The circulation of Buddhist ideas, literature, art, and people resulted in the creation of a connected world in Asia, which this presentation calls a “Buddhist cosmopolis.” In addition to explaining this idea of a Buddhist cosmopolis, the presentation examines the ways in which the circulations and the diversity of Buddhist practices, ideas, objects and people could be studied and conceptualized. It specifically examines the spread of knowledge, art forms, and the travels of missionaries and pilgrims within various parts of Asia to demonstrate the spatial and ideological connections, as well as the unique local traditions that emerged at these locations. The presentation suggests employing frameworks of “convergence,” “divergence,” “entanglements,” and other concepts related to mobility and connections to theorize this idea of a Buddhist cosmopolis. The understanding of a Buddhist cosmopolis, it argues, also helps comprehend the intricacies of intra-Asian interactions and the impact Buddhism had in fostering them.

The Buddhist Cosmopolis: Connectivity, Diversity, and Materiality in the Buddhist World(s)

Thursday, November 5, 2020 @ 7 PM CST
Online via Zoom (registration required)
Free and open to the public.

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FACULTY HOST: SHIH-SHAN SUSAN HUANG

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