

A Synchronistic Method of Higher Processes

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Buddhists, if they take the social-guidance philosophy seriously, are likely to label themselves as a disciple of the Buddha. As disciples of the Buddha, we may think that we are all students of his dispensation – whatever the Buddha taught, we are likely to learn these teachings; and if they accord rightly to our experience, we embrace the teaching. Buddhists across the world are likely to know or follow the same basic sets of principles – in this sense there is unity in the traditions; and all of the traditions accept that the Pali Tipitaka contains the fundamental teachings of the Buddha, although their distinct teachings may diverge from the apparent fundamentals. At one time, this was likely: one dispensation or a single form of Buddhism. This single form was collected in the Saṅgīti Sutta, and may be the likely literary candidate to express the foremost teachings as an attempt at the unification of Buddhist philosophical views. As the various sanghas became more and more distant from each other, their singularities led to multiple expressions of the Buddhist doctrine. Some of these teachings have been wrongly labeled by modern scholars with no regard or respect to the early Buddhist tradition.¹ Once the various traditions learn to extend basic respect for each other's sect, we can begin to look at the fundamental teachings – those that we all have in common. There are also the grounds of diversity – but too much inquiry into this may cause the line of communication to become static. The Agamas and the Nikayas are basically a common set of literature for Mahayana and Theravada Buddhists – or so named as the Sutrāyanists by the Vajrayanists – perhaps differing here and there in terms of synonyms, and the root language of the texts, but to over-generalize: the teachings are almost the same or correlate. There is one instance preserved in the text that indeed served as the stage for unifying all of the Buddhist teachings. For these Sutrāyanists, one of the earliest attempts to hold a council for the setting up of Buddhist education can be found in the Saṅgīti Sutta. This discourse must be looked at in whole, and not as an index for convenient reference situations. Apart from what can be gleaned from the Saṅgīti Sutta itself, it is not merely enough to just read the discourse and use it as one is citing an index.² In the just-previously annotated text, an exploration was made to determine how the Saṅgīti Sutta was used as a proto-Abhidhammic text by various traditions, a revised look at this will occur below:

¹ See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talk%3AHinayana/Archive_2 - people in this very day and age continue to disrespect the Theravada tradition. Any steps towards unity should include the replacing of the pejorative.

² See: Dion Oliver Peoples: Chanting the Saṅgīti Sutta (Wangnoi: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Press, 2012)

Examining Secondary Literature: Pertaining to Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma

Apart from most of the Theravāda Buddhist Tipiṭaka (canonical texts) and commentaries available, one research-work became particularly valuable: *The Journal of the Pāli Text Society, Volume V 1897-1907*. This journal contains the century-old, but useful, article by Professor Takakusu: “The Abhidharma Literature of the Sarvāstivādins” from 1904-1905 (pages 65-146). Another important and recently published text is Venerable Bhikkhu KL Dhammajoti’s *Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma*. Sarvāstivāda Buddhism was one of the oldest Theravāda schools before it split away and eventually became assimilated into Mahāyana and disappeared as a distinct unit; being previously separated from the Theravāda school before King Asoka’s Council; this is known because some of the questions in the Kathā-Vatthu³ are directed towards them. The Sarvāstivāda school existed into the 15th Buddhist century (1000s CE, or present in the 7th CE in Mathurā and Kāśmīra⁴), and covered the largest, most extensive geographical area of any school (from India into Persia and into China, even into southern India and Sumatra, Java and Champa-Cochin China.). It seems many of their texts have been preserved in the Chinese language, and little information is available in English. Takakusu’s century-old article (p. 69) states that Sarvāstivāda doctrine was known as Vaibhasika; and the Sarvāstivādins (meaning: the school that states that everything exists), were known to be great thinkers with a highly organized abhidharmic-philosophical system, their own Vinaya-texts, and their own Abhidhamma-texts which were rooted in the Saṅgīti Sutta⁵⁶, although many of their texts were written after the Theravāda texts.⁷

Like the Theravāda School of Buddhism, the Sarvāstivādins have seven books comprising their Abhidhamma collection, one is attributed to be the work of Sāriputta (the *Dharmaskandha*⁸ - although the Tibetan version and the Chinese version seem to be different texts); the Sarvāstivāda Abhidhamma has one principle text and six supplementary texts – the *Jñānaprasthāna* is believed to be the primary text (authored by Kātyāyanīputra) and written in a dialect that is not Sanskrit – possibly the Kāśmīra

³ See: Shwe Zan Aung and Mrs. Rhys Davids, *Points of Controversy or Subjects of Discourse: being A Translation of the Kathā-Vatthu from the Abhidhamma-Piṭaka*, (London: Pāli Text Society, 1969)

⁴ Bhikkhu KL Dhammajoti: *Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma* (Center of Buddhist Studies, University of Hong Kong, 2007), p. 64

⁵ See, particularly: Hajime Nakamura: *Indian Buddhism – A Survey with Bibliographical Notes* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2007), p. 105: “The *Abhidharmasaṅgītiparyāyapāda-śāstra* was compiled on the basis of the *Saṅgīti-sūtra* of the Sarvāstivādins. It has a close connection with the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*. The act of compiling this text gradually led to the establishment of the Sarvāstivāda as an independent sect.” Later, the text mentions: the Tibetan version of the *Prajñapti-śāstra* could be the referenced-source as well – so maybe there is some confusion, but there is no doubt that the true source of the Abhidharmic-materials is indeed the Saṅgīti Sutta – as scholars just elaborated on the points contained within the text.

⁶ This is also explained elsewhere: “Abhidharmic tendencies, tendencies that led eventually to the growth of a separate literature, can be seen early in some scriptures. The use of numerical categories is one such tendency. The Saṅgīti-Suttanta lists a variety of items...” – as seen from the Introduction of: Louis de La Vallée Poussin & Leo M. Pruden: *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam of Vasubandhu* (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1991), p. xlii

⁷ Hajime Nakamura: *Indian Buddhism – A Survey with Bibliographical Notes* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2007), p. 105, footnote #18

⁸ This information can be seen from the references cited within: Hajime Nakamura: *Indian Buddhism – A Survey with Bibliographical Notes* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2007), p. 106: “There is an opinion that this text, the earliest of the six padaśāstras of the Sarvāstivādins, was composed at least 400 years after the Parinirvāṇa of the Buddha whereas another opinion is that the text was composed after the *Abhidharmasaṅgītiparyāyapāda-śāstra* and prior to other texts. Passages of the *Abhidharma-dharmaskandha-pāda-śāstra* were cited about fifteen times in the *Abhidharmasaṅgītiparyāyapāda-śāstra*. This text has a close connection with the *Vibhaṅga*.”

dialect.⁹ Professor Tanakusu emphasizes that this is the most important work in the Sarvāstivāda Abhidhamma literature. A look at the eight books of the Jñānaprasthāna reveals the nature of the text as well as similarities that can be derived from the Saṅgīti Sutta.¹⁰

| Contents of the Jñānaprasthāna¹¹ | |
|--|--|
| Book One – Miscellaneous: | <p>Lokuttara-dhamma-vaggo: What is lokuttara-dhamma? To what category does it belong? Why is it the highest in the world? The definition, its bearings, its relation to the 22 sakkāya-ditṭhis, the transcendental conditions compared with the other conditions, etc...</p> <p>Nana-vaggo: the cause of knowledge, memory, doubt, six causes of stupidity reproved by the Buddha, cessation of the causes, etc...</p> <p>Puggala-vaggo: How many of the 12 paticcasamuppadas do belong to the past, present, and future puggala and final liberation, etc...</p> <p>Love and reverence vaggo: respect out of love (pema), respect out of honor (garava), two kinds of honor, with wealth (dhana) and with religion (dhamma), strength of the body, Nibbāna, the ultimate end, etc...</p> <p>Ahirikanottappa-vaggo: shamelessness, fearlessness of sinning (anottappa), the increasing demerits (akusalamula), etc...</p> <p>Rūpa-vaggo: the rūpa-dhamma going through birth and death is impermanent – why can it be called a form; impermanence (anitya), etc...</p> <p>Objectlessness (anatta) vaggo: All the practices of austerities are vain – things desired cannot be secured, etc...</p> <p>Cetana-vaggo: thinking, reflecting, awakening (vitakka), observing (vicara), unsettled mind (uddacca), ignorance, arrogance (mana), hardness of heart, etc...</p> |
| Book Two – Connections of Human Passions (Samyojana): | <p>Akasulamula-vaggo: 3 samyojanas, 5 views, 9 samyojanas, 98 anusayas, their details, scopes, results, etc</p> <p>Sakadagamin-vaggo: the germs of passion, etc., still left in the sakadagamins, 9 forms of pahana-parinna, etc...</p> <p>Vaggo on man: moral defilements arising from views, those arising from practices, 4 fruits of samanna, death and rebirth, regions having no rebirth, etc...</p> |
| Book Three – Nana (Jnana) – Knowledge: | <p>Vaggo on Siksanga (sekha and asekhā): knowledge attained by the lower grades of sanctification, the state of an Arahant, views (ditṭhi), knowledge (nana), wisdom (panna), views of those free from passion (anasava-samaditṭhi), etc...</p> <p>Vaggo on the 5 kinds of views (right and wrong): wrong/right views, wrong/right knowledge, views of an asekhā, etc...</p> <p>Vaggo on the knowledge of another’s mind (paracittanana): what is the knowledge that discerns another’s thought? The knowledge of the past life (pubbenivasanussatinana), etc...</p> <p>Vaggo on the cultivation of knowledge: cultivation of the eightfold knowledge, dharmajñana, anvayajñana, samvrtijñana, duhkhajñana, nirodhajñana, margajñana, ksayajñana, anutpadajñana – and the relation with the secular knowledge, etc...</p> <p>Vaggo on knowledge attained by the seven types of ariya-puggalas: 77 sorts of knowledges and all the bearings of knowledge discussed.</p> |

⁹ But another source claims fragments were found in Bamiyan, in modern-day Afghanistan. See: Hajime Nakamura: Indian Buddhism – A Survey with Bibliographical Notes (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2007), pp. 105-106

¹⁰ See: Dion Oliver Peoples: Chanting the Saṅgīti Sutta (Wangnoi: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Press, 2012)

¹¹ The Journal of the Pāli Text Society, Volume V 1897-1907. This journal contains the century-old article by Professor Takakusu, “The Abhidharma Literature of the Sarvāstivādins” from 1904-1905 (pages 65-146) and A.K. Warder: Indian Buddhism 3rd Edition (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers 2004) pp. 326-327. Also considered was - Charles Willemen: Kumārajīva on Abhidharma from Mahachulalongkorn Journal of Buddhist Studies (MJBS) Volume I, 2008 (Bangkok: MCU Press, 2008), pp. 145-156

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Book Four - Intention (Kamma):</p> | <p>Vaggo on wicked actions: all details of sinful actions (3 duccharitas: kaya, vaci, mano) – their results, etc...</p> <p>Vaggo on erroneous speech: all details of sins by speech (micchavaca) – their results, etc...</p> <p>Himsa-vaggo: all details of sins of killing life, the results, etc...</p> <p>Vaggo on the demonstratable and undemonstratable: all good/bad actions (kusalakusala) relating to the past and future, etc...</p> <p>Vaggo on actions bearing the self-same results: actions bearing the fruits, etc... Here a curious allusion to speech is given. Speech is said to be in ten forms, i.e., Buddha-vak, -japla, -vyahara, -gira, -bhasya, -nirukti, -vak-svara, -vak-patha, action by mouth (-vak-karman), demonstration by mouth (-vag-vijnapti)</p> |
| <p>Book Five – The Four Great Realities (Catur-mahā bhuta):</p> | <p>Vaggo on pure-organs (indriya): The four elements – products of a combination of the four – complete and incomplete products, their causes, etc...</p> <p>Vaggo on the conditions of the combination of the elements: conditions (pratyaaya), elements of the past, those of the future, etc...</p> <p>Vaggo on the visible truth: things belonging to the rūpa-dhatu are summarily explained</p> <p>Vaggo on internal products/perception-elements: sensations feelings, ideas, etc., are discussed</p> |
| <p>Book Six – Organs or Faculties (Indriya):</p> | <p>Organ (indriya) vaggo: 22 indriyas – eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind, the female, the male, life, happiness, suffering, rejoicing, sorrow, guarding, indifferent, believing, striving, recollection, contemplation, wisdom, the unknown, the known, the yet to be known, etc...</p> <p>(Bhavo) Being-Vaggo: kama-bhava, all forms of existence, rūpa-bhava, arupya-bhava, etc...</p> <p>Vaggo on touch: 16 kinds of touch</p> <p>Vaggo on primal/equal mind: does mind continue as it commenced?</p> <p>Vaggo on mind that is primarily (one) produced: do things thought to come into existence at the commencement of the activity of mind?</p> <p>Fish-vaggo: why are some complete in regard to 22 organs and others incomplete?</p> <p>Vaggo on causes/attainment (prapti): Are all the faculties of organs conditioned by the past?</p> |
| <p>Book Seven – Meditation or Concentration (Samādhi):</p> | <p>Vaggo on the conditions of the past (attainments – prapti): all conditions of the past, etc...</p> <p>Vaggo on causes (pratyaaya): meditations on causes and conditions in the dhyana heavens</p> <p>Vaggo on comprehension/liberation (vimutti): 10 Kasīna meditations, 8 kinds of knowledge, 3 forms of Samādhi</p> <p>Anagami-vaggo: 5 states of the non-returner</p> <p>Sakadagamin-vaggo: states of the once-returner, attainments of the divine-eye, etc...</p> |
| <p>Book Eight – Views or Opinions (Ditthi):</p> | <p>Vaggo on firm meditation/memory (satipatthana/smrtyupasthana): meditations on the impurity of the body (kayanupassana), meditation on the evils of the senses (vedananupassana), meditation on the evanescence of thought (cittanupassana), meditation on the conditions of existence (dhammanupassana), etc...</p> <p>Vaggo on desire (kama)/three forms of being (tribhava): conditions of the three states of being</p> <p>Vaggo on consciousness (saññā/samjna): ten stages of consciousness as to impermanence, sorrow, anatman, impurity, death, destruction, etc.. (asubha, marana, ahare patikkula, sabbaloke anabhirati, anicca, anicce dukkha, dukkhe anattā, pahana, viraga, nirodha)</p> <p>Vaggo on the time of knowledge (jnana): knowledge that produces an abhorrence of this life, the relation of the knowledge with the aggregates (skandha), etc...</p> <p>Vaggo on views: erroneous views (micchaditthi) – ignorant views, views that there is no cause, abala, aviriya, etc...</p> <p>Gatha-vaggo: unbelieving mind – 36 wicked views – passions, brahmans, etc... and several parables.</p> |

As can be drawn, there are many components of dhamma inside the Jñānaprasthāna – which is perhaps why the text was held in such high regards. It is considered to be an innovation in Sarvāstivādin thought, their contribution to Buddhism, to apply dependent-origination to biological life.¹² Many of these contents exist inside the Saṅgīti Sutta. Another text to be examined is the *Saṅgīti-paryāya*. This text was a

¹² Louis de La Vallée Poussin & Leo M. Pruden: *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam* of Vasubandhu (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1991), p. li

primitive commentary (the earliest of Sarvāstivāda Abhidhamma¹³) on the Saṅgīti Sutta¹⁴; and for Theravāda Buddhists – the existing Sumangala-Vilasini should serve ideally and equally as a replacement – although previous scholars stated that the Dhammasaṅgaṇī actually did replace the *Saṅgīti-paryāya*.¹⁵ Tanakusu states that the *Saṅgīti-paryāya* is very similar (possessing numerical arrangements) to the Puggalapaññatti - although the texts are purposefully different.

Interestingly, the Dhammasaṅgaṇī holds a prominent position in everyday Thai life, although some people might not actually be aware of this. During Buddhist cremation ceremonies in Thailand, the first section of this mātikā¹⁶ and other verses are recited for dead people. Traditionally, the entire table of contents is not recited – only the first section is recollected. During interviews from various learned monks – they could not adequately explain why, but it is still recited and at least understood. This mātikā is popular due to the different types of Dhammas that are recollected - beginning with wholesome, unwholesome, and undetermined Dhammas.

Two of the supplementary Sarvāstivāda Abhidhamma texts could be attributed to Sāriputta, although only one is certain to the previous scholars. The discrepancy concerns the *Saṅgīti-paryāya*. The suggestion states the organization of the text is similar to the Puggalapaññatti and the Anguttara-Nikāya which arranges material numerically, invoking the Saṅgīti Sutta, as perhaps the model for this text, despite different contents – or as Dhammajoti understands: a collection of scattered teachings.¹⁷ A portion of this text refers to the Dharmaskandhas, and states that Sāriputta was personally inspired to collect the Dhamma from the Dasabala¹⁸ because some competing sectarians were claiming

¹³ Hirakawa Akira (translated by Paul Groner): A History of Indian Buddhism (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2007), p. 131

¹⁴ “Thus abhidharmic tendencies are clearly seen in many texts both Pāli and Chinese, so far advanced in many cases that it is merely a short step to real abhidhamma literature, as the Saṅgīti Sutta has led to the Saṅgīti-paryāya. There is in fact very little internal change from abhidharmic agamas to Abhidhamma works; indeed, greater internal changes have come about in later Abhidharma works at a subsequent period...” from: Louis de La Vallée Poussin & Leo M. Pruden: Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam of Vasubandhu (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1991), p. xliii

¹⁵ A.K. Warder: Indian Buddhism 3rd Edition (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers 2004) p. 216

¹⁶ Please see different chanting texts, or: Edward Muller, The Dhammasaṅgaṇī (London: Pāli Text Society 1978); Pāli Chanting with Translations (Nakornpathom: Mahāmakutrājavidyālaya Press 2001/2544); or Phra Rajaworakhun Jaowatgittimsak (Saiyut Pannasaro). Nangsuu Suatmon Wat Patumwanaram-rajaworavihara. (Bangkok: Wat Patumwanaram Rajaworavihara, 2546) (in Pāli/Thai).

¹⁷ Bhikkhu KL Dhammajoti: Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma (Center of Buddhist Studies, University of Hong Kong, 2007), p. 106

¹⁸ This is the term for the Buddha throughout the Jātakas. See Dion Oliver Peoples, “Reflections on Social Ethics in Buddhist Old-World Stories” - http://www.iabuconference.com/seminar_detail.php?smt_id=17 – accessed 18 September 2008. Buddhists recognize several names for the founder of their ‘system’: the Tathagata, the Buddha, and the Dasabala are just a few. A Dasabala (Buddha/Tathagata) has ten powers:

- Truly or actually understanding as it is, the possible as possible and the impossible as impossible
- Understanding as it truly is the results of actions (kammās) undertaken, past, future, and present, with possibilities and with causes
- Understanding as it truly is the ways leading to all destinations (all the states of existence and Nibbāna)
- Understanding as it truly is the world with its many and different elements
- Understanding as it truly is how beings have different inclinations
- Understanding as it truly is the disposition of the faculties of other beings, other persons
- Understanding as it truly is the defilement, the cleansing and the emergence in regard to the jhānas, liberations, concentrations, and attainments
- Recollecting His manifold past lives (thus the relationship to the Jātakas and the reason why this term: the Dasabala, was sometimes used to represent the Buddha) – with their aspects and particulars for recollection
- With the divine eye which is purified and surpasses the human, sees beings passing away and reappearing, inferior and superior, fair and ugly, fortunate and unfortunate... and understands how beings pass on according to their action/volition (kamma)...

different doctrines. This is similar to material mentioned in the Saṅgīti Sutta. Tanakusu's pages 101-103 list the contents of this supplementary text. Dhammajoti claims that the Saṅgīti-sutta is the matrix (māṭṛkā), which the Sarvāstivādins evolved or extended¹⁹ into a fundamental abhidharma text – the *Saṅgīti-paryāya*.²⁰

Likewise, if someone investigates the Theravāda discourses, readings reveal: answering questions seems to be a dominant feature in early Buddhism and Abhidhamma/Abhidharma literature - as the Venerable Sāriputta demonstrates in the Mahāvedalla Sutta and from the contents of the Cūḷavedalla Sutta – both from the Majjhima-Nikāya; but now, comparisons with the Saṅgīti Sutta and more abhidhammic-material will be made below:

| TEXTUAL COMPARISON: | | | |
|----------------------------|---|--|--|
| TEXT: | SAṄGĪTI-PARYĀYA²¹ | SAṄGĪTI SUTTA | PUGGALA-PAÑÑATTI |
| Intro: | Section on the Origin (nidana) (gives the setting) “Let us now unite ourselves and collect the Dhamma-vinaya, while our Master is still in the world, in order that there may be no dissention as to the teachings after the Buddha’s death... to the benefit of the people.” | Similar | <i>Lists of people-types and some descriptive information</i> |
| Sets of Ones: | All beings living on food... | Yes | 50 types of individuals with one characteristic |
| Sets of Twos: | Mind and matter, means for entering and coming out of meditation, etc... | skill here pertains to Jhāna meditation | 27 types of people with two characteristics |
| Sets of Threes: | Wholesome/unwholesome roots; wholesome/unwholesome thoughts; wholesome/unwholesome conduct; wholesome/unwholesome elements; persons; elders; accumulations; rebirth; feelings; knowledges; and 25 others... | Yes | 17 types of people with three characteristics |
| Sets of Fours: | Noble beings; fruits of homelessness; persons; speeches, efforts, boundless states, four great efforts, and 14 others... | Yes | 29 types of people with four characteristics |
| Sets of Fives: | Aggregates; aggregates of clinging; sorts of attachment (to nativity, home, love, luxury, religion), powers; faculties; Pure Abodes; rebirth-destinies; hindrances, and 16 others... | Yes, (powers in Sets of Fours and Sevens) | 14 types of people with five characteristics |
| Sets of Sixes: | Groups of consciousness; groups of contact; groups of perception; groups of feelings, elements; abhiññas, unsurpassables; and 13 others... | Yes, (abhiññas (iddhis) mentioned in Set of Threes) | 6 types of people with six characteristics |
| Sets of Sevens: | Factors of enlightenment, persons, latent proclivities, treasures, rules for settling disputes, and 8 others... | Yes, and nine others | 2 types of people with seven characteristics |
| Sets of Eights: | Noble path, persons, giving, liberations, stages of mastery; worldly conditions; and 4 others | Yes, and five others | 1 type of person with eight characteristics |
| Sets of Nines: | Abodes of beings; samyojanas (fetters?) | Yes, (fetters - in 7s) | 1 type of person with nine characteristics |
| Sets of Tens: | Kaṣiṇas, qualities of the non-learner | Yes, and more | 1 type of person with ten characteristics |
| Final Section: | Section on Admonition (closes the discourse with the Buddha stating: ‘Well done Sāriputta...’. Then the Buddha turns to the Bhikkhus and states that they all should learn, hold, and recite the <i>Saṅgīti-paryāya</i> propounded by Sāriputta.) | The implication to do the same exists through proclaiming the way for chanting – one cannot do if not learned. | The Puggalapaññatti is a dissimilar text: 278 Different Types of People Explained |

- Realizing for Himself with direct knowledge, here and now enters upon and abides in the deliverance of mind and deliverance by taintless wisdom through the destruction of the taints.

See: Bhikkhu Ñānamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya* (Wisdom Publications: Boston, MA 1995) pp. 165-167

¹⁹ Louis de La Vallée Poussin & Leo M. Pruden: *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam* of Vasubandhu (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1991), p. xlviii – thus their confusion over the source is indeed bewildering. The source is not the Dasuttara Sutta – although both are rooted in the teachings of the venerable chief disciple, Sāriputta.

²⁰ Bhikkhu KL Dhammajoti: *Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma* (Center of Buddhist Studies, University of Hong Kong, 2007), p. 7 & on p. 99, he quotes that Sāriputta composed this text comprising of 12,000 verses, and that a short version has 8000.

²¹ Junjiro Takakusu: “The Abhidharma Literature of the Sarvāstivādins” from *Journal of the Pāli Text Society*, Volume V 1897-1907: 1904-1905; pp. 100-103 & consider the following, from: Louis de La Vallée Poussin & Leo M. Pruden: *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam* of Vasubandhu (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1991), p. xlvii: “... composed approximately 200 years after the Nirvana of the Buddha. The contents of this work closely resemble the *Dasuttara-suttanta* of the *Digha Nikāya*; exists in Chinese translation, T vol. 26, no. 1536.”

If someone expounds the contents of the Saṅgīti Sutta, a text similar to the classical Abhidhamma texts could be produced, and this is very profound (since it would demonstrate the contents of these texts), considering the inclusion and position of the Abhidhamma in the Buddhist canon. There might not be any Abhidhamma, without the Saṅgīti Sutta. Indeed, the Saṅgīti Sutta here, demonstrates its value and potential to be expounded as any great text – which is why it has been historically recommended to be remembered. Additionally, it has the power to shape the development of Buddhist-sects, and as footnoted previously: the establishment of the independent Sarvāstivādin sect was due to the text gradually being expounded upon and developed.

The Dharmaskandha text attributed to the Arahant Sāriputta concerns itself in 21 sections with fundamental Sarvāstivāda principles (although the Chinese translator claims that this is the most important of all the Abhidhamma works and is another primary text for the Sarvāstivādins), mainly pertaining to emphasizing praxis²²:

| Twenty-One Sections of the Dharmaskandhas | | |
|---|--|--|
| 1: The Five Precepts | 8: Constituents of Magic Power: meditation, energy, memory, suppression of desire | 15: Branches of Knowledge (Bodhyanga) |
| 2: The Sotāpanna, their attainments | 9: Smṛtyupsthanas (Modes of resolute mediation?): impurity of the body, evils of sensations, the evanescence of thought, conditions of thought | 16: Miscellaneous Matters: mental faculties, passions, etc. |
| 3: The Attainment of Purity; stages of an ariya-puggala | 10: Ariya-satyas (Noble Truths) | 17: Indriyas: 22 indriyas |
| 4: The Four Fruits of Samana-ship | 11: Jhāna Meditation: forms and processes | 18: Ayatanas: 12 ayatanas – organs and objects of sense |
| 5: Mental Experiences: feeling in the face of suffering/joy, etc. | 12: The Immeasurable (apramana) | 19: The Five Skandhas: |
| 6: The Ariya-Vamsa – Noble Lineage | 13: The Formless (arūpa) | 20: Various Principles (Bahu/Nana-dhatu): six principles, eighteen principles, 62 total principles |
| 7: Right Victory: four forms of victory | 14: Bhavana-Samādhi: meditation for cultivating the reasoning faculty | 21: The Twelve Pratiyasamutpadas Explained |

Three of the above mentioned texts: the *Dharmaskandha*, the *Jñānaprasthāna*, and the *Saṅgīti-paryāya* are said to be the oldest of all of the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma literature; and their respective relationship towards and development from the Saṅgīti Sutta and its contents has been shown - from the division of contents and further possible explanations.

Examining Secondary Literature: Pertaining to Theravāda Abhidhamma

Theravāda Buddhism's *Vibhaṅga*²³ illustrates matters similar to the Saṅgīti Sutta in its seventeenth chapter, entitled: *Analysis of Small Items*. The *Analysis of Small Items*

²² Bhikkhu KL Dhammajoti: Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma (Center of Buddhist Studies, University of Hong Kong, 2007), p. 103-104

²³ Pathamakyaw Ashin Thittila: The Book of Analysis – Vibhaṅga (Oxford: Pāli Text Society, 2002), pp. 452-513; additionally, a source from a prior footnote states: the *Abhidharma-dharmaskandha-pāda-śāstra* and the *Abhidharmasaṅgītiparyāyapāda-śāstra* could be closely connected with the *Vibhaṅga*. See, again: Hajime Nakamura: Indian Buddhism – A Survey with Bibliographical Notes (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2007), p. 106

is similar to the Saṅgīti Sutta in respects to presenting characteristics numerically; although these are not sets of Dhamma as illustrated in the Saṅgīti Sutta.

| The Book of Analysis – Analysis of Small Items | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|---------------|
| Set # | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Higher |
| Saṅgīti # | 2 | 33 | 60 | 50 | 26 | 22 | 14 | 11 | 6 | 6 | N/A |
| Summary # | 72 | 18 | 58 | 15 | 15 | 14 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 7 | 8 |
| Exposition # | 48 | 35 | 103 | 25 | 15 | 14 | 7 | 8 | 6 | 7 | 3 |
| Total Items: | The Summary section contains an almost equal amount of dhamma-sets (231) to the contents listed in the Saṅgīti Sutta (230), whereas the exposition portions collectively expand on 271 terms, rather than dhamma-sets. | | | | | | | | | | |

Consider the rationality for illustrating the above: a future study could compare the contents of the chapter with the discourse in more depth, but here to be brief: following the summary of Dhammas, there exists the *Singlefold Exposition*, continuing numerically through the *Tenfold Exposition*, and the extra *Exposition of the Occurrences of Craving*. The section on Expositions details components in the summarized sets, thus illustrating the discrepancies in similar numerical values.

The Vibhaṅga maintains its position as a great resource for explaining terminology, assisting in doctrinal interpretations, or hermeneutical possibilities – words that one might not otherwise be familiar with. The *Analysis of Small Items*, teaches the exact negative mental states that need eradicated for the striving disciple – in this respect, the Saṅgīti Sutta covers more diverse (general/unspecific) material, because it ventures away from solely mental phenomena (conceptions) – the specialty of the Vibhaṅga. Certainly, the aims of the texts differ, and learning Dhamma can be gained from both – a benefit.

The *Analysis of Small Things* is rather like a glossary or a thesaurus of unwholesome terminology. The *Analysis of Small Items* differs from the non-descriptive index of the Saṅgīti Sutta in this respect – that there is no detailed-elaboration following the sets of Dhammas in the Saṅgīti Sutta. The Vibhaṅga, then, can be determined to be commentary on selected terminology. In some sections, the *Analysis of Small Items* serves as summary-material. The chapter is numerically similar to the Saṅgīti Sutta – and one should conduct an investigation or analysis of items: The seventeenth chapter of the Book of Analysis opens with a singlefold through a tenthfold summary of contents – as a sort of list by numerical contents.

There is another valuable and popular text to examine: if the several published versions of the Abhidhammattha-Sangaha²⁴ and related commentarial-material are

²⁴ Nārada Mahā Thera: A Manual of Abhidhamma being Abhidhammattha Sangaha of Bhadanta Anuruddācariya (Colombo/Jakarta: Buddhist Publication Society, 1968, reprinted: 1979); Mrs. Rhys Davids (revised and edited) – Compendium of Philosophy (A Translation Now Made for the First Time from the Original Pāli of the Abhidhammattha-Sangaha, with Introductory Essay and Notes by Shwe Zan Aung) (Oxford: Pāli Text Society, 1995); Bhikkhu Bodhi (general editor): Abhidhammattha-Sangaha – A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma (originally edited & translated by Mahāthera Nārada; with suggestions by U Rewata Dhamma, but later revised by Bhikkhu Bodhi,) (Seattle: Buddhist Publication Society Pariyatti Editions 1999); R.P. Wijeratne and Rupert Gethin (translators): Summary of the Topics of Abhidhamma (Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha by Anuruddha) & Exposition of the Topics of Abhidhamma (Abhidhammatthavibhāvinī) by Sumaṅgala, being a commentary to Anuruddha's Summary of the Topics of Abhidhamma (Lancaster, Pāli Text Society, 2007) – Therefore, the scholar has four versions, in his private

included into consideration as a properly arranged and expounded model-text of Abhidhamma material - please view the similarities:

| Abhidhammattha-Sangaha versus Saṅgīti Sutta | | |
|---|--|---------------------------------|
| Chapter and Major Abhidhammattha-Sangaha Topics: | | Inside the Saṅgīti Sutta |
| Consciousness: | Triple Gems | Yes |
| | Conventional and ultimate realities | Not evident* |
| | Fourfold Ultimate Reality: consciousness, mental factors, matter, Nibbāna | Not evident* |
| | Five Aggregates | Yes |
| | Four Classes of Consciousness (Mundane and Supramundane) | Yes |
| | Wholesome or unwholesome | Yes |
| | Rooted in greed, hatred or delusion; or Rootless (from senses) | Yes |
| | Jhānas and Noble Attainments | Yes |
| Mental Factors | Mental Factors | Yes |
| Miscellaneous | Feelings, roots, functions, doors, objects, bases | Yes |
| Cognitive Process | Six Senses; processes, presentations, modes, great/slight objects, absorption, registration, attainment processes, planes | Yes |
| Process-Freed | Planes of existence, rebirth-linking, kamma, advent of death (mental-cosmology) | Yes |
| Matter | Elements, Concretely produced matter (senses), Non-concrete matter (characteristics), origination of matter, smiling, occurrence of matter, Nibbāna | Yes |
| Categories | Unwholesome: taints, floods, bodily knots, clingings, hindrances, latent dispositions, fetters, defilements; mixed: roots, jhāna factors, path factors, faculties, powers, predominants, nutriments; requisites of Enlightenment: four foundations of mindfulness, four supreme efforts, four means to accomplishment, five faculties, five powers, seven factors of Enlightenment, eight path factors, states and occurrences; the whole: five aggregates, twelve sense bases, eighteen elements, four noble truths | Yes |
| Conditionality | Method of dependent arising (12 links), method of conditional relations (24 conditions); analysis of concepts | Not evident* |
| Meditation Subjects | Calm; 40 Meditation Subjects; Analysis of Development; Analysis of Terrain; Attainment of Jhāna; Insight; Purification; Emancipation; Individuals; Attainments | Yes |
| *NOTE of Justification: | <i>Not evident implies not being listed as a dhamma-set, for example: the concept of anicca, dukkha, anattā – is also absent from the Saṅgīti Sutta – however the components or links are dispersed under other categories.</i> | |

There is no claim whatsoever that the Abhidhammattha Sangaha and the Saṅgīti Sutta are directly linked. Merely stated, the similarities above should be observed for the common links between them. Again, the intention is to show the commonalities between the Saṅgīti Sutta and these collective Abhidhamma-texts; and to suggest the potential for the discourse to have been expounded upon by other ancient commentators or where future writers can be helpful when designing new works. This further demonstrates the Saṅgīti Sutta's potential to return to the level of awareness or preeminence. Implicitly, where the material is not evident, it can be collected from this indexed-catalogue, and re-illuminated, as the authors of the commentaries successfully demonstrated, in their respective works mentioned above.

Examining Secondary Literature: The Navakovāda:

The Navakovāda is a century-old text-manual found in Thailand primarily utilized for newly ordained Buddhists – and is subtitled as being the standard text employed in

collection, of the same basic text to work from and compare; and unless otherwise mentioned, the referrals are towards the Bhikkhu Bodhi version, preferred foremost, for its reading ease and layout, out of the various versions.

Thailand for educating those interested in the Dhamma. The Navakovāda is not based on the Saṅgīti Sutta, but is included for comparisons, because the text is a “selection of fundamental precepts and classified dhammas,” - classified for the following reason: “Since it would not be possible in the time available to them for these bhikkhus to study and benefit from the voluminous texts and scriptures dealing with the Discipline and Dhamma.”²⁵ The Saṅgīti Sutta also contains social regulations and classified dhammas, and are thus examined any potential or purposeful value.

These texts serve a parallel purpose: increasing the level of dhamma-awareness in disciples, regardless of their intended duration of monastic experience. There is no limitation placed upon the Saṅgīti Sutta. The stated objective of the Navakovāda follows its division: coherently divided into three sections – each section is supposed to be studied in a month’s time, and after the completion of the traditional rains-retreat, the ordained student should be ready to exit the monkhood, and return back into the world, with a firm comprehension of Dhamma. The Saṅgīti Sutta lacks this organization – but could be divided or organized similarly to the Navakovāda. Again, the purpose of the discourse is to be wholly memorized – and there is no design-limitation or expiration-date placed on the discourse. Furthermore: there is no intention for the Navakovāda to rescue Buddhism from a schism or disputes over contents; nevertheless – the text and discourse are compared, as they are both recommended by monastic authorities of different calibers, for Buddhist education and in the case of the Navakovāda: the text could be used as a tool to preserve Thai culture. Therefore, seen within that light, the Saṅgīti Sutta would also serve to protect what needs to be learned in monastic culture.

This article won’t concern itself with its first section of the Navakovāda, covering the Vinaya, nor the third section concerning Buddhist practices for laypeople - although there are social-ordinances in the Saṅgīti Sutta. The second section is entitled: *Dhamma-Vibhāṅga*²⁶ – or *Dhamma Classified*. The sixty-six dhamma-components from the second chapter of the Navakovāda are classified numerically, but much of the manual for newly ordained Buddhists concerns itself with behavior or selected Dhammas that describe certain characteristics of individuals – as found in the Anguttara-Nikāya, and other divisions of the canonical texts, according to reviewing the sources listed beneath the selections. There are some dhammas selected for the Navakovāda that are not referenced in the Tipiṭaka.²⁷ The dhamma-components inside the text were selected as tools for social cohesion for someone’s life within forms of society. Similar circumstances could be stressed from within the Saṅgīti Sutta; though its numbers annotated below are for the number of times items were used from the discourse.

²⁵ Somdet Phra Maha Samana Chao Krom Phraya Vajirananavarorasa. Navakovāda – Instructions for Newly-Ordained Bhikkhus and Samaneras, Standard Text for the Dhamma Student, 3rd Grade. 5th Impression (Bangkok: Mahamakutarajavidyalaya, 2008), p. i

²⁶ Somdet Phra Maha Samana Chao Krom Phraya Vajirananavarorasa has a whole separate and expanded similar text - a text used for monastic examinations: Dhamma Vibhāga (Numerical Sayings of Dhamma) (Bangkok: Mahamakut University Press, 1970)

²⁷ See, for instance Somdet Phra Maha Samana Chao Krom Phraya Vajirananavarorasa, *Navakovāda – Instructions for Newly-Ordained Bhikkhus and Samaneras, Standard Text for the Dhamma Student, 3rd Grade* (Bangkok: Mahamakutarajavidyalaya 2000), pp. 46-47: The Four Protective Meditations, referenced from the *Mokkhopāyagātha* of King Mongkut, Rāma IV. Why was this material not cited from the canonical or higher-commentarial material?

| Textual Enumerations by Respective Arrangement | | | | |
|---|---|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| TEXT: | First Division | Second Division | Third Division | Total Number |
| Navakovāda | 227 | 66 | 24 | 317 Categories |
| Saṅgīti Sutta | 87 | 140 | 41 | 268 Categories* |
| Note:* | The number could be higher than 230 - some sets were used more than once to illustrate respective points. The Saṅgīti Sutta may become easier to memorize as there are less items to recollect. | | | |

There is no determination to make an obvious distinction between the two texts of discussion. Both the Navakovāda and Saṅgīti Sutta are recommended texts for learning; however, one is implemented across Thailand and neighboring nations – but was not recommended or certified by the Buddha or sanctioned by Buddhist tradition; while the Saṅgīti Sutta – sanctioned by tradition, has been relegated to the back of the collection of long discourses. The Buddha’s advice is not being followed.

There was no determination to measure the length of time needed to memorize the discourse – which would be subjected to an individual’s ability. One could probably recite it skillfully, in around 30 minutes to an hour. It would seem then, that the Navakovāda would take longer to memorize though as there are many other distinct sets of Dhamma. The following are some important dhamma-components to consider for memorization, which may be absent from one text:

The Navakovāda covers the three characteristics of anicca, dukkha, anatta – explicitly, whereas the Saṅgīti Sutta forgets to mention the instabilities of impermanence, suffering and not-self – as a threefold set. Additionally, the Navakovāda appears to neglect revealing dependent origination, whereas the Saṅgīti Sutta makes a mention to skillfully knowing dependent origination; and elsewhere, it is only highlighted in dispersed locations that would need reconstructed, assuming someone has knowledge of the dependent origination model. Although it is mentioned, one cannot assemble the parts without knowing exactly what those attributes or links are.

Does the Navakovāda neglect dependent origination? Dependent origination is never mentioned by name. The manual for newly ordained Buddhists does though, expound the second of the Four Noble Truths (the origin of suffering), but only details and rests with three aspects of craving. Later, a section of the manual’s text details the five aggregates, alternatively described as: the grouping of the four elements; pleasant, unpleasant, or neither types of sensations; remembering what one recognizes through the senses; the arising of Dhammas that may either be wholesome or unwholesome, or neither; and the awareness of sense objects at the moment of contact. All five are summarized as being name-and-form (nāma-rūpa).²⁸ Therefore, dependent origination is missing as a unit, but its components are dispersed elsewhere – after some laborious searching.

Does the Saṅgīti Sutta ignore the three characteristics common to all sankhāra? Superficially, the Saṅgīti Sutta neglects to mention anicca, dukkha and anatta – but as seen from above, the components are hidden and after laborious searching, as found:

²⁸ Somdet Phra Maha Samana Chao Krom Phraya Vajiranavarorasa. Navakovāda – Instructions for Newly-Ordained Bhikkhus and Samaneras, Standard Text for the Dhamma Student, 3rd Grade. (Bangkok: Mahamakutarajavidyalaya, 2000)

Anicca (impermanence) can be through maintaining beings through nutriment or conditions (without food, one cannot maintain the health of the physical body – thus impermanence; without maintenance, there is decay and death); conversely through the concept of a continued existence – or no rebirth; craving demonstrates impermanence because the feeling stops once the objective is consumed; through becoming – this demonstrates that one’s condition changes; suffering is impermanent; the three times are impermanent; impermanence is explicitly mentioned through perceptions making for the maturity of liberation inside the term *anicca-saññā* and *anicce-dukkha-saññā*; perceptions that lead to penetration again contain the perceptions of the three various characteristics.

Dukkha (suffering) is found in many of the above components – and explicitly articulated as pain, inherent in formations and subject to change/impermanence.

Anatta is found when illustrating personality belief – taken from the three fetters, along with doubt and attachment to rites and rituals; taken from the ‘ends’ – which includes the arising and cessation of personality; taken from the five lower fetters, and the higher fetters in the form of conceit - personality-view (*sakkāya-diṭṭhī*) - twenty identity views are:

- beliefs in: form is self, is possessed by self, is in self; contains self.
- sensation is self, is possessed by self, is in self; contains self.
- perception is self, is possessed by self, is in self; contains self.
- mental formation is self, is possessed by self, is in self; contains self.
- consciousness is self, is possessed by self, is in self; contains self.

In other words, references to clinging, in terms of the aggregates generally refer to: clinging to a doctrine of self. Through clinging to one’s personality, one suffers – certainly when even personalities can be impermanent. Those with negative personalities can improve themselves.

When comparing the manual with the discourse, the absences of certain Dhammas weigh far heavier against the *Navakovāda*, in contrast to the *Saṅgīti Sutta*. Dependent origination is widely considered to be a very profound and useful Dhamma-set - certainly as a concept for comprehension versus the three characteristics of formations – which is a philosophical element used to gain insightful personal-perspectives. There may be arguments for and against the *Navakovāda* as a great study-text to be implemented during brief spells of monastic-ordination; however, someone can equally withdraw and organize the material relating to social-ordinances from the *Saṅgīti Sutta* to learn how to behave in society. As far as the remaining dhamma-sets are concerned, again, this endeavor argues that quantitatively *Sāriputta*’s approved discourse has a greater value in terms of purely abhidhammic material available to study. While the *Navakovāda* is more interested in placing a human within a cultural context, one becomes freer to indulge into the discourse without being forced into the time limitations of the *Navakovāda*’s chapters; whereas the *Saṅgīti Sutta* is distinguishably educational. One benefit that the *Navakovāda* possesses is: the first section on the monastic-regulations – which is indeed, officially recommended for daily chanting by Buddhist monastics. The *Saṅgīti Sutta* has a lesser quantity of items to recollect, and could be stated to be a simpler leading study-text over the later-written, but simplified *Navakovāda*.

As far as what might be worth spending time learning and what might be the best topics to teach to students of Buddhism in universities: the Saṅgīti Sutta should be a staple of any course dealing with the Suttanta-Pitaka. Modern Buddhist education reinforces a gradual path of training as the guiding philosophy for educational endeavors – and if the discourse is arranged into items dealing with morality, meditation, and wisdom, even this standard procedure can prevail, while using the discourse.²⁹ From the time devoted to this study and familiarity with the Saṅgīti Sutta, one may become an advocate for stating that the entire discourse becomes worthy of recollection, since discrepancies between other works have already been illuminated above. The choice of judgment resides with the teacher analyzing the student’s ability to comprehend the material. Now, both the Saṅgīti Sutta and the Navakovāda have been compared solely for their functionality as a recommended text for monastic learning – the Saṅgīti Sutta should be easier to recollect.

Additional Commentary:

To again emphasize supporting the return of the Saṅgīti Sutta into Buddhist education, the question was asked: if there was any other possible competing preeminent discourse? Perhaps there was another – the Dasuttara Sutta. Why? In contrast: another of Sāriputta’s teachings, the Dasuttara Sutta may seem like an alternative candidate – but this would be a difficult endeavor to undertake as a complete methodology for practicing or understanding Buddhism. The division of ten sets of ten would need to be thematically arranged and the contents connected through editing, as a coherent essay, as done elsewhere.³⁰ Furthermore, the Dasuttara Sutta is void of the Buddha’s approval, although maintained in the tradition – so the Dasuttara Sutta becomes disqualified from being material considered for higher utilization, despite being possibly the root text for a later work, seen below.

Many of the important Dhamma-components found in the Tipiṭaka are present (100 items). The Dasuttara Sutta inspired the creation of the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* – *The Path of Discrimination* – a canonical text of proto-Abhidhammic construction. Thus, this is another discourse which inspired the creation of another individual abhidhammic-text. Undertaking a deeper applied study of the Dasuttara Sutta would only benefit any practitioner interested in the Buddhadhamma; but the Dasuttara Sutta is not a complete system of understanding as the Saṅgīti Sutta is – as anyone can determine as they undertake an examination of both discourses.

Again, after the comprehensive examination of the abhidhammic materials, there is no validation for the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* as a perfect text. In brief, what is wrong with the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*? The findings again, follow (based on the English translation by Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli³¹): it is agreed that the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* seems like a textual-trend

²⁹ For an example of how this can be accomplished, see: Dion Oliver Peoples: Chanting the Saṅgīti Sutta (Wangnoi: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Press, 2012)

³⁰ See, Dr. Dion Oliver Peoples: Chanting the Saṅgīti Sutta (Wangnoi: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Press, 2012)

³¹ Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli (translator): *The Path of Discrimination – Paṭisambhidāmagga* (Oxford: Pāli Text Society, 1997), III-177, p. 174 – the tradition of Theravāda Buddhism believes that the Buddha is omniscient, the Buddha though has stated otherwise, for himself. Who do we believe: the Buddha or the tradition? Later, in the next citation, we can see another tradition tried to establish the omniscience of the Buddha. They use some faulty logic and make mere

in the formation of Buddhist texts – certainly of those that may be based from a single discourse. Many of the examined texts analyzed from translations or from what other scholars have mentioned (backed by investigative inquiries from translated volumes of the Tipiṭaka), throughout, have been assembled after the death of the Dasabala – and that many other non-Theravāda traditions have texts with similarities (certainly the Sarvāstivādins, as examined earlier). Dhammajoti suggested: “The staunch Vaibhāṣika, Saṃghabhadra, in an attempt to establish the Buddha’s omniscience, cites the Sarvāstivāda version of the *Saṅgīti-sūtra*, where the Buddha is supposed to have predicted that there will be contentious views within the Buddhist movement after Him (the Theravāda version has Sāriputta speaking – so here highlights a discrepancy!). These views are not to be found in the extant Chinese Āgama or Pāli version of the sūtra, but they are doctrinal positions considered heterodox...”³² Some differing views follow:

Nārada claims that the Sutta Piṭaka is the *conventional teachings* of the Dasabala and that the Abhidhamma Piṭaka is the *ultimate teachings* of the Dasabala³³ – but there is nothing mentioned concerning the textual arrangement of the material, and from the Anupada Sutta - one can see many principles already.³⁴

The Abhidhammattha Sangaha³⁵ and Saṅgīti Sutta contain several similar sets of Dhamma. Is it possible that Mrs. Rhys Davids did not make the connection with the

attributions, per page 174: “He is the discoverer (bujjitar) of the actualities, thus he is enlightened. He is the awakener (bodhetar) of the generation, thus he is enlightened. He is enlightened by omniscience, enlightened by seeing all, enlightened without dependence on others’ instruction, enlightened by majesty... He is enlightened because he has destroyed unenlightenment and obtained enlightenment.” This is clearly discounted in the Majjhima-Nikāya’s Tevijjavacchagotta Sutta (#71) – the Buddha states: “...those who say thus do not say what has been said by me, but misrepresent me with what is untrue and contrary to fact.” - Bhikkhu Nāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya* (Wisdom Publications: Boston, MA 1995), pp. 578-588

³² Bhikkhu KL Dhammajoti: *Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma* (Center of Buddhist Studies, University of Hong Kong, 2007), p. 65 – this is also the opinion found inside the Paṭisambhidāmagga, see above.

³³ Nārada Mahā Thera: *A Manual of Abhidhamma being Abhidhammattha Sangaha of Bhadanta Anuruddācariya* (Colombo/Jakarta: Buddhist Publication Society, 1968, reprinted: 1979), p. i

³⁴ Bhikkhu Nāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya* (Wisdom Publications: Boston, MA 1995) Sutta #111, pp. 899-902, a summary/review: After the two weeks it took the secluded Sāriputta to become an Arahant, the Dasabala proclaimed in the Anupada Sutta: Sāriputta has great, wide, joyous, quick, keen, penetrative wisdom – with insights into states one-by-one as the occurred. There definitely is a systematic representation of the effort exerted above and in the explanation of the details pertaining to Sāriputta’s accomplishments. The discourse moves immediately into a very detailed explanation of the Four Jhāna’s. Some people may question the authenticity of this discourse as originating from the Dasabala. When one reads the text, it seems like the discourse might be an early teaching purposely legitimizing Sāriputta as skillful for the disciples of the Dasabala and further details the primary meditation technique promulgated by the Dasabala. Sāriputta’s confirmation of the Dasabala’s teaching not only benefits the Chief Disciple, but additionally demonstrates the truths of the Dasabala’s Enlightenment and both men’s Arahant attainments. Concerning the Abhidhamma - in the First Jhāna, Sāriputta determined: applied and sustained thought, rapture, pleasure, unification of mind, contact, feeling, perception, volition, mind, zeal, decisions, energy, mindfulness, equanimity, attention – all of these arising, present, and disappearance – and being unattracted, unrepelled, independent, detached, freed, dissociated, with a mind freed from barriers – he realized an escape beyond and cultivated that attainment to confirm that there is such (a second jhāna level)... Sāriputta in fact confirmed all of the Dasabala’s jhāna-attainments through his own escape-beyond experience as recollected by Ānanda. As the discourse nears conclusion is: perhaps someone in the Sangha was doubting Sāriputta’s abilities or attainments (having only been ordained for two weeks); the Anupada Sutta puts the question to rest.

³⁵ See the above footnote, and in the possession of the scholar are other recent versions: Mrs. Rhys Davids (revised and edited) – *Compendium of Philosophy* (A Translation Now Made for the First Time from the Original Pāli of the Abhidhammattha-Sangaha, with Introductory Essay and Notes by Shwe Zan Aung) (Oxford: Pāli Text Society, 1995); Bhikkhu Bodhi (general editor): *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha – A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma* (originally edited & translated by Mahāthera Nārada; with suggestions by U Rewata Dhamma, but later revised by Bhikkhu Bodhi.) (Seattle: Buddhist Publication Society Pariyatti Editions 1999); R.P. Wijeratne and Rupert Gethin (translators): *Summary of the Topics of Abhidhamma* (Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha by Anuruddha) & *Exposition of the Topics of*

Saṅgīti Sutta in her preface to Anuruddha's Abhidhammattha-Sangaha? She writes: "...and in this Compendium we see a famous and venerable digest of that more abstract, analytical, advanced teaching which the Buddhists called Abhidhamma, or 'ultra-doctrine,' wherein the narrative and the homily of the Suttanta discourses found no place." Nowhere, does she cite the Saṅgīti Sutta, but asserts her own understanding to acknowledge only the recognized Abhidhamma texts. Is she claiming that the Saṅgīti Sutta held no value for the creation of Abhidhamma? The current research shows otherwise and does not ignore the root-discourse from the Suttanta-piṭaka. Likewise: Bhikkhu Bodhi does not reference the Saṅgīti Sutta either, but mentions the mātikā or matrix (table of contents) of the Dhammasaṅgaṇī as the preface to the Abhidhamma Piṭaka³⁶ – which was already mentioned to be similar to the sets of twos from the Saṅgīti Sutta. These two prominent Buddhist scholars have not gone to the roots of the Abhidhamma systems or made the ancient connection publically.

The step before the Saṅgīti Sutta would be to find which discourses each of the dhamma-components are found inside, if this is indeed fully possible³⁷ – but, indeed, the focal-point of this current endeavor is the Saṅgīti Sutta. This endeavor has repeatedly emphasized and argues that the Saṅgīti Sutta serves as the basis for several Abhidhamma works in different traditions – and perhaps a lot of negligent Buddhist literature needs rescrutinized, following this endeavor. This is a major fact and presentation that can no longer be ignored.

Although the Saṅgīti Sutta is not arranged as an Abhidhamma treatise, any effort to categorize the Dhammas can lead someone to justify the Saṅgīti Sutta as a very important or significant discourse found in the Tipiṭaka in terms of its intensive content, and for its substantial role or ability to create an individual Buddhist sect – the arguments for such possibilities and comparisons have already been shown in the section pertaining to Sarvāstivādins. The Buddhist world has seen many classical commentators elaborate and arrange the teachings of the discourse to produce long-lasting material that has influenced many Buddhist students.

The effort to comprehend the Saṅgīti Sutta's Dhamma-sets solely rests with the student – no explanations are found in the text of the discourse (this could be determined to be the only weakness in the discourse as preserved), although there are claims that the Saṅgīti-paryāya of the Sarvāstivādins fills this void; the Theravāda's Vibhaṅga and Dhammasaṅgaṇī (which replaced the Saṅgīti-paryāya) are other candidates. To fulfill this, now, would be detrimental to the understanding of the discourse, and turn this work into an understanding or interpretation of Buddhist Dhamma – similar to the various Abhidhamma books mentioned previously.

Abhidhamma (Abhidhammatthavibhāvinī) by Sumaṅgala, being a commentary to Anuruddha's Summary of the Topics of Abhidhamma (Lancaster, Pāli Text Society, 2007) – *Therefore, the scholar has four versions of the same basic text to work from and compare.*

³⁶ Bhikkhu Bodhi (general editor): Abhidhammattha-Sangaha – A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma (Seattle: Buddhist Publication Society Pariyatti Editions 1999), p. 7

³⁷ Indeed, and see where this was achieved: Dr. Dion Oliver Peoples: Chanting the Saṅgīti Sutta (Wangnoi: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Press, 2012)

Analysis derived from Secondary Literature:

Several ancient and modern texts were examined in this chapter to determine the value of Sāriputta's teaching of the Saṅgīti Sutta. There is proof that at least two schools of Buddhism have utilized the Saṅgīti Sutta towards constructing their systems of Abhidhamma. Here, though, are some additional concluding remarks, as again, Dhammajoti suggested: "The staunch Vaibhāṣika, Saṃghabhadra, in an attempt to establish the Buddha's omniscience, cites the Sarvāstivāda version of the *Saṅgīti-sūtra*, where the Buddha is supposed to have predicted that there will be contentious views within the Buddhist movement after Him. These views are not to be found in the extant Chinese Āgama or Pāli version of the *sūtra*, but they are doctrinal positions considered heterodox..."³⁸ The Theravāda version has the Venerable Sāriputta stating the above proclamation pertaining to the need to protect the doctrine. Here the two Buddhist schools differ! Later schools would arise anyway, ironically rooted from the analysis of the very contents of the discourse designed to unify Buddhist disciples into one system of understanding. Nārada claims that the Sutta Piṭaka is the conventional teachings of the Dasabala and that the Abhidhamma Piṭaka is the ultimate teachings of the Dasabala³⁹ – but there is nothing mentioned concerning the textual arrangement of the material.⁴⁰ There does not need to be a discussion about the arrangement of material, but the material should have some systematic presentation for the fostering of comprehension.

As far as Theravāda Buddhism is concerned: the Abhidhammattha Sangaha and Saṅgīti Sutta contain several similar sets of Dhamma. Although the Saṅgīti Sutta is not arranged as an Abhidhamma treatise, any effort to categorize and elaborate on Dhammas can lead one to argue for and justify the Saṅgīti Sutta as perhaps, the most important or significant discourse found in the Tipiṭaka in terms of content alone, as already demonstrated through comparing the contents with other respected texts, and the creation of these ancient texts still preserved and used in Buddhist traditions.

The Saṅgīti Sutta contains most of the information found in the various Abhidhamma texts, or their table of contents⁴¹ – as already evident though the charted illustrations above, although one might suggest that the material presented is in mātikā form, as an outline with nothing explained. A venture was taken into the literature pertaining to the Sarvāstivādins, and several texts received illumination. Again, the Sarvāstivāda literature seems as old as Theravāda texts - although Sarvāstivāda

³⁸ Bhikkhu KL Dhammajoti: *Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma* (Center of Buddhist Studies, University of Hong Kong, 2007), p. 65

³⁹ Nārada Mahā Thera: *A Manual of Abhidhamma being Abhidhammattha Sangaha of Bhadanta Anuruddācariya* (Colombo/Jakarta: Buddhist Publication Society, 1968, reprinted: 1979), p. i

⁴⁰ Please examine: the Anupada Sutta – which may propose potential abhidhammic principles already – to illustrate this potential from critics claiming Abhidhamma material is not derived from the collections of discourses.

⁴¹ Hirakawa Akira (translated by Paul Groner): *A History of Indian Buddhism* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2007), pp. 140-141: "At the beginning of the Pāli Abhidhamma work entitled the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* is a section call the *Abhidhamma-mātikā*... These lists are followed by a supplementary list of forty-two twofold topics. The process by which these mātikā were chosen, by members of the Theravāda School is not clear, but of the forty-two twofold topics listed in the *Suttantika-abhidhamma*, thirty-one are also included in a list of thirty-three topics found in a sutta, the *Saṅgītisuttanta*... Since the order of the designations listed in the two works is very close, the list of dhammas in the *Saṅgītisuttanta* apparently provided the basis for the mātikā. ...This sutra eventually influenced the Sarvāstivāda abhidharma treatise, the *Saṅgītiparyāya*." Furthermore, Akira writes that the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment comprise a mātikā for additional Sarvāstivāda & Mulasarvāstivādin schools.

Abhidhamma texts have characteristics of being ancient works, possibly originating, if not from Sāriputta himself, then from close generations of his disciples. However, Theravāda Abhidhamma must have been familiar with their work or vice-versa – due to the *Points of Controversy* text – where points of contention are worked out until the solution is found and the opposing doctrine is refuted.

The section on the Navakovāda may just illuminate biases based on historical education methods or philosophies found in different cultures. The bias suggests using the officially sanctioned material for recollection or study; in this case: the monastic regulations and the Saṅgīti Sutta, over anything established by politically influential people. Taken together though, one would get an extensive amount of social-regulations and dhamma-sets – but a student could decipher contents based on their specialized need.

The research gleaned from this article suggests and determines this discourse is, educationally, the most important Theravāda Buddhist scriptures, based on the derivative concepts that can arise from critically examining this teaching of Sāriputta (as approved by the Buddha). Again, the Saṅgīti Sutta is a proto-Abhidhamma text that allows for additional developments, the evidence is in the foundation of later written texts. Reciting this information encourages the development of Buddhist intelligence. This demonstrates and defends the discourse as the most preeminent discourse available for Theravāda Buddhists. No other discourse details all of the collective material found in the Saṅgīti Sutta, although another, the Dasuttara Sutta, attempts a thematic arrangement. While the case for returning the Saṅgīti Sutta back into prominence has been suggested here, next is a presentation of the Mahayana abhidharma literature.

Examining Mahayana Abhidharma Systems:

Nagarjuna's Mūlamādhyamikakārikā is used for the Madyāmika system, and Asaṅga's Yogācārabhūmiśāstra is used for the Yogacarins – and these are said to be the equivalent to the Theravada and Sarvāstivādin abhidhamma-systems.⁴² The Abhidharmasamuccaya is a consolidation of all of Asaṅga's Mahāyāna views related to Abhidharma. After reading the Abhidharmasamuccaya, one can assert that it is of remarkable complexity, and very similar to material that can be found in the Theravada and Sarvāstivādin systems, with a few exceptions, most notable: the inclusion of advice from the Mahāyānābhidharma Sūtra – a discourse conceived in a dream of Asaṅga.⁴³

For the sake of this article, only the general contents of the texts were looked at, and although the entire bulk of the contents were examined quickly – nothing immediate was raised as a topic for alarmed inquiry. Two charts follow to illustrate their content – and again, when judged against the Saṅgīti Sutta, we can get further evidence that the root text to all of this being discussed here, needs to be included into Buddhist university research.

⁴² Walpola Rahula & Sara Boin-Webb: *Abhidharmasamuccaya: The Compendium of the Higher Teaching (Philosophy)* by Asaṅga (Fremont: Asian Humanities Press, 2001), p. xviii

⁴³ The actual wording here is that the Future Buddha – the Bodhisattva Maitreya, came down to Asanga during the night, and would discuss matters with him, or that Asanga would ascend to Tusita Heaven to learn from Maitreya. See: Walpola Rahula & Sara Boin-Webb: *Abhidharmasamuccaya: The Compendium of the Higher Teaching (Philosophy)* by Asaṅga (Fremont: Asian Humanities Press, 2001), p. xii-xiii – thus very likely: this all occurred in the man's dream or meditative states – when he was contemplating Dharmas.

The Mahayana works urge the stressing of lokuttara-concepts, but all of these are ever-present in Theravada teachings - but whereas the Mahayana system expounds on this issues to a curious extent, the Theravadans don't necessarily pursue these doctrinal aims.

| A Look at the Abhidharmasamuccaya⁴⁴ | | |
|---|--|---|
| Laksanasamuccaya – Compendium of Characteristics | Three Dharmas | Five Aggregates, Eighteen Elements, Twelve Spheres (āyatanas) – asking the meanings of many terms – helpful like a glossary |
| | Division of Aspects (Grouping) | Like the Dhātukathā, this examines the aggregates, elements and spheres from sixty points of view: its substance and designation, conventional and ultimate, conditioned and unconditioned, worldly and transcendental, time and space, conditioned origination, etc – to show that there is no-self in these categories. |
| | | Classifies the aggregates, elements and spheres in terms of: characteristics, elements, types, states, associations, space, time, partial, complete, mutual, and absolute |
| | Conjunction | Examines the physical and mental phenomena as combinations in various circumstances and conditions in different realms – with the objective of demonstrating that the conjunction and disjunction of things are only in the mind and that the notion of the self feels, perceives, wishes, remembers – is false. |
| | Accompaniment | Examines beings with regard to their seeds (bīja) [where someone was born] in the three realms with regard to their mastery of worldly and transcendental virtues and their good, bad or neutral practice – which leads to disassociation |
| Viniścayasamuccaya – Compendium of Determining | Four Noble Truths | Truth of Suffering |
| | | Origin of Suffering |
| | | Cessation of Suffering |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Path of Preparation • Path of Application • Path of Vision • Path of Mental Development • Path of Perfection |
| | Determining Dharmas (Teaching) | Discourse, verse narration, exposition, stanza, solemn utterance, circumstance, exploits, 'thus it was said', birth stories, development, marvels, instruction |
| | Determining Acquisitions | Definition of Individuals: character, release, receptacle, application, result, realm and career |
| Definition of Comprehension: Comprehension of the Dharma, Comprehension of the meaning, Comprehension of reality, later comprehension, comprehension of the Jewels, comprehension of the stopping of wandering in Samsara, final comprehension, comprehension of the disciples, comprehension of the Pratyekabuddhas, comprehension of the bodhisattvas | | |
| Determining Dialectic | Ways of determining meaning, ways of explaining a Sutra, ways of analytical demonstration, ways of treating questions, ways of determining according to groups, ways of determining a talk or controversy (logic), ways of determining the profound and hidden meanings of certain Sutra passages. | |

⁴⁴ According to the Introduction to Walpola Rahula & Sara Boin-Webb: Abhidharmasamuccaya: The Compendium of the Higher Teaching (Philosophy) by Asaṅga (Fremont: Asian Humanities Press, 2001), p. xviii-xxvi

| A Look at the Abhidharmakosabhasyam⁴⁵ | |
|---|---|
| Chapter One: The Dhatus | Homage to the Buddha Three Qualities of a Buddha |
| | Definition of Abhidharma, Definition of Abhidharmakosa, Purpose of the Abhidharma, Authors of Abhidharma |
| | Division of the Dharmas; The Five Skandas, Twelve Ayatanas, and Eighteen Dhatus; Threefold Classification of the Dharmas; Some Problems Raised by the Threefold Classification; Classification of the Dharmas in the Eighteen Dhatus; Subsidiary Discussions (organs, etc) |
| Chapter Two: The Indriyas | Indriyas; Twenty-two Indriyas; Mental States; Dharmas not Associated with the Mind; Six Causes; Four Conditions; |
| Chapter Three: The World | Living Beings and the Physical World; The Variety of Sentient Beings & Their Transmigration; Dependent Origination and Transmigration; Lifespan and Death of Sentient Beings; Physical World & the Size and Lifespans of Sentient Beings; The Dimensions of Time and Space & the Cosmic Cycle |
| Chapter Four: Karma | Karma (including a long section on the various types of discipline); Karma as Taught in Various Scriptures; The Courses of Action; Karma and its Results; Karma as Taught in the Commentaries; The Bodhisattva; Three Meritorious Actions; Miscellaneous Discussions |
| Chapter Five: The Latent Defilements | The Anuśayas; The Ninety-eight Anuśayas; Miscellaneous Discussions on the Defilements; The Abandoning of Defilements |
| Chapter Six: The Path and the Saints | The Nature of the Path; The Four Noble Truths; The Path of Seeing: Preliminary Practices; The Path of Seeing; The Āśaikṣa Path; The Various Paths |
| Chapter Seven: The Knowledges | The Relationship Between the Patiences, the Knowledges, and Seeing; The Characteristics of the Ten Knowledges; The Aspects of Ten Knowledges; The Ten Knowledges: An Analysis; The Eighteen Qualities unique to a Buddha; Qualities the Buddhas have in Common with Ordinary Persons and with Saints; |
| Chapter Eight: The Absorptions | General Introduction: covers the Four Dyanas, Four Arupyas, etc.; and Concluding Remarks |
| Chapter Nine: Refutation of the Pudgala | General Statements; Refutation of the Vātsīputrīya Theories; Refutation of the Soul Theory of the Grammarians; Refutation of the Soul Theories of the Vaiśeṣikas |

To summarize these two charts, dealing with the Mahayana Abhidharma systems: it is quite apparent, beyond the differences of being rooted in Sanskrit, that: the borrowing of common material was beyond evident. Index the items. There is a chart to follow this paragraph that allows for the indexing. There are little differences between the systems of abhidhamma/abhidharma. Perhaps the questions, asked by different scholars determined the differences in the perceptions that created the texts, and the distances and lack of communication between the various sects allots for the differences in the development of the systems. If there was any effort at a synchronistic method of higher processes to be examined – it was accomplished here to a very limited extent, and could be further engaged by very capable students interested in unifying Buddhist philosophical views. In a sense, the framework is provided: one can provide an index of common themes in a column, and the title of the works in the upper row – and check off the items if the work contains that issue. Then students can be certain for themselves that the

⁴⁵ Louis de La Vallée Poussin & Leo M. Pruden: Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam of Vasubandhu (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1991) – in Four Volumes & David Patt: Elucidating the Path to Liberation: A Study of the Commentary on the Abhidharmakosa by the First Dalai Lama (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1993), p. 9: "...the Kośa represents the culmination of only one stream or lineage that was participating in this process... The Visuddhimagga of Buddhaghosa holds a place of equal significance for the Theravādin tradition."

various Buddhist traditions have certain commonalities between them. To begin with, the student might produce something like this:

| A Synchronistic Method of Higher Processes | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|------------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| INDEXED ITEMS (incomplete data – recommendation for a student to compare all the content) | Sangīti Sutta | Sangīti-Paryāya (incomplete) | Jānaprasthāna | Dharmaskandhas | Abhidhammattha-Sangaha | Abhidharmasamuccaya | Abhidharmakosabhasyam | Vibhanga: Analysis of Small Items |
| 1. | | | | | | | | |
| 2. | | | | | | | | |
| ...230. (and so forth, as necessary) | | | | | | | | |

Students should examine all the various texts, and make some itemized annotations, to determine the viewpoints on the various indexed items. University students of Buddhist studies can benefit from this identification of unification or diversification of views in order to properly comprehend any trends that have developed historically. This data compilation could not be performed adequately, regretfully, for this conference paper, with limited time for publication – so the effort was scrapped. Certainly, the chart can be expanded, potentially, to account for more titles and more indexed items, as the student determines to be appropriate for one’s study or examination.

Conclusion:

This brief study of the various abhidhamma/abhidharma systems proves that there are many commonalities that exist in these schools of Buddhism, and it is more than evident to proclaim that the variances are due to the distant Sanghas remaining out of contact with each other, respectfully for reasons of difference, culture, language and other trivialities. There is proof in our modern classrooms that the systems can greet and dialogue with each other. The future of a stronger Buddhism may rest with the next and subsequent generations of Buddhists who can see through the sectarianisms and get back to Buddhism. Taking a look at our abhidhammas or abhidharmas – expounding on what concerns the dhamma or dharma will greatly fulfill our professions as Buddhists.

While it is true that several criteria of Dhamma or Dharma are very different in the three main systems of Buddhism, communication between the schools is highly important. For instance, if someone is discussing the Triple Gem in the context of the Theravada system, but another system is discussing the Three Roots: of a lama, tutelary deity (patron protector of a certain place of lineage) that transmits knowledge or deeper principles of the self (akin, thus to Dhamma), and the protector (like a dead member of the Sangha, such as: Dorje Shugden). Through scrutiny, can determine that these are no different from aspects of the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha – despite the guise or layers of cloaking that the terminology is rendered in. Here though, in this article, we have been synchronistic towards the higher processes of the mind, for the benefit of others.

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