



The Matrix from the Abstract Teaching

translated by

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The Matrix from the Abstract Teaching

(Abhidhamma-Mātikā from Dhammasaṅgaṇī)

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Preface

This work stands at the beginning of the Abhidhamma, and is used as a tabulation against which various mental factors which are examined in the early sections of the Abstract Teaching are measured. The Dhammasaṅgaṇī itself is, in large part, an explanation of the first three items in the list (on wholesome and unwholesome things and things without consequences).

I hope to expand the present work at some point to include the explanations of the matrix that are given in the Nikkhepaṅgaṇḍa and Aṭṭhakathā sections of Dhammasaṅgaṇī.

In 2011 I revised the Analysis of Mindfulness and this required a revision of this material also. I have also now included simplified footnotes in the English version in line with my current practice.

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Translations consulted:

Buddhist Psychological Ethics, by Mrs C.A.F. Rhys Davids, translation and study of Dhammasaṅgaṇī, Pali Text Society, 1900, 3rd ed. reprinted Oxford, 1993.

The Dhammasaṅgaṇī, Enumeration of Ultimate Realities, by U Kyaw Khine, DPPS, Yangon, C.E. 1996 = B.E. 2539.

[The Matrix from the Abstract Teaching]

[The Triplets Matrix]

[1] Wholesome things,
Unwholesome things,
Things without consequences.¹

[2] Things connected with pleasant feeling
Things connected with painful feeling
Things connected with neither painful nor pleasant feeling

[3] Things with results
Things that have resultant nature²
Things that are neither results nor have resultant nature³

¹ Aṭṭhasālinī has this interesting explanation of this sequence: *what has the characteristic of having faultless and pleasant result is wholesome, what has the characteristic of having faulty and painful result is unwholesome, what has the characteristic of no result is without consequence*. For this meaning, see SED: *á-vyākṛta, mfn. undeveloped, unexpounded...* I follow the first meaning, but PED follows the second meaning and translates as *unexplained, not decided, not declared, indeterminate* and misses the point here.

² The Nikkhepakaṇḍa section of Dhammasaṅgaṇī paraphrases with *vipākasabhāvadhammā; things that by their own nature are resultant*.

The Triplets Matrix

[4] Things that are attached to and favourable to the attachments

Things that are not attached to (but) are favourable to the attachments

Things that are not attached to and are not favourable to the attachments

[5] Things that are defiled and connected with the defilements

Things that are not defiled (but) are connected with the defilements

Things that are not defiled and are not connected with the defilements

[6] Things that are with thinking and reflection

Things that are without thinking (but) have reflection alone

Things that are without thinking and without reflection

[7] Things that are united with joyful interest

Things that are united with pleasure

Things that are united with equanimity

³ The Nikkhepakaṇḍa says this phrase means: *whatever actions that are neither wholesome nor unwholesome, all form, and the element without processes* (i.e. *nibbāna*).

The Triplets Matrix

[8] Things that are to be given up through vision (of the First Path)⁴

Things that are to be given up through development (of the rest of the Paths)⁵

Things that are to be given up neither through vision (of the First Path) nor through development (of the rest of the Paths)

[9] Things that have roots that are to be given up through vision (of the First Path)

Things that have roots that are to be given up through development (of the rest of the Paths)

Things that have roots that are neither to be given up through vision (of the First Path) nor through development (of the rest of the Paths)

[10] Things that go towards increase⁶

Things that go towards decrease⁷

Things that go towards neither decrease nor increase

⁴ Aṭṭhasālinī: *through vision means through the (vision of the) Path of Stream Entry.*

⁵ Aṭṭhasālinī: *through development means through the (development of the) other three Paths.*

⁶ Aṭṭhasālinī: *this is a name for the rolling on of destinations through the death relinking (consciousness).*

⁷ Aṭṭhasālinī: *this is a designation for the Noble Paths.*

The Triplets Matrix

[11] Those in training⁸

Those no longer in training

Those neither in training nor no longer in training

[12] Things that are limited

Things that are very great

Things that are immeasurable⁹

[13] Things that are limited sense-objects

Things that are very great sense-objects

Things that are immeasurable sense-objects

[14] Things that are inferior

Things that are middling

Things that are excellent

⁸ *Sekhā*, those in training, are those on one or other of the Noble paths or fruitions, with the exception of Arahants, who are known as *asekhā*, *those who are no longer in training*; those who are neither in training nor no longer training are ordinary folk (*puthujjanā*) who have not attained the Paths or the Fruits.

⁹ *Aṭṭhasālinī*: *measureable things like passion and so on are called measureable, whether from sense-objects or from association, these are not measureable, they are opposed to the measureable, therefore they are immeasurable.*

The Triplets Matrix

[15] Things that are wrongful and have a fixed destiny
Things that are righteous and have a fixed destiny
Things that do not have a fixed destiny¹⁰

[16] Things that have Path as their objects
Things that have Path as their roots
Things that have Path as their predominant (factor)

[17] Things that have arisen
Things that have not arisen
Things that are arising

[18] Things that are past
Things that are future
Things that are present

[19] Things that are past objects
Things that are future objects
Things that are present objects

¹⁰ According to the Nikkhepaṅga, there are five acts that are wrongful and have a fixed destiny beginning with matricide (and including patricide, killing a Arahat, drawing the blood of a Buddha, and making a schism in the Saṅgha); the four Paths and Nibbāna are righteous and have a fixed destiny; other things do not have a fixed destiny.

The Triplets Matrix

[20] Things that are his own¹¹

Things that are another's

Things that are his own and another's

[21] Things that are internal objects

Things that are external objects

Things that are internal and external objects

[22] Things that are visible and have impingement¹²

Things that are not visible and have impingement

Things that are not visible and do not have impingement

The Triplets Matrix

¹¹ Nikkhepaṅga: *whatever things for the various beings are one's own, individual, constantly and personally attached to: form, feelings, perception, processes, and consciousness.*

¹² Atṭhasālinī: *what is reckoned as having a visible nature ... (that is) visible; what is reckoned as having a striking nature ... (that has) impingement.*

[The Pairs Matrix]

[The Roots Collection]¹³

[1] Things that are roots, things that are not roots

[2] Things that are connected with roots, things that are unconnected with roots

[3] Things that are associated with roots, things that are unassociated with roots

[4] Things that are roots and connected with roots, things that are connected with roots (but) are not roots

[5] Things that are roots and associated with roots, things that are associated with roots (but) are not roots

[6] Things that are not roots but are connected with roots, things that are unconnected with roots

The Roots Collection

¹³ I have included the headings at the beginning of the section they refer to in order to clarify what follows. They appear only as end-titles in Dhs.

The Pairs Matrix

[The Lesser Pairs]

[7] Things with causes, things without causes

[8] Things that are conditioned, things that are not conditioned

[9] Things that are visible, things that are not visible.

[10] Things that are impingements, things that are not impingements.

[11] Things that have form, things that are formless.

[12] Things that are mundane, things that are supermundane.

[13] Things that are perceptible in one way, things that are not perceptible in another way.

The Lesser Pairs

[The Pollutants Collection]

[14] Things that are pollutants, things that are not pollutants.¹⁴

[15] Things that are connected with pollutants, things that are unconnected with pollutants.

[16] Things that are associated with pollutants, things that are unassociated with pollutants.

[17] Things that are pollutants and are connected with pollutants, things that are connected with pollutants but are not pollutants.

[18] Things that are pollutants and associated with pollutants, things that are associated with pollutants but are not pollutants.

[19] Things that are unassociated with pollutants but are connected with pollutants, things that are unconnected with pollutants.

The Pollutants Collection

¹⁴ In the Abhidhamma there are listed as four: *the pollutants of sense-desire* (*kāmāsava*); (*desiring*) *continuation* (*bhavāsava*); (*wrong*) *views* (*diṭṭhāsava*) and *ignorance* (*avijjāsava*); in the discourses *wrong views* is normally left out.

[The Fetters Collection]

[20] Things that are fetters, things that are not fetters.¹⁵

[21] Things that are favourable to the fetters, things that are unfavourable to the fetters.

[22] Things that are associated with the fetters, things that are unassociated with the fetters.

[23] Things that are fetters and favourable to the fetters, things that are favourable to the fetters but are not fetters.

[24] Things that are fetters and associated with fetters, things that are associated with fetters but are not fetters.

[25] Things that are unassociated with fetters but are favourable to the fetters, things that are unfavourable to the fetters.

The Fetters Collection

¹⁵ Normally ten fetters are mentioned: *embodiment view (sakkāyadiṭṭhi)*, *doubt (vicikicchā)*, *grasping at virtue and practices (sīlabbataparāmāsa)*, *passion for sensuality (kāmarāga)*, *ill-will (vyāpāda)*, *passion for the form worlds (rūparāga)*, *passion for the formless worlds (arūparāga)*, *conceit (māna)*, *agitation (uddhacca)* and *ignorance (avijjā)*.

[The Knots Collection]

[26] Things that are knots, things that are not knots¹⁶

[27] Things that are favourable to the knots, things that are unfavourable to the knots

[28] Things that are associated with knots, things that are unassociated with knots

[29] Things that are knots and favourable to the knots, things that are favourable to the knots but are not knots

[30] Things that are knots and associated with knots, things that are associated with knots but are not knots

[31] Things that are unconnected with knots but favourable to the knots, things that are unfavourable to the knots

The Knots Collection

¹⁶ There are four: *the knots of avarice* (*abhijjhā*); *ill-will* (*vyāpāda*); *grasping at virtue and practices* (*sīlabbataparāmāsa*); *adherence to 'this is the truth'* (*idaṃsaccābhivivesa*).

[The Floods Collection]

[32] Things that are floods, things that are not floods¹⁷

[33] Things that are favourable to the floods, things that are unfavourable to the floods

[34] Things that are associated with floods, things that are unassociated with floods

[35] Things that are floods and favourable to the floods, things that are favourable to the floods but are not floods

[36] Things that are floods and associated with floods, things that are associated with floods but are not floods

[37] Things that are unassociated with floods but favourable to the floods, things that are unfavourable to the floods

The Floods Collection

¹⁷ These are the similar to the pollutants above: *the floods of sense-desire* (*kāmogha*), (*desiring*) *continuation* (*bhavogha*), (*wrong*) *views* (*diṭṭhogha*) and *ignorance* (*avijjogha*).

[The Yokes Collection]

[38] Things that are yokes, things that are not yokes¹⁸

[39] Things that are favourable to the yokes, things that are unfavourable to the yokes

[40] Things that are associated with yokes, things that are unassociated with yokes

[41] Things that are yokes and favourable to the yokes, things that are favourable to the yokes but are not yokes

[42] Things that are yokes and associated with yokes, things that are associated with yokes but are not yokes

[43] Things that are unassociated with yokes but favourable to the yokes, things that are unfavourable to the yokes

The Yokes Collection

¹⁸ These are the similar to the pollutants above: *the yokes of sense-desire* (*kāmayoga*), (*desiring*) *continuation* (*bhavayoga*), (*wrong*) *views* (*diṭṭhiyoga*) and *ignorance* (*avijjāyoga*).

[The Hindrances Collection]

[44] Things that are hindrances, things that are not hindrances¹⁹

[45] Things that are favourable to the hindrances, things that are unfavourable to the hindrances

[46] Things that are associated with hindrances, things that are unassociated with hindrances

[47] Things that are hindrances and favourable to the hindrances, things that are favourable to the hindrances but are not hindrances

[48] Things that are hindrances and associated with hindrances, things that are associated with hindrances but are not hindrances

[49] Things that are unassociated with hindrances but favourable to the hindrances, things that are unfavourable to the hindrances

The Hindrances Collection

¹⁹ Five in number: *sensual desire* (*kāmacchanda*), *ill-will* (*vyāpāda*), *sloth and torpor* (*thīnamiddha*), *agitation and worry* (*uddhaccakukkucca*), *skeptical doubt* (*vicikicchā*).

[The Adherences Collection]

[50] Things that are adherences, things that are not adherences²⁰

[51] Things that are adhered to, things that are not adhered to²¹

[52] Things that are associated with adherences, things that are unassociated with adherences

[53] Things that are adherences and adhered to, things that are adhered to but are not adherences

[54] Things that are unassociated with adherences but adhered to, things that are not adhered to²²

The Adherences Collection

²⁰ These are defined as being adherence to the wrong views that the world is eternal or not eternal; finite or infinite; the soul and the body are the same or not the same; the individual exists or doesn't exist after death; the individual both exists and does not exist after death or neither exists nor does not exist after death.

²¹ Aṭṭhasālinī: *because of their taking objects with adherence (there is) adherence to, (therefore) adhered to (is said).*

²² This doesn't quite follow the same scheme as the other defilements set out above, following which we might have expected: *things that are adherences and associated with adherences*, etc. because the *adherences* have only one object, (*wrong*) *view (diṭṭhi)*. I owe this explanation to Bhikkhu Bodhi.

The Pairs Matrix

[The Greater Pairs]

[55] Things that are with sense-objects, things that are without sense-objects

[56] Things that are consciousness, things that are not consciousness²³

[57] Things that are mental factors, things that are not mental factors

[58] Things that are associated with mind, things that are unassociated with mind

[59] Things that are joined with mind, things that are not joined with mind

[60] Things that are produced by mind, things that are not produced by mind

[61] Things that are developed by mind, things that are not developed by mind

²³ These are defined as being adherence to the wrong views that the world is eternal or not eternal; finite or infinite; the soul and the body are the same or not the same; the individual exists or doesn't exist after death; the individual both exists and does not exist after death or neither exists nor does not exist after death.

The Pairs Matrix

[62] Things that are kept rolling by mind, things that are not kept rolling by mind

[63] Things that are productions produced by mind, things that are not productions produced by mind

[64] Things that are productions that are produced by mind and developed by mind, things that are not productions that are produced by mind and developed by mind

[65] Things that are productions that are produced by mind and kept rolling by mind, things that are not productions that are produced by mind and kept rolling by mind

[66] Things that are internal, things that are external

[67] Things that are derived, things that are not derived

[68] Things that are attached to, things that are not attached to

The Greater Pairs

[The Attachments Collection]

[69] Things that are attachments, things that are not attachments²⁴

[70] Things that are favourable to the attachments, things that are unfavourable to the attachments

[71] Things that are associated with the attachments, things that are unassociated with the attachments

[72] Things that are attachments and favourable to the attachments, things that are favourable to the attachments but are not attachments

[73] Things that are attachments and associated with the attachments, things that are associated with the attachments, but are not attachments

[74] Things that are unassociated with the attachments but favourable to the attachments, things that are unfavourable to the attachments

The Attachments Collection

²⁴ There are four: *attachments to sensuality (kāmupādāna)*, *views (diṭṭhupādāna)*, *grasping at virtue and practices (sīlabbatupādāna)*, *self-theories (attavādupādāna)*.

[The Defilements Collection]

[75] Things that are defilements, things that are not defilements²⁵

[76] Things that are connected with the defilements, things that are unconnected with the defilements

[77] Things that are defiled, things that are not defiled

[78] Things that are associated with the defilements, things that are unassociated with the defilements

[79] Things that are defilements and connected with the defilements, things that are connected with the defilements (but) are not defilements

[80] Things that are defilements and defiled, things that are defiled, but are not defilements

[81] Things that are defilements and associated with the defilements, things that are associated with defilements but are not defilements

[82] Things that are unassociated with defilements but connected with the defilements, things that are unconnected with the defilements

The Defilements Collection

²⁵ The defilements are here defined as ten: *greed (lobha)*, *hatred (dosa)*, *delusion (moha)*, *conceit (māna)*, *(wrong) views (diṭṭhī)*, *doubt (vicikicchā)*, *sloth (thīna)*, *agitation (uddhacca)*, *lack of conscience (ahirīka)*, *lack of shame (anottappa)*.

The Pairs Matrix

[The End Pairs]

[83] Things that are to be given up through vision (of the First Path), things that are not to be given up through vision (of the First Path)

[84] Things that are to be given up through development (of the rest of the Paths), things that are not to be given up through development (of the rest of the Paths)

[85] Things that are roots that are to be given up through vision (of the First Path), things that are not roots that are to be given up through vision (of the First Path).

[86] Things that are roots that are to be given up through development (of the rest of the Paths), things that are not roots that are to be given up through development (of the rest of the Paths).

[87] Things that are with thinking, things that are without thinking

[88] Things that are with reflection, things that are without reflection

[89] Things that are connected with joyful interest, things that are unconnected with joyful interest

[90] Things that are united with joyful interest, things that are not united with joyful interest

[91] Things that are united with pleasure, things that are not united with pleasure

The Pairs Matrix

[92] Things that are united with equanimity, things that are not united with equanimity

[93] Things that are (connected with) the sensual realms, things that are not (connected with) the sensual realms

[94] Things that are (connected with) the form realms, things that are not (connected with) the form realms

[95] Things that are (connected with) the formless realms, things that are not (connected with) the formless realms

[96] Things that are included, things that are unincluded²⁶

[97] Things that lead out, things that do not lead out

[98] Things that are fixed, things that are not fixed

[99] Things that are surpassable, things that are unsurpassable

[100] Things that are with faults, things that are without faults

The End Pairs

²⁶ Atṭhasālinī: **included** means: *included in, contained in, the round of the three grounds (of existence); unincluded means not being included therein.*

[The Pairs Matrix from the Discourses]

[101] Things which partake of understanding, things which do not partake of understanding.

[102] Things like lightning, things like thunder-bolts

[103] Foolish things, wise things.

[104] Dark things, bright things.

[105] Things which cause remorse, things which do not cause remorse.

[106] Things which are definitions, things within the range of definitions.

[107] Things which are expressions, things within the range of expressions.

[108] Things which are designations, things within the range of designations.

[109] Name and form.

[110] Ignorance and craving for continuation.

[111] View about continuation and view about discontinuation.

[112] View about eternalism and view about annihilation.

The Pairs Matrix from the Discourses

- [113] View about finitude and view about infinity.
- [114] View about the beginning of things, view about the ending of things.
- [115] Lack of conscience and lack of shame.
- [116] Conscience and shame.
- [117] Difficulty in admonishment and association with the wicked.
- [118] Ease in admonishment and association with the good.
- [119] Skilful in what is an offence and skilful in rising from what is an offense.
- [120] Skilful in an attainment (of jhāna) and skilful in rising from an attainment (of jhāna).
- [121] Skilful in elements and skilful in applying the mind.
- [122] Skilful in the (sense) spheres and skilful in conditional origination.
- [123] Skilful in what is a cause and skilful in what is not a cause.
- [124] Uprightness and gentleness.
- [125] Patience and meekness.
- [126] Amity and courtesy.

The Pairs Matrix from the Discourses

[127] Non-guarding of the doors of the faculties and non-knowing the measure in food.

[128] Guarding of the doors of the faculties and knowing the measure in food.

[129] Forgetfulness and lack of full knowledge.

[130] Mindfulness and full knowledge.

[131] Strength in discrimination and strength in (mental) development.

[132] Calm and insight.

[133] The sign of calm and the sign of exertion.

[134] Exertion and balance.

[135] Failure in morality and failure in view.

[136] Success in morality and success in view.

[137] Purity in morality and purity in view.

[138] Purity in morality and endeavour in regard to (right) view.

[139] Spiritual anxiety towards what is a cause for anxiety and wise endeavour in regard to that anxiety.

[140] Dissatisfaction with (only) doing good deeds and not lacking in endeavour.

The Pairs Matrix from the Discourses

[141] Understanding and freedom.

[142] Knowledge regarding destruction (of the pollutants) and knowledge of what has not yet arisen.

The Pairs Matrix from the Discourses

The Matrix is Finished