

WHAT DID DHAMMASAṄGAṆĪ MEAN?

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Introduction

Though this topic seems to be insignificant to raise at a time when we have sufficient amount of studies in the abhidhamma, it should be pointed out that this inquiry highlights the importance of this text in understanding the teaching of the Buddha as well as the development of later abhidhamma.

Materials and Methods

The research will be based totally on literary survey. It will study the primary as well as the secondary sources on the abhidhamma, some of important ones are given here.

Results

This study is intended to show 'collection of dhammas', the meaning of *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* has a historical meaning. With this understanding of the meaning of the text, the author highlights the importance of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*. The significance of this text is much more than the emphasis of this book in the Buddhist Manual of Psychological Ethics. By the students of Buddhism in their studies, high emphasis should be given *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, especially to the elaborations of *mātikas*.

Discussion

The *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, traditionally accepted as the first book of the Abhidhammapiṭaka is understood as a collection of dhammas, meaning doctrinal points or phenomena in this context. This notion of 'collection of dhammas' has been emphasized in the traditional acceptance that the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* is the text that mainly emphasizes analysis while synthesis in the *Paṭṭhāna*. But is not clear what this 'collection of dhammas' exactly

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meant in compiling *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*. And also what were the *dhammas* intended to collect and was whether whole text was intended for collection as such? are the other areas not so clear studying the text. As far as this author understands and show in this research there is no clear consistent structure in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* as in the *Vibhaṅga* in which elaborations of the major doctrinal points are consistently incorporated. There is hardly any coherence in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* chapter organization like again in the *Vibhaṅga* and the Dhātukathā. In this observation the author of this research in contraction with the traditional view that whole *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* is constructed according to the first *māikā*, the *tika mātikā* in which *kusala*, *akusala* and *abyākata* are incorporated for observation.

The research highlights the structure of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* has two major parts in the line of which the analysis of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* is formulated. The chapter one, four and five are dedicated for introduction and elaboration of matikas (topics) while second and the third chapters are for elaborating on the psycho-physical personality together with path of liberation in accordance with the *nippariyāya* method in the abhidhamma. The second and the third chapters show interrelationship whereas the second and the third chapters do not show an exact interconnection with the former three. This is a crucial issue in accepting the whole *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* was intended to collect dhammas in

It is also important to consider that it is in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* that we come across the dhammas which were considered to be paramattha-dhammas (ultimate realities). Mind and matter described in the second and the third chapters with an emphasis on the path of liberation signify a new way of presenting mind-matter composition aimed at progress of the path of liberation. Each component of the interplay was considered an ultimate reality. These phenomena were much more elaborated in the later exegetical works of abhidhamma. But the question here is that the other chapters do not precisely serve this purpose. A close observation of the content of the first, fourth and fifth chapters, it is possible to say to that they serve the purpose of clarifying very important concepts of the teaching of the Buddha rather than collection. These concepts were not the *Martials* which were regarded as the ultimate realities. Thus the meaning of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* as collection of dhammas becomes ambiguous.

Conclusions

In this study, the researcher observes that the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* is not the first of the Theravada Abhidhammapiṭaka but was the second one. The Vibhanga with its content and structure can easily be regarded as the first book among the texts of the Abhidhammapiṭaka. The *Vibhaṅga* was composed taking and elaborating on the old form of *abhidharma-matikās*, directly taken from the Discourses. After the composition of the *Vibhaṅga*, there were lots of other new materials and observations of the teaching of the Buddha which could not be treated in the *Vibhaṅga*. This resulted in the composing a separate text collecting all these new materials and observations. The *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, the Collection of the dhammas thus meant it was a collection of materials and discussions of the teaching of the Buddha which can easily be named as dhamma.

Keywords: Abhidhamma, *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, *mātika*, *nippariyāya*, collection of *dhammas*.

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