CHAPTER TWO

A Survey on the works on Abhidhamma Literature in Sri Lanka and Myanmar

This Chapter will deal with a survey of the works on Abhidhamma Literature i) In Sri Lanka and ii) In Myanmar.

i) In Sri Lanka:— We find that after the demise of Lord Buddha during the reign of Devānampiya Tissa of Sri Lanka (ancient Ceylon) Abhidhamma was first introduced into Sri Lanka by Thera Mahinda, the son of Emperor Aśoka. Thereafter, the people at large became curious and wanted to know and understand the inner theme of Buddhism. Thus various works on Abhidhamma like manuals, commentaries and sub-commentaries etc., were written in Sri Lanka.

Abhidhammic Works of Sri Lanka in the Fifth Century to Tenth Century A.D.

It is known that Buddhism arrived at Sri Lanka long before Fifth Century A.D., but we did not find any
Ābhidhammic works which were written during that period.

The scholars at that time mostly engaged themselves to reveal the importance of Vinaya Pitaka and Sutta Pitaka as well as stress much labour to restore the collection of Pali grammar. But it was the time of Mahā-Dhammakathī, so during King Buddhagātha's reign Pali soon achieved secondary importance and its use being restricted to mnemonic purposes. Some became specialized in Pali and Dhammakathī probably felt himself justified in the belief that, if the canon were to be made more widely known amongst the people, it should be put into the form easily intelligible to them. And a beginning was made with the translation of the Suttas.

There is no clear evidence to show that the work thus commenced by Dhamnakathī was continued by others. Probably the conservatism of the monks in this matter stopped any further attempts. So, it is very clear to be said that neglect of Pali studies had begun from that period which is corroborated by the fact that when scholars did come to write in that language, such as in the case of the Dipavaṃsa which according to Oldenberg was written

2. Malalasekera, G.P. Pali Literature of Ceylon, p.73
about that period, the language was unnatural, weak and stilted, lacking in subtlety and virility of expression.

Buddaghosa. — The reaction against this lamentable state of decline came when Buddhaghosa's works gave fresh impetus to the study of Pali, and a definite attempt was made to supersede the "language of the land" by means of Pali.

It was the time of Buddhaghosa a renowned scholar, who composed an original work called the *Nanodaya* when he was in Jambu-dīpa. He, at the same time, wrote a book called *Atthasaṅgīya* on the *Dhammasaṅgīya* - the first book of the *Abhidhammathānī*. So, we may say that from the time of Māhādhammaṅgatī Mahādhamma came in the forefront as writers and scholars showed their keen interest to work on it.

Buddaghosa's first work in Sri Lanka was the *Visuddhimagga*, "the Path of Purity". The *Mahāvamsa* mentions that after "summing up the three Pitkas together

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with the commentary® Buddhaghosa wrote it in brief. It is known as a concise but complete Encyclopaedia of Buddhism and Buddhist teachings.

The numerous works on Aṭṭhakathās or commentaries as well as some non-canonical Pali literature were ascribed to Buddhaghosa. But only the names of the works on Abhidhamma which was ascribed to Buddhaghosa are given below.

1) The Atthasālīnī (Commentary on the Dhammasangāṇī of the Abhidhamma Pitaka).

2) Visuddhimagga (A work dealing with Abhidhamma Topics).

3) Paramatthakathā (On the seven books of the Abhidhamma Pitaka). Actually, Buddhaghosa wrote a series of commentaries on the books of the Abhidhamma Pitaka. The exegesis on the other five books are collectively called the Pañca-pakaranatthakatha. They are the Kathavatthu atthakatha, the Puggala-paññattipakaranatthakatha, the Dātukathā-pakaranatthakatha, the Yanakapakaranatthakatha and the Patthāna-pakaranatthakatha.

4) Buddhaghosa also wrote the Parittatthakathā, which is one of the books of the Abhidhamma Pitaka.

13. Law, B. C. Life & Work of Buddhaghosa, p. 84.
14. ibid.
5) The *Sammohavinodani* a commentary on the *Vibhaṅga*, was also written by him.

Buddhadatta, a contemporary of Buddhaghosa was one of the foremost scholiasts after Buddhaghosa. The *Ganha-viṇñāṇa* also refers to him after Buddhaghosa. Some says that he was the elder of Buddhaghosa and of other commentator Dhammapāla. Buddhadatta belonged to the Kāverī region in the kingdom of the Coles of South India and his native place was Uragapura. Alike Buddhaghosa, he also wrote many commentaries on *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*. They are:

1) *Abhidhammāvatāra*, i.e., Regent into the *Abhidhamma*. It can be mentioned as an introduction to the study of Buddhist Philosophy, and the *Abhidhamma*.

2) The *Rūparūpasūcīvibhaṅga* was his second treatise on the *Abhidhamma*. He wrote it to enlighten the beginners on the *Abhidhamma* system of thought. But it does not exist in Ceylon at present.

15. Law, B.C, Life & Work of Buddhaghosa, p.84.
Dhammapala—Besides Buddhadeva, Dhammapala was one of the notable commentators of Srilanka. From the account of the Sasanavamsa we learn that Dhammapala lived in Badaratitha in the Pandila kingdom near Srilanka. This Badaratitha (otherwise called Padaratitha) was very close to Madras. Probably he was Tamil or Dravidian by birth and wrote in South India. Dhammapala wrote Paramatthamajusā, a commentary on the Visudhanīgga. He also wrote an anuśīkā on the Abhidhammatthakatha. But this work is very rare. According to Hiuan Tsang's account we came to know that Dhammapala probably lived in the Seventh Century A.D. Dhammapala's works show great learning, much exegetical skill and a good deal of sound judgment.

However, some of the monarchs were more enlightened than others and more anxious for the welfare of the religion strove to keep alive the study of the Dhamma. Thus Dādhopa-Tissa I (Circa 543-52) gave a special Parivena to the Elder Nāgasala at Maricavatti and prevailed upon him to teach the Abhidhamma with the Āṭṭhakathā and his successor Kassapa II made great offerings to the holy monk Māhādhammakathā, and made him teach the Dhamma. For the

21. Ibid.
work, who dwelt at Kasthaka in the monastery built by the king's brother, he caused the whole Pali scripture to be written, together with lesser books or 'epitomes' (Sa-Sangham). From this period the great attention paid to the Abhidhamma is significant one. It was a time of the king Vijaya Bahu of Sri Lanka (Ceylon) who paid his keener interest to revive a religious movement of Buddhism accompanied by a great intellectual awakening. The king himself was a scholar and a poet; the pursuits of literature had a great attraction for him. And he composed a Sinhalese translation of the Thamna-Sanghami, the first book of the Abhidhamma Pitaka. Unfortunately this work is now lost. As he was a generous patron of learning, he engaged the young nobleman in literary pursuits and the king himself acted as judge of them. He caused the three Pitakas to be written and scholars from abroad, especially from India were brought to Sri Lanka. Several works of merit in Pali too, were produced of this time which deal mostly with the Abhidhamma Pitaka.

Chief among those works were the Abhidhammattha-Sangha of Anuruddha Acariya which deals with the Abhidhamma written probably during the period of Eighth to Tenth Century A.D. The works were held in the highest esteem by all Buddhists of Southern countries.

28. ibid.
There was a controversy among the scholars regarding the date and authorship of Anuruddha. But his name is mentioned in the colophon of that work and the style of his language reveals that the author did not live before the Tenth to Eleventh century, most probably the latter. This was also corroborate with the fact that Sariputta, who lived in the reign of Parakkama Bahu (Parakramabahu) the great (1164-97), compiled a paraphrase to the Abhidhammattha-Sangaha—coupled with the fact that no mention is made in Anuruddha's work of the exploits of Parakkama, whose greatness was extolled by all the writers of this period which would lead us to place the author before that monarch. But Burmese tradition glims a light on the fact that Anuruddha was an Elder of Srilanka and wrote the compendium at the Mulagoda Vihāra founded by Somadevi, Queen of King Vattadhanan (88-76 B.C.) and the minister Mula, at Polonnaruwa. The Cāsana-vasāsa and the Saddhamma-Sanghā of the fourteenth century also ascribed him as the author of the Abhidhammattha-Sanghā.

However, according to Saddhamma Sanghā and also supported by Gāndhavāma we came to know that Anuruddha was also the author of three treatises on the Abhidhamma

30. ibid.
vis., the *Abhidhammattha-sangaha*, the *Paramattha-Vinicchaya*,
and *Nāma-rūpa-pariccheda*.

For nearly nine centuries the *Abhidhammattha-sangaha*
has stood at the head of works on *Abhidhamma*. But its style
is unattractive with its dry, terse categories, elliptical
memmonic summaries, its endless catalogues and analyses.
Besides the *Abhidhammattha-sangaha*, two other works of
Anuruddha, which were stated above, are included among the
*nine little finger* Manuale (*let-than*) of the * Paramattha-Vinicchaya*.
Both works were written while the author was residing at Kāṇḍi-
pura in the Tarebārātha, as he says in the colophon of the
*Paramattha-Vinicchaya*. They are composed in *gāthā* verse.
The treatment of the subject in the *Nāma-rūpa-pariccheda*
is much simpler than in the *compendium*; it is meant to
be an introduction to the study of the *Abhidhamma* that
divided into thirteen chapters giving a general idea of the
subjects.

The *Paramattha-Vinicchaya* is a much shorter work in
twenty-nine sections dealing with *Citta*, *Caṭṭasika*, *Rūpa*
and *Nibbāna*. But by no means it is so comprehensive as the
*Nāma-rūpa-pariccheda*; nor is it as extensively used.

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32. The others being Buddhadatta's *Abhidhammavatāra* and
*Rūpa-Vibhaga*, Thampāla's *Sācī-Saṅkhāra*, Kassapa's
*Mahāvīcchedāni*, Khema's *Khema-ppakaraṇa* and Chapaṭa's
*Nārāyana-dīpaka*.

As it is mentioned above that this period was remarkable for paid great attention to the Abhidhamma; here the extant inscriptions of this period reveal us that the great care was taken for the purity and the exalted prestige of the Buddhist Sangha (Order), and for anyone who desire to enter the order the minimum knowledge of the Dhamma was insisted upon. Thus from an inscription of Kassapa V (929-39), who expounded the Abhidhamma himself and caused it to be written on plates of gold. It is interesting to note that no one was allowed to join the order unless he knew at least four sections of the Parittas.

Mahinda IV. (Circa 975-91) encouraged the study of the Dhamma by decreeing, in an inscription which is still preserved, that the monks who read aloud and explained to an audience the Abhidhamma Pitaka should be assigned twelve Vasag of food and raiment. Moreover, he caused Dhammamitta to expound the Abhidhamma and Dēyānāga “who dwelt as a recluse in the forest and was like an ornament unto Lanka, to discourse thereon.”

According to Gandhavamsa there was a monk named

Ananda who probably lived about the eighth or the ninth century and was a native of India. It is not much more known about him but one thing is that he belonged to the Vanavāsī or Araṇṇavāsī fraternity of Sri Lanka. He composed at the request of Buddhamitta the Mūla-tīkā to the seven books of the Abhidhamma. This work now exists in three sections one each for the Atthasālīni and the Sammohavinodanī and other for the Pañca-prakārana. Probably the original edition was in one volume - the Sattā-prakārana-atthakathā and still exists in Myanmar. This monk left behind him several disciples who were scholars of note and authors of important compilations. The vanavāsī sect seems to have been closely associated with the Buddhists of Kaliṅga region at the end of the thirteenth century. Thus we find that the members of this fraternity devoted themselves to the study of the Abhidhamma.

To this period may be assigned the Khema-prakārana also called the Paramatthadīpa by Elder Khema. The book is now not widely known in Sri Lanka and whatever copies there are at present have been introduced from Myanmar.

41. ibid., p.211.
42. ibid., p.156.
It is more often called in Srilanka 'Nāma-rūpasaṁsa'.

So, we find that during the tenth century A.D., Ābhidhammic literature reaches its highest glory in Srilanka and it was continued in the later period, despite of some religious and political hindrances.

Ābhidhammic Works of Srilanka in the Eleventh Centuries to Seventeenth Centuries A.D.

In the eleventh Century, king Vijaya-bāhu of Srilanka appealed to Anuruddhā, king of Myanmar, for helping in re-establishing the Saṅgha (Order) in the island, the intercourse between two countries became closer and more intimate,

King Anuruddhā obtained from Srilanka copies of the Pali Tipiṭaka, which he examined and compared with the Thaton collection Myanmar aided by the Talaing monk Arahanta.

Anuruddhā died in 1057 A.D. without being able to see the first fruits of his effort, but during the reigns of his immediate successors Pali learning took firm root at Pagan and the works of this period show that the Myanmarese monks specialised in the study of Ābhidhamma side by side with the grammar.

44. ibid., p.185.
As a result of it, the monk Aggavamsa of Myanmar completed the Saddaniti in 1154 A.D., which was a grammatical work based on the Tipitaka and the Saddaniti formed the first return gift of Myanmar to Sri Lanka.

Here it is important to mention that king Vijayabahu died in A.D. 1120. It was again the signal for internal discord, which threatened to disturb the unity of the kingdom. But at this time of emergency a mighty figure appeared on the stage and all other claimants to the throne were overruled in favour of Parakrama, a prince of great accomplishments and energy who soon became master of the kingdom and crowned himself as sole 'king of Lanka' in 1164 A.D.

The Mahavamsa devotes several chapters in describing the various activities of the king. Inspite of some political conflicts with the other countries he secure the prosperity of the land by a careful organization of a splendid civic service and lawfulness with a firm hand. Besides this, he engaged himself mostly to the restoration and the embellishment of the religion. To purify the Buddhist Sangha as there was neither any unity or any monastic discipline among the monks, he decided to hold a council of the Elders of the three fraternities and appointed Mahakassapa of

46. Bode, Mabel, Sasanavaansa, p.74.
47. Geiger, W., fr. Mahavamsa, pp.1xxviii, vv.3-4.
48. Viz., The Abhayagiri, the Jetavana, the Mahavihara.
Udambaragiri Vihāra, a man learned in the three Piṭakas and who know the Vinaya wholly as the head of the assembly. By dint of those efforts, the king became successful to bring perfect internal tranquility and undisturbed atmosphere into the Order.

So during this period it is seen that there arose a band of scholars, who made this epoch the Augustan age of Srilankan literature, as they got lots of facilities from the king who not only encouraged them in their activities but also took a great devout interest in their works.

By those authors whose name come forefront was Mahākassapa of Dimbutagala (Udambaragiri) Vihāra. As it is mentioned above that Mahākassapa was especially proficient in the Vinaya Law but he is also credited to have written a Porana ti̊kā on the Abhidhammattha-Saṅgaha. Whether he is identical with the Elder Kassapa, whom the Sasanavamsa-dīpa calls a poet of the Cola country, but who is regarded in Myanmar as a native of Srilanka and author of a treatise on the Abhichamma called the Mohavicchedani (which forms one of the little-finger manuals) - a ti̊kā on the same.

52. ibid.
Perhaps brightest among the constellations that adorned Srilanka's literary firmament during Barākramabāhu's reign was Sāriputta, also called Sāgarmati (like to the ocean in wisdom). Though according to the author of Saddhamma-SAṅgaha mentions that Sāriputta's name is not refers in connexion with the Abhidhammic work but the Gandhavaṁsa says that he also wrote a Sinhalese sanne to the Abhidhammattha-SAṅgaha.

Another author viz., Culla-Dhammapāla wrote the Sacca-SAṅkhēpa, a 'Work-Summary' or 'outline of Truth', as its name implies is a short treaties in five chapters, dealing with such Abhidhamma matters. There seems to be some uncertainty as to the authorship and date of the Sacca-SAṅkhēpa. However, Chapata mentions the Sacca-SAṅkhēpa in his Saṅkhēpa-Vaṃnana commentary, a book on the Abhidhammattha-SAṅgaha and according to Mr. Aunṭy Dhammapāla lived even earlier than Anuruddha because we are told that when Anuruddha wrote his work, the Sacca-SAṅkhēpa was as a vade mecum superseded by it in the twelfth Century.

It was twelve Century A.D. to thirteenth Century A.D., the two renowned scholars viz., Sumanṭagala and Vāciṣṣara flourished in Srilanka and both of them were pupils of Sāriputta.

They were specialized in the study of *Abhidhamma* and wrote *ṭīkās* on several *Abhidhamma* works.

Sumaṅgala was perhaps elder than Vācissara. Sumaṅgala wrote a *ṭīkā* on Buddhadatta's *Abhidhammatāvatāra* viz., *Abhidhammattha-vikāsini* (the Blossoms of Philosophy). He also wrote a Nava-ṭīkā on Dhammapāla's *Sacca-Sāṅkhēpa* called *Sarattha-salinī* (the Essence of Meanings). But his best known work on *Abhidhamma* is the *Abhidhammattha-Vibhāvanī* (clear philosophy).

Sāriputta had another pupil named Vācissara. According to Mr. Wickremasinghe there were two Vācissaras both of whom lived before the end of the thirteenth century, the first one slightly senior to the other. The elder Vācissara was specialized in the *Abhidhamma* and also in the *Vinaya*. The Gāndhāvaṃsa ascribes several other works to his name but here we mention only the *Abhidhammic* works of him. These were *Khema-ppakarana-ṭīkā*, an original work on the *Abhidhamma Rūpārūpa-vibhāga*, a *porāṇa-ṭīkā* on Anuruddha's *Nāma-rūpa-pariccheda* and a *ṭīkā* on the *Sacca-sāṅkhēpa*.

Another Thera named Vimalabuddhi is said to be contemporary with the elder Vācissara who wrote a oldest *ṭīkā* on

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60. *ibid*.
62. *ibid*. 
the compendium which is now unknown in Srilanka and considered quite superannuated even in Myanmar.

In the fifteenth Century, Mahābodhi Thera wrote a Porāṇa-tīkā (Mikha-mattakā) on Anuruddha's Paramatthā Vinicchāya. He seems to have written a tīka on the Khema-ppakaranā as well. The Saddhamma-Sāṅghā mentions that he also wrote a Sacca-Sāṅkhepanāṇa entitled Nissayattha-kathā.

However, the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Portuguese came to Srilanka. This time Buddhism fell into great trouble because the peace and integrity in the saṅgha was then disturbed by foreign invasion. So no Abhidhammic work was seen at that time. It was a dark age of Srilanka which was still continued to seventeenth century.

Abhidhammic works of Srilanka in the Eighteenth Century to Twentieth Century.

In the Eighteenth Century, Kittisiri Rajasīṅgha, the ruler of the Kandyan Province, had sent emissaries to Siam in quest of Buddhist Elders for re-establishment of the Higher Ordination in Srilanka while others went with similar purpose to Myanmar at the beginning of the 19th Century and thus three fraternities were established in Srilanka.

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66. Bapat, P.V. 2500 years of Buddhism, p.370.
Viz., of Siam of Myanmar (upper Myanmar) and of Ramañña (lower Myanmar).

As a result of this close association between the two countries, several of the Srilankan monks again went to Myanmar who were specialized in the study of the Abhidhamma and on return from Myanmar to Srilanka they carried a large number of Pali works written by Myanmarese authors. They edited, translated and published many of these works in Srilankan characters.

Besides these, several original works also have been written in Pali during the last century such as Moraṭuwa Medhānanda Thera published a book called the Dhamma-gārava-dīpanī, written in Pali gāṭha verse, which gives a history of the controversy and his own observations on the subject, together with the opinions expressed to him by various eminent Theras of Myanmar.

In nineteenth century a controversy took place between the Christians (British captured the island in 1815) and the Buddhists as the education of the young was only left for christian missionaries. But it was solved by Colonel Olcott in 1880 A.D. He not only came in Srilanka to solve this...
matter but also took a refuge in Buddhism and encouraged local Buddhists to establish their own schools.

Under the influence of Colonel H.S. Olcott, a young enthusiast called David Hewavitarane, who later came to be known as Anagarika Dhammapāla earnestly devoted himself for a revival of Buddhism. It was his religious fervour and missionary zeal that led to the founding of the Mahābodhi Society in 1391 A.D. in Sri Lanka.

Anagarika Dhammapāla's youngest brother Simon Hewavitarane left a large legacy which was to be used for the printing and publishing of Pali books. Nevertheless over forty nine volumes of commentaries on the canonical texts of the Pali Tipitaka have been published. Among them, Dhammasaṅgani, the first book of Abhidhamma Pitaka was published in 1952 A.D.

Stray volumes of the Tipitaka and commentaries were also published at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. But most of those books and commentaries, including those in the Simon Hewavitarane Series, are now out of print.

Besides, the Abhidhammattha-vibhāvanī in A.D. 1933 and the Atthasālitaṁṇita tīkā in A.D. 1938 published by the vidyodaya tīkā publication series, may also be mentioned here.

70. Bapat, P.V. 2500 years of Buddhism. p.371.
Rev. A.P. Buddhadatta becomes famous for his edition of the *Visuddhimagga* in 1914 A.D. in Sinhalese characters and for his editions of *Abhidhamma* texts for the Pali Text Society, of the *Nama-rupa-pariccheda* in 1914 A.D., the *Abhidhammavatara* in 1915 A.D., the *Samohavinodani* in 1923 A.D. Besides these, he has written numerous scholarly books in the Sinhalese language.


The Government of Srilanka took a keen interest in publishing the Pali texts and their Sinhalese translation to encourage Buddhistic studies. The Vidyalākāra authorities and Prof. G.P. Malalasekera of the University of Srilanka has taken a leading role on this context. Under the guidance of Prof. Malalasekera Srilanka has taken an effort to bring all Buddhist countries together and to set up a World Fellowship of the Buddhists, which successively met in Srilanka in 1950 A.D. and Myanmar in 1954 A.D.

71. Bapat, P.V. ed. 2500 Years of Buddhism, p.374.
Thus we concluded with this fact that Sri Lanka is the country which not only holds firmly the Theravada Buddhism but also tries to enrich the Buddhist literature and for this reason many Abhidhammic works were come out from the pens of the scholars which bring a new era of prosperity in the World of Buddhist literature.

**Abhidhamma Literature in Myanmar**

(ii) In Myanmar: The Vaisha sketches that after the conclusion of the Third Buddhist Council, Theras namely, Sopa and Uttara went to Lower Myanmar and Dhammarakkhita went to Upper Myanmar to propagate Buddhism. Remarkably from the 14th Century onwards the activities of the Myanmarese monks come to the forefront and the special subject of their study was the Abhidhamma. Thus, we find one after another, a number of works on Abhidhamma, coming out from the pens of the Myanmarese scholars. The study of the Abhidhamma is still pursued specially in Myanmar, even at the present day and numerous works have been written on it in course of centuries.

The Abhidhamma Pitaka - the third and the last section of the Tipitaka (three great divisions of the Buddhist scriptures) contains the 'higher religion' or the 'higher

72. Haldar (De) , Manikuntala. History of Buddhism, p.133.
subtleties of religion*. Now, let us discuss the emergence of Abhidhammic literature of Upper and Lower Myanmar i.e., Aparanta Country and Suvannabhūmi respectively.

Abhidhammic Works of Upper Myanmar and Lower Myanmar in the Twelfth to Fourteenth Centuries I.

Though Buddhism entered in Myanmar long before twelfth centuries but we did not find any Abhidhammic works which were written in that period.

It was the time of Chapata who was the novice pupil of Uttarājīva, first wrote a philosophical treatises named Saṅkhepasvāpannā which was a commentary on the Abhidhammatthasāṅgaha of Anuruddha. So, we may said that from his time Abhidhamma came in the forefront as writers and scholars showed their keener interest to work on it. The Chapata who was also known as Saddhammajotipāla may be composed the Naṃacārapāṇi on ethics according to Forehhammer but classed by the Pīṭakatthāmaṇi as Abhidhamma. The remaining Abhidhammic works ascribed to chapata are the Nāṭikatthāpāṇi and Paṭṭāpanāgānaṇīya.

75. Boede, M. Pali Literature of Burma, p.19.
76. ibid.
In the reign of Narapatisithu of Pagan of Upper Myanmar, Vimalabuddhi Thera wrote the Abhidhammattha-saṅghaṭika.

After Narapatisithu, the next keen patron of learning was Kyovā. Though the works produced under his auspices were chiefly grammatical yet the Abhidhammatthasaṅgha was also one of the principal subjects of study.

According to Sāsanavamsa it may be stated that in 1277 the Pagan dynasty fell under the assaults of Mongol invaders from the North, while nearly at the same time a successful revolt in the South completed the overthrow of the Myanmarese power. Shan rulers established their capital at Myinzaing (Khandhapura in Pali) and the glory of Pagan, where the very temple had been torn down to fortify the city against the enemy, was never restored. Though many monks settled at Myinzaing, but no books were written there.

It was in 1312 a Shan King Sihasura founded Panyā (Pali Viṣaya pura), where with a new era of peace and safety for the order came a revival of literary activity. In Sihasura's reign, Sirimangala or Sirisumangala, one of the most diligent of his fraternity, busied himself with commentaries explaining the grammatical construction of

the Abhidhamma commentaries like Atthasāliṇī and Sammohavinodani which are ascribed to Buddhaghosa. Buddhaghosa wrote Atthasāliṇīyojana in Fourteenth Century. This is a good example of reviving monastic industry in that day.

In this age, Culla Vimalabuddhi, author of a work called Abhidhammapannasatthana explains some passages of Abhidhamma. In the Gandhavamsa, a tika on the Abhidhammatthanagaha called Pasagathivannana (or Pasagandhivannana) is ascribed to a Vepullabuddhi of Pagan.

Hansavati, the capital of the kingdom of Lower Myanmar from the middle of the fourteenth Century, also had its learned Theras. The Aṭṭhe gusāra written at Hansavatī by a scholar whose name is not mentioned in the Sāsanavamsa, deals with Abhidhamma topics.

So, it is seen that between Twelveth to Fourteenth Centuries number of Abhidhamma works were written while the then authors engaged themselves in the grammatical works.

80. ibid.
Abhidhammic Works of Upper and Lower Myanmar in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries

The Sasanavamsa gives us a glimpse into the life of a monastic scholar of those days. From there, we know that Ariyavaṃsa was a celebrated teacher and author of the Fifteenth Century. Ariyavaṃsa, who resides at Pagan and a member of the Chapata Sect., settled in Ava in the reign of Narapati (1442-68). He wrote Manisārāmanuṣa a commentary on the Abhidhammatthavibhāvanī. His another work on Abhidhamma was Manidīpa, a ṭīkā on the Atthaśālinī of Buddhaghosa. He also composed an Atthaśālana or interpretation in Myanmarese of a commentary called the Anuṭīkā on the Abhidhamma.

In Lower Myanmar at Hamsāvatī some works were done in the way of commenting on the Abhidhamma. The Thera Saddhannālāṇkāra wrote the Paṭṭhānasāradīpanī, and Mahānāma, a ṭīkā entitled Madhusāratthadhīpanī. These works are mentioned without any date in the Sasanavamsa which by the way, differing from the Piṭkatthamaṇṇa, gives Ānanda as the author of the last named, a ṭīkā on the Abhidhamma. The Piṭkatthamaṇṇa places both in the reign of Bayin Naung.

82. Bode, Mabel, ed. Sasanavamsa, p.95 ff.
83. Phayre, A.P. History of Burma, p.52.
84. Bode, Mabel, ed. Sasanavamsa, p.33.
Abhidhammic works of Upper and Lower Myanmar in the Seventeenth Century.

The Seventeenth Century witnessed a number of well-known learned theras who devoted themselves in the works of the Abhidhamma texts. Among them, Tipitakalanka was the foremost. He composed a work on Abhidhamma entitled Visatirana. He also composed a lighter work on Abhidhamma entitled Yasavaddhanavatthu. The list of works written by Tipitakalanka revealed varied learning but he is remembered chiefly as an Abhidhamma scholar and a sage.

The theras of Saging at this period seem to have given the stress on Abhidhamma studies. Tilokaguru was one of these theras who engaged himself for many years for writing tikās and supplementary tikās (anuṭikā) on various texts. A tikā on the Yamaka ascribed to him. He also deals with the Dhatukatha thoroughly before composed this tikā on Yamaka. But he was famous for composing a tikā on Patthana the last and most important book of the Abhidhammapitaka.

During this period the Saging monasteries also produced a number of Myanmarese nissayas (interpretations of

Paraphrases on Abhidhamma texts. But it is difficult to distribute these works aright among their several authors, whose Pali names are but an indifferent help to accuracy. There were at least four Ariyālaṃkārās noted for scholarship. The monk mentioned in the Sasanavamsa as the second Ariyālaṃkāra who was pupil of the great therī and he was equal to Tipitakālaṃkāra is probably the scholar of whom Oldenberg remarks that the Myanmarese are indebted to him for the version of a great number of Pali works. Those composed by this Ariyālaṃkāra are interpretations of the Atthasālīni of Buddhaghosa, the Saṅkhēpa-vānana of Saddhammājotipāla, the Abhidhammattha-vibhāvani of Sumangala and the Vibhanga of the Abhidhammapitaka.

The another writer of the same period was Maṇiratana who spent his life in interpreting the abstruser side of sacred learning to those who were only understand the vernacular language. The Sasanavamsa mentions translations by Maṇiratana of the following works such as - the Atthasālīni and Sammohavinodanī (Buddhaghosa's commentaries on the Dhammasaṅgani and the Vibhanga.) He also translated the ṭīkās Abhidhammattha-vibhāvani and Saṅkhēpa-vānana into Myanmarese which were the later exponents of the Abhidhamma works.

Thera Saradassi of the same place was the another author of some works bearing equal characteristics of the time. He wrote *Gulhatthadīpanī* (explaining difficult passages in the seven books of the Abhidhamma) and the *Visuddhi-maggagapāthipadattha*, a book of the same nature on Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga* in Pali.

The middle and latter part of the seventeenth Century we notice that the *Sasanavamsa* refers to the religious works which are mainly written in the Myanmarese languages although there are references of one or two Pali works side by side with the Myanmarese works. These texts are mainly the interpretation of well-known Pali works. Thus we get the name of the great scholar Aggadhammālāṅkāra who lived during the reign of king Mahāpavaradhammarajañalokāhipati (1651 A.D.). He translated and interpreted a number of Pali texts into vernacular. Among them, the translation of Anumuddha's *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha* ascribed to him. He also translated the several *Abhidhamma* texts, viz., of the *matika* of the *Dhammasaṅgani*, the *Dhatukatha*, the *Yamaka* and the *Paṭṭhāna*. The last task of him i.e., *Paṭṭhāna* shows his real devotion to his subject.

92. ibid., p.111.
93. It concerns with the *Matika* (table of contents) of the *Dhammasaṅgani*.
94. The fifth book of the *Abhidhammapitaka*.
95. The Sixth book of the *Abhidhammapitaka*.
96. The Seventh book of the *Abhidhammapitaka*.
Now, let us glance at the features of the Pali Myanmarese literature. There we see that how the several books of the Abhidhamma were interpreted and paraphrased in Myanmarese language during the seventeenth Century and how that tradition of the Seventeenth Century has come down to later generation also. So they eagerly wanted to study Abhidhamma in the vihāras. Not only that but also the students of that century deeply interested to study Patthāna, a part of Abhidhamma literature.

At that situation many commentators of Srilankan Theras viz., Vimalabuddhi and Sumaṅgala, both composed ṭīkās on Abhidhamma. Author Sumaṅgala composed Abhidhamma-tthavibhāvanī, a part of the usual course of Abhidhamma study in Myanmar.

Besides, these two ancient and authoritative treatises from Srilanka, the Abhidhammadvatāra by Buddhadatta and the Saccasāṁkhepa by Culladhammapala were studied more in the early period of Myanmarese then in later times.

In this period, no Pali work on the Abhidhamma has been more often translated and paraphrased than Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha. In this connection it should be mentioned here

100. ibid., pp. 59-69.
that the true Myanmarese theory on Abhidhamma such as a manual on Dhammasąhgaṇī, reveals the Myanmarese view of it. Nevertheless in the Seventeenth Century some of the most eminent scholars were flourished to spend their time making Myanmarese versions of Pali texts.

**Abhidhammic Works of Upper and Lower Myanmar in the Eighteenth Century.**

In the eighteenth century another national crisis had come and passed a literary revival, begun under Alaungpaya and his descendants. Actually in the eighteen century the country have passed under a dark period.

In 1733 A.D. when Maharajadhihipati came to the throne, appointed the therā Nāgapara as his ācāriya (spiritual adviser), Nāgapara prepared ganthipadaṭṭha or gloss on the difficult words in the Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha and that was a famous work to him. He also glossed the ancient commentary Atthasaḷāṇī of Buddhaghosa in the same way. He translated Abhidhamappā dīpika into the vernacular. One of his contemporary Saradassi therā of Pagan ascribed him as the author of a 'Dhātukathāvojana' which is either a grammatical commentary or a translation

of the Dhatukathā of the Abhidhammapitaka. Another Thera Munindaghosa of the country, translated the Abhidhammattha-sāngaha into Myanmarese language. In this century we also find another royal preceptor Nāṇa or Nāṇālaṁkāra who was a man of profound knowledge. He wrote in Myanmarese the two commentaries on the Abhidhamma texts i.e., The Yamaka and Mahāpatṭhāna (or Patṭhāna).

Towards the end of the eighteenth century in the latter part of king Bodopaya's reign, there was active intercourse between the Saṅghas of Sri Lanka and Myanmar. Nāṇādhivamsa, the Saṅgharāja of Myanmar may be mentioned in this context. Though he was specialized in Vinaya teachings, he encouraged Abhidhamma subjects also.

Abhidhammic Works of Upper and Lower Myanmar in the Nineteenth Century to Twentieth Century.

It may be mentioned first that the nineteenth century is linked with the twelfth century as the history of Pali literature in Myanmar repeats itself. It was the reign of king Min-don-min who was the 'Convener of the Fifth Council'. In that Council, a great assembly of learned

106. ibid., p.70.
107. ibid., p.71.
108. ibid., p.78.
monks and teachers was summoned together at the Capital Mandalay where they read or recited the sacred texts to restore the best readings under the Presidentship of king Min-don-min. By the royal order, a complete set of the Tipitaka texts was then engraved on stone tablets which was placed in Shrines. This act duly recorded by Min-don-min's Counsellors, the inauguration of the first printing press in Upper Myanmar. After Min-don-Min, the Myanmar faced a great problem that British Army occupied Mandalay. But we cannot ignore our brief study without a glance at this latest period i.e., the era of the printing press.

Here we just mention the Abhidhammic works of that period. During this period the standard work of Metaphysic like Abhidhammatthasangaha are numerous. To take an example, a summary of this important text with commentary by U Tin was published at Maulmein in 1883 under the title Saruptthadipani and in 1897 Maung Tun Aung wrote the Abhidhammatthasangahaparitta. Other work like the Abhidhammatthasaṅgahaganthithit by U Tissa and U-Janinda in 1898 may be mentioned.

However, upto 1886, Buddhism continued to flourish in that country through its scholarly studies on the Tipitaka.
especially on the Abhidhamma. Numerous monasteries of the country contain rich collections of Pali manuscripts.

Those works prepared well grounds in which Abhidhamma as well as Pali flourishes to-day. A noteworthy thing is that in Myanmar there are very few lay men who have not studied the Abhidhamma.

At the beginning of this century the more notable among the learned monks of Myanmar was Ledi Sayadaw who specialised in the Abhidhamma. He wrote various books on Abhidhamma which were published by the Pali Text Society.

We may also mention here the names of the S.Z. Aung, Mrs. C.A.F. Rhys Davids, Prof. Maung Tin, Ledi Pandit U, Maung Gyi and U. Lin who wrote on the subject relating to Abhidhamma.

However, still now, a trend of scholarly studies on Abhidhamma Literature are very much vibrant particularly in Myanmar and one after another treatise on Abhidhamma came out from the pens of the enthusiastic persons of Myanmar and this became a marvelous bond of unity among all the Buddhist countries of South-East Asia.

113. Bapat, P.V. 2500 years of Buddhism, p.374.
114. ibid.
115. ibid., p.375.