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Anti-Catholicism and Protestant Reformism in the History of Western Imagery of the Buddhist Monk: Some Roots of the Modernist Monk

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Abstract

From the late nineteenth century onwards, Asian Buddhist monks have been associated in American thought with science, rationality and anti-colonialism. Though the narrative of nineteenth century 'Buddhist Modernism' is routinely invoked to explain this, a more illuminating genealogy of this 'modernist monasticism' identifies deeper roots in anti-Catholicism. This paper explores these roots through a genealogy of the Buddhist Modernist Monk. Beginning with the seventeenth century travel journals of Jesuit missionaries, it winds its way through varied British rhetorics to nineteenth century Sri Lanka, and ends in Chicago, at the World's Parliament of Religion of 1893. There, these intertwined discourses coalesced in the form of the Buddhist Modernist Monk: a figure now familiar and beloved in American culture as an embodiment of compassion and rationality, yet with a history of prejudice and politics that has yet to be meaningfully explored. As we acknowledge anti-Catholicism's centrality to the history of the Modernist Monk, we are necessarily reminded of the moral ambivalence of the 'science-religion' dichotomy that fuels his mystique. At minimum, future analyses must critique the presumption of such supra-historical binaries, and deploy an open framework attentive to the contradictions and relations of reciprocal determination that characterize his genealogy.

Keywords
Buddhist Modernism, monasticism, anti-Catholicism, Dharmapala, T.W. Rhys Davids

In the fall of 2005, the world's most famous Buddhist monk found himself at the center of an international scientific controversy. A long-time supporter of neu-

roscientific research on the effects of meditation, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama of Tibet was scheduled to discuss these efforts at the annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience in Washington D.C. To the surprise of the Society, the lecture's announcement generated an unexpected storm of protest and counter-protest petitions, substantial coverage in the *New York Times* and voluminous chatter in blogs engaged with two seemingly unrelated disputes. The first was familiar as an iteration of the science vs. religion opposition: 'A science conference is not [an] appropriate venue for a religion-based presentation', asserted one critic; 'Who's next, the pope?' (Schmidt 2005, 2). The second focused on the more tangible terrain of occupied Tibet and the People's Republic of China. Defenders of the Dalai Lama's appearance retorted that these critics were predominantly Chinese and motivated not by scientific integrity but by politics: their protest needed to be understood within the wider framework of China's invasion of Tibet in 1950, and the Dalai Lama's subsequent, life-long fight for Tibetan independence.

This inflammatory conflation of Buddhist monasticism, science and geopolitics embodied by the Dalai Lama is older than a half-decade. Contemporary scholarship routinely understands it as a manifestation of 'Buddhist modernism', and so traces its roots to nineteenth-century Asian Buddhist responses to Western colonial domination. In this narrative, Asian Buddhist nationalists countered pejorative treatments of Buddhism by characterizing it as 'modern' and 'scientific', based on reason and direct experience, and thus resonant with — if not superior to — Protestant Christianity.[1] In so doing, they relied heavily upon the constructions of Western sympathizers, notably Henry Steele Olcott, whose 'modern Buddhism' was famously embodied and promulgated by Asian Buddhists at the World's Parliament of Religions in 1893. From this perspective, the conflation of monasticism with science and nationalism invoked and embodied by His Holiness the Dalai Lama perhaps reads as a contemporary invocation of a century-old anti-colonial rhetorical strategy.[2]

To locate the birth of this conflation within the Buddhist Modernist narrative, however, is to obscure its older and more troubling roots. When we draw back our lens, we see that a deeper impetus of growth for this 'modernist monasticism' is not anti-colonial activism, but British anti-Catholicism. This paper explores these roots through a genealogy of the 'Buddhist Modernist Monk'.[3] It begins, not in

1. For a sophisticated narrative for the emergence of 'Buddhist modernism' see McMahan 2008. More recently, Anne M. Blackburn (2010, xiii) has argued that Buddhist modernist narratives overstate this view of Buddhism largely as a response to colonial occupation, highlighting instead the 'remarkable stability in the central religious activities' of Sri Lankan Buddhists.

2. As Georges Dreyfus has argued, there are excellent reasons to problematize this understanding, not least of which is its failure to 'consider how the Dalai Lama's discourse strategically uses and transforms Orientalist motifs' (Dreyfus 2005, 17).

3. This approach resonates with Jane Naomi Iwamura's genealogy of 'the Oriental Monk' — a figure that, she contends, 'has enjoyed a long and prominent sojourn in the realm of American popular culture. We have encountered him under different names and guises: as Mahatma Gandhi and as D. T. Suzuki; as the Vietnamese Buddhist monk consumed in flames; as the Beatles' guru, the Maharishi Mahesh; as *Kung Fu*'s Kwai Chang Caine and as Mr. Miyagi in the *Karate Kid*; as Deepak Chopra and, as well, as the Dalai Lama' (Iwamura 2000, 25). She notes elsewhere that 'The term Oriental Monk is used as a critical concept and is meant to cover a wide range of religious figures (gurus, bhikkhus, sages, swamis, sifus, healers, masters) from a variety of ethnic backgrounds (Japanese, Chinese, Indian, Tibetan). Although the range of individual figures points to a heterogeneous field of encounter, all of them are subjected to a

the rhetoric of nineteenth century nationalists or American Theosophists, but in the seventeenth century travel journals of Jesuit missionaries. It winds its way through selective British rhetorics to nineteenth century Sri Lanka, and ends in Chicago, at the World's Parliament of Religion of 1893. There, I suggest, these intertwined discourses coalesced in the form of the first Buddhist Modernist Monk: a figure now familiar and beloved in American culture as an embodiment of compassion and rationality, with a history of prejudice and politics that has yet to be meaningfully explored.

THE GHOST IN THE MACHINE: BRITISH ANTI-CATHOLICISM

The earliest European descriptions of what would later be called 'Buddhist' monks are roughly contemporaneous with the Protestant Reformation. They appear in the writings of a handful of late sixteenth century Jesuit missionaries in the Mughal Empire. Inspired by the legends of Prester John, a Christian king said to have ruled over a Christian nation lost amidst the pagans of the East, these Jesuits were eager to find signs of kinship between Asian religious rituals and their own. It was with excitement that Antonio Montserrat (1536–1600) noted that in the deep recesses of the Himalayas, 'priests in linen garments read from Holy Scriptures and distributed wine and bread from golden vessels' (cited in Pomplun 2010, 47). The Portuguese Jesuit Antonio Andrade (1580–1634) entered western Tibet in 1624 in search of Montserrat's elusive Himalayan Christians and echoed Montserrat's impressions: the rites and the lamas of Tibetan religion indeed resonated with the rituals and priests of Roman Catholicism. In particular, Andrade was struck by the practices of the 'Grand Lama in Utsang' who, mirroring the Catholic Mass, 'offers small quantities of bread and wine, that he drinks of them himself and distributes the remainder to the other lamas and that he blows and breathes his mouth over the wine he presents to God, which he alone and no one else may do' (cited in Lopez 1998, 25). When the German Jesuit Johann Grueber (1623–1680) entered Lhasa in 1661, he also highlighted parallels between lamas and Catholic priests. 'They celebrate the Sacrifice of the Mass with Bread and Wine', he reported,

> give extreme unction, bless married Folks, say Prayers over the Sick, make Nunneries, sing in the service of the Choir, observe divers fasts during the year, undergo most severe Penances, and, among the rest, Whippings; consecrate Bishops and send out Missionaries who live in extreme Poverty, and travel barefoot through the Desarts as far as *China*. (Cited in Lopez 1998, 25)

Not all Jesuit thinkers, however, supported the kinship model.[4] For some, these apparent resonances between Pope and Grand/Great Lama raised unsettling questions: should these similarities be read as sign of shared ancestry, or of something sinister? In the context of sharp Protestant opposition to the doctrine of Papal supremacy espoused by Jesuits, the genealogical status of these ostensibly obscure Asian priests emerged as a weighty concern.

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homogeneous representational effect as they are absorbed by popular consciousness through mediated culture' (Iwamura 2011, 6)

4. The well-known missionary Ippolito Desideri (1684–1733), for example, paid little attention to such issues, turning his attention instead to the study — and refutation — of Tibetan philosophy (Desideri 1937).

The explanation of Athanasius Kircher, the renowned Jesuit polymath, is paradigmatic of the opposing view. In 1667, Kircher carefully reframed Grueber's writings in his own *China Illustrata*, the most influential European work on China produced in the seventeenth century. For Kircher, the Great Lama was not an analogue to the Pope: he was a perversion inspired by the devil itself:

> Before him the visitors fall prostrate and place their heads on the ground. They kiss his feet with incredible veneration, as if he were the Pope. Thus, even by this the deceitfulness of the evil spirit is marvelously shown, for veneration due only to the vicar of Christ on earth, the Pope of Rome, is transferred to the heathen worship of savage nations, like all the other mysteries of Christianity. The Devil does this with his natural malevolence. Therefore, just as Christians call the Roman Pontiff Father of Fathers, so the barbarians call this wretched divinity the Great Lama, that is, the High Priest. (Kircher 1987, 66)

For Kircher and others, the similarities were to be read, not as signs of shared ancestry, but as marks of difference. In contrast the right-minded reverence they paid to the Pope, Jesuit missionaries should understand the devotion of Asian devotees to the Great Lama as demonic in nature, engendering ignorance and sacerdotal exploitation. So abased were these Asian laypeople by the devil's influence, Kircher noted, that 'they bribed lamas' to obtain

> some of the Great Lama's excreta or urine ... not without profit to the lamas ... They wear the excreta around their necks and mix the urine with their food — what abominable filth! While attacking every physical infirmity in this way, they quite stupidly think that they will remain perfectly healthy and safe against the attacks of ill health — poor fools! (Kircher 1987, 67)

Significantly, this misguided adulation was directed not only to the Great Lama, but also upon idols, especially one

> which they call Manipe ... The stupid people worship before this idol, making unusual gestures and performing their rites while repeating over and over again, 'O Manipe mi hum' [i.e. *Oṃ mani padme hum*] , that is, 'Manipe, save us!' The people even offer various foods to appease the divinity and perform similar abominable examples of idolatry. (Kircher 1987, 74)

Mindless devotees, 'stupid' worshippers, venal priests — Kircher's carefully crafted characterization of the followers of 'Manipe' was nothing if not strategic. Throughout Kircher's career, Jesuits had themselves been accused by Protestant opponents and even Catholics of the same crimes. Ten years before Kircher composed *China Illustrata,* Blaise Pascal had famously charged Jesuit missionaries in China of allowing 'Christians to practice idolatry, by the ingenious idea of getting them to hide under their clothes an image of Christ, to which they are taught to apply mentally the worship paid publically to the idol' (cited in Hsia 2004, 385). Ardently deflecting these faults onto the lamas of 'Manipe', Kircher arguably sought to differentiate the Brotherhood from the 'religion of Manipe' and so distance itself from these charges.

The Jesuit rejoinder, however, failed at every level. Catholic attempts to differentiate ironically fortified the perception of Buddhism as a kind of Asian *doppelganger*, a barbarous Hyde to the Church's Jekyll, a dark and exotic proxy of Catholicism itself. Over the next two centuries, as works such *China Illustrata*

spread throughout Europe, the equation of Buddhism with Roman Catholicism became so firm a fixture in the European imagination that its denunciation served as an oblique form of anti-Catholic rhetoric. Generations of readers formed an image of Chinese (or 'Thibetan', or 'Tartary') 'idol worshippers' mired in ignorance and sacerdotal exploitation, slavishly venerating an anti-Pope. Such veneration was, they learned, the hallmark of this 'religion of Manipe', since 'from (the Great Lama), as if from a wellspring, the whole nature of their faith, or rather, their heathen mania, flows' (Kircher 1987, 66). Perhaps the most lasting 'success' of the Jesuit rejoinder was the introduction of Buddhism and 'the lama' into the discursive domain of Protestant-Catholic rhetoric — a legacy that would come back to haunt them.

ENGLAND: RATIONALITY, NATIONALITY AND THE MONK

An English translation of Kircher's description of the 'religion of Manipe' entered England in 1672, and was reprinted in a half-dozen popular journals over the next dozen years. At the height of its popularity, it coincided with the controversial rule of the Catholic king James II (1685–1688), and a concomitant rain of carefully strategized Anglican tracts. To the Restoration Protestant, James' rule signified a domestic infiltration of the normally externalized Catholic Other: the barbarian was not merely at the gate but installed upon the throne, leaving the Motherland vulnerable to mass conversion to 'the most conspicuous deviant element in society' (cited in Tumbleson 1998, 98). In response, Anglican polemicists introduced an argument against Catholicism that, Raymond Tumbleson argues, engendered the 'metaphysical reordering of political cosmology from a hierarchy culminating in a king or pope, who possessed sole authorizing power, to a republic of observers'.[5] This strategy relied not on theological agreement but on external, public assent: Catholicism was condemned because it ran counter to reason. Papal devotion was wrong not only because it went against scripture or tradition, but because it was 'irrational': 'It is *the judgement of Sense',* Edward Stillingfleet had famously affirmed, that is the means to a '*certainty*' independent of the Papal '*Infallibility*' that '(d)estroys the *obligation* to *Faith* which ariseth from the *rational evidence of Christian doctrine*'.[6] English Protestants were urged to heed his call and dismiss the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation because it transgressed God-given rationality: Samuel Johnson (1688, i) avowed,

> We are sure a Divine Revelation cannot contradict the Common Sense and Reason of Mankind ... But if this Revelation should contradict the plan Principles of Reason, then it would overthrow the Understanding which we are sure we have received from the hands of God.

William Payne agreed:

> there is nothing can expose such a doctrine, for nothing can be more uncouth and extravagant than itself, it not only takes away all evidence of sense upon which all truth of miracles, and so of all Revelation does depend, but it destroys all manner

5. Raymond D. Tumbleson (1996, 131–156) aptly characterizes this form of rhetoric the 'science of Anglicanism'.

6. Stillingfleet 1847, volume 1. This was followed a year later by the publication of a supplement running for eight more volumes containing works from the earlier part of the seventeenth century. See Wolffe 1991, 112–113.

> of certainty, and all the principles of truth and knowledge.
>
> (Cited in Tumbleson 1998, 120)

Put differently, Restoration Protestantism assumed 'a Baconian shape'; it was homologized to the methods and conventions of scientific experimentalism — the 'plain Principles of Reason' — and placed in polar opposition to 'the open priest-craft' of Catholicism (Tumbleson 1998, 98 ff). This opposition would be invoked and re-worked by British writers in varied contexts over the next two centuries, and play a key role in the concomitant creations of 'science' and the 'Modernist Monk'.

Throughout the eighteenth century, the image of the 'irrational' Catholic was promulgated through a new emphasis on an old character: the craven monk. David Hume's *Natural History of Religion* (1757) was an influential exemplar. For Hume, monotheism was the marker and culmination of a rational civilization — impossible and unheard of in the 'primitive' civilizations of the expanding British Empire. Even among the European literati it was a precarious ideal under constant siege by the tendency of the 'vulgar, ignorant, uninstructed' masses to slip ever deeper into polytheistic thought. The history of mankind was neither a fall from monotheistic grace, nor a steady forward march toward the light of rationality, but an on-going struggle between rational theism and idolatrous polytheism: 'Men have a natural tendency to rise from idolatry to theism, and to sink again from theism to idolatry' (Hume 1991, 37). And when idolatry was in the ascendancy, it led inevitably to the irrationality and self-abasement epitomized by the craven monk:

> Where the deity is represented as infinitely superior to mankind, this belief ... is apt ... when joined with superstitious terror, to sink the human mind into the lowest submission and abasement, and to represent the monkish virtues of mortification, penance, humility and passive suffering, as the only qualities which are acceptable to him.[7]

Hume's identification of 'monkish virtues' with irrationality and primitivism — and by extension, of anti-sacerdotalism with reason and modernity — resonated with the presumptions of Kircher. It was subsequently extended by Edward Gibbon, a self-proclaimed *bon protestant*, who opened his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776–1780) with an amused description of 'ignorant monks celebrating their superstitious ceremonies in a church that stood on the ground where a pagan temple had once stood'. In so doing, Gibbon both affirmed a sectarian opposition between rational English observer and irrational Catholic monk, and equated that opposition with the broader Enlightenment dichotomy between rational subject and irrational Other (Tumbleson 1998, 150). Reason, freedom, science, morality — all the hallmarks of the Enlightened European stood in polar opposition to 'servile and pusillanimous' monks:

> The actions of a monk, his words, and even his thoughts, were determined by an inflexible rule or a capricious superior ... A blind submission to the commands of the abbot, however absurd, or even criminal, was the ruling principle ... The freedom of mind, the source of every generous and rational sentiment, was destroyed by the habits of credulity and submission; and the monk, contracting the vices of a slave, devoutly followed the faith and passions of his ecclesiastical tyrant ... The monastic studies have tended, for the most part, to darken, rather than dispel, the cloud of superstition ...

7. Hume 1991, 43. It is instructive to note that A.N. Wilson characterizes Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* and Hume's *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* as 'the two books in the English language which have done more than any other ... to undermine faith' (Wilson 1999, 19).

> The monastic saints ... excite only the contempt and pity of the philosopher ... [Their stories] have seriously affected the reason, the faith, the morals of the Christians. Their credulity debased and vitiated the faculties of the mind; they corrupted the evidence of history; and superstition gradually extinguished the hostile light of philosophy and science ... (A)ll the manly virtues were oppressed by the servile and pusillanimous reign of the monks.[8]

It was Gibbon who expressly extended his condemnation of monasticism to its Buddhist forms. The decline and fall of the Mongol Yuan dynasty in the fourteenth century was, he suggested, the inevitable outcome of Kubilai Khan's reverence for Buddhism — here called 'the Religion of Fo' — and its monks or *bonzes*: 'Yet this learned prince declined from the pure and simple religion of his ancestor ... he sacrificed to the idol *Fo*; and his blind attachment to the lamas of Thibet and the bonzes of China provoked the censure of the disciples of Confucius'.[9] Just as the Roman magistracy had been displaced by an elite corps of Christian naval-contemplators, so too did the *bonzes*, lamas and priests of the *religion de Fo* erode the Confucian magistracy.

The implications of Gibbon's narrative were clear: not only was monasticism a basic pattern of human civilization, its inherently corrosive, anti-civilizing effects were likewise universal. In this sense, Buddhist monk and idol-worshipping Catholic were indistinguishable. Contemporaneous writers reminded Gibbon's readers of the

> most surprising Conformity between [the religion of Buddhism], and that of Rome ... [We] find, in this Religion, every individual article, great and small, of which the Romish system is composed: Such as the Worship of Images, praying to Saints, and for the Dead; Purgatory, Pardons, Indulgences, Confession, Absolution, Penance; Exorcism, the Treasure of the Church, Merits and Works of Supererogation; the Pretences to work miracles; a Hierarchy, or different order of Priests, with a Pope at their Head; Monks and begging Friars, Nuns; in short, every Thing in Speculation and Practice down to Holy Water and Beads ...[10]

Both Buddhist monk and/as Catholic priest stood in hostile opposition to the integrity of a Protestant British civilization.

By the early nineteenth century, British attitudes to Catholicism were increasingly more complex and deeply intertwined with nationalist rhetoric. The merging of the Kingdom of Ireland with the Kingdom of Great Britain (1801) fueled an already steady rise in the Catholic population that far outstripped the general population increase.[11] Consequently, there emerged new pressure to abolish anti-Catholic laws by both Irish Catholics and sympathetic British — a concern

8. Gibbon 1994, 418–28. For Gibbon's full treatment of monasticism, see 411–451.

9. Gibbon (1994, 428) continues by appending an intriguing footnote, published in 1788: 'The attachment of the khans, and the hatred of the mandarins, to the bonzes and lamas (Duhalde, Hist. de la Chine, tom. 1. p. 502, 503) seems to represent them as priests of the same god, of the Indian Fo, whose worship prevails among the sects of Hindostan, Siam, Thibet, China and Japan. But this mysterious subject is still lost in a cloud, which the researches of our Asiatic Society may gradually dispel'.

10. From Thomas Astley's *A New Collection of Voyages and Travels Consisting of The most Esteemed Relations which have hitherto published in any language Comprehending Everything Remarkable in its Kind in Europe, Asia, Africa and America,* 1747, as cited in Lopez 1998, 29–30.

11. Lesourd (1978, 258) estimates that between 1800 and 1815, while the population as a whole increased by 21.4%, Catholic numbers increased by 75%.

heightened by the need for Catholic recruits to fight in the Napoleonic wars, and a growing fear of civil war.[12] In 1829, Parliament passed the Catholic Emancipation Act, thereby permitting members of the Catholic Church to sit in Parliament.[13]

Unsurprisingly, British anti-Catholic rhetoric in the wake of the Act echoed the nationalist flavor so evident in Gibbon. The volume of 'No Popery' literature was at a crescendo, encouraging the English, Scots, and Welsh to construct an image of themselves as a single nation — distinctly British, collectively Protestant and vehemently anti-Catholic.[14] Richard Whately's incendiary *Essays on the Errors of Romanism* and *The Confessional Unmasked* were distributed by the Protestant Evangelical Mission and Electoral Union to each member of Parliament in 1865, just before Guy Fawkes Day, England's annual commemoration of a foiled Catholic conspiracy to murder her king. Victorian literature mirrored this nationalist bias; the Hanoverian protesters of Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones*, the sinister monk Schedoni in Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian* — all spoke to the peculiarly British stigmatization of Catholicism and its monks as 'both alien, what the vain French and wicked Italians practice, and frighteningly familiar as the accompaniment of absolutism' (Tumbleson 1998, 2).

Predictably, Buddhism's 'Great Lama' was explicitly linked to Papal absolutism. A popular British journal could tacitly condemn both by purporting to explain the mechanisms of papal succession:

> We need scarcely need inform our readers, that the Dalai Lama in theory is a real incarnation of the deity, but in point of fact the head of a Church ... The fiction in respect to choice of Lama is bolder in theory than the alleged interference of the Holy Host in the election of a Pope; but in reality the choice is managed in a very similar manner by the magnates of Thibet ... this is certainly the case at the first appearance, but scarcely more so, looking back to the time when His Holiness gave away Ireland by a Bull, and quartered the New World like an orange between his obedient sons of Spain and Portugal.[15]

Yet it was not the distant Pope that represented the greatest menace to hard-line Protestant British. In this segment of the Victorian imagination, it was local Catholic monks and priests who were most abhorred. This vision was canonized in 1875 with the new publication of John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* — perhaps the best-known textual example of anti-Catholicism in British history and most eagerly awaited reprint of the Victorian era.[16]

12. Home Secretary Robert Peel, a long-time opponent of Catholic Emancipation, famously wrote to Wellington that 'though emancipation was a great danger, civil strife was a greater danger' (*Dictionary of National Biography* 1895, vol.44, 213). We get a sense of how marked public opinion became in favor of Catholic emancipation by noting that virtually every MP elected after 1807 spoke out in favor of Catholic Emancipation.

13. The Catholic Relief Act formally repealed the Test Act 1673 and the Penal Laws still in force since the ratification of the Disenfranchising Act of the Irish Parliament in 1728.

14. The printing press was extensively used as an instrument of anti-Catholic agitation. For a fuller discussion of this and other ways of mobilizing popular anti-Catholicism in nineteenth century Britain, see Wolffe 1991, esp. 145 ff.

15. 'Curious Coincidence — Roman and Tartarian Pontiffs'. *Literary Examiner,* 1:11 (1823, Sept. 13), 168.

16. This three-volume account of Protestant persecution had, since 1570, been set in churches and other public places alongside the Bible where it remained throughout the eighteenth century. Dozens of abridged versions had been produced and circulated by Protestant societ-

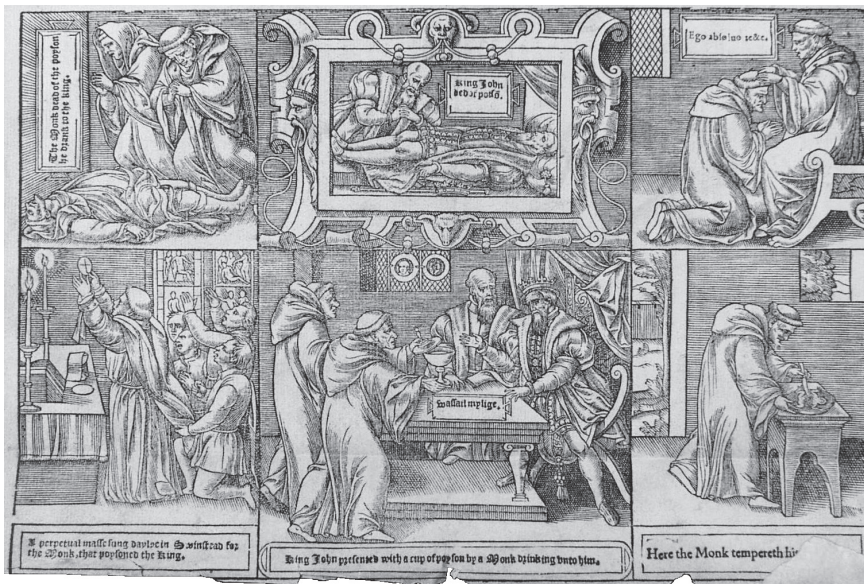

Figure 1. The poysoning of King John by a monk in 1216.

Its visual highlight was a six-panel illustration of 'The poysoning of King John by a Monke of Swinsted Abbey'. One of only a half-dozen full-page images in over 2,000 pages, the engraving (Figure 1) portrayed in successive frames a tonsured, robed figure preparing a cup of poison, presenting it to the English king, bending over the king's lifeless body, and then raising his arms heavenward in celebration of both murder and Mass. Graphically conflating worldly and divine kingship in the person of the Protestant British monarch, the engraving portrayed the inevitable outcome of Catholicism's response to an unsubmissive king: treachery and murder by a monk-fanatic, and the onset of the grossest form of despotism: 'the proud and mis-ordered Reign of Antichrist, beginning to stir in the Church of Christ'.[17] To the Victorian Englishman, the message of this visual narrative was almost as familiar as the Bible itself: Catholicism and its monks were inimical to both Church and State: an alien, treacherous and despotic menace that stood in hostile opposition to monarchy, morality and true Christianity.

Key to Victorian representations was the image of priest as invidious hermeneut: a cloaked, invasive figure that insinuated himself between the unsuspecting Englishman and God's word. Indeed, the Bible was 'popery's only antidote, the sword that slays the monster', wrote G.H. Whalley in *Popery in Ireland* (1865) in his tale of the rescue of a young girl from a convent where she had been 'imprisoned' for reading the Bible without priestly intervention. Unmediated access to the Bible was the hallmark of the free Englishman; the mediating monk blocked the devout subject's access to God's word and to his righteous king. The mutual implication of religious and secular discourses so graphically represented by the 'poysoning of King John'

ies since 1684, but no accurate edition had been produced since. The London incarnation was thus an eagerly-awaited event. For details on its publication history, see Haydon 1993, 28.

17. For an illuminating analysis of this image, see Tumbleson 1998, 21–22.

thus bespoke a truth so transparent it hardly needed restating: unalloyed anti-sacerdotalism was Christian soldiering and British nationalism by other means.

What gave the monk such power? How did he inveigle his way between the Englishman and his king, between the Protestant and his Bible? Revisiting the argument familiar from the 'scientific Anglicanism' of the Restoration, Victorian Protestants attributed the power of the monk to the archetypal corrosive of Protestant civilization: irrationality.

> So hold these glorious abbeys grim control
> Over men's Heart and Mind, enslaving both
> To crafty monk and superstitious rite:
> Therefore, to find them crush'd be little loth,
> But note their ruins with new delight.
>
> (Tupper 1891, 58)

Predictably, this rhetorical pitting of monasticism against rationality was recast in the language of broader debates about the appropriate domains of theology and the emerging discipline of 'science'. Simon Schaffer reminds us that the nineteenth century witnessed 'the end of natural philosophy and the invention of modern science'.[18] Natural history had traditionally been the domain of (Anglican) clergy: professionals whose close reading of the Book of Scripture made logical their corollary expertise in reading the Book of Nature.[19] The new scientific disciplines of biology and geology, however, sought independence from clerical influence and to legitimate a new set of authorities. This was, notes Peter Harrison, 'the explicit mission of such figures such as Thomas Huxley and his colleagues ... who sought with an evangelical fervor to establish a scientific status for natural history, to rid the discipline of women, amateurs and parsons, and to place a secular science into the center of cultural life in Victorian England'.[20] In short, the 'scientist' was to subsume the priest, to become the new and inviolable hermeneut for a Book of Nature now severed from its putative kinship with Scripture.

It served the needs of this movement to deploy a rhetoric of conflict between theology and science and, unsurprisingly, to revisit the long-standing 'irrational Catholic'. Typical of this trend was John William Draper's infamous *History of the Conflict Between Religion and Science* (1874), which recast Roman Catholicism as the historical enemy of 'Modern Science' and Protestantism as science's 'legitimate sister':

> Then has it in truth come to this, that Roman Christianity and Science are recognized by their respective adherents as being absolutely incompatible; they cannot exist together; one must yield to the other; mankind must make its choice — it cannot have both. While such is, perhaps, the issue as regards Catholicism, a reconciliation of the Reformation with Science is not only possible, but would easily take place, if the Protestant Churches would only live up to the maxim taught by Luther, and established by so many years of war. (Draper 1998, Ch. 12)

18. Schaffer 1986, 413. This transition is marked by the emergence of the first professional bodies for scientists. For example, the British Association for the Advancement of Science was established in the1830s.

19. Implicit here is the metaphor of the two books widely employed by leading figures of the Scientific Revolution. The Bible and Nature are each books created by God to be read in order to learn God's will. This concept is pervasive in the writings of European natural philosophers from at least the sixteenth century, though it was subject to varied interpretations and uses.

20. Harrison 2006, 87. Harrison is drawing here on Barton 1990, 53–81.

We are reminded of the Jesuit kinship theory; here it is Luther and not Prester John who spreads the seeds of the true religion, and contemporary Protestant scientists who 'discover' their ancestral doubles in the Reformation past. Draper also invokes the Catholic-Buddhist *doppelganger* to portray monasticism as a universal and pernicious dimension of human culture — an assumption he embeds in the larger logic of his influential 'warfare thesis':

> But has not the order of civilization in all parts of the world been the same? Does not the growth of society resemble individual growth? ... A swarm of bees carried to some distant land will build its combs and regulate its social institutions as other unknown swarms would do, and so with separated and disconnected swarms of men. So invariable is this sequence of thought and act, that there are philosophers who, transferring the past example offered by Asiatic history to the case of Europe, would not hesitate to sustain the proposition — given a bishop of Rome and some centuries, and you will have an infallible pope: given an infallible pope and a little more time, and you will have Llamaism — Llamaism to which Asia has long, ago attained. (Draper 1998, Ch. 12)

Draper's cross-cultural observation tacitly underscored the simultaneity and mutuality of British anti-Catholicism with England's demarcation of its domains of nation and empire. Britain's processes of self-articulation as an industrializing, Protestant anti-Catholic empire and then modern nation-state was the domestic backdrop for England's period of colonial growth and the concomitant development of 'Buddhism' as an object of scholarly study. Yet it is in the cracks of these processes — the intersection of various strains of late nineteenth century scientific discourses with the British imperial project and the construction of a Protestant-Catholic British national identity — that the 'priests of Manipe' would undergo a dramatic transformation in the Protestant imagination.

THE REFORMATION OF THE 'PRIESTS OF MANIPE'

The context for this transformation is Raj India. With the formalization of Britain as a colonial power in the Buddha's birthplace, the tendency to Catholicize the colonized Other manifested in British writings and policies concerning India and its inhabitants. Anti-sacerdotalism, anxieties about religious despotism, the elision of reason with Protestantism — all were exported to India, where they filtered and justified British perceptions of the history, practices and texts of its Hindu (and to a lesser degree, Islamic) inhabitants.[21] In the eyes of colonial administrators, for example, Indian government was nothing more than sacerdotal despotism. 'It is difficult to determine', affirmed James Mill in the classic *History of British India*, 'whether the constitution of the government and the provisions of law, or Religion, have, among the Hindus, the greatest influence upon the lives of individuals, and the operations of society'. In Mill's understanding of Hindu history,

> Everything in Hindustan was transacted by the Deity. The laws were promulgated, the people were classified, the government was established, by the Divine Being. The astonishing exploits of the Divinity were endless in that sacred land. For every

21. Because of the constraints of space, I do not unpack the historical construction of 'Hindu' and 'Hinduism', nor explore the diversity of British perceptions of Indian religions. For treatment of these concerns, see Pennington 2005, Oddie 2010, Sweetman 2003, and Clarke 1997 esp. 54–95.

> stage of life from the cradle to the grave; for every hour of the day; for every function of nature for every social transaction, God prescribed a number of religious observances. (Mill 1968, Vol. I, 229)

Attributing their laws, not to themselves but to 'the Deity', the Hindu masses were — like so many benighted Catholic peasants — in thrall to those who could interpret Divine writ on their behalf:

> Beside the causes which usually give superstition a powerful sway in ignorant and credulous ages, the order of priests obtained a greater authority in India than in any other region of the globe; and this again they employed with astonishing success in multiplying and corroborating the ideas on which their power and consequence depended. (Mill 1968, vol. II, 127 ff.)

Brahmins — India's 'priestly caste' — held the hearts and minds of credulous Indians captive to superstition and priestcraft as effectively as had their Roman Catholic counterparts, and guaranteed an equally despotic government. Small wonder that Raj-period Indians were — in Mill's estimation — inherently incapable of establishing or ruling an enduring Empire, let alone by representational government.[22]

Priestly rule was at the root of more than governmental despotism. Centuries of superstition among 'the ignorant and credulous' of India had forbade the development of rationality and science. Selectively citing thinkers such as H.T Colebrook and Pierre Laplace, Mill strove to demonstrate that the scientific accomplishments attributed to Indians — astronomy, algebra, musical notation — were in fact the work of 'bolder and more inventive peoples'. In the rare cases where Indians had demonstrated some glimmerings of scientific thought, the ways in which they had applied those insights betrayed their innate irrationality; Indians' cultivation of mathematics and astronomy were applied to 'wasteful and mischievous' and 'irrational' pursuits' such as astrology, rather than the ends that would serve utility, 'infallibly denot(ing) a barbarous nation'.[23] Like Catholicism, Hinduism was institutionally and culturally antagonistic to modernity and science, and by extension, with Britishness and Protestantism.

The Catholicization of Hinduism was perpetuated by Sir William Jones (1746–1794), whose translation of the Indian *Laws of Manu* helped inaugurate the field of modern Indology:

> The *Laws of Menu* is a work with many beauties, which need not be pointed out, and with many blemishes, which cannot be justified or palliated. It is a system of despotism and priestcraft, both indeed limited by law, but artfully conspiring to give mutual support ... it is filled with strange conceits in metaphysicks and natural philosophy, with idle superstitions, and with a scheme of theology obscurely figurative. (Jones 1993, 202)

Idle superstition, despotism, artfully conspiring priestcraft — Jones' reading of

22. This analysis is indebted to Inden 1994, esp. 169–172.

23. Mill 1968, vol. II, 125–34. Mill's logic is anticipated by the work of Charles Grant, member of the Board of Trade in India in the 1780s and 1790s. Grant drafted the widely-read 'Observations on the State of Society among the Asiatic subjects of Great Britain', in which he contrasted the Hindus' superstition and lack of curiosity with the 'great use' that the British and fellow Europeans had made of reason, and the manner in which European scientific discoveries complemented, rather than competed with, Christian beliefs. For a broader discussion of this trend, see Adas 1990, esp.166–177.

this Hindu work was saturated and structured by British anti-Catholic, anti-sacerdotal clichés. Indeed, his larger project of codifying a system of Indian law that could be universally applied by British representatives 'without reference to local customs and native legal specialists' resonated with the Protestant imperative to do away with priestly mediators of the Bible:

> If we had a compete digest of Hindu and Mohammadan laws, after the model of Justinian's inestimable Pandects, compiled by the most learned of the native lawyers, with an accurate verbal translation of it into English; and if copies of the work were reposited in the proper offices of the Sedr Divani Adalat and the Supreme Court, that they might occasionally be consulted as a standard of justice, we should rarely be at a loss ... and should never perhaps be led astray by the Pandits or Maulavi's (*sic*), who would hardly venture to impose on us, when their impositions might so easily be deceived. (Breckenridge and van der Veer, 1993, 258)

By mastering 'the language of the Gods, as the Brahmens call it', Jones could free himself from the tyranny of the Brahman intermediary and so place Indian law on an objective, rational footing.[24] The British duty to champion the faith against priestly interloping was elided into a duty to spread objective reason and law and among the heathen savages in its Empire.

Jones' tacit identification of the Brahmin as a displaced Catholic priest was a long-lived legacy, a thread running through the works of influential writers and administrators including Thomas Macaulay,[25] James Mill (1968, vol. II, 127 ff) and John Stuart Mill.[26]

For our purposes, however, a more significant byproduct of Jones' Catholicization of the Hindu was its impact on his perceptions of Hinduism's putative opposite and adversary — Buddhism:

> If the metaphysics of the *Vedantis* be wild and erroneous, the pupils of the *Buddha* have run, it is asserted, into an error diametrically opposite; for they are charged with denying the existence of pure spirit, and with believing nothing absolutely and really to exist but *material substance* ... The *Pandit* who now attends me, and who told *Mr. Wilkins* the *Saugatas* were atheists, would not have attempted to resist the decisive evidence on the contrary ... if his understanding had not been blinded by an intolerant zeal of a mercenary priesthood. (Jones and Shore 1824, 45)

Standing in diametric opposition to the 'wild and erroneous metaphysics' of the Hindu Brahmins, the apparently long-dead Indian Buddhist tradition would seem — in the inexorable logic of British anti-Catholicism — a likely candidate for Protestantization. Further study would tell the tale.

It was Brian Hodgson, Assistant Resident for Great Britain at the Court of Nepal, who picked up the thread. From 1823 to 1829, Hodgson collected and transmitted hundreds of Buddhist Sanskrit texts to Europe, publishing articles on their phi-

24. J. Majeed rightfully notes that 'what was being applied by the name of Islamic and Hindu law was in fact, a new form of law with roots in both Indian and British culture ... Jones' project to legitimize British rule in an Indian idiom was also evident in his nine hymns to Hindu deities, which tried to define a renascent Hinduism which could be compared and contrasted with other cultural idioms. His Indo-European thesis of the affinity between Sanskrit, Greek and Latin, enabled such intercultural comparisons to be made on a firmer foundation than ever before ' (Majeed 1990, 209–224, 210).

25. See Macaulay's essay on Warren Hastings in Macaulay 1967, 404.

26. See Public Dept. Dispatch 16 April 1828, E/4/935, para 8 IOLR; (LD, p.292).

losophy and history that became foundational for subsequent European scholarship.[27] 'Feeling his want of language skills', Hodgson had initially leaned heavily on the interpretations and input of a Nepalese Buddhist informant, Amṛtānanda. However, echoing the *modus operandi* of Jones and other colonialist thinkers, he soon found that his 'possession of the books led to questions respecting their relative age and authority; and tried by this test the *Bauddha's* quotations were not always so satisfactory' (Hodgson 1991, 35). He therefore cultivated a two-pronged approach: making note of Amṛtānanda's attempts to explain 'the interminable sheer absurdities of the Bauddha philosophy and religion' (Hodgson 1991 99), but giving primacy to the scientific analysis of the text over the informant on concrete, historical questions concerning dating and origins. In this way, Hodgson the Orientalist could temper Amṛtānanda's quaint exotica with modern, empirical research and so 'separate Buddhism *as it is* (in Neapul) and Buddhism *as it ought to be* ' (Hodgson 1991, 41, italics mine).

What, then was 'true' Buddhism for Hodgson? How 'ought it to be'? Through the application of sound reasoning fused with the sciences of comparative physiognomy, philology and ecclesiastical history, Hodgson discerned its defining traits: 'Buddhism ... is monastic asceticism in morals, philosophical skepticism in religion' (Hodgson 1991, 68). The true Buddhist, in turn, was 'clearly deducible from the context, in a thousand passages (for the subject is not expressly treated) *... the only true followers of Buddha are monks'*. These were not, of course, the despotic and superstitious variety of monk produced by Rome. These 'true followers' were egalitarian and anti-sacerdotal — reminiscent, in fact, of Hodgson's idealistic conception of pre-Catholic Christians, and the non-hereditary Anglican clergy of his own time:

> Mr. Upham, I find, has deduced from Remusat's interpretation, the inference ... that I am in error in denying that Buddhism, in its first, and most characteristic form, admits the distinction of *Clerus et Laicus*. It is difficult expressly to define that distinction; but it may be seen in all its breadth in Brahmanism and in Popery; whilst in Islam, and in the most enthusiastic of the Christian sects, which sprang out of the Reformation, it is wholly lost. According to my view Apostolic Christianity recognized it not; the congregation of the faithful, the Church, was a society of peers, of brethren in the faith, all essentially equal, in gifts, as in place and in character. On earth, there were no indispensable mediators, no exclusive professional ones; and such alone I understand to be priests ... Whoever has been able to go along with me in the above reflections can need only to be told that primitive Buddhism was entirely monastic, and of an unboundedly enthusiastical genius, to be satisfied that it did not recognized the distinction in question.
>
> (Cited in Pels and Salemink 1999, 96)

Hodgson's candid equation of Brahmanism with Popery, and of 'primitive Buddhism' with both Apostolic and post-Reformation Christianity, built upon the anti-Catholic logic of his colonial compatriots: the authenticity of priest-free Protestantism was confirmed by the authority of scripture and reason, and reiterated in the Indian idiom with the trans-cultural inescapability of gravity.

27. Hodgson's articles were widely acclaimed by scholars of his generation; he received the Gold Medal of the Societe Asiatique de Paris and the Legion d'Honneur in 1838 for his contributions to the study of Buddhism. For more on Hodgson's diverse scholarly contributions and legacy, see Waterhouse 2004.

Particularly telling was Hodgson's condemnation of contemporary Buddhist monks who closely resembled priests and so betrayed the teachings of the Buddhist texts:

> The first mention of an exclusive minister of religion, or priest, in the Bauddha books, is in those of a comparatively recent date, and not of scriptural authority ... [H]is character is anomalous, as is that of everything about him; and the learned Bauddhas of Nepal at the present day universally admit the falling off from the true faith. (Hodgson 1991, 68–70)

Hodgson's authoritative characterizations of original Buddhism paved the way for the final Protestantization of the former 'Roman Catholicism of Asia'. Subsequent British scholars contrasted the philosophically skeptical Buddha with his despotic Hindu compatriots, and saw in the Buddha 'a local reformer who steadfastly opposed the influence of caste' (cited in Almond 1988, 9). Alexander Cunningham (1814–1893) celebrated the Buddha as 'a great social reformer who dared to preach the perfect equality of all mankind, and the consequent abolition of caste, in spite of the menaces of the most powerful and arrogant priesthood in the world' (Cunningham 1997, 33). By the mid-1860s, the inevitable association was made: 'Gautama did for India what Luther and the Reformers did for Christendom', declared the *Journal of Sacred Literature*:

> Like Luther he found religion in the hands of a class of men who claimed a monopoly of it, and doled it out in what manner and in what measure they chose; like Luther, he protested that religion is not the affair of the priest alone ... And as Europe bestirred herself at the voice of Luther, so India answered heartily to the call of Gautama. (Cited in Almond 1998, 74)

The Westminster Review of 1878 echoed the motion. The Buddha's reformation had the same relationship to Brahminism as Protestantism had to Roman Catholicism. '[I]t rejected all bloody sacrifice, together with the priesthood and social caste so essentially bound up with them' (cited in Almond 1998, 74). George Grant concurred; as a protester against the sacrificialism and sacerdotalism of the Brahmans, the Buddha was 'the Hindu Luther in whose voice all previous voices blended, and whose personality fused into living unity forces that had long been gathering' (Grant 1898, 125). In sum, by the late nineteenth century, the Buddha and the ancient Buddhist tradition had been converted to the ranks of the proto-Protestant elite. Rational, anti-sacerdotal, democratic — ancient Buddhism and its monks were now, to the Protestant British, a benign Other rather than a benighted one. No longer a dark *doppelganger*, ancient Buddhist monks were instead an exotic-yet-familiar version of themselves, rendered all the more attractive by their seeming obsolescence.

It was, however, in the work of Thomas W. Rhys Davids (1843–1922) that this comforting obsolescence came under threat, tacitly enabling the Modernist Monk to emerge. Rhys Davids, easily the most influential British scholar of Buddhism of the late nineteenth century, was posted in 1871 as the Assistant Government Agent of Nuwarakalaviya in Sri Lanka.[28] There, he became involved with the archeological excavation of the city of Anurādhapura, and began to collect inscriptions

28. For a useful treatment of the intersection between Rhys David's dual careers as scholar and civil servant, see Wickremeratne 1985.

and manuscripts. Eager to further his translation efforts, Rhys Davids studied Pāli with a Buddhist monk named Yatramulle Unnanse — a man for whom he maintained a profound admiration until the end of his life. 'There was', he wrote years later, 'a strange light in his sunken eyes ... and there was an indescribable attraction about him, a simplicity and high-mindedness that filled me with reverence' (Rhys Davids 1882, 186–87). A marked departure from the suspicion with which Jones or Hodgson had treated their Asian informants, Rhys Davids admiration for Unnanse led him to new assessments of ancient Buddhism and its monks. 'It is probable', he continued, 'that in the long history of Buddhism there would have been monks of Yatramulle's caliber — representatives of an enlightened priesthood — that had influenced the sweep of Buddhism across Asia'. From 1878, with the publication of Rhys Davids' *Buddhism* by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, we see a subtle new incarnation of Victorian Protestant scholarship emerge in his most widely read works.

As did his scholarly successors, Rhys Davids considered the expression of 'true' Buddhism to reside in its ancient texts — specifically, the Pāli texts of the Southern canon 'which are', he declared, 'much more reliable and complete' than the later 'Sanskrit works of the Northern Buddhists' (Rhys Davids1877, 15). Like Hodgson and others, he also considered its exemplars to be ascetic, anti-sacerdotal monks. Indeed, '[f]ree of such division between clergy and laity as it obtains in Christian countries' (Rhys Davids 1877, 152), early Buddhist monks were so different from priests that they 'excited the hostility' of the Brahmins '[who] were mostly well-meaning, well-conducted, ignorant, superstitious, and inflated with a sincere belief in their own divinity; and they inculcated a sense of duty, which tempered the despotism of the petty rajas' (Rhys Davids 1877, 24). In vivid contrast to superstitious priests, these monastic exemplars were 'entirely free from the idolatries and superstitions of the day'; they followed a 'course of reasoning ... analogous to that by which the modern European philosopher seeks to find the explanation of life' and sought to 'give a scientific explanation of the great fact of the existence of evil, and certainly the most consistent, if not the most successful of all efforts that have been made in that direction' (Rhys Davids 1882, 91, 103, 82) .

Predictably, Rhys Davids' proto-scientific Buddhist monastics were markedly distinct from their Catholic counterparts in their commitment to rationality, free will and independent thought:

> The vow of obedience was never taken by the Buddhist monks or nuns, and in this may be noticed a fundamental difference between them and the members of monastic orders in the West: mental culture, not mental death, was the aim set before the Buddhist ascetic by the founder of his order. Each one is to set conquer self by himself; and the observance of no ceremony, the belief in no creed, will avail him who fails in obtaining this complete mastery of himself. Outward respect and courtesy to his superiors is exacted from the novice; but his own salvation ... depends on his self-culture; he is to obey not his brother but the Law; his superior has no supernatural gifts of wisdom or absolution ... (Rhys Davids 1882, 168–169)

As the history of Christianity had taught him to anticipate,

> the Buddha's monastic society did become more and more like one of the monkish orders which sprang up in the West ... When successive kings and chiefs were allowed to endow the Society ... it gradually ceased in great measure to be the

> school of virtue and the most favourable sphere of intellectual progress, and became thronged with worthless and the idle. (Rhys Davids 1882, 153)

This downward spiral from authenticity was especially pronounced among the Buddhists of Nepal, Tibet, China and Mongolia, whose doctrinal development 'is exceedingly interesting, and very valuable from the similarity it bears to the development which has taken its place in Christianity in Roman Catholic countries' (Rhys Davids 1882, 199). Indeed, the divinities of Northern Buddhism

> bear a distinct resemblance to the Eons or Emanations of the Gnostic Church; and it is not impossible that they owe their existence to the influence of Persian Christianity. In any case the whole theory ... is the greatest possible contradiction to the Agnostic Atheism, which is the characteristic of [Gautama's] system of philosophy. (Rhys Davids, 1882, 207).

As this 'stronger' side of Gautama's teaching was neglected, 'the debasing belief in rites and ceremonies, and charms, and incantations, which had been the especial object of his scorn, began to live again, and to grow vigorously, and spread like the Birana weed warmed by the tropical sun in marsh and muddy water' (Rhys Davids 1882, 207). The final manifestation of this East-West tale of parallel institutional rot is a familiar pairing:

> Lamaism, indeed, with its shaven priests, its bells and rosaries, its images, and holy water, and gorgeous dresses; its service with double choirs, and processions, and creeds, and mystic rites, and incense, in which the laity are spectators only; its abbots and monks, and nuns of many grades, its worship of the double Virgin, and of the saints and angels; its fasts, confessions, and purgatory; its images, its idols, and its pictures; its huge monasteries, and its gorgeous cathedrals, its powerful hierarchy, its cardinals, its Pope, bears outwardly at least a strong resemblance to Romanism, in spite of the essential difference of its teaching, and of its mode of thought. (Rhys Davids 1882, 250)

Thus, in Rhys David's vision, all Buddhisms were not created equal. The so-called Northern Buddhists tacitly recapitulated the history and trappings of Roman Catholicism: from its Gnostic predecessors to its Popes and idols. Southern Buddhists, however, had traced a different, anti-sacerdotal branch of development from Buddhism's origins — one that remained doctrinally and institutionally closer to the original Buddhism of the founder. Most importantly, such exemplars were not exclusive to the hoary past of ancient India; far and few between though they were, some were alive and well and living in contemporary Asia:

> There is reason to believe that the ancient spirit of the Order is by no means extinct in China and Japan, and even Tibet. And I know from personal experience that it survives in Ceylon. Go and talk to the yellow-robed and tonsured recluse ... you must speak with him as man to man, not as the wise to the barbarian ... And it will be strange if you do not find a new world of thought and of feeling opening out before you. I once knew such a man. He would have seemed nothing to a passing observer but a thin and diseased-looking monk, rather mean in stature ... I found him versed in all the poetry and ethics of the Suttas, and was glad to hear him talk ... Throughout the long history of Gotama's order, its influence over those who had eyes to see, and ears to hear, must have been moulded and guided by many men such as Yatramulle Unnanse ... (Rhys Davids 1882, 186)

In short, the lineage of the ideal monk of the Pāli text was not irreparably broken.

There were contemporary Asian monastics like Yatramulle Unnanse, whose dignified demeanor, rationality and high-mindedness attested to the fact that 'the Buddhist Order was not founded, altogether in vain' (Rhys Davids 1882, 187).

Rhys Davids' perspective was a sea change in Victorian colonial scholarship. For the first time since being 'discovered' in the mid-nineteenth century, the scientific proto-Protestant monastic had emerged from the pages of the Pāli Canon to speak to his colonizer on equal terms: 'man to man', not as a 'barbarian' speaking to 'the wise' (Rhys Davids 1882, 187). In so doing, Rhys Davids' rational monastic tacitly exploited a fundamental ambivalence in British constructions of Buddhist monks. While the 'long-dead' ideal *bhikkhu* evoked the 'loss of Asian greatness' bemoaned and celebrated by Orientalist writers, he could also be understood as evidence of ancient Asia's glory defined by Britain's own terms. But a contemporary Asian embodiment of Western reason necessarily 'made the ignominy of [Asia's] contemporary subjection to British rule all too evident' (Prakash 1999, 107). The rational, modern Buddhist monk was thus a deeply charged and politically volatile image. By the opening of the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, he would be a strategy for appropriating the cultural power and prestige of Western science on behalf of distinctly non-Western concerns.

THE MODERNIST MONK GOES TO AMERICA: OLCOTT, DHARMAPALA AND THE WORLD'S PARLIAMENT OF RELIGION

> Arrayed in robes of spotless white, which seemed all the whiter by reason of his swarthy countenance and wealth of jet-black hair, with arm and index finger extended, and every muscle of his body quivering with excitement, Dharmapala, the Buddhist scholar from Calcutta, stood upon the edge of the platform in the religious congress at Chicago. (*New York Herald*, September 15, 1893)

By the time modern, flesh-and-blood Asian Buddhists debuted at the World's Parliament of Religion in Chicago in 1893, Protestant British conceptions of Buddhist monks had been circulating in popular American literature for more than two decades.[29] James Freeman Clarke's famous *Atlantic Monthly* exposition on 'Buddhism, or the Protestantism of the East' (1868) had liberally referenced British scholarly literature to explain that:

> Buddhism and Protestantism accept nature and its laws, and make a religion of humanity as well as of devotion ... The Brahman and the Roman Catholic think that eternal rest is to be obtained by intellectual submission, by passive reception of what is taught us and done for us by others: the Buddhist and the Protestant believe it must be accomplished by an intelligent and free obedience to Divine Laws. Mr. Hodgson, who has long studied the feature of this religion in Nepaul, says: 'The one infallible diagnostic of Buddhism is a belief in the infinite capacity of the human intellect'. ... And herein is another resemblance to Protestantism, which emphasizes so strongly the value of free thought and seeking after truth. (Clarke 1871 [1878], 145)

Clarke was evidently aware that reason and monasticism were, in the mind of his American readers, incompatible bedfellows, and had offered a creative if somewhat torturous explanation. In Europe, he explained, those Catholics who were not satisfied 'with a merely sacramental salvation, and longed for a higher

29. American conceptions of Buddhism were neither homogenous nor exclusively conditioned by Protestant conceptions. For a broader overview, see Tweed 2000.

life' were 'put together in convents and kept them by themselves, where they could do no harm'. As such,

> the whole monastic system of the Church of Rome is an *included Protestantism*, or a Protestantism within the church ... [m]any of the reformers before the Reformation were monks. Savonarola, St. Bernard, Luther himself, were monks. From the monasteries came many of the leaders of the Reformation. (Clarke 1871 [1878], 145)

In India, this course of events was played out in Buddhism's history:

> It took the form of a monasticism included in Brahmanism, and remained a part of the Hindoo religion. And so, when the crisis came and the conflict began, this Hindoo Protestantism maintained itself for a long time in India, as Lutheranism continued for a century in Italy, Spain and Austria. (Clarke, 1871 [1878], 145)

Monasticism was, ironically enough, the wellspring from which the Protestant and Buddhist revolt against superstition and sacerdotalism had sprung. The rational Buddhist and Protestant monk had shared historical precedent.

Americans had also learned about the true Buddhist by way of Henry Steel Olcott (1832–1907), a journalist and Civil War veteran, and Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831–91), a Russian-born occultist with self-avowed connections with 'Mahatmas' — members of an esoteric brotherhood in Tibet. In 1875, Olcott and Blavatsky joined forces to co-found the Theosophical Society, an organization that sought to

> diffuse among men a knowledge of the laws inherent in the universe; to promulgate the knowledge of the essential unity of all that is, and to determine that this unity is fundamental in nature; to form an active brotherhood among men; to study ancient and modern religion, science and philosophy; and to investigate the powers inherent in man. (Lopez 2002, xii)

These objectives were framed by Blavatsky's conviction that 'ancient wisdom' about the nature of the universe had been largely obscured by dogmatic religion and materialistic science. It was preserved only in a handful of places, such as India and Tibet, where esoteric 'Masters' had access to a truth that transcended the confines of rational knowledge. In this sense, the Society was also a response to Darwin's theory of evolution — an attempt 'to found a scientific religion, one that accepted geology and archeology while proclaiming an ancient and esoteric system of spiritual evolution more sophisticated than the physical evolution described by Darwin' (Lopez 2002, xii.). It was clearly fueled by a deep contempt for Christianity, a tradition which had, in Olcott's view, fallen into moral bankruptcy: 'the Popist half is lapsing into fetishism, the Protestant into Nihilism ... Vice and crime increase daily under the festering influence of Atonement ... the court calendars are burdened with cases of seduction, rape, adultery ... and every other crime of the Decalogue' (cited in Prothero 1996, 64). Long-time followers of Olcott may have remembered the First Presidential Address of the Theosophical Society at which he had characterized the mission of the Theosophical Society as a two-flank war against 'theological superstition and a tame subservience to the arrogance of science' and drew on John William Draper's infamous *History of the Conflict Between Religion and Science* as the epigram for his printed speech.[30]

More widely known in the United States was Olcott's *Buddhist Catechism* (1881),

30. David McMahan rightfully notes that although '[Olcott] allied Buddhism with scientific rationalism in implicit criticism of orthodox Christianity' , he also 'went well beyond the tenets of

a purported distillation of the essence of 'true' Buddhism. The *Catechism* had been born from the Theosophical Society's anti-colonial projects in Ceylon. Two years earlier, Olcott had developed a great interest in Ceylonese Buddhist revivalist efforts, and had opened a correspondence with several prominent Sinhalese monks, including Hikkaḍuwē Sumaṅgala (1827–1911) and Migettuwatta (or Mohottiwatta) Guṇānanda (1823–1890). At their behest, the Theosophists sailed to Ceylon in 1880 where, amidst great public panoply, they took the vows of lay Buddhists, and affirmed their determination to join their Buddhist *confreres* in the battle against Christian missionaries.

Olcott's core line of anti-colonial attack was Buddhist education. Striving to turn the 'superstitious' Sinhalese people from 'spirit worship' and other 'non-Buddhist practices', he had borrowed a page from Christian missionary tactics and founded the Buddhist Theosophical Society (BTS): a multi-pronged organization dedicated to disseminating knowledge of the 'true' Buddhist tradition among the Sinhalese people. Significantly, the BTS membership structure mirrored Olcott's ambivalence about Buddhist monks. Olcott divided the membership of the BTS into two parts: one for laity managers and the other for monastics, who were ineligible for managerial positions. This bifurcation ostensibly reflected Olcott's text-derived conviction that Buddhist monks be removed from the entanglements of secular life so they could pursue a 'higher calling'. It also resonated with Olcott's dismissal of contemporary Buddhists whose practices he regarded as degenerate.[31] Needless to say, this division was deeply resented by the politically active Guṇānanda.[32]

Olcott then challenged Ceylon's Protestant colonizers by adopting another Christian missionary strategy. Immersing himself in 10,000 pages of translations and writings of English and French scholars, most notably those of Rhys Davids, he produced *The Buddhist Catechism:* a collection of 383 question-and-answer propositions 'on the lines of the similar elementary handbooks so effectively used among Christian sects' for use in schools, by the laity and the *sangha* itself (Olcott 1895, 298). Olcott's Christian-style distillation was given the stamp of approval by the monk-activist Hikkaḍuwē, and was vigorously disseminated throughout Ceylon and the United States.

The *Catechism* was widely read in both settings.[33] Sinhalese Buddhists and American Protestants alike were informed that Buddhism was neither a religion nor a creed but a philosophy that rejected superstition, sacerdotalism and ritual. 'Dedicated to education and the study of science' (Olcott 1908, 96), Buddhism's teachings were not merely endorsed by modern science but went beyond it; Buddhism was not so much 'a chart of science' as 'a system of ethics and tran-

conventional science in extrapolating from the Romantic- and Transcendentalist-influenced "occult sciences" of the nineteenth century' (McMahan 2008, 95).

31. Olcott's own account of taking Buddhist vows underscores this conviction: '[T]o be a regular Buddhist is one thing, and to be a debased modern Buddhist sectarian is quite another' (Olcott 1895, 168).

32. According to one biographer Guṇānanda came to see that Olcott 'was trying to teach distinguished monks and scholars instead of learning from them' (Anderson 2003, 178).

33. It would eventually go through more than forty editions and be translated into over twenty languages. It first appeared, in both English and Sinhalese, on 24 July 1881. It is still used today in Sri Lankan schools.

scendental metaphysics' (Olcott 1908, 97) unencumbered by the trappings of institutionalized religion. Its monks bore little resemblance to the 'priests of other religions' who claimed to be 'intercessors between men and God, to help to obtain the pardon of sins'. By contrast, the ideal Buddhist *bhikkhu* of the texts 'do not acknowledge or expect anything from a divine power'; their duties to the laity are to 'set them an example of highest morality; to teach and instruct them; to preach and expound the Law ... to dissuade them from vice; be compassionate and tenderhearted, and seek to promote the welfare of beings' (Olcott 1908, 78–80). *The Catechism* was, in short, Olcott's answer to Darwin's materialism and Christianity's corruption, and made clear that Buddhism and its monastic ideal were potential contributors to larger conversations between Christianity and science, as well as between different forms of Christianity itself.

Among the Sinhalese most deeply informed by Olcott's vision was a young Buddhist named Don David Hēvāvitāraṇa (1864–1933) who would introduce himself at the 1893 World's Parliament as Anāgārika Dharmapala, 'Homeless Protector of the Dharma', exemplar of Southern Buddhism. Hēvāvitāraṇa had been born in Colombo to an English-speaking middle-class family with strong ties to monastic revivalists, including Hikkaḍuwē and Guṇānanda, Olcott's Sinhalese correspondents. Like most upwardly-mobile Sinhalese of his day, Hēvāvitāraṇa had been formally educated in Anglican Christian mission schools — an experience which left him with a thorough appreciation for the power of Christian texts and missionary methods, and an equally thorough contempt for his Christian missionary teachers.[34] Their shortcomings stood in stark contrast to the erudition and demeanor of Hikkaḍuwē Sumaṅgala and Guṇānanda who were, for Hēvāvitāraṇa, both antithesis and antidote to Christian colonialism:

> In contrast to my wine-drinking, meat-eating and pleasure-loving missionary teachers, the *bhikkhus* were meek and abstemious. I loved their company and would sit quietly in a corner and listen to their wise discourse, even when it was far above my head. I was fortunate in knowing well the venerable H. Sri Sumangala, the most learned and beloved of *bhikkhus* ... Another Buddhist monk who, as a friend of my family, I saw nearly every day, was ... Gunananda. He was a golden-tongued orator, winning in personality and, when he began replying to Christian attacks on Buddhism, his fame soon spread over the island. (Guruge 1965, 684)

It was through his relationship to Guṇānanda that Hēvāvitāraṇa met the Theosophists during their first visit to Ceylon. Olcott's fusion of Buddhist education and anti-colonialism apparently made a powerful impression on the sixteen year-old, who — against the backdrop of Olcott and Guṇānanda's arguments over the 'rightful' place of monks in the structure of the BTS — commenced a rigorous study of Theosophical literature. By 1884, his conversion was complete: Don David had eschewed his European name for Dharmapala, 'Protector of the Dharma', and, wearing the *anagārika* robes of 'spotless white' which would so impress the American audience of the World's Parliament of Religions, was formally initiated into the Theosophical Society.

What was this *anāgārika* role that the young nationalist had adopted?

34. 'But I do not come to the West ignorant of Christianity. For twenty years I have been reading and rereading the Christian Bible. Along with ancient Buddhist writings, I carry with me everywhere a leather-bound Bible, which is heavily underlined with references and cross-references and falling apart form constant use' (Guruge 1965, 682).

Dharmapala had borrowed its outward form from leading Indian Theosophists who publicly took the traditional Hindu vows of a *naiṣṭhika brahmacārin* (celibate religious student) to enact a specifically Theosophical identity. Like a monastic, a Theosophical *brahmacārin* took vows of celibacy, wore robes (of white) and lived a moderately ascetic lifestyle. He was however, a layperson, free to move around and engage in social affairs. (He would, for example, have been eligible for managerial positions in the BTS.) It was an interstitial role with no precedent in Buddhism, 'true' or otherwise. It did, however, represent one solution to the tension between world renunciation and the need for anti-colonial engagement embodied by Guṇānanda's conflict with Olcott. Dharmapala took vows in 1881, proclaimed himself thereafter to be an '*Anāgārika*', 'homeless mendicant'.

Dharmapala's orientation to Buddhist monasticism continued to evolve. In 1886, he accompanied Colonel Olcott and C.W. Leadbeater on a three-month fundraising tour of Ceylon during which he met a number of Sinhalese village monks — men whose apparent 'immorality' and adherence to superstitious 'spirit cults' bore little resemblance to Olcott's text-based monastic ideal, and whose social indifference contrasted painfully with Guṇānanda's selfless activist example. '*Sramana Pretas*' (monkish goblins), he would later call such figures: 'shameless, virtueless cardboard monks' whose failure to propagate the true Dharma violated both their monastic obligations and their patriotic duty (quoted in Seneviratne 1999, 39). For Dharmapala as for Olcott, the promulgation of 'true' Buddhism — a scientific system of ethics and metaphysics — was anti-colonialism by other means.

Over the next decade, Anāgārika Dharmapala worked with Olcott on a number of Buddhist missionary projects. The shared ideological core of these efforts lay in the theme of recovery: Dharmapala and his Theosophical *confreres* sought to 'recover' and promulgate the 'true' universal Buddhism that had been repressed and corrupted by centuries of colonialism in Asia. In Ceylon, it was a 'return to [the] righteousness' of pre-colonial Sri Lankan civilization they sought: the retrieval of a society founded on Buddhist morality, and ruled by a righteous and paternalistic king. In India, Dharmapala sought to recover Bodhgayā, the historical site of the Buddha's enlightenment, from its current Hindu owners, and to transform it into a universal Buddhist pilgrimage site.[35] All of these efforts would be facilitated through Buddhist education — in particular, by presenting Buddhism in terms that were attractive to the western-educated Asian elite so necessary to the development of modern Buddhist Asian nations.

These considerations were paramount to Dharmapala's decision to accept an invitation to represent Southern Buddhism at the World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago. In July 1893, he enlisted the help of fellow Theosophist A. E. Buultjens to 'write out the Buddhist answers to the questions propounded in the programme of the Chicago Fair'.[36] Then, armed with twenty thousand copies of the Five Precepts of Buddhism to distribute at the Parliament and various ports of call, Dharmapala boarded a steamer on the first leg of his journey to America to enlighten their Christian masses about the truth of Southern Buddhism.

The World's Parliament of Religions had been planned as the spiritual expression of the larger Columbian Exposition: 'the most comprehensive and brilliant

35. For insightful discussion of this dimension of Dharmapala's work, see Trevithick 2006.

36. Dharmapala's diary entry, July 17, 1893.

display', affirmed Dr. John Barrow, the Parliament Chair, 'of man's material progress which the ages have ever known' (Barrows 1893, vol. 1, 4). An object lesson in social Darwinism, the Exposition popularized and propagated an evolutionary hierarchy whose apex was scientific Protestantism as expressed by the technological achievements of modern America. This positioning was tacitly reiterated by the Parliament's transparently Christian objectives:

> To bring together in conference, for the first time in history, the leading representatives of the great Historic Religions of the World ... To indicate the impregnable foundations of Theism, and the reasons for man's faith in immortality, and thus to unite and strengthen the forces which are adverse to a materialistic philosophy of the universe ... To discover ... what light religion has to throw on the great problems of the present age, especially ... Temperance, Labour, Education, Wealth and Poverty. (Barrows 1893, vol. 2, 18)

These objectives were to be realized through the application of a set of 'specific rules and regulations ... promulgated for the conduct of the proposed conference' which included some very un-parliamentary features: debate was prohibited, for example, as was any form of 'censure' or 'random talk' (Snodgrass 2003, 67–8). The Parliament was, in short,

> an aggressively Christian event ... organized around unquestioned Christian assumptions of the nature and function of religion ... [and] governed by a set of rules for controlling discourse so permeated by Christian presuppositions that they effectively reduced all other religions to inadequate attempts to express the Christian revelation. (Snodgrass 2003, 1).

Dharmapala apparently understood this positioning as an opportunity as much as a limitation. His opening greeting to the Parliament dutifully celebrated the similarities of Buddhism with Christianity and lauded the objectives of the Parliament. Its real virtue, however, lay in its resonance with an ancient Buddhist event:

> When I read the program of this Parliament of Religions I saw it was simply the re-echo of a great consummation which the Indian Buddhists accomplished twenty-four centuries ago.
>
> At that time Asoka, the great emperor, held a council, in the city of Patna, of a thousand scholars ... and the influence of that congress, held twenty-one [37] centuries ago, is to-day a living power, for you everywhere see mildness in Asia ... Go to any of the Buddhist countries [today] and you will see the carrying out of the program adopted at the congress called by the Emperor Asoka.
>
> Why do I come here today? Because I find in this new city, in this land of freedom, the very place where that program can also be carried out.
>
> (Barrows 1893, vol. 2, 95–96)

History, as Dharmapala would later affirm, was repeating itself. The Parliament was merely Christianity's steps towards a vision of universal humanism which had been realized in Asia thousands of years earlier. As such, the evolutionary culmination of this humanistic impulse was not to be found in downtown Chicago, but in contemporary Asia: 'Go to any Buddhist country and where do you find such healthy compassion and tolerance as you find there?' The Parliament's evolutionary pyramid had been tacitly re-arranged; present-day Buddhist Asia was

37. This inconsistent dating is as in the original.

now spiritual precursor to and model for the modern Christian nation. 'I hope in this great city, the youngest of all cities, this program will be carried out, and that the name of Dr. Barrows will shine forth as the American Asoka' (Barrows 1893, vol. 2, 96).

Dharmapala reiterated this vision in greater detail in his major presentation to the Parliament, 'The World's Debt to the Buddha'. Explicit in his narrative was the now-familiar British Indological conflation of Buddhism with rational, anti-sacerdotal Protestantism:

> Twenty-five centuries ago, India witnessed an intellectual and religious revolution which culminated in the overthrow of monotheism, priestly selfishness, and the establishment of a synthetic religion, a system of light and thought which was appropriately called Dhamma — Philosophical Religion. All that was good was collected from every source and embodied therein, and all that was bad discarded ... The dream of the visionary, the hope of the theologian, was brought in to objective reality. Speculation in the domain of false philosophy and theology ceased, and active altruism reigned supreme.

Śākyamuni had not only challenged priestly despotism and superstition; he had explicated a system of rational and ethical thought which contemporary Euro-American thinkers understand to be tantamount to the most advanced scientific thinking of the modern West:

> Sir Edwin Arnold [author of *The Light of Asia*] says: 'I have often said, and I shall say again, that between Buddhism and modern science there exists a close intellectual bond. When Tyndall tells us of sounds we cannot hear, and Norman Lockyer of colors we cannot see, when Sir William Thompson and Prof. Sylvester push mathematical investigation to regions almost beyond the calculus, and others, still bolder, imagine and try to grapple a space of four dimensions, what is all this except the Buddhist Maya? And when Darwin shows us life passing onward and upward through a series of constantly improving forms toward the Better and the Best, each individual starting in new existence with the records of bygone good and evil stamped deep and ineffaceably from the old ones, what is this again but the Buddhist doctrine of Karma and Dharma?' Finally, if we gather up all the results of modern research and look away from the best literature to the largest discovery in physics and the latest word in biology, what is the conclusion ... forced upon the mind, if not that which renders true Buddhism so glad and so hopeful? (Barrows 1893, vol. 2, 877–878)

Indeed, Dharmapala held, since the dawn of this the nineteenth century, the most advanced Western scholars had found in Buddhism a mirror of their own thinking at each stage of their collective ascent of the philosophical ladder. French positivists found it positivism, Buckner and his school considered Buddhism a materialist system, Rhys Davids a form of agnosticism, others a precursor to Schopenhauer or Fichte, while '[T]he latest dictum of Professor Huxley is that it is an idealism supplying "the wanting half of Bishop Berkeley's well-known idealist argument"' (Barrows 1893, vol. 2, 866). Each had, however, seen only a portion of the Buddha's vision, and so had failed to grasp the entirety of Śākyamuni's synthetic genius. But the tide was finally turning: 'The tendency of enlightened thought of the day all the world over is not towards theology, but towards philosophy and psychology. The bark of theological dualism is drifting into danger. The fundamental principles of evolution and monism are being accepted by the thoughtful'. Scientific Euro-America was finally catching up to ancient Asia.

How might the Westerner accelerate his evolution? Who could help him realize his own intellectual destiny? Asoka, Dharmapala had noted in his introductory remarks, had not worked unaided. The success in Asia of his great civilizing mission was due to the ceaseless efforts of the humble Buddhist monk:

> After the consummation of that program, the great Emperor sent the gentle teachers, the main disciples of Buddha, in the garb that you see on this platform, to instruct the world. In that plain garb they went across the deep rivers, across the Himalayas, to the plains of Mongolia and China and to the far-off beautiful isles, the empire of the rising sun. (Barrows 1893, vol. 2, 880)

'Actuated by the spirit of compassion', these scholar-teachers, whose *raison d'être* was to transmit the Dharma, had brought the whole of Asia 'under the influence of the Buddha's law. Never was the religion propagated by force, not a drop of blood has ever been spilt in the name of the Buddha'. But most importantly, their lineage remained unbroken; it stretched from Asoka's Indian courtyard to a platform in Chicago, where its contemporary Asian incarnations sat before their Western friends, ready to guide them to a destiny already realized in Asia.

Devout yet scientific, greatly compassionate yet psychologically sophisticated — Dharmapala as Buddhist modernist (quasi-)monk was enthusiastically received by the attendees of the World's Parliament, many of whom may have found in the image of the rational *bhikkhu* a reconciliation of the seemingly opposing claims of Christianity and modern science. Dharmapala himself may have seemed such a fusion of opposites: an Asian Buddhist whose white robes evoked monastic purity, yet whose lay status insulated him from anti-sacerdotal prejudice. Dharmapala's embodiment of the Modernist Monk icon at the Christian-centric Parliament likewise capitalized upon the long-lived Euro-American perception of the Buddhist monk as the 'Other' of the Christian monastic: not the radically Other monk of the seventeenth century Jesuit travelers' tales, but the distant cousin produced by nineteenth century Protestant scholars. Exploiting the space tacitly opened up by Rhys Davids, the Buddhist Modernist monk — in part a peculiar hybrid of Western imperialist and Asian nationalist discourse — had emerged from the pages of British Protestant scholarship to preach to his creators.[38]

CONCLUSION

> What is anti-Catholicism? It is the ghost in the machine, the endless, neurotic repetition by self-consciously rational modernity of the primal scene in which it slew the pre-modern as embodied in the archetypal institution, a-rational and universal, of medieval Europe ... (Tumbleson 1998, 13)

From the Protestant Reformation onwards, British anti-Catholicism wound its way though a range of interrelated cultural phenomena: colonial rule in India, Enlightenment discourses of 'science', and the emergence of Buddhist Studies as a field of study. Mirroring the contours of this complex journey was the figure of the Asian Buddhist monk. From at least the eighteenth century, the Buddhist monk was associated with the Roman Catholic monastic — the alien, superstitious and despotic 'Other' of Protestant Britain and Enlightenment modernity.

38. Dharmapala was not the only representative to leave an enduring impact on American perceptions of Asian traditions. Swami Vivekananda's representation of Hinduism as universalist, tolerant and consonant with science was especially influential.

By the nineteenth century, the British 'Catholicization of the Other' colored broader rhetorics of colonial justification in India: the British duty to champion the faith against the Catholic menace elided into a duty to spread reason, science and Protestant civilization among the heathen savages in its Empire. Anti-sacerdotalism, fears of priestly despotism, rhetorics of irrationality — all were imported into India, where they filtered British colonial perceptions of the history, practices and texts of its Hindu inhabitants. Consequently, by the end of the nineteenth century, Hinduism had been dubbed 'India's Roman Catholicism', and Buddhism — the former 'Catholicism of Asia' — made an about-face: it was hailed by British Victorian thinkers as the 'Protestantism of the East:' a rational and humanist rebellion against Hindu despotism, ritualism and priestcraft. Its primary exemplars were its monastics whose rationality and high-mindedness attested to the fact that 'the Buddhist Order was not founded, altogether in vain' (Rhys Davids, 1882, 187).

The Buddhist Modernist monk did not remain a figure of imperial imaginings. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, Asian nationalists, American Theosophists and Buddhist revivalists appropriated and adapted the figure of the 'Modernist Monk' to promote their own projects. At the Chicago-based World's Parliament of Religions in 1893, Anāgārika Dharmapala and other Buddhist representatives introduced to Americans the Buddhist Modernist Monk in living form.

Today, that monk is a familiar icon, most recently re-invoked when His Holiness the Dalai Lama stepped forward to address an audience of neuroscientists. As we saw, this figure has remained a highly charged site of intractable modern binaries. Devout yet rational, compassionate yet politically sophisticated, religious yet scientific — to his supporters, His Holiness affirms and enriches what Terry Eagleton has called 'the Enlightenment dream of a world entirely transparent to reason, free of the prejudice, superstition and obscurantism of the *ancien regime*' (Eagleton 1991, 64). To his detractors, this Buddhist Modernist is a wolf in monk's clothing: a cunning religious leader artfully deploying this Euro-American Enlightenment dream to cloak a separatist, nationalist agenda.

The Buddhist Modernist Monk's complex genealogy provides one way of thinking about how these polar positions came to be naturalized. The next step is to draw on these insights to develop a space from which we, as scholars of religion, might help to deconstruct them. As we acknowledge anti-Catholicism's centrality to the Enlightenment dream that helped produce the Modernist Monk, we are necessarily reminded of the moral ambivalence of the 'science-religion' dichotomy that fuels his mystique. At minimum, our analyses must critique the presumption of such supra-historical binaries; the figure is, I believe, better served by an immanent, open framework attentive to the contradictions and relations of reciprocal determination that characterize his genealogy. It is from that vantage point that we must further ask: in what ways may the Modernist Monk's anti-Catholic roots resonate in scholarly constructions of Buddhism and its monks? How do they shape contemporary popular perceptions of Buddhism? These questions are rarely considered, yet demand to be heard.

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