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ARTICLE

Benjamin Clough and the birth of Buddhist studies

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Abstract

This article surveys the life and work of Benjamin Clough (1791–1853), Wesleyan Methodist missionary to Ceylon, focusing on his contributions to the study of Pali and Buddhism. It attempts to show that he inaugurated the Western study of Pali and that he should be recognised as one of the most important early scholars of Buddhism.

Keywords: history of Buddhist studies; Pali; Sri Lankan Buddhism; Theravada; Wesleyan-Methodist missionaries

Although much valuable work has been done on early Buddhist studies, some important gaps and misunderstandings remain. Here, I would like to discuss one of the main pioneers, the Wesleyan Methodist missionary to Ceylon, Benjamin Clough (1791–1853) (Figure 1), whose important role has not yet been recognised.[1] Clough published the first Pali grammar in a Western language in 1824, which inaugurated the study of Pali in the West.[2] His 1834 translation of a *Kammavācā*, a collection of *Vinaya* excerpts used in monastic rituals, was the first published translation of canonical Pali text into a Western language.[3] The second, Sinhala–English, volume of his *Dictionary of the English and Singhalese and Singhalese and*

[1] For a brief survey of Clough's work, however, see E. Harris, 'The impact of nineteenth-century missionary translations of Theravāda Buddhist texts', in *Translating Buddhism: Historical and Contextual Perspectives*, (ed.) A. Collett (Albany, NY, 2021), pp. 129–131. See also E. J. Harris, *Theravāda Buddhism and the British Encounter: Religious, Missionary and Colonial Experience in Nineteenth-Century Sri Lanka* (London, 2006), passim.

[2] B. Clough, *A Compendious Pali Grammar with a Copious Vocabulary in the Same Language* (Colombo, 1824).

[3] B. Clough (trans.), 'The ritual of the Budd'hist priesthood, translated from the original Pálí work, entitled Karmawákya', in *Miscellaneous Translations from Oriental Languages* (London, 1834), vol. ii, no. 4 (contributions paginated separately). Giovanni Maria Percoto made an Italian translation of the *Upasaṃpadā-kammavācā*, corresponding to the first of Clough's text's seven parts, in 1776, but this was never published. De Jong refers to another manuscript translation of the text, but this is actually just another copy of Percoto's; J. W. de Jong, 'A brief history of Buddhist studies in Europe and America', *Eastern Buddhist*, n.s., 7.1 (1974), p. 68; L. Feer (ed.), *Papiers d'Eugène Burnouf conservés à la Bibliothèque nationale* (Paris, 1899), p. 115. Jacob Georg Christian Adler published a German translation of Percoto's translation in 1787: J. G. C. Adler, 'Kammuwa: Einweihungsformular zum zweiten Grad der Bomanischen Mönche in Ava, Aus der heiligen Sprache der Bomanen übersezt', *Deutsches Gemeinnütziges Magazin* 1 (1787), pp. 121–135. Francis Buchanan published an English translation of a Latin translation of the same text by Vincenzo Sangermano in 1799: F. Buchanan, 'On the religion and literature of the Burmas', *Asiatick Researches* 6 (1799), pp. 280–289. William Tandy published another English translation of Sangermano's translation in 1833: Sangermano, [V.], *A Description of the Burmese Empire, Compiled Chiefly from Native Documents*, (trans.) William Tandy (Rome, 1833), pp. 97–100. George Knox published an English translation of a Burmese translation of the *Upasaṃpadā-kammavācā* in 1832: G. Knox, 'The ceremonial of the ordination of a Burmese priest of

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English Languages includes many Pali and Sanskrit words, and served as the main lexical resource for Pali and Buddhist Sanskrit until the publication of Robert Childers's Pali dictionary between 1872 and 1875.[4] Apart from his own work, Clough established a focus on Pali and Buddhism within the Wesleyan Mission, which led it to become a veritable school of Buddhist studies; its several authors included Daniel J. Gogerly and Robert Spence Hardy, two of the most important nineteenth-century scholars.[5] Although Clough published less on Buddhism than he intended, his few short contributions laid the foundations for Gogerly and Hardy's work, and provide important insight into the early field. Clough seems to have been neglected mainly because most of his publications were rare and difficult to access, and because some appeared in Methodist or other missionary publications that did not reach scholarly readers. Scholars also denied the significance of his *Pali Grammar*, wishing to claim that the Western study of Pali was inaugurated by Eugène Burnouf and Christian Lassen.

Clough was born in Bradford, Yorkshire, in September 1791. His mother was an innkeeper and his father was a sergeant in the First West York Militia, who died when Clough was four years old. When he was 12 or 13, he attended weekly meetings for children held by John Crosse, the Vicar of Bradford, who had Methodist leanings and had been a friend of John Wesley. He was also influenced by his older brother, Isaac, a convert to Methodism who died of tuberculosis in 1809 and was regarded as a saintly figure.[6] Clough joined the movement at

Budd'ha', *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 3.2 (1832), pp. 271–284. Clough's was the first published translation directly from the Pali, the others all being translations of translations.

[4] Two vols (Colombo, 1821–1830); R. C. Childers, *A Dictionary of the Pali Language*, two vols (London, 1872–1875).

[5] Gogerly and Hardy worked closely under Clough for many years and succeeded him, one after the other, as leaders of the Colombo station and the Southern District of the Mission. Other members who published on Buddhism include William Harvard, Thomas Kilner, Robert Newstead, William Bridgnell, John Callaway, David De Silva, and John Scott. See, e.g., W. M. Harvard, *A Narrative of the Establishment and Progress of the Mission to Ceylon and India* (London, 1823); T. Kilner (trans.), 'The power of truth', *The Friend* 2.6 (1838), pp. 105–107; R. Newstead, *Notices Relative to the Idolatry and Devil-Worship of Ceylon, &c. Designed to Impress Upon the Minds of Youth a Concern for the Salvation of the Heathen* (London, 1838); W. Bridgnell, 'National characteristics', *The Friend* 2.3 (1838), pp. 48–49; W. Bridgnell, 'On resentment (extract from Buddha's sermons, translated from the Dampiyāwa', *The Friend* 4.1 (1840), pp. 10–12; J. Callaway, *Oriental Observations and Occasional Criticisms More or Less Illustrating Several Hundred Passages of Scripture* (London, 1827); J. Callaway, *Yakkun Nattannawā: A Cingalese Poem, Descriptive of the Ceylon System of Demonology, to Which Is Appended, The Practices of a Capua or Devil Priest, as Described by a Budhist: And Kōlan Nattannawā: A Cingalese Poem, Descriptive of the Characters Assumed by Natives of Ceylon in a Masquerade* (London, 1829); D. De Silva, 'Buddha's sermons: Majjhima Nikaya', six parts, *The Friend: A Monthly Magazine of Literature and Religion in Ceylon*, ser. 2, 2, no. 15 (1871), pp. 33–36; no. 17 (1871), pp. 73–76; no. 22 (1871), pp. 145–148; 3, no. 29 (1872), pp. 70–73; no. 32 (1872), pp. 113–117; no. 35 (1872), pp. 161–165; D. J. Gogerly, J. Scott, and D. De Silva, 'Budhism: a lecture delivered before the Colombo Young Men's Christian Association', *Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland* 4.14 (1867–1870), pp. 87–137. Another member, William Buckley Fox, contributed to E. Upham, *The Mahávansi, the Rájá-ratnácari, and the Rájá-vali, Forming the Sacred and Historical Books of Ceylon; Also, a Collection of Tracts Illustrative of the Doctrines and Literature of Buddhism*, three vols (London, 1833), vol. i, pp. xi–xv, though his comments were harshly criticised by George Turnour in his *The First Twenty Chapters of the Mahawanso and a Prefatory Essay on Pali Buddhistical Literature Originally Published as an Introduction to the Above Mentioned Portion of the Mahawanso and to the Epitome of the History of Ceylon, and the Historical Inscriptions, Printed in the Ceylon Almanacs of 1833 and 1834* (Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte, 1836), pp. xvi–xvii; and G. Turnour, *The Maháwanso in Roman Characters with the Translation Subjoined, and an Introductory Essay on Páli Buddhistical Literature*, vol. i, *Containing the First Thirty-Eight Chapters* (Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte, 1837), p. ix. On De Silva, see 'The Late Rev. David de Silva', *Ceylon Friend: A Monthly Magazine of Literature and Religion in Ceylon*, ser. 2, 5.51 (1874), pp. 33–37; R. F. Young and G. P. V. Somaratna, *Vain Debates: The Buddhist-Christian Controversies of Nineteenth-Century Ceylon* (Vienna, 1996), passim.

[6] W. M. Punshon, 'Memoir of the Rev. Benjamin Clough, formerly of Colombo, Ceylon', *Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine* 81 (February 1858), pp. 97–107; S. Sugden, 'Memoir of Isaac Clough', *Methodist Magazine* 36 (November 1813), pp. 837–841.

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Figure 1. Benjamin Clough. *Source*: Collection of the Author.

around the time of his brother's death and began working as a local lay preacher while still in his teens. In 1811 or 1812, he was introduced to Thomas Coke, John Wesley's main lieutenant and successor and twice president of the Methodist Conference. Accepting a position as Coke's personal assistant, Clough travelled with him to Scotland and Ireland before being selected to accompany him on his mission to Ceylon. Although Coke died during the journey, Clough arrived at Galle on 29 June 1814, aged 22, the youngest of six original members of the Wesleyan Methodist Mission, now the Methodist Church of Sri Lanka. He had been Coke's beloved favourite and occupied a place close to the centre of the movement throughout his life. When Clough's first wife, Margaret, died in 1827, his friend, the scholar Adam Clarke, who had done early work on the Rosetta Stone and was three times president of the

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Methodist Conference, published a volume of her correspondence and personal writings.[7] Clough's nephew, William Morley Punshon, who studied for the ministry with Clough in 1843 while living with him at his home in London, went on to become another president.[8] Clough was a true believer, zealously devoted to the saving of souls throughout his life. In an 1815 letter, he states that, when he would return home from travelling to preach three or four times a day, he would weep because of his physical inability to do more.[9] Punshon describes Coke as having been impressed when, at their first meeting, Clough said without hesitation that he was ready to leave everything behind and depart with him the following morning. He also writes that Clough was offered rapid promotion within the established Church if he left the Methodist movement or lucrative official posts if he left the ministry, but he 'steadily refused'.[10]

Initially posted at Galle, Clough moved to Colombo in 1815 and led the station there together with his close friend William Harvard. He stayed on after Harvard's return to England in 1819 and continued to lead the station, and the Mission's Southern District, for almost another two decades. He began studying Sinhala as soon as he arrived on the island, and Pali soon thereafter, and learned to speak Portuguese as well. The missionaries set up a press in Colombo, which gave them the power to publish their own writings; they had brought a printing press, type, and paper with them, and Harvard was a printer by trade. Gogerly was also a printer by trade and took over the press after his arrival in 1818. Clough reports that, by 1816, the station had three presses in operation; by 1822, it had five.[11]

Clough began trying to learn about Buddhism as soon as he arrived on the island, initially taking an ethnographic approach, visiting temples, discussing Buddhist teachings with monks, and observing Buddhist rituals and festivals. In a letter from 1814, just a few months after his arrival, he reports that he had 'cultivated an acquaintance with several of the priests of Budhu' and 'visited several of the temples, and [...] been present, I think, at all their festivals of note'. In a letter from the following year, he writes:

> Mr. Harvard and myself have been labouring the last six or eight months to find out, if possible, what the system [of Buddhism] is, and what the main pillars are that support it [...]. We have spent much of our time in conversing, in a quiet way, with the most learned priests we could meet with.[12]

[7] A. Clarke (ed.), *Extracts from the Journal and Correspondence of the Late Mrs. M. M. Clough, Wife of the Rev. Benjamin Clough, Missionary in Ceylon* (London, 1829).

[8] Benjamin Gregory writes: 'Benjamin Clough, Dr. Punshon's uncle [was] the real theological tutor of his brilliant nephew, and the stalwart anchorsmith that smote and smoothed him into shape while he was yet in the white heat of his glowing and his spark-emitting youth': 'The Rev. Joseph Fowler', *Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine* 118 (1895), p. 55. See also F. W. MacDonald, *The Life of William Morley Punshon, LL.D.* (London, 1887), pp. 39–46.

[9] B. Clough, 'Extract of a letter from Mr. Clough, one of the missionaries at Ceylon, to his brother, Columbo, June 20, 1815', *Methodist Magazine* 39 (March 1816), p. 113.

[10] Punshon, 'Memoir of Clough', pp. 98, 105.

[11] B. Clough, 'Extract of a letter from Mr. Clough, to Mr. E. Gibbon, dated Colombo, April, 1816', *Methodist Magazine* 39, Appendix (1816), p. 517; Anon., *General View of the Missions Conducted by the Wesleyan Missionary Society* (London, 1822), p. 1. Of the five, two belonged to the Mission, two to the Colombo Bible Association, and one to the government, under the direction of the Mission. The press mainly printed Bible translations, tracts, and schoolbooks. See also R. S. Hardy, *Jubilee Memorials of the Wesleyan Mission, South Ceylon, 1814–1864* (Colombo, 1864), pp. 275–286; E. D. T. Kularatne, 'The Wesleyan Methodist mission in the printing and publishing industry in the 19th century Ceylon', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka*, n.s., 42 (1977), pp. 213–242; M. S. Vasanthakumar, 'The Legacy of the Controversies: The Continuing Impact on Interfaith Encounters in Sri Lanka of Nineteenth-Century Controversies between Buddhists and Christians' (unpublished MPhil thesis, The Open University, 2001), pp. 37–41.

[12] B. Clough, 'Extract of a letter from Mr. B. Clough, missionary to Ceylon, to Dr. Adam Clarke, Point-de-Galle, Sept. 27, 1814', *Methodist Magazine* 38 (November 1815), p. 875; B. Clough, 'Extract of a letter from Mr. Clough to Mr. Buckley, Point-de-Galle, Feb. 12, 1816', *Methodist Magazine* 39 (October 1816), p. 398.

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Harvard comments: 'Mr. Clough took every opportunity of being present at their religious services, and endeavoured on such occasions to engage the priests in conversations on religious topics.'[13] William Bridgnell gives an interesting account of a visit that Clough made with other missionaries, including Hardy, sometime in or after 1825, to the Kelanīya Vihāra, the most important temple in the Colombo area, and of a conversation he had with a monk there.[14]

In 1817, Clough and Harvard used Mission funds to purchase the library of William Tolfrey, a civil servant who had taken up the study of Sinhala and Pali texts, after his unexpected death that year.[15] Clough made a catalogue of the collection, which included Buddhist manuscripts in both languages, mentioning there that he intended to translate a few stories from the *Pansiyapanasjātakapota*, a Sinhala translation of the Pali *jātakas*.[16] Although he never published any, Gogerly translated some from the Pali for his first article on Buddhism, published in 1838.[17] In an 1819 letter, Clough reports that he had begun translating 'a very interesting book [...] on the History and Religion of Budhu' two years earlier, but had not had time to work on it.[18] This was probably the *Sārasaṅgaha*, an apparently twelfth- or thirteenth-century work that Clough had acquired as part of Tolfrey's library and describes in his catalogue as dealing with 'various subjects, in both Religion and History'.[19] In 1820, he described a broad programme of research for himself and the Mission, writing, with his colleague George Erskine, to Sir Robert Brownrigg, the departing governor:

> Several of our Brethren have attained a competent knowledge of the native languages. [...] We hope [that] the literature of the Island will ere long be considerably advanced by their publications, both of dictionaries and grammars of the language, as well also as of some translations of the native books [...] which have never yet appeared in any European language.[20]

Although Clough presents the study of Pali and Buddhism as being necessary to convert Buddhists to Christianity in his missionary letters and publications, he adopts a more liberal voice in the prefaces to his *Grammar* and *Dictionary*. He writes, for instance, that he decided to publish his *Pali Grammar* because of its importance to 'the republic of letters' and that he intended the Sinhala–English volume of his *Dictionary* in part to gratify the 'curiosity of the learned world'. He justifies the study of Buddhism by suggesting that 'it must appear an object of no ordinary importance to every philanthropist, to be in possession of all that constitutes a system commanding a religious influence over so many millions of our fellow men'.[21]

[13] Harvard, *Narrative*, p. 235.

[14] R. Newstead, *Notices*, pp. 28–34. On an earlier visit that Clough made to the same temple, see Harris, *Theravāda Buddhism and the British Encounter*, p. 197.

[15] The most detailed presentation of Tolfrey's life and work can be found in an obituary published in the *Ceylon Government Gazette* 799 (11 January 1817).

[16] B. Clough, 'Account of the Oriental library purchased from the estate of the Late W. Tolfrey, Esq', part 1, *Extracts from Quarterly Letters, &c.* 2 (January 1818), p. 36.

[17] In the interim, a summary of the text was published by Edward Upham: *Mahávansi*, vol. iii, pp. 267–313.

[18] B. Clough, 'Miscellaneous, No. 1', *Extracts from Quarterly Letters, &c.* 7 (April 1819), p. 65.

[19] Clough, 'Account of the Oriental library', part 2, *Extracts from Quarterly Letters, &c.* 3 (April 1818), p. 70 (misnumbered p. 66). On the *Sārasaṅgaha*, see C. Neri, 'The case of the *Sārasaṅgaha*: reflections on the reuse of texts in medieval Sinhalese Pāli literature', *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 43.4/5 (2014), pp. 335–388.

[20] B. Clough and G. Erskine, 'To His Excellency General Sir Robert Brownrigg, Bt. & G.C.B., governor of the Island of Ceylon, &c. &c. &c', *Extracts from Quarterly Letters, &c.* 10 (January 1820), p. 4.

[21] *Pali Grammar*, p. vii; *Dictionary*, vol. ii, p. vii.

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The great Danish linguist Rasmus Rask visited Colombo for nine months between 1821 and 1822, and worked closely with Clough, who arranged lodgings and at least two Pali tutors for him, loaned him money, cared for him after a breakdown caused by overwork, and assisted him in acquiring the famous collection of Pali manuscripts that he brought with him back to Denmark.[22] Clough returned to England twice on furloughs, first from December 1822 until September 1825 and then from April 1832 until May 1833.[23] While on his first furlough, he inspected and provided a detailed written description of a manuscript of the *Pansiyapanasjātakapota* belonging to Sir Alexander Johnston, whom he had known while they were both in Ceylon, which Johnston later donated to the Royal Asiatic Society.[24] Probably through Johnston's influence, Clough was elected a corresponding member of the Society in February 1833.[25] Clough donated a copy of his *Pali Grammar* to the Society in 1828 and a copy of his *Dictionary* in 1831.[26] Clough is also listed as a member of the Society's Committee of the Oriental Translation Fund from its first meeting in 1829.[27] He published his *Kammavācā* translation in a volume of the Fund. A bout of malaria forced him to leave the island finally in 1837. After returning to England, he worked as a circuit preacher, stationed successively in Sheffield, London (Deptford), Maidstone, Leeds (Bramley), and Wakefield, moving to a new location every three years, following the Methodist practice of itinerancy.[28]

[22] O. K. Nordstrand, 'Rasmus Rasks Ceylonofold', *Fund og Forskning i Det Kongelige Biblioteks Samlinger* 8.1 (1961), pp. 53–78, and 'A note on Rasmus Rask and the Ceylonese manuscripts at the library of the Wesleyan Mission, Colombo, in 1822', *Journal of the Sri Lanka Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, n.s., 18 (1974), pp. 70–73.

[23] The *Government Gazette* (Calcutta) reports a date of 14 December 1822 for Clough's departure on his first furlough, a date of 7 September 1825 for his return, and a date of 20 April 1832 for his departure on his second furlough. See 'Shipping intelligence', 30 January 1823; 'Ceylon', 20 September 1825; and 'Shipping list', 19 July 1832. The date of his return from his second furlough is recorded as 12 May 1833, in Anon. ['A Surgeon'], *A Voyage to Ceylon with Notices of the Wesleyan Mission on the Island* (New York, [1838] 1841), p. 48.

[24] B. Clough, Letter to Alexander Johnston, 25 March 1824, Royal Asiatic Society, London, RAS COLL3/1/2/1. Though it is not indicated as such, a transcription can be found in E. Upham, *The History and Doctrine of Budhism, Popularly Illustrated: With Notices of the Kappooism, or Demon worship, and of the Bali, or Planetary Incantations, of Ceylon* (London, 1829); it runs from 'The Singalese book' in the first full paragraph on p. 32 to the end of the first paragraph on p. 33. See also 'Appendix, No. III. Donations to the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland from its institution, March 15, 1823, to March 15, 1827', *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 1 (1827), pp. 631–632; 'Appendix, No. II. At the annual meeting of the Royal Asiatic Society, held on the 7th June, 1831', *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 3 (1834), p. xi and note. Johnston, who served as Chief Justice of Ceylon, was an important figure for the Wesleyan Mission and for Clough. While on a trip to London in 1809, he expressed a wish to William Wilberforce, the famous abolitionist and philanthropist, that missionaries be sent to the island. Wilberforce conveyed this wish in a letter to Adam Clarke, who conveyed it to Coke. Harvard identifies this as Coke's original inspiration for undertaking the mission (Harvard, *Narrative*, pp. 11–16; see also Hardy, *Jubilee Memorials*, p. 60). In an 1817 letter, in my own collection, Johnston himself states that he is honoured that the Wesleyan Methodists in London 'consider [him] in some measure as the original cause of the establishment of [their] Mission on this Island' (Letter to the Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries on Ceylon, 30 August 1817). See Harvard, *Narrative*, pp. 397–398, for a transcription; for a related letter, see also p. 373. Following his return from Ceylon in 1819, Johnston was one of the founders of the Royal Asiatic Society and served as one of its four original vice presidents. We will see that he sent a copy of Clough's *Pali Grammar* to Burnouf. He seems likely to have encouraged Clough's study of Buddhism from the beginning.

[25] 'Royal Asiatic Society', *Athenæum* 276 (9 February 1833), p. 91. Clough is listed in the present journal as a corresponding member from the time of his election until his death.

[26] 'Appendix, No. VII. Donations to the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, from April 7, 1827, to July 25, 1829', *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 2 (1829), p. cviii; 'Appendix, No. IV. Donations to the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland', *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 3.3 (1834), p. lxvi.

[27] *Report of the Proceedings of the First General Meeting of the Subscribers to the Oriental Translation Fund* (London, 1829), p. 3.

[28] Clough was stationed at Sheffield for the years 1839 to 1841, Deptford for 1842 to 1843, Maidstone for 1844 to 1846, Leeds (Bramley) for 1847 to 1849, and Wakefield for 1850 to 1851. While stationed at the Deptford circuit, Clough lived in Woolwich. See J. Hall, *The Wesleyan Methodist Itinerancy, or, An Alphabetical Arrangement of the Circuits*

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He also took part in missionary fundraising. I have not found any evidence of his having continued his study of Pali or Buddhism during this time, except for his publication of a short article entitled 'Buddhism' in the *Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine* in 1840.[29] Although he suggests there that he would try to write more, he seems never to have done so. He retired in London (Southwark) in 1852 and died there the following year.

Clough's most important work was his *Compendious Pali Grammar*, published with a date of 1824. Two different versions are known, one with a two-page 'Advertisement', in lieu of a preface, which was reprinted from a single-page prospectus issued in 1822; and the other with a seven-page original 'Preface' by Clough. The two versions are otherwise the same. As the preface is found in only a few known copies, I have included it in the Appendix. The work is in three parts, paginated separately. The first is the grammar proper, a reworked translation of the *Bālāvatāra*, a traditional introductory grammar for monastic students. The second is a list of Pali verbs taken from the *Dhātumañjūsā* and the third is a transcription of the body of the *Abhidhānappadīpikā*, a traditional thesaurus, with English equivalents. The work was begun by Tolfrey and completed by Clough. In the 'Advertisement', Clough describes Tolfrey as having 'considerably advanced' the translation, but this is likely modesty. George Turnour writes that, in his understanding, the work was 'scarcely commenced' at the time of Tolfrey's death.[30] Though he is not acknowledged, Rask made some contribution to the first chapter, on pronunciation.[31]

The publication of the *Grammar* took a rather complicated course. Clough issued the 1822 prospectus, mentioned above, on 3 March of that year, presenting a plan of the work and a call for subscribers, suggesting that 100 would be needed for the publication to move forward.[32] Rask sent a copy of this prospectus to the Asiatic Society of Bengal, where the secretary, Horace Hayman Wilson, announced it in a meeting the following month.[33] In a letter to Wilson, held by the British Library, dated four months later, Rask writes that he has enclosed a proof and asks Wilson to show it to [William] Adam, who he says subscribed for two copies, and to [William] Yates.[34] This can only have been the first part of the text, the grammar proper. In the 'Preface', which he wrote after his return from his first furlough in 1825, Clough states that he submitted the final two parts of the work to the printers just before his departure in December 1822 and that this prevented him from finishing them in the manner he had intended.[35] The printing was all but certainly superintended by Gogerly, who was in charge of the Colombo station during Clough's absence.[36] Overall, the first part of the *Grammar* was printed prior to Clough's departure at the end of 1822 and the other two parts sometime afterwards, likely in 1824, the date given on the volume's title page. The 'Advertisement' was presumably also printed in Clough's absence. After writing the

in Great Britain, with the Names of the Ministers Who Have Travelled in Them, Each Year, from the Commencement (London, 1873).

[29] 43, pp. 1015–1022.

[30] Turnour, *Maháwanso in Roman Characters*, p. xxv.

[31] Nordstrand, 'Rasks Ceylonofold', p. 66. Nordstrand suggests that Rask wrote this chapter, but it is just a reworked version of the pronunciation guide for the first, English–Sinhala, volume of Clough's *Dictionary*; pp. i–vii. Rask's contribution cannot have been very significant.

[32] B. Clough, *Proposals, For Publishing by Subscription a Compendious Pali Grammar with a Copious Vocabulary in the Same Language* (Colombo). Rask records the date of issue in his diary; Nordstrand, 'Rasks Ceylonofold', p. 66.

[33] R. Rask, Letter to Horace Hayman Wilson, 3 July 1822, British Library, Asia, Pacific, and Africa Collections, MSS Eur E 301, 4, pp. 91–92; 'Asiatic Society', *Government Gazette* (Madras), 9 May 1822; 'Literary and philosophical intelligence', *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British India and Its Dependencies* 14 (December 1822), p. 584.

[34] Rask, Letter to Wilson.

[35] Clough, *Grammar*, p. vii.

[36] B. Clough, *Correspondence Between the Rev. J. Bailey, Church Missionary, and the Rev. B. Clough, Wesleyan Missionary on the Affairs of the Colombo Auxiliary Bible Society* (Colombo, 1835), p. 48.

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'Preface' following his return in 1825, Clough substituted it for the 'Advertisement' in some copies.

The *Grammar*'s distribution was also rather complicated. Before the full work was completed, Clough sent a copy of the first part, the grammar proper, to Rask, which Rask records have received in June 1823, soon after his return to Denmark. This is likely the item identified in the auction catalogue for Rask's books as 'Fragment of *Cloughs* Pali grammar'.[37] In their 1826 *Essai sur le pali*, Burnouf and Lassen note that the Asiatic Society of Bengal had received a copy of the *Grammar* and mistakenly state that its intended publication had not been carried out.[38] Léon Feer reports that Burnouf's papers include a manuscript French translation of chapters 2–8 and a manuscript copy of the original English of chapters 9–10, with notation of the original pagination.[39] These chapters together comprise the complete grammar proper, suggesting the possibility that Burnouf and Lassen may have received a copy from either Wilson or Rask before they published the *Essai*. Direct inspection of Burnouf's papers might be able to confirm or deny this. Clough sent a copy of the full *Grammar* to Calcutta in 1826 or 1827, where it received a brief, anonymous review in the *Government Gazette*, likely authored by Wilson.[40]

The first mention of complete copies arriving in Europe seems to be an anonymous notice in the *Journal Asiatique* of October 1827, which states that some had arrived in England and that two had been sent on to France: Johnston sent a copy with the 'Advertisement' to Burnouf in August and, at around the same time, Thomas Pell Platt sent a copy with the 'Preface' and an inscription by Clough, dated Colombo, 4 August 1826, to [Jean-Daniel] Kieffer. The author of the notice is very jealous of Clough's accomplishment, going so far as to claim that Burnouf and Lassen's 1826 *Essai* should be considered to have priority in being 'le premier ouvrage qui fasse connaître le pâli', because it was published before the *Grammar* arrived in Europe.[41] Half a century later, J. Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire, who had been a student of Burnouf's, similarly claimed that Burnouf and Lassen had a 'relative priority' that entitled them to be recognised as having inaugurated the study of Pali: 'Nos illustres confrères, s'ils n'ont pas eu une priorité complète, ont au moins une priorité relative; et c'est leur rendre une impartiale justice que de dire que ce sont eux qui inauguré les études pâlies, que la grammaire de Clough, trop peu répandue, n'avait pas suscitées.'[42] Although the *Essai* was an impressive accomplishment, considering that Burnouf and Lassen wrote it on the basis of a just a few manuscripts that they were able to find in Paris, it is very basic. Most of the text is devoted to peripheral issues, such as Pali scripts and the nature

[37] *Catalogus librorum, quos reliquit Erasmus Rask, prof. quondam P. E. linguarum orientalium et bibliothecarius Universitatis Havniensis, divendentur hi libri publica auctione Havniæ … die 9 Sept. 1833* (Copenhagen, 1833), no. 1679. Clough must have either sent it prior to his departure from Ceylon the preceding December or posted it from London after he arrived. Apparently not realising that the copy Rask received in 1823 could not have been complete, Nordstrand speculates that Rask must have brought a copy of the first chapter of the *Grammar* home with him from Ceylon; Nordstrand, 'Rasks Ceylonofold', p. 66.

[38] E. Burnouf and C. Lassen, *Essai sur le pali, ou langue sacrée de la presqu'île au-delà du Gange* (Paris, 1826), p. 24, n. 1.

[39] Feer, *Papiers d'Eugène Burnouf*, p. 76.

[40] This review was reprinted as 'The Pali language', *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register* 23 (May 1827), p. 663. I have not seen a copy of the original.

[41] 'Note sur le Grammaire pali de M. Clough', *Journal Asiatique* 11 (October 1827), pp. 252–255.

[42] Review of E. Senart, '*Kaccâyana et la littérature grammaticale du pâli, 1re partie, grammaire pâlie de Kaccâyana, sûtras et commentaire* and other works', *Journal des Savants* (February 1877), pp. 84–85. In the same review, Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire also falsely accuses Clough of plagiarism: 'Le véritable auteur de la grammaire était M. Gogerly; il ne l'avait pas tout à fait achevée lui-même; il l'abandonna au Rév. [B.] Clough, qui la fit paraître sous son nom personnel' (p. 84, n. 3). Note that he carelessly mixes up Gogerly and Tolfrey, a mistake he had made already in his 'Du bouddhisme et de sa littérature à Ceylan: Collection de M. Grimblot, consul de France à Ceylan', part 2, *Journal des Savants* (February 1866), pp. 104–105.

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and history of the language; it only has one chapter on grammar that does not give much information.[43] Its importance cannot reasonably be compared to that of the *Grammar*, which enabled Westerners to begin reading Pali texts. Further, even if we were to accept arrival in Europe as a criterion for priority, as we have seen, Rask had a printed copy of the main part of the *Grammar* in Denmark already in 1823.

Almost a century later, the tradition was continued by no less a scholar than J. W. de Jong, who, in his influential 'Brief history of Buddhist studies in Europe and America', goes rather further than either the author of the *Journal Asiatique* notice or Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire to claim—incorrectly—that the *Essai* was 'the first Pāli grammar to be published in Europe'. He dismisses the *Grammar*'s importance on the old grounds that it 'seems to have reached Europe only after a long delay', citing an 1832 letter from August W. von Schlegel to Lassen that quotes Hermann Brockhaus as stating that only two copies had arrived in Europe by that time.[44] Other scholars have repeated de Jong's claim. Philip Almond writes, for instance, that the *Grammar* 'seems to have had a minimal impact on European Orientalists [...]. More significant was Burnouf and Lassen's *Essai sur le Pali*, the first Pali grammar to be published in Europe'.[45] Perhaps de Jong did not look closely enough at the *Essai* to recognise that it is not a grammar. Clough's was both the first Pali grammar in a Western language and the first in Europe. It was in fact the only Pali grammar published in a Western language until the late 1860s.

Returning to the *Grammar*'s distribution, as mentioned above, Clough donated a copy to the Royal Asiatic Society in 1828, which was noticed in this journal the following year. A copy with the 'Preface', in my own collection, is inscribed by Clough to Mountstuart Elphinstone, 'With the Authors Respects/ Wesleyan Mission House/ Colombo 30th Novr 1829', apparently indicating that it was sent as a gift. In March 1833, Friedrich August Rosen sent two copies to Wilhelm von Humboldt from London, requesting that he pass one of them on to Franz Bopp.[46] In a published memoir, an anonymous medical doctor who sailed to Ceylon with Clough on his return from his second furlough in 1833 states that, when he arrived, Clough found that termites had 'attacked a large number of copies of his "Pali Grammar," and his other works, and totally ruined them for sale, or even use; he estimated his loss at nearly two hundred pounds sterling'.[47] In his 1837 review of George Turnour's *Maháwanso in Roman Characters*, Hardy comments that European interest in Pali texts had been proven 'by the number of copies that have recently been sold in London of the Pali Grammar published by Rev. B. Clough'.[48] When this sale took place is unclear; Clough may have brought some copies home on his second furlough, sent some or all of his unspoiled stock to London after his return to Ceylon in 1833, or both. Overall, Clough distributed the *Grammar* in a rather desultory manner over a period of about a decade. Only a handful of copies reached Europe before the 1830s, and not many seem to have arrived even then. Prior

[43] In a letter quoted by Akira Yuyama, Burnouf states that he wrote the sections dealing with Pali scripts, the history of Pali, and Buddhism, and that Lassen wrote the comparisons of Pali with Sanskrit and Prakrit; A. Yuyama, *Eugène Burnouf: The Background to His Research into the Lotus Sutra* (Hachioji, 2000), p. 21. On Burnouf's work on Pali, see also A. Keller, 'Le déchiffrement de la langue pâlie et le bouddhisme du Sud', in *Eugène Burnouf (1801–1852) et les études indo-iranologiques: Actes de la Journée d'étude d'Urville (28 mai 2022) suivis des Lalitavistara (ch. 1–2) et Kāraṇḍavyūha traduits par E. Burnouf*, (ed.) G. Ducœur (Strasbourg, 2022), pp. 97–119.

[44] De Jong, 'Brief history', pp. 66, 70. For von Schlegel's letter, see Letter to Christian Lassen, January 11, Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Bonn, S 860: III: 34, https://august-wilhelm-schlegel.de/version-04-20/letters/view/648 (accessed 29 May 2025).

[45] P. C. Almond, *The British Discovery of Buddhism* (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 26–27.

[46] F. A. Rosen, Letter to Wilhelm von Humboldt, 7 March 1833, Jagiellonian Library, Coll. ling. fol. 53, pp. 252–257, https://webarchive.bbaw.de/default/20200622071327/https://wvh-briefe.bbaw.de/Brief?section=all&id=489 (accessed 29 May 2025).

[47] Anon., *Voyage to Ceylon*, p. 64.

[48] *The Friend* 1.3 (1837), p. 41.

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to the sale mentioned by Hardy, Clough seems to have handled the distribution personally, via direct mail from Colombo, to learned bodies, subscribers, others who paid in advance, and perhaps to some as personal gifts. The work probably also circulated in handwritten copies, such as the one possessed by Burnouf.

The *Grammar* was a Rosetta Stone that opened the study of Pali texts to the Western world. George Turnour states that it served as the basis for his own initial study of Pali and recommends it to others, commenting that 'the close affinity of Páli to Sanscrit, together with the aid afforded by Mr. Clough's translated Páli Grammar, in defining the points in which they differ, will enable any Sanscrit scholar to enter upon that interesting investigation with confidence'.[49] Burnouf made significant use of it, citing it several times in both his 1844 *Introduction* and 1852 *Lotus de la bonne loi*.[50] Feer suggests that Burnouf was using his French/English manuscript copy as the basis for a grammar of his own, which he never finished.[51] Burnouf also used the *Grammar* in his teaching. In the preface to the third edition of his translation of the *Dhammapada*, F. Max Müller writes:

> I began [Pali] in 1845 during my stay at Paris with Burnouf, who was then almost the only scholar who could read Pâli texts, and I still have a letter of his in which he apologises for his imperfect knowledge of the language. At that time Pâli scholarship had not yet become a special and independent study, but it was a kind of annexe to Sanskrit. Men like Bopp and Burnouf were expected to teach not only Sanskrit and Comparative Philology, but at the same time, Zend, the Prâkrit dialects, and, as one of them, Pâli. Clough's Pâli Grammar (Colombo, 1824 and 1832) and Turnour's Mahâvanso (1837) were all that we had to depend on.[52]

Max Müller's reference to Clough 1832 must be a mistaken reference to the 1830 Sinhala–English volume of Clough's *Dictionary*, which we will discuss presently. Viggo Fausböll cites the *Grammar* almost 30 times in his 1855 edition of the *Dhammapada*, based on three manuscripts that Rask brought to Denmark.[53] The preface to the important 1874 French translation of Ivan Minaev's Pali grammar opens with the statement: 'La seule grammaire pâlie qui existe, antérieurement à celle de M. Minayeff, nous voulons dire la grammaire de Clough, est depuis longtemps épuisée et aujourd'hui presque introuvable.'[54] In the preface to the second volume of his Pali dictionary, Childers comments that Clough's *Grammar* 'remained unsuperseded for more than thirty years'.[55]

The Sinhala–English volume of his *Dictionary*, 852 pages in length, which includes many Pali words, was Clough's other main contribution to Pali studies. Punshon thought it destined to be 'the work by which [Clough's] name will probably live the longest in the world of letters'.[56] Hardy describes its compilation:

[49] Turnour, *First Twenty Chapters of the Mahawanso*, pp. xcviii, cx; Turnour, *Maháwanso in Roman Characters*, pp. li, lviii.

[50] E. Burnouf, *Introduction à l'histoire du buddhisme indien* (Paris, 1844), vol. i; and E. Burnouf, *Le lotus de la bonne loi* (Paris, 1852).

[51] Feer, *Papiers d'Eugène Burnouf*, pp. 75–77.

[52] F. Max Müller (trans.), *The Dhammapada, A Collection of Verses, Being One of the Canonical Books of the Buddhists*, 2nd revised edn (Oxford, [1870] 1898), p. ix.

[53] V. Fausböll (ed.), *Dhammapadam, ex tribus codicibus Hauniensibus* (Copenhagen, 1855).

[54] S. Guyard, Avant-propos to J. Minayef, *Grammaire palie: Esquisse d'une phonétique et d'une morphologie de la langue palie*, (trans.) S. Guyard (Paris, 1874), p. 3. The author overlooks F. Mason, *A Pali Grammar on the Basis of Kachchayano with Chrestomathy & Vocabulary* (Taungoo, Burma, 1868).

[55] Childers, *Dictionary*, vol. i, p. xii.

[56] Punshon, 'Memoir of Clough', p. 104.

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> All possible pains were taken. The most learned men in the island were consulted in all cases of difficulty; and when it is known that every word not colloquial had to be sought for separately, from the works in a literature of considerable extent, it will be seen that great patience and much labour were required in its compilation. The method adopted was this. The principal books in the language were taken, and every word in them was cut from the leaf, and arranged in a frame filled with little boxes, according to the initial letter, a, á, i, í, and so on. Then all the words beginning with a were taken, and arranged according to the letters in the first syllable, ang, aka, aká, aki, akí, aku, akú, following the order of the nágara alphabet. Some of the definitions that are given of words connected with the rites and doctrines of Buddhism [were] previously unknown in any western language.[57]

Describing his work to the anonymous medical doctor he sailed with in 1833, Clough said that he sometimes spent days trying to find the correct meaning of a single word.[58] The printing and binding expenses were borne by the government, which then received 100 free copies.[59] In the dedication of the work, Clough thanked the governor, Sir Edward Barnes, for this sponsorship, which enabled him to publish the work without 'the risk of personal loss',[60] a loss that we have seen he actually suffered in publishing the *Grammar*. Though it received less discussion than the *Grammar*, and was also rare, it was an important scholarly resource. We have seen that Max Müller 'depended' on it and Burnouf himself cites it about 20 times in his *Introduction* and about 40 in his *Lotus*.

Given his early enthusiasm, the time and effort he put into its study, and his stated plans, Clough published less specifically on Buddhism than we would expect. Hopes were certainly high in some quarters. In 1823, the anonymous reviewer of Harvard's *Narrative of the Mission to Ceylon* for the *Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine*, perhaps Adam Clarke, expressed the wish that Clough would soon provide an 'exposition of the history, struggles, and forms of Budhuism, for which he has qualified himself beyond any other European, by his researches into Pali Literature'.[61] Indeed, no one at the time was better qualified for the task. In the end, though, Clough published just three small works: an article entitled 'The Buddha's vihara in Ceylon' in an 1833 edited volume of missionary contributions;[62] his *Kammavācā* translation for the Oriental Translation Fund; and his article 'Buddhism' for the *Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine*. Along with these, Clough made a few comments in the prefaces to his *Grammar* and the second volume of his *Dictionary*, in letters published in the *Methodist Magazine* (later the *Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine*) and in an internal Methodist publication entitled *Extracts from Quarterly Letters, &c.*, which was printed periodically in Colombo and sent to the missionary committee in London. While his letters in the *Methodist Magazine* and *Extracts* are now easy to access in digital form, the former never reached scholarly readers and the latter were not made available to the public.

Clough's published letters provide an important window into his early work on Buddhism and the development of his perspective. In his 1814 letter to Clarke, mentioned above, Clough provides a description of a preaching ritual, which is important in apparently being the oldest account of two-pulpit preaching, a distinct style used at the time by Siyam Nikāya monks in which one monk would recite a Pali text and another would provide

[57] Hardy, *Jubilee Memorials*, p. 278. For a discussion of some of Clough's definitions, see Harris, 'Impact of nineteenth-century missionary translations', pp. 136–139.

[58] Anon., *Voyage to Ceylon*, pp. 18–19.

[59] Hardy, *Jubilee Memorials*, p. 277.

[60] Clough, *Dictionary*, vol. ii, p. xxii.

[61] 46, p. 455.

[62] B. Clough, 'The vihara of Buddha in Ceylon', in *The Missionary; or Christian's New Year's Gift*, (ed.) W. Ellis (London, [1833]), pp. 277–289.

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an explanation in Sinhala.[63] Clough also mentions an interesting practice in which laypeople would stand for hours with lamps on their heads as an offering of light. This practice is also mentioned by Harvard, but is apparently otherwise unattested.[64] Clough's February 1816 letter to Buckley, also mentioned above, describes his frustration with his original, ethnographic approach and provides a rationale for the study of Buddhist texts:

> The priests are extremely reluctant to bring their books of any importance to light, and it is very difficult to get them to answer any question in a direct way; indeed, the best of them will prevaricate, and avoid a fair statement, if he can, without being suspected of duplicity. And it is almost impossible to find two of them who will give the same answers to the same questions. And when we remind them of the difference, their general reply is, the books that we studied have it so: yet all contend for the same degree of veracity.[65]

On the one hand, Clough felt that his conversations with Buddhists had reached a dead end and would not lead him to any clear understanding; on the other, the monks he spoke with told him that their beliefs were contained in their texts.

An 1825 letter illustrates one of the main approaches that Clough used in his conversion efforts, highlighting contradictions between Buddhist belief and science. Describing a private discussion he had with a Kandyan monk, he writes:

> [The Buddha] represents the world as a vast plane. ['']Now['], said I, ['']on this principle, if a ship leave a port, and for two years together continue to sail at such a rate in a direct westerly course, then at the end of that two years she must be so many thousand miles from the place she left.' 'Certainly,' said he. 'But now,' said I, 'our ships have often tried this; and at the end of two years, instead of finding themselves many thousand miles from the place they left, they have found themselves in the port from which they sailed.' Having a globe before me, I now explained the matter, and he immediately apprehended it. 'Besides,' said I, 'here is this quadrant, and this compass, by which instruments we find our way to every part of the world. And I can assure you, that Buddha has referred to oceans, to continents, to islands, and empires, and people, that never had an existence! Besides, said I, he pretends to have described the whole world.' And here I handed him a list of all the places mentioned in their books, as well known by him; and showing him a map of the world, said, 'This list of yours does not include one quarter of the world.' By this time the Priest was in a pitiable state. His face [...] turned pale; his lips quivered; and his whole frame was agitated. When he recovered he excused himself, and apologised for his agitation, and said, 'Sir, I have heard with amazement these things. I see the truth of what you state on

[63] Clough, 'Letter to Clarke', pp. 875–876. This style of preaching has been studied by Mahinda Deegalle, who cites a few references from the late nineteenth century; M. Deegalle, *Popularizing Buddhism: Preaching as Performance in Sri Lanka* (Albany, 2006), ch. 5. We can add a few more, earlier references: Harvard, *Narrative*, pp. lviii–lix; Clough, *Grammar*, p. iv (see Appendix); A. de Silva, 'On the corruptions of Budhism and the different tenets opinions and principles of the Amarapoora and Siamese sects', in J. Ribeiro, *History of Ceylon: Presented by Captain John Ribeyro to the King of Portugal, in 1685*, (trans.) Abbé le Grand and G. Lee (Colombo, 1847), p. 277; C. Pridham, *An Historical, Political and Statistical Account of Ceylon and Its Dependencies* (London, 1849), vol. i, p. 315; R. S. Hardy, *Eastern Monachism: An Account of the Origin, Laws, Discipline, Sacred Writings, Mysterious Rites, Religious Ceremonies, and Present Circumstances, of the Order of Mendicants Founded by Gótama Budha* (London, 1850), p. 234.

[64] Harvard, *Narrative*, pp. lviii–lix.

[65] Clough, 'Letter to Buckley, 12 February 1816', p. 398.

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> these points; but how are we situated in other respects?' 'Well,' said I, 'your astronomy, your history, and, in fact, the whole system of your theology, is precisely in the same state: It is all error![66]

Gogerly, Hardy, and Gogerly's student David De Silva used this method as well, and it can be considered fundamental to the Wesleyan approach.[67] Clough remarkably shows no awareness that his own religious tradition faced the same problem, a vulnerability that Buddhists would exploit in their long series of controversies with the Wesleyans that culminated in the famous Panadura Debate of 1873, which De Silva is generally considered to have lost to the influential monk Migettuwatte Gunananda.[68] The letter also represents a poignant snapshot of Buddhists' initial encounter with modernity, providing a reminder that traditional geography, cosmology, and mythical history were central to pre-modern South Asian Buddhist belief, with modern forms of Buddhism retaining only a fraction of the tradition's former territory.

Moving to Clough's formal publications, his preface to the second volume of his *Dictionary*, from 1830, presents a remarkable vision and justification for the study of Buddhism as a field in its own right:

> The favourable position of Ceylon [...] and the facilities which its learned languages afford for the investigation of the *buddhist* system, ought to be taken into consideration. Whether the developement of *buddhism* be likely to yield an interest commensurate with the difficulties and labour of unfolding it to the world, is not the question now to be answered. It must appear an object of no ordinary importance to every philanthropist, to be in possession of all that constitutes a system commanding a religious influence over so many millions of our fellow men. But the enquiries to be instituted in the investigation of *buddhism* lead to subjects so intricate and obscure that no author ought to venture upon the enterprize who is unable to consult original authorities in their own languages. This remark may appear gratuitous in the preface to a dictionary, yet the sentiment is fully borne out if we look at the errors into which many respectable writers have fallen in attempting to describe the *buddhist* system. Translations of native works of acknowledged authority, if executed with fidelity, will open the way for obtaining information, and remove many of the obstacles which at present impede the progress of research. [...] A knowledge of the languages in which the system is recorded becomes indispensable; and any work at all calculated to facilitate their acquirement claims the patronage and encouragement of every one interested in oriental researches.[69]

[66] B. Clough, 'Extract of a letter from Mr. Clough, dated Colombo, Nov. 5th, 1825', *Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine* 49 (August 1826), p. 558.

[67] John Scott writes of the Buddhist response to Gogerly's use of this approach: 'To escape from the difficulty, an ingenious attempt was made a few years ago to prove that these accounts of the universe were to be understood in an allegorical sense. Mr. Gogerly however [...] demolished this explanation, shewing that what Buddha taught concerning the world was intended by him to be believed literally, as an essential part of his religion'; Gogerly, Scott, and De Silva, 'Budhism', p. 88. Of course, Christians used the same approach to escape from similar difficulties. We can see in the Buddhist move an early step in the development of Buddhist modernism.

[68] Hardy traces the origin of the controversies to Clough's posting of a broadside entitled 'Reasons why i am not a Buddhist', in 1826; *Jubilee Memorials*, pp. 286–288. The text of the broadside seems to be lost. The best scholarly works on the controversies are Young and Somaratna, *Vain Debates* and B. A. R. Coplans, 'Methodism and Sinhalese Buddhism: The Wesleyan Methodist Encounter with Buddhism in Ceylon, 1814–1864, with Special Reference to the Work of Robert Spence Hardy' (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Leeds, 1980).

[69] Clough, *Dictionary*, vol. i, pp. vi–viii.

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A few things are noteworthy here. First, at a time when other scholars were reading Buddhist texts mainly for information on Indian history, Clough stands out in emphasising the importance of understanding Buddhist thought. He shows a clear understanding of the complexity of the matter and an awareness that significant effort would be required over an extended period of time. Especially salient is Clough's insistence that the effort should focus on Buddhist texts in their original languages. Of course, this did turn out to be the field's primary focus, a fact that has inspired some significant, if somewhat confused, discussion in more recent scholarship.[70] Although Clough is clearly writing in his liberal, academic persona here, he does an admirable job of justifying the study of Buddhism as being important to the broad understanding of humanity.[71]

[70] Almond brought the issue to the fore in his *British Discovery of Buddhism*, in which he depicts the scholarly prioritisation of texts as a colonialist move that he calls 'textualization'. He argues that Western scholars took control of Buddhism by defining it as existing primarily in Western libraries, rather than in Asia, and then used this control to depict contemporary Buddhism as representing a decline from a glorious past; pp. 12–13, 24, 26, 37, 139. Donald Lopez adopts Almond's idea, along with his term 'textualization', and attributes the move specifically to Burnouf; D. S. Lopez, 'Burnouf and the birth of Buddhist studies', *Eastern Buddhist*, n.s., 43.1/2 (2012), pp. 31, 34. Far from being a colonialist imposition, however, the idea that historical Buddhism is degenerate is a central pillar of Buddhist belief, a simple correlate of the depiction of the time of the Buddha as a religious golden age. What is remarkable is not that scholars saw later Buddhism as a decline, but that they accepted and developed depictions of its glorious origin. In an influential 1991 article, Gregory Schopen claimed that 'Protestant presuppositions' led scholars to privilege scriptural ideals of Buddhist practice over epigraphic/archaeological data as historical evidence, suggesting that Protestant prioritisation of the Bible over Church tradition 'has been so thoroughly absorbed into the Western intellectual tradition that its polemical and theological origins have been forgotten and it is now taken [...] entirely as a given'; G. Schopen, 'Archaeology and Protestant presuppositions in the study of Indian Buddhism', *History of Religions* 31.1 (1991), p. 22. While scholars have certainly often failed to realise that a tradition's abstract doctrines do not necessarily tell us much about its historical and cultural reality, there does not seem to be any reason to think this had anything to with either Protestantism or a focus on texts. Scholars have shown that scriptural texts can be read for historical data; J. S. Walters, 'Suttas as history: four approaches to the *Sermon on the Noble Quest* (Ariyapariyesanasutta)', *History of Religions* 38.3 (1999), pp. 247–284; J. Nattier, *A Few Good Men: The Bodhisattva Path According to* The Inquiry of Ugra (Ugraparipṛcchā) (Honolulu, 2003), pp. 63–69. Ronald Davidson highlights the fact that Buddhists themselves attributed primary importance to their texts and suggests that 'Buddhist studies is influenced by traditional bias of the indigenous informants more than by the values of Protestant Christianity'; R. Davidson, *Indian Esoteric Buddhism: A Social History of the Tantric Movement* (New York, 2002) p. 352, n. 52. We have seen that Clough explicitly makes it clear that this was so in his case. Although he was the most thoroughly Protestant of the early scholars, he shows nothing so simple as an uncritical projection of his beliefs about the location of true Christianity onto Buddhism. Clough was not mainly concerned to uncover the beliefs that his informants held in ethnographic fact, but rather the beliefs he would need to disprove to convert them to Christianity. In the history of religions, it is not at all unusual for people to identify as being committed to beliefs that they do not understand, or necessarily even know of. Buddhists identified their beliefs as being contained in their texts for the simple reason that they had faith in the Buddha and believed that the texts preserved his teachings. They themselves might misunderstand one thing or another, but the texts must be right. While Schopen often presents the discrepancy between idealised visions of early or true Buddhism and the more realistic pictures suggested by epigraphy and certain *vinaya* texts as a matter of fantasy versus fact, it is important to recognise that he also often depicts idealised visions of early Buddhism and early Mahāyāna as fact and the more realistic pictures as reflections of a later decline. On this, see D. Drewes, 'The forest hypothesis', in *Setting Out on the Great Way: Essays on Early Mahāyāna Buddhism*, (ed.) P. Harrison (Sheffield, 2018), pp. 74–79, 85–87. The tension between these contradictory perspectives is central to Schopen's work, giving the impression that he challenges standard understandings of Buddhism more than he actually does.

[71] In an early letter, Clough depicts the study of Buddhism as having an almost millenarian significance: Westerners will need to understand Buddhism 'previous to the grand overthrow of the whole system of idolatry'; B. Clough, 'Extract of a Letter from Mr. Clough to Mr. Buckley, Mission House, Colombo, Nov. 4, 1816', *Methodist Magazine* 40 (June 1817), p. 235. Like other missionaries, Clough saw the British colonial domination of South Asia as part of a divinely orchestrated plan for spreading the Gospel; he envisioned the study of Buddhism as another part.

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In his 1833 'Buddha's vihara in Ceylon', Clough discusses the nature and format of Buddhist temples and provides some basic comments on Buddhism that were significantly ahead of their time. His discussion focuses on a woodblock print of an unspecified *vihāra*, which we can identify as Yatagala Rāja Mahāvihāraya, an ancient, still active temple near Galle. Clough gives an early characterisation of the Buddha as an ancient philosopher and indirectly presents the idea of five *skandhas*, coming very near to providing the first published, scholarly account of the Buddhist teaching of *anātman*, or 'no-self':

> *Gautama Buddha*, the originator of this great system of faith, was the founder of a school of philosophy in one of the Gangetic provinces, several centuries previous to the Christian era [...]. His philosophy embraces many doctrines which bear a striking resemblance to those of the oldest Grecian philosophers, and particularly in their doctrine of atoms. With him matter is eternal, consisting of five primitive elements, out of which spring all that variety of objects existing both in the visible and invisible worlds.[72]

Along with his general presentation, Clough makes an interesting mention in a note of a Buddhist temple building that had been transported to England and was being exhibited in London.[73]

Clough's 1840 'Buddhism' was one of the best publications on Buddhism published to that date, though it seems to have been completely overlooked. I have not yet been able to locate a single publication, contemporary or recent, that mentions it. He discusses the contents of some *suttas* and *atthakathās*, and mentions that he had made translations of several *suttas*, which turned out to be too long to include. Although George Turnour had presented outlines of the Pali canon already in 1837, Clough includes one of his own that was clearly prepared independently, showing a good general familiarity with its divisions and

[72] Clough, 'Vihara', pp. 278–279. The first clear, published presentation of the doctrine of *anātman* in Western scholarship can be found in D. J. Gogerly, 'On transmigration', Part 1, *The Friend* 2.3 (1838), p. 45.

[73] *Ibid*, pp. 280–281. The temple was exhibited at Exeter Hall from 12 December 1832 until the middle of the following year; 'A real heathen temple', *London Courier and Evening Gazette*, 11 December 1832; 'The Oriental exhibition', *Morning Herald* (London), 11 July 1833. The published catalogue gives a detailed description, but unfortunately no background information; Anon., *The Miniature of Buddhism, in a Description of the Objects Represented in the Buddhist Temple Imported from India, and Opened for Public Inspection, at Exeter Hall on December 12th 183*[*2*] (London, 1833). The British Library's copy of this catalogue has a handwritten note on the title page, of uncertain veracity, identifying its author as Edward Upham. The person who accompanied the exhibition was one J. W. Pereira; 'Royal Asiatic Society', *The London Literary Gazette and Journal of Belles Lettres, Arts, Sciences, &c.* 849, 27 April 1833, p. 265. The temple was later reported as being exhibited in Liverpool in 1834, Hull in 1844, and Liverpool again in 1849. A notice in the *Liverpool Mercury*, reprinted in the *Downpatrick Recorder* for 29 December 1849, reports that the 'Temple [...] was imported from India [Ceylon] some years ago by Fletcher, Alexander, and Co., in a vessel belonging to W. Tindall, Esq., of Scarborough' and that 'the Temple which in itself is most perfect with a colossal statue of Buddha, and also statues of deities and their chief disciples was originally exhibited at Exeter Hall, London, and is formed of Indian teak wood, weighing altogether, upwards of five tons. The interesting object is the property of a private gentleman, and has been laying by packed in the original boxes, in which it was imported, for the last few years [...]. The genuineness of the temple is vouched for by the Rev. Benjamin Clough [...] a gentleman who was, for 25 years, a missionary in Ceylon, and was in the identical temple at the time of its being the scene of idolatrous worship in Ceylon' ('A Buddhist temple'). In April 1850, William Drewitt exhibited the temple at his Royal Portobello Gardens in Dublin; 'The Portobello Gardens', *Dublin Evening Post*, 18 April 1850. In 1853, the temple was put up 'for sale, hire, or on share' with the claim that 'a fortune has already been realized' by its exhibition; 'For sale, hire, or on share', *The Era* (Dublin), 13 March 1853. It was still under exhibit at the Portobello Gardens in July of that year, after which I have not yet found any more about it. It seems certain that Clough had some involvement in the temple's being brought to England, but it is unclear what it was.

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contents.[74] Like Wilson, H. T. Colebrooke, early Jean-Pierre Abel-Rémusat, and late Hardy, Clough presents the Buddha's historicity as uncertain, referring to him as 'the reputed author of the system' and qualifying a comment about him with the condition 'if such a person did ever exist'.[75] It is unfortunate that Clough did not write more, and it is difficult to do more than speculate on his reasons for not doing so.

When attempting to locate Clough in the birth of Buddhist studies, it is important to first say that the common claim that the field was founded by Burnouf is not very helpful. While his *Introduction* and *Lotus* were certainly the grandest works of the early period, Burnouf did not actually found anything. It is in fact difficult to identify any major discovery or important perspective that can properly be credited to him.[76] Donald Lopez gives Burnouf credit for four specific moves—'Indianization', 'Sanskritization', 'Textualization', and 'Humanization'—but, without going into specific details, all of these had been made by previous scholars and, substituting Palicisation for Sanskritisation, we find all four combined already in the work of Clough.[77] Rather than originating with a single publication or heroic figure, the field emerged in an extended process involving contributions from several scholars. The process was set in motion by the foundation of the great Asiatic societies, most importantly those of Calcutta, Paris, and London, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, which provided the institutional basis for organised, collegial study. The first works to present themselves as part of a progressive, international effort to make sense of Buddhism were published under the auspices of these societies, or in close communication with them, in the 1820s. The most important scholars in the very beginning were Wilson, Rémusat, and Clough, with Burnouf joining them in the second half of the decade. To a significant extent, these can be regarded as the first works of what we now call Buddhist studies.

An important factor was the relative dating of the main categories of primary texts, a difficult problem that was not resolved until the 1870s. Although scholars had several pieces of the puzzle, until this dating was in place, they were largely groping in the dark. With Burnouf, it is important to keep in mind that he always thought that his Nepalese Sanskrit manuscripts preserved the oldest surviving texts and that this threw off his whole understanding. Once scholars determined that Pali *suttas* were much older, Burnouf's views became largely obsolete and few scholars cited his work. Another key factor was the emergence of Buddhist studies as a field of its own, which involved an even longer process that stretched into the second half of the twentieth century. Until then, most leading scholars studied Buddhism as an aspect of Indology, Sinology, or the broader study of Asia. The first scholar to envision and advocate the study of Buddhism as a distinct field, however, was Clough, in the preface to the second volume of his *Dictionary*, discussed above. Of all the things that might have interested them on the island, not only Clough, but all the Wesleyans published only on Buddhism. After the time of Gogerly and Hardy, this exclusive focus was

[74] Turnour, *Maháwanso in Roman Characters*, p. lxxv, and 'An examination of the Páli Buddhistical annals', part 1, *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* 6.67 (1837), pp. 527–528; Clough, 'Buddhism', pp. 1017–1018.

[75] *Ibid*, p. 1016. For the views of Wilson, Colebrooke, Rémusat, and Hardy, see D. Drewes, 'The idea of the historical Buddha', *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 40 (2017), pp. 1–25. Following Wilson's Sanskrit–English dictionary, Clough defined Śākyamuni as 'the real or supposed founder of the buddhist religion' already in the Sinhala–English volume of his *Dictionary*; H. H. Wilson, *A Dictionary, Sanscrit and English: Translated, Amended and Enlarged, From an Original Compilation Prepared by Learned Natives for the College of Fort William* (Calcutta, 1819), s.v.; Clough, *Dictionary*, vol. i, s.v.

[76] The most significant are perhaps being the first to translate a Mahāyāna sūtra from an Indic to a Western language and the first to recognise Mahāyāna sūtras as a distinct class of Buddhist scriptural text. For criticism of the idea of Burnouf as the founder, see also M. Kapstein, Review of U. App, *The Cult of Emptiness: The Western Discovery of Buddhist Thought and the Invention of Oriental Philosophy* and D. S. Lopez Jr, *From Stone to Flesh: A Short History of the Buddha, History of Religions* 54.4 (2015), pp. 463–464.

[77] Lopez, 'Burnouf'.

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maintained by T. W. Rhys Davids, whose Pali Text Society succeeded the Wesleyan Mission as the primary institution for Western Pali studies.

Significantly more work will be needed before we will have a clear sense of the main figures and developments involved in the emergence of Buddhist studies. The most important periods requiring additional study, I would suggest, are the 1820s and the 1850s to 1880s. Although major scholars from the 1830s, especially Turnour, Alexander Csoma de Kőrös, Rémusat, and Isaac Jacob Schmidt, have been recognised as playing significant roles, typically envisioned as paving the way for Burnouf's *Introduction*, the international, academic study of Buddhism actually emerged in the 1820s, a period that scholars have scarcely touched. The work of this period has been overlooked largely because much of it is very rare or, in the case of most of Wilson's work, which I will discuss elsewhere, was published anonymously. Much of the rare material from this period has been digitised in recent years, enabling scholars to access it without needing to travel, but much is still only available on crumbling pages in scattered archives. This is especially true of scholars' letters, which generally have not received careful study.[78] The period from the 1850s to the 1880s is important because most of the basic understanding of Indian Buddhism and its history current today was established during this time, the main scholars being Wilson (still!), Gogerly, Hardy, Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire, Max Müller, Karl Friedrich Köppen, V. P. Vasil'ev, Émile Senart, I. P. Minaev, Rhys Davids, Hermann Oldenberg, and Hendrik Kern. The now central idea that early Buddhism focused on the practice of meditation and the attainment of a special religious or mystical experience, however, did not emerge until the 1920s and 1930s, when it was introduced by D. T. Suzuki.

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Appendix: 'Preface' included in some copies of Clough's *Grammar*

<i.> The Pali and the Sanskrit languages being so nearly allied to each other, it is much to be regretted that the former should have remained so long an almost unexplored region. Interesting discoveries have been made, of late years, in Oriental literature, through the medium of Sanskrit; yet the Pali, although possessed of every claim to investigation, has been greatly neglected by Europeans. In the few introductory remarks which the Editor intends here to make, he will refrain, as much as possible, from adverting to points that might lead to a discussion on the *relative* claims which these two very ancient languages have upon the attention of Oriental scholars of the present day. The Sanskrit is the most ancient and extensive depository of the History, Theology, Jurisprudence, and Science in general, of the Brahmins; the Pali is the same of the Buddhists. The Brahmins conceive the Sanskrit to be the most ancient language in the world; but the Buddhists, with equal warmth, and some show of reason, contend that the Pali is entitled to the precedence.

The arguments advanced by both parties, turn chiefly upon religious notions, in which they are ever at issue, and we might as well attempt to reconcile the principles of the two great systems of heathenism to each other, as hope to prevail on their adherents to think

[78] Several of Clough's unpublished letters are kept in the Methodist Missionary Society archive, held by the SOAS library. Generally, these can only be viewed on microfiche, with special permission being necessary to see the originals. When I visited the library in July 2024, I unfortunately found the microfiche copies to be insufficiently legible and was not able to see the originals. These will doubtless prove a source of important information. For comments on the difficulty of studying Burnouf's letters, see Yuyama, *Eugène Burnouf*, p. 3.

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alike on this subject.—This point, therefore, must be determined by Europeans, when they are in possession of the requisite evidence. Judging from the striking similarity that exists between them in every essential part, one would be disposed to conclude that the Sanskrit and Pali languages had a common origin, or that the one is derived from the other, and that they were vernacular in countries contiguous, and in ages not very remote from each other.

If the developement of each, in modern days, had been carried on with equal ardour and success, it would, most certainly, have extended and perfected discoveries of the first importance to Oriental literature. For it ought long ago to have been more extensively known among men of <ii.> Asiatic research, that among the numerous volumes existing in the Pali language, are many by different authors, with different titles, which narrate many of the same events as are found in Sanskrit. Here we have the same Dynasties of Kings and Emperors;—the rise, progress, and overthrow, of the same Empires—accounts of the same wars and contentions, both civil and religious. It must, therefore, be apparent, that could the two languages have been brought into the full view of Europeans, by the same progressive efforts, their concurrent testimony on the subjects already mentioned, would have afforded Oriental writers additional certainty in their researches: and, in all probability, would have removed much of that obscurity and doubtfulness which is observable in almost every page of modern Asiatic research.

In some cases indeed, the testimony of Oriental writings is not satisfactory evidence of the facts upon which it bears, as the coalition might arise from design or intrigue: but no such objection presents itself to the union of evidence which we find in the Sanskrit and Pali writings, for the Books found in one language have been written by Brahmins, and the others by Buddhists, between whom there could not in any period of the world have existed any such amity as would be necessary to unite in framing such a series of systematic records.

Their religious views and practices being opposite to each other, they lived in a state of constant hostility, which ended in the most sanguinary conflicts. And when the balance of power preponderated in favour of the Brahmins, the Buddhists became an oppressed and persecuted people, and finally, they and their religion were expelled from the country which had been the birth-place of both. From this period must be dated the decline of the Pali language and literature; an event which took place anterior to the Christian era.

A full examination of this subject is a desideratum in Asiatic research, and greatly merits the attention of some able Orientalist; but any attempt of the kind would here be out of place. This ground is yet so little trodden, that it was intended, in the first instance, that the present work should go abroad without any lengthened remarks being prefixed, but it being the first work of the kind ever published, and one likely to fall into the hands of persons who have had but few opportunities of collecting information of some of the peculiar facts connected with the language it is designed <iii.> to illustrate, it is now thought that a few observations are indispensable.

And first of the *name*. The names of several of the principal languages of India are epithets expressive of some particular qualities of the language they designate. The word *Pali* is from පැල *pela*, *a Row*, a word which when used in such a place, is designed to express the perfection of its grammatical construction. But the name which it most generally bears in the records of the language is මගධය *Magadha*, which it takes from the country so called, where it was originally spoken.

Mr. Colebrooke, in his learned Essay on the Sanskrit and Prákrit languages, in the Asiatic Researches, Vol. 6, makes out the Magadha to mean among Indian authors, "a rude uncultivated language; a dialect of the vulgar, and the lowest castes of natives." How so learned and respectable a writer on Indian literature could have fallen into such an error, I know not, except by the probability that he suffered his mind to be biassed by the sentiments of the Brahminical Pundits, who hold the Buddhists in abhorrence, and their language in

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contempt. For, waiving various other arguments that might be advanced, it might be fairly presumed, that the Grammar here presented to the world of the real මගධභාෂාව *Magadha bhasava* is quite sufficient to refute such a charge. Mr. Colebrooke's *Magadha bhasava*, must therefore mean some rude dialect of the old language, which became vernacular in the country subsequent to the period already referred to, when the religion and language of Buddha were driven out of Magadha by the persecuting Brahmins.

Of the *country* where Pali became vernacular. This is a subject of enquiry which has already been partly anticipated. The natives designate it sometimes මධ්‍යදේසය *Madhyadaysaya*, which among them, means India proper, or India within the Ganges. There is scarcely any end to their historical accounts of this country, which is rendered so sacred to them on account of its being the birth-place of their Deity, the great scene of his labours, and especially the place where he delivered *vivâ voce*, the Banna, their *Sacred* writings, all of which are found in the Pali language. Col. Wilford's account of this country given in the A. R. Vol. 9, agrees very well with the native account of it. "By Magadha proper, South Bahar is understood, but in a more extensive sense, it includes all the Gangetic provinces, and is by far the richest <iv.> and best part of the British Empire in Asia. It is also famous for having given birth to Budha, and being, as it were, the cradle of the religion of one of the most powerful and extensive sects in the world." And that it must have been a place of great sanctity at some period, even its present name testifies, *South Bahar*, which it has from විහාර *Vihara*, a temple. At the present period, Pali has not only ceased to be the vernacular language of Magadha, but of every other country. But in the temples of Budha, whose priests continue to study it with unabated interest, it is often the medium of intercourse, particularly in the discussion of sacred subjects: and on the festival days, their public lectures are generally given in Pali, and afterward interpreted into Singhalese by one of the officiating priests.

One of the chief arguments advanced by the Buddhists in proof of the *antiquity* of Pali, is the antiquity of their Religion. They by no means admit that Goutama, the son of Sododana, whose era is well ascertained in Indian Chronology, was the founder of their Religion, but that in the lapse of ages, he was one of its great devotees, and one who living according to all the laws of that system, attained the rank of Buddha. They mention also, that the principles of Buddhism are coeval with time, or the existence of man, and that the other systems of Religion found in India are schisms, or rather corruptions, of the primitive Religion. Before this point can be conceded to them, we must set both Revelation and reason aside. Buddhism is perfect atheism; and its advocates maintain that the belief in the existence of gods, and the practices of paying them divine homage, are modern corruptions of the first religious principles of mankind. Such ideas are opposed by the reason, common-sense, and practice, of all the nations of the world besides. Therefore, if the antiquity of Pali be solely founded on such a sentiment, it will have no support.

It is true, the Magadha Emperors, from whom Buddha is descended, were for many centuries Lords paramount of India, and that while such was the case, the Pali was, no doubt, cultivated in a high degree; yet we have no Records in the Language worthy of notice anterior to the Days of Goutama Buddha, whom I conceive to have been the great moral Philosopher of his day. In the most *ancient* languages we have deposits of literature, which were, doubtless, the earliest efforts of mankind. Hence in Sanskrit are found Books on <v.> astronomy, astrology, witchcraft, and necromancy, in all its variations. But in the ancient Pali there are found no works of this description nor any reference to the subjects, any further than that such were in existence at the times in which the authors in that language lived and wrote. Another peculiarity observable in most of the ancient languages is, that they are in general exceedingly artificial and complex in their grammatical construction, abounding in a great variety of inflexions and terminations. But as languages are in no small degree affected by the changes and vicissitudes of the nation in which they are at

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first vernacular, they become in the lapse of time less artificial, and substitute in the place of their original inflections and terminations various auxiliaries and particles, by the adoption and use of which the language is both spoken and written with less efforts of mind than before. And this is peculiarly the case when the language, or a very proximate dialect of it, is, by invasion or conquest, transferred to another people. This fact is so clearly established, in European history especially, that it is unnecessary to produce instances. If therefore we apply this rule of judging to the question in consideration, we have a criterion by which we may judge of the *antiquity* of Pali. Every essential of this language is found in Sanskrit. The Vocabularies of its nouns and of its verbal roots are nearly the same: the one of nouns which is appended to this Grammar is a copy, with slight alterations, of the *Amera Cosha*, published by Colebrook, and the list of verbal roots is nearly the same, but differently classified, as the one published by the same author from Sanskrit. The Grammars also of the Pali are formed on nearly the same model as those of the Sanskrit, but with this difference, they are much more simple, and not burthened with that load of inflexions and anomalies which are so appalling to the Sanskrit student, and bear the most undoubted marks of being much more modern. The conclusion therefore is to my mind irresistible, that Pali is not what may be termed a primitive, i.e. one of the ancient languages which at the confusion at Babel divided the families of the earth, but that it is a derived language, and one of the most ancient and perfect scions of the Sanskrit. It still remains to be determined when it became a distinct and vernacular language in the nation where it was first found.

<vi.> Of the *character* in which Pali was originally written, little can be said with certainty, and it has often been a matter of surprise to me that the learned in Ceylon who have studied the language almost as their native tongue, should not be able to give any account whatever of its alphabet. It has been suggested, especially by Dr. F. Buchanan, that the square character found in the Burman empire, in which many of their books are written, is the original character of the Pali language. Several eminent Priests have gone from Ceylon to Ava, and have resided there for years, and on their return have brought large collections of books in this character. I have examined with much care, and with the assistance of the Priests, several specimens of them, to try and ascertain this fact; but the custom which prevails among the Burmese of lackering or enamelling the books in this character, instead of writing or rather engraving them with the style, tends to give a great indistinctness to many of the letters, and renders it not so easy to decypher them. Yet it is quite clear in my apprehension that the alphabet was formed upon that ancient model, the *devánágari*, as are many of the Indian alphabets, both within and beyond the Ganges. But not having been able to procure a copy of the alphabet, and being under the necessity of forming my opinion upon it as I find it in written order, I cannot speak with that certainty I should wish: however I find there are in this alphabet 9 characters less than are in the *devánágari* alphabet, viz. 5 vowels and 4 consonants; also several of the symbols which in Sanskrit are substituted for certain mute consonants for the convenience of writing, such as the upper and lower signs for the *r*, which sounds never occur in Pali, although the word may be directly derived from Sanskrit. In the latter we write *purwah*, in the former *pubbo; chandrah*, *chando*. Granting, however, that this alphabet is what it is now conjectured to be, yet it is remarkable that no vestiges of it were to be found in Ceylon previous to the introduction of the books already referred to, from the Burman empire. For it is the decided sentiments of the Priests and the learned of both countries, that both the religion of Buddha and the Pali language were carried from hence to Burma. But it is time and patient research that must determine both this and <vii.> other matters of importance that yet remain unsettled with respect to the history of the Pali language. I must however just say that "*the native of Taway*," mentioned by Dr. F. Buchanan, A. R. vol. 6 page 306, greatly misled that Gentleman, when he told him there was a great difference between the Pali of Ceylon and that of the Burman empire. It

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is the uniform declaration of those Singhalese Priests who have resided in that empire for years, and at Ava the seat of learning and general information, that there is no difference whatever; and in the very limited opportunities which I have had of collating Burman and Singhalese Pali books I find them exactly the same, with the only exception of a few literal differences which have originated with the copier. So that a Burma Pali book, either in the square or common character *read* in Ceylon, will be perfectly intelligible to the Singhalese Pali scholar.

The latter part of this work went to Press, I am sorry to say, under considerable disadvantages. On account of the ill state of my health, I was forced to quit Ceylon for a time, nor could I previous to my leaving the country give that finish to the manuscript I could have wished. The *Dahtoo Manjusa*, or list of Verbal Roots, although completed, is not classified in the manner I first intended it should be. And it was my intention also, to have enlarged the various meanings of the negahandua, or vocabulary, much beyond what they now are. However, the work was only given in the hope that it would lead to the publication of a more copious and perfect work by some one who has more leisure, and greater facilities at command than have ever fallen to my lot.

It has already appeared in the Prospectus, that was given to the public, how far the late W. TOLFREY, Esq. H. M. C. S. in this Island carried this work. Both the Grammar and the Vocabulary were brought into a state of great forwardness by him, but I never could collect from any of his memorandums that he contemplated publishing them. When his mass fell into my hands, I thought that such documents were of too great importance to the republic of letters to suffer them to be lost. Hoping they would be found of some utility, I resolved on publishing them, with the result also of my own efforts at their completion, at the same time shall refrain from any further apology on the Subject.

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