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978-0-521-04064-8 - Buddhist Monk, Buddhist Layman: A Study of Urban Monastic
Organization in Central Thailand

Jane Bunnag

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Buddhist monk, Buddhist layman

A STUDY OF URBAN MONASTIC ORGANIZATION
IN CENTRAL THAILAND

JANE BUNNAG



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Preface

This book is based upon material collected in Ayutthaya between September 1966 and August 1967 for use in my doctoral dissertation which was presented to London University in May 1969. This fieldwork was carried out under the auspices of the London–Cornell Project for East and South-East Asian Studies which is financed jointly by the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Nuffield Foundation. I would like therefore to thank the authorities concerned most warmly for their generous sponsorship of my research programme.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Dr S. J. Tambiah of the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge, as it was he who first inspired my interest in Theravada Buddhism, and provided constant stimulus and support throughout my studies. I am also heavily indebted to Dr E. M. Mendelson and Miss Barbara Ward who supervised and encouraged my postgraduate work at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, and to Professor E. H. S. Simmonds, Head of the Department of South-East Asia and the Islands, for his warm support throughout.

My thanks are also due to the officials of the National Research Council, Bangkok, who gave me permission to carry out my research programme in Ayutthaya, and to Dr Puey Ungaphakorn, Governor of the Bank of Thailand, who kindly sponsored my application.

I would like, furthermore, to express my gratitude to Dr Jacques Amyot of the Department of Social Sciences, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, for his valuable advice on certain aspects of fieldwork, and to Khun Sulak Siwarak for introducing me to the town and people of Ayutthaya. Of these latter I am particularly indebted to Khun Thep Sukkharattani and his family who welcomed me into their home, and to Khun Siri Imchai whose continuing and expert guidance was invaluable. Indeed, I must acknowledge my gratitude to all residents of Ayutthaya, both monk and lay, whose co-operation made my fieldwork an experience both fruitful and memorable.

The Thai terms used in the following chapters are transliterated according to the ‘general’ system laid down by the Royal Institute of Thailand, and presented in an article entitled ‘Notification of the Royal Institute concerning the Transcription of Thai Characters into Roman’, *Journal of the Siam Society*, vol. 33, pt. 1 (1941), pp. 49–65.

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The transcription of Pali terms follows the system used in the *Concise Pali-English Dictionary* compiled by A. P. Buddhadatta Mahathera (Colombo, 1957), although the diacritical marks have been omitted here.

Throughout the text the terms monk and *bhikkhu* (Pali) are used interchangeably; the Pali word *bhikkhu* being used in preference to the Thai term *phra*, also meaning monk, as the former is more generally known. I have used the Pali term *Sangha* (monkhood) in preference to the Thai derivatives for the same reason. The Thai term *wat* meaning monastery is however both brief and fairly familiar, and has therefore been used as an occasional substitute for the English equivalent.

Members of the laity are in some places referred to by the alternative term 'householders' (Pali: *gahapati*; Thai: *khawat*), a term which expresses the fact that their religious role is complementary to that of the homeless *bhikkhu* (lit. mendicant).

Monks and laymen mentioned in the text have been given fictitious names, except where the individuals involved requested that their real names should be used.

Jane Bunnag

Bangkok

September 1972

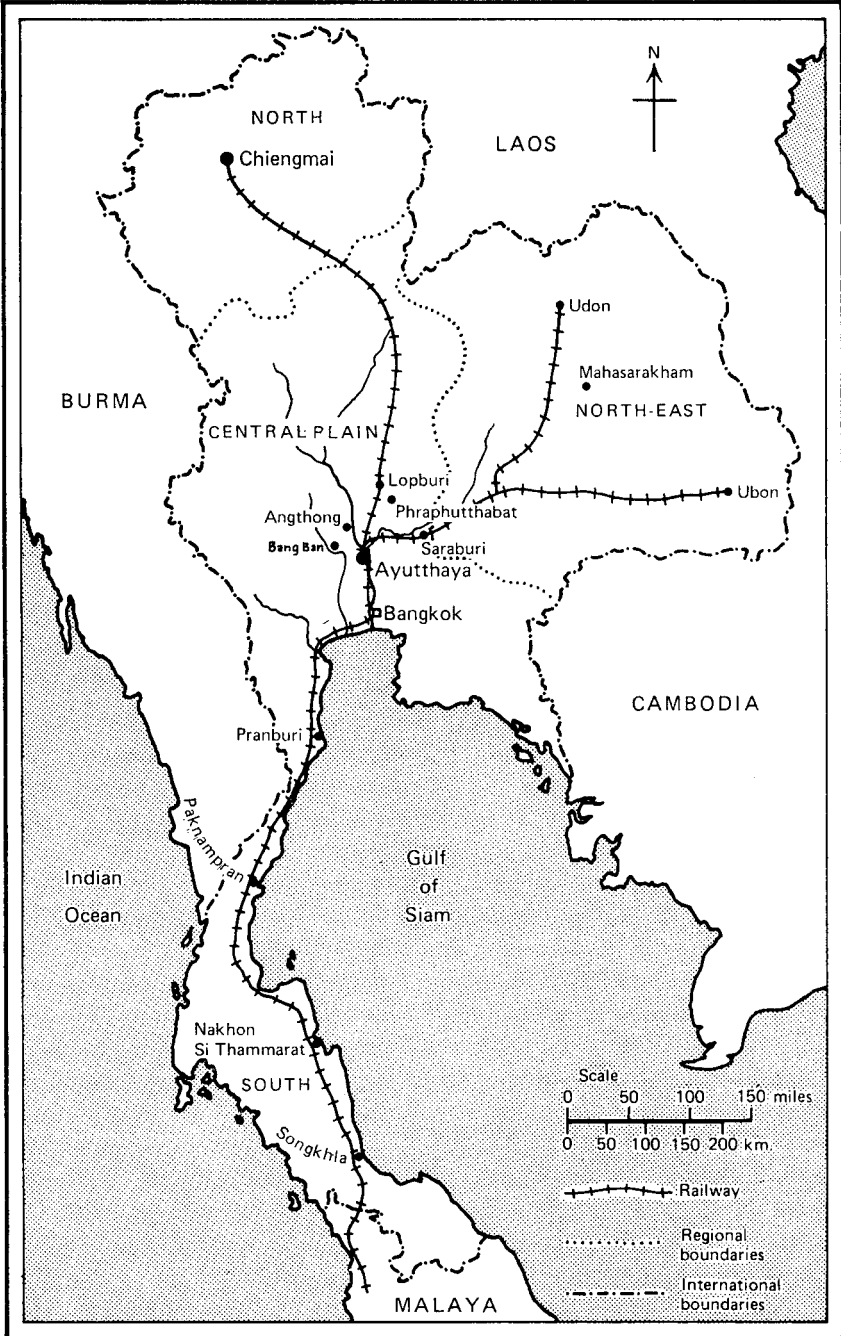
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Map A Thailand