time immemorial as due to the attribute of the Absolute (Brahman, Greek = Hen), that being avijja (agnosis, nescience, as is philosophically meant Emanationism). Avijja (a+vijja [atman]) and anatta (an+atman) in no way differ, such that both refer to the beginningless privation, or objectivity immanent to the Absolute. Overcoming this objective desire (tanha) and enthrallment which constitute what is meant by anatta, is vijja (illumination), or conventionally liberation (vimutta, vijjavimutta); namely the only connection between atman and anatta is that of avijja to which Buddhism's endgoal is pannavimutta (liberation via wisdom) in which avijja has no longer any footing; where avijja is not present, so too is anatta absent, this is the very Tathagata (gone to Brahman, or That), the same 'dead man walking', he who has 'died before he has (physically) died'. Like the ancient riddle about the fool "who rides upon horseback looking to and fro for a horse, and seeing none, denies that horses exist", so too is modern buddhism inept and impotent in 'seeing' that the focus is the Witness (atman), that very Subject which cannot be known (empirical knowledge) objectively, but which can be Known (gnosis, wisdom); thereby effectuating "liberation", "immortality" (amata), and the declaration that "this is my last life".

That myself or anyone need go into such extensive and repetitive detail about a simple term, anatta, which now corruptly forms the basis of modern Buddhism, only demonstrates the heights from which original Buddhism has fallen severely over the past 2400 years. Like an ancient city in the jungle overgrown with vines and weeds, shat upon by nesting birds, and inhabited by fanged monkeys who fling their feces at visitors, modern "buddhism" attracts only the mentally perverse, often spiritually suicidal, who wrongly see superficially something noble in a soulless nihilistic Humanistic idealism.

The 'renowned' Theravada materialist Nyanatiloka has said: "Thus with this doctrine of Selflessness, or anatta, stands or falls the ENTIRE structure of Buddhism".

Rightly so, all of Theravada fears and protects the meaning and 'interpretation' of anatta like a pack of rabid dogs protect their fresh kill. They fear and protect the meaning of anatta more so than Christians protect their position that Mary was a virgin and that

Jesus 'arose from the dead'. More than Nyanatiloka have stated the obvious, ALL of Theravada would fall, upon the exposure of the genuine meaning become accepted and widely known as regards anatta, not however would "fall Buddhism", but Theravada and others misconceptions of same, nothing more. Theravada, a great portion of Vajrayana, and much of Zen fear the soul like a pious monk fears the devil to sneak up upon him, in any event they have heaped upon the definition more sophistry and ages of sectarian fecal matter to make Buddhism appear to be nothing more than the most base form of materialism, that only a very rare few independent scholars who delve deep into the presectarian Nikayan Pali texts can see that Buddhism has not, nor ever denied the atman, and that anatta no more denies the atman, nor is a 'doctrine' (i.e. doctrine of anatta, as so often coined by the Theras), that the Upanishads themselves in so saying the "atman is not this, nor that (neti net)".

The more superficially one studies Buddhism, the more it seems to differ from the Brahmanism in which it originated; the more profound our study, the more difficult it becomes to distinguish Buddhism from Brahmanism, or to say in what respects, if any, Buddhism is really unorthodox. The outstanding distinction lies in the fact that Buddhist doctrine is propounded by an apparently historical founder, understood to have lived and taught in the sixth century B.C. Beyond this there are only broad distinctions of emphasis. It is taken almost for granted that one must have abandoned the world if the Way is to be followed and the doctrine understood.

We can only suppose that Buddhism has been so much admired mainly for what it is not. A well known modern writer on the subject has remarked that "Buddhism in its purity ignored the existence of a God; it denied the existence of a soul; it was not so much a religion as a code of ethics" (Winifred Stephens, *Legends of Indian Buddhism*, 1911, p. 7.). Similarly M.V Bhattacharya maintains that the Buddha taught that "there is no Self, or Atman" (*Cultural Heritage of India*, p. 259). Even in 1925 a Buddhist scholar could write "The soul . . . is described in the Upanishads as a small creature in shape like a man . . . Buddhism repudiated all such theories" (PTS Dictionary, s.v. attan). It would be as reasonable to say that Christianity is materialistic because it speaks of an "inner man". Few scholars would write in this manner today, but ridiculous as such statements may appear, (and it is as much an ignorance of Christian doctrine as it is of Brahmanism that is involved), they still survive in all popular accounts of "Buddhism"; such as (Th. Scherbatsky *Buddhist Logic* 1. 1932, p. 2) saying Buddhism "denied a God, it denied the Soul, it denied Eternity"! Scherbatsky's *The Doctrine of the Buddha* (BSOS, VI. 867L) provides a good critique of Keith's demand to "lay aside our natural desire to find reason prevailing in a barbarous age", in his 'Buddhist philosophy, p. 29'.

It is of course, true that the Buddha denied the existence of a "soul" or "self" in the narrow sense of the word (one might say, in accordance with the command, *deneget seipsum* (deny himself), (Mark, VIII.341) but this is not what our writers mean to say, or are understood by their readers to say; what three mean to say is that the Buddha denied the immortal, unborn and Supreme Self of the Upanishads. And that is palpably false. For he frequently speaks of this Self or Spirit, and nowhere more clearly than in the repeated formula 'na me so atta', "That is not my Self", excluding body and the components of empirical consciousness, a statement to which the words of Sankaracharya are peculiarly apposite, "Whenever we deny something unreal, it is with reference to something real" (*neti-neti Brahma Sutra* III.2.22); as remarked by Mrs. Rhys Davids, "so, 'this one', is used in the Suttas for utmost emphasis in questions of personal identity" (*Minor Anthologies*, I, p. 7, note 2). 'Na me so atta' is no more a denial of the Self than Socrates' "the body is not the man", is a denial of the Man!"

One of the 'great' books thumped by the ignorant manyfolk calling themselves Buddhists today and of which deny the atman, is "Selfless Persons" by Steven Collins, in which he himself in his book never makes the conclusion for the denial of the Atman in Buddhist doctrine, in so saying himself, albeit unintelligently, "Buddhist metaphysics could be reduced to a kind of pragmatic agnosticism in which the self is not so much denied as declared inconceivable. Anatta then simply advises against uselessly trying to conceive it (the Self)." [Page 10, *Selfless Persons*, Steven Collins]. More laughable than can be imagined, the entire book, large though it is, only contains three pages under the heading of "proof for anatta" (i.e. Souls denial), and yet these same three pages contain absolutely no doctrinal evidences whatsoever.

The Theras and others fear the inevitable slippery slope Buddhism (theirs) will fall into upon acceptance of the genuine meaning of anatta, whereupon "if anatta doesn't deny the atman, than how is Buddhism any different than Vedanta, by and large?" The answer is of course none whatsoever. They protect anatta like their very own baby in the cradle, they will surrender its meaning and definition with their life, like no other word in pali they propagate a lie which is now running on 1700 years old. The only reason they have been unable to crush opposition, is that the Nikayas were recorded and propagated long long before Sarvastivada (Theravada) came into existence to exterminate it.

It has been asserted by modern so-called Buddhism-in-name-only that Buddhism knows only of the gods (Brahma) and nothing of the Godhead/Absolute/Agathon Brahman. In actuality there can be doubt that in the grammatically ambiguous expression *Brahmabhu'to* (attano) which describes the condition of those who are wholly liberated, that it is Brahman (the Absolute) and not Brahma (deva, or mere god) that is in the text and must be read; for it is by Brahman that one who is "wholly awake" has "become."

For (1) the comparatively limited knowledge of a Brahma is repeatedly emphasized, and (2) Brahmas are accordingly the Buddhas pupils, not he theirs [S 1.141-145; Mil 75-76], (3) The Buddha had already been in previous births a Brahma (god) and a Mahabrahma [AN 4.88] hence it is meaningless and absurd in the equation to say *Brahmabhu'to*=Buddho [AN 5.22; DN 3.84; It 57 etc.], to assume that Brahman= Brahma (god) and that (4) the Buddha is explicitly "much more than a Mahabrahma" [DhA 2.60].

[DN 3.84] "The Tathagata means 'the body of Brahman', 'become Brahman'." (this passage also proves [from earlier context] that Brahma (god/s) is utterly different than the word Brahman).

[DN 1.249] "I teach the way to the union with Brahman, I know the way to the supreme union with Brahman, and the path and means leading to Brahman, whereby the world of Brahman may be gained."

[DN 1.248] "all the peoples say that Gotama is the supreme teacher of the way leading to the Union with Brahman!"

[3.646 Pat-Att.] "To have become Brahman [is the meaning of] Brahmabhuto."
[Atthakanipata-Att. 5.72] "To become Brahman is to become highest Svabhava (Self-nature)."
[It 57] "Become-Brahman is the meaning of Tathagata."
[SN 3.83] "Without taints, it meant 'Become-Brahman'."
[SN 5.5] "The Noble Eightfold Path is the designation for Brahmayaana (path to Brahman)."
[MN 1.341] "The Soul is having become Brahman."
[SN 4.117] "Found the ancient path leading to Brahman."

No such entity as "HINDUISM" ala any religion or religious corpus

The word "Hinduism" comes from the word sindhu, the Indo-Aryan word for "the sea," and came to apply to the peoples in the region east of the Indus River. The word "Hinduism" has no connection to any specific religion at all but a peoples and area. "From the point of view of religion, the Vedic literature divides itself into two parts, viz. the Rigveda on the one hand and the rest of the Vedic literature on the other; the two distinct phases of essentially the same religion may be called Vedic religion and Brahmanism. This division and the above two names hardly need any justification. It is now recognized beyond doubt that, although Brahmanism is nothing but an isolated development of the religion contained in the Rigveda, yet the two religions are entirely different in spirit. While one represents a comparatively exalted form of a purer faith based on nature-worship, the other tends to become artificial, mechanical and hieratic, and makes rites and ceremonies its chief concern." [P.S. Deshmukh, Religion in Vedic Literature, 198].

"The word Brahmanism seems originally to have been used, and popularly still to be understood, to denote the religion of those inhabitants of India who adored Brahma as their supreme God, in contradistinction to those who professed Buddhism, and, in more recent times, Muhammadanism. But this is founded upon a misconception. Brahma was never universally worshiped; and his acknowledgement as the supreme God is not even true, still less a prominent characteristic of Brahmanical religions and sects." [Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics 2.799b].

"Hinduism has never prepared a body of canonical scriptures or a common prayer book; it has never held a general council or convocation; never defined the relation between laity and clergy; never regulated the canonization of saints or their worship; never established a single centre of religious life; never prescribed a of training for its priests" [Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics 6:712].

From the book "Self and non-self in early Buddhism"

"The anatta taught in the Nikayas has merely relative value, it is not an absolute one. It does not say simply that the Soul (atta, Atman) has no reality at all, but that certain things (5 aggregates), with which the unlearned man identifies himself, are not the Soul (anatta) and that is why one should grow disgusted with them, become detached from them and be liberated. Since this kind of anatta does not negate the Soul as such, but denies Selfhood to those things that constitute the non-self (anatta), showing them thereby to be empty of any ultimate value and to be repudiated, instead of nullifying the atta' (Soul/Atman) doctrine, it in fact compliments it."- Perez-Reimon

[Self and non-self in early Buddhism, ISBN 90-279-7987-1; publ. Mouton Publishers, the Hague, 1980]

A FEW PASSAGES

[SN 3.196] At one time in Savatthi, the venerable Radha seated himself and asked of the Blessed Lord Buddha: "Anatta, anatta I hear said venerable. What pray tell does Anatta mean?"

"Just this Radha, form is not the Soul, sensations are not the Soul, perceptions are not the Soul, assemblages are not the Soul, consciousness is not the Soul. Seeing thusly, this is the end of birth, the Brahman life has been fulfilled, what must be done has been done, he discerns there is nothing further than this very Soul."

You think modern Buddhism mentions this passage (SN 3.196) or many hundreds of others just like it? NO, they do not. WHY? Might they be trying to ignore the fact that all Buddhist sutra contradicts their "no-Soul doctrine" nihilistic secular nonsense? YES

[AN 4.422] In the first Jhana he dwells. Whatever form there be, feelings, perceptions, impulses, or consciousness, these he sees to be without permanence, as suffering, as ill, as a plague, a boil, a sting, a pain, an affliction, as foreign, as otherness, as empty (suññato), as Soulless (anattato). So he turns his mind (citta) away from these; he gathers his very mind in the realm of Immortality (amataya dhatuya).

[MN 1.232] “What do you think, is form lasting or impermanent? Impermanent Gotama. Is that which is impermanent suffering or blissful? Indeed its suffering Gotama. Is that which is impermanent and suffering and subject to perpetual change; is it fit to declare of such things ‘this is mine, this is what I am, this is my Soul? Indeed not Gotama!”

THE FALLACY OF MODERN PSEUDO-BUDDHISM

A (form) is not X (soul/atman), ...B (feelings) are not X, ...C (perceptions) are not X, ...D (experiences) are not X, ...E (consciousness) is not X,therefore X does not exist? **FALLACY**

OR: ABCDE not X, therefore X does not exist. **FALLACY**

There is no more a Soul (attan/atman) in the physical empirical body than there is Light in what is merely illuminated from afar, this is neither to say that 'there is no Soul', nor 'there is no Light'.

Both Buddhism, and the Upanishads, and Sankhara, and all of Vedanta have stated that all phenomena are anatman,...the very term anatman (pali: anatta) is used in the exact same context by the Upanishads and Gotama Buddha.

No-Soul = NATTHATTA in sutra, not anatta/anatman

(literally “there is not/no[nattha]+atta’[Soul]) has only five occurrences (all at SN 4.400) anywhere in Sutta/Atthakatha. Anatta’ is not “no-Soul”, but natthatta’ which is deemed, by Gotama, to be ucchedavada annihilationist heresy.

[SN 1.96] "The nihilist (natthika) goes to terrible hell...from darkness to darkness" To espouse negation of the Soul is heresy in Buddhism, contrary to the personal dogma of 'modern Buddhism' who misconceive the via negative methodology (na me so atta, neti neti, anatta) so common to Indian philosophical systems.

The "All dharmas are anatta" (sabbe dhamma anatta) excuse killed

How Dhammapada commentary explains Dhammapada #279

Tattha sabbe dhamma’ti pañcakkhandha’ eva adhippeta’

Dhammapada Att. 3.407 " 'Sabbe dharmas' are the five aggregates in meaning”

THE SABBE DHAMMA ANATTA UNCOVERED, REVERSING SECULAR DOGMA

Theravada (heretical sect proclaiming itself as Buddhism) has used as its last defense for 1500 years now, the “sabbe dhamma anatta” defense to ‘prove’ that all is ‘void’ of a Soul in Buddhist doctrine, or that there cannot be a Soul whatsoever, for as they say “all Dharmas” encompasses everything in entirety. The Theravada say this phrase found in the Dhammapada (and other locations) means in translation

“All Dharmas are Soulless”. However, in fact, under close examination the Theravada dogma falls apart very quickly and their self-created dogma disappears under close scrutiny. Here ends the “sabbe dhamma anatta” debate.

Phrase dissected

Dhammapada #279 “Sabbe dhamma’ anatta”

sabbe (noun [see SN 4.15 below], direct object, in accusative. Sabba is nominative, ‘the ‘all’) The ‘all’ partakes of the Soul; however the Soul does not partake of, is not in, the “‘all’”. Sabbe Dharmas are not the Soul (anatta). Sabba is described as the “five aggregates” in the Pali commentary to this passage.

dhamma’ (proper noun, plural, subject, undeclined in nominative, dharmas)

anatta’ (adjective, modifying sabba. An [is not] atta’ [attan: Soul]; Buddhadatta Mahathera's Pali-English Dictionary; page 8: Atta’ [attan]: soul.). ‘all’ 275 occurrences of anatta’ in sutta are adjectival, never as a noun in standalone but rather modifying a noun in negation to its correlation to being identifiable with the Attan.

How Dhammapada commentary explains Dhammapada #279

Tattha sabbe dhamma'ti pañcakkhandha' eva adhippeta'

Dhammapada Att. 3.407 "Sabbe dharmas are the five aggregates in meaning"

Sabba in standalone

This single passage below at Samyutta 4.28 shows that Dhamma is not the crux of the infamous "sabbe dhamma' anatta", but rather sabba.

SN 4.28 "sabbam., bhikkhave, anatta" The "all", bhikkhus, are not the Soul.

SN 4.21 "sabbam., bhikkhave, addhabhu'tam" Bhikkhus, the 'all' are afflictions.

SN 4.19 "sabbam., bhikkhave, a'dittam." Bhikkhus, the 'all' are ablaze.

Elaboration with proofs

SN 4.15-29 is the full explanation of the meaning of sabba. It is abundantly clear without debate that sabba is indeed the psychophysical phenomena or the 'the 'all'. The absurd notion that sabba is an adjective modifying Dhamma is impossible. Firstly Dhamma is in the nominative plural; secondly sabba is the standalone accusative direct object in the cases directly above, namely SN 4.28, which proves that Dhamma is not the direct object of anatta'.

Anatta is the adjective in this sentence as it must be in 'all' 275 of its occurrences in the Nikayas. It is incorrect to say that "all' Dhammas are no self" or some other such sectarian concoction. Dhamma is in the nominative plural in agreement with sabba, not in the accusative, which would be "dhammam." or plural accusative "dhamme" sabba (nominative) is the direct object of anatta' which is why it occurs as sabbe (accusative plural). Dhamma is not the direct object of this sentence but rather the subject. One cannot know the meaning of this three-word phrase, which occurs 17 times in Sutta without knowing sabba's meaning at Samyutta Nikaya book 4 verse 15. The sectarian dogma that has grown around this three-word phrase is not found nor can it be attributed to these passages based upon Sutta, context, nor SN 4.15; but only on much later nihilistic slanted commentary. Dhamma in this three word phrase, as Dhammapada #277 and #278 show, is interchangeable with sankha'ra'.

Completely in line with the Sabbe sutta at SN 4.15, sabbe is "the 'all'". This is shown above and below at the Dhammapada that the 17 occurrences of "sabbe dhamma' anatta'" are occasioned by san.kha'ra' (phenomena). Sabba's meaning is not "all'" nor the adjective of this phrase, that is reserved for anatta'. It has been falsely believed by many that Dhamma is the direct object of the sentence given its location of the middle in the phrase, but this is incorrect since it is undeclined and sabba in its many other occurrences above show in fact that sabba is the crux of what is anatta, afflictions, and ablaze.

One might think Khandhas (skhandas), are the conventional term for 'the 'all', but in actu'all'y khandhas means "mass" or "collection" and do not always carry negative connotation in Sutta as it pertains to the "five khandhas". The "five heaps" is a much more accurate translation for khandha. Khandha is also used in context pertaining to Gotama Buddhas' teachings as khandhas, or "collection/mass of doctrine". Khandha implies "masses", whereas sabba implies "matter/ 'the 'all'", especi'all'y sensory related matter; sabba: Lat. solidus & soldus "solid". Both mass (khandha) and matter (sabba) are encompassed by the term san.kha'ra' (phenomena).

Dhammapada

277. "Sabbe san.kha'ra' anicca"ti, yada' pan'n'a'ya passati; atha nibbindati dukkhe, esa maggo visuddhiya'.

'The 'all' phenomena are impermanent; when this is seen by means of wisdom, one becomes disgusted with suffering. This is the path of clarity.

278. "Sabbe san.kha'ra' dukkha"ti, yada' pan'n'a'ya passati; atha nibbindati dukkhe, esa maggo visuddhiya'.

'The 'all' phenomena are suffering; when this is seen by means of wisdom, one becomes disgusted with suffering. This is the path of clarity.

279. "Sabbe dhamma' anatta"ti, yada' pan'n'a'ya passati; atha nibbindati dukkhe, esa maggo visuddhiya'.

'The 'all' dharmas are not the Soul; when this is seen by means of wisdom, one becomes disgusted with suffering. This is the path of clarity.

The above three passages show certainly that Dhamma' is taking a different meaning than standard implication of "power/doctrine/Sa'sana" and is replaceable with sankha'ra' in this context. It is even highly plausible that sankha'ra' was replaced with dhamma' by the redactors to imply something Buddhism does not teach.

Other occurrences of Sabba in Sutta

SN 2.125 sabbe san.kha'ra' netam. mama nesohamasmi na meso atta'ti

'The 'all' phenomena are not me, are not who I am, are not my Soul.

SN 3.43 sabbe san.kha'ra' anicca' dukkha' viparin.a'madhamma'ti

'The 'all' phenomena are not everlasting, suffering are dhammas in flux.

AN 1.32 sabbe te dhamma' anit.t.ha'ya

'The 'all' dharmas are not fixed

SN 4.15 Sabbasuttam.

Sa'vatthinida'nam.. "Sabbam. vo, bhikkhave, desessa'mi. Tam. sun.a'tha. Kin'ca, bhikkhave, sabbam.? Cakkhun'ceva ru'pa' ca,

sotaṅca sadda' ca, ghaṇaṅca gandha' ca, jivha' ca rasa' ca, ka'yo ca phoṭṭhabba' ca, mano ca dhamma' ca— idam. vuccati, bhikkhave, sabbam..

Yo, bhikkhave, evam. vadeyya— ‘ahametaṃ. sabbam. paccakkha'ya an'nam. sabbam. paṇ'na'pessa'mi'ṭi, tassa va'ca'vatthukamevassa; puttāho ca na sampāyeyya, uttarin'ca vigha'tam. a'pajjeyya. Tam. kissa hetu? Yatha' tam., bhikkhave, avisayasmin'ṭi. Pat.hamam.

The Sabba Sutta

At Savatthi. Bhikkhus, I will teach you on sabba ('the 'all')! Pray listen closely.

And what, bhikkhus, is sabba? The eye and its corresponding forms, the ear and its corresponding sounds, the nose and its corresponding smells, the tongue and its corresponding tastes, the body and its corresponding sensations, the intellect and its corresponding dhamma. This, O' bhikkhus, is c'all'ed sabba.

Whosoever, bhikkhus, should proclaim thusly: "Having abandoned these 'the 'all' (sabba), I sh'all' manifest different set of 'the 'all' (sabba)"-that surely would be only mere (foolish) presumption on his part. If he were questioned on this matter he would only reap his own vexation. How so? It would be utterly outside his abilities to talk about this.

NOTHINGISM (Natthika), A Buddhist heresy

Buddhism differs from the “nothing-morist” (Skt. Nastika, Pali natthika) in affirming a spiritual nature that is not in any wise, but immeasurable, innumerable, infinite, and inaccessible to observation; and of which, therefore, empirical science can neither affirm nor deny the reality thereof of him who has ‘Gone to That[Brahman]’ (tathatta). It is to the Spirit (Skt. Atman, Pali attan) as distinguished from oneself (namo-rupa)-i.e., whatever is phenomenal and formal (Skt. and Pali nama-rupa, and savinnana-kaya) “name and appearance”, and the “body with its consciousness”.

#1. Vimanavatthu #1252-1253 “My name was Piyasi, I held sway over the Kosalans; I held the view of a nihilist (natthikaditthi), was of evil habit and was miserly; I was an anti-foundationalist/annihilationist then (ucchedavada)...[#1253] “...a recluse Kumarakassapa gave me a talk on the Dhamma and drove from me those (previously held) evil views! (annihilationism/nihilism).”

#2. natthatta'ti (literally “there is not/no[nattha]+atta'[Soul]”) has only 5 occurrences (all at SN 4.400) anywhere in Sutta/Atthakatha (even the worthless Abhidhamma). Anatta' is not “no-Soul”, but natthatta' which is deemed, by Gotama, to be Ucchedavada annihilationistic heresy.

Sutta states explicitly that natthatta' (no-Soul) = natthika (nihilism) = ucchedavada (Annihilationism). If you do hold the view that there is "no-Soul", you are a Natthika (nihilist); i.e. a Ucchedavadin.

#3. Petekopadesapali 40 Ucchedavada=Natthika

#4. SN 1.96 Bhikkhu Bodhi's translation “The nihilist...goes to terrible hell...from darkness to darkness”. What Bhikkhu Bodhi failed to realize is that SN 4.400 Natthatta (no-Soul) is = Ucchedavada (Annihilationism) which is = natthika as per (petekopadesapali 40, etc.). If Bhikkhu Bodhi knew that these three were synonymous with each other, he would certainly reconsider his translation of natthika as “nihilist”.

#5 To hold the view that there is “no-Soul” (natthatta) is = to ucchedavada (SN 4.400) [Annihilationism] = natthika (nihilist).

#6. [SN 2.17] ‘Nonbeing (asat, natthiti [views of either sabbamnatti ‘the all is ultimately not’ (atomism), and sabbam puthuttan ‘the all is merely composite (atoms)’ [SN 2.77] both are heresies of annihilationism)’. ”.

ANATTA IN SUTRA, ALL OCCURANCES, THE "NO-SOUL DOCTRINE" FALLACY BURST

Number of times anatta' (all variants) occurs in Nikayas: 662

Number of times anatta' (all variants) occurs in Atthakathas (commentaries): 493

ALL 22 THINGS THAT ARE SAID TO BE ANATTA (i.e. “devoid of/without Selfhood/Soul” in Sutta)

Ru’pa form

vedana’ feelings

sañña’ perceptions

san’kha’ra’ impulses

viñña’n.a sentience/consciousness

sabba (aggregates/ “the all”)

cakkhu eye

cakkhuvīñña’n.a visual mental-forms

cakkhusamphasso vision contact

tan.ha’ lusts-desires

mano mind/mentation

manovīñña’n.a mental formations

manosamphasso mental contact

Sota ear

gha’na nose

jivha’ tongue

ka’yo body

ra’go lusts

kot.t.hika cell "body-cell"

asa’rakat.t.hena’ unreal and foul

asubham. disgusting

asubha’niccadukkha’ti disgusting, impermanent and suffering

Variants/compounds of Anatta’

anatta’

Anattena

anatta’ti

anatte

anatta’va

anatta’yeva’ti

anatta’yeva

Anatta’nupassi’suttam.

Anatta’nupassi’suttam.

anatta’nupassi’

Anatta’nupassino

anatta’nupassanena

Anatta’nupassanekattam.

Anatta’nupassana’suññata’nupassana’nañca

anatta’nupassana’sankha’ta’

anatta’nupassana’vut.t.ha’navasena

anatta’nupassana’viseyeva

anatta’nupassana’vasena

anatta’nupassana’vase

Anatta’nupassana’va

anatta’nupassana’yeva

anatta’nupassana’ya

anatta’nupassana’mukheneva

anatta’nupassana’mukhena

anatta’nupassana’ña’n.ena

anatta’nupassana’ña’n.e

Anatta’nupassana’ña’n.am.

anatta’nupassana’

anatta’nupassananti

Anatta’nupassanattha’ya

Anatta’nupassanam.

anatta’nanti

anatta’nattaniye

anatta’nattaniyameva

anatta’nam.yeva

anatta’nam.

Anatta’dhi’noti

anatta'dhi'no
anatta'disabha'vam.yeva
anatta'tipi
anatta'ka'ropi
anatta'ka'rena
anattasuttam.
anattasambhu'to
anattasambhu'ta'
Anattasambhu'tam.
anattasabha've
anattasaññi'
anattasañña'paricitena
anattasañña'paricitañca
anattasañña'ti
anattasañña'
Anattasaññanti
anattasaññañca
anattasaññam.
anattalakkhan.e
Anattalakkhan.asuttam.
anattalakkhan.ameva
anattalakkhan.añca
anattalakkhan.am.
anattaniyam.
Anattani
anattana'va
anattadhammo'ti
anattadhammo
anattadassanam.
anattatopi
anattatoti
Anattato
anattam.