

Chapter 6 also contains some well-measured and sensitive comments on how to think about and discuss certain stock characters of *akam* poetry. Takahashi's comments, especially on poetic constructions of *tāy* ("mother") and *parattai* ("the other woman" or "courtesan") are especially enlightened. Although this book might be too technical and particularized for an outsider to Tamil literature, it deserves a place on the shelf of every serious scholar of Tamil, and should be included in South Asia reference collections in college and university libraries.

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*The Roots of Nationalism: Sri Lanka.* By ANANDA WICKREMERATNE.  
Colombo: Karunaratne and Sons, 1995. xviii, 313 pp. \$19.00 paper.

Wickremeratne's text, let me say at the outset, is all that is promised. It is an erudite addition to the historiography of nineteenth-century Sri Lanka, a product undoubtedly of painstaking research, subtle historical location, and flowing prose. It is, in other words, a finely crafted work of a thoughtful scholar.

Read another way, however, the book is a conversation with an important strand of contemporary scholarship on Sri Lankan, as well as South Asian, nationalisms. In that broad swath of scholarship, written from different standpoints, contemporary South Asian nationalism is understood in relation to nineteenth century movements of "social reform." In the literature on these movements, the issue usually at stake is the kind or quality of political space that the movement is thought to occupy. For example, it is possible to locate the movements under the signs of their leaders—Jyotiba Phule, Dayanand Saraswathi, Arumuga Navalar, or Anagarika Dharmapala—or to locate them in the political space made by the subordinated groups that constituted them. Wickremeratne's intervention, even though limited to the Sri Lankan case of Dharmapala, raises questions about this understanding of nationalism.

That question, put in my words, is this: what are the colonial conditions of possibility of these movements? Undoubtedly, there are many, but Wickremeratne's concern is primarily with but one such condition, the emergence of Christian missionary education and the decline of Buddhist temple education in the latter half of the nineteenth century. This historical movement, Wickremeratne argues, had several unintended consequences.

On the one hand, the growth of missionary education positioned schools in a new spatial logic across the island, changing the overall distribution of educational resources. For example, it is argued here, as it often is, that the Jaffna peninsula was a net beneficiary of these new developments. But furthermore, by choosing to favor education in English over education in the vernaculars, new social possibilities were enabled. In this scheme of things, then, upward mobility was about education, which was, in turn, about learning a certain kind of English. Yet, given that the distribution of resources was not, itself, even, that upward mobility carried regional unevenness with it.

This marked rupture in both the style and place of education in social life is located concomitantly with the decline of Buddhist temple education. Wickremeratne is able to show that this practice of teaching, where Buddhist monks used their temples to school the laity, became quite subordinate to that of missionary education by the late nineteenth century. This is a fascinating consequence of colonial policy,

intended or otherwise, for Buddhism itself stands reconstituted by the decline of its pedagogic function. I read the book, in fact, as a careful examination of the dying of an old order that then allows for the birth of a new one. The kind of Buddhism that was “revived” soon after must then have been quite different from the forms of faith which might have preceded it.

There are, of course, many other consequences of colonialism that do not receive attention in this text, the new plantation economy and the capitalization that it enabled being of central importance. But Wickremaratne makes no claim to be comprehensive—which in any event would be a monumental task. Rather, in drawing attention to a set of colonial practices that had serious consequences for postcolonial Sri Lanka, he elegantly illuminates the unmaking of that nation in recent years.

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## SOUTHEAST ASIA

*The World of Maluku: Eastern Indonesia in the Early Modern Era.* By LEONARD Y. ANDAYA. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1993. ix, 300 pp. \$38.00.

This important book provides the first convincing account in English of one of the longest and most paradigmatic of Asian encounters with Europe. From the time Antonio Serrão led the first Portuguese expedition to the fabled source of cloves in 1512 to the transfer of clove production to other European tropical colonies almost three centuries later, “the spice islands” remained even more central to European imagining than to European cuisine. A large literature has chronicled the bloodstained contest for control of the tiny islands at the edge of the known world, on which the cultivation of clove and nutmeg was concentrated. Most was by Europeans (Portuguese, Spanish, and Dutch particularly) reporting back to a Europe for whom the Malukan inhabitants of the islands were savage, heroic, or pathetic, but seldom comprehensible as people with their own world view. The slow advance of professional history in Southeast Asia since 1950 has mostly disregarded the area not only because it has become a modern backwater (its extraordinary beauty still undiscovered by tourists), but also because the sources are so demanding. Nobody should embark on this task without a good command of Portuguese, Spanish, and Dutch as well as the sensitivity to east Indonesian cultures needed to read these sources “against the grain.”

Leonard Andaya has not balked at challenges in the past, having shown how to use Malay and Dutch sources to illuminate the otherwise dark Malay world of the eighteenth century, and difficult Bugis, Portuguese, and Dutch sources to shed light on South Sulawesi society in the seventeenth (*The Kingdom of Jobor* [Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1975]; *The Heritage of Arung Palakka* [The Hague: Nijhoff for KITLV, 1981]). *The World of Maluku* offers the same careful mastery of difficult primary sources, but is much more self-conscious in their use, imposing on himself a need to delineate the mental world from which they came. He seeks to describe the interactions between Malukans and Europeans between 1512 and 1800, “focusing on