

Darlegung der Bedeutung (Atthasālinī). Der Kommentar zur Dhammasaṅgani.
Übersetzt von Bhikkhu Nyānaponika. Redaktionell bearbeitet und ediert von
Sven Bretfeld und Rainer Knopf (Oxford: Pali Text Society, 2005), pp. xviii+651,
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The present translation is the first German translation of a Pāli text published by the Pali Text Society. The text is an anonymous and undated commentary on the *Dhammasaṅgani*, the first book of the *Abhidhamma-piṭaka* in the Theravāda tradition, named *Atthasālinī* (As). It was edited by Edward Müller as early as 1897, reprinted with indices, a list of variant readings and a list of identified quotations in 1979, and translated into English as *The Expositor* by Pe Maung Tin in 1920–21 (a translation which is to be used with utmost caution according to O. von Hinüber¹). Although the present translation was published in 2005, it was completed already on 8 September 1942, while the translator, Ven. Nyānaponika (Siegmond Feniger 1901–94), was in an internment camp in Dehra Dun. The Pali Text Society learned about this manuscript in the 1980s and considered the preparation of the manuscript for publication in 1986. The translator assigned the publication rights to the Pali Text Society, and, in 1993, work on the typewritten manuscript began in the Buddha-Haus in Oy-Mittelberg; but it came to a standstill in 1999. In the same year Sven Bretfeld and Rainer Knopf were put in charge of preparing the manuscript for publication. Two gaps discovered in the translation (As 312,21–313,11 and 350,10–351,14) were filled in by Oskar von Hinüber. It is unclear why the final portion of the text, the *nigamanakathā* (pp. 429,15–431,6), was not filled in too. The editors simply explain (p. 623, n. 1) that it was not translated.

The book consists of a Table of Contents (v–xi), a short Preface by Oskar von Hinüber in English and German on the history of the manuscript of the translation (xi–xiii), the translation of the text (1–623), a list of abbreviations (627) and several indices by Sven Bretfeld: an index of Pāli terms discussed in the notes (631–2), an index of names of persons (633–4), an index of texts and collections of texts mentioned or quoted in the *Atthasālinī* (635–7) and a general index (639–51).

What is really missing are introductions by the translator and the editors. Considering the fact that the translator died in 1994, the first wish is without avail. Nevertheless one would have liked to know some details with respect to the translation.

First, there is no information concerning the edition used for translating the text. In checking the translation and editions, it becomes obvious that it was not the edition by Müller from 1897 which Nyānaponika used. In the Introduction to the *Atthasālinī*, Nyānaponika translates a longer passage which is paralleled in the *Jātakanidāna* (pp. 46–82), but missing in the European edition of As (see p. 46, n. 2). Furthermore he translates readings opposing the text as given in the English edition (E^e) of 1979 (i.e. 17,22.24), but conforming to the readings given in Cousins's list of *variae lectiones* added to the edition, which come mainly from the Burmese and Nāgari editions. The form of the name *timirapiṅgala* used in the translation (p. 22,3) is neither to be found in the text of E^e nor in the list of *variae lectiones*, but in B^e. Besides, I found references to a Burmese and a Sinhalese edition (pp. 388, n. 1; 395, n. 1; 442, n. 1; 444, n. 1; 465, n. 1; 471, n. 1; 481, n. 1; 489, n. 2; 490, n. 2; 496, n. 2) – the reference to a Sinhalese edition 'Lesart in Sinh' (p. 112, n. 2) should also have been given in the usual way with the abbreviation C^e. Thus Nyānaponika seems to

1. O. von Hinüber, *A Handbook of Pāli Literature* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1996), p. 149, n. 515.

have compared a Burmese and a Sinhalese edition at least. Given the fact that the translator was no longer alive, it would have been the task of the editors to give such information in an introduction.

Second, it would also have been desirable to receive some information about the types of sub-commentaries and the extent to which they were evaluated. This too can only be learned in reading the book: as the notes show, the translator made ample use of the *Mūlatīkā*.

Third, the principles of translation needed some elucidation. The practice of inserting numbered headlines – probably inserted by the translator, or, eventually, by the editors? – makes the text very lucid. But this practice does not reflect the text as it is. The subject given in the headline is mostly taken from the first word of the following sentence. This first word is then no longer translated in that very sentence, as for instance, ‘A. Von Entzücken begleitete Dinge (...), B. von Glücksgefühl begleitete Dinge (...), C. von Gleichmut begleitete Dinge (...). A. Die **von Entzücken begleiteten Dinge ...**’ (p. 100,8–11) for the words *pīttitike* up to *pītsahagatā* in the sentence *pīttitike pītiyā saha ekuppādādhāvaṃ gatā ti pītsahagatā, pītsampayuttā ti attho*. Or ‘1.2.1 Das Gruppenbündel von den Wurzelursachen (*hetugocchaka*) [headline,] **Dinge, die Wurzelursachen sind ...**’ (p. 109,5–8), for *hetugocchake tāva hetudhammā ti mūlaṭṭhena hetusaṅkhātā dhammā*, which should be translated as ‘Bei dem Gruppenbündel von den Ursachen sind zunächst **die Dinge, die Ursachen sind**, im Sinne einer Wurzel (*mūla*) als Ursache bezeichnete Dinge’. In other cases the concluding words seem to have been used as a headline. For example the words *ime dasa kusalakammapathā nāma* following in the edition at the end of the section after ‘Haßlosigkeit’ (p. 197,34), and not translated in that place, seem to have been taken as a headline on p. 195,26. In other instances the continuous text is turned into headlines and following enumerations (p. 185,2ff.). Sometimes it is not discernible where the headline comes from (p. 347,1–2). The translation would have been more literal if the inserted headlines had been marked as insertions by putting them between square brackets, and as for the rest to translate the text as it is. This is valid all the more, because in some cases no headline is given, where one would have expected it, as for instance in the passage on *kilesagocchake* (p. 115,10–12), which in accordance with the other passages should be rendered as a headline, i.e. ‘1.2.12 Das Gruppenbündel von den Befleckungen’. In any case a comment on this practice should have been given.

Fourth, it would also have been interesting to know whether the identification of quotations was the work of the translator or of the editors. If it was that of the translator, the editors would have done a good job in adding the missing references. This should have been an easy task, since the roman *Atthasālinī* edition of 1979 contains a ‘table of quotations and references traced’ by I. B. Horner. This very detailed list has not been consulted, therefore the sources of many quotations identified at least by 1979 are unfortunately not given in this translation. Accordingly an index of quotations is looked for in vain.

Turning to the translation, a Pāli–German glossary listing terms and their equivalents in translation, as found at least in publications of more technical texts nowadays,² would have helped to avoid inconsistencies in translating one and the same term. Thus *hetu* is translated as ‘Ursache’ (p. 109,29.30.31.32.33.34.35, etc.) and as ‘Wurzelursache’ (p. 109,7.1 0.12.16.17.18, etc.), or as ‘Wurzel’ in *ahetukā* ‘Wurzellose’ (p. 109,15), and in *hetuvippayutta*

2. See for instance *Summary of the Topics of Abhidhamma (Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha)* by Anuruddha. *Exposition of the Topics of Abhidhamma*, trans. R. P. Wijeratne & R. Gethin (Oxford, Pali Text Society, 2002), 379ff.

‘wurzelunverbunden’ (p. 109,19). *Ekodibhāva* is translated as ‘Einigung’ (p. 279,6.7) and as ‘Einung’ (p. 279,17.18.19.22.23). *Dukkavedanā* in some cases is translated as ‘leidigem Gefühl’ (p. 194,24; 195,15; 197,24), which should better be changed into ‘leidvolles Gefühl’ used in other places as well (p. 195,3.12, etc.). Inconsistencies are also to be observed in various passages, thus we read ‘Dinge, die zur beendeten Schulung gehören’ (*asekkhā dhammā*; p. 102,36–7), and ‘zum Ende der Schulung gehörenden Dinge’ (p. 103,8); or ‘Dinge ohne feststehende Folge’ (p. 104,21) and ‘nicht feststehende Dinge’ (p. 105,10); *nikkhepaṇḍa* is translated as ‘Buch von der Sinnfeststellung’ (pp. viii; 523; 525,20) and as ‘Buch vom Niederlegen des Sinns’ (p. 118,7); ‘Zu einer Zeit, wenn ein der Sinnensphäre angehörender ... mit Erkenntnis verbunden’ (p. 123,15–17) and ‘Zu welcher Zeit ein zur Sinnensphäre gehörender, ... mit Wissen verbunden’ (p. 125,17–19; ≠ 126,5–6; 128,6–7); etc.

As a whole the text is translated into a fluent and legible German – albeit not always very literal. In rare instances, terms are rendered by newly created words not easily intelligible, for example, ‘Vorverweil’, lit. ‘die frühere Wohnstatt’ (p. 597,30–31, etc.) for *pubbenivāsa*, using a word not common in German. Sometimes the translation is a little old fashioned, as ‘Weihekreis’ for *bodhimaṇḍe* (p. 43 with n. 2, 60 etc.), rendered as ‘Bodhithron’ by Nyānatiloka,³ and as ‘circle of the tree of knowledge’ by Pe Maung Tin⁴ in their respective translations of the *Visuddhimagga*, while others understand it as a proper name and leave it untranslated.⁵ However, Nyānaponika also is not consistent in his translation, because in another instance he renders *bodhimaṇḍe* by ‘im Umkreis des Bodhi-Baumes’ (p. 45). The word ‘gekündet’ (p. 282,3.7), if it ever existed, would be better rendered as ‘verkündet’.

The translation of verses seems to be rather free, possibly in order to imitate the metre. Thus the verse

*atth’ eva gambhīragataṃ sudubbudhaṃ
sayaṃ abhiññāya sahetusambhavam;
yathānupubbaṃ nikhilena desitaṃ,
ahesinā rūpagataṃ va passatīti*

(As 12)

translated as

Des tiefen Sinnes und gar schwer erkennbar:
»Bedingten Ursprungs« – selbst erkannt vom Seher
Und restlos dann der Reihe nach erklärt
Erscheint nun wie in sichtbarer Gestalt!

(p. 20,27–30)

is not clear, to me at least. This mainly results from the fact that the translation does not indicate what this verse is about. It characterizes the *dhamma* as reflected in the *Paṭṭhāna*. This had been mastered by the Thera Tissadatta, whose story culminates in this verse. Therefore I would suggest to translate:

[Diese Lehre] ist in der Tat tief [und] überaus schwer zu verstehen. Nachdem er selbst [sie] mit [ihrem] Ursprung und [ihrer] Ursache erfahren hat, findet sie, [von ihm] der Reihe nach vollständig dargelegt, gleichsam sichtbare Gestalt durch den großen Seher.

3. Nyānatiloka, *Visuddhi-magga oder Der Weg zur Reinheit*, 6th edn (Konstanz: Christiani, 1993), p. 232.

4. Pe Maung Tin, *The Path of Purity* (Oxford: Pali Text Society, 2003), p. 228.

5. P. Masfield, *The Udāna Commentary*, vol. I (Oxford, Pali Text Society, 1994), pp. 126, 506, etc.

The verse

*diṭṭhe dhamme ca yo attho, yo cattho samparāyiko
atthābhisamayā dhīro, paṇḍito ti pavuccatīti*

is translated as

Wer gegenwärtiges und auch künftiges Heil,
Weil klug er dieses Heil erwarb (*atthābhisamaya*),
Als »Weiser« kann er gelten dann. (p. 129,19–21)

which is not a grammatical construction in German. I would translate:

Welches Heil [auch immer] in dieser Welt [es gibt] und welches Heil [auch immer]
zur nächsten Welt gehört, einer, der durch die Einsicht in dieses Heil verständig
[ist], wird 'Weiser' genannt.

The translation of the words *āpajjeyya vācasikaṃ na kāyikaṃ* in the verse quoted from the *Vinaya* 'Kann trotzdem es auf Sprachliches und nicht auf Körperliches sich bezieh'n' (p. 182,16–17) is not correct. What is meant is that one who does not speak may commit (*āpajjeyya*) a verbal, not a physical [offence], i.e. '[einer, der nicht spricht ...] beginge ein verbales, nicht ein physisches [Vergehen]'.

In other cases too the translation is somewhat free giving the sense instead of being literal, i.e. 'ward »Sutta« dieser »Korb« genannt' (*suttam Suttan ti akkhātam*). See also 'Die Bedeutung des »Gruppenbündels von den Befleckungen« wurde bereits bei der »Dreiergruppe von den befleckten Dingen« erklärt' (*kilesagocchake saṃkiliṭṭhattike vuttanayena attho veditabbo*), which should be: '**Beim »Gruppenbündel von den Befleckungen«** muß man die Bedeutung gemäß der Methode kennen, die bei der »Dreiergruppe von den befleckten Dingen« (s. S. 99) erklärt wurde'.

Sometimes the gender of the word is not correct, 'Das Vibhaṅga mit zwei Teilen' instead of an expected 'der Vibhaṅga', where, however, the text in fact reads 'zwei Vibhaṅgas' (*dve vibhaṅgā*; p. 28,6), and similar 'das Parivāra mit 16 Teilen' where the text reads 'sixteen Parivāras' (*soḷasa parivārā ti*). Here the neuter chosen in the translation may be caused by the fact that the shorter version of the *Parivāra* is referred to, for which the neuter is used in the concluding lines after chapter 14 of the *Parivāra* (Vin V 179,19). In a few cases a Pāli term is kept in the translation without any attempt to translate or explain it, for instance *gotrabhū* (pp. 100,33; 101,6), which in other instances is rendered as 'Reifemoment' (p. 363,14,15), and as 'Reife-Erkenntnis' (pp. 363,29.34.37, 365,4). The translation of *dhammavicayasambojhaṅga* as 'Erleuchtungsglied "Lehrergründung"' (p. 157,25) is unlucky, since the second word can be read as Lehrer-gründung, or as Lehr-ergründung. Since the latter is meant here in fact, it would have been clearer to leave *dhamma* untranslated ('*dhamma*-Ergründung') or to render it as 'Wahrheit'⁶ or to put a hyphen after 'Lehr-'. The word *abbohārika* is translated as 'führt/führen nicht zur Benennung' (pp. 178, n. 2; 182,27–28; 183,3–24.30.38–39 among others), which is not very distinct. It should better be translated as 'unwirksam' (see also *Critical Pali Dictionary* s.v. *abbohārika*). *Micchattaniyatā dhammā, sammattaniyatā dhammā, aniyatā dhammā* is rendered as 'Verkehrte Dinge mit feststehender Folge, treffliche Dinge mit feststehender Folge, Dinge ohne feststehende Folge' (p. 104,17–21). Although this is not wrong as regards content, it is, however, not a literal translation. Here *niyatā* is rendered as 'mit feststehender

6. *Visuddhi-magga oder Der Weg zur Reinheit*, 6th edn (Konstanz: Christiani, 1993), p. 156.

Folge' whereas in the commentary's nearly identical explanations of the compounds *micchattaniyatā* and *sammattaniyatā* as *karmadhārayas* it is translated as 'weil sie feststehend sind' (p. 105,2) and as 'weil sie darin festgelegt sind, daß ...' (p. 105,6). Since *niyata* in all three instances has the same meaning, it should also be translated in the same way. Therefore, it should be considered whether these compounds are explained as *karmadhārayas* by the commentary ('[Dhammas], welche [zugleich] falsch seiende (respectively: trefflich seiende) und determinierte sind'; *micchattā ca te niyatā cā ,ti micchattaniyatā*, and *sammattā ca te niyatā ca, anantaram eva phaladānenā ,ti sammattaniyatā*) in order to determine the first member of the compound as a predicative instrumental. In that case it should be translated as '[Dhammas, die] durch das Falschsein/Trefflichsein determiniert sind'. This in fact could be meant here, since *Dhammas* are only determined by *micchatta* and *sammatta*, in all other cases they are undetermined. The translation of *vipākādāne sati khandhabhedānantaram eva vipākādānato niyatā* as '»Feststehend« bedeutet, daß, wenn sich eine Karmawirkung ergibt, sie unmittelbar nach dem Zerfall der gegenwärtigen Daseinsgruppen eintritt' also is not very lucky, because it is not clear that 'feststehend' refers to the *Dhammas*. Thus it should be translated as '**[die Dhammas] sind determiniert**, weil – unter der Voraussetzung, daß eine [Karma]wirkung gegeben ist – die [Karma]wirkung unmittelbar nach Zerfall der Daseinsgruppen eintritt'. The same holds true for the translation of *micchādīṭṭhi niyatā* as 'Die falsche Ansicht mit feststehender [Folge]' (pp. 193,28–29; 542,3). What is meant is that the determined/fixed (*niyatā*) wrong view (*micchādīṭṭhi*) is one among the fixed doctrines of non-causality, i.e. non-existence of action and nihilism, while the undetermined wrong view (*aniyatā micchādīṭṭhi*) does not belong to these doctrines. Thus it should be translated as 'die determinierte falsche Ansicht' and 'die nicht determinierte falsche 'nsicht'. In 'Wurzelbegleitete Dinge mit Wurzelursachen' (p. 109,12) two different translations for *sahetuka* seem to have been kept; 'wurzelbegleitete' should be deleted.

Since the translator did not live to see his translation published, the final shaping of the work, printing errors, etc. have to be put down to the editors. In general the book is well shaped. The page numbers of the original text are given at the margins. Quoted words are typed in bold with the original Pāli word in italics – mostly following. This is very agreeable. Only in a few cases is the bold type missing: p. 106,4: 'Aufgestiegene Dinge'; p. 125,16; 126,14: 'Welche Dinge sind heilsam?' Given the fact that nowadays often the *Chaṭṭhasaṅgāyana* CD-Rom (CSCD) is used for looking into the original texts, it would have been an additional help to add the paragraphs of CSCD,⁷ because this allows an easier access to the original text matching the translation. However, in the present case it would perhaps have been even more preferable to insert the paragraph numbers of the European edition, because here the text is divided into smaller portions.

The presentation of the Pāli is not always to the Western standard. One would expect *n' eva sekkhā nāsekkhā dhammā* instead of *neva sekkhanāsekkhā dhammā* (p. 103,2). This passage, however, again belongs to those added to the original text (the text reads only *sekkhat-tika*). Instead of *tajjā manoviññānadhātu samphassajam/jā* (p. 248,6.22–23) one would expect *tajjāmanoviññānadhātusamphassajam/jā*.

The number of printing errors is large. Although they mostly do not distort the sense, they might be disturbing, at least for non-native-speakers. A list of them will be placed on the homepage of the Pali Text Society. Here only some points are given. At pp. 108,15; 125,14 new paragraphs start, therefore, spaces should be inserted before the text. The text

7. As was done in *Summary of the Topics of Abhidhamma*.

on p. 235,21–4 belongs to the following section, therefore there should be no interspace. Regularly references to other pages are given in round brackets at the end of a line. This also should be the case on p. 29,29 instead of the words ‘wurde bereits auf S. 7 behandelt’, which give the impression that such a reference were part of the original text. At p. 123,1–125,13 the original text from the *Dhammasaṅgani* with translation is inserted without any remark, though it is not part of the text of As. Following the practice of other publications of the Pali Text Society, such additions should have been placed between brackets.⁸

In a number of cases, detected quite accidentally, text and translation deviate, because passages of As are summarized (As E° 362,5–10 = trans., p. 545) or, even worse, are left untranslated:

As E°	Translation
58,10–11 and 15–16	129,25ff.
140,19–20 and 20–23	248
142,30–143,33 and 35	251
144,16–145,6	252
146,7–147,7 plus 147,16–148,37 plus 149,4–151,18	253
253,27–255,3	389
259,23–260,11	395
361,9–18 and also 22–3, 24–6 and 28–31	544
362,4 and also 7–9 and 19–20	545
394,1–13	583

As a comparison of text and translation shows, the translator mainly, but not exclusively, omitted quotations illustrating statements, and word-explanations. Since sometimes only one sentence is omitted, I fear that many more passages than indicated by the references given above are untranslated. It is completely incomprehensible to me how these gaps could escape the editors’ observation, at least in such cases where one page of the translation corresponds to three pages in the Pāli (p. 251 = E° 142–4) or even to more than six pages (trans. 253 = E° pp. 145–51) or where the page number of the Pāli text generally given at the margins is missing, because the whole page is untranslated (E° 254 = trans. 389).

As a whole the publication of this translation by one of the profound experts of the Buddhist *Dhamma* is to be welcomed. It enables even a non-expert of *Abhidhamma* to read a category of texts mostly difficult to be understood. Nevertheless, the translator deserved more diligence in preparing his translation for publication. The large number of printing errors, the missing references to already identified sources, the avoidable inconsistency of terminology, and mainly the missing preface, where the editors should have informed the reader about many details (edition used for translation; method of translation, i.e. insertion of headlines, etc.; their own part in shaping the publication) detract from the joy felt about this first German translation published by the Pali Text Society.

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8. Compare *Kāṅkhāvitarāṇī*, eds K. R. Norman & W. Pruitt (Oxford: Pali Text Society, 2003), p. 41,2–6, etc.