

## Papañca

(Development of the (sensory) "world")

papañca = prapañca

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■■■■■■■■ prapañca [pra-pañca] (√ 1. pac , or pañc)  
- the expansion of the universe , the visible world Up.

■■■■■■ √ pañc or √ pac  
- to spread out Dhātup.  
- the developing world ŚBr. ŚvetUp

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In AN 4.173, one can read:  
**Appapañcaṃ papañceti,**

translated as:

- *one proliferates that which is not to be proliferated (Bodhi)*
- *objectifies non-objectification (Thanissaro)*
- *"He creates proliferation [or speculations] in relation to something that should not be proliferated [or speculated about]. (Mp)*
- *proliferating the unproliferated (Sujato)*

Knowing the definition of the "world" in Buddhism (SN 35.82), one could also translate appapañcaṃ papañceti as:  
"He develops (expands) the undeveloped (sensory world).

Then

"Friend, as far as the range of the six bases for contact extends, just so far extends the range of proliferation. As far as the range of proliferation extends, just so far extends the range of the six bases for contact. With the remainderless fading away and cessation of the six bases for contact there is the cessation of proliferation, the subsiding of proliferation."

(Transl: Bodhi)

Yāvatā, āvuso, channaṃ phassāyatanānaṃ gati tāvatā papañcassa gati; yāvatā papañcassa gati tāvatā channaṃ phassāyatanānaṃ gati. Channaṃ, āvuso, phassāyatanānaṃ asesavirāganirodhā papañcanirodho papañcavūpasamo"ti.

could also be translated as:

"Friend, as far as the range of the six fields of sensory experiences for contact extends, just so far extends the range of the developing world (of senses). As far as the range of the developing world (of senses) extends, just so far extends the range of the six fields of sensory experiences for contact. With the remainderless fading away and cessation of the six fields of sensory experiences for contact, there is the cessation of the developing world (of senses) , the subsiding of the developing world (of senses) ".

And the Agama parallel (SA 249), would also translate as:

But if one says that after the extinction of the six sense-spheres of contact, and the fading away of desire, after cessation, after ending, there is fading away of all "development of the sensory world" \*, and the attaining of nirvāṇa, then this is the teaching of the Buddha."

(\* Here the translator renders it as "meaningless argument" - however, "argument" or "dialogue" is a post-Buddha's term for papañca in Sanskrit literature).

Whoever has given up development of the sensory world,  
Delighting in the path free of development of the sensory world,  
Is blessed with nibbāna,

The unexcelled safety from the yoke.  
Thag 17.2

**NOTE:**

MA 15 & EA 40, the parallels of MN 18, do not address the issue of papañca. Instead of papañcasaññāsaṅkhā, MA for instance, speaks in praise of detachment in regard to past, present, and future phenomena.

The commonality between the MN & the MA/EA is about the presence of sense & object & consciousness. Which seems to agree with the SN 35.82 & SA 231 definition of the "world", as covered above.

Papañca is just about developing the sensory "world". And that is what the very few suttas with parallels are concerned with.

And as far as Snp 4.14 is concerned:

Having considered the root of the development of the (sensory) "world",  
He should consider preventing all (notion of) "I am".  
He should train, always mindful,  
to dispel any craving inside him.

Mūlaṃ papañcasaṅkhāya,  
Mantā asmīti sabbamuparundhe;  
Yā kāci taṇhā ajjhataṃ,  
Tāsaṃ vinayā sadā sato sikkhe.

This shows that it has obviously to do with the "I". (see [SN 22.47](#) and its almost perfect parallels).  
Dispel the "I am this" (external), then the "I am". The latter being the factor of the development of the (sensory) "world" - of papañca.

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AN 8.30 is about not developing the "world" (of senses) [nippapañca].

**NOTE:**

SN 35.94 does not have a parallel for this extract, but could be translated as follow:

*Papañcasaññā itarītarā narā,  
Papañcayantā upayanti saññino;*

Man, by all sorts of perception and development of the (sensory world),  
become less perceptive by the fetter of developing the (sensory) "world".

Also, SN 35.248 has no parallel for the following extract; but could be translated as follow:

*'Asmī'ti, bhikkhave, papañcitametaṃ, 'ayamahasmī'ti papañcitametaṃ, 'bhavissan'ti ... pe ... 'na bhavissan'ti ... 'rūpī bhavissan'ti ... 'arūpī bhavissan'ti ... 'saññī bhavissan'ti ... 'asaññī bhavissan'ti ... 'nevasaññīnāsaññī bhavissan'ti papañcitametaṃ.*

These are all development of the (sensory) world: 'I am', 'I am this', 'I will be', 'I will not be', 'I will have form', 'I will be formless', 'I will be perceptive', 'I will be non-perceptive', 'I will be neither perceptive nor non-perceptive.'

Etc.