CHAPTER IV

Theravāda Philosophy

The term Hinayana which is not to be found in the early Hinayana texts refers to the schools of Theravāda and is translated as small vehicle. The doctrine of Hinayana is called Sthaviravāda in Sanskrit and Theravāda in Pāli. The Hinayana movement comprised more than eighteen schools. Among them the most important and oldest school was Theravāda. The followers of this school were known as Theravādins. Dipavamsa says that the name of the 'Theravāda' is originated from the First Council. Immediately after the death of the Great Master his senior disciples rehearsed his original doctrines. Because they had no written copy, they collected the teachings of the Buddha which was known as the Tipitaka or Three Baskets. These consisted of Vinaya, Sutta and Abhidhamma respectively. The Mahavamsa (v.12) says "That redaction of the true Dhamma, which was arranged at the beginning by the great Theras, Mahākassapa and others, is called that of the Theras. Thus according to the Pāli tradition the doctrine which was approved in the First Council was known as the Theravāda". The Buddhists themselves also told that the canon was settled at the First Council or immediately after the death of the Buddha and believed that it was afterwards handed down by means of oral tradition. The term
'Theravāda' is derived from the Pāli word 'Thera' which means elder and 'vāda' means order or doctrine. Hence the word 'Theravāda' literally denotes the doctrines of the elders of the Buddhist monks. Thus the Theravāda school has been regarded as the oldest school of Buddhism which follows the doctrine of Buddha.

Then from the Second Council Buddhism was divided into Orthodox and Heterodox system. The Orthodox group follows the original doctrine of the Buddha while the later Heterodox system did not follow his doctrine. Since then Orthodox class was known as Theravāda or Sthaviravāda and the followers of this school were known as Theravādins. Hence, Theravāda school developed during the first and second century B.C. at the Council of Vaisali. Buddhaghosa also asserts that the canon which he had before him was the same as that fixed by the First Council. The Sthaviras or the Theravādins went to Ceylon at the time of Asoka in the second half of the third century B.C. and later on to other places. After this, Ceylon became the headquarters of Buddhism and thereafter it spread to other South-Eastern parts of Asia. Theravāda still remains the established Church of oldest tradition in Ceylon.

There are no contemporary written records of the Buddha's teachings. The teachings were redacted and fixed
in successive Buddhist Councils. Thus, Buddhism was
developed in its doctrinal statement and scholastic
interpretation and textually began at first in Pāli and
next in Sanskrit. The Pāli canon which was adopted by the
Buddhist elders began in an oral tradition sometimes before
the transplantation of Buddhism to Ceylon. This occurred
after the death of Buddha in about 483 B.C. At the end of
the fifth century also a Council revised the text of the
Tipitaka. From this time the doctrine and tradition of the
Theravāda had been definitely fixed. And about four
hundred A.D. the Pāli Suttas had for the first time been
translated in Sinhalese. The most important reason of the
Pāli literature is that Pāli literature is a store-house of
basic material in Buddhism. This implies that the whole of
this literature revolves round the personality of the
Buddha. Thus the original teachings of the Buddha could be
found in Pāli written documents. "Professor Kern, Rhys
Davids and others also maintain that Pāli literature
represents the doctrines of the Sthaviravāda school". The
canon of the sacred literature of the Theravāda original
Pāli language consist of the following:

1. The Vinaya Pitaka:

   The Vinaya Pitaka contains all the orders and rules
   which the recluse had to observe. It gives a detailed
   account of the life and ministry of the Buddha, and the
development of the Sangha. The literal meaning of the Vinaya is the 'guidance'. The Vinaya Pitaka consisted for the Sangha, the established code of ethics, monastic discipline, rule, rules of morality or canon of law. In this sense it can be regarded as the collection of rules of the monastic life and habits of the monks which introduced the 'Dhamma' or the theoretical philosophy of the Buddhist canon. Buddha himself discoursed this rule for the future discipline of the Sangha. The Vinaya Pitaka comprises the following texts:

(a) Parajika (Major Offences) : including an explanation of how each rule was promulgated and listing especial cases and exceptions.

(b) Pacittiya (Minor Offences) : dealing with explanations and exceptions.

(c) Mahavagga (The Great Section) : giving the rules for admission to the Sangha, ordination, dress, residence and the rules for the performance of especial monastic activities.

(d) Cullavagga (The Small Section) : dealing with the treatment offences, and duties of teachers and novices, with special rules for nuns.

(e) Parivara (Epitome of the Vinaya) - containing a commentary primarily on the great section and telling important stories about the events following the Enlightenment of the Buddha.
2. The Sutta Pitaka:

The second Pitaka of the Buddhist scripture is called the Sutta Pitaka or Basket of Discourses. It contains discourses derived by the Buddha on various occasions. The term Sutta in Pāli or Sutra in Sanskrit literally means 'thread' applied to a kind of book, which involves the main point or substance of more than what is expressed in words. Buddhist also adopted this word to mean a discourse, a chapter, a small portion of a sacred book. This canon consists of the truths of the religion itself presented from very varied points of view. It also involves the discussion and elucidation of the psychological system in which those truths are based. It is divided into five sections or Nikayas.

(a) Dīgha Nikāya (Collection of Long Discourses) - thirty-four discourses in three series, many of which dealing with the training of the disciples.

(b) Majjhima Nikāya (Collection of Medium Length Discourses) - containing fifty-two discourses, many of which tell of the Buddha's austerities, his Enlightenment, and early teachings.

(c) Sāmyutta Nikāya (Collection of Kindred Sayings) - these are divided according to subject :

(i) Sagathavagga - discourses in verse, or containing verses,
(ii) Nidanavagga - beginning with discourses on the chain of causation,
(iii) Khandhavagga - on the five aggregate and on treatises,
(iv) Salayatanavagga - beginning with discourses on the six senses,
(v) Mahavagga - the great series, on the Noble Eight-Fold Path,
(vi) Aṅguttara Nikāya - short passages arranged in eleven sections according to the number of topics dealt with in each, and finally
(vii) Khuddhaka Nikāya - this is the biggest volume made up of fifteen books which contain the most exquisite parts of the entire canon:

(i) Khuddhaka pātha - Shorter Texts,
(ii) Dhammapada - The Way of Truth,
(iii) Udāna - Heartful Sayings,
(iv) Iti-Vuttaka - "Thus Said" Discourses,
(v) Sutta-Nipāta - Collected Discourses,
(vi) Vimāna Vatthu - Stories of Celestial Mansions,
(vii) Petavatthu - Stories of Departed Spirits,
(viii) Theragāthā - Psalms of the Brethren,
(ix) Therigāthā - Psalms of the Sisters,
(x) Jātaka - Birth Stories,
(xi) Niddesa - Expositions,
3. The Abhidhamma Pitaka:

The Abhidharma or Abhidhamma (Pāli) Pitaka is a collection of metaphysical expositions and psychological system of the religion and of various points arising out of it. It is devoted to elaboration of the Eternal Law. It is of highly metaphysical nature. The term 'Abhidharma' consists of two parts 'abhi' means toward and 'dharma' means teaching which together mean the study and expository of the Buddha's teaching. On the other hand, according to Buddhaghosa, the prefix 'abhi' is employed in the sense of 'excellence and difference' and Abhidharma, therefore, means dharma (religion) which excels and is differentiated from the other dharma (suttapitaka) by its varied attributes. According to the many Buddhist scholars, Abhidharma (Abhidhamma) means merely the expansion, enlarged treatment, exposition in detail of the Dhamma. The Abhidhamma Pitaka deals not only with philosophy but also with the most general causes and the principles which govern all things. It is also an ethical system because it enables one to realise the Ultimate goal, Nirvāṇa. The Abhidhamma investigates the true factors of mind and matter
of a being in order to understand the things as they truly are. It deals with the same subject matter as the Suttapitaka. But there is a little difference between the two only in being more scholastic in the first than the latter. It was written in the form of questions and answers. The most important points of these texts are elements of mind and matter. The characteristics of these texts are scholasticism, definitions, classifications and analytical details of doctrinal points. The Abhidhamma Pitaka consists of seven books, known as the 'Suttapakaranas'. They are the following:

(i) Dhammasaṅgani - Enumeration of Phenomena,
(ii) Vibhaṅga - Book of Analysis,
(iii) Dhatukatha - Treatise on the Elements,
(iv) Puggalapaññatti - Book of Human Types,
(v) Kathāvatthu - Points of Controversy,
(vi) Yamaka - Book of Pairs,
(vii) Patthāna - On Relations.

The fundamental doctrine of the Theravāda is to restrain from all kinds of evil deeds, to accumulate all that is good and to purify the mind. These things can be accomplished only through the practice of *sīla* (good conduct), *samādhi* (meditation) and *prajñā* (wisdom). Good conduct purifies the mind; *samādhi* (meditation) brings
about its concentration and helps one to understand the significance of the four noble truths, and the law of dependent origination and the last one prajñā or wisdom is the highest source of knowledge. According to the Pāli tradition the source of highest knowledge is intuition (prajñā). This notion of intuition is closely connected with illumination. Intuition or illumination is self-assured; it obviously transcends empirical verification.

The main philosophy of this school is that all sins in this world is anitya (impermanence), duhkha (suffering) and anatman (soul-less). The Theravāda maintains that worldly things are impermanent, (anitya) full of suffering (duhkha) and without any substance (anatta). Thus they admit that everything is momentary and subject to decay. All compounded things originate from nāma-rūpa or non-material or material. These two are composed of five elements viz. sensation (vedanā), perception (samjñā), mental formative (saṁskāra) consciousness, (vijñāna) and lastly body (rūpa).

Thus when an individual understands the true nature of things, he tries to renounce worldly life. The individual avoids indulgence and self-mortification and follows the Middle path (Madhyama-pratipāt) which can lead his life to the avoid once of sufferings. According to
Theravāda, the middle path is the real path which avoids both indulgence in the pleasures of senses and self-mortification. When the individual realises that worldly suffering is due to craving and it can be destroyed by following the Noble Eightfold Path. Then the person can be said to be the perfect man or an Arhat or worthy man. This school states that the person who attained the life of an Arhat will no more return to worldly life. According to this school, Nirvāṇa is a happy state which is free from passion, ill-will and delusion, in reality it is a state which is beyond description. This school maintains that there is no self though there is the process of birth, death and rebirth. This process can be stopped by the achievement of Nirvāṇa.

For the Theravādins Nirvāṇa is achievable in this life. The individual who has attained Nirvāṇa remains until death. When an individual dies consciousness ceases; there is no more transmigration. Because when one attained Nirvāṇa the chain of causation is permanently broken. Thus the goal of Sthaviravādins is to attain Arhathood. An Arhat understands the true nature of things and follows the middle path (eight-fold-path) and strives for Nirvāṇa, the state of dispassionateness.
Among the Pāli or Theravāda writers and exponents of Buddhism, Buddhaghosa (about 400 A.D.), Nāgasena (about 140 to 115 B.C.), Buddhadatta (about 400 A.D.) and Dhammapala (about first half of the fifth century) can be mentioned as the most famous and popular thinkers.

**Buddhaghosa:**

Buddhaghosa is represented as the most important exponent of the Pāli Buddhism (400 A.D.). He wrote a number of new commentaries and came to be considered as the official interpreter of the Pāli school. According to the opinion of different thinkers the origin of Buddhaghosa is controversial. To the Mahavamsa, Buddhaghosa was born near Bodh Gaya. Another view is that he came from Tailāṅga. On the other hand, the Burmese believed that he was born at Burma. Some scholars like Professor D. Kosambi agreed the Burmese tradition that he came from the South. Whatever may be the truth, it is believed that he stayed at Bodh Gaya for a long time. Formerly, he was known as Ghosa but after the conversion into Buddhism he was known as Buddhaghosa. At first he was a good scholar in the Vedas and allied literature. Later on, from the advice of Mahavastu Revata he was converted into Buddhism under the Thera Revata. He studied both the Abhidhamma and the Vinaya and later became as the greatest exponent of Pāli Buddhism. He went to Ceylon during the reign of king Mahanama. There he heard all the
Sinhalese commentaries and the tradition of the Elders from Thera Sanghapala and convinced that they were the exact and true teachings of the Tathagata. He translated the Sinhalese commentaries into Magadhi and wrote a number of commentaries. Out of the vast number of works of Buddhaghosa the following can be mentioned:

The Visuddhi-Magga:

The 'Visuddhi-Magga' or 'Path of Purity' or 'Salvation' is the first work of Buddhaghosa. In it 'something of almost everything' in early Buddhist literature can be found. In that book he composed all the Sinhalese and Pāli works done before him. It is a series of great commentaries on the chief books of the Pāli canon. As the Mahavamsa states, "it is truly a summary of the three Pitakas together with the commentary". In fact the book is a summary of the Tipitaka and a great masterpiece of Buddhist literature which describes authoritatively, lucidly and in great detail the principal meditational practices of the Buddhist Yogin. The author himself explains the title of the work, "Visuddhi here means the 'Nirvāṇa' which is wholly and thoroughly purified, and freed from dirt of every description, and the path which leads to this purification is called Visuddhi-Magga". He says that it is his intention to expound this "Path to Purification" in accordance with the teachings of the
Mahavihara i.e., the traditions preserved in the "great mastery" of Anuradhapura. Moreover, it is the standard authority for the Neo-Sthaviravādin philosophy. Buddhaghosa also follows the Hinayanic scheme of spiritual progress in his Visuddhimagga. He divides it into three sections, of which the first deals with sila (moral precepts), the full observance of which results in the attainment of the first two stages, sotapatti and sakadagami; the second deals with citta or samādhi, which results in the attainment of the third stage anagami; and the third treats of panna (knowledge), perfection which leads the adept to the final stage, Arhat or complete emancipation. The Buddha reveals the way of purity under the three heads of conduct, concentration and wisdom. Visuddhi-Magga also describes the three stages. The whole Visuddhi-Magga consists of a considerable discussion of these two disciplines with conduct as the foundation. The two disciplines are the forty subjects of meditation and their resulting trances into a category by themselves. The forty subjects Ghosa calls concentration and the four trances and the four formless states he calls the eight attainments. Thus Buddhaghosa's Visuddhimagga discusses the whole path of purification which leads to Nirvāna.

The Atthasalini:

This is the commentary on the Dhamma Sangani with an introductory survey of all Abhidhamma literature. In his
Atthasalini Buddhaghosa mentions various opinions concerning the Abhidhammapitaka, but makes no references to the Sarvāstivādin Abhidhamma. In the very opening commentary on Dhammasaṅgani he explains 'yasmin samaye' which means 'the time in which'. In Theravāda time is represented by the term 'samaye' which means both 'condition' and 'time'. In that text he describes a number of significations which the word 'samaye' can admit such as samaya (collection), ksana (moment), hetu (cause) etc. He then explains the meaning of samaya as 'paccayasamaggi' or 'a conglomeration of causes'. He questioned why Buddha used the word 'samaya' in this context. He answered that Buddha used 'samaya' in order to emphasize the truth that nothing can arise from a single cause but that everything originates from conglomeration of causes.

The Pancappakarana Athakatha:

It is a commentary on the last five books of the Abhidhamma Pitaka namely, the Dhatu-katha, the Kathāvatthu, the Puggalapaññatti, the Yamaka and the Patthāna. He wrote the commentaries on the seven texts on the Abhidhammapitaka. They are based on the original Sinhalese commentaries as well on the accepted tradition of Mahāvīra.

The Sumangala Vilasini:

It is a commentary on Digha-Nikaya. In this commentary the two kinds of Buddha's habits are discussed;
(i) the profitable and (ii) the unprofitable. The profitable habits remained to the Blessed one. Profitable habits were five fold: (i) his habits before-breakfast, (ii) his habits after-breakfast, (iii) his habits of the first watch of the night, (iv) his habits of the middle watch of the night, (v) his habits of the last watch of the night. Whereas the unprofitable habits of the Master is his attainment of saintship at the time he sat cross-legged under the Bo-tree.

In addition to these, Buddhaghosa wrote commentaries on the three principal Nikayas, the Papancasudani on the Majjhima, the Saratthappakasini on the Samyutta and the Manorathapurani on the Anguttara. Among the three commentaries the Manorathapurani, the commentary on the Anguttara-Nikaya is the special work. Because it involves the biological notes on almost all the chief disciples of the Lord Buddha and also the names of the places where the Buddha went during the rainy season.

Moreover, the Samanta-pasadika is a commentary on the Vinaya. In the introduction to this book Buddhaghosa describes thus: "In commencing this commentary, having embodied therein the Maha-athakatha, without excluding any proper meaning from the decisions contained in the Mahapaccari, in the famous kusundi and other commentaries
and including the opinion of the Elders..." Further he wrote a commentary on the Patimokha known as the Kankhavitarani or the Matikatthakatha. It was based on the Mahavihara tradition. Moreover, his Padyacudamani is a poem which describes the birth and marriage.

Thus Buddhaghosa preserved a number of books for the future Buddhism. He collected doctrines from the Elders and wrote many commentaries on the Buddhist doctrines. The Buddhism of Buddhaghosa is now the predominant form of Hinayana, and therefore the system of thought best known to the West.

Nāgasena:

Nāgasena was one of the most important exponents among the Theravāda writers. He was well versed in the three Vedas, history and other subjects. He studied the Buddha's doctrine under the Elder Rohana and entered the order. He also learnt from Venerable Dhammarakkhita the whole of the three baskets. He was born at Kajangala in a brahmin family near Himalayas and his father's name was Sonuttara. He was the contemporary of the Greek king Milinda or Menander who ruled in northwestern India about the middle of the second century B.C. probably about 140 to 115 B.C. Nāgasena reviewed, what he had learnt throughout, but they could not satisfy his mind. Fortunately, he met
the Greek king Milinda at Sagala and taught him whatever he knew about Buddhism.

Nāgasena presented only one text called the 'Milinda-panha'. It was compiled after he had conversation with the king Menander (Milinda). In his text he explained the whole Buddhist philosophy. Inasmuch as in the book he expresses his whole philosophy, the Milinda-panha is a comprehensive exposition not only of Buddhist metaphysics, but also of Buddhist ethics and psychology. After the Pāli scriptures the Milinda-panha is considered as an authoritative text. The book consists of seven chapters. The first chapter is largely personal and historical while the other remaining are all doctrinal.

In the first chapter he addressed the characteristics of an individual, viz. impermanent individuality (no-soul), truth, renunciation, reasoning, wisdom, good faith, perseverance, mindfulness and meditation.

In the very opening of the first chapter he expresses his views about the impermanent individuality. He admits that an individual is a collection of five elements and that an individual is a mere empty sound. Further an individual is only a generally understood term, a designation in common use. So there is no individual. As an example:
Milinda asked "How is your Reverence known and what, Sir, is your name?"

Nāgasena: "I am known as Nāgasena, O king, and it is by that name that my brethren in the faith address me". "But although parents, O king, give such a name as Nāgasena, or Surasena or Virasena or Sihasena, yet this, Sir-Nāgasena and soon---is only a generally understood term a designation in common use. For there is no permanent individuality (no soul) involved in the matter".

Next he explained what is renunciation and the summum-bonum of life. He says that the renunciation is the end that this sorrow can be perished away, and that no further sorrow may arise. And the complete passing away without cleaving, to the world is the highest aim. Then he expresses the good conduct and the characteristics of good conduct. Good conduct is the basis of all good qualities.

The characteristics of good conduct are:

(i) the five moral powers - faith, perseverance, mindfulness, meditation and wisdom.

(ii) the seven conditions of Arhatship - self-possession, investigation of the Dhamma, perseverance, joy, calm, meditation and equanimity.
(iii) the path readiness of memory (unbroken self-possession).
(iv) the four kinds of right exertion, the four constituent, bases of extraordinary powers, the four stages of ecstasy, the eight forms of spiritual emancipation, the four modes of self-concentration.

Thus in the first chapter Nâgasena shows how the nature of personality is continually changing with the passage of time, but possesses a specious unity through the continuity of the body.

In his second chapter Nâgasena describes the problem of rebirth. He maintains that he who is reborn remains neither the same nor another. Nâgasena says "one comes into being another passes away, and the rebirth is, as it were, simultaneous. Thus neither as the same nor as another does a man go on to the phase of his self-consciousness". For example: "It is like milk, which when once taken from the cow turns after a lapse of time, first curd, and then from curd to butter. Now, would it be right to say that the milk was the same thing as the curds or the butter".

But by the cessation of all that leads to rebirth, he will not be reborn. He further says that he will not be reborn and may not feel bodily pain. Because, the causes, proximate or remote of bodily pain still continue, he could
be liable to it. But the causes, proximate or remote, of mental agony having ceased, he could not feel it. For the Blessed one says "one kind of pain he suffers, bodily pain but not mental".  

He also interprets what is that is reborn. Name and form is reborn. By this name-and-form deeds are done, good or evil and by these deeds another name-and-form reborn. When one is reborn he is not released from his evil deeds. Because when one dies he will die with craving in his heart, but if he could not he will not be free. He says whatever is subtle is mental, that is 'name' and whatever is gross therein that is 'form'. The two are connected one with the other, and spring into being together.

Lastly, he stresses that the beginning of time is immemorial. There are two types of time—time which exists and time which does not exist. Where there are beings who when die will be reborn, there time is. Where there are beings who when die, will not be reborn, there time does not exist. Because such beings who will be in the state of nirvāṇa are beyond the four corners of time and space. This means that where there are beings who are altogether set free (who having attained Nirvāṇa) in their present life there time is not because of their having been quite set free.
The third chapter discusses about the origination of the three periods of time i.e. past, present, future and the ultimate point of time. He describes the process of evolution i.e. how the cause and the effect arise with the conditions. Then he explains the origination of sight and thought in relation with other conditions through association such as, contact, sensation, idea, conceived, purpose, perception, reflection and investigation. Moreover, he also describes the distinguishing characteristics of these conditions.

The fourth chapter considers the function of Karma. It is because of the various result of Karmas that all men are not alike, some are short-lived and long-lived, some sickly and some healthy. It is Karma that divides them up into low and high and the like divisions. It is by the influence of Karma that beings are reborn and do not die until their evil Karmas are exhausted. Hence, to destroy their evil Karmas they should effort in this present life. While the foolish persons take pleasure in the senses and in the objects of sense, find delight in them they continue to cling to them. Hence they are not set free from suffering. But the wise man neither takes pleasure in those things. And inasmuch as he ceases craving and by the cessation of craving all pain has ceased. Thus that cessation is Nirvāna. Nāgasena maintains that Nirvāna is
possible to all men who can fight against the bondage of senses.

The fifth chapter discusses the attributes of the Buddha, truth, rebirth and the transmigration of body. Nāgasena admits that Buddha is pre-eminent and incomparable and is knowable by everybody. He will be known only by those persons who know the truth. Because, the truth is taught by the Buddha himself. Hence he himself is the truth.

Next, Nāgasena explains about the transmigration of body and the rebirth. He maintains that rebirth is possible without transmigration. And lastly, transmigration is dependent upon man's own karma or deeds.

The sixth chapter explains the distinction between the life of an ordinary human being in flesh and blood and the life of an enlightened person. Then it considers the attributes and the miraculous powers of the Buddha. Buddha is a human being with good conduct and wisdom. Then it explains the distinction between a life full of passion and the life devoid of passion. The former is overpowered by craving and later is free from craving. Next Nāgasena describes the meaning of transmigration. He says that transmigration is the indefinite succession of process.
For example: 'It is like the case of a man who after eating a mango sets out the seed in the ground. From that seed a great tree would be produced and give fruit. And there would be no end to the succession, in that way, of mango trees'. Then it involves the origin and the function of memory. Memory arises both subjectively and objectively (externally). Besides memory is also artificial.

The last or the seventh chapter explains the memory i.e., in how many ways does memory spring up. There are sixteen ways in which memory springs up. Then Nāgasena says that the present sorrow should cease and no other sorrow should arise after the removal of this sorrow. That is how a person can prevent the future thirst which all the time does not exist. Next, he discusses about the seven kinds of knowledge and among them 'the investigation of the truth' is the only wisdom which makes man wise. He also discusses about the merit and demerit of knowledge and the minutes of all things i.e., Truth. Finally, he says that there is no such thing as a soul in beings.

Buddhadatta:

Buddhadatta had come from Uragpur in the kingdom of Cola. It is said that he was born in India and lived at various times both in Ceylon and Kancipura. He was the contemporary of Buddhaghosa. He had gone earlier to Ceylon
to study the real teachings of Buddha. Like Buddhaghosa he also had lived and studied the Buddha's doctrine at the Mahavihara in Anuradhapura. On the way, when he came across Thera Buddhaghosa, he requested Buddhaghosa to send copies of his commentaries to him in India which in all probability Buddhaghosa did. Then he later summarized Buddhaghosa's commentaries. He comprehended Buddhaghosa's commentaries on the Abhidhammapitaka in the Abhidharmavatara and those on the Vinaya-Pitaka in the Vinaya-vinicchya. The Abhidharmavatara is the most famous work of Buddhadatta. Although Abhidharmavatara is a summary of Buddhaghosa's work (commentaries), Buddhadatta did not follow them blindly.

According to Buddhaghosa, there are five metaphysical ultimates i.e., rūpa (form), vedanā (sensation), saññā (perception), samkhara (various intellectual differentiation), and vinna (consciousness). But in the Abhidharmavatara, Buddhadatta classified them as citta (consciousness), citasika (constituents of consciousness), rūpa (form) and nibhāna (nirvāna). He was the author of the commentaries on the Buddhavamsa and the Rūparūpa-vibhāga.

The poem Anagatavamsa "The History of the Future One" i.e. the future Buddha is regarded as a sequel to the Buddhavamsa, the story of the past Buddhas. It perhaps
belonged to an earlier period. The Anagatavamsa gives a more detailed treatment of the future Buddha and his contemporary the Cukravartin, world-ruler, in the form of a prophecy which is made to issue from the lips of Gautama Buddha. Thus Buddhadatta developed Buddhaghosa's philosophy. He also presented a great deal of work in the early Buddhist philosophy for future generation. That is why the later philosophers could develop his philosophy in many fields of Buddhist knowledge. After him, Venerable Dhammapala developed both Buddhaghosa's and his philosophy.13

Dhammapala :

After Buddhaghosa there was another Pāli commentator whose name was Thera Dhammapala. He was born at Badaratittha on the south-east coast of India opposite to Ceylon. He was also one of the famous authors of the Pāli literature. Besides, he was an adherent to the Theravāda school. He wrote a number of Pāli commentaries at a little later than Thera Buddhaghosa, perhaps first half of the fifth century. According to another view it was probably in the fifth century A.D. Dhammapala based his commentaries on original Sinhalese works. It is also said that he probably made use of the Dravidian commentaries, available to him in South India. Dhammapala in any case must have studied at Anuradhapura, for like Buddhaghosa he also refers to the Atthakathas of the 'great monastery' of Anuradhapura.
A little after Buddhaghosa, Dhammapala wrote his commentary, the Paramathadipani "Elucidation of the true Meaning" on those texts of the Khudakanikaya which Buddhagosa had not mentioned. He did all the works which had remained undone by the great commentator Buddhaghosa, i.e. on Udana, Itivuttaka, Cariyapitaka, Thera-gatha, Theri-gatha, Vimana-vatthu, Peta-vatthu. All these texts are together called the 'Paramathadipani'. He wrote another commentary on a post-canonical work, called the Netti. He also presented a commentary called the Paramathamajusa on Buddhaghosa's the Visuddhimagga. The Paramathamajusa is a famous work of Dhammapala. In this commentary he is commenting on nava-sarira-patubhava in chapter XVII of the Visuddhimagga. Here he says that "when body is worn out and cast aside, a new body is born in another world and further echoes". This commentary refers to the views of other schools and teachers, like Vasuddhamma of the Mahasanghikas or Kanada, Kapila, Ajivika or other works like the Atthasalini, the Sammohavinodani and the Pathana-attakatha. It also refers to the views of the Abhayagiri school and mentions Upatisa and Vimuttimagga.

Both Buddhaghosa and Dhammapala have some similar conceptions throughout, and follow the same explanation. For this reason it is impossible to say that any considerable period of time could have lapsed between these
two commentators. The commentaries on the Peta-vatthu and the Vimana-vatthu follow a similar arrangement to that of the Jataka commentary and the commentary of Dhammapala elucidating and enlarging on verses by circumstantial prose narrative. A 'Jataka' refers always to a past existence of the Buddha. It is considered that the commentary on the Vimana-vatthu of Dhammapala has much greater value than those on the Vimana-vatthu itself. Regarding Dhammapala as an interpreter, he might have applied what had been said by the Buddhaghosa. The commentaries of Dhammapala have borrowed about twenty-five stories from the commentary on the Dhammapada. There is, of course, always the possibility that all these commentaries did not copy from one another, but made use of common sources. Likewise, the commentaries of Buddhaghosa have parallels with that of the Dhammapada and over fifty stories are common to the commentaries on the Dhammapada and the Jataka respectively. In some cases, there is, word for word identity, in others there are varying versions of the stories. Burlingame said that the Jataka commentary was later than the commentaries of Buddhaghosa. The commentary on the Dhammapada was later than that of none of these commentaries. There are several other valuable legends among the two authors. Buddhaghosa followed the Atthakathas and drew upon them which he prefaced his Samanta-pasadika, the commentary on the Vinaya Pitaka, the historical introduction. Dhammapala
also utilised the Sinhalese Atthakathas which were studied by Buddhaghosa. It contains the sections on ecclesiastical history. The sections presumably formed the introductions to the Atthakathas, which deal with the Vinaya Pitaka. The Atthakathas have been handed down since the First Council with the texts of the Tipitaka. The same Atthakathas are also the sources from which the historical and epic Pāli poems of Ceylon are derived; for the Pāli chronicle of Ceylon, the Dipavamsa and the Mahavamsa, cannot be termed as actual histories, but only 'historical poems'. The Dipavamsa the 'Island Chronicle', and the Mahavamsa, the 'Great Chronicle' are Pāli epics, the former is an artless work in rough Pāli epics. It was written in the fourth century A.D. According to another view it was probably written between the beginning of the fourth and the first third of the fifth century A.D. Whereas, the Dipavamsa is a work of genius, and comparable with the great Indian Kavyas, composed on the last part of the fifth century A.D. Both rest on irregular notes of events kept in the Mahavihara and ancient Pāli verses scattered in the commentaries, and both are partly historical but largely legendary. Both the epics commence with the story of Gautama Buddha, tell of his three visits to the island of Ceylon, which was at that time inhabited only by demons, namely Raksas, Yaksas, Pisacas and Nagas. Thus the historical sections of Atthakathas became as it were,
treasuries of ecclesiastical and secular traditions of all kinds as well as of actual historical records. Thus a close study of Dhammapala's commentaries would be very helpful in understanding the contemporary religious condition not only to the South India and Ceylon but to the whole India. The study of his commentary also would be helpful in understanding and clarifying more in the philosophy of Buddhaghosa.

The Visuddhimagga of Buddhaghosa is a systematic exposition of Buddhism of the Pāli books which possessed a very high quality. In that book he utilised all the Sinhalese and Pāli works done before him. It is a series of great commentaries on the chief books of the Pāli canon. Buddhaghosa's 'Path of Purity', is the main authority for the ethics of the middle period. His philosophy is based on epistemology and ethics. On the other hand, Nāgasena's Milinda-Panha' is a comprehensive exposition not only of Buddhist metaphysics but also of Buddhist ethics and psychology. Apart from its importance as a Buddhist text, the 'Milinda-Panha' is also to be valued as a historical document and a literary achievement of great eminence. Buddhaddatta developed the whole work of Buddhaghosa. Though he did all the work done by Buddhaghosa, there is some dissimilarity between them. Dhammapala has some similar conceptions with that of Buddhaghosa. He did the work that
had been undone by the Buddhaghosa. In addition to this, there are some similarity and dissimilarity between the two philosophers. Nevertheless, Buddhadatta and Dhammapala developed the philosophy of Buddhaghosa.
References:


5. Winternitz: History of Indian Literature, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, 1977, p.201.


8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid., p.64.

11. Ibid.


13. I cannot write in details on Buddhada t ta as the materials are very rare. I have consulted at first 'The Pandu Buddhist Temple' situated at Guwahati which is the branch of the 'Calcutta Mahabodhi.
Society'. But the materials are not available there. So they directed me to consult the 'Calcutta Mahabodhi Society'. Unfortunately there is also no material regarding this topic. Next, they referred again to 'The Mahabodhi Society of Bangalore'. Then 'The Mahabodhi Society of Bangalore' referred to the 'Buddhist Publication Society of Sri Lanka' and the 'Vipassana Visodhana Vinyas', Mumbai. But unfortunately for the paucity of time I could not communicate to all these places.

15. Ibid., p.196.