

works. The *Abhidharma-kośa-bhāṣya* defines the Sarvastivādins as holders of “everything exists” theory and the Vibhajyavādins as holders of “some exists” theory. The present and the past *karmas* that have not given fruit do exist while the past *karmas* that have given fruit and the future *karmas* do not exist<sup>13</sup>. Another view attributed to the Vibhajyavādins by the *Abhidharma-nyāyānusāra* is the rejection of the subdivision of the seven *anuśayas* into ninety eight found in the Sarvastivāda Abhidharma texts, and holding on to the seven *anuśayas* as found in the *Sūtra*<sup>14</sup>.

C. Witanachchi.

#### References

1. Points of Controversy, PTS, xli.n.1.
2. *ibid* 7.n.1
3. Dutt, Nalinaksha, *Early History of the Spread of Buddhism and the Buddhist Schools*, Luzac and co. London, 249 f
4. *Middle Length Sayings*, II. 386 f
5. *ibid* xl
6. *Points of Controversy*, xxxvii
7. *Ibid*. xli
8. Dhammajoti, Bhikkhu Kuala Lumpur, *Entrance into the Supreme Doctrine*, Postgraduate Institute of Pali and Buddhist Studies, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka, 1998, p.31
9. Dhammajoti, *Sarvastivāda Abhidharma*, Centre for Buddhist studies, Sri Lanka, 2002, p.37
10. Dhammajoti, 1998, p.158 n.80
11. *ibid*. p.27
12. *ibid* p.261
13. *Ibid*. 261 f
14. *Ibid*. p.202 n.373

**VIBHAJJAVĀDA (2)** (Sanskrit *Vibhajyavāda*), is the “doctrine of analysis”. The term *Vibhajyavāda* as representative of the way the Buddha taught occurs in the account of the third council given in the Pāli commentaries to the *Kathāvatthu* or the *Vinaya*, and in the *Mahāvamsa* (*KvuA.* 7; *VinA.* I, 61; *Mhv.* 5:272). According to these texts, the monastic community was purged of heterodox elements with the help of an inquiry about what the Buddha had taught. While counterfeit monks would propose various views of the type listed in the *Brahmajāla Sutta* (*D.* I, 13 ff);

the proper reply to this inquiry was that the Buddha taught *Vibhajyavāda* or was a *Vibhajyavādin*.

In Theravāda literature, the term *Vibhajyavāda* occurs on several occasions as an epithet that expresses praiseworthiness, such as when the *Visuddhimagga* eulogizes a monk from the Mahāvihāra as foremost among those who uphold the doctrine of analysis, *Vibhajjāvādi-seṭṭhānaṃ* (*Vism.* 711).<sup>1</sup> Here and elsewhere in later Pāli literature, *Vibhajyavāda* seems to stand representative of the Mahāvihāra lineage of the Theravāda tradition.

The *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* uses the same term to refer to those who are at odds with Sarvastivāda doctrines, such as the proposal on the existence of past and future phenomena (*AbkKbh.* 5:25). Other “doctrinal views explicitly attributed to the Vibhajyavādins... do not form a coherent group, but rather are unified simply by virtue of being opposed to respective Sarvastivāda positions”. Thus “various doctrinal positions attributed to the Mahīśāsakas, Dharmaguptakas, Kāśyapīyas, or the Dārṣṭāntikas are also assigned to the Vibhajyavādins”, so that “the name *Vibhajyavāda* might be best characterized as a loose umbrella term for those, excluding the Sārvastivādins, who belonged to the original Sthavira branch”.<sup>2</sup> The same term also makes its appearance outside of the context of Buddhist schools, as it occurs in a Jaina text in a recommendation to expound with the help of an analytical methodology.<sup>u¶</sup> 3

In the early Buddhist discourses, the term *Vibhajjāvāda* can be found in the *Subha Sutta* (*M.* II, 197). Confronted with a categorical proposition on the superiority of the life of a householder over the life of someone who has gone forth, according to the Pāli version of this discourse the Buddha replied that in this respect he was one who would make a pronouncement only after having carried out an analysis: *vibhajjāvādo kho aham ettha*. Notably, according to the Chinese parallel passage in the *Madhyama Āgama*, a discourse collection generally held to have been transmitted by the Sārvastivāda tradition (see also ĀGAMA), the Buddha did not come out with the term *Vibhajjāvāda* on his own, but rather was asked by his visitor to give an analytical explanation of the matter (*T.I.* 667a22).<sup>4</sup> This minor difference seems to reflect the influence of school affiliation on the respective texts, since whereas in the

Theravāda version the Buddha introduces himself as a *vibhajjavādin*, thereby implicitly indicating that this term stands representative for his way of approach, in the Sarvāstivāda version of the same discourse he merely gives an analytical exposition after being asked by his visitor to do so.

Another discourse of relevance to the term *Vibhajjavāda* occurs in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*. According to this discourse, the Buddha was a *vibhajjavādin* in regard to asceticism (A. V, 190). This discourse contrasts the term *Vibhajjavāda* a to *ekaṃsavāda*, to taking a categorical stance on the matter. A notable circumstance of this discourse, as well as of the *Subha Sutta*, is that the Buddha is one who adopts *Vibhajjavāda* in regard to this particular point, *ettha*.<sup>5</sup> That is, these two Pāli discourses present the Buddha as adopting *Vibhajjavāda* in regard to specific proposals that in both cases involve unwarranted generalizations. Thus “the Buddha did claim himself to be an analyst (*vibhajjavādi*), but this was dependent upon the sort of question or claim made by the inquirer”.

In fact, according to the *Poṭṭhapāda Sutta* there were matters in regard to which the Buddha took a categorical position, *ekaṃsika* (D. I, 191). An example of an *Poṭṭhapāda Sutta*, are the four noble truths. The same holds true for matters of morality and the need for wholesome conduct, where the Buddha categorically declared that unwholesome deeds of body, speech and mind should not be undertaken, *Bhagavatā ekaṃsena akaraṇīyaṃ akkhātamaṃ kāyaduccharitaṃ vacīdudcharitaṃ manoduccharitaṃ* (A. I, 57).

The term *vibhajja* and *ekaṃsa* also make their appearance in the context of altogether four types of questions that should be met with by the appropriate mode of reply. One of these four types of question requires a categorical reply, *ekaṃsa vyākaraṇīya*, while another needs to be met with by undertaking further analysis, *vibhajjavādyākaraṇīya* (e.g. A.I, 197). Notably, out of these four, “one kind of answer is not considered superior or inferior to any other kind of answer.... each kind of answer, when apposite, is equally valid and equally commendable.”<sup>7</sup>

This set of four answers helps to clarify the implications of *vibhajjavāda* as a characterization of the early Buddhist teachings. To adopt the analytical

methodology does thus not make categorical replies impossible, in fact at times such categorical replies are quite opportune. Yet, such categorical replies should be based on a previous undertaking of the analytical method. This much can be seen from the *Poṭṭhapāda Sutta*, since the *ekaṃsika* teaching it presents, the four noble truths, are in themselves an analysis of the human predicament. This analysis was the outcome of the analytical insight the Buddha had gained with his awakening. In regard to *ekaṃsika* statements on wholesome and unwholesome conduct, the *Dvedhāvītakka Sutta* records that this distinction, too, was the outcome of an analysis undertaken by the Buddha before his awakening (M. I, 115). This re-awakening analysis enabled him to make clear-cut categorical statements on this matter.

In this way, then *vibhajjavāda* as a referent to the early Buddhist teachings can be understood to highlight the thorough emphasis on investigation and analysis in early Buddhism, an attitude that may then express itself in categorical assertions as well as in replies that differentiate between alternative possibilities. When considered from this perspective, the suggestion made in the account of the third council that the Buddha should be reckoned a *Vibhajjavādin* would not conflict with his taking a categorical stance on certain matters. That is, the Buddha can indeed be reckoned a *Vibhajjavādin*, in the sense that the propositions he made were based on previous analysis of the matter in question.

Analayo

#### References

- 1 A survey of other references to this term in Pāli literature can be found in Cousins: “On The Vibhajjavādins, the Mahīmsāsaka, Dhammaguttaka, Kassapiya and Tambapaṇṇiya Branches of the ancient Theriyas”. *Buddhist Studies Review*, 2001, 18.2:131-182.
- 2 Cox: “Mainstream Buddhist Schools”, *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism*, New York 2004, 2: 506; CF. ALSO Dutt: *Buddhist Sects in India*, Delhi 1978: 208
- 3 Jayatilleke: *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*, Delhi 1980: 162 quotes *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* 1.14.22: *vibhajjavāyam ca viyāgarejjā* ,

recommending that a wise man “should expound the analytical theory”.

- 4 T. stands for the Taisho edition
- 5 Prasad: “Theravāda and Vibhajjavāda, A Critical Study of the Two Appellations”, *East and West*, 1972, 22.1/2: 106 comments that “from the use of the term ‘herein’ (*ettha*)... it is clear that he declared himself to be so only in that given context”.
- 6 Kalupahana: *The Buddha’s Philosophy of Language*, Sarvodaya Vishva Lekha 1999: 73
- 7 Karunadasa: “Theravāda as Vibhajjavāda: A correct Identification for Wrong Reasons?”. *Wilhelm Geiger and the Study of the History and Culture of Sri Lanka*, Colombo 2000: 26.

#### VIBHAṄGAATTHAKATHĀ See SAMMOHAVINODANI

**VIBHAṄGAPPAKARAṆA**: *Vibhaṅgappakaraṇa* is the second treatise of the *Abhidhammapiṭaka* of the Theravāda School of Buddhism. It is the Theravāda counterpart of *Dharmaskandha Sāstra* of *Sarvastivāda Abhidharma*. It is regarded as the supplement and continuation of *Dhammasaṅgani*, the first treatise of the *Abhidhammapiṭaka*.

*Vibhaṅga* means exposition, classification or analysis. Accordingly *vibhaṅga* contains analysis of eighteen topics of Buddhist doctrines such as (1) *khandha*-aggregates, (2) *āyatana*-base (3) *dhatu*-elements (4) *sacca* –truths (5) *indriya*- faculty (6) *paccayākāra* –cause and effect (7) *satipathāna* –mindfulness (8) *sammappadhāna*- right exertion (9) *iddhipāda* – basis of psychic power (10) *maggaṅga* – constituents of path (11) *bhojjhaṅga* – factors of enlightenment (12) *jhāna*- absorption (13) *appamaññā*- noble living (14) *sikkhāpada* –precepts (15) *patisambhidā* –analytical knowledge (16) *ñāna* – wisdom (17) *khandhakavatthu* – minor section dealing with numerous classification of *dhammas* and (18) *dhammahadaya* –mental elements.

It is also important that each of the eighteen *Vibhaṅgas* are discussed under three criteria i.e. *suttantabhājanīya* according to *suttanta*, *abhidhammabhājanīya* according to *abhidharma*, and *pañhāpucca* by way of question and answers

(catechism). All the eighteen expositions (*vibhaṅgas*) are complete in themselves and independent. Among the eighteen *vibhaṅgas* the *khandha vibhaṅga* which occupies nearly one third of the whole *pakaraṇa* appears to be the biggest *vibhaṅga*. Traditionally *vibhaṅga* contains thirty five *bhānavaras*. Many of the passages of the *Vibhaṅga* are found in the *Patibambhidāmagga*, to which it has a great resemblance, in contents, as well as in arrangements.

The tradition attributes the authorship of *vibhaṅga* (also the authorship of the remaining six *pakaraṇas*) to Buddha himself. But scholars are of the opinion that they must have been produced during a period of two or three hundred years, beginning from second or third century, after the *Parinibbāna* of the Buddha. The scholars assign seven *abhidhamma* treatises into three periods of composition chronologically. i.e. early, middle and late. Accordingly the *Vibhaṅga* along with the *Dhammasaṅgani* and the *Puggalapaññatti* are assigned to the proposed early period. The scholars also point out quotations from the first four *nikāyas* often found in the above three treatises indicate that they belong to the early period.

The *Vibhaṅgappakaraṇa* is published in the roman script by PTS, edited by Mrs. C.A.F. Rhys Davids in 1904. The *Vibhaṅga* commentary is assigned to the great commentator Ven. Buddhagoshācārya and it is named “*Sammohavinodani*” (Expeller of Bewilderment). The commentary is published in Roman scripts by the PTS, edited by Ven. A.P. Buddhagoshā in 1923.

K. Arunasiri

#### VIBHĀṢĀŚĀSTRA See MAHĀVIBHĀṢĀ

**VIBHAVA**, “non-existence” or “non-becoming”, occurs regularly in the early discourses together with such synonyms as “annihilation”, *uccheda*, and “destruction”, *vināsa*. Another sense of the term *vibhava*, found mainly in commentarial literature, is “wealth” or “prosperity”. The present article, however, is concerned with *vibhava* in the sense of non-existence.

Views that propound future non-existence, ‘*vibhava -ditthi*, are an extreme that has its counterpart in views that propose external existence. Those who

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