CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION
CHAPTER-I: INTRODUCTION

The Kathavatthu is an important Buddhist text. Kathavatthu is one of the seven books belonging to the Abhidhamma Pitaka of the Theravāda tradition. Although the book is believed to have been added to the canon last, in the traditional listing of the Abhidhamma books it is placed as the fifth. However, sometimes it is also said to be the third of the seven books of Abhidhamma.¹ The literal meaning of the phrase “kathā-vatthu” is “subject of discourse” but in the light of its text the name has been translated as “Points of Controversy”.

The Kathavatthu is a Buddhist book of debate on matters of theology, philosophy, cosmology and so on. This book is ascribed to Moggaliputta Tissa Thera who, according to tradition, compiled it in the Third Council at Pātaliputra, convened by King Aśoka (3rd century B.C.E.) against the polemical or controversial points of the schismatic monks or schools.

The aim of this thesis is to critically analyse the content and the historical settings of the Kathavatthu. This analysis will be purely on historical grounds and philosophy being part and parcel of the Kathavatthu will automatically be discussed. In this chapter the author will introduce the history associated with the Kathavatthu. So the Background, the Authorship, the Author, the Abhidhamma Literatures (in General), Pāli Works Belonging To The Theravāda Abhidhamma Literature, Date Of The Kathavatthu, Content, Commentary, Authorship Of The Commentary and Survey Of Literature have been discussed in this chapter keeping in mind the historical point of view.

The order of works comprising the Abhidhammapitaka is Dhammasangkota, Vibhāṅga, Dhammapāḍhati, Puggalaṭhāṭha, Kathavatthu, Yamakas and Patthāṇa as opposed to the mnemonic verse Dhammasaṅgata-Vibhaṅga ca Kathavaṭṭha ca Puggalaṭha Dhammasaṅgata-Vibhaṅga ca Kathavaṭṭha ca Puggalaṭha Abhidhamma ti vuccati.
1.1 THE BACKGROUND

As long as the Buddha was alive, he was able to keep a lid on the divisive formulations and any kind of schism that have generated within the Buddhist Order and the Doctrine. Problems of misinterpretation due to the divergent nature of the Sangha were evident during the time of the Buddha. So he formulated various Vinaya rules known as the Adhikaraṇa samatha to dispel any dissention amicably within the Saṅgha. Yet his reluctance to appoint a successor and insistence that the doctrine he taught and the discipline he instituted serve as guides for his future disciples left them with a sense of freedom about interpreting the doctrine as they wished. Indeed, this was what prompted the Buddha to formulate the hermeneutical principles; it was also what led to the holding of the First Council three months after his death. It took almost two and a half centuries for the controversies to surface again. When they did, they pertained to three issues which will be discussed later in the fourth chapter, namely: (1) the nature of the continuity of the individual, (2) the reality of the elements that constitute the individual, and (3) the status of the liberated person. These were the primary topics of philosophical controversy during the time of Emperor Aśoka.

Realizing that the Order was divided on doctrinal issues as well as practical affairs, Aśoka is said to have invited one of the most respected monks, Moggaliputta tissa, to convene a council for purging heretical views and restoring the purity of the Buddha’s teachings. The proceedings of this Third Council are recorded in the Kathavatthu, a text that gained canonical status in no time, despite being written by a disciple who lived almost 250 years after the Buddha. It was the doctrinal significance of this work that compelled later commentators to make a special effort to justify its authority and sanctity. This they did by claiming that (1) the Buddha predicted the authorship and contents of this work, and (2) when Moggaliputta tissa compiled the treatise, he was faithfully following the
principles (naya) and topics (matika) established by the Buddha. According to Kalupahanan, "Even if we suspect the first of these claims, there seems to be no reason to question the second, as long as we are willing to place the Kathavatthu against the background of the discourses of the Buddha and analyze its contents."

The historical background of the Kathavatthu is the division of the saṅgha into many different schools. According to the commentary to the Kathavatthu, one hundred years after the parinibbāna of the Buddha, a group of monks called Vajjiputtaka proposed laxity of rules. The orthodox monks got together and decided that the proposed relaxation of rules was not warranted by the original Vinaya of the Buddha. The group who did not accept this decision broke away from the original group and formed a new sect called 'Mahāsaṅghika' or 'those who belonged to the great community'. The traditional group came to be known as Theravādins i.e. 'those who follow the doctrine of the Elders'. Subsequently, about two centuries after the parinibbāna of the Buddha, there sprang five sects from the Mahāsaṅghikas, namely, Ekabhojārika, Gokulika, Paññattivīda, Bāhulika and Cetiyavāda. From Theravāda arose eleven sects, namely, Mahīṃsakā, Dhammaguttika, Vajjiputtaka, Dhammattariya, Channāgārika, Bhadravānīka and Sammitiya. During the reign of Emperor Aśoka, who showed great concern for the sāsana, there were many who entered it for the sole purpose of living an easy life. As a result the sāsana had become corrupted. The third council was convened by Aśoka in order to remedy this situation. In this council, the entire three pitakas were recited and the Kathavatthu was compiled by the convener of the council, Mogaliputta Tissa Mahāthera in order to repudiate the wrong views held by the nikāyins other than the Theravādins. The Theravāda version of the story and the very historicity of the third council have been questioned by certain historians. Moreover, it has been shown that some of the sects mentioned in the book belong to a post-Aśoka period. Nevertheless, the historicity of the book and its author is generally accepted.

2 Kathavatthuppakaranā Atthakathā, 7
1.2 AUTHORSHIP

The traditional Theravāda belief is that the Abhidhamma Piṭaka, in its extant form, was preached by the Buddha himself. In the commentary to the Dhammasaṅgani, Buddhaghosa says that the Abhidhamma was preached by the Buddha to the inhabitants of the Tavatimsa heaven where his mother was born following her death, immediately after the birth of the future Buddha. This theory of the inception (nidāna) of the Abhidhamma is meant to attribute the general authorship of the Piṭaka to the Buddha. However, in the case of the Kathāvatthu one has to take into consideration the following two points:

(1) Kathāvatthu is the only Theravāda Abhidhamma book for which the tradition acknowledges a separate author, namely, the great elder Moggaliputta Tissa.

(2) Its subject matter is a critique of the so called wrong views adopted by later Buddhist sects that emerged several centuries after the parinibbāna of the Buddha. In this connection, the commentary of the book (viz. Pañcappakaranaṭṭhakathā) has the following explanation to make:

After he [the Buddha] had taught them the Dhammasaṅgani, the Vibhaṅga, the Dhātukathā and the Puggalapaññatti, he thought: when in the future the turn for setting forth the Kathāvatthu shall arrive, my disciple, the greatly wise Elder, Tissa, the son of Moggali will purge the blemishes that have arisen in the Religion, and calling a third council, will seated in the midst of the Order, divide this compilation into thousand sections........ He drew up, with respect to courses to be adopted in all the discourses, a list of heads in a text uncompleted by just one section for recitation.4

This saves the situation by attributing the authorship of the main themes of debates recorded in the book to the Buddha and by leaving the detailed authorship to Moggaliputta Tissa.

4 Pañcappakaranaṭṭhakathā Nidānakathā 0.6,p.7
1.3 THE AUTHOR

Moggaliputta Tissa, the author of the Kathavatthu, was the president of the third Buddhist Council held in the Aśokarāma in Pāṭaliputta (Pāṭaliputra now Patna) in the third century B.C.E. and also the spiritual counselor of Emperor Aśoka. Being the most senior and accepted leader of the Buddhist Sangha Moggaliputta Tissa played a vital role in all activities pertaining to the Buddhāsāsana (Theravada sect) of the day. The Dipavaṃsa, the Mahāvaṃsa, the Samantapāsādikā- the commentary on the Vinaya and epigraphical evidences are the main sources available for a study of Moggaliputta Tissa.

According to the Mahāvaṃsa (5.5.95f) and the Samantapāsādikā (VinA.1.p.35f) immediately after the conclusion of the second Buddhist Council held hundred years after the parinibbāna of the Buddha the story of Moggaliputta Tissa begins. Here it is stated that after finalizing the Council the theras looked into the future to ascertain whether there would be a similar controversy in the sāsana in the future. They foresaw that after the lapse of 118 years a similar controversy would come up in the reign of Emperor Aśoka. When the theras saw that none of them would survive till then, they thought of a person who would be capable of settling the dispute to come. But they could not see any one either in the human realm or in the six deva realms. Ultimately in the Brahma world they saw a Brahma named Tissa who is capable of settling the dispute and had almost exhausted his time to live. They requested him to be reborn in the human realm to rescue the sāsana from the future calamity. Brahma Tissa accepted this request without hesitation. According to the Theragāthā Atṭhakathā, Sabbakāmi the most senior therā who participated at the second council, instructed the Brahma Tissa before his parinibbāna to purify the sāsana of the crisis that would crop up during Dharmāśoka’s time. Further the Theras entrusted the ordination and the education of the child who would be born in the house of the Brahmin Moggali to Ven Siggava and Candavajji who were young bhikkhus at the time. It was explained, as a punishment to the young monks for not involving themselves in

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5 Theragatha Atṭhakathā.II.193
settling the current dispute (which led to the holding of the Second Council). But the Dipavamsa does not speak of the request supposed to have been made to Brahma Tissa by the theras, to be re-born in the human realm. Instead the Dipavamsa says that a Brahma would pass away from the Brahma world and would be reborn in the human world. He would be ordained by Siggava and Candavajjji and having learnt the scriptures he would crush the doctrine of the heretics and help the sāsana.

\[ \text{Pabbajito tada Tisso pariyattinca papuni} \]

\[ \text{Bhindīva tīthiyavaddam patiṭṭhapessati sasanam}^6 \]

The wife of the Brahmin gave birth to a son in due course and was named Tissa and coupled with the name of his father he came to be known as Moggaliputtatissa, the son of Moggali. Until he attained sixteen years of age Tissa, the son of the brahman Moggali, had no connection with the elder Siggava who was visiting his home daily. The elder wanted to have a dialogue with the youth. Through this dialogue Siggava aroused his interests in learning the Buddhamaṇṭa (Buddhist doctrine). When the youth said that he want to learn it, the elder said that it could be taught only if he would ordain himself like him (like the elder). The youth sought permission of his parents to enter the Order to learn the manta. The parents gave him the permission thinking that their son would come back after learning it.

The elder Siggava ordained him and taught him the topics of meditation on the thirty two parts of the body (dvattimsākāra kammatṭhānā\(^7\)). Before long the youth attained the state of a sotāpanna. The elder thought that it was not possible now for the novice to return to lay life. The thera did not want his pupil to proceed further and did not give instructions for meditation any more. The thera thought: “he would soon attain arahanthood and would not be keen to learn the teachings of the Buddha” (Buddhavacana). The elder Siggava sent the novice

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6 Dipavamsa. Ch. V.v.58
7 VinayaAtthakatha (Samantapāsādikā). I.p.40
Moggaliputttatissa to the elder Candavajji to learn the teachings of the Buddha. Here the Samantapāsādikā specifically says that he learnt the entire teachings of the Buddha with the commentary, except the Vinaya

\[
\text{thapetvā vinayapīṭakam sabbam buddhavacanam uggahi saddhim atṭhakathāya}^8
\]

Next, the Samantapāsādikā says that at the time of the Higher Ordination even before he had spent one rainy season, he was a master of the tipitaka which means that he mastered the Vinaya too.

\[
\text{upasampannakale pana a vassiko 'va samano tipitaka dharo ahosi}^9
\]

The Mahāvamsa too says:

\[
\text{Pesesi Candavajjassa therasantika muggaham}
\]

\[
\text{Katun suttabhidhammanam so tatha 'ka taduggaham}^10
\]

Thera (Siggava) sent him to theraj Candavaji that he might learn the Sutta and the Abhidhamma and he learn it.

The Mahāvamsa continuing the narration further adds: "The elder Siggava having conferred the Higher Ordination at the proper time, taught him the Vinaya and the other two (Sutta and Abhindhamma) again."

\[
\text{upasampadāyitva kale so siggavako yati vinayam uggahapesi ouna sesa dvayam pi ca}^11
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The Samantapāsādikā statement that the novice Moggaliputtatissa learnt the entire Buddha’s teachings together with the commentaries, except the Vinaya, apparently has been a problem to Ven. Sariputta, and author of the

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8 VinayaĀṭṭhakathā (Samantapāsādikā). I p.41
9 VinayaĀṭṭhakathā (Samantapāsādikā). loc.cit.
10 Mahāvamsa. Ch. V.v.150
11 Mahāvamsa. loc.cit.
Sarathadipani, the śākā (sub-commentary) of the Samantapāsādikā. Probably he found something unusual in it and was trying to find out if there was any reason for it:

ettha samaneranam vinayapariyapunanam carittam no hotiti thapetva vinayapitaka, avasesam Buddhavacanam ughthanapesiti ti supi Ganthipadesupi Vuttam.¹²

"It is stated in all the three glossaries that as there was no custom to teach the Vinaya to the novices, except the Vinaya, rests of the Buddha’s teachings were taught”

It may be noted that this was not Ven. Sariputta’s opinion, but he is giving an explanation given in the Glossaries. The author of the Sarathadipani and the authors of the glossaries belong to the Mahāvihāra School and did not want to dispute or disagree with the Samantapāsādikā, apparently they were trying to defend it.

But there appears to be a more strong reason for teaching the Sutta and the Abhidhamma to the novice Moggaliputtatissa, postponing the Vinaya to a subsequent occasion. The elders Siggava and Candavajji were training their pupil to handle a major dispute on the core of the Buddha’s teachings relating to the Sutta Pitaka and the Abhidhamma Pitaka. Therefore he should be an expert on the Sutta and the Abhidhamma to face the heretics who were forwarding their own views as those of the Buddha. There was no immediate necessity for him to master the Vinaya and they could afford to postpone the teaching of it to a subsequent occasion. And also the teachers knew their genius pupil would not take a long time to master the Vinaya when the time comes. However it is seen that Moggaliputtatissa mastered the Vinaya in no time, the preserving of which was entrusted to the lineage of monks (ācariya paramparā) he belonged to. He took over position of the chief of the Vinaya after the demise of his teacher Siggava.

¹² Sarathadipani p.103
According to the *Mahāvamsa*,\(^{13}\) Moggaliputtatissa having practiced *vipassana* meditation attained the state of an *arahant* with the six super normal powers and reached the position of a senior monk when he was still young (Tissa Daharo – child Tissa).

*Tato so Tisso daharo arabhitv vipassanam*

*Chalabhinnno ahu kale therabhavanca papuni*

It is not known exactly how and when he first came in contact with King Aśoka with whom he was destined to have “close relations with regard to matters pertaining to the Buddhasāsana”. It appears that he was residing at Aśokarāma in Pātaliputta put up by Aśoka.

Moggaliputtatissa’s name is first mentioned along with that of Emperor Aśoka when Aśoka wanted to know the extent of the *Dhamma* preached by the Buddha. According to the *Mahāvamsa*\(^{14}\), it was the elder Moggaliputtatissa who answered that there are 84,000 sections in the *dhamma* preached by the Buddha. Apparently, this was the first recorded meeting of Aśoka and Moggaliputtatissa.

After the Emperor constructed 84,000 *vihāras* equivalent to the 84,000 sections of the *dhamma*, and on the day of the consecration of the *vihāras* the Emperor questioned the *Mahāsāṅgha* as to whose generosity towards the *sāsana* was great and whether he would be a kinsman of the *sāsana* (*sāsanassa dāyado*). The assembly of monks entrusted the reply to Moggaliputtatissa, who declared that even in the life time of the Buddha there was no generous giver similar to Aśoka. But he further said that unless a person ordains his own son or a daughter he would not become a kinsman of the *sāsana*. This was the second occasion Moggaliputtatissa’s name is mentioned along with that of Emperor Aśoka.

However it is observed that the therī’s timely advice paved the way for the ordination of the Emperor’s children, *Mahinda* and *Saṅghamitta* and made the

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\(^{13}\) *Mahāvamsa* Ch. V.v153

\(^{14}\) *Mahāvamsa* ChV. v.77-78
Emperor’s attachment to the sāsana even stronger. It is also said\textsuperscript{15} that the Elder gave this advice having looked into the future prospects as Aśoka’s son prince Mahinda and the Daughter Sanghamitta and also the progress of the sāsana (that would take place as a result of their admission to the sāsana). At the ordination of prince Mahinda, the Elder Moggaliputtatissa became his preceptor (upādhyāya). It was under Moggaliputtatissa thera that Bhikkhu Mahinda learnt the three Pitakas in three years\textsuperscript{16}.

From the Ordination of Mahinda, the elder Moggaliputtatissa does not come to the scene till the crisis arose in the sāsana as a result of the lavish patronage of Emperor Aśoka. According to the narrative Aśoka began to patronize the Buddhist monks in an unprecedented scale and as a result heretics lost their gains and honour. The heretics who lost their revenue donned the saffron robes and dwelt together with the bhikkhus. They proclaimed their own doctrines as the doctrines of the Buddha and carried out their own practices as they wished. Moggaliputtatissa realized that a severe crisis has arisen in the Buddhasāsana and was waiting for the time for its appeasement.\textsuperscript{17}

As stated in the Samantapāsādikā Moggaliputtatissa thought: “now that the dispute has arisen it will soon be aggravated, and it is not possible to settle it while living in their midst”.

\begin{quote}
Tada Moggaliputtatissa theru uppannam’ dāni idam adhikaranam tam na cirassevakakkhalam bhavissati na kho pana etam sakka imesam majjhe vasantena vupasametum.\textsuperscript{18}
\end{quote}

Having thought thus Moggaliputtatissa entrusted the leadership of his chapter to Mahinda thera and withdrew to the hill near Ahogaṅgā alone, wishing to abide in peace and lived there for seven years.

\textsuperscript{15} Mahāvamsa Ch.V. v.194
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid, p.210
\textsuperscript{17} Mahāvamsa Ch.V.v.228ff
\textsuperscript{18} VinayaĀṭṭhakathā (Samantapāsādikā)1.53

11
In the meantime the conditions at Pātaliputta aggravated. In spite of the heretics being subjected to censure by the Order of monks, with regard to the dhamma and the vinaya and the teaching of the master, they gave rise to diverse forms and upheavals, stains and thorns in the dispensation. Some of them tended the sacrificial fires, some subjected themselves to the heat of the fires, some worshipped the sun following its movements in the sky while others made determined effort to destroy the dhamma and the vinaya.\(^\text{19}\)

The genuine monks refused to perform the *uposatha* ceremony or its conclusion (*parārāṇā*) with the heretics. The *uposatha* ceremony at Āsokārama was interrupted for seven years. They informed the emperor too, of this matter. He commanded a minister to go to the monastery and settle the disputes and revive the *uposatha* ceremony. The minister did not have the courage to ask the Emperor about the details. So he inquired from another minister about the course of action to be taken to carry out the order of the Emperor. But the *Mahāvamsa* does not say that the minister inquired from another minister about the ways and means of executing the order given by the Emperor. He replied that the Emperor wished “that all those who did not perform the *uposatha* be slain, even as quelling an uprising in the frontier districts by executing the culprits”. The minister went to the monastery, summoned all the monks and conveyed the order to perform the *uposatha*. The monks replied that they would not perform *uposatha* in the company of heretics and the minister began chopping their heads, starting from the senior most elder. The massacre of the monks by the minister was stopped by the intervention of Tissa thera, the Emperor’s own brother, who was residing at the Āsokārama at the time. The matter was reported to the Emperor and he reprimanded the minister and with great anguish hastened to the monastery and told the senior monks: “Venerable Sirs, this minister has acted contrary to my command. On whom will the evil devolve?”

Some replied that the responsibility falls on the Emperor, who gave the order, while some others said that the responsibility falls on both the

\(^{19}\text{VinayaĀṭṭhakāthā (Samantapāsādikā) loc.cit.}\)
minister and the Emperor. There were still others who declared: “If you had good
intentions no evil will fall on you”. The Emperor was perplexed and inquired
whether there was any monk who could clear his doubts and stabilize the sāsana.
The monks informed the Emperor that Moggaliputtatissa thera is capable of
clearing his doubts and stabilize the sāsana.

According the Mahāvamsa20 and the Samantapāsādikā21 it appears that
the Emperor was hearing the name of the elder Moggaliputtatissa for the first time
and Emperor is made to ask whether the elder is old, but prior to that, both
sources have mentioned how the elder Moggaliputtatissa answered the king’s
question, as to the number of sections in the dhāma. Already both sources had
explained how the elder explained to the emperor how to become a kinsman of
the sāsana. It was under the elder Moggaliputtatissa, that Mahinda, the son of the
Emperor had already been ordained. Under the circumstances it is contradictory to
say that the Emperor had not heard or met the elder earlier. The
Vamsatthappakāsinī, does not comment on it. Apparently, having observed the
contradiction Sāriputta thera (12th century A. C.) in his Sārathadipani, the sub
commentary (ṭīkā) on the Samantapāsādikā, was possibly trying to defend him.

Mahallako nu kho bhante theru, kincapi rajena theru ditthapubbo. Namam
pana sallakkhetum asakkonto evam pucchi ti vadanti22

“Though the king had seen the thera before, being unable to remember the
name inquired whether the thera was old”, so they say.

The Emperor dispatched a large delegation of monks and ministers twice,
to bring the thera with the message: “the Emperor summons you” (rājā
pakkosati), but the thera did not comply. When the king inquired from the monks
the reason for the refusal, the monks said that when they say that the Emperor

20 Mahāvamsa Ch.V.v.246f.
21 VinayaAtthakathā (Samantapāsādikā)1.56f
22 Sārathadipani p.118
summons you the therā would not come. You may tell him: “Sir, the
dispensation is sinking. Be of assistance to me to stabilize the dispensation.”

sāsanaṁ bhante osidati, amhākam sāsanampagganhanatthaya
sahāyakohothati 23

Then only he would come. This shows the strong character of the therā.
He did not obey the Emperor’s order twice. When the Emperor sent for him with
the messages as suggested by the monks, the therā agreed to come. Finally the
therā was conveyed in a decorated boat down the river with great honour and
security.

The Emperor waded knee deep in the river to receive the therā. It is said
that he stretched his hands for the therā to hold and disembark. The therā got hold
to the Emperor’s right hand and got down. This was a great honour bestowed on
the therā by the Emperor.

The Samantapaśādikā at this instance says that the bearers of the swords
(asiggaḥaka) were about to behead the therā, for it was a tradition that whoever
that takes the Emperor by hand should be beheaded, which the Emperor is said to
have prevented. Neither the Mahāvamsa nor its tikā is aware of this custom. The
therā finally dispelled the Emperor’s doubts about the killing of the monks and
explained to the Emperor that kamma always accompany volition (cetanā). If
there is no volition, there would be no sin. It is also said in the Mahāvamsa and
the Samantapaśādikā that the therā performed a miracle at the request of the
Emperor to show him that he is capable of dispelling doubts of the king and
stabilizing the sāsana. It is also evident that though the Emperor had an unparallel
faith in the sāsana he had no clear knowledge of the basic tenets of Buddhism,
Therefore the Emperor learnt the teachings of the Buddha from the therā for seven
days living in the royal park itself. Later the Emperor summoned all the monks to
the Asokārama and separated them according to their faith and sitting behind a
screen with the therā at one end, commenced questioning the monks individually

23 VinayaAtthakathā (Samantapāsādikā), I, p.57
as to what the Buddha taught. The heretics forwarded their own faiths as that of the Buddha. As the Emperor had already learned the Buddha’s teachings from the theras, he had no difficulty in identifying the heretics. Consequently they were disrobed and given white clothes and were expelled from the śāsana. The number expelled thus exceeded sixty thousand. When the remaining monks were called and questioned the same was they replied that the Buddha taught Vibajjhapāda (analytical doctrine). The king verified the answer from the theras who confirmed that the Buddha was a Vibajjhapāda. The Mahāvamsa and the Samantapāsādikā say the questioning was done by the Emperor himself.

However, it is reasonable to presume that the decision whether a monk was genuine or a heretic was made by the theras Moggaliputtatissa and the expulsion was made by the Emperor.

The next important task the elder Moggaliputtatissa undertook was the holding of the Third Buddhist Council (Tatiya saṅgīti) for which he selected out of sixty thousand monks one thousand who were endowed with the six supernormal powers experts in the three piṭakas and versed in the special sciences (Visāraḍe chalabhīṇē tepitake pabhīṇaṭapiṭambhide). The rehearsal which was headed by elder Moggaliputtatissa, under the patronage of the Emperor, was concluded in nine months. However this Third Buddhist Council was not accepted by the Northern Buddhist Tradition. It is considered as a sectarian Council within the Theravada school of Buddhism. It was at this convocation that the elder Moggaliputtatissa recited (set forth) the Kathavatthupakarana, the last text to be added to the Abhidhamma Pitaka of the Theravadins, to refute heretical theories. The Mahāvamsa and the Samantapāsādikā merely say that he set forth the Kathavatthupakarana in order to suppress heretical views, but the commentary to the Kathavatthu, the Pancappakarana Atthakatha provides more information about the purpose for which Moggaliputtatissa set forth the Kathavatthupakarana.
Moggaliputtatissa thera recited (composed) the *Kathavatthuppakarana* in order to suppress all the issues born at that time and also that would arise in the future, analyzing the topics kept by the Buddha and incorporating 500 suttas of his own (faith) and 500 suttas of the heretics.²⁵

The *Saratthadīpanī* goes to the extent of telling that it (*Kathavatthuppakarana*) was intended to suppress whatever the issues that would arise till the disappearance of the *saddhamma*.

\[ \text{tato patthaya saddhammantaradhana ayatim sppajjanakavadanca sandhaya vuttam.}^{26} \]

However, it is clear that it was Moggaliputtatissa who closed the *Theravada Abhidhamma pitaka* confining it to seven tests.

Subsequent to purifying the *sasana* and finalizing the Third Buddhist Council, Moggaliputtatissa embarked upon a missionary programme. According to the Mahāvaṃsa and the *Samantapāsādikā*, the Elder after concluding the Council looked into the future where the *sasana* would be established and foresaw that it would be established in the frontier provinces and made preparations to send several missions headed by eminent Theras to identified locations. That was the first occasion, in the history of Buddhism that a well planned missionary programme was launched to extend beyond the Indian sub continent, covering even some of the countries which are today designated as middle-east countries. It was that missionary programme of the Elder that made Buddhism a world

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²⁴ *Pañcappakaranāṭṭhakathā* Nidānakathā 0.6, p.7
²⁵ ibid
²⁶ *Saratthadīpanī* p.118
religion, which was earlier confined to a limited locality in central India. The selection of the chief theras as heads of various missions as well as the selection of the other members of the missions, too, was in the hands of the Great Thera. At the same time, it was Emperor Aśoka’s patronage and his political and friendly relations that existed with the countries concerned that resulted in the ultimate success of the missions.

After the establishment of Buddhism in Sri Lanka, King Devanampiyatisa sent a message to Emperor Aśoka to send a sapling of the bodhi tree and the theri Sanghamitta to Sri Lanka. The Emperor was in a dilemma as to how to sever the branch from the mother tree and inquired from Moggaliputtatissa thera whether to send the bodhi to Sri Lanka

_Bhante Lankam Mahabodhi pesetabba nu kho_ 27

The thera informed the emperor that the bodhi-tree should be sent and revealed to him the five determinations of will of the Buddha (addhitthanapahiśca), according to which the branch of the bodhi would automatically sever from the mother tree and would establish in a container. It is regarding this incident that the Mahāvamsa and the Samantapāśadikā mention the name of elder Moggaliputtatissa for the last time.

The Dipavamsa and he Samantapāśadikā provide vital information regarding elder Moggaliputtatissa. He belongs to the line of Vinaya exponents descending from elder Upāli whom the Buddha acknowledged as the chief among the Vinaya exponents and to whose pupils preserving of Vinaya (by oral tradition) was entrusted after the first Council. The Dipavamsa 28 gives the line of successive chief Vinaya exponents from the elder Upāli up to Moggaliputtatissa. After the elder Upāli, his pupil, arahant Dasaka was the chief among the Vinaya exponents. From arahant Dasaka the position passed onto his pupil elder Sonaka. The chief position among Vinaya exponents passed on from elder Sonaka to elder

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27 Mahāvamsa Ch.XVIII.21-22
28 Dipavamsa Ch.V.89-93
Siggava. Arahant Siggava was the teacher of Moggaliputtatissa. The elder Moggaliputtatissa inherited the position from his teacher elder Siggava. The Dilpavamsa further gives the number of years, the above theras held the chief position of the Vinaya:

\[ \text{Sabbakalam pamokkho vinaye Upalipandito Pannasam dasako thero, catucattarisanca sonako Pancapannasavassam Siggavassa atthasatthi Moggaliputtasavhayo}^{29} \]

The learned Upāli was the chief of Vinaya at all times, elder Dasaka for fifty years, elder Sonaka for forty four years, elder Siggava for fifty five years and elder Moggaliputta Tissa for sixty eight years (held the chief position of Vinaya)

It was Elder arahant Mahinda who inherited the chief position of Vinaya after the elder Moggaliputta Tissa.

\[ \text{Tisso Moggaliputto ca Mahindam Saddhiviharikam katvā vinayo pamokkhan- chāsitivassamhi nibbuto}^{30} \]

It is of paramount importance that some scholars believe that Moggaliputtatissa is referred to in the Sarvastivada literature, too. The Vijñānakāya, one of the seven Abhidharma treatises of Sarvāstivāda Buddhism, authorship of which is attributed to Devasharman, answers one Maudgalyayana as if he was living. Scholars are of opinion that he is no other person than Moggaliputtatissa, the president of the third Buddhist Council and author of the Kathāvatthu, which refutes the view of opponents. Therefore scholars further believe that the Vijñānakāya, and the Kathāvatthu, belong to the same period.

The Dilpavamsa, the Mahāvamsa and the Samantapāsādikā amply testify to the erudition of and the unique position held by Moggaliputtatissa in matters

\[ ^{29} \text{Dilpavamsa Ch.V.96} \]
\[ ^{30} \text{Dilpavamsa Ch.V.94} \]
pertaining to the Buddhasasana of the day and also the high esteem in which he was regarded by the bhikkhus, the royalty and the people.

The Dipavamsa\textsuperscript{31} calls him chalabhhi\texttilde{no} (endowed with six supernormal powers) mahiddhiko (possessing great psychic powers) mah\texttilde{aj}utim (greatly resplendent) ganapamokkkhko (leader of the Sangha) Mah\texttilde{ap}\texttilde{a}f\texttilde{io} (of great wisdom) parav\texttilde{a}dappamodhana (suppressor of other (heretical) views) and D\texttilde{igh}adassi\textsuperscript{32} (far sighted). Dipavamsa finally describes Moggaliputtatissa as

\begin{quote}
Satthukappo mah\texttilde{~}n\texttilde{~}g\texttilde{~}o / Pathavya n\textquoteleft atthi idiso\textsuperscript{33}
\end{quote}

He resembled the master (Buddha). There was no one similar to him on earth.

The Mah\texttilde{a}vamsa too calls him Jinasasana jotako\textsuperscript{34} (illuminator of the s\texttilde{s}ana) and describe him in no lesser terms than Dipavamsa where it is said that:

\begin{quote}
Ativa pakato asi cando va suriyo va so loki tass vaco\textquoteright{manni sambuddhassa vaco viya\textsuperscript{35}
\end{quote}

He was so well known even as the sun and the moon. The people took his words as those of the Buddha himself.

He was the spiritual advisor to the Emperor A\texttilde{o}ka. It was his plans or proposals that the Emperor executed. With the support of the Emperor, Moggaliputta Tissa rescued and uplifted the declining s\texttilde{s}ana. He got the heretics out of the s\texttilde{s}ana. He held the Third Buddhist Council under his leadership. He suppressed the heretical views of the dissident Buddhist sects by composing the Kath\texttilde{~}avatthuppakarana which would be helpful to crush even future heretical

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{31} Dipavamsa Ch.VII, 39-40
\textsuperscript{32} Ibid, Ch.VII, 1
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid, Ch.VII, 51
\textsuperscript{34} Mah\texttilde{a}vamsa, XII, 1
\textsuperscript{35} Mah\texttilde{a}vamsa Ch. V.153
\end{flushright}
views. The *Kathāvatthupakarana* was the last to be added to the Theravada *Abhidharma pitaka* and it may be considered that he closed the Theravada *abhidharma pitaka*. It was on his initiation that various Buddhist missions were dispatched, taking the first step to make Buddhism a world religion. As a result of the farsighted efforts of Moggaliputtatissa (*Dīghadassī* as *Dīpadvamsa* calls him) Theravada branch of Buddhism was saved from being adulterated by alien heretical views, retained its identity, survived and progressed as a distinct school up to date achieving the status of a world religion. In fact he could be regarded as the patriarch of the Theravada school of Buddhism.

Neither the *Mahāvamsa* nor the *Samantapāśādikā* provides any information regarding the *parinibbāna* (passing away) of elder Moggaliputtatissa. Only the *Dīpadvamsa* helps us to have some idea of his death. According to the *Dīpadvamsa* the *parinibbāna* of the Thera has taken place in the twenty sixth regnal year of Emperor Asoka.

\[Asokassa chavisatvasse Moggaliputasavhayo / Sāsanam jotayitvāna nibbuto āyusankkhaye\]^{36}

In the 26\textsuperscript{th} regnal year of Asoka Elder Moggaliputta Tissa having illuminated the *sāsana* attained *parinibbāna* at the end of his life span.

But when it comes to the exact number of years he lived the *Dīpadvamsa* provides two different reports. According to one report he lived for eighty six years.

\[Tisso Moggaliputto ca Mahindam Saddhivihārikaṃ katvā vinayo pamokkhan- chāsitivassamhi nibbuto\]^{37}

Tissa the Moggali’s son, having made his pupil Mahinda chief of *Vinaya* attained *parinibbāna* at the age of eighty-six

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^{36} Dipavamsa V.102

^{37} Dipavamsa V.94
But in the same chapter Dipavamsa gives his age at the time of his demise as eighty.

_Tisso Moggaliputto ca Mahinda Mahinda Sadhivihēriyakārīnaṃ katvā vinayo pamockhāñ- āstitivassanhi nibbuta_38

It is not possible to decide which of the two ages given is correct. It is clear that he was an octogenarian at the time of his death. It is significant that his historicity has been established by archaeological evidence. A relic casket bearing the inscription "sapurisasa mogaliputasa" in the Tope no.02 at Sanchi has been excavated by A.G. Cunningham. In this respect Ananda W.P. Guruge remarks39: "his contribution to Buddhism must have certainly been very significant for him to be so designated, and for his bodily remains to be venerated in a stupa."

**ABHIDHAMMA LITERATURES**

Before going into the details of the date of the Kathavatthu it is important to know about the development of the Abhidhamma literatures in general. With the Abhidhamma emphasis on discriminating analysis as the proper mode of religious praxis, Buddhist thought becomes 'philosophical'. However, the philosophical contribution of Abhidhamma cannot be understood apart from its specific sectarian and doctrinal context.

"In structure and style of presentation, even more than in subject matter, Abhidhamma is radically innovative. The colloquial, earlier discourses that persuaded with simile, metaphor and anecdote are replaced by a precise, regimented style and technical terminology that demonstrates by definition, exegesis, catechesis and taxonomy. Despite its technical character, Abhidhamma

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38 Dipavamsa V.107
39 Ananda W.P.Guruge, _Asoka A Definitive Biography_, Central Cultural Fund, Colombo, 1992-93, p.154
was not a sterile tangent in the development of Buddhist thought, but was the representative core of the Buddhist monastic worldview.\textsuperscript{40}

The innovative character of \textit{Abhidhamma} did not spring up in an abrupt or discontinuous way; instead, it grew over centuries, with roots in two tendencies that can be traced to the earlier Buddhist discourses. The first of these tendencies was a penchant for analysis pursued with the goal of encompassing in an intricate classificatory system all the factors (\textit{dharma}) thought to constitute experience. This included topical lists of factors distinguished by numeric and qualitative criteria as well as complex combinations of sets of categories yielding matrices (\textit{mārka}).

The second tendency was more expository than analytic and evolved from dialogues about doctrine conducted in the early Buddhist community. Such discussions would often begin with a quotation from earlier discourses or a doctrinal point to be defined and would then proceed using a pedagogical technique of question and answer.

\textit{Abhidhamma} texts also document the concurrent development of organized methods of exegesis and argument. While similar due to shared beginnings, the canons of Buddhist schools became widely divergent; contradictions occur even within the texts of a single school. In order to judge the authenticity and authority of different passages and texts, to interpret them accurately and to mediate conflicting positions, the schools began to elaborate a systematic hermeneutics.

For the *Abhidharmika* schools, accordingly, the *Abhidharma* texts were considered explicit, whereas the collections of discourses were merely implicit and thus in need of further interpretation.

More formal methods of argumentation begin to appear in Abhidhamma texts of the middle period (first centuries CE), which record doctrinal disagreements and debates among rival schools. These texts exhibit a stylized pattern using both supporting scriptural references and reasoned investigations, both of which were considered equally effective in argument. In the earliest examples of such arguments, the reasoned investigations did not yet possess the power of independent proof and were considered valid only in conjunction with supportive scriptural citations. However, in texts of the later period, supporting scriptural references became decontextualized commonplaces – cited simply to validate the occurrence of terms – and reasoned investigations began to be appraised by independent no scriptural criteria such as internal consistency and the absence of fallacious causal justification and other logical faults.

The study of Abhidhamma today, however, is complicated by a great lack of sources. Frauwallner describes the situation:

"Von kanonischen Abhidharma-Werken der Hinayana-Schulen ist nur wenig erhalten. Neben dem Abhidharma der Sarvastivadi besitzen wir nur den Abhidharma der Pali-Schule und den sarputrabhidharmah, der von A.Bareau der Schule der Dharmaguptake Zugeschrieben wird."\(^4^1\)

The *Abhidharma*-works of the *Sarvāstivāda*-school have for the most part only been preserved in Chinese translation, and the best available sources from a philological point of view are, therefore, the corpus of Pāli *Abhidhamma*-texts preserved in the *Theravāda*-canon along with their respective commentaries. Nevertheless, much philological work still needs to be done on these texts.

\(^{41}\) English translation in Frauwallner (1995:39): "Very few of the canonical works of the Abhidharma of the Hinayana schools have survived. A part from the abhidharma of the Sarvastivadin, we possess only the Abhidharma of the Pali
A description of the Abhidharma-literature presupposes an understanding of the development of the Buddhist sects, since each of the various texts belongs to a particular sect.

As a genre, the early Abhidharma-works of both the canons are scholastic treatises that serve to establish, systematize and summarise the doctrines and terminology of the Buddhist Sutras, while the later Abhidharma-works seek to establish a coherent system of doctrine based on the earlier works. Winternitz\textsuperscript{42} describes the relationship between the Sutras and the Abhidharma-works and characterizes the Abhidharma as genre:

\begin{quote}
In der Tat unterscheiden sich die Bmcher des Abhidhammapitaka von denen des Suttapitaka nur dadurch, da\textsuperscript{ß} sie umstandlicher, trockener, gelehrter, mit einem Wort mehr scholastisch sind. Der Gegenstand, den sie behandeln, Originalitat und Tiefe wird man in ihnen vergebens suchen. Desfinitionen und Klassifikationen sind ihre starke Seite.\textsuperscript{43}
\end{quote}

The original meaning of the word Abhidhamma is “as regards the dhammas” or “things relating to the teaching” in a non-technical sense,\textsuperscript{44} being a prepositional compound first used in the locative case (Abhidhamma). This

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{42} Winternitz, M., HIL, II, 1913, p.134
  \item \textsuperscript{43} Translation by Ulrich T. Kragh. “The books of the Abhidhammapitaka are actually only distinct from those of the Suttapitaka in that they are more elaborate, dry, learned, that is to say more scholastic. The subject that they treat is the same. One searches in vain for originality and depth in them. Definitions and classifications are their strengths.” See Ulrich T. Kragh, “The Extant Abhidhamma-Literature” in The Indian International Journal of Buddhist Studies, No.3,BJIK Institute of Buddhist and Asian Studies, Sarnath-Varanasi,2002, p.126
  \item \textsuperscript{44} Hinüber, Oskar von. A Handbook of Pāli Literature. Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, 1997 [1st ed.Berlin: Walter de Gruyter,1996], p.64
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
interpretation was given by Geiger,45 while the Pali commentaries have traditionally explained it as Uttamadhamma, i.e., “higher Dhamma”. Willeman, Dessein and Cox conclude: “The term ‘Abhidharma’ thus seems to mean ‘the study of the dharma’, the term ‘dharma’ referring to the doctrines preached by the Buddha (it may also refer to the truths revealed by those teachings). Consequently, Abhidharma may be interpreted as meaning studies of the Buddha’s teachings or research into the truths revealed by the Buddha”46

While the sarvastivada-school speaks of seven fundamental Abhidharmatexts, the Theravada-school speaks of seven canonical Abhidhamma-works. classified as Abhidharma-works of the Theravada-school and of the Sarvastivada-school are, however, not at all the same. This suggests that the extant Abhidharma-literature was established at a point after early Buddhism had become fragmented into sects. There are, however, certain similarities between some of the texts, which indicate that the roots of the early extant Abhidharma-works were a common heritage of the sects.

The fragmentation of Buddhism into sects or schools (Sanskrit nikāya, Pali ācariyavāda)47 began with the split between the Mahāsāṅghika-school and the Sthavira-school at the Buddhist council held in King Aśoka’s capital, Pātaliputra. The entire fragmentation was also related to the expansion of Buddhism during the unification of India under the reign of King Aśoka (c. 270-230 BC). Bareau48 writes:

_Mais le grand movement d’expansion date certainement du regne d’Aroka. Le Bouddhisme dut profiter evidemment des vastes dimensions de l’empire de son zele fidele. Comme le veulent les_

45 Geiger, W: _Pali Language and Literature_, tr. by B.K Ghosh, University of Calcutta, 1943, p.118
46 Willeman, Dessein and Cox, _Sarvastivada Buddhist Scholasticism_, 1998, p.15
48 Ibid, p.35
Gradually, the Buddhist schools fragmented further into other sub sects, most of which, however, we do not know very well. The schools that are important in the context of the Abhidharma-literature are particularly the Theravada-school and the Sarvastivada-school, because almost all of the extant Abhidharma-works belong to these two sects. With the exception of a single text belonging to the Dharmaguptaka-school, the Śāriputrābhidharmasāstra, which is ascribed to Ven. Śāriputra, it is unknown what kind of Abhidharma-literature – if any – may have existed in the other early Buddhist schools.

Both the Theravada- and the Sarvastivada-school belonged to the Sthavira-branch of Buddhist sects. One should not think that the Theravada is equal to the early Sthavira tradition. Instead, it represents the continuation of the Sthavira tradition in Sri Lanka, from where it spread to other Southeast-Asian countries. This can be seen in such texts as Kathavatthu, which rejects dogmatic

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49 Translation by Ulrich T. Kragh: “But the major movement of expansion is certainly dated to the reign of Asoka. Buddhism could obviously profit from the vast dimensions of the empire under his loyal support. As claimed by the Theravadin and Sarvastivadin traditions, it was probably during this period that the teachings were spread to Ceylon and Kasmira, as well as Gandhara, Surastra and Maharastra. This vast expansion of Buddhism across all of India no doubt favoured regional particularities of doctrine and accelerated and accentuated the internal divisions of the community.” See Ulrich T. Kragh, ‘The Extant Abhidhamma-Literature’ in The Indian International Journal of Buddhist Studies, No.3, BJK Institute of Buddhist and Asian Studies, Sarnath-Varanasi, 2002, p.128

50 For a chart giving an overview of the schools, see Bareau, op. cit., p.30.

51 Bareau, op. cit., p.205.
points that were raised later by other sub sects.\textsuperscript{52} The \textit{Sarvāstivāda}, on the other hand, was geographically centred in the Northwest region of India, particularly in \textit{Kāśmira}.\textsuperscript{53} Thus, these two schools were dominant in opposite ends of the periphery of the area influenced by Buddhism and any later exchange between them was minimal.\textsuperscript{54}

It was alongside this sectarian fragmentation that the earliest \textit{Abhidharma}-compositions appeared, although it does not seem to have been the cause of the schisms.\textsuperscript{55} Nevertheless, as mentioned above, some of the early texts of the \textit{Theravāda}- and \textit{Sarvāstivāda}-tradition seem to have shared common ancestors and they also served the same basic purposes. With the \textit{abhidharma}-texts, an increasingly sophisticated systematization of the Buddhist doctrines contained in the Sutras and of their terminology gradually came about. At first, their purpose was simply to establish proper summaries of the Sutras, but as each sect developed its own \textit{Abhidharma} works, these texts equally served to argue for the particular interpretations of the concerned school and criticise in the views of the others. Thus, \textit{Abhidharma} developed into a polemic genre that became the fundament for Buddhist philosophy.

The first attempts at systematizing the teachings of the Buddha seem to have been lists of terms called registers (\textit{mātrkā}). An early example of such a register is the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment (\textit{bodhipaksyadharmah}) found in a number of \textit{Sutras} and \textit{Vinaya}-texts.\textsuperscript{56} It was from these registers that the earliest \textit{Abhidharma}-literature seems to have sprung. Several such lists are preserved in the \textit{Abhidharma}-works, either at beginning of texts or contained inside it.

\textsuperscript{52} Bareau, op. cit., p.205-6.  
\textsuperscript{53} Willeman, Dessein and Cox, \textit{Sarvastivada Buddhist Scholasticism}, 1998, p.39  
\textsuperscript{54} On the one hand, the Sarvastivada-school does not figure in the lists of Buddhists sects given by the Theravada-school (cf. lists in Bareau, op.cit., p.16), but, on the other hand, certain Sarvastivada-positions re indicated in the non-canonical Theravada-text \textit{Milindapanha}.  
\textsuperscript{55} Willeman, Dessein and Cox, \textit{Sarvastivada Buddhist Scholasticism}, 1998, p. 53  
\textsuperscript{56} Willeman, Dessein and Cox, \textit{Sarvastivada Buddhist Scholasticism}, 1998, p. 11
The Pali abhidhammapitaka contains seven works:

(1) Dhammasaṅgaṇī, (2) Vibhaṅga, (3) Dhatukathā, (4) Puggalapaññatti, (5) Kathvāvatthu, (6) Yamaka and (7) Paṭṭhāna, which — with the exception of Kathvāvatthu — the Theravada-tradition believes to have been taught by the Buddha to his deceased mother in the Tāvatimsa heaven. Along with these seven canonical Abhidhamma-works, one must also consider the Patisambhidāmagga, which is also a work of the Abhidhamma, although it has been included in Khuddakanikāya due to its lateness. Instead of following the canonical order of the texts given above, I will here follow the relative chronological order suggested by Frauwallner.57

The earliest of these works is probably Vibhaṅga,58 because it has similarity with the Sarvāstivāda-work Dharmaskandha and the Sāriputrābhidharmaśāstra, which may be associated with the Dharmaguptaka-school. This indicates that these texts share an ancient, common heritage, and Vibhaṅga may, therefore, belong to the oldest layer of the Pali Abhidhamma-works.

Like Vibhaṅga, Dhatukathā is another early Abhidhamma-work,59 because it displays similarity with the Sarvāstivāda-work Dhatukāya. Its starting point is a register, which corresponding to the first and second register of Vibhaṅga,

57 This relative chronology is very questionable, but is at least an attempt. Frauwallner does not argue extensively with philological detail for his relative chronology but bases it mainly on the development of philosophical content and style of writing. A very different relative chronology is found in Potter, Karl H. (ed.) Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophies, Vols VII, MLBD, Delhi, 1996 p. 121ff. also see Kragh, Ulrich T., "The Extant Abhidhamma-Literature" in The Indian International Journal of Buddhist Studies (IIJBS) No.3, BJK Institute of Buddhist and Asian Studies, Sarnath-Varanasi, 2002, p. 129
discusses the aggregates (Khandha), sensory fields (ayatana), elements (dhatu), etc. Applying fourteen methods of analysis which constitutes the fourteen chapters of the work, the mutual religions of the elements of the register are discussed systematically.

Puggalapaññatti is a compilation in numerical order (1-10) of most of the types of persons (puggala) mentioned in the Suttas. Nakamura notes that it was compiled along the same pattern as Aṅguttara Nikāya. T. W. Rhys Davids has argued for this text being the earliest of the canonical Abhidhamma-works, while Frauwallner places this work after Vibhaṅga and Dhatukathā in his relative chronology that is followed here.

Norman, on the other hand, suggests a deeper significance of this text, which seems plausible but presupposes the existence of Vibhaṅga prior to Puggalapaññatti, which has not yet been established.

The book probably represents the results of the disputes which took place in early Buddhism about the nature of the ‘person’, and which are referred to in the first section of the Kathāvatthu. The Theravadins came to the conclusion that the Puggala had no reality, was not one of the dhammas, but was a mere concept (paññatti). It was therefore not correct for it to be included in the Vibhaṅga, which dealt with the real dhammas which existed, but it was made into a text by itself. The title ‘the concept of a person’ shows that to the Theravadins the subject was unreal.

The three canonical Pali Abhidhamma-texts mentioned so far constitute the earlier stratum. In the following texts, which belong to the later stratum, a tendency appears to move beyond the inherited material and gradually to

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60 Pali edition by Morris (1883); English translation by B.C. Law (1924), German translation by Nyanatiloka (1910)
61 Nakamura, Hajime: Indian Buddhism, MLBD, Delhi, 1980, p.105
62 Rhys Davids, T. W. History and Literature of Buddhism, Calcutta, 1952, p.188
introduce innovations. *Patthana* is the longest of the Pāli Abhidhamma-works.\(^6^4\) This text deals systematically with causal relationships in the form of conditions (*paccaya*).

*Yamaka* examines the congruence of terms by posing pairs of affirmative and negative questions: hence its title ‘the pairs’ (*yamaka*).\(^6^5\)

Frauwallner is more critical about this work, claiming that it is deficient in content. The more systematized approach employed in *Yamaka*, as in *Patthana*, indicates that these texts belong to the later stratum of the Pāli Abhidhamma works. Norman\(^6^6\) referring to Warder\(^6^7\) writes: “It has been suggested that such a text [i.e. *Yamaka*], which seems to be intended for someone who has already studied the system, but wishes to become fully competent in it, is perhaps the latest of the books in the *Abhidhamma-pitaka*.”

A truly comprehensive and systematized – yet more compact – work is first found in *Dhammasaṅgani*, Which is a presentation of ‘states’ or ‘phenomena’ (*dhamma*).\(^6^8\) The text begins with a register, which is based on older material.

The last of the canonical works belonging to the Pāli *Abhidhammapitaka* is *Kathavatthu*.\(^6^9\) The Pāli chronicles\(^7^0\) attributes this text to Moggaliputta Tissa, who is supposed to have expounded it at the third Buddhist council. It would thus have been authored around 240 BC, during the reign of King Asoka (Potter 1996:587).

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\(^{64}\) Pali edition by Carolyn A.F. Rhys Davids (1906; 1921) and in six volumes by Kashyap (1961a); partial English translation by Narada (1969)

\(^{65}\) Pali edition by Carolyn A. F. Rhys Davids (1911-13); there is currently no translation in any western language of this work.


\(^{67}\) Warder, A.K., Indian Buddhism, MLBD, Delhi, First Ed. 1970, 2nd Revised Ed. 1980. p.302

\(^{68}\) Pali edition by Muller (1885) and Kashyap (1960a), there are several translations: one english translation is by Carolyn A.F. Rhys Davids (1900) and a French translation is by Barea (1951).

\(^{69}\) Pali edition by Taylor (1894-1897) and Kashyap (1961b); English translation by Aung & Rhys Davids (1915). For a list of scholarly monographs and articles on this text, see Potter (1996:587) or under Kathavatthu at http://faculty.washington.edu/kpotter/cheyt/txt.html

\(^{70}\) *Dīpayāma 7.41; Mahāvamsa 5.278*
Bareau and Frauwallner disagree with this dating, as they consider it to be a composite work that was compiled over many centuries. La Vallee Poussin has shown the oldest parts of Kathavatthu to be related to the Sarvāstivāda-text, Vijñānakāya, and has suggested that these must date back to the third century BCE.\(^{71}\)

**DATE OF THE KATHAVATTHU**

According to the Pāli accounts\(^{72}\) of the 3\(^{rd}\) Council the last of the Abhidhamma works- the Kathavatthu was composed by Tissa in that council held in the reign of Asoka, i.e. circa 246 B.C.E.\(^{73}\). The *Kathavatthu* quotes from Dhammasaṅgaṇī and Vibhaṅga and refers to the contents peculiar to *Patthāna*. It does not quote from Dhātukathā and Puggalapaññatti, and has no direct reference to *Yamaka*, although like that work it uses ‘vokāra’ for ‘Khandha’.\(^{74}\)

The *Abhidhamma* books “must have been produced during a period of two or three hundred years, beginning from the 2\(^{nd}\) or 3\(^{rd}\) century after the Buddha’s death (parinibbāna). The books may be considered in three groups according to their time of compilation early, middle and late groups. The *Kathavatthu* will be regarded as a book belonging to the middle period”.\(^{75}\)

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\(^{72}\) The tradition is found only in the Atthakathas and the Sri Lankan Chronicles. See B.C.Law, Debates Commentary , pp.1-7

\(^{73}\) See Nyanatiloka: *Guide through Abhidhammapitaka*, p.60.


\(^{75}\) G.P. Malalasekera: *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism A-Aca*, p.76
As to the other two pitakas, “all, even the Vinaya, are for its compiler(s) ‘Suttanta’ just as we would say, not Leviticus or Luke or king John, but the Bible, Shakespeare.”

The Abhidhammapitaka is considerably younger than both Vinaya and Suttapitaka and originated, according to Frauwallner, between 200B.C.-200A.D. Three parts of the canon are referred to for the first time in a late part of the SuttaVibhaṅga in the Vinaya (Vinaya.IV.344,17). The word “Abhidhamme” occurs in earlier parts of the canon, but without any technical connotation simply meaning “things relating to the teaching (Dhamma).” The commentary explains abhidhamma as ‘higher dhamma’ (Atthasalani.2,14). Abhidhamma is defined in the Mahāyānasutratālīkārā (IX.3) as “that by which the meaning of the sutra is best understood”. The Pali Atthisālinī also remarks, “the Abhidhamma surpasses the Dhamma presented in the suttas because the various classifications of the elements of existence are listed haphazardly in the suttas, while the Abhidhamma gives them in their definitive catechetic forms. Thus the suttas are preached from the standpoint of conventional truth according to specific worldly circumstances, but the Abhidhamma deals with absolute truth, and is concerned with the analysis of mind and matter (nāmarūpa pariccheda). This same sense of Abhidharma is also alluded to by Vasubandhu. In the Abhidharmakosabhasya (I.2ab) he notes that Abhidharma means that unsullied wisdom (prajñā ‘malā) which analyzes factors (dharmapavicaya).

Kogen Mizuno describes, “The book seems to have grown gradually and most of the heretical views discussed are ascribed to various schools, some of which are later than the others. The text itself makes no mention of the names of

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76 Mrs. Rhys Davids: Points of Controversy; c.f. sakya, p.365.
78 Also Vinaya.IV.144,3; Niddesa.I.238,27; Milindapanha. 13,7
79 Hinuber, op.cit, p.64
the schools. This is supplied by the Commentary. In this book many texts quoted
from the Suttapitaka gives authority to the argument. As far as the terminology
used and the theories set forth are conceived, this book seems to belong to the
later period. Some scholars agree with tradition and accept the book as belonging
to the latest period. Others make the Patthana the latest book of all.”

Minayeff argued that the Kathāvatthu apparently referred to the Vetulyakas and hence could not be pre-Christian. To this Mrs. Rhys Davids
answered that the name actually occurred in the Commentary on the Kathāvatthu.

The author of the Commentary, Buddhaghosa, is clearly aware that some
of the views referred to could not have arisen in Tissa’s time. He explains this by
stating that Tissa spoke to prevent views which were going to arise, by analyzing
the topics of discourse (mātikā) established by the Tathāgata.

When identifying the holders of the views, the commentator sometimes
uses the word ‘now’ (etarahi) implying that the schools still existed in his time
and still had that view. It is, however, possible that Buddhaghosa took over the
word ‘etarahi’ from the Sihala atthakathā (Sri Lankan commentary) he was
following, and now refers to the time when the latter were complied. Just as the
phrase ‘Yāva ajjatana’ at Samantapāsādikā, probably refers to a date in the 1st
century C.E.

But according to K.R. Norman, “there is, however, no need in principle to
assume that some of the heresies cannot be as early as the date normally given for
the composition of the Kathāvatthu, simply because the schools to which they are
attributed did not exist before the 1st century B.C. Very few of the heresies seem

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81 Kogen Mizuno: Encyclopaedia of Buddhism A-Aca, p.76.
82 Minayeff: recherché sur le Bouddhisme, pp.81 ff.200f.
83 Dialogues (Dīghan ikaya) pt.I, Preface; of Oldenber in (ZDMG) Zeitschrift des Dentschen
Morgenlandischen Gesellschafl, 1998, pp 632-43
85 Samantapāsādikā, 62.10
86 See adikaram EHBC p.87
to be anything more than obvious quibbles, which the audience to any sermon could have raised. The date of this adoption by a recognized sect could well have been much later."87

Mrs. Rhys Davids has suggested that the Kathāvatthu was not composed ‘enbloc’. It has a “Patchwork-quilt” appearance, which is explained if we suppose that each Kathā was framed as a new heresy gained importance and was then added to the memorial stock.88

That the whole of Kathāvatthu does not belong to the same stratum follows clearly from the fact that the first debate of the book – ‘Puggala Kathā’ – has some marked linguistic peculiarities. It uses ‘ke’ for ‘ko’, ‘Vattabbe’ for ‘Vattabo’ ‘Vattabbam’ and ‘se’ for ‘so’.89 It appears thus possible that the whole of the Kathāvatthu did not exist in the 3rd century B.C. On the other hand, it is probable that the first katha derives from a Magadhan text of Aśoka’s time.90 It is thus not improbable that some parts at least of the Kathāvatthu were composed in the time of Aśoka.

It has sometimes been suggested 91 that Aśoka’s Rock edict IX has been influenced by the Kathāvatthu. It is true that Aśoka does not mention the Kathāvatthu by name in the lithic records. In the Rock edict IX, the inscription runs as follows:92

Siya va-tam atham nivateya () siyapuna no hidalokike cha Vase() iyam-
Puna dhammamagale alakikye () Hamche Pi-tam-atham no nite-ti hida alham palata anamtam (puna) pavasati () Hamche puna tam atham nivate-ti hida tato ubhaye ladhe hoti hida cha-se-athe palate cha anamtam punnam pavasati tena dhammamagalena ()

88 ‘Introduction’ to Points of Controversy
89 Sakya p.359; JRAS 1929 pp.27 ff
90 G.C. Pande; Studies in the Origins of Buddhism pp.13 ff
91 See B.M. Barua: Bhabru Edict, JRAS 1915 pp.805 ff
92 See B.C. law: A History of Pali Literature p.325
The style of composition and the subject of discussion which we notice here resemble those of the Kathāvatthu and the Sāmaññaphala Suttanta of the Dīgha Nikāya (Vol.I) respectively.93

The Therī Khemā, chief of the Buddha’s women disciples, describes herself as being “Kathāvatthu visārada”94 this strengthening the theory that the Kathāvatthu was known already in the Buddha’s time. Unfortunately this reference is found in the commentary which is of later origin. The Udāna commentary95 refers to a Kathāvatthuṇṇakarana ākā for details of certain points raised.

The Kathāvatthu is noteworthy for the number of so-called ‘Māgadhism’ it contains, especially the nominative singular masculine form in ‘-e’. An analysis96 of these forms indicates that except for repeated occurrences of one stock phrase, all the statements, heretical and otherwise, are in Pāli. The ‘-e’ forms are in the frame work, where there is a consistent pattern of both ‘-o’ and ‘-e’ forms. This gives the impression that there must have been at an earlier time a structure in which the two dialects viz. Pāli and Māgadhī, were completely differentiated, doubtless to make a clear distinction between the two speakers. “This probably means that Tissa was using a structure which was already stereotyped in his time, and perhaps did in fact go back to the time of the Buddha, or at least to the Second Council.”97

The frame work of the dialogue is stereotyped and abbreviated, which means that it would have been a simple matter to add refutations of new heresies as they arose, merely by following the pattern of dialogue employed. The latest

93 Ibid p.326
95 Udana Atthakhatha, 94; ibid
96 K.R. Norman: Magadhism in the Kathavatthu in A.K. Narain, Studies in Pali and Buddhism pp. 279-87
date\textsuperscript{98} for the addition of such refutations was probable the 1\textsuperscript{st} century B.C., when the canon was written down, or the time of the closing of the commentary upon the Kathāvatthu. i.e. the Sri Lankan commentary (Sihalavatṭhakathā) upon which Budhaghosa’s was based, after which time any insertions would be obvious.

Thus from the above discussions we may safely conclude that the Kathāvatthu was composed not in a single period but within a span of around seven hundred years i.e. from 4\textsuperscript{th} century B.C. (the date of second Council) to 4\textsuperscript{th} Century A.D. (prior to Budhaghosa)

\textit{CONTENT}

\textit{Synopsis of the Kathāvatthu text:} The Kathāvatthu in its present form and as commented on by Budhaghosa contains twenty-three sections: each of the sections deals with eight to twelve questions and answers refuting the diverse false views of the heretical groups. Some of the interesting questions dealt with in the Kathāvatthu are as follows:

1. Do the absolute sense and personality (puggala) exist?
2. Does everything exist?
3. Can an Arhat fall away from Arhatship?
4. Can one as a ‘worlding’ be free from sensuous greed and ill will?
5. Are the ten powers of the Buddha also shared by his disciples?
6. Is it correct to say that the Buddha lived in the world of human beings?

\textsuperscript{98} Ibid p.64; M. Wintemitz, HIL pp. 8,617; Malalasekera Dictionary of Pali proper Names Vol-II pp. 817-8
All these problems are presented and discussed in the form of a formalized debate. This elaborate and formal debating contributed to the development of Indian and particularly Buddhist logic.

A close investigation will make it evident that this book of controversy is looked upon in one way as no more than a book of interpretation. A few specimens of controversy which the Kathāvatthu has embodied show that both sides referred to the Buddha as the final court of appeal.

This work has been edited by Mr. A.C. Taylor for the P.T.S. in two volumes and translated into English by S. Z. Aung and Mrs. Rhys Davids naming The Points of Controversy also for the P.T.S. She has also ably written a chapter on some psychological points in the Kathāvatthu in her work on Buddhist Psychology, Second Ed. (1924), which deserves mention. The editor (Taylor) has made use of the following manuscripts in editing the text:

1. Paper manuscript from the collection of Mrs. Rhys Davids,
2. Palm-leaf manuscript belonging to Prof. Rhys Davids.
3. Palm-leaf manuscript belonging to the Royal Asiatic, and
4. Mandalay palm-leaf manuscript from the India Office collection.

A Siamese edition of this work has also been used by the editor (A.C.Taylor).

This book consists of 23 chapters. The Kathāvatthu is divided into four Paññāsaka "groups of 50 (points to be discussed)", which are subdivided into 20 vaggas each with a varying number of disputed items. At the end, three further vaggas are added.99 This somewhat irregular structure seems to indicate that the

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99 This division has not been followed strictly either in Kathāvatthu or in Kathāvatthu -translation; it can be seen at KathāvatthuAttakathā, p.xxvii-xxxi.
text had been growing over a certain time, and whenever new controversies arose they were included.100

The first chapter deals with Puggala or personal entity, falling away of an arahat ("Falling away" is, more literally, declined, the opposite of growth), higher life among the devas (the higher life is of twofold import: path-culture and renunciation of the world), the putting away of corruptions or vices by one portion at a time (this comes under the head of Purification piecemeal in the Kathāvatthu, Odhisodhiso kilese jahatiti?), the casting off sensuous passions (kāmarāga) and ill-will (byāpada) by a worldling (puthujjano), everything as persistently existing, some of the past and future as still existing, application in mindfulness (satipatthāna) and existence in immutable modes (antam atti'it);

"H'ev'atthi h'eva n'atthiti.
S'ev'atthi s'eva n'atthiti?
Na h'evam vattabe-pe-

s'ev'atthi s'eva n'atthiti?
Āmantā."101

The English translation of the quotation can be as follows:

"It exists on this wise, it does not exist on that wise.

Does ... both exist and not exist?

Nay, that cannot truly be said ...

Is this to say it both exists and does not exist?

Yes."102

100 Hinuber, Oscar von: A Handbook of Pali Literature, p.71.
101 Kathāvatthu, 1.10; Taylor, A.C.: ed. Kathāvatthu, PTS, 1979 (Reprint in combined volume) p.159
According to the Theravada Buddhists the individual has no real existence. It is only a Sammuti, Buddhaghosa accepts this view. He says that on the existence of Khandhas, such as rupa, etc., there is the usage ‘evam nāma’, ‘evam gotta’. Because of this usage, common consent, and name, there is the Puggala- [Kathāvatthupakaraṇa Atṭhakathā?]

The second chapter deals with the arahat or the elects, the knowledge of the arahat, the arahat being excelled by others, doubt in the arahat, specified progress in penetration. Buddha’s everyday usage (according to the andhakas, his daily usages were supramundane usages) (vohāra), duration of consciousness, two cessations (dve nirodho), etc.

The third chapter deals with the powers or potentialities of the Tathāgata (tathāgatabalam-“ten powers” some he holds wholly in common with his disciples, some not and some are partly common to both). It further deals with emancipation (sarāgam cittam vimuccati means become emancipated), controlling powers of the eight man (attamaka puggala)- no saddhā (faith), viriya (energy), sati (recollection), samādhi (meditation) and pāññā (wisdom); divine eye, divine ear (dibbasota), insight into destiny according to deeds, moral restraint (samvaro) scious life, etc.

Yathākammupagatam ṇānam dibbacakkhuntii?

The celestial eye amounts to insight into destiny according to deeds

“So dibbena cakkhuna visuddhena atikkantamasakena satte pasati cavamane upapajamane, hine suvanne dubbanne sugate duggate yatha kammupageka satte pajanati.” Asannasattesu sanna attithi?

102 Vide Points of Controversy, pp.108 f.
Is there any consciousness among the unconscious beings? The Andhakas concede consciousness to those devas of the unconscious sphere at the moment of rebirth and of decease.

The fourth chapter deals with the following subjects, e.g. attainment of arahatship by a layman (gihi or householder) - Yasa, Uttaya, Setu who attained arahatship in all the circumstances of life in the laity; common humanity of an arahat, retention of distinctive endowments, arahat's indifference in sense-cognition (an arahat is endowed with sixfold indifference upākṣa), entering on the path of assurance (during the dispensation (pavacana doctrine, teaching) of Kassapa Buddha the Bodhisatta has entered on the path of assurance and conformed to the life therein), putting off the fetter, etc. Sabbasaṅghojaṇāṇam pahāṇam arahattanti?

This is the question raised in this section. The answer is that arahatship is the removal of all obstacles. Mrs. Rhys Davids points out on the authority of the commentary that this is an opinion of the Andhakas. Under this section arise the following questions: arahat endowed with four fruitions? Is an arahat endowed with four kinds of contact (phassa), four kinds of sensation (vedanā), four kinds of consciousness (saṅkha), four kinds of cetasā (volition), four kinds of thought (citta), four kinds of faith (saddhā), four kinds of energy (viriya), four kinds of these questions are in the affirmative. All personal endowments, according to the Theravadins, are only held as distinct acquisitions, until they are cancelled by other acquisitions.

The fifth chapter deals with knowledge of emancipation (vimutti ṇāṇam), perception (viparite ṇāṇam), assurance (niyama), analytical knowledge (patisambhidā), popular knowledge (sammuti ṇāṇam), mental objects in telepathy (cetopariyāye ṇāṇam), knowledge of the present (paccuppanna ṇāṇam), knowledge of the true (anāgata ṇāṇam), and knowledge in the fruition of a disciple (savakkassa phalena ṇāṇam).
The sixth chapter begins with the controverted point that the assurance of salvation (or niyama) is unconditioned or uncreated, so also is Nibbāna. Then it treats of casual genesis (paticcassamuppada or dependent origination), four truths (cattāri saccani), four immaterial spheres of life and thought (akasaanancayatanam asamkatam the sphere of infinite space is unconditioned or uncreated), of the attaining to cessation (nirodhosamapatti), of space (ākāsa) as unconditioned (asamkhata) and visible, and of each of the four elements, the five senses, and action as visible.

The seventh chapter treats of the classification of things (samgahitakathā), of mental states as mutually connected (sampayutta), of mental properties (cetasika dhammā), that merit increases with utility (paribhogamayampūñam vaddhati), that earth is a result of action (pathavikammavipāka), that decay and death (jarāmarana) are consequences of action, that Ariyan states of mind (ariyadhama) have no positive result (vipāka) that result is itself a state entailing resultant state (vipāka-dhammādhammo).

The things cannot be grouped together by means of abstract ideas (N’atti keci dhammādhamma kecithi dhammehi sangahita). We learn from the commentary that it is a belief held by the Rajagirikas and the Siddhatthikas that the orthodox classification of particular material qualities under one generic concept of matter, etc., is worthless from this reason that things cannot be grouped together by means of ideas. The argument seeks to point out a different meaning in the notion of grouping.

The eighth chapter deals with six spheres of the destiny (chagatiyo). According to the Buddha, there are five destinies, such as purgatory (niraya), the animal kingdom (tiracchanayoni), the peta realms (pettvisaya), the mankind (manussa), and the devas. To these five the Andhakas and the Uttarāpathakas add another namely, the Asuras. Then it treats of the following controverted points; that there is an intermediate state of existence (antarabhāva), that the kāma-sphere means only the five fold pleasures of sense (Pañc’eva kāmaguna.
kāmadhātu), that the ultimate 'element of rūpa' is the thing cognized as material, that the ultimate element of arūpa is the thing cognized as immaterial, that in the rūpa-sphere the individual has all the six senses (salāyatana), that there is matter among the immaterial, that physical actions proceeding from good or bad thoughts amount to a moral act of karma, that there is no such thing as a material vital power (natthi rūpajivitindriyanto is two fold material and immaterial), and that because of karma an arahat may fall away from arahatship (kammahetu araha arahatta parihāyat).

The ninth chapter deals with the way whereby the fetters are put off for one who discerns a blessing (in store) (anisamsa-dassavissa saññojanānam pahānam). Then it discusses that the "Ambrosial" (amatam) is an object of thought not yet freed from bondage, whether matter should be subjective or objective, that atent (immoral) bias and insight are without mental object. Then it records a discussion between the Uttarāpathakas and the Theravādinas as to whether consciousness of a past object or of future ideas is without object. The former holds that when mind recalls a past object, it is without object. Their views are proved to be self-contradictory by the Theravādins.

The tenth chapter deals with the five 'operative' (kiriyā) aggregates (khandhas) which arise before five aggregates seeking rebirth have ceased. It treats of the eightfold path and bodily form and discusses the points that the eightfold path can be developed while enjoying the five kinds of sense consciousness (pañca viññāna) which are 'co-ideational (sabhoga), good (kusala), and bad (akusala), that one engaged in the path practices a double morality (dvihīṣīlehi), that virtue, which is not a property of consciousness, rolls along after thought, that acts of intimation (viññatti) are moral (sīlam) and those of non-intimation (avīññatti) are immoral (dussīlayam).

The eleventh chapter begins with the disputed point that the latent bias (anusaya) is 'indeterminate' (avyākata). It discusses that insight is not united with consciousness, and that insight into the nature of ill is put into operation
from the utterance of the word, "This is ill". It treats of the force of the *iddhi* (magic gift, miracle), concentration (*Samādhi*), the causality of things (*dhammattitata pari-nipphama*), and impermanence (*aniccata*).

The twelfth chapter deals with acts of restraint (*samvaro kamma*). It discusses that all actions have moral results and that sense organs are the results of Karma. It further treats of seven rebirths, limit, murder, evil tendencies which are eliminated in the case of a person who has reached the seventh rebirth.

The thirteenth chapter deal with a doomed man's morality, captivity and release, lust for the unpleasant, etc.

The fourteenth chapter discusses that the root of good and bad thoughts follows consecutively and conversely. It treats of the development of sense organs of a being in human embryo. It deals with the questions relating to the immediate contiguity in sense, outward life of an *ariya*, unconscious outbursts of corruption, desire as innate in heavenly things, the immoral and the unrevealed and the un-included.

The fifteenth chapter treats of correlation as specifically fixed, reciprocal correlation, time, four *āsavas* (sins), decay and death of spiritual things, trance as a means of reaching the unconscious sphere, and of karma and its accumulation (karma is one thing and its accumulation is another).

The sixteenth chapter deals with controlling and assisting another's mind, making another happy, and attending to everything at the same time. It discusses that material qualities are accompanied by conditions good or moral, bad or immoral; they are results of karma. This chapter further treats of matter as belonging to the material and immaterial heavens, of desire for life in the higher heavens.

The seventeenth chapter records that an *arahat* accumulates merit and cannot have a premature death, that everything is due to karma, that *dukkha* is completely bound up with sentient organisms, that all other conditioned things
excepting the Ariyan Path only are held to be ill (dukkha). It treats of the Order, the accepting of gifts, daily life, the fruit of giving (a thing given to the Order brings great reward), and sanctification of the gift (a gift is sanctified by the giver only and not by the recipient).

The eighteenth chapter deals with the Buddha’s living in the world of mankind, the manner is which the Dhamma was taught, the Buddha feeling on pity, one and only path, transition from one jhāna (rapt musing or abstraction) to another, seeing visible objects with the eye, etc.

The nineteenth chapter treats of getting rid of corruption, the void which is included in the aggregate of mental co-efficient (samkhāra-khandha), the fruits of recluseship, patti (attainment) which is unconditioned, fundamental characteristics of all things which are unconditioned, Nibbāna so morally good, final assurance, and the moral controlling powers (indriyakathā).

The twentieth chapter treats of the five cardinal crimes, insight, which is not for the average man, guards of purgatories, rebirths of animals in heaven, the Aryan Path which is fivefold, and the spiritual character of insight into the twelve fold base.

The twenty-first chapter discusses that the religion is subject to reformation. It treats of certain fetters, supernormal potency (iddhi), Buddhas, all-pervading power of the Buddha, natural immutability of all things, and inflexibility of all karmas.

The twenty-second chapter treats of the completion of life, moral consciousness, imperturbable (Fourth Jhāna) consciousness, attainment of Arahatship by the embryo, penetration of truth by a dreamer, attainment of arahatship by a dreamer, the immoral, correlation by repetition, and momentary duration.

The twenty-third chapter deals with the topic of a Bodhisatta who (a) goes to hell (vinipātam gacchati), (b) enters womb (gabbhaseyyam okkamati), (c)
performs hard tasks (dukkarakārikam akāsi), (d) works penance under alien teachers of his own accord and free will (aparantapam akāsi, aṇham satthaṁ uddisi). This chapter further deal with the controverted point that the aggregates, elements, controlling powers—all save ill is undertermined (aparinipphanna).

The text ends with these twenty three chapters containing 217 points of Controversies. The P.T.S. Edition of the Text as well as the Commentary confirms this number. But in some books the number of Controversies is mentioned as 219.103

**COMMENTARY**

The commentary to the Kathavatthuppakarana follows that to the puggalapaññatti, the second of the five pakaraṇa taken up for exegesis in the Pañcappakaranaṭṭṭhaṅkathā (PpkA) which also bears the designation Paramatthadīpāṇi. Unlike PpkA the commentaries to Dhammasaṅgaṇī and Vibhaṅga are individually named as Atthasāliṇī (DhsA) and Sammohavinodanī (VibhA) respectively. The title Paramatthadīpāṇi has not been of frequent use, perhaps because it can be easily confused with Dhammapāla's work of the same name. Since the commentaries to these five pakaraṇa are comparatively short works, being significantly shorter than the works they comment on, they are for convenience collected into one gantha, 'volume', but for all practical purposes are independent works each standing on its own merits. The three books DhsA, VibhA and PpkA are practically of equal size consisting of 39, 41 and 'about 40' bhānavāra respectively. Each bhānavāra is said to consist of 6,000 syllables. Considering that Pañcappakaranaṭṭṭhaṅkathā is a commentary on five works including the lengthy Yamaka and the voluminous Paṭṭhāna it stands no

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comparison with its companion volumes DhsA and VibhA. This in no way detracts from its exegetical value as the preceding Abhidhamma commentaries, the Āgama commentaries and the Visuddhimagga (Vism) have already dealt with the topics that are not repeated over again in PpkA. Repetitions generally take the form of fresh comments or alternative explanations. This will be discussed later.

“Quite contrary to the pattern of commentaries to the four major Nikāya texts (Āgamatṭhakathās) where each has a lengthy and independent commentary or to Samantapāsādikā, the single but voluminous work on the Vinayapītaka, the Abhidhamma commentaries seem to follow the commentaries to works of the Khuddakanikāya in several respects. This is particularly so in the manner of designating them and grouping them, for we have here a curious mixture of individual commentaries to single works (and two works together as in Paramatthajotika), as well as two groups of works which share the same name Paramathadīpañī. This latter similarity is a pure coincidence and probably bears no connection whatever between the Khuddakanikāya and the Abhidhammapītaka in their historical evolution in the Pāli Canon.”

Whilst there is general agreement in the method of exegesis and consistent point of view, the question of the Abhidhamma commentaries differing from the Āgama commentaries and Vism in several instances needs careful investigation, and the reason for this will have to be sought in a serious study of the Abhidhamma commentaries which is strictly not within our scope here. In the great majority of cases, however, the author deliberately avoids the discussion of terms and concepts that have been discussed at length in the earlier commentaries on both Sutta and Abhidhamma texts. The intention of the author to avoid repetition becomes quite clear when he refers to Vism and DhsA by name. It is also significant that in his references to Vism and the Āgama commentaries he does not state that they are his works whereas in all the Āgama commentaries the

authorship of Vism is claimed by Buddhaghosa when he refers to that work. This too requires closer examination.

**AUTHORSHIP OF THE COMMENTARY**

The commentaries to all the works of the *Abhidhammapitaka*, decidedly works of the same author as is evident from the uniformity of all three commentaries, are attributed to Ācariya Buddhaghosa in the stereotyped paragraph coming after the epilogue in verse containing the author’s *patthana*, ‘aspiration’ at the end of each of the three works DhsA, VibhA and PpkA. Apart from this paragraph meant to serve as a colophon, evidently the handiwork of a scribe of later date which has been added to all the works attributed by tradition to Buddhaghosa whether they are of his authorship or not, there is no direct evidence to indicate that he was the author of the Abhidhamma commentaries. In the prologue to the *Atthasāliṇī* it is stated that the author ‘was fervently requested by the monk Buddhaghosa, pure in conduct and moral practices and of subtle and flawless wit’ to compile the commentary to the Abhidhamma. In the epilogue to the *Sammohavinodani* the author states that he had been requested ‘by the sage Buddhaghosa of steadfast virtue, quick in comprehension (lit. of non-sluggish ways) and of keen intellect to expound its (i.e. of the Vibh) exegesis’. Furthermore, unlike in the four Āgama commentaries where Buddhaghosa acknowledges Vism as his own, the author of the Abhidhamma commentaries stakes no claim to either Vism or the Āgama commentaries. The prologue to

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105 Vide the epilogue to *PatthanaAtthakatha* where he states that he has concluded the commentary to the entire Abhidhammapitaka.
107 *Atthasāliṇī*, V.8, p.2
108 *Sammohavinodani*, V.3

47
Atthasālīni\textsuperscript{109} refers to his indebtedness to the Āgamaṭṭhakathā. In the verses that follow he states that he would avoid the topics comprehensively dwelt upon in Vism and write his exegesis faithfully following the textual tradition of the sacred lore - \textit{tanti}. Equally significant are his references to both the \textit{Nikāya} commentaries and Vism in the epilogue to PugA (vv. 2 ff.). Among the sources he has made use of he mentions the \textit{Āgama} commentaries but states that he has ‘avoided repeating what has already been said in Vism in compiling his none too concise nor too protracted commentary’. DhsA p. 86 discusses divergent opinions expressed in the \textit{Mahā-āṭṭhakathā}, the Āgamaṭṭhakathā and the \textit{Paṭṭhana} in the exegesis on the phrase: \textit{idam vakkhāmi etam vakkhāmi}.

Again at p. 188 f. twice the author draws a distinction between his explanations and those in the Āgamaṭṭhakathā. Among specific references to Vism is DhsA p. 168:

\textit{sabbakammaṭṭhānānām hi bhāvanāvidhānam sabbam āṭṭhakathānayena gahetvā Visuddhimagge [chap. iv-xi] vittihrītan, kim tena tattha tattha puna vuttenā ti na taṁ puna vittihrayāma.}

The cittabhāvanāniddesa of Vism is mentioned at DhsA\textsuperscript{110} and the practice of meditation commencing with preliminary \textit{kasiṇa} exercises - \textit{kasiṇaparikamma} discussed in Vism [Chap. iv-v] - at DhsA.\textsuperscript{111} Again the discussion on \textit{ākāsakasiṇa} in Vism, the training of the mind in fourteen ways as given in Vism and the story of the \textit{Elder Rakkhita} for which the reader is referred to Visuddhimagga are mentioned at DhsA. Vism is mentioned twice and the \textit{brahmavīhārakathā} of Vism is alluded to at DhsA.\textsuperscript{112} Examples of such reference to the Āgamaṭṭhakathā and Vism always treating them as authoritative works but not as the author’s own writings, can be cited from all three Abhidhamma commentaries. In spite of the respect our author has for Vism with which he generally agrees, it is noteworthy here that in several instances he disagrees with it. Had \textit{Visuddhimagga} been his

\textsuperscript{109} Atthasālīni, V.17, p.2
\textsuperscript{110} Ibid, p.183
\textsuperscript{111} Ibid, p.186-187
\textsuperscript{112} Ibid, p. 189, 192
own work he would have been expected to add that he was now revising his view. Professor P. V. Bapat\textsuperscript{113} in his excellent edition of DhsA in nāgarī characters points out twenty-five instances where the interpretations in DhsA differ from those in Vism (and the Āgamaṭṭhakathā). The differences are not restricted to mere interpretations but pertain to fundamental issues and technical points in Buddhist philosophy.\textsuperscript{114} On the other hand there is general agreement within the four Āgamaṭṭhakathā and Vism on practically all exegetical matters. The Samantapāsādikā is twice mentioned as a more comprehensive source in understanding the nature of pāṇātipāta and adinnādāna in the discussion on akusala kammakathā at DhsA.\textsuperscript{115}

The Abhidhamma commentaries acknowledge Vism and the Agamatthakatha as being anterior to them. Of the works ascribed to Buddhaghosa there is consensus among scholars that Vism, the two Vinaya commentaries Smp and Kkhv and the Agamatthakatha are his own. From the evidence adduced by Bapat\textsuperscript{116} that the divergent interpretations furnished in DhsA to those in Buddhaghosa’s undisputed works, a difference in authorship is clearly indicated. He further poses the question as to why a great master like Buddhaghosa should cite his own interpretation given in Vism as a mere alternative in DhsA if he had in fact been the author of the latter. He concludes that the author was a Ceylonese monk, a junior contemporary of Buddhaghosa, nurtured in the same tradition. He is, however, reluctant to identify Buddhaghosa at whose request the Abhidhamma commentaries were compiled as acariya Buddhaghosa because DhsA refers to him as bhikkhu. On the other hand, VibhA refers to him as yati, ‘a sage’ and the attributes used in both works speak of a distinguished monk of very great eminence. One would not be far wrong in accepting Mrs Rhys Davids’ suggestion that the reference is to acariya Buddhaghosa himself.\textsuperscript{117} “Judging from his

\textsuperscript{113} Bapat, P.V., (ed.) \textit{Atthasālinī}, Bhandarkar Oriental Series No.3, Poona (Pune), 1943
\textsuperscript{114} Ibid, p.xxxvff.
\textsuperscript{115} Ibid, p.97f.
\textsuperscript{116} Bapat, op. cit.
statements about Buddhaghosa the author of the Abhidhamma commentaries seems to have had a profound respect for him for his virtue, intellect and scholarship. Who else but the great commentator himself would command such respect from a fellow worker in the field? Furthermore, his pre-eminence as a monk and a scholar together with the pride of place accorded to Vism and the Agamattha Katha might be a justifiable reason to presume that it was at acarīya Buddhaghosa’s insistence that the Abhidhamma commentaries were written. It is probable, as tradition says that Buddhaghosa entered the Order at a mature age. Hence a younger monk who had kept a greater number of vassa, ‘rains residences’ and has greater seniority in the sāsana may refer to an older monk as ‘bhikkhu’ and address him as ‘āvuso’ so that Bapat’s objection on this score becomes untenable.”

**SURVEY OF LITERATURE**

In my research work I have followed the edition by Arnold C. Taylor in Pali Text Series nos. 34 and 36 (London: H. Frowde, 1894-97). I have also consulted the edition by Bhikkhu J. Kashyap published by the Nalanda Devanagari Pali Series (Bihar: Pali Publication Board, Bihar Government, 1961). The translation is by Shwe Zan Aung and Mrs. Carolyn Rhys Davids, Points of Controversy (Pali Text Society, London 1915, reprinted by Luzac in 1960). In numbering the sections of the text I have followed the numbering of the P.T.S. translation. The numbers for Books and Controversies follow exactly those of the other standard available edition, that by A.C. Taylor, and with rare exception match those of the Nalanda edition. There are two other editions of the Commentary to be mentioned, one by Mahesh Tiwari with Buddhaghosa’s commentary from Patna in 1971, the other by N.A. Jayawickrama, Pali Text

Jayawickrama, N.A., Kathavatthupakarana Attakatha, PTS, London, 1979, p.xii

ibid
Series 169, London, 1979. The translation of the commentary named Debates Commentary by B.C.Law is also of great help. Though both the translations are old and archaic but still they have served the purpose.

The detailed articles on Abhidharma (Abhidharma Studien I-IV, Köln) by Erich Frauwallner (1963, 1964, 1971, 1972) are philologically well founded and contain extremely compact discussions of the contents of the early Abhidhamma-works in Pali and the Sarvāstivāda-works extant in Chinese. His emphasis is, however, less on textual history than on philosophical development, which at times has led him to oversimplify problems of textual criticism. Nevertheless, his writings are fundamental for academic research on Abhidharma, and have now also become available in English translation under editorship of Ernst Steinkellner (1995). For the Pāli Abhidhamma-texts, I have relied on K.R. Norman, Frauwallner and Oskar von Hinuber. K.R. Norman (1983) has given a survey of the literature in A History of Indian Literature, Vol. VII.2: Pali Literature, in which he presents the texts well but does not provide sufficient information for a more thorough understanding of the Pāli Abhidhamma-works. Erich Frauwallner offers more detail on the contents of the individual texts. Oskar von Hinuber (1996) contributes in his A Handbook of Pali Literature an overview of the entire literature, brief descriptions of the individual works and bibliographical references. For his section on the works of Abhidhammapitaka, he has mainly relied on the writings of Frauwallner (Hinuber, 1996, p.65). The Sarvastivāda Abhidharma-texts have been treated thoroughly by Charles Willemen, Bart Dessein and Collett Cox (1998) in Sarvāstivāda Buddhist Scholasticism. Unlike the writings of Frauwallner, this volume emphasizes textual history. Although at times it repeats the same information in different guises, which likely results from poor editing, it provides a thorough study of the textual history and the problematic involved in the study of Abhidharma-literature. The chapters written by Bart Dessein are often strained by heavy sentences and must be read with caution, while Collett Cox’s contribution as chapter three is well written and to
This is a proud to state that thorough discussions on the Kathāvatthu are done by three Indian scholars of Buddhism. The first and foremost and probably the bests were written by N.N. Dutt (1930 to 1978). The next is done by S.N. Dube (1980) and the latest work is by Alka Barua (2006). All these works have inspired me a lot. Dutt’s early book viz., *Aspects of Mahayana Buddhism and its Relation to Hinayana* is noteworthy for its detailed treatment of the subject on the evolution of the sects of Buddhism. These works are primarily based on the Kathāvatthu. But unfortunately the later work namely *Buddhist Sects in India* is quite repetitive of his earlier works. *Abhidharma* texts of other sects were less highlighted. The work of Dube (1980) is quite well. He also treated the philosophical as well as ethical issues from a historical view-point. But during these thirty years after the publication of his work much more information is available on the transition of Buddhist doctrine and sects during the time of the compilation of the Kathāvatthu. This information available from the literatures of other Buddhist sects has opened up a new dialogue among the scholars which need to be surveyed and analysed from an un-biased point. Barua’s work is purely based on the *atthakathā* and is philosophically treated. Though it provides a detailed description of each and every debate, but the history is confusing. All these works have inspired me a lot, but I beg to differ on certain points. This diversity of opinion which is also the subject matter of the Kathavatthu is probably the life force of my present work. After going through all these books and many more recent works I felt about doing something else. One must have to consider the fact that the commentary and the text does not belong to the same time-frame. A.so the *atthakathās* and the chronicles belong to a later time and portray the views of the Mahavihāra school of Buddhism. Hence, descriptions about the doctrine and the sects available from these texts need to be judged from an unbiased view point, which will be possible if we can take into consideration the accounts available from other Buddhist schools on similar matter and

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belonging to the same period of time. It is my aim to present the subtle ideas and historical perspective of the Kathavatthu in a different manner which will be simple and lucid so that any ordinary student like me can enjoy the stereotyped and abbreviated text with its full flavour.

A selective chronologically arranged list of the works published exclusively on the Kathavatthu in recent years is furnished for further reading:


2. Portion translated by T.W.Rhys Davids, "Schools of Buddhist belief", JRAS 1892, 1-38


4. Edited by Arnold C. Taylor. Two volumes. PTS 34, 1894; 36, 1897; London 1979


6. Louis de la Vallee Poussin, "Buddhist notes: The five points of Mahadeva and the Kathavatthu", JRAS 1909, 413-424

7. Edited Mantala 1922


11. N.N. Dutt, “Doctrines of the Sammitiya school of Buddhism”, *IHQ* 15, 1939, 90-100


17. Edited and translated into Sinhalese by Kodagoda Nanaloka Thera. Four volumes. Kolambha (Sri Lanka) 1967-69

18. Edited, with Buddhaghosa’s *Atthakatha*, by Mahesh Tiwari. Patna 1971


22. Edited, with Buddhaghosa’s *Atthakatha*, by N.A. Jayawickrama. London 1979


27. K.R. Norman, “Magadhisms in the Kathavatthu”, KRNCP 2, 59-70


34. Alka Barua, Kathavatthu (A Critical and Philosophical Study), New Bharatiya Book Corp., Delhi, 2006

The Kathavatthu is the leading document of Early Buddhism. It presents a broad cross-section of Buddhist thought in an age of critical transition when some of the conflicts and obscurities latent in the earlier doctrines emerged openly. In the course of their discussion ground was prepared for future development. The Kathavatthu is of immense importance for any reconstruction of the history of early Buddhism and especially for understanding the figurative transition from the earlier historical forms to the later developed systems. Hence, it is a watershed in the development of Buddhist Thought. This study seeks to elucidate the doctrinal
significance of the controversies and to connect them historically with specific tendencies in the growth of the Buddhist faith, practice, organization and its wider milieu.