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## The Role Of Commentaries In Theravāda Buddhist Literature

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### Abstract

Pāli commentaries is a great important literature as an original teaching of Buddha as a belief of following and practice in *Theravāda* Countries. It was extension of hiding meaning of what the Buddha taught to penetrated all difficult words of Buddha and supported to real understanding of nature and ultimate gold of Buddhism was considered by *Theravāda* Buddhist Scholars. *Theravāda* Buddhism give the favor as a priority to learn and study the original teaching Pāli texts, then Pāli Commentaries was continued to further studied to the more understanding of Buddha's teachings. At the present time, everything condition had been changing including such as geography, literature, languages, environment etc., from the time of Buddha, some ancient using words of meaning could not easy understanding in any societies. Therefore, the writer of Commentators foresaw and realized about the Buddhist world in devoting their life in the Buddhist teachings and left their Buddhist knowledges by helping people who would follow in practice of Buddhism to achieved ultimate gold (*Nibbāna*).

### Keywords:

Aṭṭhakathā-Dhīghanikāyaṭīkā, Theravāda-MūlapaṇṇāsaAṭṭhakathā, Nibbāna Dhammapadamahāṭīkā.

### Review of Literature

“*A History of Pāli Literature*” by Bimala Churn Law, Edition in 2007, is an essential of knowledge in Pāli Literature and reviewed in brief of Pāli *Tipiṭaka* and its *Aṭṭhakathā* interested in history of Buddhism explained great respected to Buddha and His Great Disciples in effort of Pāli Traditions how it is major teaching and learning to support Pāli Buddhism included all concepts of *Tipiṭaka* Training practices.

“*Pāli Literature*” by G.P. Malalasekera 1928, M.H. Bode 1909, H. Saddhātissa 1990 was contained three aspects of *Pāli* tradition consumed *Pāli Tipiṭakas* a way of different learning about the Ceylon, Burma and South-East Asia in *Pāli* literatures. In Ceylon, it mentioned that broadly speaking for history of Pāli Literature including philosophy, folklore, and comparative religions for the Buddhist scriptures. In Burma, History of flowing Places of Buddhism existed, learning and teachings was appeared many *Pāli* Scholars and South-East Asia, Buddhism was respected deeply practices such as Thailand, Cambodia and Lao for the different works of *Pāli Tipiṭaka* concepts.

“*Early Buddhist Oral Tradition*” Textual Formation and Transmission; by Bhikkhu Anālayo, 2022, it was aim of subject put into his work that Buddhist Education [Buddhism—study and teaching]. Oral Tradition, Monastic and Religious life in Buddhism.

### Research Methodology

It was focus about the commentaries (*Aṭṭhakathā*) considerable in ancient literatures relating to *Theravāda Pāli* tradition from the Buddha’s age at present days. From 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> B.C to 3<sup>rd</sup> BC, 3<sup>rd</sup> BC to 5<sup>th</sup> A.D and 11<sup>th</sup> Century widely came out Great Scholar stand keeping Pāli tradition written way of hypothesis systematic of observation method included in it. Otherwise, on the *Aṭṭhakathā*, ancient literatures remind to this article with the Expository Research and historical Research studied them used this form of *Pāli* learning and teachings.

### Aim of Research Paper

1. It is defying the real meaning of Buddha’s teaching providing to *Tipiṭaka* (original words of Buddha) from his disciples explained to the condition of all walk of life.
2. From the past event to present day it led to clear visions in understanding of *Pāli* traditions what was keep on ultimate goal of Buddhism in the perspective of *Pāli* valuable thinking in mind.
3. There was no confusion what the Buddha teachings supporting of his great disciples from generation to generation in every age to realize the difficult words of Buddha highlight to *Pāli* languages declined of Buddhism in the sacred main land India hopefully emerged again future Buddhist Scholars in preservation of *Pāli* Buddhism.

### Introduction

The Pāli canonical texts were known as Buddha’s teachings called *Tipiṭaka* divided names *Vinaya*, *Sutta* and *Abhidhamma Piṭakas*. Apart from this, general approving Buddhist *Saṅgha* remarked the *Aṭṭhakathā* as *Tipiṭaka* Buddha’s *vacana* in *Theravāda* tradition at the present days following the countries of Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Lao, Cambodia, Thailand and some other part of south East Asia.

In the *Theravāda* Buddhist tradition, there were known as three kinds of literatures Original Teachings (Teaching of Buddha), Commentaries (Teaching of Great Disciples), Sub-Commentaries (Teaching of Great Disciples) accepted in Buddhist literatures, emerging from the first time under the Buddha and soon after pass away of Buddha, First *Saṅgha* council was held to collect the Buddha teachings for the preservation and maintaining of *Tipiṭaka* by the Buddhist *Saṅgha* communities from generation to generation first oral tradition and memorization till the fourth *Saṅgha* Council in writing made on palm leaf changing of development became the material books to using easy way of studies any items at the modern time.

As soon as the Buddha have been got an Enlightenments under the tree of Bodhi, the evil *Māra* came to request to passed away for the Buddha, the Buddha said that *parinibbātu bhagavā, parinibātu sugato, parinibbānakālo dāni, bhente bagavato*.

“*Bhante*, may the Blessed One now attain *parinirvana*! May the Sugata now attain *parinirvana*! Now is the time for the Blessed One’s *parinirvana*!

*The Buddha answered that Na tāvāhaṃ pāpima parinibbāyissāmi, yāva me bhikkhū nasāvakā bavissanti viyattā vinītā visāradā bahussutā dhammadarā dhammanudhammapaṭipannā anudhammacārino uttānī karissanti, uppannaṃ parappavādaṃ sahadhammena suniggahitaṃ niggahetvā sappāṭihāriyam dhammaṃ desessanti*’ ‘Evil One, I shall not enter *parinirvana* until I have monk disciples who are accomplished, trained, skilled, learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma, who will pass on what they have gained from their own Teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyze it, make it clear; until they shall be able by means of the *Dharma* to refute false teachings that have arisen, and teach the *Dharma* in all its wonder’<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Nyanaponika Thera and Bhikkhu Bodhi, trans, *Anguttara nikāya Pāli 4* (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1988), 311.

In this way the Buddha preached his dhamma during forty-five years until the last words of saying to the remarkable taught of Buddhism that ‘*Yo vo Ānanda mayā dhammoca vinayoca desito paññatto so vo mmaccayena satthā*,<sup>2</sup> “whatever Teaching and Discipline has been taught by me or laid down, Ānanda, that is your teacher after my passing away”.

The Buddhist *Saṅgha* admired all his teaching in their mind, the event of *Saṅgha* committees’ hand over to the Buddha’s teachings in the different Great dispels of Buddha by the carrying long term conditions recorded that in the *Aṭṭhakathā* stated

*U pāli dāsako ceva soṇako siggavo tathā  
Tisso moggaliputto ca paṇṇete vijitāvino  
Prampaṛāya vinayaṃ dīpe jrbhusirivaye  
Acchirātnesum tatiyo yova saṅgaha.*

Until the time of third *Saṅgha* council, *Tipiṭaka* of *Vinaya* maintained by the Great disciples who have name of Upāli under the teaching of Buddha and Dāsaka, Soṇaka, Siggava and Moggaliputta Tissa Thera by the memories of by heart to the part of outside India<sup>3</sup>.

The head of *Saṅgha*, by the practice of the Sati (mindfulness) *Paññā* (wisdom), and *Samādhi* (wisdom) on focus as an oral and memorization till the time to the Fourth *Saṅgha* Council in Sri Lanka, while it was recorded to the writing down on Palm leaf from the oral tradition then the reign of *Vattagāmani* in 1<sup>st</sup> Century BC in order to preservation of all Buddha’s teaching. It was included the literature of *Pāli Aṭṭhakathā* (commentary) and also called *Pakiṇṇakadesanā* under the teaching of Buddha.

Pre-spreading out of India, celebrating of Third *Saṅgha* Council in India, by Mahinda Thera (son of Asoka) carried *Pāli Tipiṭakas* and its commentaries (*Aṭṭhakathā*) from India to Sri Lanka where became the root of the Buddha’s teachings in translation of Pāli to Sinhalese Languages left by Mahinda Thera in hand transition to new generation as the new languages in Sri Lanka in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC.

According the *Dipavamsa*<sup>4</sup> and the *Mahāvamsa*,<sup>5</sup> From the 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C. during the reign of *Vattagāmaṇi Abhaya* the commentaries and *Pāli* cannon was written and gradually developed Buddhist original canonical texts and non-canonical texts until the original Sinhalese commentaries were translated into Pāli by *Buddaghosa* in the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

It was generally considered about that information of the history Buddhist background, folklore, social, political, philosophical and religious history of India at the time of Buddha and on sports, pastimes, geography and other data of ancient days. On the other hand, it covers astronomy, grammar, geography, tribes and kings and nobles, fauna and flora, the ancient manners and customs of the land and of the history.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, the value of Pāli Buddhism in *Aṭṭhakathā* most deeply mentioned the essence of Buddhism systematically practice in the way of living beings to the guide of liberation and peace.

### Significance of *Aṭṭhakathā* (Commentary)

The Buddha taught his *Dhamma* just as not only Original words of *Dhamma* but also explain the *Dhamma* as *Pakiṇṇaka Dhamma* (scattered about, miscellaneous)<sup>7</sup> called *Aṭṭhakathā* (explanation of meaning), exposition, a commentary)<sup>8</sup> which was used in original teachings as *Aṭṭha* (meaning)<sup>9</sup>, *Paripucchā* (question, interrogation)<sup>10</sup> and *Samvaṇṇanā* (explanation, commentary, description, praise)<sup>11</sup> in the *Vinayālaṅkāra ṭīkā* referred that “*Na hi bhagavato a byākatam tanti padaṃ nāma atthi, Sabbhesamyeva attho kathito, tasamā sambhueddheva tiṇṇam piṭakānam atthavaṇṇanakkamopi bhāsito daḍḍhabbam. Tattha tattha hi bagatā pavattitā pakiṇṇakadesanāyeva aṭṭhakathāti*”.<sup>12</sup> Here, the Pāli word “*Aṭṭhakathā*” means today translated in English that “a commentary; explanation of meaning, exposition of meaning,

<sup>2</sup> *Mahāvagga Pāli*, Chatṭhasaṅgāyanā Edition (Yangon: Department for the Promotion and Propagation of the Sasanā, 1956) 216.

<sup>3</sup> I.B. Horner, trans, *Vinaya Piṭaka, Vol, 1-6 The Book of the Discipline* (London: Pāli Text Society), 216.

<sup>4</sup> Mabel Haynes Bode, trans, *Dipavamsa, An Ancient Buddhist Historical Record* (London: Pāli Text Society, 1908), 20–21.

<sup>5</sup> Wilhelm Geiger, trans, *Mahāvamsa, The Great Chronicle of Ceylon* (London: Pāli Text Society, 1912), 100–101.

<sup>6</sup> Jayawardana, Chandana, and Wijerathne Bohingamuwa, *Pāli Commentaries and Sri Lankan Society: An Introductory Note* (Colombo: Royal Asiatic of Sri Lanka, 2021), 15.

<sup>7</sup> Rhys Davids, *Pāli-English Dictionary* (London: Pāli Text Society, 1912), 393.

<sup>8</sup> Buddhadatta Mahathera, *Concise Pāli-English Dictionary* (Colombo: Colombo Apothecaries company, 1949), 41.

<sup>9</sup> Buddhadatta Mahathera, *Concise Pāli-English Dictionary* (Colombo: Colombo Apothecaries company, 1949), 41.

<sup>10</sup> T.W. Rhys Davids, *Pāli-English Dictionary* (London: Pāli Text Society, 1992, 1995), 112

<sup>11</sup> Buddhadatta Mahathera, *Concise Pāli-English Dictionary* (Colombo: Colombo Apothecaries company, 1949), 256.

<sup>12</sup> Sāriputta Thera, *Vinayālaṅkāraṭīkā* (Yangon: Hanthawaddy Press, 1960), 12.

explanation, exegesis, a commentary”<sup>13</sup> in the *Pāli-English Dictionary*. According to *Dighanikāya Tikā*, grammatically stated that “*Attho kathīyati etāyāti atthakathā, sā eva aṭṭhakathā tthakārassa ṭṭhākāram katvā yathā dukkhssa pīḷanaṭṭho ’ti*”<sup>14</sup> The explanation of the hidden words of Buddha called *aṭṭhakathā* and changed *ttha* to *ṭṭha* for instance of *dukkassa pīḷanaṭṭho*. It is known as non-canonical texts after the preaching of Arahant behind the Buddha believed by *Theravāda* Buddhism. The conception of *Aṭṭhakathā* in the *Theravāda* Buddhist studies consumed the deepest meaning used as an original teaching of Buddha at the present time in the Pāli Buddhist countries. Otherwise, the *Pāli* studies of some scholars had a controversy point of view in *Aṭṭhakathā* as an original teaching of Buddha.

At the present time, well understanding of *Pāli Aṭṭhakathā* in studies were found as *Theravāda Pāli* country of Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia etc., remarked the treaties of Pāli *Atthakathā* as record the first time of *Saṅgha* council to process in the Six *Saṅgha* Council of assembly sustained like the original teaching of Buddha not only studies in original teaching and learning but also practice the guideline to achieve Buddhist goal in the commentaries.

### Relating of Original Words of Buddha, It's Aṭṭhakathā (Commentaries)

Its main purpose being to interpret the Buddha's original speeches defined difficult words grammatically and lexically and the other word, put into explanations and elucidation of Buddha's *Dhamma*. Otherwise, revealed in much views of Buddhist thoughts which related to orthodox of Buddhism. It was led to understand the doctrine of the Buddha, which was composed after sometimes the Buddha's passing away. Therefore, the *aṭṭhakathā* are very important for the study of Buddhism to the proper understanding and critical study of Pāli Language.

In *Paṭṭhāna* of original teaching of Pāli, “*Yam rūpaṃ nissāya manodātuca manoviññāna dhātuca vattanti*”<sup>15</sup> is just right described “as *Yam rūpaṃ*” means this matter. In the *Aṭṭhakathā* explained that the world “*Hadaya vatthu*” as “this base on the heart” definitely mentioned it.

In the original teaching of Buddha such a *Silakkhandha Vagga Pāli*, the Buddha said “*Lokavidū*”<sup>16</sup> *Loka* means the world, *Vidū* means knower. it combined it ‘knower of the world’ just it in mention normally. In the *Silakkhandhaaṭṭhakatha*, the word *loka* expand that “*Lokoti Okāsaloka, Sattaloka, Saṅkhāraloka*” ‘world means world of space, world of the sentient being and the formation of the world in three worlds stated in detail. This is how the *Aṭṭhakathā* reveals that we have to take the three worlds in Buddha teachings.

In the original teaching of *Dhammapada Pāli*, there were just preached “*Gāthā*” ‘verses’ by the Holy Buddha. Taking of this verse, the commentator added it wider understanding of Buddha's teaching as each of stories in the related verses included. As an example of this, the commentators presented the stories such as “*Jotika Thera* for his present life stories and past life storied have described it in *Dhammapada* commentary for the wider understanding of what the Buddha taught.

According to *Sabbhi Sutta* of *Samyutta Nikāya* instructs that “*sabbhir’eva samāsetha*” which means one should associate only with the good. Here the verbal meaning of *sam’āsetha* is “you should sit down together” [with noble persons (*saha nisīdeyya iti attho*)].

Ven, *Buddhaghosa* rectifies the meaning of *sam’āsetha* in his commentary of *Samyutta Nikāya*, saying that *sam’āsetha* means one should associate with noble people in their every demeanor (*dedanāsīsan’ev’ etaṃ sabba-iriyāpathe sabbir’eva sahakapeyya iti attho*).

But neither exegeses nor definitions are provided for each and every word of the Pāli Canon in commentaries. Thus, the commentaries can be conceded as exegesis for the concealed (*anuttānapadavaṇṇanā*) and the unexplained (*apubbapadavaṇṇanā*) terms of the *Tipiṭaka*.

Some knotty words and key terms (I, e., words which bear philosophical and religious value) were explained with elaborations, especially key terms which underwent verbose explications though their meanings were without any obscurity, especially when they near specific significance in Buddhism, serving as remarkable reference for primary sources such as *Mahā-aṭṭhakathā*, *Mahāpaccariya-aṭṭhakathā*, *Kuruṇḍi-aṭṭhakathā* etc., this function was accomplished as an autonomic activity.

<sup>13</sup> Rhys Davids, *Pāli English Dictionary* (London: Pāli Text Society, 1921), 452.

<sup>14</sup> Rhys Davids, trans, *Dighanikāya Tikā* (London: Pāli Text Society, 1970), 16.

<sup>15</sup> *Paṭṭhāna Pāli*, Saṭṭha Saṅgha Council Edition (Yangon: Department for the Promotion and Propagation of the Sasanā, 1964), 5.

<sup>16</sup> *Silakkhandha Vagga Pāli*, Saṭṭha Saṅgha Council Edition (Yangon: Department for the Promotion and Propagation of the Sasanā), 46.

It is generally believed that these commentaries were composed, at the first council and rehearsed at the two following Councils, then introduced to Sri Lanka by Arahant Mahinda in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE.<sup>17</sup> Actually, it was used by the Buddha himself in original texts from the foregoing interpretation in the conception of original literatures and view of *Ācariya ũkā*.

According to Malalasekera's analyses, "By the time of the third council, commentarial literature had been more or less fully developed; when Mahinda came to Ceylon, he brought over with him the expositions of teaching. He translated them into the vernacular language, and were further developed by the monks of Ceylon."<sup>18</sup> It was main purpose of clarification of hiding of Buddha's word to be well understand in obscure points of teachings in Original Pāli words.

Scholar of B.C. Law in his books of A history of Pāli literature, said that "it explains the words and judgements of others as accurately and faithfully as possible"<sup>19</sup> but it seems to be that strict academic methods have been employed by commentators in the process of supplying explications for the *Tipiṭaka*.<sup>20</sup> In fact, it was expended from the origin of Buddha's word *Tipitks*, (*Vinaya*, *Suttanta*, *Abhidhamma*). *Vinaya Piṭaka* contained Buddhist law, *Suttan Piṭaka* is story of Buddha's life and individual features of actors related to the way of living and *Abhidhamma* is philosophy of Buddhism in general preached by Buddha.

Each commentary of *Tipiṭaka* defined the different aspects of Buddhism Including religious matter and so on.

### Reviewing of Pāli Commentaries (*Aṭṭhakathā*) Commentators (*Aṭṭhakathācariya*) and its Classification

For the trace back to Pāli commentaries and Pāli commentators were recorded to search the places where the first place of Buddhism in India from the Buddha time to transferred to second place of Sri Lanka connected with the third place of great Pāli scholars was born in Myanmar where, who could write the commentaries.

In the Theravāda Pāli Buddhism, the Pāli commentaries can be divided in the coming places of the time where was written by whom and came to existence of *Aṭṭhākathā* (commentaries) at the present time. Exactly, it was starting time in the word mouth of Buddha by delivering his teachings to understand his Dhamma widely for beings behind him his great disciples in expounding of teachings.

In the *Mahākammavibhaṅga Sutta*,<sup>21</sup> *Koṭṭhika Sutta*,<sup>22</sup> *Sīvaka Sutta*,<sup>23</sup> *Aggivaṅgagotta Sutta*,<sup>24</sup> and *Sallekha Sutta*,<sup>25</sup> etc., the Buddha supported to agree with views to his disciples who explain expansion of his teachings as he had preached as a brief. The explanation of Buddha's disciples was called *Pālimuttaka or Pakiṇṇaka Desanā (Aṭṭhākathāti pālimuttakavinicchayo<sup>26</sup> tattha tattha hi bhagavato pavattitā pavattitā pakiṇṇakadesanāyeva Aṭṭhākathā<sup>27</sup>* known as an original Pāli that became a Buddha's words mouth of agreed with *Aṭṭhākathā*.

Well-known recorded *Aṭṭhākathā* in Buddha age, Great Pāli scholars at the present time accepted with reference known of Suttas in *Aṭṭhākathā* at the Buddha's time as following:

1. Mahākammavibhaṅga Sutta
2. Koṭṭhika Sutta
3. Sīvaka Sutta
4. Aggivaṅgagotta Sutta
5. Sallekha Sutta,
6. Haliddaka Sutta

<sup>17</sup> Chandana Jayawardana, *Pāli Commentaries and Sri Lankan Society: An Introductory Note* (Colombo: Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka, 1845), 16.

<sup>18</sup> G.P. Malalasekera, *Pāli Literature of Ceylon* (United Kingdom: Royal Asiatic Society, 1958), 90-91.

<sup>19</sup> B.C. Law, *A history of Pāli literature*, vol. II, (Delhi: Abhishek Prakashan, 2007), 303.

<sup>20</sup> Aruna K. Gamage, *Some Observations on the Exegetical Elaborations of the Pāli Canon in the Aṭṭhākathā-s* (Colombo: Sri Lanka International Journal of Buddhist Studies, 2013), 87.

<sup>21</sup> Bhikkhu Ñānamoli, Bhikkhu Bodhi, trans, *Majjhima Nikāya, Volume 3* (London: Pāli Text Society 2002), 207.

<sup>22</sup> Bhikkhu Bodhi, trans, *Saṃyutta Nikāya, Volume 4 of the Pāli Canon* (London: Pāli Text Society 1993), 145.

<sup>23</sup> Bhikkhu Bodhi, trans, *Saṃyutta Nikāya, Volume 4 of the Pāli Canon* (London: Pāli Text Society 2027), 230.

<sup>24</sup> Bhikkhu Ñānamoli, Bhikkhu Bodhi, trans, *Majjhima Nikāya, Volume 1* (London: Pāli Text Society 2002), 483.

<sup>25</sup> Bhikkhu Ñānamoli, Bhikkhu Bodhi, trans, *Majjhima Nikāya, Volume 1* (London: Pāli Text Society, 2002), 140.

<sup>26</sup> Kassapa Thera, *Vimativinodanīṭikā Pāli 1* (Yangon: Buddhasāsanā Samiti, 1960), 124.

<sup>27</sup> Munindaghosa, *Vinayālaṅkāra ũkā-1* (Yangon: Buddhasāsanā Samiti, 1960), 10.

7. Madhupiṇḍika Sutta, (Explanation of Buddha's great disciples for the word of Buddha) (Thera Mahākaccāna).<sup>28</sup>

After demise of Buddha, The Buddha in his hands of *Aṭṭhakathā* and his words of Original *Pāli* were collected at the first Buddhist Council by his Great disciples. These were giving spreading name *Tīpitaka* as an original texts book of *Sutta*, *Vinaya*, *Abhidhamma* like that the commentaries (*Pakinnakadesanā*) are called *Vinayā* Commentaries, *Sutta* Commentaries and *Abhidhamma* commentaries were later known *Mahāaṭṭhakathā*. From the *Mahāaṭṭhakathā*, it was spread some commentaries were became eight kinds of Commentaries known as

1. *Mū Aṭṭhakathā*,
2. *Mahāpaccari Aṭṭhakathā*,
3. *Cūla Aṭṭhakathā*,
4. *Kurundī Aṭṭhakathā*,
5. *Andhaka Aṭṭhakathā*,
6. *Sñekhpa Aṭṭhakathā*,
7. *Ariya Aṭṭhakathā*, and
8. *Mahā Aṭṭhakathā*.

At the time of third Buddhist Council, Venerable *Mahinda Thera* carried them to Ceylon and translated them in Sihala languages in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C. Again, in the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.C. *Buddhaghosa* translated them into *Pāli*.<sup>29</sup> At the Present time, the work of *Buddhaghosa* translated the commentaries called new commentaries and later commentators wrote some commentaries were well known as following:

The new commentaries were written by *Buddhaghosa* are:

1. *Visuddhimagga Aṭṭhakathā* in *Sutta Piṭaka*, 5<sup>th</sup> century, first work of *Buddhaghosa*.
2. *Samantapāsādikā Aṭṭhakathā* in the definition of the Five Book of *Vinaya Piṭaka*,
3. *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī Aṭṭhakathā* in *Sutta Piṭaka* of *Dīghanikāya*,
4. *Papañcasūdanī Aṭṭhakathā*, *Sutta Piṭaka*, the three books of *Majjhimanikāya*,
5. *Sārathapakāsinī aṭṭhakathā* in *Sutta Piṭaka* of five books of *Samyuttanikāya*,
6. *Manorathapūraṇī Aṭṭhakathā* in the *Sutta Piṭaka* of eleven books of *Aṅguttaranikāya*,
7. *Aṭṭhasālīnī Aṭṭhakathā*, *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*, *Dhammasaṅgaṇī Pāli*,
8. *Samṃohavinodanī Aṭṭhakathā*, *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* of *Vibhāga Pāli*,
9. *Pañcapakaraṇa Aṭṭhakathā*, the five books of the rest of the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka Pāli*,
10. *Kaṅkhāvitāṇī Aṭṭhakathā*, *Vinaya Piṭaka* of *Dvemātikā*,
10. *Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā*, *Sutta Piṭaka* of *Kuddakanikāya Pāli*,
11. *Paramatthajotikā Aṭṭhakathā*, *Sutta Piṭaka* of *Kuddakapāṭha* and *Suttanipāta Pāli*,
13. *Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā*, *Sutta Piṭaka* of *Jātaka Pāli*,
12. *Ācariya Buddhadatta* wrote the commentaries as following:
  1. *Manurattha Aṭṭhakathā* (hagiography Buddhist text),
  2. *Vinayavinicchaya Aṭṭhakathā*,
  3. *Uttaravinicchaya Aṭṭhakathā*,
  4. *Abhidhammavatāra Aṭṭhakathā* (seven books of *Abhidhamma*),
  5. *Rūpārūpavibāga Aṭṭhakathā*

*Ācariya Dhammapāla* hard work his hand of Commentaries are as below:

1. *Udāna Aṭṭhakathā*,
2. *Itivuttaka Aṭṭhakathā*,
3. *Vimanavatthu Aṭṭhakathā*,
4. *Petavatthu Aṭṭhakathā*,
5. *Theragāthā Aṭṭhakathā*,
6. *Therīgāthā Aṭṭhakathā*,
7. *Cariyāpiṭaka Aṭṭhakathā*,
8. *Netti Aṭṭhakathā*. These are called *Paramatthadīpanī*.

Then others his New Commentaries known also that are:

1. *Sadhammapakāsanī Aṭṭhakathā*,
2. *Sadhammapajjota Aṭṭhakathā*, (*Cūlaniddesa* and *Mahāniddesa Pāli*),
3. *Visuddajanavilāsīnī Aṭṭhakathā*

<sup>28</sup> Goonesekera, *Buddhist Commentarial Literature* (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1967), 344.

<sup>29</sup> K. R. Norman, *A Survey of the beginnings of Buddhist Pāli Commentaries from India to Ceylon* (London: Pāli Text Society, 1983), 3.

The commentaries developing time of date from the first half 5<sup>th</sup> century to 13<sup>th</sup> century left evidences at the present day see totally recording commentaries are Eighty Commentaries but according to *Theravāda* Buddhist Six *Saṅgha* Council in Myanmar, there are fifty-one books of commentaries in the present days which was recorded by the *Pāli* Scholars. Therefore, it was totally can be found out that *Buddhaghosa* wrote Sixty-Seven Books of *Aṭṭhakathā*, Thirty-Seven Books of *Jātaka* stories. Otherwise, there are Seventy-One books of *Aṭṭhakathā* in the *Piṭaka* History.

Later some Myanmar monks also wrote Commentaries, and Sub-Commentaries following practices in Writing *Pāli* Languages like Venerable *Nārada Thera* in 1941 wrote the Commentaries of *Milindapañha aṭṭhakathā*, *Peṭakopadesa-aṭṭhakathā* and so on.

### A *Pāli* Commentaries of Great Aspect in Buddhism

In India, Sri Lanka, some ancient name of city and division or district are using in the *Pāli* traditions alive of existences at the present time. It was definitely said that although Buddhism of India faded away at the present time but it was flood of light in valuables sources for the history India, Sri Lanka. The commentaries *Pāli* literatures point out that an ancient city in India existence today that known as for Instance, in India, *Benares*, *Rājagaha*, *Vesālī*, *Nālandā*, *Pāvā*, *Ujjenī*, *Campā*, *Uttara*, *Mashurā*, *Ulumpā*, *Sāvattihī* and so on have much valuable sources by the following practices in different aspects of Buddhist traditions in commentaries mentioned in detail such as aspects of society, linguistic, literature, religious, philosophical, ethical, social, political and artistic otherwise, the evidences of historical, geographical, and culture aspects as well as the island of Ceylon relating of information which occurred incident or episode in the two countries of India and Ceylon. It was combined three *Piṭaka* of original teaching of Buddha (*Vinaya Piṭaka*, *Suttanta Piṭaka* and *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*) reviewing in containing of brief that following about the Commentaries.

#### Commentary of the *Vinaya Piṭaka*

It is known as the *Samanatapāpāsādika* on the five books of the *Vinaya Piṭaka* for the commentary and also the *Kaṅkhāvitaraṇī* is a commentary on the *Pāṭimokkha*, a book of the *Vinaya Piṭaka*. It contains historical and geographical aspects and about the first, second, and third *Saṅgha* Council. Otherwise, the patronage of king provided Buddhism in the interesting such as King *Ajātasattu*, king *Bimbisāra*, the king of *Licchaviṅga* etc.,

#### Commentary of the *Sutta Piṭaka*

**Sumaṅgalavilāsinī:** The commentary on the *Digha Nikāya*: It is rich in historical information and folklore, and abounds in narratives which throw a flood of light on the social, political, philosophical, and religious history of India at the time of Buddha.<sup>30</sup>

**Papañcasudani:** The commentary on *Majjhimanikāya*: It provide the Buddhist history and geography details like about the country of Kuru including province, villages, towns, etc.

**Sāratthapakāsinī:** The commentary on the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*: it described about the different qualities of four Buddha in Buddhism that whom are *Sabbaññu* Buddha (all knowing), *Pacceka* Buddha, (Individual), *Catusacco* Buddha (master of four truths) and *Suta* Buddha (Buddha who has heard), etc.<sup>31</sup>

**Manorathapūraṇi:** The commentary on the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*: it contained an interesting account of the *Theras* and *Therīs* like the *Thera Anuruddha*, *Ānanda*, *Devadatta*, *Upāli*, etc.

**The Khuddakapāṭha Commentary:** Commentaries on the *Khuddaka Nikāya*; it is known as *Paramatthajotika* included about the race of *Licchavis* and its country, etc.,

**Dhammapada atthakathā:** Commentaries on the *Khuddaka Nikāya*; it mentioned a mass of the story derived from the four *Nikāya* like *Vinaya*, the *Udāna*, etc.

**Sutta Nipāta Commentary:** Commentaries on the *Khuddaka Nikāya*; it was referred to information of geographical, historical, religious and otherwise.<sup>32</sup>

#### Commentary on the *Abhidhamma*

In *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*, the books of *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*'s commentary are known the *Atthasālinī* in which explain buddha's word for word tediously and certainly useful for *Pāli* studies including information historical, geographical and certain technical terms of Buddhist psychology like about the rivers, cities, island, etc.

<sup>30</sup> B.C. Law, *A History of Pāli Literature* (Delhi: Abhishek Prakashan, 2007), 410.

<sup>31</sup> B.C. Law, *A history of Pāli Literature* (Delhi: Abhishek Prakashan, 2007), 437.

<sup>32</sup> B.C. Law, *A History of Pāli Literature* (Delhi: Abhishek Prakashan, 2007), 437.

The Religious aspects in the commentaries are: In India, and Ceylon, the background history of Buddhism as well as condition of the country of India at the time of Buddha and later Ceylon was clearly found in the *Aṭṭhākātha*. The Buddha guided his teachings as brief, there was difficult to understand in the term of Grammar, etymology, Cosmology, anatomy, terminologies of *Pāli* words. Beside that at the time of Buddha and later, the commentaries indicated the aspects of Buddhism in details.

The Commentary of *Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā*, *Jataka Aṭṭhakathā*, *Petavatthu Aṭṭhakathā*, *Vimānavatthu Aṭṭhakathā* give the information of Social, economic aspects of Buddhism in the history.

With the religious matter of aspects, the *Nidanakathā*, *Jatakatha*, *Buddhavaṃsakathā*, *Sāratthappakāsini*, *Theragāthā*, *Therīgāthā Aṭṭhakathā*, the *Manorathapūranī*, the *Kathāvattupakaranakathā*, the *Vimānavatthu and Petavatthu aṭṭhakathā*, which these are explained about the aspects of religion.

In the commentary of *Paramatthadīpanī* was wrote by *Ācariya Dhammapāla* contains about the individual *petas* or sprits concerning with the Buddhist conceptions in several of sprit's stories and the sprits world like *Sūkaramukahpeta*, the *Putimukhapeta* etc.,<sup>33</sup>

The commentary of *Vimānavatthu* was wrote by *Ācariya Dhammapāla* defined the heaven and hell such as the various grades of heaven, the pleasure of the *Tāvatiṃsa* heaven, the joys and comforts of the dwellers etc.,

In the commentaries, the aspect of Politic are revealed about the king *Pasenadī*, *Bimbisāra*, *Ajātasatthu*, *Liccavī and Vajjhi*, and Asoka, *Rudrabarman* etc, can be found in it.

For the geographical aspects, Indian and Ceylonese geographical history shown that about the Himalaya, *Anotatta Lake*, rivers like *Ganes*, for Ceylonese, *Mahāvihāra*, *Tisasarama*, *Tuladharapabbata*, *kaladighavapī vihāra*, *Mandalarama* etc., included in it.

Above the *Tipiṭaka* state as brief in literatures uses are in series that *Buddhaghosa* first work of writing was a *Visuddhi Maggha* in the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D.,<sup>34</sup> is very popular at the present day in the meditation aspects based on the definition of *Sīla*, (Morality), *Samādhi*(concentration), *Paññā* (wisdom) included pages Seven hundred forty-two pages and Second works of commentaries was known:

*Samantapāsādikā*, commentaries of *Vinaya*, then, *Sumaṅgalavilāsīnī*, the commentaries of *Dīghanikāya*, *Papañcasūdanī*, the commentaries of *Mijjhimanikāya*, *Sāratthapakāsini*, the commentaries of *Samyuttanikāya*, *Manorathapūranī*, the commentaries of *Aṅguttaranikāya*, the commentaries of *Abhidhamma* known as *Papañcasūdanī* were constantly wrote as series of *Tipiṭakas*. It was time in later commentaries, from the time 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D *Buddhaghosa* reached to studied Buddhism in Ceylon them translated from Sinhalese language to Pāli language appeared at the present time in the *Theravāda* countries of his works of *Pāli* literatures.

*Theravāda* Buddhism generally believed that the commentaries are divided two categories were mentioned foremost of commentaries that used with reference as *Kurundi* for *Vinaya Piṭaka Aṭṭhakathā*, *Mahā Aṭṭhakathā* for *Sutta Piṭaka*, *Paccari Aṭṭhakathā* for *Abhidhammā* fixed at the 1<sup>st</sup> Buddhist Saṅgha Council by *Buddhosa*.

These are remained later Buddhist scriptures from the works of *Buddhaghosa*, *Buddhadatta* and *Dhammapāla* at the present time and the other of texts in ancient commentaries of Buddhist scriptures are lost from the time of Buddha.

Well-Known of Commentaries in Sri Lanka during 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC: it was lost at the present day

1. *Mūla Aṭṭhakathā* (known as *Pakiṇṇaka Aṭṭhakathā* at the Buddha time.
2. *Mahā Aṭṭhakathā* (the adding in new condition of problem of definition Commentaries)
3. *Mahāpaccari Aṭṭhakathā*
4. *Cūlapaccari Aṭṭhakathā*
5. *Sṅkhepa Aṭṭhakathā*
6. *Kurundī Aṭṭhakathā*
7. *Andhaka Aṭṭhakathā*
8. *Ariya Aṭṭhakathā*

Total eight commentaries are known in Sri Lanka.

The *Mūla Aṭṭhakathā* were composed by the time of Buddha known as *Pakiṇṇaka desanā*. *Mahā Aṭṭhakathā* were written by the Thera of *Arahantas*. The rest commentaries were composed by the Thera of Ceylon in the accordance of successor of teachers.

<sup>33</sup> Kanail Lal Hazra, *Studies on Pāli Commentaries* (Delhi: Buddhist World Press, 1991), 329.

<sup>34</sup> B.C. Law, *A history of Pāli Literature* (Delhi: Abhishek Prakashan, 2007), 400.

### During the 1100 B.E the scholar of commentators in the Buddha's *Sāsanā*

1. Venerable Buddhaghosa Thera
2. Venerable Dhammapāla Thera
3. Venerable Buddhadatta Thera
4. Venerable Mahānāma Thera
5. Venerable Upasena Thera
6. Venerable Siddhattha Thera
7. Venerable Sāriputta Thera
8. Venerable Dhammasīri Thera
9. Venerable Mahāsāmi Thera
10. Venerable Vācissara Thera
11. Venerable Anuruddhā Thera
12. Venerable Khemā Thera
13. Venerable Mahākassapa Thera<sup>35</sup>

### Conclusion

Buddhism is emerged different sects after the third council onward. At the present, many different concepts of Buddhism consumed for the branch of *Theravāda* Buddhism including *Pāli* traditions which was practiced by the south east Asia country, Myanmar, Lao, Cambodia, and Thailand, Sri Lanka etc. in which the way of teaching and learning of *Pāli* became different views. Therefore, the *Pāli* chronical texts including of commentaries are recorded acceptance of varies texts books and different account of texts books on their receptive way although practice of *Pāli* Buddhism in learning and teachings together one way of ultimate goal of liberation in the *Theravāda Pāli* Buddhism.

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<sup>35</sup> Thin Kyaw, *On the subject of commentaries* (Yangon: the article of Buddhist Scholars Society, 1962)