

THE PATISAMBHIDAMAGGA: IS IT AN ABHIDHAMMA TEXT?

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The Patisambhidamagga, a text among the 15 books of the Khuddakanikaya, enjoys a unique place in the Pali canon, for it is the only prose text that is composed of extracts from various canonical texts. Scholars like Rhys Davids and Barua consider this text as a later composition in which doctrinal matters in the Pali canon are systematically organized, and as a source book for subsequent Buddhist texts such as the Gnanaprasthana of the Sarvastivadins.

Even though the various relationships of the Patisambhidamagga to other Buddhist texts of later periods has already been pointed out by scholars, so far there has not been any substantial study on the issues related to its doctrines, methodology, and the Abhidhammic nature. As there is insufficient study or assessment of these matters, in this study I intend to address these issues by examining the question: Is Patisambhidamagga an Abhidhamma text?

By doing so, I expect not only to find out the Abhidhammic nature of the text but also to solve various other related issues connected with the origins and the development of Buddhist doctrinal literature. In this study, in order to arrive at a conclusion, I will present my research findings under three headings: the presentation methods of the Sutta Pitaka., the presentation methods of the Abhidhamma Pitaka, and the presentation methods of the Patisambhidamagga.

