

edition¹⁶: *siṅgīnikkhasavaṇṇo*, with n. 6 referring to *siṅganikkhasuvaṇṇo* of the 1894 edition. However, Oldenberg's edition of the Vinaya (I/38, ll. 15–16) has *siṅgīnikkhasuvaṇṇo*, with the following note: “*siṅgīnikkhasuvaṇṇo* ABC constantly; DE: *siṅgīnikkhasuvaṇṇo ti siṅgīsuvavaṇṇanikkhena samānavaṇṇo*. The [parallel in the; ARF] Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā (cf. Ja I 84,₁₈*) reads: °*savaṇṇo*.”¹⁷

In Pv-a p. 22, l. 16 we see another undesired consequence of using a Romanised version instead of consulting the original Burmese text. The editor reads *abhiviyabhimsanakam*, which does not make sense. Instead, we would expect *ativiyabhimsanakam* “extremely dreadful”. This reading is recorded in Pv-a p. 22, n. 16 for the 1894 edition, the Sinhalese edition and the Siamese edition,¹⁸ and is also found in the online version in Roman script of the Chaṭṭhasaṅgāyana Tipiṭaka.¹⁹ This demonstrates once again that the printed Romanised version used by the editor is a corrupt version of the original edition.

I hope the above comments will prove useful to the editor and publisher. After a thorough revision based on the original Burmese printed edition in Burmese characters, Jackson's edition will definitely replace Hardy's good, but outdated edition of the Pv-a.

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¹⁶ See *Chaṭṭhasaṅgīti piṭakam. Mahāvaggapāli*. Yangon: Buddhasāsana Samīti Press, 1957 (2nd ed.), p. 48, ll. 24–25.

¹⁷ Oldenberg, op. cit. (cf. n. 14), p. 367, §22.

¹⁸ That is, the so-called Thai edition known as the Syāmaratṭha Tepiṭaka, published by Mahachulalongkorn University on CD-ROM, on which the Buddhist Scriptures Information Retrieval (BUDSIR) electronic text published by Mahidol University is based; see <https://www.mahidol.ac.th/budsir/budsir-main.html> (last accessed September 24, 2021). Its date cannot be ascertained, and a list of sigla is missing.

¹⁹ Cf. n. 9 above.

C.M.M. Shaw – L.S. Cousins

The Book of Pairs and Its Commentary. A Translation of the Yamaka and Yamakappakaraṇaṭṭhakathā. Vol. 1 & 2. [Pali Text Translation Series]. Bristol: The Pali Text Society, 2018 & 2020. xvi + 411p. & vi + 456p. £ 35,50 & £ 35,50 (ISBN 978-0-86013-513-5 [Vol. 1] & 978-0-86013-528-9 [Vol. 2]).

The Yamaka is the sixth text of the Theravādin Abhidhammapiṭaka. Its name, which means “Book of Pairs”, refers to the text's methodology of posing a question followed by its converse formulation, e.g., “(a) Is suffering, the truth of suffering? (b) Is the truth of suffering, suffering?” (Vol. 1, p. 275). It has been speculated that this lengthy work of applied logic was used as a manual

for advanced students of the Abhidhamma to help them become experts in the system and skilled in debate.¹ The Pāli text of the Yamaka was edited by Caroline Rhys Davids and published in two volumes in 1911² and 1913.³ Its commentary, the Yamakappakaraṇaṭṭhakathā, was also edited by Caroline Rhys Davids and published in the *Journal of the Pali Text Society* in 1912.⁴ In her forewords to these editions, Rhys Davids does not portray the Yamaka in a particularly positive light, describing it as “a baffling and forbidding composition”,⁵ referring to its ten chapters as “valleys of dry bones”⁶ and commenting (on its repetitive nature) that “like Sisyphus, we slide down from it gasping in despair”.⁷ It is perhaps no wonder that a century passed before there were scholars brave enough to prepare a complete English translation of this text. Thus far two volumes have been published of a projected three-volume set, in which Charles Shaw has translated the Yamaka while Lance Cousins has translated its commentary.

The Yamaka is divided into ten chapters, called *yamakas*, each dealing with a separate topic, namely, roots (*mūla*), aggregates (*khandha*), spheres of perception (*āyatana*), elements (*dhātu*), truths (*sacca*), formations (*saṅkhāra*), tendencies (*anusaya*), consciousness (*citta*), phenomena (*dhamma*) and faculties (*indriya*). Volume one covers chapters one to five, while volume two covers chapters six to eight. Most of these chapters follow a threefold structure, namely, (1) the delimitation of terms and concepts (*paṇṇattivāra*), in which questions are firstly posed by themselves and then repeated with answers, (2) a discussion on the process of rebirth with reference to person and place (*pavattivāra*), and (3) a description of an individual’s understanding of the category being considered (*pariññāvāra*). Within these sections there are further subdivisions. The complicated structure of the Yamaka, together with its terse wording, make it an especially challenging text. It would therefore have been desirable to include in volume one introductory material to help orientate and prepare the reader for what lies ahead, including information on the text’s structure, system of logic, language, style, etc. As it stands, unless one firstly reads the secondary literature on the Yamaka (helpfully listed in a footnote in Vol. 1/xi) and/or has prior experience reading Abhidhamma texts, the first chapter or two

¹ A.K. Warder, *Indian Buddhism*. 3rd ed. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2000, p. 290.

² *The Yamaka. Being the Sixth Book of the Abhidhamma-piṭaka*, ed. by Caroline Rhys Davids. Vol. 1. London: Henry Frowde for the Pali Text Society, 1911.

³ *The Yamaka. Being the Sixth Book of the Abhidhamma-piṭaka*, ed. by Caroline Rhys Davids. Vol. 2. London: Humphrey Milford for the Pali Text Society, 1913.

⁴ Yamakappakaraṇaṭṭhakathā from the Pañcappakaraṇaṭṭhakathā, ed. by Caroline Rhys Davids. *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 6 (1912) 51–107.

⁵ Rhys Davids, op. cit. (cf. n. 4), p. 51.

⁶ Rhys Davids, op. cit. (cf. n. 2), p. xi.

⁷ Rhys Davids, op. cit. (cf. n. 2), p. xvi.

of this translation is unlikely to make a great deal of sense. It should be noted, however, that the commentary provides some explanation of the structure and approach of the root text, and the inclusion of a translation of the commentary is a very valuable addition to this publication.

Due to the terse and formulaic wording of the Yamaka, it would be impossible to produce a translation that is both very faithful to the Pāli and written in natural English. It seems that the translators have prioritised the former over the latter, which seems wise given the highly technical nature of the text. Indeed, the Yamaka implies a great deal of assumed knowledge and therefore the translation might have benefited from the addition of footnotes which briefly explain key terms and concepts with which less experienced readers may be unfamiliar. The translation follows the Pali Text Society edition of the Yamaka; however, because the text of this edition is heavily abbreviated, the Vipassana Research Institute's digitisation of the Chaṭṭhasaṅgīti edition has also been utilised to fill out the abbreviated passages. This has resulted in an eclectic translation that draws from both editions. Helpfully, a system of brackets has been used to indicate what text is found in one edition but not the other.

Despite the Yamaka's difficult style, its content offers a wealth of interesting details. For instance, the chapter of formations (Saṅkhārayamaka; Vol. 2, pp. 3–82) frequently uses the terms “moment of arising” (*uppādakkhaṇa*) and “moment of dissolution” (*bhaṅgakkhaṇa*). This could be regarded as an early expression of the concept of momentariness, which becomes more fully developed in the commentaries with the additional term “moment of presence” (*thitikkhaṇa*). This is just one aspect of the Yamaka that deserves further investigation, and the two books under review will undoubtedly be invaluable for such future research. With the eventual publication of the remainder of this multivolume set, this first complete translation of the Yamaka will be a significant contribution to Pāli studies.

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K.R. Norman – Petra Kieffer-Pülz – William Pruitt (tr.)

Overcoming Doubts (Kaṅkhāvitarāṇī). Vol. I: *The Bhikkhu-Pātimokkha Commentary*. Bristol: Pali Text Society, 2018. L + 628p. £ 45,50 (ISBN 978-0-86013-517-3).

This work represents the first translation of the Kaṅkhāvitarāṇī into a Western language and marks a significant achievement in the study of the Theravāda Vinaya. The translation of “Overcoming (*vitaraṇī*) Doubts (*kaṅkhā*)” concerns a