

# **The Pāli Tipiṭaka Recension Carved on the Kuthodaw Pagoda Stelae and Its Relation to Other Burmese Versions**

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## ABSTRACT

This article presents details on the background (and subsequent influence) of the Kuthodaw Pagoda inscriptions (Mandalay, Myanmar), supplementing and extending an earlier paper by Allon et al. (2016). In particular, this article puts forward new material on the Tipiṭaka editing projects undertaken during the reign of King Mindon (reigned 1853–1878) and the so-called Sixth Council (1954–1956). By examining what is known about the processes that occurred for these apparently unified recensions and the subsequent publishing initiatives linked to each, the article attempts to clarify and underline the importance of the Pāli text of the Kuthodaw Pagoda stelae and its significance for contemporary editors, readers, and translators of Theravāda canonical texts. Also included are indicatory results of new textual studies comparing four canonical extracts using nineteenth century manuscripts from Mandalay, the Kuthodaw stelae inscribed version, and printed versions linked to the Fifth and Sixth Councils, as well as those of the Pali Text Society (PTS).

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#### I. INTRODUCTION

From 1860 to 1868 King Mindon (reigned 1853–1878) of Myanmar — the country known then in Western sources as Burma — had the complete Theravāda Buddhist canon in Pāli (the *Tiṭṭaka*) carved onto 729 marble stelae using Burmese script and installed at a specially constructed monument in his new capital in the north of Myanmar (Ludu Daw Ahmar 1980, 52).<sup>1</sup> The inscribed marble stelae were set up vertically and each separately housed at the specifically constructed Kuthodaw Pagoda not far from the new royal palace complex in Mandalay. By transferring Pāli texts from manuscript to stone King Mindon did something new, extending the range of the traditional and routine religious duties of Myanmar kings, namely, to take steps to conserve and transmit the Buddha's teachings for the good of the realm and the teaching (*sāsana*). Myanmar has a particularly rich and well-established history of stone inscriptions (both religious and non-religious) in a number of languages; however this was the first time the

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<sup>1</sup> There are, in addition, four stelae in the Burmese language.

Pāli canon was carved onto stone in its entirety ; the Kuthodaw was at the time of its production unique in the Theravāda world.<sup>2</sup>

The Kuthodaw inscriptions (which survived unscathed both Japanese and British bombing of Mandalay during the Second World War) preserve a complete and perhaps unified recension of the Pāli canon, and as such they constitute a unique inscriptional witness of the Theravāda textual tradition of Myanmar outside the range of influence of Western textual methods and practices. This paper follows an earlier one (Allon et al. 2016) reporting on a collaborative project to conserve, document, and study the texts on the stelae in Mandalay — that paper details official permissions, documentation of the site, conservation planning, cleaning, photography, etc., and provides a detailed description of the first phase of the larger project aiming to comprehensively study the monument and the textual recension it preserves. That material will not be repeated here ; however, some additional historical material located since that paper was published will be included below.

In order to explore the nature of the recension of the Pāli canon inscribed in stone, this paper firstly gives some background on the Kuthodaw Pagoda and overviews preliminary findings from textual research. In particular, new information on the so-called Fifth Council (1871) and the editorial procedures of the Sixth Council (1954–1956) are presented to move towards a clearer understanding of the (currently opaque) textual work of those two projects. Their work has had a decisive formative influence on the versions of Pāli texts accessible today on-line. This paper also attempts to put forward evidence that the Pāli text preserved on the stelae of the Kuthodaw Pagoda (and the subsequent printed editions based on those) are a significant international resource for all interested in the transmission (and constitution) of the Theravāda canon in Myanmar and in wider South and Southeast Asia. Recourse to the readings preserved on stone in Mandalay can

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<sup>2</sup> Within Myanmar it became a model for other sites to house inscribed versions of the Pāli commentarial corpus (Sandamuni Pagoda) or contemporary writings in Pāli and Burmese (i.e. writings by Ledi Sayadaw at Monywa, Sagaing region) (Bollée 1968, 495).

assist editors, readers, and translators of Pāli texts to better comprehend the Tipiṭaka texts as transmitted within Myanmar from ancient times.

The broader focus of the overall project is to explore questions of how the texts as inscribed at the Kuthodaw relate to both earlier manuscript traditions within Myanmar and subsequent printed versions of the canon published in Myanmar — all in order to situate the text version on marble within the much larger range of international sources for Pāli textual scholarship and research. This paper is intended to supplement previous accounts and will present:

1. Additional background on the Kuthodaw Pagoda from Western sources.
2. Further details about the Fifth Council held nearby in the Royal Palace in 1871 after the stelae had been carved.
3. New information on subsequent printings of the Kuthodaw inscriptions by the Hanthawaddy and similar presses from 1893 to at least 1939.
4. New material on the editing procedures adopted by the influential Sixth Council (1954–1956), which took the Kuthodaw inscriptions as a starting point.
5. A review of characterisations of the value of the Kuthodaw inscribed texts by Bollée (1968) and Clark (2015a; 2015b), the only scholars to previously examine the inscribed text closely.
6. New indicatory findings from four short textual examinations which compare the Kuthodaw text with readings from manuscripts and printed editions.

The clarification of the differences between the inscribed and published versions of canonical texts deepens scholarly appreciation of the alterations (major and minor) introduced over the past centuries to Pāli texts by documenting (the many times silent) editorial practices and conventions, which are as yet poorly described or understood. A major value of using the stelae texts is that they present a Myanmar version of the Pāli canon uninfluenced by Western scholarship. As far as we know, the Kuthodaw texts have only been used by two Western scholars for

Pāli textual work (details below). The reasons for this lack of use by scholars from outside Myanmar seem to be threefold:

1. The long periods of restrictions on foreigners visiting Myanmar and travelling within the country meant that it was often very difficult for non-Myanmar-based scholars to access the inscriptions.
2. For those scholars who managed to access the site, the stelae were mostly locked away in individual pagodas and not easy to read or photograph without considerable preparatory steps (unlocking, cleaning, dousing with water, arranging lighting, etc.) and so no fully legible images seem to have been available (the complete set of high resolution photographic images prepared for this project will be released online for public access overcoming both of these two limitations).
3. While scholars outside Myanmar had little to no access, for Myanmar-based scholars it seems the publication of the state-sponsored Sixth Council edition of texts from the mid-1950s onwards resulted in a setting aside of the Kuthodaw's nineteenth-century inscriptional versions (authorised as they were by the Fifth Council in 1871); presumably the Kuthodaw versions (like those that preceded the Fifth Council) were perceived as surpassed and improved upon by the extensively publicised and drawn out editorial work of the nationally significant Sixth Council in the 1950s.

Undoubtedly important scholarship on the Kuthodaw and its history exists in Burmese; however, it has not yet been possible to make use of work by interested Myanmar scholars (apart from Ludu Daw Ahmar's indispensable work) or to systematically search through printed materials in Burmese on the monument. With that said, the material presented here is heavily reliant on English language materials with the consequent limitations that entails.

Before gathering together a number of historical sources concerning the Kuthodaw, it is as well to mention in passing (since a comprehensive history of the role of the Kuthodaw has yet to be written) that it is not possible to consider the construction of the impressive Kuthodaw

inscriptional monument without regard to the context of British encroachments in Lower Myanmar in the mid- to late-nineteenth century prior to full annexation. The larger question of the reasons for the entire Buddhist scriptural text corpus being carved into stone for the first time in Myanmar by King Mindon can presumably be considered as an element of (renewed?) focus on scriptures *per se*, perhaps even with an element of “scripturalist” import.<sup>3</sup>

The setting up of such an outstanding public monument as the Kuthodaw, and the subsequent public event of the Fifth Council, played a significant role in King Mindon’s self-promotion and push towards legitimation as a Buddhist monarch (see for example the royal proclamations cited below explicitly linking Mindon with Aśoka, the great Buddhist monarch of the legendary past). As observed by Braun (2012, 6), “The Fifth Council allowed Mindon to reassert the strength of Buddhism as a coherent whole in royal Burma and, by extension, his authority under the banner of the *dharmarāja*.” No doubt much more research is possible into the role of the monument within Mindon’s political agenda. The focus here, however, is on the place of the text inscribed on the stelae for Pāli textual history within Myanmar.

A final introductory comment is needed to address the question of the relative importance (or otherwise) of the Kuthodaw recension for Pāli textual studies, i.e., with particular reference to the Burmese tradition. As stated by Rhys Davids and Carpenter (1886, xi–xii; emphasis added):

As to the Sumaṅgala[vilāsini] itself, there is a marked difference between the text as handed down in Ceylon and the text (so far as we can judge from our one Burmese manuscript) as handed down in Burma. *The variations are more frequent than important.* It will be seen on referring to our notes that they amount on average to at least five or six words on each printed page, but that there are only about half a dozen cases in the whole volume in which the variations make any substantial difference in the

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<sup>3</sup> With reference to Theravāda countries, Collins (1990, 115, n. 51) described “scripturalism” as “a religious attitude arising as a reaction to a wide range of phenomena in the experience of colonialism and modernity”, as part of a “search for indigenous resources to combat foreign dominance” leading to “an emphasis on the noble ideals of the early texts”.

sense. The variations do not therefore constitute what could fairly be called another recension. One synonym is used for another, one particle for another of closely similar sense, a word of no particular importance of the context is added or admitted, a rare or difficult word is replaced by a more common or easy one, an historical present is used instead of a past tense or vice versâ, an active is put in the place of a medial form of a verb, or slight alterations in the order of words are introduced for the sake of supposed improvement in the style.

We do not wish to overstate the significance of the Kuthodaw version for constituting Pāli editions, but nor do we want to undervalue the inscriptions *a priori*. However:

a false sense of security sometimes concerns whole traditions of transmission, as the case of the Pāli canon shows. For historical reasons European editions have almost exclusively relied on Ceylonese materials and tended to ignore the Burmese tradition, which forms a separate branch, but not without complicated interactions between these “branches”. ... Nalini Balbir has described some reactions of editors of Theravāda texts, who thought they knew that early Buddhism was found in Ceylonese sources and nowhere else, and had to accept gradually the existence of other materials. The conviction about the validity of some sources was apparently so strong that editions produced by the Pali Text Society were sometimes based on merely a single manuscript, not because the text was transmitted to posterity in a *codex unicus*, but because more material was deemed unnecessary.

Hanneder 2017, 153–54

Without reasonable and systematic efforts to examine the preserved text in detail, it is not clear that dismissing the inscriptions as a “late” source is justified. As will be seen when we present the findings of more detailed comparisons below, there are indications that the tradition represented on the stelae contain readings of importance and of use to editors. Scholars in Myanmar may question any need to examine the text of the Fifth Council when the Sixth Council has already concluded its exacting and painstaking work. To this we can only reply that the lack of documentation about Sixth Council textual emendations and alterations to the text, i.e., what changes were introduced in those (now widely used) editions, prompts us to at least wonder if that large project did have time to review each and every difference when the changes were made silently. The sections of the Tipiṭaka from the Sixth Council were edited by different groups of monastic scholars; were the decisions

they took with regard to changing the text uniform? A summary of what we know about how the two councils worked with the texts is included below to start to explore this.

## 2. THE KUTHODAW PAGODA STELAE: BACKGROUND AND FINDINGS

### 2.1. WESTERN SOURCES AND HISTORICAL REFERENCES

In this section we will present — in approximate chronological sequence — materials significant to the appreciation of both the nature and history of the Kuthodaw monument and text recension. There is as yet no comprehensive study of the monument nor its inscriptions and so the material presented below can be only a contribution towards such a cumulation. Ludu Daw Ahmar's important booklet (first published in 1972, available in Burmese and English) on the monument is exceptionally important because it is founded on earlier scholarship from Myanmar, but it does not provide detailed citations identifying which material she has drawn from each of the listed sources (most are in Burmese).

Considerable detail on the Fifth Council and new material about the versions printed in Myanmar from 1893 onwards are included below. These printed editions have not yet been fully described or critically assessed, perhaps due to their scarcity and inaccessibility. Our preliminary assessment suggests that these printings based on the Kuthodaw stelae can offer improved readings of the Kuthodaw text itself, which is significant for future would-be editors of Pāli texts. With help from scholars in Thailand and Japan and from the Library of Congress we have managed to obtain reproductions of some volumes of these rare sets (details are given in Appendix 1).

A major importance of the Kuthodaw then, is its preservation of a complete, purposeful and traditional editing (i.e., recension) of the Pāli canon by the most important of the Myanmar Saṅgha of the time. Lest anyone think that Theravāda texts are immune to the normal vicissitudes of textual transmission, there is widespread evidence of variants in Pāli texts. For example, Hardy (1901, viii) commented:

the various readings of other commentaries which are referred to in Dhammapāla's commentary by "keci paṭhanti" [some read] or "apare vadanti" [others say] or "pāṭho pi" [there is though a reading] and the like

... we have here a specimen amongst many of Dhammapāla's accuracy in giving an account of all textual possibilities.

The role of Myanmar in transmitting the Pāli canon is well known, e.g., the numerous references to Burmese script sources in the editions of the PTS (founded in 1881 and so ten years after the Fifth Council in Mandalay), complete online versions of the Pāli canon largely based on Myanmar sources, etc.

## 2.2. KING MINDON'S COPIES OF THE TĪPIṬAKA AND THE FIFTH COUNCIL

Almost all scholarly works in English which discuss the Fifth Council refer back to an important work by the well-known Mandalay-based scholar, journalist and activist, Ludu Daw Ahmar (1915–2008). Her 1973 booklet in Burmese entitled *Kambhā' 'a krī" chui" cā 'up'* was translated into English by Than Tun as *The World's Biggest Book* and first published in 1974. The English version has been through second and third editions and is still in print. Myo Myint (1987, 185), for instance, refers to the Burmese version, while Braun (2013, 23–28) in turn cites Myo Myint 1987, amongst other sources, for information on the Kuthodaw Pagoda.<sup>4</sup> Ludu Daw Ahmar does not give individual citations or footnotes in the booklet and so it is never clear which (if any) of the ten listed references she is drawing on for which details; only scholars accessing the original sources will be able to deepen our knowledge of these matters.

Myanmar rulers have a long history of copying and transmitting the canon as part of their standard state activities, for example during the reign of King Bagyidaw a royal order was made on 2 January 1820, stating:

Copies of the Pitaka (on lacquered plaques with letters) in gold, (on paper with letters) in ink and (letters incised) by stylus (on palm leaf) left by former kings in [the] Royal Library, are in (various stages of) decay; the king wants new copies made in all three styles, i.e., written in gold, ink and by stylus; get all good scribes and all experts in preparing the material for writing; there is a register of these specialists and their descendants in

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<sup>4</sup> Myo Myint (1987, 185, n.46) mentions that most of his account is based on the 1972 Burmese language version of the book by Ludu Daw Ahmar.

all parts of the kingdom; get all of them here and put them under Maha Dama Thin Gyan, Min Daing Bin Amat Minister King's Counsellor, for reorientation (in their old art).

Than Tun 1988, 50

The editing of the Pāli Tipiṭaka under King Mindon involved three separate (but interlinked) projects, the sequence of which has been frequently conflated or confused:

1. EDITING THE TĪPĪTAKA: 1856 TO 11 MARCH 1865 (Ludu Daw Ahmar 1980, 16–20): this involved very senior monks checking texts and then preparing a carefully proof-read and complete manuscript copy. Work began in 1856, involved 134 monks and 100 scribes.<sup>5</sup>
2. CARVING OF THE TEXT EDITED BETWEEN 1856–1865 ONTO MARBLE (THE KUTHODAW TEXTS): 14 October 1860 to 4 May 1868 (Ludu Daw Ahmar 1980, 20–22, 50–52). Before the first editing project was completed, the second was begun, which involved the carving on marble stelae of that edited text. Three senior monastic leaders were in charge with six lay individuals also helping to supervise, and 50 masons.<sup>6</sup>
3. THE FIFTH COUNCIL: 15 April to 12 September 1871

Ludu Daw Ahmar 1980, 52.

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<sup>5</sup> “Four presiding monks called ‘Sayadaws in charge of the religion’ were editors-in-chief. One of them was in fact the Supreme Head of the Religion whom we called Thathanabine. All of them had titles conferred on them by the King as the most learned men in the land in matters of religion. Next to them were thirty senior monks acting as senior editors, then fifty monks as editors and another fifty more as sub-editors. There are eighty-four thousand sections in the *Pitaka* and these editors were severally and separately held responsible to make each section correct before it was handed over to the copyists numbering up to 100 with their own group leaders, all under the command of the Keeper of the Library. But the scribes were not left to their own devices. Three senior monks, viz. (1) Sayadaw of *Dakkhinarama*, (2) Sayadaw of Sidawmyinwun Taik and (3) Sayadaw of Zibani were in constant attendance to explain any doubts as to spelling, grammar, etc. in the text copied. Scribes works were also to be checked by clerks of the Hluttaw and other courts.” (Ludu Daw Ahmar 1980, 16–17)

<sup>6</sup> “Even before the copying of [the] *pitaka* on palm-leaves, etc. was complete the King ordered another on stones. Senior monks assigned to supervise the making of the stone copy were: (1) Sayadaw of Queen Taungsaungdaw, (2) Sayadaw of Myadaung Myosa Thaynat Wungyi and (3) Sayadaw of Sidawmyinwun Tike. Lay supervisors were [six in number]” (Ludu Daw Ahmar 1980, 20–21).

Published accounts of the Fifth Council rely almost exclusively on Ludu Daw Ahmar (1980) and perhaps only sources in Burmese will be able to add to what has been rehearsed already. A royal order from 10 September 1871 describes the Fifth Council:

King Ajatasatthu [*sic*] convened the First Buddhist Synod, Kalasoka the Second, Asoka the Third and Dutthagamani the Fourth<sup>7</sup> when the Buddha's Teachings were reduced to writing on palm leaves. These kings supported the Dhamma Sak Authority of Law, by their Ana Sak — Power of Enforcement, and in that way the Buddha's Religion had had a lasting effect on all people for many centuries. Following their example the king had convened the Fifth Buddhist Synod on 15 April 1871. Eight members of the Council of Royal Preceptors at the Hall of Good Law led the convention when 2,400 monks met to recite all the Buddha's Teachings in the Great Prasada of Earth Palace. The Convention shall be over on 12 September 1871. With the beat of drum the good news would be declared in the capital and messengers would take the information to the provinces so that all people in the kingdom could join the festivals that would start by a cannon fire as soon as the recitations are over.

Than Tun 1989, 178–179<sup>8</sup>

This is the only original source seen so far to specify the dates of the council. A later proclamation from 31 May 1878 built upon this, stating (additions in square brackets are those of the editor, Than Tun):

Pariyattisasana — Learning the Buddha's Teachings [Patipattisasana — Practicing the Ways given in the Buddha's Teachings, Pativedhasasana — Gaining Insight into the Buddha's Teachings]; these are the mainstays of Buddhism and all the ancient kings who professed to be the defenders of the Buddha's Religion devoted their best efforts to keep the Buddha's Teachings [which were later reduced to writing in the form of the three Pitakas] free from any addition or omission. They sponsored to hold the Sangayana — Convention to recite all the Buddha's Teachings in the original form. After the convention the text would be copied again completely edited to make it free from any mistake and to use the edited

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<sup>7</sup> Dīp XX 19–21 states that the king was Vaṭṭagāmaṇi.

<sup>8</sup> Mindon is described as being busy with “the founding of the Kuthodaw, the Royal Merit pagoda, where the Books of the Law are engraved on three hundred and seventy marble slabs [*sic*]; the holding of the Fifth Great Synod, in which two thousand four hundred monks took part and the Three Baskets of the Law were recited over a period of five months” (Scott 1924, 296f.).

text in all monastic schools. It is very important to encourage these educational [*sic*] institutes that produced most able teachers as well as talented pupils [to carry on with the Buddhist studies for many generations in succession]. In all these phases, the king's help was essential in the nature of extending generous aids and subsidies to these establishments. These certainly would help the Buddha's Religion last [for the whole span of five thousand years]. Bearing this in mind the king had (1) the Pitaka Text incised on [729] stone stelae, (2) the learned were given the Four Requisites of Monks, (3) the Fifth Buddhist Synod was convened in Earth Palace and (4) religious examinations were held regularly and sumptuous rewards were given to successful candidates.

Order: In order to make the king's help to the Religion an *Asadi-sanuggaha* [*sic*] — Effort with no equal, fire a cannon three times to begin the Religious Examination on each day of its duration. This Order was passed on 31 May 1878.

Than Tun 1989, 235

It is notable that before this, in 1861, there is a report of Mindon having Abhidhamma text carved on “stone posts”, during the period when the Kuthodaw stelae were being inscribed (1860–1868):

A European visitor to Mandalay in 1861, Adolf Bastian, gives us another example of the particular importance of the Abhidhamma to King Mindon. He records that one day he came upon workers in one of the palace courtyards engraving the Abhidhamma on stone posts that the king had ordered set up as milestones along all the roads of the kingdom.

Braun 2013, 72

We have not located any specific details of how the Fifth Council conducted its work in terms of decisions or choices it made; it does seem to have been a reciting of each Tipiṭaka text as already “purified” and worked through by the earlier royal projects (Braun 2013, 25). Documenting the participation by Ledi Sayadaw at this Council, Braun states “Recitation during the council was not done *en masse*. Instead, a monk would recite a text or part of a text to the assembled monks and, in particular, to a learned senior monk who would listen for errors” (Braun 2013, 26). The confusion over the sequencing of the carving of the Kuthodaw and the holding of the Fifth Council has been commented on by both Ludu Daw Ahmar (1980, 52) and in more detail by Braun (2013, 26).

There have been very few significant studies on the Kuthodaw Pagoda in Western scholarship. Indeed, in the introduction to his exami-

nation of two portions of the stelae recension, Bollée (1968) was only able to identify four such prior studies (Müller 1895; Ferrars and Ferrars 1900; O'Connor 1907; Leumann [1925] 1998). We think it important to present those accounts here in one place, assembling the scattered scholarly information available on this monument. We have therefore chosen to review and quote from a small number of earlier scholarly and other accounts of the Kuthodaw, mainly for historical purposes, in that their negative judgements perhaps contributed to the academic neglect of the contents of the inscriptions, even before the political restrictions preventing Western scholars access to the site for so many decades.

With the PTS producing editions and the availability of the King Chulalongkorn series of the *Tiṭṭaka* (1893–1894) in some European centres, notices about the Kuthodaw inscriptions failed to ignite European interest in any serious way (e.g. Leumann [1925] 1998, 430). The earliest substantive published description of the monument is that of Max Müller from September 1895. An enlarged photograph of the Kuthodaw had been sent to him by Mr Ferrars, “a member of the Burma Forest Department” (1895, 504) with the further information that

the text, as engraved on the marble slabs, was critically revised and edited by a Royal Commission, consisting of ten learned men under the presidency of the famous Rahan [i.e. monk], U-Nye-ya. It is stated that three copies of the same text were prepared at the same time on palm-leaves, and sent by the king to three European libraries. What libraries they were I have not been able to find out.

Müller 1895, 504

Reading Müller’s essay on the Kuthodaw, the tone may come as a shock to some (see Appendix 5.2.1 for the full text of the relevant passage). Müller is usually regarded as one of the founding fathers of modern religious studies; however, the essay (meant for a literary magazine) reveals animus and judgement against the utility of the monument and it is seen as less valuable to have the Buddhist texts on stone when

[a] small copy of the New Testament, which our University Press turns out for a penny a copy, is more useful, has more power for good in it, quite apart from its intrinsic value, than the whole of this gigantic structure which no one reads, nay, which but few people understand.

Müller 1895, 504

Max Ferrars is mentioned by Müller as the informant on the ground in Mandalay ready to undertake the complete photographic documenta-

tion of the site should some learned society or government agency deign to fund it — apparently no one took up this offer and it was only very recently that complete sets of images were prepared. Before that there seem to have been a number of earlier individual or group projects: Willem Bollée took a partial set of images in 1968 (Allon et al. 2016, 225), while Ludu Daw Ahmar mentions that “Recently a mission from West Germany was here to photograph every face of the inscriptions” (1980, 56–57) (no further information traced, though perhaps she is in fact referring to Bollée) and then, in 2006, Alpha Computer made a complete set of images but because they were of a low resolution, the text is not very legible (Clark 2015b, 107; Allon et al. 2016, 225).

The next account to add material of interest is the Ferrars’ own, included in their sumptuous and superbly illustrated volume showing the full range of their photographic talents in Burma. This account included one of the first known published photographs of the Kuthodaw itself (1900, 171), which appears to be taken from Mandalay Hill.<sup>9</sup> On the Kuthodaw they state (1900, 121–122) that

[t]he late King Mindôn Min caused the whole of the Pâli text of the Tripitaka to be engraved on 729 marble slabs, 4 feet by 3 feet. These, set under as many stucco canopies, are known as the *Kûthodaw* or *Law-kama-yazin* — the royal work of merit. ... They constitute the most important of the King’s religious foundations. A number of years were spent by a committee of learned *yahán* [i.e. monks] in editing the text. Certain portions have since been transferred to type, and in time the whole of this text will be available in print.

The next account is by O’Connor (1907) whose observations are quoted in full below. These are more descriptive and of the traveller’s guide variety with a romanticising tone, but importantly he included several black and white photographs of the site, including the pagodas (p. 45), one of the carved gateways used to access the site (p. 47), the first known published photograph of a stela with the caption “A page of the Kutho-daw” (p. 49) and an aerial view from Mandalay Hill (p. 61).

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<sup>9</sup> Additionally, the British Library has images of the Kuthodaw Pagoda taken during the 1880s. Images of the site from 1885 (e.g. shelfmark: photo 15/6(33)) and 1886 (e.g. shelfmark: photo 312/(34)) seem to show very few trees inside the site, whereas an image from 1895 (shelfmark: photo 88/1(29)) shows numerous trees inside the site.

Significantly, O'Connor also identifies contemporary use being made of the stone stelae to correct another version of the canonical text which (if based on observations and not poetic licence) belies Max Müller's inaccurate assessment from afar (quoted above) that no one read the inscriptions:

Let us turn back through the courtyard of the Taik-taw to the most wonderful object in all Mandalay, the Kutho-daw or Lawka Marazein Pagoda, where the Buddhist scriptures stand carved in stone. Here is the biggest Bible in the world, each page of it a monolith of white marble the height of a man. And each of these pages, 729 in number, has a temple to itself. The white temples stretch away in long avenues like an army of soldiers, and if you get them in a line and look down it, you will see the great stones within like colossal mile-posts, receding far into the distance. There are rows upon rows of them facing east and west and south and north, and in their midst there towers up a lofty white pagoda with a golden spire. There are great and exquisitely carved gateways at the cardinal points, and there are rows of trees now between the temple avenues. A great stillness pervades this place, broken only by the chaunt [*sic*] of a novice's voice droning the graven text to a man prone within one of the temples correcting his copy of the life-giving book.

Outside as you come away you will find kneeling at the far end of one of the white stone aisles which culminate in the central pagoda, a group of worshippers: old women with white hair, and little children with shut eyes and folded hands, and wrinkled elders whose race is nearly run. They kneel here in humility without, because they are a people of exquisite instincts and because they think much of this place which enshrines in imperishable stone the message of their master; the wisdom that they believe will guide their footsteps into the pathway of eternal peace.

Of the Kutho-daw it need only be added that the text was revised, the accuracy of the carving was certified to, by the most learned monks and officials in the city. The work extended over five years, and it was shared in by all the Ministers of the King.

O'Connor 1907, 48–50

This last sentence is the first mention we have traced of a time period for the carving of the entire monument. Additional incidental and largely derivative brief comments on the Kuthodaw are scattered throughout works from the British colonial period; most being akin to the example below:

Farther east [of the Sandamuni Pagoda] is the Kuthodaw, the most splendid monument of king Mindon, consisting of a pagoda 100 feet high

surrounded by 729 others, in each of which is a marble slab inscribed with a part of the Buddhist scriptures in Burmese and Pāli. Great care was taken to collate the various manuscripts so as to arrive at the most correct version, and the whole stands as a complete official record of the sacred writings.

*Imperial Gazetteer of India: Provincial Series, Burma, Vol. 2, The Minbu, Mandalay, Sagaing, and Meiktila Divisions; and the Native States* 1908, 94

There are further references merely in passing and without adding new information (e.g., Finot 1915, 129, n.2). Credner's account in 1947 (56–57),<sup>10</sup> however, includes the (mis-)information not traced before, that the editing of the texts by the Fifth Council had taken three years and only subsequently was the text carved on stones. This error had to be explicitly corrected by Braun (2012).

Next comes a short descriptive note in 1925 by Leumann (reprinted in 1998) instigated by the same Max Ferrars mentioned above who had attempted to attract interest in the Kuthodaw through Max Müller.

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<sup>10</sup>“Zum Teil sind diese Stufenfelder in Burma erst junger Entstehung. So stammt die großartige Anlage Kuthodaw erst aus den 70iger Jahren des vorigen Jahrhunderts. Sie ist von dem um die Pflege der buddhistischen Lehre besonders verdienten König Mindon Min, dem vorletzten der burmanischen Herrscher, errichtet worden, um in ihr die reine Form des Tipitika, des Pali-Kanons als wichtige Grundlage der Lehre der Nachwelt in möglichst unvergänglicher Form zu erhalten. Auf einem Konzil buddhistischer Priester und Schriftgelehrter hat er den ursprünglichen Text des Kanons in dreijährigen Arbeiten feststellen und das Ergebnis in 729 Steintafeln einmeißeln lassen. Jede dieser Tafeln ließ er in einen kleinen Stupa einmauern, die sich nun — 729 an der Zahl — um eine Zentralstupa gruppieren. So liegt diese eigenartige Schöpfung, bis auf unsere Tage unverseht im schimmernden Weiß des rechteckig angeordneten Stupenwaldes erhalten, zu Füßen der auf der Höhe eines kleinen Inselberges errichteten älteren Arakan Pagode, die selbst eines der bedeutendsten Heiligtümer des Buddhismus in Burma darstellt. Weit schweift der Blick von der Höhe über das Kuthodaw und das dahinter im Grün der Fruchtbaumgärten fast verschwindende Mandalay, über die weite Reisfeldebene des Irawadi, die im Osten durch den Steilanstieg des Shanplateaus begrenzt wird, sich nach Süden ins Unendliche verliert, durchstrahlt gewissermaßen von der Heiligkeit dieses kultischen Mittelpunktes der alten Königsstadt Mandalay.”

Leumann mentions that there had been no follow-up to or outcome from Müller's notice and yet the Kuthodaw inscriptions ought not be forgotten; Ferrars had supplied Leumann with a copy of the very same enlarged photographic image (29 x 39 cm) sent to Müller 30 years earlier. Leumann ([1925] 1998, 431) was able to identify the stela as presenting part of the Vinaya and stated that it was possible to read the text to check the PTS edition of Oldenberg. Leumann's quoting of a few lines of the text is the first published use of the Kuthodaw recension by a Western scholar, followed by Willem Bollée in 1968 (discussed below).

As far as we are aware, however, no study has attempted to clarify or identify the sources for the readings of the Kuthodaw Pagoda recension, to make clear presumed changes introduced by its redactors, or to expand on the influence it had on the subsequent manuscripts or printed editions of the canon in Myanmar and elsewhere (those topics will be taken up after a brief presentation of the comments by earlier scholars on the Kuthodaw).

The Fifth Council (held in 1871) reputedly had 2,400 monks recite the text. Whether or not non-Myanmar monastics were present is unclear.<sup>11</sup> There is a suggestion that the printed versions of Fifth Council texts might have been withdrawn from sale after the publication of the Sixth Council's revised version. According to Conze's 1954 report, once the Sixth Council completed its work, "the sale of all other editions [including the Fifth Council ones presumably] will be forbidden" (Conze 1954, 6; see also Bollée 1968, 497). This suggestion is repeated by Ruiz-Falqués (2017, 367), who states, "A different version of the canon, published by the Handhawaddy [*sic*] Press, can still be found, but it is not easy and has been systematically removed from monastic library shelves and Pali bookshops."

Putting this possibility to a half dozen learned monks in Mandalay in late 2017, however, drew a blank and none had any inkling of this

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<sup>11</sup>One late source written immediately before the Sixth Council mentions this possibility as evidence that Myanmar and Sri Lanka have assisted each other throughout history to preserve the Buddha's teachings: "During the reign of King Mindon too, when the Fifth Great Buddhist Council was held at Mandalay, many Sinhalese bhikkhus attended the Synod at the invitation of the King" (*The Sangāyanā Monthly Bulletin* 1953, 1(4), 4).

having been the case, so it cannot yet be confirmed that this did in fact happen in an organised manner. Perhaps the new printings from the Sixth Council may just have been easier to get hold of while the old editions were frail and less likely to stand up to use or the climate.

### 2.3. PRINTINGS OF THE KUTHODAW RECENSION BY HANTHAWADDY AND OTHER PRESSES (1893–1939)

In line with king Mindon's stated aim of strengthening the transmission of Buddhist teachings, the Kuthodaw stone inscriptions did, it seems, become the authoritative basis for early printed editions of the Tipiṭaka in Burma. Information on these printed versions is sketchy and incomplete; however, given their relevance to our own readings of the Kuthodaw texts it is necessary to review what we know about them.<sup>12</sup> These printed versions are exceptionally rare and as far as we are aware, only one Western scholar, C.A.F. Rhys Davids, has used these editions to establish or check readings (Dukap I (1906, ix), Tikap I (1921, xii), Yam I (1911, ix)).<sup>13</sup> After a review of the meagre details about them that have been published up to now, we will outline new information extracted from newly accessed copies of some of these early printings.

The main source of information up to now has been the paragraphs below from Ludu Daw Ahmar's indispensable guide to the history of the Kuthodaw:

Thirty years after the stone *pitaka* was completed, the paper *pitaka* was made for the first time. Mr Philip H. Ripley of the Hanthawaddy Press was

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<sup>12</sup>The new source for hitherto unreferenced information on the printing of the Kuthodaw Pagoda and Fifth Council versions has been the Burmese language introductions from some of the early Pāli editions published by the Hanthawaddy and Thudhamawadi presses between 1893 and 1939 (listed with some details on the translations utilised in Appendix 1, 5.1 below), in particular the Pācittiya edition (1893, [ka]-ca). Other information has come from the editions of the Mahāvagga (1900, unnumbered page preceding title-page), Saṃyuttanikāya Vol. 2 (1900, unnumbered page preceding title-page), Parivāra (1900, unnumbered page preceding title-page), Vinayapiṭaka Cullavagga (1911, two unnumbered pages preceding title-page), and Aṅguttaranikāya Vol. 1 (1939, two unnumbered pages following the title-page).

<sup>13</sup>We thank Peter Jackson for drawing our attention to these uses.

the pioneer in this work. One volume of this book (Royal Octavo size) had 400 pages approximately and there were thirty-eight volumes in a complete set. A printed book would make the *Pitaka* cheap and the public opinion was against it. So only when the Taunggin Thathanabine expressed his happiness to hear the news that the *pitaka* would soon be available in book form, that Mr Ripley regained his courage to proceed with the work of printing. It was in about 1900 and Mr Ripley took all care to make his copies perfect. He had the galley-proofs checked against the “stone *Pitaka*” at Mandalay. In fact he claimed that his books were “true copies of the *Pitaka* inscribed on stones by King Mindon”. He also had the titles to various chapters printed in the same handwriting as they appeared on the stones. People who were once proof-readers under him like Hanthawaddy U Ba Yin and Saya Zeya (U Yaw) often recalled that the old gentleman took enormous pains to make the *pitaka* he printed free of mistakes. He printed a declaration on each book that he would give a reward of Rs. 50 for each word that did not agree with the corresponding word on the “stone *pitaka*”.

Ludu Daw Ahmar 1980, 53–54

Ripley was amply rewarded for all the care he took in printing the *Pitaka* in exactly [*sic*] as it appeared on stones. Many sets of his books were sent even outside Burma where Theravada Buddhism prevailed. Soon other printing concerns followed suit. One of them was the Tampadipa Time Press which in 1912 printed books on *pitaka* with the same claims as Ripley. It even used a picture of [the] “stone *Pitaka*” cave as its trade mark. Ripley had established a tradition that all printed *Pitaka* books must have the “stone *Pitaka*” as the standard work.

Ludu Daw Ahmar 1980, 56

None of the printed copies available to us (listed in Appendix 1 below) have this declaration of the fifty rupee reward, nor the “stone *pitaka*” cave trademark. Ludu Daw Ahmar gave the printing date as about 1900 but we now have information that there were printings in 1893 (of the Pācittiya). In 1893 Ripley resigned his post and travelled to England to study printing and it seems likely that he returned with printing equipment and enhanced technical knowledge. A previously unremarked source (Wright 1910, 139) of additional (and corroborating) information, which dates from 1907, is too lengthy to reprint here but is given as 5.2.2 in the appendices below.

Additional information has been found which sheds light on these printings and who was responsible for them. A review of the activities of the Sāsanaḥitakāri Association (i.e., “Association for the Benefit of

the Buddha's Teaching") published in Burmese in 1893 (as the introduction to a re-printing of the Pācittiya section of the Vinaya) states that from 1890 onwards a group of learned monks and lay people in Rangoon organised meetings, discussions, and fundraising as part of an eventual five-point programme to both preserve and propagate the Dhamma in Burma.<sup>14</sup> Once official permission had been granted to form an association, the Sāsanahitakāri Association resolved on 17 July 1892 to prioritise the production of a well-edited and well-printed version of the Tipiṭaka for the benefit of both teachers and students of the Dhamma.<sup>15</sup> Nothing else is yet known about this group but their five-point programme also mentions plans to invite European teachers of the Dhamma (to Myanmar presumably) and so they seem to have been similar to groups in Sri Lanka<sup>16</sup> which were reacting to British colonial rule and missionary initiatives by beginning their own home-grown Buddhist defence and propagation models. It is possible, for example, that they were in part reacting to Judson's complete Burmese language translation of the Bible, which had been in publication since 1835. By November-December 1893 this new Association was able to announce that it had *completed* publication of the entire Tipiṭaka in Myanmar. So far none of these texts have been located or examined; however, copies may exist in Myanmar libraries or in the British Library collections.

This review of the history of the publications says the Association had, between sometime in 1892 and November-December 1893, initially printed 1,000 copies of the two first sections of the Vinaya — the

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<sup>14</sup>We have had assistance with a number of Burmese language introductions found in the early editions of Pāli texts published in Myanmar. In December 2017, with the assistance of Daw Yi Yi Maw (University of Arts and Humanities, Mandalay), Dr. Tin Tin Nwe rephrased these stylised and formal introductions into contemporary Burmese. Those rephrasings were then translated into English and the resulting versions polished somewhat for fluency and style before being reproduced in this article.

<sup>15</sup>Multiple benevolent societies with religious aims were in existence by 1894 under British rule (*The Sangāyanā Monthly Bulletin* 1/1, 1953, 8).

<sup>16</sup>For convenience, we use the term "Sri Lanka" here and throughout the article, despite its usage being anachronistic at times. For similar reasons, we also consistently use the terms "Thailand" and "Cambodia" throughout this article.

Pārājika and Pācittiya — in “durable format” because those, they said, were the basis of the existence of the monastic orders and, therefore, of the entire Buddhist teachings. When those 1,000 copies had been sold, the funds raised were used to prepare, print and bind a subsequent complete edition of the Tipiṭaka. This account of their activities appears in a volume (again Pācittiya) published by the Hanthawaddy Press (“Hamsāvati”) in Rangoon in November-December 1893. It is not clear if the earlier complete Tipiṭaka appeared under the name of the same press but that seems likely given the explicit need stated to have good fonts and accurate printing. It is also not yet clear if any of these particular volumes have survived. The earliest Hanthawaddy publication (non-Tipiṭaka) we have traced dates from 1891 (Taw Sein Ko’s *An Elementary Grammar of the Burmese Language*).

Remarkably, the same programme review provides information about the text printed in this first complete printing of the Tipiṭaka in Burma:

In line with the [Association’s] decision [to publish the Tipiṭaka], permission was gained to copy from the basis of the Fifth Council text prepared under the supervision of Sayadaws appointed officially and by the king’s senior advisors. The Laṅkārama Sayadaw, Venerable Nanda-mañju in Mandalay and the Kyaundawyar Monastery Sayadaw, Venerable Ravinda in Rangoon, who are the equals of those learned Sayadaws mentioned above [at the Fifth Council in 1871], made every effort to copy the text accurately and to use a first class printing house to print the text with correct spelling and punctuation under the supervision of the Pāli expert Mr Phye and using excellent quality paper and binding materials.

1893, Pācittiya edition introduction;  
for details see Appendix 1, 5.1

To recap then, the first (presumably complete) printing of the Theravāda Tipiṭaka in Myanmar so far traced was produced under the auspices of the Sāsanahitakāri Association probably through the Hanthawaddy Press in Rangoon. It is not made explicit here whether the version reportedly completed in 1893 was in fact based on the Kuthodaw inscriptions or some other format of the Fifth Council version; however, the title-pages of editions appearing from the Hanthawaddy Press from 1900 explicitly refer to the Mandalay stelae, using wording

that is strikingly similar to the sentence found at the top of the verso side of each stela.

The history of these printings of the Fifth Council texts based on the Kuthodaw inscriptions is still unclear. Most of the copies so far examined have no preliminary matter to explain how the text has been constituted, other than a note on the title-page which states that the prints follow the text of the Fifth Council inscribed in stone in Mandalay.<sup>17</sup> To judge by the variety of donative notices appearing in the volumes from the Hanthawaddy and the Thudhamawadi Presses, there seem to have been multiple print runs between 1893 and 1939 funded by a variety of well-to-do families or individual donors. We have not seen a complete set of any printed series as yet, instead we only have had access to scattered scanned editions. Ludu Daw Ahmar (1980, 53) states that the Hanthawaddy set was complete in 38 volumes. The extant copies that we have been able to locate are listed in Appendix 1 below (5.1).<sup>18</sup>

The introduction to a 1939 Hanthawaddy printing of the fifth volume of the *Aṅguttaranikāya* provides additional information. It is signed by the British-Burma Film Company and states that when this company purchased the compound of the Hanthawaddy Newspaper Press in Rangoon along with everything therein to set up a film production facility, they found in storage there “multiple copies of high quality [printings] of the *pitakas*, the commentaries and sub-commentaries as well as Myanmar paraphrases (*nissaya*)”. Over 9,000 copies as unbound text blocks were in need of binding and covering before they could be released. Rather than destroy these or otherwise let them go to waste, the company wanted to bind and distribute them, but the cost was prohibitive and so they seem to have bound and released some but were also actively requesting donors to contribute to this and reminded pious

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<sup>17</sup>The title-pages of editions from Thudhamawadi Press, however, do not explicitly state that they are based on the Fifth Council recension.

<sup>18</sup>We wish to thank Professor Shimoda for making available scans from the library of the University of Tokyo and also the Dhammachai Tipitaka Project for sharing scans they made of the collection at the Mangalarama monastery, Taung Gyi, Shan state.

Buddhists that the sponsoring of the distribution of the Tipiṭaka itself is as meritorious as the building of a *caitya*.

Setting apart the commercial tone of the two Thudhamawadi printings seen (which are keen to encourage buyer loyalty to their editions), the Hanthawaddy printings sporadically contain a range of short donor panegyrics and lists of names, but no indications of how the text there printed was constituted. Possibly (as in the case of the British-Burma Film Company invitations) arrangements were made with individual donors to cover the binding and covering of pre-printed text-blocks or fascicules.

In terms of the nature of the text printed in these early editions, they are somewhat corrected versions of the text on the Kuthodaw stelae (more details on the relationships between these editions and the later printings are given in the section on text comparisons below).

#### 2.4. THE EDITING WORK OF THE SIXTH COUNCIL

Moving on to the influential editing work of the Sixth Council held in Rangoon (now Yangon), Clark (2015a) investigated a range of sources relating to the Sixth Council, specifically looking at why the event was held, the way in which it was presented to the general public, and the nature of the resultant printed series of the Tipiṭaka. Regarding the last, he provided a detailed analysis of a section of one text, with comments on its editing methodology and sources. This section of the present article will build upon Clark's findings with the inclusion of additional information, particularly regarding the manner in which the editing project as a whole was undertaken and the ways in which the editing groups were organised. Additionally, it will document the explicit and repeated positioning of the Kuthodaw stelae text as the basis for the Sixth Council's text editing work and to identify what steps were taken to review and revise that text.

In terms of the Sixth Council's explicit aims, the Pāli preface (Nidānakathā) to the printed edition states:

Then the great elder monks decided to hold a Dhamma Council and announced, "It is necessary to hold this Dhamma Council; it is not the case that it is unnecessary to hold this. Therefore, we will now bring together [printed?] books of the Tipiṭaka with the stone inscription[s] of the Fifth Council, make them a corpus and will hold a Dhamma Council

having corrected the texts beforehand. By this means we will remove readings produced by careless writing that have arisen in contemporary [printed] books due to changes to the tradition. Having established the root text of the teachings — corrected and purified — and having printed it, the long-term preservation of the Buddha’s teaching will be accomplished by disseminating it throughout the whole world, in various countries and various places....”<sup>19</sup>

More clarity about the text editing processes of the Sixth Council can be reached here than has been hitherto recorded by tracing official statements about what was to occur prior to the printing of the texts and confirming these against later published accounts.<sup>20</sup> As far as we are aware, these details have never been discussed in academic articles and so it is necessary to present them in some detail. After reviewing the Sixth Council’s own statements on the editing structures and processes, some information will be given on the involvement of international Theravāda monastic scholars (mostly from Sri Lanka and Thailand) and on the proofreading procedures for Sixth Council printed texts.

#### 2.4.1. SETTING UP EDITORIAL PROCEDURES AND SOURCES FOR THE TIPITAKA

An early overview statement of the sources and processes used to edit the Sixth Council series appears in a publicity bulletin (*The Sangāyanā*<sup>21</sup> *Monthly Bulletin*) published in English to broadcast news of the preparations for the Council (1/1, 1953, 11):

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<sup>19</sup>*atha kho te mahātherā “dhammasaṅgītiṃ karissāmā” ti katasanniṭṭhānā evaṃ pativedesum “kattabbā yev’ esā dhammasaṅgīti. n’ esā na kattabbā. tasmā mayaṃ dāni piṭakapotthakāni pañcamasaṅgītisilālekhāya samānetvā tāni yeva sarīraṃ katvā pāḷisaṃsodhanapubbaṅgamaṃ dhammasaṅgītiṃ kassāma. yāya ādhunikapotthakesu paramparāparivattanavasena saṅjātā pamādalekhaṇā ca nirākarīyissanti. visodhitaṃ ca suparisuddhaṃ pāvacaṇamūlaṃ labhivā taṃ muddāpetvā sakalaloke nānāraṭṭhesu nānādesesu byāpanavasena buddhasāsanassa ciraṭṭhiti ca sādhiyissati.* (“Nidānakathā” 1956, iv)

<sup>20</sup>We rely on English versions of the material cited here; undoubtedly more documentation exists in Burmese sources, but those seem not to have been fully exploited by anyone yet.

<sup>21</sup>English language publications in Burma at the time of the Sixth Council frequently transliterate Pāli words differently to standard spellings used today (e.g. *sangāyanā* instead of *saṅgāyanā*). In this article, we reproduce the spellings found in the original publications.

The Union Buddha Sāsana Council [of Burma] is in possession of some of the Tipitakas, formerly scrutinized and edited by the learned Sayadaws of Mandalay under the auspices of the Young Men’s Buddhist Association of Rangoon. The remaining portions which were left unedited are being scrutinized and edited by eighty groups of learned Mahātheras who are entrusted with the responsibility of purifying the Texts, scrutinizing, comparing, editing, classifying and arranging all the teachings of the Buddha.

It is not clear which “Tipitakas” are meant, or indeed, even if printed volumes are indicated, although that does seem most likely.<sup>22</sup> As stated by Clark (2015a, 95–96, 101), the editions of the Sixth Council very publicly took the marble stelae of the Kuthodaw as their historical basis and the Sixth Council texts include limited variant readings from parallel printed editions of the Tipitaka from the PTS, Thailand, Sri Lanka, and Cambodia. No evidence has so far come to light of any use of manuscripts in preparations for the editing of the texts.

The announcement of the preparations for scrutinizing and (re-)editing the canonical texts continues, “The Pāli Texts adopted by the Fifth Great Buddhist Council and inscribed on 729 marble slabs at Mandalay will form the basic Texts” (*The Sangāyanā Monthly Bulletin* 1/1, 1953, 11).

The photo accompanying this announcement (reproduced as Figure 1) makes clear that the marble inscriptions (validated after carving by the Fifth Council) are the antecedents of the Sixth Council work. Subsequent statements in the same bulletin underline this.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>On the very next page of the same issue we read “The Buddha Sāsana Council gave the [Laotian] Mission [of 1953] the ... Pāli Text of Five Nikāyas in 38 volumes, comprising 1 set of Tipitakas”. The Hanthawaddy edition is reported to have had “thirty-eight volumes in a complete set” (Ludu Daw Ahmar 1980, 53) and that was also instigated by Mandalay-based Sayadaws (see section 2.3 above). These two features suggest this reference is to that set; however, the involvement of the Young Men’s Buddhist Association of Rangoon is unexplained so we cannot be sure. When the text quoted adds “remaining portions which were left unedited” that may refer to the *Milindapañha* and other texts not printed by the Hanthawaddy edition, but this too is speculation.

<sup>23</sup>“The Groups for Correcting the Texts are now busy with their editing and comparing their scripts with the inscriptions on the marble slabs. Thus, this Kutho-daw Pagoda had a great bearing on the Fifth Great Buddhist Council

As comprehensively demonstrated by Braun (2013, 23–28), the carving of the Kuthodaw stelae occurred prior to the Fifth Council, nevertheless multiple publications of the Sixth Council (e.g., *The Sangāyanā Monthly Bulletin*, 1/1, 1953, 11) state the opposite.



The responsible bhikkhus comparing their scripts with the inscriptions on the marble slabs.

FIGURE 1 : MONKS BESIDE THE KUTHODAW PAGODA STELAE

The bulletin goes on to say (emphasis added):

The Pāli Texts as extant in *printed* form in Sinhalese script in Ceylon, in Siamese script in Thailand, in Cambodian script in Cambodia, together

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and the Kaba-Aye (World Peace) Pagoda and the Kutho-daw Pagoda are now closely connected with the proceedings of the forthcoming Chattha Sangāyanā” (*The Sangāyanā Monthly Bulletin* 1/2, 1953, 1). In April 1953 the Laotian Mission visited “various places of religious interest” and at “Mandalay, they watched the responsible Bhikkhus comparing their scripts with the inscriptions on the marble slabs” (*The Sangāyanā Monthly Bulletin* 1/1, 1953, 12).

with the Texts published by the Pali Text Society, England, will form the basic Texts for collation. The Commentaries (Atthakathās) and Sub-Commentaries (Tikās, Anutikās and Yojanās) will be basic Texts for reference.<sup>24</sup>

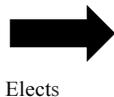
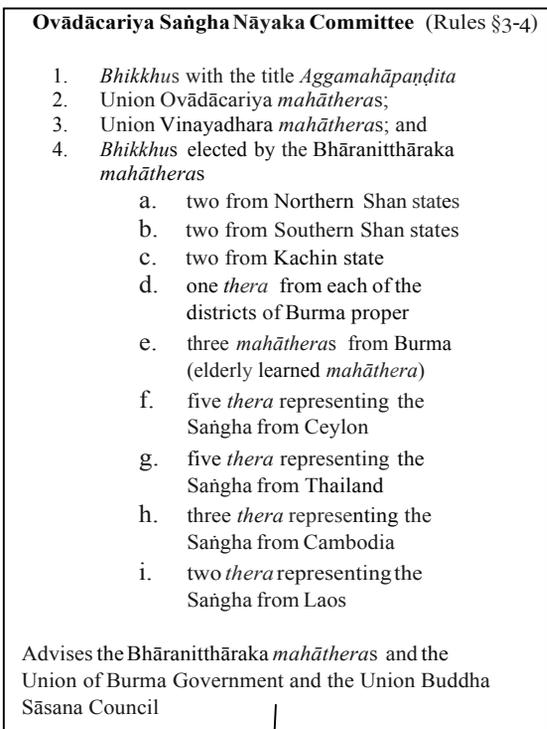
*The Sangāyanā Monthly Bulletin* 1/1, 1953, 11

#### 2.4.2. PROCESSES OF EDITING

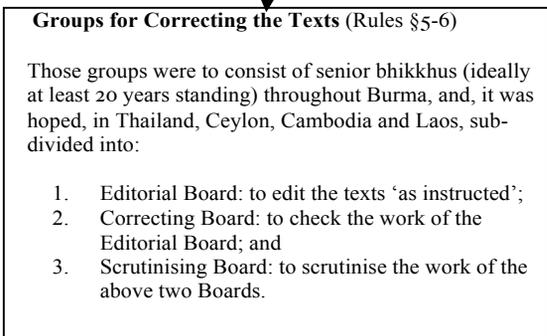
The official outline of the form and functions of the organisation running the Sixth Council were set out in “The Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā Sangha Council Rules, 2496 BE” (*The Sangāyanā Monthly Bulletin* 1/2, 1953, 2, 11). In theory at least, these “Rules” are the basis for the actions undertaken by the Council and its Committees and Sub-committees, including those which edited, printed and ultimately distributed the texts we term the Sixth Council series. As a way to overview that material we have arranged the same information as a chart in Figure 2 below, which shows the Committee structures; Text box 1 which follows, lists the “duties” of each committee extracted from the published Rules. Sub-committees 1 to 3 under the Bhāranitthāraka Committee ultimately produced the texts published as Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā versions (these are asterisked in the diagram).

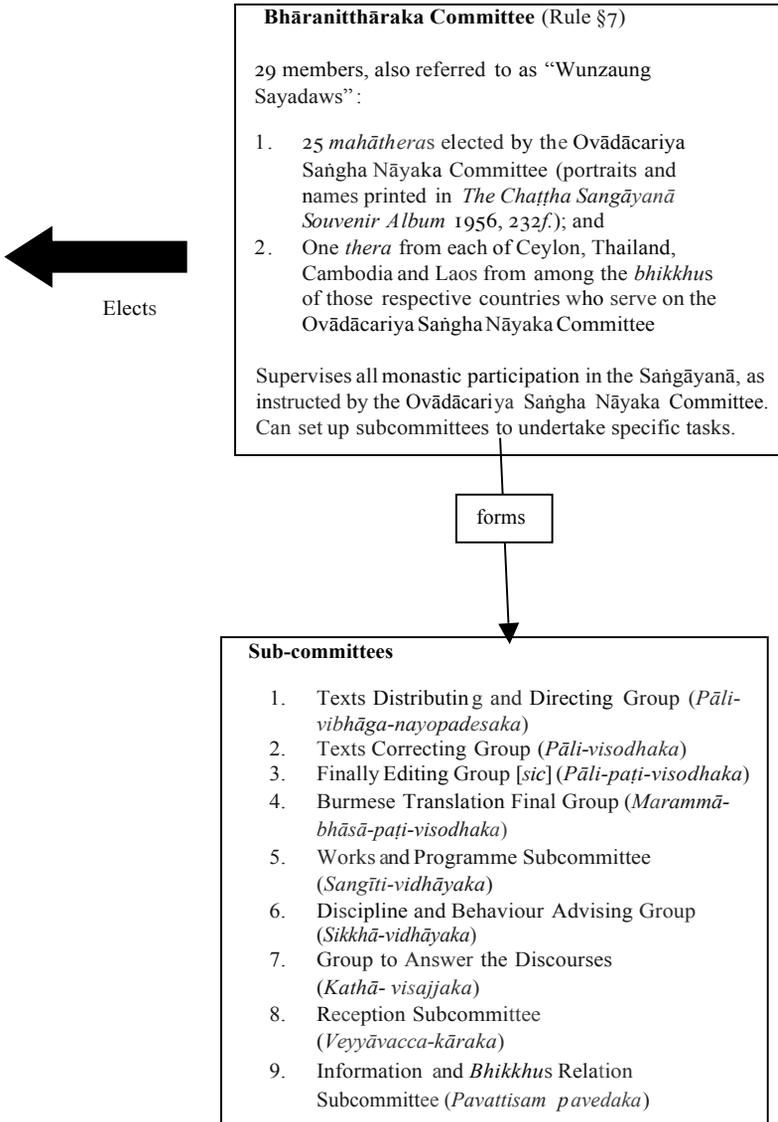
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<sup>24</sup>In 1954 (a propos of a visit by Drs I.B. Horner and Butler) the following account was published, “The P.T.S. edition of the Tipiṭaka has to be employed by the Text-editing Text Re-editing Groups in their respective works. The other day, Miss I.B. Horner and Prof. Butler visited the Thāthana Yeiktha and watched the Mahātheras and Theras reediting and scrutinising the Pāli texts with reference to various editions of the Tipiṭaka, including that of the P.T.S. and various Commentaries, Sub-commentaries and Vyākaraṇas (Grammars). The Bhikkhu-editors dividing into four Groups scrutinised the Pāli texts with the Mandalay Inscriptions also” (*The Sangāyanā Monthly Bulletin* 1/2, 1954, 10).



forms





**Figure 2: Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyanā Committee Structure**  
 Based on *The Saṅgāyanā Monthly Bulletin* 1/2, 1953, 2, 11

TEXT BOX 1 : Tasks of the Sub-committees of the Bhāranittharaka Committee  
(*The Sangāyanā Monthly Bulletin* 1/2, 1953, 11)

10. *Duties of the Texts Distributing and Directing Group [Pāli-vibhāga-nayopadesaka]*:

- (a) To edit the different kinds of Texts;
- (b) To distribute the Texts to the Groups concerned for editing, and to call for the edited Texts within the allotted time; and
- (c) To instruct the detailed methods of correcting the Texts, such as division of sentences, clauses, punctuation, and phrases; fixing headings; indexing; character-sifting; and differentiation of editions.

11. The duties of the Texts Correcting Groups [*Pāli-visodhaka*] are to correct the Texts edited by the Editing Groups, by collating with the authorised Texts and Commentaries.

12. *The Burmese Translation Group [Marammā-bhāsā-paṭi-visodhaka]*:

Its duty is to translate the Texts into Burmese, in accordance with the instructions given to them, and with reference to the Texts, Commentaries, and Sub-commentaries.

13. *The Sangayana Works Sub-committee [Sangṭi-vidhāyaka]*:

Its duties are

- (a) To select the Bhikkhus who will chant in the Sangāyanā;
- (b) To select the Bhikkhus in order of precedence;
- (c) To instruct in the methods of chanting, articulation, and pausation;
- (d) To draw up a timetable for the Sangāyanā;
- (e) To draw up a programme for the Chattha Sangāyanā; and
- (f) To invite the Bhikkhus to the Sangāyanā and provide them with board and lodging.

14. *Sikkha vidhayaka [Sikkhā-vidhāyaka] Group*:

Its duty is to see that the Bhikkhus behave well in all the four kinds of postures, in accordance with the Rule of the Viniya [*sic*].

15. *The duties of the Katha visajja [Kathā-visajjaka] Group are*

To verify and rectify all the controversial points,

- (a) that have arisen from within the Sāsana; and
- (b) that have arisen from outside the Sāsana.

16. *Reception Sub-committee [Veyyāvacca-kāraka]*:

Its duties are

- (a) To procure the four requisites of the monks, namely, the building, robes, food and medicine;
- (b) To keep the above in order;

- (c) To wash, label, patch and dye the robes of the Bhikkhus participating in the “chanting”;
- (d) To arrange food for the Bhikkhus in accordance with the Vinaya;
- (e) To accept invitations from outside and to allot the Bhikkhus for such invitations;
- (f) To attend to any sick Bhikkhu;
- (g) To keep the dormitory and the latrines in hygienic order;
- (h) To provide water for bathing, cleansing, and washing the face;
- (i) To keep the towels, napkins, blankets, and bedsheets clean and tidy;
- (j) To arrange the journeys of such Bhikkhus.

17. *Information and Monks Relation Sub-committee [Pavattisam pavedaka]:*

Its duties are

- (a) To be conversant with all matters relating to the Chattha Sangāyanā ...
- (b) To know about all the “Sangīti” Bhikkhus ...
- (c) To take information about the Sangāyanā matter in hand;
- (d) To contact all the Bhikkhus participating in the Sangāyanā;
- (e) To make reports to the Bhāranitthāraka Mahatheras once a week, or urgently in cases of emergencies;
- (f) To carry out their duties smoothly in connection with the Sangāyanā matters or the Bhikkhus participating in the Sangāyanā;
- (g) To propagate in Pāli, Burmese, and other languages the following [information] throughout the world, so as to let the people of the world revere Buddhism: (1) Origin of the Chattha Sangāyanā; (2) Organisation and allotment of duties; (3) How the Union Buddha Sāsana Council acts in this respect; (4) That the Chattha Sangāyanā is an international one [etc.]

A major point in clarifying the textual work done by the Sixth Council committees is that the review of the texts prior to reciting them was planned in three consecutive stages by the first three sub-committees of the Bhāranitthāraka Committee, with each stage being a pre-condition for the work of the next one.

The first sub-committee appointed by the oversight Bhāranitthāraka Committee was the “Texts Distributing and Directing Group” (*Pāli-vibhāga-nayopadesaka*). It made decisions about the distribution of various texts for expert review. Once decisions had been made regard-

ing who would review what, the various texts were handed over to Subcommittee 2, the “Text Correcting Group” (*Pāli-visodhaka*).

The Text Correcting Group was made up of multiple sub-groups, which were to consist of senior monks (of at least 20 years standing) throughout Burma as well as — it was initially hoped — in Thailand, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, and Laos; although in the end Cambodia and Laos were not able to contribute in this way. This Sub-committee had three sub-layers (Rules §5–6):

1. an Editorial Board to edit the texts “as instructed”,
2. a Correcting Board to check the work of the Editorial Board,
3. a Scrutinising Board to review the work of the two preceding Boards.

Once these three sub-groups had completed their review work on texts, they were ready to be handled by the third Subcommittee, the “Final Editing Group” (*Pāli-paṭi-visodhaka*).

No explicit instructions about these editing tasks have been located or published so far, but subsequently published progress reports do make clear the nature of the tasks done by each subcommittee (in the case of the Second Subcommittee, 118 “Text Correcting Groups” in Myanmar alone are mentioned below, while details of the structure of editorial committees in Sri Lanka are mentioned separately below). In some cases a certain inexactitude of the translation from the original in Burmese may be hindering appreciation of what the various stages involved, especially with the term “edit”.

The first Sub-committee, the “Text Distributing and Directing Group” (*Pāli-vibhāga-nayopadesaka*), formally had the following preliminary duties:

- (a) To edit the different kinds of Texts;
- (b) To distribute the Texts to the Groups concerned for editing, and to call for the edited Texts within the allotted time; and
- (c) To instruct [in] the detailed methods of correcting the Texts, such as division of sentences, clauses, punctuation, and phrases; fixing headings; indexing; character-sifting and differentiation of editions.

*The Sangāyanā Monthly Bulletin* 1/2, 1953, 11

This last wording in Rule §10 suggests that explicit (printed or written) instructions were in fact promulgated as “detailed methods

(*naya*) of correcting the texts” to guide how the separate groups were to edit the basic texts prior to them being corrected.

Who were the individuals editing the texts? Beginning with the issue published in September 1953, *The Sangāyanā Monthly Bulletin* lists the names and some details about the learned ordained individuals responsible for editing various texts (with the article “Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā” Broadcast by Thiripyanchi U Sein Maung, Chief Executive Officer, Union Buddha Sāsana Council, Rangoon on 8 July 1953: translation *The Sangāyanā Monthly Bulletin* 1/5, 1953, 5). As an example, one of the individuals involved named there is described in this way in 2001: “Venerable U Silananda [1927–2005] has been a Buddhist monk for over fifty years. He holds two titles of Master in *Dhamma* and had taught at the Atithokdayone Pali University and served as the external examiner at the Department of Oriental Studies, The University of Arts and Sciences, Mandalay, Myanmar. He also was the chief compiler of the comprehensive Tipitaka Pāli–Burmese Dictionary and one of the final editors of the Pali Texts, Commentaries, and Sub-Commentaries at the Sixth Buddhist Council, held in the Rangoon, Myanmar, in 1954” (Silananda 2001, 261). It is notable that different groups of around half a dozen monks and senior monks (*thera* and *mahāthera*) are responsible for named divisions of the canon (these names do not appear in the final editions).

A July 1953 update from the Executive Officer of the Union Sāsana Council on progress with preparation of the texts (published September 1953) clarifies the procedure under Stage Two and mentions all three stages which seem to correspond to the three levels of sub-committee visible on the chart (Figure 2: Sub-committees 1–3) (numbers in square brackets below have been added for clarity):

I should like to inform you how far the work has proceeded in respect of [1] correcting, [2] editing, [3] re-editing and scrutinising the Text which is to be commonly adopted by the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā. The Discourses of the Omniscient Buddha comprise the Tipitaka or Five Nikāyas which have been printed in 88 different books [volumes?].<sup>25</sup> About six or seven

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<sup>25</sup>These 88 printed “books” were presumably the outcome of the first phase (Subcommittee 1); see also the “eighty groups” cited above. Those versions were prepared for the various groups working as Subcommittee 2 “to correct

months ago [late-1952], these books were distributed among 118 Text-Correcting Groups [Sub-committee 2 on Figure 2 presumably] formed from the learned Bhikkhus all over the Union [of Burma], together with the various editions of the Text and relevant Commentaries and Sub-commentaries, for the purpose of collating, correcting, and return of the same to the headquarters. ... So, at the present juncture, the whole Vinaya Piṭaka has been re-edited. When the Thai and Ceylon members of the Text Re-editing Group [presumably the *Pāli-paṭi-visodhaka*] arrive here this month (July 1953), this Vinaya Pitaka will be scrutinised by them in conjunction with the Mahatheras selected by the Bhāranīthāraka Committee (Wunzaung Sayadaws) for this specific purpose. When these Vinaya books receive the common approval of all the members, they will be printed at the Council's huge printing works at Yegu, Rangoon as the Tipiṭaka commonly adopted by all the Theravāda countries.

*The Sangāyanā Monthly Bulletin* 1/5, 1953, 5

Again :

Next, I should like to tell you something more about the re-editing of the Pāli Texts. As I have mentioned in my previous talks, the three Books on Dīgha Nikāya have been completely re-edited by the Burma Re-editing Groups. When similar books which are now being re-edited in Ceylon arrive here, both will be compared and passed by the Bhāranīthāraka Mahātheras. The five books on Vinaya which have already been approved by the Bhāranīthāraka Mahātheras will be printed at the Council's Printing Press at Yegu, when the same is formally opened on the 25th October 1953.

*The Sangāyanā Monthly Bulletin*, 1/7, 1953, 6–7

So, in the terms used by the Council, the first step was to establish a correctly printed text (the 88 books mentioned as “pre-revised versions”), and the second step was the “correcting” of that text. After these two steps were completed, Subcommittee 3, the “Final Editing Group” (*Pāli-paṭi-visodhaka*), took the material in hand (mentioned in Rule §9 but no further explanation found). This is the stage when the international Saṅgha members (from Sri Lanka and Thailand only, since Cambodia and Laos were not able to send representatives to Burma, as stated in *The Sangāyanā Monthly Bulletin* 1/6, 1953, 7–8) became

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the texts edited by the editing groups by collating with the authorised texts and commentaries” (Rule §11). See below for the reference to the distribution of “pre-revised versions” for checking in Sri Lanka.

involved in finalising the texts, in both Mandalay and Rangoon. This was the final stage before the printing of the Sixth Council versions.

2.4.3. DETAILING THE CONTRIBUTIONS FROM SRI LANKA AND THAILAND  
In terms of editorial contributions, the Rules above specify “Groups for Correcting the Texts shall also be formed in Thailand, Ceylon, Cambodia, and Laos” (*The Sangāyanā Monthly Bulletin* 1/2, 1953, 2, Rule 5) but only Sri Lanka and Thailand seem to have been able to do this.

It is necessary to make explicit here the contributions of Sri Lankan and Thai editing sub-groups that have only been documented by Clark (2015a, 97) up to now; the published reports suggest considerable consultation on the constitution of the text.<sup>26</sup> In terms of Sri Lankan involvement in the text editing for the Sixth Council recension, in January 1953 an official Burmese mission to Sri Lanka had arrived in Colombo (emphasis added):

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<sup>26</sup>A separate Sri Lankan Tipiṭaka text re-editing initiative is reported to have begun in Sri Lanka in 1950, prior to the 1952 resolution by senior Burmese monastics to hold the Sixth Council (*The Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā Souvenir Album* 1956, 36). Seeing that some passages of the texts as published were “devoid of their meaning ... [w]ith this reason in view, we, the Bhikkhus representing the three sects of Ceylon, competent in the task, and led by Mahānāyaka and Anunāyaka Theras, assembled at the Vidyalānkāra Pirivena in the year ... [1950] of the Christian Era, on the fifteenth day of August, and inaugurated a Dhamma Sangāyanā. It took us as long as three years and six months to complete the first stage of this Dhamma Sangāyanā, in which we rehearsed every letter, every word, and every sentence of the Buddha Vacana, compared the different texts, local and foreign, modern and ancient, and arranged together and examined the different variations in readings. In the second stage which is now in progress, we are rehearsing, discussing, and comparing the Buddha Vacana, paragraph by paragraph, sentence by sentence, and meaning by meaning. The third stage of this Dhamma Sangāyanā will follow, it is hoped, at the close of the Lent this year. This will be known as Pancasatika Sangīti or Pancasatika Sajjhāyana and will rehearse, consider and examine carefully the whole of the Tipiṭaka, according to etymology, tradition, and usage, before an assembly of Bhikkhus over five hundred in number.” (*The Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā Souvenir Album* 1956, 96)

It was on this occasion that the Honourable U Win, formally handed to the Prime Minister of Ceylon, the Honourable Mr Dudley Senanayake, *the pre-revised versions* of the Burmese Tripitaka Texts which the Buddha Sasana Council in Rangoon expected the Ceylon monks to examine and revise in the light of the Tripitaka Texts available in Ceylon.

*The Sangāyanā Monthly Bulletin* 1/8, 1953, 2

A considerable network of scholar monks and qualified lay individuals was subsequently set up in Sri Lanka to comply with the Sixth Council's request for a review of the Tipitaka ahead of the Sixth Council recitation. A central body of 16 *mahātheras* and groups of five monks (distributed at 29 locations throughout Sri Lanka) were nominated to review individual texts and report back to the central body which sat in Colombo. They would in turn review the editing work in the presence of one of the five members from the 29 locations, presumably so they could explain any of their decisions that were questioned. The groups of five *theras* doing the editing were from various *pirivenas* (monastic education centres) and temples (*The Sangāyanā Monthly Bulletin* 1/8, 1953, 2–3). These revised texts were returned to Burma in due course: the first mission in July 1953 and the second in November 1953 (*The Sangāyanā Monthly Bulletin* 1/8, 1953, 4), with announcements of further deliveries not yet found.

The Thai involvement is somewhat less well documented so far, but a number of senior monks did visit both Mandalay and Rangoon to work through the texts after their revision by the Burmese national teams. The phrasing below suggests there were more extensive groups set up in Thailand, but no account of them has yet turned up:

Bhikkhu Phra Dhammadhiraja Mahamun, Bhikkhu Chawin Saradam and Bhikkhu Kiet Sukitti, representing the Chaṭṭha Sangāyanā Text Re-editing Committee in Thailand came to Burma by air on the 21st. July 1953, for the purpose of revising and scrutinising the Tipitaka Texts that have been re-edited by the Text Re-editing Groups of Burma. On the same day a Buddhist Mission headed by Venerable Polwatte Buddhadatta Mahāthera arrived at Rangoon bringing the First instalment of the Tipitaka revised by the Ceylonese Sangha. These two Buddhist Missions met at Rangoon and they both visited Mandalay. Venerable Buddhadatta Mahāthera and the Thai Theras remained at Mandalay to scrutinise the Texts that have been re-edited by the Text Re-editing Groups of Burma. The other members of the Ceylonese Mission returned to Rangoon and thence to Ceylon. The

Thai and the Ceylonese Bhikkhus began their work at Mandalay a day or two after their arrival and in one month they completed their work and returned to Rangoon. On reaching Rangoon, Bhikkhu Chawin Saradam returned to Bangkok by air before the Vassa of 1953. Temporarily residing at the Thāthana Yeiktha and working daily except on Fast-days, the Thai and Ceylonese Bhikkhus scrutinised the Tipiṭaka that have been re-edited by the Text Re-editing Groups of Burma. On completing their work after a period of over four months, they returned to Thailand by air on the 12th December 1953.

*The Sangāyanā Monthly Bulletin* 1/8, 1953, 11

Before the arrival of the international editors in Burma, a July 1953 update from the Executive Officer of the Union Sāsana Council (Rangoon) on progress with preparation of the texts (published September 1953) reports:

During May last [1953], a Text Re-editing Group [Subcommittee 3] has been formed from among the Theras and Mahātheras who are well conversant with Buddhist literature, for the purpose of *re-editing the corrected books* with reference to various editions of the Tipiṭaka; Vyākaranā and relevant Commentaries and Subcommentaries.

Emphasis added, *The Sangāyanā Monthly Bulletin* 1/5, 1953, 5

Elsewhere, in a broadcast in September 1953, it is stated:

Now, we should like to inform you how the relevant Pāli Texts, which have been re-edited by Text Re-editing Groups of Burma have been collated with the corrected Vinaya Books brought to us by the Ceylonese Mission. As previously arranged, Ceylon, Thailand, Cambodia and Laos were to send a representative each to work in co-operation with the Text Re-editing Groups of Burma. The learned Theras and Mahātheras of Cambodia and Laos were unable to send their representatives, but gave their assent to the decisions to be arrived at by the Mahātheras of the remaining Theravāda countries. Venerable Buddhadatta Mahāthera, representing Ceylon, and Bhikkhu Phra Dhammadhirāja Mahāmuni, representing Thailand arrived here in July last [1953], for the purpose of scrutinising the Pāli Texts in conjunction with the Text Re-editing Groups of Burma. They went to Mandalay and began their work in co-operation with eight other Mahātheras from the Text Re-editing Groups of Burma. They have ably scrutinised the Five Books on Vinaya and completed their task very smoothly in 20 days.

*The Sangāyanā Monthly Bulletin* 1/6, 1953, 7

## 2.4.4. PRINTING AND PROOFREADING OF THE FINALISED TEXT

With so much time and effort having gone into editing the texts, it was important that no errors of typesetting mar the final publications. The typesetting, printing, and binding of the finalised texts was a huge undertaking and the first tenders for the supply of materials were let in April 1953, although printing did not get underway until 7 AM on 25 October 1953. A “Printing Department Report” appeared in 1953 (*The Sangāyanā Monthly Bulletin* 1/9, 1954, 11) which details that by that time the specially built printing facility had ordered 350 tons of white printing papers, 70 tons of strawboard for binding, and 43 kilometres of book cloth from London. Fifty typesetters/compositors were employed and 5,400 kilograms of Pāli type in Burmese characters ordered to add to the 2,700 kilograms on hand.

In terms of proofreading, the stages were outlined as follows:

The first proof-reading is done by four lay persons who passed the Lectureship Examination in Buddhist Literature, and have headed [*sic*] by Saya Nyan, a learned Pāli scholar.

The second proof-reading is done by four Sayadaws who have passed the Lectureship Examination in Buddhist Literature.

The third and the final proof-reading is done by the following Mahātheras:

- (1) Sayadaw U Kondañña, Agga Maha Pandita, Chauk-htat-gyi kyaung-taik, Rangoon.
- (2) Venerable A.P. Buddhadatta, Agga Maha Pandita.
- (3) Sayadaw U Nāgavamsa, Bhagaya Tawya, Rangoon.
- (4) Venerable Mahāsi Sayadaw, Agga Maha Pandita.
- (5) U Visuddha, Vijjalankāra Sayadaw.

Working daily from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. these five Mahātheras are doing this final proof-reading.

*The Sangāyanā Monthly Bulletin* 1/10, 1954, 10

The textual output for each of the five separate sessions of the Sixth Council was on hand prior to the relevant sitting, with the very first sitting at twelve and a half minutes after twelve on the full moon of Kason 1316 (Burmese Era), 17 May 1954.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup>Most academic reviews consistently ignore the major contributions made to Burmese language versions of texts and the production of the multi-volume Tipiṭaka Pāli-Myanmar dictionary. A full listing of the publications of the

In summary, the link to the Mandalay inscriptions was explicitly and repeatedly made in the lead up to the Sixth Council to set up a continuity with the previous councils. Considerable attempts were made to consult learned individuals (lay and monastic) from other Theravāda countries, with missions to Sri Lanka and Thailand well-documented and the involvement of senior monks in settling the final texts apparent. The subsequent intentional publicising of this suggests a push to legitimise the Council as a truly international affair (Clark 2015a). In spite of this publicity, it is unclear how Sri Lankan or Thai monastic authorities regarded the publications of the Sixth Council. Subsequent publication of Tipiṭaka versions in Theravāda countries suggest that, while respecting the Sixth Council work and contributing to it, the editions emanating from that Council did not in fact supplant those current in individual Theravāda countries though some took into consideration the variants

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Sixth Council has yet to be made, thus an indicatory list is given here (most extracted from the scanned versions on the website of the “Kaba Aye Buddha [sic] Research Library” (<http://www.kbrl.gov.mm/catalog/index/2>).

*The Saṅgāyanā Monthly Bulletin* (English)

*Saṅgāyanā* (Burmese language bulletin series)

Revised (re-edited) texts of the Tipiṭaka: Vinaya (5 volumes); Suttanta (23 volumes); Abhidhamma (12 volumes)

Revised (re-edited) texts of the Aṭṭhakathā (Commentaries) (50 volumes, first published 1958–1959)

Revised (re-edited) texts of the Tīkā (Sub-commentaries) (31 volumes, first published 1960–1961)

Nissaya (word-by-word translations of the Tipiṭaka texts into Burmese) (8 volumes)

Burmese translations of Tipiṭaka texts (projected 40 volumes; by 2011 only 29 volumes published)

English translations of selected Tipiṭaka texts (22 volumes)

Tipiṭaka Pāli-Myanmar dictionary

Publications about the Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyanā (by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture) (18 volumes)

\**Chaṭṭha saṅgāyanā phvaṅ' pvai mhat' tam' krī* = *The Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyanā Souvenir Album* (1954)

*Chaṭṭhasaṅgāyanā mhat' tam' / The Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyanā Souvenir Album* (1956)

and decisions made by Sixth Council editors. The appearance of variant readings in the Sixth Council editions stems from the editing decisions made by this complex and distributed process.

The simplified chart below attempts to outline the nature of the relationships between these editions:

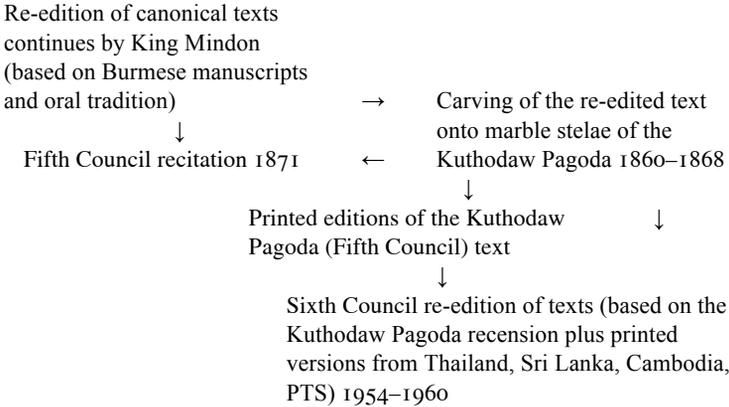


Figure 3: SUMMARY OF THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG BURMESE EDITIONS

## 2.5. STUDY OF SELECTED TEXTS

Part of the project being reported on here is the preparation of a transcription of the texts on the Kuthodaw marble stelae into Roman script, which was begun in 2016 in collaboration with monastic scholars at the Sitagu International Buddhist Academy in Mandalay. An eventual aim of the overall project is the provision of an electronic edition of the Kuthodaw Pagoda text to accompany the high-resolution digital images, as a resource for researching Pāli canonical text editions. Continuing on from the background information given above, in this section a closer examination is made of the relationships between the Kuthodaw stela versions of a sample of texts, the early-twentieth century Myanmar printed versions and the Sixth Council published versions, and some manuscript versions. After a brief review of the only two known earlier studies on the Kuthodaw recension, this section will present an indicative summary of new explorations on Kuthodaw text samples, namely,

(1) Pācittiya of the Suttavibhaṅga; (2) Dhammasaṅgaṇī (Mātikā only); (3) Buddhāpadana of the Apadāna; and (4) Mūlapariyāya-sutta of the Majjhimanikāya.

2.5.1. PREVIOUS SCHOLARSHIP<sup>28</sup>

In the first published Western scholarly examination of the text versions either on or associated with the Kuthodaw Pagoda, Bollée (1968, 496–97) — working from photographs<sup>29</sup> — collated two lengthy text extracts to compare the edited Pāli text printed in PTS, Thai, Sri Lankan, and Burmese editions. Bollée examined the entire Sāmaññaphala-sutta (D I 47–86), a text already examined in detail by Hamm to compare other Asian editions (1962, 1973), and the Kuṇārajātaka (Jā V 415–56).<sup>30</sup>

Bollée found that for the *sutta*

[B<sup>KP</sup>], the text of the stone slabs, differs in 21 instances from E<sup>e</sup>, the European [i.e. PTS] edition, and [Be<sup>ChS</sup>], the Burmese edition of the VIth Council text (Rangoon, 2500/1956). In 75 cases [B<sup>KP</sup>] goes with [Be<sup>ChS</sup>] against E<sup>e</sup>. ... In 11 out of 12 instances the variae lectiones denoted with the abbreviation *ka* in [Be<sup>ChS</sup>] are identical with [B<sup>KP</sup>].

Bollée 1968, 496

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<sup>28</sup>Abbreviations: B<sup>Th</sup> refers to the Burmese script manuscripts commissioned by King Tharrawaddy and given to Arthur Phayre by King Mindon (currently in the British Library); B<sup>KP</sup> refers to the Burmese recension preserved on the Kuthodaw Pagoda stelae; Be<sup>H</sup> to the Hanthawaddy series; Be<sup>ChS</sup> refers to the Sixth Council Chatṭhasaṅgīti series; and E<sup>e</sup> to the PTS series in Roman script. For details, see below.

<sup>29</sup>Bollée notes that during his trip to the site in January–February 1965 the stelae had to be moistened before being photographed (with flash) for the text to be more legible. He took photographs of the Sutta- and Abhidhamma-piṭaka sections and those films (but not prints) are now in the Universität Hamburg (Asien-Afrika-Institut, Bibliothek). Sixty-seven films and around one thousand photos are stored there which are not currently indexed (Birte Plutat, email to Mark Allon, 15 August 2013; see Allon et al. 2016, 225). In addition, “The late Dr Hermann Kopp possessed a copy of Wilhelm Geiger’s folio edition of the Vinaya slabs [from the Kuthodaw]” (personal email Willem Bollée to Mark Allon, 14 August 2013); however, as yet there is no trace of this (see Allon et al. 2016, 225).

<sup>30</sup>Bollée’s sigla have been altered to match those used here: i.e. B<sup>m</sup> = B<sup>KP</sup> and B<sup>e</sup> = Be<sup>ChS</sup>.

This positively confirms (as expected) that the text printed by the Sixth Council (Be<sup>ChS</sup>) does cite variant readings from the Kuthodaw stelae and the Kuthodaw text is a direct influence on the Sixth Council edition for the text Bollée examined. For his second text, the *Kuṇāla-jātaka*, Bollée collated B<sup>KP</sup> with Be<sup>ChS</sup> (Rangoon, 1960) and noted:

when collating [B<sup>KP</sup>] with [Be<sup>ChS</sup>] (Rangoon, 2504/1960) 118 different readings apart from evident writing or inking errors. From material collected for a new edition of this *Jātaka* [B<sup>KP</sup>] could be collated with other editions, too. In 11 cases C<sup>e</sup> (*Jātakatthakathā* [sic], Colombo, 1937), alone or together with other versions, reads the same as [B<sup>KP</sup>] against [Be<sup>ChS</sup>] ... In the other instances [B<sup>KP</sup>] stands alone or is followed by other Burmese editions only. ... The different readings indicated in [Be<sup>ChS</sup>] with the abbreviation *ka* can be identified in 26 out of 31 cases (inclusive of two repetitions) with [B<sup>KP</sup>].

Bollée 1968, 496

Based on these two detailed and extensive collations, Bollée's conclusion (1968, 496) — echoing that of Hamm — was that the Burmese (and other editions from Asia) “represent only the tradition of their own respective countries, holds true rather for [B<sup>KP</sup>] than for [Be<sup>ChS</sup>], all the more because the [B<sup>KP</sup>] slabs were ready before the Vth Council, even allowing for the revision”; i.e., the Kuthodaw Pagoda versions are more distinctively faithful to an identifiably Burmese recension of the text than Be<sup>ChS</sup>. This accords with the descriptions of the methods used to prepare the Sixth Council editions, the use of published versions from surrounding countries and the PTS printings.

Bollée goes on to conclude that B<sup>KP</sup>:

was probably used by most of the later Burmese editions, whether this is stated explicitly in them or not. In the case of the *Kuṇāla-jātaka* the Hamsavatī Press edition (Rangoon, 1939), in which *daṇḍas* divide the words in the prose passages as on the stone slabs, is almost identical with the [B<sup>KP</sup>] version. The text is printed in the traditional way, whereas in the other pre-war editions of the *Jātaka Pāli* published by the Sudhammavātī Press (Rangoon, n.d.) the verse lines are printed one beneath the other, but, just as in the Hamsavatī edition, they are not numbered. It also corrects many errors of [B<sup>KP</sup>].

Bollée 1968, 497

It is significant that the printed versions of the Hanthawaddy (Hamsavatī) and presumably other presses are correcting “errors” from the stelae texts and as such have undergone revisions and improve-

ments. In summary, Bollée (1968, 497) outlines the importance of the Kuthodaw Pagoda inscriptions in this way:

1. Most of the Burmese editions have [B<sup>KP</sup>] as their authentic basis.
2. This text, above all, allows a more detailed criticism of the edition of the Vth Council, e.g. with respect to the unspecified different readings marked in [B<sup>ChS</sup>] with the abbreviation *ka*.
3. Here and there [B<sup>KP</sup>] has a better, or — which often occurs in Pāli — equivalent reading. This can be important in cases where the text of the PTS edition is unsatisfactory, as e.g. in the case of *Petako-padesa*, or where it is based on Oriental prints only.
4. [B<sup>KP</sup>] is at least not contaminated with E<sup>e</sup> and can, therefore, be better compared with other Oriental editions.
5. The Mandalay slabs — one of the most important monuments left by King Mindon — form the first complete Tipiṭaka text handed down to us which a Buddhist council officially approved of.

A second set of studies to use the Kuthodaw texts supplements this description. In his unpublished PhD thesis, Clark (2015b) made a study of the Apadāna, including an edition and translation of the text's second, third, and fourth chapters. In preparing the edition, he worked with a wide range of Myanmar textual material, including images of the Kuthodaw Pagoda stelae.<sup>31</sup> Importantly, Clark (2015b, 106) proposed that British Library manuscript IO Man/Pali77 is the possible exemplar of the Apadāna text inscribed on the Kuthodaw Pagoda stelae. This suggestion is consistent with the latest year mentioned in its long

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<sup>31</sup>Clark's description (2015b, 107) of his use of the Kuthodaw Pagoda stelae for his work reads: "Kuthodaw Pagoda marble stelae associated with the fifth Buddhist council (stelae numbers 665–687) located in Mandalay, Burma. The text was inscribed on these particular stelae between 1866 and 1867. Digital colour photographs were taken by myself in 2011. Because some of the stelae were unclean and the camera resolution was not ideal, the inscribed text was often difficult to read clearly. Besides these photos, I examined a DVD-ROM containing digital photographs of the stelae. ... While the stelae were cleaned in preparation for this project, the camera resolution is poor and therefore, again, the inscribed text was often difficult to read clearly. ... [I]t appears that [British Library manuscript IO Man/Pali78] is a more faithful and careful reproduction of [British Library manuscript IO Man/Pali77] than the Kuthodaw Pagoda stelae."

colophon, 1857. Elsewhere, Clark (2015a) made a detailed study of a section of the Sixth Council edition of the Apadāna, with the aim of shedding light on the editing methodology and sources used to produce that edition. He found that the sample text was “eclectically edited by freely adopting readings from the Kuthodaw Pagoda stelae and several early printed editions from South and Southeast Asia, with preference given to readings that are most easily understood” (Clark 2015a, 106). Further, he noted that, “The Kuthodaw Pagoda inscriptions contain a reasonably large number of spelling mistakes” (Clark 2015a, 103) and “The editors of the [Kuthodaw Pagoda] recension, which represents a thoroughly revised version of the Pāli canon made during the founding years of Mandalay, have emended the received text in order to avoid hypermetric *pādas* wherever possible” (Clark 2015a, 104). This suggests that the recensions of the Fifth and later the Sixth Council have had a strong normative influence on the textual traditions in Burma and are therefore of relevance to scholars making use of the widely distributed Sixth Council reprinted and reformatted texts available now (e.g. the Digital Pāli Reader; Igatpuri version of 1993–1998, etc.) (Grönbold 2005, 47–49, 56). As shown above, promotional material on the Sixth Council explicitly stated that the Fifth Council stelae inscriptions were the starting point for their review of the canonical texts; these textual studies support this.

According to Clark, readings from the Kuthodaw version of that text had influenced later manuscripts and printed versions. This is supported by eye-witness statements such as this from 1951:

On other days the long white colonnades of gleaming shrines are empty, save for an occasional visitor; or for a few Monks in the Yellow Robe, who, kneeling within the little shrines, are busily comparing with the stone inscription a new-written palm-leaf manuscript of Sutta, Vinaya, or Abhidhamma; and marking on it where the text differs, or the copyist has erred.

Maung Tsain 1951, 20

### 2.5.2. TEXT COMPARISONS

To make a start on using the digital images produced in the first stage of this project (Allon et al. 2016, 236), the inscribed versions of four selected text extracts from the Kuthodaw stelae were worked through in detail, comparing them (in this first instance) with other Myanmar

versions<sup>32</sup> and the respective PTS versions (because these have been so widely used in contemporary Western scholarship).

The sources of the texts compared here are listed below in chronological sequence. See the individual sections below for further details on individual sources for textual comparison.

- 29 Burmese script manuscripts commissioned by King Tharrawaddy, given to Arthur Phayre by King Mindon in 1855 and currently held in the British Library (B<sup>Th</sup>). This manuscript set predates the Kuthodaw inscriptions; indeed, Oldenberg (1882, 59) suggests that the manuscripts date to 1841–42.<sup>33</sup>
- Kuthodaw Pagoda inscriptions (B<sup>KP</sup>).
- Fifth Council editions published by the Hanthawaddy (Haṃsāvātī) (Be<sup>H</sup>) and other Myanmar presses (1893 onwards, especially the 1900 versions) (these are listed below at 5.1.1).<sup>34</sup>
- Pali Text Society (PTS) editions (E<sup>e</sup>).<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> As Balbir (2009, 4) has identified, there are “risks of conflating Buddhist traditions from different provenances and thereby producing an artificial mixture”, i.e., “a kind of phantom text” (Hinüber 1996, 36).

<sup>33</sup> The set is currently located in the British Library at Or. 3403-80. It is generally regarded as being of high quality (Oldenberg 1882, 59). Although presumed to be a complete version, British Library staff were unable to locate the section of the Majjhimanikāya which contains the Mūlapariyāya-sutta. For more information on this set, see Herbert (1975). As far as we have traced, these manuscripts were used for the Khuddakapāṭha (1870) and for at least the following PTS editions: Vinaya (1879–1883), Thera- and Therī-gāthā (1883), Majjhima-nikāya I (1888), Itivuttaka (1889), Dīgha-nikāya (1890–1911), Aṅguttara-nikāya (1885–1900), Nettipakaraṇa (1902), Sutta-nipāta (1913), Sutta-nipāta commentary (Paramatthajotikā II, 1916) and Mahāniddeśa (1917).

<sup>34</sup> The statement “In this way the 5th council edition has skipped printing technology” (Ruiz-Falqués 2017, 366) is not quite accurate in this regard since the Hanthawaddy editions (and perhaps others) printed the Fifth Council text.

<sup>35</sup> With the Pali Text Society named after “the Early English Text Society” (Rhys Davids, 1942, 81) it is not clear how (if at all) the editing methods and conventions of that and similar groups influenced the editing style of the PTS itself. The nature of existing PTS editions has been well overviewed by Balbir

- Sixth Council publications or the Chaṭṭhasaṅgīti Piṭaka series (Be<sup>ChS</sup>) (Grönbold 2005, 47–48) and subsequent reprintings and transcriptions as noted.<sup>36</sup>

The initial goal of the comparison was to situate the Kuthodaw inscriptions in relation to these versions of the selected texts.

#### GENERAL REMARKS ON BUDDHIST TEXTUAL TRADITIONS

We have chosen to initially explore the Burmese recension(s) by examining text passages from the Kuthodaw stelae in relation to other Burmese versions of the same texts. There are some general and distinctive features of the Pāli manuscript (textual) tradition to be identified first, which have been written about in Europe for as long as manuscripts from the country have been used by European scholars. Fausbøll's 1861 comments on the Burmese manuscripts available to him (notwithstanding Balbir's characterisation of his work (2009, 2)) are a useful starting point:

The other signed B, is a MS. [i.e. manuscript] in the Burmese character ... this is, like most of the Pāli MSS. in Burmese writing, a very bad one, and as for the text contained therein, it appears to be a later, revised or rather would-be emended edition, as one may directly see on looking over the readings and attending to the real discrepancies. As far as I am aware, all the Burmese copies of the Sacred Pāli Writings represent such a revised edition.

1861, I

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(2009), who notes that the work of the PTS was never systematic and as such, heterogeneity is the rule. Some PTS "editions" are merely "transcriptional" (2009, 3). Even those PTS editions based on more extensive groups of manuscripts seem to have produced conflated texts.

<sup>36</sup>This edition includes in footnotes variant readings or references to the following sources: Sī = Sīhaḷapothhake dissamānapātho [Sri Lankan], Ka-Sī = Katthaci Sīhaḷapothhake [Sri Lankan], Syā = Syāmapothhake [Thai], Kaṃ = Kambojapothhake [Cambodian], I = Inḡalisapothhake [PTS], Ka = Katthaci Marammapothhake (= B<sup>KP</sup>?) [Burmese], Ṭṭha = Aṭṭhakathā, ? = "Siyā nu kho porāṇapātho" ti takkitapātho.

He expanded on this repeatedly:

As to the difference between the Singhalese (C) and the Burmese (B) Redaction of the Jātaka-Book, I still hold the same opinion that I expressed in my “Five Jātakas” [1861, cited above].

1872, ix

On the whole it seems that C retains older forms and expressions, whereas B replaces them by more modern, more common, or more regular ones.

1872, x

B sometimes adds and sometimes omits a few words. The additions seem on the whole to have the character of minor ameliorations of the style; of the omissions some may have arisen from the carelessness of the copyist, but some also seem to be intentional.

1872, xi–xii

B represents a later, corrected edition.

1872, xii<sup>37</sup>

This article will not take up these matters in detail but a comparison of these comments with the more detailed summary of these features by Stede (PTS *Cullaniddesa* edition 1918, xii–xix) would be a starting point for future discussions to characterise the nature of Pāli manuscripts from Myanmar.

On the nature of the manuscript textual tradition itself, both Hinüber and Norman have pointed out the artificial and changing nature of the Pāli used in canonical texts (Hinüber 1982; 1983; 1996, 5; Norman 1983, 6–7; 2006). Smith did this eloquently in his introduction to Agga-vaṃsa’s *Saddanīti* (1928–1954, volume I, vi):

Therefore, with the conviction that our Pāli is a function of that of the twelfth century — and that a knowledge of the Burmese and Sinhalese philology of that period is indispensable for those wishing to go back, through the recension of Buddhaghosa and Dhammapāla, to a Pāli that has interest linguistically — I have begun the study of standardised Pāli (*la*

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<sup>37</sup>See also his comments about the manuscripts from Mandalay “Although the MSS. are, on the whole, carefully written, as remarked before, still they share with nearly all Burmese MSS. such blunders as brāhmaṇa for brāhmaṇa, gandha for gantha, niṭhita for niṭṭhita, etc.” (Fausbøll 1896, 2).

*norme palie*) taught by Aggavaṃsa in the three volumes that make up the Saddanāṭi.<sup>38</sup>

Kahrs (1992) has raised significant questions about the importance and even the competency of Aggavaṃsa's work. Importantly, he has also identified issues with the examples from the Pāli canon quoted in the work. Unanswered questions remain about how and to what extent the work of Sanskrit grammarians influenced the schools of grammar that grew up for Pāli and Prakrits (Kahrs 1992, 8). Pind (1995, 297), however, has an opposite view and states, "There is no proof that the grammatical literature has had any influence on Theravāda scribes: in spite of minor divergences, Pāli literature is remarkably consistent, as shown by the many canonical quotations in the grammatical literature." The role of the preliminary studies below is more to start to map these differences as they relate to the tradition from Myanmar, in particular as recorded in stone by the Kuthodaw Pagoda texts.

A final general point concerns the *-by-/-vy-* alternation in Pāli. In B<sup>KP</sup>, B<sup>Th</sup> and Be<sup>H</sup> *-vy-* is consistently written as *-by-*, which is followed by later Burmese editions, such as Be<sup>ChS</sup>. Because we are examining the textual tradition from Myanmar here, that is accepted as the spelling for Pāli words in the extracts.

The four text extracts selected to be analysed and compared and the sources used are the following:

I. VINAYA-PIṬAKA : SUTTAVIBHAṄGA PĀCITTIIYA I :  
SAMPAJĀNA-MUSĀ-VĀDA (abbrev Vin IV, Pāc)<sup>39</sup>

The sources compared were:

- B<sup>Th</sup>: manuscript IO Pāli 2 (Oldenberg 1882, 59) in the Phayre collection at the British Library; leaves *ka-kī*

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<sup>38</sup>“C'est donc dans la conviction que notre pali est une fonction de celui du 12me siècle — et que la connaissance de la philologie birmane et singalaise de ladite époque est indispensable à qui voudra remonter, à travers la recension Buddhaghosa-Dhammapāla, à un pali d'intérêt linguistique —, que j'ai entrepris l'étude de la norme palie enseignée par Aggavaṃsa dans les trois volumes qui forment la Saddanāṭi.”

<sup>39</sup>The abbreviation “Pāc” for the Pācittiya is taken from Nāṇatusita 2014, xviii.

- B<sup>KP</sup>: Kuthodaw Pagoda inscriptions, lines 1–42 on stela 17a; inscription completed on 30 January, 1862
- E<sup>e</sup>: Oldenberg, Hermann (ed.). 1882. *The Vinaya Piṭakam: One of the Principal Buddhist Holy Scriptures in the Pāli Language*, Vol. IV. London: Williams and Norgate, pp. 1–4
- Be<sup>H</sup>: *Vinaññ’” piṭakat’, pācit’ pāli to’*. 1900. Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press, pp. 1–6<sup>40</sup>
- Be<sup>Th</sup>: *Vinayapiṭaka, pācit’ pāli to’*. 1911. Rangoon: Thudhamawadi Press, pp. 1–6
- Be<sup>ChS</sup>: *Pācittiyapāli*. 1967; 2005; 2008. Chaṭṭhasaṅgīti Piṭaka series. Yangon: Buddhasāsana Samiti, pp. 1–6<sup>41</sup>

2. ABHIDHAMMA-PIṬAKA: *DHAMMSAṅGANĪ: MĀTIKĀ* (Dhs)

The sources compared were:

- B<sup>Th</sup>: manuscript IO Pāli 22 (Oldenberg 1882, 61) in the Phayre collection at the British Library; leaves *kā–kī*
- B<sup>KP</sup>: Kuthodaw Pagoda inscription, lines 1–41 on stela 112a; inscription completed on 25 December, 1862
- E<sup>e</sup>: Müller, Edward. (ed.). 1885. *The Dhammasaṅgaṇi*. Oxford: Henry Frowde for the Pali Text Society, pp. 1–8<sup>42</sup>
- Be<sup>H</sup>: *Abhidhammapiṭakat’, Dhammasaṅgaṇī pāli to’*. 1908. Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press, pp. 1–6

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<sup>40</sup>Be<sup>H</sup> refers to the versions published by the Hanthawaddy (Haṃsāvātī) Press which are explicitly linked to the Fifth Council version on the title-pages; we have followed the Library of Congress transliteration of Burmese, but the usual problems with rendering this language into Roman script remain.

<sup>41</sup>The 1967 edition in Burmese script was reprinted in 2005 and then again as a romanised version in 2008 (*Vinayapiṭaka, Pācittiyapāli*. Yangon: Buddhasāsana Society): “Romanized from Myanmar version printed in 1997. Pāli Series 02.” It is notable that the reprints carefully retain the same page breaks as the earlier editions in every case. No misprints were noted in the text comparison of these various reprintings.

<sup>42</sup>This edition is based on one Burmese and one Sinhalese manuscript, but no variants are given, no critical apparatus is established, nor is there sufficient information to locate or identify these manuscripts nowadays.

- Be<sup>ChS</sup>: *Dhammasaṅgaṇīpāḷi*. 1961. Chatṭhasaṅgīti Piṭaka series. Rangoon: Buddhasāsana Samiti, pp. 1–16<sup>43</sup>

3. SUTTA-PIṬAKA : BUDDHĀPADĀNA OF THE APADĀNA (Ap)

The sources compared were :

- B<sup>Th</sup>: manuscript IO Pāli 21 (Oldenberg 1882, 61 / § 21 ; Mellick 1993, 36–40) in the Phayre collection at the British Library; leaves *ka–kī*<sup>44</sup>
- B<sup>KP</sup>: Kuthodaw Pagoda inscription, lines 1–40 on stela 665a ; inscription completed on 25 August, 1867
- E<sup>e</sup>: Lilley, Mary E. (ed.). 1925. *The Apadāna*, Vol. 1. London : Oxford University Press for the Pali Text Society, pp. 1–6
- Be<sup>H</sup>: *Therā-apadān ‘ pāḷi to ‘*. 1909. Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press, pp. 1–5
- Be<sup>ChS</sup>: *Suttantapiṭake Khuddakanikāye Apadānapāḷi*, Vol. 1. 1997. Chatṭhasaṅgīti Piṭaka series. Yangon: Ministry of Religion, pp. 1–7

4. SUTTA-PIṬAKA : MŪLAPARIYĀYA-SUTTA  
OF THE MAJJHIMA-NIKĀYA (M I)

The sources compared were:<sup>45</sup>

- B<sup>KP</sup>: Kuthodaw Pagoda inscription, lines 1–66 on stela 356a ; inscription completed on 16 February, 1865
- E<sup>e</sup>: Trenckner, V. (ed.). 1888. *The Majjhima-nikāya*, Vol. 1. London: Pali Text Society, pp. 1–6
- Be<sup>H</sup>: *Mūlapariyāsa pāḷi to ‘*. 1909. Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press, pp. 1–7

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<sup>43</sup>This edition was reprinted in 1997 and romanised in 2008 (*Dhammasaṅgaṇīpāḷi*. Yangon: Buddhasāsana Society. Romanised from Myanmar version published in 1997. Pāli Series 29).

<sup>44</sup>This manuscript contains a relatively small number of corrections, which fall into two categories. Corrections belonging to the first type appear to have been made by the original scribe using a stylus. Corrections belonging to the second type are more frequent and appear to have been made by a later hand using a pencil.

<sup>45</sup>The Phayre manuscript (B<sup>Th</sup>) of this text was not available in the British Library when we sought it.

- Be<sup>ChS</sup>: *Majjhimanikāya mūlapaṇṇāsapāḷi*, Vol. I. 1956. Chatṭhasaṅgīti Piṭaka series. Rangoon: Buddhasāsana Samiti, pp. 1–8

2.5.3. DESCRIPTION OF THE MAIN FEATURES OF THE FOUR TEXT  
EXTRACTS FROM THE KUTHODAW PAGODA INSCRIPTIONS  
AND COMPARISON WITH OTHER SOURCES

PUNCTUATION AND GENERAL ORTHOGRAPHIC REMARKS

The Kuthodaw Pagoda stelae (B<sup>KP</sup>) present their contents in Burmese script as *scripta continua*, i.e., without spacing between “words”; there are a few exceptions as detailed below. The only punctuation marks included in the inscriptions, as in the manuscript tradition, are *danḍas* in single || or double sets |||. Generally, single *danḍa* sets || mark small syntactic units and double sets separate larger units (usually marked in modern printed editions by a full stop or a new paragraph). No actual single *danḍas* | have been observed in the B<sup>KP</sup> inscriptions.

In the Apadāna extract studied here, single *danḍa* sets || mark the end of a *pāda*, except for the final *pāda* of a verse which is marked by a double set |||. <sup>46</sup> Occasionally *danḍas* are (probably in error) omitted; e.g., at Dhs B<sup>KP</sup> (I 12a,22) a single || is missing. A pair of *danḍas* is also used to enclose the abbreviation (*pa* or *la* standing for *peyyāla*) which stands in for passages which are meant to be repeated (these are thus markers of abbreviation). <sup>47</sup> Occasionally, wider spaces are left where the surface of the stone is irregular (or otherwise unsuitable for carving and inking) or the spacing between lines requires a larger gap for clarity (i.e. to avoid any overwriting of complex graphemes for conjunct characters extending above or below the line). The lines of text though

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<sup>46</sup>In one instance (Ap B<sup>KP</sup> 665a,2–3), where the end of a *pāda* coincides with the end of a line, the double *danḍa* is erroneously omitted. Please refer to the Referencing section at the end of this article for an explanation on how we cite text for the Kuthodaw Pagoda stelae and manuscripts.

<sup>47</sup>For example, in the extract from the Pācittiya studied here, || *pa* || occurs 6 times, and || *la* || 70 times. The reasons for this distribution of usage are not clear yet.

are not always perfectly horizontal, which may reflect the manner in which they were originally laid out and carved.<sup>48</sup>

The appearance of the inscribed B<sup>KP</sup> text matches the indigenous palm leaf manuscript tradition of the Tipitaka on which the inscriptions are modelled. The Phayre manuscript (B<sup>Th</sup>) versions of the extracts studied here are also written in *scripta continua*, with single *danḍa* || sets marking small syntactic units and double *danḍa* sets || || separating larger units. As an example, in comparison with the Kuthodaw Pagoda stela, in the Dhs Phayre manuscript missing *danḍas* appear to be much more common (e.g., Dhs B<sup>Th</sup> ka-r,1; ka-v,6-7; kī-r,6), seemingly due to frequent scribal errors,<sup>49</sup> or extra *danḍas* are frequently inserted between words, which may reflect the oral recitation of the text, grouping several words into one unit (e.g., Dhs B<sup>Th</sup> kā-r,7-8; kā-v,4-5; ki-v,3). Interestingly, this is not observed in B<sup>KP</sup>.

The editions of the Hanthawaddy (Be<sup>H</sup>) and other presses (1893 onwards) fall into line with this style of text presentation and print a text which is in appearance similar to B<sup>Th</sup> and B<sup>KP</sup>; however, some shift in style to match the conventions of the new printing technology can be noted. In Be<sup>H</sup> there is in general a similar usage of *danḍas* as in B<sup>KP</sup>, but Be<sup>H</sup> does not reflect occasional omissions of *danḍas* found in B<sup>KP</sup> and B<sup>Th</sup>. In Be<sup>H</sup> there are the occasional beginnings of discernible breaks between phrases or words (or even between members of compounds), seemingly at random, and the usage of paragraphing (e.g., Dhs Be<sup>H</sup> 1-7) and using indentation marks; similarly, in Ap Be<sup>H</sup> (1-5) paragraphs separate *apadānas*; and in M I Be<sup>H</sup> (1-7) they mark each *bhūmipari-ccheda*, presumably under the influence of Western styles of printing.

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<sup>48</sup>Bollée (1968, 494) describes a possible method for the carving (however it is not clear on what basis): “The procedure at the Vth Council was, therefore, probably the following: First the text was engraved on stone, then the council discussed it, and finally the necessary alterations were made on the slabs.” Braun mentions that “so far as I know no errors were found” (Braun 2013, 25).

<sup>49</sup>Although it is claimed by Oldenberg (1882, 59) and other PTS editors that the Phayre manuscripts used are of a high quality, the extracts studied here have a significant number of errors and this judgment needs to be reviewed for each text. In addition, opening leaves of texts seem to be well-made and accurate, but deeper into the manuscript standards are different in a number of cases.

It would seem that reprintings of the Fifth Council texts by other presses (e.g. “Thudhamawadi”, “Ratanadīpa”, etc.) follow this style for Pāli texts. Only the printings of the Sixth Council begin to include regular and larger spaces between “words”, paragraphs and punctuations, in all likelihood even more influenced by Western models for presenting Pāli with word division.<sup>50</sup> In the extracts studied here we have paid particular attention to punctuation of the texts in an attempt to explore if those conventions can be used to discern lines of influence between manuscript, inscriptional, and printed editions.

Punctuation in the Chaṭṭhasaṅgīti editions (Be<sup>ChS</sup>) of the selected text extracts seems to reflect influences from the European PTS editions (E<sup>e</sup>), which predate Be<sup>ChS</sup> and, in the case of M I, Dhs, and Pāc, also the Hanthawaddy editions. Be<sup>ChS</sup> adds paragraphs, word breaks, and headings; however, its usage of *daṇḍas* is slightly different to B<sup>KP</sup> and B<sup>Th</sup>. For example, in the Apadāna extract, a single *daṇḍa* | marks the end of a *pāda*, except for the final *pāda* of a *pādayuga* which is marked by a double *daṇḍa* ||, whereas paragraphs are used for separating *apadānas*. In the Mūlapariyāya-sutta (M I) a combination of traditional punctuation with *daṇḍas*, and European punctuation (such as commas, m-dash, quotation marks) are used; a single *daṇḍa* | appears where B<sup>KP</sup> and Be<sup>H</sup> use a single set ||, and a double *daṇḍa* || where B<sup>KP</sup> and Be<sup>H</sup> use a double set |||. The romanised edition of Be<sup>ChS</sup> from 2008 uses capital letters, hyphens separating compound members (only between final and initial vowels), as well as full stops for *daṇḍas*; thus, its presentation is very close to PTS editions (E<sup>e</sup>) which include headings, paragraphs, word breaks, capitalisation (of the first word of a sentence and for proper nouns), hyphenation, and punctuation (full stops, commas, colons, semi-colons, carets (˘) over long vowels resulting from *sandhi*, em-dash in *peyyāla* passages, hyphens in compounds).

#### ORTHOGRAPHY

The orthography of nasals in B<sup>KP</sup> varies among the four texts examined. In the Suttavibhaṅga Pācittiya (Pāc) the class nasals before consonants

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<sup>50</sup>The Library of Congress standard for converting Burmese script to Roman script states “For Burmese words, leave a space after each syllable. For loanwords, use the same word division as in the original language. Apply the same practice to loanwords with modified forms in Burmese” (*Burmese* 2011, 3). Pāli words, e.g., are seen as loan words in this system.

(instead of *anusvāra*) are mainly used, except before velar consonants where B<sup>KP</sup> (as well as B<sup>Th</sup>, Be<sup>H</sup> and Be<sup>ChS</sup>) sometimes write *anusvāra* (-ṃ-) and at other times the appropriate class nasal (-ñ-). Similarly, in the extract from Dhs all Burmese sources (B<sup>Th</sup>, B<sup>KP</sup> and Be<sup>H</sup>) consistently use the class nasals before consonants, except for occasional *anusvāra* (-ṃ-) appearing for velar nasal -ñ- but only before syllable -ki-.

Consistent with prior observations made by scholars working on Burmese versions of Pāli texts, B<sup>KP</sup> displays variations in vowel length, especially short -i- and long -ī-. In the Pāc extract two examples of such variations were found: Pāc B<sup>KP</sup> (17a,3, 5) (also in Pāc Be<sup>H</sup> 1,10 and 2,1) and Pāc Be<sup>ChS</sup> (1,11, 17) write *khiyanti*, *khiyāntānaṃ*,<sup>51</sup> whereas Pāc B<sup>Th</sup> (ka-r,6) and Pāc E<sup>e</sup> (1,17) have *khīyanti* and *khīyāntānaṃ* respectively. On the other hand, the word *gīra* occurs in Pāc B<sup>KP</sup> (17a,11) with long -ī-, (likewise Pāc B<sup>Th</sup> kā-r,5), whereas all other witnesses spell *girā*. In Dhs different patterns were observed: spelling of short -i- and long -ī- in Dhs B<sup>KP</sup> would agree with all Burmese witnesses against E<sup>e</sup>; e.g. long -ī- in the word *bāhīrā* is found in Dhs B<sup>KP</sup> (112a,26), Dhs B<sup>Th</sup> (ki-r,6), Dhs Be<sup>H</sup> (4,9) and Dhs Be<sup>ChS</sup> (1,10-12), whereas *bāhirā* in Dhs E<sup>e</sup> (5). Similarly, in Dhs all adjectives ending on -iya- in Dhs B<sup>KP</sup> (as well as Dhs B<sup>Th</sup>, Dhs Be<sup>H</sup> and Dhs Be<sup>ChS</sup>) are consistently written with short -i-, whereas in Dhs E<sup>e</sup> the suffix is written -īya-.<sup>52</sup> In the Mūlapariyāya-sutta, M I B<sup>KP</sup> and M I Be<sup>H</sup> quite consistently agree in spelling of short -i- and long -ī- against the other witnesses (e.g., *vītarāgattā* ... *vitadosattā* ... *vitamohattā* (M I B<sup>KP</sup> 356a,44 (*ff.*), M I Be<sup>H</sup> 5,22 (*ff.*)), *vītarāgattā* ... *vitadosattā* ... *vitamohattā* (M I Be<sup>ChS</sup> 6,5 (*ff.*), M I E<sup>e</sup> 5,4 (*ff.*))).

Vowel lengths -u- and -ū- in B<sup>KP</sup> frequently differ from other witnesses: either B<sup>KP</sup> writes -ū- where others write -u- (e.g., in *cittasahabhūno* (Dhs B<sup>KP</sup> 112a,24f) against *cittasahabhuno* (Dhs B<sup>Th</sup> ki-r,4,5; Dhs Be<sup>H</sup> 4,4-5,7-8; Dhs Be<sup>ChS</sup> 10,1-2; and Dhs E<sup>e</sup> 5), or alternatively, -u- in B<sup>KP</sup> against -ū- in other witnesses (e.g., Dhs B<sup>KP</sup> 112a,34 writes *vijjupamādhama*, whereas *vijjupamā dhama* in Dhs B<sup>Th</sup> ki-v,8; Dhs Be<sup>H</sup> 5,9; Dhs Be<sup>ChS</sup> 13,16; and Dhs E<sup>e</sup> 7), showing, yet again, the influence of Dhs E<sup>e</sup> on Dhs Be<sup>ChS</sup>. Similarly, in the Apadāna, Ap B<sup>KP</sup> (665a,7) reads *kuṭāgāvararūpetā* against *kūṭāgāvararūpetā* in all other sources. It is suggested that the orthographic variations between

<sup>51</sup>They presumably follow Sadd 327, 3-5.

<sup>52</sup>This may be influenced by Sri Lankan sources.

short and long vowels do not occur randomly but may follow some distinguishable patterns that require further investigation.

In Dhs there is a variation between the phonemes *-th-* and *-dh-*: B<sup>Th</sup>, B<sup>KP</sup>, and Be<sup>H</sup> write *-dh-* whereas Be<sup>ChS</sup> and E<sup>e</sup> *-th-*; for example, *paṭisandhāroca* in Dhs B<sup>KP</sup> (112a,38), Dhs B<sup>Th</sup> (kī-r,4) and Dhs Be<sup>H</sup> (5,22), but *paṭisanthāroca* in Dhs Be<sup>ChS</sup> (15,11–12) and Dhs E<sup>e</sup> (7), showing influence of Dhs E<sup>e</sup> on Dhs Be<sup>ChS</sup>. Occasionally B<sup>KP</sup>, B<sup>Th</sup>, and E<sup>e</sup> all tend to use single consonants against double consonants in Be<sup>ChS</sup>; e.g., in the Suttavibhaṅga Pācittiya extract *sallapento* is found in Pāc B<sup>Th</sup> (ka-r,5), Pāc B<sup>KP</sup> (17a,2) and Pāc E<sup>e</sup> (1,10), whereas in Pāc Be<sup>ChS</sup> (1,8) *sallapanto* (and six further occurrences in Pāc); similarly, *asutaṃ* in Pāc B<sup>Th</sup> (kā-r,5), Pāc Be<sup>H</sup> (2,24) and Pāc E<sup>e</sup> (2,17), against *assutaṃ* in Pāc Be<sup>ChS</sup> (2,20).

A few (presumed) scribal errors were identified in B<sup>KP</sup>; e.g., in Dhs, *-m-* is written for *-p-*: *maggaho* in Pāc B<sup>KP</sup> (112a,39), whereas *paggāho* in Pāc Be<sup>H</sup> (5,26–27), Pāc B<sup>Th</sup> (kī-r,15), Pāc Be<sup>ChS</sup> (16,1–2) and Pāc E<sup>e</sup> (8). In the Apadāna, *-ṭh-* is at times written as *-ṭṭh-* (e.g. *paṭṭhamā* instead of *paṭhamā* at Ap B<sup>KP</sup> 665a,5) and *-c-* instead of *-j-* (e.g. *sīhapañcarā* instead of *sīhapañjarā* at Ap B<sup>KP</sup> 665a,7 and Ap Be<sup>H</sup> 2,4). Curiously, Be<sup>H</sup> prefers *vīriya* (e.g. Ap Be<sup>H</sup> 5,6–11), while Ap B<sup>KP</sup> *viriyā* (e.g. Ap B<sup>KP</sup> 665a,36–37). In this and other respects, Ap Be<sup>ChS</sup> appears to be more similar to Ap Be<sup>H</sup> than Ap B<sup>KP</sup>, which may indicate that its base text was derived from Ap Be<sup>H</sup> or some other early printed edition instead of Ap B<sup>KP</sup> itself.

#### MORPHOLOGY AND LEXICON

Both B<sup>KP</sup> and Be<sup>H</sup> occasionally disagree with the other witnesses in morphological features; e.g., in the Apadāna, Ap B<sup>KP</sup> (665a,30) and Ap Be<sup>H</sup> (4,20) write *sabbe kañṇā* against *sabbā kañṇā* in other sources. In the Mūlapariyāya-sutta, M I B<sup>KP</sup> (356a,34) and M I Be<sup>H</sup> (4,23–24) write *pathaviṃ mābhinandati* whereas M I Be<sup>ChS</sup> (5,4) and M I E<sup>e</sup> (4,11) *pathaviṃ mābhinandi*; or *nibbānaṃ mābhinandati* (M I B<sup>KP</sup> 356a,37; M I Be<sup>H</sup> 4,30–5,1) against *nibbānaṃ mābhinandi* (M I Be<sup>ChS</sup> 5,11; M I E<sup>e</sup> 4,21). In Dhs, there is an elision of the morpheme *-no-* in the compound *nevācayagāmināpacayagāminodhammā* in all Burmese sources (i.e. Dhs B<sup>Th</sup> ka-v,4–5; Dhs B<sup>KP</sup> 112a,5; Dhs Be<sup>H</sup> 2,2; Dhs Be<sup>ChS</sup> 2,12), whereas Dhs E<sup>e</sup> (2) writes *neva-ācayagāmino na apacayagāmino dhammā*, presumably reflecting a Sri Lankan manuscript.

Variant readings are very rare in Pāc, just occasionally B<sup>KP</sup> (probably erroneously) omits a word (e.g., *musā bhaṇitanti* (Pāc B<sup>KP</sup> 17a,43) against *musā mayā bhaṇitanti* in Pāc B<sup>Th</sup> (kī-r,5), Pāc Be<sup>H</sup> (6,6), Pāc Be<sup>ChS</sup> (6,8) and Pāc E<sup>e</sup> (4,19)) or, alternatively, a word is added to mark more explicitly the end of a section, e.g., Pāc B<sup>KP</sup> (17a,44) *musāvādasikkhāpadaṃ paṭhamam* against *paṭhamam* at Pāc B<sup>Th</sup> (kī-r, 6) and *musāvādasikkhāpadaṃ niṭṭhitam paṭhamam* at Pāc Be<sup>H</sup> (6,9) and Pāc Be<sup>Ch</sup> (6,13), although this is para-textual.

In Dhs all readings in Burmese sources agree; however, there are several significant lexical differences in relation to Dhs E<sup>e</sup>, indicating that the latter presumably relied on Sri Lankan manuscripts (the PTS edition of Dhs gives no variant readings and uses two unidentified manuscripts, one Burmese and one Sri Lankan). The following examples were identified in the Dhs extract studied: (1) Dhs B<sup>KP</sup> (112a,34), Dhs B<sup>Th</sup> (ki-v,7), Dhs Be<sup>H</sup> (5,7) and Dhs Be<sup>ChS</sup> (13,9–10) read *saraṇā dhammā* || *araṇā dhammā* || ||, whereas Dhs E<sup>e</sup> (7) *saraṇā dhammā, saraṇā dhammā*; (2) Dhs B<sup>KP</sup> (112a,7), Dhs B<sup>Th</sup> (ka-v,8–kār,1), Dhs Be<sup>H</sup> (2,6) and Dhs Be<sup>ChS</sup> (3,5) read *sammattaniyatādhammā*, against Dhs E<sup>e</sup> (1) *sampattaniyatā dhammā*; (3) Dhs B<sup>KP</sup> (112a,21), Dhs B<sup>Th</sup> (ki-r,1) and Dhs Be<sup>H</sup> (3,24–25) read *nīvaraṇācevadhammānīvaraṇasampayuttāca* || *nīvaraṇasampayuttācevadhammānocanīvaraṇā* || ||, whereas Dhs E<sup>e</sup> omits this duplet. In Dhs, colophons in B<sup>KP</sup> agree with Be<sup>H</sup> and Be<sup>ChS</sup> against B<sup>Th</sup> and E<sup>e</sup> (e.g., Dhs B<sup>KP</sup> (112a,9) and Dhs Be<sup>H</sup> (2,13) and Dhs Be<sup>ChS</sup> (3,28) *tikamātikā*; whereas Dhs B<sup>Th</sup> (kār,3) *dvāvīsatikam niṭṭhitam* and Dhs E<sup>e</sup> (2) *tikam niṭṭhitam*).

One of the greatest differences between the witnesses of the Mūlapariyāya-sutta (M I) is in the titles that head and end the *sutta* and in division titles, perhaps reflecting their para-textual status. Otherwise, in the Mūlapariyāya-sutta (M I) B<sup>KP</sup> and Be<sup>H</sup> readings agree in virtually all cases; sometimes Be<sup>H</sup> (seemingly) corrects an error in B<sup>KP</sup>, e.g., endings in *mutam mutate sañjānāti* (M I B<sup>KP</sup> 356a,26–27) against *mutam mutato sañjānāti* (M I Be<sup>H</sup> 3,30 and so in all other witnesses); or deletes particle *na* in *te bhikkhū bhagavato bhāsitaṃ nābhinanduntī* (M I B<sup>KP</sup> 356a,66) against *te bhikkhū bhagavato bhāsitaṃ abhinanduntī* (M I Be<sup>H</sup> 7,28–29). Generally, M I B<sup>KP</sup> and M I Be<sup>H</sup> agree and only minor differences are found among all other witnesses, e.g., an additional *ti* in later printed

editions, e.g., *abhisambuddhoti vadāmi* (M I B<sup>KP</sup> 356a,66; M I Be<sup>H</sup> 7,26–27) against *abhisambuddhoti vadāmīti* (M I Be<sup>ChS</sup> 8,17; M I E<sup>e</sup> 6,22–23). There is one instance in the Mūlapariyāya-sutta where all witnesses differ from each other in wording: *te bhikkhū bhagavato bhāsitaṃ nābhinanduntī* (M I B<sup>KP</sup> 356a,66); *te bhikkhū bhagavato bhāsitaṃ abhinanduntī* (M I Be<sup>H</sup> 7,28–29); *na te bhikkhū bhagavato bhāsitaṃ abhinanduntī* (M I Be<sup>ChS</sup> 8,19); *Attamanā te bhikkhū Bhagavato bhāsitaṃ abhinandun – ti* (M I E<sup>e</sup> 6,24–25).

The Buddhāpadāna of the Apadāna appears to contain more variant readings than the other texts selected for this investigation. For example, we find *dhārenti* (Ap B<sup>KP</sup> 665a,18; Ap Be<sup>H</sup> 3,10–12) instead of *dhārentu* (Ap Be<sup>ChS</sup> 4,12–14; Ap E<sup>e</sup> 3,16–18), *samāhantā* (Ap Be<sup>ChS</sup> 3,18; Ap Be<sup>H</sup> 2,26) instead of *samāhantvā* (Ap B<sup>KP</sup> 665a,13; Ap E<sup>e</sup> 2,27) and *santi* (Ap B<sup>KP</sup> 665a,11; Ap Be<sup>H</sup> 2,18) instead of *sandhī* (Ap Be<sup>ChS</sup> 3,7; Ap E<sup>e</sup> 2,16). Curiously, in Be<sup>H</sup> we find *tejasā* (Ap Be<sup>H</sup> 4,3) against all other witnesses included in this investigation which read *cetasā*; indeed, in the case of the Apadāna, it cannot be said that Be<sup>H</sup> is an especially faithful reproduction of B<sup>KP</sup>. At times the readings of E<sup>e</sup> are substantially different, e.g. we find the reading *suvaṇṇajālābhi samyuttaṃ rajatajāla-maṇīhi ca* (Ap E<sup>e</sup> 3,15) instead of *chattā tiṭṭhantu ratanā kañca-nāveḷapantikā* and the complete omission of the first four verses of the text.

#### 2.5.4. SUMMARY OF PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Overall, the findings of these reviews of four sample sections of the text inscribed on the Kuthodaw Pagoda stelae mostly confirm what have been identified already as features of the Pāli texts transmitted by Burmese sources (Bollée 1968; Hamm 1962; 1973; Grönbold 2005; Clark 2015a; 2015b).

- Assuming that the placement of *daṇḍas* within Pāli texts is guided by traditions of text division, we judge from the (generally lighter) use of *daṇḍas* on the Kuthodaw Pagoda inscriptions that the inscriptions as carved do not present evidence (for these texts at least) of direct influence of the *daṇḍa* tradition in the manuscript tradition represented by B<sup>Th</sup>, i.e., B<sup>Th</sup> seems to stem from a different manuscript line than B<sup>KP</sup>. Further exploration of manuscripts from Mandalay that pre-date the Kuthodaw Pagoda may yet identify a manuscript more closely related to the source tradition.

- $Be^H$  and  $Be^{ChS}$  do tend to conserve the *danḍa* markings from  $B^{KP}$ . Since  $Be^{ChS}$  is apparently based on  $B^{KP}$  (as reflected in  $Be^H$ ) this seems to be confirmed.
- As already known,  $E^e$  tends to innovate within the transmitted text by omitting repetitive elements, and completely revising punctuation and division naming conventions. No Burmese source innovates by removing repeated material. Instead, Burmese sources generally follow the text patterns passed down by the tradition rather carefully in terms of the *peyyāla* markings; simultaneously though there is evidence of (mostly minor) “innovations” in the text as printed in the Sixth Council versions which, in terms of printing and layout, have a strong influence from Western models of presenting printed texts (including the introductions of sections and other headings).
- As shown for each of the texts discussed, there are idiosyncrasies of text presentation (matching what many other editors using Burmese sources have found). There are minor differences between  $B^{Th}$  and  $B^{KP}$  that include variations in vowel length, the use of *anusvāra* or class nasals, variation between *-th-* and *-dh-* and *-tth-*.
- There are micro shifts in word division, presentation of consecutive words as compounds or not, etc. In a few cases these do alter meanings.
- Variant readings seem to be rare, especially in Dhs, Pāc, and M I; Burmese witnesses mostly agree, lexical differences are mainly found in relation to  $E^e$ . Ap appears to contain more variant readings among its witnesses than the other texts selected for this investigation, indicating that, in comparing different editions and manuscripts, each text may reflect different sources and idiosyncrasies of transmission.
- Although  $B^{KP}$  is generally aligned with  $Be^H$ , Ap and Dhs show several differences between these two sources.
- Overall, when contrasted with the  $Be^{ChS}$  editions, there are no indications or evidence in the texts reviewed to suggest that the  $B^{KP}$  texts contain anything other than a Burmese “recension” of the texts they present; while the  $Be^{ChS}$  edition (as stated in the extracts cited earlier) seems to be based on  $B^{KP}$  as well as a number of printed editions (importantly, most likely not directly on any

manuscripts) (Clark 2015a, 95).

- Alterations of the text transmitted by the Fifth Council have been silently introduced into the Pāli text of Be<sup>ChS</sup>.
- Be<sup>ChS</sup> reflects influences from E<sup>e</sup>, having regularised the texts (e.g., insertions of *ti*, inclusion of the explanatory word *niṭṭhitam*) and following its example, the inclusion of readings from different (non-Burmese) transmission lines.
- Be<sup>ChS</sup> has been characterised by Clark (2015a, 103–105), who states that the choice of readings made by its editors “has resulted in a text that is more homogeneous, adheres more closely to standard Pāli, and is more easily understood. ... Moreover, contrary to previous belief, the series does not exclusively represent the Burmese transmission of Pāli literature; in fact, it has liberally used readings from all its sources, which were produced in different countries” (Clark 2015a, 105). In this edition, readings have been favoured that
  - produce an orthographically consistent text, and that better reflect the corresponding Sanskrit,
  - produce metrically standard *śloka* verses containing eight-syllable *pādas*,
  - avoid unusual grammatical features (in favour of readings that contain standard grammar),
  - produce a sentence more easily understood from a semantic viewpoint.
- E<sup>e</sup> is eclectically edited using some witnesses that belong to different transmission lines to the other witnesses included in this investigation. Therefore, at times the readings of E<sup>e</sup> are substantially different.

### 3. ABBREVIATIONS

Be <sup>ChS</sup>	Burmese script Chatṭhasaṅgīti edition (Burmese or Roman script versions)
Be <sup>H</sup>	Burmese script “Fifth Council” text as printed by the Hanthawaddy Press
B <sup>KP</sup>	Burmese script Kuthodaw Pagoda inscriptions
B <sup>Th</sup>	Burmese script Phayre manuscript(s); manuscripts commissioned by King Tharrawaddy and given to Arthur Phayre by King Mindon; now housed at the British Library

E<sup>c</sup> European Roman script PTS editions

PTS Pali Text Society

## REFERENCING

Abbreviations of Pāli texts follow the PTS usage plus Pāc for Pācittiya

Manuscripts: text + folio letter/number + recto/verso + line; e.g., Dhs ka-1,5 = Dhammasaṅgaṇī folio ka, recto, line 5

Kuthodaw Pagoda inscriptions (B<sup>KP</sup>): stela no. + side + line; e.g., 112a,1 = stela 112, side a, line 1; 112b,1–5 = stela 112, side b, lines 1–5. The counting of line numbers in the B<sup>KP</sup> does not include the header and footers (text in cartouches at top and bottom of the stela).Editions: text + volume + page + line; e.g., for Be<sup>ChS</sup>, M I 234,2–3 = Majjhima-nikāya, volume 1, page 234, lines 2–3; M I 234,2–235,10 = Majjhima-nikāya, volume 1, page 234, line 2 to p. 235, line 10. The counting of line numbers in editions does not include the header.

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ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

Late in the final proof-reading of this article, Anthony Scott kindly provided images of the following Myanmar PhD theses which contain information

directly relevant to this topic; however, we have not been able to use these for this article:

- Khin Khin Si. 2006. *History of Pāli Literature in the Konbaung Period (1752–1885)*. Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Yangon.
- Ma Myat Myat Htun. 2006. *The Study of [the] Sixth Buddhist Council*. Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Yangon.
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## 5. APPENDICES

### 5.1. APPENDIX 1: HANTHAWADDY AND OTHER PRINTINGS OF THE KUTHODAW TEXTS (CA. 1893–1939)

Very few copies of these early printed books survive, even within Myanmar; an exception is a partial set held in the library of the University of Tokyo (UT). As an initial step towards documenting these editions, we reprint here a list of the volumes traced so far, with date, standardised Pāli title, pagination, place of publication and press.

BL = British Library; Dh = Dhammachai Tipiṭaka Project digital versions; LC = Library of Congress; UT = University of Tokyo library

1. 1893. Pācittiya (Vinayaṭiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 425 pp. [Dh]
2. 1900. Dhammasaṅgaṇī (Abhidhammaṭiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 228 pp. [UT]
3. 1900. Dhātukathā and Puggalapaññatti (Abhidhammaṭiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 77 pp. (Dhātukathā), 71 pp. (Puggalapaññatti) [UT]
4. 1900. Paṭṭhāna, Vols. 1, 3–5 (Abhidhammaṭiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. [UT]
5. 1900. Yamaka (Abhidhammaṭiṭaka), Vols. 1–2. Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. [UT]
6. 1900. Vibhaṅga (Abhidhammaṭiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 371 pp. [UT]
7. 1900. Pāṭikavagga of the Dīghanikāya (Suttaṭiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 207 pp. [UT]
8. 1900. Sīlakkhandhavagga of the Dīghanikāya (Suttaṭiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 200 pp. [UT]
9. 1900. Mahāvagga of the Dīghanikāya (Suttaṭiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 241 pp. [Dh, UT]

10. 1900. Khandhavagga of the Saṃyuttanikāya (Suttapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 196 pp. [Dh]
11. 1900. Saḷāyatanavagga of the Saṃyuttanikāya (Suttapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 293 pp. [Dh]
12. 1900. Cūlavagga (Vinayapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 442 pp. [UT]
13. 1900 Mahāvagga (Vinayapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 451 pp. [UT]
14. 1900. Pācittiya (Vinayapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 369 pp. [BL, LC, UT]
15. 1900. Pārājika (Vinayapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 323 pp. [Dh, UT]
16. 1900. Parivāra (Vinayapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 311 pp. [Dh, UT]
17. 1905. Yamaka, Vol. 3 (Abhidhammapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. [UT]
18. 1908. Dhammasaṅgaṇī (Abhidhammapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 228 pp. [Dh]
19. 1908. Dhātukathā (Abhidhammapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 77 pp. [Dh]
20. 1908. Kathāvatthu (Abhidhammapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 355 pp. [Dh]
21. 1908. Paṭṭhāna, Vol. 2 (Abhidhammapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 333 pp. [Dh]
22. 1908. Paṭṭhāna, Vol. 4 (Abhidhammapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 282 pp. [Dh]
23. 1908. Paṭṭhāna, Vol. 5 (Abhidhammapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 240 pp. [Dh]
24. 1908. Vibhaṅga (Abhidhammapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 371 pp. [Dh]
25. 1908. Jātaka (verses only; Suttapiṭaka) Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 387 pp. [Dh]
26. 1908. Majjhimaṇṇāsa of the Majjhimanikāya (Suttapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 420 pp. [Dh]
27. 1908. Pāṭikavagga of the Dīghanikāya (Suttapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 207 pp. [Dh]
28. 1908. Sagāthāvagga of the Saṃyuttanikāya (Suttapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 172 pp. [Dh]

29. 1908. Nidānavagga of the Saṃyuttanikāya (Suttapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 198 pp. [Dh]
30. 1908. Mahāvagga of the Saṃyuttanikāya (Suttapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 347 pp. [Dh]
31. 1908. Uparipañña of the Majjhimanikāya (Suttapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 328 pp. [Dh]
32. 1908. Khuddakapāṭha, Dhammapada, Udāna, Itivuttaka and Suttanipāta (Suttapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 274 pp. [Dh]
33. 1908. Vimānavatthu and Petavatthu (Suttapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 217 pp. [Dh]
34. 1909. Paṭṭhāna, Vol. 3 (Abhidhammapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 449 pp. [Dh]
35. 1909. Apadāna, Buddhavaṃsa and Cariyāpiṭaka (Suttapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 488 pp. [Dh]
36. 1909. Cūlaniddeśa (Suttapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 253 pp. [Dh]
37. 1909. Mahāniddeśa (Suttapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 367 pp. [Dh]
38. 1909. Milindapañha (Suttapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 337 pp. [Dh]
39. 1909. Mūlapañña of the Majjhimanikāya (Suttapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 384 pp. [Dh]
40. 1909. Nettippakaraṇa and Peṭakopadesa (Suttapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 298 pp. [Dh]
41. 1909. Paṭisambhidāmagga (Suttapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 391 pp. [Dh]
42. 1911. Cūlavagga (Vinayapiṭaka). Rangoon: Thudhamawadi Press. 454 pp. [Dh]
43. 1911. Mahāvagga (Vinayapiṭaka). Rangoon: Thudhamawadi Press. 461 pp. [Dh]
44. 1911. Pācittiya (Vinayapiṭaka). Rangoon: Thudhamawadi Press. 399 pp. [Dh]
45. 1911. Pārājika (Vinayapiṭaka). Rangoon: Thudhamawadi Press. 330 pp. [Dh]
46. 1911. Parivāra (Vinayapiṭaka). Rangoon: Thudhamawadi Press. 336 pp. [Dh]
47. 1911. Mahāvagga of the Dīghanikāya (Suttapiṭaka). Rangoon: Thudhamawadi Press. 249 pp. [Dh]

48. 1911. Pāṭikavagga of the Dīghanikāya (Suttapiṭaka). Rangoon: Thudhamawadi Press. 211 pp. [Dh]
49. 1911. Sīlakkhandhavagga of the Dīghanikāya (Suttapiṭaka). Rangoon: Thudhamawadi Press. 200 pp. [Dh]
50. 1912. Paṭṭhāna, Vol. 1 (Abhidhammapīṭaka). Rangoon: Thudhamawadi Press. 325 pp. [Dh]
51. 1912. Yamaka, Vol. 1 (Abhidhammapīṭaka). Rangoon: Thudhamawadi Press. 215 pp. [Dh]
52. 1912. Yamaka, Vol. 2 (Abhidhammapīṭaka). Rangoon: Thudhamawadi Press. 289 pp. [Dh]
53. 1912. Yamaka, Vol. 3 (Abhidhammapīṭaka). Rangoon: Thudhamawadi Press. 289 pp. [Dh]
54. 1912. Yamaka, Vol. 3 (Abhidhammapīṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 266 pp. [Dh]
55. 1922. Paṭṭhāna, Vol. 3 (Abhidhammapīṭaka). Rangoon: Ratanādīpa Press. 439 pp. [LC]
56. 1939. Aṅguttaranikāya, Vol. 1 (Suttapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 485 pp. [Dh]
57. 1939. Aṅguttaranikāya, Vol. 3 (Suttapiṭaka). Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Press. 490 pp. [Dh]

## 5.2. APPENDIX 2 : EXTRACTS OF EARLIER PUBLISHED ACCOUNTS

## 5.2.1. MAX MÜLLER (1895, 503–505) ON THE KUTHODAW

True, the Buddhist Canon is full of repetitions, but at present we need only think of the number of volumes, of pages, and of words, whether repeated or not. It is not easy to realise such a number as 8,708,000 syllables, but we may try to do so, and then think of the Kutho-daw, which is a Buddhist monument near Mandalay in Burma, consisting of about 700 temples, each containing a slab of white marble on which the whole of this Buddhist Bible, the whole of these eight millions of syllables, has been carefully engraved. The alphabet is Burmese, the language is Pâli, the language supposed to have been spoken by Buddha. Well may the Buddhists say that such a Bible on white marble cannot be matched in the whole world. I am glad it cannot. Think of the fearful expenditure of labour and money. And what is the result? A small copy of the New Testament, which our University Press turns out for a penny a copy, is more useful, has more power for good in it, quite apart from its intrinsic value, than the whole of this gigantic structure which no one reads, nay, which but few people understand. The Kutho-daw is not an ancient monument. It was erected in 1857 by Mindon-min, the predecessor of King Thebaw, the last king of Burma. No one seems ever to have described this marvellous pile, and I confess that unless my correspondent, Mr Ferrars, had sent me photographs of it, I should have found it difficult to believe in this extraordinary monument of Buddhist piety and Buddhist folly.

To judge from these photographs, there are about seven hundred temples, forming together a large square, with a higher temple in the centre, visible from far and wide. Each temple contains a slab of white marble covered with inscriptions, possibly more than one, if the inscriptions contain, as is maintained, the complete text of the three *Pitakas*. Over each slab there is an ornamental canopy in pagoda form, which renders photography difficult, but by no means impossible. Mr Ferrars, a member of the Burma Forest Department, is quite ready to undertake the photographic reproduction of the complete text of the *Tripitaka*, if the Government or some learned society will bear the small expense that is required. He has been assured that the text, as engraved on the marble slabs, was critically revised and edited by a Royal Commission, consisting of ten learned men under the presidency of the famous Rahan, U-Nye-ya. It is stated that three copies of the same text were prepared at the same time on palm-leaves, and sent by the king to three European libraries. What libraries they were I have not been able to find out.

If a photographic reproduction could be made at a reasonable price, it would certainly seem desirable, though, from a specimen sent to me, I am a little afraid that some of the letters are no longer quite distinct. The signs of decay are visible all over the building; the moisture of the climate has begun to tell, and moss is growing on the walls and cupolas. What a confirmation of Buddha's

teaching that all is perishable and that all that has been put together will come apart again!

How much more real good might have been done if this pious and learned Buddhist king had been properly advised as to the best way of doing honour to the memory of Buddha! Buddhists in many parts of the world seem very anxious that the nations of Europe should gain a correct knowledge of the ancient religion of Buddha. In this they are quite justified. Some go so far as to send missionaries to convert the world. This seems rather too sanguine a plan; anyhow, before such attempts are made, it would certainly be desirable to spread a correct knowledge of Buddhism, and thus to counteract the mischievous misrepresentations of the great sage of Kapilavâstu, scattered broadcast by those who call themselves esoteric Buddhists. The importance of Buddhist literature for a comparative study of religions is now generally recognised, and for philological purposes also a scholarlike knowledge of Pâli is of very great importance.

It is a great pity that at Oxford there should be no chair of Pâli; and the true admirers of Buddha could hardly show their admiration in a better way than by helping to found a lectureship of Pâli language and literature. The King of Siam has shown his reverence for the memory of Buddha by helping me to bring out a series of translations of the sacred books of the Buddhists. Is there no other admirer of the great sage to follow this noble example? Even a gigantic marble structure like the Kutho-daw crumbles to pieces, and the inscriptions remain silent in the wilderness. A learned and painstaking teacher of Pâli, though he must not expect to gain any converts to Buddhism at Oxford, would certainly help to secure to Buddha that position among the wisest and best men of the world which belongs to him by right as the recognised guide and teacher of 423 millions of human beings — as a sage whose utterances even those who belong to another religion may read, mark, and inwardly digest, with real advantage to themselves — as one whom a former professor in this University declared to be “second to One only”.

#### 5.2.2. ARNOLD WRIGHT (1910, 139) ON PHILIP RIPLEY AND THE HANTHAWADDY PRESS

THE HANTHAWADDY PRESS. The story of the growth of the Hanthawaddy Press is linked to an unusual degree with the history of the founder and owner, Mr Philip H. Ripley. Born in Kyaukpyu fifty years ago [1860], Mr Ripley came to Rangoon at the age of seventeen to earn his own living. He first obtained an appointment in the Rangoon and Irrawaddy Valley (State) Railway, and subsequently entered the British Burma Secretariat. While there he assiduously set himself to master the Burmese language under the *capable* guidance of the late Mr W. Hadford, Government translator. After two years' steady work he was selected for the post of sub-editor of the Educational Gazette, a Government publication, and by the time he was twenty years of age he was acting as

Burmese translator to the Government. It was about this time that he became keenly interested in the art of printing, the taste for which was accentuated by his connection with the Government Printing Press in the passing of proofs of Burmese matter for the British Burma Gazette. As a hobby, he set up a miniature printing press, for the printing and publishing of Burmese literature, in a by-lane known as 34th Street, at the back of the Town Hall. General jobbing work in English was also undertaken, and he was entrusted with the whole of the printing for the Church of England in the Rangoon Diocese. In 1893 Mr Ripley resigned the service of Government in order to proceed to England for the purpose of studying the method of type-founding, and of improving his general knowledge of the art of printing. In this he was eminently successful. During the twelve months that he spent in England Mr Ripley visited numerous printing works, and made himself thoroughly familiar with the practical details of type-founding. On his return to Rangoon in 1897, he brought with him complete plant for a type foundry, which he set up in the present commodious premises known as the Hanthawaddy Printing Works, at 46, Sule Pagoda Road. The building, which is four storeys in height, has a floor space of 6,000 square feet. In the new home of the Hanthawaddy Press the printing of Burmese literature continues to be the main work undertaken, special attention being directed to the publication of Burmese classics, which are found inscribed upon palm leaves in the various monasteries throughout the country. The most important work in this direction has been the production of the Pāli Text of the Tripitaka (Buddhist scriptures), after very careful recension. As a young man Mr Ripley cherished an ambition to make these writings known, and, in spite of discouragement, even from the Buddhist priesthood, he resolutely set about the task. The work took many years to accomplish. The complete Tripitaka comprises thirty-eight printed volumes. The proofs of this work had to be sent for revision to Mandalay, where the whole of these scriptures, engraved on marble slabs, are placed round a pagoda at the foot of Mandalay Hill. The demand for the volumes is steadily increasing. The Press undertakes not only printing in English, Burmese, and Tamil, type-casting, and stereotyping, but also bookbinding, rubber-stamp making, engraving, and the making of photo-process blocks. During recent years the business has grown steadily, and at the time of writing new works are in course of erection in the suburbs of Rangoon, and a branch is about to be opened at Mandalay. Among the periodicals and newspapers published by the Press are the *Rangoon advertiser*, an English paper, and the *Hanthawaddy weekly review*, which is printed in Burmese, and contains general news, translations of Reuters telegrams, and commercial information calculated to be of interest to the Burmese. The firm employ four Burmese editors, the chief of whom is an ex-official of the Court of the late King of Burma, and over 180 hands are engaged in the works. In the management of the business great assistance is rendered Mr Ripley by his wife and his two sons, Messrs. Harry and George Ripley. Both sons were educated at

Dulwich College, England. The elder served his apprenticeship in printing with Messrs. Andrews Bros., London, and subsequently joined a firm of photo-process engravers. Mr George Ripley studied at the Crystal Palace School of Engineering, and afterwards added to his experience by a term of apprenticeship at Glasgow in the engineering works of Messrs. Major & Coulson. The London agents for the Hanthawaddy Press are Messrs R.D. Galbraith & Co., of 11, Billiter Square, E.C. Mr P.H. Ripley is managing director of the Hanthawaddy Land Company and he is on the directorate of the Athlone Land Company. He is also a member of the board of governors of the Diocesan Schools, Rangoon.

### 5.2.3. LUDU DAW AHMAR (1980, 53–57) ON PHILIP RIPLEY

Thirty years after the stone *pitaka* was completed, the paper *pitaka* was made for the first time. Mr Philip H. Ripley of the Hanthawaddy Press was the pioneer in this work. One volume of this book (Royal Octavo size) had 400 pages approximately and there were thirty-eight volumes in a complete set. A printed book would make the *Pitaka* cheap and the public opinion was against it. So only when the Taunggywin Thathanabine expressed his happiness to hear the news that the *pitaka* would soon be available in book form, that Mr Ripley regained his courage to proceed with the work of printing. It was in about 1900 and Mr Ripley took all care to make his copies perfect. He had the galley-proofs checked against the “stone *Pitaka*” at Mandalay. In fact he claimed that his books were “true copies of the *Pitaka* inscribed on stones by King Mindon”. He also had the titles to various chapters printed in the same handwriting as they appeared on the stones. People who were once proof-readers under him like Hanthawaddy U Ba Yin and Saya Zeya (U Yaw) often recalled that the old gentleman took enormous pains to make the *pitaka* he printed free of mistakes. He printed a declaration on each book that he would give a reward of Rs. 50 for each word that did not agree with the corresponding word on the “stone *pitaka*”.

The reason for Ripley’s such thoroughness [*sic*] was not entirely business. He was an Armenian born at Kyaukphyu and when he was a boy he visited the Mandalay Palace with his father known to the Burmese as Commissioner Red Head. King Mindon took a fancy to adopt the Little Red Head as one of his sons. So he lived in the Palace like a prince and attended an English school run by an Anglican clergy called Dr. Marks where most of the King’s sons were sent for modern education. Whenever he had to mention the King, he used the term “Phondawgyipaya” like the other children of the King. When the King was ill for the last time, there were many palace intrigues on naming a successor to him. The Little Red Head, then seventeen, did not want to get himself involved in any one of these intrigues and so he fled to Rangoon. He was Burmese in many ways and when he entered the printing and publishing business, he tried to express his thanks to the King he loved by making an extension of the King’s project in having perfect copies of the *Pitaka*.

Ripley was amply rewarded for all the care he took in printing the *Pitaka* in exactly as it appeared on stones. Many sets of his books were sent even outside Burma where Theravada Buddhism prevailed. Soon other printing concerns followed suit. One of them was the Tampadipa Time Press which in 1912 printed books on *pitaka* with the same claims as Ripley. It even used a picture of “stone *Pitaka*” cave as its trade mark. Ripley had established a tradition that all the printed *Pitaka* books must have the “stone *Pitaka*” as the standard work.

Most of the foreigners visiting Burma made it a point to visit the Kuthodaw at Mandalay and take photographs of the World’s Biggest Book. Recently [1972?] a mission from West Germany was here to photograph every face of the inscriptions. The mission had to take seven days to finish the task. When the Sixth Buddhist Synod was convened at Rangoon, a delegation of 100 monks came here to check their text against the text here. It reported that it found no serious difference between the two.