

Ideological Characteristics of Dhammapāla's Writings:

Focusing on relations with Northern Buddhism

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Introduction

Dhammapāla, 10th century, is a renowned Theravāda commentator who authored many writings.¹⁾ In recent years, however, with the spread of electronic texts making it easy to compare the literature, verified quotations of Northern Buddhist texts have been repeatedly identified in Dhammapāla's writings.

These identifications began with Katsumoto's research.²⁾ On the basis of the *Cariyāpiṭaka-aṭṭhakathā* quoting descriptions from the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, Katsumoto identifies Dhammapāla as a Theravāda figure in the Mahāyāna Buddhism. Yet, as Hayashi later reported that Dhammapāla had ideological commonalities with Sarvāstivāda literature, it became clear that certain points in Katsumoto's theory do not hold.³⁾ In this way, explication of Dhammapāla's personal ideology is still a work in progress.

In this current state of research, after considering texts authored by Dhammapāla, I have pointed out that he was familiar with the Northern Buddhist school of thought. In this paper, I identify citations from the *Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya* (AKBh.) in the antarābhava theory developed in Dhammapāla's *Kathāvatthu-anuṭṭikā* (KvAT.), as well as points where its counter-theory appears.

1. Discussion of the antarābhava

Buddhist thinkers sometimes claim that after death and before being reborn, one takes the form of existence called antarābhava. However, since antarābhava was not explicitly stated in Early Buddhism, every school has a different opinion about whether to recognize it. Sarvāstivāda Buddhism recognizes this existence, while Theravāda Buddhism does not.

Theravāda Buddhism's theory denying the existence of antarābhava is explained in Dhammapāla's *Kathāvatthu-anuṭṭikā* in the most systematic way. Previous to that, the only verified description is a simple denial of the existence of antarābhava in Buddhaghosa's

writing. The *Kathāvatthu-anuṭṭikā*, while quoting the antarābhava-affirmative position explained in the *Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya*, takes a counter-argumentative stance. Although this counter-argument is fascinating, it is also complex and contains comprehensive content, because of which, in this paper, I cannot demonstrate it in its entirety. Consequently, in this paper, I would like to introduce four sections of the *Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya* quoted in the *Kathāvatthu-anuṭṭikā* and suggest it as a foundation for future research.

2. the *Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya* quoted in the *Kathāvatthu-anuṭṭikā*

① KvAṬ. (p. 123.16–18): santānavasena pavattamānānam dhammānam avicchedena desantaresu pātubhāvo dittho. yathā tam vīhiādiaviññānakasantāne, evam saviññānakasantāne pi avicchedena desantare pātubhāvena bhavitabbam.

≈ AKBh. (p. 120.16–17): santānavartinām hi dharmānām avicchedena deśāntareṣu prādurbhāvo dr̥ṣtas, tadyathā vr̥hisantānasya, tasmād asyāpi sattvasantānasyāvicchedena deśāntareṣu prādurbhāvo bhaviṣnuh.

② KvAṬ. (p. 124.1–4): paṭibimbam tāva asiddhattā asadisattā ca na nidassanam. paṭibimbañ hi nāma aññad eva rūpantaram uppajjati ti asiddham etam. siddhiyam pi asadisattā na nidassanam siyā. ekasmim thāne dvinnam sahaṭhānābhāvato, yatth' eva hi ādāsarūpam paṭibimbarūpañ ca dissati.

≈ AKBh. (p. 120.19–23): pratibimbam asiddhatvād asāmyāc cānidarśanam (AKK. 3, 11cd). pratibimbam nāmānyad evotpadyate varnāntaram ity asiddham etat. siddhāv api ca satyām asāmyād anidarśanam bhavati. katham tavad asiddham. sahaikatra dvayābhāvāt (AKK. 3, 12a). tatraiva hi deṣe ādāsarūpam dr̥śyate pratibimbam ca.

③ KvAṬ. (p. 124.7–8): paṭibimbam nāma aññad eva rūpantaram uppajjati ti asiddham, ekasmim thāne dvinnam sahaṭhānābhāvato.

≈ AKBh. (p. 120.20–22): pratibimbam nāmānyad evotpadyate varnāntaram ity asiddham etat.... sahaikatra dvayābhāvāt (AKK. 3, 12a).

④ KvAṬ. (p. 124.14–15): tassa pana sāmaggīyā so ānubhāvo, yam tathā dassanam hoti ti. acinteyyo hi dhammānam sāmattiyaḥbhedo.

≈ AKBh. (p. 121.4–5): sāmagryās tu sa tādṛśaḥ prabhāvo yat tathā darśanam bhavati. acintyo hi dharmānām śaktibhedah.

Conclusion

Finally, I would like to identify ideological aspects of Dhammapāla's commentary using various results from previous studies and identifications made in this paper. The relation-

ship between Dhammapāla's writings and Northern Buddhism is summarized as follows:

Points of Agreement	Ideological Characteristics
The definitions of <i>triyaṇa</i> , <i>cittotpāda</i> , and <i>dāna</i> are borrowed from Vasubandhu's writings.	Agrees with the Yogācāra doctrine. ⁴⁾
The definition of <i>pratītyasamutpāda</i> is borrowed from Vasubandhu's writings.	Ideological affinity with Vasubandhu's writings. ⁵⁾
The definition of <i>sādhāraṇa-karman</i> is borrowed from Vasubandhu's writings.	Agrees with the Sarvāstivāda doctrine. ⁶⁾
The theory of <i>saṃtatipariṇāma</i> is borrowed from Buddhist literature.	Agrees with the Sautrāntika doctrine; conflicts with the Sarvāstivāda and the Sammatīya (<i>Vātsīputrīya</i>) doctrine. ⁷⁾
The definition of <i>satyadvaya</i> is borrowed from Buddhist literature.	Agrees with the Sarvāstivāda doctrine. ⁸⁾
The definition of <i>vedanā</i> is borrowed from Buddhist literature.	Agrees with the Sarvāstivāda doctrine; conflicts with the Sautrāntika doctrine. ⁹⁾
The <i>antarābhava</i> theory, which it argues against, is quoted from Northern Buddhist literature.	Agrees with the Sautrāntika doctrine; conflicts with the Sarvāstivāda doctrine.

These points seem to have no ideological cohesion. However, the important point is that “Even if Dhammapāla quoted a description from Northern Buddhist writings, he did not destroy the systematic doctrine of Theravāda that Buddhaghosa accomplished.”¹⁰⁾ Accordingly, if Dhammapāla actively introduces a theory from Northern Buddhist writings to advocate for the Theravāda theory, and if those Northern Buddhist writings contain descriptions violating the Theravāda theory, and regardless of whether he quoted it, he was criticizing it from the standpoint of the Theravāda theory.

Notes

- 1) Shimizu (2015).
- 2) Katsumoto (2006).
- 3) Hayashi (2011).
- 4) Katsumoto (2006).
- 5) Kusumoto (2010).
- 6) Hayashi (2011).
- 7) Shimizu (2017: 219–232).
- 8) Shimizu (2016).
- 9) Shimizu (2017b).
- 10) Hayashi (2011: 227).

Abbreviations

- AKBh. *Abhidharmakośa-Bhāṣya*, P. Pradhan (ed.), *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya of Vasubandhu*, Patna: K. P. Jayaswal Research Institute, 1967.
- AKK. *Abhidharmakośa-Kārikā* - Cf. Chap. 1–9: AKBh.
- KvAṬ. *Kathāvatthu-Anuṭṭikā (Pañcapakaraṇa-Anuṭṭikā)* - Dhammagiri-Pāli-ganthamālā edition, vol. 129, *Abhidhammapiṭake Pañcapakaraṇa-anuṭṭikā*, Igatapurī: Vipāśyanā Viśodhana Vinyāsa, 1998.

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Key words Theravāda, Vasubandhu, Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya

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