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I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Jeffrey Wayne Bass entitled "The Practicality of the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha*." I have examined the final paper copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in Philosophy.

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THE PRACTICALITY OF THE *ABHIDHAMMATTHA-SANGAHA*

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Abstract

This study centers on a close analysis of the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha*—a compendium of Abhidhamma philosophy written by a Śri Lankan monk named Ācariya Anuruddha Mahathera sometime between the eighth and twelfth centuries. Through a detailed comparison of the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* to its sources, I am able to demonstrate that the text represents an important innovation in the Abhidhamma tradition. First of all, in the *Sangaha*, the building blocks of its primary source are rearranged by degrees of meditative attainment. We will see that the *Sangaha*'s author systematized the prior material into a clearly stratified map of meditative states. Also, in his compendium Anuruddha included sections of Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga*, a text that is not part of the canonical or commentarial corpus of Abhidhamma literature. Anuruddha chose this source precisely because it complimented his conception of Abhidhamma as a guide to the practice of Theravāda meditation. In the second half of my study, I examine the influence that Anuruddha's innovations had on future representations of both the Abhidhamma tradition and Theravāda in general. Several Abhidhamma specialists characterize Abhidhamma activity in ancient India as an effort to construct a guide for the practice of meditation. I challenge these characterizations, arguing that they are the result of Anuruddha's far-reaching influence.

Table of Contents

Chapter One—From "Early Buddhism" to the "Theravāda Tradition" 1

What is *Abhidhamma*? 1

Two Central Ideas in this Study 3

The *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* 5

From "Early Buddhism" to the "Theravāda Tradition" 9

Outline of Chapters 16

Chapter Two—Anuruddha's Inheritance 18

The Development of Abhidharma Philosophy and Literature in Ancient India 18

The Respect Given to Abhidhamma 26

Chapter Three—The *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* as Preservation and Innovation 29

The *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* as Preservation of Abhidhamma 30

The *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* as Innovation in Abhidhamma 34

Anuruddha's Practical Abhidhamma Canon 44

The *Sangaha*'s Popularity 46

Chapter Four—The Practicality of the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* 49

Ledi Sayadaw and the *Vipassanā Dīpanī* 50

The *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* as a Practical Text in the *Vipassanā Dīpanī* 54

Abhidharma, Abhidhamma, and Meditation 56

Chapter Five—Conclusion 65

A Translation of the *Paramatthadīpanī-Tīkā* 65

The *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* and the *Visuddhimagga* 66

Summary and Implications 68

Bibliography 70

Vita 79

Chapter One—From "Early Buddhism" to the "Theravāda Tradition"

What is *Abhidhamma*?

The term *Abhidhamma* refers to both a system of philosophy and a set of texts. The system consists of the minute and methodical analysis of various aspects of the teaching put forward by the Buddha in his sermons. These analyses are generally encoded in lists. The most important of these lists are contained in the textual core of the Abhidhamma tradition: the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*, one of the three major divisions of the *tipiṭaka,* the Theravāda canon of scripture. This *Piṭaka* consists of seven books: the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī,* the *Vibhaṅga,* the *Dhātukathā,* the *Puggalapaññatti,* the *Kathāvatthu,* the *Yamaka,* and the *Paṭṭhāna.* These works are radically different from the other two divisions of the Pāli canon—the *Sutta Piṭaka* and the *Vinaya Piṭaka*. They contain no narratives, no records of history, and no sermons. Instead, we find in them detailed expositions in which aspects of the Buddha's doctrine have been meticulously analyzed, classified, and defined.

An excerpt will help clarify the nature of these texts and the method of analysis they represent. Book One of the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*, the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, begins as follows:

> Katame dhammā kusalā? Yasamiṃ samaye kāmāvacaraṃ kusalaṃ cittaṃ uppannaṃ hoti somanassa sahagataṃ ñāṇasampayuttaṃ rūpārammaṇaṃ vā saddārammaṇaṃ vā

gandhārammaṇaṃ vā rasārammaṇaṃ vā phoṭṭhabbārammaṇaṃ vā dhammārammaṇaṃ vā yaṃ yaṃ vā panarabbha. Tasmiṃ samaye phasso hoti, vedanā hoti...[1]

Which are the things that are wholesome? At a time when a state of wholesome consciousness belonging to the sensuous sphere has arisen accompanied by joy and associated with knowledge (and spontaneous), referring to any one object, be it an object of sight, sound, smell, taste, a tangible object, or a mental object—at that time there are present:...[2]

What follows is a list of *dhammas*,[3] that is, indivisible constituents of the type of moment of consciousness specified. In one unimaginably brief instant of "wholesome consciousness belonging to the sensuous sphere" there are altogether sixty-five of these factors. Depending on the mode of analysis, either eighty-nine or one hundred and twenty-one states of consciousness exist in the Abhidhamma scheme. The *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* offers a detailed analysis of each one of these states.

These Abhidhamma texts and the system they represent have had a profound affect on monastic understandings and representations of Theravāda Buddhism. For a modern example, in 1915 Ledi Sayadaw, a renowned Burmese monk, composed a guide to the development of insight called the *Vipassana-Dīpanī*.

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[1] *Dhammasangani* (edited by Edward Müller. London: Pali Text Society, 1978), 2.

[2] Nyanaponika Thera's translation from Nyanaponika Thera. *Abhidhamma Studies: Buddhist Explorations of Consciousness and Time* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1998), 31.

[3] The term *dhamma* has a wide variety of meanings in the Theravāda tradition. In the context found above, the term refers to an indivisible element of conscious reality. Thus they are the mental and physical atoms of our experience. For more on this understanding of the term *dhamma*, see Rupert Gethin's *The Foundations of Buddhism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 209-11.

The method chosen by Ledi Sayadaw in this manual is the enunciation of lists of doctrinal elements followed by commentary on their importance. His reliance on lists is no surprise, for he was a master of this Abhidhamma philosophy. He translated many Abhidhamma texts and taught Abhidhamma classes to monks and laity. Several of his discussions on points of Abhidhamma were included in the *Journal of the Pali Text Society*.

However, one aspect of the *Vipassana-Dīpanī* is something of a surprise. In his manual, Ledi Sayadaw does not draw his lists from the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*. Instead, his lists are taken from an Abhidhamma text written centuries after the canonization of the *Tipiṭaka*. Why would he choose a source besides the orthodox canon? What does his choice tell us about the relationship between the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* and the role of Abhidhamma in the Theravāda tradition? More generally, what does his choice tell us about the relationship between the Pāli canon and the broader Theravāda tradition?

Two Central Ideas in this Study

Ledi Sayadaw's source is a medieval compendium of Abhidhamma philosophy called the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha*. The present study centers on a close examination of the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* and its relationship to the Abhidhamma tradition that came before and after it. Two arguments are central to my study. First, I demonstrate that the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* represents two

significant innovations in Abhidhamma. The first innovative aspect of this text is the reorganization of constituents of reality taken from the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* so that they are ordered by degrees of meditative attainment. We will see that the *Sangaha*'s author systematized this material into a clearly stratified map of meditative states leading to nibbāna (*nirvāṇa*). The nuances of this argument, and certain aspects of the term "innovation" that are only applicable in the context of Abhidhamma philosophy, will become clear in Chapter Three. The second innovation in the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* is the inclusion of material from the *Visuddhimagga*, a Theravāda commentary written by Buddhaghosa in the fifth century CE. This text is not historically considered to be part of the Abhidhamma corpus of literature.[4] It is neither taken from, nor is it a commentary on, any of the seven books of the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*. I will discuss the significance of the fact that in his manual Anuruddha excluded certain books of the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* in favor of the *Visuddhimagga*. My second main argument is that these innovations, which took place sometime between the eighth and twelfth centuries, had an influence on the way that both monastic and lay Abhidhamma specialists have understood and represented the role of Abhidhamma in Theravāda Buddhism. In the second half of

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[4] Here, I am using both *The Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies'* and B.C. Law's characterizations of Buddhaghosa's work. In his section on Buddhaghosa called "Commentaries on the Abhidhamma Pitaka", Law includes the *Atthasālinī*, the *Sammoha-vinodanī*, the *Dhātukathāpakaraṇa-aṭṭhakathā*, the *Puggalapaññatti-aṭṭhakathā*, the *Kathāvatthu- aṭṭhakathā*, the *Yamakapakaraṇa- aṭṭhakathā* , and the *Paṭṭhānapakaraṇa- aṭṭhakathā* in Buddhaghosa's work on Abhidhamma. See Bimala Churn Law, *A History of Pali Literature* 2 vols. (Delhi, 1983), 468-76.

my study, I challenge characterizations made by Abhidhamma experts such a Dr. Y. Karunadasa, Noble Ross Reat, and Nyanaponika Thera that essentialize the pre-*Sangaha* Abhidhamma tradition as an effort to produce a guide for the practice of Theravāda meditation. After examining the work of Ledi Sayadaw, I suggest that these characterizations are best understood as the result of Anuruddha's innovations and his influence on the tradition.

The *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha*

In medieval Śri Lanka, a monk named Ācariya Anuruddha wrote a manual that became the definitive primer for Abhidhamma studies in South and Southeast Asia.[5] Anuruddha's manual was intended to condense Theravāda Abhidhamma Buddhism into an easily digestible size and form. Thus, he called his little book the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* or *The Comprehensive Manual on Matters of Abhidhamma.*

Caroline A. F. Rhys Davids dates Anuruddha and his work somewhere between the eighth and twelfth centuries CE. She draws the earlier date from a set of Talaing records which provide a chronological list of learned and saintly men. Anuruddha's name appears two names after Kaccāyana, who is believed to have

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[5] Caroline A. F. Rhys Davids notes four Pāli works which designate Anuruddha as the author of the *Sangaha.* These works are the *Sāsanavaṃsa*, the *Gandhavaṃsa*, the *Saddhamma-Sangaha,* and the *Buddhaghosuppatti.* See Anuruddha. *(Abhidhammatthasangaha) Compendium of Philosophy*, (edited and translated by C. A. F. Rhys Davids. Oxford: Pāli Text Society, 1995), vii ft.

lived in the seventh century.[6] For the later date, the first commentary on the *Sangaha* appeared during the reign of Parakkamabāhu I, sometime between 1153 and 1186.[7] At present, a more specific date for the *Sangaha* cannot be determined.

Whenever it was written, the *Sangaha* came to occupy a prominent space in the Pāli literature of South and Southeast Asia. Rhys Davids begins her preface to the Pāli Text Society's translation of the *Sangaha* by commenting on its popularity:

> In so far as a book may be pronounced useful which has ministered to a continual demand, the utility of the *Abhidhammattha Sangaha* ranks very high among the world's historical documents. For probably eight centuries it has served as a primer of psychology and philosophy in Ceylon and Burma, and a whole of exegetical literature has grown up around it, the latest additions to which are but of yesterday.[8]

Similarly, in their introduction to Bhikkhu Bodhi's translation of the *Sangaha,* Bhikkhu Bodhi and the Venerable Rewata Dhamma write,

> Such is his [Anuruddha's] skill in capturing the essentials of that system [Abhidhamma], and in arranging them in a format suitable for easy comprehension, that his work has become the standard primer for Abhidhamma studies throughout the Thervada Buddhist countries of South and Southeast Asia. In these countries, particularly in Burma where the study

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[6] Again, C. A. F. Rhys Davids, "Editor's Preface" in Anuruddha (1995), vii-viii, and ft.

[7] See Gethin's introduction to Anuruddha and Sumangala, *(Abhidhammatthasangaha) Summary of the Topics of Abhidhamma and (Abhidhammatthavibhāvinī) Exposition of the topics of Abhidhamma*, (edited and translated by R. P. Wijeratne and Rupert Gethin. Oxford: Pāli Text Society, 2002), xiii. This commentary, called the *Sankepavaṇṇanā*, was written by Chapaṭa, a well-known Burmese monk who was ordained in Ceylon. For more on Chapaṭa and his work, see Mabel Haynes Bode, *The Pali Literature of Burma* (London, 1966), 17-18.

[8] C.A.F. Rhys Davids in Anuruddha (1995), vii.

of Abhidhamma is pursued most assiduously, the *Abhidhammattha Sangaha* is regarded as the indispensable key to unlock this great treasure store of Buddhist wisdom.[9]

This attention afforded the *Sangaha* is no recent development. A significant literary reaction to the text is apparent as early as the twelfth century, in which we find at least two commentaries written on it.[10] The *Abhidhammatthavibhāvinī-Ṭīkā*, or simply the *Vibhāvinī,* was written in the twelfth century by a Sinhalese monk named Ācariya Sumangalasami.[11] Like its subject, the *Sangaha*, the popularity of this commentary grew quickly. To this day it is considered by many to be the most "reliable exegetical work on the *Sangaha.*"[12]

The *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* is a fertile ground of scholarly inquiry for a number of reasons. To begin with, the text serves as a sort of temporal conjunction in the Abhidhamma tradition of South and Southeast Asia. Stretching behind it are hundreds of thousands of lines of canonical and commentarial text, preserved from ancient India.[13] As we will see in Chapter Three of this study, Anuruddha's efforts represent a rare preservation of the techniques of ancient Indian abhidharma

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[9] See Bhikkhu Bodhi's Introduction to Anuruddha, *(Abhidhammatthasangaha) A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma*, (edited and translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi. Seattle, WA: BPS Pariyatti Editions, 1999), 1. For Bode's discussion on the *Abhidhammattha Sangaha,* see Bode, 61-3.

[10] See Gethin's introduction to Anuruddha and Sumangala (2002) and Bode, 81.

[11] See Bode, 54-5.

[12] Bhikkhu Bodhi, *(Abhidhammatthasangaha) A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma* (Seattle, WA: BPS Pariyatti Editions, 1999), 17.

[13] See Chapter Two of this study, for the work of Erich Frauwallner and Johannes Bronkhorst.

scholars.[14] Also, forward from the *Sangaha* stretch a host of important developments in medieval and modern Theravāda Buddhism. These developments include controversies over interpretations of the *Sangaha*, which we will explore in Chapters Four and Five. Also, modern monks such as Ledi Sayadaw and Bhikkhu Bodhi use the *Sangaha* as a point of departure for much of their work.

The *Sangaha* takes up an incomprehensibly large amount of material, reorganizes it, and presents it in a new way. Its two main sources—the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* and Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga*—were themselves the results of the distillation of a large textual mass that came before them. After Buddhaghosa, the Abhidhamma textual corpus reached hundreds of thousands of lines beyond the hundreds of thousands of lines found in the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*. Yet, despite the incomprehensible mass of this textual tradition, the *Sangaha* itself occupies no more than fifty pages of printed Pāli text.[15] Given the brevity of manual, the authorial power of Anuruddha becomes strikingly clear. He chose what to include, what to exclude, and how to organize the material. This striking disproportion—the diminutive size of the *Sangaha* versus the mass of the tradition that it purports to summarize—brings many questions to mind. Which texts from the massive Abhidhamma canon were included in the *Sangaha*? Which were excluded? What method, or which criteria, did Anuruddha use to help guide his choice of material?

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[14] See Chapter Three and Frauwallner's idea of abhidharma as "formalistic scholasticism".

[15] Anuruddha and Sumangala, *Abhidhammatthasangaha and the Abhidhammatthavibhāvinī-Ṭīkā*, (edited by Venerable Hammalawa Saddhātissa. London: Pali Text Society, 1989).

How was this material reorganized and represented? What can Anuruddha's decisions, his treatment of the Abhidhamma material, tell us about his understanding of the role of Abhidhamma in Buddhism? What influence did Anuruddha's decisions have on future representations of the tradition?

From "Early Buddhism" to the "Theravāda Tradition"

Recent developments in the textual study of Theravāda Buddhism have opened a new field in which these questions can be explored. In his contribution to *Constituting Communities*, Jonathan S. Walters describes the recent trend in Theravāda Studies as a shift away from looking at "early Buddhism" to looking at the "Theravāda Tradition". In the textual sense, this shift involves the repositioning of scholastic efforts so that they include texts from South and Southeast Asia that were disregarded by early Buddhist scholars from the west. The theoretical framework for this Master's thesis is modeled after recent studies done by pioneers of this new domain of research in Theravāda. I will now discuss the work of three such pioneers whose work has been particularly influential to this study: Steven Collins, Charles Hallisey, and Anne Blackburn.

In 1990, Steven Collins composed an essay called "On the very Idea of the Pali Canon"[16]. In this essay, Collins, building primarily on the work of Gregory Schopen and Charles Keyes, insists that we reject the notion that the Pāli canon

[16] Steve Collins, "On the Very Idea of the Pali Canon" (*Journal of the Pali Text Society* 15, 1990: 89-126).

equals "Early Buddhism".[17] Rather than seeing the Pāli Canon as a textual mass from which the Theravāda school emerged, he suggests that we reverse the progression, seeing the Pāli Canon as a *product* of that school.[18] In other words, we must remain aware that the Pāli Canon itself is the product of certain historical circumstances surrounding the Mahāvihāra monastery in Sri Lanka around the third century CE.[19] Collins argues that the Theravāda conception of the *Tipiṭaka* as a closed source of *buddha-vacana*[20] is easily understood when considered in the historical context in which this conception developed. Third century Sri Lanka saw a confrontation between the Mahāvihāra and Abhayagiri monasteries. At the time, Abhayagiri monks used what we now call Mahāyāna texts. They were frequently referred to by their Theravāda opponents as embracing the *vetulla-vāda*—or "extended speech".[21] Thus, the insistence that their corpus of scripture was in fact the only source of *buddha-vacana* was part of "a strategy of self-definition and self-legitimation by the Mahāvihārin monks..."[22]

However this perception of the Pāli canon as the only source of *buddha-vacana* developed, it is problematic for Buddhist scholars to take the pronouncement too seriously for the following reason:

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[17] Colins (1990), 89.

[18] Collins (1990), 89.

[19] Collins (1990), 98.

[20] This term literally means "the speech of the Buddha" and refers to the actual words of, or words directly authorized by, the Buddha.

[21] Collins (1990), 98.

[22] Collins (1990), 101.

> The evidence suggests that both in so-called 'popular' practice and in the monastic world, even among virtuosos, only parts of the Canonical collection have ever been in wide currency, and that other texts have been known and used, sometimes very much more widely.[23]

This statement is an echo of Charles Keyes' assertion that in Theravāda Buddhism there "is no single integrated textual tradition based on a 'canon' to the exclusion of all other texts".[24] This idea points us in the direction of a new realm of textual studies in Theravāda Buddhism. For it now becomes necessary "to identity those texts that can be shown to be the sources of dogmatic formulations that are being communicated to the people through some medium."[25]

Collins concludes his essay by asserting that future studies in Theravāda must be more geographically and temporally localized. His essay ends with the following admonition:

> If we wish to delineate the actual 'canon' or 'canons' of scripture (in the wider sense) in use at different times and places of the Theravāda world, we need empirical research into each individual case, not a simple deduction from the existence of the closed *tipiṭaka* produced by the Mahāvihāra. We need more research, for example, historical and ethnographic, on the actual possession and use of texts, in monastery libraries and elsewhere, and on the content of sermons and festival presentations to laity, to establish more clearly than we currently can just what role has been played by works

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[23] Collins(1990), 103.

[24] Charles F. Keyes, "Merit Transference in the Kammic Theory of Popular Theravāda Buddhism". *Karma: An Anthropological Inquiry*, (edited by C. F. Keyes and E. V. Daniel. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 272.

[25] Collins (1990), 103.

> included in the canonical list. The hypothesis I have sketched out here suggests that actual importance of what we know as the Pali Canon has not lain in the specific texts collected in that list, but rather in the *idea* of such a collection, the idea that one lineage had the definitive list of *buddha-vacana*. So the Pali Canon should be seen as just a 'canon' (in one sense of that word) in Pali, one amongst others.[26]

This brings us to the work of Charles Hallisey and his essay "Roads Taken and Not Taken in the Study of Theravada Buddhism".[27] Hallisey's essay reinforces Collins' ideas on rethinking our textual focus. In this invaluable study, Hallisey begins by exploring the work of early Buddhist scholars who sought one essential Buddhism, from which lay and monastic practice was derived, in the *Tipiṭaka*. In their search, these early scholars ignored a multitude of texts that had been produced in Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Burma—written in both Pāli and vernacular languages. The following passage demonstrates the general attitude of early scholars towards these texts. Of local, vernacular texts that addressed the life of the Buddha, T.W. Rhys Davids wrote,

> [They] are literary not historical documents, and such historical value as they have is the very instructive way in which they show how far the older beliefs about the life of the Buddha had been, at the time when these books were composed, developed (or rather corrupted) by the inevitable hero-worship of the followers of his religion.[28]

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[26] Collins (1990), 104.

[27] Charles Halliesy, "Roads Taken and Not Taken in the Study of Theravāda Buddhism", *Curators of the Buddha*, (edited by Donald S. Lopez, 31-61. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

[28] Hallisey, 36.

This stance concerning the validity of the Pāli canon versus the corruption of later texts permeated early studies of the Theravāda tradition.

Hallisey points us in the direction of articulating "a completely different historical paradigm for our research."[29] This new paradigm encourages us to broaden our examination of Theravāda Buddhism to include not only the *Tipiṭaka*, but also the local texts and circumstances that produce meaning for the followers of the tradition. In other words, these local texts that were ignored, and even berated by early Buddhist scholars are those outside the orthodox canon that have been, none the less, fundamental to understandings of Buddhist practice among the monastic and lay communities of South and Southeast Asia in various stages of the tradition's long history.

Also in this essay, Hallisey develops the postorientalist notion of *intercultural mimesis*. This term marks an instance in which some aspect of a subjectified culture influenced its Western investigators to represent that culture in a certain way. For example, the textual direction of early Western scholars who sought an essentialized Buddhism in the *Tipiṭaka* may have been influenced by the Theravādin perception of the *Tipiṭaka* as the ultimate source of *buddha-vacana*. As Collins makes clear in his essay, periodic reform movements with a rhetorical stance of 'back to the Canon!', have occurred throughout Theravāda history.[30]

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[29] Hallisey, 50.

[30] Collins (1990), 102.

The one scholar whose work most informs the approach taken in this study is Anne Blackburn. Particularly, this study makes use of her distinction between the *formal* and *practical* canons of the Theravāda tradition. In her essay "Looking for the Vinaya", Blackburn uses this distinction to demonstrate the importance of Collins' idea on the need to localize textual studies in Theravāda.

Rather than assuming that the Theravāda tradition has one canon—the *Tipiṭaka*—from which all education and understanding derive, Blackburn suggests that we look for two distinct kinds of canon within the tradition—the *formal* and the *practical*. Blackburn calls the *Tipiṭaka* the *formal* canon. It is the ultimate source of authority in the tradition. Even if the authors of the Theravāda tradition do not engage with the Pāli canon regularly, they still frequently and formally refer to it as the ultimate source of their ideas and practices. Of the *practical* canon, Blackburn writes,

> This may include portions of the *tipiṭaka* and commentaries which encompassed and perhaps "filtered" these portions of the *tipiṭaka* to students. It may also include texts understood by their authors, readers and listeners as works about the Buddhist *dhamma*, consistent with but *perhaps not explicitly related to,* sections of the Pāli *tipiṭaka* and its commentaries. The practical canon thus refers to *the units of text actually employed in the practices of collecting manuscripts, copying them, reading them, commenting on them,*

listening to them, and preaching sermons based upon them that are understood by their users as part of the tipiṭaka-based tradition.[31]

In other words, Blackburn's *practical* canon consists of whatever texts may be used in a particular circumstance to convey the meaning of Buddha's teaching.

A brief look at Blackburn's specific application of this distinction will help clarify her ideas. She examines the role of the *Vinaya Piṭaka* in the education of novice monks in twelfth-thirteenth century Sri Lanka. She demonstrates that, while the *Vinaya* remained an important aspect of the *formal* canon, it played a relatively unimportant role in the *practical* canon during this period. In other words, novice monks were not taught about monasticism by way of the *Vinaya Piṭaka*. Rather, the bulk of their early education consisted of three Suttas that describe in more abstract terms the behaviors and attitudes that befit a monk. As per Collins' admonition, Blackburn's distinction allows a fuller investigation into the local—that is, geographical and historical—circumstances that have shaped the Theravāda tradition through time.

I am greatly indebted to each of these scholars. Exposure to their ideas—which have given a great deal of momentum to the shift from "early Buddhism" to the "Theravāda Tradition"—is what led me to ask the questions about the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* that have guided this work.

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[31] Blackburn, Anne. "Looking for the *Vinaya*: Monastic Discipline in the Practical Canons of the Theravāda", (*Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies,* Volume 22, Number 2, 1999: 281-309), 284 (italics hers).

Outline of Chapters

In this chapter I have introduced the text that I will examine. This text is the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha,* a popular manual on Abhidhamma, written sometime between the eighth and twelfth centuries. I have also outlined a recent trend of thinking in Theravāda studies, headed by scholars such as Collins, Hallisey and Blackburn, that informs my examination of the text. I have touched on the two major conclusions of my research: First, that the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* represents a unique innovation in the Abhidhamma tradition. Second, that Anuruddha's innovation influenced future representations of the pre-*Sangaha* tradition.

In Chapter Two, I begin by outlining some of the more general features of Abhidhamma philosophy and literature. I also discuss scholarly ideas on the development of early abhidharma efforts in the context of ancient India. Chapter Two provides a context in which to examine the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha*.

Chapter Three is a close reading of the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha*. My conclusion in this chapter is that Anuruddha's innovation with the Abhidhamma material involves two interesting choices. First, Anuruddha chose to reorient the Abhidhamma material by placing meditative attainment at the center of his organizational scheme. Second, he chose to include a text, the *Visuddhimagga*, that was not included in the formal Abhidhamma canon. Here I rely heavily on Blackburn's distinction between a formal and practical canon. We will see that

Anuruddha's practical Abhidhamma canon is not the same as the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*, the formal Abhidhamma canon.

In Chapter Four, I begin by examining the writings of Ledi Sayadaw, a Burmese monk whose understanding of the development of insight was shaped by Anuruddha's work. Anuruddha helped inform Ledi Sayadaw's understanding of the purpose and practice of meditation. In other words, the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* plays a central role in Ledi Sayadaw's practical canon. I then argue that the same influence can be seen in many representations of the pre-*Sangaha* Abhidhamma tradition. Finally, I suggest that characterizations of the pre-*Sangaha* Abhidhamma tradition as a guide for the practice of meditation indicate instances of what Hallisey calls *intercultural mimesis*.

In Chapter Five, I begin by summarizing my main points and discussing the implications of this study on future studies in the Theravāda tradition. I also investigate potential avenues of investigation that have been opened by my research.

Chapter Two—Anuruddha's Inheritance

The Development of Abhidharma Philosophy and Literature in Ancient India

How and why did the Abhidhamma tradition develop? In this chapter, I offer a brief overview of the evolution of abhidharma philosophy and literature from the time of its early conception to the fifth century CE and the work of Buddhaghosa. In my discussion, I place special emphasis on the recension of abhidharma literature that was eventually canonized by the Theravādins in Sri Lanka. This historical survey will help us to understand the place of the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* in the larger landscape of the Abhidhamma tradition in South and Southeast Asia.

To begin, it is necessary to distinguish between the Sanskrit term *abhidharma* and the Pāli term *Abhidhamma*. Early Buddhists of ancient India sought to encode the Buddha's doctrine into a clear and unambiguous system. This gave rise to an enduring scholastic tradition that developed within a number of schools, only one of which was the Sthaviravādin, or proto-Theravādin school. Thus, when I refer to the activity and philosophy common to all the various schools, or to efforts that are apparent before schisms in the early Buddhist community, I use the term *abhidharma*. Throughout this paper, the term *Abhidhamma* refers to the Theravāda understanding of abhidharma philosophy, and to the specific collection of abhidharma texts that were canonized in Pāli by the Theravādins—known as the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*.

Theravāda tradition holds that shortly after the Buddha's death, a body of sermons (*suttas*) was recited by Ananda as they would later appear in the written canons.[32] Of these suttas, Robert E. Buswell and Padmanabh S. Jaini write,

> Because of the inherent circumscription of their scope and application, the *sūtras* were not an ideal vehicle for constructing an indefeasible system of philosophy, such as would be required if Buddhism were to compete in the crowded sectarian scene that characterized Indian religious life. It was to construct such a definitive system that Abhidharma was born.[33]

In other words, despite the great importance of these sermons, the language used in them is conventional—that is, it conforms to the linguistic and conceptual standards of the listeners. Because they were delivered in a variety of contexts, and to a variety of audiences with varying degrees of potential receptivity, the suttas were worded such that the audience could easily understand them—incorporating metaphors and generalizations. This characteristic of the suttas led early Buddhists to strive for expressions of doctrine that were definitive, absolute, and incapable of being further analyzed or reduced. Noble Ross Reat calls abhidharma "a technical, scholastic movement to systematize the numerous philosophical, psychological and moral concepts of early Buddhism."[34]

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[32] This version of history is found in the *Cullvagga* of the *Vinaya Piṭaka*. See U Ko Lay. *Essence of Tipitaka* (Maharashtra, India: Vipassana Research Institute, 1998), 21.

[33] Robert E. Buswell and Jaini Padmanabh S., "The Development of Abhidharma Philosophy" (*Abhidharma Buddhism to 150 A.D.,* edited by Karl H. Potter et al. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1996), 74.

[34] Reat, Noble Ross. "The Historical Buddha and His Teachings" (*Abhidharma Buddhism to 150 A.D.,* edited by Karl H. Potter et al. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1996), 25.

When looking for a form to accommodate this articulation of the doctrine, early Buddhists were influenced by lists found in the suttas. To begin to understand the origins of the ancient abhidharma method, we might look to two suttas from the *Digha Nikaya*—the *Pāsādika* and the *Dasuttara Suttas.* In the former, the Buddha is brought news of the death of Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta, the twenty-fourth and final ford-maker (*tīrthaṇkāra*) of the Jain tradition. Bhikkhu Cunda, who relays this news to the Enlightened One, speaks of a schism that has already arisen among the deceased teacher's followers. The Buddha remarks that when a teaching is not well taught, such schisms are to be expected. Immediately following this statement, the Buddha enumerates the thirty-seven limbs of enlightenment (*bodhipakhiyā dhammā*).[35] In the *Dasuttara Sutta,* Sāriputra delivers a sermon in which he teaches the *dhamma* under headings beginning with the group of ones, then the group of twos, and so on up to the group of tens.[36]

In one particularly important passage of the *Pāsādika*, the Buddha states that the thirty-seven limbs of enlightenment are "the truths which when I had perceived, I made known to you, and which, when ye have associated yourselves, ye are to rehearse, all of you, and not quarrel over, comparing meaning with meaning and phrase with phrase."[37] I highlight this verse for the simple reason that it is easy to

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[35] U Ko Lay, 143.

[36] U Ko Lay, 156.

[37] Tipiṭaka. Suttapiṭaka. Dīghanikāya: Dialogues of the Buddha, (translated by T.W. Rhys Davids and Carolina A. F. Rhys Davids. London: Luzac, 1956-66), 120. See also U Ko Lay, 55.

imagine that those who heard this would perceive in it not only the value of the contents of the list, but also the efficaciousness of lists themselves. As the *Dasuttara Sutta* demonstrates, other suttas exhibit this same method of collection and classification of the Buddha's teaching. In fact, if we look closer at the format of the *Dasuttara Sutta*, we find that it is strikingly similar to the general format used in the first book of the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*, the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*. In both the *Dasuttara* and the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, lists are enumerated in response to questions such as "Which two things are to be developed?" and "Which six things are to be made to arise?"[38] The early abhidharma philosophers took lists found in the suttas as a model for representing the doctrine at its most rudimentary level.

In his *Studies in Abhidharma Literature and the Origins of Buddhist Philosophical Systems*, Erich Frauwallner explains the formation of these works as taking place in two distinct stages. In the first stage, which took place immediately following the Buddha's death and perhaps even during his lifetime, early Buddhists were dedicated to assembling and sorting through the teaching found in the Buddha's sermons. In the second stage, a more complex and active undertaking began. This was the generation of a canon of philosophical analyses that were modeled after lists the Buddha had enumerated in his sermons.[39] According to

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[38] *Buddhist Information of North America*, "Dasuttara Sutta", BIONA, http://www.buddhistinformation.com/ida_b_wells_memorial_sutra_library/dasuttara_sutta.htm

[39] Erich Frauwallner, *Studies in Abhidharma Literature and the Origins of Buddhist Philosophical Systems*, (translated by Sophie Francis Kidd. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 3.

Frauwallner, the seeds of abhidharma literature may be found in three lists found in the suttas. The first lists that began appearing in abhidharma philosophy were "originally intended to define more precisely the general fundamental concepts of *skandhāḥ, āyatanāni,* and *dhātavāḥ*, and to facilitate categorization."[40]

Using the suttas as their point of departure, the early developers of the abhidharma system compounded more and more lists of interpretation and classification. In his work, Frauwallner discusses this particular kind of scholastic effort and the analytical approach that produced these lists in detail. These efforts guided the development of a new genre of catechetical literature in ancient India—the abhidharma genre. This genre is based on a system of minute analysis of various aspects of the Buddha's teaching. For example, in the Theravāda tradition, the five constituents of personhood (*skandhas*) were intended to demonstrate the absence of an enduring soul or self. Early abhidharma efforts saw each of the five *skandhas* further analyzed in greater detail. Instead of one general constituent of personhood, such as matter (*rūpa*), we find an analysis of the twenty-eight kinds of qualities of matter. In this system—the abhidharma philosophical system—no new content is generated. Instead, the system takes given concepts, in this instance concepts taken from the suttas, and develops them into a new series of classifications and organizations. The basic content remains the same, but it is continually represented from new angles and rendered in ever-new list-based

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[40] Frauwallner, 5.

forms.[41] Thus, old lists could be reintroduced merely by posing a new set of criteria by which to analyze them. To illustrate this point, Frauwallner writes, "Pairs of concepts proved an especially rich vein for the formation of tetrads. One only needed to distinguish the four possibilities: whether either one or the other, both, or neither of the two concepts occur."[42] Frauwallner calls this type of textual and philosophical effort "formalistic scholasticism." Frauwallner's characterization of the method of early abhidharma scholars also applies to the method employed by Anuruddha in the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha*. Therefore, I will discuss this idea of Frauwallner's in greater detail in Chapter Three, prior to my analysis of the *Sangaha's* content.

This scholastic approach, combined with the fact that the generation of such material was seen as a source of religious merit,[43] led to the production of a multitude of abhidharma material. Some of these early lists were held in greater esteem than others, and eventually a core of fundamental abhidharma texts was born. As the work of Frauwallner and Johannes Bronkhorst demonstrates, many of these seminal texts had achieved their basic form before any major schisms occurred.[44] Because of the coexistence of this core material in both the Sarvastivādin and Sthaviravādin abhidharma texts, Frauwallner points to a date of

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[41] Frauwallner, 8.

[42] Frauwallner, 9.

[43] Frauwallner, 8.

[44] See earlier section on the distinction between the terms *abhidharma* and *Abhidhamma*.

no later than 200 B.C.E. for a probable origin of the oldest layer of the material that was eventually canonized in the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*.[45] But Bronkhorst, relying heavily on Frauwallner's work, pushes this date back even further. In his essay "Dharma and Abhidharma"[46], Bronkhorst tracks the evolution of a certain list found in both the *Sūtras* and the *Vinaya*. This list begins with the four *smṛtyupasthāna* (four *satipaṭṭhāna*) and then enumerates six other *kuśala dharma*, or "beneficial psychic characteristics". Versions of the list can be found in a variety of ancient passages, preserved in Pāli and Chinese. Bronkhorst notes that in the sutras we find much older versions. Thus, Bronkhorst's comparisons of these various textual remnants "point to the influence of Abhidharma-like activity long before the completion of the Sūtrapitaka."[47] After examining the work of Frauwallner and Bronkhorst, it seems clear that whoever began working to compile these lists and their commentaries from the suttas began shortly after the Buddha's *parinibbāna*,[48] if not during his lifetime. As they did so, abhidharma became a system independent of the *suttas* themselves. Abhidharma became "a distinct body of exegetical material in its own right."[49]

According to the tradition, the final addition to the Sthaviravādin abhidharma canon came at the famed third council in 247 BCE. This last book was the

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[45] Frauwallner, 41.

[46] Johannes Bronkhorst, "Dharma and Abhidharma", (*Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, Vol. XLVIII Part 2 1985, 305-320).

[47] Bronkhorst, 319.

[48] A term used to refer to the Buddha's death.

[49] Buswell and Jaini, 76.

Kathāvatthu. At the council, according to the *Mahāvaṃsa*, a complete *Tipiṭaka* was assembled.[50] It is important to keep in mind that a multitude of abhidharma texts existed by the time Buddhism came to Sri Lanka. Those texts that reflected most accurately the Sthaviravādin practice of abhidharma Buddhism were selected for canonization.[51] Thus, the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* was not a text that was conceived, written and edited over time, but was rather the "result of a conscious effort of compilation."[52] The Sthaviravādin version was disseminated southward by Aśokan missionaries. It was during this time that Buddhism made its way to Sri Lanka.[53] Frauwallner's work corroborates this version of history found in the *Mahāvaṃsa*. After carefully examining the evidence, Frauwallner concludes that the canon of Abhidhamma texts recognized by the Mahāvihārans in Śri Lanka was composed in Pāli in India, and not Sri Lanka as one might suppose. He writes,

> In Ceylon itself, commentaries on the canonical works were written in Singhalese. Pāli did not become the ecclesiastical language until much later, from approximately the 3rd century A.D. onwards. It is therefore unlikely that here comprehensive works were written in Pāli at this period and incorporated into the canon. This leads to the conclusion that the works of the Pāli Abhidharma originated in the mother country and were taken from there to Ceylon.[54]

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[50] *Mahāvaṁsa: The great chronicle of Ceylon* (translated by Wilhelm Geiger and Mabel Haynes Bode. London: Pali Text Society, 1980), 82-87

[51] Frauwallner, 54.

[52] Frauwallner, 53.

[53] Buswell and Jaini, 79.

[54] Frauwallner, 41.

In Sri Lanka, the Buddhist canon was sealed in the last quarter of the first century BCE when it was committed to writing during the reign of King Vattagamani of Ceylon.[55] Others say that the Pāli cannot be known to be fixed until the time of Buddhaghosa.[56] Bhadantācariya Buddhaghosa was a fifth century monk who compiled and translated many of the commentaries on the canon that had been written in Sinhalese. He also wrote many of his own commentaries.

The Respect Given to Abhidhamma

Abhidhamma has long been given an elevated status in the Theravāda tradition. Abhidhamma is perceived as the culmination of the Buddha's teaching. According to Buddhaghosa the Buddha's first recitation of the Abhidhamma scriptures occurred before an audience of gods.[57] In the eleventh century Burmese justice system, criminals or witnesses would be asked to clutch a fragment of the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* in order to ensure the truth of their statements.[58] Of the Abhidhamma tradition, Bhikkhu Bodhi writes,

> In the Theravada tradition the Abhidhamma Pitaka is held in the highest esteem, revered as the crown jewel of the Buddhist scriptures. As examples

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[55] *Mahāvaṁsa*, 277.

[56] Collins (1990), 96.

[57] This story is found in the first chapter of Buddhaghosa, *The Expositor (Atthasālinī): Buddhaghosa's Commentary on the Dhammasangaṇī, the First Book of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka* (translated by Pe Maung Tin, edited and revised by Caroline A. F. Rhys Davids. London: Pali Text Society, 1921), 15.

[58] U Than Tun, *Essays on the History and Buddhism of Burma* (Isle of Arran, Scotland: Kiscadale, 1988), 31-32.

> of this high regard, in Sri Lanka King Kassapa V [tenth century C.E.] had the whole Abhidhamma Pitaka inscribed on gold plates and the first book set in gems, while another king, Vijayabahu [eleventh century] used to study the *Dhammasangani* each morning before taking up his royal duties and composed a translation of it into Sinhala.[59]

Buswell suggests that the *Pāsādika Sutta* passage cited above marks the beginning, initiated by the Buddha himself, of this tendency among Theravāda monks to place abhidharma philosophy above the content of the suttas. According to early Buddhist tradition, any material that sought to be included as the authentic teaching of the Buddha must be subjected to these three tests: it "should be put beside the *sūtras*, compared with the *Vinaya*, and tested against the law [the doctrine of interdependence]."[60] According to Buswell and Jaini, these three criteria served as guiding principles for the development of Abhidharma philosophy. Its strict adherence to these three criteria—particularly the third—is another reason that abhidharma philosophy came to enjoy a superiority to the suttas and the Vinaya among many of the monks.[61]

So Ācariya Anuruddha's inheritance was this: A massive textual corpus developed by a system of minute analysis that had been applied over hundreds of years to certain key aspects of the Buddha's doctrine. The effort for which Anuruddha is best remembered is a manual in which he condensed the

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[59] Anuruddha (1999), 2.

[60] Buswell and Jaini, 75.

[61] Buswell and Jaini, 76.

unfathomable mass of this tradition into fifty pages. How did he represent the Abhidhamma tradition? And why did his efforts meet with such favor? We will begin to answer these questions in the next chapter.

Chapter Three—The *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* as Preservation and Innovation

My goal in this chapter is to elucidate Anuruddha's particular vision of Abhidhamma as it is made evident in the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha*. To this end I will look at his text in two ways: 1) I will examine the *Sangaha* as a preservation of the earlier abhidharma philosophical and textual tradition discussed in Chapter Two. Understanding Anuruddha's work as a continuation of the textual practices and products of early abhidharma scholars will help to clarify the method I have employed in my examination of his text, and 2) I will look at the *Sangaha* as an innovative text that makes use of the Abhidhamma system while changing the organizing principles of the material found in the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*. I will demonstrate that Anuruddha extracted from the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* a clear, stratified model of Buddhist felicity at the heart of which stands meditative attainment. In other words, Anuruddha gave the Abhidhamma material a practical orientation. Finally, I will use Blackburn's distinction between a formal and a practical canon to examine which texts compose Anuruddha's practical Abhidhamma canon. Anuruddha's manual illustrates the value of this distinction. It makes no mention of several books of the formal Abhidhamma canon, the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*. However, he does include the *Visuddhimagga*, a fifth century work by Buddhaghosa that focuses on meditation.

The *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* as Preservation of Abhidhamma

To open my discussion of the *Sangaha* as a preservation of both the canonical and commentarial corpus that came before it, I want to address Bhikkhu Bodhi's treatment of the question *What does the* Abhidhammattha-sangaha *do*?[62] In their introduction to the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* Bhikkhu Bodhi and the Venerable Rewata Dhamma write,

> As the Abhidhamma system, already massive in its canonical version, grew in volume and complexity, it must have become increasingly unwieldy for purposes of study and comprehension. Thus at a certain stage in the evolution of Theravada Buddhist thought the need must have become felt for concise summaries of the Abhidhamma as a whole in order to provide the novice student of the subject with a clear picture of its main outline—faithfully and thoroughly, yet without an unmanageable mass of detail.[63]

Bhikkhu Bodhi and Rewata Dhamma describe the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* as a reaction to this need. Scholarly consensus and historical fact both confirm and clarify this characterization. The "certain stage" mentioned above came in the wake of Buddhaghosa's prolific efforts. The need for "concise summaries" was met with many short Abhidhamma manuals, which began to appear after Buddhaghosa's

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[62] This treatment can be found in Bhikkhu Bodhi and the Venerable Rewata Dhamma's "Introduction" to Anuruddha (1999), 1-20; also in Bhikkhu Bodhi's "Editor's Introduction" to Nyanaponika Thera, vii-xxv.

[63] Bhikkhu Bodhi and the Venerable Rewata Dhamma, "Introduction" to Anuruddha (1999), 15.

work in the fifth century CE. Nine of these manuals survive today,[64] all of which were written sometime between the fifth and twelfth centuries.[65] The *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* was the most popular answer to this need for a concise account of the system. U Rewata Dhamma and Bhikkhu Bodhi credit the *Sangaha*'s popularity to "its remarkable balance between concision and comprehensiveness."[66]

A similar characterization accompanies Sumangala's *Abhidhammatthavibhāvinī-Ṭīkā*, which is historically the *Sangaha's* most popular commentary. This text was written in the twelfth century. At one point in the *Abhidhammatthavibhāvinī-Ṭīkā*, the author writes that his efforts are meant for the sake of "those who are frightened by books."[67] Of the *Abhidhammatthavibhāvinī-Ṭīkā*, Rupert Gethin writes:

> It seems that in part, at least, Sumangala [author of the *ṭīkā*] consciously wrote his commentary on the Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha for those overwhelmed by the sheer extent and complexity of the canonical and commentarial Abhidhamma literature… Taken together, Anuruddha's Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha and Sumangala's Abhidhammatthavibhāvinī-ṭīkā certainly succeed in providing a remarkably full yet compact account of the Theravāda Abhidhamma and its commentarial tradition.[68]

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[64] C.A.F. Rhys Davids, "Editor's Preface" to *(Dhammasangaṇī) Buddhist Manual of Psychological Ethics*, viii-ix. These nine are: *Paramattha-vinicchaya, Nāmarūpa-pariccheda, Abhidhammāvatāra, Rūpārūpa-vibhāga, Sacca-sankhepa, Mohavicchedanī, Khema-pakaraṇa, Nāmācāra-dīpaka,* and *Abhidhammatthasangaha.*

[65] Anuruddha (1995), viii. See also Anuruddha (1999), 15.

[66] Anuruddha and Sumangala (2002), 15.

[67] *Ganthabhīrukajananuggahaṇtthaṃ.* See Anuruddha and Sumangala (2002), 51.

[68] Anuruddha and Sumangala (2002), xvii.

By the end of the fifth century CE, the Theravāda textual corpus had reached a formidable size. The work of Buddhaghosa alone, which preceded the composition of the *Sangaha* by no less than 300 years, fills "more than thirty volumes in the Pali Text Society's Latin-script edition".[69] Furthermore, as Bhikkhu Nāṇamoli notes in his introduction to the *Visuddhimagga*, Buddhaghosa's commentaries presuppose a host of commentarial literature that preceded him and his work.[70] Included in the canonical and commentarial material present by the fifth century is the ponderous mass of the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* itself. Erich Frauwallner writes the following critique of the method of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*, the first book of the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*:

> Typically, when a short, clear basic exposition would have sufficed, each individual case is treated in minute detail according to a stereotype, frequently with very little variation. A typical example of this is the first chapter... which treats the question of which mental elements are good, evil, or indeterminate. Here one author has managed to spin out to 130 pages what Vasubandhu says in two pages in the Abhidharmakośa... In other cases, the method degenerates in to artificiality and senseless exaggeration.[71]

Given the mass of commentarial abhidharma literature we know to have existed in the fifth century, and Frauwallner's characterization of the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* itself, it is easy to see why a work such as the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* would be welcome, if not necessary, to the novice student of the subject. Thus, it is easy to

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[69] Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga: The Path of Purification* (translated by Bhikkhu Ñanamoli. Seattle, WA: BPS Pariyatti Editions 1999), xiii.

[70] See Buddhaghosa (1999), xxviii-xxxvii; see also Law, 349-50.

[71] Frauwallner, 8-9.

understand why those who followed Buddhaghosa would begin laboring in the field of compendia and summaries.

There is another rather striking bit of evidence that points to the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* as a faithful preservation of the Abhidhamma textual tradition: Anuruddha's did not introduce any new content to the material. The *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* is a compendium, not a commentary. So if we look at the actual *content* of the work and compare it to the content of the textual material that came before it, no innovations are evident.[72] In this way, Anuruddha's text, though it was composed in the eighth century at the earliest, falls under Erich Frauwallner's classification of ancient abhidharma efforts as *formal* or *formalistic scholasticism*. Frauwallner writes:

> The term "scholasticism" springs to mind as a characterization of this [the abhidharma] method. However, it is scholasticism of a special kind. I have described scholasticism in Indian philosophy elsewhere as a form of philosophizing that does not start out from a direct perception of things but is based instead on given concepts, which it develops into a system. However, in terms of content, nothing new is created. It remains the same, merely being considered from continually new aspects and presented in ever new forms.[73]

Frauwallner's phrase "new forms" does not refer to any deviation from the preference of lists. Rather, it refers to constant reexaminations of and expansions on the original material. According to Frauwallner, the purpose of this method was to

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[72] See Bhikkhu Bodhi's comments on the contents of the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* in Anuruddha (2002), 18-20.

[73] Frauwallner, 7-8.

preserve carefully what the Buddha taught by considering it from as many angles as possible. This description bears directly on the method employed by Anuruddha in his work. It helps us to understand Anuruddha as both a preserver and an innovator. Anuruddha did not add to what he inherited from prior Abhidhamma scholars. And he made use of the same formalistic system by which they, presumably, fashioned an entire new *Piṭaka*, the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*, out of key terms found in the *Sutta Piṭaka*.

The *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* as Innovation in Abhidhamma

Though he did not add to the content of the material he inherited, he did systematize the material in a new way. Anuruddha's innovation is his reorganization of the material. Thus, in the examination of the *Sangaha* that follows, my method for discerning Anuruddha's particular vision of Abhidhamma is to look at the central quality (or qualities) used to reorient the inherited material. In other words, in keeping with Frauwallner's ideas on formalistic scholasticism, I am asking the question *What terms did Anuruddha use to guide his reexamination of the Abhidhamma material?* Furthermore, in the case of the *Sangaha*, our understanding of Anuruddha's conception is further clarified when we look closely at the texts from which Anuruddha drew his material.

Book One of the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*, the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, is the book to which the *Sangaha* is most indebted for its content. Generally speaking, the

Sangaha is a brilliant resystematization of the material found in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*. When we step back and look at the overall organization of each work—the movement of the chapters—a parallel ordering of the general elements becomes evident, as well as a shared content. Book I of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* deals with the arising of consciousness, and is organized into three parts.[74] Similarly, the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha*'s first three chapters deal with the structure of consciousness.[75] Book II of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* covers the various material forms (*rupa*). Similarly we find that, after a two-chapter interlude of commentarial material, Anuruddha addresses the arising of material forms. The contents of the last three Books of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, which introduce modes of interaction between the various constituents (*dhammas*), are covered by Anuruddha in the chapters that follow his treatment of materiality. So it is evident that Anuruddha looked to the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* for the ordering of his chapters.

However, Anuruddha's adaptation becomes clear once we begin looking at the actual organization and presentation of states of consciousness and their constituents in the *Sangaha* versus what is found in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*. The first three books of the *Dhammasaṅganī* divide mind states (*citta*)[76] according to whether

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[74] I am using the headings of C.A.F. Rhys Davids in *Buddhist Manual of Psychological Ethics (Dhammasanganī)*.

[75] See Anuruddha (2002), 19, 23-148.

[76] A *citta* is one unimaginably brief moment of consciousness, or awareness of an object. Our conscious experience of reality is composed of an innumerable succession of such moments. Each of these *citta* is

they are *kusala* (clever, skilful, expert; good, right, meritorious), *akusala* (improper, wrong, bad), or *avyākata* (undecided, not declared, indeterminate).[77] In other words, the organization is based on the ethical qualities of the mind states. In the Introduction to her translation, C.A.F. Rhys Davids writes that the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* is "in great part an analysis of the psychological and psycho-physical data of ethics."[78] Shortly after, Rhys Davids elaborates on her description of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*:

> The object [of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*] is not so much to extend knowledge as to ensure mutual consistency in the *in*tension of ethical notions, and to systematize and formulate the theories and practical mechanism of intellectual and moral progress scattered in profusion throughout the Suttas.[79]

Let us look more closely at the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*'s organization and how it relates to this characterization on the part of Rhys Davids. Book I of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* addresses "The Uprising of Mind (*Cittuppāda-kaṇḍaṃ*)".[80] The three parts of this book are arranged into Good States of Consciousness (*kusala cittāni*), Bad States of Consciousness (*akusala cittāni*), and Indeterminate States of Consciousness (*dhammā avyakātā*)—aspects that relate to the ethical quality of an action. Here, the term *ethical* can be understood to mean states of mind that are understood to be

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affected by one or more mental factors (*cetasikā*), such as greed, compassion, or concentration. For more on the term *citta*, see Gethin (1998), 210-13.

[77] The Pali Text Society's Online Pali-English Dictionary. http://dsal.uchicago.edu/dictionaries/pali/.

[78] *Buddhist Manual of Psychological Ethics (Dhammasangaṇī)*, xxxii.

[79] *Buddhist Manual of Psychological Ethics (Dhammasangaṇī)*, xxxiii (italics hers).

[80] *Buddhist Manual of Psychological Ethics (Dhammasangaṇī)*, 1.

conducive to the Buddhist path of liberation. The constituents (*dhammas*) are then arranged into subgroups within each of these three broad groups. Thus, the author(s) of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, whoever he (or they) may be, chose the ethical dimension of the mind state as the Polaris around which all other phenomena in Book I would rotate.

I now allege that Rhys Davids' characterization cannot be based solely on the content of the work, but rather on the organization described above. My reasons for saying this, and its importance, will become clearer as we move into Anuruddha's work. For Anuruddha's innovation was that he changed this central organizing principle from the ethical quality of mind states to the domain of experience in which mind states may be encountered. Thereby his work demonstrates that the material in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* could have been organized around any number of aspects of the constituents (*dhammas*), only one of which was the ethical quality of the mind states (*cittas*). Let us look more carefully at how Anuruddha reorganized this material. Anuruddha's Polaris is made clear within the first three verses of his work. In verse one we find the obligatory salutation to the Triple Gem—the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha. Then, in verse two Anuruddha establishes the organization of the material into a "fourfold ultimate reality". Verse two reads,

> *Tattha vutt'ābhidhammatthā catudhā paramattho*
> *Cittaṃ cetasikaṃ rūpaṃ nibbānam iti sabbathā* [81]

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[81] Anurudhha, Abhidhammatthasangaha, ed. the Venerable Saddhatissa (London: Pali Text Society, 1989), 1.

> The things contained in the Abhidhamma, spoken of therein, are altogether fourfold from the standpoint of ultimate reality: consciousness, mental factors, matter, and Nibbāna[82]

The first three of these categories— consciousness (*citta*), mental factors (*cetasika*), and matter (*rūpa*)—serve as a superstructure for the chapters that follow. However, the classification by which Anuruddha organizes the remainder of his work is found in verse three. Verse three reads:

> *Tattha cittaṃ tāva catubbidhaṃ hoti: (i) kāmāvacaraṃ; (ii) rūpāvacaraṃ; (iii) arūpāvacaraṃ; (iv) lokuttarañ cā ti.*[83]
>
> Of them, consciousness, firstly, is fourfold: (i) sense-sphere consciousness; (ii) fine-material sphere consciousness; (iii) immaterial-sphere consciousness; (iv) supramundane consciousness.[84]

Here, consciousness is broken into four categories. Let us look at how these four categories shape the rest of the *Sangaha* and then I will characterize Anuruddha's system as Rhys Davids did the system of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*. Beginning with verse three and continuing until the end of the first chapter, the Compendium of Consciousness (*cittasangahavibhāga*), is an analysis of one hundred and twenty-one types of mind states (*cittas*)—the first aspect of the fourfold reality. This means that Chapter One of the *Sangaha* is a dramatic reorganization of

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[82] Bhikkhu Bodhi's translation in Anuruddha (1995), 25.

[83] Anuruddha (1989), 1.

[84] Bhikkhu Bodhi translates in Anuruddha (1995), 27.

the contents of Book I of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*.[85] However, unlike the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, the first classification of the *cittas* in the *Sangaha*, found in verse three, is made according to the *avacara*, or "sphere"[86], in which they are experienced: sense sphere (*kāmāvacara*), final material sphere (*rūpāvacara*), immaterial sphere (*arūpāvacara*), or supramundane (*lokuttara*). Sense-sphere consciousness (*kāmāvacaracitta*) is then divided into unwholesome (*akusala*), rootless (*ahetuka*), and beautiful (*sobhana*) states of consciousness. These in turn are subdivided based on various qualities. Fine-material-sphere consciousness (*rūpāvacaracitta*) is broken up according to the five jhānas[87] and the qualities (such as zest—*pīti*) and experiences (such as happiness—*sukha*) that accompany them. Similar treatments of *arūpalokacittāni* and *lokuttaracittāni* follow.

The organization established in verse three carries into Chapter Two, the Compendium of Mental Factors (*cetasikasangahavibhāga*). Therein the mental factors are grouped according to the type of consciousness in which they can possibly be encountered. Thus we find,

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[85] For Bhikkhu Bodhi's comparison of the contents see Anuruddha (1995), 19.

[86] Bhikkhu Bodhi's translation; Wujeratne and Gethin also translate as "sphere".

[87] A *jhana* is a meditative state characterized by unimpeded concentration. In other words, it is a state in which the mind of the meditator becomes fully absorbed and engrossed in the selected object of attention. In the model found in the suttas, there are four such levels of meditative absorption. Attainment of the first *jhāna* is the first major cornerstone on the Theravāda path of meditation. An explanation of the discrepancy between the five-jhāna Abhidhamma model and the four-jhāna model found in many other passages of the Pāli Canon is beyond the scope of this study. See Frauwallner, 57-59.

...(ii) Vitakko tāva dvipañcaviññāṇa-vajjita-kāmāvacaracittesu c'eva ekādasasu paṭhamajjhānacittesu cā ti paññāsa cittesu uppajjati.[88]

Initial application arises in fifty-five types of consciousness: in all types of sense-sphere consciousness except two sets of five-fold sense consciousness... and also in the eleven types of second jhāna consciousness.[89]

Just as in Chapter One, the categories and classification used in this chapter of the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* are drawn from the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*. But their order and organization is changed so that, as we have seen, the categories *kusala*[90], *akusala*, and *avyākata* have been placed under categories that, in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, were included under them. As the quote above demonstrates, these new predominant categories are the *avacaras*.

Chapter Three, the Compendium of the Miscellaneous (*pakiṇṇasangahavibhāga*), classifies types of consciousness along with their factors into six categories: root (*hetu*), feeling (*vedanā*), function (*kicca*), door (*dvāra*), object (*ārammaṇa*), and base (*vatthu*). Therein we read...

...Somanassasahagatacittāni pana lobhamūlāni cattarī, dvādasa kāmācvacarasobhanāni, sukhasantīraṇa-hasanāni ca dve ti aṭṭhārasa kāmāvacaracittāni c'eva paṭhama-dutiya-tatiya-catutthajjhāna-sankhātāni catucattālīsa mahaggata-lokuttaracittāni cā ti dvāsaṭṭhividhāni bhavanti.[91]

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[88] Anuruddha (1989), 7.

[89] Bhikkhu Bodhi translated in Anuruddha (1995), 91.

[90] The Pali Text Society's Online Pali-English Dictionary http://dsal.uchicago.edu/dictionaries/pali/.

[91] Anuruddha (1989), 12.

> There are sixty-two kinds of consciousness accompanied by joy, namely: (a) eighteen types of sense-sphere consciousness—four rooted in greed, twelve types of sense-sphere beautiful consciousness, the two (rootless) types, i.e. joyful investigating and smiling consciousness... (b) forty-four types of sublime and supramundane consciousness pertaining to the first, second, third, and fourth jhānas.[92]

Again, we see that the categories established in verse three of Chapter One are used to orient the rest of the material. And so they are throughout the remainder of the *Sangaha*.

Let us summarize the discussion regarding Anuruddha's resystematization so far. Anuruddha reorganized the material he took from the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* in a significant way. With verse two, he establishes the major sections of his work. Verse three, meanwhile, establishes the orientation of phenomena within each section. This means that Anuruddha has rearranged the phenomena in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* so that the primary emphasis is not on the ethical quality of the *cittas*, but rather on the domain of experience (*avacara*) in which a given *citta* may be encountered.

This point, Anuruddha's use of the *avacara* as the primary device of orientation, is what is most significant to my argument. An article on Buddhist cosmology called "Cosmology and Meditation", written by Rupert Gethin, can help clarify the significance of the term *avacara*. In this piece, Gethin discusses the "equivalence or parallels in Buddhist thought between psychology on the one hand

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[92] Bhikkhu Bodhi translates in Anuruddha (1995), 116-17.

and cosmology on the other."[93] Gethin's article makes clear the distinction between the term *avacara* as a term denoting consciousness and the term *dhātu* as a term denoting cosmology. In Book XVIII of the *Vibhaṅga*, we find an analysis of *dhammas* that is similar to Anuruddha's. Therein, a wide variety of phenomena are analyzed according to the plane (*dhātu*) in which they arise—*kāmadhatu*, *rūpadhātu*, or *ārūpadhātu*.[94] However, Anuruddha's use of the term *avacara* signifies that his system is centered on individual experience, rather than cosmology. The point of Gethin's article is to make clear the similarities between Buddhist cosmology and psychology. But in the context of Anuruddha's manual, this distinction is quite significant. For the primary division in the Theravāda model of *avacaras* is the boundary that exists between ordinary mind states (*kāmāvacaracittāni*) and those mind states that can only be accessed through the attainment and development of meditative absorption (*rūpāvacaracittāni* and so on). In other words, by use of the term *avacara*, Anuruddha's initial mode of classification in the *Sangaha* is the separation of ordinary mind states and those which one may only experience after having attained the first *jhāna*. *Jhānas* are meditative states characterized by deep levels of concentration (*samādhi*). All other aspects of the Abhidhamma material are aligned around states of consciousness as they relate to meditative development.

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[93] Gethin, Rupert. "Cosmology and Meditation: *from the Agganna-Sutta to the Mahayana*", (*History of Religions,* Vol. 36, No. 3, Feb 1997, 183-217), 188.

[94] *Book of Analysis (Vibhanga)*, translated by Pathamakyaw Ashin Thittila, (Oxford: Pāli Text Society, 1988), 514-39. For the Pāli see *Vibhanga* (edited by Caroline A. F. Rhys-Davids. London: Pāli Text Society, 1978), 404-20.

Furthermore, these mind states are clearly stratified. Ordinary mind states are arranged by their degree of purity. The *jhānic* mind states that follow these are ordered by levels of attainment. Thus, if we limit our focus to verse three[95], we may characterize Anuruddha's new systematization as a clearly stratified model of liberation in which meditation is the only effectual means of liberation. Anuruddha extracted from the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* a guide for advancement in the practice of meditation.

To better understand the need for such a scheme, we can once again look to the *Sutta-Piṭaka*. In the *Brahmajāla Sutta* we see the enunciation of many potential challenges to the preservation the Buddha's model of meditative attainment. This challenge stems from the misinterpretation of meditative experience. Consider the following excerpt from a section of this sutta called "The Sixty-Two Kinds of Wrong Views".[96]

> "There are, monks, some ascetics and Brahmins who are Eternalists, who proclaim the eternity of the self and the world in four ways. On what basis, on what grounds do they do so?
>
> Wrong view number 1: "Here, monks, a certain ascetic or Brahmin has by means of effort, exertion, application, earnestness and right attention attained to such a state of mental concentration that he thereby recalls past existences – one birth, two births, three, four, five… several thousand, several

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[95] I feel it necessary to set this limitation, because any number of means—devotion, merit-making and so on—could be argued for in the attainment of higher and higher sense-sphere mind states (*kāmāvacaracittāni*).

[96] Buddhist Information of North America, "Brahmajala Sutta", http://www.buddhistinformation.com/ida_b_wells_memorial_sutra_library/brahmajala_sutta.htm.

> hundred thousand births. 'There my name was so-and-so, my clan was so-and-so... And having passed away from there, I arose here.' Thus he remembers past lives, their conditions and details. And he says: 'The self and the world are eternal, barren like a mountain peak, set firmly as a post. These beings rush round, circulate, pass away and re-arise, but this remains eternally. Why so? I have by means of effort, exertion, attained to such a state of mental concentration that I have thereby recalled various past existences. That is how I know the self and the world are eternal...' That is the first way in which some ascetics and Brahmins proclaim the eternity of the self and the world."

The experience of a deep meditative state, as described by this *sutta*, is subject to a variety of misinterpretations. And a misinterpretation such as the "self and the world are eternal... set firmly as a post" strikes against two central doctrines of the Theravāda tradition: *anicca* (impermanence) and *anatta* (non-self) as fundamental characteristics of all phenomena within *saṃsāra*. However, the misconception, or "wrong view" discussed in the *Brahmajāla Sutta* could be circumvented by a clear and unambiguous map of meditative attainment in which each level leading to Nibbāna conforms to the principles of the doctrine. Such a scheme provides meditators with doctrinal terms by which they may interpret their experience.

Anuruddha's Practical Abhidhamma Canon

This meditative emphasis on the part of Anuruddha becomes even more apparent when we look at the materials included and excluded in his manual. Here Blackburn's distinction between the *formal* and *practical* canon becomes invaluable.

For when we apply these terms to our analysis of the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha*, we see that the formal Theravāda canon is not the same as Anuruddha's practical Abhidhamma canon. According to Bhikkhu Bodhi, the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* draws from only four of the seven books of the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*: the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, the *Vibhaṅga*, the *Paṭṭhāna*, and the *Puggalapaññatti*.[97] This fact is rather significant when we consider that Chapter IX of the *Sangaha* is little more than a summary of the major points regarding meditation practice found in Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga*. Of the multitude of commentarial material that may have been included, that which was included (or "preserved") in Anuruddha's Abhidhamma manual was Buddhaghosa's compilation of instructions for meditation. This indicates that, in the mind of Anuruddha, there can be found in the *Visuddhimagga* material relating to Abhidhamma that is more relevant than that which is found in certain books of the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* itself, namely the *Katthavathu*, the *Dhātukathā*, and the *Yamaka*. Anuruddha's work, therefore, indicates an effort to summarize only those aspects of the textual Abhidhamma tradition that conform to his own conception of Abhidhamma and its role in the Theravāda tradition. As we have seen, this conception centers on meditation. Other texts that speak to this conception, though they may not be included in the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*, are brought into the sphere of Anuruddha's Abhidhamma.

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[97] Anuruddha (1995),18-20.

The *Sangaha*'s Popularity

In a discussion of the Abhidhamma commentary tradition, Bhikkhu Bodhi states that "Out of the beams and rafters of the canonical Abhidhamma, the commentaries construct a comprehensive and philosophically viable edifice that can be used for several purposes..."[98] Though his work was not a commentary, this is exactly what Anuruddha did. He gave the mass of Abhidhamma material a clear and logical purpose. Chapter I of his manual establishes an analytical structure based on meditative attainment that proceeds through the remainder of the work. And Chapter IX, which will discuss in greater detail shortly, summarizes various methods of attainment in concentration (*samādhi*) and insight (*vipassana*) meditation, taken from the *Visuddhamagga*. The *Sangaha* could readily be used to guide students in the practice of meditation.

Anuruddha also condensed the Abhidhamma material considerably—to fifty pages, in fact—by creating categories such as "universals" (*sabbacittasādhāranā*),[99] a category created by him to indicate mental factors that are present in all moments of consciousness, in his enunciation of mental factors (*cetasikā*). In the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*'s analyses of states of consciousness, the constituents of that state are listed in their entirety, including mental factors that are shared by all states of consciousness. This accounts for certain descriptive phrases such as "tedious

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[98] Anuruddha (1995), xii.

[99] Anuruddha (1995), 77.

prolixity" and "long-winded treatments", that we find in Erich Frauwallner's discussion of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*.[100] But in his analysis of mental factors, Anuruddha employs terms such as "universals." Such compression makes the *Sangaha* ideal for memorization, transmission, and ,hence, preservation of the complex Theravāda model of reality.

I now submit that the popularity of the *Sangaha* is a result of this practical orientation. The *Sangaha* became so popular precisely because it gave the vast mass of Abhidhamma material an unambiguous purpose that was readily apparent. In it, Anuruddha also rendered the Abhidhamma tradition into a form that was easy to memorize and therefore easy to transmit. Earlier, I cited a statement made by Bhikkhu Bodhi in which he attributed the *Sangaha*'s popularity to Anuruddha's ability to capture "the essentials" of the Abhidhamma system and to arrange them "in a format suitable for easy comprehension..."[101] This praise for Anuruddha is well deserved. However, given what we have seen in this study, we can nuance Bodhi's statement by adding that Anuruddha's manual has remained popular because of its practical orientation, or, more specifically, because of its orientation as a guide for meditative attainment.

Now we see where the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* stands relative to the prior tradition. Anuruddha realigned the material found in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* so that his

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[100] Frauwallner, 8.

[101] Anuruddha (1995), 1.

analysis of mind states, and consequently all other phenomena that follow, centered on degrees of meditative attainment. His work also drew heavily from a text that addressed meditation, but did not fall within the formal canon of Abhidhamma scripture. In the chapter that follows, I will look at the influence Anuruddha's work had on future representations of the Abhidhamma tradition and the Theravāda tradition in general.

Chapter Four—The *Practicality* of the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha*

In the final section of Chapter Three, I discussed the practical orientation of the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha*. I argued that it is purposeful and, unlike the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*, easy to memorize. This helps us account for its popularity. In this chapter I would like to discuss further the practicality of the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha*. However, in this chapter I use this term in the sense that Blackburn develops in her groundbreaking essay "Looking for the Vinaya".[102] In other words, I want to investigate the influence that the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha*, a text that stands outside the formal Theravāda canon, has had on representations of the *Tipiṭaka*-based tradition. I begin by looking at how the *Sangaha* operates in the practical canon of Ledi Sayadaw, a renowned Burmese monk of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. We will see that the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* has, in fact, helped shape Ledi Sayadaw's understanding of one important aspect of the Theravāda tradition: the practice of *vipassana* meditation. Following this examination of Ledi Sayadaw's work, I look at three modern characterizations of the ancient Abhidhamma tradition. Each of these treatments characterizes the efforts of ancient abhidharma scholars as an attempt to construct a guide to the practice of meditation. Ultimately, I challenge these characterizations of the ancient tradition, arguing that

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[102] See Chapter One—From "Early Buddhism" to the "Theravāda Tradition".

they are the result of a retrospective application of the innovations made by Anuruddha. In other words, they interpret the ancient abhidharma system in light of significant changes that occurred long after the Abhidhamma texts were compiled and closed.

Ledi Sayadaw and the *Vipassanā Dīpanī*

Maung Tat Khaung was born in 1846 in the Burmese village Saing-Pyin Khee.[103] He was ordained at age fifteen. At eighteen, he returned to lay life, having become frustrated with his studies, which he felt were "too narrowly restricted to the *Tipiṭaka*."[104] He studied the *Vedas* with the intention of making a living through fortune telling. However, after many years of Vedic study, he abandoned this aspiration and returned to monastic life. In 1886, he founded a monastery in the Ledi forest, just north of Monywa. It is here that he came by the name that he will be remembered for—Ledi Sayadaw[105], or the great teacher of Ledi forest.

In his lifetime, Ledi Sayadaw published over seventy manuscripts, some written in Pāli, others in Burmese. In his studies he concentrated on Pāli grammar and Abhidhamma philosophy. But he was particularly well known for his knowledge

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[103] Ledi Sayadaw. *The Manuals of Dhamma*, (Maharashtra, India: Vipassana Research Institute, 2001), iii.

[104] Vipassana Research Institute (VRI), *Sayagi U Ba Khin Journal*. (India: Vipassana Research Institute, 1994), 75

[105] *Saya* is burmese for teacher, *daw* or *taw* means great, See Ledi Sayadaw, 1.

of the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha*.[106] He wrote a Burmese translation of the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha*, called the *Paramattha-Saṅkhepa*. The work for which he is best remembered is a commentary on the *Sangaha* called the *Paramatthadīpanī-Ṭīkā*.[107] This work received a good bit of attention within the field of Burmese Abhidhamma studies because in it the Sayadaw pointed to over three hundred instances in the popular *Vibhāvinī-Ṭīkā*[108] where he claimed that errors or misinterpretations had occurred. These corrections were met with both enthusiasm and scorn.

Ledi Sayadaw was instrumental in the formation and dissemination of the Burmese meditation movement that spread beyond Southeast Asia into India, America, and many other parts of the world. This movement emphasizes the practice of *vipassana* meditation, which I will say more about later in this chapter, by both monastic and lay Buddhists. Influential lay meditation teachers such as Sayagi U Ba Khin and S. N. Goenka cite Ledi Sayadaw as the first teacher in their lineage. Much of the Sayadaw's work centers on *vipassana*. In 1915 he attended the annual meeting of the Society for Spreading the Buddha's Teaching in Foreign Countries. At this time, he wrote a manual called the *Vipassanā Dīpanī*, or "The Manual of Insight".[109] This work was offered as an "Outline of the Exercises of Insight for the

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[106] VRI, 75.

[107] Anuruddha (1995), 18; Ledi Sayadaw, v-vi.

[108] The popular commentary on the Abhidhammattha-Sangaha mentioned in Chapter One.

[109] Sayadaw, vii.

Followers of the Buddha in Europe."[110] In this manual, the Sayadaw focuses on the practice of *vipassana* meditation, or the development of insight.

Ledi Sayadaw's *Vipassana-Dīpanī* provides an excellent example of how the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* influenced later representations of the Theravāda tradition. To begin with, in the *Vipassanā Dīpanī*, Ledi Sayadaw makes use of the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* more than any other source. In fact, upon close examination it becomes apparent that the Sayadaw's actual instructions for the development of insight are little more than a commentary on the second half of Chapter IX of the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha*. But before looking at the manual in detail, it is necessary to articulate the general purpose and path of Theravāda meditation.

To begin to understand the role of meditation in the Theravāda tradition, we can look in the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* at the analysis of those states of mind that are unwholesome (*akusala*). In these mind states we find one mental factor (*cetasika*) that is common to all: delusion (*moha*).[111] This term *moha* is synonymous with *avijja* [112], or ignorance, which is the first of the Twelve Links of Dependent Origination that lead to old age, suffering, and death. According to the Theravāda tradition it is our ignorance of the true nature of ourselves and the world that keeps us bound to actions and views that inevitably lead to suffering (*dukkha*). As the chain

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[110] Sayadaw, vii & 30.

[111] Anuruddha (1995), 32-40.

[112] The Pali Text Society's Online Pali-English Dictionary. http://dsal.uchicago.edu/dictionaries/pali/.

of Dependent Origination demonstrates, to dispel this ignorance is to dispel the primary cause that brings about the effect of suffering. Meditation is the means by which one comes to perceive reality as it truly is. The path of meditation begins with the development of concentration (*samādhi*) and progresses with the development of insight (*vipassana*). The term *vipassana* comes from the Sanskrit root √*pass,* meaning "to see." The word is typically understood to mean "inward vision, insight, intuition, introspection".[113] This type of meditative development is coupled with another type called *śamatha*, or calm. *Śamatha* and *vipassana* meditation are meant to develop the qualities of concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*) respectively.[114] Calming meditation is thought to bring about the sort of mental one-pointedness that is necessary to engage in meditation that brings about insight.[115] This aspect of development on the path—the development of insight—is what Ledi Sayadaw discusses in his manual.

How does the Sayadaw represent this practice? Given that its author was a master of Abhidhamma philosophy, the content and form of the *Vipassanā Dīpanī* are not surprising. Therein we find lists such as an "analysis of things in the ultimate sense," just as we found in the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* and the *Dhammasaṅganī*. In fact, U Nyana's translation of this manual reads much the same as Rupert

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[113] T. W. Rhys-Davids and William Stede, *Pāli-English Dictionary*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2003), 627.

[114] Gethin (1998), 174-75.

[115] Anuruddha (1995), 329.

Gethin's translation of the *Vibhāvinī-Tīkā*[116]. In both we find the following pattern: the author presents a list and then provides commentary on the significance of the list. The *Vipassanā Dīpanī*'s lists begin with an enumeration of three kinds of *vipallāsa*, or hallucinations. Other lists include "The Two *Gati* (or Transmigrations),"[117] "The Two *Saccas* or the Two Truths,"[118] and "The Three *Pariññās* (or Profound Knowledges)".[119]

The *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* as a Practical Text in the *Vipassanā Dīpanī*

The practicality, in Blackburn's sense, of the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* becomes clear when we start to look more closely at the lists themselves. In the manual, Ledi Sayadaw puts forward approximately fifteen central lists, around which he develops several other subordinate lists. Eight of these central lists are taken directly from the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha*, and presented with Ledi Sayadaw's commentary on their meaning and significance. His model for ultimate phenomena looks nothing like the ethical arrangement of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*. It is, however, only a slight variation of Anuruddha's model. First, he divides ultimate phenomena according to their *material* and *mental* qualities.[120] He then lists the various material phenomena using the same categories that were put forward by Anuruddha. Then,

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[116] See Chapter One—The *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha*.

[117] Ledi Sayadaw, 4.

[118] Ledi Sayadaw, 6.

[119] Ledi Sayadaw, 18.

[120] Ledi Sayadaw, 8.

he divides mental phenomena into three kinds—*Citta*, *Cetasika*, and *Nibbāna*. Not surprisingly, in Ledi Sayadaw's manual, *Cittas* are divided according to *avacara*—*Kāma*-consciousness, *Rūpa*-consciousness, *Arūpa*-consciousness, and *Lokuttara*-consciousness—just as in the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha*. We have seen the significance of this arrangement in Chapter Three of this study. This organizational scheme, first put forward by Anuruddha, amounts to a resystematization of the material found in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* so that a stratified model of meditative attainment is the main organizing principle.

The significance of Ledi Sayadaw's use of Anuruddha's lists becomes clear when we emphasize this fact: The *Vipassanā Dīpanī* was not written as a guide to Abhidhamma philosophy, but rather as a guide to the practice of *vipassana* meditation. In fact, the term "Abhidhamma" is used but once in the entire manual, and then with little relevance.[121] With this understanding, it becomes clear what a central role the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha*, and Anuruddha's innovations to the Abhidhamma material play in Ledi Sayadaw's understanding of the tradition. As we saw in Chapter Three, Anuruddha's manual placed meditation at the very heart of the Abhidhamma tradition. All other aspects of the tradition were aligned around meditative attainment. Anuruddha took this perception of the Abhidhamma tradition to such an extreme degree that in his text he excluded texts from the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* in favor of a non-Abhidhamma text that addressed meditative development.

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[121] Ledi Sayadaw, 28.

Anuruddha's innovations made the role of Abhidhamma unambiguous. At least seven hundred years later, Ledi Sayadaw wrote a manual in which he discussed his understanding of the development of insight and at the heart of his understanding are Anuruddha's lists. Because of Anuruddha's innovations, in the Sayadaw's understanding of the Theravāda tradition, the distinction between Abhidhamma and meditation has been effaced. We see in Ledi Sayadaw's manual, just as in Anuruddha's manual, the presupposition that Abhidhamma is intended to assist in meditative attainment. My point is that it is Anurrudha's innovation in the Abhidhamma material that makes Ledi Sayadaw's conception of the practice of insight (*vipassana*) possible. Ledi Sayadaw's understanding of the development of insight is not only shaped by Anuruddha's reformulation of the lists, but by Anuruddha's vision of the role of Abhidhamma in the Theravāda tradition.

Abhidharma, Abhidhamma, and Meditation

Since its conception in ancient India, there has been a strong presence of meditation in abhidharma philosophy. Anuruddha's continuity of content[122] makes clear the following striking statistic: 75% of the mind states[123] that are analyzed in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* are inaccessible to anyone who has not attained at least the first stage of profound meditative absorption (*jhāna*). The other books of the

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[122] See Chapters Three of this study, on Frauwallner's "formalistic scholasticism."

[123] That is if we consider *kāmavacara*, *rūpāvacara*, *arūpāvacara*, and *lokuttara* to be equal fourths.

Abhidhamma-Piṭaka, particularly the two most revered—the *Vibhaṅga* and the *Paṭṭhāna*—are further and alternate analyses of the phenomena articulated by the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*. Thus we see that meditation plays a central role in the framework and development of the entire *Abhidhamma-Piṭaka*. And there are some Abhidhamma specialists who have characterized ancient abhidharma activities as attempts to develop a guide for meditation. Given what we have just seen regarding the influence of Anuruddha's innovations on Ledi Sayadaw's representation of the development of insight, I would like to examine this characterization of the ancient, pre-*Sangaha* Abhidhamma tradition. According to some Abhidhamma specialists, the role of ancient abhidharma as a guide to the practice of meditation is *the* defining aspect of the tradition. In this section, I challenge this characterization. I argue that the characterization of ancient abhidharma scholars as striving to produce a guide for meditation is misleading. It is based on *categories* and *developments* that emerged long after these ancient abhidharma efforts had ended. These categories include the distinction between scholar monks and meditating monks, which was cemented by Buddhaghosa in the fifth century CE. The developments include Anuruddha's innovations to the Abhidhamma material in the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha*.

In his contribution to Karl Potter's *Abhidharma Buddhism to 150 A.D.*, Noble Ross Reat states that "the Theravāda and the Sarvāstivāda developed in the respective Abhidharmas a rigorous systematic guide to the practice of meditation."[124]

According to Nyanaponika's Thera's book *Abhidhamma Studies,* an understanding of the role of meditation is essential to an understanding of Abhidhamma. The following passage summarizes the stance taken by Bhikkhu Bodhi and Nyanaponika Thera in Nyanponika's work *Abhidhamma Studies*.

> For wisdom or insight to arise, the meditator must learn to suspend the normal constructive, synthesizing activity of the mind responsible for weaving the reams of immediate sensory data into coherent narrative patterns revolving around persons, entries, and their attributes. Instead, the meditator must adopt a radically phenomenological stance, attending mindfully to each successive occasion of experience exactly as it presents itself in its sheer immediacy.[125]

According to this interpretation, the phenomena articulated in the Abhidhamma scheme are not intended just to be memorized, but internalized. They are meant to displace the mind's habitual use of conventional terms and concepts to classify reality so that what is perceived is that which is ultimately true. The process by which this occurs requires careful continuous attention "to each successive occasion of experience as it presents itself in its sheer immediacy."[126]

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[124] Noble Ross Reat, 56.

[125] Nyanaponika Thera, XVII-XVIII.

[126] Nyanaponika Thera, XVIII.

In his essay "The Dhamma Theory: [127] Cornerstone of the Abhidhamma Tradition", Dr. Y. Karunadasa writes,

> [T]he *dhamma* theory was intended from the start to be more than a mere hypothetical scheme. *It arose from the need to make sense out of experiences in meditation and was designed as a guide for meditative contemplation and insight.* The Buddha had taught that to see the world correctly is to see—not persons and substances—but bare phenomena (*suddhadhamma*) arising and perishing in accordance with their conditions. The task the Abhidhamma specialists set themselves was to specify exactly what these 'bare phenomena' are and to show how they relate to other 'bare phenomena' to make up our "common sense" picture of the world.[128]

So characterizations of ancient Abhidhamma as an effort to produce a guide to the path of meditation are not rare within the Theravāda tradition.

I will now argue that these characterizations of ancient abhidharma as efforts to produce a guide for meditation are misguided. They are best understood as instances of Charles Hallisey's concept of *intercultural mimesis*.[129] Again, this term indicates a case in which some aspect of a culture has influenced a certain academic representation of that culture. Modern scholastic attempts, such as those made by Nyanaponika Thera and Dr. Y. Karunadasa, to understand the ultimate

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[127] This is the theory of the existence of indivisible bits of reality that cannot be further divided or analyzed. This theory is the cornerstone Abhidhamma anaysis. For more see Dr. Y. Karunadasa's "The Dhamma Theory: *Philosophical Cornerstone of the Abhidhamma*", (The Wheel Publication No. 412/413. Accessed on *BuddhaSana: A Webpage by Binh Anson*. http://www.saigon.com/~anson/ebud/ebdha227.htm on 09/16/2005). Or see Rupert Gethin's excellent article "He who sees *dhamma* sees *dhammas*: dhamma in early Buddhism" (*Journal of Indian Philosophy* 32, 2004), 513-42.

[128] Karunadasa, second paragraph.

[129] See Chapter One—From "Early Buddhism" to the "Theravāda Tradition."

origins and purpose of ancient abhidharma philosophy have been influenced by the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha*. As we have seen, the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* represents but one particular understanding of Abhidhamma philosophy and its role in the Theravāda tradition. Its popularity can be seen as instrumental in the dissemination of this understanding of the role of Abhidhamma.

If we broaden our consideration of textual sources and historical developments, the characterizations cited above become problematic. To begin with, I would like to examine an essay by Jeffrey Samuels called "Establishing the Basis of the Sāsana"[130]. In this contribution to *Approaching the Dhamma*, Samuels explores the recent emphasis on ritual in the training of novice monks in Śri Lanka. At the beginning of his essay, he describes a striking passage from the *Manorathapūraṇī*, Buddhaghosa's commentary on the *Aṅguttara Nikaya*. In this section, Buddhaghosa tells a story about a debate within the monastic community that took place in the first century BCE. Samuels writes:

> The subject of the debate centered around the question of what constituted the foundation or basis of the Buddhist religion (*sāsana*). While certain rag-clothed (ascetic?) monks (*paṃsukūlikatherā*) argued that the basis of the *sāsana* was practice (*paṭipatti*), the *dhamma*-preaching monks (*dhammakathikātherā*) argued that the basis was learning (*pariyatti*). The commentary, attributed to the famous *dhamma*-preaching monk and synthesizer Buddhaghosa, further reveals, not surprisingly, that the

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[130]Jeffrey Samuels, "Establishing the Basis of the Sāsana: Social Service and Ritual Performance in Contemporary Sri Lankan Monastic Training", (*Approaching the Dhamma*, edited by Anne Blackburn and Jeffrey Samuels. Seattle, WA: BPS Pariyatti Editions, 2003.)

dhammakathikātherā won the debate, thereby establishing study—or 'the burden of the book' (*ganthadura*)—as the basis of the *sāsana* over the path of practice, or the 'burden of meditation' (*vipassanādhura*).[131]

Buddhaghosa ends this section with the following passage:

> Evam eva āraddhavipassakānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ sate pi sahasse pi saṃvijjamāne pariyattiyā asati ariyamaggapaṭivedho nāma no hoti.[132]
>
> Even if a hundred or a thousand monks are proficient in *vipassanā*, if there are no monks with learning, there would cease to be realization or knowledge of the noble path.[133]

Samuels is able to cite the presence of this same sentiment in two other instances in the commentaries.[134] This passage by Buddhaghosa indicates a strong distinction between the activities of study (*ganthadhura*) and meditation (*vipassanādhura*). According to Wapola Rahula, this distinction arose in commentaries of the fifth century CE.[135] We certainly cannot imagine this strong bifurcation of effort, much less a dispute between the two extremes, to have had any real significance until

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[131] Samuels, 105.

[132] Buddhaghosa, *Manorathapūraṇī: Buddhaghosa's commentory on the Aṅguttaranikāya after the manuscript of Edmund Hardy.* (London: Pali Text Society, 1973), 93.

[133] Samuels' translation in Samuels, 105.

[134] Samuels, 122 ff.

[135] Walpola Rāhula. *History of Buddhism in Ceylon: the Anuradhapura period, 3d century BC--10th century AD.* (AD Colombo: MD Gunasena, 1966), 159-60. He writes: "Gantha-dhura or the vocation of 'books' denotes the learning and teaching of the dhamma, while vipassanā-dhura or vocation of meditation means reflecting on life as impermanent, suffering and without permanent entity. No such division of vocation is known to the original texts. Nor are the terms gantha-dhura and vipassanā-dhura known to the early texts. A knowledge of the dhamma as well as meditation was part and parcel of a monk´s life according to the original conception. This division is found only in the Pāli Commentaries of the 5th century A.C. [C.E.] and other non-canonical works. Acceptance of the new idea that learning is the basis of religion seems to have given rise to this innovation."

after the Buddha's death. For only in the Buddha's absence would the need for a carefully preserved textual corpus containing the teaching (*Sutta*) and the norms of the community (*Vinaya*) be emphasized. As I showed in Chapter Two, Frauwallner and Bronkhorst have demonstrated that by this time abhidharma efforts were well in place. Thus it is best for us to imagine the context of the generation of the first abhidharma lists as devoid of this sharp distinction between efforts in text versus efforts in meditation. Yet characterizations such as that of Karunadasa clearly place the *ganthadhura* aspect of ancient abhidharma efforts in a subordinate position to the *vipassanādhura* aspect. In other words, a characterization that places early abhidharma efforts squarely in the camp of *vipassanādhura* are misleading because they are made in a context in which this distinction between *ganthadhura* and *vipassanadhura* is far more relevant than it was in the context of ancient India.

Furthermore, let us suppose that these distinctions were prominent in ancient India. Still we encounter a discrepancy in characterizations of early abhidharma efforts as centered on meditation. These characterizations paint a picture of early abhidharma scholars who were rigorously involved in the deep investigation of internal realities. As Rupert Gethin points out in his critique of Schopen's work[136], the activities of scholar monks leave traces in the form of manuals and treatises. But the activities of those pursuing a life of *viapassanadhura* leave little behind. Which type of evidence do we find that survives from the activities of ancient abhidharma

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[136] Gethin (1998), 105.

scholars? The 1956 Burmese edition of the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*, which was the product of the Sixth Great Council, amounts to twelve volumes and almost 5,000 pages.[137] One Siamese edition of the *Paṭṭhāna*, Book Seven of the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*, is over 6,000 pages long.[138] According to the work of Erich Frauwallner and Johannes Bronkhorst, a significant portion of this material was developed within three hundred years after the Buddha's death.[139] The evidence left to us is that of a community whose emphasis was on the development, memorization, and transmission of texts.

So the textual evidence does not indicate a community of vigorous meditators carefully analyzing their experiences. And in the ancient Indian context the sharp distinction between efforts in text and efforts in meditation does not seem to have been important. So what could account for this surge of characterizations of ancient abhidharma efforts as a means to guide the practice of meditation? Anuruddha's influence on the tradition certainly could. We have seen the popularity of his text. If we exclude the *Sangaha* from the corpus of Abhidhamma literature, that is, if we include only what was generated before the fifth century CE, then the characterizations cited above are problematic and misleading. But if we include the *Sangaha*, they are not so. The *Sangaha* is a primer, a gateway into the more

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[137] *Maung Tin-Wa*, "Theravāda Traditional Buddhist Scriptures", http://acl.arts.usyd.edu.au/~hudson/buddhism_2.htm.

[138] Access to Insigh "Abhidhamma Pitaka: The Basket of Abhidhamma", http://www.accesstoinsight.org/canon/abhidhamma/index.html.

[139] See Chapter Two— The Development of Abhidharma Philosophy and Literature in Ancient India.

complex textual tradition. As we have seen, this introductory manual emphasizes one dimension of the Abhidhamma tradition—meditation. This understanding of the tradition, popularized by Anuruddha, has been unjustifiably imposed upon the efforts and intentions of ancient Indian scholars.

Chapter Five—Conclusion

Before offering my concluding thoughts on this study, I would like to outline some of the further avenues of study that my work points toward. Generally, there is a lot of scholarly work that could be done by looking at what came before and what came after the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha*.

A Translation of the *Paramatthadīpanī-Tīkā*

Despite its importance to the Abhidhamma studies of Burmese monks, an English translation of Ledi Sayadaw's controversial *Paramatthadīpanī-Tīkā* [140] has never been undertaken. A close examination and translation of this work and of the context in which it was written could greatly assist the work of future scholars who wish to study the effects of colonialism on Burmese Buddhism. Ledi Sayadaw made his criticisms against the well-established *Vibhāvinī-Tīkā* in the midst of a *sangha* that had been decimated by the British conquest. In 1852, after the British conquered Lower Burma, scores of monks moved to Upper Burma leaving many villages in Lower Burma with no religious leadership. Questions concerning how to preserve the monastic community brought a revival of the old debate whether the

[140] See Chapter Four-- Ledi Sayadaw and the *Vipassanā Dīpanī*.

monastery or the forest was the better habitat for a monk.[141] Ledi Sayadaw represents an group of monks who saw meditation as essential to the practice of Buddhism. The Burmese Sangha lost its entire organizational structure in 1885 when the British deprived religious monks of all political authority save the domain of courts of arbitration.[142] Ledi Sayadaw composed the *Paramatthadīpanī-Tīkā* in 1897. Fifteen years after the publication of the *Paramatthadīpanī-Tīkā*, a monk named Vimala Sayadaw published the *Ankura-Tīkā.* This commentary rejects Ledi Sayadaw's criticisms and attempts to reinforce the position of the *Vibhāvinī-Tīkā.*

A careful consideration of Ledi Sayadaw's commentary within this historical context may help to clarify the positions of the various monastic groups (*nikayas*) that had developed during this time. It would also certainly help to explain the development of the Burmese meditation tradition that made its way to the rest of the world.

The *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* and the *Visuddhimagga*

In this study, I have demonstrated that at least one prominent modern Abhidhamma specialist in Southeast Asia owes a debt to Anuruddha for his understanding of the Abhidhamma tradition. It was also demonstrated that

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[141] This information on Burmese history was taken from the Introduction to Htin Aung's *Burmese Monks' Tales*, (New York, Columbia University Press, 1966).

[142] See Bechert's article on Burmese Buddhism in *The World of Buddhism: Buddhist monks and nuns in society and culture*, (edited by Heinz Bechert and Richard Gombrich. New York: Facts on File, 1984), 153.

Anuruddha owed a debt to Buddhaghosa for his work on meditation in the *Visuddhimagga*. As I discussed in Chapter Three, the ninth Chapter of Anuruddha's work—the *Kammaṭṭhānasangahavibhāga*, or *Compendium of Meditation Subjects*[143]—is a systematization of the *Visuddhimagga*. Each verse of the *Kammaṭṭhānasangahavibhāga* is a summary of one of the chapters of the *Visuddhimagga*.

Anuruddha's use of Buddhaghosa's work points to the influence Buddhaghosa has had on the Theravāda tradition. Blackburn's distinction between the practical and formal canon offers a new light in which to investigate the work and influence of Buddhaghosa. The sheer mass of his textual efforts makes it seem impossible to give a full account of the debt owed to him by the Theravāda tradition. But a more detailed examination of the presence of the *Visuddhimagga* in the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* could certainly add to this effort. We have seen the importance of Anuruddha's treatment of the material he found in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*. What, if any, innovations did he impose upon the material found in the *Visuddhimagga*?

In this thesis, I have analyzed the work of Anuruddha in relation to his sources—in other words, how he appropriated them. A comparable study centering on the *Visuddhimagga* and its treatment of its sources, could help us understand

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[143] Anuruddha (1995), 329.

more clearly Buddhaghosa and his role in the tradition. From which sources did Buddhaghosa draw and in what ways did he reinterpret those sources?

Summary and Implications

In this study, I have explored the life, the function and the practicality of an important text in South and Southeast Asian Buddhism. The implications of this Master's thesis speak to the study of Abhidhamma as well as to our study of the Theravāda tradition in general. Studies of Abhidhamma Buddhism in South and Southeast Asia must give due consideration to the popularity of the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* and the particular vision of Abhidhamma encoded within it. Scholars must also become more aware of the innovation in the older Abhidhamma material that Anuruddha's vision represents. Here I have argued that his text has had a considerable effect on representations of abhidharma, Abhidhamma, and the Theravāda path of meditation.

Regarding the Theravāda tradition in general, this study demonstrates the value of looking at the "Theravāda Tradition" together with "Early Buddhism". In this study, I considered the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* in light of research on the ancient abhidharma tradition. By looking comparatively at the two and seeing how they relate, we deepen our understanding of the tradition by giving it a history. Considerations of developments and innovations such as that in the

Abhidhammattha-Sangaha can also help nuance and inform our characterizations of the seminal texts of the Theravāda tradition, such as the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*.

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