



ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY
GENERAL STUDIES COURSE PROPOSAL COVER FORM

Course information:

Copy and paste current course information from Class Search/Course Catalog.

Academic Unit	<u>School of Historical, Philosophical & Religious Studies</u>		Department	<u>Religious Studies</u>	
Subject	<u>REL</u>	Number	<u>357</u>	Title	<u>Theravada Buddhism in South and Southeast Asia</u>
Is this a cross-listed course? If yes, please identify course(s)	<u>No</u>				
Is this a shared course? Course description:	<u>No</u>	If so, list all academic units offering this course _____			

Requested designation: Literacy and Critical Inquiry-L

Note- a separate proposal is required for each designation requested

Eligibility:

Permanent numbered courses must have completed the university's review and approval process.
For the rules governing approval of omnibus courses, contact the General Studies Program Office at (480) 965-0739.

Area(s) proposed course will serve:

A single course may be proposed for more than one core or awareness area. A course may satisfy a core area requirement and more than one awareness area requirements concurrently, but may not satisfy requirements in two core areas simultaneously, even if approved for those areas. With departmental consent, an approved General Studies course may be counted toward both the General Studies requirement and the major program of study.

Checklists for general studies designations:

- Complete and attach the appropriate checklist
- Literacy and Critical Inquiry core courses (L)
 - Mathematics core courses (MA)
 - Computer/statistics/quantitative applications core courses (CS)
 - Humanities, Fine Arts and Design core courses (HU)
 - Social and Behavioral Sciences core courses (SB)
 - Natural Sciences core courses (SO/SG)
 - Global Awareness courses (G)
 - Historical Awareness courses (H)
 - Cultural Diversity in the United States courses (C)

A complete proposal should include:

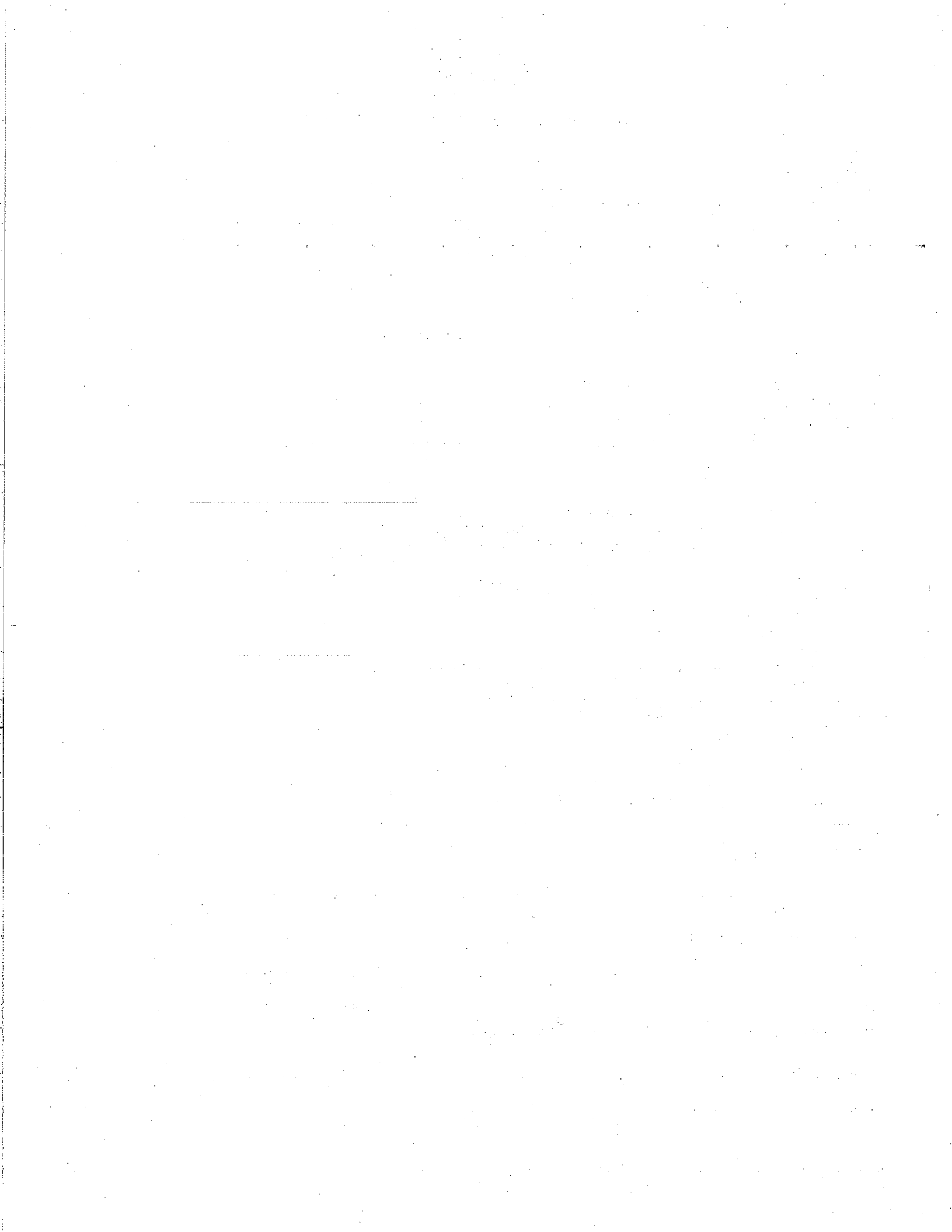
- Signed General Studies Program Course Proposal Cover Form
- Criteria Checklist for the area
- Course Catalog description
- Course Syllabus
- Table of Contents from the textbook and list of required readings/books

Contact information:

Name	<u>Cindy Baade</u>	Phone	<u>480-965-7183</u>
Mail code	<u>4302</u>	E-mail:	<u>cynthia.baade@asu.edu</u>

Department Chair/Director approval: (Required)

Chair/Director name (Typed):	<u>Matthew J. Garcia</u>	Date:	<u>1/29/14</u>
Chair/Director (Signature):	<u></u>		



Arizona State University Criteria Checklist for
LITERACY AND CRITICAL INQUIRY - [L]

Rationale and Objectives

Literacy is here defined broadly as communicative competence in written and oral discourse. **Critical inquiry** involves the gathering, interpretation, and evaluation of evidence. Any field of university study may require unique critical skills which have little to do with language in the usual sense (words), but the analysis of spoken and written evidence pervades university study and everyday life. Thus, the General Studies requirements assume that all undergraduates should develop the ability to reason critically and communicate using the medium of language.

The requirement in Literacy and Critical Inquiry presumes, first, that training in literacy and critical inquiry must be sustained beyond traditional First Year English in order to create a habitual skill in every student; and, second, that the skills become more expert, as well as more secure, as the student learns challenging subject matter. Thus, the Literacy and Critical Inquiry requirement stipulates two courses beyond First Year English.

Most lower-level [L] courses are devoted primarily to the further development of critical skills in reading, writing, listening, speaking, or analysis of discourse. Upper-division [L] courses generally are courses in a particular discipline into which writing and critical thinking have been fully integrated as means of learning the content and, in most cases, demonstrating that it has been learned.

Students must complete six credit hours from courses designated as [L], at least three credit hours of which must be chosen from approved upper-division courses, preferably in their major. Students must have completed ENG 101, 107, or 105 to take an [L] course.

Notes:

1. ENG 101, 107 or ENG 105 must be prerequisites
2. Honors theses, XXX 493 meet [L] requirements
3. The list of criteria that must be satisfied for designation as a Literacy and Critical Inquiry [L] course is presented on the following page. This list will help you determine whether the current version of your course meets all of these requirements. If you decide to apply, please attach a current syllabus, or handouts, or other documentation that will provide sufficient information for the General Studies Council to make an informed decision regarding the status of your proposal.

Proposer: Please complete the following section and attach appropriate documentation.

ASU - [L] CRITERIA			
TO QUALIFY FOR [L] DESIGNATION, THE COURSE DESIGN MUST PLACE A MAJOR EMPHASIS ON COMPLETING CRITICAL DISCOURSE--AS EVIDENCED BY THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:			
YES	NO		Identify Documentation Submitted
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	CRITERION 1: At least 50 percent of the grade in the course should depend upon writing, including prepared essays, speeches, or in-class essay examinations. <i>Group projects are acceptable only if each student gathers, interprets, and evaluates evidence, and prepares a summary report</i>	Syllabus: Assignments Mid-term sample attached
1. Please describe the assignments that are considered in the computation of course grades--and indicate the proportion of the final grade that is determined by each assignment.			
2. Also: <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> Please circle, underline, or otherwise mark the information presented in the most recent course syllabus (or other material you have submitted) that verifies this description of the grading process--and label this information "C-1". </div> C-1			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	CRITERION 2: The composition tasks involve the gathering, interpretation, and evaluation of evidence	Recommended reading list on Blackboard attached and detailed in syllabus course itinerary Resources for research topics suggested by syllabus
1. Please describe the way(s) in which this criterion is addressed in the course design			
2. Also: <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> Please circle, underline, or otherwise mark the information presented in the most recent course syllabus (or other material you have submitted) that verifies this description of the grading process--and label this information "C-2". </div> C-2			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	CRITERION 3: The syllabus should include a minimum of two substantial writing or speaking tasks, other than or in addition to in-class essay exams	200 word reflection post on readings for each class; see syllabus, assignments Final research paper of 12-15 pages; see syllabus, assignments

ASU - [L] CRITERIA

1. Please provide relatively detailed descriptions of two or more substantial writing or speaking tasks that are included in the course requirements

2. **Also:**

Please **circle, underline, or otherwise mark** the information presented in the most recent course syllabus (or other material you have submitted) that verifies **this description** of the grading process--and label this information "C-3".

C-3

ASU - [L] CRITERIA			
YES	NO		Identify Documentation Submitted
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>CRITERION 4: These substantial writing or speaking assignments should be arranged so that the students will get timely feedback from the instructor on each assignment in time to help them do better on subsequent assignments. <i>Intervention at earlier stages in the writing process is especially welcomed</i></p>	See course syllabus
<p>1. Please describe the sequence of course assignments--and the nature of the feedback the current (or most recent) course instructor provides to help students do better on subsequent assignments</p>			
<p>2. Also:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; margin: 10px auto; width: 80%;"> <p>Please circle, underline, or otherwise mark the information presented in the most recent course syllabus (or other material you have submitted) that verifies this description of the grading process--and label this information "C-4".</p> </div>			
<p>C-4</p>			

Course Prefix	Number	Title	Designation
REL 357	22594	Buddhism in South and Southeast Asia	L

Explain in detail which student activities correspond to the specific designation criteria. Please use the following organizer to explain how the criteria are being met.

Criteria (from checksheet)	How course meets spirit (contextualize specific examples in next column)	Please provide detailed evidence of how course meets criteria (i.e., where in syllabus)
C-1	More than 80% of the students' work is based on cumulative writing assignments. Prior to each class, students submit a 200 word reflection on the readings. There is an in-class exam asking students to define and explain with reference to an example core concepts in the Theravada Buddhist tradition. They also develop a portfolio consisting of a bibliography, an outline for their in-class presentation and research paper, and the actual research paper itself.	Syllabus: Assignments Mid-term sample attached
C-2	Writing assignments are structured to lead from reflecting on class reading assignments to developing a research focus. The final research paper will interpret readings assigned for class and other sources students identify, read to comprehend, and incorporate in their final research paper in which they gather, interpret and evaluate the sources used	Recommended readings list on Blackboard attached and detailed in syllabus course itinerary. Resources for research topics suggested in syllabus.
C-3	On each of the days before class meets, students will post a 200-word long critical reflection on readings assigned for the next day. This is to ensure that they comprehend and absorb substantive knowledge conveyed in this course. As this assignment progresses, students become more adept in articulating perspectives and specific approaches presented in the readings. In the course of the semester, students learn how to make cogent differentiations among the cases discussed.	200-word reflection post on readings for each class: See syllabus, assignments Final research paper of 12-15 pages: See syllabus, assignments.

C-4	In class discussion of readings provides students with opportunities to draw on their reflection posts in order to present contributions in class. This on-going and shared intervention solicits the constructive contribution of peers and provides opportunities for feedback from the instructor.	Syllabus
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REL 357 Theravada Buddhism in South and Southeast Asia

3 L & G

Examines Theravada Buddhist institutions, practices, and communities in ancient and contemporary south and southeast Asia.

Allow multiple enrollments:

No

Primary course component:

Lecture

Repeatable for credit: No

Grading method: Student

Option

Offered by: College of Liberal Arts and Sciences -- Historical, Philosophical & Religious Studies, Sch

Pre-requisites: Minimum 24 hours; ENG 102, 105 or 108 with C or better





SCHOOL OF
Historical, Philosophical
& Religious Studies

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

REL 357

Buddhism in South and Southeast Asia

Spring 2010, line number 22594

Instructor
Professor Schober
Coor 6646

TTH, 3-4:15 pm

Office Hours:
T, TH 2-3 pm and by appointment

Main Office – COOR 4595
480-7278027

UG Advisor: Cindy Baade
COOR 3311, 480-965-8364

e-mail: J.Schober@asu.edu

General Studies: L, HU, G

Course Description:

Today, more than 150 million people practice Theravada Buddhism. They live primarily in South and Southeast Asia and also maintain global networks among diasporas and convert communities all around the world, including Arizona. They are affected by the same kinds of global movements, politics and trends as other communities, but they interpret and attach meaning to them in light of their religious views.

This religion traces its genealogy to an early form of Buddhism, called Nikaya Buddhism. Its textual traditions are written in Pali and in local, vernacular languages. This form of Buddhist tradition has been foundational to the emergence of kingdoms and complex societies in South and Southeast Asia. It continues to be a dominant religion today in much of Sri Lanka and mainland Southeast Asia: Burma/Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, and some parts of Vietnam. It is very different from other branches of this religion in East Asia or in the West.

Buddhism has shaped cultures, institutions, practices, and communities in ancient and contemporary South and Southeast Asia. Contemporary Buddhist beliefs and practices continue to influence a wide range of social and cultural realities, ranging from art and architecture to cosmology, politics, and economics. Each week, we will explore a particular theme (e.g. classical cultures, education, ritual, meditation, gender, ecology, social justice, and so on) to help us understand the ways in which these religious and social practices have been articulated at specific moments in history.

Learning Outcomes:

In this course, you will learn about:

- The religious tenets, history and spread of Theravada Buddhism;
- The cultural and religious diversity within this form of Buddhism;
- its historical role in the emergence of institutions, kingdoms and states in South and Southeast Asia;
- Its contemporary influence on cultural practices and politics in modern South and Southeast Asian Societies;
- Global networks among diaspora and convert communities.

Assignments:

Assignments in this course build on each other to achieve the culminating portfolio. Active reading and critical thinking assignments lay the groundwork for learning and articulating what you have learned. Two weekly blog entries and active participation in class discussion equips students with the skill to articulate the materials covered and the basic knowledge they acquire about this religion and the region. The midterm tests for comprehension of cultural and religious concepts through short essay exams, reinforced by class presentations about on-going research projects, in progress, and quizzes. The portfolio documents this learning process with an outline of the research project presented in class, a bibliography, and eventually a completed research paper (12-15 pages).

Responses to readings (ca. 200 words per class), to be posted the day before class:	40 points	C-1
Participation in class, moderating discussion, and quizzes:	20 points	C-3
In-class midterm:	40 points	C-1
Research Portfolio (outline, bibliography and in-class presentation):	50 points	C-3
Final Research Paper:	50 points	C-1
Total:	200 points	C-3

Grading:

Grades are assigned in 10% intervals, i.e. A= 100-90%, B=89-80%; C=79-70%, D=69-60%, E=below 59%.

Required Reading:

- Strong The Buddha (2009)
- Swearer The Buddhist World of Southeast Asia (2009)
- Jordt Burma's Mass Lay Meditation Movement (2007)
- Essays on Blackboard (see reading assignments below)

Course Itinerary:

Week 1 (Jan. 19-21): The Basics

T: Introductions, course goals and expectations, navigating Blackboard
 TH. What do we study in Religious Studies: discourse/texts; institutions; lineages/transmission; community/ individuals; practice (see folder on Blackboard)

Week 2 (Jan. 26-28): The Individual Path

T: Biography of the Buddha: a paradigmatic narrative (read: Strong, ch.1 and 2)

TH: Rebirth and lineage; the previous lives of the Buddha (read: Strong, ch.3)

Recommended:

Sengpan: Recital of the Tham Vessantara-Jataka: A Social-Cultural Phenomenon in Kengtung, Eastern Shan State, Myanmar

Week 3 (Feb.2 and Feb.4): The Formation of Buddhist Communities

T: Discovering Nibbana, Teaching the Dhamma (read Strong ch. 4)

TH: Formation of lay and monastic communities (read Strong ch. 5)

Recommended:

Schober, "Venerating the Buddha's Remains in Burma: From Solitary Practice to the Cultural Hegemony of Communities." *The Journal of Burma Studies* 6 (2001):111-139.

Steven Berkwitz, *South Asian Buddhism*, ch.2 Foundations: Mainstream Buddhist Texts and Communities, p.33-67

Week 4 (Feb. 9 and 11): Sacred Objects and Sacred Space

T: Relics, Images and Cosmology (read Strong, Two Buddha Relic Traditions)

TH: Buddhist Cosmology; watch video on Blackboard and read; Swearer, Part I

Recommended:

Schober- "In the Presence of the Buddha: Ritual Veneration of the Burmese Mahamuni Image." In *Sacred Biography in the Buddhist Traditions of South and Southeast Asia*, ed. Juliane Schober, pp. 259-288. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997.

Melody Rod-Ari: Thailand: The Symbolic Center of the Theravada Buddhist World

Reynolds, Frank E. The Holy Emerald Jewel. Some Aspects of Buddhism, Symbolism and Political Legitimation in Thailand and Laos. In *Religion and Legitimation in Thailand, Laos and Burma*. Bardwell L. Smith (ed.). Chambersburg: Anima Books, 1978; 175-193

Week 5 (Feb. 16 and 18): The Classical Kingdoms of Southeast Asia

T: Court Culture and Hegemony: Kings and Buddhist Patronage (read Heine-Geldern),

TH: Why Stupas matter (read Penny Edwards: "Grounds for Protest: Placing Shwedagon Pagoda in Colonial and Postcolonial History." *Postcolonial Studies* 9, no. 2 (2006): 197-211)

Recommended:

Pattaratorn Chirapravati: *Buddhism and Thai Art*

Pimmada: *Stupa Worship: The Early Form of Thai Religious Tourism*

Philp, Janette, and David Mercer. "Politicised Pagodas and Veiled Resistance." *Urban Studies* 39, no.9, (2002: 1587-1610).

Week 6 (Feb. 23 and 25): Texts and Education:

T: Canonization and Difference in the Pali canon (Collins: "On the Very Idea of the Pali Canon." *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 15 (1990): 89-126.)

TH: Monastic Education (read: Dammasami: Growing but as a Sideline: An Overview of Modern Shan Monastic Education)

Recommended:

Seeger: Thai Buddhist Studies and the Authority of the Pali Canon

Meister: Burmese Monks in Bangkok: Opening an Abhidhamma School and Creating a Lineage

(Week 7 (March 2 and 4): Buddhist Practice:

T: The Rise of Lay Meditation (Jordt, p.1- 56)

TH: Meditation, Social Authority and the Economy of Merit (Jordt, p. 56 - 138)

Recommended:

Schober, "Religious Merit and Social Status among Burmese Lay Buddhist Organizations." In *Blessings and Merit in Mainland Southeast Asia*, eds. N. Tannenbaum and C. Kammerer, pp. 197-211. New Haven: Yale University, Southeast Asia Monograph Series, 1996.

Week 8 (March 9 and 11): Buddhist Utopias and Burmese Politics

T: Monks and Gender (Jordt, p.139-170)

TH: Mid-term

Springbreak

Week 9 (March 23 and 25): Hegemonies and Subjugations

T: Buddhism and minority cultures (read Lehman: The Central Position of the Shan/Thai Buddhism for the Socio-Political Development of Wa and Kayah Peoples)

TH: Buddhism and spirit cults (read: Schober; the 37 Spirit Lords)

Recommended:

Crosby, Streams of the Salween: Currents and Crosscurrents in the Study of Shan Buddhism

John Holt, Spirits of the Place, Hawai'i University Press, 2009

Week 10 (March 30 and April 1): Colonialism and Political Ideology

T: Buddhism and Colonialism (read: Swearer, part III, King,)

TH: Buddhism and the Political Ideologies of Modern Nation States (read: Borchert: Buddhism, Politics, and Nationalism in the Twentieth and Twenty-first Centuries)

Recommended:

Charles Hallisey : "Roads Taken and Not Taken." In *Curators of the Buddha: The Study of Buddhism under Colonialism*, ed, Donald S. Lopez, Jr., pp. 31-62, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

Stephen Berkwitz, South Asian Buddhism, ch.5 : Reappraisals

Week 11 (April 6 and 8): Modern Buddhist Formations

T: Buddhism in Modern Thailand (read: McDaniel, "Buddhism in Thailand: Negotiating the Modern Age." In *Buddhism in World Cultures: Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Steven Berkwitz, pp. 101-128. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2006)

TH: Buddhism and Violence in Sri Lanka (read: Abeysekera, Ananda. *The Saffron Army, Violence, Terror(ism): Buddhism, Identity, and Difference in Sri Lanka*. *Numen* 48, (1), 2001; 1-46.

Recommended:

Schober, Juliane. "Buddhism and Modernity in Myanmar." In *Buddhism in World Cultures: Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Steven Berkwitz, pp. 73-100. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2006

Schober, "Buddhist Just Rule and Burmese National Culture: State Patronage of the Chinese Tooth Relic in Myanmar." *History of Religions* 36, no. 3 (Feb. 1997): 218-243.

Swearer, "Thai Buddhism in the 21st Century: Contesting Views." In *Destroying Mara Forever: Buddhist Ethics Essays in Honor of Damien Keown*, ed. Charles Prebish and John Powers, Boulder, CO: Snow Lion Books, 2010.

Taylor, James. *Buddhism and Postmodern Imaginings in Thailand*. London: Ashgate, 2008.
Samuels: *Buddhism and Caste in India and Sri Lanka*

Week 12 (April 13 and 15): Buddhist Revival:

T: Reconstructing 'Ancient' Cambodian Buddhism (Marsten)

TH: Buddhism Globalism and Vietnam: (read: Chapman on Thich Nhat Hanh)

Week 13 (April 20 and 22): Socially Engaged Buddhism:

T: Buddhism and ecology (read Darlington and watch video on Thai forest monks)

TH: Buddhism and Social Justice (read Schober, Chapter 8 on the Saffron Revolution),

Week 14 (April 27 and 29) Buddhism and Gender:

T: The Changing Roles of Thai Buddhist Women: Obscuring Identities and Increasing Charisma (Religion Compass, Volume 3, Issue 5, Date: September 2009, Pages: 806-822, Martin Seeger)

TH: **Student presentations**, watch video on Blackboard (read Cook)

Recommended:

Women and the Sangha: A Twentieth-Century Case. In *The Experience of Buddhism. Sources and Interpretations*. John Strong (ed.). 3rd ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2008; 246-248.

Keyes, Charles F. Mother or Mistress but Never a Monk: Buddhist Notions of Female Gender in Rural Thailand. *American Ethnologist* 11 (2) May, 1984; 223-241.

Bartholomeusz, Tessa. *Women under the Bō Tree. Buddhist Nuns in Sri Lanka*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Mroczek: *A Robed Revolution: The Contemporary Buddhist Nun's (Bhiksuni) Movement*

Week 15 (May 4): Student presentations — C1

Suggested Research Topics and Resources:

Blackboard: For each week, there are accompanying folders found on Blackboard. In these folders, you will find essays assigned for readings, powerpoint presentations and audio-visual materials.

Lib guides: On the library website, you can link to lib guides on Southeast Asia and on Buddhism.

Buddhist Missionizing, Diasporas and Converts:

Christoph Emmrich 's work on Nepal

Western converts and immigrants: creating new local traditions:

Brooke Schedneck, Wandering Dharma Blog

Jeff Wilson: Mapping the American Buddhist Terrain: Paths Taken and Possible

Itineraries, Religion Compass, Volume 3, Issue 5, Date: September 2009, Pages: 836-846

Blue Color Buddha (video);

Buddhism and Violence:

Schober, "Buddhism, Violence, and the State in Burma (Myanmar) and Sri Lanka." In *Religion and Conflict in South and Southeast Asia: Disrupting Violence*, eds. Linell E. Cady and Sheldon W. Simon, pp. 51-69. New York: Routledge, 2007.

Abeysekara, Ananda. *Colors of the Robe: Religion, Identity and Difference*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2002.

Tambiah, Stanley J. *Buddhism Betrayed? Religion, Politics and Violence in Sri Lanka*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991.

Buddhism and Psychology:

Gilpin: The Use of Theravada Buddhist Practices and Perspectives in Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy

Buddhism, Ecology and the Environment:

Keown; Buddhism and Ecology: A Virtue Ethics Approach

Cooper: Buddhism and the Environment

Crosby: Kamma, Social Collapse, or Geophysics? Interpretations of Suffering among Sri Lankan Buddhists in the Immediate Aftermath of the 2004 Asian Tsunami

Buddhism and Charisma:

Tambiah, Forest Monks and Amulets

Orientalism and The Study of Theravada Buddhism:

Charles Keyes: "Weber and Anthropology." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 31 (2002): 233-255.

K. Pattana: Beyond the Weberian Trails: An Essay on the Anthropology of SE Asian Buddhism

Kate Crosby: Changing the Landscape of Theravada Studies;

Charles Hallisey : "Roads Taken and Not Taken." In *Curators of the Buddha: The Study of Buddhism under Colonialism*, ed., Donald S. Lopez, Jr., pp. 31-62, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

Richard King, *Orientalism and religion: postcolonial theory, India and 'the mystic East'*

Attendance, Make-ups:

Attendance is required. Make-up exams are given only if a prior arrangement has been made with your professor.

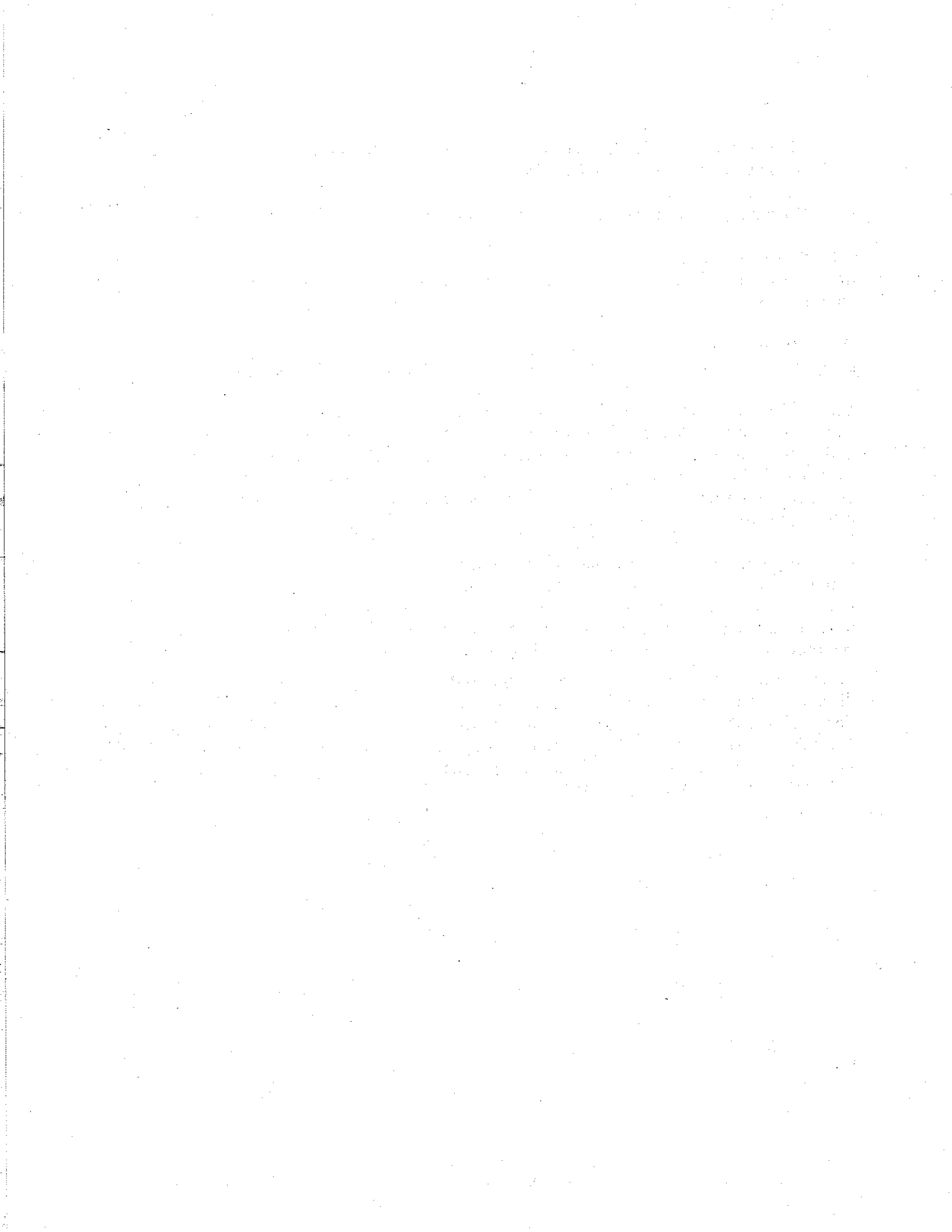
Withdrawals, and Incompletes

<http://www.asu.edu/aad/catalogs/general/ug-enrollment.html#grading-system>

Academic dishonesty: Academic honesty is expected of all students in all examinations, papers, laboratory work, academic transactions and records. The possible sanctions include, but are not limited to, appropriate grade penalties, course failure (indicated on the transcript as a grade of E), course failure due to academic dishonesty (indicated on the transcript as a grade of XE), loss of registration privileges, disqualification and dismissal. For more information, see <http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>.

Disability Accommodations: Qualified students with disabilities who will require disability accommodations in this class are encouraged to make their requests to me at the beginning of the semester either during office hours or by appointment. **Note:** Prior to receiving disability accommodations, verification of eligibility from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) is required. Disability information is confidential.

Establishing Eligibility for Disability Accommodations: Students who feel they will need disability accommodations in this class but have not registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) should contact DRC immediately. Their office is located on the first floor of the Matthews Center Building. DRC staff can also be reached at: 480-965-1234 (V), 480-965-9000 (TTY). For additional information, visit: www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc. Their hours are 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday.



L - Cadenä
C-1

Rel 357 – Spring 2010
Professor Schober

Your name: _____

Midterm

Define each term or concept and give an example of its use within the Theravada Buddhist traditions and cultural settings. Full credit is given only for responses that are complete, accurate, and concise. The total exam is worth 90 points (3 points per concept) or 25% of your grade. PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY!

1. Vessantara Jataka

2. Stupa

3. Rupakaya

4. Dhammakaya

5. Mara

6. Arahant

7. What is the full name of the current Buddha?

8. Maitreya

9. Sumedha

10. Paccekauddha

11. Asoka

12. Sasana

13. Cakkavatti

14. Tipitaka

15. Vinaya

16. yogi

17. Anatta

18. Anicca

19. Bhavana

20. Bhikkhu

21. Jhana

22. Nibbana

23. Parami

24. Metta

25. Samasara

26. Sila

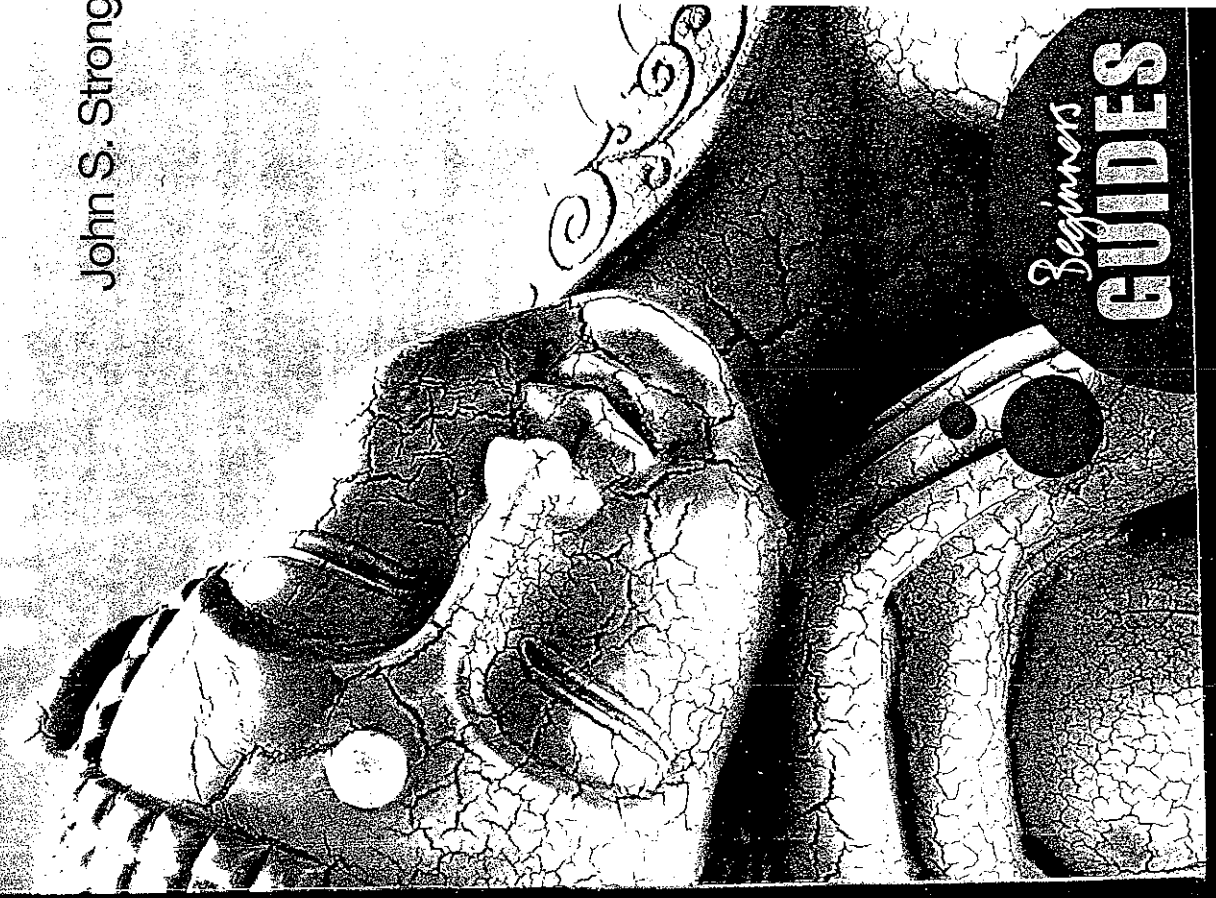
27. Sanghika

28. Pariyatti

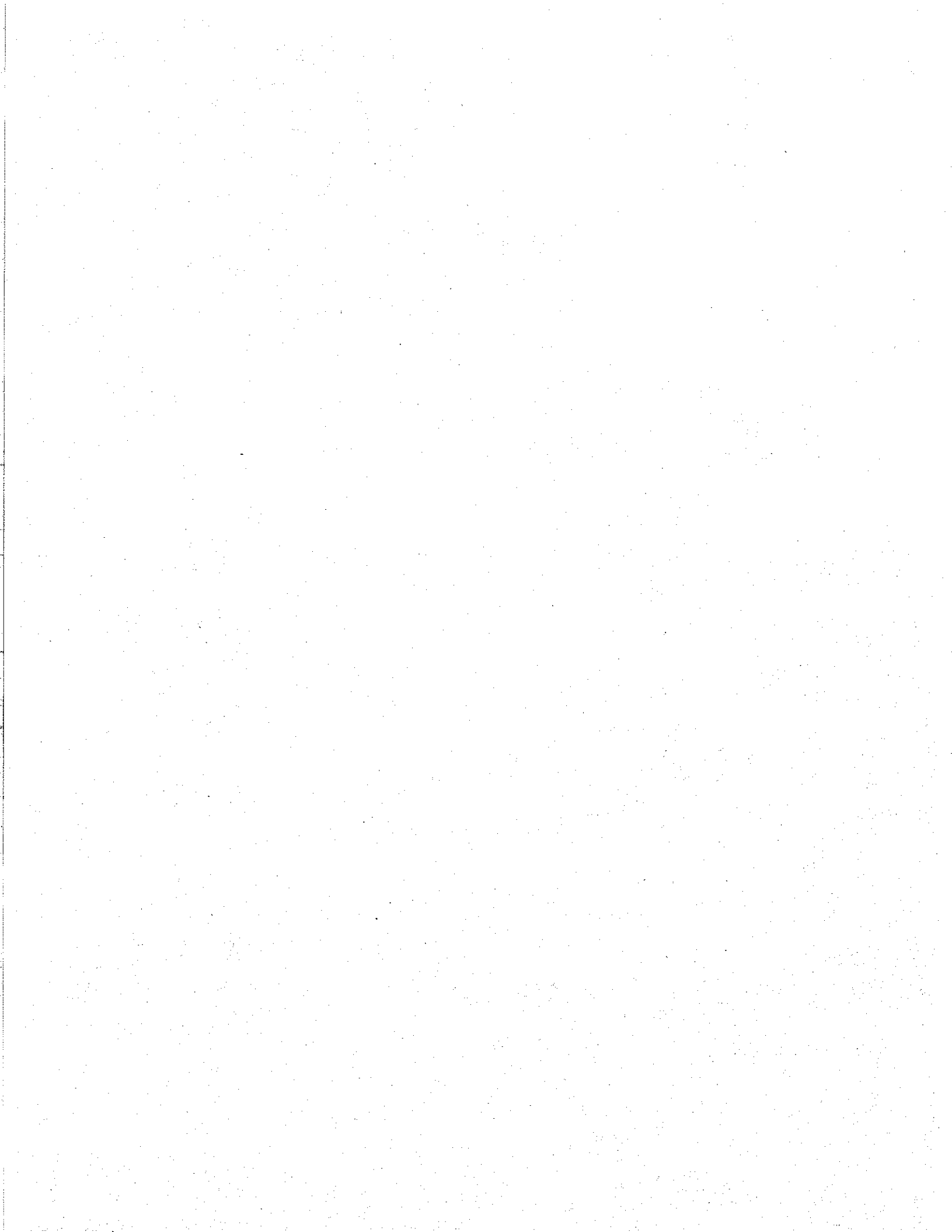
29. Pativedha

30. Patipatti

John S. Strong

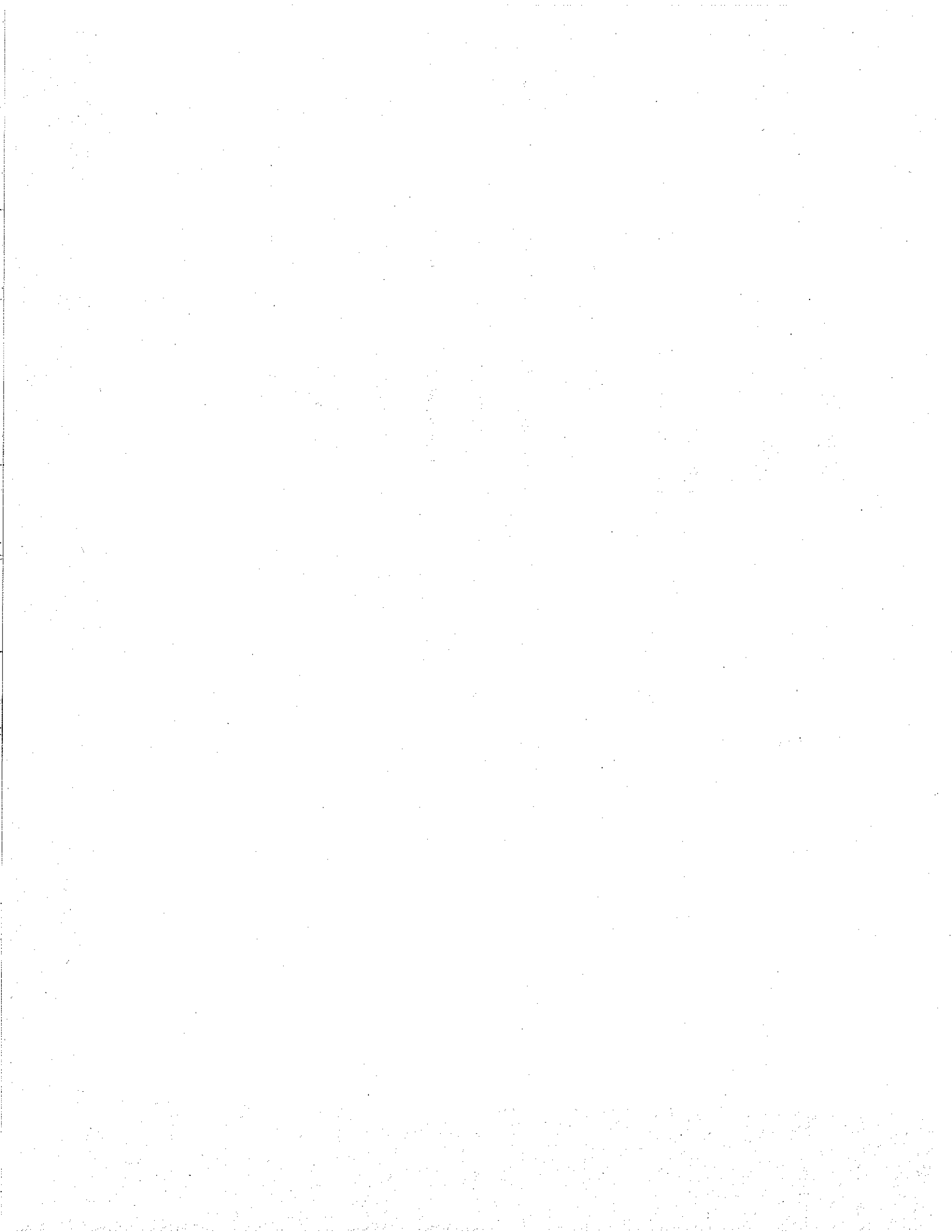


Beginner
GUIDES



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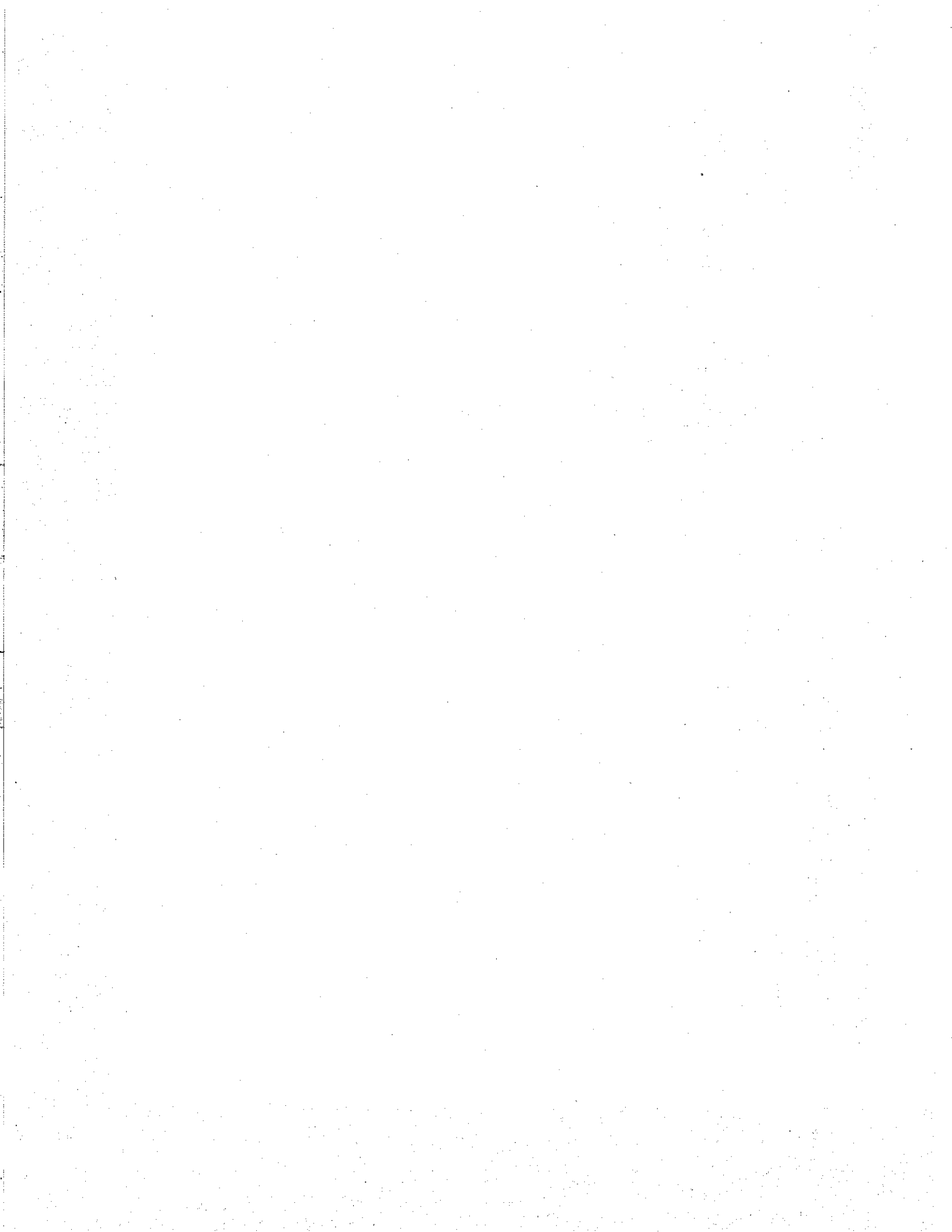
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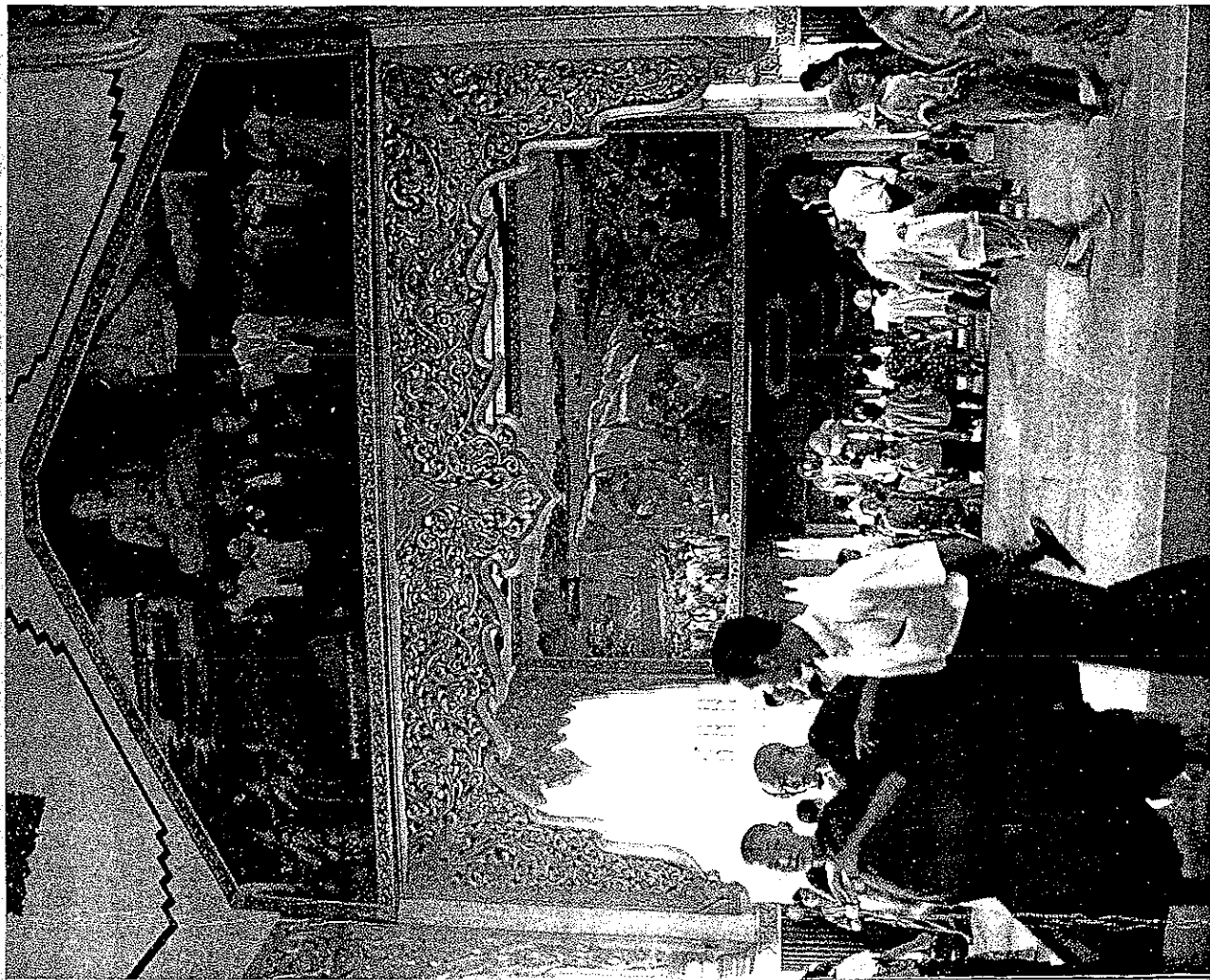
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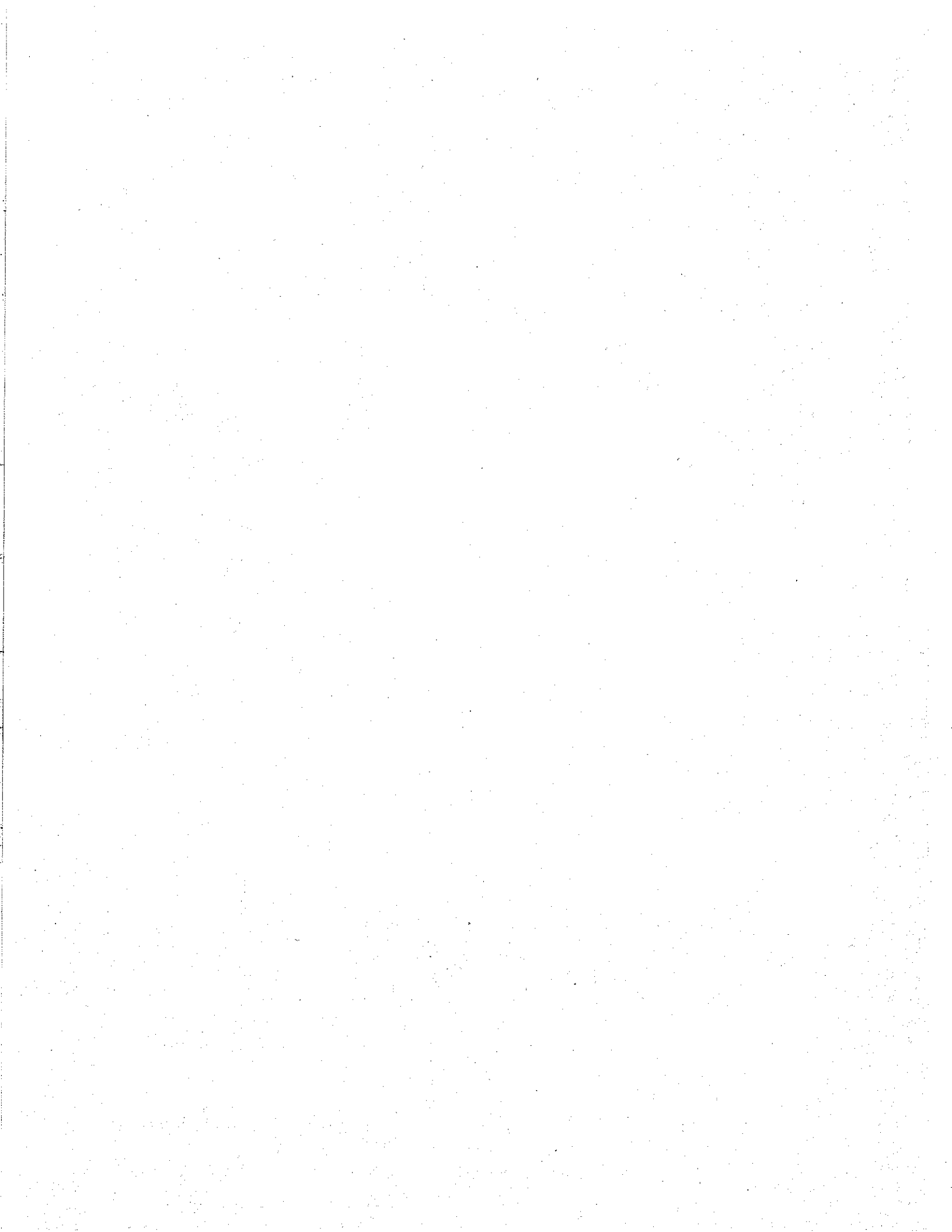


BURMA'S MASS LAY MEDITATION MOVEMENT

Buddhism and the Cultural Construction of Power



INGRID JORDT



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The **BUDDHIST**
WORLD *of Southeast Asia*

SECOND EDITION



DONALD K. SWEARER



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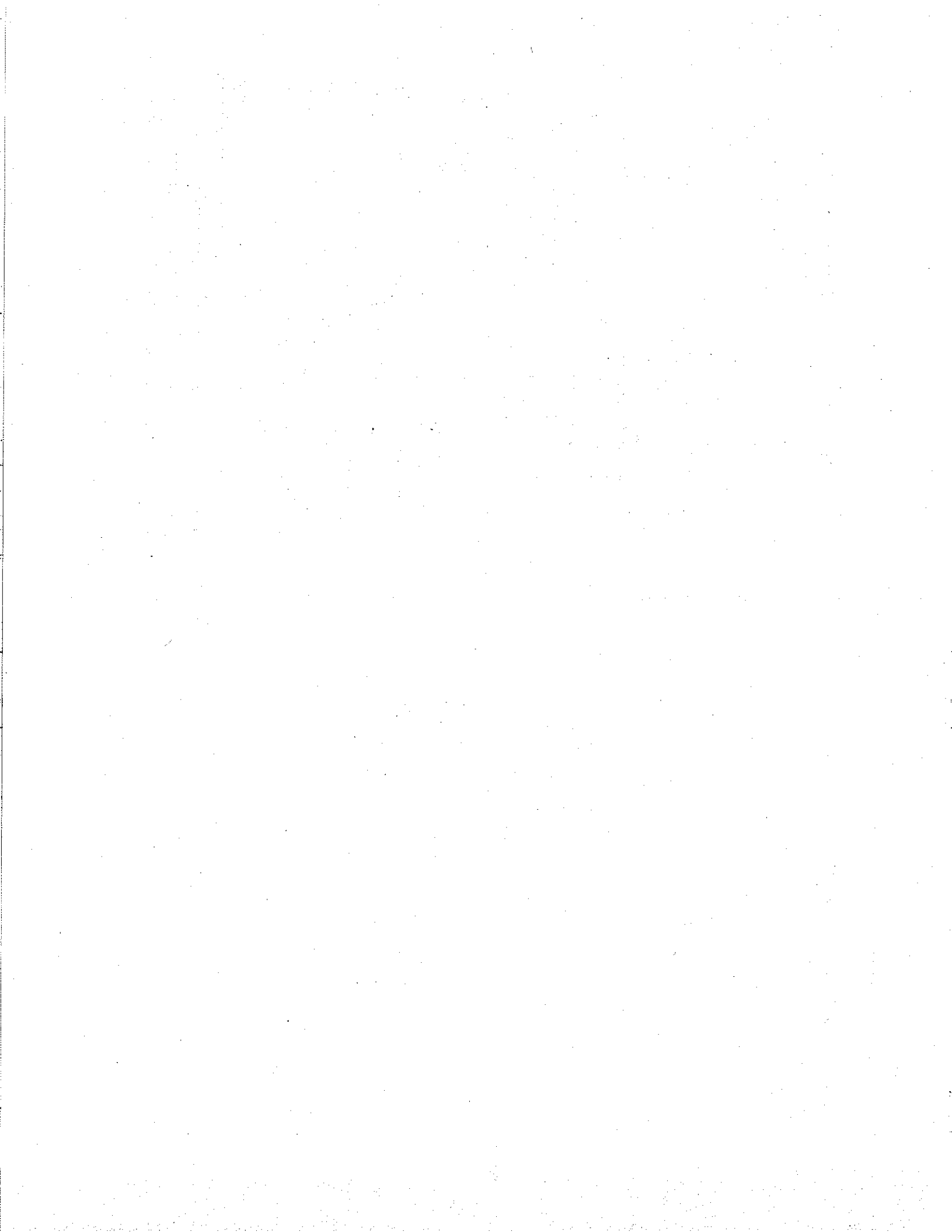


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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The Buddhist World of Southeast Asia is the result of my observation and long-term study of Theravada Buddhism. My interest in Buddhism began as a result of personal experience. In the late 1950s I spent two years in Bangkok, Thailand, where I lived in a Buddhist culture and taught at a Christian college and a Buddhist monastic university. Since that time I have spent several sabbatical leaves in Thailand with shorter stays or visits in Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Cambodia, and Laos. Although my understanding of Buddhism has benefited from the work of scholars from different disciplines, this monograph also reflects my personal experience in Thailand and Southeast Asia. This experience is informed by teaching in the liberal arts college classroom, the primary context in which I have spent most of my academic career. My approach to Buddhism, especially its expression in Thailand, is a multidisciplinary approach integrated with a personal appreciation of its depth of meaning and diversity of expression. This monograph is written for readers who wish to study Buddhism, not simply as a normative doctrinal system, but as a historically and culturally contextualized religious tradition, or to put it another way, Buddhism as a *lived* tradition.

This study of Buddhism offers a broad, holistic analysis of the Buddhist tradition as it has been shaped within the historical and cultural milieu of Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka. Diverse forms of Buddhism took root in Southeast Asia, but from the twelfth century C.E., the branch of Buddhism known as Theravada or "Teaching of the Elders," with its extensive and diverse scriptural canon written in the Pali language, gradually assumed a dominant religious and cultural role.¹ Historical evidence from major archaeological



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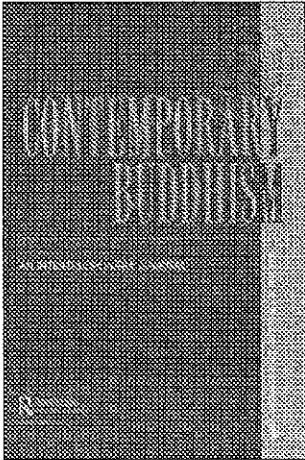
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Recital Of The *Tham Vessantara-jĀtaka*: A Social-cultural Phenomenon In Kengtung, Eastern Shan State, Myanmar

Sengpan Pannyawamsa

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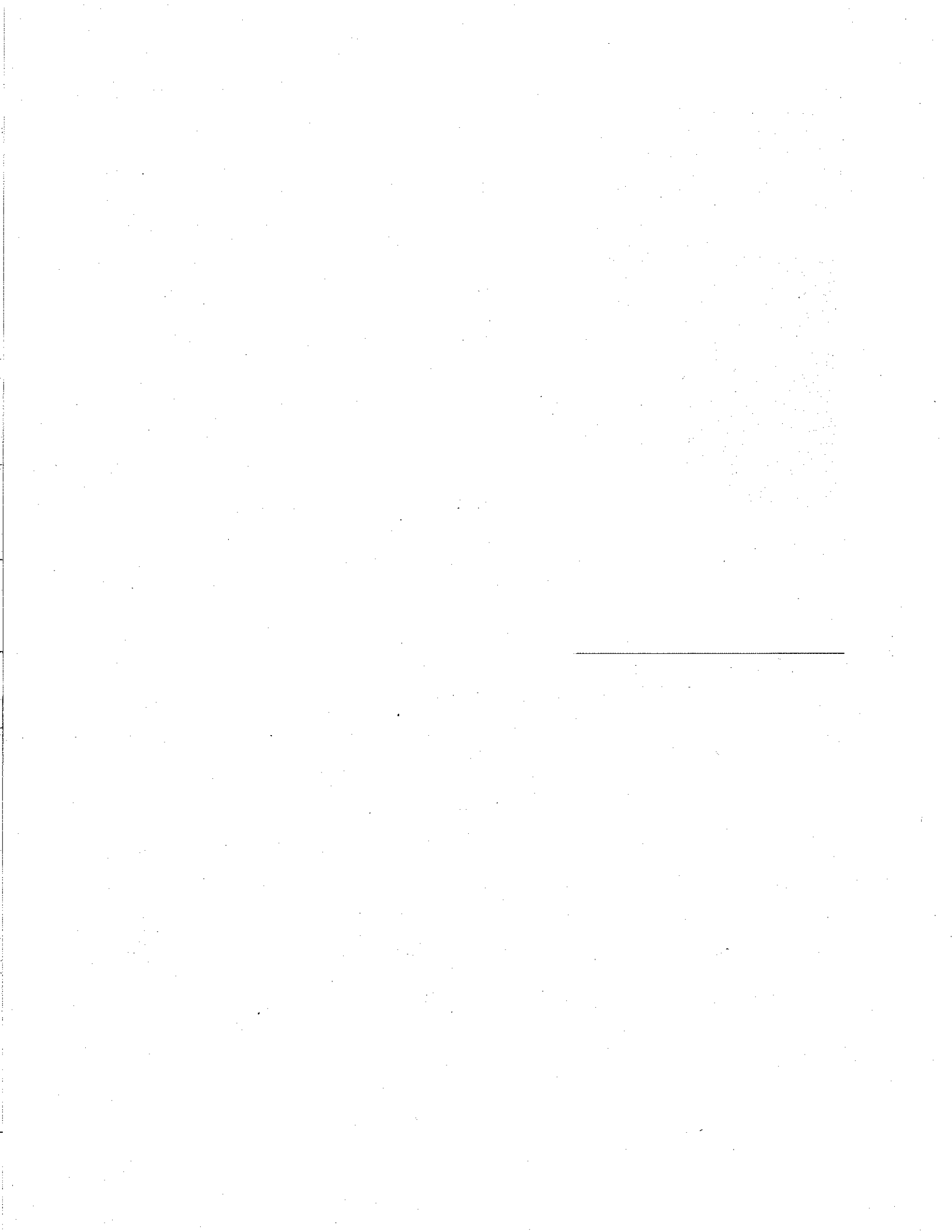
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RECITAL OF THE *THAM VESSANTARA-JĀTAKA*: A SOCIAL-CULTURAL PHENOMENON IN KENGTUNG, EASTERN SHAN STATE, MYANMAR

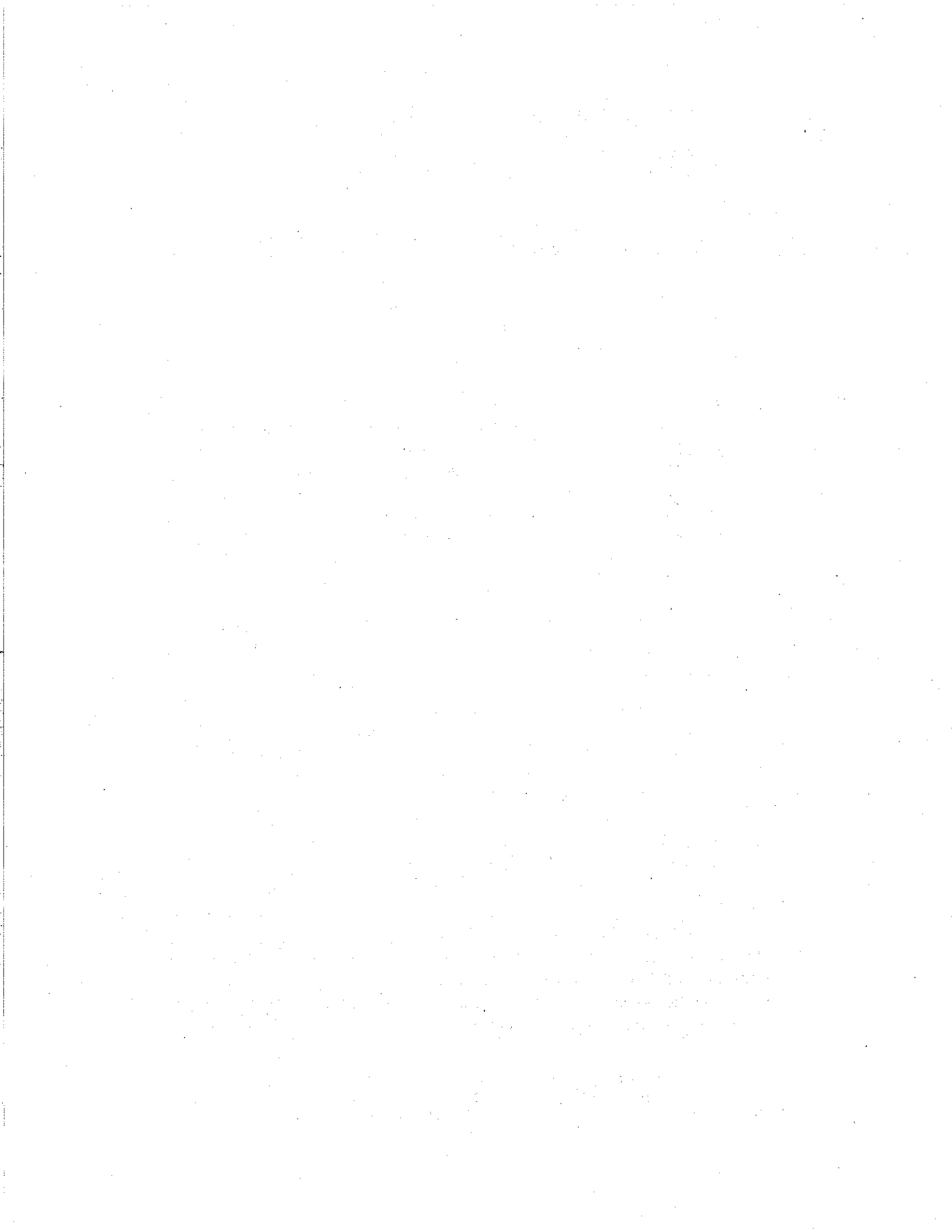
Sengpan Pannyawamsa

The Vessantara Jātaka is possibly the single most important and widely known Buddhist text in South East Asia. It relates the life story of the bodhisatta in his final life before birth in historical time as Siddhattha Gotama. It exemplifies the cardinal virtue of generosity as it shows the hero prepared to give away everything that is most precious to him, including wife and children, in pursuit of Buddhist virtue. This powerfully emotive story is very popular in the Theravada countries of South and South East Asia, where its formal recitation, taking a minimum of three days, is regarded as highly meritorious and sponsorship of such performances a valued form lay patronage and participation. This paper is a study of the context and process of such recitation, as observed in Kentung, Eastern Shan State, and an appraisal of its role in communal life in the region.

Introduction

The recitation of the *Tham Vessantara-jātaka* (*ThVJ*) (*Jātaka* No. 547) is highly honoured and valued by people of all walks of life in Kengtung. It is the most expensive form of *dāna* (offering).¹ People work hard to save enough to sponsor a recitation. It takes years for some families to make their dream come true. Some of them are even in debt after sponsoring it due to excessive spending on offerings.² People do not feel fulfilled if they have not sponsored such an offering once in their lifetime. Any family that is able to sponsor this kind of performance is praised and honoured for their generosity (Ritphen, 238–240). They believe that this kind of merit-making brings good luck to oneself and one's family and relatives in this life and the life after.

The recitation of the *ThVJ* usually takes three days or more depending on the wealth of the sponsors. A day before and a day after, other *Jātakas* or *suttas* are recited. The *ThVJ* recitation occupies an entire day, from predawn to about seven or eight in the evening. Sermons are also preached before the libation water is poured by the chief devotee to commemorate the donation and mark the



Thailand: The Symbolic Center of the Theravada Buddhist World

MELODY ROD-ARI

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AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Melody Rod-Ari is currently a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Art History at the University of California at Los Angeles specializing in Thai Buddhist art. Rod-Ari's dissertation examines the art and architecture of the Temple of the Emerald Buddha in Bangkok, Thailand.

Introduction

The Temple of the Emerald Buddha in Bangkok is considered the most sacred temple in Thailand. The temple's sanctity is derived from its enshrinement of the Emerald Buddha, the nation's religious and political palladium, for which the temple is named. Chronicles explain that the Emerald Buddha was fashioned from the *Chakkavatti's* (Universal World Ruler) wish granting jewel, so that the image came to embody potent symbols of Buddhism and kingship through its form and medium. Its enshrinement in Bangkok symbolically marks the Temple of the Emerald Buddha as a Buddhist center, and its keeper, the King of Thailand, as the ultimate religious and political leader.

Prior to its enshrinement at the Temple of the Emerald Buddha in 1784, the Emerald Buddha was described in chronicles as having traveled to important Buddhist centers throughout South and Southeast Asia. This paper focuses on the sacred geography that the Emerald Buddha has created through its movements, arguing that this geography, along with the royal patronage of the temple where it is enshrined, is an important religious and political tool for the self-promotion of Thai Kings and the promotion of Thailand as the sacred center of modern-day Theravada Buddhism.

Mapping the History, Significance and Movements of the Emerald Buddha

The importance of the Emerald Buddha image as a religious and political palladium is derived, in part, from descriptions of it in chronicles.¹ These chronicles include the *Ratanabimbavamsa*, *Jinakalamali*, and *Amarakatabuddharupanidana*.² It is important to note that these chronicles all have their origins in modern-day Thailand and Laos. While these chronicles and later commentaries would like the reader to believe that the Emerald Buddha has importance throughout the Theravada Buddhist world, it is only in Thailand and Laos that the icon has had any real religious and political impact.³

Overall, the chronicles vary slightly on details of the Emerald Buddha's travels, but they unanimously agree on matters of the icon's genesis.⁴ The chronicles explain that the crafting of the icon was intended to preserve the teachings of the Buddha after his *parinibbana* (final nirvana). With the help of the god Indra and the celestial architect and craftsman Vishnukamma, a jewel belonging to the Universal World Ruler was secured by the monk Nagasena in 44 BCE.⁵ On this same date, Vishnukamma carved the jewel into the likeness of the Buddha in the Deva heaven (heaven of celestial beings), and proceeded to descend to the ancient Buddhist capital of Pataliputra,



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Buddhism and Thai Art

Pattaratorn Chirapravati*

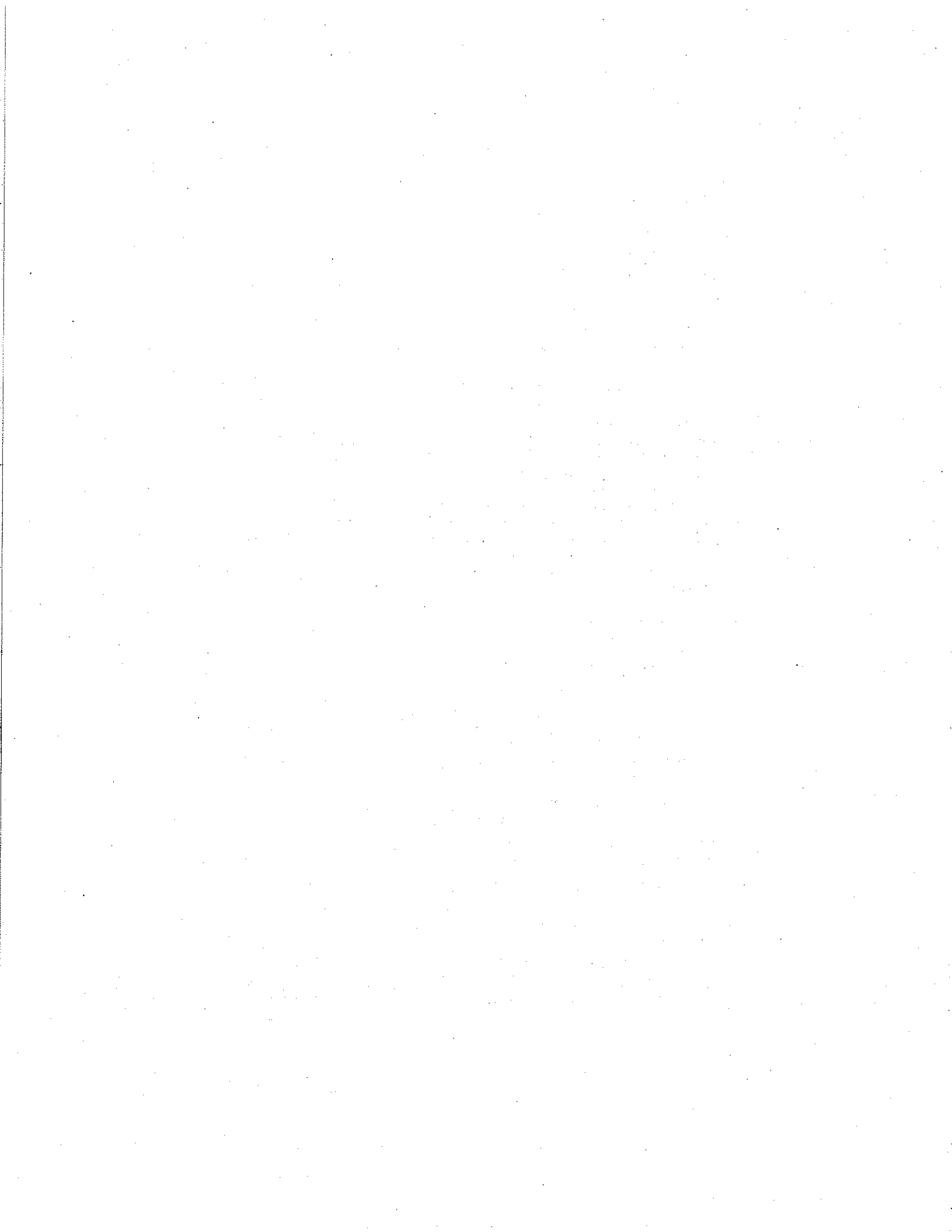
California State University, Sacramento

Abstract

The last few years have been exciting for the field of Thai art history because of new archaeological discoveries and publications that have shed new light on several periods and subjects. New art history books range from highly technical books written for specialists like Hiram Woodward to less technical books, written by specialists, but for general readers, such as Betty Gosling's book *The Origins of Thai Art*, guidebooks written by specialists for a wide audience that includes scholars and educated tourists such as Dawn Rooney's book, *Ancient Sukhothai: Thailand's Cultural Heritage*, and art exhibition catalogues written by specialists for museum goers and scholars such as Forrest McGill's catalogue, *The Kingdom of Siam: The Art of Central Thailand, 1350–1800*. New light has also been shed on the field of Buddhism in Thailand, scholars such as Peter Skilling, Steve Collions, Donald Swearer, Justin McDaniel, Leedom Lefferts, and Bonnie Brereton published new translations of texts, compiled dictionaries, and studied ritual practices in relations to texts and objects. At the same time, Buddhist scholars and anthropologists have incorporated Buddhist art and architecture in their studies of texts and rituals. This article will offer a critical overview of the relation between the study of art and Buddhism in Thailand.

Introduction

The last few years have been exciting for the field of Thai art history because of recent publications that have shed new light on several periods and subjects. These new art history books range from highly technical books written for specialists such as *The Art and Architecture of Thailand* by Hiram Woodward, Jr. (E. J. Brill, 2003), to less technical books written by specialists for general readers such as Betty Gosling's book *The Origins of Thai Art* (River Books, 2006), guidebooks written by specialists for a wide audience that includes scholars and educated tourists such as Dawn Rooney's book *Ancient Sukhothai: Thailand's Cultural Heritage* (River Books, 2007), and art exhibition catalogues written by specialists for museum goers and scholars such as Forrest McGill's catalogue *The Kingdom of Siam: The Art of Central Thailand, 1350–1800* (Snoeck Publishers, Buppha Press, Art Media Resources Inc., and The Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, 2005). In addition, scholars have participated and contributed



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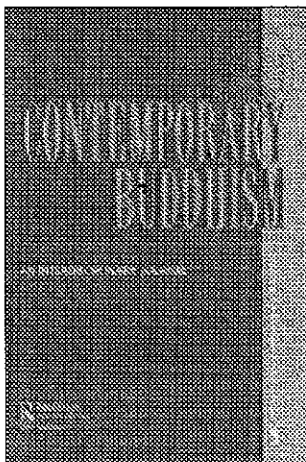
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***Stūpa* Worship: The Early Form of Tai Religious Tourism**

Dr Pimmada Wichasin

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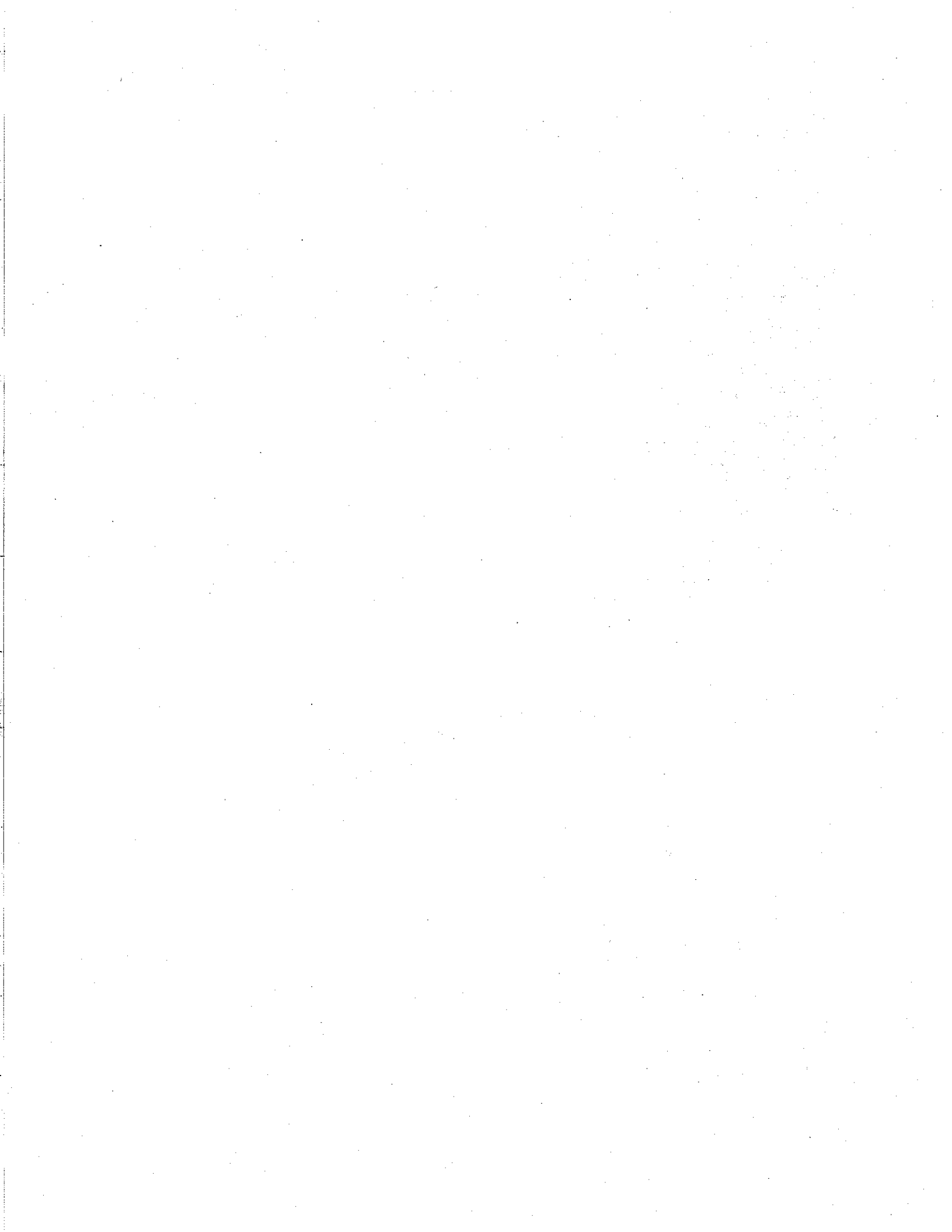
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STŪPA WORSHIP: THE EARLY FORM OF TAI RELIGIOUS TOURISM

Dr Pimmada Wichasin

Pilgrimage and tourism can be related to each other, especially religious tourism. It can be said that pilgrimage is considered an early form of religious tourism due to the fact that these two share similar aspects. The relationship of pilgrimage and tourism with the emphasis on the case of stūpa worship is illustrated in this paper. Stūpa worship is regarded to be an early form of both the pilgrimage and tourism of Tai. The 'Tai' in this context refers to those who share Lanna cultural features such as Tai Lanna, Tai Lue, Tai Yai, Tai Khuen, and Laos.

Pilgrimage as religious tourism

Pilgrimage is a religious phenomenon existing in all main religions of the world: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism and Islamism. Barber defined pilgrimage as 'a journey resulting from religious causes, externally to a holy site, internally for spiritual purposes and internal understanding' (1993, 1). Leeming and Odajnyk (2001, 269) suggest that pilgrimage involves three essential steps. The first step involves the significant separation through pilgrimage from home and ordinary life and a journey to a sacred centre. This separation can be identified with clothes, ritual or any unusual behaviour. The second step is the interaction with the sacred as with ritual acts. The third step is the return home, which is always marked by a sense of renewal.

Pilgrimage has often been linked with tourism. It might be said that the pilgrimage should be seen as the earliest form of travelling (Cohen 2004). In the context of tourism, most researchers refer to the pilgrim as a religious tourist (for example, Kaplan and Bar-On 1991; Smith 1989, 1992; Turner and Turner 1978). One of the reasons is that pilgrimage provides a mix of pious and pleasurable states through the means of travel. With the exception of the devotional aspect, pilgrimage involves sightseeing, travelling and visiting different places. Besides, the nature of tourist experience shares some similarity with the essential steps of pilgrimage. For example, MacCannell claims that the tourist can be compared with the modern-day pilgrim because they make a journey to experience a quest for authenticity (MacCannell 1973 cited in Collins-Kreiner and Kliot 2000).



GROWING BUT AS A SIDELINE: AN OVERVIEW OF MODERN SHAN MONASTIC EDUCATION

Venerable Khammai Dhammasami

This short article gives an account of the modern Shan Buddhist monastic education system, previously an unexplored area. Under the pressure to develop along the line of its Burmese counterpart, with the narrowly defined, government-sponsored written examination-based education system, the Shan monastic education system turns away from its century-old literary heritage, lik-laung, and it has yet to be officially recognised by the state in its existence of half a century.

Background

I have argued elsewhere that the decline of in-depth study in monastic education in Burma and Thailand has been due mainly to the loss of control by the monastic educationists to the state that introduced state-controlled written examinations in the mid-seventeenth century (Dhammasami 2007, 10–25). The formal examinations were introduced to stop conscripts from joining the monastic order during times the two countries were at war. The introduction of the formal examinations meant that individual teaching monasteries handed over to the temporal authority the power to design their own syllabuses, which a normal university enjoys today. While the state-controlled, or state-sponsored, depending on how you see it, examinations were held only in the capital for the first two centuries, they were later expanded to the provinces: in Thailand under King Rama V (1868–1910) as a part of his centralization programme, and in Burma under the British colonial government as a part of their pacification policy to bring back normalcy. Since then, monastic education in those two countries has gradually come to be confined to narrow syllabuses of the state-controlled examinations. The main examinations were known in Burma as *Pathamapyan* and in Thailand as *parian*. Both countries have since extended these examinations: in Burma to a higher level called *Dhammācariya* degree, and in Thailand to a lower level called *nak tham*.



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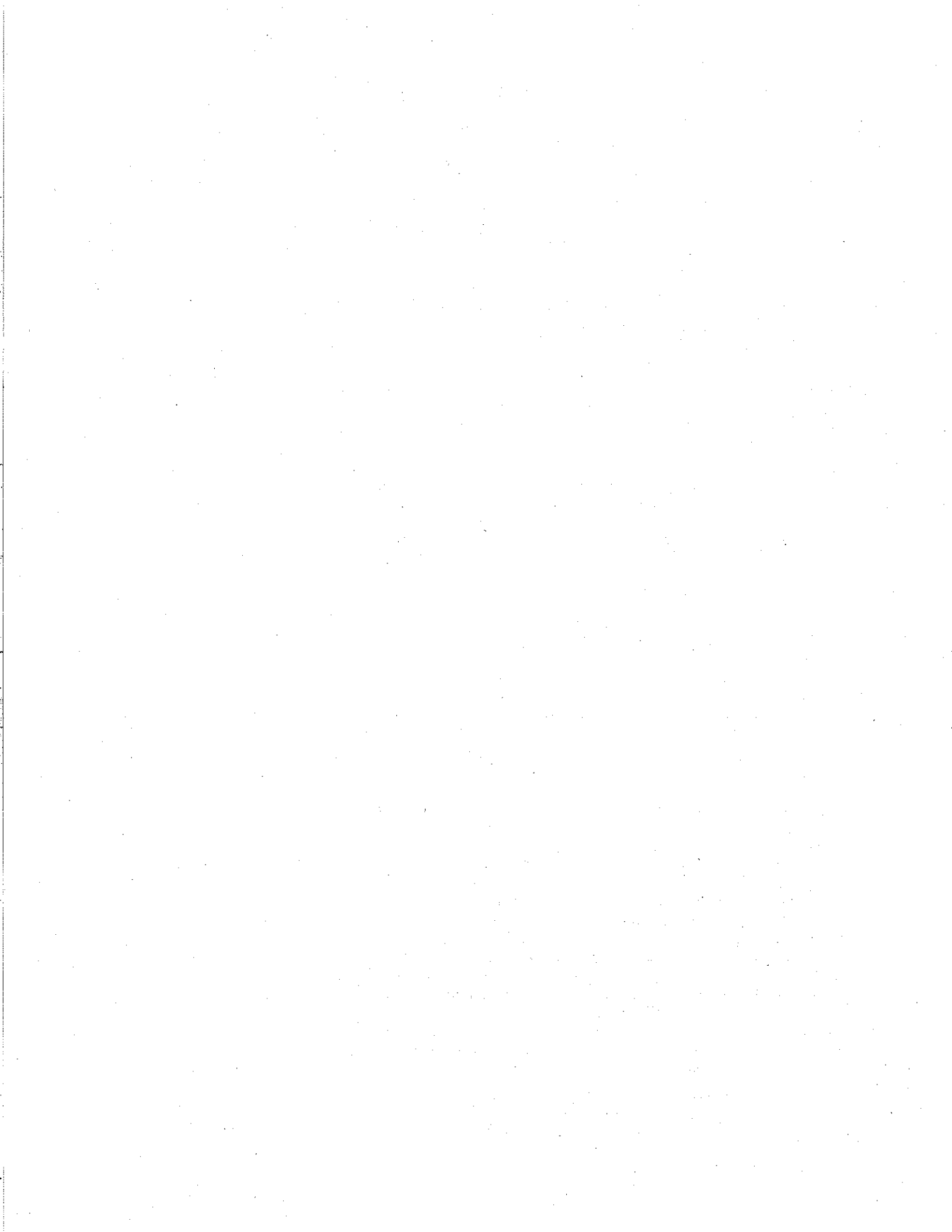
THAI BUDDHIST STUDIES AND THE AUTHORITY OF THE PĀLI CANON¹

Martin Seeger

In Thai Buddhism, a high number of examples show that during the last 20 years or so the triangular interrelationship between hermeneutics, canonical authenticity and authority has been—more or less consciously—the subject of numerous, often very fervent debates. This has made clear the importance of the Pāli canon as a centre of reference for normative and formative authority in Thai society. Also, during these debates the conservatism of Thai Theravāda, and thereby its identity, has been challenged in various ways, e.g. by Western influenced text-critical or intertextual approaches, by reference to superior religious insight and by requests for feminist interpretations of the Pāli canon. At the same time, however, and in response to these challenges, the rationale for Thai Theravāda's conservatism and identity have become very clearly articulated, to an extent that has arguably never happened before in Thai history. By looking at some of the debates in which the foremost Thai Buddhist thinker and scholar monk P. A. Payutto (1939–) has been involved, I seek to gain a deeper understanding of what these debates can teach us about the specific context and state of Thai Buddhist studies.

Introduction

Due to its complex structure and historical development, the Pāli canon contains a great number of diverse concepts and teachings that might be interpreted quite divergently or even as contradictions. At the same time, however, there is a substantial number of canonical texts that are expressing a concern against doctrinal fragmentation and warning against various dangers to the longevity of the religion (*sāsana*) and distortion of original meaning.² For Theravāda, painstaking conservatism (i.e., working against erosion by the passage of time) has become their programme; the foundation of their identity. In this tradition, anachronism is deliberately accepted and laboriously sustained for the sake of preserving an originality that is taken for granted. In order to prevent the loss of originality, quite a number of mechanisms had been incorporated into the Pāli canon and post-canonical texts that were to help to work against deliberate manipulation or oblivion of original meaning. The so-called Four 'mahāpadesas' (the 'Great Authorities') that occur twice in the Pāli canon are



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Burmese Monks in Bangkok: Opening an Abhidhamma School and Creating a Lineage

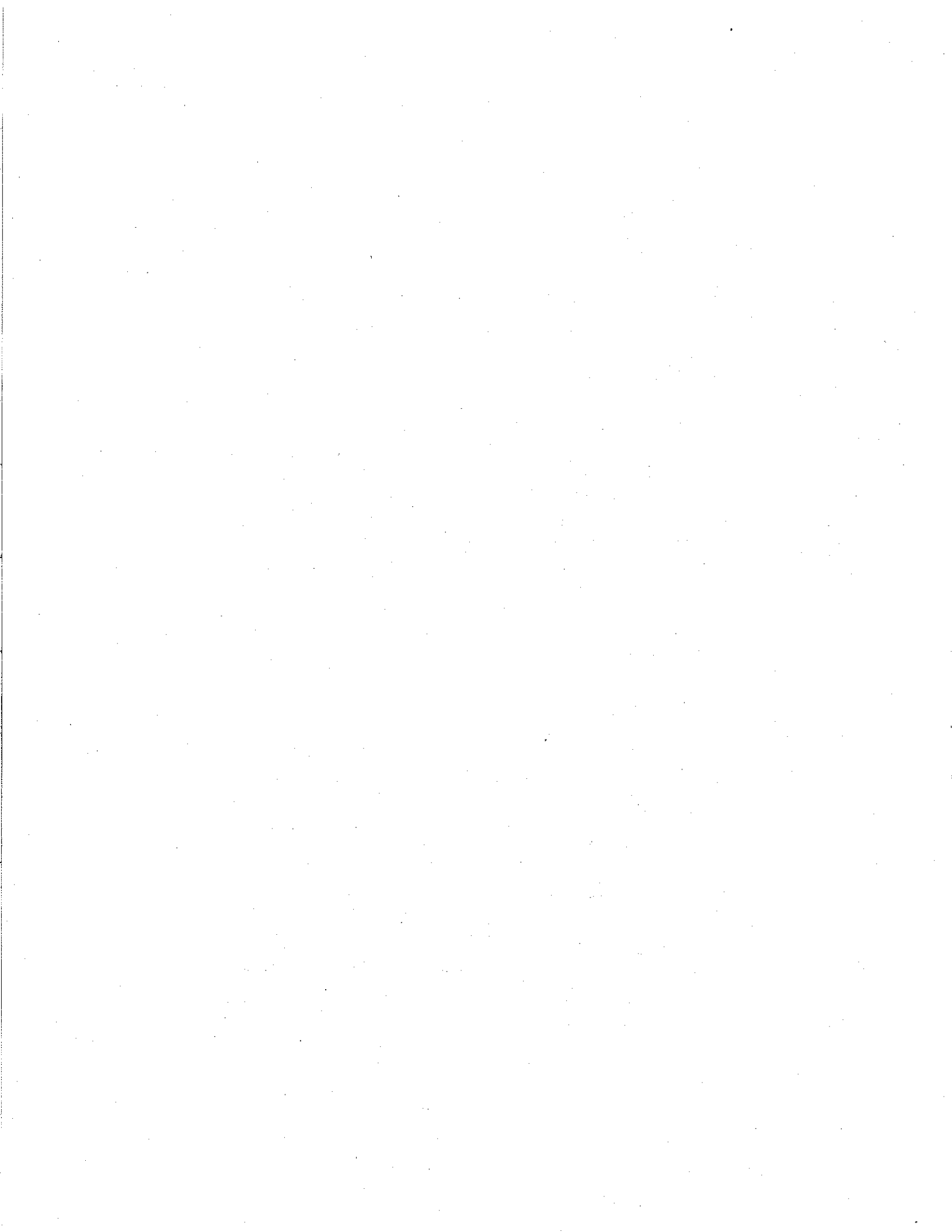
Kelly Meister*

University of California, Riverside

Abstract

In 1951, a small group of Thai monks went to explore the propagation of Buddhism in Burma. After being inspired by the Burmese methods of teaching Buddhist dhamma, the Abhidhamma-Jotika College was founded by Venerable Sayadaw Saddhammajotika Dhammācāriya, a Burmese monk commissioned to initiate Abhidhamma education in Bangkok. In fact, according to the college's history, prior to the founding of the Abhidhamma-Jotika College, Thailand lacked any formal training institution specifically dedicated to the study of the Abhidhamma, and thus for the means, materials, and teachers to enable the study of this 'basket' of the *Tipiṭaka*, Thais looked to the Burmese. It is common to hear about the negative history of warfare and animosity between the Thai and Burmese. However, in order to fully understand the relationships between the two, particularly regarding Buddhist practice and study in Thailand, it is crucial to understand the very positive respect given by Thai Buddhists to the Burmese. This paper will look at the Abhidhamma-Jotika College as an exemplifier of how, through Phra Saddhammajotika, a unique lineage was born in Thailand. Through this lineage the students of the Abhidhamma-Jotika College continue to identify with the ethnicity of their Burmese founder and, moreover, believe they are participating in 'something Burmese'.

In 1951, a small group of Thai monks traveled north to Burma to explore the ways in which the Burmese educated themselves on Buddhist dhamma. They were impressed. In particular, they wished to import the Burmese methods of Abhidhamma education to Thailand, and, thus, requested Burmese monks to come to Bangkok and open an Abhidhamma school. With the opening of the school, the Abhidhamma-Jotika College, a new lineage of Buddhist practitioners emerged. As with many other Buddhists in Thailand, the students of the Abhidhamma-Jotika College retain a lineage traced back to their teacher. However, unlike other Buddhist lineages in Thailand, the Burmese ethnicity of the college's founder is continually reaffirmed as the teachers and students of the school believe they are participating in 'something Burmese'.¹



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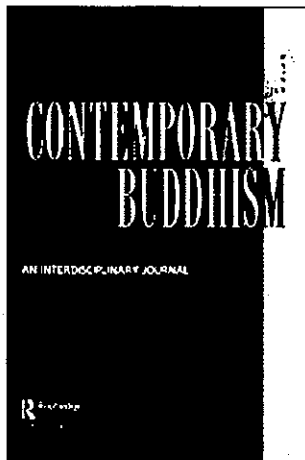
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The Central Position of the Shan/Tai Buddhism for the Socio-Political Development of Wa and Kayah Peoples

Chit Hlaing (F. K. Lehman)

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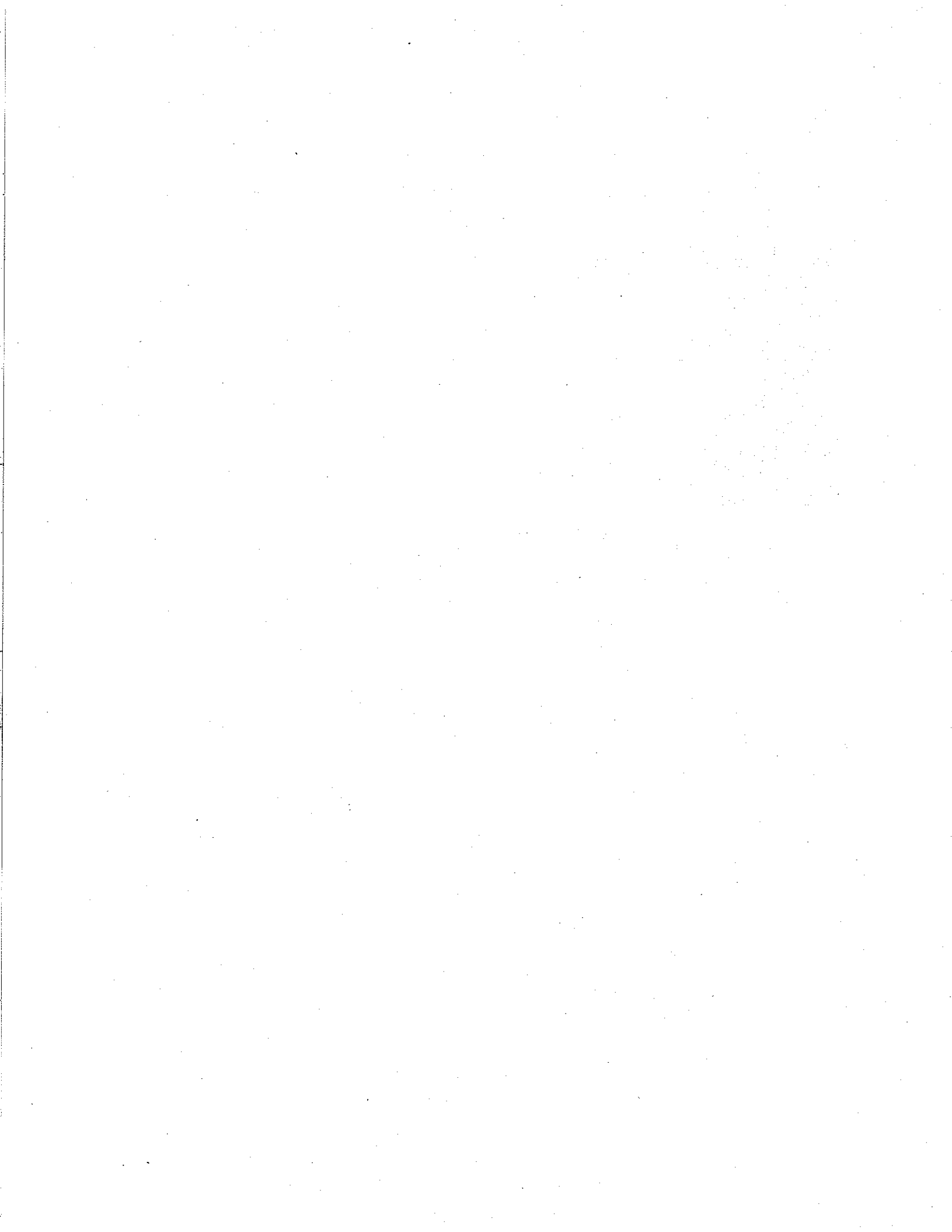
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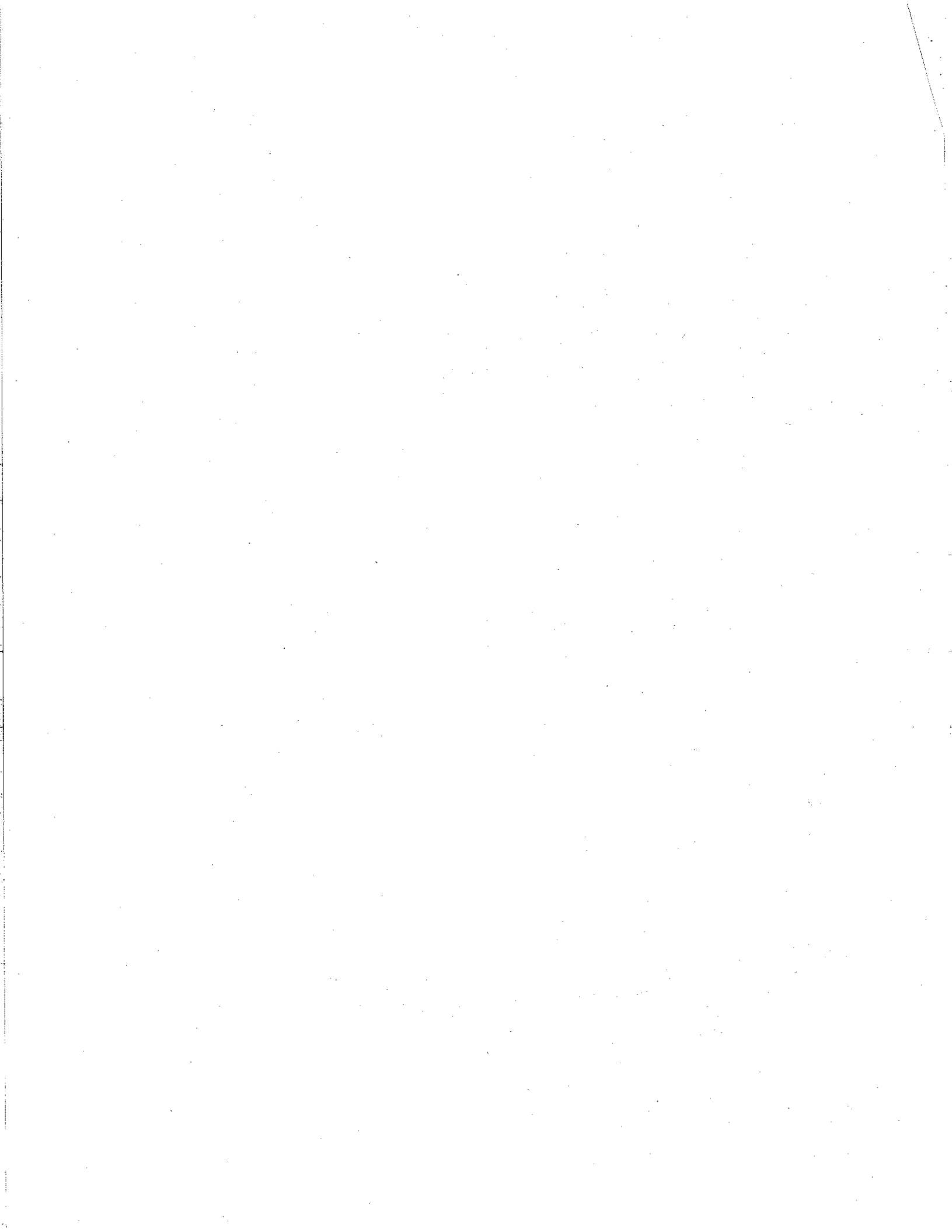
THE CENTRAL POSITION OF THE SHAN/TAI BUDDHISM FOR THE SOCIO-POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF WA AND KAYAH PEOPLES

Chit Hlaing (F. K. Lehman)

This paper concerns work I have done on the China-Burma border between 2001 and 2007, with background of work with Shan both in Burma and in North Western Thailand. It will be about the place of the Shan and their Buddhism in the network of ethnic and trade relations on this border. It will raise questions about Shan Monastic traditions. On the one hand I have worked on the nature of Wa (Pirok) Theravada Buddhism and the history of the Wa 'kingdom' of Ban Hong, and the Shan have played a central role as source of knowledge about Buddhism and of kingship, providing models of both for these Wa. A number of interesting questions arise about the Shan sources of models of Buddhist monastic organisation here; and it is quite clear that Wa 'kingship' was based upon the Shan notion of a Caofa or Cao Moeng. The second focus (during most of 2003, mostly at Ruili/Meng Mao) has been the cross-border, inter-ethnic trade system chiefly in gemstones and jade. In this context the Shan have played a central role as what anthropologists have called 'cultural brokers'. The Shan uniquely have been in a position to mediate between conflicting Burmese, Chinese and Thai conceptions about precious stones, making this trade network work smoothly. Since the Shan on these borders know how to 'be Chinese' (as Tai Noe), to 'be Burmese' (as Tai Mao and/or Tai Tay), and even to 'be within the Thai cultural ambience'.

Introduction

What follows is the result of several sessions of fieldwork in the Burma-Thailand-China borderlands, sessions in which the Shan have figured significantly, either directly or otherwise. These results will be seen to raise as many question as apparent conclusions. The work in question began with my early 1961 study of the Kayah (Red Karen/Karenni), whose ethnogenesis was based in considerable measure on Shan models of religion and political order. It continued with my field study of Shan communities in North West Thailand (Mae Hongsorn) in 1967-68, chiefly concerning the grammar of the language, the



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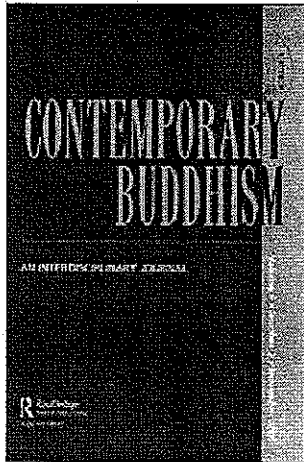
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Streams of the salween: currents and crosscurrents in the study of Shan Buddhism

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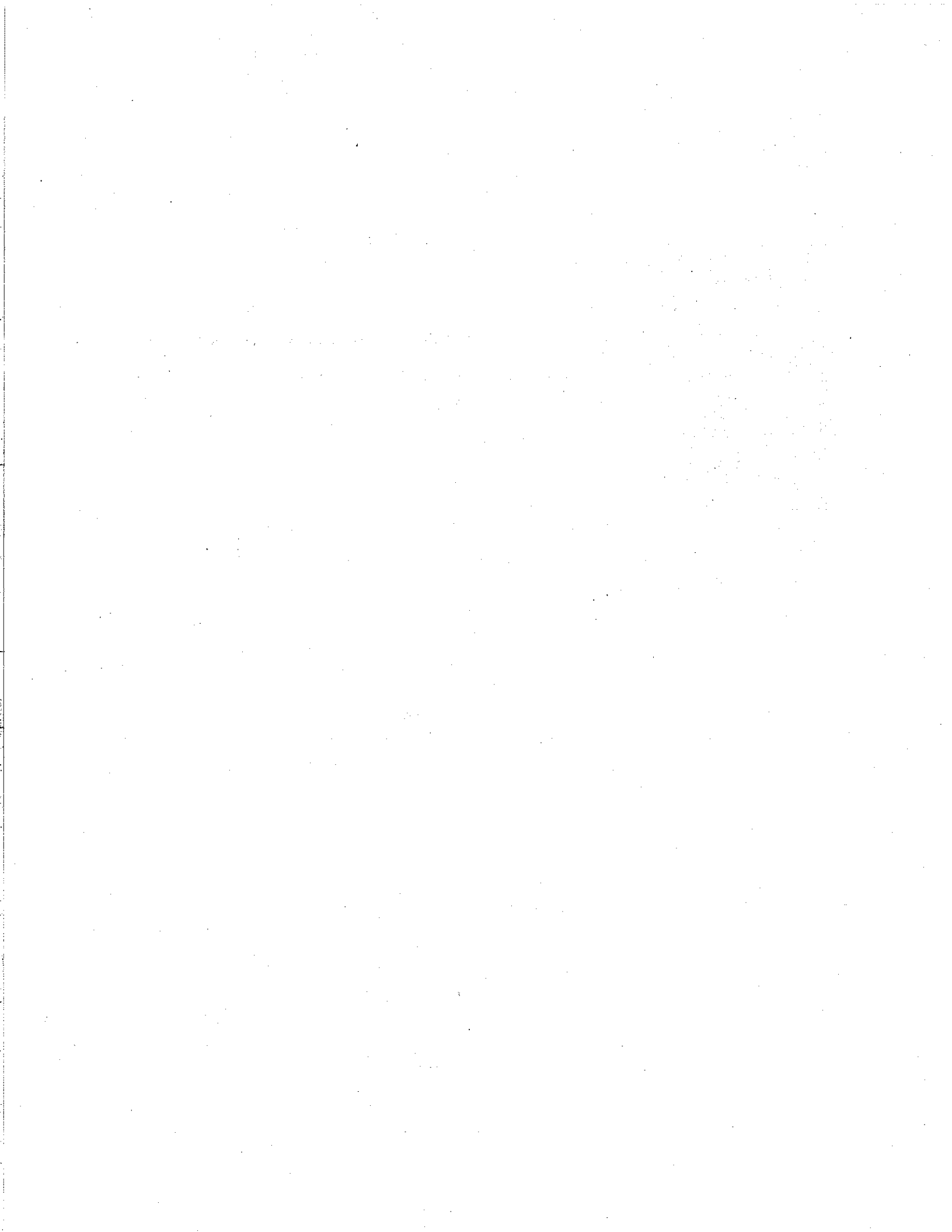
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EDITORIAL

STREAMS OF THE SALWEEN: CURRENTS AND CROSSCURRENTS IN THE STUDY OF SHAN BUDDHISM

Kate Crosby, Khammai Dhammasami, Jotika Khur-yearn
and Andrew Skilton

Like other lowlanders in Southeast Asia, most Shan practise Theravāda Buddhism, yet the Shan or Tai/Dai, to use the name they always call themselves, remain little represented in the many writings and courses on Theravāda available around the world.¹ This volume seeks to redress the invisibility of Shan Buddhism by bringing together the papers relating to Buddhism that were presented at a two-day international conference on 'Shan Buddhism and Culture' held in London on 8–9 December 2007 CE to mark the Shan New Year of 2102.²

We believe that this was the first international conference to be dedicated to the Shan, although some conferences in Asia in recent years have been, either wholly or partially, dedicated to the Tai, the broader range of ethnic groups to which the Shan belong.³ Ethnically, the 'Shan' or 'Dai' (Tai) include a number of closely related Tai ethnic groups, the Tai Long (referred to as 'Tai Yai' in Thai), Tai Khun and Tai Lue.

The Shan states, the traditional homeland of the Shan peoples, now lie across several modern state borders, forming part of southern China, north-eastern Burma, and north-western Thailand. Historically, Shan have had a crucial role as cultural, political and mercantile intermediaries between the dominant and minority groups of the nations within whose modern boundaries their own former kingdoms now lie, as well as between the transnational cultures of mainland South Asia, East Asia, and Southeast Asia. They also, of course, preserved and developed their own unique cultures and sub-cultures. From this perspective, we can see the Shan territories as crossroads between cultures, a central and significant place. Yet, looked at by historians recording history from the centres of dominant cultures with which the



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Buddhism, Politics, and Nationalism in the Twentieth and Twenty-first Centuries

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Abstract

Buddhism is widely understood as a religion with a global scope. Particularly from the end of the twentieth century, the widespread growth of Buddhism internationally, and the extensive ties between Buddhist institutions, leave the impression of unity within contemporary Buddhism. Nevertheless, in this article, I argue that Buddhism cannot be understood outside of a national context. Although international ties between Buddhists are real and important, Sanghas generally remain under the governance by national governments and monks and nuns remain citizens of particular nation-states. As a result, contemporary Buddhism is marked by a tension between the transnational and the national.

At the start of *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson remarks that the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia at the end of 1978 and the subsequent invasion of Vietnam by China marked the first time that Communist countries had engaged in 'large-scale conventional war' with one another (1991, p. 1). This event occasioned Anderson's reflections on the origin and nature of modern nationalism because of the way in which Communism had been positioned as an internationalist movement. Despite conflicts within the Soviet Communist block and between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and China, there was a myth of international unity that was finally laid to rest by the intracommunist wars of Indochina. This is important, Anderson suggests, because it demonstrates the degree to which the internationalism of the Communist world of the middle part of the twentieth century masks national affiliations. There is a similar tendency, I would suggest, to viewing Buddhism in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century as an international, even global, phenomenon, rather than a national one. It is my purpose in this article to examine the contours of this question, and to explore whether it is best to see Buddhism as a transnational phenomenon or a national one.

In many ways, seeing Buddhism principally as a transnational phenomenon is quite reasonable. For the last hundred years and more, we have talked about Buddhism as a coherent object of study, a group of teachings that directly and indirectly make some claim to representing the truth as

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RECONSTRUCTING 'ANCIENT' CAMBODIAN BUDDHISM¹

John Marston

The article explores a distinction made in Cambodian Buddhism between 'bōran' Buddhism (ancient or non-reformed) and 'sāmāy' Buddhism (modern or non-reformed). This distinction had historical importance and was a major point of division in the twentieth century prior to the Pol Pot period. The article explores the degree to which this distinction has re-emerged in recent times and the different ways in which the concept 'boran' is used today, giving several examples. Sometimes it is used with reference to what I would describe as new tendencies within Cambodian Buddhism.

The 1989 relaxation of socialist controls over religion in Cambodia altered quickly the landscape of religious practice and, with it, a whole configuration of conceptual systems. A free revival of pre-1975 practices inevitably entailed new constructions of the idea of an authentic past. It is in these terms that the re-emergence of *bōran* as a category of Cambodian Buddhism is a significant development. *Bōran* translates as 'ancient'; in a Cambodian context it sometimes suggests great antiquity, such as that of Angkor, but is also sometimes used in a way that translates merely as 'traditional'. In the usage I am focusing on for this paper, *bōran* stands in contrast to *sāmāy*, or 'modern' Buddhism, and in particular the reform Buddhism that was introduced in the early twentieth century when Venerable Chuon Nath, later the Mohanikay Supreme Patriarch, began to have influence. While at this time *sāmāy* Buddhism became the favored model of religious administration authorities based in Phnom Penh, active resistance by *bōran* was² continued well up into the time the country fell to the Khmer Rouge. The tensions between *bōran* and *sāmāy*, symbolizing as they did the practical expression of modernity and the rejection of it, were an important dynamic of Cambodian Buddhism in the twentieth century. However, in the new social context of post-1989 Cambodia, the reappearance of the concepts *bōran* and *sāmāy* was bound to have new implications.

This resulted directly from constitutional reforms that in 1989 lifted controls over religion and a general shift in attitudes, which, with political change, saw the era as time of return to pre-socialist institutions. While I will argue that the



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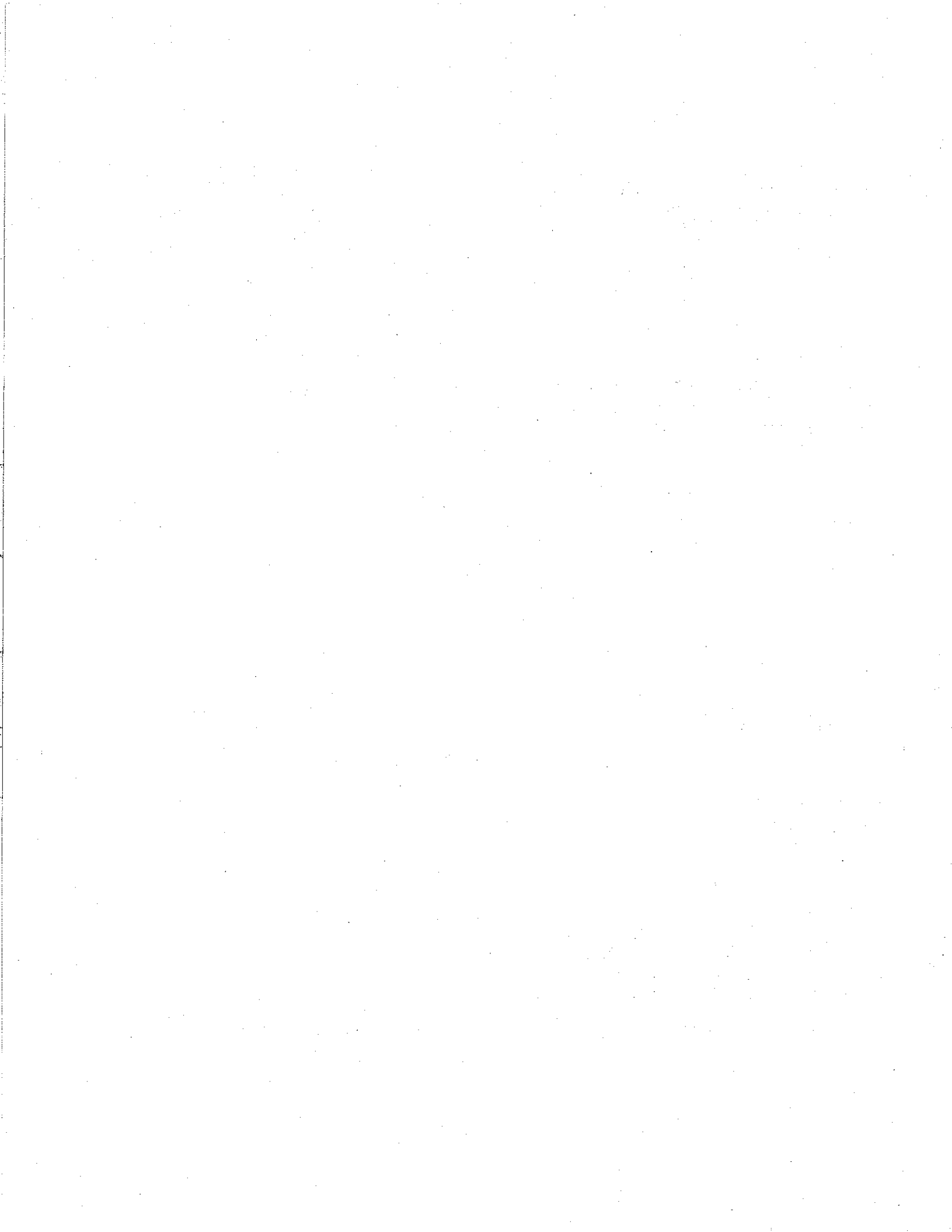
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The Changing Roles of Thai Buddhist Women: Obscuring Identities and Increasing Charisma¹

Martin Seeger*
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Abstract

Thai Buddhism is characterised by a complex polymorphism that has become manifest in the plurality of religious movements and cults. There exists an enormous variety of belief systems and religious practices that are based on widely differing interpretations of religious texts or other sources of normative and formative authority. These systems and practices are far from static, but changing with a similar pace as current Thai society as a whole does. This religious plurality and change can also readily be perceived in the socio-religious roles of Thai Buddhist women. With this paper, I intend to contribute to the existing body of academic literature on the changing roles of Thai Buddhist women, by reporting on the lives of a sample of outstanding Buddhist women, who excel in various realms. While doing so, I will show the significance of their lives and work in the context of current Thai Buddhism.

The question is not whether *bhikkhūnīs* in Thailand will come into being or not, but rather when, how and in which form the *bhikkhūnīs* will come into being. (The intellectual and activist monk Phra Phaisan Wisalo)²

Thai Buddhism is characterised by a complex polymorphism that has become manifest in the plurality of religious movements and cults. There exists an enormous variety of belief systems and religious practices that are based on widely differing interpretations of religious texts or other sources of normative and formative authority.³ These systems and practices are far from static, but changing with a similar pace as current Thai society as a whole does. This religious plurality and change can also readily be perceived in the socio-religious roles of Thai Buddhist women.

During the last decade or so, both Thai and Western academia has been paying increasing attention to the changing roles of Thai Buddhist women, in particular those of *maechīs* (*maechīs* are women who shave their hair, keep either eight or ten Buddhist precepts and wear white-coloured robes). Lindberg-Falk for example has observed an increasing number of nunneries in Thailand in recent decades. This has empowered *maechīs*, as they can govern themselves independently from monks and they 'have [also] become visible in the local communities, and their interaction with the lay people has often come to resemble the relationship between the monks and the laity.'⁴ During her fieldwork in the late 1990s, Lindberg-Falk noticed an approximation of roles between monks and *maechīs* in a couple of ways: *maechīs* undergo an ordination procedure that has been designed based on canonical standards; they officiate in ceremonies and go for alms (*piṇḍapāta*).⁵ In addition to this, as access to education has been very much dependent on the individual background and the temple or nunnery to which the *maechī* is affiliated, efforts have been made to provide *maechīs* with the possibility of a more systematic education. Thus, the educational possibilities for *maechīs* have significantly improved during the last 15 years as three centres of secondary or tertiary education for *maechīs* have been

