

NOTICE OF PASSING

K.R. Norman

(21 July 1925 - 05 November 2020)

I write with the sad news of the death of K.R. Norman, who has died at the age of 95.

Roy or Mr Norman, as he liked to be known, was one of the great scholars of Middle Indo-Aryan philology. His academic career was spent almost entirely in Cambridge. He completed an MA at Cambridge in 1954 and went on to become Lecturer in Indian Studies (1954–1978), then Reader in Indian Studies (1978–1990), before being appointed Professor of Indian Studies in 1990, shortly before his retirement in 1992.

His scholarly contribution to the field of Pali studies has been immense, but his output covered also Jaina studies and the Ashokan inscriptions. His publications include translations of the major verse texts of the Pali canon: *Elders' Verses I (Theragāthā)*, 1969; *Elders' Verses II (Therīgāthā)*, 1971; *The Group of Discourses (Suttanipāta)*, 1992, 2nd ed. 2001; *The Word of the Doctrine (Dhammapada)*, 1997; each of these translations includes meticulous philological annotations.

He also published two significant monographs, *Pāli Literature* (1983) and *A Philological Approach to Buddhism* (1997; 2nd edition 2006), and leaves behind eight volumes of his *Collected Papers* (1990–2007). From 1981 to 1990 he was editor of *A Critical Pāli Dictionary*, overseeing the publication of seven fascicles (11–17) of vol. II.

As well as being a Fellow of the British Academy and a Foreign Member of the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters, he was the longest serving member of the Council of the Pali Text Society (1959–2010) and also served as its President (1981–1994).

It is safe to say that all those who work on ancient texts in middle Indian languages will remain deeply indebted to his work for a long time to come.

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