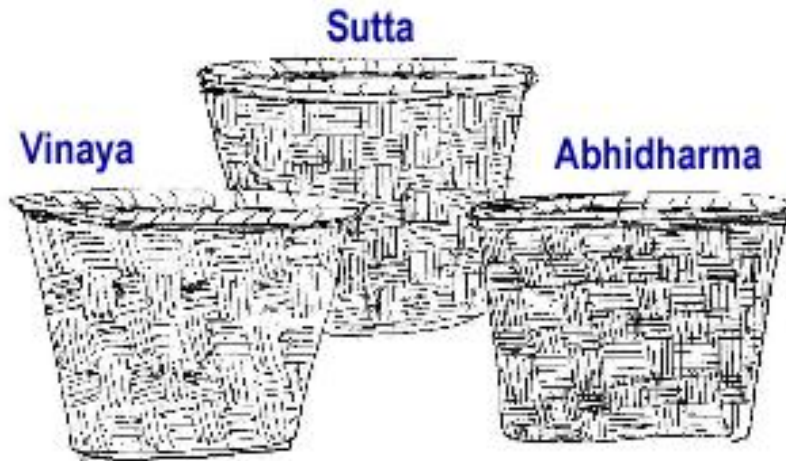


Tripitaka - Three Baskets



Abhi = highest or special
dhamma = law, teaching of the Buddha

Tibetan Buddhism has a different categorization system of the Buddhist canon into not three baskets, but into two groups: Kangyur and Tengyur.

The Kangyur contains the collection of Śākyamuni Buddha's instructions and the Tangyur is the group of the works by Indian commentators.

Tibetan Buddhists assign the sūtra piṭaka and vinaya piṭaka to the Kangyur and the Abhidhamma piṭaka to the Tengyur.

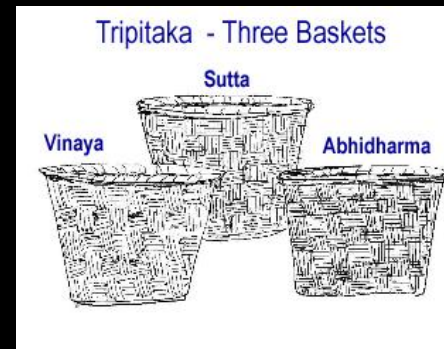


Sūtras

- dialogues
- “Thus I heard”
- descriptions of scenery, etc.
- repeated questions, etc.
- doctrinal classification
- taught for certain cases



Vinaya also said to record direct warnings of the Buddha to followers.



Abhidhamma

Abhi = higher, best, special
dhamma = teachings of the Buddha

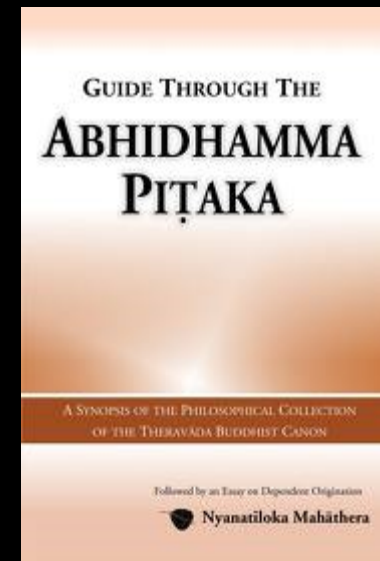
Lists, summarizes, expounds, enlarges upon essential characteristics.

Maybe from *matikas*, lists of points for discussion.

Tibet classifies as commentary.

Sūtras use the word “Abhidhamma” but not as a piṭaka.

Disregards individual differences.



Assumption: A thorough investigation of the mind is the proper method for first understanding that special organ and then purifying it.



Tushita Heaven
4th week after awakening



Buddhist councils

Abhidhamma written 3rd C. BCE – 2nd CE, codified 400-500 CE



above: talk on Abhidhamma using PowerPoint

- Scholars and practitioners doubt Abhidhamma is the words of the Buddha, even more than doubting sūtras are.
- In the past there may have been more Abhidhamma writings.
- Each tradition developed their own, emphasizing particular teachings.

Examples of Abhidhamma works:

- The *Abhidhammakosa* (*kośa* means treasury) by Vasubandhu (4th-5th Cen. CE)
- The *Visuddhimagga* (*The Path of Purification*) by Buddhaghosa (5th Cen. CE)

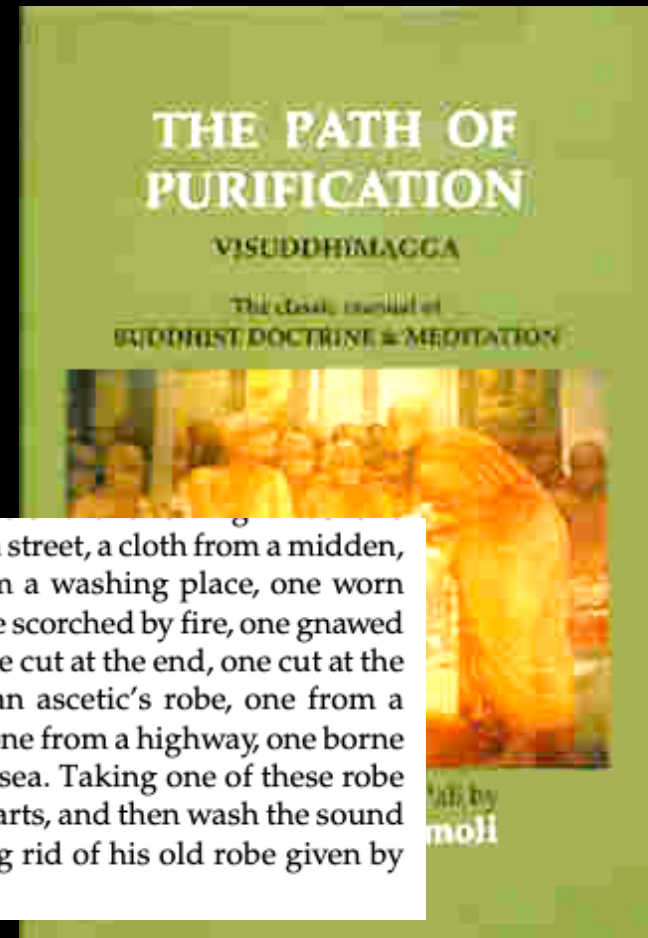
The *Visuddhimagga* is considered the most important Theravada text outside of the Tipitaka.

Three sections:

1. *Sīla* (ethics or discipline)
3. *Samādhi* (meditative concentration)
- 3 *Pañña* (understanding or wisdom).



from a charnel ground, one from a shop, a cloth from a street, a cloth from a midden, one from a childbed, an ablution cloth, a cloth from a washing place, one worn going to and returning from [the charnel ground], one scorched by fire, one gnawed by cattle, one gnawed by ants, one gnawed by rats, one cut at the end, one cut at the edge, one carried as a flag, a robe from a shrine, an ascetic's robe, one from a consecration, one produced by supernormal power, one from a highway, one borne by the wind, one presented by deities, one from the sea. Taking one of these robe cloths, he should tear off and throw away the weak parts, and then wash the sound parts and make up a robe. He can use it after getting rid of his old robe given by householders.



The Theravada Abhidhamma with Bhikkhu Bodhi (Class #1, 5 ...

[https://www.youtube.com > watch](https://www.youtube.com/watch)



Sep 30, 2018 - Uploaded by DharmaRealmLive

Dharma Realm Buddhist University Extension hosted Venerable **Bhikkhu Bodhi** for a lecture series at ...

Outline of the content of Abhidhamma works:

1. Devotional verse, connects Abhidhamma to words of the Buddha
2. Defines Abhidhamma
3. Experience of reality involves mind and its interaction with matter
4. Analysis of (1) the mind, (2) matter, (3) ultimate reality
5. Empirical reality is relative to our psychological factors, temporary and subject to change.
6. The nature of all phenomenal occurrences (*skandhas*) is they are non-substantial and defiled because mental states of pleasure, greed, etc., keep us ignorant of the nature of full reality.

Ultimate Reality, full reality, is called *paramārtha*.

It is fourfold : mind, coefficients of mind, matter, the unconditioned

In Abhidhamma, Ultimate Truth (Reality) is fourfold:

1. Consciousness (*citta*)
 2. Mental Factors (*cetasika*)
 3. Matter (*rūpa*)
- } conditioned dhamma
-
4. Nibbāna
- } unconditioned dhamma

Abhidhamma explains “dependent origination” (*pratītyasamutpāda*)

Conditioned reality		Unconditioned reality
4 elements earth, fire, air, water		space
24 kinds of materiality derived from the 4 elements : Sound, odor, weight, etc.		Nirvana due to knowledge
89 kinds of consciousness		Nirvana not due to knowledge
profitable, unprofitable, indeterminate		

Chapter I - The Eight Main Types Of Thought Relating To The Sensuous Universe

Type I.

[1] Which are the states that are good?

When a good thought concerning the sensuous universe has arisen, which is accompanied by happiness and associated with knowledge, and has as its object a sight, a sound, a smell, a taste, a touch, a [mental] state, or what not, then there is

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| (i) contact | (xxvi) the power of mindfulness |
| (ii) feeling | (xxvii) the power of concentration |
| (iii) perception | (xxviii) the power of wisdom |
| (iv) thinking | (xxix) the power of conscientiousness |
| (v) thought | (xxx) the power of the fear of blame |
| (vi) conception | (xxxi) absence of lust |
| (vii) discursive thought | (xxxii) absence of hate |
| (viii) joy | (xxxiii) absence of dullness |
| (ix) ease | (xxxiv) absence of covetousness |
| (x) self-collectedness | (xxxv) absence of malice |
| (xi) the faculty of faith | (xxxvi) right views |
| (xii) the faculty of energy | (xxxvii) conscientiousness |
| (xiii) the faculty of mindfulness | (xxxviii) fear of blame |
| (xiv) the faculty of concentration | (xxxix, xl) serenity in sense and thought |
| (xv) the faculty of wisdom | (xli, xlii) lightness in sense and thought |
| (xvi) the faculty of ideation | (xlili, xliv) plasticity in sense and thought |
| (xvii) the faculty of happiness | (xlv, xlvi) facility in sense and thought |
| (xviii) the faculty of vitality | (xlvii, xlviii) fitness in sense and thought |
| (xix) right views | (xlix, l) directness in sense and thought |
| (xx) right intention | (li) mindfulness |
| (xxi) right endeavour | (lii) intelligence |
| (xxii) right mindfulness | (liii) quiet |
| (xxiii) right concentration | (liv) insight |
| (xxiv) the power of faith | (lv) grasp |
| (xxv) the power of energy | (lvi) balance . |

[2] What on that occasion is contact (...)

Type III.

[147] Which are the states that are good?

"When a good thought concerning the sensuous universe has arisen accompanied by pleasure, disconnected with knowledge, and having as its object, a sight, a sound, a smell, a taste, a touch, a [mental] state, or what not, then there is

contact,	conception,	the power of
feeling,	discursive thought,	faith, concentration,
perception,	joy,	energy, conscientiousness,
thinking,	ease,	mindfulness, the fear of blame;
thought,	self-collectedness ;	absence of lust,
the faculty of ...		absence of hate,
faith,	concentration,	absence of
energy,	ideation,	covetousness,
mindfulness,	happiness,	absence of malice;
	vitality ;	conscientiousness,
right intention,	right mindfulness,	fear of blame ;
right endeavour,	right concentration,	serenity, wieldiness,
		buoyancy, fitness,
		plasticity, rectitude,
		both of sense and thought ;
		mindfulness, grasp,
		quiet, balance.

By so methodically dealing with the nature of the senses, those committed to the teaching method of the Abhidhamma now see that the mind is essentially in charge of the world and in order to reach further understanding, it is the mind that must be developed.

Significantly, the Visuddhimagga here turns the discussion to a consideration of the Buddha's Four Noble Truths as found in the Abhidhamma literature.

1. Life is suffering - dukkha
 - Birth trauma
 - Illness
 - Old age
 - Fear of approaching death
 - Separation from what one loves
 - Stuck with what one hates
2. The cause of suffering is desire - tanha
3. The cure for suffering is to remove desire
4. To remove desire, follow the Eightfold path

The Four Noble Truths are grouped and regrouped into 15 categories.

- whether their meanings are "real, not unreal, not otherwise";
- how words such as suffering (*dukkha*) may have many meanings;
- the nature of cessation;
- why they are called Noble Truths;
- what are the similarities and differences among the Truths and so on.

Then there is consideration of the Truth of cessation: the nature of Nirvana.

Afterwards, the *Visuddhimagga* describes how to meditate.



Abhidhamma Vipassana

The Wheel of Life



12 *Nidanas* – Twelve Links of Conditioned Existence (karma)





One of the Buddha's disciples (Maudgalyayana) had the ability to visualize and draw ideas. The Buddha is said to have approved of this depiction.



The Wheel of Life helps us
with the first step toward
awakening:
understanding our condition.



Former Life

- ignorance
- activities which produced karma

Current Life

- consciousness
- name and form (identity)
- 12 domains (5 senses + mind, thoughts...)
- contact (between objects and senses)
- sensations (registering the contact)
- desire (for continued contact)
- attachment

Future

- becoming (conception of a new life)
- birth
- old age and death





At a Tibetan cultural center
near Dharamsala, India



The Three Poisons: desire, anger, ignorance

Pigeon (or rooster) is vain, gives rise to lust and greed (as opposed to healthy desire).

It is very moved by blame or praise, which gives rise to the snake.

The snake is aggressive and angry. Instead of thinking things through we act.

When we feel this, we often blame others.

If we act aggressively, it likely increases the tensions.

The pig is ignorance, led only by its snout. This ignorance gives rise to vanity and greed.





The light and dark paths are both propelled by forces.

Maybe a “spiritual” quest is an “evolutionary urge” to strive “upward” toward Buddhahood.

Ignorance is the force pulling us down or away from Buddhahood. Progress takes effort.







Conditioned Existence (positive and negative) brought about by karma.



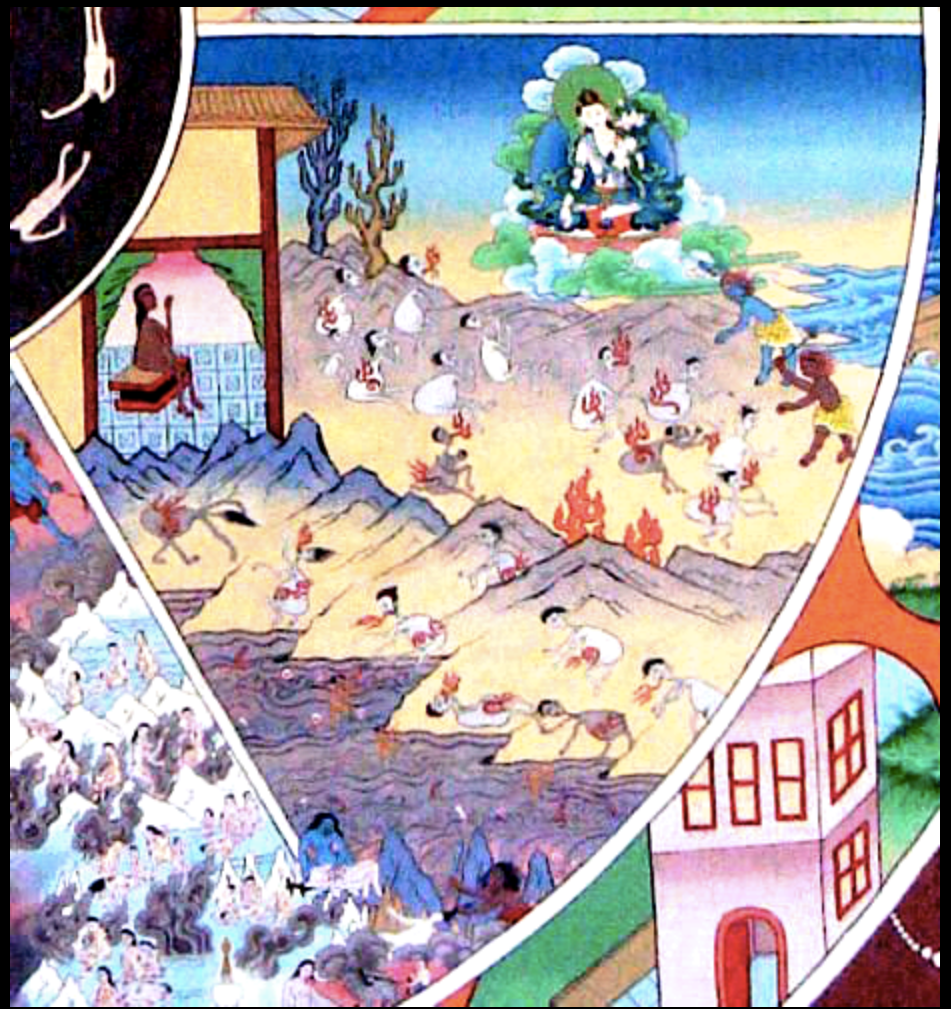
The Realm of Hell

Intense pain and torment.

An objectification of hatred.

Hell on earth, because hatred has made every situation a torment.

Hell is long - maybe because time drags when we suffer. But it's not forever.



Realm of Hungry Ghosts

Living only to consume.
Ghostlike, driven by hunger.



Realm of Animals

Life is the life of the body, the business of self-preservation,
ignorant of anything else.



Titans

Knowing only warfare.

Not content with possessions.

Not longing because they need things but because they are jealous of the possessions and achievements of others.

They try to capture the heavenly tree which fulfills all wishes.



Humans

Birth in the Human Realm is fortunate.

It gives rise to opportunities.

The likelihood of a blind turtle that rising from the depths of the ocean once in a hundred years, putting its head through the hole in a yoke is greater than achieving rebirth as a human.



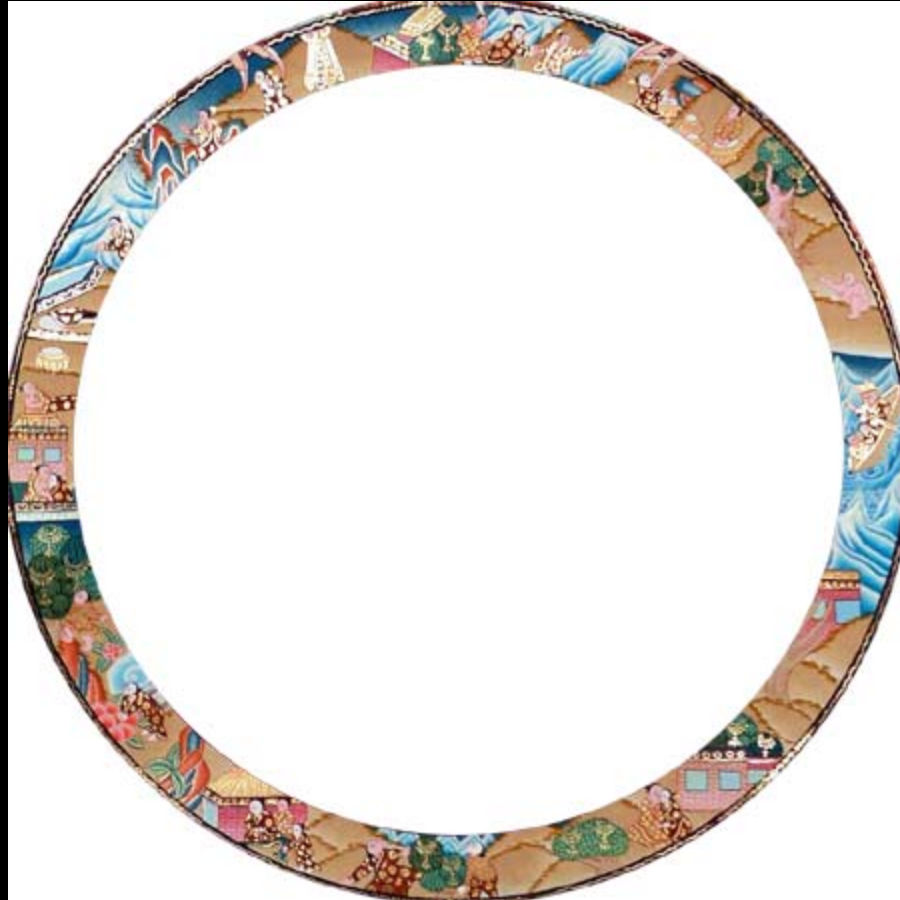
Realm of the gods.

One who has started to gain spiritual attainment creates heaven on earth.

Yet, these gods partake in human pleasures and remain in the karmic cycle.









1. Ignorance (*avidya*)

Blindness, pushing on believing s/he has been here before.



Potter

2. Karmic formations (*samskaras*) A potter making pots.

How it is made depends on the potter.
We dump all the images formed by ignorance into the creation of our pots.



Monkey

3. Consciousness (*vijnana*)

Restless, playing with fruit.

Takes a bite even though mouth is full with attention on another fruit.

The animal mind tasting the fruit of karma.



Boat

Name and Form (*nama-rupa*)

"Name" = the non-physical components of a person (sensation, feeling, *samskaras*, and consciousness).

"Form" = the physical component of a person's experience (the body)



House with empty windows

Our sense organs, portals from impressions.

Our interaction with the world sets the stage for the next link.



Couple

Contact between senses and their objects.



Arrow

Sense data impinging on the senses, evoking strong feelings.
Feelings are painful or pleasant.

Contact gives rise to attachments and aversions.



Craving – thirst.

Woman offering drink to a man

The male/female relation implies sexual desire.

The man partaking alcohol emphasizes the addictive nature of this.

In the previous link we had feelings of aversion and desire. We choose the pleasant and crave it.



Grasping

Once one has developed desires to obtain something (or to avoid something) one takes concrete steps to try to get it (or get rid of it).

Fruit is an ancient symbol of earthly desire.
Climbing the tree is going to the full length to attain it. (Biblical?)



Bringing into Existence – Couple making love

We seek more and more pleasure, acting out of balance with the reality of impermanence (*anicca*), and thus face more and more things we don't like, and run from.

This creates more thrust in the overall motion of the wheel.



Birth

The karmic energy of action brings about more effects.

This energy must manifest.

Here this is represented as the woman who must give birth.

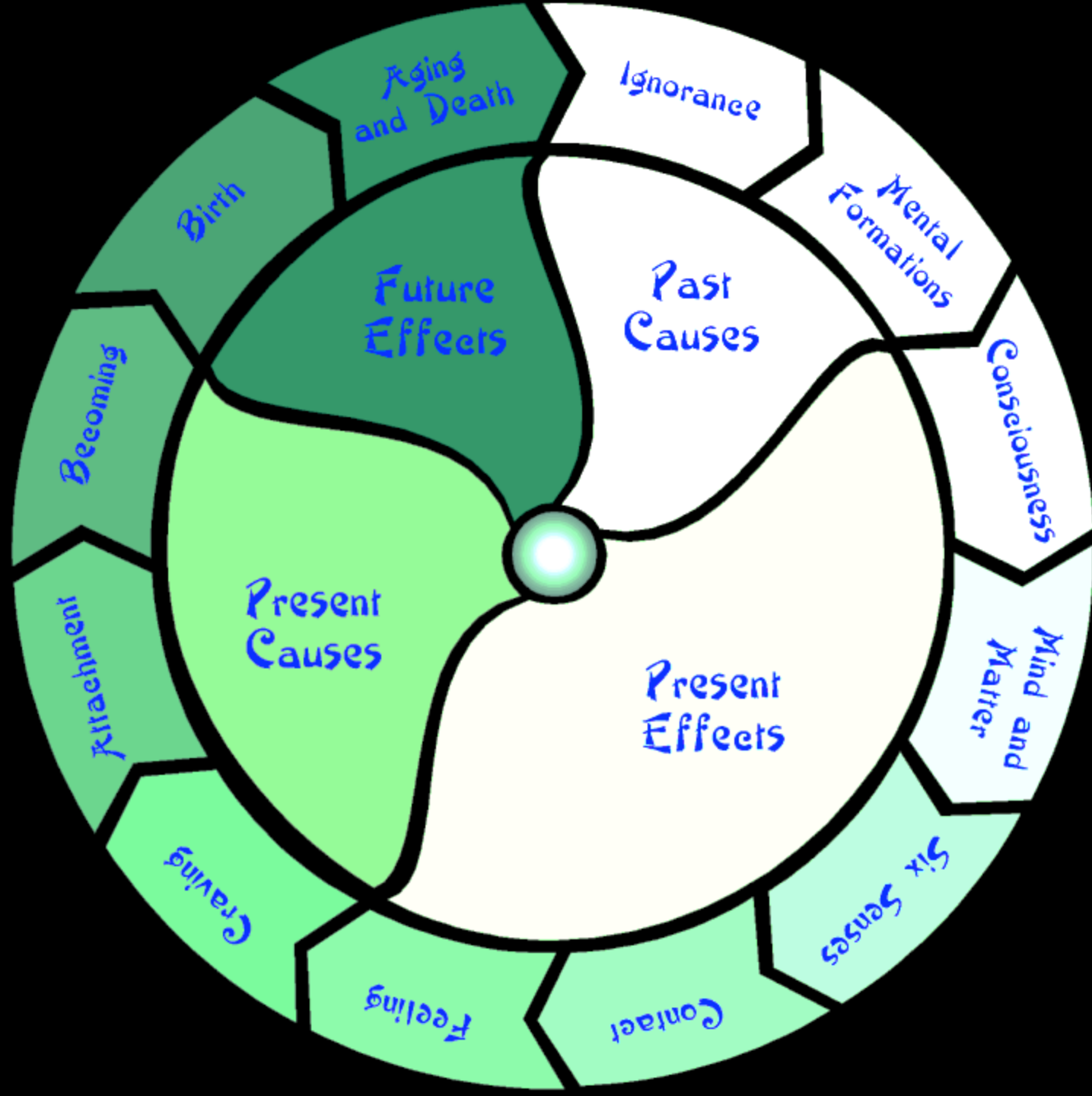


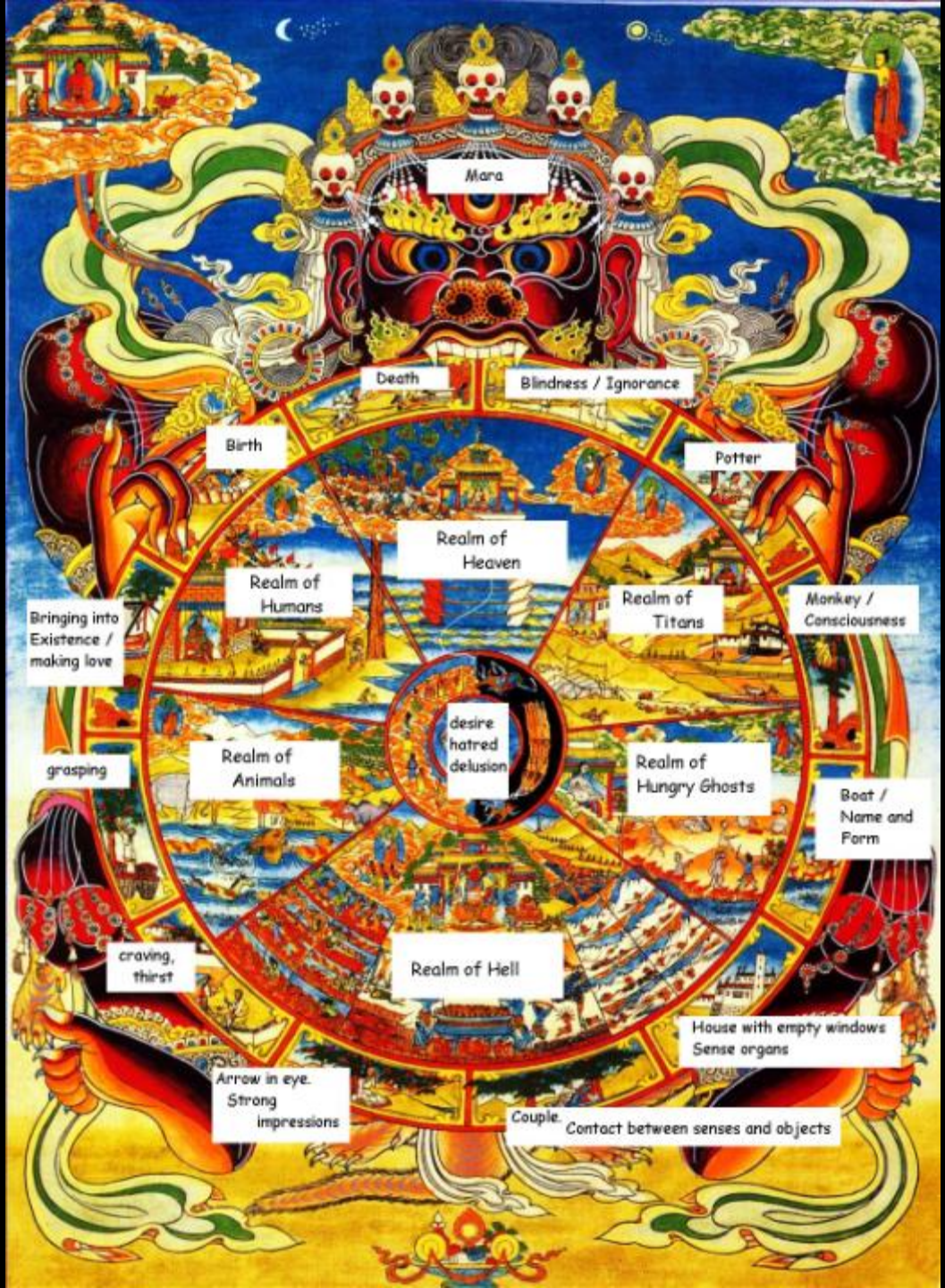
Death

A coffin being carried away.

Once there is birth, death is inevitable.

Old age, sickness, and death are the problems that afflict human existence that the Buddha addressed





Relevance of the Abhidhamma Pitaka today

- Understanding history, especially early Buddhism
- Shows what is most important for particular traditions
- Understanding sūtras
- Regarded as high Dharma in SE Asia
- For meditation training

Now, once more it is growing in importance.
New publications in Asian and European languages.



Of course, the ultimate attainment advocated in the Abhidhamma is *nibbana* (nirvana). An important topic for scholars today is the Abhidhamma texts' consideration and analytical treatment of the concept of *nibbana*.

Rhetorical Q: . Is *nibbana* non-existent because it cannot be apprehended?

A: *Nibbana* can be apprehended by proper understanding and concentration.

Q: Is reaching *nibbana* futile since it is absence?

A: There is an absence of past and future and so there is no "reaching" of *nibbana*.

Q: Is material permanent since *nibbana* has permanence?

A: Only *nibbana* is permanent and has no arising.

Semantic problems are treated, as involved in the expression "the absence of present" and the term "destruction".

Such considerations of *nibbana* are rarely found in sūtra literature and provide an opportunity today for discovering how the difficult concept was and continues to be handled.