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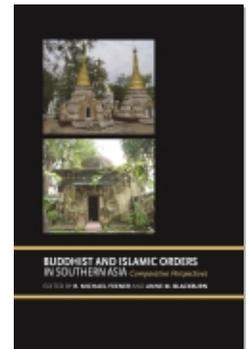
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THE ITINERARIES OF “SĪHAḶA MONK” SĀRALAṆKĀ

Buddhist Interactions in Eighteenth- Century Southern Asia

ALEXEY KIRICHENKO

Since the early stages of academic work on Buddhist traditions for which Pāli is a canonical language, the task of analyzing Buddhist monastic orders in specific historical contexts has been a difficult one. Vinaya regulations of monastic behavior and observances that form part of the authoritative collections of foundational Buddhist teachings (*tipiṭaka*) essentially see all ordained practitioners who follow the doctrine and discipline of the Buddha as an aggregate body of monastics (*saṅgha*). Empirical studies, in contrast, identify a multitude of local communities with their respective ordination lineages, practical canons, interpretations of discipline, and so on. As testified by the historical evidence, monastics moved as individuals or in groups within the wider Buddhist world, thus transcending the divide between the two scales of macro- and micro-communities. Yet, for scholars, a significant challenge lies in understanding how these movements worked. That is, how did persons identified generally with the wider Buddhist monastic *saṅgha* also function within and across specific local Buddhist and monastic communities? How did local monastic communities interact with each other? Were there impediments to monastic mobility from one area or country to another?

For earlier generations of scholars, it appears that the very notion of macro-community, an ideal *saṅgha* defined in the Vinaya, created an expectation that encounters between local varieties or branches of the Buddhist monastic order oriented toward a shared Pāli-language *tipiṭaka* would be guided by mutual recognition. This perception was strengthened by several known instances of the reintroduction of higher ordination (*upasampadā*) from Laṅkā to Southeast Asia and vice versa in the second millennium. Thus, in his survey of Pāli literature, K. R. Norman noted that, owing to such imports of *upasampadā* and the transmission of manuscripts, “the traditions of each country have become

to some extent interwoven.”¹ Addressing Burma’s contacts with Laṅkā, U Bokay, Kanai Lal Hazra, and Tilman Frasch laid much emphasis on the argument that both countries relied on each other for monastic ordination and maintained what are rather vaguely called “institutional linkages,” “strong bonds,” and “close religious ties.”² Some scholars, such as Niharranjan Ray, Charles Godakumbura, Hazra, and Emmanuel Guillon, interpreted the limited data on monastic reordinations as evidence for the expansion of one subregional *saṅgha*—“the Sinhalese form of Buddhism,” or “Mahāvihāra Buddhism”—to Burma and other parts of mainland Southeast Asia after the twelfth century, overtaking other local monastic institutions.³

However, more recent studies discussing Buddhist monastic contacts in Southern Asia are much more cautious in their conclusions. In particular, Peter Skilling and Anne Blackburn have argued that monastic lineages that arose as a result of imported ordination invoked their origin as a way to prove ritual purity and efficacy but developed their own independent identities, quite distinct from the monastic communities as practiced and organized at the geographic source of the ordination.⁴

The present chapter focuses on new evidence on transregional ordination lineages in early modern Southern Asia. This new evidence generally supports arguments for independent development (such as those by Skilling and Blackburn), showing that importation of an ordination—an act of using transregional monastic intermediaries to enable local initiators of reordination to start a new monastic lineage—did not necessarily entail the transplantation of the lineage of the intermediary or any features associated with that lineage in its location of origin. Though the transplantation of such external features as forms of dress, monastic administration, educational practice, and textual preferences did occur between monastic communities in Burma, Laṅkā, and Thailand since the late nineteenth century, it would be wrong to assume that such transfers were the norm in the earlier periods as well.

Moreover, movements of Buddhist itinerants between local communities within a wider Buddhist world did not necessarily forge lasting operational ties and networks between these communities. The case presented and analyzed in this chapter suggests that clear distinctions should always be made between different types of transmission and mobility among Buddhists. At one end of the spectrum of possibilities, we find sporadic transmission of objects (such as relics, images, and manuscripts) and persons. Another possibility was religious networking involving more regular communication between different nodes. This communication might include a relatively regular use of imported religious specialists for ritual or prestige purposes without a larger expansion of orders. At the other end of the spectrum, we find lasting forms of transfer, resulting in the spread of common practices and social structures. Though all of these possibilities are found at different points in time and space, one has to be very specific in analyzing the extent of historical monastic interactions.

This chapter follows the definition of Southern Asia as suggested by the editors of the present volume. At the same time, it recognizes that the introduction of such a term is unlikely to exhaust the need for refining historical geographic terminology, since important economic and cultural links existed not only between South and Southeast Asia but between Southeast and East Asia and elsewhere. During the period in question here, long-distance mobility at the scale of the entirety of Southern Asia was extraordinary or even exceptional. Therefore, this space might be called a macroregion made of many smaller sub- and microregions (at the scale of individual polities, principalities, and other historical units recognized by Southern Asian peoples and cultures). In this way, the movements of religious itinerants within this macroregion transcended geographic and polity boundaries. It would perhaps have been recognized as transregional by eighteenth-century Burmese, Thai, or Sinhalese had their conceptual vocabulary included such a term.

My general argument and analysis of mobility of Buddhist itinerants in early modern Southern Asia derives from a case study in the eighteenth-century revival of Buddhist contacts between Laṅkā, Siam, and Burma. It is centered on the monk Sāralaṅkā, a Tai from Tenasserim who was involved in one of the Siamese missions to Kandy in the 1750s that led to the establishment of Siyam Nikāya, one of the three currently major Lankan monastic fraternities. Later on, Sāralaṅkā traveled to Upper Burma and resided there for more than a decade. During that time, he gave at least four or five testimonies on his travels, copies of which remained in circulation in Burma until the late nineteenth century.

Following the travels of an individual actor involved in the transmission of monastic ordination offers a rare perspective on the institutionalization of a Buddhist lineage. Sāralaṅkā's testimonies and the alterations to his narratives made over time provide a striking view of the contingencies accompanying the movement of a Buddhist monk from life within a particular local community to functioning within the wider space of Southern Asia, encompassing several sub- and microregions and cultures. The chapter draws attention to Sāralaṅkā's interstitiality as a social actor and argues that it was hardly unusual or insignificant in its time. As the imperial cultures of the region were exclusivist and conceptually incompatible in certain aspects, the malleability of mobile figures such as Sāralaṅkā proved a valuable asset, allowing royal courts to communicate—and sometimes cooperate—across the greater Buddhist world.

IMPORTING MONASTIC ORDINATION AND THE ROLE OF THE “MISSIONARY”

Sāralaṅkā's travel to Laṅkā occurred as a result of attempts made by the royal court at Kandy to reestablish a formally ordained (through *upasampadā*) monastic community on the island.⁵ For reasons that are not clear, from the sixteenth century onwards standard forms of Buddhist monasticism yielded to specific

types of nonordained monastic practice. A reformist religious movement led by Vālivīṭa Saraṇaṃkara (1698–1778) managed to get the support of the Kandyan court, sending off envoys to Southeast Asia with the help of the Dutch East India Company (VOC). In 1753, a monastic mission sent from Ayutthaya was enthusiastically received by Kandyan king Kīrti Śrī Rājasimha (r. 1747–1782) and ordained a large number of monks and novices in different parts of the island. Another mission arrived three years later and might have been followed by a third one in the late 1750s. The interchange of missions between Siam and Laṅkā then stopped until the early nineteenth century.

The reestablishment of monastic ordination and the revival of centralized Buddhist ecclesiastical structure achieved by Saraṇaṃkara and his associates had a lasting impact on Sinhalese Buddhism, monastic education, and textual practices.⁶ However, little, if any, of this success could be ascribed to Ayutthayan *bhikkhus* (fully ordained monks) who were invited as officiators to Laṅkā. Besides several names and a few celebratory but vague remarks, Sinhalese and Thai sources mention almost nothing about them. Accounts of Kandyan envoys provide limited information about missionaries that were sent to Laṅkā, concentrating instead on details of the journey, description of the Siamese court, local ceremonies they witnessed, and sacred sites near Ayutthaya.⁷ The *Mahāvamsa*, a major Lankan chronicle first composed in the early sixth century and supplemented serially, including by a prominent Siyam Nikāya monk in the 1780s, is equally silent on the lineage of Siamese missionaries, as noted by Anne Blackburn.⁸

In a coincidence that is quite telling, a similar lack of interest in profiling the source of imported ordination is also evident in the case of Northern Thai monastic histories tracing the ordination of Thai monks on Laṅkā in the fifteenth century.⁹ In the same way, the Amarapura Nikāya, a competitor to Siyam Nikāya established as a result of bringing new ordination from Burma to coastal areas of Laṅkā between 1800 and 1813, cherished little memory of Aggasāra and other Burmese monks who officiated at the ordinations carried out after the return of Aṃbagahapīṭiyē Ñānavimāla, the first of Sinhalese novices ordained in Burma.¹⁰ In fact, it is only from the second half of the nineteenth century that a substantial traffic of ideas, arguments, and modes of practice as well as lasting forms of communication are traceable between Sinhalese and Southeast Asian monks.¹¹

In terms of the distinctions introduced above, the emergence of Siyam Nikāya should be understood as a case in which a transfer of ordination within the Southern Asian Buddhist world occurred without the transplantation of monastic order, lineage, or external forms of monasticism. Blackburn’s work shows that the success of a new community was secured by its ability to position itself as perpetuating “pre-existing local understandings of prestigious monasticism.”¹² She notes a high degree of selectivity by early leaders of Siyam Nikāya with respect to Siamese Buddhist practices. According to Blackburn, in

almost every case, when Siyam Nikāya monks had a choice to make between local ritual forms and expressions (styles of chanting, curriculum, administrative models, and so on) and forms and arrangements recommended or personified by Ayutthaya monks, they displayed a clear preference for local Buddhist traditions.¹³ Although manuscripts were brought from Ayutthaya and entered Siyam Nikāya collections, there is no evidence that these texts were used in Kandy according to systems of education and practice characteristic of Buddhist monastic orders at Ayutthaya.¹⁴

Although the Ayutthayan missions to Kandy appear not to have expanded Ayutthayan Buddhist monastic orders to the island, the testimonies of Sāralaṅkā, a monk involved in this transmission of ordination offer a rare opportunity to examine the personality and subjectivity of historical “missionaries.” They also offer insights into the context in which Buddhist mobility in historical Southern Asia occurred and the extent of religious networking that such mobility could support. Moreover, since Sāralaṅkā was not a central actor in Ayutthayan missions (and his testimonies result only from his unexpected subsequent relocation to Upper Burma), his perspective on the Ayutthayan connections to Kandy do not reflect the polemical needs of the Ayutthayan or the Kandyan *saṅgha* but, rather, a more distant perspective on the establishment of Siyam Nikāya in particular and the workings of religious travel in eighteenth-century Southern Asia more generally.

SĀRALAṅKĀ’S TESTIMONIES AND CAREER

Of several testimonies taken during Sāralaṅkā’s residence in Upper Burma, at least two survive. The first was recorded in 1767 by Ranma Thiri Kyawhtin, officer in charge of the Mahamingalabon royal manuscript library, a service obligation for which he was rewarded with revenues accruing from the village of Khadaw.¹⁵ The record appears to have been made soon after Sāralaṅkā’s arrival in Upper Burma. A copy of this testimony survives in the Zetawun monastery in Monywe village. It is undated, but, judging by the manuscript’s layout and handwriting, it seems to be nearly contemporary with the original record. The second available testimony was taken before Sāralaṅkā’s return to Tenasserim. The document is dated December 1787, but the date appears to be wrong (see notes 18 and 29 below).¹⁶ An undated copy of this document is now kept in the Universities’ Central Library in Yangon, and its provenance cannot be ascertained.¹⁷ The manuscript can be assigned a tentative date falling between the 1850s and the early 1900s.

All data on Sāralaṅkā come solely from these testimonies that are not fully reliable. Sāralaṅkā himself gave conflicting information as he was adapting his biography over the time of his stay in Burma. In addition, there seem to be scribal errors in the manuscripts. Therefore, working out a precise chronology of Sāralaṅkā’s life and travels poses difficulties.¹⁸ Since the purpose of this chapter

is to explore the case of Sāralaṅkā in relation to Buddhist networking and the importation of monastic ordinations, I leave a detailed analysis of testimonies and their chronology for another essay, while providing in this chapter a synoptic reconstruction of Sāralaṅkā’s career.

Sāralaṅkā was likely born in the late 1720s or 1730s. According to the 1767 testimony, his place of birth was Pin-o village near Tenasserim.¹⁹ Between the early seventeenth century and 1760, Tenasserim functioned as one of the principal ports controlled by Ayutthaya, so Sāralaṅkā originated from a key spot on the Siamese maritime frontier.²⁰ In his testimony providing an ethnic identification in accordance with Burmese usage, Sāralaṅkā described himself as Taninthayi Shan (Tai from Tenasserim).²¹ The Ayutthayan polity granted his father the revenues accruing from a village of Bakaung near Tenasserim, which suggests that he had been a minor official.²² Sāralaṅkā grew up at the court of Ayutthaya, for he was summoned there (as he stated in 1767) or moved there accompanying a son of a Mottama (Martaban) princess who became an Ayutthayan queen (as he testified in the 1780s).²³

When this prince became a novice at an Ayutthayan royal temple (unidentified in the testimonies), Sāralaṅkā followed suit and later became a monk at the same temple.²⁴ In 1753 and 1756, when two missions were sent to reestablish ordination on Laṅkā, Sāralaṅkā’s monastic preceptor was chosen to head the second one. Sāralaṅkā accompanied him to Laṅkā, lived there for a few years, and then returned to Ayutthaya (in 1764, it appears) for a brief period. Later, he moved back to Tenasserim, perhaps in 1765. At that time, Tenasserim fell from Siamese control. In early 1760, the town was captured by the Burmese king Alaungmintaya (r. 1752–1760). After brief restoration of Siamese rule over the Tenasserim coast in the early 1760s, in 1764 a new Burmese king, Hsinbyushin (r. 1763–1776), appointed officials to three major ports to the north of Tenasserim, and, in the summer of 1765, Burmese troops under the command of Min Mahanawyahta arrived at Dawe (Tavoy) and secured the coastline.²⁵

As the arrival of troops under Min Mahanawyahta to Tavoy is mentioned in the “1787” testimony, Sāralaṅkā seems to have returned to Tenasserim near this time. He attempted to hide in the forest but was captured by Burmese soldiers, perhaps in 1765 or in early 1766. First, he was accommodated at Mergui. However, owing to the scarcity of resources there, he was sent on to Tavoy, which seems to have functioned as Burmese headquarters on the coast. There, Sāralaṅkā had to be reordained as required by the head of the local monastic community.²⁶ Information about him then circulated to the capital, and he was escorted from Tavoy to Upper Burma sometime between 1766 and 1767.

During his stay in Upper Burma, Sāralaṅkā made a new career for himself, one that shows the value sometimes attributed to monks with exposure to the wider Southern Asian Buddhist world. On his arrival, he was accommodated in a village near Sagaing (one of the cities composing the capital area). After being

questioned about his travels, he was transferred into the tutelage of Kyethtungin Hsayadaw (1693–1775), one of the most venerated royal teachers, also considered a model “forest-dwelling” monk. At this point, Sāralaṅkā’s benefactor (providing for his maintenance) was the governor of Sagaing, a close ally of the late king Alaungmintaya, the founder of Konbaung dynasty (1752–1885).

Later on, Sāralaṅkā resided in Taungbila, a famous site near Sagaing with an excellent pedigree as a location of “forest-dwelling” monasticism.²⁷ Finally, Sāralaṅkā became abbot of his own monastery located to the south of Sagaing. The construction of this monastery was started by another courtier, a relative of Alaungmintaya (who appears to occupy a higher position in the court hierarchy than the governor of Sagaing). However, this new sponsor died, and the monastery was completed by the governor of Sagaing, Sāralaṅkā’s earlier donor.²⁸ After staying in Sagaing for some fourteen years, Sāralaṅkā requested permission to return to his native Tenasserim. He was allowed to go, and a new testimony was recorded before his departure. The likely date when the record was made is either 1780 or 1781.²⁹ Nothing more is known about Sāralaṅkā thereafter.

Sāralaṅkā’s growing recognition during his residence in Upper Burma is reflected in the way Burmese officials who recorded his testimonies referred to him. Whereas the 1767 document identifies Sāralaṅkā as a “monk who has been to Sīhaḷa [*sīhuiḷ rok phunḥ krīḥ*] and was brought [to Ava] by a royal inspector [*nāḥ kham*] and clerks [*cā re*] of the town of Dawe,” the second testimony presents Sāralaṅkā as a “venerable monk [*phunḥ tau krīḥ*] who had traveled from Jambudīpa to the island of Sīhaḷa for the purpose of taking care of the *sāsana* [Buddhist teaching and tradition]” and as “the most venerable monk [*phunḥ tau krīḥ phurā*].” This rise from a mere “monk” to “the most venerable monk,” mentioned in relation to his own achievements, was significant. Although Sāralaṅkā did not enjoy the most prestigious position of a royal teacher (*charā tau*) and did not belong to the top levels of the monastic hierarchy, he and his contribution to the Lankan *sāsana* were recognized by the Burmese court.

Additional documents from the same period that quote the testimonies of Sāralaṅkā further demonstrate his fame. The first reference appears in the *Cetyavaṃsa* (Chronicle of stūpas), a brief work in Pāli accompanied by bilingual translation composed in 1775 by Mun Ko, a writer from Bagan.³⁰ The *Cetyavaṃsa* traces the construction of major Buddhist monuments in Burma. Mun Ko focuses on the installation of a new umbrella on Shwedagon stūpa (relic monument) by King Hsinbyushin (r. 1763–1776), then jumps back in time to list improvements made to the stūpa throughout its history, dwelling briefly on King Dhammaceti, also known as Rāmādhipati (r. 1473–1492), one of the kings who sponsored such construction. Mun Ko then provides a summary of a testimony given in 1773 by “a monk who was born in the royal city of Ayutthaya called Dvārāvati and who came from Sīhaḷa.”³¹ Although the name of the monk is not mentioned and his birthplace is referred to as Ayutthaya (whereas the 1767

testimony refers to Sāralaṅkā as a native of the Tenasserim area), the contents of the testimony leave no doubt that the person in question was Sāralaṅkā. Thus, to Mun Ko, information on Sāralaṅkā’s travel to Laṅkā and details the latter provided about the sacred sites of the island were significant enough to be included alongside major milestones in the history of Buddhism and temple construction in Burma.³²

Another reference to Sāralaṅkā’s testimony appears in monastic correspondence dating to 1810. In a reply given by monk Ariyāvamṣa Ādiccaramṣī to his disciple Sirimālā and included in the anthology of such replies called *Samantacakkhudīpanī* (The exposition on the eye of all-around knowledge), Ariyāvamṣa refers to a “record of a spoken testimony of the venerable Sāralaṅkāra, who has been to Sīhaḷa, [made] in the reign of Lord Hsinbyushin, the elder brother [of the present king], who had founded the third city of Yadanapura.”³³ The document mentioned by Ariyāvamṣa could well be a copy of Sāralaṅkā’s 1767 testimony that survives at Ariyāvamṣa’s monastery in Monywa village.³⁴ If indeed the record referred to by Ariyāvamṣa is reflected by this manuscript, it is worth noting that it does not mention Sāralaṅkā by name. This fact suggests that Sāralaṅkā was sufficiently well known for Ariyāvamṣa to attribute the testimony.³⁵

The references in Mun Ko’s chronicle and Ariyāvamṣa’s monastic correspondence (documents compiled a hundred miles to the southwest of Sagaing in Bagan and some fifty miles to the west of Sagaing in Monywa) suggest a fairly wide circulation of testimonies. Hence, in the late eighteenth century, Sāralaṅkā appears to have been one of the monastic celebrities of Upper Burma. At the same time, it is revealing that in both sources he is mentioned only in the context of testimonies. This suggests that Sāralaṅkā’s fame derived not from his monastic practice in Burma or his personal charisma, but depended on literary works created by the Burmese interested in Laṅkā and on the Burmese networks of circulation through which manuscript copies of Sāralaṅkā’s testimonies spread.

It is worth stressing that, in relation to monastic practice, the very asset Sāralaṅkā transmitted to Laṅkā—namely, his Ayutthayan ordination—was lost as soon as he had been escorted to Tavoy by Burmese officials. To continue as a monk, Sāralaṅkā was obliged to reordain into a local monastic community. Moreover, Sāralaṅkā’s testimonies do not show much rigor in accounting for that Ayutthayan ordination or any indication that the Burmese took any interest in Sāralaṅkā’s Ayutthayan lineage or were eager to establish a new lineage in Burma originating with Sāralaṅkā. Instead, he was absorbed into a Burmese monastic order and rose to relative prominence within it, capitalizing on his association with Laṅkā and his ability to narrate this association in terms prized by Burmese patrons. This process of adaptation of a narrative to suit his emerging role of successful “missionary” monk is reflected in the ways the “1787” testimony differs from the one recorded in 1767.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF TESTIMONY

The testimony of 1767 is a record of interrogation that lists the questions asked by a Burmese official and the replies provided by Sāralaṅkā. It gives a matter-of-fact account of Sāralaṅkā's travel together with a few details on the monasteries and sacred sites of Laṅkā. The document gives an overall impression of Sāralaṅkā as a person trying to downplay any individual distinction to avoid claims to authority that he might not be able to substantiate. Sāralaṅkā testified that his ordination occurred only few years before the arrival of the Kandyan embassy at Ayutthaya and that even on his return from Laṅkā he was still a "junior monk" (*rahan ṇay*).³⁶ He did not pretend to have sound scriptural training or expertise.³⁷ He did not refer to being prominent anywhere he had traveled or to making a personal contribution to the Lankan mission. It is significant that he also made no effort to celebrate his belonging to a particular monastic lineage or order, providing only those details that were necessary to demonstrate that his claim on monastic status was valid in Vinaya terms so as to prove he was not a false monk.

Sāralaṅkā stated that the mission faced severe difficulties on the way back to Ayutthaya. Whereas the travel to Laṅkā occurred with combined Sinhalese, Siamese, and Dutch support, the return journey was a personal initiative, and so the monks had to find the means of survival in an alien environment. Thus, while traveling in India, they had to go from one place to another pretending to be either Malays or Javanese.³⁸ According to Sāralaṅkā, the majority of monks who participated in the mission died of chickenpox during the sea journey from India to Southeast Asia. Sāralaṅkā also admitted that the return to Siam did not make things easier for him. He explained that, when surviving monks arrived back at Ayutthaya, the king who had sent the mission was already dead and a new king occupied the throne.³⁹ Since the embassy's leaders had died on the mission, there was no one of influence to claim a state welcome on return to Ayutthaya. The monks only managed to transmit a message to the king.⁴⁰ Sāralaṅkā spent one rainy season's retreat in Ayutthaya and then moved to Tenasserim.⁴¹

In contrast to the 1767 testimony, the one likely dating to 1780–1781 (but generally referred to as dated 1787) is not the product of an interrogation, but rather a lengthy narrative aimed at detailing Sāralaṅkā's itinerary, the situation on Laṅkā, and the history of that island for the benefit of posterity. Besides offering greater detail, this later testimony also strives to explain the context that necessitated a Buddhist mission to Laṅkā. This new conceptual framework was accompanied by a revised chronology of events, a different itinerary (especially of the return journey), and inflated claims about the prominence of the mission. In a later section, I will address the wider Burmese context for the new conceptual framework into which Sāralaṅkā's activities were drawn.

In 1767, Sāralaṅkā failed to report certain details, citing poor memory. By the 1780s, his memory was refreshed to the extent that he could provide an account that looked essentially complete. If in 1767 he managed to name only thirteen out of thirty monks whom he claimed to have participated in the mission, in the second testimony he provided a full list of thirty-two names (the alleged number of missionaries increased by two) together with their native places. Departing from his earlier statements that he went to Laṅkā as a junior monk with only a few years of monastic standing, following his preceptor, Sāralaṅkā now claimed that, after the arrival of Sinhalese envoys to Ayutthaya, the king assembled all monks residing in the area, offered alms food, and requested to select four *mahātheras* who had completed twenty rainy seasons and were forty years old and twenty-eight monks who were thirty years old and had ten years of monastic standing. Thus, instead of being a poorly educated *bhikkhu* accompanying his teacher two years after ordination, Sāralaṅkā became one of the monks who was ordained for ten years and chosen by the entire Ayutthayan *saṅgha* to travel to Laṅkā.⁴²

Sāralaṅkā also claimed that, on selection, monks chosen to transmit the ordination to Laṅkā were given special scriptural training lasting for a year and that this scriptural expertise was imparted to newly ordained Sinhalese monks.⁴³ Almost every detail related to the mission’s experience during the journey that did not sit well with the grand purpose of the mission was corrected from the earlier testimony in a way that strengthened the mission’s profile. Thus, mention of disguising as Malays, deaths from chickenpox, and lack of interest shown to the survivors on their arrival back in Ayutthaya had all disappeared. Instead, Sāralaṅkā spoke about reverential treatment the VOC extended to the mission during the latter’s residence at Batavia on the way to Laṅkā, added new details about the arrangements the Kandyan king Kīrti Śrī made to greet the mission on its approach to Kandy, and recounted the ceremonial welcome the mission received on return to Ayutthaya as well as lavish donations bestowed on its members who chose to travel back to their native cities (like Sāralaṅkā, who returned to Tenasserim).⁴⁴

Sāralaṅkā’s facility in manipulating the data for the second testimony is further highlighted by the fictional genealogy he provided for King Kīrti Śrī and the claim that the latter was ordained and lived for one year as a monk following the arrival of the mission in Laṅkā, a story that finds no support in other sources. Another significant instance of retouching was the conflation of two missions from Ayutthaya in 1753 and 1756 into one: the second testimony identified the leaders of both the first and the second missions from Ayutthaya to Kandy as participants of a single mission. This eliminated the possibility that the role of the 1756 mission (in which Sāralaṅkā appears to have participated based on the first testimony) would be interpreted as purely supportive rather than as foundational to the Ayutthayan-Kandyan interaction.

Despite the embellishments and reformulations evident in the second testimony, it is important to note that Sāralaṅkā's testimonies were not completely fictional. They demonstrated a sound knowledge of Lankan geography and sacred sites, navigation routes in the Indian Ocean, and names of Sinhalese officials, and he correctly identified the names of Siamese ministers who were sent to Laṅkā in 1756 as well as the names of monks who headed the missions to the island. These points suggest that discrepancies in the testimonies and fictionalization of the narrative were mostly strategic and served to create an account that would ultimately be intelligible to and perceived as trustworthy by a Burmese audience. Apparently, a testimony that looked complete and described a successful mission that was well received throughout its journey suited the expectations of that audience better than a more straightforward report that included more signs of risk, contingency, and failure. The circulation and survival of copies of the testimonies prove that Sāralaṅkā managed to pass the tests of intelligibility and trustworthiness within the Upper Burmese Buddhist monastic context. Both the adjustment of Sāralaṅkā's testimonies and the importance accorded to them in Burmese manuscript circulation shed light on one of the forms of circulation identified in the first section of this chapter. Sāralaṅkā's experience in Upper Burma is a striking example of the transmission and localization of things and persons within the Southern Asian Buddhist world in contexts that did not involve the transplantation of either monastic lineage or a monastic order but did involve an adaptation to local circumstances. Thus, the processes of localization involving mobile monastics can be examined both at the scale of monastic ordination lineages and the Buddhist orders that they shape (as noted by Blackburn) as well as at the scale of individuals.⁴⁵

LOCALIZATION AND INTELLIGIBILITY

At first glance, the career of Sāralaṅkā may seem disjointed—consisting of discrete parts with little logic connecting them—and contradictory, to the extent that no truthful testimony of it could be made. A boy from a village near a remote Siamese port city travels to the royal capital and is ordained there. Soon, while still a junior monk with few qualifications, he becomes a part of an important monastic mission, important at least in retrospect (there are no means of ascertaining how the mission was perceived by those who initiated it). Spending some years in a distant country and surviving the hardships of a perilous journey, Sāralaṅkā returns to Ayutthaya and might be expected to enjoy the accruing glory. Yet Ayutthaya is in decline, and so he chooses to return to his native area. Tenasserim, however, is not a safe haven either, and soon Sāralaṅkā is displaced by the Burmese but manages to reassert himself as a venerable monk in Upper Burma. These ruptures and twists in his career leave one to wonder if Sāralaṅkā was ever in control of his itinerary and career trajectories. To what

extent, if at all, did his earlier background and relationships shape his subsequent evolution?

Sāralaṅkā’s career as evidenced by his testimonies departs significantly from normative accounts of Lankan or Southeast Asian monasticism as found in such sources as the *Mahāvamsa*, an early sixth-century Lankan chronicle, or official Burmese chronicles. It would be unimaginable in modern Sinhalese or Thai narratives of the establishment of Siyam Nikāya or Nikāya Siyamwong (Siamese Lineage), which tend toward a panegyric account of monastic missions. Sāralaṅkā seems an unlikely candidate for the transmission of ordination and a successful monastic career, for he does not possess an exalted lineage, sound education, scriptural expertise, or notable charisma. His corporate status as a fully ordained monk and a cofounder of the Siyam Nikāya in Kandy neither helped him to find a suitable place on return to Ayutthaya nor protected him from deportation to Upper Burma.

In fact, by the nature of his origins and interstitiality, Sāralaṅkā was an ideal candidate for perilous travels, someone who could have been considered expendable by authorities yet also capable of surviving in challenging new settings. Though necessitating reordination at Tavoy in 1765 or 1766, Sāralaṅkā’s status as a captive and one of non-Burman background did not preclude his being venerated by the Burmese court and receiving his own monastery in Sagaing. In fact, it was Burma, not Laṅkā or Siam, where Sāralaṅkā achieved greatest personal prominence. Marginality and personal insecurity enhanced Sāralaṅkā’s ability to adopt whatever socially approved behavior (including the notions of monasticism) was expected from him. This ability is clear in the way he reshaped his second available testimony vis-à-vis the earlier one to suit his acquired status as an eminent monk and recipient of high-level patronage. And it is likely this ability to adapt that brought Sāralaṅkā closer to prestigious social roles and modes of action. The adaptation displayed by Sāralaṅkā in his testimonies shows how authoritative discourses on Buddhism and monastic activity are shaped by negotiation between those speaking and writing and their audience. In turn, this type of negotiation raises the issue of the role of local audience reception in the context of Buddhist mobility, allowing us to expand our analytical understanding of the processes through which Buddhist travelers were localized in particular settings and drawing attention to the ways in which the receiving culture’s or community’s goals and needs could take precedence over formal measures of knowledge and experience of mobile Buddhists. Indeed, local Buddhist communities had an impressive ability to capitalize on long-distance contacts within Buddhist *oikumene* and to situate itinerant monks and the connections they might symbolize into local projects and conceptual frameworks.

When examined in relation to other contemporary Burmese documents detailing long-distance religious travel to and from Upper Burma in the late

eighteenth century, Sāralaṅkā's case appears representative of a fairly large group of "foreign" religious specialists who provided the Burmese court with information on neighboring countries and facilitated Burma's interactions with them. Such evidence reveals a pattern to these interactions, with the Burmese already having a certain idea about a particular foreign destination and its value, construing the "foreign" actor as able to serve their aims. Accordingly, as in Sāralaṅkā's case, the Burmese absorbed the details provided by a "foreigner," while conveying to the traveler their own understanding of the matter at hand and catalyzing the traveler's adaptation to local circumstances. The fusion of "local" and "foreign" elements in Sāralaṅkā's testimonies is illustrated below.

The development of Sāralaṅkā's testimonies was not limited to enhancing his image. Equally notable is his tendency to refer to locally significant sacred sites and religious practices as well as to adapt Burmese historiographical notions. For instance, one of the features of the testimonies is the mapping of Laṅkā according to an understanding of the Burmese religious landscape, where major Buddhist sites of Laṅkā are compared to stūpas in Burma.⁴⁶ We see another example in Sāralaṅkā's use of Burmese monastic curricular terms to frame a description of how Siamese monks from Ayutthaya trained Lankan monastics. According to the testimony, fifty newly ordained Lankan monks who had the ability to preach were assigned to act as preceptors in "all curricular texts studied during the evening and daytime classes [*ñña vā ne. vā saṅ rūiḥ kyaṃḥ akun*]."⁴⁷ This description imposed the structure of monastic education in Upper Burma on the training allegedly given to Sinhalese monks by their fellows from Ayutthaya. The division into daytime (*ñña vā*) and evening (*ne. vā*) classes—the former dedicated to Pāli grammar and Vinaya, and the latter to Abhidhamma—reflected the basic daily routine in Burmese monasteries. The term "curriculum" (*saṅ rūiḥ*) also closely resonated with Burmese notions of monastic training, since by the late eighteenth century a significant share of monasteries in Upper Burma based the education of schoolboys, novices, and junior monks on a similar selection of Pāli and bilingual texts.⁴⁸

Finally, Sāralaṅkā's account of the history of Sinhalese kingship and the situation of the *sāsana* on the island (provided in his second available testimony) displayed an interesting fusion of local, unofficial Burmese historiography with more standard Lankan narratives. Though the sequence of rulers of Laṅkā from Vijaya to Kīrti Śrī given by Sāralaṅkā depended on the *Mahāvamsa* to a certain degree, it omitted the majority of kings mentioned in the Lankan chronicle. It did, however, refer to Dharmapāla—a puppet king installed by the Portuguese at Koṭṭē in the sixteenth century who was also in contact with the Burmese king Hsinbyumyashin (r. 1551–1581) who ruled at Hanthawady (Bago). Since at least the early seventeenth century, Burmese sources identified Dharmapāla as a rightful sovereign of Laṅkā who fought "Indian" non-Buddhists (*micchādīṭṭhi*) ruling at Koṭṭē [*sic*], Kandy, and Sītāvaka and finally managed to subdue them and unify the island with the help of Hsinbyumyashin.⁴⁹ Strikingly, Sāralaṅkā

retells this story—apparently unknown in Kandy or Ayutthaya—in a form diverging from mainstream Burmese court historiography but consonant with local traditions at Sagaing, where he resided in Burma.⁵⁰ All the monasteries where Sāralaṅkā resided between 1767 and about 1781 were located in direct proximity to a site that embodied the tradition about Hsinbyumyashin and the king of Laṅkā. Therefore, departures from official Burmese narratives in Sāralaṅkā’s testimony indicate that Sāralaṅkā’s retelling was based not on Burmese texts, but rather borrowed from some local oral version that Sāralaṅkā likely heard in Sagaing.

SĀRALAṅKĀ, THE BURMESE ROYAL COURT, AND A WIDER BUDDHIST WORLD

Strategic use of idioms comprehensible to the Burmese public undoubtedly contributed to Sāralaṅkā’s local intelligibility. Of even greater importance, however, was the fact that Sāralaṅkā’s travels were compatible with Burmese notions of Burma’s position within a wider Buddhist world. Moreover, Sāralaṅkā’s residence in Sagaing coincided with late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Burmese royal interest in refining its knowledge of the broader Buddhist world and expanding engagement with it. The success with which Sāralaṅkā localized himself in Upper Burma—although he was not sought after as the officiator to found a new monastic lineage or as a participant in a valued foreign monastic order—reflects the importance of this specific historical moment when mobile monastic elites were particularly valued at the Burmese court.

Scholarship on the reign of King Badon-min (r. 1782–1819) has long referred to multiple Burmese missions sent to India during this period. Modern Burmese works mention in particular 170 Sanskrit texts that were brought from Nabadwip (an important center of Sanskrit learning and a Vaishnava pilgrimage site in West Bengal) and transcribed from Bengali into Burmese Sanskrit. They were then recopied on palm leaves under the supervision of Nāṇābhivaṃsa (1751–1832), a key court-sponsored monk and the future head of the royal monastic hierarchy, in 1786.⁵¹ Manuscript evidence provides further context for such embassies to the Indian subcontinent. In 1783, the minister for palatial affairs (*atvaṇ van*) Min Letwe Nawahta U Ne (1723–1791) wrote to Nāṇābhivaṃsa requesting a list of “works of worldly knowledge” (*lokī kyaṃḥ*; a common phrase used to refer to Sanskrit and Sanskrit-derived texts) that were unavailable in Burma and should be sought in the “foreign country of sea-vessel-[faring] Indians.” This request arose in the context of Badon-min’s sponsorship of copies of Pāli Buddhist texts and learned Sanskrit works, leading to the recognition of the inadequate availability of Sanskrit texts in Burma. Nāṇābhivaṃsa identified forty-eight titles that had been available in Burma in the past but were now lost. A year later, Punshi and Sukāram (two royal Brahmins, of either Bengali or Tamil descent,⁵² serving at the Burmese court)

were sent to Kolkata accompanied by Yangon-based merchant captain Thiri Sandarat.⁵³ From Kolkata they were referred to Nabadwip, where they managed to recopy a number of texts, most of which were actually not suggested by Ñāṇābhivamsa. A year later, they arrived at Amarapura, inaugurating a transcription project completed by late 1786.⁵⁴

This acquisition of Sanskrit intellectual heritage highlights Burmese participation in wider South Asian religious and intellectual networks as well as the need for information and intermediaries that supported such Burmese goals. In the view of the Burmese elites, the royal corpus of Sanskrit works was authoritative not because of its Indian origins, but as a result of its use in Upper Burma. Min Letwe Nawahta made no indication of Badon-min's interest in expanding the royally transmitted corpus of Sanskrit texts, and Ñāṇābhivamsa was asked to identify only those titles that were recopied in Burma in the past.⁵⁵

Also helpful in contextualizing Sāralaṅkā's reception in eighteenth-century Burma is the evidence on Burmese communications with Laṅkā and Qing China in the late eighteenth century. What seems to be the earliest direct contact between the court of Badon-min and the Sinhalese resulted from sending Thiri Sandarat, the captain who had traveled to Kolkata, Nabadwip, and Laṅkā. In about 1787, he was instructed to check whether Laṅkā still possessed the Buddha's tooth relic, the forehead bone relic, the relic of the hair between the eyebrows, and the Bodhi tree brought from India, as described in the Buddhist historiographical works *Mahāvamsa*, *Dīpavamsa*, *Bodhivamsa*, and *Nalāṭadhātuvamsa*. He was also instructed to see whether the conduct of Sinhalese monks and novices was in conformity with the Vinaya.⁵⁶ In late 1789, Thiri Sandarat returned to Amarapura accompanied by Sinhalese novice Varakālantē and a senior mason Narāyanapā, bringing a manuscript of *Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta* and its bilingual commentaries as well as messages from an unidentified Sinhalese "king" and high-ranking monastic leader (*anunāyaka*) of Anurādhapura.⁵⁷ The message of the *anunāyaka* recounted the ecclesiastical history of Laṅkā, mentioning its prior contacts with other parts of Southern Asia for the purposes of monastic ordination and eulogizing Kandyan monarchs for taking perfect care of the country and the *sāsana*.⁵⁸ A message that the Burmese identified as being sent by the Sinhalese king requested a number of Pāli texts.⁵⁹

Badon-min and Ñāṇābhivamsa made a selective reading of the messages focusing on three points: that Laṅkā had a recent history of importing monastic ordination from elsewhere in the region, that there was no complete *tipiṭaka* available in Laṅkā, and that the Mahācetiya (Great Relic Monument) in Anurādhapura had no umbrella installed on top. This, in current Burmese understanding, signified a dramatic neglect of the sacred site. Ñāṇābhivamsa laid plans to give Varakālantē proper scriptural training, ordain him as a monk, learn Sinhala script from him, prepare a full set of *tipiṭaka* transcribed in Sinhala, and send a mission under Ñāṇābhivamsa himself to reestablish the

sāsana on Laṅkā. In the meantime, Narāyanapā would return to Laṅkā and confirm the favorable reports made by Thiri Sandarat about the flourishing state of the teaching in Burma, and a son of Thiri Sandarat should be sent with the funds to repair major monuments. Such measures were intended to convince Lankan Buddhists that the well-being of the *sāsana* could be entrusted to the care of Badon-min.⁶⁰

This example illustrates the performative or “symptomatic” role the engagement with overseas Buddhist locations played in Southern Asian Buddhist cultures of the period. That is, engagement with valued persons and objects from the wider transregional Buddhist world stemmed from specific local historical circumstances and, as such, highlights key moments of institutional instability and/or ambition within local contexts.⁶¹ Within the Buddhist world of that time and indeed earlier, lay Buddhist patrons and monastic leaders were defined as leaders in part through their ability to contribute to the cause of the *sāsana* on a global level. They portrayed themselves and were seen as participants in a greater Buddhist *oikumene* instantiated by relics, sacred sites, manuscripts, and ordination opportunities, supported by Pāli and Sanskrit literature and their vernacular adaptations, Buddhist art, and, sometimes, accounts of foreign informants such as Sāralaṅkā.⁶² Of course, Nāṇābhivāṃsa may have overstated his aims in offering to reordain the monks on Laṅkā; thinking small was not an option for a person responsible for taking care of the *sāsana* on behalf of a Burmese king, especially one as ambitious as Badon-min.⁶³

The interactions of the Konbaung court with China displayed similar willingness of the Burmese to offer their ordination and mastery of Pāli texts to a wider Buddhist world and to patronize “foreign” relics. Communications with the Qing started roughly at the same time as the travels of Thiri Sandarat. By 1787, local rulers (Ch. *tūsī*) from the Burma-Yunnan border facilitated the delivery of a letter from the Qianlong emperor (r. 1736–1796) to Badon-min. A few years later, they set up the delivery of three princesses identified as Chinese, given as brides to Badon-min, an act potentially signifying in local eyes that the Qianlong emperor might be recognized as a Burmese vassal.⁶⁴

From the beginning of these exchanges, the Burmese court chose to frame them in relation to the well-being of the *sāsana*. Among diplomatic gifts exchanged between the two courts, a prime place was given to religious symbols. At the suggestion of Nāṇābhivāṃsa, an exhortation to Qianlong to worship the Three Jewels (the Buddha, *dhamma* [teaching], and *saṅgha*) was added to the reply to the 1787 letter mentioned above.⁶⁵ Moreover, the Burmese embassy sent to China in 1788 to deliver a reply apparently displayed keen interest in the Buddha’s tooth relic that the Burmese believed to be kept at Mt. Wutai. As a result, the embassy returned to Burma bringing the image of the Buddha said to be worshiped by Qianlong and made in the likeness of the Buddha that the Mt. Wutai tooth relic had assumed during a visit of the Kangxi emperor (r. 1661–1722) to the site.⁶⁶ Another valuable object brought by the embassy was

the replica of the tooth relic. In a message to Badon-min, Ñāṇābhivaṃsa confirmed that he was aware of the story of Kangxi's arrival at Mt. Wutai and that the image constituted a genuine relic.⁶⁷ At his suggestion, the image and a copy of the tooth relic were enshrined in Pahtodawgyi in Mingun, a stūpa meant to be Badon-min's chief work of merit.

Ñāṇābhivaṃsa's 1796 correspondence with the monks of Kōng-ma (Ch. Gēngmǎ; Bur. Kaingma), a Tai principality on the Burma-Yunnan frontier (in what is now Lincāng Prefecture of Yunnan), also shows Ñāṇābhivaṃsa's vision for the Tai areas. Addressing the monks from the location that played a critical role in the communication between the Qing and Konbaung courts, Ñāṇābhivaṃsa cited Badon-min's good deeds, mentioning, for instance, his Buddhist diplomacy with Kandyan king Rājadhī Rājasimha (r. 1782–1798). The message also suggested that Kōng-ma monks should emulate the example of monk Ekāmuni from Mōng Hsa (Bur. Maingtha, an A-ch'ang town in what is now Dēhóng Prefecture of Yunnan), who came to Amarapura in Upper Burma to be reordained and trained in the curriculum promoted by Ñāṇābhivaṃsa and his monastic allies.⁶⁸ This recommendation underscores the desire of Upper Burmese court elites to establish stronger symbolic links with those who mediated their interactions with the Chinese administration in Yunnan and the Qing imperial court, while promoting conformity with Burmese notions of the *sāsana* among the Tai.

This evidence of concerted, heavily resourced overtures from the court of Badon-min to key nodal points in the Buddhist ritual and wider geopolitical worlds of Southern Asia (and beyond) helps to clarify the position of Sāralaṅkā in Upper Burma and his ascendance to a high rank within royally sponsored monastic circles. Burmese royal conceptions of a greater Buddhist world created a demand for agents able to affirm and animate these geographies and to provide vital practical information that facilitated strategic royal engagement with subregional locations beyond Burma. Although this chapter has concentrated on the ways in which Sāralaṅkā adapted his reports of the Buddhist world to suit his Burmese audiences, it is also evident from Sāralaṅkā's testimonies (and the way they were quoted in subsequent Burmese texts) that his reports were understood as valuable sources of current information on the condition of particular Buddhist sites and travel routes.

Since the Konbaung court's influence beyond the borders of the Burmese polity was limited, religious initiatives of the Burmese crown on its peripheries outside of Burma proper depended on intermediaries and collaborators in a way similar to the functioning of hybrid or plural political structures on the Burma-Yunnan frontier. Though Sāralaṅkā was not strictly an agent of the Burmese court, the interest in his testimonies and the way they were quoted by contemporaries suggest that he was seen as a source of valuable information about Buddhist institutional locations with which Burmese royal and monastic leaders were concerned.

Facilitation of Burma’s religious and diplomatic contacts in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries involved a broad and nonsectarian mix of actors, operating on sea and land routes across Asia and the Indian Ocean. In addition to Buddhist monks of diverse ethnic origin, these interactions relied on European trade companies and colonial powers as well as on Asian trading, religious, and administrative networks (such as Tamil merchants, port masters, and laborers from Laṅkā and the Coromandel coast; Arakanese and Armenian traders, officials, and entrepreneurs from the Burma-Yunnan frontier; Bengali Brahmins; and even Sufi Muslims).⁶⁹ Foreign religious practitioners who found their way to Upper Burma and passed local tests of intelligibility were received as significant social actors. Brahmins, Sufis, and Buddhist monks and novices were associated not with margins, but with political and religious centers outside Burma with which they were familiar and about which they could provide information. Some of them came to be rewarded or patronized by the Burmese royal court, which valued such skills as a command of Persian as a language of diplomacy or proficiency in astrology, alchemy, or medicine.

Research in history and the social sciences during the last twenty years has seen the burgeoning of work on border areas and social agents operating in interstitial spaces between lowland states and polities as well as studies of groups and networks acting on the margins or peripheries of large territorially organized social bodies. In Asian studies, this work has led to the development of such concepts as “the history at the interstices” or Zomia that, among other things, called for rescaling conceptual tools to recognize the subjectivity of regions and people that had not been adequately represented in previous research.⁷⁰ In China studies, an important trend has been research on hybrid regimes and “dual sovereignty” that Ming and Qing imperial states employed at their frontiers. This research has focused attention on multiple native collaborators on imperial frontiers as well as other indigenous actors.⁷¹ In research on global trade and colonial expansion in the Indian Ocean, growing attention has been paid to social formations of mobile individuals able to function as entrepreneurial minorities. Gujarati *baniyas*, Julfan Armenians, Peranakan Chinese, Parsis, and participants in many other networks termed “conjoint communities,” “communally defined trading groups,” and “circulation societies” were the primary Asian actors exploiting the opportunities for long-distance trade, financial, and industrial operations created by indigenous and colonial empires.⁷² In the case of Southeast Asia, such research has been complemented by work on Chinese and Arab networks in the region.⁷³

In the study of Southeast Asian religions, however, a comparable depth of detail on interstitial actors is yet to materialize, although a substantial literature has emerged on the role of Indian intermediaries in the circulation of Islam in Southern Asia.⁷⁴ In the field identified as Theravāda studies, the study of Buddhism oriented toward authoritative texts in Pāli, the mapping of peripheral

figures has just begun. The most significant example is the recent work on the activities of pioneer Western Buddhists in Asia,⁷⁵ but there are no corresponding studies of indigenous itinerants or of mobile Buddhists before the colonial period.⁷⁶ The present chapter on Sāralaṅkā draws attention to this category of actors and shows the ability of a particular monastic itinerant to rise in the Burmese monastic order by virtue of his reception as someone able to contribute to Burmese support for the cause of the *sāsana* within a greater Buddhist world.

Sāralaṅkā's case and other examples referred to more glancingly in this chapter illustrate that mobile Buddhists in eighteenth-century Southern Asia made their careers either by fusing into monastic orders at their destinations or by facilitating the development of these monastic orders, often by providing a monastic ordination. These cases do not reveal the extension of Buddhist monastic orders—with their external features of organizational structure and practice—into new foreign locations.⁷⁷ Mobility associated with the import of an ordination, as in the establishment of Siyam Nikāya or movements of Burmese-ordained monks in Tai areas on the Burma-Yunnan frontier, was made possible by awareness of a greater Buddhist world transcending political boundaries, by the hybrid nature of communication networks through which diplomatic activities of regional polities were carried out, and by diverse benefits Southern Asian Buddhists and their patrons could derive from venturing into foreign territories.

Thus, this case invites us to consider when and to what extent ordination lineages play a formative role in the institutionalization of Buddhist monastic communities. In my work on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Burmese monastic organization, I find lineages largely irrelevant or at least much less relevant than ritual communities, reformist networks built around signature practices, royally supported hierarchies, and educational infrastructure.⁷⁸ At the same time, in her analysis of the rise of Siyam Nikāya on Lanḱā and the development of Sīḥaḷa Saṅgha in Northern Thailand, Blackburn argues that the invocation of imported lineages provided an avenue for reconfiguring local communities and enhancing their claims for recognition.⁷⁹ To me, the perspective on the foundation of Siyam Nikāya offered in Sāralaṅkā-related materials suggests that the ordination brought from Ayutthaya merely fulfilled ritual requirements for inaugurating a new monastic lineage in Kandy and reviving Sinhalese monastic order. Neither the lineage, nor the order in this case could be called “imported” in the strict sense of the term.

The compartmentalization of the Buddhist world into multiple polities created opportunities for itinerant religious specialists, who may have been drawn to mobility by social marginality in their places of origin or other instabilities such as wartime conditions. Navigating these spatial formations required many skills, including those demonstrated by Sāralaṅkā, who was able to mix creatively idioms that were vernacular and local with those that were cosmopolitan and transregional. Barriers to and opportunities for the localization of itinerant religious specialists varied greatly from one location in Buddhist Southern Asia

to another. For example, the Upper Burmese situation appears different from Laṅkā in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, where the close dependence of the formation of monastic orders on the social organization of Sinhalese society (especially in terms of caste hierarchies) and the exclusivist and centralized nature of the dominant monastic community (Siyam Nikāya), with its strict control over access to monastic ordination and bureaucratic appointments, likely limited the prospects for such actors as Sāralaṅkā.⁸⁰ More research is required to develop detailed comparisons and identify structural possibilities for the localization of foreign persons, ideas, and practices into Burmese, Sinhalese, Tai, or Thai monasticism and for long-distance networking within the Southern Asian Buddhist world over time. Localization strategies such as that employed by Sāralaṅkā were used elsewhere in Buddhist interactions in early modern Southern Asia during the eighteenth as well as parts of seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. More research is required, however, to determine how common such strategies were in earlier periods and which social and political features may have shaped the success or failure of itinerants seeking a favorable reception in the Southern Asian Buddhist world. It is equally interesting to see how the processes and strategies involved in receiving and localizing mobile Buddhists might have been transformed when interactions between Buddhist countries intensified during the late nineteenth century, producing a more complex intellectual climate and a broader mix of localization patterns characteristic of the modern period.

NOTES

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1. Kenneth Roy Norman, *Pāli Literature Including the Canonical Literature in Prakrit and Sanskrit of All the Hīnayāna Schools of Buddhism, A History of Indian Literature*, vol. 7, fasc. 2 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1983), p. 13.

2. Mon Bokay, “Relations between Ceylon and Burma in the 11th Century AD,” in *Essays Offered to G. H. Luce*, edited by U Ba Shin, Jean Boisselier, and A. B. Griswold, vol. 1 (New York and Ascona: Artibus Asiae, 1968), p. 94; Kanai Lal Hazra, *History of Theravāda Buddhism in South-East Asia: With Special Reference to India and Ceylon* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1982), pp. 89, 92, 103, 111, 130; Tilman Frasch, “A Buddhist Network in the Bay of Bengal: Relations between Bodhgaya, Burma and Sri Lanka, c. 300–1300,” in

From the Mediterranean to the China Sea, edited by Claude Guillot, Denys Lombard, and Roderich Ptak, *South China and Maritime Asia 7* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998), pp. 83, 85, 89.

3. Niharranjan Ray, *An Introduction to the Study of Theravāda Buddhism in Burma* (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1946), pp. 114–115, 171, 190–192; C. E. Godakumbura, “Relations between Burma and Ceylon,” *Journal of the Burma Research Society* 49.2 (1966): 147; Hazra, *History of Theravāda Buddhism*, pp. 103, 108, 111; Emmanuel Guillon, “Jalons pour une histoire du Bouddhisme en Asie du Sud-Est,” *Péninsule* 8–9 (1984): 124. Others argued that the expansion of Sinhalese monasticism in Southeast Asia manifested competing forms of Sinhalese monastic tradition, especially with respect to ritual practice. See, for instance, Prathip Chumphon, “Khor sanitsathan ruang phra malai,” *Wannakhadi wikhro* 1975; François Bizot, *Les traditions de la pabbajjā en Asie du Sud-Est* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1988). For an alternative view, see Prapod Assavavirulhakarn, *The Ascendancy of Theravāda Buddhism in Southeast Asia* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm, 2010), pp. 170–172.

4. Peter Skilling, “Theravāda in History,” *Pacific World: Journal of the Institute of Buddhist Studies*, third series, 11 (2009): 63–64; Anne M. Blackburn, “Sīhāla Saṅgha and Laṅkā in Later Premodern Southeast Asia,” in *Buddhist Dynamics in Premodern Southeast Asia*, edited by D. Christian Lammerts (Singapore: Institute for Southeast Asian Studies, 2015), pp. 315–322; Anne M. Blackburn, “Buddhist Connections in the Indian Ocean: Changes in Monastic Mobility, 1000–1500,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 58 (2015): 251–257. See also Jason A. Carbine, “How King Rāmādhipati Handled His Boundary Case: Sīmā, Sāsana, and Buddhist Law,” *Buddhism, Law, and Society* 1 (2016–2015): 151–152, which follows Blackburn in her arguments regarding the significance of Laṅkā.

5. For the context of this monastic reform, see Kitsiri Malalagoda, *Buddhism in Sinhalese Society 1750–1900: A Study of Religious Revival and Change* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), pp. 54–58; Anne M. Blackburn, *Buddhist Learning and Textual Practice in Eighteenth-Century Lankan Monastic Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), pp. 37–38.

6. For an analysis of how Saraṇaṃkara drew on Sinhalese literary and cultural heritage in developing the innovative techniques he used to reshape monastic education and preaching, fashioning the emergence of the Siyam Nikāya as a new Buddhist textual community, see Blackburn, *Buddhist Learning*.

7. P. E. Pieris, “An Account of King Kirti Sri’s Embassy to Siam in 1672 Saka (1750 A.D.),” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Ceylon Branch* 18 (1903): 17–44; P. E. Fernando, “An Account of the Kandyan Mission to Siam in 1750 A.D.,” *The Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies* 2.1 (1959): 37–83. Both articles are translations of reports on a mission that sailed to Siam in 1750 and returned to Laṅkā in 1753, compiled by two officials who took part in the mission. The first is a translation of the account written by Ālepolā Mohoṭṭāla, and the second is a translation of the work of Vilbāgedara Muhandiram.

8. Anne M. Blackburn, “Lineage, Inheritance, and Belonging: Expressions of Monastic Affiliation from Laṅkā,” in *How Theravāda Is Theravāda? Exploring Buddhist Identities*, edited by Peter Skilling, Jason Carbine, Claudio Cicuzza, and Santi Pakdeekham (Chiang Mai: Silkworm, 2012), pp. 279–281. Blackburn further suggests that such treatment might be due to the nature of the source and its primary focus on the meritorious deeds of kings, Kīrti Śrī in this case. It might be assumed that Thai sources, linked to the missions’ origin, would be better

equipped to shed light on these activities, but so far only a few original documents have been brought to light. See Supaphan na Bangchang, “A Pāli Letter Sent by the Aggamahāsenāpati of Siam to the Royal Court at Kandy in 1756,” *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 12 (1988): 185–212; Damrong Rajanubhab, *Ruang praditsathan phrasong sayamwong nai Langkathaweep* (Bangkok: Matichon, 2003).

9. Blackburn, “Sīhaḷa Saṅgha,” pp. 214, 220–221.

10. Studies of the formation of Amarapura Nikāya are also silent about the practices that might have been introduced to Lanḅā as a result of imported ordination. Malalgoda, *Buddhism in Sinhalese Society*, pp. 94–100; Masahiro Kitsudo, “A Survey of the Founders of the Amarapura Nikāya in Burma (Myanmar): Their Journeys and Higher Ordinations,” *Journal of Sugiyama Jogakuen University: Humanities, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences* 33 (2002): 153–172.

11. Malalgoda, *Buddhism in Sinhalese Society*, pp. 132–172; Anne M. Blackburn, *Locations of Buddhism: Colonialism and Modernity in Sri Lanka* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

12. Anne M. Blackburn, “Localizing Lineage: Importing Higher Ordination in Theravādin South and Southeast Asia,” in *Constituting Communities: Theravāda Buddhism and the Religious Cultures of South and Southeast Asia*, edited by John Clifford Holt, Jacob N. Kinnard, and Jonathan S. Walters (New York: State University of New York Press, 2003), pp. 133–140. The quote is from p. 139.

13. Blackburn, *Buddhist Learning*, pp. 136–137.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 58–59. More recently, Kate Crosby, Andrew Skilton, and Amal Gunasena have argued that texts transmitted to the Kandyan court included works on “traditional” Southeast Asian *kammaṭṭhāna* meditation and that this meditation practice was imparted to Sinhalese monks. Unfortunately, no evidence on the use of this practice and its likely scale of penetration is provided. Kate Crosby, Andrew Skilton, and Amal Gunasena, “*The Sutta on Understanding Death* in the Transmission of Boran Meditation from Thailand to the Kandyan Court,” *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 40.2 (2012): 177–198. Lorna Dewaraja mentions that the persuasion of Siamese monks was instrumental in the transformation of Asela Mahā Perahera, a principal Kandyan festival that became focused on the Buddha’s tooth relic instead of Hindu deities, yet the evidence for this remains unclear. Lorna Dewaraja, “Thailand’s Gift to Sri Lanka: the Establishment of the Siam Nikaya,” *The Daily News* (Sri Lanka), May 14, 2003, <http://www.budsas.org/ebud/ebdha241.htm>, accessed January 10, 2013.

15. Undated palm-leaf manuscript from the Zetawun monastery, Monywe village, Monywa township, folio *ka*^v.

16. Palm-leaf manuscript no. 10551 in the Universities’ Central Library (UCL), Yangon, folio *ḍam*^v.

17. Library records show that the manuscript was acquired from Daw Ma Ma Gyi Bell from Yangon, but that person was merely a dealer. No details on its earlier provenance are known.

18. Testimonies provide conflicting dates for Sāralāṅkā’s birth (1732 in the 1767 testimony and 1730 in the “1787” testimony; neither date can be reconciled with other data in the documents) as well as his monastic ordination (1754 in the former and 1753 in the latter testimony; both seem questionable). His arrival in Lanḅā is dated to 1757 in the former and to either 1758 or 1756 in the latter testimony (it is ambiguous on that point), with only 1756 historically probable.

His departure from Lan̄kā is likewise uncertain, dated to 1763 in the former testimony and to 1762 in the latter. Sāralan̄kā's return to Ayutthaya is dated to late 1764 in the 1767 testimony and to early 1764 in the latter.

19. Ms. from the Zetawun monastery, f. *ka*^v.

20. See Michael Smithies, "Seventeenth Century Siam: Its Extent and Urban Centres According to Dutch and French Observers," *Journal of Siam Society* 83.1–2 (1995): 62–78.

21. Ms. from the Zetawun monastery, f. *ka*^v.

22. *Ibid.*; ms. no. 10551 in UCL, f. *ḍam*^v.

23. Ms. from the Zetawun monastery, f. *ka*^v; ms. no. 10551 in UCL, f. *ḍam*^v.

24. Ms. no. 10551 in UCL, ff. *ḍam*^v–*ḍāḥ*^f.

25. Dutch sources show that, in 1762–1763, Mergui and, most likely, Tenasserim were under the Siamese. See Lorna Dewaraja, *The Kandyan Kingdom of Sri Lanka, 1707–1782* (Colombo: Lake House, 1988), p. 116, n. 131. A Burmese royal chronicle contradicts this, effectively implying that Burmese control over the Tenasserim coastline was unbroken since 1760. See Ūḥ Moṅ Moṅ Taṅ, *Kunḥ bhoṅ chak mahārājavaṅ tau krīḥ* (Yangon: Universities Historical Research Centre, 2005), vol. 1, pp. 268 and 282.

26. Ms. from the Zetawun monastery, f. *kū*^v.

27. Moṅ Moṅ Taṅ, *Kunḥ bhoṅ*, p. 280. Perhaps, this shift was also related to Sāralan̄kā's association with Kyethtungin Hsayadaw (though it is not mentioned in the testimonies), as Kyethtungin is known to have been granted a royal monastery near Taungbila in 1766.

28. Ms. no. 10551 in UCL, ff. *ḍhau*^v–*ḍham*^f.

29. The second available testimony bears a date of December 1787, while also claiming to be recorded in the reign of King Ngasingu-min (r. 1776–1782), that is, eleven to five years earlier than 1787 (ms. no. 10551 in UCL, ff. *ḍam*^f and *ḍham*^f). The document also states that the testimony was taken after Sāralan̄kā resided in the royal city for fourteen years (f. *ḍham*^f). If this information is correct and if, indeed, Sāralan̄kā was escorted to Ava in 1766 or 1767, the document thus falls between 1780 and 1781 (which corresponds to the reign of Ngasingu-min).

30. The creative work and biography of Mun Ko are almost entirely forgotten. Apparently, none of his works have been published, and, thus, most contemporary scholars of Burmese literature never saw his writings. I have been told that, besides *Cetyavaṃsa*, there exist several poems written by Mun Ko. U Thein Lwin, deputy director general of archaeology (Upper Myanmar), personal communication, November 2013.

31. The date 1773 suggests that Mun Ko had access to another testimony of Sāralan̄kā's that is not available to us.

32. Undated noncataloged palm-leaf manuscript from the collection of U Bo Kay, the late archaeological conservator of Bagan, now kept in the Archaeological Museum, Bagan. The quote from Sāralan̄kā's testimony appears on folios *cū*^v–*ce*^v in the Pāli text and on folios *cho*^v–*cham*^f in the *nissaya*.

33. Ariyāvaṃsa Ādiccaramsī, *Samantacakkhudīpanī kyamḥ* (Yangon: Sāsānā reḥ u ci tṭhāna, 1985), p. 398. Ariyāvaṃsa Ādiccaramsī (1766–1834), also known as the Second Monywa Zetawun Hsayadaw, was one of the most erudite Burmese authors of his time. He combined nonscriptural and scriptural knowledge and took particular interest in chronicles, legal texts, and devotional poetry. He was one of the primary official historiographers of the Burmese court in the 1820s and early 1830s, and a teacher of several ministers. In spelling Ariyāvaṃsa's title, I follow the historical Burmese manner.

34. As mentioned above, the manuscript is undated, but was, most likely, copied in the 1760s or 1770s and, if so, should have belonged to the first abbot of the monastery who preceded Ariyāvamsa. The nature of reference given by Ariyāvamsa in his 1810 message rules out the possibility that he used the “1787” testimony, for the information Ariyāvamsa quotes is absent there. Moreover, the “1787” testimony was taken not in the reign of Hsinbyushin but later.

35. It is likely that Sāralaṅkā was the only candidate for attribution, as no other participants in Siamese missions to Laṅkā are known to have resided in Burma.

36. Ms. from the Zetawun monastery, ff. *kā*^v and *kū*^r.

37. He stated that he had studied only to the extent of knowing the four *pārājikas* (the rules that constitute one of the most basic observances in the *saṅgha*). Ms. from the Zetawun monastery, f. *kā*^r. *Pārājika* rules cover a group of transgressions of monastic discipline that lead to a loss of monastic status: noncelibacy, theft, murder, and false claims of supramundane spiritual attainments.

38. The Burmese term *pa shyū* used in the text could signify both. Ms. from the Zetawun monastery, f. *kū*^r. It is not clear if that entailed posing as Muslims.

39. Borommakot (r. 1732–1758) was succeeded by Utumphon and in two months by Ekkathat (r. 1758–1767).

40. This translation is based on the reading of the phrase in question as *ca khyvam mañ kui sā chak ra saññ*. The second syllable could also be read as *chvam*, which with some degree of imagination might be translated as “the king has personally offered rice,” but the syntax is unusual and the translation does not fit the context.

41. Ms. from the Zetawun monastery, f. *kū*^r.

42. Ms. no. 10551 in UCL, f. *dāh*^v. Sāralaṅkā did not try to reconcile the claim about the choosing of monks of ten years’ standing with the chronology he had provided for himself and, as he did previously, testified that he had been ordained less than ten years before departure for Laṅkā.

43. Ibid., f. *ḍha*^r.

44. Ibid., ff. *ḍha*^v–*ḍhā*^r, *ḍhau*^v.

45. See Blackburn, *Buddhist Learning*. For a comparative case of such dynamics, see the chapter by Amy Holmes-Tagchungdarpa in this volume.

46. In the 1767 testimony, Sāralaṅkā mentioned that Mahinda stūpa and the stūpa enshrining Buddha’s nails in Tissavihāra in Anurādhapura were similar in shape to Shwezigon in Bagan, that Mahiyaṅgana *cetiya* (shrine complex) and Dīghāvāpī *cetiya* were similar in shape to Shwedagon in Yangon, and that the landscape of Anurādhapura was similar to the old city of Bagan with its multitude of ancient temples and overgrown terrain. The 1773 testimony, as quoted by Mun Ko, compared Mahāmaṅgalavihāra in Trincomalee to Shwezigon in Bagan; the same comparison was also reproduced in the “1787” testimony. This third document also featured other comparisons, some of them revised as compared to the 1767 testimony.

47. Ms. no. 10551 in UCL, f. *ḍho*^v.

48. For a discussion of this curriculum, see Alexey Kirichenko, “Local Sources and Micro-Regional Perspectives on the Histories of Buddhism in Nyaungyan and Konbaung Myanmar,” paper given at the “New Perspectives on the History of Myanmar” conference, University of Yangon, July 24, 2014.

49. Ussaro, *Haṃsavatī Chañ phrū rhañ areḥ tau puṃ mau kvamḥ udāñh*, edited by Ūḥ Tuiḥ Hla (Yangon: Universities Historical Research Centre, 2006), pp. 137–148.

50. Ms. no. 10551 in UCL, f. *dhe*^r.

51. The list appears in a message sent by Nāṇābhivāṃsa to Badon-min. Nāṇābhivāṃsa, *Ameḥ tau phre* (Yangon: Sāsanā reḥ u ci ṭṭhāna, 2012), pp. 176–189. It is referred to, for example, in Than Tun, “The Influence of Occultism in Burmese History with a Special Reference to Bodawpaya Reign,” *Bulletin of the Burma Historical Commission* 1.2 (1960): 117–145.

52. The Burmese term *kyaññḥ* used in the document does not properly differentiate between the two possible locations.

53. In the 1780s and 1790s, Thiri Sandarat was one of the key agents in Burma’s external communications, traveling to India and Laṅkā on the instructions of Badon-min. His origins and biography are not clear so far, but I assume that he was most likely either an Indian or an Armenian. The name Punshi might be a scribal error for Munshi.

54. Palm-leaf manuscript no. 5747 in UCL, ff. *tū*^v–*to*^r.

55. The same pattern of restoring one’s collections to their former contents has guided other historical manuscript acquisition efforts in Buddhist Southern Asia. For example, in 1755 the Kandyan court requested from Ayutthaya seventy-five Pāli works lost in Laṅkā. These (and some twenty more) were delivered by the 1756 mission in which Sāralaṅkā participated. In 1789, a similar request for thirty-three Pāli texts was made to Amarapura. See Oscar von Hinüber, “Remarks on a List of Books Sent to Ceylon from Siam in the 18th Century,” *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 12 (1988): 175–183; Nāṇābhivāṃsa, *Ameḥ tau*, p. 331. The objective to strengthen local tradition through external contacts does not imply that no external borrowing or influence occurred as a result. As amply demonstrated by the fact that 170 mostly new manuscript copies were delivered to Amarapura from Nabadwip in 1785 instead of the 48 replacement texts requested, Buddhist interactions in eighteenth-century Southern Asia likely promoted the traffic of new artifacts and practices though did not result in the establishment of shared networks related to religious orders.

56. Nāṇābhivāṃsa, *Ameḥ tau*, p. 340.

57. The only extant royal court on the island at the time was in Kandy rather than Anurādhapura, but the Burmese likely framed their connection with the island in terms of Anurādhapura since it was a well-known early royal Buddhist center on the island. At that time it was to some extent administered from the Kandyan royal court with the assistance of subregional intermediaries on the island.

58. Palm-leaf manuscript no. 6093 in the research library of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Yangon, ff. *ḍho*^v–*ṇī*^r.

59. Nāṇābhivāṃsa, *Ameḥ tau*, p. 331.

60. *Ibid.*, pp. 324–326, 331–332, and 340–341.

61. I follow Anne Blackburn in her use of the term “symptomatic” in Blackburn, “Sīhala Saṅgha and Laṅkā,” p. 318.

62. See further, Blackburn, “Buddhist Connections.”

63. At the same time, although the practical outcomes of Nāṇābhivāṃsa’s grand plans were more limited, they helped to lay the foundation for more substantial cooperation between Buddhist elites of Burma and Laṅkā achieved by the late nineteenth century.

64. A Burmese translation of this letter referred to Qing and Burmese sovereigns as being equals. For the translation of Qianlong’s letter, see Nāṇābhivāṃsa, *Ameḥ tau*, pp. 211–212. For an official account of the reception of princesses, see Moñ Moñ Tañ, *Kunḥ bhoñ*, vol. 2, pp. 62–64. For discussion of this diplomatic activity, see Sylvie Pasquiat, “Trois princesses chinoises à la cour d’Amarapura: Petite histoire d’une mystification diplomatique (1790),” in

Études birmanes en hommage à Denise Bernot, edited by Pierre Pichard and François Robinne (Paris: Presses de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient, 1998), pp. 245–259; and U Thaw Kaung, “Bogus Chinese Envoys, Spurious Chinese Princesses at the 18th-Century Myanmar Royal Court,” *Journal of Burma Studies* 18.2 (2014): 193–221.

65. Nānābhivamsa, *Ameḥ tau*, pp. 213–214.

66. *Ibid.*, p. 308.

67. *Ibid.*, p. 309. The story of Kangxi's arrival at Mt. Wutai is detailed in a chronicle compiled under the supervision of the Second Monywe Zetawun Hsayadaw. Undated palm-leaf manuscript of the fourth bundle of Monywe chronicles in the Zetawun monastery, ff. *jā–jī*. I have not yet been able to trace the origins of this particular narrative.

68. A-ch'angs are a Tibeto-Burman ethnic group from Yunnan. Nānābhivamsa, *Ameḥ tau*, pp. 601–602.

69. An attempt at a closer examination of this mix of actors is made, for example, in Alexey Kirichenko, “Political Expansion, Maritime Trade, and Religious Practitioners on the Move: Revival of Interactions between Burma and Lanka in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries,” lecture given as a part of the Nalanda-Sriwijaya Lecture Series, Nalanda-Sriwijaya Center, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, May 21, 2012.

70. Thongchai Winichakul, “Writing at the Interstices: Southeast Asian Historians and Postnational Histories in Southeast Asia,” in *New Terrains in Southeast Asian History*, edited by Abu Talib Ahmad and Tan Liok Ee (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003), p. 23; Willem van Schendel, “Geographies of Knowing, Geographies of Ignorance: Jumping Scale in Southeast Asia,” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 20 (2002): 647–668; James C. Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

71. See, for example, C. Patterson Giersch, *Asian Borderlands: The Transformation of Qing China's Yunnan Frontier* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006); C. Patterson Giersch, “Grieving for Tibet: Conceiving the Modern State in Late-Qing Inner Asia,” *China Perspectives* 3 (2008): 4–18; John E. Herman, *Amid the Clouds and Mist: China's Colonization of Guizhou, 1200–1700* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2007), esp. pp. 103–143.

72. Definitions are given in Christine E. Dobbin, *Asian Entrepreneurial Minorities: Conjoint Communities in the Making of the World-Economy, 1570–1940* (London: Curzon Press, 1996); Edward A. Alpers, *The Indian Ocean in World History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); and Sebouh David Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean: The Global Trade Networks of Armenian Merchants from New Julfa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011). These provide a few representative examples of the extensive body of research on Asian entrepreneurial communities.

73. See, for example, Ismail Alatas' contribution to this volume as well as Eric Tagliacozzo and Wen-Chin Chang, eds., *Chinese Circulations: Capital, Commodities, and Networks in Southeast Asia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011); Jianxiong Ma and Cunzhao Ma, “The Mule Caravans as Cross-Border Networks: Local Bands and Their Stretch on the Frontier between Yunnan and Burma,” in *Myanmar's Mountain and Maritime Borderscapes: Local Practices, Boundary-Making and Figured Worlds*, edited by Su-Ann Oh (Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2016), pp. 237–257; Engseng Ho, *Graves of Tarim: Genealogy and Mobility across the Indian Ocean* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); and Ulrike Freitag, “Introduction: Inter-Oceanic Migrations from an Indian Ocean Perspective, 1830s to 1930s,” in

Connecting Seas and Connected Ocean Rims: Indian, Atlantic, and Pacific Oceans and China Seas Migrations from the 1830s to the 1930s, edited by Donna R. Gabaccia and Dirk Hoerder, *Studies in Global Social History* 8 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), pp. 67–78.

74. See, for example, Michael Feener and Terenjit Sevea, eds., *Islamic Connections: Muslim Societies in South and Southeast Asia* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2009); Michael Laffan, *The Making of Indonesian Islam: Orientalism and the Narration of a Sufi Past* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011); Christopher M. Joll, “Islam’s Creole Ambassadors,” in *The Ghosts of the Past in Southern Thailand: Essays on the History and Historiography of Patani*, edited by Patrick Jory (Singapore: NUS Press, 2012), pp. 129–146.

75. Brian Bocking, Phibul Choempolpaisal, Laurence Cox, and Alicia M. Turner, eds., *A Buddhist Crossroads: Pioneer Western Buddhists and Asian Networks, 1860–1960* (London: Routledge, 2014).

76. Note, however, that there is an ongoing research project by Anne M. Blackburn, “Making Buddhist Kingdoms across the Indian Ocean, 1200–1500.”

77. Anthropological work on contemporary Tai Buddhists in Dēhóng Prefecture of Yunnan suggests that even now the participation of Tai monks from the area in ordination and educational networks in Myanmar does not displace indigenous Tai lay and monastic formations not recognized by official Burmese monastic institutions. See Takahiro Kojima, “Tāi Buddhist Practices on the China-Myanmar Border,” in *Myanmar’s Mountain and Maritime Borderscapes*, edited by Su-Ann Oh, pp. 369–387.

78. See Alexey Kirichenko, “Dynamics of Monastic Mobility and Networking in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Upper Burma,” in *Buddhist Dynamics in Premodern and Early Modern Southeast Asia*, edited by D. Christian Lammerts (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2015, pp. 333–372); Alexey Kirichenko, “The Thathanabaing Project: Monastic Hierarchies and Colonialism in Burma,” in *Theravada Buddhism in Colonial Contexts*, edited by Thomas Borchert, *Routledge Critical Studies of Buddhism* (London: Routledge, 2018, pp. 138–161); Alexey Kirichenko, “Change, Fluidity, and Unidentified Actors: Understanding the Organization and History of Upper Burmese Saṃgha from the Seventeenth to Nineteenth Centuries,” paper presented at the joint meeting of the Association for Asian Studies and the International Convention of Asia Scholars, Honolulu, Hawai‘i, April 3, 2011.

79. Blackburn, “Sīhaḷa Saṅgha”; Blackburn, *Buddhist Learning*.

80. See Malalgoda, *Buddhism in Sinhalese Society*; Blackburn, *Buddhist Learning*.