

Critical Translation of Pali Commentaries (PTS Edition) into English

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Abstract:

The translation of the commentaries (*aṭṭhakathā*) into English on the four major nikāyas, namely Dīgha, Majjhima, Saṃyutta, and Aṅguttara, has been a long desideratum. Many have wondered why such a situation was not rectified before though some portions have been translated by scholars like Bhikkhu Bodhi in his translations of the *Brahmajālasutta*, *Sāmaññaphalasutta*, etc. An exception is the translation of the *Visuddhimagga* by Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli. The work may be considered outside the *aṭṭhakathā* literature since it is not a commentary in the proper sense of the term on any specific canonical text but a compendium of what its author Buddhaghosa thought as the true Buddhism.

The present publication is a reproduction of the translations of the *Papañcasūdanī* by the late Professor N.A. Jayawickrama, who resolutely told me to continue what he would be forced to stop due to the advanced age and other health issues just before his passing away. His works appeared for the first time in the following journals and the felicitation volume.

1. JBS (Journal of Buddhist Studies), vol. I: 73-119, Centre for Buddhist Studies Sri Lanka, 2003.
2. JBS (Journal of Buddhist Studies), vol. II: 1-58. Centre for Buddhist Studies Sri Lanka, 2004.
3. JBS (Journal of Buddhist Studies), vol. III: 42-84. Centre for Buddhist Studies Sri Lanka, 2005.
4. Buddhist and Pali Studies in Honour of the Venerable Professor Kakkapalliye Anuruddha: 1-41. Centre of Buddhist Studies, The University of Hong Kong, 2009.
5. The *Dhammadāyādasutta-vaṇṇanā*, though not completed, is a new translation by the late Professor N.A. Jayawickrama

This present publication contains an introduction to Pāli Commentaries and a section dealing with the *Papañcasūdanī* in the form of a separate introduction specifically

devoted to it. The translation of Pāli commentaries is a daunting task. It is unimaginable for a single translator to fulfill the task of translating the commentaries to the four major nikāyas within a short period of time if quick results are to be achieved. Translations of the Pāli commentaries are becoming increasingly important nowadays to generate more interest among scholars and laymen alike. The Buddhist Cultural Centre of Sri Lanka (headed by Ven. K. Wimalajoti) has undertaken translations of the entire Pāli commentaries, but only a few have come up including the third volume of the *Papañcasūdanī*.