Appendix.

(copied from the Introduction to Survey of Paramattha Dhammas by

Sujin Boriharnwanaket.)

**The Scriptures and Their Commentaries**

The word of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Vinaya

as taught by him, consists of nine divisions, which are Sutta,

Geyya, Veyyåkaraùa, Gåthå, Udåna, Itivuttaka, Jåtaka,

Abbhuta and Vedalla.[[1]](#footnote-2)

Sutta[[2]](#footnote-3) includes all Discourses, such as the “Mangala

sutta” (“Good Omen Discourse,” Minor Readings, V), and

also the Vinaya Piìaka [[3]](#footnote-4) and the Niddesa.

Geyya includes all suttas with verses (gåthå), such as

the Sagåthå-vagga of the Saÿyutta Nikåya or “Kindred

Sayings” (I).

Veyyåkaraùa or “Exposition” includes the Abhidhamma

Piìaka, the suttas without verses and the words of the

Buddha that are not included in the other eight divisions.

Gåthå or “Verses” include the Dhammapada, Theragåthå,

Therígåthå (Psalms of the Brothers and Sisters) and

those parts of the Sutta-Nipåta not called Sutta and entirely

in verse.

Udåna or “Verses of Uplift” include eighty-two suttas

connected with verses recited by the Buddha, inspired by

knowledge and joy.

Itivuttaka or “As it was said” includes one hundred ten

suttas [[4]](#footnote-5) beginning with “Thus it was said by the Blessed One”

(in Påli: “Vuttaÿ h’etaÿ Bhagavatå”).

Jåtaka or Birth Stories include five hundred fifty

stories of the past lives of the Buddha and his disciples,

beginning with the “Apaùùaka Jåtaka.”

Abbhuta, “Marvellous,” includes suttas connected with

wonderful and marvellous things (dhammas with

extraordinary qualities, which are amazing).

Vedalla includes suttas with questions and answers

that have as result understanding and delight, such as the

Cullavedallasutta.

The word of the Buddha consists of eighty-four

thousand units of text. The Venerable Ånanda learnt

eightytwo thousand units of text from the Exalted One, and

two thousand units of text from the bhikkhus, mainly from

the Venerable Såriputta. Each theme is one unit of text. Thus,

the sutta containing one theme is one unit of text. Where

there are questions and answers, each question forms one

unit of text and each answer forms one unit of text.

When the scriptures are classified as the Tipiìaka, they

are classified as threefold, namely: the Vinaya, the Suttanta

and the Abhidhamma.

The Vinaya Piìaka or “Books of Discipline” consist of

five Books, namely:

• Parivåra (Appendix Mahåvibhaòga)

• Bhikkhuní-vibhaòga [[5]](#footnote-6)

• Mahåvagga

• Cullavagga (Accessory)

The commentary that explains the Vinaya is the Samantapåsådikå.[[6]](#footnote-7)

The Suttanta Piìaka, or Discourses, consists of five

“Nikåyas”[[7]](#footnote-8), namely, Dígha Nikåya or “Dialogues of the

Buddha”[[8]](#footnote-9), Majjhima Nikåya or “Middle Length Sayings”[[9]](#footnote-10),

Saÿyutta Nikåya or “Kindred Sayings”[[10]](#footnote-11), Aòguttara Nikåya or

“Gradual Sayings”[[11]](#footnote-12), Khuddaka Nikåya or “The Minor

Collection”[[12]](#footnote-13).

The Dígha Nikåya is a collection of long dialogues

(dígha means long), consisting of thirty-four suttas. This

collection is divided into three sections (in Påli: vagga)[[13]](#footnote-14):

• Síla-kkhandha-vagga (síla means morality and

khandha means group)

• Mahå-vagga (mahå means great)

• Påìika-vagga (called after the first sutta; Påìika is a

proper name).

The commentary to this collection is the “Sumaògalavilåsiní.”

The Majjhima Nikåya is a collection of suttas of

medium length (majjhima means middle), and it consists of a

hundred and fiftytwo suttas. It is divided into three parts,

which are called in Påli “paùùåsa,” meaning fifty. The first

two parts consist of fifty suttas each and the third part of the

fiftytwo suttas. They are called:

• Múla-paùùåsa (múla means root), consisting of

five sections of ten suttas;

• Majjhima-paùùåsa, consisting of five sections of

ten suttas;

• Upari-paùùåsa (upari means above or later),

consisting of five sections, of which four have ten

suttas and the fifth has twelve suttas.

The commentary to this collection is the “Papañcasúdaní.”

The Saÿyutta Nikåya is a group of suttas (saÿyutta

means joined, connected) divided into five main divisions,

namely:

• Sagåthå-vagga (gåthå means verse, with verses),

with eleven sections

• Nidåna-vagga (nidåna means origin or cause),

consisting of nine sections

• Khandha-vagga (dealing with the five khandhas),

consisting of thirteen sections

• Saîåyatana-vagga (saîåyatana is the sixfold

åyatana or sense spheres), consisting of ten

sections.

• Mahå-vagga (great chapter), consisting of twelve

sections.

The commentary to this collection is the

“Såratthappakåsiní.”

The “Aòguttara Nikåya” consists of suttas grouped

according to the numbers of Dhamma subjects or points dealt

with. They are arranged in order, from one to eleven. Thus,

there are eleven “nipåta,” or sections in all. “Book of the

Ones” consists of suttas dealing with one kind of subject, and

so on up to the Book of the Elevens. Summarizing them, they

are:

• Eka-nipåta (eka means one), Book of the Ones

• Duka-nipåta (duka, from dve, two, meaning pair),

Book of the Twos

• Tika-nipåta, Book of the Threes

• Catuka-nipåta, Book of the Fours

• Pañcaka-nipåta, Book of the Fives

• Chaka-nipåta, Book of the Sixes

• Sattaka-nipåta, Book of the Sevens

• Aììhaka-nipåta, Book of the Eights

• Navaka-nipåta, Book of the Nines

• Dasaka-nipåta, Book of the Tens

• Ekådasaka-nipåta, Book of the Elevens.

The commentary to the Aòguttara Nikåya is the

Manorathapúraní.

Apart from these four Nikåyas, there is the

Khuddaka Nikåya, which contains the word of the Buddha.

This consists of the following books:

• Khuddakapåìha or “Minor Readings”[[14]](#footnote-15).

• Dhammapada (pada means word or phrase)[[15]](#footnote-16)

• Udåna or “Verses of Uplift.”

• Itivuttaka or “As it was said.”

• Suttanipåta or “The Group of Discourses.”

• Vimånavatthu or “Stories of the Mansions” (in Minor

Anthologies IV).

• Petavatthu or “Stories of the Departed” (in Minor

Anthologies IV).

• Theragåthå or “Psalms of the Brethren.”

• Therígåthå or “Psalms of the Sisters.”

• Jåtaka or “Stories of the Buddha’s Former Births” (in

three volumes by P.T.S.).

• Mahå-Niddesa (niddesa means descriptive

exposition).

• Cúîa-Niddesa (cúîa or culla means small).[[16]](#footnote-17)

• Paìisambhidåmagga or “The Path of Discrimination.”

* Apadåna (life histories).[[17]](#footnote-18)

• Buddhavaÿsa or “Chronicle of the Buddhas” (in

Minor Anthologies III).

• Cariyåpiìaka or “Basket of Conduct” (in Minor

Anthologies III).

The commentaries to these collections of the Khuddaka

Nikåya are the following:

• The Paramatthajotikå, which is the commentary to

the Khuddakapåtha and the Suttanipåta[[18]](#footnote-19).

• Dhammapadaììhakathå or “Buddhist Legends” (in

three volumes by the P.T.S.) which is the

commentary to the Dhammapada.

• The Paramatthadípaní, which is the Commentary to

the Udåna, the Itivuttaka, the Petavatthu, the

Theragåthå, the Therígåthå, the Cariyåpiìaka and the

Vimånavatthu[[19]](#footnote-20).

• The Jåtakatthavaùùanå, which is the commentary to

the Jåtaka[[20]](#footnote-21).

• The Saddhammapajjotika, which is the commentary

to the Mahå-Niddesa and the Cúîa-Niddesa.

• The Saddhammappakåsiní, which is the commentary

to the Paìisambhidåmagga.

• The Visuddhajanavilåsiní, which is the commentary

to the Apadåna.

• The Madhuratthavilåsiní, or “The Clarifier of Sweet

Meaning” (P.T.S.), which is the commentary to the

Buddhavaÿsa.

The Abhidhamma Piìaka consists of the following

seven Books:

• Dhammasaògaùí (translated by PTS as “Buddhist Psychological Ethics,” and also translated by U Kyaw Khine) and this has as commentary the Aììhasåliní (“The Expositor.”)

• Vibhaòga or “The Book of Analysis,” which has as

commentary the Sammohavinodaní or “Dispeller of

Delusion [[21]](#footnote-22).”

• Dhåtukathå or “Discourse on Elements.”

Puggalapaññatti or “a Designation of Human Types.”

Kathåvatthu or “Points of Controversy.”

Yamaka or “The Book of Pairs” [[22]](#footnote-23).

• Paììhåna or “Conditional Relations” [[23]](#footnote-24).

As to the commentary to the last five Books of the

Abhidhamma, this is the Pañcappakaraùatthakathå [[24]](#footnote-25)

The greater part of the commentaries to the Tipiìaka

is from the hand of the great commentator Buddhaghosa [[25]](#footnote-26).

He translated into Påli, compiled and arranged material from

the ancient commentaries, which were in Sinhalese.

These commentaries, the Mahå-Atthakathå, the Mahå-

Paccarí and the Kuruùèi, stemmed from the time of the

Thera Mahinda, the son of the great King Asoka who came

to Sri Lanka in order to propagate Buddhism.

Furthermore, there are sub-commentaries, called ìíkå

in Påli, which explain the commentaries. These are the

Såratthadípaní, a sub-commentary to the Samantapåsådikå,

which is the commentary to the Vinaya, the Sårattha

Mañjúså, a sub-commentary to the Suttanta Piìaka, the

Paramatthapakåsiní, a sub-commentary to the Abhidhamma

Piìaka, and the anuìíkå (anu meaning: along, alongside),

which explains words and expressions in the subcommentaries. Apart from the aforementioned works there are several other texts in Buddhism needed for the study of the Dhamma that were composed by the “Elders” [[26]](#footnote-27) who were qualified to pass on the tradition of the Dhamma. These

are the following texts:

• Milindapañha or “Milinda’s Questions”[[27]](#footnote-28), composed

about 500 Buddhist Era (43 B.C.).

• Visuddhimagga or “Path of Purification”[[28]](#footnote-29), an

Encyclopedia on Buddhism, composed by

Buddhaghosa about 1000 B.E. (457 A.D.).

• Abhidhammattha Saògaha or “A Manual of

Abhidhamma”[[29]](#footnote-30), composed by Ven. Anuruddha

about 1000 B.E. (457 A.D.)[[30]](#footnote-31).

• Sårattha Saògaha, composed by Ven. Nanda about

1000 B.E. (457 A.D.).

• Paramattha Mañjúså, a sub-commentary to the

Visuddhimagga, composed by the Ven. Dhammapåla.

•Saccasaùkhepa (meaning Exposition of the Truth),

composed by Ven. Dhammapåla [[31]](#footnote-32).

• Abhidhammattha-vibhåviní-ìíkå, a sub-commentary

to the Abhidhammattha Saògaha composed by

Sumangala, of Sri Lanka.

• Moha Vicchedaní, an explanation of the

Dhammasangaùi and the Vibhaòga (the first and

second Books of the Abhidhamma), composed by

Ven. Kassapa of Sri Lanka, about 1703 B.E. (1160

A.D.).

• Mangalattha Dípaní, an explanation of the Mangala

sutta (Good Omen Discourse, Khuddakapåìha, Minor

Readings, no 5) composed by Ven. Sirimangala in Chiangmai.

I could add to this enumeration the Nettippakaraùa, translated

as “The Guide,” P.T.S. and the Peìakopadesa which has been translated as “Piìaka Disclosure” by Ven. Ñåùamoli. They are

compilations of a school, which, according to tradition, traced

its descent to Mahå-Kaccana, one of the great disciples of the

Buddha. Dhammapåla has written a commentary on the Netti,

probably late fifth century A.D.

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1. See “The Expositor,” Atthasåliní Introductory Discourse, 26. The teachings as compiled (not yet written) literature are thus enumerated in the scriptures as nine divisions, for example in the“Middle Length Sayings” I, no. 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. The Påli term sutta means that which is heard. The word of the Buddha which has been heard. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. The three Piìaka, or Tipiìaka, are the three divisions of the teachings, namely: the Vinaya, Suttanta and Abhidhamma. When the teachings are classified as nine divisions, the Vinaya is in a section of the Sutta. The Atthasåliní mentions the Sutta-Vibhaòga and Parivåra in the section on Sutta, which belong to the Vinaya. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. In the “Atthasåliní” the counting is one hundred and twelve. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. The P.T.S. has edited and translated these two books as three parts, the “Suttavibhaòga.” [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. The Introduction to the Vinaya, the Båhiranidåna, has been translated as ‘The Inception of Discipline and the Vinaya Nidåna’, P.T.S. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. Nikåya means “body” or collection. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. I am giving the English titles, as used in the translations of the P.T.S. “The Dialogues of the Buddha” have been edited in three volumes. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. Edited in three volumes. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. Edited in five volumes. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. Edited in five volumes. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. This collection consisting of sixteen parts has been edited in different volumes, but not all of them have been translated into English. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. These sections are in the Påli text but not in the English edition. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. Translated into English and edited by the P.T.S. in one volume together with the translation of its commentary “The Illustrator of Ultimate Meaning.” [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. There are several English translations of this text. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. The Mahå-Niddesa and the Cúîa-Niddesa have not been translated into English. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. This has not been translated into English. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. The commentary to the Khuddakapåtha has been translated into English as I mentioned. The commentary to the Sutta Nipåta has been translated by Ven. Bodhi. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. Translated into English are: the Udåna commentary (two volumes), the Itivuttaka commentary (two volumes), the commentary to the Vimånavatthu, “Vimåna Stories,” the commentary to the Petavatthu, “Peta Stories,” the commentary to the Therígåthå, “Commentary on the Verses of the Therís.” [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. In the English edition of the Buddha’s Birth Stories, parts of the commentary have been added. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
21. In two volumes. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
22. Yamaka means “Pair.” This has been translated into English in Myanmar by U narada, Múla Paììhana and pupils. Also PTS is producing a translation of the Yamaka in three parts: The Book of Pairs and its Commentary: A translation of the Yamaka and Yamakappakaraùaṭṭhakathā by C.M.M. Shaw & L.S. Cousins, 2018. Only the first part has been finished. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
23. There is a translation of part of the Paììhåna. There is also a“Guide to Conditional Relations”, explaining part of the Paììhåna, by U Narada, Myanmar. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
24. Only the commentary to the Kathåvatthu has been translated into English, with the title of “Debates Commentary” [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
25. He lived in the fifth century of the Christian era and stayed in the“Great Monastery” of Anurådhapura, in Sri Lanka. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
26. Thera can be translated as Elder or senior monk, a monk who has been ordained for at least ten years. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
27. In two volumes. One translation by the P.T.S. and another one by T.W. Rhys Davids. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
28. One edition as translated by Ven. Nyåùamoli, Colombo, and one edition as translated by Pe Maung Tin, P.T.S. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
29. It has been translated into English and published by the P.T.S. with the title of “Compendium of Philosophy”, and by Ven. Nårada, Colombo, under the title of “A Manual of Abhidhamma”. It has also been translated by the Venerable Bhikkhu Bodhi as “A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma”. Moreover, it has been translated together with its commentary as “Summary of the Topics of Abhidhamma” and “Exposition of the Topics of Abhidhamma”, by R.P. Wijeratne and Rupert Gethin. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
30. The P.T.S. edition suggests that the date is between the 8th and the 12th century A.D. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
31. Translated into English by by R.P. Wijeratne and Rupert Gethin, see footnote 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)