works. The Abhidharma-kośa-bhāṣya defines the Sarvastivādins as holders of “everything exists” theory and the Vibhajjavādins 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. Another view attributed to the Vibhajjavādins by the Abhidharma-nyāyavādaśāra 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.

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References

1. Points of Controversy, PTS. xli.n.1.
2. ibid. 7 n.1
3. Dutt, Nalinshka, 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. Dhammajo, Bhikkhu Kuala Lumpur, Entrance into the Supreme Doctrine, Posgraduate Institute of Pali and Buddhist Studies, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka, 1998, p.31
11. ibid. p.27
12. ibid p.261
13. ibid.261 f
14. ibid p.202 n.373

VIBHAJJAVĀDA (2) (Sanskrit Vibhajjavāda), is the “doctrine of analysis”. The term Vibhajjavāda as representative of the way the Buddha taught occurs in the account of the third council given in the Pāli commentaries to the Kathāvatha or the Vinaya, and in the Mahāvamsa (KvA. 7; VinA. 1, 61; MvA. 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 Brahmajīla Sutta (D. I, 13 f); the proper reply to this inquiry was that the Buddha taught Vibhajjavāda or was a Vibhajjavādin.

In Theravāda literature, the term Vibhajjavāda 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, Vibhajjavādi-seṭhānasā (Vism. 711). Here and elsewhere in later Pāli literature, Vibhajjavāda seems to stand representative of the Mahāvihāra lineage of the Theravāda tradition.

The Abhidharma-kośabhaṣya 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 Vibhajjavādins in the scholastic literature of the Sarvastivādins... 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 Mahāśāsakas, Dharmaguptakas, Kāśyapiyas, or the Dārśanānikas are also assigned to the Vibhajjavādins”, so that “the name Vibhajjavāda might be best characterized as a loose umbrella term for those, excluding the Sarvastivādins, who belonged to the original Sthavira branch”. 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.

In the early Buddhist discourses, the term Vibhajjavāda 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, vibhajjavādo kho aham ettha. Notably, according to the Chinese parallel passage in the Madhyama Agama, a discourse collection generally held to have been transmitted by the Sarvastivāda tradition (see also AGAMA), the Buddha did not come out with the term Vibhajjavāda on his own, but rather was asked by his visitor to give an analytical explanation of the matter (7.1, 667a22). 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 vibhaajavādin, thereby implicitly indicating that this term stands representative for his way of approach, in the Sarvastivāda 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 vibhaajavādin in regard to asceticism (A.V, 190). This discourse contrasts the term Vibhajjavāda a to ekānpa, to taking a categorical stance on the matter. A notable circumstance of this discourse, as well as of the Sudha Sutta, is that the Buddha is one who adopts Vibhajjavāda in regard to this particular point, ettha.5 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 (vibhaajavādh), 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, ekānpa (D.1, 191). An example of a Poṭṭhapāda Sutta, are the four noble truths. The second 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, Bhagavātā ekānpasa a karaniyam akkhātam kāyaduccaritaṃ vasoduccaritaṃ manoduccaritaṃ (A.1, 57).

The term vibhaajia 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 vyākaranaḥ, while another needs to be met with by undertaking further analysis, vibhaajavāyakaraṇaḥ (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 opposite, is equally valid and equally commendable “.7

This set of four answers helps to clarify the implications of vibhaajavāda 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 ekānpa 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 ekānpa statements on wholesome and unwholesome conduct, the Dveḍhāvatākka Sutta records that this distinction, too, was the outcome of an analysis undertaken by the Buddha before his awakening (M.I, 115). This reawakening analysis enabled him to make clear-cut categorical statements on this matter.

In this way, then vibhaajavāda 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.

References

1 A survey of other references to this term in Pāli literature can be found in Cousins: “On The Vibhajjavādins, the Mahāyāna, Dhammaguttaka, Kassapiya and Tambāpoṣiṇiya Branches of the ancient Theriyas”. Buddhist Studies Review, 2001, 18:2:131-182.
3 Cf. ALSO Dutt: Buddhist Sects in India, Delhi 1978: 208
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recommending that a wise man "should expound the nātyical theory".

4 T. stands for the Taisho edition

5 Prasad: "Theravāda and Vibhajavāda, A Critical Study of the Two Appellations", East and West, 1972, 22.1/2: 106 comments that "from the use of the term 'herein' (etiha) ... 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


VIBHAṅGAAṬHAKATHĀ See SAMMOHAVINODANI

VIBHAṅGAPPĀKARĀṆA: Vibhaṅgappakaraṇa is the second treatise of the Abhidhammaṭṭhaka of the Theravāda School of Buddhism. It is the Theravāda counterpart of Dhammasaṅgīna of Sarvastivāda Abhidharma. It is regarded as the supplement and continuation of Dhammasaṅgīna, the first treatise of the Abhidhammaṭṭhaka.

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

It is also important that each of the eighteen Vibhaṅgas are discussed under three criteria i.e. suttanabhājaniya according to suttanta, abhidhammaṭṭhakamiya according to abhidharma, and paññāpucchasa 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 bhūnavaras. Many of the passages of the Vibhaṅga are found in the Patisambhidāmagga, 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 Dhammasaṅgīna and the Puggalapāṭhadi 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. Buddhagosa in 1923.

K. Arunasiri

VIBHAŚAŚĀSTRA See MAHĀVIBHAŚĀ

VIBHAV. "non-existence" or "non-becoming", occurs regularly in the early discourses together with such synonyms as "annihilation", uccēda, 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-dīṭṭhi, are an extreme that has its counterpart in views that propose external existence. Those who