on the ground. This gap appears when Buc suggests George W. Bush operated within an eschatological framework, but does not show the mechanisms by which the U.S. president might have gained this understanding of the world. The same gap is most striking in Buc's discussion of the First Crusade. For him, the image of the crusaders practicing cannibalism presented in a small number of contemporary sources proves that all crusaders believed they were participating in an apocalyptic event. Perhaps Raymond of Aguilers, who actually mentioned cannibalism, was attempting to make this connection, but the chasm between this clerical writer and the soldiers on this campaign is simply too great to leap.

That said, Buc has opened a conversation about an important topic of great relevance in the contemporary world. Scholars of non-Christian societies should join the conversation to help understand religious violence. As Islam developed in synergy with Judaism and Christianity, a comparable study of religious violence in the historical Islamic world would be welcome.

———David S. Bachrach, University of New Hampshire

Bhavani Raman, *Document Raj: Writing and Scribes in Early Colonial South India*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012.

doi:10.1017/S0010417515000663

This book outlines the production of the textual practices, ideologies, and social relations of writing that provided new epistemological ground for colonial governance in the late eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth in the largely Tamil-speaking regions of the Madras Presidency. The transformation from early modern to colonial forms of writing also produced new habits of mind and body and forms of expertise, and the pedagogical aspirations and textual commonsense of a then-emerging clerical middle class in South India. Perhaps most originally, Raman identifies south India arts of memory as a central aspect of this story—the place of memory in early modern governance (at least), its pedagogy, and finally its transformation into "mere rote" under the new regimes of writing that were intimately intertwined with the stuff of modern power.

The textual culture that East India Company officials encountered was multilingual, multi-scripted, and unevenly distributed across the landscape. Record offices, if they existed at all, were inheritances from the early Tamil dynasties of South India along with more recent Mughal and Maratha rulers. They were filled with palm-leaf manuscripts in various states of decay and, at best, copper-plates recording patrimonial inheritance and royal gifts of both land and office. To the Europeans, these records were uncanny, polyglossic things, text artifacts written in a half-dozen languages and a variety of non-standardized scripts could not stand independently as autonomous sources

for the authority of a deed or an inherited office. More curious still, "the efficacy of deeds," Raman notes, lay "in the performance of their receipt and writing among men who knew each other" (p. 59). To be a record, a text artifact required the attestation of the *kanakkappillai* or *kannakkan*, an earlier form of local official whose memory held histories of the family and the land, productivity, sales and gifts, and office. Thus the authority of an official record was "anchored in memory," embodied in inherited office, and personalized by the name and local standing of a human being.

Anchored in memory, such a system participated in a much deeper textual habitus that found its expression institutionalized in pedagogy. Early modern, kin-based schools, called *tinnai* or *pyol* schools, cultivated the arts of memory and calculation through repetition, recitation, and apprenticeship. Indeed, "The primary aim of the *tinnai* school was the cultivation of memory" (112–13). Such cultivation involved memorization of lexicons and poetic texts that enabled students to learn arithmetic and the alpha-syllabary through a kind of bodily mnemonics that reproduced the manner and place of articulation of Tamil sounds in the very poetic form of the texts. Contrary to a modern European textual common sense, "Memorization was not a mode through which to learn texts; rather these texts were used to cultivate memory" (113). The end result of this pedagogy was the production of "clever students," virtuosos who could remember vast swaths of different kinds of data, living concordances that could be cross-referenced and checked against other realms of memorized knowledge. Memory itself was archive in this realm of statecraft and revenue generation, in the polyglot world of early modern South India in which a *kanakkans* could remember and cross-reference different measurement systems and land productivity, or recall histories of deeds and office, in four or five languages.

This challenged those who needed to yoke their rule to legible, transparent, grammatically coherent, fixed, and depersonalized semiotic forms. Especially so in the nineteenth century's first decade as the British began the process of permanent settlement (the Ryotwari system) and rationalized ownership of land and other property. Memory and attestation was not transparent or accessible to European supervision or metropolitan reporting. The British thus established a new axis of knowing under land surveys and bound the *kanakkan* and his memory/records to it (73). Memory was downgraded to "rote," a legacy with profound implications in the education system and as a part of an orientalist textual ideology. The personalized system of attestation, too, turned suspect—officials insisted the *kanakkan* was a fount of corruption among an inherently corrupt people. But rather than eliminating the system of *kanakkans* and the hereditary offices of scriptural authority, they appropriated such offices (held disproportionately by Brahmins and other "clean castes") and reproduced an older agrarian caste hierarchy into a new clerical middle class. The *kanakkan* was thus embedded within a new epistemological

system in which local languages would be privileged, fixed grammatically, and standardized such that they could become the transparent languages of command, as Bernard Cohn so famously named them, under a modern colonial state.

The implications are clear: The formation and institutionalization of these new epistemologies and practices of writing, provoked by new modes of ruling, themselves undergirded the formation of a document raj, a papereality of law and governance. More profoundly still, they produced a fixed language and its geography, modern Tamil and the Tamil-Speaking lands of Tamilnadu. The practices that formed the document raj would be far reaching, for they ultimately provided the commonsense ground for a new kind of imagined community in the Tamil nationalisms of India and beyond.

Bhavani Raman's extraordinary book is both disciplined in focus and expansive in implication. From its attention to the micro-processes of writing and the cultivation of memory to the establishment of modern bureaucratic governance and nations, it moves from a well-crafted story about the formation of a particular polity to an elegant theory of the relationship between linguistic and political modernity.

———Bernard Bate, Yale-NUS College, National University of Singapore, and Stanford Humanities Center, Stanford University

Caroline Humphrey and Hürelbaatar Ujeed, *A Monastery in Time: The Making of Mongolian Buddhism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013, xiii, 426 pp.

doi:10.1017/S0010417515000675

Humphrey and Ujeed's *A Monastery in Time: The Making of Mongolian Buddhism* is a meticulous and theoretically sophisticated study of a unique institution in the Mongol world: Mergen Monastery in the Urad district of Inner Mongolia, China, which rejected the Tibetan liturgy used across Inner Asia and established its own vernacular tradition. The book, based on more than a decade of ethnographic fieldwork and historical-archival research using many original sources, skillfully demonstrates how a little-known institution on the outskirts of China could be considered a kind of "center" from which to view the most dramatic events of the last few centuries in Asian history: the Qing rule, the onslaught of the Han migration, the Cultural Revolution and the near disappearance of religious activity under state atheism, and, finally, the revival of Buddhism in contemporary China (approved in Inner Mongolia as part of "ethnic culture"). Spanning the period from the eighteenth century to the present, the book traces the development, institutionalization, ruptures, and transformations of a local form of Mahayana tantric Buddhism