

Mapping Monastic Geographicity Or Appeasing Ghosts of Monastic Subjects

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Rarely do the same apparitions inhabit the work of modern theorists of subjectivity, politics, ethnicity, the Sanskrit cosmopolis and medieval architecture at once. However, the South Asianist historian who ponders the work of Charles Taylor, Partha Chatterjee, James Scott and Sheldon Pollock cannot help notice the apparitions of monastic subjects within each. Tamara Sears has gestured at the same apparitions by pointing to the neglected study of monasteries (*mathas*) associated with Saiva temples.¹ She finds the omission intriguing on two counts. First, these monasteries were built for and by significant teachers (*gurus*) who were identified as repositories of vast ritual, medical and spiritual knowledge, guides to their practice and over time, themselves manifestations of divinity and vehicles of human liberation from the bondage of life and suffering. Second, these monasteries were not studied even though some of these had existed into the early twentieth century. Sears implies that two processes have occurred simultaneously. Both are epistemological. One has resulted in a continuity of colonial-postcolonial politics of recognition. The identification of a site as ‘religious’ rested on the identification of a building as a temple or a mosque. Residential sites inhabited by religious figures did not qualify for preservation. The second is the foreshortening of scholarly horizons by disappeared buildings. Modern scholars, this suggests, can only study entities and relationships contemporaneous with them and perceptible to the senses, omitting those that evade such perception or have disappeared long ago.

This is not as disheartening as one might fear. Disappeared objects and people from one site may reappear albeit in unexpected places and forms. The disappeared monastery, especially its school and infirmary, can be found for instance in Charles Taylor’s exploration of radical

reflexivity – the post-Cartesian idea and practice by which the individual person disengages herself from embodied and social thinking, from ‘prejudices and authority’ and is able to think for himself in disengaged fashion.² What is counted as ‘prejudice and authority’ if not those of the scholastic Churchmen? How were these practices transmitted and dispersed through entire generations of reading and thinking populations without the work of teachers, texts and schools dispersed into the countryside after the sack of the Catholic monasteries?

A contrast might be offered with examples from south and southeast Asia. A Puritan-style wholesale sack of monasteries did not happen in Burma or India or even in China till the Maoist and Cultural Revolutions.³ Pre-colonial Asian governors sought to control residential establishments (such as monasteries) by hierarchizing them, appointing particular ‘chief monks’ or disestablishing particular ordination and spiritual lineages and their adherents. Expulsions of disestablished monks with their supporters and adherents to the margins accompanied the elevation of others by newly arrived governors. In pre-colonial Burma as well as in its vicinity, monastic lineages could be found on both the non-conformist as well as the favored governmental order at any moment between the sixteenth and the nineteenth century. Michael Charney found that a military occupation of Prome in the sixteenth century resulted in the deportation of monks from Prome to the royal capital, Ava. ‘Hat-wearing’ and village-living (*gamavasi*) monks set up *pwegaing* schools that taught students to read and write, knowledge of martial arts and special sciences that enabled them to earn a living in the lay-world. Prome-originating monks and their students mingled with the laity at festivals, and alternated between the court and the forest, teaching pupils and constructing forest-based (*aranyavasi*) monastic lineages. ‘Princes’ came from both kinds of monastic schools. Civil war in the mid-eighteenth century made some Burmese princes keen to establish the mystique of authority on an alternative

and relatively inaccessible basis. Vedic formulae and fire-based sacrifice-rituals and a slew of Sankrit texts were imported into Burma at this time - along with their interpreters, the 'Brahmans' from Manipur.⁴

A parallel historiography of Manipur (currently India) for the same period establishes that these 'Brahmans' constituted a particular ordination lineage of Vaishnava Goswamis drawn from Benares (Kashi) and Nadia (Bengal) in India. According to Manipuri chronicles, groups of such Vaisnava Brahmans had been brought since the fifteenth century into the east from regions further west (such as Bihar, or Khardah for the Adhikari mayum, Gujarat for the Sija Gurumayum, Nandagram in Hindustan for the Furalatfam).⁵ Given titles (Aribam, Guru Aribam, Gurumayum, Manoharmayum and so on), many of these Vaisnava Brahmans were assimilated into the clan Meitei and married with local women. To these groups at the end of the sixteenth century were added artillery-bearing Muslim soldiers raised in areas of Cachar by rival lords: these Muslim soldiers were also settled on the same monastic lands and called *Pangons*. Out of these multiple groups was born the 'ancestral' cult, a complex re-synthesis of Vaisnava, Buddhist and Sufi Islamic concepts of *sunyata* (emptiness) as a 'Father Void' (Atingok) and an alchemic pharmacopeia of biomoral health.

At the start of the eighteenth century, a Meitei warrior named Pakhengba a.k.a Garibnawaz [lit. 'protector of the weak' in Persian] attempted to break the power of the ritualists of this 'ancestral cult' by importing another lineage of Gaudiya Vaishnava gurus associated with Shanti Das Gosai from Sylhet.⁶ The initiation of the Meitei governor into this Vaishnava order was accompanied by an intensification of cultic rivalries. The imported Vaishnava Brahmans, it is said, burnt the traditional texts (*puyas*), changed its mythology/history, made Manipur part of an anecdote in the *Mahabharat*, and represented the Meitei prince-patron as the Krishna-

incarnation of the deity Vishnu in place of the earlier Rama-incarnation. ‘Ancestral’ ritualists – those composite Buddhist-Vaisnava Brahmins and their Sufi adherents- were among those who were scattered by this new dispensation in the eighteenth and nineteenth century.

These ‘heterodoxies’ constituted the *zomia* of upland South and Southeast Asia.⁷ Yet, till they emerge as prophets of millenarian movements, disrobed Vajrayana monastics, Vaisnava and Sufi Muslim leaders appear to play little role in Scott’s analysis of “escape agriculture” that these communities practiced. If shifting agriculture was a form of politics, the absence of the disrobed monastic from this political sphere leaves the source of technological, hydrological, cultivation skills of runaways and exiled men and women beyond analysis. An extensive scholarship on the ways in which ideals of justice, obligations (towards parents, governors, sentient beings) and merit (*punya*) had been institutionalized through south, southeast and eastern Asian societies between the ninth and the eighteenth centuries suggests that material and ritual technologies, along with codes of justice, were shared between both deportees and incoming governments.⁸ Monastic adherents have long been on both sides of the same governmental order, including under Islamicate regimes, as Eaton’s work on rice- cultivation between 17th and 18th century suggests.⁹

Partha Chatterjee’s recent discussion of the ‘political society’ too is beset with these apparitions.¹⁰ Chatterjee identifies the ‘political’ society as made up of marginalized actors who attempt to engage the welfarist aspects of nation-state governments. These actors harness ideas of moral governance and spokespersons on their behalf to articulate these ideas. Marginalised actors and their spokesperson are distinct from those individuals and groups who make up ‘civil society’ in postcolonial South Asian democracies. To a historian taking a long temporal view of the matter, this postcolonial pattern appears to be a restatement of processes described by

Charney, Huxley and others for eighteenth century Burma and Manipur. If moral, intellectual and technological roots of non-state subaltern actors have to be understood, they have to be treated as having the same sources of reference as the state-actors in a democratically elected government. The question that this brief appraisal of modern theorists of subjectivities, ethnicity and state-power raise is whether or not the sameness of knowledge-sources for the non-state actors and those in power has been vanished by colonial apparatuses of power-knowledge. Did the sameness of codes and techniques become invisible to modern social scientists because they were disestablished in the course of the nineteenth-twentieth century?¹¹

My monograph argues in the affirmative. However, in order to appreciate what is at stake in such recognition and non-recognition, I will lay out a series of propositions below. First, the unitary subject who was split between ‘religion’ and ‘secular’ was born during the Protestant Reformation. This split subject formed the basis of many European judgments about eighteenth and nineteenth-century South Asian societies, and became in turn the backbone of an analytic repertoire. Eminent Sanskritists and epigraphists of the early twentieth century were also swayed by it to see a divide between the ‘priest’ and ‘prince’. It prevented them from staking out the centrality of ordination and social-sexual lineages as the core of ‘the political’ in South Asia between the sixth and nineteenth centuries. As a result, ordination-empowerment rituals and gifts were separated from regimes of labor, law and identity in discussions of political ‘subjectivity’ in most parts and times of South Asia.¹²

Second, induction into this socio-political order began with an initiation and empowerment ritual between an individual ascetic or monastic teacher and a disciple. This ritualized relationship was mandatory in all forms of Mahayana and Tantranaya Buddhist gnosis as well as in Vaisnava Bhakti and Saiva Tantra. The relationship always represented more than

the dyad at its core. The individual teacher brought the gravity and learning of entire lineages of training and discipline within which he had trained. The individual initiate represented a family's reputation for generosity, desire for learning. The dyadic relationship was as intensely affective as it was hierarchical, with the novice or initiate either junior in age or junior in learning and ritual practice, often both.

Third, entering such subject-hood was also to embrace subjection to the teacher-guru's authority. Whether the individual disciple underwent the ritual in peaceful conditions or impelled by distress, once initiated, the disciple was committed to practices that bundled physical as well as mental-emotional disciplines and attitudes under the direction of a teacher-guru. All discussions of the Sanskritic legalists on the time and nature of payments suggests that the obligation of the disciple towards his teacher was an absolute.¹³ Such payments were discussed as 'gifts' in legal treatises on *dana* and *dakshina*. Biographies of Tibetan and Chinese scholars reveal that humble initiates paid with labor-services (as shepherds and herdsmen in some instances) and cloth, wine, barley, carcasses of meat.¹⁴ Wealthier initiates offered 'as remuneration for the initiation rite an image made of gilded bronze, and a golden throne as a thanks-offering (gtan-rag) a silver spoon with the image of a stag, a sword with an ornamented hilt, and an armour with the image of a scorpion on it'.¹⁵ Labor-services at one end and precious bullion at another connected the same order of disciples through their common subjection to the adept teacher-master. Both 'subaltern' and 'wealthy' merchant or warrior could gain esoteric, alchemic knowledge and formulae (*mantra*) from the adept master after such an initiation. The subjectivity that this gave rise to has been called ascetic by some scholars.¹⁶ I prefer to call it monastic in order to emphasise its collective nature, its economic and political

institutionalization. Subjectivities of particular collectives were dependent on the direction of such 'teacher-gurus' and mediated the location of particular collectives in any landscape.

Fourth, cultivators, artisans, fishermen, herders living on and by the resources of some lands could be both objects of such 'gifts' to a teacher by a disciple as they could themselves be subjects of a monastic order. Similarly, initiated soldiers, craftsmen, boat-builders, ritualists could all accompany a guru as his 'subjects' to a gifted plot of land far away from their original homes and birth-places as a form of devotion to their master. Depending on the years or generations attached to such a master or a monastery, each could have different degrees of obligations *as* monastic subjects. Each could also enjoy a different intensity of intimacy with such a monastery or guru-teacher. Knowledge, power and intimacy were all perceptible in terms of concentric circles arranged in an ascending order, the highest pinnacle of which represented the most potent combination of ritualized training and knowledge of the chief monastic teacher and his (rarely her) favored disciple, with all skill, power and affect receding as one climbed down and outwards.

Finally, institutions identifiable as a monastery included caves holding two or more contemplatives as well as structures built above ground of timber and wood, brick and stone. Such monasteries were especially important in centering a sense of geography across the Himalayan belt stretching from modern Karakoram to the Upper Burmese mountains and extending it into the coastal plains. Scholars of Tibetan geohistory thus deploy the term monastic geographicity to underline the centrality of the monastery in shaping relations across highlands and low.¹⁷ This term at once expresses the spatial extent of a cultural complex of establishments and movements and a conceptual map of dominant patterns of communication, lifeways and a permanent repertoire of techniques. Economic techniques ranged from yak-dominated

pastoralism combined with barley and buckwheat-based sedentary agriculture and regulated trading. Social techniques included clan exogamy, polyandry and the indivisible nature of family wealth. The exchange and codification of ideas was facilitated by the numerous links established between various monasteries, its monks, lay subjects and learned *lamas* (in Sanskrit, *guru*).

Monasteries focused pastoral networks, pilgrim itineraries, trade routes; they acted as local market-places and storehouses. By virtue of receiving the gift of donors in exchange for merit, they developed into stores of local goods. That is how individual monasteries became owners of extensive lands, herds of large and small livestock, trading goods and interest on loans. Functioning as local banks and warehouses, such establishments exercised significant ritual and economic authority over the organization of production, distribution and exchange of labor, animals and goods. In turn, they may have related to each other in terms of a hierarchy of greater and lesser authorities. All this made monasteries the key building blocks of every 'region' and monastic geographicity a map of the patchworks of ritual, economic, social and political relationships across various ecological niches from the earliest period on record.

Such clusters and patchworks of relationships across multiple ecological niches were based both on the pasture needs of herds and human subjects' need for salt, grain and manufactured goods. Pastoralists occupied pasture grounds on top of plateaus, sedentary cultivators the valleys: yet their common attachment to and dependence on a common monastery gave the latter its 'presence' in both kinds of terrain. The relationship between the different ecological units could also be enhanced by a vertical trade between the two. Each region was constituted by many layers of authority exercised by lords and priests of various shrines and their associated fiefs, tenants and herders.¹⁸ Such intertwined patchworks heightened the significance of the numbers, size and qualities of households and herds attached by or committed to each

lordship. Expanding and refining these by ensuring access to water, grazing, mineral and manufactured goods and sites enhanced the powers of each lordship.¹⁹ Conflicts, when they occurred between adjacent authorities, such as the overlapping monastic or temporal sovereignty of a site, involved splitting the loyalties of the same groups of ‘follower’ households. Strategies of warfare involved ensuring the desertion and flight of the rival’s followers and the latter’s relocation or re-identification.

Monastic geographicity provides a way out of the colonial impasse of territorialism and tribalism that has beset much of the scholarship of the period prior to the twentieth century. Yet, this is not a term that South Asian epigraphists and archaeologists readily embraced in the period 1947-1990. Though there were many images of monastic teachers and gifts of images celebrating their spiritual achievements in the art historical discussion of the period, there was little direct discussion of the ways in which these images were traces of political lineages based on ordination and initiation, or the connection between such lineages of practice with storehouses, fields, treasuries, trade routes. In the segment below, I accumulate the findings of an earlier scholarship to suggest the basic outlines of a monastic geographic order connecting the Himalayan world with that of coastline of Bengal and beyond.

Monastic geographicity and governmentality in 6th-13th centuries:

Since the early twentieth century, scholars of South Asian epigraphy and art had uncovered evidence of initiation/empowerment and ordination-based lineages that anchored Bouddha monks and Saiva Brahman householders-agriculturalists as well as ascetic Saiva and Vaisnava sannyasis to each other and in the same geographical and ritual spaces. From the outset, these images had suggested the dispersed extra-national nature of monastic connections,

the core of the monastic geographic order. Metallic images and rock-inscriptions eulogizing bodhisattva-teachers since the sixth or seventh century were important clues to the presence and veneration of perfected monks and their disciples. Eulogies in rock of the Bouddha monk Viradeva, composed by an unknown author, had been found in Ghosravan (Gaya district, modern Bihar).²⁰ Born in Nagarahara, (identified with a place in modern Afghanistan), the monk is said to have mastered ‘all the branches of science’ under the principal acharya Sarvañjyaśānti at the *mahavihara* (great monastery) of Kanishka (founded some time in the 2nd-3rd c. CE on the outskirts of the modern city of Peshawar). Eventually, this monk became the assistant to the director of the Nalanda monastery (on the plains of Bihar), and was placed in charge of the construction of a temple dedicated to the *Vajrasana* (lit. ‘diamond-seat’, a reference to both the enlightened person of Sakyamuni and the seat of his enlightenment, Bodhgaya). The eulogist compared the diamond-seat (on the plains) to the peaks of the Kailasa and Mandara mountains. This monk was especially skilled, either as a builder or as an architect-engineer. He was also described as one who ‘allayed the affliction of the distressed’ even repelling ‘the power of Dhanvantari,’ the physician of the gods. Equally noticeable in this epigraphic record was the connection between mountains and plains far removed from each other in physical and ecological terms but connected through monastic institutions and persons.

Similarly skilled monastic figures were also commemorated with images. N.K. Bhattasali found a tiny metallic image of a monk – the Sthavira Pindola Bharadvaja, deified as a ‘Buddha of medicine’ (*bhaisajyaguru*).²¹ Bhattasali noticed that clusters of objects at various sites in eastern India had inscriptions transferring the merit accrued from gifting an image (in this case, a Siva-linga) to a teacher (*acarya*).²² Susan Huntington found similar processes at work in a batch of metal sculpture dated to the 11th century.²³ Huntington’s pioneering study of medieval

sculpture is awash with inscriptions referring to ‘teachers of the vinaya’ ‘companions of teachers’ who inspired the making and gifting of images of a bodhisattva (no 2, p 204). There is the monastic teacher (*acarya*), a learned and illustrious monk resident at Nalanda monastery, to whom the disciple-donor transferred the ‘attainment of supreme knowledge’ accruing from the gift of a Tara image (no 12, p 209). Another disciple, an erstwhile Vedic Brahmana, had become the disciple of an elder (*sthavira*) monk named Vairocana-simha (no. 20, p 214, also deified in Tibetan Buddhism). A Buddha elder (*sthavira*) too assigned the merit of his gift of an image to his own teachers (*acarya, upadhyaya*) before his parents (*matr-pitr*) (no.18, p. 213). Similarly Gouriswar Bhattacharya’s work on an eleventh –century inscription on a slate relief identified a Buddha bhikshu male figure with shaven head and long ears as that of a tantric acarya, the preceptor of the donor and a worshipper of Tara.²⁴ This sculpture was a ‘portrait’ of a tantric teacher and evidence of a teaching lineage focused on a female deity.

Mahayana texts from the second century on had worked out in some detail the methods by which the administration of such monastic orders was to be organized.²⁵ Jonathan Silk’s analyses of some of these texts (such as *Ratnarasi*) spells out the triple orders of contemplation, recitation-teaching and ‘service’ appropriate to Mahayana monks.²⁶ Such literature discussed the qualities of rectitude and mindfulness necessary in figures identified as *vaiyaprtakara bhiksu* (administrative monks), who among other obligations, undertook the care of the varieties of renunciants (forest-dwelling and the highest order of monks, alms-begging ascetics, preachers, students and scholars), as well as serving a lay householder community by acting as a field of merit. These discussions laid out the many layers among monastic subjects. Other terms suggested an administrative hierarchy within Mahayana monastic orders. The *navakarmika* had

the charge of construction, and by implication, employed artisans, handymen, engaged transporters, handled the compensation for such work.

Orders of committed monks, organized in lineages and communities (*dgompa*) in residential monasteries endowed with lands and tenants supplied the bureaucratic backbone for a particular style of governance by ritual.²⁷ Since the 1950s, a wideranging scholarship on this style of governance in many Asian societies between Mongolia at its northernmost end and islands of Southeast Asia at its southernmost end had established the ubiquity of this model of governmentality.²⁸ Following this work, we can read many of the inscriptions of the medieval South Asian context as ‘constitutions’ of a governmental order. As Ellington puts it, these were constitutions in that they established claims, codified practice and derived ideas from the broad textual world of Veda, Upanisada, Purana, Smriti, Buddhist Jataka and Vinaya as sources of law (*dharma*). The practice that materialized all these textual codes was the merit-earning (and emancipatory) act of ‘gift’ (*dana*). Most inscriptions recorded between the sixth and the thirteenth centuries recorded gifts of land and people.

My rudimentary and incomplete survey of inscriptions relating to eastern India published in the pages of the *Epigraphia Indica* from 1892-1950s reveals some uniform aspects of the statements of the charters. A standard phrase such as *bhumi-chhidra-nyaya* established the claim to enjoyment of land by one who ‘broke’ it first. This was most applicable in instances where lands were specifically stated to be in forests. A sixth-century copperplate specified that a brahman had requested a plot of land in the forested (*atavi-bhukhanda*) holding (*visaya*) of Savungga where the brahman desired to erect an image of the deity Anantanarayana (Visnu).²⁹ At least a hundred ritualists were required to perform the daily and periodic worship of this deity. Appended to the grant was a list of names of recipient Brahmans (bhatta Nagadatta holding

individual plots, while others named ‘Divakara, Rudra’ et al were listed as joint holders of land). The plot would have been substantial, for it included the dwellings of these Brahmans as well as the cultivation from which the grain, vegetables and flowers necessary to this worship were generated. A similar grant of ‘waste land long lain neglected’, a land ‘full of pits and infested with wild beasts’ was converted to arable by being gifted to a brahman; this gift was said to have earned the donor both merit (in the spiritual economy) and revenue (in worldly terms).³⁰ In such instances, there was no specific clause that made the land-gift ‘rent-free’.

In most other cases, the gifts included arable as well as pasture lands. The ‘village/villages’ always implied cultivators and grounds together. When the latter were described, set terms were deployed to address the cultivators as well as ordinary tax-collectors that the donee was to ‘enjoy all the fruits (*phala*) of cultivation’, that the grounds included grassy fields and pasture (*gocara*), with lowland and raised ground, trees and water places, pits and salt wells. The grants addressed the ‘royal’ administrators when the jurisdiction of the donee over the maintenance of order and the monetization of fines and their collection were handed over in the gift by the donor. These clauses established the horizons of monastic governmentality. As mentioned in many ‘Pala’ and ‘Chandra’ grants the clauses of such grants were *sa-dasaparadha* (with fines realisable from culprits committing the ten major [Buddhist] crimes), *sa-coroddharana* (with stolen articles recovered from thieves), free from troubles including corvee, *a-cata-bhata-pravesa* (free from the entry of headconstables and constables), *a-kincit-pragrahya* (free from the collection of taxes), *samasta-rajabhoga-kara-hiranya-pratyaya-sahita* (together with all the income enjoyed by the king in the shape of taxes in kind and in cash).³¹

Men appointed to the offices and functions of such gifted estates were the monastic bureaucracy. We know that many such bureaucrats existed because they made subsidiary grants

sometimes referring to their monastic teachers-lords, and often in the same terrain. For instance, a donor of Kamarupa (medieval northern Bengal-westernmost Assam) called Vaidyadeva, while gifting two villages to Brahmans, recorded that his father and grandfather had served as officers of the Bouddha Ramapala and Vighrapala, father and grandfather respectively of a lord of Gauda (medieval western Bengal).³² The making of a monastic bureaucracy, especially a ritual bureaucracy alongside a scribal one, was especially dependent on Saiva and Vedic Brahmans. This feature of scholastic-ritual or scribal-technological co-dependence established by grants of lands was critical to the monastic-governmental order. A grant of the Bouddha (*paramasaugata*) Mahendrapala confirmed all the gifts of grain and land that a Saiva subject called Divakara, had made to various working populations.³³ Land (*bhumi*) and different measures of grain as seed for cultivation (*khari* and *pataka*) were donated to persons such as a fisherman (*kaivarta*), wine-distiller (*maundaka*), flower-garland makers (*malakar*) and tanners (*carmakar*). The grant did not mention a single Buddhist monument or person even though the donor was identified as a devout Bouddha.

Monastic bureaucracies were led by Brahmana officiants and householders. Other 'Pala' grants mention a 'Darbhapani, foremost of twice-born ones', described as the principal actor in the spread of Devapaladeva's hegemony. This brahman's son, Somesvara, was compared to the warrior Arjuna. The inscriptions say that another of the temporal-spiritual Bouddha lords (Surapala) attended all the sacrifices sponsored by Somesvara's son, Kedaramisra. Kedaramisra's son, Guravamisra, 'an astrologer and astronomer' served Narayanapala.³⁴ Clearly, it was brahmans such as Guravamisra, said to have the 'treasures of speech, scholarship in the Vedas, supreme devotion to statecraft, and a relation with a family shining in splendour' whose

extravagant eulogies, including those composed by veterinary physician-brahmans, record life-affirming deeds of venerable Buddhist monastic ‘lords’.³⁵

This structured the specialization of knowledge-technologies and ritual disciplines within ordination lineages. Technologies that domesticated the ‘wild’ forces (of water, land and air) as well as the delivery of violence constituted important organizing principles for particular lineages of learning and skill. Initiated or monastic ‘scholar-princes’ nurtured ritualized militia and scribes alike with grants of tax-exempt lands; scribal and warriors in turn specialized in a variety of ritual and military means. At the same time, this method of sponsorship also structured a co-dependence of the bouddha and the saiva-sakta ordination-monastic lineages and brought Vajrayana Bouddha and Saiva tantric close to each other in their focus on the body as the ultimate source of enlightenment and potency.³⁶ Mahayana lineages elaborated various *mantrayana* and *tantrayana* interpretations. Vajrayana body-based *tantra*, *kaula*, *siddha* disciplines, firmly established in a wide swath of territories in the subcontinent, made skilled ascetics the ideal superhuman and fierce warriors patronized by scholar-princes.³⁷ The co-dependence of Buddhist and Saiva-Sakta householders and ascetics was structurally validated as the practices, methods and strategies of one set of disciplines were converted into and shared with that of the other. This co-dependence was manifest in the icon of Harihara, the conjoint form of Siva and Vishnu, long associated with Khmer and Indonesian Tantric Hindu practices travelled at this time into other cultural terrain.³⁸

These inscriptions concretized a governmental authority that needed a variety of personnel to become materially effective. The inscriptions referred to this variety ranging from the disciple of a perfected master to different categories of composers, scribes, engravers (the *literati*) soldiers and many different kinds of workers. The constitutional limit on external

authorities was expressed in two ways. The donees were protected from the exercise of ‘royal’ supervisory authority represented by the law-enforcement personnel, the *chat-bhat*. Exemption from their ingress into the gifted estate, and exemption from their search warrants, meant that ‘sovereignty’ was localized, shaped by the terms of the grant, and limited to the territorial boundaries spelled out in the grant.³⁹ At the same time, since the value of merit was universal and cross-generational, inscriptions often addressed future lords-to-be. The last verses of most land-gifting inscriptions requested future kings to defend, preserve and maintain these grants, since merit accrued to the man who both made and preserved a *dana* (gift). If inducement to the spiritual rewards did not carry enough weight, a curse might be attached that those who were greedy about the property of others would fall into hell. ‘Heterogenous’ and plural temporalities were coded in the same charter – a reference to ancestors, contemporaries and people yet to come were simultaneously addressed in the landscape drawn up by these grants.

Mistaking Monastics for Augsburg’s ‘Kings’ and ‘Emperors’

Who issued these charters? South Asianist epigraphists and art historians of 1947-1990 have debated the identity of the ‘Pala-Sena’ cognomen attached to donors’ names in the charters. The term *Pala* literally meant ‘nourisher’; attached to cows, the suffix could refer to a cowherd (*go-pala*) as it could stand for the name of a powerful herdsman. Susan Huntington was the earliest to notice homonymy (the many Gopalas, Mahendrapalas, Surapalas) of the epigraphic record and suggest that Sanskrit’s capacity for *slesa* (the production of multiple levels of truth at once) was significant in confusing the reader.⁴⁰ Sanskrit’s capacity for double entendres also produced confusion in determining monastic geographicity. The replication of sacred centers and duplication of the names of omnipotent individuals created a problem of toponymy in the epigraphic record. Ideologies of translation, as well as those of territorial state and tribal nation-

making, that each scholar brought to her (or his) interpretation inevitably pre-determined the outcomes.

A group of scholars led by D.C.Sircar was preeminent in this regard. In his work on Tantric pilgrimage and meditative centers (Sanskrit *pithas*) he had established that Indrabhuti, the Buddhist ‘prince’ of Uddiyana *pitha* was also a celebrated Tantric teacher and ‘father’ of Padmasambhava, the famous teacher of Yogacara associated with Buddhist Tibet.⁴¹ Yet he never developed the theoretical or historical implications of a medieval *prince* or power-holder who was simultaneously a Tantric *teacher*. As a result, he could not account for medieval lordly ‘lineages’, nor the collocated nature of Saiva, Vaisnava and Buddhist practices and groups in medieval and early modern Bengal, Bihar and Assam.

Consistently till his death in 1982, Sircar read individual titles in inscriptions in terms of a Puritan notion of interiorized ‘belief’.⁴² In his hands, the term ‘*paramasaugata*’ indicated only that individuals were devout worshippers of Sugata, the Buddha. Sircar did not wonder at the lack of qualifier terms (such as *upasaka* or *bhiksu*) which would have indicated lay, novice or ordained status for men described as *paramasaugata*. So powerful an effect have Sircar’s ideological positions and translation practices had in South Asia-based epigraphy that subsequent scholars there have also conflated *paramasaugata* with Buddhist interiority and *paramabhagavat* with Vaisnava interiority to suggest a picture of temporal Pala imperialists acting on impulses resembling Pauline antinomianism.⁴³ In the process the political aspects of observed behavior necessary to fulfill ritual commitments and vows – the protective obligations of the monk who has taken two-hundred odd vows – became invisible as part of political subjectivities.

Michael Willis' recent study of Udaygiri brings this home sharply.⁴⁴ Epigraphic charters that describe a donor as *paramabhagavat*, Willis argues, describe the donor as the leader of worship, and in the case of rituals of sacrifice, entailed that the leader of the praying community was also the recipient of such worship. In other words, the venerating priest and the venerable deity were the same figure; the deity incarnate and the praise-singer were the combined figure of the 'king'.

The same argument should be extended to the term *paramasaugata*. The leading monk was both venerable teacher and venerated lord. As chief amongst monks, he was committed to making the Buddha's word eternal. One of the most idealized of Bouddha goals was compassion, idealized in the Jataka stories - in which importunate beings and destitute brahmans enabled the bodhisattva-hood of 'kings'. Such compassion was materialized in sanctuaries granted to refugees of different kinds.⁴⁵ Not interiority but an ethic of Buddhist sanctuary is indicated in a ninth century inscription record of a monastic (Narayanpala's) gift of a rent-free village in Tirabhukti (Tirhut) to the Saiva temple at Pasupatinath (Kathmandu) for the performance of *puja, bali, charu, sattra* of the congregation of Pasupata Saivacharyas (*p^{ra}-ashupata-ach^{arya} - parisad*). The inscription reveals a great deal of the relationship between northern Bihar (Tirhut) and valley Nepal (Kathmandu) as it does of the relationship between a Bouddha abbot and Saiva ascetics.⁴⁶ The grant to the temple was to enable it to *feed* all visible and invisible creatures: *puja* fed the divinities, *sattra* fed brahmans.⁴⁷ The life of all creatures was sustained in this elaborate fashion *because* there were ritual obligations and commitments to do so. Interiority alone could not explain the grants of land and subsistence by Bouddha donors to others consistently beyond their ordination or monastic lineages, such as the Brahmans above. Only a fully disciplined monastic selfhood could account for the gifts of land - in this instance four villages - to a

Vaisnava deity (Nanna Narayana), whose ritualist was a Brahman secured from ‘Lata’ (presumably Gujarat). The builder of the temple of this deity had requested the donor for lands needed to maintain this priest, the worship and the temple attendants. The donor had honored the request.⁴⁸

Critically for the subsequent theorization of sovereignty and subject-making in the subcontinent, ascriptions of interiority obscured the *monastic* commitments and status of the ‘lord of lords’ (*maharajadhiraja*) Dharmapaladeva who ‘installed the king of Kanyakubja’.⁴⁹ Partly due to nationalist and ethnicist commitments of scholars of the twentieth century, early epigraphists appear to have overlooked two simultaneous bits of evidence. One was that the same word (*abhisek*) stood for the ritual empowerment by a guru of his disciple as well as for the water-based ablution ceremony that marked the ‘coronation’ of a lay supporter as a temporal authority or ‘king’. Second, they overlooked the evidence of the Tibetan histories which asserted that

In the south, the Indian kings there established, the Raja Dharma- dpal and Drahu-dpun, both waiting in their lands under orders to shut up their armies, yielded the Indian kingdom in subjection to Tibet; the wealth of the Indian country [22a] gems and all kinds of excellent provisions they punctually paid. The two great kings of India, upper and lower, out of kindness to themselves, pay honour to commands.⁵⁰

The ‘King Dharmapala’ was described in another Tibetan-language (but Mongolian monk-authored) text of the eighteenth century as the ‘chief spiritual guide and minister’ of the eighth-century Tibetan lord Khri sron lde’u btsan.⁵¹ By this reasoning, Sridharmapaladeva was the monastic or abbatical head of Nalanda monastery, and his ‘kingship’ was that of perfected Bouddha monastic teacher and head of a monastery-throne, whose nephew may have been a lay but initiated member of the monastic government or ‘court’.

Tibetan histories had spoken of three lineages of ordination stemming from ‘celebrated Indian pandit Dharmapala from Magadha, who arrived at the Tibetan capital accompanied by three pupils, all of whom bore the surname of Pala.’⁵² The three disciples of Dharmapala were referred to in a fifteenth-century text, *The Blue Annals*.⁵³ In one account, they were named as Siddhapāla, Gunapāla and Prajñāpāla ‘from the eastern quarter of India’.⁵⁴ At the very least, ‘Pala’ should have been treated as a signature of authority transmitted by and through initiation-ordination relationships between teachers and disciples. Their bearers were connected to each other in spiritual-textual lineages, encoded as ‘strings of successors’ (*vamsavali*) literature produced at the same time. Donations made by a ‘Dharmapala’ were monastic gifts to others, Buddhist and non-Buddhist alike, and ‘descendants’ of Dharmapala were likely to have been both spiritual and social descendants.

The fact that many of the inscriptions of donations were found in the foothills and plains of modern south Bihar and north and north-west Bengal-Bangladesh corresponded to the claims of Tibetan monarchical hegemony over populations and regions that were the Himalayan foothills (*terai*). These regions were identified with Buddhist sites. By virtue of monastic geographicity and gift-giving by lay and ordained bouddha disciples, this order extended southwards into the plains of coastal Bengal. Sites such as Kausambi and Kapilavastu (Ser-skyahi-gnas), Ayodhya (Mi-thub-pa), Ti-ra (Tirabhukti?) and especially the fortified monastic site called Pundravardhana (Li-kho-ri-sin-hphel-ba) in the eighth century (and Mahasthan, Bogra, Rajshahi subsequently) were integral to Tibetan reckoning of themselves as part of the cosmological ‘Jambudvipa’.⁵⁵

Sanskrit-language grants that mentioned ‘Dharmapala’ as a donor referred to the ways in which monasteries in the Himalayan foothills mediated between northern Buddhist monastic

subjects, adherents and supporters and those of the coastline and plains. One of these specifically linked Dharmapala to a gift of a village ‘Kusasthala’ (Kanyakubja) to his friend, the descendant of Yasovarman, the king of Kanyakubja.⁵⁶ This confirms the relationship between an abbatical head of a monastery and his lay follower or supporter’s lineage. Another copperplate of Sridharmapaladeva specifically puts him at Pataliputra on the river Ganga at the time that he granted the four villages mentioned above (to the deity Nunna-Narayana) at the request of a great temporal authority called Narayanavarman.⁵⁷ Twentieth-century nationalist Indian scholarship that recognized neither the political weight of ordination lineages nor the investment of Himalayan and inner Asian societies in becoming part of such lineages missed a very significant aspect of the settlement histories of eastern India/southern Asia.

Implications for Eastern India: Sylhat, Kamarupa and the Inner Asian Plateaus

Tibetan histories such as the chronicle *La-dvags-rgyal rabs* claimed that the writ of the lord Ral pa cen ran till Gangasagar (lit. ‘the lake of the Ganga’).⁵⁸ Such claims illuminated the copperplate grants of the Chandra and located regions to the east of the river Ganga - medieval Sylhat and Kamrupa especially - within a Sino-Tibetan ‘upper and lower’ style of government. Medieval eastern Bengal, Burma and Assam shared Sino-Tibetan structures of military and other labor-services.⁵⁹ Populations were divided into men obliged to military service and men obliged to perform civil service. Each was led by military and non-military commanders, each of who recruited men for appropriate services. Key to the work of each were two devices called *kho* and *phalo*. Though their meanings remain disputed, the phalo resembled an assembly, and a kho something like a census. As soon as a kho was made, the countries became integral parts of the Tibetan empire. The empire itself was divided into four “horns” (or divisions). Each horn in turn was divided into a few ‘thousand-districts’ (chiliarchies) which again were subdivided into

smaller units for military and civil administration (a smaller unit of ten was called *pai*; members of it were *paitou*). Each horn's administration was organized in terms of 'upper' and 'lower' halves for military purposes, each half in turn governed by its own commander. Archaeologists have pieced together from woodslips found in Central Asia that the Tibetan soldiers from different districts (*stong sde*) were brought together in units of four (*tshugs*); accompanied by their families, and carrying some of their own rations, these soldiers went off to serve in various desert and mountainous parts of Central Asia.⁶⁰ The identical unit of four members was called *got* in medieval Kamrupa-Assam. Drawn from widely dispersed landscapes into *tshugs*, these 'ethnically mixed' groups in turn varied their subsistence activities according to the season and terrain. Campaigns occurred in the autumn; when the campaigns ended, the men turned to the mix of livestock herding and farming that also needed them to keep working as watchmen and scouts of fields and herds.

A history that spoke of Tibetan expansion into further eastern parts of 'Jambudvīpa' and a compliant 'Raja Dharmapala and his nephew' in Bengal was a history that referred to the mobilization of human and animal resources of different terrains by monastic abbots and their spiritual as well as social lineages. Matthew Kapstein had argued that the ninth-century Tibetan lord who invited a Buddha tantric teacher to Tibet sought to secure Tibetan supremacy in the Tibetan–Tang warfare in Inner Asia of the time.⁶¹ The account that referred to the cooperation of the Indian 'Dharmapala and his nephew or grandson' also counted in the Tibetan military one hundred 'brigade leaders' who were 'dagger-armed soothsayers.'⁶² A tablet at IHa-sa commemorating the Tibetan and Chinese truce in 822 CE listed a 'Lord of Curses' as part of the diplomatic entourage.⁶³ Such 'curses' could only have been potent *mantra* uttered by exquisitely trained Brahmins.⁶⁴

This military ritual co-dependence of Bouddha tantric and Vedic Brahman may have been at work in ensuring the co-dependence of the ‘Pala’ ordination and social lineage on the Brahmans that we have touched on already. It was also visible in the dependence of the Pragjyotisha (Kamarupa, western Assam) Pala lords who nurtured brahman ‘followers of the Samaveda’, especially those who had mastered some kind of martial arts. This Pala lordly lineage began with a Brahmapala, successively including Ratnapala, Purandarpala, Indrapala, Harshapala, Jayapala and yet another Dharmapala.. These lords too were identified with scholarly lineages – from Bhatta Baladeva of the Vajasaneyi school in one case.⁶⁵ Expertise in ‘*Vyakarana* (grammar), *Mimamsa* (philosophy), *Nyaya* (justice-legality), and *Tantra* (ritual means)’ was spelt out as the qualifications for lordship of the other.⁶⁶

The charters of these lords too suggest their incorporation into a system of monastic-military governmentality extending across the Himalayan-coastal geographical terrain. One of their charters also lauded a brahman called Himanga, ‘a chariot warrior’, highly skilled in acts like ‘aiming at targets, habituated to the performance of wonderful, tough and difficult tasks, and had experience of the movement of arrows hurled, their fall and results’. This warrior brahman was given land yielding six thousand paddy (baskets?) while his brother, Trilocana, was given another plot of land yielding two thousand paddy (baskets?).⁶⁷ These ‘Pala’ lords also set up elaborate orphanage-like *sattra* institutions, one of which was especially famous in the thirteenth century and located at Yogihati (Ambari).⁶⁸

Patron/protector, Host/guest, Refugee/sanctuary relationships between Bouddha monastic abbots, non-monastic lay householder or ascetic subjects and Saiva administrators were also inherited over generations, and spread over considerable distances. It was historically appropriate then that some of these protector-guru or dependent –patron service relationships evolved into

lordships of their own over two centuries or so. Inscriptions found at Bangarh (modern Dinajpur district, northern West Bengal) at the crossroads of two land-routes in north Bengal, read alongside the sculptural finds, suggests exactly how such relationships evolved and were materialized.⁶⁹ In keeping with either an ethic of compassion or for reasons of merit-consciousness or for the well-known tantric goals of guarding or taming the cosmological quarters, one Pala ‘lord’ constructed a great monastery(*maṭha*) at Varanasi (modern Banaras) as a ‘gift’ for the Durvasa sect of Saiva ascetics. A disciple of one of these Saiva ascetics (called Indrasiva) was in turn gifted a monastery in Bangarh. This gift linked northern Bengal to a pilgrimage center on the Gangetic plains, just as Buddhist orders were connected to the maintenance of Saiva ascetics. Indrasiva’s disciple, Sarvvasiva, in turn became the *guru* (spiritual teacher) of Nayapala, a name that shows up in older Pala ‘king-lists’ (perhaps we should now refer to these as ‘Patron-Protector’ lists) as dateable to early eleventh century. Thereafter Sarvvasiva gave over the status of spiritual preceptorship of Nayapala to his younger brother and disciple Murttisiva and retired to the forest.

The donee of one generation became the overlord of the next. The ‘younger brother’ Murttisiva grew into the figure archetypically associated with temporal lordship – excavating tanks, laying out gardens, adding several structures to the temple of Siva-Parvati at Bangarh and securing the services of many female oblates (*devadasis*) for this temple. In keeping with his growing eminence, Murttisiva attracted the devotion of yet another of Sarvvasiva’s disciples, a Saiva ascetic called Rupasiva, who enjoyed the patronage of another patron, Bhojadeva (1000-1055) before he came to Bengal. Once at the Bangarh monastery, Rupasiva was responsible for having an image of Murttisiva made and for sponsoring the composition of an eulogy, or *murttisiva prasasti*, by another *brahmana* poet, Srikantha.⁷⁰

The circle was completed. The appurtenances of both temporal and spiritual ‘lordship’ – the monumental building, the entourage of servants, the literary eulogy – were in place. On the basis of detailed photographs of the image and its pedestal inscription, a recent epigraphist described Murttisiva as a male wearing a loincloth (*kaupina*), scarf (*uttariya*) about the shoulders, a sacred thread (*upavita*, the mark of the ‘twice-born’ brahman, ksatriya and vaisya), with a large bundle of matted hair heaped high on the head (*jatabhara*), wearing also a beard, moustache and a possible mark on the forehead, with auspicious floral signs on the palms and soles of the feet indicating signs of greatness, and an aureole (*prabhamandala*) around the head with a design of flames suggesting the near divine status of the person. Such figures appeared simultaneously between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries on the walls of the Wat Si Chum temple, Angkor, the Hayagriva Madhava temple at Hajo in Goalpara, Assam and on the walls and niches of Newar or Malla temples in Nepal.⁷¹ If some of these loin-cloth-clad, sacred-thread-wearing and hirsute male figures excavated from Ambari (Guwahati, modern Assam) were not merely recipients of grants but themselves the Pragjyotisha Pala lords, this is a matter that remains uninvestigated.

Marriage and the Monastic-Dynastic Relationship

Saiva-Bouddha Tantric ordination lineages and managerial systems within monastic estates became dynastic when individual members of the ordination lineage married. Neither Tibetan Bon nor Tantric Saiva nor Vajrayana Bouddha monasticism required permanent celibacy of the ordained. Theoretically parallel to each other, ordained monastic and lay householder lineages overlapped in the life of the Tantric Bouddha (such as the Vajracharya in Nepal and the Karmapa in Tibet) in Bon and in Saiva-Sakta communities. Some of the work of the epigraphists and scholars of the earlier generations had established the Tantric standing of such lineages such

as the ‘Pala’ and the ‘Chandra’. For instance, referring to the meditation on mother goddesses (Tara or Ekjata in Bouddha tantric textual compilations such as the *Sadhanamala*), one of them had argued that Dharmapala’s banner bore the effigy of Tara.⁷² The same Dharmapala appeared in another inscription as having visited Kedara and Gokarna –both Himalayan pilgrimages – where he ‘removed the distress’ of kings (who appeared to have been refugees) by distributing resources among them and enabling their return to their own lands. But it also suggests that till then, this ‘king’ was an unwed young monk: after such pilgrimage, Dharmapala ‘entered the life of a householder’ by marrying Rannadevi, daughter of a Rastrakuta.⁷³ From this marriage was born Devapaladeva, who combined both monastic and temporal authority in himself and was described in the inscriptions as world- conquering ruler.⁷⁴ The father’s contemplative focus on Tara was shared by the son, whose inscription on an icon of the deity found in Patna district bore Tantric formulae (*Om Tare Tuttare Ture Svaha*).⁷⁵

Similarly, an administrator (*pithipati*) named Sangharakhshita at Bodhgaya was said to have originated from the Chikkora-Sinda clan ‘of Kannada origin’ (*karnatkulapradip*). The spiritual teachers or ordination patriarchs of these administrators were Saiva men with names ending in *Sena* (Devasena, Buddhasena and son or disciple Jayasena).⁷⁶ A dedicatory inscription on a votive bronze *caitya* dated to the twelfth century identified its donor as the lady (*devi*) of Acharya Sangharakshita, ‘lord of Pithi’.⁷⁷ Here was proof that ordination gurus/ spiritual teachers had female consorts – an important aspect of both Tantric meditational and disciplinary arrangements as well as for ensuring the social reproduction of guru lineages. The social history of marriage, the formation of ‘pedigree’ (*kula and kulin-ism*) in the region must surely have been impacted by the presence of married monastics.

The Sena lineage is particularly remembered in subsequent historiography for this reason. From the mid-twelfth century, members of this lineage became ‘law-givers’ or ‘rulers’ around the Diamond seat (Bodhgaya). A Tibetan monk Dharmasvamin (Bu-ton) who visited Bodhgaya in 1234-35 (*after* the Turco-Afghan Muslim ‘conquest’ of Bihar⁷⁸) found Buddhasena claiming to be ‘lord of Magadha’.⁷⁹ Buddhasena issued orders to the cultivators and others attached to the rent-free property owned by the Mahabodhi complex that the income from the property was assigned permanently to yet another Bouddha monastic scholar (*bhikshu pandita*), Dharmarakshita, who had once been the *Rajaguru* (royal preceptor) of the Kama or Kama country (interpreted by Sircar as Kumaon country). The donee in turn was advised to care for the elderly monks from Sinhala, presumably also present on the plains at the same time. Even though formally initiated as ‘Saiva’ tantric, the Sena ordination-social lineage had continued to maintain Bouddha tantrics. In the thirteenth century, there was no Augsburg style resolution that demanded that subjects of a ‘prince’ adhere only to the ritual world of their prince-governor or administrator.

More, the Pala-Sena epigraphs and artifacts outlined a veritable ‘free market’ of ritual means of authority. This was unpropitious for monotheism even within a single ordination or social lineage of guru-disciple such as the Sena. Numerous copper-plate grants of lands made by individuals of the Sena lineage under a common seal (*Sadasivamudra*) evinced a variety of meditative-practical disciplines varied within the lineage and order.⁸⁰ Titles used in conjunction with names varied: *parama-mahesvara* was used for Vijayasena and Vallalasena, *parama-vaisnava* for Laksmanasena and *parama-saura* for Visvarupasena and Kesavasena. Rather than indicators of interiority, these descriptors were badges of ordination and externally observable ritual behavior, embodied discipline; they identified the particular aspect of practice that each

had mastered over time. The particular aspects of such deities as Siva, Vishnu and Surya that these men wished to embody were exactly what the image-makers amplified. Many such figures have been found at Mahasthan and Jagajjibanpur in Bogra and Malda respectively in north Bengal, and at Pilak and other sites in present day Tripura.⁸¹

As for histories of gender and the making of social lineages, the oversight of the Tantric Bouddha monastic lineages at the heart of the 'Pala' in the foothills led to a peculiar oversight of the ways in which Himalayan patterns of polyandry shaped the distinctive patterns of kinship and household in regions east of Dhaka from very early periods.⁸² Without an understanding of the ways in which polyandry worked to reduce conflicts between obligations to siblings and to conjugal kin by joining them to each other, few scholars could work out the ways in which subsequent Sena 'rulings' regarding endogamous sexual unions generated particular social solidarities among inter-married cousins and half-brothers and shaped the interests of women in those groups. In the late nineteenth century, Bengali language historiography was riven by a debate on the validity of genealogies (*kulajis*) said to have been organized according to the rules of 'Sena' initiate-gurus such as a Vallalasena and his son Laksmanasena (identified in the epigraphs as the leading worshipper of Visnu).⁸³ Vallalasena was the author of four important texts, one of which was the famous treatise on sixteen great gifts and many lesser ones (*Danasagar*).⁸⁴ His own guru was an Aniruddhabhatta. These initiated 'law-givers' were said to have devised a system of social rank based on nine verifiable and observable indices of conduct (*dharma*).⁸⁵ These were humility (*vinaya*) learning (*vidya*) pilgrimage (*tirtha-darsan*) rigor (*tapa*) generosity of gift (*dana*) reciprocal exchanges of daughters (*avritti*) and famous acts (*kirtti*) that established reputation (*pratistha*). This form of distinction was devised to diminish the standing of an emergent order of merit that was associated with immigrant Turco-Afghan

lords. According to one seventeenth-century text, those ‘Brahmans’ who ‘freely provided supplies for the armies of the Muslim king (*patsa/lit padsahah*)’ secured titles such as ‘Khans’ and ‘Ray-Rayans’.⁸⁶ The rules of conduct that the Senas devised based on *dharmashastra* were part of a political-social debate about the sources of reputation of ‘brahmans’. But they were also economic. Bouddha monastic authorities had not produced texts emphasizing the performance of marriage as a ritualized activity from which ‘public’ standing could be gauged. Initiated ‘law-givers’ established the ritualized marriage as a public occasion, they made it possible for the ritualist (‘purohit-priest’) to be given lands and food by the sponsors. Was making marriage a ‘public’ occasion for gift-giving an attempt to sustain and extend the lives of their own dependents, the orphaned Brahmans trained in the various sattras and subjects of their own ordination lineages? This too remained uninvestigated after the twentieth century.

Knowledge-Power and Making Monastic Geographicity:

In addition to establishing political co-dependence and ritual heteropraxy among collectives of monastic subjects on the land, ordination lineages and the collectives of monastic subjects were ultimately useful in bringing together different kinds of skills in ecologically appropriate ways. Grants of land to clusters of monastic subjects appear to have been made in some of the most inhospitable water-logged terrain of medieval Bengal and Assam between the sixth and the thirteenth century. This region referred to in the grants as ‘Samatata’, coastal or riverine plains, stretched across all low-lying lands from the lower foothills of the Himalayas to the coasts. On the basis of twenty inscriptions relating to such a region, Barrie Morrison had characterized the whole Bengal delta as ‘the principal territorial base for Buddhism.’⁸⁷ In 1954-57, military engineers found many ruins at the top of a ridge of hills called Mainamati (in modern Comilla, Bangladesh). An inscription found from there and dated to the late sixth

century recorded the donations of vast quantities of uncultivated lands by a Gupta administrator to a Mahayani Buddhist monastic teacher (*Shakyabhikshu Acarya*) called Shantideva.⁸⁸ The deed stipulated that the lands would provide the flowers, lights, incense and perfumes (*gandha, pushpa, dop, dhupadi pravarttanaya*) used by monks of the Vaivarttika Mahayana Buddhist order who resided in the monastery (*sanghavihara*), dedicated to the bodhisattva Avalokitesvara. The income from the lands was to be used not only to supply the needs of ritual worship used by the monks thrice daily, but also to supply the monastic robes (*chivara*), bedding, furnishing and medicines (*bhaisajya*) needed by the monks as well as for the periodic repair and maintenance of the monastery itself. This teacher was not the ‘royal’ preceptor; the latter’s lands in the upland areas were identified as bordering two of the plots given to the Bouddha monk-teacher (acharya). But nor was this the only Bouddha monastic in receipt of lands from a Mahadeva (Siva) - invoking Gupta governor. Among the waterlogged lowlands between two ports, open to boats at one end, were also the plots of the monastery established by the Bouddha monastic Acarya Jitasena. The locations of these establishments become doubly significant because some of these grants are made at the request of men who as in the latter grant, are either identified as ‘maharaja Rudradatta’ or address chief merchants (*aryanagar sreshthi Ribhupala*), the chief scribe (*prathama kayastha Skandapala*) and the leader of caravan-traders (*sarththavaha Sthanudatta*) at the same time. Clearly, the location of the monasteries was directly related to the commercial networks of the times.

The location of these monastic establishments has so far suggested a fairly consistent pattern of deployment of skill. They served commercial networks and ‘tamed’ the wild. Traces of monastic locations in South Asia suggest an identical pattern between highlands and coasts. In the Himalayan highlands, monasteries were located at the crossroads of maritime silk-routes and

in dynamic exchange with neighbours.⁸⁹ A similar location of monasteries could be found on the coasts continuous with the Burmese coastline.⁹⁰ For such reasons, Michael Aung-Thwin's analysis of records using Mon-language terms revealed that all the terms referred to sacred centers in the Himalayan belt and Magadha on the Indo-Gangetic plains.⁹¹ Until settled by such men and animals from Pagan in highland Burma, lower Burma was a swampy, frontier area, sparsely inhabited, with only a few coastal ports and little or no cultivated villages. Highland societies populated and 'civilized' the plains and coasts.

For similar reasons, the scholarly studies on Buddhist monastic institutions in Central India have proved interesting. They extend Aung-Thwin's argument by suggesting that similar groups may have been responsible for the extension of rice cultivation in an area that depended on storing rainfall for cultivation.⁹² A similarly technological relationship with water and its drainage or storage might also have brought hydrological experts into eastern Indian terrains that were water-logged for half the year. These were the low-lying lands of the Samatata, in the vicinity of the marshes of Sylhet and plains drained by the Brahmaputra. It is likely that here the task to which monastic skill was directed was the reclamation of land from the sea and floodwaters by the building of embankments, dykes, wells, moats. Epigraphic evidence about the sponsorship of settlements in the Samatata is important for this reason. Yet, here too, the later historian has to simply confront the epigraphic confusion.

Partly because post-nationalist historians worked on the same terrain without knowing about others tilling the same furrow, the problems of an older historiography tended to replicate themselves in each generation. The multiple 'Pala' re-appeared in the case of the Chandra. Pamela Gutman working on the epigraphic records of the Arakanese 'kingdom' found the Shit-thaung pillar inscription of Anandacandra; three sides of the pillar were inscribed with the names

of three different lineage orders, and the pillar claimed to have been at Vaishali.⁹³ The name referred to an original Vaishali visited by the Sakyamuni in the plains of Bihar. The Chinese monks Fa-Hsien (401-410) and Xuanzang (629-645) had visited at least one such site ‘Fei-she-li’ on the plains but found only ruins in an otherwise fertile region. If the Anandachandra who sponsored the carving of the pillar in the eighth century claimed to have come from Vaishali as a way of buttressing his monastic credentials with a link to a sacred center, then it was significant that that name was never again mentioned in the three inscriptions of the Chandra found by epigraphists in a region slightly north of the original findspot of the Anandacandra pillar. These inscriptions of donors named a Purnachandra, a Suvarnachandra, his son Trailokyachandra, the latter’s son Srichandra, the son of Srichandra, Kalyanchandra, and their descendants, a Ladahachandra and Govindrachandra; these men were described as ‘rulers of Rohitagiri’ or Rohita mountains.⁹⁴

Sircar had identified ‘Rohitagiri’ with Shahabad district (Bihar on the plains).⁹⁵ So he had suggested that the Chandra men migrated from there and conquered the region further south called Samatata. Trailokyachandra, Sircar believed, had set himself up as ‘king’ at Chandradvipa, an island at the mouth of the river Ganga.⁹⁶ Subsequent scholars would argue that the Chandra moved from Arakan northwards into Srihattamandala (southern Kamarupa or modern Sylhet).⁹⁷ Other epigraphic inscription suggested that they were supported by contributions from their ‘followers’ in the form of taxes and fines mentioned in all older inscriptions (*bhaga, bhoga, kara, hiranya and uparikara*). Neither scholar suggested that ‘Chandra’ was an ordination lineage based on command of tantric grammars written in the fifth-sixth century, nor that their presence in both north and south, upland and lowland, was commensurate with older patterns of establishing the monastic lineage as the uniting principle of

both. Such scholarship thus missed the cosmopolitanism that Sheldon Pollock subsequently identified as key to the Sanskrit world. We can expand the ambit of cosmopolitanism by recognizing the ways in which this system of governmentality made visions of the cosmos the core of governance and settlement as well. Rather than simple cosmopolitanism, we should call this a form of ‘cosmopolitics’ in the terrain. A close reading of Sircar’s published version of the grants can help us understand such ‘cosmopolitics’ better.

First was a straightforward terrestrial set of references. The Paschimbag grant of Srichandradeva described Srichandra’s forces as having conquered Kamarupa, entering the woodlands near the Lohitya (ie. the river Brahmaputra) and seeing on the plains below ‘drowsy yaks ruminating leisurely’.⁹⁸ This reference to high-altitude Himalayan ecology was also allegorically assimilated with a semi-tropical one. Banana trees grew in this terrain, monkeys roamed and there were black aloe trees. Granted that banana and fruit-trees were metaphors of abundance and auspiciousness, they combined peculiarly with ruminating yaks and monkeys. Were these meant to be taken in more than allegorical terms? Just such a terrain would be found by the mid-nineteenth century botanist, Joseph Dalton Hooker in the region known in his time as Sikkimese Darjiling (subsequently ‘Indian’ north Bengal).⁹⁹ It was also found in the early twentieth-century in southeastern Tibet by the botanist F. Kingdon Ward, who collected specimens of flora there. Below the Alpine level on the Himalayan cliff face, he found valleys filled with rhododendrons of all kinds and conifers in which monkeys abounded.¹⁰⁰ It was exactly the flora and fauna described in the Paschimbag grant of Srichandradeva. This reference to Himalayan ecology reinforced an indirect reference to ‘Yavana’ (Indo-Greeks) and ‘Huna’ (Sino-Tibetan) women who were described as having either scarified or painted cheeks and breasts.¹⁰¹ The land granted was at a lower altitude: the lands were in medieval Srihatta (larger

than modern Sylhet but in that region) south of the river Kusiya (mentioned in the grant) that ran through the region.

Second were a series of extra-terrestrial beings. The same copper-plate specified three different plots of land. The first block of land measuring 120 patakas (approximately, 1800 acres) was granted to the deity Brahman. The deity in turn would share this land in varying portions with a teacher of the celebrated Chandragomin's Buddhist grammar written in the fifth-sixth century, ten students, five daily visitors fed by income of the lands, a brahman who would build a temple to the deity, an astrologer, four florists, two oilmen, two potters, two blacksmiths, two carpenters, twenty-two servants and cobblers, and a very substantial group of musical performers made up of five players of the small drum, two players for the big drum, eight players of the kettle-drum, two performers, and eight female servants. SriChandra, under the seal of the Dharmachakra (wheel of righteousness) settled a Brahman as deity in a temple as well as a teacher of Buddhist grammars.¹⁰² This inscription placed both at the heads of a community: the deity owned the land and his devotees and subjects cultivated it while the teacher of grammar presided over the entire service and student corps, many of which may well have been expert brahmans themselves. This was a model of 'dual rule', in which scholastic and cosmic worked together to domesticate the wild.

A quadripartite geomantic scheme worked out on the land and in the environment. A second block of land, measuring 280 *patakas* (approximately, 4200 acres) was granted to four deities – Vaisvanara, Yogesvara, Jaimani and Mahakala – described as 'worshipped in the four *desantariya* ('other lands') *mathas* and the four *Vangala* (Bengal) *mathas*'. This reference suggests a monastic cosmopolitics completely antithetical to the post-Reformation and nationalistic readings their twentieth-century readers had given them. On the one hand, there

were deities revered by monks of ‘other lands’. These deities were made land (and water and air) owners in Srihatta. On the other hand, those monks who revered them were given residential space *as* regional (*desantariya*) figures alongside ‘bengali’ monks. Though we cannot understand what the differences between ‘desantariya’ and ‘desiya’ monastic dormitories might have been, these differences *were* recognized but treated strictly at par. So while the deities practiced a cosmic extra-territoriality, their adherents were given temporal enjoyment or jurisdiction over soil physically distant from their worldly origins elsewhere. Such extra-territorial jurisdiction had been established under the terms of the Pala grant to the monastery of another Tantric Bouddha lord of Suvarnavipa (Java/Sumatra) in Nalanda.¹⁰³ Now, under the Paschimbhag grant, extra-territoriality was abstracted as extra-terrestriality at the same time that a cosmology was materialized as ‘rights’ to land, water, vegetation. Such extra-terrestriality was also familiar from the northern bank of the Brahmaputra river where lands in the gift of deities Mahagauri and Kamesvara existed since the seventh century.¹⁰⁴ In this instance, however, the extra-terrestrial jurisdiction of the four deities was anchored in two groups of four *mathas* each (a total of eight monasteries). The teacher at the head of each monastery was to get 10 patakas (a total of 80 patakas). Each group of five students in each monastery, whether it was that of a ‘foreigner’ or of a ‘bengali’, held an equal quantity of land (5 patakas). Lesser shares of land were granted to the florist, barber, oilman, maidservants, scribes and physician of the monasteries.

A third and final block of land, also theoretically given to the same four deities, was shared out equally between 6000 *brahmans* or householder-cultivators, suggesting that the latter leased the lands from the former. Only one of these donees had a name ending with ‘sarmman’ the normative identifier of medieval *brahmana jati-varna* standing. Of the thirty seven other names of *brahman* leaders of the settlers, most had names such as Nanda, Manikya, Bhanu,

Narayana, and so on. On the basis of the mismatch between these cognomens and their characterization as *brahman*, Sircar suggested that these new settlers constituted basically non-brahman professional communities who would later be merged as non-brahmana jatis such as vaidya and kayashtha.

But why such a colossal number of 6000 ‘professionals’ all referred to as ‘brahmans’? Was this a massive relocation of some kind? The Paschimbhag grant of land was initiated by a Vaisnava named Vinayaka. Was he too trying to establish a sanctuary of some sort? In the period between the 9th and the 10th century, political turmoil roiled inner Asian and Himalayan worlds – An Lushan, a Sogdian (Persianate Central Asian) led a rebellion against the Tang regime. In 842, a Buddhist monk murdered the Tibetan monarch and many Bon-worshipping Tibetans may have fled persecution. The establishment of the Song empire and the restoration of Confucianism led to the disestablishment of some Chinese Buddhist establishments. Battles between the Tibetan-Buddhist Da-li forces and the expanding Chinese state occurred on the eastern fringe of the Himalayan world. Any number of reasons could have brought populations implied under the term ‘6000’. Many of these populations, at any rate, were familiar with Tantric deities such as Mahakala, an aspect of Siva, also the presiding deity revered as ‘protector’ of ordained monks and Tantric teachers.

An aspect of the Paschimbhag grant connects the Tantric worship of Mahakala with the settlement of these Brahmans. Critical in the Tibetan Buddhist veneration of Mahakala was a form of dancing famous as the *cham*. Stein noticed these dances as performed around a basic ritual of the destruction of danger by the protector. A ritual dance of destruction – encapsulated in the image of the enraged dancing Siva (*Narttesvara*) deified in temples of the southern half of the peninsula – was, in the Tibetan plateau, performed by a ‘masked actor representing the

principal deity [Mahakala] on the one hand, and by the mantra master (Tantric officiant) who called forth the deity'.¹⁰⁵ The orchestra accompanied the dancers. The huge musical and especially drumming retinue that was settled on the land by the Paschimbhag grant suggested – as no other provision of any other grant of the period and region had so far- that the politically charged and performative aspects of Tibetan Bon and Buddhist Tantric gods had been attached to a scholarly community and a Brahman teacher of Bouddha hermeneutics.¹⁰⁶ The drummers, musicians, dancers were part of an extra-hermeneutic tradition centered on that temple. The kind of performance in question was protective: the presence of the deities Vaisvanara and Yogesvara, along with Mahakala, indicated as much.

Vaisvanara in Sankaracarya's articulation of advaita principles in the first half of the eighth century, represented an 'awakened' Atman (knower) whose five senses and internal organs perceived object relations.¹⁰⁷ Though articulated as part of a critique of Bouddha philosophy, Vaisvanara had just as quickly been tamed by Bouddha tantric adepts: in their visualization Vaisvanara or Agni was associated with the South –East direction (one among four directions) that a yogi meditating on the deity (Vajravarahi) visualized as part of cremation ground practicum. The appearance of this female deity in the Tibetan Bouddha pantheon could be dated to the early tenth century, when she began to appear in visions to the tantric adept Tilopa (ca 928-1009); he in turn, orally transmitted this esoteric knowledge to his disciple, Naropa (ca. 956-1040). This chain of transmissions made the deity and the principle of Vaisvanara very important to Tantric Buddhists in the Sa-skya lineage.¹⁰⁸

Yogesvara was also the term of reference for a *mahasiddha*, a master of Tantric yoga and alchemy, the thaumaturge Virupa, the first transmitter of *lam bras* teaching, the foundation of Sa-skya Buddhist teaching in the medieval Tibetan world. Among the narrative episodes

associated with this figure were those to do with water-management and wealth-production: he parted the Ganges River when he left the monastery to become a wandering yogi and reversed the flow of the Ganges as payment to a ferry man, nailed down a ray of the sun to keep it from moving until he had drunk his fill.¹⁰⁹ Known principally as an intermediary between India and Tibet, between historically located humans and deities, this figure's 'ownership' of land in medieval Srihatta was significant by itself. It was rendered even more potent since the grant associated Yogesvara with Jaimani, one of five deities who removed the fear of crashing thunder. Sircar had been puzzled by the reference to Jaimani in this grant. He thought Jaimani was the celebrated founder of a school of philosophy (Purva-mimamsa) seldom deified elsewhere. So he had been unable to explain why such a figure might be made a 'landlord' in medieval Srihatta.

The same four deities – Vaisvanara, Yogesvara, Jaimani, Mahakala – alongside Brahman were also described as the 'owners' of the lands on which the 6000 *brahma-kshattriyas* were to be settled. Given the demon-taming, thunder-fighting and water-parting deities who were settled on the land and given stakes in it, it is possible that the 6000 men translated the deities' capacities into technological goods such as bridges and moats. Per Sorensen and Guntram Hazod argue that medieval inner Asianists were acutely aware of the dangers of flooding as well as of rivers changing course.¹¹⁰ The search for flood-control technologies remained an ongoing and evasive venture both in the interbraided Nepalese and Gangetic riverine systems as well as in the monsoon-fed Tsangpo (also called Skyid-chu and Brahmaputra in the different parts of the Asian world that it flowed through) river system in central Tibet in the ninth century – and thereafter. The Tibetan Ral pa cen had built his palace and a sacred center (the main temple) at lHa-sa on the edge of the shallow marshland as the ritual gateway to the subterranean world of the Naga, cosmological beings who controlled subterranean wealth. Temples, constructed to propitiate or

tame potentially destructive Naga-beings, were the places that human and supra-human worlds were to negotiate an arrangement. Since Tibetan Buddhists already had had the benefit of Virupa-like intermediaries, it was likely that their expertise was redeployed to another locality – at a different altitude. It was possible to argue that the redeployment of such skills and expertise had occurred when Srichandra allowed the resettlement of 6000 householder-brahmans as cultivators, musicians, craftsmen and artisans in Sylhat in the jurisdiction henceforth known as the Srichandrapur sasana.

The connection of water-borne calamity of some kind with the region of Srihatta-Kamrupa is even more strongly suggested by the Rampal [Dacca] copper-plate of the same donor Srichandradeva dated to the late tenth and early eleventh century. Under this grant, Srichandra gifted land – in an area where an earlier Pala abbatical lord may have granted land to the Vaisnava deity Nannya-narayan (the area may possibly have been called Nannya mandala after that). But this time, instead of a huge group of people, the grant was given to a brahman (named Pitavasaguptasarmman) who performed pacifying rituals (*santivarika*).¹¹¹ Another copperplate, also carrying the Buddhist *dharmachakra* seal of Srichandradeva, granted dispersed plots of land to another peacemaking brahman (named Vyasagangasarmman) who had already conducted a four-sacrifice ceremony called *Adbhutsanti*.¹¹² *Adbhut* stood for ominous portent, *santi* the ritual to avert it. Earthquakes and floods would be reported in the region from the eighteenth century.¹¹³ Had something similar occurred in earlier centuries that required such pacification rituals?

In addition to ritually calming the waters, or at least negotiating with intermediaries who might pacify the environment and avert calamitous flooding, it is possible to see two other aspects of the Paschimbag grant, both associated with skilled emigrants. This was the clause in

the latter grant by which a plot of land measuring 52 patakas (approx 780 acres) was set aside for the port or boat-house of Indresvara. Unknown to Sircar, there was an Indresvara temple in eastern Nepal, a region that modern anthropologists identified with Bhaktapur and that older texts called Punauti, Punyavati or Banepa. If we follow the wording of the Paschimbhag grant minutely on the map of the subcontinent, we can see that populations from a Northern and Himalayan plateau had been resettled in huge numbers in the ninth or tenth century in the region called Srihatta in one context, Kamarupa in another and Devaparvat of the Samatata region in a third. A second aspect of the grant was that Srichandra's 'adherents' thought of the 'Uttarapath' (Northern Path) when heading towards the river Lohitya (Brahmaputra). How would they have known of such a path if they were not already using it? Though it is now impossible to offer a definitive answer, there is enough in the Paschimbhag grant that suggests men with profound knowledge of the flora and fauna were those referred to as eagerly searching the 'Lalambi forests' in the hills (Devaparvat) of the Samatata region for 'superbly efficacious medicinal plants'.¹¹⁴ Migrant and skilled brahmans from the northern world, skilled in taming the waters and navigating them, had been settled in regions such as Sylhet and Chittagong in eastern India.

Their monastically- authorized settlements in the region were extended and consolidated with subsequent members of the Chandra lineage. Of four copper-plates found from the Mainamati hills near Comilla (old Bangladesh), two were grants authorized by Ladachandradeva (1000-20 CE), a third by his son, Govindachandradeva (1020-55 CE) and the fourth a charter granted by Viradharadeva in the twelfth century. The last grant mentioned villages lying in an area called 'Saiima'; earlier epigraphists had simply failed to notice that 'U-Tsaima' was the site of the first Tibetan Buddhist monastery and temple of the eighth century, a little to the north of Lhasa. All these copperplates suggested not only a fairly continuous pattern

of settlement in south-eastern Bengal between the sixth and the thirteenth century but also put the monastic centers at the very center of such settlements. Appropriately most monastic centers were conceived of as intermediaries between heaven and subterranean waters, between the gods and the creatures of the underworld. The subjects of such monastic centers thus massaged the many relationships of this cosmopolitical spatial, social and cosmological order at the same time.

Conclusion:

Three kinds of geographic relationships have been surveyed here. One is that between terrestrial and extra-terrestrial beings. A second is that between dispersed spatial sites such as between Afghanistan and Bengal-Assam. A third is between hills and plains, mountains and seas. All three form different aspects of monastic geographicity. Yet its mapability in the landscape of the past is dependent on the modern historian's willingness to grant 'political' authority to monastic-ascetic ordination lineages and to treat ritual as a military-medical aspect of such governance. All studies of power, subjectivity, ethnicity in Asian contexts that did not begin with a prior understanding of ordination and sexual lineages (teachers-disciples, donors-donees) and the varieties of disciplines, practices, vows and commitments of the lay and the ordained were likely to fall foul of Protestant notions of territorial and temporal secular political identities, processes and entities. The material we have skimmed in this essay thus begs the question that we began with: why have so many erudite scholars of the Asian past found it impossible to conceive of monastic subjecthood and monastic lineages in the twentieth century? Had colonialism completely destroyed these subjects, or had colonialism merely destroyed *our* power of naming these subjects? That is the question the next set of chapters will address.

NOTES

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³ Andrew Huxley, 'Positivists and Buddhists: The Rise and Fall of Anglo-Burmese Ecclesiastical Law,' *Law and Social Enquiry*, 26, 1, Winter 2001, 113-142; idem *Religion, Law and Tradition: Comparative Studies in Religious Law*, London and New York, Routledge, 2002; *Thai Law, Buddhist Law: Essays on the Legal History of Thailand, Laos and Burma*, Bangkok, White Orchid Press, 1996; 'The Traditions of Mahosadha': Legal Reasoning from Northern Thailand, *BSOAS*, 60, 2, 1997, 315-326; with Ryuji Okudaira, 'A Burmese Tract on Kingship: Political Theory in the 1782 Manuscript of Manugye', *BSOAS*, 64, 2, 2001, 248-259 .

⁴ Michael W. Charney, *Powerful Learning: Buddhist Literati and the Throne in Burma's Last Dynasty, 1752-1885*, 45.

⁵ L. Birmangal Singh and Pannalal Ray, *Itihasera Aaaloke Tripura-Manipur*, Akshar Publications, Agartala and Kolkata, 2007, 25-26.

⁶ N. Vijayalakshmi Brara, *Politics, Society and Cosmology in India's North East*, Oxford University Press, Delhi 1998, 105-111, supported by numismatic and epigraphic evidence for the region in Laishram Kunjeswori Devi, *Archaeology in Manipur*, New Delhi, Rajesh Publications, 2003, M. Kirti Singh, *Recent Researches in Oriental and Indological Studies (Including meitology)*, Delhi, Parimal Publications, 1998, 122-89, 236-271.

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⁹ Richard M. Eaton, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1760*, University of California, Berkeley, 1993.

¹⁰ Partha Chatterjee, *The Politics of the Governed: Reflections on Popular Politics*, Columbia University Press 2004.

¹¹ In addition to the works cited in note 8, I have benefited from Sherry B. Ortner, 'Resistance and the Problem of Ethnographic Refusal', *CSSH*, 37, 1, 1995, 173-193; Edward B. Reeves, 'Power, Resistance and the Cult of Muslim Saints in a Northern Egyptian Town,' *American Ethnologist*, 22, 2, May 1995, 306-323; Barry J. Lyons, 'Discipline and the Arts of Domination: Rituals of Respect in Chimbotrazo, Ecuador,' *Cultural Anthropology*, 20, 1, 2008, 97-127; Robert A. Yelle, 'The Hindu Moses: Christian Polemics against Jewish Ritual and the Secularisation of Hindu Law under Colonialism', *History of Religions*, 49, 2, 2009, 141-171; Gregory M. Simon, 'The Soul Freed of Cares? Islamic Prayer, Subjectivity and the Contradictions of Moral Selfhood in Minangkabau, Indonesia', *American Ethnologist*, 36, 2, 2009, 258-275

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¹³ Pandurang Vaman Kane, *The History of the Dharmasastra*, vol. 2, 321-361.

¹⁴ *The Blue Annals*, 178-9.

- ¹⁵ *The Blue Annals*, 96.
- ¹⁶ Gavin Flood, *The Ascetic Self: Subjectivity, Memory and Tradition*, Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- ¹⁷ Wim van Spangem, *Tibetan Border Worlds, A Geohistorical Analysis of Trade and Traders*, Kegan Paul International, London and NY, 2000, 59 and passim; for Bon monasteries, see Andreas Gruschke, *The Cultural Monuments of Tibet's Outer Provinces: Kham*, vol 1, TAR, White Lotus Press, Bangkok, 2004.
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- ²⁰ Ramaranjan Mukherji and Sachindra Kumar Maity, *Corpus of Bengal Inscription Bearing on History and Civilisation of Bengal*, Firma KLM, Calcutta 1967, 132-141
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- ²² For the donative declaration of 'de dharmoyang acaryya prathama... bhadrasya' on a black stone lingam, see Bhattasali, *Iconography*, 143.
- ²³ Susan L. Huntington, *The "Pala-Sena" Schools of Sculpture*, Leiden, E.J.Brill, 1984, 65-66.
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- ³³ Gouriswar Bhattacharya, 'The British Museum Stone Inscription of Mahendrapala', *South Asian Studies*, 23, 2007, 69-74.

- ³⁴ Garuda Pillar Inscription in Ramaranjan Mukherji and Sachindra Kumar Maity, *Corpus of Bengal Inscriptions*, 151-163
- ³⁵ Gaya Stone Inscription, in Ramaranjan Mukherji and Sachindra Kumar Maity, *Corpus of Bengal Inscriptions*, 141-150.
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- ⁵¹ Sarat Chandra Das, *Contributions*, 61
- ⁵² Sarat Chandra Das, *Contributions*, 50.
- ⁵³ Goerge N. Roerich trans *The Blue Annals*, Part I (first 1949) and II (first 1951), this Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 198-, 34.
- ⁵⁴ Sarat Chandra Das, *Contributions*, 70.
- ⁵⁵ Frederick W. Thomas, trans *Tibetan Literary Texts and Documents Concerning Chinese Turkestan*, Part I, Literary Texts, Royal Asiatic Society, London, 1935, 262-263.
- ⁵⁶ Ryosuke Furui, 'A New Copper Plate'
- ⁵⁷ F.Kielhorn, Khalimpur Copperplate of Dharmapaladeva', *E.I.*, 4, 243-254.

- ⁵⁸ August Hermann Francke, *Antiquities of Indian Tibet, vol II: The Chronicles of Ladakh and Minor Chronicles*, ed with foreword by F. W. Thomas, first 1926, this reprint, Delhi, 1972, 89- 90
- ⁵⁹ Donald Ostrowski, 'The "tamma" and the Dual-Administrative Structure of the Mongol Empire', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 61, 2, 1998, 262-277, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3107652>, accessed June 10, 2009. The word tamma derived from Chinese tanma, initially meant a mounted scout, and from the time of the Chin emperors, represented the military vanguard of a military governor of a province: his parallel in a dual system of government was the civilian governor in each province, also permitted to recruit forces.
- ⁶⁰ Tsuguhito Takeuchi (Kobe), 'Military Administration and Military Duties in Tibetan –Ruled Central Asia (8th-9th century)' in Alex Mackay ed *Tibet and Her Neighbours*, 43-55
- ⁶¹ Matthew Kapstein, 'The Treaty Temple of the Turquoise Grove' in Idem ed *Buddhism between Tibet and China*, Boston, Wisdom Publication, 2009, 1-20
- ⁶² F. W. Thomas, *Tibet Literature in Translation*, 272
- ⁶³ Augustus H. Francke, 'List of Minister's Names found in Tibetan Inscriptions in front of Ta-Chao-ssu-temple (Jo-khang) in Lhasa, 822 AD', *Epigraphica India*, 11, 1911-12, 272-80. For the words of the Sino-Tibetan agreement by which each agreed that the regions of the east would be held by China, and those of the west by Tibet, and establishing mobility of traders and envoys as marks of amity, see *EI*, 10, 1909-10, 89-93.
- ⁶⁴ For the reputation of Brahmans as 'cursers', see John E. Mitchiner, *Traditions of the Seven Rsis*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsida, 1982, 230-233
- ⁶⁵ Sualkuci Grant of Ratnapala, Charter II, in *Kamarupasaranavali*, 197
- ⁶⁶ First Copper-plate of Indrapala, in *Kamarupasaranavali*, 199-202.
- ⁶⁷ Subhanakarapataka Grant of Dharmapala, in *Kamarupasaranavali*, 217-221.
- ⁶⁸ Stone Inscription of Samudrapala, *Kamarupasaranavali*, 227.
- ⁶⁹ R.D.Banerji, 'The Bangarh Grant of Mahipala I: The Ninth Year', *E.I.*, 14, 1915-16, 324-30, recording another donation by a bouddha monk of a village in the 'estate' of Pundravardhana/ Mahasthana to a brahman named Krishnaditya sarmanna, son of Bhattaputra Madhusudana, an immigrant from a village Hastipada, and student of Vajasaneyin branch of Yajurveda, and well versed in grammar, logic and philosophy. The genealogy of the 'Pala' donor was repeated in another grant by the father of this donor in R.D.Banerji, 'Amgacchhi Grant of Vighrahapala II, E.I., 15, 293-301. The brahman was named Khoduladevasarman, and was again an immigrant from Chattragrama.
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- ⁷¹ For Surya Pahar at Goalpara, see Kaushik Phukan, <http://www.posoowa.org/2007/06/27/the-condition-of-surya-pahar-a-neglected-archaeological-site/>; <http://explorenortheastindia.com/assam.htm>; for the depiction of multiple deities at the Hayagriva madhava temple at Hajo, see asi.nic.in/images/epigraphy/008.jpg. For reports that the Hajo temple is the site of the winter pilgrimage of thousand of Buddhist Tibetans and Bhutanese on the ground that Shakyamuni attained Mahaparinirvana at Hajo, that the Vaishnava temple itself is a chortem called r-Tsa-mchg-gron (Tsamcho-dun), a rocky area a few kilometers away is considered the site of the Buddha's cremation called Silwa tsal-gi tur do (the pyre of the cool grove), that Buddhists also consider sacred a Shaiva Kedarnath temple on the shoulder of a hill nearby and call a lake beside the temple Tso-mani bhadra (the lake of the notable gem), see Ravi Deka's report filed in 2000 at <http://www.geocities.com/ravideka/archaeology.htm>, visited 2008/02/20

⁷² K.K.Dasgupta, 'Iconography of Tara', in D.C.Sircar ed. *The Sakti Cult and Tara*, University of Calcutta, 1967, 115-127.

⁷³ Monghyr Copper-Plate in Ramaranjan Mukherji and Sachindra Kumar Maity, *Corpus of Bengal Inscriptions*, 115-131.

⁷⁴ Hirananda Sastri, 'Nalanda Copperplate of Devapaladeva', *EI*, 17, 1923, 310-327.

⁷⁵ D. C. Sircar, 'The Tara of Candradvipa', in Sircar ed *The Sakti Cult*, 128-133.

⁷⁶ D. C. Sircar, *Some Epigraphical Records of the Medieval Period*, Abhinav Publications, New Delhi, 1979, 30-31

⁷⁷ See Bhattacharya, 'A New Pithipati' *ibid*, 455-57.

⁷⁸ For Khalji presence on the plains of Magadha, Gaur and foothills of the Himalayas between 1199 and 1227, see Jadunath Sarkar, *The History of Bengal: Muslim Period 1200-1757*, Patna, 1973, 1-38

⁷⁹ Sircar, *Some Epigraphical Records*, 31-32

⁸⁰ Enamul Haque, *Bengal Sculptures: Hindu Iconography Upto c 1250 AD.*, Bangladesh National Museum, Dhaka 1992, 143-44

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