Leaving Home and Finding Home:
Theology and Practice of Ann Hasseltine Judson and the American Baptist Mission to Burma, 1812-1826

by

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Theology in the Divinity School of Duke University

2015
ABSTRACT

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Abstract

This dissertation is a historical and theological investigation of one of the first American missionary women, Ann Hasseltine Judson. This project follows the recent historical shift in international and mission history toward questions of engagement, agency, and exchange to elucidate shifting identities and relational negotiation along the lines of gender, nationality, and community. Ann Judson engaged in a process of detachment and identification, or uprooting and replanting, from her formative context in the United States to her new home in Burma. Ann Judson used devotional habits and theological rationale to uproot herself from the United States and create a critical distance in order to open herself to replant in her new mission field. Her preparations to uproot guided Ann toward the type of mission Burma might offer, and included a shift in her religious tradition from Congregationalist to Baptist. Ann’s change to the Baptists widened her circle of supporters, as she added a network of women’s societies, congregations, and the newly formed national Baptist Triennial Convention.

Methodological tools of sociological identification, gender history, women’s history, and practice theories assist to elucidate Ann's personal agency, organizing principles, and efforts to encourage the agency of others within the American Baptist Mission to Burma. Ann engaged in her context and social relations to construct and shape mission practices. She extended formative knowledge into complex practices of home- and church-making. Ann’s organization of practices focused on her two goals: to establish a stable life in Burma and to participate in the birth of the Burmese church. As a foreigner, Ann sought good civic relations and the ability to openly spread Christianity with her practices of household economy and missionary diplomacy. As a missionary, Ann fashioned the practices of
catechesis and community cultivation to connect and guide religious inquirers, and enable the agency and responsibility of Burmese converts within the congregation. Her theology of redemption and religious affections tinted every attempt to make sense of her environment, experience, and encounter, and she also crafted a theology of mission for the West in her historical account of the American Baptist Mission to Burma.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

I believe very few females who have left their native country, have had it in their power to make such sacrifices as myself. When I think of my pleasant home, and dear Bradford friends; the flattering prospects and sources of enjoyment which I left, I am often led to wonder how I was ever made willing to forswear them, and deliberately embrace a life replete with vicissitudes as the present. But, my dear sister Mary, a little sacrifice for the cause of Christ is not worth naming; and I feel it a privilege of which I am entirely undeserving, to have had it in my power to sacrifice my all for Him who hesitated not to lay down his life for sinners.

— Ann Judson, 1819

In legend, Ann Hasseltine Judson is a mythical force of feminine nature, striding forth to sacrificially act in truth as the model martyr for missions. Among Baptists, Ann is remembered for three moments in her missionary career. First, it is said that during the commissioning of the first cohort of American male missionaries, Ann slipped from her pew and knelt at the altar, submitting herself completely to God. Second, it is said that Ann and Adoniram, individually studying the Bible to prepare for Bible translation and other missionary activities, both concluded believer’s baptism to be the only proper administration of this Christian right. Following this, they were immersed, no longer considering the sprinkling they received as infants to be effective, and went on their way to Burma as the first American Baptist missionaries. Third, Ann is famous for sacrificing her health and safety to save imprisoned Adoniram from starvation, torture, and execution at the hands of the Burmese during a time of war. After her death, poets eulogized Ann as the saintly, angelic, missionary heroine who “dar’d the rude arrogance of savage power/to plead for him, and bade his dungeon glow/with her fair brow.”

2. On Reading the Memoir of Mrs. Judson, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 400.
While legend has preserved Ann Judson in memory after other influential Baptist foremothers have been long forgotten, it has preserved little of Ann’s activities in mission and her legacy in many different quarters. Whereas James D. Knowles, Ann’s first biographer, could presume “no precedent nor argument is needed to justify the publication…of a life which has been so closely connected with the history of the Burman Mission” in 1829, legend presents a lone, almost isolated figure of inspirational action. In reality, Ann Judson was never an isolated figure. Even when physically alone, Ann was aware of her loneliness, aware of the beloved family she had left, and aware of the people she had come to know and love in Rangoon. Ann Judson’s lasting influence and legacy in American mission cannot be isolated from her contexts and her relationships. To recover her life and legacy in mission, therefore, one must engage with the very intelligent, rising middle class, and well-connected young woman of Bradford, Massachusetts, who came to the conclusion that she must forsake everything to live in a strange place, forge new relations with strangers, try to be useful, and above all, maintain her journey toward God.

1.1 Argument

With her life, Ann Hasseltine Judson left a deep imprint upon missionary practice and relations in Burma. By her writings, Ann shaped public opinion, American Baptist organization, and mission support with her observations, theological reflections, and her determination to persevere. An agent of change, Ann Judson also willingly sought to be changed by moving to a new place, making new relations, and seeking her true home with God.

As a pioneer missionary to Burma, Ann Judson used devotional habits and theological rationale to uproot herself from the United States and create a critical distance in

order to open herself to replant in her new mission field. Her preparations to uproot guided
Ann toward the type of mission Burma might offer, as Ann grew more interested in working
among indigenous people in their own languages, and more uncomfortable with colonial
governance and patronage. Her process of uprooting also included a shift in her religious
tradition from Congregationalist to Baptist. Ann’s Congregationalist community of
Bradford, Massachusetts had taught Ann devotional habits for detachment and encouraged
her interest in mission. Ann’s change to the Baptists widened her circle of supporters, as she
added a network of women’s societies, congregations, and the newly formed national Baptist
Triennial Convention. Her most important relation continued to be Adoniram, who viewed
Ann as his gifted colleague in mission.

Ann engaged in her context and social relations to construct and shape mission
practices. She extended formative knowledge she had learned in Bradford, Massachusetts
and Rangoon into complex practices. Ann’s organization of practices focused on her two
goals: to establish a stable life in Burma, and to participate in the birth of the Burmese
church. As a foreigner, Ann sought good civic relations and the ability to openly spread
Christianity with her practices of household economy and missionary diplomacy. As a
missionary, Ann fashioned the practice of catechesis to connect and guide religious inquirers.
She also practiced community cultivation for both inquirers and new converts. In doing so,
Ann enabled the agency and responsibility of Burmese converts within the congregation.

Ann carried a vivid theological framework of God’s redemptive relation to the world
with her, and her experiences in Burma reinforced her sense of God’s overarching
benevolence, immediate presence, and active providence. Ann made sense of life’s
vacillations and her choices through theological habits, rationale, reflection, and convictions
focused on God’s redemption of the world, and the Christian’s journey toward God through
the pursuit of religious affections. In the end, Ann offered a theology of mission to the West as an orderly journey toward God and with God, in sacrifice of self and pursuit of participation in God’s work of redemption.

1.2 Method

Close reading of a single life requires many different methods. From the very beginning, this project prioritized the recovery and close reading of Ann Hasseltine Judson’s writings. Many of Ann’s missionary correspondence letters were published in denominational and regional newspapers. These periodicals also provide the context of Ann Judson’s letters in relation to Baptist life, American concerns, and the viewpoints of her fellow colleagues in mission. Ann’s first biographer, James D. Knowles, preserved several types of both public and semi-private resources to provide an account of Ann’s inner spiritual life as well as her missionary activities in the posthumous Memoir of Mrs. Judson. Publishing large selections of letters and journal entries, Knowles provided a narrative of Ann’s development as a missionary and preserved some of her most important occasional documents. As the crowning star of primary resources, Ann Hasseltine Judson edited and published a history of the first ten years of the American Baptist Mission to Burma, An Account of the American Baptist Mission to the Burman Empire, In a Series of Letters, Addressed to a Gentleman in London (1823).4

Probing for methods that would assist explanations, but not silence or overrule Ann Judson’s narrative, this project draws from the fields of social history, sociology, gender analysis, and practice theory. Social history and gender analysis facilitate situating Ann Judson within her current historical context. They provide information about the content and method of her formation, and reveal the shifting channels of gender ideology, American

identity, and missionary expectations of her time. As Ann Judson did not stay in the United States, and insisted she had forsaken her beloved homeland for God, sociological studies of missionary identification assist in describing and assessing Ann’s efforts to transition to Rangoon as her new home, without ignoring the continued influence of her American formation.

Ann composed most of her writings in the genre of letter-writing. Within them, Ann Judson demonstrated a high level of awareness of her role as a relational bridge between America and Burma, and between the Burmese and God. As a pioneer crafter of mission practice, Ann also regularly explained, justified, and openly questioned her rationale for action and her reactions to events in Burma. To balance Ann’s position as relational bridge and a pioneering creator, theories of practice provide insight into the socially cooperative, complex, habitual, and historically extendable nature of Ann Judson’s practices in mission.

For a foundational definition of practice, this project draws upon Alasdair MacIntyre’s emphasis on the importance of formative knowledge, extension of practices into new contexts, and relational exchange in tradition. James McClendon’s attention to distinctive practices of catechesis and watch-care in the baptist stream of Christian tradition, especially in his discussion of agency, relationship, and the telos of Christian practice as a journey toward God, provides a second, theologically reflective, method of practice analysis. Analysis of practice from Paul Connerton, Michel de Certeau, John Yoder, and Ellen Charry, appropriate to the practice considered, offer other lenses and critical analysis of human agency, power, non-institutional traditioning, gender negotiation, interpersonal relations, theological reflection, and embodiment of faith.

While recovery and close reading of Ann Judson’s context, relations, practices, and theology are the priority of this project, the methods used heavily influence the structure and
flow for each chapter. The first chapter and second chapters, for example, distinguish different arenas for identification with the Burmese and maintaining relations with the West, respectively. As a result, these chapters closely interrogate themes within the narrative, but chronological order and synchronic nature of these arenas are assumed rather than strictly defined. The final four chapters each begin with a prelude on practice theories to lay out concepts and categories for analysis. Theories of practice are rarely mentioned during the following sections, however, in order to focus primarily on Ann’s narrative of events. As the chapters are thematically arranged by distinct practices, there is chronological overlap, but they are generally ordered according to shifts in the content and focus of Ann’s correspondence as the American Baptist mission matured.

After close narration of Ann’s creative extension of practices, the final section of each chapter moves to consider an issue where recovery of sources, critical analysis, and Western interpretation of Ann Judson have collided relative to each respective practice. Chapter three narrates a further display of Ann’s home-making practices to survive in the crisis of war between the Burmese empire and British colonial forces, which led to her fame in the West. Chapter four considers whether the mode of Ann’s practice was the front line of cultural imperialism. Chapter five asks questions about Ann’s negotiations, acceptance, and rhetorical agency within Western gender constraints and mission assumptions imposed upon her published literary works for missions, while chapter six highlights Ann’s criticism of American irreligious affluence and her theological invitation to mission for the West.

1.3 Historiography

This dissertation joins three recent movements among historians who have challenged divisions, silos, and boundaries within their fields, and across disciplines. First, Catherine Brekus and other Americanists have argued that women’s history is integral to
American religious history. Addressing the recurrent dismissal and compartmentalization of “women’s issues” in American history, Catherine Brekus has charged that “women’s history leads to an altered vision of America’s religious past.” Brekus’ *Strangers and Pilgrims: Female Preaching in America, 1740-1860*, for example, recovered a long forgotten moment of numerous American female traveling preachers and religious leaders in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and prodded further analysis of gender negotiations, republicanism, and evangelical theology during this period. Some women’s historians, such as Laurel Thatcher Ulrich and Karen Hansen, use social historical method to recover the roles and spheres of women’s influence. Others, like Catherine Kelly and Mary Kupiec Cayton, interrogate gender ideologies, economic shifts, and other forms of formative sociability that shaped the lives of New England women.

Second, this project follows a recent resurgence of international interest in the expansion of Christianity across cultural and political systems, and the movement of Americanists into larger international scholarship circles. In previous decades, many twentieth-century Americanists, appalled by the excesses of the Cold War and other American international projects, have been steadily combatting American historical naïveté about “the unique righteousness of the American role in the world.”

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6. Jane Hunter, “Women’s Mission in Historical Perspective: American Identity and Christian Internationalism,” *Competing Kingdoms: Women, Mission, Nation, and the American Protestant Empire, 1812-1960*, Barbara Reeves-Ellington, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Connie A. Shemo, eds. (Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press, 2010), 20. Added to the negative critique of missionaries by post-colonialist history, the social-historical, linguistic, and new cultural historical turns have produced a restricted focus within America’s national landmass, “indeed the site of ample drama and conflict.” Indeed, investigation of American expansionism has resulted in significant critiques of the use of Manifest Destiny rhetoric in American missions to Native Americans. In the vacuum of interest in American internationalism left by these important historical projects, the “ongoing obsession of Americans with the Vietnam legacy”—and the continued fallout from the religiously and ethnically narrated rise of Middle Eastern terrorism in post 9/11 America—postcolonialism and historical critiques of the Cold War and Vietnam era of American international policy have filled the void (Hunter, “Women’s Mission in Historical Perspective,” 19-21).
Gentility, for example, applied serious American “cultural self-scrutiny” to the “blinding arrogance” of American women’s worldviews in their efforts to inculcate Western ideologies in China as part of the Christian gospel.7

Standing by her first analysis, Hunter now judges her own work as one-sided, and therefore “too easy and incomplete. For in judging the intent of missionary work to dominate and transform, I did not adequately assess indigenous uses.”8 In the twenty-first century, the tide in mission history is shifting toward the investigation of missionaries and converts as fully-fleshed historical actors, who participated “in relationships…, who coexist in colonialist contexts and mutually influence each other.”9 Dana Robert, for example, argues that “the real experiences of missionaries in specific locations, and the concrete needs and interests of the early converts, both challenged and shaped” missionary action, vision, and ideals.10 Growing interest in webs, networks, and relational influence has produced more questions about the larger “swirling force field of loyalties to nation, God, class, and self” within and without missionary decision-making, their literary productions, and American reception of missionary reports.11 Interactions between gender ideologies, women’s active religious influence, and American political identity, according to Hunter, continue to be a particularly fruitful topic for American religious history and mission history. This is especially true for the nineteenth century when ideas of American uniqueness and expansionism were growing alongside ideologies of female selflessness, virtue, and cultural protectors.

Third, this project follows investigations of lived theology and the transmission of Christian faith from both historical and theological disciplines. Laurie Maffly-Kipp, Mark Valeri, Leigh Schmidt, and others have pioneered interdisciplinary study of social practice theory, practical theology, and historical research. Striking a balanced perspective between social construction and theologically informed action, Maffly-Kipp et. al. seek more nuanced understanding of the multivalent character of practices, their development, and the transformation of human life through practice.\(^{12}\) From the theological perspective, James William McClendon Jr. has lead the way, first as an advocate for narrative theology, and then in his systematic theology. Starting with ethics instead of doctrine, McClendon begins with embodied faith and the gospel’s three-stranded moral structure of the way of following Jesus, communal watch-care, and witness of the faith to the world.\(^{13}\) Defining doctrine as what the church must teach to be the church today,\(^{14}\) McClendon to starts with the end of all things, in eschatology, or the Rule of God. Though it is doubtful McClendon read or knew much of Ann Judson, they both share such great interest in the rule of God, teaching the faith, and the Christian community, there is little doubt they belong to the same theological tree.

1.4 Life of Ann Judson and the American Baptist Mission to Burma

The chapters that follow prioritize issues of context, relation, and practices, respectively, and narrative chronology sometimes fades into the background. For those who know little about the course of Ann Hasseltine Judson’s life, a simple chronological sketch must suffice. Ann Hasseltine was born on December 22, 1789 in the provincial New

England town of Bradford, Massachusetts, located forty miles north of Boston on the Merrimack River. Her father, John, descended from several generations of Bradford Hasseltines, and he and Rebecca raised four daughters, Rebecca, Ann, Abby, and Mary, in a rising middle-class merchant family. The Hasseltines were also prominent attendees of the First Congregational Church and on good terms with Pastor Jonathan Allen. In 1803, Ann enrolled in the recently founded Bradford Academy. In 1806, a Great Awakening revival swept through Bradford Academy and the First Congregational church, and Ann experienced months of anxiety over her salvation, which culminated months later in religious awakening and assurance of regenerate grace. Shortly after, Ann Hasseltine became a full member of First Congregational Church, and participated in prayer meetings, benevolent works, and a female mission society. After her graduation from Bradford Academy in 1807, Ann voluntarily taught school in rural villages near Bradford, and engaged in self-study of religious works like Jonathan Edwards.

In 1810, the Massachusetts Congregational Assembly met in Bradford. A group of seminary students from Andover College presented a letter to the members of the Assembly, expressing their commitment to foreign missions and petitioning Congregationalist clergy to form the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM). One of the seminary students was Adoniram Judson. Ann Hasseltine and Adoniram Judson met during the meeting, and shortly after Adoniram asked Ann to marry him and join him in foreign

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15. According to Thomas Kidd, “there was simply no clear break between the First and Second Great Awakenings….There was, really, no Second Great Awakening, but rather a long-term turn toward Baptist and Methodist piety from the American Revolution to the Civil War, punctuated by new revivals like the one at Cane Ridge, Kentucky, in 1801” (The Great Awakening: The Roots of Evangelicalism in Colonial America [New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007], 321). Kidd demonstrates wave after wave of revivals from 1735 and after the Revolutionary War (311-312, 319). The Bradford revival of 1806 displayed signs of this long-term turn, as it showed both continuity with the earlier New England revivals and yet, especially in the growing attention to female participation, also fueled aspects of later nineteenth century evangelicalism. The wider encompassing ‘Great Awakening’ classification better suits the Bradford 1806 revival, rather than trying to place it within a particular ‘First’ or ‘Second’ period.
mission. Ann and Adoniram were married February 5, 1812. Adoniram and his missionary colleagues received ordination the next day, and thirteen days later the Judsons sailed to India on the Caravan with two mission colleagues, Samuel and Harriet Atwood Newell.

When the Judsons and the Newells arrived in Bengal, India in July 1812, the British missionaries welcomed them, but the British government ordered their deportation. While the Judsons looked for a new place to go, Ann and Adoniram also studied a contentious issue between American Congregationalists and Baptists over the proper administration of baptism. Concluding believer’s baptism was the correct manner, Ann and Adoniram petitioned for baptism from the British Baptists in Serampore and became Baptists on September 6, 1812. The American Board mission cohort decided they could not continue together, and that the Judsons must find a new mission field on their own.

Ann and Adoniram Judson eventually landed in Rangoon in July 1813, after a short stay in the British controlled Isle of France and another escape from deportation in Bengal. Ann and Adoniram Judson moved into the British Baptist mission house with Felix Carey and his wife, and began learning the Burmese language. In 1815, the Careys’ departure left Ann and Adoniram Judson on their own in Rangoon, and Ann began visiting the Rangoon vicereine to ensure the mission’s stability and welfare. Ann also gave birth to a son, Roger Williams Judson, and was later devastated when her son died of fever at eight months old. Shortly after little Roger’s death, Adoniram Judson’s health broke down, and the Judsons almost left Rangoon because of Adoniram’s inability to work. News of missionary reinforcements and some rest and recovery kept Ann and Adoniram in Rangoon, and George and Mrs. Hough joined them in 1816. With George Hough’s assistance, both Ann and Adoniram printed Christian religious literature in Burmese. Ann Judson gathered her
first society of Burmese women for religious instruction and conversation, while Adoniram continued translation work.

Desiring a preaching assistant, Adoniram left the Baptist mission in December 1817 on a short trip for the neighboring region of Arrakan, but his ship never reached port. To make matters worse, political tensions between Burma and British Bengal increased in the summer of 1818. Ann Judson successfully maneuvered the Rangoon courts to save George Hough and the mission from harassment and extortion, but the Houghs decided to leave Rangoon for the relative safety of India anyway. In August of 1818, the American Baptist Mission in Rangoon almost folded again, but Ann decided to stay in Burma and hope for the best. Shortly after her decision to stay, political tensions decreased, Adoniram returned to Rangoon, and the Judsons continued their work in the Baptist mission house without the Houghs.

In the fall of 1818, four new American missionary colleagues, James and Elizabeth Colman and Edward and Eliza Wheelock, joined the Judsons in Rangoon, and the Baptist mission entered a new phase. With the help of the Colmans and Wheelocks, Ann and Adoniram designed and built a zayat, a Burmese religious structure used for religious conversation and meditation. The Wheelocks soon departed due to illness, and Edward Wheelock died of consumption en route to India for treatment. From April to December of 1819, Ann and Adoniram spent their days in the zayat conversing with newcomers, offering literacy and religious instruction, and gathering a community of religious inquirers. Moung Nau was the first convert in June 1819, and Ann oversaw his religious instruction to prepare for baptism. By December 1819, however, daily visitors in the zayat had evaporated as rumors that the Burmese government was actively investigating and persecuting Burmese who did not participate in Buddhist worship. In response, Adoniram Judson and James
Colman traveled 400 miles upriver to the Burmese capitol of Ava. They petitioned the emperor for religious tolerance, but their appearance at court was so disastrous they feared increased government persecution of converts and inquirers.

Returning to Rangoon, Adoniram Judson and James Colman announced plans to leave Rangoon for neighboring Arrakan, as it technically belonged to Bengal but spoke a Burmese-like language. Ann watched the American Baptist Mission to Rangoon almost fold a third time, but the Burmese converts convinced the missionaries to reconsider their decision. The Colmans left for Arrakan, and the Judsons remained in Rangoon with the Burmese mission community. Ann and Adoniram resumed their work in a semi-private manner to avoid government suspicion. In mid-1820, however, Ann Judson began experiencing debilitating liver pain, and she and Adoniram both left Rangoon for a short trip to Calcutta for medical attention. Against the advice of physicians, Ann returned to Rangoon with Adoniram in early 1821, and they found all of the converts had maintained their Christian faith while the Judsons were away. Ann’s chronic liver pain continued however, and in late 1821 she departed for a long medical furlough to England and America.

Ann arrived in the United States in 1822 and planned to spend her furlough with the Hasseltines. She delivered a speech to the Boston female society on behalf of female education in Burma in late 1822, and published her speech widely in newspapers from New York to Washington, D.C. Her broken health then returned, exacerbated by cultural shock and an incessant stream of visitors. Ann left Bradford for Baltimore, and wintered under in the medical care of her brother-in-law, Dr. Elnathan Judson. In seclusion, Ann gathered her and Adoniram’s previously published correspondence and authored *An Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah* (1823). After some travel in the spring of 1823, Ann returned to Rangoon with two new missionary colleagues, Deborah and Jonathan Wade.
While Ann was away, Adoniram continued translation, care of the Rangoon church community, and also worked to improve relations with the Burmese emperor. He and another new missionary colleague, medical doctor Jonathan Price, had a very successful visit to the emperor in 1822. Adoniram and Dr. Price made plans to establish a new mission in Ava, and the Wades and the recently returned Houghs would remain in Rangoon. Days after Ann’s arrival in Rangoon in late 1823, she and Adoniram traveled to Ava with two Burmese girls Ann had adopted and planned to educate. Once there, the Judsons discovered that Westerners were now out of favor with the emperor, as Burmese and Bengal relations had again disintegrated. In May 1824, the British launched a surprise attack on Rangoon, beginning the First Anglo-Burmese War. In Ava, Adoniram Judson was arrested as a spy for the British government and imprisoned. Bribing and petitioning her way to the governor of Ava, Ann Judson worked tirelessly to advocate for Adoniram’s release and ensure he received livable conditions. Five months after Adoniram’s arrest, Ann gave birth to their second child, Maria Eliza Butterworth Judson. Between Ava and the jungle prison of Oung Pen La, Ann Judson kept imprisoned Adoniram alive for eighteen months, while she endured several serious fevers, extortion, and scanty resources. After his release from Oung-Pen-La, Adoniram was conscripted by the Burmese to serve as translator for peace agreements between the Burmese and British.

Ann and Adoniram were eventually freed at the war’s end in 1826, and moved to the British camp of Amherst in their newly acquired territory. Leaving Ann busily constructing a new house and buildings, Adoniram traveled back to Ava to try for religious tolerance. Ann’s fever returned, and she died of broken health on October 24, 1826, with a few surviving members of the Rangoon congregation by her side.
CHAPTER TWO

LEAVING HOME: CONTEXTUAL UPROOTING AND REPLANTING

Farewell to the privileges and conveniences of civilized life! Farewell to refined Christian society! We shall enjoy these comforts no more; but Burmah will be a good place to grow in grace, to live near to God, and be prepared to die.

– Ann Judson, 1813

In the summer of 1810, Ann Hasseltine received an offer she did not “dare to decline…though so many are ready to call it a ‘wild, romantic, undertaking.’” A new acquaintance, Adoniram Judson, had asked Ann to leave her hometown forever and join a brand new venture organized by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM). Confiding by letter to her friend Lydia, Ann said she felt “a call of providence” in Adoniram’s solicitation of her hand in marriage. “I have about come to the determination to give up all my comforts and enjoyments here,” Ann told her childhood friend, for a missionary life of “dangers, trials and hardships.” Assuring Lydia of her seriousness in the matter, Ann cut short any idea that her decision was due to a case of wanderlust or romantic infatuation. Seeking to distance herself from “any attachment to an earthly object,” Ann had searched for a “sense of my obligations to God,” and opened herself to “go where God, in his providence, shall see fit to place me.” Yet Ann still worried whether Lydia would approve of Ann’s decision to leave the comforts of home “to promote the glory of God” in a strange land. “I will still confide in you, and beg for your prayers, that I may be directed in regard to…a missionary life,” pleaded Ann, though such direction

1. Ann Judson to her parents, Madras, 1813, in Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 16.
3. Ann Judson to Ms. Lydia K., Beverly, Massachusetts, September 8, 1810, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 48-49.
would, in the end, take her away from her close friendship with Lydia and to the other side of the world.

At the age of twenty-two, Ann had little experience in travel when Adoniram proposed marriage and a missionary life in India. Until this point, Bradford, Massachusetts and the surrounding provincial towns constituted Ann’s entire known world, and she recognized the limits of her context to prepare her for life outside of Massachusetts, even more so to live outside the United States. Nevertheless, home was a place she loved and full of people she loved, and unless she could create some critical distance in order to leave, Ann knew she could not marry Adoniram and board the ship as missionary. Ann’s process for discerning her “call of providence,” therefore became her method of preparing herself to uproot from beloved Bradford, and replant in a new, unknown place.

To “make herself willing to forsake” her American life and embrace a future “replete with vicissitudes” as a missionary, Ann engaged in a process of detachment, or uprooting, from various aspects of her known home context and an openness to reattach, or replant, herself with a new, strange, and unknown context. To fully understand this process of detachment and reattachment, this chapter relies upon Elizabeth Underwood’s sociological study of “identification” among American Presbyterian missions to Korea. Underwood explains, that during the turn of the twentieth century, American missionaries openly discussed and debated their desire and action “to identify with the people they wished to reach.” Often embedded in advice to prospective missionaries rather than official mission board policy, these missionaries defended identification ideals scripturally with Paul’s “missionary standard to be ‘all things to all men’ as the benchmark that has been differently interpreted by successive generations of missionaries.” Underwood follows Max Warren’s

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definition of identification as “the sympathetic entering into the life of another;” complete, or entire achievement of, identification is “by definition impossible since missionaries remained religiously marginal to their target population and are usually racially distinct.” Prior sociological research found identification in four spheres of “linguistic, material-social, political-economic, and religious-educational.” Underwood, in her study, argues that historical era, encounter environment, and personality differences of missionaries each shape the ideal of identification in such a manner that the context of missionary attempts at identification should be the primary determinant of the meaning, achievement, variations, and stifling of identification. Instead of “segmenting out spheres…for analysis” of the presence or absence of identification, Underwood argues for locating missionary activity along a continuum, with full identification the unattainable ideal. Following Underwood’s emphasis on context, this chapter investigates Ann Judson’s active detachment from her Bradford context and preparations for reattachment in a new land as her first step toward identification.

Toward the ideal of identification, therefore, Ann exercised religious habits to identify herself first as God’s child and her ultimate home as heaven, and then drew upon her belief in spiritual equality before God to identify herself with a new people in a new context. Ann used many different terms to describe her sense of ‘giving up all’ and ‘going to the place God sees fit,’ which mirror the analytical terms of detachment and reattachment for identification. In detachment, Ann distanced herself from her American context in order to observe, critically examine, open herself to, and reattach to an aspect of her new context.

Ann’s sense of God’s activity, or at least her sense of limited control over her voyage, also lends itself to the metaphor of uprooting and replanting. Like a young sapling, Ann felt that she had been pulled up from her native soil, and transplanted into new land. The process required a great deal of pruning, watering, and energy to set new roots in order to find nourishment and grow in a new earth.

With little access to specific information about Asia or even knowing where she would ultimately settle into a missionary place, Ann trained herself to encounter the unknown other side of the world and to see others with the theological lens of spiritual equality. When she landed in Bengal, her self-preparation was immediately put to the test as she encountered the strange, unknown context of European colonialism over indigenous Indian people groups. Ann’s personal method for uprooting herself from her beloved family and friends, in a sense, shaped the approach of her entire missionary career in Burma. When Bengal proved an untenable residence for the Judsons, the ensuing months of uncertainty challenged and enlarged Ann’s method of uprooting and replanting, resulting in a strengthened commitment to work among indigenous peoples in a stable residence. Once Ann arrived in Burma, she quickly learned that political savvy, language learning, and religious practice were fundamental pieces for replanting in her new context. Challenged by her new context, Ann even went through a period of refinement in her religious practice, the one aspect of her prior context from which Ann did not seek detachment.

To understand Ann Judson’s uprooting and replanting efforts from the months before she left Bradford through the early period in her Burmese context, this chapter will first detail Ann’s preliminary efforts to detach from her former life in Massachusetts, followed by her preparations to journey overseas to India. It then covers Ann’s discernment of her desired future field during months of homelessness, and her search for a place that
would allow her and Adoniram to be missionaries to indigenous people. The third section analyses Ann’s growing discomfort with Western behavior and political activity along with her efforts to understand the Burmese political atmosphere and her place, as a Westerner, within it. The fourth section details Ann and Adoniram’s efforts to learn the Burmese language to break contextual barriers. The last section pairs Ann and Adoniram’s adoption of Baptist ecclesial principles with her first encounters of Burmese Buddhism to demonstrate how Ann used her method of detachment and reattachment to break from her Bradford religious tradition, in the first instance, and to reaffirm her Bradford religious tradition, in the second instance.

2.1 Preparations to Uproot, Expectations to Replant

Before her departure onboard the Caravan, Ann Judson engaged in self-examination to discern “whether my love to Jesus was sufficiently strong to induce me to forsake all for his cause.” In her journal, Ann centered on her internal sense of religious piety, and at the same time prepared herself for contextual change. During the year before her departure, Ann worked through various levels of detachment from her United States context. Leaving her home, Ann continued her religious practices to solidify her detachment from Bradford daily life, and cultivated a level of identification for learning about a new place and new people by prioritizing her ‘love to Jesus’ as the overarching attachment to direct her in replanting in a new context, wherever that might be.

As her time of departure approached, Ann examined her surroundings and crafted a long list of what exactly she must ‘forsake’ when she departed America. First, she would leave the provisions of the provincial, mercantile town. She would no longer have easy access to material goods and foodstuffs, and those she could acquire would not be the usual American fashion and fare. To detach from the material “privileges and conveniences of civilized life,” Ann labeled her material attachments as “comforts” and “enjoyments.”

Aspects of her Bradford context which had once been expected and normal, Ann now saw as “luxuries” to be given up for “the rugged, thorny path through which a Missionary must pass, in preference to the smooth and easy life I might have led in my native country.”

Second, Ann sought to detach herself from social circles, family, and friends. Ann considered “sacrificing my affection to relatives and friends” to be the sharpest thorns of the missionary path. More than a location of goods, education, and commerce, Bradford constituted the social web of people. Bradford provided the “pleasant years of my childhood,” Ann wrote, and was the place she learned the importance of familial bonds, education, “beloved friends,” and religious experience. Her relationships in Bradford gave her “all the happiness this world can afford,” and taught her the value of “a Saviour’s blood, and to count all things but loss, in comparison with the knowledge” of God.

As the truest test of ‘her love to Jesus,’ Ann considered herself to be woefully insufficient to give up Bradford as the religious and educational training ground of her youth. Ann relied upon the strength of God, and her sense of God’s gracious attachment to her, to detach her from her social comforts.

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The use of religious exercises provided the necessary contextual detachment for boarding the ship, but Ann was not fully uprooted as she still carried the significance of Bradford in her memory. After her departure, Ann spent many days weeping over the magnitude of all that she had left, writing farewells to “happy, happy scenes,” and vowing they were “never, no, never to be forgotten.” Her memories brought forth great sorrow, and whenever, Ann wrote, “my native land, my home, my friends, and all my forsaken enjoyments, rushed into my mind; the tears flowed profusely, and I could not be comforted.” After her departure, Ann continued to feel like a Bradford plant, nurtured and encouraged to flourish in her native soil, but now uprooted and shipped to a comparatively “uncongenial clime” of foreign soil.

While on board the ship, Ann returned to study and reflection upon religion to soothe her grief and prepare for the unknown. With so many aspects of her future undecided, Ann turned to spiritual biographies and Scripture as resources for replanting in a foreign place. Desiring “ardent piety,” Ann read William Cave’s *Lives of the Apostles and Martyrs*, and the life of Nonconformist minister Philip Doddridge. Eager to be “the most useful,” she spent hours reading the Bible, several commentaries and other works on biblical

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13. Ann Judson’s journal, February 27, 1812, in Knowles, *Memoir of Mrs. Judson*, 56. Ann Judson gives no account of the voyage over to Burma in her *Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah*, and without original sources, it is difficult to know how much of the journals and letters have been edited for content. Knowles admitted to incorporating only part of Judson’s journal entries into the memoir, and interspersed these entries with letters to family and friends, in chronological order of their being written. Knowles chose entries that display the “grandeur of aim, generous self-denial, devoted affection, and intrepid courage” of Ann Judson (*Memoir of Mrs. Judson*, 53-54).
themes. She professed a need to know more about the “inspiration” and “divinity of the Scriptures,” and also read works on the validity of the Christian religion. Focused on scripture, apologetics, and righteous living, Ann planned her course of study according to her perceived needs for a land of strange religion, rival sacred texts, and alternative forms of piety.

Ann also spent several evenings on board discussing religious topics with Adoniram and their missionary colleagues Harriet and Samuel Newell. After these discussions, Ann recorded her new resolve to guard against any “lukewarmness” in her devotion to God, and to conquer any fear of death. These resolutions were helpful for her immediate context onboard the ship, and Ann relied upon them in periods of distress during her travel. During one intense storm, Ann became increasingly distraught for fear of shipwreck, and “thought all hope of our safety was entirely gone, and immediately began to inquire into my preparedness for an entrance into another world.” Traveling from a beloved home and “know[ing] not where we shall go,” Ann prepared for the possibility of death in order to entrust the choice of “what part of the world we shall spend our remaining days,” including how many of her days might remain, “with the Heavenly Father.”

Along with her growing awareness of mortality, Ann entertained imaginative visions of entering as a foreigner into ‘heathenish darkness.’ Ann’s “secretly pleasing and consoling” conversations and reflection about early death also made her “rejoice…even [at] the thought

17. “Spent most of the day in reading, and the evening in religious conversation. We conversed much on death, and the probability of our finding an early grave. The subject was solemn and affecting, yet secretly pleasing and consoling. I never felt more willingness to die, or a stronger hope in Christ. Am astonished that I have thought no more of dying, and made no more preparation for death. Resolve to make it the business of each day, to prepare to die,” in Ann Judson’s journal, March 12, 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 58.
18. Ann Judson to her sister, at sea, June 16, 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 64.
of seeing the land of strangers and heathenish darkness.” On one level, Ann’s discussion of ‘heathendom’ acted as a place marker for the unknown future, as Ann had little access to educational resources. Records of educational materials and studies of Indian languages, religions, and other aspects of culture are missing from Ann Judson’s account of her voyage. She did read the biographical memoir of British Linguist Sir William Jones, who had high regard for all aspects of Indian history, religion, and culture. It is possible that the missionary cohort shared this memoir and discussed it and others at length, but in her journal, Ann was more interested in Jones’ personal character than in his descriptions of Sanskrit. Ann’s interests lay in the way in which she, as a Christian, should enter into a new society.

As a possible avenue of reattachment, Ann employed her prior theological education in her female prayer circle to open herself to identification with the ‘heathen’ she would

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20. Ann Judson to Ms. L. K., at sea, n. d., in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 61. Judson’s descriptions of poor, ignorant heathen should be interpreted within her vocabulary concerning religious knowledge and conversion at this point. Poor, ignorant, and stupid were terms used during the Great Awakening to describe an unconverted or backslidden person, whether they be a nominal Christian, against the church, or of an ‘incorrect’ form of the Christian faith. For example, in a letter to her family, Ann Judson prodmed them not to sit “stupidly” during the War of 1812, but to be in constant prayer (Ann Judson to her family, Isle of France, May 6, 1813, in MBMM, December 1814, 97). Using such language, however, does not prevent later readers of Ann Judson’s work to interpret her words as a design to educate and civilize.

21. It is possible that Ann Judson recorded reflections and conversations about India and that Knowles the editor did not include them, choosing instead entries detailing Judson’s pious mind. Yet it is unclear what resources the missionaries would have had to learn about missionary practices in India. Daniel Jeyaraj lists only one published sourcebook in the English language about mission and mission interests in India, Propagation of the Gospel in the East (1709). However, the Danish members of the Halle mission to Tranquebar were correspondents with the SPCK in England, and Ann Judson may have had access to these documents. Jeyaraj’s essay is more concerned with the impact of Tranquebar mission upon continental Europe than England and America (“Mission Reports from South India and Their Impact on the Western Mind,” Converting Colonialism: Visions and Realities in Mission History, 1706-1914, ed. Dana L. Robert [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008], 29-30).

22. For historical accuracy and to highlight the sociological methods used, the term ‘context’ instead of ‘culture’ is used throughout this chapter. Ann Judson does not use the word ‘culture’ within her own Account or within any letters or journal entries within Knowles’ Memoir of Mrs. Judson. There is one use of ‘culture’ as a synonym of ‘cultivate’ within Ann Judson’s Address to the Females in America, Relative to the Situation of Females in the East (reprinted in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 403). Knowles himself, nor any of the other sources within the memoir, used the term.

meet. Onboard the ship, Ann sought “the sympathetic entering into the life of another,” though still an unknown other, through her theological doctrines of sin and creation. Writing to her sisters, Ann reminded them that the people of India were “a race of beings, by nature like ourselves, but who, not like us, are ignorant of the God who made them, and the Saviour who died for them.” Watching indigenous workers along the river from onboard the ship, Ann reflected upon their status as God’s creation, who “have immortal souls, and like us are destined to the eternal world—and yet have none to tell them of Christ.” As she had done in her female praying circle at home, Ann interpreted her impressions of India with her theological understanding of the human condition. Ann declared these reflections made her “melancholy,” but they also enflamed her interests in actually going ashore to begin her missionary labors. Ann’s efforts of theological identification also complicated her use of the term ‘heathen.’ When used theologically, Ann often spoke of the similarities between herself and the ‘heathen other’ before God.

Ann also incorporated her openness to identification in descriptions of the Indian countryside as she tried to narrate her view so that her Hasseltine family would be able to imagine it. Ann described the shoreline as “truly delightful, and reminded me of the descriptions I have read of the fertile shores of India.” As the ship traveled up the river to port, Ann compared “Hindoo cottages” as standing “as thick together as the houses in our seaports,” but situated in the “midst of trees.” As if describing a pastoral painting, Ann told her family members about the “perfectly green grass,” the “herds of cattle” grazing along

24. In a letter to a friend, Ann Judson recalled the information and sharing about people in the East during female circle prayer meetings in Bradford (Judson, Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 99). Judson also mentioned “the account Buchanan gave” in a letter to her sister Mary when describing the worship ritual of the “Juggernaut” in Serampore, India. This is most likely a reference to Claudius Buchanan’s Two discourses preached before the University of Cambridge... and a sermon preached before the Society for Missions to Africa and the East...to which are added Christian Researches in Asia (Cambridge, England: University press, 1811, and reprinted in Boston: Samuel T. Armstrong, 1811).


“the banks of the river,” and the “natives…scattered about, differently employed.”  

According to Ann, her view of India was “truly romantic” and appealing, and “I should be happy to come and live among them, in one of their little houses.” Entranced by the exotic and still some distance away from the shore, Ann wrote with imaginary and highly idyllic visions of her future life among a foreign people, but her choice of an indigenous cottage instead of an “elegant English seat along the shore” marks a high level of openness to identify with a foreign people in a strange land.

Ann’s openness to identification, however, still contained direct assumptions of Western superiority. Identification with others and ethnocentrism or superiority were not mutually exclusive traits among missionaries. According to Underwood, “Missionaries could, theoretically, be non-racist, treat all peoples equally, yet still fail to identify. The term identification implies an active acceptance and overt adoption of the host people and culture as one’s own.” While evidence of identification should not be confused with attempts to directly confront or overcome ethnocentrism and racism, attention to such attitudes within the context and practices of missionaries is encompassed by the study of identification. For Ann Judson, both the hierarchically ordered context of the ship Caravan and Western assumptions of superiority obstructed Ann’s openness to identification. For example, the politeness and structure required by the ‘gentleman’ British sea captain refracted Ann’s early interactions with visitors onboard from the Bay of Bengal. Compared to the captain’s orderly and conscientious behavior to the missionary guests, the resident pilot in India kept Ann awake with “the continual noise and profane language on the deck.”

27. Ann Judson to her sister, at sea, June 16, 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 63.
29. Underwood, Challenged Identities, 91.
30. Ann Judson to her sister, at sea, June 16, 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 64.
identify with ‘the heathen,’ described above, also revealed her underlying assumptions about the superiority of ‘enlightened’ Christian beliefs, morality, and religious practice.

While at sea, Ann’s combined impressions of Indian culture, European civilization, and Christian superiority maintained an impression of her own perceived advantage as a converted Christian and as a civilized Western person. Ann’s assumptions of Christian superiority were clearly displayed when the river navigation pilot with his servants boarded the ship. Ann told her sister that the pilot’s “Hindoo” servant “exactly answers the description we have had of those poor benighted creatures. He looks as simple and feminine as you can imagine. What an alteration would a belief in Christianity make in such a degraded creature.”

In her observation, the servant was overshadowed by the naval surroundings and out of place in the context of the European ship. Not knowing the man’s circumstance, Ann assumed that his religious heritage was responsible for his ‘poor, benighted’ state in contrast to her enlightened Western Christian upbringing in Bradford.

With two years of preparation in America and four months crossing the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, Ann used reflective, religious habits in order to uproot herself from her old home in Bradford and prepare herself to be replanted “in a strange land, where all are unknown to us, and we to them.” As shown above in her reading and reflection, she attempted to detach herself from Bradford and imagine herself in a new place, among unknown indigenous people, in order to identify with and make a new home in a strange and foreign place. Such preparations, as will be shown below, were at times helpful, and at other times obstructed her ability to understand and adapt to the new. Mostly, however, her new experiences showed her how unprepared she was, how firmly rooted to America she

continued to be, and how much more she must shift and change in order to make Burma her home.

2.2 Searching for a New Home

When Ann Judson embarked on her missionary journey in 1812, her decision to “go… notwithstanding the almost insurmountable difficulties in the way” did not include where, exactly, the Judsons would reside once they arrived. 33 Having prepared to leave home, Ann was anxious to find a new “place where, and the circumstances in which” she would spend her “few days” in missionary service. 34 A missionary field and a physical residence out of which Ann could practice mission were long in coming because the British colonial government refused to allow American missionaries to settle in India. From the first voyage from Bradford in February 1812 until their final voyage into Rangoon in July 1813, the Judsons were without a chosen mission field and permanent housing for eighteen months. During this time, Ann engaged in a difficult period of discernment as the Judsons searched for a place where they would be accepted as missionaries to indigenous people. Through various opportunities and disappointments, Ann navigated her commitment to “go where God…shall see fit” 35 and her desire to live and work openly among indigenous people. In settling in Burma, the Judsons ultimately chose living and working among indigenous people over working freely and openly as missionaries.

As Ann uprooted from the United States, she continued to express confidence that God would place her in a situation of “the most usefulness.” 36 Ann had committed to missionary life out of a sense of duty and the expectation that if God would give her “such

34. Ann Judson’s journal, September 5, 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 77-78.
35. Ann Judson to Ms. L. K., Beverly, Massachusetts, September 8, 1810, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 49.
an opportunity of laboring for him, he will make me peculiarly useful.”37 Ann’s commitment “to spend her life among the heathen” without assurance of “a single female companion,” made her a willing partner in pioneer missionary work.38 Following Claudius Buchanan’s imperative to translate the Scriptures and bring “the New Testament religion” to other nations, Adoniram Judson was drawn to places where he and Ann could engage in translation work.39 Ann and Adoniram’s search for mission work covered a wide swath of countries and continents, but always focused on places where the Judsons might be the only missionaries, though not the only Westerners, in residence.40 As Ann had expressed similar commitments to working as closely with indigenous people as possible, Ann too was interested in translation.

As a result, Ann trusted Adoniram’s evaluation about the Judsons’ usefulness in various missionary fields. Though she first balked at Rangoon as a prospective missionary field due to lack of safety, she did concede that “it presents a very extensive field for usefulness, containing seventeen millions of inhabitants; – and the Scriptures have never been translated into their language.”41 The Indonesian island of Java too, presented “a wide

40. Knowles lists South America, Japan, Persia, and Madagascar, in Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 81.
field for missionary labors, and no missionary is there.” In contrast, Ann and Adoniram chose not to remain on the Isle of France (present day Mauritius) though “the governor of this island would patronize a mission, and would be pleased to have us continue here.” Ann Judson’s few months residence there convinced her, “Missionaries are really needed here. But when we compare this population with many other places which are equally needy, we cannot feel justified in staying here.” The island, heavily populated by Europeans, had provided Adoniram Judson and Luther Rice with several preaching opportunities to the British militia, but they had little interest in a permanent mission among the military. The Judsons continued to “long to get to the place where we shall spend the remainder of our lives in instructing the heathen.” They did not stay on the Isle of France, and instead chose to sail back to Madras, India in the hopes that they would be allowed to find passage to the Malaysian Island of Penang.

Ann’s optimism about God’s gift of a mission field waned, however, after a full year of traveling around the Indian Ocean with no firm plans about permanent residence. Whereas travel to the Isle of France in early 1812 to avoid arrest and deportation by the British Bengal government had evoked hope and anticipation, Ann recorded feeling distressed “on account of the gloomy prospect before us” by the time the Judsons made plans to travel to Penang in 1813. Without assurance of passage to Penang, Ann counted the probability of “great difficulties and trials…. Everything respecting our little mission is

42. Ann Judson to her parents, Calcutta, October 9, 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 83.
43. Ann Judson to her sisters at the Isle of France, March 12, 1813, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 99.
44. Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 101-102. The combined news of Harriet Newell’s death and little prospect for mission in the Isle of France evoked strong feelings of homelessness shortly after Ann Judson’s arrival: “No prospect of remaining long on this island. It seems as if there was no resting place for me on earth. O when will my wanderings terminate? When shall I find some little spot, that I can call my home, while in this world?” (Ann Judson’s journal, January 23, 1813, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 92-93).
45. Ann and Adoniram Judson’s relations with the British Bengal government are discussed in 2.3, “Subject to a New Government.”
involved in uncertainty. I find it hard to live by faith, and confide entirely in God, when the way is dark before me.”

When no ships would give them passage to Penang, her fears of imprisonment and deportation by the British Bengal government returned. When passage on to Rangoon became available, Burma again became the Judsons’ preferred destination “as there is no vessel about to sail for any other place, ere it will be too late to escape a second arrest.”

Once Ann and Adoniram agreed on Rangoon as a potential permanent residence, Ann cautiously resumed her hope for potential usefulness by opening herself to identify with the Burmese. She and Adoniram made plans to try again for Penang if Burma proved too dangerous or impracticable, but Ann began imagining herself in Burma, with a “people who have never heard the sound of the Gospel, or read, in their own language, of the love of Christ.” Aware of her prior “dread and terror” at the thought of living under Burmese government, Ann now felt “perfectly willing to make it my home the rest of my life.” She expressed a preference for the isolation with “a degree a pleasure, in the thought of living beyond the temptations peculiar to European settlements in the east.”

The well-established Baptist mission in Serampore and the secure patronage available in the Isle of France now paled in comparison to the possible realization of her desire to work directly with an indigenous population.

In hindsight, Ann Judson narrated her decision to go to Burma as “the hand of Providence pointing to that region, as the scene of our future labors.”

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46. Ann Judson to her sisters, Isle of France, May 6, 1813, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 100.
47. Ann Judson’s journal, June 20, 1813, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 103.
48. Ann Judson’s journal, June 20, 1813, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 103.
49. Ann Judson, Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 15. Ann Judson’s autobiographical memoir provides a reduced synopsis of their year without permanent residence, with no reference to her letters and journal entries containing information about why the Judsons decided against the Isle of France. Her biographer James Knowles maintained Ann’s characterization of the decision as a Providential occurrence, though his memoir includes her diaries and letters detailing the period of anxiety, indecision, and early dismissal.
relied on her belief in Providence as the homestead stake keeping her in Burma, the prior year and a half of uncertainty and frustration over choosing a missionary field also strengthened her resolve to settle in one missionary field and take root in one location. In the early years, Ann believed if the American Baptist missionaries were forced to leave Burma, even for a short time, the mission might be “entirely destroyed.” She therefore became very protective of the American Baptist mission’s survival in Burma, and was most anxious that a missionary always reside in or near the mission house at Rangoon. For example, Ann and Adoniram rarely traveled overseas together, and weathered potentially dangerous situations within their missionary household. Ann had also learned from her two expulsions from Bengal, that her she must attend to her political identity in order to maintain a permanent residence overseas.

2.3 Subject to a New Government

A child of the new American Republic, Ann Judson was unfamiliar with the British colonial government in India and the imperial government of Burma. She knew of the East India Company’s resistance to unauthorized missionary presence in Bengal before she embarked upon the Caravan to India, but Ann spent little reflective space in her journal upon the possibility that her new home would be in a political realm like Burma, which was highly suspicious of Westerners and intolerant of religious conversion among its Burmese subjects. Ann quickly learned, however, that the British colonial and Burmese imperial governments

of Burma. Knowles interpreted the struggle of finding a permanent missionary residence to be “a wonderful series of providential occurrences” which “impelled” the Judsons, “contrary to their expectations and plans, to the Burman Empire…No one, who reviews the series of occurrences from the time of their arrival in Calcutta, can doubt that God was preparing the way for establishing the Burman Mission, and for summoning the American Baptist churches to the holy labors and pleasures of the missionary enterprise” (Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 102, 105). The uncertainty of the Judsons’ missionary residence followed by their successful establishment of the American Baptist Mission in Rangoon was later used to convince others in American Baptist life to become proponents of world mission.

could be the largest obstruction to engaging in mission. During her stays in British colonial
territories, Ann broadened her identification to indigenous peoples of all classes in reaction
to her observations of indifferent Western behavior toward indigenous peoples and abusive
upper class behavior toward the poor, indigent, and enslaved. As seen in chapter four, in
response to her political encounters Ann constructed her political identity abroad as
‘American’ and ‘missionary’ to distinguish herself from other Europeans and their colonial
or mercenary political interests. Observing the harsh and oppressive behavior of the
Burmese government system, Ann recognized she must balance work among all classes of
indigenous people with diplomatic attention to the hierarchically rigid ruling government of
Burma.

The Judsons and the Newells arrived in Calcutta on June 18, 1812, which, coincidentally, was the same day President James Madison signed a declaration of war between Britain and the United States. Ten days later, Adoniram Judson and Samuel Newell were “summoned to Calcutta, and an order of government was read to them, requiring them to immediately leave the country.” At this time, the East India Company greatly feared Indian “civil violence and rebellion as a result of missionary activity,” and Ann attributed the East Indian Company’s resolute opposition to missions before the treaty of 1813 as the basis for the Bengali government’s ill will toward the American missionaries.

51. James D. Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 67. See also Judson, Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 10.
53. Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 70.
The increasing economic strife between American merchants and the British navy that led to the War of 1812 did not help matters, and therefore the American missionaries were not allowed to settle in Tranquebar with the Danish Halle mission nor in Serampore with the British Baptists.\footnote{See David Reynolds’ description of American economic opportunism during the Napoleonic Wars and the resulting British “economic warfare” that prompted James Madison to petition Congress for a declaration of war against Great Britain (\textit{America, Empire of Liberty} [New York: Basic Books, 2009], 90-91). Dana Robert also attributes the immediate expulsion of American missionaries to the heightened tensions between the countries before the War of 1812 (\textit{American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice} [Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997], 41). Though Ann did not place even indirect blame upon the economic warfare between Britain, France, and “neutral” America preceding the War of 1812 as impacting the acceptance of American missionaries in India, she recorded Adoniram Judson’s previous difficulties when trying to visit missionary supporters in England in 1811. His ship “was taken by a French privateer; and, as if to try the purity of his missionary zeal, Mr. Judson was put on board, and, after being detained as a prisoner for several weeks, was safely conveyed to the dungeon of a French prison in Bayonne. Through the assistance, however, of an American gentleman, who saw Mr. J. conveyed through the streets, he procured his release, and, after a most difficult struggle…he was allowed to proceed through the country, and to pass the Channel to England. In that highly favoured land, he obtained all the assistance, encouragement, and information he desired, and returned again to America,” (\textit{Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah}, 8-9).} Faced with threats of arrest and deportation, the Newells quickly departed for the Isle of France,\footnote{Ann Judson reported that the decision was made in part due to Harriet Newell’s pregnancy: “The situation of my friend, Mrs. Newell, rendered it necessary that she should arrive at some home as early as possible. Mr. and Mrs. Newell, therefore, embraced the opportunity this ship presented” (\textit{Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah}, 10).} while the Judsons searched for a new missionary field.\footnote{More on the Judsons’ conversion to the Baptist faith and influences of British Baptists in section 2.5, “Immersed in New Religion” (See Knowles, \textit{Memoir of Mrs. Judson}, 81-90, and Judson, \textit{Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah}, 10-14).}

By choosing to search for a new mission field, the Judsons did not comply with government orders. According to Ann, immediate departure required the Judsons to board a ship bound for England, and would have been paramount to giving up on her future in mission. Justifying their refusal “to comply with the orders of government” as her attempt to be “conscious of having done our duty” to her mission commitment, Ann and Adoniram
bided their time first in Serampore with the British Baptists and then in Calcutta under British supervision. After two months of waiting for a ship to take them anywhere but America or England, the Judsons and Luther Rice were forcibly booked on a British East India Company merchant ship to England and refused passes for other options. The three attempted to circumvent the order by secretly boarding the Creole without government passes and at midnight to escape detection. When government officials stopped the ship downriver from Calcutta, the American missionaries left their luggage onboard and went ashore to avoid discovery.

Ann performed her first act as political negotiator on behalf of the missionary company while in hiding to avoid deportation. The Bengal government paid little attention to the female American of the group, and therefore Ann could travel and negotiate in places where “the brethren did not think it safe for them to go.” To do her duty for the mission, Ann traveled back to the Creole in a small boat “rowed by six natives, entirely alone, the river very rough, in consequence of the wind; without an umbrella or anything to screen me from the sun, which was very hot.” The rowers, seeing Ann’s fear of capsizing whenever the sail “would almost tip the boat on one side...would constantly repeat, ‘Cutcha pho annah sahib, cutcha pho annah.’ The meaning, Never fear, madam, never fear.” After safely arriving onboard the Creole, Ann negotiated for the retrieval of the missionaries’ luggage at the next riverside town.

Ann interpreted this moment as a first test of her spiritual preparation for hardships in missionary life. In doing so, she widened her understanding of missionary hardship to

58. The British Baptist mission run by the Carey, Marshman and Ward families in Serampore lay outside the East India Company’s territory and was under colonial control of the Danish crown (Pruitt, Looking Glass for Ladies, 19).
59. Ann Judson to her parents, at sea, December 7, 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 86.
60. Ann Judson to her parents, at sea, December 7, 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 86-87.
include political relations, and received, in her view, God’s providential help through non-Western sources. Throughout her first actions as the managing partner of the missionaries’ affairs, Ann felt the full force “of the many trials attendant on a missionary life, and which I had anticipated.” She had overcome her fear of drowning and successfully negotiated the retrieval of their luggage from the Creole, and now she had to wait and see if her plans would be successful. Ann entered a local Bengali tavern as “a stranger, a female, and unprotected.” She had little money, no knowledge of where her male companions were, and a deep uncertainty of how indigenous people would respond to her in her time of vulnerability and need. To her great relief, Ann Judson received hospitality instead of violence and theft, and Adoniram Judson, Luther Rice, and the luggage arrived as scheduled. For the next few days, the three American missionaries unsuccessfully begged any outgoing ship for admittance, no matter the destination. Then, without any knowledge of who had successfully managed to negotiate with the magistrate on their behalf, Adoniram was handed a pass for the Creole. With the help of indigenous people and mission sympathizers, the Judsons and Luther Rice were able to outmaneuver the ‘trial’ of political obstruction and continue their search for a permanent missionary residence.

The process of detachment from some aspects of Western civilization further complicated Ann’s political identity and her openness to identify with indigenous people. Ann’s first encounter with a Hindu servant while still onboard the Caravan had reinforced her assumptions of Christian superiority and ‘heathen degradation’ as the culprit for the man’s current state. During her stay in Calcutta, however, Ann recorded more troubled

61. Ann Judson to her parents, at sea, December 7, 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 87 (emphasis original).
observations about the state of indigenous Bengali Hindus under British rule. Ann was shocked by the sheer number of people without employment in Calcutta, and moved by the many deaths of the Calcutta poor “for the want of nourishment.”\textsuperscript{64} Writing to her sister Mary, Ann exclaimed, “the inhabitants of America know nothing of poverty, slavery and wretchedness, compared with the natives of India.” Ann also highly disapproved of the way “the natives of India…are treated by Europeans like beasts more than like men.”\textsuperscript{65} To Ann, the Christian response should be one of pity instead of Western disdain, and relief instead of exploitation of the poor as dispensable labor.

Ann’s stay in the Isle of France reinforced her earlier misgivings about conforming to Western behavior toward indigenous people. In a letter to her family, Ann recorded one occasion where she tried to relieve the suffering of an indigenous slave, though she admitted it was a feeble attempt. One night, Ann heard a great commotion coming from her neighbor’s yard. Going outside, Ann witnessed the slavemistress, a Frenchwoman, beating her slavewoman with a club for attempting to run away. Ann told her sisters, “my blood ran cold within me, and I could quietly see it no longer,” and so she intervened in “broken French, [and] asked her to stop, and what her servant had done.” Believing she had talked with the mistress “till her anger appeared to be abated,” Ann was again upset the next evening to see the slavewoman being beaten and strapped in a heavy chain and an iron neck ring as further punishment for running away.\textsuperscript{66} Ann begged the mistress to forgive the slave, noting that the slavemistress was “so full of anger that she could hardly speak…[but] she

\textsuperscript{64} Ann Judson to her sisters, Serampore, June 1812, in Knowles, \textit{Memoir of Mrs. Judson}, 70.
\textsuperscript{65} Ann Judson to her sisters, Serampore, June 1812, in Knowles, \textit{Memoir of Mrs. Judson}, 70. See fn69 for more discussion about New England discourse on slavery, poverty, and American citizenship.
\textsuperscript{66} Ann Judson described the contraption: “I saw a large chain brought into the yard, with a ring at one end, just large enough to go round her neck. On this ring were fixed two pieces of iron about an inch wide, and four inches long, which would come on each side of her face to prevent her eating. The chain was as large and heavy as an ox chain, and reached from her neck to the ground. The ring was fastened with a lock and key” (Ann Judson to her sisters, Isle of France, March 12, 1813, in Knowles, \textit{Memoir of Mrs. Judson}, 98).
would forgive her, because I had asked her; but she would not have her servant to think it was out of any favor to her.” When the slave was told she was forgiven because Ann had requested it, “the slave came, knelt and kissed my feet, and said, ‘Mercy, madam, – mercy, madam,’ meaning, Thank you, madam. I could scarcely forbear weeping at her gratitude.”

Though Ann refrained from explicitly condemning the institution of chattel slavery, she described the event to evoke pity for the slave and disapproval of the Western slaveowner in her New England audience. The most explicit Ann became on the subject of slavery at this moment was to remind her readers of the slaves’ need to hear of “that Saviour, who is equally the friend of the slave and the master,” and to remark that whenever she remembered this event, it “greatly encourages me to plead the cause of humanity whenever an opportunity offers.”

Different reasons for Ann’s hesitance to send strongly worded public statements in her letters will be discussed in the next chapter, but it is likely that Ann herself disapproved of slavery due, in large part, to this encounter in the Isle of France. She specifically instructed that proceeds from her published Account of the American Baptist Mission in 1822 would go to the redemption of Burmese girls from slavery as well as financial support for Ann’s planned female school.

69. The above description prioritizes the interpretation of this event from within Ann Judson’s writings and her use of specific terms. Considering New England discourse surrounding the issue of slavery, however, Ann Judson may have been reflecting the forgetfulness of New Englanders over their recent past as slaveowners, and the rising discourse of racial difference between republican citizens and freedpersons. In Massachusetts, for example, the state Supreme Court in a 1783 court case, Commonwealth v. Jennison, had ruled for the effective abolishment of slavery, but ambiguous language in the ruling allowed slavery to continue. In the gradual emancipation, manumissions often left free people and former slaves in destitution, without the ability to receive financial restitution or assistance. The continued poverty and devastation led to indentured servitude and essentialist race language of “degraded strangers” toward persons of color after the 1820s (Joanne Pope Melish, Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and Race in New England, 1780-1860, [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998], 2-3, 65, 96). For a firsthand account of Northern indentured servitude, prejudice, and racism during the early nineteenth century, see Julia A. J. Foote, A Brand Plucked from the Fire: An Autobiographical Sketch (Cleveland: Lauer & Yost, 1884).
Ann became increasingly uneasy with Western-indigenous relations in the British colonies, and the Judsons ultimately decided against mission under colonial government at that time because of their desire to live and work among indigenous populations. The effect of relations between Western colonial powers and indigenous peoples, however, also extended past British controlled territories. Tense political relations directly interfered with the Judsons’ first attempt to enter as Westerners into Burma. Early on in their relation with the British Baptist mission in Serampore, William Carey and his son Felix had urged the Judsons to join Felix Carey’s new mission attempt in Rangoon. According to Ann, Adoniram was very interested in going to Burma, “as there is no other place where he could be equally useful in translating.” Ann, however, was not as sanguine about the possible mission under a government where “our lives would depend on the caprice of a monarch, or of those who have the power of life and death.”

Ann had heard reports of government cruelty, and she worried that her status as a Westerner would make her a target for harassment.

Ann’s worry about personal molestation as a Westerner in Rangoon was a symptom of larger political tensions between British Bengal and the Burmese empire in 1812. Political hostilities obstructed the Judsons’ first attempt to sail to Rangoon. According to Ann Judson, if it weren’t for “the fresh difficulties existing between the English and Burman government,” the Judsons would have embarked for Rangoon in late 1812 instead of traveling to the Isle of France after the Newells. Political difficulties bred negative stories and reports against the Burmese, and Ann and Adoniram heard “dreadful accounts…of the ferocity and barbarity of the natives, together with the many privations we must suffer

70. Ann Judson’s letter from Calcutta, September 19, 1812 in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 81.
71. Ann Judson’s letter from Calcutta on September 19, 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 81-82.
among the heathen.” On the other side, the Burmese government had lost all faith in the British over the harboring of an Arrakan rebellion leader in Bengal. Political unrest along the border between Bengal and Burma meant that travel to Burma and entrance into the country as English speakers was out of the question in 1812, and so the Judsons cast about for another place to go. A brief reprieve between the Bengal and Burmese governments in restarted trade between the two countries and provided a successful escape option for the Judsons from Madras to Rangoon in 1813, but political relations continued to swing from ambivalence to hostility throughout the early decades of the nineteenth century.

During her time in Bengal and the Isle of France, Ann had gradually detached herself from Western colonial government, behavior, and identity due to her discomfort with colonial treatment of indigenous people and slaves. When she arrived in Burma, however, she expected a wide gulf between herself and the Burmese, who were supposedly cruel, avaricious, and violent. Ill from the voyage between Madras and Rangoon, Ann depended upon Adoniram Judson’s first descriptions, which were very “disheartening” and matched “the frightful accounts we had received.” Ann herself found the country “rich and beautiful,” but then added accounts of “oppressive rulers” that deterred peasants from hard work and accumulation of goods. She also described a high level of famine and poverty, which resulted in stealing and murder, as “scarcely a night passes, but houses are broken

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74. Ann Judson to her parents, Calcutta, October 9, 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 83.
75. Ann Judson’s journal, June 20, 1813 in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 103.
open, and things stolen.”⁷⁷ After detailing a particularly gruesome stabbing and robbery in her diary, Judson concluded that “all these things…teach us the need of being constantly prepared for a sudden, violent death.”⁷⁸ As two of very few Westerners, Ann and Adoniram were vulnerable to extortion, policing, and government intrigue, which heightened Ann’s concern for their personal safety.

Once again, Ann turned to her religious devotional practices, this time to navigate her concern, her new status as an outsider, and her perceived duty as a missionary. Ann’s relative wealth and easy access to material goods compared to lower class Burmese caused her great discomfort. In her interest to live and work among the indigenous people of Rangoon, Ann noticed how hard they worked “for a scanty subsistence,” while others, “sick and diseased, daily begg[ed] the few grains of rice, which when obtained, are scarcely sufficient to protract their wretched existence.” Though Ann and Adoniram were practicing drastically austere living measures in comparison to Bradford, Ann guarded against longing and envy. Any time Ann mentioned food, materials, or community she missed in Bradford, she quickly followed with a recitation of her Burmese neighbors hardships, and declared “we feel that we have all the comforts, and, in comparison, even the luxuries of life.”⁷⁹

Blaming Burmese government for their citizens’ poverty, in her letters Ann listed the ways in which the Rangoon government was oppressive and corrupt. The “avaricious government” deterred productive economy, as it was “ever ready to seize what industry has hardly earned.”⁸⁰ During a funeral procession for a government family member, Ann praised the Rangoon populace of behaving with “as perfect order and regularity as could have been observed in a Christian country.” Some of the officials, in contrast, used the occasion to

⁷⁹ Ann Judson’s journal, September 3, 1815, in Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 43.
⁸⁰ Ann Judson’s journal, September 3, 1815, in Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 43.
assassinate a Burmese governor. The governor’s steward had plotted to murder his master, and then “to seize on his property, go up to the king, and buy the office which his master had lately occupied.” The plot was discovered after the hired assassin was found and tortured, and then “afterwards treated in the most cruel manner…. The immense property of this governor goes to the king, as he left no children, though several wives remain.”81 To Ann Judson, both the perpetrators and the reigning officials were entangled in the same cruel, avaricious, government system, with the masses and widows suffering the ill effects.

Ann’s criticisms of the government, however, never reached a level where she desired Western intervention or the dismantling of the current Burmese imperial regime. In the midst of her prayers for God “to dissipate the thick darkness which covers Burmah,”82 Ann did not wish, or even hint, for government overthrow or colonial presence in Burma. Instead, she hoped for “the glorious day” when “cruel, avaricious, idolatrous Burma, will say to Jesus, ‘What have I any more to do with idols? Come thou, and reign over us.’”83 Ann Judson believed that Christianity could take root under Burmese government. She hoped that the government, if convinced of Christianity or at least Christianity’s improvement of its citizens, could be a vehicle of promoting Christianity across Burma.

Motivated by mission safety and freedom to labor, Ann comprehended the necessity of relations between the missionaries and the government. She was aware of the highly temperamental state of affairs between the British Baptist mission and the Burmese government. Only recently had Felix Carey gained recognition from the imperial court for his medical and political skills, and he spent months in the capitol of Ava or in Bengal on a diplomatic mission at the will of Burmese emperor. Ann and Adoniram, instead, focused

82. Ann Judson’s journal, October 8, 1813, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 133.
83. Ann Judson’s journal, August 8, 1813, in Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 27.
their political diplomacy toward good relations with the local Rangoon viceroy and his wife. The Judsons thought this political path might provide the bridge to close relationship with indigenous Burmese, and also allow them more freedom to engage in missionary labors.

2.4 Speaking a New Language

While the Judsons’ stayed in India and the Isle of France, British missionaries and other Europeans helped the pair navigate language differences. The presence of colonial governments and the use of the European languages also provided channels for the Judsons to acquire necessities, such as shelter and boat passage. Once they arrived in Rangoon, however, Ann and Adoniram entered an entirely new context with little access to anything resembling Bradford. Having no ability to speak the Burmese language heightened Ann’s feelings of isolation, cultural disorientation, and perceptions of the mysterious “heathen” other. She felt “surrounded by despotism, avarice, cruelty, and the darkness, the dreadful moral darkness, of heathen idolatry…for the language of the Burmans was then to us a perfect jargon.” For Ann and Adoniram, language study was the most immediate and important bridge for identification with the Burmese, which included an orienting sense of Rangoon as their new home. Their joint desire to learn Burmese, however, immediately challenged the gendered structure of Burmese society as well as gendered assumptions within the Judsons’ relationship. Following gender roles and personal interests, Adoniram learned formal Burmese and its historical roots from classical religious texts while Ann studied Burmese in between other household and market duties. Still seeking identification,

84. In her narration of the difficulties between the American missionaries and the British East India Company Government, Ann Judson thanks the many “friends, who were solicitous for our welfare” in the margins, in Judson, *Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah*, 10-18.

Ann Judson used her path to attain more understanding of Burmese daily life, conversational Burmese, and awareness of other immigrant groups in Rangoon.

Upon their arrival in 1812, Ann and Adoniram’s desire to learn Burmese was immediately tested by the lack of resources at hand. There were no dictionaries or grammars. The Burman form of writing looked nothing like Roman letters. Felix Carey, the British missionary contact with knowledge of Burmese, had completed a small partial grammar, and the translation of six chapters of Matthew.\footnote{Ann Judson’s journal, August 15, 1813 in Knowles, \textit{Memor of Mrs. Judson}, 128.} Ann and Adoniram looked for a teacher, because Felix Carey had been called up to the government capitol of Ava and Mrs. Carey spoke Portuguese.\footnote{According to William Carey’s 1811 report on the British Burman mission, Mrs. Felix Carey was born in Rangoon of Portuguese parents. She could speak and read in both Portuguese and Burmese. At the time of their marriage in 1811, Mrs. Carey was not a Baptist, but was “highly attentive to the Word of God.” If she did indeed convert to the Baptist faith, William Carey thought Mrs. Felix Carey would be “highly useful in the future concerns of the mission, acquainted as she is with the language, and the habits and ideas of the people,” in William Carey, “Review of the [British Baptist] Mission at the close of 1811,” \textit{The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine}, March 1, 1813, 261.} They found an Indian man willing to teach them Burmese, but he could not speak English. The Judsons would point to an object and the teacher would speak the word in Burmese. They would then repeat the Burmese and write the word down in English letters.\footnote{Ann Judson’s journal, July 13, 1813, in \textit{Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah}, 22.} After a few weeks of learning Burmese by repetition and transliteration, Ann wrote that her progress was “hardly perceptible,” and that her relatives in America “can form no idea of the difficulties of acquiring a language, like this.”\footnote{Ann Judson’s journal, August 8, 1813, in \textit{Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah}, 25.} Ann, who had previously taught in Bradford schools, found Burmese so entirely new and strange she had to begin with Burmese much like younger children in her classroom had to learn English grammar, reading, and writing for the first time.

Ann faced further difficulties as a female seeking education in a context where women were rarely educated. According to Ann, the teacher “was not very willing to instruct...
me, appearing to feel that it was rather beneath him to instruct a female.” Ann was “determined to persevere” in learning the language, despite Burmese contextual bias, “as the females here are held in the lowest estimation.” To convince the man to teach her, Ann also needed Adoniram’s support. Once the teacher understood Adoniram’s desire to “instruct me as himself,” he gave Ann equal Burmese instruction to Adoniram. Ann considered her stubborn perseverance in learning to speak, read, and write Burmese to be a personal victory over the bias of her Burmese context.

Though Mrs. Carey could not help Ann learn Burmese, in providing shelter and hospitality she was much more accommodating than the teacher to Ann’s language learning needs. As the missionary wife, Ann would have been expected to take charge of household duties right away if Mrs. Carey and the household servants had not been there. Since Mrs. Carey had “the entire charge of the family, being familiar with the language, which enables her to give directions to the servants,” Ann was relieved “from every concern of this nature,” and could “devote my whole time to the study of the language, which we find very difficult.” Ann and Adoniram were grateful for Mrs. Carey’s hospitality, but private language instruction in a secluded mission house was not the ideal situation for breaking contextual barriers and mastering the Burmese language. Their time with Mrs. Carey was shortened, also, by her death in 1815 as the Careys were traveling to Ava with a large printing press. The large riverboat overturned, and Mrs. Carey and her son drowned. Felix Carey survived, but left Burma and the missionary profession shortly after out of grief.

After eighteen months of residence in Burma, Ann and Adoniram reconsidered their prior arrangement to learn Burmese in the same way. Both felt restricted in the mission

house, and Adoniram had also discovered that to learn Burmese Buddhist religious vocabulary, he needed to learn Pali, an older dialect of Sanskrit. Seeking to “be in a way of getting the language much sooner,” the Judsons moved into Rangoon proper “as we shall hear it spoken more frequently, than we could in the house we have left.”\textsuperscript{94} In order to leave Mrs. Carey and her household, Ann decided that she would sacrifice hours of formal language study so that her husband could increase his level of formal study in grammar and philology. Ann was also pregnant with their first child at this time. To give her husband more time to attend closely to the language in their Rangoon house, and perhaps to prepare for an addition to the family, Ann took over daily domestic affairs.

After the Judsons moved into Rangoon, Adoniram Judson spent his day “bent over his table, covered with Burman books, with his teacher at his side, a venerable looking man…they talk and chatter all day long, with hardly any cessation.”\textsuperscript{95} Focused on translation work, Adoniram studied linguistic knowledge on the “nature and construction” of Burmese and the Buddhist religious language of Pali. Adoniram’s diligent study of Pali, which was “a dead language, cultivated by the learned only,” helped Adoniram along his ideal to “acquire a perfect knowledge of the Burman” and “to be perfectly acquainted with the terms he employs” in comparison with an indigenous Burmese priest.\textsuperscript{96}

Ann Judson, on the other hand, split her time between study and household management. Although Ann and Adoniram returned to gendered division of labor in regards

\textsuperscript{94} Ann Judson’s journal, January 15, 1813, in \textit{Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah}, 30.

\textsuperscript{95} Ann Judson’s journal, September 3, 1815, in Judson, \textit{Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah}, 37.

\textsuperscript{96} Adoniram Judson’s journal, January 1, 1816, in Judson, \textit{Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah}, 159. Adoniram Judson composed a grammar and dictionary of Pali, which is “a dialect of Sungskrit [Sanskrit], and was introduced into this country with the religion of Boo dh (160). Though Pali “is now a dead language, cultivated by the learned only,” the prevalent usage of Pali in Burman religious texts and theological terminology convinced Judson that “some knowledge of it is indispensable to one who would acquire a perfect knowledge of the Burman, and especially to a missionary, who intends to translate the Scriptures, and who ought, therefore, above all others, to be perfectly acquainted with the terms he employs” (161).
to the household, however, Adoniram was not the sole beneficiary of the new arrangement. Ann spent her mornings engaged in domestic tasks. A second language teacher, hired especially for Ann, would come mid-morning, and then Ann would endeavor to read, write, and talk in Burmese in between her “many more interruptions than Mr. Judson, as I have the entire management of the family.”

To Ann’s surprise, after a year of daily efforts to procure food, give orders to servants, and look after the family, she outpaced Adoniram in her ability to understand and converse with the local Burmese, as she was “frequently obliged to speak Burman all day.”

Ann’s decision to take on household tasks, therefore, aligned with her desire to replant in Burma. These tasks, which Ann organized into a complex practice, are detailed in chapter four. In regards to her efforts to cross the contextual divide between her Western upbringing and her adopted Burmese residence, Ann used her household tasks to identify with the residents of Rangoon. In going to market a few weeks after her arrival, Ann observed that the people had “intelligent countenances…and they appear to be capable, under the influence of the Gospel, of becoming a valuable and respectable people.” After several months of trying to speak with Rangoon residents, Ann described her Rangoon neighbors as “Burmese friends” with whom she could “spend whole evenings pleasantly conversing” in Burmese. Ann and Adoniram returned to the mission house after three months in town, but they did not return to their previous state of isolation.

97. Ann Judson’s journal, September 3, 1815, in Judson, Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 37. Roger Williams Judson was born shortly after this entry.
98. Ann Judson’s journal entry from September 3, 1815, in Judson, Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 37-38. Judson also mentions in a letter to Newell that Adoniram’s teacher knew the grammatical construction of Burmese and could also teach Pali, the “learned language” used in Burmese religious writings (44).
99. Ann Judson’s journal, October 8, 1813, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 133.
100. Ann Judson to Samuel Newell, Rangoon, [1814], in Judson, Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 44.
replant during their short stay in Rangoon kept the Judsons, and the mission house, connected to Burmese daily life.

Conversation on “the subject of religion,” however, continued to be “by far the most difficult, on account of the want of religious terms in their language.”

Ann and Adoniram, as seen in chapter five, continued along their different paths and acquired different tactics and proficiencies in religious conversation as well. Adoniram Judson spent another three years before he felt comfortable enough to publicly preach and teach the gospel. Ann, on the other hand, was the first to try different methods of teaching and religious conversation. She was also the first to address the presence of other outsiders living in Rangoon. Noticing a large population of Siamese immigrants, Ann learned to read and write in Siamese by translating a collection of their religious stories. Ann and Adoniram both realized that proficiency in Burmese and Siamese, whether conversational or academic, only brought them so far in their desire to introduce Christian doctrines, such as eternal deity, to Burmese Buddhists who, according to Ann, had no concept of eternity and desired “the highest state of perfection” in nigban, where one “ceases to exit.”

They both had to confront the religious aspects of the Burmese community and context in which they sought to replant.

101. Ann Judson to her sisters, Rangoon, December 8, 1815, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 145.
103. For example, Ann Judson provided an account of the Burman Buddhist tenet of deification, compared with Christian doctrine of an eternal God: “They have not the least idea of a God who is eternal – without beginning or end. All their deities have been through the several grades of creatures, from a fowl to a deity. When their deities take heaven, as they express it, they cease to exist, which, according to their ideas, is the highest state of perfection. It is now two thousand years since Gaudama, their last deity, entered on his state of perfection; and though he now ceases to exist, they still worship a hair of his head, which is enshrined in an enormous pagoda, to which the Burmans go every eighth day. They know of no other atonement for sin, than offerings to their priests and their pagodas. You cannot imagine how very difficult it is to give them any idea of the true God and the way of salvation by Christ, since their present ideas of deity are so very low” (Ann Judson to her sisters, Rangoon, December 8, 1815, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 145).
2.5 Immersed in New Religion: Becoming Baptist and Exposure to Burmese Buddhism

Anticipating a life as a missionary in a foreign place, Ann Judson reinforced her religious commitment by using devotional practices to detach herself from her American context. She was pressed to reevaluate her commitment to Bradford religious tradition before reaching Burma, however, when Adoniram reevaluated his own commitments to the Congregationalist tradition. During the process of uprooting and replanting, therefore, Ann went through two immersions into new religion. The first was her rebaptism into the Baptist faith in 1812, which Ann Judson reports causing her great pain and feelings of loss over her break with “a system which I have been taught from infancy to believe and respect.” Still, Ann Judson did so of her own convictions, praying that God would “prevent my retaining an old error, or embracing a new one!” Similar to her prior method of detachment from her former context and opening self to encounter the new, Ann used her religious devotional habits to create distance from her prior religious tradition and ultimately “change her sentiment” to be immersed as a Baptist.

Ann’s early detachment from some aspects of her Bradford religious context to become a Baptist also prefigured Ann’s continued detachment from some American forms of Christianity and her promotion of some religious aspects of the Burmese context, as they matched what she believed could be faithful Christian practice. Convinced of Christianity’s superiority and truth, Ann remained firmly attached to her convictions about proper religious worship and practice even as she tried to replant in Rangoon and identify with the indigenous Burmese. Her first exposure to Burmese Buddhist practices, therefore, retained her prior negative assumptions and reinforced her own beliefs and devotion to Christianity.

104. Ann Judson’s journal, August 23, 1812, in Knowles, Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 76. Ann Judson does not provide a detailed account of her “change of sentiment” and subsequent rebaptism into the Baptist tradition in her self-edited memoir.
Over time, Ann did express a growing appreciation for Burmese intelligence and inquisitive pursuit, as well as certain aspects of Burmese religious culture, especially morality and learning. Even though Ann maintained her belief in the necessity of Christ to save and her estimation of Burmese Buddhism as “idolatry,” her identification with the Burmese people prompted her continued “grappling with the relationship between culture and Christianity.”

Ann and Adoniram’s embrace of Baptist sentiments concerning the rite of baptism were similar to other New Light Congregationalists who struggled over the proper place and function of the baptismal ceremony during the decades of the Great Awakening. Isaac Backus, for example, was a Congregationalist who was converted in a Norwich, Connecticut revival of 1741, and ordained as a minister in 1746. After two years of great internal resistance to give up “many things very dear to him…into the hands of God” like his pedobaptist tradition, Backus became convinced of believers’ baptism and was later rebaptized in 1751. Backus’ Congregationalist church of Middlesborough, Connecticut tried to hold to a “mixed-communion” whereby infant and believer’s baptism were practiced among the congregation and both were allowed entrance to the Lord’s Supper, but the congregation’s agreement over experiential religion and revivalism could not hold the church together. Middlesborough Church, like many other New Light, or Separate Congregationalist churches, eventually split into two, as Backus and other families left to form a “strict-communion” Baptist church in 1756. Congregationalist churches were equally pained whenever they recorded an individual member “gone to the Baptists.” In later decades of the

105. According to Elizabeth Underwood, “unlike any other branch of missions, evangelistic work forced missionaries to grapple with the relationship between culture and Christianity” because evangelistic work held the most opportunities for close relationships and assumed Christianity “predated and superseded American and Western culture” (Underwood, 214-215).

Great Awakening, Congregationalists felt particularly targeted by Baptist revivalist preachers who entered New Light Congregationalist meeting houses, stirred up baptismal controversy among the regenerate members, and left town with a new Baptist church and community dissension in their wake.\textsuperscript{107}

To become a Baptist, in Ann Judson’s opinion, was to risk social, ministerial, and missionary ostracism. Ann’s initial resistance to studying the doctrine of baptism and her high level of concern over broken relations was a reflexive defense of her Bradford religious context, as it too had been troubled by its New Light Congregationalist members “gone to the Baptists” of Haverhill as recently as 1801.\textsuperscript{108} Furthermore, the Judsons had arrived in Calcutta to find an unwelcome government, and Ann feared that any engagement on contested points of doctrine would make their unsettled status in India even worse. To Ann, her husband’s interest in baptism debates was “another heavy trial” to bear alongside the “trials occasioned by orders of government.” If her husband decided to join the Baptists, Ann feared he would “offend his friends at home, hazard his reputation, and, what is still more trying, be separated from his missionary associates.”\textsuperscript{109}

Adoniram Judson gave two different reasons for taking up the subject of baptism onboard the \textit{Caravan} and continuing his studies in Calcutta. Adoniram said he originally

\textsuperscript{107} C. C. Goen, \textit{Revivalism \& Separatism}, 283. According to Goen, whenever Backus or other Baptist ministers provided accounts of new Baptist churches forming in the 1790s and early 1800s, “it is not too much to say that the same factors which operated in the first instance to turn many of the Strict Congregationalists into Baptists continued to influence pedobaptists, particularly in new regions” (283).

\textsuperscript{108} According to C. C. Goen, the Baptist church at Haverhill, Massachusetts, was formed due to an “earlier temporary separation from the Congregationalist church.” The New Light Congregationalists either returned to the Congregationalist churches at Haverhill and Bradford, withdrew to form the Baptist church under the pastorate of Hezekiah Smith in 1765 (\textit{Revivalism \& Separatism}, 314). Though much older, Hezekiah Smith was a contemporary of Ann Hasseltine, as he remained the pastor of the Haverhill Baptists until 1806. According to J. D. Kingsbury, members separated from the First Congregationalist Church of Bradford in 1801 and joined the Baptist congregation at Haverhill. As a response, pastor Jonathan Allen of First Church Bradford delivered \textit{A Treatise on Baptism, Vindicating the Mode of Sprinkling, and the Rights of Infants} which was subsequently printed in Concord (Kingsbury, \textit{Memorial History of Bradford, Massachusetts, from the Earliest Period to the Close of 1882} [Haverhill, MA: C. C. Morse & Sons, 1883], 114).

\textsuperscript{109} Ann Judson’s journal, August 10, 1812, in Knowles, \textit{Memoir of Mrs. Judson}, 76.
engaged in study of Baptist and pedobaptist arguments over baptism in order to defend his pedobaptist sentiments to William Carey and the other British Baptist missionaries. However, Adoniram also admitted that his confidence in pedobaptism was already shaky, and Ann claimed Adoniram’s “doubts commenced while on our passage from America” as he studied Scripture.\textsuperscript{110} Adoniram’s method of study also followed American arguments between Separate, or New Light, Congregationalist pedobaptists and Separates like Isaac Backus who followed the logic of regenerate membership to its end and embraced believers’ baptism. Adoniram declared he would study Baptist and Pedobaptist “sentiments… candidly and prayerfully, and to hold fast, or embrace the truth, however mortifying, however great the sacrifice.”\textsuperscript{111} By late August of 1812, Adoniram felt “convinced from Scripture, that he has never been baptized, and that he cannot administer baptism to infants.”\textsuperscript{112} Ann was extremely distressed by Adoniram’s decision to be re-baptized and join the Baptists, though she did express admiration for his commitment to duty and the truth above missionary and familial relations.

Adoniram’s decision to become a Baptist drastically affected his wife’s future as a missionary, but Ann maintained her own sense of religious commitment on the subject of baptism. According to Ann’s letters, she tried several times “to have him give it up, and rest satisfied in his old sentiments, and frequently told him if he became a Baptist, I would not.”\textsuperscript{113} After Adoniram’s decision, Ann spent the following week investigating Scripture and in deep prayer. Ann forced herself to lay “aside all my former prejudices and sentiments,” even though serious thought “of renouncing a system which I have been taught from my infancy

\textsuperscript{110} Ann Judson to her family, Isle of France, [February 14, 1813], in Knowles, \textit{Memoir of Mrs. Judson}, 73.

\textsuperscript{111} Ann Judson to her family, Isle of France, [February 14, 1813], in Knowles, \textit{Memoir of Mrs. Judson}, 73.

\textsuperscript{112} Ann Judson’s journal, Calcutta, August 23, 1812, in Knowles, \textit{Memoir of Mrs. Judson}, 76.

\textsuperscript{113} Ann Judson to her family, Isle of France, [February 14, 1813], in Knowles, \textit{Memoir of Mrs. Judson}, 73-74 (emphasis original).
to believe and respect” was “mortifying” to “my natural feelings.” Using her religious devotional habits of detachment and commitment to God, Ann wrote, “I looked up to the Father of lights” and “gave up myself to the inspired word” in order to search for truth. At the end of her “fair appeal” to Scripture, Ann felt convinced that “nothing really can be said in favor of infant baptism or sprinkling.” Moreover, Ann believed the process of detachment from her familial tradition for a greater attachment to God had led her and Adoniram to become Baptists “not because we wished to be, but because truth compelled us to be.”

Much like Backus, Ann and Adoniram had followed after other New Lights who concluded they had been in error concerning the ordinance of baptism, and now wished to receive baptism properly through immersion.

Ann and Adoniram Judson did not try to create dissension or stir up animosity against their pedobaptist relatives and colleagues, but Ann still dreaded the repercussions from her ‘change of sentiment’ concerning baptism. The choice to leave America had been difficult, but Ann’s uprooting from her ecclesial heritage brought fears and feelings of isolation in a way that physical departure had not. According to Ann Judson’s letter to a friend Nancy, she considered the change of belief to be a difference “in those things which do not affect our salvation.” Still, Ann Judson’s first line to her friend is an inquiry if her friend could “still love me, still desire to hear from me, when I tell you I have become a Baptist?” Samuel and Harriett Newell, the Judsons’ closest companions, had already departed for the Isle of France, but the remaining American missionaries, including Adoniram Judson, felt that the American Board would not tolerate a missionary that would

114. Ann Judson’s journal, August 23, 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 76.
115. Ann Judson to her parents, Calcutta, September 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 75.
not follow the Board directive “to baptize credible believers with their households.” Ann’s fears of separation from the American Board missionary cohort were realized in the otherwise amicable split, “as we are perfectly united with our brethren in every other respect, and are much attached to them.” Leaving the company of her missionary colleagues was “inexpressibly painful,” and in turn greatly heightened her fears of censure and rejection from Bradford. Ann described the process of breaking from Congregationalist ties as one that caused “our hearts to bleed for anguish. We felt we had no home in this world, and no friend but each other.” The loss of colleagues and the potential loss of American supporters were equally painful and distressing, because to Ann they meant the possibility of complete missionary isolation without letters, financial support, and the solace of prayer on her behalf from American churches and relatives. Counting these losses as “very painful sacrifices,” Ann still felt compelled to follow her conclusions for the immersion of believers as the right manner of baptism.

117. Edward Judson’s biography of Adoniram Judson includes three letters from Ann Judson, and includes the date of Ann Judson’s letter to her family from the Isle of France as February 14, 1813 (Life of Adoniram Judson, 40). Edward Judson relied upon Ann Judson’s letters for the details of both Adoniram and Ann Judson’s change of beliefs, and also gives an account of why the Judsons both concluded they must leave the employ of the ABCFM if they became Baptists. Adoniram’s letters likewise showed the dispute to be about degrees of theological conviction and ministry practices in that regard, and that he regretted the split: “The dissolution of my connection with the Board of Commissioners, and a separation from my dear missionary brethren, I consider most distressing consequences of my late change of sentiments, and, indeed, the most distressing events which have ever befallen me… I hope, therefore, that while my friends condemn what they deem a departure from the truth, they will at least pity me and pray for me.” (Life of Adoniram Judson, vol. 1, 42-43). By this time, Baptists had “pointed out repeatedly that the apostles of New Testament times baptized no one without a credible profession of faith, and if there were occasions of ‘household baptisms’ (as pedobaptists frequently contended), these did not necessarily include children” (C. C. Goen, Revivalism & Separatism, 211).

118. Ann Judson’s journal, August 23, 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 76.

119. Ann Judson to her family, Isle of France, [February 14, 1813], in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 74.

120. Ann Judson’s journal, September 1, 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 77. Though Ann recorded conflicted emotions and reticence to study the doctrines of baptism and covenant with Adoniram Judson in her journal, Dana Robert’s statement that “in hindsight, it is clear that given the expectations of lifelong marriage and her isolation from everyone except her husband, Ann Judson had no choice but to go along with her husband in his change of views” (American Women in Mission, 43n7) does not fully appreciate Ann’s experience of the decision. From Ann’s journal entries, it is clear that she did not view it in that way. Furthermore, it should not be assumed that Carey and the other British Baptist missionaries would have baptized Ann without her personal decision to join in Adoniram’s petition. British Baptists, like Congregationalists, required women, including wives, to make their own confession and petition for entrance
Though Ann feared the worst, her choice to join the Baptists with Adoniram did not end in utter isolation and opprobrium. The Judsons sent a request for baptism to the British Baptist missionaries at Serampore, who were “extremely surprised…as they had known nothing of our having any doubts on the subject.” On September 6, 1812, William Ward baptized the Judsons in the British Baptist chapel in Calcutta. A few weeks later Ward baptized their American missionary colleague Luther Rice, who had also decided in favor of believers’ baptism, as well.\textsuperscript{121} As detailed in the following chapter, Ann Judson’s correspondence with her family continued with the same interest in detailing her experiences and missionary practices. Luther Rice returned to the United States and successfully appealed to the American Baptists, and therefore Ann and Adoniram received new lines of financial and spiritual support.\textsuperscript{122} And though the American Board missionary cohort separated, the Judsons reconnected with Rev. Samuel Newell when they arrived in the Isle of France and Ann Judson continued to correspond with him after she had settled in Burma.\textsuperscript{123}

While embrace of Baptist sentiments, her rebaptism, and the ensuing break with her missionary colleagues filled Ann’s correspondence during her time in India, Ann’s vision of the church congregation also shifted in a subtler yet equally permanent way toward more into the Baptist church. Robert’s assessment of the Judsons’ ‘change of sentiment’ is also uncharitable toward Adoniram Judson, “At first Ann refused to be re-baptized, but Adoniram was adamant and Ann studied the Scriptures herself, finally concluding to agree with her husband” (\textit{American Women in Mission}, 43). Nowhere in Ann’s letters or in her private journal, as they appear in Knowles, suggests Adoniram Judson demanded his wife to be re-baptized too, though he did indeed encourage Ann to study the matter thoroughly.

\textsuperscript{121} Ann Judson to her family, Isle of France, [February 14, 1813], in Knowles, \textit{Memoir of Mrs. Judson}, 74. According to Edward Judson, Rev. William Ward of the British Baptist mission in Serampore administered baptism to both Mr. and Mrs. Judson (\textit{Life of Adoniram Judson}, 44).

\textsuperscript{122} According to James Knowles, the Judsons’ “adoption of Baptist principles…resulted in the establishment of the Burman Mission, and in the formation of the Baptist General Convention in the United States” (\textit{Memoir of Mrs. Judson}, 73). The formation of the Triennial Convention and the Judsons’ connections to Baptist mission supporters will be discussed in chapter three.

Identification and embrace of the Christians in Calcutta. When she first arrived in India, Ann expressed appreciation for once more being able to spend the night “in a house on land” and to attend a church meeting for “the first time…above four months.” At this point, Ann treasured Western aspects of worship and paid little attention to anything strange or foreign. For example, she described her delight “with hearing the organ play our old favorite tune, Bangor,” as she entered her first church service in Calcutta. The next day, Ann observed the Baptist mission school’s students, Portuguese and non-caste Indian boys and girls, praying and singing at school. Judson watched these children from afar, and described herself as “really affected to see these poor children, picked up in the streets, learning to sing the praise and read the word of God” in Western tunes.

After several weeks in India and her Baptist change of sentiment, Ann’s sentiments about worship had also shifted toward a higher level of identification with indigenous congregants. As she became more optimistic about a future where she would “go alone with Mr. J. to that place which providence shall direct,” her confidence “that Jesus will go with us, and direct our steps” led her to detach from Western forms of Christian society and embrace her new worship setting among the Christians in Calcutta. During communion, Ann declared she “never saw a more striking display of the love of God, than was manifested in those who came around the communion table.” Instead of familiarity, Ann’s encounter with the love of God was made manifest by the abounding strangeness and diversity in her fellow worshippers:

124. At this point, Ann Judson’s only written mention of non-European attendees is found in her description of the church’s cooling system: “The church was very handsome, and a number of punkies, something like a fan several yards in length, hung around, with ropes fastened to the outside, which were pulled by some of the natives, to keep the church cool” (Ann Judson to her sister, Serampore, n. d., in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 78).
who have been emphatically called from the highways and hedges—Hindoos and Portuguese, Armenians and Musselmans, could join with Europeans and Americans, in commemorating the dying love of Jesus. Surely nothing but divine grace could have removed prejudices, early and inveterate, from the minds of these different characters, and united them in the same sentiments and pursuits.\textsuperscript{128}

Though her first religious experiences in India reinforced her identification with the familiar and Western, in this experience Ann identified herself ecclesially and religiously with those unlike her in nationality and custom.\textsuperscript{129} For a brief time, Judson envisioned her religious faith as transcendent of national boundaries and ‘prejudices, early and inveterate.’ This experience of the love of God in communion with all from ‘the highways and hedges’ did not entirely free Ann Judson from prior assumptions of American Christian superiority. It proved to be, however, a reverberating moment wherein Ann transcended her American identity to imaginatively identify with the diversity of peoples gathered by the Christian sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. It fueled her desire to spend her missionary days among non-Western indigenous peoples, and provided an alternative image of Christian behavior toward indigenous peoples in contrast to the colonial governance and slavery Ann witnessed in Bengal and the Isle of France.

When Ann arrived in Burma, however, she employed Christian devotion habits and worship to solidify her ties with Christians over against Burmese Buddhist religious practice. Finding her new context overpowering, Ann turned to Christian practice to process feelings of loneliness, displacement, and concern for the future of the mission. In her journal, she confessed, “I enjoy more, in reading the Scriptures, and in secret prayer, than for years

\textsuperscript{128} Ann Judson’s journal, Calcutta, November 1, 1812, in Knowles, \textit{Memoir of Mrs. Judson}, 78.

\textsuperscript{129} Perhaps this moment is “pre-identification,” where Judson is uprooted from her prior culture but has not yet attached herself to a new culture. Underwood studies missionary attempts at “identification” along a continuum, “with the ideal, as noted above, unattainable. This approach allows the…situation to determine both what is meant by identification and where its achievement is stifled. It also allows for better exposure of the variations within the…encounter” and “uncovers impact” provided by the native people and field upon the missionaries (Underwood, \textit{Challenged Identities}, 89-91).
before; and the prosperity of this mission, and the conversion of this people, lie with weight on my mind, and draw forth my heart in constant intercession.”

Journal writing and prayer also provided occasions to pour forth her fears of decline in religious faithfulness and fervor, as Ann wept over the immensity of her work. By maintaining religious habits, Ann brought order and familiarity from her Bradford upbringing to an otherwise overwhelming introduction to Burmese language and customs.

The Judsons’ dissolution from the ABCFM also meant a church split between them and their Congregationalist colleagues, and Ann and Adoniram went on to operate as a Baptist church of two. There is no evidence that Adoniram Judson was re-ordained after his immersion; British and American Baptists accepted Adoniram’s prior ordination charge of “responsibility as spiritual leader” and “the hand of [ministerial] fellowship” extended to him by laying on of hands. On September 28, 1814, Ann recorded the Judsons’ first celebration of the Lord’s Supper in Burma. “Though but two in number, we feel the command as binding, and the privilege as great, as though there were more; and we have indeed found it refreshing to our souls.” Worship and “secret prayer” on the Sabbath provided “great relief and refreshment to our minds; for on this day, we lay aside our studies, and every worldly employment, and devote our time to the duties of religion.” As the sole lay congregant, Ann accepted Adoniram’s charge as they practiced Sunday worship together.

132. According to C. C. Goen, most Separate Congregationalists and Congregationalists who became Baptists did not extend their concern for proper administration of baptism into concerns about ministerial ordination status. The logic of the “pure church ideal” in the New Light and Separate Baptist movement did press ministers to show evidence of their own religious experience and regeneration, but did not question the validity of the church’s laying hands for ordination. Isaac Backus, for example, did not renounce his Congregationalist ordination when he was immersed and was not re-ordained when he left the Middleborough Congregationalist church to start the Baptist church there (*Revivalism & Separatism*, 154, 218-222).
There were many times, as well, when formal worship offered the comfort Ann would have otherwise received from her Bradford community. When the Judsons’ infant son died in May 1816, Ann offered thanks for her ability to pray, offer “out feeble praise,” meditate upon God’s “sacred word,” and celebrate the Lord’s Supper in Burma, even as she mourned the loss of her “Christian country” and its comforts. Within her thanks for the familiar, however, Ann’s openness to worldwide identification once again emerged. Worship, including the Lord’s Supper commemoration of “the dying love of a Saviour to a perishing world,” was now a more firmly transcendent, world-encompassing Christian practice that Ann could do outside of an established “house of God,” and the reconstruction of Western familiarity in an Eastern land.

In the early years, Ann’s growing appreciation for the transcendent nature of Christian worship in her letters stopped short of any appreciation for Burmese Buddhist worship. As discussed in the next chapter on her continued Western relations, Ann’s journal and her letters to family and friends provided a limited framework for writing about her new religious surroundings. Her journals and letter entries attributed the sheer difference of her new context to generalized and negative depictions of Buddhism in comparison to Christianity. A few weeks after her arrival, for example, Ann described the Burmese in a situation “truly deplorable, for they are given to every sin.” As examples of sinfulness, Ann remarked, “lying is so common and universal among them, that they say, ‘We cannot live without telling lies.’” In regards to religious doctrines, Ann was shocked to hear her Burmese teacher tell her “that when he died he would go to my country.” She found his “notions” of

reincarnation “absurd,” and longed to have sufficient language skills to “tell him where he would go, or how he could be saved.”

Ann’s sense of religious propriety was most offended by the ostentatious festivals and feasts involving parades to the Buddhist pagodas in Rangoon. According to Ann, Rangoon’s mass celebrations involved travelers from miles around, and were second only to the feasting in the Burmese capitol of Ava. During a four-day festival of Gautama, Ann wept over “the deluded multitude who are this day collected in immense crowds, to offer that homage and adoration to an idol, which is due to God alone.” Coming from an internally focused, word-oriented Protestant tradition, Ann’s senses were inundated by the immensity of the crowds, the “pomp and splendor” displayed by the government, the “great and expensive offerings,” and the countless religious images devoted to Gautama and other creatures. As a result, Ann made no attempt to liken the massive celebrations to anything in her Bradford revival experience, except to the stories of pagan “idolatry, infatuation, and delusion” recited among Bradford mission supporters. In her descriptions to her female prayer society, Ann contrasted the “ludicrous” sights of idolatry, with the “a view of the surrounding country, which presents one of the most beautiful landscapes in nature” created by God. Ann’s simultaneous view of created images and natural beauty produced “feelings so various and opposite…, [and] fire the soul with an unconquerable desire to make an effort to rescue this people from destruction, and lead them to the Rock that is higher than they.”

When not overwhelmed by festival displays, Ann wrote about Burmese Buddhism in vacillating tones that exhibited only a slightly higher level of openness to Burmese religious practice. Along with a vast amount of reflection upon the integration of religion into the

137. Ann Judson’s journal, October 8, 1813, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 133.
wider Burmese context, Ann also discussed Western arguments over the propriety of
Christian missions, and what Christianity offered to the Burmese people. In a letter to her
friend, Ann recognized the cohesiveness of Buddhism within the Burmese culture, and
wondered, “What nation, so far advanced in civilization as the Burman, has renounced its
system of religion at the first mention of a new one?” In another letter written around the
same time, Ann described the Burmese Buddhist religion as one of “grossest idolatry,”
where the “rational and immortal” population had been “given up to follow the wicked
inclination of their depraved hearts, entirely destitute of any real principle, or the least spark
of true benevolence.” Ann’s entirely negative remarks were aimed, however, not at Burma
but at Western Enlightenment critiques of mission as poisoning “the native innocence and
purity of heathen nations.” Let these Westerners, challenged Ann, “visit Burmah.” When
attending to mission supporters and detractors, therefore, it was impossible for Ann to
separate justification for her missionary presence from her written assessment of the Burman
religious landscape.

When Ann considered what Christianity had to offer the Burmese in contrast to their
religious tradition, Ann remained convinced of Christianity’s superiority and truth, but was
more appreciative of what the Buddhist religion had in common with Christian faith and
practice. For example, right after her challenge to Western detractors, Ann tempered her
language as she described the Burmese religion as one that taught good moral precepts, but
was “destitute of power” and had “no atonement for sin.” The “grand difference” between
the Christian gospel and the Burmese system of religion, for Ann, was the “‘good news’
indeed, to the heavy laden and sin-sick soul” that also provided the Holy Spirit’s power to

act with the “benevolence, tenderness, forgiveness of injuries, and love of enemies” as Burmese Buddhism taught its adherents to do.  

Ann’s confidence in Christian superiority was a barrier to full identification with the Burmese of Rangoon. Due to her respect for the “advanced” state of Burmese civilization and Buddhist religious system, she and Adoniram tried to understand Burmese Buddhist religious thought in order to religiously converse with the people. In the introduction to Ann Judson’s *Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah*, Ann gave a brief explanation of Burmese Buddhist doctrines on created existence, deity, and annihilation. According to Ann, Burmese Buddhists believed that all existence “involves in itself the principles of misery and destruction,” and the whole universe “is only destruction and reproduction” of earthly existence based on “rewards and punishments [which] follow meritorious and sinful acts” according to the “nature of things.” As a consequence, “there is no eternal God” and the human’s ultimate desire is to “aspire to Nīghan, the state in which there is no existence.”

Deity in the Burmese Buddhist sense, according to Ann, is defined by the cycle of Boodhs, like Gautama, who arrived at a state of perfection due to his “meritorious acts,” and also left instructions for Burmese Buddhists. Gautama achieved annihilation, or Nīghan, and Burmese Buddhists follow Gautama until “the appearance of the next deity, who is supposed now to exist in embryo, and who, when he appears, as the most perfect of all beings, will introduce a new dispensation.” Even in this “objective description,” however, Ann subtly compares Burmese Buddhism with her revivalist Christian beliefs in eternity, atonement, and experiential religion. Ann also continued to commend Christian morality over Burmese Buddhism because of Christianity’s “power to produce purity of life” through the Spirit.

When comparing religious systems or defending her missionary endeavors, Ann continued to speak negatively about Burmese Buddhism as a religious system, but could speak very positively about its practitioners. Shortly after her brief explanation of Burmese Buddhism, Ann effusively described the Burmese people. She favored them as a “farther advanced in civilization than most of the Eastern nations.” According to Ann, the people were “lively, industrious, and energetic;” they were “frank and candid,…are powerful logicians, and take delight in investigating new subjects.”143 Though Ann had rejected the Buddhist religious system as full of infeasibility and error, she praised the high degree of Burmese learning, claiming “their books are numerous; some of them written in the most flowing, beautiful style, and much ingenuity is manifested in the construction of their stories.”144 Ann also compared religious devotion of the Burmese people to Americans. In these instances, the Burmese were often the superior party, as they “are not like professed Christians...partly engaged in religion, and partly in the world.” Over time, the din of festival fireworks, “the splendid offerings, the gay attire, and the enthusiasm of devotions,” caused Ann to reflect upon the Rangoon crowd’s engagement of the “whole soul” in religion.145 To Ann’s approval, “they evidence at once that they believe what they assert,” even as she was dismayed that the strong devotion of the Burmese to their religion created barriers “that nothing short of an Almighty arm, could break down…and cause the introduction of the gospel.”146 Ann used her assessment of Burman piety to both temper expectations of missionary success and to chide her readers in America toward an equal level of religious devotion. By appreciating the level of devotedness, Ann used her own appreciation for

Christian worship and devotion to identify with the alternative model for religious devotedness she saw in Burmese Buddhism. Ann never wavered in her own belief of the superiority of Christianity, but she did find her pietistic equals among the Burmese Buddhists in Rangoon.

2.6 Conclusion

Ann Hasseltine’s first inclinations to detach from ‘earthly objects’ in order to know her ‘obligations to God’ and her future life ‘where God, in his providence, shall see fit to place me’ became the pattern by which Ann prepared herself to leave the familiarity of Bradford and open herself to identify with an unknown, foreign people in a strange land. Using the sociological definition of ‘identification’ and Elizabeth Underwood’s argument for the primacy of historical era and context, this chapter investigated many arenas wherein Ann’s pursuit of identification was embraced, refined, and challenged by her contextual surroundings. The first section focused on Ann’s pursuit of detachment, or uprooting, from her Bradford surroundings and relationships, and her preparations to replant in an unknown land. Ann sought detachment for the creation of a critical distance between Bradford and herself, and tried to imagine herself in an unknown place among new people. The category of ‘heathen’ denoted the strange and dangerous ‘other’ when Ann imagined a new context, but when reflected upon theologically, ‘heathen’ was a place marker for strangers who were spiritually similar to her.

The second and third sections of this chapter detailed Ann’s refinement of her sense of usefulness along her desire to live among and identify with an indigenous population and to operate freely as a Christian missionary. These sections investigated Ann’s search for a permanent mission location and her growing dissatisfaction with Western colonial government activity in Bengal and the Isle of France. Ann Judson’s negative presumptions
about living under a non-Western government like Burma displayed Ann’s sense of Western Christian superiority continued to hold firm in her early assessment of Burmese politics, though disturbed by colonial government and slavery. These two sections provide helpful contextual information for chapter four, “Home-Making,” on Ann Judson’s organization of practices along her goal of settling and relationally connecting in Burma.

The fourth and fifth sections of this chapter described the most effective bridge and the largest barrier for Ann’s identification with Burmese of Rangoon. Even when Ann took on more household work so that Adoniram could pursue philological study of Burmese, she turned her new activities toward identification through her efforts to speak Burmese at market and among her household staff. As a pioneer Protestant missionary, religion was one arena in which Ann Judson did not pursue detachment and identification, but her Bradford devotional habits, ironically, provided the means to detach from Bradford ecclesial tradition and become a Baptist. This last section investigated momentary, though important, instances of identification with non-Western Christians and Buddhist religious practitioners within Ann’s narrative, though her insistence on the supremacy of the Christian religion remained throughout her years of mission work. These sections provide helpful contextual information for chapters five and six on “Church-Making” practices of catechism and community cultivation, respectively.

After this exploration of Ann Judson’s openness to identification with new historical contexts outside the West, the project turns to Ann Judson’s attempts to continue and strengthen relationships among key Western parties. Though uprooted from her context, Ann Judson did not seek to erase her prior life. On the contrary, her Bradford formation was always in the background. As seen in the following chapters, at times Ann critically examined or rejected her Bradford formation, and at other times she did not recognize the way her
prior formation colored her interpretation of her new context. The next chapter will start with an investigation of Ann’s Bradford relations who directly formed Ann for mission, before describing Ann’s larger audience of Western mission support. The expectations of the West affected Ann’s narration of her encounters and practice, but a third relation, her husband Adoniram, offered Ann opportunities beyond Western gender expectations and encouraged her participation as an equal colleague in the mission.
CHAPTER THREE

FROM HASSELTINE TO JUDSON:
WESTERN PARTNERSHIPS IN MISSION

In changing my name, [God] has allowed me to take the name of one, who loves the cause of Christ, and makes the promotion of it the business of his life — one, who is, in every respect, the most calculated to make me happy and useful, of all the persons I have ever seen.

— Ann Judson, 1812

According to Baptist lore, on February 6, 1812, Ann Hasseltine Judson, newly wedded and nervous, sat in a church service for the commissioning of the first American missionaries. After a passionate sermon on the Great Commission, five young men rose from their pew and knelt at the front of the church for ordination rites. These recent graduates of seminary institutions had offered themselves up and were found to be well suited as the first American Congregationalist missionaries. As the Congregationalist ministers laid hands on the newly commissioned missionaries to the East, suddenly, Ann Judson herself rose from her pew, walked to the front of the church, and knelt near the altar. Moved by the Spirit, she too submitted to the commission of the church, though no minister laid hands and formally ordained her. Unfortunately, there are no letters, reports, or early biographies of the Judsons to substantiate this story, and it bears little resemblance to Ann Judson’s journal, December 12, 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 89.

The story first appears in Courtney Anderson’s 1956 biography, To the Golden Shore: The Life of Adoniram Judson (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1956), 110-112. The story of Ann Hasseltine Judson leaving her pew to kneel near the altar does not appear in any memoir or biography of Ann Hasseltine Judson or Adoniram Judson before 1900. However, there is also no alternative story of Ann Judson during the ordination service; early biographies are silent about Ann’s presence or skip over the ordination service altogether. There is, however, a lithograph engraving of the ordination of the first American Board missionaries, published in American Missionary Memorial, Including Biographical and Historical Sketches, ed. H. W. Pierson (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1853). The artists, Dopler and Prudhomme, placed a kneeling woman, her face covered by a bonnet, in the corner of the picture, to the left and slightly behind the five missionary men kneeling to receive ordination by laying on of hands. It cannot be proven whether the artist was reflecting a commonly told story in the lithograph, or if the bonneted woman is simply artistic license. According to Asa Smith’s narrative of the ordination service, “With the lot of those missionaries the gentle heart of woman is linked. Harriet Atwood is there, and Ann Hasseltine. They who have long been bound together by the ties of affectionate

1. Ann Judson’s journal, December 12, 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 89.
2. The story first appears in Courtney Anderson’s 1956 biography, To the Golden Shore: The Life of Adoniram Judson (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1956), 110-112. The story of Ann Hasseltine Judson leaving her pew to kneel near the altar does not appear in any memoir or biography of Ann Hasseltine Judson or Adoniram Judson before 1900. However, there is also no alternative story of Ann Judson during the ordination service; early biographies are silent about Ann’s presence or skip over the ordination service altogether. There is, however, a lithograph engraving of the ordination of the first American Board missionaries, published in American Missionary Memorial, Including Biographical and Historical Sketches, ed. H. W. Pierson (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1853). The artists, Dopler and Prudhomme, placed a kneeling woman, her face covered by a bonnet, in the corner of the picture, to the left and slightly behind the five missionary men kneeling to receive ordination by laying on of hands. It cannot be proven whether the artist was reflecting a commonly told story in the lithograph, or if the bonneted woman is simply artistic license. According to Asa Smith’s narrative of the ordination service, “With the lot of those missionaries the gentle heart of woman is linked. Harriet Atwood is there, and Ann Hasseltine. They who have long been bound together by the ties of affectionate
Judson’s self-understanding as a Bradford woman going abroad with a new husband to make their “business of life” the “cause of Christ.”

This story of Ann ‘rising from her pew’ reveals twentieth century American Baptist conceptions of individual calling in relation to church authority. By contrasting the orderly commissioning against the spontaneous spiritual response, the story enters into the larger Baptist tension of institutional versus individual inspiration as the mark of a call from God, which has also happened to be, among other things (like race, education, and class), a gendered debate over the limits of women’s authority within the church. Baptist lore has managed to do, however, something that many American religious histories have not. In the United States, women have historically constituted at least fifty percent of congregational makeup in both “mainline” and “dissenting” Christian religious movements, but are consistently disregarded as contributing figures to religious history. The story of Ann companionship, who, on the banks of the Merrimack, have communed often with each other concerning their common Savior; they have come, in the bloom of their youth, to behold the consecration of the chosen companions of their future lives—to make anew their own consecration to the service of Christ in a Pagan clime….It is no wonder that one well qualified to testify speaks of ‘the solemn grandeur’ of the occasion, of ‘the irrepresible sighing and weeping aloud of many,’ and of the ‘tears which could not be wept’ (‘Ordination of the First American Foreign Missionaries,” American Missionary Memorial, 29). Edith Daniels Hubbard, in her 1913 biography Ann of Ava, may have used the lithograph in her description of Ann during the dedication service, as “many eyes turned from the young missionaries to linger lovingly upon a girlish figure kneeling reverently by the side of a boxed pew near the front” (37). Courtney Anderson, in turn, most likely embellished Hubbard’s description. According to the ABHS Judson 200 project, Ann is not the kneeling woman, and is seated in the front box pew of the lithograph (see the lithograph engraving, http://judson200.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=293, accessed April 23, 2014).

3. Ann Judson’s journal, December 12, 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 89.


5. Ann Braude, “Women’s History Is American Religious History,” Retelling US Religious History, ed. Thomas Tweed (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 87-88. According to Braude, “One cannot tell a story unless on know who the characters are. Women constitute the majority of participants in religion in the United States, and have wherever Christianity has become the dominant faith in North America.” For the majority of women during the Great Awakening, classical forms of theological education and institutionally authorized forms of ministry were not an available option. Not to be counted out, women like Ann sought other forms of religious education and ministry opportunities, often through the development of relationships and connections. Traveling preachers and well-known pastors may have instigated the Great Awakening, but it was the women and men of the local congregations who kept the flames of revival going and turned its energy toward worldwide mission.
Judson ‘rising from her pew’ in front of her new husband and all of her relations, provides a provocative reminder of God’s leadership over the congregation, and particularly the female activity within the congregation, as the energy and drive of Baptist denominationalism in the United States. This Baptist myth, in its many instantiations, continues to narrate the importance of women’s activity as an integral aspect of Baptist life in America.⁶

Though this well told narrative has assisted congregational Baptists in their discernment over such weighty issues over the past century, it has not helped Baptists remember Ann Judson’s appeals for partnership in mission. As seen in the prior chapter, Ann Judson’s greatest fear in changing to the Baptist tradition was broken ties with her Bradford family and friends. This fear, of course, can be readily explained as a matter of familial loyalty, but to Ann it was also a matter of mission support. Out of duty, Ann would have changed to the Baptists and gone on alone with God and Adoniram as her only companions, but she firmly believed that the mission needed congregational support in America. Nor has this myth assisted Baptists in remembering how early nineteenth American Baptists formally joined what would become the Modern Mission Movement. From the foreign land of India, the freshly baptized Judsons wrote to the Baptists of America, and called them to become supporting partners in mission. As a result, the national Triennial Convention was formed, women’s mission societies multiplied, and a national Baptist periodical was created to keep interest in mission alive across the denomination.

When Ann Judson journeyed to the United States on furlough in 1822, each of these arms of the American Baptist denomination was eager to hear her speak on the Baptist mission they had supported with their interest, money, and prayers. Though she would

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⁶ The critique of American religious historians’ “dismissal” of women’s history as a peripheral issue or a separate topic they can safely ignore is found in Catherine Brekus’ introduction to The Religious History of American Women: Reimagining the Past, ed. Catherine Brekus (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 1.
always be ‘our Bradford girl,’ Ann was now popularly recognized as ‘America’s Baptist missionary.’ While the previous chapter focused on Ann Judson’s multi-layered experience of uprooting from the United States and replanting in Burma, this chapter narrows its focus to those who aided Ann with her decision to become a missionary, those who supported the Judsons from the United States, and her closest relationship of all – Adoniram Judson, her husband and partner in mission.

Ann’s Bradford community, Western mission supporters, and missionary marriage enabled Ann’s practice of mission in distinctive ways, and received Ann’s influence in turn. By focusing on these relationships, Ann Judson ceases to be a solitary soul, venturing out in mission with the blessing of God alone. The community of Bradford, Massachusetts excited, supported, and provided the way for Ann’s entrance into mission work. Though Ann certainly felt “entirely alone,” she carried memories of her Bradford community and their prayers with her. As seen in the following chapters, the Bradford community provided Ann with formative knowledge she would extend into her practices in Burma. After her conversion to the Baptist tradition and their formal association, Ann Judson created new connections in the United States. Through the means of newsprint, Ann cultivated and contributed to a wide network of mission support and a conversational community of women’s societies, local congregations, periodicals, and the Triennial Convention. Though Adoniram Judson was the formally recognized missionary and managed all official correspondence, Ann benefited from the Triennial Convention and female society support, especially in the matter of household finances and missionary colleagues. Financial support from the United States relieved Ann and Adoniram from diverting their time toward earning money and most household chores, thus freeing both to engage in mission practices.

Furthermore, American Baptists listened closely to the Judsons, and sent them mission colleagues to fit the immediate needs of the Rangoon mission. And though they were near-strangers in 1812, Ann and Adoniram Judson were steadfast partners by the time they landed in Rangoon a year and a half later. With Adoniram’s encouragement, Ann participated and directed several aspects of the mission. He considered Ann “one of the first of women, the best of wives.”

In the spirit of Baptist lore, this chapter analyzes Ann Judson’s Western relations as interpersonal, gendered partnerships of negotiation and shared contributions. While studies of historical shifts in doctrine or political influence often center on male activity within the church, attention to the social nature of Christianity highlights the activities of women in church. According to Karen Hansen, attention to social interaction reveals the way in which practicing Christianity gave women the power to “influence one another, to shape an experience, and to craft and sustain a community.” Focused interpersonally, gender analysis includes established roles, power relations, and also negotiations of gendered constructs and opportunities through relationships. In addition, the gendered expectations and roles for women in the arena of Western literary production are especially pertinent, as Ann Judson maintained all of her Western relations by means of widely circulated and published correspondence. According to Mary Kupiec Cayton’s analysis of early Congregationalist mission magazines in regards to Harriet Newell, American Christian ambivalence toward

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8. Adoniram Judson to the Corresponding Secretary, Ava, December 7, 1826, in Knowles, *Memoir of Mrs. Judson*, 331. He said this of Ann after hearing of her death in Amherst while he was away in Ava, seeking to reenter Burmese empire territory as a missionary. Ann died less than six months after the end of the Anglo-Burmese war.


10. Analysis of gender in the private sphere, however, should not confuse “gender” as a synonym for “women,” nor should it only refer to relations between the sexes. According to Joan Scott, the use of “gender” as a category of analysis “rests on an integral connection between two propositions: gender is a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes, and gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power” (“Gender: A Useful Category of Analysis,” *American Historical Review* 91 [1986]: 1056, 1067).
women in publication led to a distinctly feminine style of early publication. For example, female contributors to the Congregationalist _Panoplist_ were published either anonymously or by first name only as a strategy of printing women’s writings as overheard “communications meant for mothers, sisters, and female friends.” This gendered literary strategy, according to Cayton, “typifies the positioning of women missionaries in the context of the private, interpersonal space they had always inhabited” in their American context, but unexpectedly became the avenue which “opened the door for women to be seen as public figures in the way male missionaries such as Brainerd, Sergeant, and Carey had been.”\(^\text{11}\) This was true of Ann Judson’s published early letters in the _American Baptist Magazine and Missionary Intelligencer_, which she signed by her nickname “Nancy.”\(^\text{12}\) However, this chapter also critiques Cayton’s analysis of gender ideologies and dynamics within publications, as it considers the placement of Ann Judson’s letters alongside male missionary correspondence in the newspapers. Content, audience, and style within the letters and journals are assessed, therefore, for a wider gauge of Ann Judson’s deployment of gendered literary techniques to make her professional activity explicable, and more palatable, to Western mission supporters.

### 3.1 Formative Relations: Mission Enablers In Bradford, Massachusetts

In denominational histories, the beginnings of the American foreign missionary enterprise spotlight the conversions of Adoniram Judson and his male associates, the missionary fervor aroused among the students of Andover Seminary, and the haystack


\(^{12}\) Ann Judson's early letters printed in the American Baptist Magazine and Missionary Intelligencer are presented to the public as “Mrs. Judson to ----,” but signed “Nancy Judson” or “N. Judson” (respectively, Ann Judson to her parents _The American Baptist Magazine and Missionary Intelligencer_, Nov 1, 1817, 220; and Ann Judson to Sec. Dr. Baldwin, Nov 1, 1818, 447-448).
meetings of Williams College, which may or may not have preceded the Andover fervor. Historical records assume the missionary interest of male seminarians provided the energy that resulted in the first meeting of the Congregationalist led American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission (ABCFM) in June of 1810. Yet few consider why this first meeting was held in the small, provincial village of Bradford, Massachusetts instead of Andover, Williams College, or the larger metropolis of Boston. That Ann Hasseltine Judson, Harriet Atwood Newell, and Rufus Anderson grew up and attended school together in Bradford, suggests that the successful organization of the ABCFM was also due to the torch of mission interest carried by First Congregational Church Bradford and Bradford Academy. Before it hosted the meeting that founded the ABCFM, the Bradford community already contained the relational connections, intellectual engagement, and social energy to encourage Ann toward religious conversion, full church membership, and her decision to become a missionary. Bradford’s pledge to maintain connections through prayer and eschatological promises to meet again in heaven sustained Ann’s courage while traveling abroad and warded off loneliness when she arrived in Burma. If not for Bradford, Ann Hasseltine might not have accepted Adoniram’s proposal for mission.

At the turn of the nineteenth century, the name Hasseltine was practically synonymous with Bradford. The second of four daughters, Ann was born into a well-respected family and a direct descendent of the town’s founders. John and Rebecca Hasseltine had their children baptized, were regular attendees at First Church Bradford, and

13. According to James Knowles, there was great debate about who started the missionary fervor first, and who, exactly, “led the way in originating the American Board of Commissioners” (Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 39). The tendency to begin the history of the American Missionary movement with the religious conversion of the first male missionaries is found as early as 1822 in Ann Judson’s published historical account of Adoniram Judson’s religious conversion (Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 6-9). A history of the American Baptist missionary enterprise and the formation of the American Baptist Foreign Mission society from the perspective of Adoniram Judson’s conversion, education, and his decision to become a missionary can also be found in Robert Torbet, Venture of Faith: The Story of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society and the Women’s American Baptist Foreign Mission Society 1814-1954 (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1955), 14-20.
were on good terms with Pastor Jonathan Allen. They had not confessed full conversion, or evidence of regenerate grace, as Congregationalist polity required, and were therefore not full members of the church. Due to the Hasseltines’ commitment to educate their daughters, Ann entered Bradford Academy at the age of twelve. An intellectually gifted and personable student, Ann was remembered for her great scholarly and social successes. Thoroughly immersed in the provincial life of Bradford and highly admired in turn, young Ann exhibited no signs of dissatisfaction or restlessness until religious revivalism swept through Bradford Academy, First Church, and the Hasseltine family in 1806. The charged religious atmosphere among the Hasseltine family, First Church and Bradford Academy served as the catalyst for Ann Hasseltine’s commitment to mission.

Ann’s account of her religious conversion emphasized her internal struggle with faith, but she also explained the process of her conversion through shifts in social circles, peers, and family influences. According to Hansen, the conversion process was often of a communal nature during the Great Awakening. “People, as much as ideas or beliefs, drew others – neighbors, relatives, work mates – into the church,” and both preachers and believers assisted others in conversion and intervened during times of self-doubt. As a student and young woman, Ann cared deeply about her friends and family and recognized their influence in her life. In her conversion narrative, the interest or disdain of family and friends affected Ann’s feelings toward religious devotion. In her early years at Bradford Academy, Ann recalled being “surrounded with associates, wild and volatile like myself, and often thought myself one of the happiest creatures on earth.”

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interest in religion, further association with these “wild and volatile creatures,” by way of
dinner and dancing invitations, tempted Ann away from her first resolution to “begin a
religious life.” Ann had determined to choose religious seriousness over grand parties, but
she could not resist the invitation for a smaller, family dinner. The intimate dinner turned
out to be a large dinner of several families, and when “dancing was…introduced; my
religious plans were forgotten.” When the revival conferences entered Bradford in 1806,
Ann again described her friends as a barrier to her full engagement in religion. Ann recalled,
“though I now deeply felt the importance of being strictly religious, it appeared to me
impossible I could be so, while in the midst of my gay associates.” As Ann experienced
increasing anxiety during the revival and Sabbath meetings, she would often hide her
affections, pretending to be happy and unconcerned amongst her “light companions.”¹⁹

For solace and direction, Ann turned to a female family member. During the Great
Awakening, women “in particular attempted to convert” others and operated as spiritual
mentors out of “a sense of responsibility developed from personal piety.”²⁰ When she visited
an aunt “who was…under serious impressions” about religious conversion, Ann confessed
her feelings of religious struggle. Ann remembered her aunt’s encouragement to “devote
myself entirely to seeking an interest in Christ, before it should be forever too late.”²¹ Taking
her aunt’s words to heart, Ann “felt resolved to give up everything, and seek to be reconciled
to God.” Returning to Bradford, Ann continued her search for reconciliation by first
ignoring “a large party” in her family’s home in order to pray, and later soliciting religious
reading materials from her school preceptor.²² After several months of prayer and reading,

²⁰. Hansen, A Very Social Time, 159.
Ann concluded her conversion process by confessing her sense of regenerate grace upon her life, and joining the Bradford Congregational Church.⁴⁳

After her conversion, Ann’s “love of social pleasures” was not “diminished, although the complexion of them was completely changed.”⁴⁴ Ann replaced dances and evening parties with intimate friendship tête-à-têtes, female prayer circles, and outings “to visit this and that family, to speak of Him whom her soul loved.”⁴⁵ After her graduation from Bradford Academy, Ann sought more religious education through conversations with her female society, clergy, and as a school instructor in nearby towns.⁴⁶ Given access to biblical commentaries and the weighty works of Jonathan Edwards, Samuel Hopkins, Joseph Bellamy, Phillip Doddridge, and others, Ann constructed a course of religious self-study to rival that of a male student at Andover Seminary.⁴⁷

Like other religiously motivated women during the Great Awakening, Ann also took on the role of spiritual mentor and encourager. As her desire to fully devote her life to Christ increased, Ann cultivated relationships with her fellow congregants at First Church, and turned her prior relations with family and peers toward religious pursuits. Ann and her friend Lydia had once “mutually assisted each other in lightness, dissipation, and vanity,” but later, Ann wrote, when God “convinced one of her lost undone condition, her first object was to convince the other.”⁴⁸ She had frequent discussions with Lydia after their conversions about “how we could most promote the glory of God?”⁴⁹ Ann also attended several female prayer

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２３．Ann Judson’s private journal, September 2, 1806, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 25.
２４．Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 22.
２５．Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 23.
２６．Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 23, 33.
２７．Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 23. According to Dana Robert, Ann Hasseltine’s religious self-study rivaled the characteristic “male student enrolled in Andover Seminary” (American Women in Mission, 7).
２８．Ann Judson to Miss Lydia K., Beverly, Massachusetts, September 8, 1810, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 50.
２９．Ann Judson to Miss L. K., Beverly, MA, September 8, 1810, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 50-51.
meetings on behalf of missions, as the group fervently prayed over the “idolatry, infatuation, and delusion” in India “when surrounding the social altar for prayer and praise, in our native town.”

Ann’s commitment to become a missionary, however, transcended Bradford expectations and female patterns of pious responsibility. Deciding to do what none of her associates or peers had done before, Ann became “the first American female, who resolved to leave her friends and country, to bear the Gospel to the heathen in foreign climates.”

Even so, Ann sought her female friendships and Bradford community for guidance. Ann received counsel from various persons, some of whom “expressed strong disapprobation of the project,” while “others would give no opinion. Two or three individuals…were steady, affectionate advisers, and encouraged her to go.”

By letter to Lydia, Ann expressed strong

31. Knowles’ account of Ann’s process of seeking advice emphasized the exceptional nature of encouragement, and asserted that Ann “was forced to decide from her own convictions of duty, and her own sense of fitness and expediency…Her adventurous spirit and her decision of character eminently fitted to her resolve, where others would hesitate, and to advance, where others might retreat. She decided to go, and her determination, without doubt, has had some effect on the minds of other females, who have since followed her example” (*Memoir of Mrs. Judson*, 43). He then selects various passages of Ann’s diary that highlight her prayerful process of discernment to go as a missionary out of duty to God’s desire for her to go. Knowles, possibly to contest Harriet Newell’s prior fame as first female martyr of American missions, concludes his ode to Ann Judson: “To Mrs. Judson undoubtedly belongs the praise of being the first American female, who resolved to leave her friends and country, to bear the Gospel to the heathen in foreign climates” (44). Within this section of Knowles’ account, Knowles is most concerned to prove that courageous and active Ann Judson owned the pedestal of “First Woman in Mission,” the preeminence of American virtue in the missionary spirit, and a thorough condemnation of any “enemy of Missions” who would “accuse Missionaries of ambitious and selfish purposes” (50). It is interesting, though beyond the bounds of this current discussion, to note Knowles’ description of Ann Judson with key character virtues of the early American republicanism such as exceptionalism, adventuring/entrepreneurialism, personal agency, and firm convictions (see Ian Tyrell, “New Approaches to American Cultural Expansion,” in *Competing Kingdoms*, 44ff).

32. Knowles profusely defended Judson’s personal choice in the matter. In several places, Knowles emphasized Judson’s unique character and experience as *first missionary female*, as “Miss H. had no example to guide and allure her” (43). While this is undoubtedly true in regard to Ann Judson’s American context, Knowles’ description ignores Judson’s access to stories about British missionaries and possibly their wives (See Cayton, “Canonizing Harriet Newell,” 73-75). Ann Judson and her female prayer circle most likely had access to William Carey’s 1796 address to the British Baptist Missionary Society about the “almost necessity of Females well qualified to communicate the Gospel of Christ in a situation where superstition secludes,” and his frequent letters detailing the possible role of missionary wife. Carey’s address influenced American denominational and missionary organization policy on missionary marriage (William Carey to the Baptist Missionary Society, December 28, 1796, quoted in Pruitt, *Looking Glass for Ladies*, 46).

certainty of her “determination to… sacrifice my affection to relatives and friends, and go where God, in his providence, shall see fit to place me.” Yet days later, in her journal, Ann expressed a concern that she was not yet convinced of the missionary opportunity “being a call from God, and that it would be more pleasing to him, for me to spend my life in this way that in any other.” Ann’s decision to marry Adoniram and commit her life to God through mission was, therefore, the result of deep soul searching as well as serious conversations with her closest friends.

To mitigate Ann’s anxiety about leaving, her family and friends encouraged Ann to remember their continued connections through prayer and hope-filled expectations of the heavenly community. Ann’s sister composed a poem and embroidered it onto Ann’s workbag as a representation of the Bradford community’s promise to remain connected to Ann after her departure:

May He, whose word the winds and waves obey,
Convey you safe o’er ocean’s dang’rous way,
From ev’ry danger, ev’ry ill defend,
Be your Support, your Father, and your Friend.
On the Other Side
The Christian’s God in heathen India reigns,
Whose grace divine the feeblest heart sustains:
Be thine the joy to hear thy Savior’s praise
Resound from pagan fanes in Christian lays;
And when this varying scene of life is o’er,
O may we meet thee on that blissful shore,
Where friends shall never part, farewells be heard no more.

34. Ann Judson to Ms. Lydia K., Beverly, MA, September 8, 1810, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 48-49.
35. Ann Judson’s journal, September 10, 1810, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 44.
36. Panoplist, February 1812, 425-427, quoted in Cayton, “Canonizing Harriet Newell,” 81. Cayton identifies the probable author of the poem as one of Ann Judson’s sisters, though the Panoplist does not record the author of the poem. According to Cayton, the lack of record “typifies the positioning of women missionaries in the context of the private, interpersonal space they had always inhabited,” though this strategy of printing women’s writings as overheard “communications meant for mothers, sisters, and female friends…opened the door for women to be seen as public figures in the way male missionaries such as Brainerd, Sergeant, and Carey had been” (“Canonizing Harriet Newell,” 81.
After several lines declaring the cosmic authority and sustaining reach of God, Ann’s sister promised to daily pray for the safety and the success of the Judsons. The Bradford community firmly believed that the “Christian God in heathen India reigns,” and they expected to see Ann again “where friends shall never part, and farewells be heard no more.” As Ann departed, the promise of heavenly meeting and the imagery a grand Bradford reunion transformed into the great host worshipping at the eschaton.³⁷

Ann’s sense of continued connection with Bradford through prayer sustained her during period of loneliness, and she channeled this sense of prayerful connection through her uprooting resolution to leave all “for the dear cause of Christ.”³⁸ During her first weeks at sea, Ann wrote that she was often overcome with weeping over the magnitude of all that she had left behind. In those hours, remembering that she had left her dearly beloved Bradford for a cause her community had fostered and encouraged her to pursue, “soothed my griefs, dried up my tears, and restored peace and tranquility to my mind.”³⁹ During the long period of searching for a home and the first years of life in Rangoon, however, Ann’s personal commitment to ‘the dear cause of Christ’ caused her more restlessness and anxiety than comfort. Writing to her sisters, Ann wished dearly that “it were possible for you to come,” and dreamt of how happy it would make her to “spend one evening at home, and give you an account of the scenes through which we have passed.”⁴⁰ In a politically volatile place, confronted with a difficult language to learn, and cut off from all American correspondence, Ann highly doubted her ability to engage in mission.

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³⁷. This eschatological imagery of reunion is quite popular, and becomes a mainstay of imagery for missionary support and world ecumenism. The prayers of America would result in a worldwide reunion in heaven, where the saints of every nation would meet and give thanks to God together.
³⁸. Ann Judson’s journal, February 27, 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 56.
³⁹. Ann Judson’s journal, February 27, 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 56.
To stave off loneliness, Ann Judson reminded herself of Bradford's promises to meet her again before the throne of Christ. Taking up heaven imagery, Ann wrote, “I often look at death with very animating feelings. Then I hope to meet all my friends, to be no more separated.” Even when Ann felt “she had nothing new to communicate” about the progress of the mission, she still felt “a pleasure and satisfaction, too great to be neglected, in writing to those dear friends, whom I never expect to see again, till I meet them in the eternal world.”

Her sentiments were not death wishes, but acknowledgements of her dependence on Bradford’s continued prayers for her. Ann’s remembrance of the promises also reminded her family to continue in their religious enthusiasm and to maintain their hope in being counted among the saints of God. Ann repeatedly wrote that both she and her sisters had “business to promote [God’s] glory,” so that each, in Rangoon and in Bradford, would be “prepared for a happy meeting” in heaven. Until that event took place, Ann encouraged correspondence to continue the mutual religious encouragement they had shared before her departure.

3.2 Mission Support: Triennial Convention, Female Societies, And Missionary Magazines

When Ann and Adoniram Judson left the United States as ABCFM missionaries, the Baptists of America already contributed to their support. As early as 1800, the Congregationalist and Baptist women of Boston had formed a female mite society for the promotion of missions. The Baptists of Massachusetts had also begun publishing The

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42. Ann Judson to her sisters, Isle of France, March 12, 1813, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 99-100. The quote continues with an encouragement toward religious piety so that she might meet her friends in heaven: “Let us, my sisters, live near to God, and make it our only business to promote his glory. Then we shall be prepared for a happy meeting, and the trials through which we have passed in this life will only heighten our felicity” (100).
43. Pruitt, Looking Glass for Ladies, 14.
Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine (MBMM) in 1803.\(^{44}\) With subscriptions, readers followed the adventures of the British missionaries in Bengal, especially the Serampore trio William Carey, Joshua Marshman, and William Ward, and of missionaries to Native Americans on the frontier. From these groups and other interested donors, Baptists gave three thousand dollars to the American Board for the sending of Ann and Adoniram Judson, Harriet and Samuel Newell, Roxana and Samuel Nott, Gordon Hall, and Luther Rice to India.\(^{45}\)

The division of the missionary cohort over the issue of baptism, which both sides then had to relay to the United States, created space for Ann Judson to deploy the feminine correspondence genre to shape the future of American support for mission. Ann actively solicited support among Baptist congregations and women’s societies through letter writing, and treasured the prayerful support of these Western connections as absolutely necessary to the success of the Baptist mission. Along with her extensive network of interpersonal and ecclesial connections, Ann publicly influenced a large American audience on the subject of mission through published correspondence in periodicals. Her open and friendly writing style followed early nineteenth century writing techniques, and she negotiated these gender constraints to publicly encourage and shape mission support across the United States.

Due to the growing number of missionary and other religious publications, news of the Judsons change to the Baptists and subsequent resignation from the American Board spread like wildfire in the United States. In late January of 1813, the first correspondence reached the American Board and Baptist leaders of America; by popular demand, these letters from William Carey, Joshua Marshman, and Adoniram Judson were published in the

\(^{44}\) Torbet, *Venture of Faith*, 13.
March 1813 issue of *MBMM*. Two months later, Ann Judson joined the rank of voices discussing the future of American Baptist mission, with two of her letters published alongside further male correspondence on the issue. In May of 1813, the *MBMM* published a series of letters written to both male and female Baptists of America, with further detail about the Judsons’ conversion as well as appeals for the Baptists of America to form a national society for missions. The first three were letters from William Carey, Adoniram Judson, and Luther Rice to Rev. Thomas Baldwin of Boston, a key organizer of Boston Baptist support for missions and would become the first Corresponding Secretary of the Baptist Board for Foreign Mission. In these letters the three missionary men followed Cayton’s description of male correspondence “positioned...within a public realm,” by presenting themselves “as official reportage from commissioned agents.” Carey, for example, urged the American Baptists to form a national mission society similar to the British Baptist Mission Society, now that “the churches in America [lay] under obligations different from any under which they lay before.” Judson and Rice also discussed logistics concerning the Americans’ future mission station, including future plans for sharing finances and material goods communally as the British Baptists did in Serampore.

46. Adoniram Judson to Dr. Thomas Baldwin, Calcutta, August 31, 1812; Adoniram Judson to Revs. Carey, Marshman, and Ward, Calcutta, August 27, 1812; Adoniram Judson to Dr. Worcester, September 1, 1812, in *MBMM*, March 1813, 266-267. According to Torbet, the multi-denominational support system of the original American Board followed the pattern of the London Missionary Society. It was the Congregationalist missionaries, and not the American Board or American congregations, who decided they could not work alongside the Baptist Judsons, and American missions along denominational lines became the mode of missions for the nineteenth century (Torbet, *Venture of Faith*, 24). However, Torbet’s narrative does not take Ann Judson’s reservations about conversion seriously. Ann knew before her baptism that if the Judsons converted to the Baptist tradition, they would have to break ties with the Congregationalist missionaries, the American Board, their home congregations, and perhaps even their close family and friends (see previous chapter, “Immersed in New Religion”). Baptist and Congregationalist churches in America were united in support only to a point, and then doctrinal differences and the competitive spirit reared their heads.

47. Cayton, “Canonizing Harriet Newell,” 81-82. The collection of letters from Carey, Marshman, Rice, and the Judsons are located together at the very beginning of this magazine volume (289-296). The magazine then continues with correspondence on other aspects of Mission in India with a letter and journal excerpt from Harriet Newell of the American Board mission, and a second letter from William Carey.

48. William Carey to Dr. Rogers of Philadelphia, Serampore, October 12, 1812, in *MBMM*, May 1813, 290.
Ann Judson, on the other hand, followed Cayton’s description of women’s correspondence. Ann’s published letters “took the form of letters to family and friends, their transformation into print making the reader party to an intimate exchange.”\textsuperscript{49} Ann addressed her first letter to “my dear friend Nancy,” and described her and Adoniram’s “conversion of sentiments” to the Baptists after “maturely, candidly, and I hope, prayerfully” examining the subject “for months.”\textsuperscript{50} Ann’s second letter was to a Mrs. Carleton, a former Bradford acquaintance. The two women had once been intimate companions, and Ann remembered that the “difference in sentiment” between the pair over baptism had not resulted in the usual “bitter feelings” between Baptists and Congregationalists. Now that Ann too was a Baptist, she wished to reconnect with her former friend, as any “little restraint” between the two was now removed. Ann solicited prayers from Mrs. Carleton’s social circle for women “in a heathen land who know no such joys, who have no such animating hopes to comfort their hearts in the dreary hour of death.”\textsuperscript{51} In return, Ann promised to “write you all the particulars respecting this mission when we are settled,” and asked Mrs. Carleton to “write me every opportunity.” The missionary magazine also printed Ann’s intimate closing, “your all affectionate Nancy Judson,” including her promises to cherish future correspondence from her friend as “a cordial to the heart.”\textsuperscript{52}

In their correspondence, male missionaries and Ann Judson followed Western gender disparity in the published letter-writing genre, which continued to uphold gender segregation and restricted perceptions of women’s roles in public discourse and early female missionary memoirs. However, Ann Judson also used her visibility of publication as a form

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  \item \textsuperscript{49} Cayton, “Canonizing Harriet Newell,” 81-82.
  \item \textsuperscript{50} Ann Judson to ‘my dear Nancy,’ September 7, 1812, Calcutta, in \textit{MBMM}, May 1813, 294-295.
  \item \textsuperscript{51} Ann Judson to Mrs. Carleton, Calcutta, [September 7-October 22, 1812], \textit{MBMM}, May 1813, 295-296.
  \item \textsuperscript{52} Ann Judson to Mrs. Carleton, Calcutta, [September 7-October 22, 1812], \textit{MBMM}, May 1813, 295-296.
\end{itemize}
of agency and influence over mission support. Once in published form, readers did not necessarily interpret female letters as private, and considered the news and requests in female missionary letters as addressed directly to them, just as they did the published male missionary letters to the Corresponding Secretary of the Baptist Board. Ann Judson’s letters to ‘dear friend Nancy’ and ‘Mrs. Carleton,’ therefore, equal the Baptist missionary men in her address to the entire MBMM readership. Her first letter was regarded by the editorial staff of MBMM as a strong defense of the sincerity of the Judsons’ change to the Baptists against “reports impeaching the motives” of Adoniram. Mrs. Carleton and her female society, represented every corresponding secretary and every female prayer group. In this indirect manner, Ann Judson introduced herself to all of the Massachusetts female societies as a Baptist and asked for their continued support of the Judsons’ “infant mission.”53 Alongside Carey, Adoniram Judson, and Luther Rice, Ann Judson’s accounts were likewise printed to swell public opinion and congregational support for a national mission convention for Baptists.

Much like Ann Judson’s negotiated influence through restricted discourse, American Baptist women influenced mission support and convention organization indirectly through their restricted roles of encouragement and financial giving. Statewide mission societies, notably in Massachusetts, New York, South Carolina, and Georgia, formed immediately in response to the Judsons’ letters and Luther Rice’s campaigning. These state mission societies, which were in turn formed from earlier local mission societies, predated the 1814 formation of the General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States of America, for Foreign Missions, known as the Triennial Convention, and the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions (BBFM), which carried on the business of the convention

53. Editor’s note, MBMM, May 1813, 294; Ann Judson to Mrs. Carleton, Calcutta, [September 7-October 22, 1812], MBMM, May 1813, 296.
between its tri-annual sessions. The Triennial Convention brought Baptists of America into a new, previously unknown, polity formation of a convention, consisting of member delegates from congregations and mission societies. As only men could attend, women’s societies sent male delegates as their representatives, but otherwise women continued to hold only indirect means of influence and leadership within the Convention and the Baptist Board. During Ann Judson’s tenure as the first American Baptist female on mission, women’s interest in missions continued to be locally organized, though local societies for the support of missions and Bible translation multiplied exponentially. They collected money, which they then “gifted” to the Board, designating their funds for particular missionary needs, materials, and activities. These women’s societies corresponded directly with Ann Judson and other female missionaries about missionary interests, and circulated the letters they received among other mission societies. Likewise, Adoniram was the official correspondent to the Board throughout the early period of the Baptist Mission, and Ann continued on as an unofficial missionary whose husband was employed by the Board. Ann Judson corresponded indirectly with the Board by writing letters to Mrs. Margaret Baldwin, wife of BBFM Corresponding Secretary Thomas Baldwin.

Through her letter writing to mission supporters, Ann Judson built a sense of close relations through the means of religious support for missions. On one level, Ann desired

55. Torbet, *Venture of Faith*, 28. There is good evidence that the BBFM and Triennial Convention worked closely with female mission societies from its inception. By 1816, the Board of Foreign Missions published a notice for all, “Female religious and Missionary Societies within the United States,…to forward, as soon as convenient, to the Secretary of the Boston Female Society for Missionary purposes [Mary Webb, Secretary], particular information of the name by which they are designated; the date of their institution; the object, or objects of the society; and the constitution of rules by which they are governed….We can, with much pleasure, state the increase of Missionary institutions. Many of our sisters are bringing their tithes into the store house. Spinning, knitting, and weaving societies, are multiplying, with a view to aid the great object of sending the gospel of salvation to the ends of the earth” (Boston, August 25, 1816, MBMM, September 1816, 375).
56. Mrs. Charlotte White, a widow, offered her entire estate to the Board in her application to become a missionary to Burma alongside Mr. and Mrs. Hough in 1815. She never made it to Burma, as she remarried to a London Missionary Society missionary and supervised schools in India (Torbet, *Venture of Faith*, 188-189).
news from the West to ward off loneliness and isolation. In a letter to Samuel Newell, Ann confessed, “you can hardly form an idea with what eagerness we receive every scrap of intelligence from any part of the Christian world.” When she wrote, she encouraged her correspondents to “write us long and frequent letters. Any thing respecting yourself or the other brethren, will be interesting to us.” Ann’s letters were often written in short segments and incorporated journal entries from over the course of several days or months; she asked her correspondents in return “to excuse this long letter, for I doubt not your interest in our concerns.” Whenever Judson discovered letters or packages had been lost at sea, she expressed great disappointment. Likewise, Ann expressed disappointment whenever illness prevented her from promptly replying to letters she received.

Ann’s open, personable form of correspondence conveyed her genuine interest in personal relations, but she also clearly conveyed her dependence on mission supporters for the continuation of her work in Burma. Ann believed the prayers and correspondence of the growing multitude of local mission societies were vital to the American Baptist Mission. During times of crisis and loneliness, Ann wished she could “unite with some of my dear American friends in social prayer! How it would mitigate the gloom and loneliness of my situation, were some of them present to strengthen my confidence in Jehovah.” Without the physical presence of her American friends and family, Judson expressed an even greater appreciation for their prayer and correspondence. In an 1817 letter, she impressed the importance of receiving letters to “keep alive the missionary spark in my soul” and to assure “that I was not alone, but at all times aided and supported by them.” Still writing in the

intimate style to particular friend, Ann connected the “many congenial souls” of congregations, female societies, and local mission societies to the daily life of the Baptist mission, because “though prevented accompanying me, [they] would assist me by their prayers, encourage and animate me by their letters.” 61 She wanted her correspondents to know she depended upon the constant prayers of the gathered supporters of mission.

The wide extent of publication and the consistent printing of Ann Judson’s letters alongside “official” correspondence to the Board further suggest that Ann composed her letters in an intimate style, but consciously composed her subject matter to inform and encourage all of her readers in the United States. Throughout their tenure in Burma, Ann and Adoniram’s mission correspondence was printed regularly in Baptist and non-Baptist periodicals. 62 Their earliest letters and journals were published in The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine (1813-1816), and in 1816 the MBMM expanded into The American Baptist Magazine and Missionary Intelligencer (1817-1824) (ABMMI). 63 As the bimonthly periodical for the Triennial Convention, the ABMMI printed the longest editions of Ann and Adoniram’s journals and letters. Other editions of these letters, often in shortened versions or summaries, were also printed in various regional Baptist, women’s society, and other

61. Ann Judson to Mary, Rangoon, August 1817, in Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 94. Ann’s inclusion of this portion of her letter in her own memoir implies her encouragement of all mission supporters to contribute letters, prayers, and other forms of America connection to the foreign missionary.

62. All of the letters Ann Judson used in the Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah were previously published in periodicals, and she did not use all of her published letters. There are at least twenty-eight different letters by Ann Judson published in early nineteenth century American periodicals, and these were often reprinted in at least as many publications. Other letters, not yet found, may have been circulated among female and other mission societies and printed in women’s magazines or other periodicals. For example, The Evangelical Monitor reprinted Ann Judson’s letter to the Female Judson Society of Richmond, VA, which was originally printed in the Richmond Weekly Visitor (Ann Judson to the Female Judson Society of Richmond, Washington, D.C., April 26, 1823, in Evangelical Monitor, May 1823, 46–47). Ann Judson’s correspondence was also shared between Great Britain and the United States by periodical publications (see Ann Judson to a lady in Scotland, Rangoon, in The Religious Intelligencer, April 17, 1819, 733–735, and Ann Judson to James Butterworth, Prome and Rangoon, in London Missionary Register, November 1826, reprinted in The Christian Journal, and Literary Register, March 1827, 77–85).

63. With the exception of the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine (Boston: Manning & Loring; Lincoln & Edmands, 1803-1816), the American Baptist Missionary Magazines were published in Boston by the American Baptist Missionary Union.
denominational periodicals, such as *The Panoplist, The Pittsburgh Recorder*, and the *Columbian Star*.⁶⁴ Ann and Adoniram’s correspondence, therefore, at times answered the questions and interests of their direct correspondents, and they always tended to reflect the general interest of mission supporters in the United States. The scope of Ann Judson’s published correspondence and the wide readership of her letters increased her authority on the subject of missions, effectively canceling out her style of private, female exchange.

Western constraint on women’s publications, however, was more than a matter of form and style. According to Cayton, male and female missionaries also followed gendered patterns for content. Male missionaries reported “on the logistics…and formal progress” of the mission, while female letters “focused mainly on feelings about departure for a strange land and longings for home and family.”⁶⁵ In the Judsons’ correspondence, Ann and Adoniram tended to follow the gendered expectations of their audience on several matters. For example, Adoniram often reported on official business, such as baptisms, preaching, religious conversations, missionary methods, and expenses. Ann, on the other hand, tended to share about her Burmese female society and teaching, but would also include more detailed conversations and accounts of the decision making process within the mission. The Judsons also consistently took advantage of the gender constraints to detail the fullest picture of their mission. Expecting their letters to be circulated across different audiences, Ann often referred her correspondent to Adoniram’s letter for a description of certain events, and vice versa. For example, in her letter to Mrs. Carleton, Ann supposes her friend will have already heard of her change to the Baptist tradition “as Mr. Judson has already

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⁶⁴ *The Panoplist, and Missionary Magazine* was a Congregationalist periodical published in Boston from 1808-1817. The *Columbian Star* was a regional Baptist periodical published by J. D. Knowles in Washington, D.C. (1822-1829). *The Pittsburgh Recorder, Containing Religious, Literary, and Political Information* was a regional Presbyterian periodical published out of Pittsburgh (1822-1829).

written the particulars respecting our change, to Dr. Baldwin.” In the following chapters, attention is paid to Ann Judsons’ negotiation of gendered division of writing style and subjects. While gender constraints in letter writing sometimes resulted in a fuller account of Baptist mission practice, Ann’s negotiation of Western audience expectations at times also exaggerated gendered divisions of labor between Ann and Adoniram in Burma.

Attention to Western expectations and gendered forms of the Judsons’ correspondence, however, must be set within wider recognition of the purpose for the correspondence and publication between the Judsons and their Baptist partners in the United States. Through their written efforts, Ann coordinated with Adoniram to galvanize American Baptist organization for foreign mission. The above investigation of Ann Judson’s corresponding partners and scope of publication integrates the collective work of women’s mission societies, local congregational mission support, and the institutional formation of the Triennial Convention and the Baptist Board. The Judsons’ letters and Luther Rice’s travel around the United States to promote national organization for the purposes of overseas mission fell upon Baptist ears ripened by women’s and regional society efforts. Furthermore, Ann’s calls for prayer and correspondence with these regional groups continued to stress the importance of local congregations in the cause of missions. By way of periodicals, the Baptist Board and women’s societies shared the news and the needs of the Judsons, informally involving all Baptists in the funding and the decision-making of the early Baptist Board. On the subject of missions, early Baptist congregants behaved as a conversational community within the larger arena of Baptist and Great Awakening life, rather than a centralized denominational institution.

The provision of funds and the choice of missionaries sent to the Burmese Baptist mission demonstrate the strong support early nineteenth century readers had for Ann’s active involvement in the mission. The BBFM and local mission societies heeded the Judsons’ requests for like-minded male and female companions to labor alongside them. Starting with the Judsons’ “offering of [their] services” in exchange for financial support, the Baptists willingly pledged to provide enough money to allow both Adoniram and Ann to focus on establishing the mission instead of raising their own support. In response to the Judsons’ pleas for printed materials, the Baptist Board sent George and Mrs. Hough, though they already had two young children, to Rangoon in 1816 because George Hough knew how to work the printing press. Unfortunately, Mr. and Mrs. Hough thought Rangoon too dangerous for their young family, and by the end of 1818 the Houghs had removed with the printing press to the relative safety of British Bengal. 67 Within weeks of the Houghs’ departure, however, James and Elizabeth Colman and Edward and Eliza Wheelock arrived in Rangoon, and were immediately pronounced to be “of the right stamp” by the Judsons. 68

In response to the arrival of the missionaries, Ann Judson wrote her most official form of communication to the Baptist constituency across the United States. In a letter published in the ABMMI and addressed to Mrs. Baldwin, the wife of the Baptist Board’s Corresponding Secretary, Ann thanked “our dear Christian friends” for sending “some of

67. The Triennial Convention appointed Rev. George Hough to the Burman Mission on April 12, 1815. The convention had previously employed Hough as a domestic missionary (“Baptist Foreign Mission,” MBMM, June 1815, 189). Hough’s decision to leave did not sit well with the American Baptists or with Ann Judson. Ann Judson’s decision to stay in Rangoon alone instead of traveling with the Houghs is further detailed in chapter four, “Home-Making”. There was talk of Hough ending his tenure with the Baptist Board (Address of the Baptist Board for Foreign Mission to the General Convention, April 26, 1820, ABMMI, September 1820, 398-399). However, the Houghs did not return to the United States, and it seems Mr. Hough continued to be employed by the British or American Baptist Boards from Serampore as a printer of religious texts for the Judsons (Adoniram Judson to Rev. Sharp, Rangoon, January 25, 1821, ABMMI, January 1822, 251; Adoniram Judson to George Hough, April 8, 1821, ABMMI, January 1822, 256). George Hough returned to Rangoon along with his family to resume his missionary duties in Rangoon, Burma in early 1822 (Ann Judson to her family, Baltimore, December 30, 1821, ABMMI, July 1822, 381).

their choicest number” as missionaries, as the congeniality and zealous energy of the Colmans and Wheelocks had “given a new spring to our feelings and exertions.”69 Ann was particularly thankful for her new colleagues’ “propriety and delicacy of conduct, their correct way of thinking, their fervent piety, and their right views of missionary employment.”70 Ann’s compliment extended to all four of her new associates; Elizabeth Colman and Eliza Wheelock were as zealous as their more well known husbands in learning Burmese and supporting the Judsons’ efforts to openly practice mission in Rangoon.71 By praising her new colleagues to her readers, Ann signaled her affirmation of American Baptists’ continued support of her labors as well as Adoniram Judson’s in Burma. Her growing audience of mission supporters, in turn, continued to devour each new letter from Burma concerning the struggles and successes of the American Baptist mission.

Outside of financial support and the selection of new colleagues, the Triennial Convention congregations, women’s societies, and periodical readers in the United States had little influence over the daily operations of the Baptist Mission. While the Judsons’ correspondence could be widely shared from New York to Georgia in less than a month, letters took months to reach Burma. It was not unusual for correspondence to be lost at sea, or held up by warfare. At best, the Judsons and their missionary colleagues could write their of their decisions to the Board, and hope for a nod of approval from the Board a year or two later. Decisions concerning the daily operations of the Baptist Mission, and also the extent of

71. If these women and their husbands had been able to stay in Rangoon, there would have been an American Baptist sextet of Colmans, Wheelocks, and Judsons to match the British Baptist Serampore sextet of Careys, Wards, and Marshmans. Mr. Wheelock, however, was dead from consumption within six months of his arrival, and by 1820, the Colmans had left Rangoon for British Bengalese controlled Chittagong, where many recent converts were in need of a pastor, and there was no Burmese government to prevent “public preaching” and imprison inquirers of Christianity. James Colman contracted a fever in the wilderness of Cox’s Bazar, and died in 1821. Mrs. Wheelock and Mrs. Colman did not return to Rangoon or America, and instead joined British mission efforts for juvenile education in Bengal; “Memoir of Mrs. Eliza H. [Wheelock] Jones,” ABMMI, April 1832, 97-104, and Mrs. Colman to Mrs. S., Calcutta, May 1, 1822, ABMMI, November 1823, 218-219.
the Judsons’ opportunities for mission practice, rested on good relations between Ann and Adoniram.

3.3 Close Partner in Mission: Adoniram Judson

Adoniram Judson was born in 1788 in Malden, Massachusetts, the eldest son of Congregationalist Reverend Adoniram and Abigail Judson. Young Adoniram grew up in the Congregationalist church, but of the pair, Ann had considerably more experience as a committed church member, a revivalist encourager, and a benevolent worker who desired to “promote the cause of Christ” before their departure as missionaries. At sixteen, Adoniram pronounced himself a Deist and began traveling New England, but the sudden death of a young friend challenged Adoniram’s disdain of religion. Adoniram Judson enrolled in Andover seminary as a “special student” in 1808 because he neither professed converting faith in Christ nor felt a call to ministry. In December 1808 and May 1809, respectively, he “made a solemn dedication of himself to God” that “involved in itself a consecration to Christian ministry,” and obtained full membership in the Third Congregational Church of Plymouth, Massachusetts.72 When Adoniram Judson traveled with like-minded seminary colleagues to petition the Massachusetts Congregational Assembly for denominational patronage of foreign mission work in the summer of 1810, he had only decided to become a missionary four months before.73 By this time, Ann Hasseltine had profession conversion,

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72. Francis Wayland, *Memoir of Adoniram Judson*, vol. 1, 12–26, 28. According to Edward Judson, Adoniram Judson went to seminary before his conversion and call to ministry. He enrolled in Andover Seminary on special student status in September 1808 “as he was neither a professor of religion nor a candidate for the ministry.” He “made a solemn dedication of himself to God” that “involved in itself a consecration to Christian ministry” on December 2, 1808, and joined the Third Congregational Church of Plymouth, Massachusetts on May 28, 1809 (Edward Judson, *Life of Adoniram Judson*, 15).

73. There was a great deal of dispute over “the first leader of American mission” and the “birthplace of American Foreign Mission;” see Knowles, *Memoir of Mrs. Judson*, 37. Adoniram Judson had begun “to ponder seriously the subject of foreign missions” in September of 1809, and finally resolved to become a missionary in February 1810. Judson and some of his fellow classmates had formed their own missionary society while at Andover Seminary in 1809. Edward Judson lists the society members as: Adoniram Judson, Samuel Nott, Samuel Mills Jr., James Richards, Luther Rice, and Gordon Hall (Edward Judson, *The Life of Adoniram Judson*, 15).
become a full member of First Church Bradford, and participated in revivals and benevolent work for over four years.

While in Bradford, Adoniram Judson met Ann Hasseltine, and soon after made a “direct offer of marriage on his part, including, of course, a proposition to her, to accompany him in his missionary enterprise.” Adoniram Judson’s visit to Bradford in 1810 did not instigate Ann Hasseltine’s desire to serve Christ and her fellow creatures, but he did provide new opportunities outside the realm of most married women in the early nineteenth century. Single women, though increasingly active in religious works and female societies, were rarely employed for foreign mission, and married women, expected to raise children and run households, rarely had time for organized religious activities outside of the Sabbath. As a partnership through marriage, Ann had to negotiate Western expectations for married women simultaneously with the new possibilities offered by the role of missionary colleague.

Adoniram’s expectations toward his spouse and missionary partner likewise greatly affected the shape of Ann’s mission practice relationship. Shortly after their meeting in Bradford, Adoniram Judson left for England to explore mission patronage and partnership

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23). Ann Judson did not provide a missionary society list, but did list “Messrs. Nott, Newell and Hall” as those who joined Adoniram Judson in “resolving to leave their native land, and engage in the arduous work of missionaries” before the society’s presentation to the Massachusetts Association (Judson, *Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah*, 8). Both Judson and her biographer James Knowles attributed the petition to the Massachusetts Association as the beginning of several meetings and conversations that resulted in the formation of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Judson, *Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah*, 8; Knowles, *Memoir of Mrs. Judson*, 40).


76. According to Dana Robert, “the reality of dependence on her husband for fulfillment of her own vocation gave the missionary wife certain motivations for mission that were peculiarly female. Regardless of how strong her own personal call was to mission work, the reality of the necessity of marriage to fulfill her goals meant that the early missionary wife was highly committed to her role as a ‘helpmate’” (*American Women in Mission*, 32).
with the London Missionary Society. As Adoniram could not express his hopes and expectations in person, he sent letters persuading Ann to participate and contribute to the daily operations and decisions concerning the mission. Based on his early correspondence, Adoniram expected, a high level of parity and cooperation within his marriage to Ann.

Adoniram’s earliest display of the parity and partnership in mission, however, occurred in his preoccupation with the possibility that he and Ann would perish together in the cause of mission. Adoniram Judson’s 1811 letters to his recently betrothed Ann Hasseltine and her father, can hardly be labeled love letters. Ann is addressed as his “dear” beloved, but the content of his letters seem focused on scaring Ann away from mission or having her parents lock her up to prevent their departure. With passing reference to conventional consent from parents, Adoniram Judson instead asked Mr. Hasseltine whether you can consent to her departure for a heathen land, and her subjection to the hardships and sufferings of a missionary life; whether you can consent to her exposure to the dangers of the ocean; to the fatal influence of the southern climate of India; to every kind of want and distress; to degradation, insult, persecution, and perhaps a violent death.

With narrative flair, Adoniram prepared Ann’s family for the likelihood that once he and Ann departed for mission, the Hasseltines should never expect to see Ann again, that he would not protect her from hardship, and they might never know what happened to her. If Ann married him, they would be partners for better or worse, and in sickness, poverty, and sorrow.

Adoniram romanticized the companionship involved in experiencing trials, and he also, simultaneously, tested the steely resolve of his future mate. Adoniram’s private letters to Ann in 1811 contained more dramatizations of the perils they would encounter abroad, including mental distress and spiritual exhaustion. He

78. Adoniram Judson to Mr. Hasseltine, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 49-50.
warned Ann, “we shall be weary of the world….We shall see many dreary, disconsolate hours, and feel a sinking of spirits, anguish of mind, of which now we can form little conception. O, we shall wish to lie down and die.” Though he and Ann would “no more see our kind friends around us, or enjoy the conveniences of civilized life, or go to the house of God with those that keep holy day,” they would at least suffer together. And if one of them was “unable to sustain the heat of the climate and the change of habits…at least, either of us will be certain of one mourner.”79 Dwelling on unknown hardship and the certainty of painful trials, Adoniram Judson’s letters tested the determination of his betrothed Ann to pursue mission through marriage to him. As she was practically a stranger, dampening expectations of mission success and instructing Ann to pray with him “for an overcoming faith”80 was his best option to ensure Ann’s competence as his mission companion.

In between his morbid descriptions of future trials and torments, Adoniram also offered Ann other possibilities for cooperative partnership in their future mission. Adoniram hoped for the time, “in which you will change your name…and dwell on the other side of the world, among a heathen people.” Together, the Judsons would “be in a new situation and employment,” and would learn to speak and worship in a foreign tongue.81 To Ann’s father, Adoniram asked the Hasseltines to consent in the hope of meeting their daughter once more in heaven, and hearing “acclamations of praise which shall redound to her Saviour from heathens saved,

through her means, from eternal wo and despair.” 

Reading between the lines of Adoniram’s melancholy language, Ann gleaned a preview of marital devotion and the active role in mission she could expect as Adoniram’s wife and partner.

Even so, Ann did not have the time to truly evaluate her husband until they were already married and on the way to India. Ann and Adoniram spent hours onboard the Caravan in prayer, reading, and intellectual discussion on religious topics, including preparations for early death. Ann found Adoniram to be intellectually engaging, spiritually challenging, and generally “one of the kindest, most faithful, and affectionate of husbands.” Though by letter Adoniram brought doom and gloom, in person “his conversation frequently dissipates the…spiritual darkness which hangs over my mind, and brightens my hope of a happy eternity.” Moreover, Ann could imagine herself as useful to Adoniram as his wife and a true partner in mission. In letters to her family, Ann hoped “God will make us instrumental of preparing each other for usefulness in this world, and greater happiness in a future world.”

Comparing her new situation with a friend’s advantageous and respectable marriage in Bradford, Ann boasted “in point of conjugal felicity, and solid happiness, I am not disposed to yield you the palm” on the matter of mutual partnership and usefulness.

Adoniram’s feelings about his wife were not proper material for published masculine correspondence, and therefore his views of their partnership and marriage are less directly accessible. Judging by his actions and his references to Ann in his letters, Adoniram Judson immediately considered Ann to be an excellent partner for their future in mission together.

83. Ann Judson to her sister, April 11, 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 59.
84. Ann Judson to Mary C., ABMMI, Sep 1818, 412.
Despite his fatalistic premonitions about early death, Adoniram made every effort to preserve Ann’s health. When she fell ill on their journey to Rangoon, he acted as her primary caregiver and sent her back to Bengal for a few months rest and medical attention during their first year in Rangoon. Adoniram also supported Ann’s insistence that she, too, should receive equal language instruction when their first instructor resisted teaching a woman to speak and read in Burmese. Of course, as seen in the Judsons’ change to the Baptists, focus on translation, and settlement in Rangoon, Adoniram was a very persuasive personality, and could often bring Ann over to his opinion. More often than not, however, Adoniram’s ideas brought about more opportunities for Ann’s participation and influence upon the Baptist Mission.

Throughout her tenure in Burma, Ann pioneered the practices of the Baptist Mission alongside Adoniram. For example, when Ann turned some of her energies to the care of the household and did not follow her husband in his philological learning, Adoniram continued to incorporate her into the literary needs of the mission. While Adoniram focused most of his energy on linguistic work for translation purposes, Ann experimented with teaching, society work, and religious composition. During the early years, Ann also assumed the role of primary correspondent with the United States, illustrating both of their activities for their Western partners. In the later years, every decision of the early American Baptist mission, including the construction of the mission’s first public religious structure called a zayat, was made in consultation with Ann and with respect for her talents in certain arenas of mission practice.

85. “Mr. and Mrs. J. are now superintending the erection of a Zayat, in which they shortly expect to commence instructing the natives in the principles of religion,” in Eliza H. Wheelock to Mrs. Baldwin, Rangoon, February 22, 1819, ABMMI, November 1819, 217.
3.4 Conclusion

No longer an individual commissioned by God alone, Baptist lore should imagine Ann Judson surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses from Bradford and elsewhere in the United States. She received neither ordination nor official status as a missionary from the Baptist Board, but several hands were involved in forming, encouraging, and supporting her labors in Burma. Using gender analysis of North American societal relations, this chapter first recovered the important role played by the community Bradford, Massachusetts as mission enablers in the instigation of the American foreign missions movement. The encouragement Ann received from her Bradford community during her conversion and growing interest in useful labor in devotion to Christ provided the foundation for her future commitment to foreign mission.

The second section traced Ann’s use of missionary correspondence to cultivate a network of women’s societies and local congregations toward the formation of a national Baptist Convention for the support of foreign mission. In conversation with Mary Kupiec Cayton’s analysis of Western constructions of ‘feminine’ and ‘masculine’ correspondence and publication, this section investigates the style, content, scope, and audience of Ann and Adoniram’s missionary letters. By paying attention to Ann’s negotiation of gender restrictions in order to influence her readers and the manner and method of circulating her letters, this section argues for Ann and Adoniram’s early and contributive influence upon American support for missions and American Baptists’ early support for both Ann and Adoniram’s endeavors, as evidenced by Ann’s positive declaration of their new male and female mission colleagues being of ‘the right stamp.’

The third section of this chapter investigated the arrangement Adoniram and Ann made in their marriage of mission partnership. In his proposal, Adoniram offered Ann a
lifetime of usefulness in foreign mission, and considered her his equal partner in mission. Since the gendered construction of the Judsons’ correspondence sometimes created the perception of exaggerated gendered divisions of labor between the pair, recognition of the Judsons’ close partnership as one of mutuality and cooperation offers a key corrective for the investigation of Ann’s mission practices in future chapters.

By focusing upon Ann’s attitude toward her changing contexts and her negotiations of Western relations, respectively, the first two chapters sought to depict Ann as a well-rounded person in mission. She connected to and was affected by her contexts and relations, but she also acted as an agent by navigating, influencing, and contributing to her context and relations in turn. The following chapters pay close attention to the manner in which Ann directed her agency within in her new Rangoon context toward her pursuit of two goals – to make a stable life in Rangoon, and to participate in God’s creation of an indigenous Burmese church. To follow Ann Judson’s dual foci, this project next turns to practice theory, in order to outline a way to attend to Ann’s contexts, relations, and goals throughout her years in mission. By detailing Ann Judson’s activity as practices, sustained attention is given to the formative knowledge provided by Ann Judson’s Western context and relations, which she extended into mission practices of household economy and diplomacy, or “home-making” practices, and “church-making” practices of catechism and community cultivation.

While her Western relations provided formative knowledge for these practices, Ann’s openness to identify with Burma sought new relationships in Rangoon carried equal, and at times more, weight in Ann’s developing practice of mission.
CHAPTER FOUR

HOME-MAKING:
PRACTICES OF HOUSEHOLD ECONOMY AND
POLITICAL DIPLOMACY

I have been accustomed to view this field of labor with dread and terror; but I now feel perfectly willing to make it my home the rest of my life.

— Ann Judson, 1813

Looking ahead to end of the Judsons’ wanderings in 1813, Ann Judson anticipated her new missionary field. In her journal, Ann imagined Burma as a “rough, uncultivated,” spiritual and literal wilderness. All the same, she longed “to make it my home for the rest of my life,” and proposed a useful missionary practice of “removing some of the rubbish, and preparing the way for others.” Two years later, Ann maintained her commitment to making a home in Burma, though other missionaries and Christian friends begged the Judsons to leave for more promising terrain. In her journal, Ann Judson refused these entreaties. “God grant that we may live and die among the Burmans,” she wrote, “though we should never do anything more than smooth the way for others.” To Ann Judson, making a home in Burma and establishing the Baptist mission were one and the same.

Ann paired her moderate expectations for her life of service as a missionary with an almost unbounded willingness to do anything for the sake of the mission. During her twelve years as a missionary, Ann engaged in language translation work, evangelistic visitation, teaching, catechesis, prayer groups, diplomacy, and raising mission support through

1. Ann Judson’s journal, Madras, June 20, 1813, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 103.
2. Ann Judson’s journal, Madras, June 20, 1813, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 103; Ann Judson’s journal, Rangoon, August 20, 1815, in Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 36.
correspondence and publication. Many of her activities were short-lived or interrupted by periods of illness, political unrest, and religious intolerance. Ann Judson’s various mission activities during her twelve years as missionary are best understood, therefore, by focusing on Ann’s goals as a missionary and then tracing the development of organized practices.

As shown in chapter two, Ann learned early on that her and Adoniram’s ability to practice openly and freely as missionaries depended upon their success in building a sustainable life in Burma. Ann’s first goal, to secure stable residency for the Baptist mission, resulted in the organization of two home-making practices toward that end. Drawing from Bradford household domesticity and the Serampore Baptists’ plans for communal living, Ann extended these formative knowledges into a practice of household economy that would draw the Judsons into relational connections in Burma. Unlike the practice of household economy, Ann developed her second home-making practice of missionary diplomacy from her context of Burma alone. These practices were not separate from the Judsons’ aim for conversion of Burma; each section will also demonstrate how Ann shaped her home-making practices to enable her second goal of sharing the gospel openly and cultivating a Burmese church. In times of great crisis, especially the Anglo-Burmese war, Ann’s home-making practices were of utmost importance for the survival of the Judsons and the mission.

Investigation of Ann’s practices would be incomplete, therefore, without attention to context and interpersonal relations. Ann Judson herself showed consistent concern over her relationships and networks, and spent a lot of energy to integrate her home-making practices within the new context of Rangoon. In order to connect Ann Judson’s various activities into structured, yet flexible, practices of mission, this chapter follows Alasdair MacIntyre’s definition of practice as the framework for identifying parameters and components of

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3. Compared with other missionary women of the early nineteenth century, Dana Robert described Ann Judson’s range and abilities as “phenomenal” (American Women in Mission, 45).
practice. Ann’s extension of formative knowledges into new contexts, for example, demonstrates one of MacIntyre’s central claims about the habitual, historical character of practice. This chapter augments MacIntyre’s theory of practice by focusing on context, interpersonal relations, and gendered power dynamics within Ann Judson’s practices. The first section will draw from different practice theories and gender history, and later sections detail Ann’s formative knowledges and home-making practices of household economy and missionary diplomacy. Ann Judson’s prowess at home-making, along with her quick wits, gave her the leverage to save Adoniram from execution during the Anglo-Burmese war and made her into the missionary hero.

4.1 Contextual And Relational Practice

Since its inception, the modern missionary movement has been entrenched in various forms of gendered discussion over the propriety and scope of missionary activity. In his famous 1792 *Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians*, William Carey, for example, promoted the idea of sending married missionaries out with other families “wholly employed” to farm and procure the “necessities” of life, while male missionaries focused on language and friendships with their indigenous neighbors. After his arrival in India, Carey quickly retracted his early assumption that “women, and even the children, would be necessary for domestic purposes” alone. By 1796, Carey promoted the “almost necessity of Females well qualified to communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ … and the advantage which would arise from considerable numbers embarked on such a cause.” In this letter

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5. William Carey to the British Baptists, quoted in Pruitt, *A Looking Glass for Ladies*, 46. William Carey learned firsthand the difference in marital harmony and mission productivity between his very ill and severely depressed first wife, Dorothy, and the wise, capable, and industrious Hannah Marshman, the wife of his colleague John.
Carey attributed the necessity of female mission colleagues to the “seclusion of women” in *zenanas*, which prevented them from hearing male preaching. Women could not hear the gospel, argued Carey, unless missionary women left their own domestic employ to enter the Indian domestic space of the *zenana*. Though not always as pragmatically intertwined as they were in William Carey’s early pleas for mission support, matters of domestic necessity, ‘proper’ missionary activity, gender relations, and location of labor have been argued and negotiated in various ways by Western audiences and missionaries ever since.

Ann Judson knew of Western prescriptions of missionary activity, but she went far beyond Carey’s vision of a ‘woman’s role’ in mission because she was driven by her own formation, ideas, and visions while stretching to identify with her new context. As seen in prior chapters, Ann began her missionary endeavors in the formative community of Bradford, maintained a reflexive attitude of distancing and openness to identification among the Burmese, and sought to build Western mission support relations through correspondence. In her writings, Ann continually refers to two different goals to guide her decision-making and activities: to secure a stable life in Rangoon, and to participate in the cultivation of a Burmese church. Following Ann’s goals, relations, and behavior, this chapter is the first of three that draws upon different methods of practice and social history to organize her various activities in a way that allows for balanced investigation of Ann’s attention to pragmatic necessities, the gendered ideals of missionary behavior, her encounters abroad, and her negotiation of “different allegiances” to Rangoon, Western mission support, Bradford, and God.

Ann did not methodically label and categorize her work into overarching practices, but her attention to her abilities, relationships, and daily activities closely corresponds with Alasdair MacIntyre’s theory of practice. According to MacIntyre, the first mark of a practice is its socially established, complex, coherent, cooperative nature. In his description of practices, MacIntyre includes the “making and sustaining of family life,” or household economy, as a practice similar to farming and architecture. As a “socially established cooperative human activity,” Ann’s practice of household economy subsumed and organized many activities such as cooking, cleaning, procuring food and clothing, and maintenance. Ann knew how to do and who would do each individual activity, and also organized the activities into the right pattern and toward social goals, for example, of sustenance, comfort, and connection to one another as well as the larger society. Ann Judson, in particular, organized the practice of household economy toward her goal of securing stable residency for the Baptist mission.

Ann’s practice of household economy, as demonstrated below, is an extension of formative knowledge she learned through American tradition. As socially cooperative, coherent, and complex, MacIntyre emphasizes the historical tradition of practices as extensive relationships with current practitioners as well as those “who have preceded us in the practice,” particularly the geniuses and reformers who “extended the reach of the practice to its present point.” Forms of education and training like trade and art apprenticeships are an easy example of the traditioned manner of practices, as MacIntyre understands them, but apprentices do not simply imitate or copy their teachers. As

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10. MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 194. MacIntyre emphasizes the importance of traditioning, as new practitioners achieve its goods only as they learn “to recognize what is due to whom...[and] listen carefully to what we are told about our own inadequacies and to reply with the same carefulness for the facts” (191).
practitioners draw upon formative knowledges, they systematically extend the practice as they take responsibility of the practice, encounter new contexts, try new things, and engage in the oft-contested nature of tradition.

When Ann practiced household economy, however, she could not point to a direct stream of master-practitioners. MacIntyre’s description of passing on tradition through apprenticeship, therefore, provides an insufficient point of comparison for many of Ann Judson’s practices, including household economy. According to Paul Connerton, the transmission of many practices function outside of the classical training, or the straight line of master-student traditioning in MacIntyre’s formation. Much of household economy wisdom and practice lies within what Connerton describes as “communal memory,” which is “more procedurally informal and more culturally diffused.”11 To discern the communal memory of Ann Judson’s household economy, one must turn to the realm of women’s social history, which “connect[s] everyday experience to the larger structures of historical analyses and major changes of the past.”12 According to Catherine Kelly, Ann Judson lived during a dramatic shift in American tradition and practice of household economy.13 As seen in the section below, Ann Judson carried the older provincial traditions as well as the rural reframing of the newer, urban middle class traditions on household economy.

13. Catherine E. Kelly, In the New England Fashion: Reshaping Women’s Lives in the Nineteenth Century (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999), 9-10. MacIntyre indirectly addresses gender and context in his description of practice. Though he does not acknowledge it, MacIntyre’s explanation of societal standards of virtues requires a third level of relations, the interpersonal, between the individual and the societal. In his examples of communally constructed virtue, for example, MacIntyre proposes that both the African Bantu and white Westerners both have societal codes treasuring the virtue of honesty, even though the Bantu lie to strangers for protection from witchcraft and Westerners tell “little white lies” to their elderly aunts out of deference to status and to avoid relational strife (192-193). In both of his examples, the level of familiarity with another person is the distinctive sign for whether or not a falsehood is appropriate. Gender negotiations also appear briefly in MacIntyre’s depiction of the Bantu and Western social codes, as these societal codes recognize different levels of relational connection and gendered performance.
Already recognized above in early Western prescriptions of missionary activity, matters of agency and communal patterns of tradition in Ann Judson’s practices also require more attention to gendered ideology, boundaries, traditioning, extension, and rhetoric. MacIntyre’s attention to both predecessors in practice and the extension into new areas and contexts provides the structure for the complex interplay of social collectivity and personal agency in a traditioned practice. Transmission and extension of household economy by way of communal memory, therefore, also proceeded with negotiation between submission to the wider culture and an individual or family’s “agency” in extending the practice or retrieving older forms of traditioned practice. Agency, understood as “self-conscious choice” must be weighted alongside agency understood as “the collective power of groups” and as “webs of significance,” meaning, and formation through mechanisms of power. As shown in the prior chapter, Ann was a pioneer within a historical shift, as evangelical fervor from the Great Awakening spilled over into a new era of overseas missions and benevolence works at home. Extraordinary women like Ann Judson offer an opportunity to see these types of agency at work in one life.

Ann Judson’s second home-making practice of missionary diplomacy also requires a significant level of attention to gendered patterns of politics as expressions of power and agency. Miguel de Certeau offers a framework for interrogating Ann’s diplomacy during the fluctuating stability of the mission house. In times of peaceful relations with the viceroy and vicereine, Ann Judson’s household organization and her diplomatic activities with the Rangoon government, are in Michel de Certeau’s terms, strategic activities. Ann Judson’s novelty and influence as a white Westerner allowed her to “capitalize acquired advantages…and thus to give oneself a certain independence with respect to the variability

of circumstances.” Ann Judson’s diplomatic activities during moments of crisis, in when she often broke many boundaries of Burmese custom, however, should be understood as tactics of powerlessness. In these times of crisis, Ann Judson “seize[d] on the wing the possibilities that offer themselves.” Her success with these tactics restored her position of protection under the government and future opportunities for strategic practice. Indeed, Judson’s excellence in diplomacy can be assessed by her ability to use tactics of the weak in order to obtain more sustainable, strategic relations with the governmental powers in Burma. As a Western foreigner seeking established residence the Burmese empire, Ann Judson’s practice of diplomacy negotiated the fine line between strategy and tactic.

As a whole, the use of practice theories, including others to be discussed in the following chapters, allows a short reprieve from two hundred years of prescriptive arguments over ‘what a woman could and should do’ in mission, especially within the domestic realm. They also allow for continued investigation of Ann Judson’s identification with her context, her relationships with indigenous Burmese, and negotiation of gender. The following sections of this chapter and the chapters that follow center, instead, on what Ann Judson’s goals for her life of mission were, and how she organized her life into practices toward these ends. As a New England woman, Ann Judson extended her formative knowledge from Bradford into the new context of Rangoon and her new life in mission.

16. de Certeau, Practice of Everyday Life, 37.
17. Whereas MacIntyre’s examples of tradition extension imply a gradual shift and development of tradition, Judson’s diplomatic activities also displayed moments of ‘exception’ to her usual female political channels rather than a developed innovation. When practicing missionary diplomacy, as seen below, Ann attempted to be both a powerful insider and a powerless outsider, and makes use of both strategy and tactic in her aims to craft a new place for a foreign teacher of religion in Burman everyday life. Reading Ann Judson’s diplomatic in this manner challenges de Certeau’s separation of strategy and tactics, though de Certeau himself acknowledges that “even if the methods practiced by the everyday art of war never present themselves in such a clear form, it nevertheless remains the case that the two ways of acting can be distinguished according to whether they bet on place or time” (Practice of Everyday Life, 38). If there is more connection or continuum between strategies and tactics than a strict separation between the two, however, it is perhaps possible that tactics done with a “clever utilization of time” can later become established practices that can then be extended into a tradition (Practice of Everyday Life, 39).
4.2 Formative Knowledge I: New England Households and the Serampore Baptist Mission

In the early nineteenth century, household economy was women’s work, though not an exclusively female domain. Unfortunately, Ann Judson did not leave thorough record of daily household chores and responsibilities. Instead, her practice of household economy peeks in around the edges of history, in bits and pieces, particularly concerning inferences many nineteenth century women easily understood. Ann provided special explanation to the Baptist Board and her supporters only when aspects of missionary household economy were drastically different, particularly the practice of living in common. Social histories on New England women, therefore, provide the ‘communal memory’ of domestic practice that was present in Bradford, Massachusetts at the turn of the nineteenth century. According to Catherine E. Kelly, Ann Judson lived during a time of domestic change, where newer urban, genteel, consumption oriented domestic practices challenged older rural memory of relational exchange, role fluidity, and production oriented domestic practice. In a provincial town like Bradford, the new did not entirely replace the old, and therefore Ann Judson carried aspects of both domestic ideals with her to Rangoon. Ann’s scope of household domesticity widened dramatically upon her visit to Serampore, where she observed Hannah Marshman’s large-scale household economy practice of common living, which sustained the British Baptist’s common living policy and their many schools.

At the turn of the nineteenth century, the ‘home’ had not yet lost its complexity as a household economy, nor had it quite become an isolated, ‘female domestic sphere’ as it would in later decades of the nineteenth century. In early New England, women’s work carried both economic and relational value and significance. Tied to agrarian daily life patterns, Laurel Thatcher Ulrich argues that married women during the seventeenth century
of Puritan New England assumed a variety of roles, including the private role of housewife, the public role of deputy husband, and the more social roles of neighbor, mother, and Christian. From the home, early New England women engaged in “feminine tasks” like weaving and cooking to sustain the entire household. As needed, especially at harvest time or if her husband were away, women engaged in more “masculine duties” like planting and selling. Taking interest in their neighbors and social connections, women shared their homes as they raised children, gossiped, and watched over one another. New England women found worth in church membership, often supplied “the energy which established new congregations,” and instructed one another in women’s gatherings. The realm of social connections was especially important for early New England Christian women, as they lived out a somewhat “contradictory religious identity” of being recognized as spiritually equal but expected to remain silent in mixed assemblies.¹⁸

These long-standing patterns of household life in New England, however, were not immune to the dramatic changes to New England following the American Revolution. According to Kelly, “the middle-class household was transformed from a center of production” during the early decades of the nineteenth century, into “a center of consumption.” Over the first decades of the nineteenth century, there was “a growing distinction between paid and unpaid work, which was itself increasingly conflated with the sexual division of labor.”¹⁹ However, provincial New England families living in a town like Bradford, Massachusetts, also tended to maintain a household economy where everyone worked hard. Furthermore, provincial New Englanders continued to appreciate older household economy virtues of utility and industriousness, rather than the newer genteel

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valuation of women’s work as femininity. The changing gendered associations of work alongside women’s continued emphasis on the utility of their labor resulted in “two potentially contradictory languages” for making meaning of women’s work and importance in family and societal structures. While these shifting languages caused a great deal of tension between the growing “domestic ideal” and the values of household economy, it also provided potential for more experimentation about the range of women’s work and the relationships women cultivated.

Ann Judson’s reception of an embroidered sewing bag is an ideal example of the provincial valuation of women’s work amidst growing industry and gentility. As ‘traditional’ tasks of cloth-making and weaving moved into factories, provincial women replaced these tasks with other forms of sewing such as knitting, sewing, and mending. According to Kelly, such domestic tasks continued to shape “provincial women’s sense of themselves…as the wives, mothers, and sisters of provincial men” and “imbued the work with…power to evoke women’s love for their kin, male and female” on the same level as nursing or childcare. Furthermore, sewing offered a means of local exchange and mutuality, as women sewed together as “fellow laborers,” exchanging patterns and assisting one another. Only later in the nineteenth century, would the relational significance of women’s work mark it as domestic and feminine, and therefore outside the realm of economic value. The Hasseltine sisters’ gift of a sewing bag was an expression of mutual labor, therefore, as well as the token of continued support and care directly expressed by the embroidered prayer.

Ann’s path of education is another marker of the shifting perception of women’s opportunities and gender relations experienced by the members of the Hasseltine household. Though her father’s profession is unknown, he was wealthy enough to invest in the “female

academy movement” that was sweeping New England. The Hasseltines enrolled Ann, their second daughter, at the age of 13 in the first class of Bradford Academy in 1802, and Ann’s younger siblings followed after. Through Bradford Academy, Ann Judson received a “high degree of education relative to other women of the time.”

As a student during the Academy’s early years, Ann Hasseltine also studied in a mixed environment. Boys and girls were educated on the same campus, with female preceptresses overseeing female education and male preceptors overseeing the boys. Though New England had always allowed for mixed gender company, the rise of female education occurred alongside pressures to realign when and where men and women mixed. There was a growing emphasis on mixed socializing and a gradual shift away from mixed economic exchange. As a result, provincial women continued to be visible participants in literary societies, dances, schools, and local fairs, but their contributions were given diminished economic weight. Women were encouraged to volunteer their labors, or their labors were literally prized less than men, as in the case of the eight-dollar prize bull versus the three-dollar prize quilt at the county fair.

Raised in the midst of such shifts in provincial household economy and social ties, Ann Hasseltine Judson drew from these varied concepts of provincial domesticity to shape household economy in Burma.

While New England gave her the building blocks, it was Hannah Marshman of the Serampore Baptist Mission who provided the model of missionary household economy.

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22. Robert, American Missionary Women, 15. It is possible that John Hasseltine, Ann’s father, was a tradesman. Bradford was a port town, trading among other Massachusetts towns, London, and the West Indies (Robert 15). Ann Judson remembers entering Bradford at “the age of twelve or thirteen,” which coincides with the year Bradford Academy was founded in 1803 (Ann Judson’s conversion account, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 14).

23. J. D. Kingsbury, Memorial History of Bradford, Massachusetts: from the Earliest Period to the Close of 1882 (Haverhill, MA: C. C. Morse & Sons, 1883), 119-120. According to Kingsbury, Bradford Academy did not become a women’s only school until 1836, the year in which Ann Hasseltine’s sister, Abigail Hasseltine, became principal.

Though the Judsons’ decided to become Baptists without the influence of William Carey, they borrowed heavily from the Serampore Baptist Mission’s financial cooperative in order to organize their own mission. The British Baptists in India lived together and pooled their resources. They placed “all monies received” from the British Board and their own labor in a common treasury, and agreed upon set allowances for each family. Household expenses and mission expenses were drawn from the common treasury. The families and school boarders all ate together at the common table. In the same letter proposing the establishment of an American Baptist mission society patterned after the British Baptist Mission society, Adoniram Judson and Luther Rice described their plans to organize the mission after the Serampore Baptist Mission plan for all missionaries to live in common with one another. While Adoniram Judson and Luther Rice focused on the financial aspects of the Serampore Baptist mission, Ann Judson learned the household organization required to sustain its common life from Hannah Marshman.

During Ann’s short visit in June of 1812, she closely observed and reported all of Hannah’s endeavors. Remembered as the “mother of the Serampore missions,” the extent of Hannah Marshman’s activity is unknown because the Baptist Missionary Society never formally recognized her as a missionary. As the senior woman of the British Baptist mission of Serampore, Hannah supervised a bustling missionary community. At the time, Hannah was principally in charge of the British Baptists’ domestic affairs, and assisted by the

25. Adoniram Judson’s close association with the Serampore mission in terms of structure and organization may have fed pernicious rumors that his conversion betrayed an opportunistic character (see Francis Wayland, Memoir of Adoniram Judson, vol. 1, 81-90). According to Brian Stanley, William Carey was greatly influenced by earlier Moravian missionaries in the development of common living ideals (The History of the Baptist Missionary Society [Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1992], 39-42).
26. Adoniram Judson to Dr. Baldwin, Calcutta, October 22, 1812, May 1813, MBMM, 291-293.
27. During her forty years of missionary work, Hannah Marshman was credited with raising William Carey’s unruly boys along with her own family of six, acting as a “pillar of support” for missionary widows and orphans, managing “scores of domestic servants of all castes,” and overseeing boarding and neighborhood schools; in A. Christopher Smith, “The Legacy of William Ward and Joshua and Hannah Marshman,” International Bulletin of Missionary Research 23 no. 3 (1999): 122-123.
second Mrs. William Carey and Mrs. Ward. Hannah also raised funds for the mission by running an Anglo-Indian boarding school for girls alongside John Marshman’s boarding school for boys. \(^{28}\)

In her assessment of Hannah Marshman’s activities, Ann Judson noted the organized daily life pattern of the mission around eating, study, and worship. According to Ann, the three families and the students lived in separate houses, but “all ate together, in a large hall, in the mission house.” Bells rang to wake the household and announce meals. Every day, students assembled in the chapel for prayer and Bible reading before school. The missionaries held three worship services (two in English, one in Bengali) every Sabbath, and spent four evenings a week in religious instruction or prayer conferences. \(^{29}\) By organizing the household and daily pattern in this way, Hannah attended to the spiritual and material needs of the families and the students. She also worked in concert with other male and female missionaries as she did so, as they shared most of their common lives together.

After her visit with Hannah Marshman and the Serampore missionaries, Ann came away with high expectations for an active missionary residence. In an unpublished letter to her sisters, Ann boasted:

> Good female schools are extremely needed in this country. I hope no Missionary will ever come out here, without a wife, as she, in her sphere, can be equally useful with her husband. I presume Mrs. Marshman does more good in her school than half the ministers in America. \(^{30}\)

Looking ahead to Ann Judson’s published appeal for female education in Burma during her medical furlough in 1822, many interpret Ann’s approbation of Hannah Marshman in 1812

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28. The Careys, Wards, and Marshmans lived as a “joint family.” The families lived in different houses, but shared all income, food, and domestic expenditures. The missionary wives were tasked with oversight of the household accounts, while the male missionaries engaged in commercial work to supplement “the slender support from England;” Sunil Kumar Chatterjee, Hannah Marshman: The First Woman Missionary in India (Sheoraphuli, Hoogly, India: self-published, 1987), 36-38.


30. Ann Judson to her sisters, Calcutta, August 23, 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 72. This letter was not previously published in Baptist or other regional New England periodicals.
as an early confirmation “that teaching would be an appropriate forum for women’s missionary work.” 31 In light of the Bradford communal knowledge of household economy and Ann’s detailed description of the Serampore household, however, the emphasis should be equally placed on Ann’s view of Hannah Marshman’s ‘sphere’ of labor, which was distinct but not separate from the three senior male missionaries. The joint missionary household economy, two flourishing boarding schools, and daily worship opportunities in the Serampore Baptist mission all fell within Hannah’s sphere of missionary labor, as did the care of all missionaries, school children, and Bengali native Christians. Though the Judsons did not work to supplement their mission support as the Serampore Baptists did, Ann Judson followed many of Hannah Marshman’s methods for daily routine and organization within the missionary household. She extended both her Bradford and Serampore formative knowledge into an organized daily life in Rangoon in order to make home, incorporating evangelistic practices as she did so.

4.3 The Practice of Missionary Household Economy: Domestic Arrangements and Relations

Ann Judson organized the missionary domestic household as a place of sustainable production, where both male and female household members could engage in other mission practices. Though educated and socialized in the rising middle class of Bradford Academy and First Congregational Church, Ann extended the older, provincial traditions of household

31. Robert, American Women in Mission, 44. There is no record of an earlier “hunch” in Ann Judson’s published correspondence. It is possible that Ann planned to teach children, since her first composition in Burmese was a children’s catechism; discussion of Ann’s composition and translation work occurs in chapter five, “Church-Making I.” According to Adoniram Judson, the first female Burman convert, Mah Men-Lay, proposed the first organized plan for a school for children: “This afternoon, Mrs. J. went to their village [Nandau-gong], to fix on a spot for the erection of a small school house. Mah Men-lay has, of her own accord, proposed to open a school in the precincts of her house, to teach the girls and boys of the village to read; in consequence of which, the latter will not be under the necessity of going to the Burman priests for education, as usual. When we found that she had really made a beginning, we told her that some of the Christian females in America would, doubtless, defray the expenses of the undertaking, and make some compensation to the instructress” (Adoniram Judson’s journal, January 20, 1821, in Ann Judson, Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 292-293).
economy in Rangoon. Under Ann’s supervision, the American Baptist mission house supported role fluidity, production oriented tasks, and shared possessions, which reinforced the Baptist mission’s valuation of both male and female labor. In addition, Ann extended New England provincial memory concerning sociability and relations within household economy toward her goal to secure stable residency for the Baptist mission. Ann’s practice of household economy, therefore, connected members of the household together and tied the mission household to the larger Rangoon community by means of hospitality and shared commerce.

In many regards, the prior work of the English Baptists in Rangoon helped Ann Judson construct a household economy of common living. When Ann and Adoniram Judson arrived in Burma, Mrs. Felix Carey welcomed them into a large house that was constructed to hold two families. The house had six rooms connected to a large central hall, and the grounds consisted of two acres of gardens with fruit trees. Mrs. Carey employed servants who also lived “in the yard” of the mission house. Mrs. Carey and the servants hospitably fed and housed the two newcomers, which allowed Ann Judson to devote her time to the language. She also introduced the Judsons to the various comforts and foods they could expect in Rangoon. Instead of “bread, butter, cheese, potatoes, or scarcely any thing to which we have been accustomed,” the Judsons were served “rice and curried fowl” with local fruits and vegetables.

When Ann Judson took sole charge of household duties in 1815, she described herself as “busily employed” as Mr. Judson. The making and running of a missionary household in Burma was difficult work, and required many people. There were gardens to

32. Mrs. Wheelock to Mrs. Baldwin, Rangoon, November 16, 1818, ABMMI, November 1819, 217.
till, food and materials to procure, things to mend, and persons to tend. Many other aspects of the household provided enjoyable company, for there were meals and daily worship to be shared. Though much interrupted by “the entire management of the family,” Ann Judson remarked that she found pleasure in her employment. Her mornings were spent “giving directions to the servants, providing food for the family, &c.,” and in the evenings the Judsons gathered to read and discuss Scripture in evening worship.  

Through her household economic practice, Ann enlarged her circle of neighbors to include several Burmese friends who would “spend whole evenings pleasantly conversing in Burmese” with her.

As she had been taught to do in Bradford, Ann Judson aimed to gain the respect and confidence of her Rangoon neighbors in the performance of her daily tasks. Ann did not seek full identification with Rangoon Burmese in her visits to market, such as by adopting Burmese dress, or foods, but she did try to exhibit herself as an industrious, virtuous neighbor who paid on time for purchases, spoke truthfully, and worked diligently. Similar to her early depictions of Burmese religious culture, Ann’s early descriptions of her behavior had a Burmese foil. Her virtue of truth telling was directly linked to her observations that Burmans told lies, for example. Ann’s early negative depictions also encompassed tensions between Burmese status relations, as the Rangoon Burmese, in turn, seemed to find Ann’s industrious behavior uncharacteristic of a comparatively well-off female of Western connections. In the midst of describing her own virtues, Ann remarked, “The Burmans are surprised to see us always employed, particularly me, as the Burman women never think of doing any work if they can get their rice without.”

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comment reflected the status of Burmese female nobility, who employed numerous attendants and servants. Rather than full adoption of Burmese customs, Ann chose a path of negotiating between her desires for identification with Rangoon, and to show them, “by our conduct, that our religion is different from theirs.”37 As Ann forged her own sense of household economy virtues, she considered both what would enable the desired activities of the missionary household and what would connect the household to her Rangoon community.

Ann’s attention to relationships continued within the household toward Adoniram and the Burmese servants. Inside the household, Ann’s economy looked more similar to Hannah Marshman than to Bradford. Ann’s letters to her mission supporters described a daily life pattern of mutuality and joint activity between the Judsons. Though Ann had given up joint language study with Adoniram to practice household economy, the pair continued to work side by side. Engaged in study of Pali and Burmese religious terms, Adoniram wrote, “I found it absolutely necessary to keep at home, and confine myself to close study for three or four years.”38 Many of Ann’s early evangelistic activities also arose out of her relationships with her teacher and Burmese servants. In her religious conversations with her teachers and servants, Ann discovered the Burmese pride in “their own wisdom and knowledge, and the superior excellence of their own religious system.”39 The servants also generally accepted the Burmese government’s system of religious pluralism for foreigners only, telling Ann, “Our religion is good for us, yours for you.”40 Undaunted, Ann continued her conversations, and experimented with other means for sharing the faith among the people in her household. In 1816, Ann composed a Catechism as a means of teaching the “a few children under my care,

37. Ann Judson to her parents, Rangoon, September 26, 1815, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 144.
38. Adoniram Judson to Dr. Staughton, Rangoon, March 7, 1817, in ABMMI, May 1, 1818, 330.
39. Ann Judson to her family, September 28, 1815, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 144.
who are learning to read.” She also organized a female prayer meeting with the women living within the missionary grounds. By 1818, twenty to thirty women gathered weekly to hear Ann read Scripture and give religious instruction. In regards to her Burmese neighbors and servants, Ann Judson may have exceeded Hannah Marshman in her ability to identify with and build relations with non-Western, indigenous neighbors through the practice of household economy.

The addition of American missionary couples however, shifted the makeup and needs of the mission household. As a result, Ann Judson’s practice of economy more closely resembled Hannah Marshman’s example. When the George and Mrs. Hough arrived in 1816, the American Baptist missionaries agreed to common living arrangements set out by the Serampore Baptist mission and adopted early on by the Judsons and Luther Rice. Adoniram Judson and George Hough sent the American Baptist Board for Foreign Mission a copy of their “Articles of Agreement,” in which they agreed to refrain from business for individual gain, to place their individual wealth from America into the mission fund, and to divide the mission fund equally among all members. Ann Judson’s responsibilities over procuring food and household goods increased so that the newly arrived men and women could have time to study the language. Later, Ann Judson, Elizabeth Colman, and Eliza Wheelock readily exchanged and adopted household economy tasks as necessary for the one another to engage in other, non-household economy practices. Arrival of more female hands to oversee household economy, as a result, eventually allowed Ann the freedom to be more involved in religious instruction and prayer meetings.

Through her practice of household economy, Ann Judson secured a stable
environment of relational networks and necessities for the Baptist mission household.
Drawing from her knowledge of household economy and the example of Hannah
Marshman and the Serampore Baptist Mission, Ann laid down roots in the foreign soil of
Rangoon. Though she did not stray from traditional New England patterns of female
oversight over household economics, Ann remade these patterns to fit both the new
relational context of Burma as well as her aims to engage in the church making practices
described in the following chapters. Ann Judson’s adeptness at relational connection was not
limited to the immediate needs of the missionary domestic household economy, however.
As the missionaries needed the approval of the Burman government to openly preach the
Christian faith, Ann Judson became a key practitioner of missionary diplomacy for the
American Baptist Mission.

4.4 Formative Knowledge II: Learning Diplomacy in Burma

Ann’s talent for good relations propelled her into the homes of local officers and
members of the royal family, which were reserved for women’s relationships and political
negotiation. While Ann’s home-making practice of household economy peeked around the
edges of her letters home, Ann offered detailed accounts of her relationship to one highly
ranked woman, the wife of the viceroy of Rangoon. Ann Judson described her visits to the
vicereine with domestic language such as ‘visiting,’ ‘having tea,’ ‘waiting upon,’ ‘offering a
gift,’ and ‘chatting,’ while also explaining the political reasons for her visits, those of
‘presenting a petition,’ ‘stating the case of the missionaries,’ and ‘urging action’ for
government protection and tolerance of the American Baptist Mission. Regular social visits
in the living room and quarters of the vicereine, therefore, were part of Ann’s practice of
missionary diplomacy, where she represented the Baptist mission to the Rangoon
government through the Burmese structure of female political channels. Ann depended upon the Rangoon viceroy and his wife for all of her formative knowledge for missionary diplomacy, which resulted in a close friendship with the vicereine.

When the Judsons’ arrived in Burma in 1813, they imagined themselves working among the common Burmese people and giving little attention to politics.\(^43\) After their experience with the British Bengal government, however, they thought it prudent to become acquainted with the local Burmese government. When Adoniram Judson’s first visit to the regional viceroy was unsuccessful, the Judsons decided on a different tactic for government relations through female channels. In December of 1814, Ann Judson made her first visit to the private quarters of the head wife of the regional viceroy in order to gain favor with governmental officials. Her visit was successful, as the vicereine received her with special attention, treated her with favor, and invited her to visit every day. At the time, Ann felt uncomfortable with such immediate acquaintance with Burman royalty, but understood the visit’s importance for access to the Rangoon government “when perhaps it would not be possible for Mr. Judson to have an audience with the viceroy.”\(^44\) The Judsons learned over time, however, that the safety of the mission house and cooperation with the people of Rangoon required Ann’s continued visits to the vicereine.

During Ann and Adoniram’s tenure in Rangoon, the Burmese government considered its kingdom threatened by the presence of British imperialism in India. Without government approval, Ann and Adoniram also encountered obstructions to any plans for building, public activity, or travel. Furthermore, all Burmese officials were highly suspicious of any Westerners, especially any who spoke English. If they maintained too much distance from the government, the Judsons feared they were easy targets for extortion, harassment,


and violence. According to Ann, Adoniram’s appearances at court did little to reduce Burmese suspicions of the Baptist mission, as Western men, “no uncommon sight in this country,” were distrusted. As a Western female, however, Ann was “quite a curiosity,” and not considered a threat to the Burmese government. Despite her earlier reticence, Ann Judson visited the vicereine more and more frequently, and became a prominent voice of the American Baptist mission to the Rangoon government.

Unlike the practice of domestic economy, Ann Judson had no prior training in politics. By necessity, she became a quick study of diplomacy and Burman governmental practices. The Burmese emperor, from his capitol seat in Ava, commissioned a viceroy to rule Rangoon. The Rangoon viceroy presided over a court and held power over numerous lower government officials. Political wrangling in the capitol often resulted in the recall and change of the Rangoon viceroy, as different officials fell in and out of favor. During the Judsons’ ten years in Rangoon, three different men held the position of viceroy. Mya-Day-men, the viceroy most liked by the Judsons and whose wife was Ann Judson’s particular friend, served two different terms as viceroy. Mya-Day-men’s head wife, the vicereine, also had her own political authority over lower court officials as well as the ear of the viceroy for larger matters. For Ann Judson to be on good terms with the vicereine was a guarantee of protection under the viceroy.

As the novelty of being a new acquaintance faded, Ann sought new ways to identify herself as an appealing political contact. Doing so could justify her continued appearance in the private quarters of the vicereine, and ensure the vicereine’s favor so that missionary petitions for safety and security would be passed on to the viceroy. For example, when attending a dinner at the viceroy’s house along with the other English and French residing in

Rangoon, Ann declined an invitation to dance, saying that “it was not proper for the wives of priests to dance.”  

This reply worked on two levels. First, it established the Judsons as part of a sacred order, and separate from other English and French traders. And second, it compared them to priests, who were a highly esteemed class of people in Burma. By associating her husband and herself in such a manner, Ann Judson quelled any suspicions of the Judsons serving a rival colonial government, and appealed to the vicereine’s desire to associate with persons of respectable status.

During this initial period of introduction, forming relations required a great deal of “wisdom and precaution…a little departure from prudence might at once destroy our mission.” One misstep might lead to the dismantling of relations between the women, and throw the very success of the American Baptist mission in Rangoon into a questionable state. Ann refrained from describing herself as a teacher, for example, or else the vicereine “would think me far beneath her notice, and perhaps forbid my approaching her again.”

Ann also learned to differentiate herself from other women. She found it important to show herself as of a higher class than the vicereine’s female attendants, and therefore during each visit Ann conducted herself in a “generally reserved and serious” manner, while also showing “a tender concern for [the vicereine’s] welfare.” Ann Judson wanted her visits to create later opportunities for more open conversation about Christianity and the American Baptists’ desires to spread religious teachings.

47. Ann Judson’s journal, Rangoon, September 3, 1815, in Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 39. Ann Judson knew well that British missionaries had attempted to establish a mission on more than one occasion in Burma, and each effort had ended with the abandonment of the mission. Failure was the norm, and no Western Protestant missionary had yet to preach publicly.
However, Ann was equally concerned that she not misrepresent herself or her husband. Already, Adoniram Judson was locally known as the “English teacher” because the earlier British Baptists had chosen not to reveal their missionary purposes. While trying to distinguish herself to the vicereine, Ann also tried to maintain her prior commitment to work among the common people within the vicereine’s household. In a potential breach of Burman conduct, Ann often conversed with the lower-status attending women while waiting for the appearance of the vicereine. There was less concern about status in her relations with these women. Ann found she had more openings to teach these women about the gospel, and that to her surprise these women of lesser status remembered her words. At one point, after the vicereine had inquired about Adoniram Judson, a woman in attendance replied that “Mr. Judson had come to tell the Burmans of the true God” for Ann, and recounted “all that I had ever said to her.”

Ann’s efforts to appeal to the vicereine as a companion resulted in a lasting friendship. In return for Ann’s many visits, the vicereine, accompanied by 200 attendants, visited the Judsons’ in their mission residence. Concerned for the Judsons’ health, the vicereine often invited Ann and Adoniram out for elephant rides around the jungle. She was especially attentive to Ann after the death of Roger Williams Judson, their eight-month-old firstborn son. Upon hearing of little Roger’s death, the vicereine and her retinue immediately visited Ann at her home to console her. The vicereine in particular wanted to know why she wasn’t invited to the funeral, and seemed to understand Ann’s feeble reply, “I

52. These visits by the vicereine also included her 200 attendants, for she always appeared publicly ‘in state;’ Ann Judson to Dr. Baldwin, Rangoon, January 18, 1818, in Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 106.
did not think of anything, my distress was so great.”

In an effort to console her friend, the vicereine invited the Judsons to accompany her on a relaxing elephant ride and picnic in the jungle, where she personally collected flowers and fruits for the Judsons to enjoy, and received their hospitable offer of food in return. Ann Judson referred to herself after this point as the vicereine’s “particular friend,” and continued to seek out ways to visit with this woman even after her loss of political influence due to the viceroy’s death. Diplomatic negotiation paired with sharing family ties, grief, and hospitality sealed the friendship between these two political women.

4.5 The Practice of Missionary Diplomacy: Securing Life in Rangoon

Though Ann Judson did not expect to practice missionary diplomacy when she began her practice of household economy, she proved to be a highly effective diplomatic figure for the Baptist Mission. Establishing herself within the vicereine’s court, Ann ably represented the goodwill of the mission toward Rangoon by means of the female channels of government. During a period of political tensions and heightened religious intolerance, however, Ann engaged in diplomatic tactics of weakness to traverse gendered political boundaries. Crossing into the male sphere of the viceroy’s court, she successfully petitioned for the sake of the Baptist mission, ironically resulting in a breach between Ann and Mr. Hough. As time went on, Ann Judson extended her diplomatic position in order to influence the Rangoon government’s tolerance for non-Buddhist religious teaching. Once her original goal to secure and sustain the mission’s presence in Rangoon was achieved, Ann took more risks on for the security of Burman Christian converts in their fledgling church.

Ann and Adoniram enjoyed the patronage of the viceroy and vicereine while Mya-Day-men and his wife ruled Rangoon, with Ann taking the lead in diplomatic negotiations. According to Ann, “Mr. Judson seldom goes to the government-house, as it is easier for me to have access to her ladyship, than for him to do business with the viceroy.”\(^\text{56}\) Whereas Ann could negotiate directly with the vicereine and distinguish the American Baptist mission from other Western interests, Adoniram had to navigate several levels of Rangoon government and the larger economic relations between the Burmese government and Western trade. If a particular need arose, the Judsons would confer together about the best course of action and draw up a petition. Ann would carry the petition to the vicereine along with a present, and then continued to wait with the vicereine until her petition was fulfilled.\(^\text{57}\)

By allowing Ann to remain in her presence, the vicereine shielded Ann from delays and bribery by under-officers. It also provided Ann with more time to sit and talk with the vicereine and other women in the court, with hope that conversation might turn toward religion. On one such occasion, discussion turned toward the difference between “the God I worshipped, and Gaudama,” before the women were interrupted by more government business. Submitting to the vicereine’s status, Ann had to wait until the subject was brought up again at a later time.\(^\text{58}\) Such conversations did not come often; Ann counted two or three such opportunities in as many years of friendship.\(^\text{59}\)

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56. Ann Judson to her parents, Rangoon, August 18, 1816, in Judson, _Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah_, 66.

57. Adoniram Judson also engaged in diplomatic negotiations for Baptist mission needs. To negotiate in the viceroy’s court, however, Adoniram Judson relied first upon other European officers and traders who had established relations with the Rangoon government. A direct appeal to the viceroy was a last resort. For example, in order to avoid a large import “tax” on a box of letters, Adoniram Judson went to a European officer, asking him to state “the impropriety of taxing ministers of religion” and press for an exemption to the tax (Adoniram Judson’s journal, Rangoon, May 28, 1819, in Ann Judson, _Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah_, 171).


Ann Judson’s success in diplomacy with Mya-Day-men’s wife contributed to a peaceful, stable environment for the American Baptist mission. With good relations between the mission and the government, Ann engaged in “strategic practices” which allowed her to “capitalize acquired advantages…and thus to give oneself a certain independence with respect to the variability of circumstances.” In 1818, Ann Judson reported to American Baptist Mission Secretary that the residents in the mission house “still live in a quite manner, unmolested by government, or robbers.” By this time, the Baptist mission had begun distributing printed religious materials, and Ann Judson’s female prayer meeting was averaging twenty to thirty women. With well-established relations, as the “viceroy’s family treat us with respect and affection,” Ann Judson had also presented the vicereine with the Baptist mission’s publications of Matthew, a tract, and a catechism. Her visits also provided an avenue for Adoniram Judson to connect directly with the viceroy and his family outside of the Rangoon court. Once Ann Judson was accepted in the vicereine’s home, Adoniram Judson could visit there with his wife.

All of Ann Judson’s diplomatic stability was lost, however, when the emperor recalled Mya-Day-men to Ava during a particularly tense period of political relations between the Burmese government and Western trade, and a particularly tenuous time for the Baptist mission. When Moung Shway-thah, a government official from Ava, became viceroy in December 1817, Adoniram Judson had recently sailed from Rangoon to restore his health and to search for an Arrakanese Christian assistant. As neither George Hough nor his wife

60. de Certeau, The Practice of Everyday Life, 36.
63. Arrakan (present day Bangladesh), bordered Burma and shared a similar language. English Baptists had recently established a mission there, with many Arrakanese converts (Ann Judson, Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 103)
could speak Burmese, Ann remained in Rangoon to oversee the mission in her husband’s absence. The mission expected Adoniram to return by March 1818, but then received word that his ship never reached Chittagong and was feared lost at sea. Rising governmental disputes between British Bengal and Burma, and the recent expulsion of Portuguese Catholic priests from the emperor’s court added to Ann’s concerns.64 Whereas the former vicereine could have provided protection and direct information about the state of Burmese politics, Moung Shway-thah had not brought his family from Rangoon. Unsure of Adoniram’s whereabouts and without any open female channels for diplomatic negotiations, Ann’s optimism over the mission’s success turned into anxious dread that the Baptist mission was doomed.

When Rangoon officials began harassing George Hough, Ann Judson extended her diplomatic expertise by daring to cross the gendered boundaries of the Burmese court for the security of the mission. In order to petition the viceroy, Ann engaged in “tactics of powerlessness,” conveying her entrance into the masculine court as an exception, done out of necessity rather than an aggressive breach of Burmese custom.65 Shortly after learning Adoniram might be lost at sea, an order “couch in the most menacing language” arrived, demanding George Hough’s appearance at the courthouse. According to Ann, the message itself “spread consternation and alarm among our teachers, domestics, and adherents.”66 Rangoon petty officers exacerbated these fears by spreading rumors that the Burmese emperor had ordered the expulsion of all foreign teachers, and directly threatening Mr. Hough with violence “if he did not tell all the truth relative to his situation in the country.”

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65. Ann Judson’s diplomatic activities during these moments of crisis, though breaking many bounds of Burmese custom, should be understood as tactics of powerlessness (de Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life*, 36-38).
Mr. Hough was not fluent enough in Burmese to appeal his treatment before Moung Shway-thah, and “as it is not customary for females to appear at his court, in absence of the vicereine,” Ann wrote, “we had nothing before us, but the gloomy prospect of being obliged to submit to all those evils, in the power of petty officers to inflict, upon those unprotected by higher authority.” Though George Hough was not imprisoned, he was threatened and subject to two days of harassment by court officials.⁶⁷

The missionaries attempted to endure the harassment patiently, but when the officials demanded Hough to appear a third time on a Sunday, Ann looked for a way to petition the viceroy on behalf of the mission. With the help of her Burmese teacher, she wrote a petition stating the grievance of ordering Mr. Hough to appear “in public, on our sacred day—and requesting that it might be the pleasure of his highness that those molestations should cease.” Accompanied by Mr. Hough to court, Ann “caught the eye of the viceroy, who sat surrounded by officers of his court.” Moung Shway-thah immediately recognized Ann, and called her to enter the court “in a very condescending manner.” Having successfully crossed into official political space, Ann then presented her petition to the secretary. The viceroy turned to investigate which of his own officers had overstepped a directive, and promised that Mr. Hough would not be questioned anymore. To her great relief, the harassing officers learned the missionaries were not among the unprotected, and therefore not easy prey for future extortion attempts.⁶⁸

Intervening for Mr. Hough, Ann nimbly negotiated between strategy and tactic as a foreigner seeking established residence in Rangoon among the indigenous population. The tenor of Ann’s story portrayed the extreme risk she had taken. In the courthouse, the harassing officers sat in the same court as the viceroy, whom Ann described as the “voice

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which issues life or death.”

Ann’s entrance into the male sphere of government “with some of the feelings and intrepidity of Esther,” exposed her vulnerability as a foreigner and as a woman, as well as the mission’s great need of protection by Burmese government officials. However, her private visits with the former vicereine, along with the advice of her trusted Burman teacher, had prepared her for proper diplomatic behavior in the public sphere of the court. Just as Ann had used Adoniram’s ‘priestly identity’ to appeal to the vicereine, she used George Hough’s ordained status to appeal for the Baptist mission’s protection from harassment. Ann also knew how to act respectfully and deferentially, and was rewarded with the Moung Shway-thah’s ‘condescension’ just as she had once won over the May-Day-men’s wife.

Ann’s successful petition did not convince the Houghs that the Baptist mission was now protected. Rumors circulated that “an attempt would soon be made by the English, to take the country,” and Ann feared that “should actual hostilities commence…the removal of the mission, at least for a time, would be the consequence.” With Adoniram Judson away, the Houghs convinced Ann to leave Rangoon and board a ship bound for Bengal. Due to gnawing anxiety over Adoniram and the security of the mission, Ann reversed her decision and decided to stay in Rangoon with the Burmese servants. In a fortunate turn of events, shortly after Ann returned to the mission house alone she received the first communication of Adoniram’s whereabouts in months. Assurance of Adoniram’s life and renewed hope in his return, however, was still not enough to convince the Houghs to stay. Shortly after

70. James Knowles, *Memoir of Mrs. Judson*, 172. Knowles tells of the persecution of Mr. Hough, and quotes Ann Judson’s *Account* for half of the story, perhaps to showcase the duress and pressure they were under. The dramatic scene within the courthouse is shortened to this reference to Esther. In comparison to Judson’s account, Knowles’ version edits out Ann Judson’s agency and diplomatic skill on the occasion.
Adoniram’s arrival in Rangoon, George Hough took his family and the Baptist press to Bengal to set up printing operations under a more hospitable government.  

A decrease in political tensions by 1819 led the American Baptist missionaries to believe the Burmese government now tolerated their presence in Rangoon, but they realized that the Burmese in Rangoon were too fearful of their own government to show public interest. A new Burmese emperor had ascended the throne with renewed ties between the Burmese state and Buddhist religious institution. To convert from Buddhism to any other religion – even a different Eastern religion – was considered treason and punishable by imprisonment or even death, and there was renewed pressure for all Burmese to attend the pagoda and join the festivals. In response, Adoniram and Ann Judson began taking more diplomatic liberty to influence local and national government policy toward greater religious tolerance for Burmans.

While Moung Shway-thah ruled Rangoon, Ann Judson’s diplomatic abilities were severely limited. Adoniram Judson tried repeatedly to introduce religious literature at court, but the viceroy only appeared interested in having “several Burman books” and Western “historical texts” printed. When Moung Shway-thah expressed displeasure at the sight of the Baptist mission’s zayat, the missionaries began to question “whether it is prudent to go on boldly, in proclaiming a new religion, at the hazard of incensing the government, and drawing down such persecution, as may deter all who know us from any inquiry.” Furthermore, after the conversion of three Burmese, Ann Judson expressed more concern “for our converts than we do for ourselves, as they would be the first to feel the effects of a

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74. Adoniram Judson’s journal, August 26-November 1, 1819, in Ann Judson, *Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah*, 190-201. Description of the zayat is found in chapters five and six, “Church-Making I” and “Church-Making II.”
tyrannical, despotic government.” The Judsons decided that a direct appeal to the newly crowned emperor in Ava was the best course of action. If the emperor frowned, “missionary attempt within his domain will be out of the question,” but with his favor, “none of our enemies…can touch a hair on our heads.”

Ann and Adoniram disagreed, however, over who should go to Ava. With her strong, ‘particular’ friendship with Mya-Day-men’s wife, Ann planned to visit her friend and see if the vicereine would grant Ann an audience with the queen. The former Rangoon viceroy was “next in rank to the king, and has all the management of all the affairs of the kingdom;” his wife was sure to give Ann Judson a “very favourable reception” and lead to good representation in the emperor’s court. Adoniram Judson, however, thought Ann’s plans to practice her diplomacy in Ava was “too hazardous, as no foreign female has ever yet appeared at the Burman court.” Choosing safety over close contacts, Adoniram Judson traveled to Ava with fellow missionary James Colman, whose medical training might appeal to the emperor.

Adoniram Judson and James Colman traveled to Ava, leaving the care of the Baptist Mission household and community in the hands of Ann Judson and Mrs. Colman. Though the missionaries successfully presented their petition to appear before the emperor, the interview was disastrous. The emperor rejected their gift, and promptly sent Adoniram Judson and James Colman away without responding to their request to “preach our religion in these dominions, and that those who are pleased with our preaching…whether foreigners or Burmans, may be exempt from government molestation.”

achieve their object of tolerance, the American missionaries visited the chief minister, who informed them that “it is quite out of the question, whether any of the subjects of the emperor, who embrace a religion different from his own, will be exempt from punishment,” and that by presenting such a petition they had performed “a most egregious blunder, [and] an unpardonable offence.” Furthermore, they learned that the Burman queen, well known for her influence over the emperor, was “particularly attached to the religion and the priests at Boodh” and promoted Buddhist adherence throughout her political channels as well. Alarmed, Adoniram asked Mr. G., a British acquaintance from Rangoon to appear before the emperor and improve his opinion of the Baptist missionaries, but it was too late. A Portuguese Catholic priest under the emperor’s employ as a medical doctor had informed the emperor that the Baptists were “a sect of Zandees (a race very obnoxious to the former emperors),” and would not hear any thing in the missionaries’ favor. Laughing at the presumption of the missionaries’ presumption to “convert us to their religion,” the emperor dismissed Adoniram Judson and James Colman back to Rangoon.  

As a result of the Americans’ diplomatic failure in Ava, James and Elizabeth Colman left for the British Bengalese controlled region of Arrakan. If not for the efforts of the early Burmese converts, discussed in chapter six, the Baptist mission in Rangoon would have folded completely. The Judsons “resolved that we would stay with these dear disciples, till we were absolutely compelled to leave them.” In order to stay, diplomatic relations with the local Rangoon government once again were of the utmost importance. Fortunately for the Baptist Mission, Moung Shway-thah left Rangoon shortly after the male missionaries’ return, and Mya-Day-men and his wife became viceroy and vicereine of Rangoon once more.

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With the return of her ‘particular friend,’ Ann Judson reprises her role as diplomatic negotiator for the Baptist mission and also the Burmese congregation. After Mya-Day men’s return, Ann Judson made several visits to gauge the government’s interest in prosecuting Burmese converts as well as the emperor’s attitude toward Western religious teachers. At first Ann Judson was encouraged by the vicereine’s “hints on the subject of religious toleration.” These hopes were dashed months later as Ann learned that “toleration extended merely to foreigners…and by no means to native Burmans, who, being slaves of the emperor, would not be allowed, with impunity, to renounce the religion of their master.” Without toleration for Burmese inquirers, the Judsons moved religious instruction and worship inside the mission house, with the members of the church assembling as secretly as possible. When Ann Judson left Burma on medical furlough in 1821, she had reestablished friendly relations and a certain level of tolerance from the Rangoon government to look the other way, but she did not achieve open religious toleration so that Burmese could assemble freely and publicly with the missionaries.

4.6 The Heroic Home-Maker: Household Economy and Diplomacy During the Anglo-Burmese War

From the perspective of the West, news that the Judsons survived the First Anglo-Burmese War from 1824 to 1826 propelled Ann Judson to international fame. For two long years of warfare between the Burmese and the British colonial, no one had heard anything

82. Ann Judson, Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 314-315. Adoniram Judson (and Ann, as the publisher of the account) hoped for general religious toleration: “I have reason to believe that this [semi-atheist] heresy is not confined to Rangoon, but is taking root in various parts of the country, and preparing the way for the Christian religion. O, for toleration—a little toleration. We will be content to baptize in the night, and hold worship in private; but we do pray that we may not be utterly banished from the land; that we may not be cut up root and branch” (Adoniram Judson’s journal, April 30, 1821, in Ann Judson, Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 270).
from Ann and Adoniram. Many assumed the Burmese had captured and executed them shortly after the British invaded Rangoon in 1824. When the Judsons were found alive and tolerably well, and the West learned that Ann was responsible for keeping Adoniram and several other Western prisoners from execution, starvation, and terminal illness, she was hailed for her heroic deployment of the diplomatic skills and household economic savvy she had honed over ten years of life in Burma. Employing her home-making practices in the severest of crises, Ann successfully connected herself to the Ava governor and other members of the Burmese government who sympathized with her plight. Her goal during the war turned from negotiating for religious tolerance to the survival of her husband and his colleagues in Burma. While in Ava, Ann prevented several attempts to execute the prisoners, and provided sustenance for them and her family during the war. During the six month interval of Adoniram’s imprisonment in the jungle of Oung-Pen-La, the lack of protective connections and scanty provisions caused Ann’s health to permanently break down. Ann sought to be known and to build relations through her home-making practices, and successfully demonstrated, or at least convinced prominent Burmese officials to entertain her assertions that she and Adoniram were not colluding with the British.

With rapidly failing health, Ann Judson departed for England and then America in 1821 and did not return until 1824. When Ann Judson left Burma, she and her husband had

83. Ann Judson’s diplomatic work to ensure the survival of the American Baptist mission during the first decade in Rangoon soon faded from memory, and was almost entirely forgotten. Indeed, in current biographical accounts, Ann Judson’s diplomatic work is a passing remark, if mentioned at all. Robert Torbet approvingly records Ann Judson’s “charm and friendly spirit…paved the way for friendly relations with government officials,” before moving on to more dramatic accounts of the dangers of Rangoon (Venture of Faith, 320). Dana Robert interprets Ann’s early diplomatic visits as calculated “hopes that making friends in high places might someday reap benefits to the mission” (American Women in Mission, 45). Knowles condensed much of Ann’s prior account of political visitation, though her preserved Ann’s letter describing the two year period of the Anglo-Burmese War in full. The effect produced a diminishment of Ann’s earlier political diplomacy, while exacerbating the extraordinariness of her wartime actions due to the drastic circumstances. With the recovery of material from Ann’s self-published memoir, it is evident that the context of Burman government led Ann to an ongoing role as missionary diplomat, rather than a brief, almost divinely inspired genius for diplomacy during Adoniram Judson’s arrest and imprisonment.
reestablished friendly relations between the American Baptist Mission and the Rangoon government, but not open religious toleration. She also left a fledgling Burmese church of thirteen members, and one of these members had already fled Rangoon to evade arrest for “disseminating heretical sentiments.” During her absence, however, relations between the Protestant missionaries and the Burman government improved so much that Adoniram Judson had decided join to Dr. Jonathan Price, a Baptist medical missionary, in Ava, and continue to press for religious toleration from there. When Ann reunited with Adoniram, she stayed in Rangoon for only a few weeks before making the long journey north to the Burmese capitol of Ava.

Shortly after Ann arrived in Ava, however, rumors of an impending war between Burma and Great Britain foiled the missionaries’ hopes of religious freedom in Burma. Disintegrating political relations between Burma and British Bengal also affected the Mission’s status at court. Dr. Price and Adoniram Judson were out of favor with the emperor, “suspicion rested on most of the foreigners then at Ava,” and “the Queen, who had hitherto expressed wishes for my speedy arrival, now made no inquiries after me, nor intimated a wish to see me.” Ann and Adoniram proceeded to build a house and Ann practiced household economy as usual, to show their peaceful intentions as American religious people. As she had practiced for several years in Rangoon, Ann Judson visited as

85. Relations improved due to the emperor’s interest in Western medicine, and the exit of a Portuguese Catholic priest from a court position. In a second visit to Ava, Adoniram Judson successfully told the emperor that “some foreigners and some Burmans” had indeed embraced Christianity in Rangoon, and the emperor, with no display of anger at the news, then allowed Judson “to expatiate on several topics of the Christian religion in my usual way” (Adoniram Judson’s journal, Ava, October 1, 1822, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 255). Entrusting Rangoon to other American Baptist missionaries, Ann and Adoniram moved to Ava, believing that their status as missionaries and as Americans would protect them from any danger that might come to foreigners if the Burmese and the British went to war.
86. Ann Judson to Elnathan Judson, Amherst, Burma, February 26, 1826, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 282.
many female relatives of the emperor as part of her diplomatic strategy to demonstrate the peaceful motives of the American missionaries.  

Shortly after war began, no amount of peaceful home-making and female diplomacy could counter Burmese suspicion of espionage. The Judsons had befriended two British traders, who attended worship services in their home and delivered BBFM mission support money to them. Unknown to Ann and Adoniram, the Englishmen were arrested by the Burmese and had confessed to prior knowledge of British plans to invade Rangoon. When the Burmese government discovered the link between the Englishmen and the American Baptists, Adoniram Judson and Dr. Price were also arrested as spies for the British government. As the Judson family sat down to dinner, a police officer and an executioner burst into the house and seized Adoniram Judson. Fearful that her husband would be tortured and killed, Ann immediately offered the Burmese officers a bribe. Refusing her money, they carted off Adoniram to the prison, and held Ann on household arrest. Ann destroyed all of the Baptist mission’s journals, and began pleading for freedom to move about Ava so she could petition for the release of Adoniram and Dr. Price. Just as she had done with Moung Shway-thah to save Mr. Hough from molestation, Ann planned her diplomatic negotiations from a position of weakness. Her situation was a dangerous one; one wrong move, and she could fall prey to extortion, cause further difficulties for her imprisoned husband, or be imprisoned herself.

Despite the high risk, Ann proved herself an excellent diplomatic nuisance in both male and female channels of government. After three days of house arrest, Ann successfully

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88. Ann Judson to Elnathan Judson, Amherst, Burma, February 26, 1826, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 282-283, 287. Ann destroyed the papers to prevent misinterpretation and their being used as evidence of espionage by the Burmese.
appealed to the Governor of Ava. Promising a present, Ann was allowed to go into town and was received “pleasantly” by the Governor. In her audience with the Governor and through more bribes to his officers, Ann obtained written permission for her to visit Adoniram in prison and send him food. She next sought the help of her highest female connection to the emperor, the Queen’s sister-in-law. Arriving with an expensive present and a posture of bold vulnerability, Ann pleaded for the release of her husband. Ann Judson’s asserted that Adoniram was innocent because he was not British but American—even though he spoke English—and a “minister of religion, hav[ing] nothing to do with war or politics.” Ann also overtly requested the female channel of government she had learned so long ago from the Rangoon vicereine, entreaty the sister-in-law to “state their case to the Queen, and obtain their release.” Ann’s boldness resulted in the Queen’s assurance that the religious teachers “will not die” by execution, but also deflated Ann’s hopes of release, as the Queen ruled that for now, the missionaries would “remain as they are” in prison. 89 This ruling from the Queen was not very assuring, as Ann Judson knew very well that imprisonment most likely meant death if she could not ensure Adoniram’s access to food, medical care, and clean living quarters while he remained in jail.

From this point, Ann willingly crossed barriers and entered multiple Burmese political arenas to protect Adoniram. Her primary diplomatic practice during the Anglo-Burmese war involved various tactics of weakness to make friends with powerful women and to enter the masculine arenas of government, militia, and prison. Speaking on Adoniram’s behalf, Ann engaged both male and female political channels to ensure her

husband’s safety. The Queen’s sister-in-law to plead for release until she had exhausted her welcome. She also made friends with the Governor’s wife, other wives of officials, and the male officials as well. Though no Burman officer dared to broach the subject of imprisoned foreigners with the emperor, they used their influence “to destroy the impression of [the Judsons] being in any way engaged in the present war.” These women and men also privately helped Ann gain access to food for Adoniram and her family, as well as other provisions that helped Ann Judson and her family survive. Without friendly sympathizers, Ann would have remained a suspect foreigner, forced to pay exorbitant prices for household goods, if indeed anyone would sell to her at all.

Female sympathizers helped Ann cross into a more powerful masculine political arena, and Ann also made risky diplomatic moves all on her own. For example, the Governor’s wife endorsed Ann Judson’s character and encouraged her continued attempts to act on her husband’s behalf with the Governor himself. Ann Judson visited the Governor as often as she could. At his request, Ann spent hours every other day in the Governor’s house, teaching him about American customs and government. In return, she was granted more access to her husband and successfully petitioned to have Adoniram

90. Ann’s work carried potential for extension of diplomatic practice as a valid practice of missionary females, but in the end she was interpreted by America as a heroic anomaly. The extremity of the situation, Judson’s position of weakness, and thus her use of tactics worked against her in this respect. Rising gender ideologies along the lines of public and private, as discussed in the above section on household economic practices, also contributed to the exceptionalizing effect. Ann garnered worldwide fame with her diplomacy, but did not immediately become a public model for American missionary women to go and do likewise.
94. Ann Judson to Elnathan Judson, Amherst, Burma, February 26, 1826, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 297.
Judson moved to “outer prison,” where she constructed a little room for him. The Governor often cautioned Ann to be conservative in her efforts, so when Ann decided to appeal to the chief military officer Bandoola, she didn’t tell the Governor’s house her plans. When the Governor learned Ann had sent Bandoola a petition secretly written by Adoniram, he was sure Ann’s “temerity” would lead to the destruction of all the white prisoners. Ann was hopeful for Adoniram’s release after Bandoola met her with condescension, but upon her return visit her hopes were later disappointed when Bandoola’s wife gave Ann a message promising Adoniram’s release after Rangoon had been retaken.\textsuperscript{95}

Much like her relationship with the vicereine, Ann realized that her constant presence at the Governor’s house helped her receive what she asked for; otherwise under-officers demanded bribes and the Governor only issued half of an order. Whereas motherhood had strengthened relations with the vicereine, however, Ann feared motherhood would strain relations with the Governor. Five months after Adoniram’s arrest and imprisonment, Ann Judson gave birth to her daughter, Maria Eliza Butterworth Judson. She was unable to visit anyone for two months after giving birth, and during that time she found the Governor less and less attentive to her petitions. News of Adoniram’s “heavy chains” within the inner prison prompted Ann to resume her visits with the Governor. She found to both her surprise and dismay that the recent restrictions placed upon her husband had been the Governor’s way of preventing the assassination of the four Western prisoners out of deference to his friendship with her.\textsuperscript{96} Ann resumed her daily visits to ensure Adoniram’s food and shelter were adequate for his survival.

\textsuperscript{95} Ann Judson to Elnathan Judson, Amherst, Burma, February 26, 1826, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 297-298.

\textsuperscript{96} Ann Judson to Elnathan Judson, Amherst, Burma, February 26, 1826, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 299-300.
As the vulnerable party in her relationship with the Governor, Ann was often frustrated by the difference between the Governor’s idea of protective friendship and her own. When the Governor sent the Western prisoners back into inner prison, Adoniram developed a fever and was near death. Though grateful the Governor had evaded pressure from the royal family to execute the white prisoners, Ann Judson changed her tactics to give her the best access to Adoniram in the prison, the Governor who enforced her petitions, and her infant child. Ann was allowed to construct a small lean-to of bamboo for herself on the Governor’s grounds, rather than stay two miles away at the Judsons’ house. Then, citing Adoniram’s fever, she successfully petitioned for free access into the prison and later to have Adoniram Judson moved to the bamboo room. The “comfortable situation” lasted only a few days, however. The Governor called Ann away from Adoniram, and when she returned to the hut, Adoniram had disappeared. Ann feared the Governor had detained her while her husband was executed, but she eventually persuaded the Governor to tell her that Adoniram and the other Western prisoners had been taken from the city prison in secret and transported to an internment camp in the jungle village of Oung-Pen-La.97

On the day of Adoniram’s removal, the Governor tried to persuade Ann to stay in Ava, telling her, “you can do nothing more for your husband, take care of yourself.” Ann refused to heed his advice, because remaining in Ava meant she had sunk into hopeless despair and admitted defeat.98 Determined to find Adoniram, Ann gathered her infant daughter, two adopted Burmese girls, and her Bengali cook, and together they journeyed to find the new prison in Oung-Pen-La. Once she found the prisoners, Ann Judson again began her diplomatic practice of visiting officials and prison guards to petition for the safety

98. Ann Judson to Elnathan Judson, Amherst, Burma, February 26, 1826, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 303.
of her husband. Unlike her growing relationship with the Governor of Ava, however, Ann never formed a stable friendship with the jailers of Oung-Pen-La. Instead, Ann reported six months of being subject to extortion and oppression.99

Outside of Ava, Ann also could not count on Burmese sympathizers to help her with household economy. Located a day’s ride from Ava, Oung-Pen-La proved to be a healthier place for Adoniram and the other prisoners, but the difficulty of caring for her family and the prisoners led to the irreparable breakdown of Ann’s immune system. The only available lodging for Ann and her girls was the storage room of a jailer’s house, where they slept on the floor. Ann had managed to secretly carry as much money as she could on her person, but the family frequently suffered “for want of provisions, which were not procurable” in the remote village. Illness and fever also constantly threatened to end the life of someone.

Adoniram Judson traveled to Oung-Pen-La with a fever, and shortly after they arrived Ann and her girls contracted small pox. After contracting a typhus fever, Ann Judson traveled to Ava and back for her medical chest because there were no medical resources. She spent two months confined in the jailer’s storage room, depending on her Bengali cook to procure and prepare food for her family and for Mr. Judson in the prison. The “worst sufferer at this time,” according to Ann, was her infant daughter Maria. In her illness, Ann Judson could not nurse her child or hire a wet-nurse. In order to feed her baby, Ann gave presents to the jailers “to obtain leave for Mr. Judson to come out of the prison, and take the emaciated creature around the village, to beg a little nourishment from those mothers who had young children.”100

100. Ann Judson to Elnathan Judson, Amherst, Burma, February 26, 1826, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 309-312.
After six months, the prisoners were returned to Ava, where Ann again connected with her Burmese relationships, especially the Governor. When the Burmese government conscripted Adoniram to act as an interpreter between the Burmese and British war camps, Ann immediately made contact with the Governor to establish a source for information about her husband’s whereabouts. During this time, her persistent connections with the Governor finally resulted in a dependable and protective relationship, which Ann dearly needed as she remained ill. Shortly after her return to Ava, Ann contracted spotted fever and spent two more months in bedridden confinement while Adoniram was away. When Adoniram was thrown back into prison upon his return from conscripted service, Ann “was too weak to bear ill tidings of any kind” and almost died from shock. Recovering “sufficient composure,” Ann was able to save Adoniram from returning to Oung-Pen-La by quickly dispatching a message to the Governor to beg him “to make one more effort for the release of Mr. Judson.” On Ann’s behalf, the Governor “presented a petition to the high court of the Empire, offered himself as Mr. Judson’s security, obtained his release, and took him to his house, where he was treated with every possible kindness.”

Ann spent the remainder of the war in the Governor of Ava’s house, where she could stay with Adoniram in between his many conscripted trips to broker peace between the Burmese emperor and the British army. Though Ann did not mention it in her letters detailing to war to America or England, it is possible that Ann continued practicing diplomacy in order to care for the other Western prisoners and bring about the end of the Anglo-Burmese war. According to one of the imprisoned British traders, they too had benefitted from Ann’s diplomatic negotiations throughout the war and remembered Ann as the principle “author of those eloquent and forcible appeals to the [Burmese] government,

which prepared them by degrees...to secure the welfare and happiness of his country, by a sincere peace.”

According to the British, Ann negotiated for peace from her residence within the Governor’s household in Ava while Adoniram and Dr. Price translated and negotiated for peace on the front lines. Along with survival of Adoniram Judson, Dr. Price, and other Western prisoners of war, the end of the First Anglo-Burmese War may also have been the result of the excellent home-making practices of Ann Judson.

4.7 Conclusion

Taking Ann’s desire to make Burma her ‘home for life’ seriously, this chapter followed Ann’s efforts to establish stable residency in Rangoon by means of two home-making practices. Recognizing the gendered structures and debates concerning the Western missionary enterprise from its outset, a theory of practice informed by and attentive to context, sociality, and relations of power provided an alternative means of describing and understanding Ann Judson’s efforts. Calculated toward the attainment of her goal, and Ann Judson practiced household economy and diplomacy in both traditionally Western and Burmese female contexts, and often by engaging tactics of weakness crossed into traditionally masculine arenas of Burmese politics. Home-making practices, for Ann Judson, sought to identify with and enter into stable relationships with indigenous Burmese through economic and political friendships.

Following Alasdair MacIntyre’s emphasis on the historical transmission of practices by means of negotiated tradition and Paul Connerton’s explanation of ‘communal memory’ for transmission, this chapter recovered the social histories of provincial New England female domestic practice and the household economy of Serampore missionary Hannah Marshman as Ann’s exemplary model for communal, mission enabling practice of household economy.

economy. Disregarding urban New England pressure to feminize and sentimentalize domestic space, Ann Judson extended her formative knowledge to organize a productive and flexible missionary household that supported both male and female engagement in other mission practices.

Ann learned her second home-making practice of missionary diplomacy from her friendship with the Rangoon vicereine. Recognizing the need for a stable government relationship, Ann visited the vicereine regularly and learned the art of making political requests while taking tea with female relatives of Burmese officials. Establishing a strategic friendship with the vicereine to ensure the safety and tolerance of the mission, Ann also engaged in tactics of weakness when she employed her knowledge of Burmese political negotiation in the masculine political sphere of the viceroy’s court to stop the harassment of her missionary colleague, George Hough. As seen in the last section, Ann’s prowess in home-making practices provided her with the skills and knowledge for survival as an enemy foreigner in the midst of war. Employing tactics of weakness, Ann relied on her feminine connections and regularly crossed into traditionally masculine space and channels of government to negotiate and provide for Adoniram and other Western prisoners of war.

Practices of home-making, however, cover less than half of Ann Judson’s activities as a missionary in Burma. Within Ann’s efforts to practice household economy and political diplomacy, there are traces of her other goal, that of participating with God in the formation of a Burmese church. Ann balanced her home-making practices, therefore, with church-making practices. For example, Ann’s attempts to converse with her servants and the vicereine on Christian doctrines are early illustrations of Ann’s church-making practice of catechesis. To investigate Ann’s more overtly missionary activity, therefore, the next two chapters investigate her church-making practices of catechesis and community cultivation.
CHAPTER FIVE

CHURCH-MAKING I: 
THE PRACTICE OF CATECHESIS

How interested you would you be, could you meet with my little society of females, on the Sabbath. Interested I say—yes, you would be interested, if it was only from this circumstance, that these poor idolaters enjoy the means of grace, and sit under the sound of the gospel.

— Ann Judson, 1817

Shortly after the Judsons’ arrival in Burma, Ann wrote to her parents about the difficulty of learning Burmese and the danger of living as foreigners in Burma. Burmese was “a most beautiful, easy language to write, but very difficult to read, or pronounce,” as unlike English, the “there are no distinctions in words and sentences, but all join together, and no capital letters.” As to the dangers, Ann reported them to be “just as we expected.” Still, though the Judsons were “exposed to robbers by night and invaders by day, we were never happier, never more contented, in any situation, than the present.”

Four years later, Ann changed the subject when Mrs. Lovett inquired whether Ann had indeed encountered the even more “difficulties and dangers” of violence, illness, and government persecution than expected. Ann did admit there was personal suffering and danger, but the true difficulty was “of a different kind from what I formerly imagined.” Ann found she had the strength to endure the dangers of Burma, but early attempts to communicate religious knowledge left her in despair and disillusionment. The “almost insurmountable difficulty of acquiring a foreign language and of communicating religious knowledge to the dark mind of a heathen,

1. Ann Judson to Mary C., Rangoon, August 20, 1817, in Judson, Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 97-98. Information about date and correspondent taken from original printing of this letter in ABMMI, Sept 1818, 410-412.
2. Ann Judson to her parents, Rangoon, August 8, 1813, in MBMM, December 1814, 104-105.
cannot be known by any but those who make the trial,” Ann wrote, “O how utterly impossible it is that these Burmans can be converted by any other than the power of God.”

In Bradford, religious conversation had become almost second nature, but now it was so difficult she was left almost speechless.

Yet Ann and Adoniram persisted, believing communication of the gospel to be central to their goal of church-making. Concluding her letter to Mrs. Lovett, Ann described her and Adoniram’s desire for the formation of a church of Burmese natives as “our one object on earth, and we make every thing bend to this.” Finally in “the most extensive field for usefulness,” Ann and Adoniram prayed “that we may be continued here, and made a blessing to the poor Burmans, who are daily perishing for lack of knowledge.” Learning Burmese was now the Judsons’ first priority, but Ann and Adoniram did not assume they would produce conversions or a church community on their own. Faced with difficulties of an unknown land, a capricious government, and ill health, Ann Judson often reported to her friends in the United States, “we feel the necessity of committing ourselves and this infant church into the hands of our heavenly Father, and of waiting his guidance and direction.”

For Ann, it was God who would convert Burmese, form the ‘infant church,’ and ultimately preserve the Burmese church.

Christian church formation, or ‘church-making’ constituted Ann’s second goal for her work in Rangoon. This chapter turns to consider Ann and Adoniram’s attempts to “engage in the great work of communicating religious knowledge,” as the first of two central practices of church-making. Organized with the goal of participating in God’s

6. Ann Judson to her parents, Rangoon, August 8, 1813, in MBMM, December 1814, 104-105.
8. Ann Judson to her parents, Rangoon, August 8, 1813, in MBMM, December 1814, 104-105.
formation of a Burmese church, Ann and Adoniram’s early efforts to produce religious materials, dialogue about religious subjects, and teach faith habits combined into the complex, cohesive practice of catechesis. Ann and Adoniram’s catechetical practice introduced a conflicting religious tradition into the Burmese Buddhist religious tradition in Rangoon, and also required negotiation across both Western and Burmese gender assumptions and constraints.

Missionary introduction of a conflicting religious tradition by way of catechesis, however, has produced accusations of cultural imperialism. Postcolonial theorists, ethnographers, and historians have interpreted catechesis and education, among other female missionary activities, as evidence of the imperialist nature of Western mission. For example, according to John and Jean Comaroff, the inculcation of “’quotidian practices’ rather than political authority were the primary vector of colonization anyway…and on that score ‘the ideological onslaught on the part of Christian missionaries, self-styled bearers of European civilization,’ was the very essence of colonization.” Even missionaries like the Judsons, who eschewed political control, have been criticized for a form of “colonization of consciousness.” Ann and Adoniram Judson’s openness to identification, negotiation, and dialogue in their practice of catechesis, therefore, must be analyzed alongside their assumptions about Burmese reception and agency amid the Judsons’ theological understanding of God’s activity and religious conversion.

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9. According to Reeves-Ellington, Sklar, and Shemo, “women missionaries engaged in the kinds of work most subject to accusations of cultural imperialism. Education, moral reform, social work, and medical work aimed to transform the cultures of those countries around the world where American women lived and worked. Across denominations women missionaries engaged in projects to ‘save’ women and children” (introduction, Competing Kingdoms, 4).
As the circle of practitioners has widened to Ann, Adoniram, the Burmese, and God, this chapter first turns to methods of practice from John Yoder and James McClendon, integrating them into methods of practice discussed in the prior chapter. It then proceeds with an investigation of Ann’s formative knowledge of church-making in her hometown of Bradford, Massachusetts during a period of Great Awakening revivalism, followed by the Judsons’ impressions of Burmese Buddhist traditions. Both of these act as formative knowledge for Ann Judson’s practices of catechesis and communal care, as she drew upon both in her translation of the Christian faith and Christian practice for Burmese inquirers.

The chapter then narrates Ann and Adoniram Judson’s partnership in their three-fold practice of catechesis. As the first component of catechesis, Ann and Adoniram engaged in different translation projects and composed introductory theological works to supply materials of the Christian faith for Burmese inquirers. Adoniram’s records demonstrate Ann’s high level of engagement and the importance of her activity, as Ann, due to Western gender constraints, continually underreported her efforts in this regard. Second, Ann and Adoniram practiced catechesis through engagement in religious conversation, and third, they each instructed inquirers on habits of the Christian faith. Drawing from Adoniram and Ann’s documents, the Judsons practiced different forms of religious conversation based on their audience, while they shared the same goal of convictional, dialogical engagement. Ann’s correspondence shared details of the third component of the Judsons’ practice of catechesis, while Adoniram, also due to Western literary constraints, underreported his efforts to instruct in faith habits. After detailing the Judsons’ full practice of catechesis, the last section evaluates the Judsons’ introduction of a competing religious tradition, complete with new habits, to argue against accusations of cultural imperialism.
5.1 Corporate and Constitutive Practice

As former Congregationalists and new Baptists, Ann and Adoniram Judson followed free church ecclesiological expectations that the church was constituted by being gathered by Christ, and where “two or three are gathered” (Matthew 18:20) there Christ would be. Indeed Ann and Adoniram took the “two or three” literally, worshipping together each Sunday and periodically celebrating the Lord’s Supper together. John Howard Yoder argues that following such ecclesial logic, congregations, as political bodies, are constituted by social practices such as breaking bread, baptism, communal discipline, and the sharing of ministerial roles in “the fullness of Christ.” Congregational, or church-making practices, to Yoder, are ordinary practices done differently in light of Christ. When practiced together and practiced rightly, for Yoder, church practices “offer a paradigm for the life of the larger society” and in so doing communicate the good news of redemption through Christ.11

Yoder’s account of constitutive Christian practice prepares the way for considering catechesis anew as Christian practice, which includes, in his analysis, a concentration on the humanity and “public accessibility” of Christian constitutive social practices.12 His definition of congregational practices as ordinary practices is helpful, as it opens the possibility of considering any of Ann and Adoniram’s activities as possible church-making practices, and dislodges the responsibility of church-making from the authority of ordained, officially commissioned, male missionaries. Likewise, Yoder dislodges the direct stream of ordained

12. Yoder, *Body Politics*, 72-73. While Yoder acknowledges of “the actions of God, in and with, through and under what men and women do,” Ann Judson believed in dynamic participation with God, as the proponent and primary active agent, in the constitution of a Rangoon church. Concentrating on the humanity of ordinary social practices, Yoder locates the involvement of Christ, as a “a man leading a social movement” with historical ramifications as the “people-building story” of ordinary men and women whose community life has been ordered by their following of Christ’s gospel message (“On Not Being Ashamed of the Gospel, Faith and Philosophy 9, no. 3 [1992]: 293). As seen in chapter seven, Ann viewed the world as the grand stage of God’s dynamic redemption, and she sought, by personal and communal practices, to commune with God by her pursuit of religious affections.
traditional master-practitioners, as baptist congregational practice also relies on communal memory and innovation of the local, gathered community.

Ann Judson’s insistence on following after God’s primary agency in the constitution of the church, according to James McClendon, has long been a primary organizing vision “by which a people…shape their thought and practice as that people” McClendon calls the baptists. Church-making practices empowered by the Holy Spirit, according to McClendon, must encourage embodied, lived faith, as “witnesses to Jesus and his way.” They must also be maintained by “renewal of the Community of Care” as congregational sociality. To embody faith well, McClendon argues for the importance of the practice of doctrine, which searches for truth as it poses the question, “what must the church teach to be the church?” in order to continue to follow as a watch-care community after Jesus’ way. Ann and Adoniram’s church-making practice of catechesis, therefore, dealt in part with “what must the church teach to be the church now?” and also with how to “to translate the way of Jesus as well.”

Drawing on MacIntyre’s definition of practice, McClendon also encourages closer attention to agency and relation in corporate practices. According to McClendon, practices involve a creative tension between “convictions,” which are the deeply self-involving, cognitive, affective, partially subconscious, embodied and personal dimensions of practices, and “rules,” or the submission of personal dimensions to larger communal patterns, limitations, expectations, judgment, and expertise of a practice’s tradition. This allows McClendon to narrate doctrine as a corporate practice wherein all participants, by invitation

14. McClendon, Doctrine, 21; and McClendon, Ethics, 61 (emphasis original).
and intention, are both learners and teachers. Following McClendon, this chapter continues to use the MacIntyrean definition of practice in the use of prior formative knowledge and in the extension of formative knowledges into new arenas of practice. It also again pays close attention to relationships developed and maintained between Ann and Adoniram as partners in church-making, and between the Judsons and the Burmese inquirers.

Attention to the Judsons’ catechesis as a church-making practice follows Ann’s terminology and standards of participation, and exemplifies McClendon’s explanation of traditional baptist understanding the Christian life as a journey along a series of guideposts. Returning to Puritan and early baptist emphases upon the process of conversion as entry into the way of salvation, McClendon describes catechesis, the first guidepost, as “the primary teaching or preaching or instruction” necessary during “the journeyer’s first stage of preparation.” The goal of catechesis is conversion, the second guidepost, which marks “the onset of discipleship or following Jesus” and, for Congregationalists and Baptists, entrance into full membership in the congregation. The Christian journey continues along practices such as the Lord’s Supper and communal discernment, which point to the third guidepost, “following Jesus along the way to the cross,” and the fourth guidepost, “soaring,” or striving to discern more fully the way of Jesus, discipleship, and distinctive vocation. As inheritors of the baptist tradition of conversion as well as early Reformed and Puritan concern over self-deception on the matter of conversion, the term catechesis more readily evokes the character of both Ann and Adoniram’s early missionary practices. Seeking Burmese inquirers who were willing to read, converse, and pray, the Judsons shared the religious knowledge of the

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16. McClendon, Doctrine, 137. According to McClendon, “the great initiatory sign of baptism in the church is specially related, at least in Scripture, to the disciple’s conversion. Congregationalists and Baptists both understood baptism as ‘the great initiatory sign’ of entrance onto the way of salvation, though they differed on whether baptism should be performed upon children born into the congregation (138).
Christian faith and searched for signs of preparation, the long process of conversion, and God’s transformation of inquirers into faithful Christians.

5.2 Formational Knowledge: New England Congregationalism and Burmese Buddhism

The direct descendent of town founders, Ann Hasseltine was a quintessential Bradford resident, with Puritan heritage and longstanding Hasseltine family leadership in the growing, provincial middle class town. Bradford, though traditionally Congregational, was not religiously monolithic or static, and was completely upended by the revival of 1806. Ann’s personal conversion early on in this revival, therefore, anticipated the pattern of the provincial town conversion during the religious ferment in the early 1800s. The changing social religious landscape of New England revivalism provided Ann with the formative knowledge of Christian religious conversation and the skills to negotiate within religious landscape of Burma. While remaining committed to the superiority of the Christian faith, Ann and Adoniram also learned about the religious landscape of Rangoon as well to better identify similarities between the two religious traditions as well as points of contention.

Throughout the eighteenth century, the First Congregationalist Church of Bradford, Massachusetts had welcomed new members from Great Awakening revivals, but had resisted revivalist influences. The Congregation had elected a stream of steady, traditional clergy, and managed to heal a momentary rift between Old Lights and Congregational Separatists. 17 Ann Hasseltine’s pastor, Jonathan Allen, was no exception. Though he had

17. According to C. C. Goen’s map of early Congregational separatism, there was a temporary separation between New Lights and Old Lights in Bradford, but no separate church organized (Revivalism & Separatism, 115). According to J. D. Kingsbury, Pastor Joseph Parsons of First Church Bradford signed a protest against Whitefield and “the irregularities which attended his ministry,” and drew the ire and competition of five nearby New Divinity ministers. Both the New Divinity churches and First Church Bradford gained a significant number of members over the next twenty years, and Kingsbury attributes the preaching of Whitfield and other revivalists as the cause of church congregational growth on both sides (Memorial History of Bradford, 92-93).
studied under Ephraim Judson, Adoniram’s uncle and a “Hopkinsian of decided type,” and preached very somber sermons on the subject of Christian duty, Parson Allen fully embraced the rising economic prosperity and society in Bradford in his penchant for powdered wigs and social dances. Allen also oversaw the formation of Bradford Academy, where the sons and daughters of Bradford’s rising provincial middle class found “better educational advantages,” and of course, the advantages of sociability. Ann Hasseltine, a Bradford legacy, followed the rest of Bradford in her desire for education, fancy dress, and amusement.

When Ann experienced conversion in 1806 at the age of sixteen, she was on the front edge of a large revival period that revolutionized the focus and activity of the First Church of Bradford congregation, and even Jonathan Allen himself. Much like Ann’s personal conversion, the pattern of conversion in Bradford revivals were of a more calm, “deep solemnity” that led over time to “renewed spiritual seriousness and reformation of morals.” Converts expressed great depth of feeling, particularly of anxious despair followed by unbounded relief as they experienced regenerate grace, but without demonstrations of “hysteria and commotion that had brought the Great Awakening into disrepute in many quarters.”

Consistent with earlier Awakening revivals, Parson Allen and the Bradford

18. Kingsbury, *Memorial History of Bradford*, 106. According to Catherine Kelly, the rise of female academies coincided with the supplanting of the older, social scale of gender roles by bourgeois ideology’s emphasis on the “divergence between men’s and women’s gender roles.” Female academies and the accompanying female culture of friendship sharpened of “women’s gender identity” during the early nineteenth century, but often felt surreal, or an “interlude,” to provincial women who expected to marry and superintend a rural household. The developing provincial society, moreover, continued along the older patterns of heterosociability and friendships as families and towns gathered together for parties, singing schools, reading clubs, and dances. Provincial heterosociability “derived not simply from some abstract or private sphere but from the practices [they] obtained in the household economy,” which included exchange and reciprocity, but also underscored “women’s cultural, economic, and political subordination” (*New England Fashion*, 67, 84, 194-195, 212).


revival stressed the necessity of conversion for salvation, entry into church membership, and renewed interest in Scripture and religious study.

Invigorated with ‘experiential religion,’ Parson Allen, Ann Hasseltine, and the members of the Bradford Congregational church spent their social energies in prayer meetings instead of evening dances. The Hasseltines and other Bradford families transformed their dance halls into “a place of prayer…ever after associated with nurture in piety and education and benevolence.”

Ann and the First Church congregants spent their growing economic capital and leisure time on various charitable projects. The revival of 1806 thus ushered in a “new era in benevolent work,” wherein First Church took a “practical and personal interest in every kind of missionary labor.”

Ann’s early work as a schoolteacher in Salem, Haverhill, and Newbury was one aspect of benevolent work through First Church. Not needing income, Ann volunteered her time “to try to be useful” with the education she had received as a Bradford Academy student.

Although Puritan and Congregationalist women had always been active in local congregational life, the women of Bradford Academy and the First Congregational church experienced a dramatic shift in their religious responsibilities. As Allen preached in his farewell sermon to the missionaries in 1812, since God “will gather together his children, from all parts of the world,” Bradford women had as much responsibility over the divine household as they did over their biological one.

Encouraged by Pastor Jonathan Allen,

22. Kingsbury, Memorial History of Bradford, 106.
23. Kingsbury, Memorial History of Bradford, 106.
24. Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 33.
25. Jonathan Allen, The Farewell Sermon, in Pioneers in Mission: The Early Missionary Ordination Sermons, Charges, and Instructions, ed. R. Pierce Beaver (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966), 269. For this sermon, Jonathan Allen chose John 11:52 as his text, “That also he should gather together in one, the children of God, that are scattered abroad.” Allen constructed his sermon as a short history of mission work through the Apostles, Martin Luther, the present revival work in the United States, and in India. Following Claudius Buchanan’s reports about the isolation and confinement of Indian women, Allen instructed Ann Judson and Harriet Newell “to teach these women, to whom your husbands have little, or no access…Go, bring them from their
First Church women engaged in efforts to convert family and friends, and worked together to attend to the needs of their town. As seen in prior chapters, Ann Hasseltine followed after her aunt and other women in her attempts to convert family and friends. She was also active in female prayer circles, which often organized local benevolence work and missionary support. For example, Ann’s sisters and other Bradford Academy graduates also taught in rural schools, and the Bradford women organized the Philendian Society in 1813 “to support female teachers’ in places where they might be useful in the moral and intellectual training of neglected children.”

During the 1806 revival, the town of Bradford also took an early interest in the cause of worldwide missions. Jonathan Allen became invested in the growing missionary interest among Congregationalist clergy and theological students. Ann and other women of the church gathered weekly to discuss missionary journals, travel diaries, and more “academic works” like Claudius Buchanan’s *Christian Researches on Asia*. Bradford Academy, much like cloisters into the assembly of the saints.” Jonathan Allen presumed gendered separation of labor, in this instance due to his understanding of Indian culture. Tension remains, however, between the spiritual equality given to women within the Congregationalist church and the gendered forms of communication, as seen in Allen’s repeated use of the word “teach.” Familial tensions also can be seen in Allen’s pointed attention to the extremity of Judson and Newell’s decision. “You literally forsake father and mother, brothers and sisters, for the sake of Christ,” Allen told the two women. Shortly after, Allen addressed the parents of the missionaries, reminding them to suppress any feelings of reluctance and “acknowledge, that it is He only could inspire your children with so much courage and resolution” (Allen, *Farewell Sermon*, 276-277).

26. According to Karen Hansen, “Acting on a sense of responsibility developed from personal piety, women in particular attempted to convert” their family and friends (*A Very Social Time*, 159). These religiously channeled activities during the Great Awakening are very similar to the activities of earlier colonial women, who “frequently supplied the energy which established new congregations and parishes in the outlying areas of older towns” (Ulrich, *Good Wives*, 217).

27. Kingsbury, *Memorial History of Bradford*, 117. The Philendean Society of Bradford was founded April 3, 1813, and according to Kingsbury, it was another project spearheaded by Pastor Jonathan Allen. Kingsbury boasts of the society’s membership of “the most influential women of Bradford,” Haverhill and Newburyport, though the society only lasted for five years. Ann Judson’s sisters, Abby and Mary Hasseltine, are listed as teachers with the society in Byhill (118). Bradford First Church women also founded a temperance society in 1813 and then again in 1827 (126-127).

28. Women interested in overseas mission work gathered together, “mapped out fields of labor, gathered materials for discussion…., compiled their incidents and their thoughts and opinions into labored essays, and for years these semi-monthly discussions were the marked feature of the social life of Bradford” (Kingsbury, *Memorial History of Bradford*, 118). Though these women’s groups were formally organized in the years after Ann Hasseltine Judson left Bradford, her female prayer circle was already actively involved in these concerns during the period of her membership.
Andover Seminary and Williams College, also debated the correctness of worldwide missions. When Ann Hasseltine and Harriet Atwood met Adoniram Judson and Samuel Newell during the Congregational General Assembly in 1810, they were already prepared “to confront the great question of personal surrender, for the love of Christ, in a life of missionary toil” as active members and mission supporters within a “renewed church” and graduates of the “quickened” Academy.

Upon her departure as a missionary, Ann Judson left a church community invested in rigorous study, experiential faith, frequent social gatherings, avid prayer, and benevolent educational work. The 1806 revival had added new members to the First Church of Bradford, transformed the weekly social routines of the town, and created new opportunities for congregational ministry, especially for female members. To Ann Judson, First Congregationalist Church of Bradford was a model Christian community while alive with revivelist piety and spirituality, and she continually encouraged it to remain that way in her correspondence.

The ‘experiential religion’ of Bradford revivalism, including the congregation’s turn away from ‘frivolity,’ ‘luxury,’ and ‘gaiety,’ informed Ann’s understanding of proper Christian faith and practice, and also colored her first impressions of Burmese Buddhism. As one who had abandoned her love of dancing and dress for religious study and prayer, Ann rejected the lavish pagodas, festivals, and sacrificial forms of Buddhist worship in Burma as “that idolatry, infatuation, and delusion, which has so often...excited the fervent prayers of our

29. Kingsbury, Memorial History of Bradford, 110. According Kingsbury, when the Congregationalist General Association met in Bradford in 1810, “the work of missions had already interested Pastor and people. Missionary enthusiasm was here already. Parson Allen was familiar with the Judsons; he studied theology with an uncle of Adoniram Judson. It is said that he introduced the missionary to Nancy Hasseltine....It is certainly a suggestive providence that when the plans had been laid for the great work and the young men were ready to go forth to foreign lands, the two young women who sailed in the ‘Caravan’ — Ann Judson and Harriet Newell — were young converts in the revival of 1806, and they had their training in Bradford Academy and under the faithful ministry of Parson Allen. Character which shapes events and is ready for grand opportunities, is not an accident, it is a result of nurture and care” (117).
little society, when surrounding the social altar for prayer and praise, in our native town.”

In describing the large pagoda in Rangoon, Ann likened it to “a wild, fairy scene,” resembling “the descriptions we have in novels, of enchanted castles, or ancient abbeys in ruins, than any thing we ever meet in real life.” To Ann, the multiple statues of Buddha, altars, animal imagery, and rich adornments were proof that the pagodas were “monuments of idolatry,” which by the power of Christian prayer would one day be torn down and houses of Christian worship would be raised upon their ruins.

Despite Ann’s rejection of formal Burmese Buddhism and her conquest imagery in regards to priests and pagodas, Ann and Adoniram researched Burmese religious practices, tenets, and ethical systems. Over time, Ann came to appreciate several aspects of Burmese religious culture while forming more nuanced criticisms of Buddhist religious tradition. Though Ann recorded her first impressions of Rangoon as a city of “cruel, avaricious” people, she later claimed the Burmese “system of morality is pure,” and the Burmans “are a lively, industrious, and energetic race of people” who were honest, intelligent, and creative. She appreciated the widespread education Buddhist priests offered in exchange for support from the populace because, as a result, almost every Burmese male could read. Still, Ann believed the Burmese religious system had no “power to produce purity of life in those who profess it,” while the Holy Spirit granted such power to converted Christians. She also criticized Burmese Buddhism for withholding education from women.

In surveying the religious landscape of Rangoon, Ann and Adoniram discovered four major facets of Burmese religious life. The first was the priest and pagoda system described

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above, and was officially connected with the Burmese imperial government, as Buddhism was the official and only sanctioned religion of Burma. Buddhist priests were well connected with Burmese government officials, and could drive off any religious rivals with accusations of heresy. In her letters, Ann described many lavish festivals and feast days, where government officials would lead in parades and sacrificial offerings, and religious pilgrims would travel from the countryside to the large pagoda in Rangoon. Funerals of government officials were also attended by the town, and included long processions to the pagoda. These events included offerings of money and goods, though Burmese residents visited pagodas and gave offerings any day of the year. Interpreting these aspects of Burmese Buddhism as idolatrous and materialistic, Ann and Adoniram rejected most, but not all, of the official pagoda Buddhist traditions.

The second major aspect of Burmese religious culture was the zayat system. In large towns and villages, small structures called zayats were set up for meditation, sacred text readings, and religious lectures. According to Adoniram’s official journal, during his visit to a Rangoon zayat, the preacher sat upon a raised frame in the center of the room, with the people seated on mats and segregated by gender. All the congregants closed their eyes and assumed a meditative position while the preacher, a former priest, recited portions of the sacred text from memory. Adoniram described the oratory of the Buddhist preacher as “entirely different from all that we call oratory. At first, he seemed dull and monotonous; but presently, his soft mellifluent tones won their way into the heart, and lulled the soul into that state of calmness and serenity, which, to a Burman mind, somewhat resembles the boasted
perfection of their saints of old.”33 Zayats were not connected to the pagoda, but were mostly complementary to the priest and pagoda system.

The third major aspect of Burmese religious culture matched the zayat system and competed with the Burmese Buddhist pagoda system. Despite the official decree that mandated all Burmese to practice Buddhism, there were Burmese men and women who refused pagoda worship and espoused un-orthodox Buddhist views. The “semi-atheist” or “sceptic” system consisted of a teacher and his disciples, or followers, who would meet together in zayats and private homes for religious teaching and debate. Adoniram and Ann described these religious practitioners as “semi-atheists” because of their emphasis on eternal wisdom, whereas the Judsons understood Buddhism to reject eternity and eternal deities for created Buddhas and “nigban” or nothingness.34

Although Burmese of all types came to visit the Judsons for religious conversation, the Judsons found Burmese of the ‘semi-atheistic’ religious system the most willing to debate and also the most sincere in their religious inquiries. However, due to their often contentious relations with the official pagoda priests, the unorthodox Burmese also caused trouble for the Judsons. For example, the Rangoon priests spread rumors and reported the heretical teachings of Moung Shway-gnong, a semi-atheist teacher whose talent for religious debate “would shake the faith of many” Christians.35 When Moung Shway-gnong and his religious

34. Adoniram Judson also described the “semi-atheist” or “sceptic” system as “refined Buddhism,” a variant religious doctrine with roots in Buddhist sacred texts. According to Adoniram Judson, “its fundamental doctrine is, that Divine wisdom, not concentrated in any existing spirit, or embodied in any form, but diffused throughout the universe, and partaken in different degrees, by various intelligences, and in a very high degree by the Boodhs, is the true and only God.” Moung Shway-gnong, a well known religious teacher of the “semi-atheist” system still attended the pagoda before his conversion to Christianity, but some of his followers and other “anti-Boodhs” are described as “despisers of Gaudama,” and people who “paid no respect to the pagodas or to Gaudama,” in Adoniram Judson’s journal, March 10, 1820, April 30, 1820, January 31, 1821, December 9, 1821, in Ann Judson, Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 252, 270, 295, 317.
adherents began visiting the Judsons for religious conversation, they drew the ire of the priests toward the Baptist mission as well. When the people of Rangoon heard the viceroy was inquiring into the priests’ accusations that Moung Shway-gnong had abandoned Buddhism, they ceased coming to the Judsons’ zayat out of fear of government reprisal against religious curiosity.\textsuperscript{36}

In the eyes of the Burmese in Rangoon, the Judsons belonged to the fourth major religious category as foreigners who were not subject to the religious decrees of the Burmese emperor. Indeed, the Judsons were not unique in Rangoon because of their foreign status and non-Buddhist religion. As a trading center, Rangoon was a religiously plural city, with each nationality allowed to follow its own religion and maintain religious teachers. In her Account, Ann Judson includes Adoniram’s reports of religious debates with Portuguese Roman Catholics, Muslims, and Armenian Orthodox.\textsuperscript{37} Ann had enough connection with the Siamese workers in Rangoon to study their language and translate some of their sacred stories. The Judsons’ desire to learn Burmese language and religious culture made them remarkable to the Rangoon Burmese, who supposed that the Judsons had come “merely to obtain their wisdom, and to return to our native country, to communicate it to others.” It took Ann and Adoniram five years to convince their Burmese neighbors that they had traveled to Rangoon “to do them good, and seek their advantage…and some of them acknowledge that [Christianity] must be a singular religion, and one worthy of attention” for Ann and Adoniram to do such a thing.\textsuperscript{38}

\textsuperscript{36} Adoniram Judson’s journal, Rangoon, November 26, 1819, in Ann Judson, \textit{Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah}, 206.

\textsuperscript{37} Adoniram Judson’s journal, September 9, 1815, August 20, 1819, and his journal of his visit to Ava in 1820, Ann Judson, \textit{Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah}, 48-49, 188, 232-240.

5.3 The Practice of Catechesis

Although Ann’s brief time in India was important to Ann Judson’s conversion to the Baptist tradition and her practice of household economy, her most formative Christian religious system remained the reviverist atmosphere of New England Congregationalism in Bradford, Massachusetts. Consistent with women’s religious activities during the Great Awakening, the newly converted Ann Hasseltine shared her ‘experiential religion’ with her family, friends, and her educational charges. During her tenure of benevolent teaching in rural schools, Ann turned her teaching abilities toward education of the Christian faith. Though she felt “very unqualified to have the charge of little immortal souls,” Ann endeavored to “impress their young and tender minds with divine truth” by opening school each day with prayer and finding other means “to guide her dear pupils to the Savior.” Ann was also well known for engaging in religious conversation with her family and friends, often pressing them to take seriously “the dealings of God” in their “lost undone condition.” In a letter, Ann exhorted her friend Lydia to think upon, “Jesus, the Saviour of sinners…[who] appeared to us the chief among ten thousands,” and to “sacrifice everything that comes in competition with the glory of God, and give our whole selves to [God].” Ann’s example of prayerful piety and was instrumental in the conversion of her father, and her earnestness in religious conversation the subject of many more letters to her friends.

40. Ann Hasseltine to Ms. Lydia K, Beverly, MA, September 8, 1810, in Knowles, Memoir to Mrs. Judson, 50-51. Ann’s exhortation to Lydia precedes Ann’s confession that she has almost fully decided to “spend my days in this world in heathen lands” as a missionary (51). Ann asked Lydia to pray as her confidant, but one wonders if Ann may also have been probing Lydia’s willingness to leave Bradford as a missionary with Ann, just like their earlier days of progressing toward conversion together as schoolmates (50).
41. Citing Ann’s younger sister Mary Hasseltine as his informant, J. D. Kingsbury relates the story of John Hasseltine viewing Ann weeping in prayer, and then proceeding to an oak tree in order to pour out his own agonies, then receiving the peace of God in experiential religion (Memorial History of Bradford, 109-110). According to Knowles, Ann’s letter to Lydia K. was one of several of letters in his possession, which “are almost exclusively confined to religious topics; and some of them…breathe an earnest desire for their welfare,
Ann Judson’s own determination to engage in mission activity abroad as a female, therefore, began as an extension of prior female efforts to raise congregational parishes and assist with religious conversions and growth. When Ann began planning her future as a missionary, she imagined her life in similar fashion as an extension of her efforts to enliven her congregation and assist with religious conversions. Shortly after her departure, Ann imagined her highest “enjoyment in this life” would come as the “instrument” of “leading some poor, ignorant heathen females, to the knowledge of the Saviour. To have a female praying society…is what my heart earnestly pants after, and makes a constant subject of prayer. 42 Before reaching Burma, Ann dreamt of replicating congregational life she knew in Bradford and a continuation of her work among her family and friends. Her complete inability to converse with Burmese when she arrived, and the continued difficulties of religious conversation, challenged Ann’s dream. Moreover, she found the Burmese were not in need of encouragement to take religion seriously, as Bradford had been just before revival. The Burmese were already vigorously involved in religious worship – though to Ann, of the wrong sort – and considered their religious tradition and their sacred texts to be superior to any foreign faith.43

While Ann and Adoniram always argued for the superiority of the Christian faith and offered Christianity as a religious alternative to other religious traditions in Rangoon, there were three important similarities between their tradition of American Protestant Christianity and what they observed about Burmese Buddhist religious practice. The first was the high rate of literacy and the textually driven nature of the two religious traditions, with centers of

and a faithfulness in beseeching them to repent of their sins and believe in the Redeemer, which indicate the early workings of the same zeal that afterwards led her to Burmah (Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 22).
42. Ann Judson’s journal, at sea, March 14, 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 58.
43. Ann Judson to her parents, Rangoon, September 26, 1815, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 143-44.
learning connected to religious structures. As Bradford Academy developed out of First Congregationalist Church, so too did Burmese pagodas offer reading and training in sacred texts to the people. Second, there were various arenas and different levels of involvement in the two religious traditions. Some of these were official, such as Sunday worship and Buddhist feast days, and others were more socially and locally driven, such as women’s prayer circles and zayat preaching. Third, both religious traditions were flexible, with continual revivals in American Christianity and outgrowths of ‘refined’ or ‘semi-atheist’ Buddhist teacher/disciple movements. The Judsons negotiated their practice of catechesis across these similarities in religious traditions.

In order to extend her knowledge of Bradford religious conversation and revivalism among the Burmese, Ann and Adoniram also pondered the points of contention between the Burmese Buddhist and Christian traditions. Though the isolation and cultural disorientation Ann experienced when she first encountered the Burmese language and Buddhist religious culture checked her “pleasure in the prospect” of spending her “days among the heathen, in attempting to enlighten and save them,” the seven years the Judsons spent learning to speak and understand provided opportunities to reflect on what they could do to teach the Christian faith. While Ann and Adoniram engaged in different activities, together they developed a threefold practice of catechesis for religious inquirers as well as new converts. According to Ann’s account, the Judsons pondered the necessary materials, different manners of religious communication, and the fundamental religious habits from the Christian tradition. Ann and Adoniram developed this threefold pattern into the Baptist Mission’s practice of catechesis.

44. Ann Judson’s journal, November 1810, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 47.
5.3.1 Materials Of The Faith: Translation Of Scripture And Composition Of Theology\textsuperscript{45}

As Reformed Congregationalists and converted in the midst of American Great Awakening Protestantism, the continuous study of Scripture was central to Ann and Adoniram’s understanding of Christian conversion, worship, and devotional life. The Judsons’ commitment to Scripture was equally matched, moreover, by the literary nature of Burmese Buddhism. Inquiring Burmese expected to critically read and discuss Christian “holy books” with religious teachers, as they would have done under Buddhist tutelage and in the village \textit{zayat}.\textsuperscript{46} As the highly literary tradition of Burmese Buddhism matched Protestant emphasis on the continuous study of Scripture, Ann and Adoniram engaged in both translation and theological composition in response to the demands of their Rangoon context. With Adoniram’s encouragement, Ann became one of the earliest composers of theology in the modern mission movement and was a model second-hand translator from Burmese to Siamese. Due to Western gender assumptions, Ann underreported her efforts to her mission support audiences, while Adoniram supplied information about the importance of her work.

When Adoniram and Ann decided to minister “directly to the natives” in their search for a mission location, they meant living among the Burmese, learning their language, and giving them the Scriptures. As stated earlier, Adoniram was especially attracted to Burma because “the Scriptures have never been translated into their language.”\textsuperscript{47} To bridge the

\textsuperscript{45} Portions of this section, in an earlier form, are published in Laura R. Levens, “Reading the Judsons: Recovering the Literary Works of Ann, Sarah, Emily, and Adoniram Judson for a New Baptist Mission History,” in \textit{American Baptist Quarterly} 32, no. 1 (2013): 37-73.

\textsuperscript{46} George Hough to Dr. Baldwin, Rangoon, February 20, 1817, in Ann Judson, \textit{Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah}, 80; see also Adoniram Judson to Maulmain missionaries, Rangoon, November 16, 1830: “I am more and more convinced that Burmah is to be evangelized by tracts and portions of Scripture. They are a reading people beyond any other in India. The press is the grand engine for Burmah” (in Wayland, \textit{Memoir of Adoniram Judson}, vol. 1, 510).

\textsuperscript{47} Ann Judson’s letter, Calcutta, September 19, 1812, in Knowles, \textit{Memoir of Mrs. Judson}, 81.
literate nature of both American Baptist and Burmese Buddhist religious life, however, Adoniram and Ann’s early plans for learning Burmese for Scripture translation and religious ‘enlightenment’ expanded by necessity. Adoniram, for example, committed himself to the endless task of learning the philological roots of Burmese and Buddhist sacred texts, which resulted in a masterpiece translation of Christian Scripture.\(^48\)

Though no doubt a talented linguist, the enduring excellence of Adoniram’s Scripture translation resulted from his twin commitments to remain as faithful as possible to the Scripture text and to translate it as fully as possible into Burmese language and culture. In keeping with these commitments, Adoniram studied the Greek and Hebrew “to ascertain the exact meaning of the original text.”\(^49\) He also learned Burmese as well as Pali, a then extinct language from which the Burmese language had borrowed several of its Buddhist religious terms. Alongside his philological learning, Adoniram depended upon feedback from early Burmese inquirers and converts. With intermittent help from Burmese teachers and assistants, Adoniram completed his first book, the Gospel of Matthew, by 1817, and continued working until he had translated every book of the Old and New Testament by 1835.\(^50\)

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\(^{48}\) The superior quality of Adoniram’s translation has reached legendary status. According to Rosalie Hunt Hall, a committee of Burmese biblical scholars found Adoniram’s translation “so beautiful and so compellingly rendered that the scholars could not improve upon its accuracy and purity,” that they concluded not to undertake a new edition of the Bible and subsequently disbanded (Rosalie Hunt Hall, *Bless God and Take Courage: The Judson History and Legacy* [Valley Forge, Pa.: Judson Press, 2005], 254-55, quoted in Phyllis Rodgerson Pleasants, “Beyond Translation: The Work of the Judsons in Burma,” *Baptist History and Heritage* 42, no. 2 [2007]: 20). There is now a new, modern Burmese language translation project, but the Judson Bible is still widely used and appreciated by Baptists and other Protestants in Myanmar today. Bishop Dr. Zothan Mawia, Methodist Bishop lower Myanmar, said that he uses the Judson Bible and dearly loved the beauty of the translation. He reported that an updated, modern Burmese translation of the Bible is currently underway in Myanmar (Bishop Zothan Mawia, in conversation with the author, April 2014).

\(^{49}\) Adoniram Judson’s 1833 letter to the American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, quoted in Hannah Conant, *The Earnest Man: A Sketch of the Character and Labors of Adoniram Judson, First Missionary to Burmah* (Boston: Phillips, Samson, 1856), 430; (emphasis original). Unsatisfied with his first effort, Adoniram labored another five years over a complete revision of the whole Burmese Bible (1840).

\(^{50}\) Dana Robert attributes the translation of Daniel and Jonah to Ann Judson (*American Women in Mission*, 45). In a letter to Mrs. C, Ann Judson wrote that she had recently translated parts of Daniel and the book Jonah from English to Burmese, “not because I consider these books of any more importance than other
From Adoniram’s viewpoint in 1817, however, there was no guarantee that he would live long enough to translate the entire Bible. It had taken four years of extensive language work to produce the first complete biblical book translation, and exclusive attention to the task had given Adoniram such severe headaches that he couldn’t read or eat for several months. Furthermore, the slow process of Scripture translation could not match Burmese demand for printed materials. By 1816, the Judsons had been joined by their first missionary colleagues, the Houghs, and a large printing press from the Serampore Mission. Mr. Hough had trained with a printing press while in America, and shortly after his arrival he began printing religious materials, sacrificing his desire to learn Burmese. With limited resources of labor, paper, and ink in relation to the Burmese demand for printed materials, the members of the Baptist Mission could not afford to hand out gospels of Matthew to every visitor. Nor did they feel it proper to wait until they had all the resources for such a project in order to use the press.

As a solution, the Baptist Mission composed shorter religious tracts in Burmese for immediate use and wider distribution. Before completing the Gospel of Matthew, Adoniram composed his first tract, *A View of the Christian Religion* (1816, rev. 1819), and widely

parts of Scripture, but because they were easier to translate” (Ann Judson to Mrs. C., Rangoon, February 10, 1818, in *Christian Herald*, March 1819, 706-707). Her translations were probably from English to Burmese, as there is no evidence Ann Judson knew Greek or Hebrew. What became of her translations, and whether Adoniram Judson used Ann’s work in his translation of the Old Testament, is unknown. There are also legends of the pillowcase that Adoniram used to hide his scripture manuscripts during the Anglo-Burmese War. If the Judsons had lost his unprinted translations, or had died while in prison, there is no telling how long it would have taken for a full translation of Scripture into Burmese. The story from Conant, *The Earnest Man*: “The story of the preservation of this precious work, related by Mrs. [Emily C.] Judson, might adorn the page of romance. It was taken to Ava in manuscript; and when Mr. Judson was thrown into prison, was secretly sewed up by his wife in a cushion too hard and unsightly to tempt the cupidity even of his jailers, and used by him as a pillow. When, at the close of seven months, he and his fellow sufferers were so rudely thrust into the inner prison, the old pillow fell to the share of one of the keepers; but finding it probably too hard for his use, he threw it back, and it came once more into its owner’s hands. It was again lost when he was driven to Oung-pen-la; and being stripped, by one of the attendants, of the mat which was tied around it, the roll of hard cotton was again filing hack into the prison. Here it was found by Moung Ing, who took it home, as a memorial of his teacher, without suspecting its priceless contents. Several months after, the manuscript, which now makes a part of the Burmese Bible, was found within, uninjured” (428-429).

circulated it along with another tract simply called *The Catechism* (1816), composed by Ann.\(^{52}\) Though Ann had not joined Adoniram in philological study, her ability to converse in contemporary Burmese provided her with the expertise for composing a short introduction to Christian theology and practice. It is unclear, however, whether Ann had formal publication of the *Catechism* in mind when she composed the document. Due to the newness of modern mission, Ann may have purposely underrepresented her literary achievement for her American audience, or she may have never imagined composing or printing a religious tract until encouraged by her husband Adoniram. Ann underreported her achievement in her letters to the United States, and claimed to have written it “for the benefit of the children under my care, without any idea of its being printed; but Mr. J. thought it best to have a few of them in circulation.”\(^{53}\) According to Adoniram’s official report to the Baptist Board, however, the “few” published *Catechisms* numbered three thousand, and was triple the number printed of Adoniram’s *View*.\(^{54}\)

Ann’s tendency to underreport her translation and composition work requires comparison between the Judsons’ activities and a closer look at Adoniram’s reports and his use of her work. For example, Ann used her *Catechism* to teach literacy and the Christian gospel to children and women in 1816 – three years before Adoniram’s first attempts at public preaching. For the Mission’s purposes, Ann’s *Catechism* also served as a conduit for

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52. Less than ten years after the first Burmese converts joined the Baptist church, Adoniram composed *The Septenary* (1829) as a guide for Burmese congregations and evangelists. It consisted of the *View*, the *Catechism*, and instructions on public worship, baptisms, marriages, funerals, and teacher guidance. From Adoniram’s letters, however, missionaries passed out *The Septenary* like a religious tract from time to time. In a letter to the missionary printer at Rangoon, Adoniram advised the *Septenary* be “kept for special cases, and not distributed promiscuously, …to be kept on hand for the converts and hopeful inquirers,” (Adoniram Judson to Mr. Bennett, Rangoon, February 7, 1831, in Conant, *The Earnest Man*, 386). Furthermore, the placement of the *View* and the *Catechism* in the *Septenary* suggests that early Burmese congregations also used these and other religious tracts as introductory theology texts. More research is needed on the use of Adoniram’s translation and his tracts in the formation of the early Burmese congregations.


54. Adoniram Judson to the Corresponding Secretary of the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, Rangoon, March, 7, 1817, in *ABMMI*, May 1818, 329.
Ann and the Baptist Mission to provide broad access to Christian religious tradition. After Ann's death, the *Catechism* went through several editions, and was used for decades by missionaries as a resource for education and evangelism, though unlike Adoniram’s *View*, there is no known translation of Ann Judson’s *Catechism* into English. Adoniram specifically requested multiple printings of Ann’s *Catechism* for his preaching tours and use in the *zayat*. As late as 1881, missionary Marilla Ingalls reported, “Mrs. Judson’s catechism is taught to every child in the Burman mission schools.” Following Adoniram Judson and the wider Baptist Mission’s use of *The Catechism*, Ann Judson was one of the earliest and most relied upon composers of theology for the Baptist Mission in Burma.

As the first American Baptist to translate for a minority people group in Burma in 1819, Ann’s inclusion of her composition alongside her husband’s work indicates her high regard for her *Catechism* as well as her continued interest in broad and equal access to Christian literary resources. Noticing that a large population of Siamese resided in Rangoon, Ann learned Siamese and translated her *Catechism*, the gospel of Matthew, and Adoniram’s *View* from Burmese into Siamese. Adoniram Judson, appreciative of Ann’s work, offered Ann’s Siamese translation as an alternative process of translation in a letter to the Board. According to Adoniram, future missionaries skilled in learning modern languages like Ann Judson, could draw from the painstaking work of the philologically oriented first translation and translate across similar languages for more widespread access to Christian religious 

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55. Multiple letters of Adoniram Judson to Mr. Bennett, the American Baptist printer in Maulmain, request the *Catechism* in a list of the most trusted religious tracts. These letters are printed in Wayland, *Memoir of Adoniram Judson*, 1:507-522. 
materials. 58 Adoniram’s translation from original languages into Burmese, “was first-hand,”
while Ann Judson’s Siamese translation from the Burmese was “second-hand.”59

After the opening of the zayat, the Catechism became Ann’s chosen resource for
teaching literacy and introductory theology to adults in her reading school. With men in one
room and women in the other, Ann supervised as Burmese teachers led the class in
traditional Burmese oral repetition and writing drills on Burmese style blackboards. Listening
to the men and women repeat “kwa, kwaa, kwe, kwee, kwo, kwoo, &c.,” Ann Judson
remarked that the sounds would be “curious” and “uncouth” to her readers’ ears, as at first
they did to Ann, but they “have now become musical, and when considered as introductory
to an acquaintance with the word of God, are productive of the most pleasant sensations.” A
few weeks later, Ann reported the progress of the adults in learning to read without spelling,
“and it is a truth, which affords no little satisfaction, that their knowledge of letters is first
employed in reading a catechism, concerning the eternal God, and his Son, Jesus

58. The American Baptist Mission in Burma used Adoniram and Ann Judson’s approach to
translation and composition widely. As later generations of Baptist missionaries began work with various tribal
groups in Burma, they composed their own tracts and translated Burmese religious materials, including
Scripture, into cognate languages like Siamese. For example, Sarah Boardman Judson, Adoniram’s second wife,
translated the Catechism into Peguan. A partial list of Sarah Judson’s translation work in Peguan is found in
Emily C. Judson, Memoir of Mrs. Sarah B. Judson (New York: Colby & Co., 1848), 182. In 1883, Josiah Cushing
produced a translation of Ann’s Catechism in Shan (The Catechism, Burma: American Baptist Mission Press),
continuing the tradition of translating the Catechism into minority languages in Burma. Ann’s Catechism joined
Adoniram’s religious tracts and Scripture translation as the most widely distributed Christian religious works by
the American Baptist Mission during the nineteenth century.

59. According to Adoniram, “There are two ways of translating — the one original, the other second
hand. The first must be adopted by a missionary whose lot falls in a section of the globe where there is no
translation of the Scriptures in any cognate language, or in any language known to the learned men of the
country. In that case, he must spend some years in reading a great many books, and in acquiring a competent
stock of the language; that, like as the spider spins her web from her own bowels, he may be able to extract the
translation from his own brain. The other mode may be advantageously adopted by a missionary who has in his
hand the Bible, already translated into some language known by learned natives of the country. In that case, he
has only to get a smattering of their vernacular, enough to superintend their operations, and then parcel out the
work, and it is done by steam…. If the partners employed are faithful, a second-hand translation may be
superior to an original one. At any rate, it will probably be more idiomatic, and in all cases, when practicable, it
ought undoubtedly to be attempted as a first essay; and as the missionary advances in the language, he can
gradually raise it to any degree of perfection” (Adoniram Judson to the Board, Maulmain, June 28, 1833, in
Christ...Thus they will insensibly obtain ideas of their creator, and ever, in after life, associate the ideas of religion and reading.”

By opening the reading school, Ann took advantage of prior Burmese association between “ideas of religion and reading,” and sought to replace the pagoda system of education and expand it to include females. Priests taught reading and writing in the pagodas to the Burmese males, and Burmese priests and “preachers” taught by reading their sacred texts in the village zayat as listeners meditated. According to Mrs. Colman, the eldest of the pupils, Moung Byaay, “was very anxious to learn to read” because of his growing concern about religion. The man was “obliged to toil hard every day for the support of himself and family, yet he has persevered until he can nearly repeat all Mrs. Judson's catechism,” so “that he might examine the gospel of Matthew for himself.”

Ann encouraged Moung Byaay to read and further examine Scripture. As much as Ann enjoyed teaching *The Catechism*, she desired more than “insensible” methods of learning Christian doctrines of the eternal God and Christ. The Judsons provided access to reading and religious materials to promote the other two components of the practice of catechesis: religious conversation and teaching habits of faith.

### 5.3.2 Communicating the Faith

Ann’s expansion into translation, composition, and literacy augmented her original desire to spend ‘my days instructing those who have never yet heard of Jesus.’ Ann also continued to show special concern for Burmese females and for women’s religious issues in her letters to women’s mission societies. She told Mrs. Carleton, “heathen idolatrous temples…are not calculated to reform the heart or life,” and “if I may be instrumental of

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61. Mrs. Colman to her sister, Rangoon, Dec. 8, 1819, in *ABMMI*, September 1820, 405-406.
leading some infant female to lisp the praise of God, I shall rejoice.” Though Western assumptions affected the mode and reporting of Ann’s religious conversations, Ann and Adoniram also encountered and navigated Burmese gendered modes of religious conversation due to educational restrictions against women. When Western and Burmese assumptions and restrictions are accounted for, Ann and Adoniram both displayed great commitment to Burmese religious agency in their communication of the faith. Whether engaging in the female societies’ concern for familial loyalty or the religious teachers’ propensity for apologetic debate, Ann and Adoniram both sought to communicate on a level of convictional engagement.

Before the Judsons considered themselves reasonably fluent in Burmese, Ann and Adoniram were already making “every opportunity to communicate religious truth” as their “path of present duty.” Ann prided herself on her conversational Burmese at the market, but realized that introducing a new religion was exponentially more difficult. Beginning with their household servants and language teachers, the Judsons often “converse[d]…on the subject of our coming to this country, and tell them, if they die in their present state, they will surely be lost.” In return, they almost always received the response of Rangoon pluralism, “Our religion is good for us, yours for you.” Unfazed, Ann and Adoniram persisted in trying to communicate, learning “to think, to reason, and to get ahold of the connections and idiom” in Burmese. After that difficulty, “new terms must be invented to give them right ideas” of God as an eternal Being, along with the expression of other Christian terms and concepts that did not match Burmese Buddhism.

63. Ann Judson to her parents, Rangoon, Burma, August 18, 1816, in Judson, Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 95.
Though the Judsons’ wrote in English, to analyze the Judsons’ religious communication takes the same patience ‘to think, to reason, and to get hold of the little connections and idiom’ within the Judsons’ religious conversation as Ann Judson did in her efforts to understand and converse in Burmese. On the surface, Ann’s description of Burmese ‘heathenism,’ and her early desire to communicate the gospel sound strange, and even offensive, to twenty-first century readers. Ann’s use of terms such as ‘infant,’ ‘stupid,’ ‘poor,’ ‘ignorant,’ ‘idolatrous,’ ‘darkness,’ and ‘heathen’ sound prejudiced and cloaked in Western colonial ideology, as discussed in chapter two. Ann’s continued concerns over the ‘perishing state’ of the Burmese and her insistence on sharing the dangers of hell make Ann sound more like a soapbox-firebrand than a nurturing cultivator of the church. Moreover, Ann’s negative terminology does not match her published descriptions of the Burmese as intellectually adept, creative, hardworking people of high moral standards.

Situated within their Great Awakening context, Ann and Adoniram’s terms and religious themes were heavily influenced by Jonathan Edwards and intellectual metaphors of enlightenment, knowledge, and awakened senses. In the Great Awakening, any person, including one’s family, was described as spiritually poor, ignorant, and stupid until they were ‘enlightened,’ or ‘awakened’ by faith from God. The path of such awakening and the first signs of God’s grace, according to Edwards, began with one’s self-awareness of sin and possible eternal damnation. Ann Judson’s use of intellectual metaphor generally followed Edwards’ pattern, and was restricted to matters of experiential religion. For example, in an 1813 letter to her family, Ann Judson wondered how the Hasseltines were affected by the War of 1812. At times Ann imagined her loved ones “in want and distress….At other times I see you aroused from spiritual stupidity, and earnestly besieging the throne of grace.” Further down in her letter, Ann described Adoniram’s opportunities to preach two Sabbath
services onboard the ship to Madras: one to the British officers and passengers, and the second to the East India Company soldiers who understood English. Ann told her family that “there is more hope of doing good” to the latter group, consisting of Portuguese Roman Catholic and Muslim members, than the former group of British Protestants, but then explained that “it is easy for God to impress his truth on either of their minds, both equally benighted.”

Formed to use such language within her Bradford religious community, Ann’s early letters from Rangoon extended the same descriptors to what she considered to be the ‘heathenism’ of Burma.

Attention to the Great Awakening context partially explains Ann and Adoniram Judson’s description of the people with whom they desired to engage in religious communication. It is also important to place their religious communication with the Burmese within their practice of catechesis. Both learning the language and cultivating good relations were important for Ann and Adoniram’s communication of the faith in the Burmese vernacular. Throughout their ten years in Burma, Ann and Adoniram Judson engaged most often in religious conversation about their convictions, similar to what has been classically called “confession” or “bearing witness.” Ann and Adoniram also desired for their own confession to engage in a response with their conversation partners—whether the response be disagreement, further questioning, or disbelief. In her conversations, Ann looked for the ‘seriousness’ of mind that, for her, marked the beginning of conversion to the Christian tradition. At the very least, ‘seriousness’ of mind meant that she had engaged with

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66. Ann Judson to her family, Port Louis and at sea, May 6 and May 10, 1813, in MBMM, December 1814, 97, 100.
67. Following speech-act theory, McClendon and Smith describe Luther, Augustine, and Rousseau’s autobiographies as engaging in confessing, which is “bearing witness, not only taking a stand but showing it….

Thus the act of confessing involves, both in this literary genre and in our own account of confession, the appropriation of a place, a taking up of those commitments of loyal ties that are seen to be appropriate to the place, and a self-involving display of these” (James McClendon and James Smith, Convictions: Diffusing Religious Relativism, rev. ed. [Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1994], 64-65).
her Burmese conversation partner on a convictional level. Ann and Adoniram’s words, therefore, were only one aspect in a complex relational exchange that sought dialogue and conversion.

Ann and Adoniram’s joint commitment to communicating the gospel in relationship also resulted in divergent methods of conversation. Conversing with Burmese women who were unused to religious questioning was drastically different, for example, than conversing with Burmese men eager for apologetic debate. By 1817, Ann Judson had gathered a “little society of females on the Sabbath,” to whom she would read the Scriptures and “endeavor to teach them about God.” They were not quite the female prayer society Ann Judson had dreamed of, as the women were interested in meeting with Ann but not eager to leave the religious traditions of their families. One woman “could not think of giving up a religion in which her parents, grand-parents, &c. &c. had embraced, and accepting a new one of which they had never heard,” and if, after all her good works, she went to hell with her ancestors, so be it. When Ann responded that the woman’s progenitors would “contribute to her torment and upbraid her, for her rejection of that Saviour of whom they had never heard” and that “she herself would regret her folly when it was too late,” the Burmese woman replied, “If I do,…I will cry out to you to be my intercessor with your God, who will certainly not refuse you.” Another woman told Ann that she believed in Christ and prayed daily to him, but then later admitted that she still believed in Gaudama, and worshipped them both. After four months of meetings, Ann reported to Dr. Baldwin, the Board Secretary, that the circle of women had grown to between twenty and thirty participants, who “sometimes hear with apparent attention, sometimes ask pertinent questions, and some
of them say they worship the true God only, and have left off going to the pagodas to worship. But how much truth there is in these assertions time alone will determine.}\textsuperscript{68}

The Rangoon women’s lack of response, especially compared to the large overturning of Bradford during the revival of 1806, prompted Ann to explain. Though she feared her Western readers would expect quick results, Ann cautioned, “the conversion of a nation wholly idolatrous, is not the work of a day or a year.” During her time in Rangoon, Ann observed that the Burmese were “wholly idolatrous” because “they evidence at once that they believe what they assert.”\textsuperscript{69} The difficulties of learning the Burmese language and attempting to explain Christianity in Burmese religious concepts were matched by her experience that the Burmese women were self-involved in their Buddhist tradition and needed time to become self-concerned about the new religious ideas Ann taught them. According to Ann, “even when truth is received and retained, if it is received with the notion that self has no concern in it, it has no effect.”\textsuperscript{70} Furthermore, Ann’s female religious circle was an anomaly in Rangoon religious culture. Burmese women were fully involved in the Buddhist pagoda festivals and attended zayats, but in being denied education, most were outside of the Burmese literate culture and religious dialogue. In Ann’s female society, she endeavored to teach the women about God, while also teaching them the basics of conversation about their religious practices and convictions. And though Ann spoke harshly about Burmese progenitors in hell, she respected the women’s attachment to their families and familial religion.

\textsuperscript{68} Ann Judson to Dr. Baldwin, Rangoon, Jan 18, 1818, in Judson, \textit{Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah}, 104-105.

\textsuperscript{69} Ann Judson to Dr. Baldwin, Rangoon, January 18, 1818, in \textit{Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah}, 105.

\textsuperscript{70} Ann Judson to Mrs. Lovett, Rangoon, May 10, 1816, in \textit{ABMMI May 1, 1817}, 96-97.
Once the Baptist Mission began circulating religious tracts and opened the zayat for public religious discussion, Adoniram’s reports of religious communication vastly differed from Ann’s. Adoniram’s first inquirers were literate men of various social means, and all pursued religious debate. Some who visited would stay for hours, asking questions and debating Adoniram’s responses. In contrast to the Burmese female group, Adoniram encountered intellectually rigorous religious debate with little evidence of “the special operations of the Holy Spirit.”\(^7\) Adoniram had successfully communicated well enough to report “a considerable number, whose sentiments have been changed; and who may be considered in the state of many nominal Christians, somewhat enlightened and partially convinced.” Moreover, Adoniram attracted the attention of “semi-atheist” teacher Moung Shway-gnong and his group of religious disciples. Day after day, Moung Shway-gnong, “a man of very superior argumentative powers,” would visit Adoniram and “converse incessantly the whole time.” Adoniram hoped for progress in Moung Shway-gnong’s seriousness, but most often he feared “no real impression is made on his proud sceptical heart.”\(^2\) For Adoniram, pertinent questions and attentiveness abounded, but he continued to look for the deeper seriousness that revealed the self-interest of conviction.

Ann and Adoniram, therefore, reported different modes of conversation, and tried to discern the mark of ‘seriousness’ within each of them. When reporting “hopeful cases” of conversion, Ann and Adoniram focused on the responses of the Burman inquirers and their growing interest in religious conversation. In 1819, Ann described “very encouraging” results in her female society even though it had shrunk to only thirteen members due to government unrest. Ann was encouraged by the inquisitive nature of the group, as well as

\(^7\) Adoniram Judson to the Board, February 24, 1819, in Ann Judson, *Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah*, 147.

their increasing attachment to the meetings. One woman said “she appeared to herself like a blind person just beginning to see,” and another asked what more she must do to “make her a real disciple of Christ,” as she believed in Christ and prayed to him daily. 73 In response, Ann told her she “must not only say that she believed in Christ, but must believe with all her heart” and that good evidence of this was the woman’s disposition and “manner of life would be changed.” For example, if instead of quarreling with her neighbors, the woman “felt a disposition to bear with, to pity, and to pray for them,” that would be good evidence of a change of heart. 74

During intense religious debates, Adoniram enjoyed triumphing with logical proofs of God’s eternity, but he was more pleased to hear an inquirer change his opinions. Adoniram reported “satisfactory evidence” of “real conversion” when Moung Shway-gnong stated that he long believed in an “eternally existing God,” and, after a long time of reasoned argument, had recently believed the doctrine of Christ. When Adoniram asked Moung Shway-gnong when his belief began, Moung Shway-gnong replied that it was “during a visit, when you discoursed concerning the Trinity, the Divine Sonship of Jesus, and the great sufferings which he, though truly God, endured for his disciples.” Even so, Adoniram was not satisfied, and wrote that Moung Shway-gnong’s “deistical spirit” remained within his objections to corporate worship and the sacraments as necessary for true discipleship. Against these last objections, Adoniram simply “rested the merits of the case on the bare authority of Christ: ‘Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.’” 75 On these

75. Adoniram Judson’s journal, March 5, 1820, in Judson, Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 254.
points, Adoniram recognized the limits to the masculine mode of intellectually oriented religious debate, and decided not to argue.

In each of these examples of ‘hopeful cases,’ Ann and Adoniram used the materials of the faith as resources in their communication of the faith, and found encouragement in the Burmese inquirers engagement in the Scriptures, religious tracts, and doctrines being discussed. Ann received questions about the propriety of questioning family tradition, and Adoniram received religious debates from those skeptical of all religious knowledge and practice. And while Ann and Adoniram encountered two entirely different patterns of religious dialogue and resistance, the Judsons both pressed their conversation toward self-interested convictions. By opening themselves to religious debate, the Judsons’ convictions were vulnerable to challenge and even change. With vulnerability on their part, however, they could also press Burmese inquirers, male and female, to engage and examine their own religious convictions.

5.3.3 Habits of Faith: Prayer, Reading, and Self-Examination

When the Great Awakening revival swept through Bradford in 1806, Ann Hasseltine turned to a pursuit of religious habits. Shortly after her conversion and membership in First Church, Ann made an ambitious daily schedule for her year of school studies. Upon waking, she planned to “solemnly devote myself to God, for the day,” to “read several passages of Scripture, and then spend a long time in prayer.” She further resolved to “read two chapters in the Old Testament, and one in the New, and meditate thereon” before attending to her chores, and when she found her hands idle, to “read in some religious book.” At noon recess, Ann planned to “read a portion of Scripture, pray for the blessing of God.” In the evening, she planned to either repeat her morning reading and prayer routine, or to privately “read a portion of Scripture” before attending a lecture or religious meeting. During all of
these plans for Scripture reading and prayer, as well as her school duties, Ann resolved to “strive against the first risings of discontent, fretfulness, and anger; to be meek, and humble, and patient, constantly to bear in mind, that I am in the presence of God; habitually to look upon him for deliverance from temptations; and in all cases, to do to others, as I would have them do to me.”

Even on holidays, Ann did not allow herself to slack in religious habits. For example, whereas she had spent the prior Thanksgiving holiday “in making preparations for some vain amusement,” Ann now “spent it in reading and praying, and endeavouring to obtain a suitable frame of mind for the approaching day.” In her journal, Ann continued the practice of devotional writing that older Puritans used to “examine themselves and to heighten their love of God,” and “to overcome their temptations to ‘worldliness.’” Different from Puritans, and like other Great Awakening early evangelicals, Ann Judson also used her journal to record what Jonathan Edwards termed the affective “spiritual ‘sense’ that was just as real as the physical senses of hearing, seeing, smelling, tasting and touching.” Ann’s private journal writing was itself a training exercise in self-examination and awareness of God.

Ann’s resolutions as a sixteen year old and her journal writing foreshadowed the third component of the Baptist Mission’s practice of catechesis. Integrating the materials and communication of the faith, Ann and Adoniram encouraged all inquirers to engage in personal faith habits of prayer, reading, and self-examination. The Judsons evaluated the Burmese inquirers’ adoption of these habits of faith as discerning markers of ‘hopeful conversion.’ Whereas Ann underreported her work in composition and translation, and the

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76. Ann Hasseltine’s journal, November 3, 1806, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 26 (emphasis original).
77. Ann Hasseltine’s journal, November 26, 1806, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 27.
Judsons reported distinctly gendered accounts of religious conversation, Western assumptions about male correspondence led to Adoniram’s underreporting of his efforts to inculcate faith habits. Ann’s attention in her correspondence provided the best detail of the Judson’s shared activity in this final component of the practice of catechesis.

As the official missionary and correspondent to the board, Adoniram meticulously reported the names of inquirers, their attendance, religious questions, debates, conversations, and professions of belief in his journal, but he rarely mentioned any inquirer’s commitment to “constantly read my writings, and pray to the eternal God.”79 Reading Adoniram alone, inquirers seem to spontaneously desire to read and to pray. Contrary to Adoniram, Ann rarely recorded verbatim the religious conversation of her female society, evening school students, and other inquirers, but she almost always reported on their progress in daily religious habits similar to those she acquired in Bradford. Ann’s correspondence, which accompanied Adoniram’s letters in Baptist publications, depicted the Baptist Mission’s teaching of daily prayer, religious reading, and self-examination to both male and female inquirers. When paired with Ann’s writings, Adoniram’s occasional comments about these habits demonstrate that he too was involved in this aspect of catechesis, despite his underreporting.

From the beginning of the female Sabbath society, Ann incorporated scripture reading and prayer into their religious conversation. Though not formal Sabbath worship, the women “enjoy the means of grace, and sit under the sound of the gospel” while Ann read, prayed, and discussed the Christian faith.80 Ann also told her female society of the

80. Ann Judson to Mary C., Rangoon, August 20, 1817, in Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 97-98. Information about date and correspondent taken from original printing of this letter in the ABMMI, Sept 1818, 410-412.
diligent efforts of American Christians, including “the earnest and fervent prayers, which were continually ascending on their account. The tears came into the eyes of some of them, who feelingly said, ‘And do they indeed do so much for us?’” Based on her questioning of the female members about whether they prayed to Christ and worshipped “the true God and left off going to the pagodas,” Ann also encouraged them to pray to daily.81 In 1818, the Baptist Mission held no corporate worship in Burmese, and Ann admitted to her readers that she had no way of verifying her society members’ self reports.82 If the Burmese women were ‘praying to Christ’ in worship as Ann reported, they were practicing it together as a society and in their homes as a daily habit of the Christian faith.

After the opening of the zayat, Adoniram too regularly offered forms of prayer and parting instructions to his visitors who came to discuss religion, though he mentioned it only when describing some highly discouraging conversational partners. On one occasion, Adoniram reported that the “proud heart” of Oo Oungdet had “repelled the humiliating doctrine” of atonement through the death of Christ, but that his nephew, Moung Oung-hmat, “listened with the air of an awakened man,… received a form of prayer with eagerness, and listened to my parting instruction with some feeling.” On another occasion, a young man named Moung Thah-ee visited the zayat and behaved in an overbearing and insolent manner. Fed up with Moung Thah-ee’s desire to “display himself” rather than converse, Adoniram threw the “inquirer” into a rage by telling him that “he must get an humble mind, and pray to the true God, or he would never attain true wisdom.” Though Moung Thah-ee stormed out after declaring “he would have me to know that he was no common man,” that he “could dispute with governors and kings, &c.,” his companion

Moung Gway later returned to Adoniram to apologize for his friend’s behavior, and also to inform Adoniram that Moung Thah-ee had heeded Adoniram’s instructions in reading the religious tract “attentively.”

Along with daily prayer, therefore, Ann and Adoniram encouraged their inquirers to continuously study religious materials and to pray for help as they read. Memorization of the *Catechism*, for example, evidenced continuous study, and possible meditation upon the religious tenets therein. Whenever an inquirer promised to read and study religious materials daily, the Judsons recorded a hopeful sign of ‘seriousness’ of religious inquiry into Christianity. When the Judsons’ gave a copy of Matthew to a governor’s son, for example, Ann reported that the young man “gladly received it, saying, not a day should pass, without his reading it.” Though the Judsons had little hope in his conversion as he was moving to Ava, “Mr. J. told him, every time he read, he must ask God to give him light, and enable him to understand it.”

The return of the “first serious inquirer” was even more encouraging to Ann, when he told her he had continued “thinking and reading” a portion of Matthew’s gospel after he was assigned as governor to an outlying cluster of villages. This village governor requested tracts and the full copy of Matthew’s Gospel, and instructed his attendants “to take up and read them attentively” just as he had done.

The Judsons and Western Christians’ shared practice of continuous Scripture reading resulted in little description of Scripture reading instructions to inquirers. Like household economy, the daily habit often peeked in around the edges and was easily understood by their readers, as when the Adoniram remarked about certain inquirers’ “particular love for

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reading Scriptures.”Ann offered, however, examples of Burmese inquirers who had impressed her with their interpretations of Scripture while under her instruction. Ann found Moung Nau, the first Burmese convert in the Baptist mission, “peculiarly interesting to see with what eagerness he drinks in the truths of Scriptures.” Noting Moung Nau’s “deeply impressed” and “unusually solemn” countenance while reading Scripture, Moung Nau explained that the words “take hold on my very heart; they make me tremble.” Comparing the public nature of Burmese Buddhist offerings and feasts, Moung Nau commented that “God commands us to do every thing that is good in secret, not to be seen of men… this religion makes the mind fear God, it makes it of its own accord fear sin.” In her description, Ann as instructor was caught up in her student’s experience of reading Scripture. Ann was first impressed by Moung Nau’s affective responses to the Sermon on the Mount. His unusual solemnness, trembling, and expression of the words taking “hold of my very heart,” matched Ann’s prior journal descriptions of her “spiritual sense,” as Jonathan Edwards called it, of being affectively arrested when she read Scripture.

Second, Ann recorded Moung Nau’s interpretation of Christ’s instructions as “God’s commands” for him as a Burman, and in contradiction to his prior religious tradition. Continuing through the Sermon on the Mount, Ann recorded Moung Nau’s exclamatory interpretation of Jesus’ instructions to “Lay not up for yourselves treasures:”

“What words are these! It does not mean that we shall take the silver and gold from this world and carry them to heaven; but that, by becoming the disciples of Jesus, we shall live in such a manner as to enjoy heaven when we die.”

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Taking on new religious instructions from Scripture, to ‘do everything that is good in secret,’ to ‘fear God’ and sin, and ‘to live in such a manner’ as a disciple of Jesus ‘as to enjoy heaven when we die,’ Ann recorded Moung Nau’s performance of the practice of reading Scripture. By taking on the posture of Jesus’s disciple and imagining himself as a direct hearer of Christ, Moung Nau entered into another spiritual sense of reading, in following “the way the plain words bore upon readers’ lives in relation to all that God had done and would do in their regard.”

Ann, who had left her home in Bradford and traveled across the world out of duty to God’s commands, readily agreed that Moung Nau did indeed “drink the truth of Scripture” as they read together.

The final religious habit Ann sought to inculcate in the Burmese inquirers was self-examination. Much like young Ann’s resolutions to control her temper and maintain constant awareness of God’s presence in her daily life, Ann Judson encouraged Burmese inquirers to search for awareness of sin and growth in grace, as marks of God’s grace. In a report on the Burmese female society, the solemnity of the group led Ann to hope “that the Holy Spirit was hovering over us, and would ere long descend, and enlighten their precious immortal souls.” The religious conversation that evening led Ann to believe that the society women were intellectually convinced that Christ’s atonement for sin was “suitable for persons in their situation,” and had begun “to feel the power of sin.” The women were preoccupied with “the sinfulness of their hearts, which they could not overcome” as the greatest obstacle “in the way of their becoming Christians.”

Ann also reported the uneasiness of Moung Nau, who though professing to be a disciple of Christ, said “he found he had many sins remaining on his heart, and he knew not whether Christ would save him.”

88. McClendon, Doctrine, 36, 45.
With Moung Nau, Ann assured him that “Christ came to save such lost helpless sinners as he thought himself; and if he put his trust in Him he would surely save him, though his sins were ever so numerous.” Reporting the conversation to Adoniram, Ann rejoiced “to see such evident marks of the operations of the Holy Spirit in…hearing his simple communications of the exercises of his mind.”

Adoniram Judson also instructed inquirers to examine their desires and behavior for evidence of growing faith. The village governor, known by the mission as Adoniram’s “first serious inquirer,” reported to Ann that he was not yet a disciple because “I cannot destroy my old mind; for when I see a handsome patso, (a cloth the Burman men wear,)…I still desire it.” And though Adoniram continued to favor moments of convivial seriousness and attention to the Scriptures in his reports to the Board, he also interpreted growing habits of self-examination as good evidence of a Burmese inquirer being “a real Christian.” Adoniram reported that Mah Men Lay, a timid woman who feared persecution, demonstrated evidence of “true Christian feeling” when she remarked on her surprise “to find this religion has such an effect on my mind, as to make me love the disciples of Christ more than my dearest natural relations.” When Adoniram reported such evidence, he was looking for Burmese inquirer’s self-awareness of their adoption of the tenets and affections of the Christian faith.

More importantly for the practice of catechesis, therefore, was whether the Burmese themselves engaged in catechetical learning. Each component of the Judsons’ practice of catechesis, aimed to reach the convictions and dispositions of the Burmese inquirer. The

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production of religious materials, religious conversation, and faith habits were more than a one-way street, for the goal of the Judsons’ catechesis was more than the transmission of religious knowledge from missionary to inquirer. They longed to see the Burmese inquirers invest in the practice of catechesis themselves, in reading religious materials, in questioning their convictions, and in adopting daily habits of Scripture and prayer, as signs of God’s formation of an indigenous, Burmese church.

5.4 Indigenous Agency or Cultural Imperialism?

Knowing their American audience expected conversions, Ann and Adoniram could have overstated – or even worse, subtly coerced – any Burmese interest in religious materials, any change in self-interested convictions, and any profession of solemn feeling over sin and salvation. It is possible to interpret the above account of catechesis as highly skewed toward the Judsons’ Western assumptions, their American audiences’ expectations, and the Protestant, Great Awakening emphasis on “experienced religion.” After all, Adoniram Judson often reported that proud hearts rebelled and young men boasted during religious conversations, but never once did he report losing a religious debate. Likewise, Ann Judson encouraged inquirers toward self-examination, but seemed equally invested in her ability to find evidence of the Holy Spirit in her female society. A letter of Moung Nau, the first Burmese convert, to the Baptists of America in 1821 repeated portions of Adoniram’s View of Christian Religion almost verbatim. With Ann and Adoniram Judson as the primary narrators of catechesis and their other home-making and church-making practices, the extent and the nature of Burmese engagement in the process becomes difficult to assess. The Judsons’ practice of catechesis did introduce a conflicting religious tradition into Burman, but fell short of the Comaroffs’ assertion that missionaries were ‘the primary vector…[and] the ideological onslaught’ of coercive cultural imperialism.
The meaning and intent of ‘imperialism’ has shifted and changed over the centuries. According to Brian Stanley, though Westerners have on the whole interpreted imperialism negatively over the past two hundred years, they have rarely agreed on the meaning of the term. The definition of imperialism in connection with overseas colonies and colonial policy did not arise in Britain until very late in the 19th century, and was not defined according to capitalist interests until the mid-twentieth century and the spread of Leninist-Marxism. In between these definitions, Stanley uncovers a second definition of imperialism as “philanthropic.” Popular in the late nineteenth century, the idea of philanthropic imperialism most often competed with capitalist interests in pursuit of humanitarian objectives, rather than serving as a distracting veneer behind which capitalists pursued easy profits.93

Ryan Dunch, likewise, traces the development of a third definition of imperialism not necessary tied to Western government colonization. The establishment of ‘cultural imperialism,’ as developed by Edward Said, has provided helpful analysis of the subtextual narratives of Western dominance found in supposedly neutral “modern knowledge systems.” Historical analyses portray Western missionaries as the front line of coercive cultural imperialism, “as narrow minded chauvinists whose presence and preaching destroyed indigenous cultures and opened the way for the extension of colonial rule.” Dunch warns, however, that many theorists of “cultural imperialism” unnecessarily and destructively “dodge the question of historical agency – precisely how, and by and to whom, these alleged values are conveyed.” Prioritizing disembodied knowledge systems and market forces over historical agents, accusations of cultural imperialism overstate the cultural influence missionaries were actually able to wield. Such accusations also over represent missionary

paternalism or racism, which indeed were evident, but not the primary driving value or organizing principle, and severely underrepresent indigenous agency.94

Though the definition of imperialism has shifted and changed, the category of imperialism has consistently implied Western use of power to control, coerce, and dominate, whether for extortion, political stability, or intentions of reform. Ann and Adoniram Judson’s early descriptions of the Burmese, though understandable within their historical period and revivalist context, conveyed American superiority, Christian superiority, and paternalistic and maternalistic assumptions, but their practices of home-making and church-making do not constitute “Western imperialism” over Burma. Ann’s practices of household economy and diplomacy exhibit the American Baptist Mission’s desire to peacefully exist underneath the patronage, or the tolerance of, Burmese imperial government.

The Judsons did provide conflicting materials, doctrinal tenets, and a pattern of daily habit and consciousness from the Christian tradition, but their three-fold practice of catechesis also contained important elements of assimilation, translation, and negotiation on the part of the Judsons as they engaged with their Burmese inquirers. For example, Ann and Adoniram never questioned the importance of sacred texts in Burmese culture, and relentlessly pursued the translation of Christian sacred texts and communication of the faith into the idiom and logic of the Burmese. Though extending from Western Protestant beliefs, the Judsons’ attention to convictions and self-examination led to vulnerability as religious

inquirers challenged their central Christian convictions, and to trust in the Burmese inquirers’ self-narration of religious experience.

The description of Ann and Adoniram Judson’s catechetical activities under the umbrella of “church-making practices,” begun in this description of their catechetical activities, acknowledges the Judsons’ Western formation and bias, but reorients and contextualizes the influence of their expectations, assumptions, and theological emphases within the historical narrative. In this manner, evidence of paternalism, such as Ann’s use of Great Awakening religious terms of “ignorance” and “benighted” in relation to “heathen,” is in no way excused by their good intentions to “seek the advantage” of the Burmese. As a mark of possible Western hegemonic mindset her language constituted a dangerous territory for the possible entrance of imperialist actions, as later generations may not have understood the religious limitations of Ann’s vocabulary and interpreted her descriptions through a lens of Western colonialist assumptions.

On the other hand, the Judsons’ development of relationships and their encouragement of indigenous agency and responsibility, as seen in their practices of home-making and catechesis, presses for continued attention to the Burmese inquirers’ reasons for pursuing relations with the Judsons and their continued interest in the Christian tradition. Continued attention to the Judsons’ identification with the Burmese and the telos Ann and Adoniram pursued in the analysis of their church-making practices, provides a more complex picture of communal negotiation over the manner of God’s formation of a Burmese church. The Judsons’ expectations, assumptions, and emphasis on conversion occurring in their practice of catechesis was deeply tied to their ecclesiology and theological doctrine of

God’s work in the world, but as will be shown in the next chapter, they were also open to learning from Burmese converts about the practice of church community in Rangoon.

5.5 Conclusion

Following Ann’s goal of the formation of a Burmese church, this chapter retrieved the first of her two practices of church-making. Continuing to build upon theories of practice and attention to context and interpersonal relations, Yoder and McClendon offer historical and theological descriptions of constitutive practices of baptist congregations. Their definitions of practices as “ordinary social practices done differently in light of Christ” and the organizing vision of “Jesus’ way,” fit the Judsons’ gathered church ecclesiology, shared by American Congregationalists and Baptists. They also widen the scope of activities, traditions, and practitioners in a way that supports the organization of Ann and Adoniram’s translation, composition, religious conversation, and faith habit activities under the larger practice of catechesis. Use of the term “catechesis,” recognizes baptist tradition concerning the process of conversion as entry into the way of salvation within the Judsons’ shared church-making practice.

For formative knowledge of catechesis, Ann Judson drew first upon her context of Bradford in the height of revivalism, benevolence, and mission support. Using Bradford as the initial gauge of Burmese Buddhist religious traditions, Ann was repulsed by ostentation and materialism she perceived in the pagodas and feasts. Always maintaining the superiority of Christianity, over time Ann gained more knowledge of multiple arenas of Burmese Buddhist religious tradition, and found several points of comparison and appreciation. Ann considered communication of the Christian faith a central priority, and to that end she and Adoniram borrowed and negotiated between American revivalism and Burmese Buddhism to extend the practice of catechesis into their new context of Rangoon.
Ann and Adoniram practiced a three-fold catechesis of religious materials, religious conversation, and inculcation of faith habits. The first component focused on translation and composition of materials of the faith. Adoniram Judson’s plans to translate the Bible in Burmese for immediate and widespread access to the Christian Scriptures fit in well with the Burmese religious context of widespread instruction on Buddhist religious texts. The Judsons encountered a high male literacy rate and an avid interest in written materials in the Burmese language. Religious literature was so important in their context that both Ann and Adoniram engaged in translation and composition of religious materials. Western gender constraints on correspondence caused Ann to underreport the importance of her composition, *The Catechism*, and her translation work from Burmese to Siamese, while Adoniram supplied publication numbers and offered Ann’s work as a model of future American Baptist translations. Attracting Burmese females and older men who could not access the education offered by Burmese priests, Ann’s literacy school used her *Catechism* as a reading primer and an introduction to Christian theology.

Ann Judson pioneered the second component of catechesis. She began a female society for prayer and religious conversation three years before the American Baptist mission opened the *zayat* as a gathering place for religious dialogue and inquiry about the Christian faith. When conversing with her literacy students, the female prayer society, or other visitors to the *zayat*, Ann sought to converse with religious inquirers on a level of convictional engagement. Adoniram also sought to engage the convictions of his inquirers, though with a more literate, educated stream of male religious inquirers, Adoniram’s conversation often turned into religious debate, which he recorded as such in his official journals. Ann Judson, on the other hand, spent more time encouraging and educating her conversation partners to engage in religious conversation. Compounded by Western correspondence gender
assumptions, the Judsons’ different Burmese audiences resulted in vastly different examples of religious conversation in the ẓayat, though their shared commitment to convictional engagement was evident throughout.

The last component of the Judsons’ practice of catechesis encouraged all inquirers to integrate the prior two aspects into daily personal and communal habits of religious reading, prayer, and self-examination. Ann and Adoniram considered the inculcation and love of these daily habits in their inquirers as hopeful marks of religious conversion. While Adoniram diligently recorded the prior two components of catechesis in the official mission board journal, he rarely mentioned his discussion of faith habits with inquirers unless something out of the ordinary occurred. Ann recorded the Judsons’ shared interest in habits of faith among their inquirers, and therefore her correspondence provided the best detail of this component of catechesis.

The Judsons’ did introduce a new, competing religious tradition into their adopted Burmese context, but their practice of catechesis, even in inculcation of ‘quotidian practices’ like faith habits, does not qualify as imperialism, politically or culturally, though there is evidence of Ann and Adoniram’s continued belief in the cultural transcendence and superiority of their inherited Christian tradition. The chapters on Ann Judson’s practices so far have both demonstrated that Ann and Adoniram’s Western audience significantly affected the Judsons’ narrated reports of their activity. By noting instances of conformation to gendered expectations, evidence of underreporting, and the impact of educational limitations between Burmese men and women, this chapter successfully retrieved the Judsons’ cohesive and cooperative practice of catechesis. The presence and agency of Burmese religious inquirers within the practice of catechesis has also been attended to with careful suspicion, as the Judsons’ navigation of Western audience expectations also affected
their reporting of indigenous Burmese activity. The next chapter continues the investigation of Ann’s church-making practices with more pointed attention to the Judson’s encouragement of and response to indigenous agency and responsibility for the early Rangoon congregation. It then returns to the issue of the Western context and expectations to investigate whether or not writing for a Western audience caused Ann to diminish her prior attention to indigenous agency and mistranslate the Judsons’ church-making practices.
CHAPTER SIX

CHURCH MAKING II: THE PRACTICE OF COMMUNITY CULTIVATION

When we hardly ventured to hope that we should ever see a truly converted Burman, how great is our joy to see a little church rise up in the midst of that wilderness, consisting of thirteen converted Burmans.

– Ann Judson, 1821

In her *Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah*, Ann Judson named April of 1819 as a “new and highly important era in the mission.” According to Ann, the construction of the zayat on a public road near the mission house inaugurated “the most essential part of a missionary’s work…I mean the public preaching of the gospel.” Writing in 1822, Ann’s editorial remark conveyed early nineteenth century American expectations for mission work. Following after revivalist patterns, the highest goal of the American missionary was to publicly preach, either formally in worship gatherings or in open-air settings of markets, riversides, and street corners. Compared to their former American Congregationalist missionary colleagues who regularly preached and conversed as they traveled the streets in Bombay in 1816, Adoniram Judson took almost three times as long in preparing to publicly preach the gospel.

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2. Ann Judson, *Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah*, 144. This turning point is marked within her memoir by a change of sources. Whereas before Ann Judson relied primarily used her own journals and her letters to family members, after 1819 she had new material with which to draw: Adoniram Judson’s official journals for the Baptist Board.
3. Samuel Newell, Samuel and Roxana Nott, and Gordon Hall, the Judsons’ former missionary partners, opened a station in Bombay in 1813, and by 1814 were preaching in English to “the hundreds of people in this place, the Europeans, the natives, and the half-castes who can speak our own tongue.” Newell and Nott also studied two native languages along with the Greek and Hebrew while they translated the Christian Scriptures (Samuel Newell to Dr. Morse, Bombay, India, August 2, 1814, in *The Panoplist and Missionary Magazine*, July 1815, 207-208). By April 1816, Gordon Hall recorded daily walks about town, freely entering into conversation and preaching to different gatherings of natives around Bombay (Gordon Hall’s journal, April 2, 1816, in *The Panoplist*, January 1817, 35).
Ann’s editorial choice to label public preaching as “the most essential part” of mission also carried Western gendered assumptions about division of labor that did not suit the narration of events within the correspondence she included in her *Account*. In the early 1820s, the female evangelists and traveling preachers of the early Great Awakening were no longer welcome in many of the churches formed and reformed by revival. Male revivalists and missionaries continued to preach publicly and women were encouraged to teach.² The early American republic increasingly narrated separate gendered spheres of labor, but as already seen in prior chapters, this narrative did not adequately portray the realities of New England provincial life or Ann’s home-making practices. As a cooperative partnership, Ann and Adoniram’s church-making practice of catechesis also fell outside growing Western assumptions of segregated spheres of mission labor. Ann and Adoniram tended to draw and engage inquirers of their own sex, but their Burmese context did not strictly segregate along gender lines and neither did the Judsons in the American Baptist zayat.

Western interest in the ‘essential’ work of public preaching also focused primarily upon the active missionaries and ignored the negotiated relationship and reception of indigenous Burmese inquirers and early converts. Within the empire of Burma, the Baptist Mission’s freedom to engage in any public catechesis and worship, including preaching, was always contested, but they never lacked alternative channels for meeting new inquirers and performing worship. A few months after the opening of the zayat, Adoniram Judson wondered “whether it is prudent to go on boldly, in proclaiming a new religion, at the hazard of incensing the government, and drawing down such persecution, as may deter all who

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know us from any inquiry.” Without government permission for Burmese conversions to non-Buddhist religious faiths or even unorthodox Burmese Buddhism, there was no stable audience to hear public communication of the Christian faith, and at times persecution was severe enough that few Burmese dared to visit for private religious conversation. As foreign residents in Rangoon, the American missionaries feared they would draw government attention to Burmese inquirers who might otherwise be able to share faith materials and practice church-making among themselves unobserved.

Illness and death among the American Baptist missionaries also added to the difficulties of organizing the infant mission around missionary preaching. Both Ann and Adoniram spent several months abroad for health purposes during their first ten years in Burma. Though they tried to keep one missionary in Rangoon at all times, Ann’s chronic liver illness left her so weak in 1821 that Adoniram traveled with her to India for six months. Facing the limitations of the religious environment and their own bodies, the Judsons concluded that to participate with God in the formation of a Rangoon church, they must practice a form of community cultivation that could survive without them.

When released from early nineteenth century gendered assumptions of masculine ‘preaching’ and feminine ‘teaching,’ Ann’s Account narrates the development of the Judsons’ practice of community cultivation. Supplemented with more of Ann’s published correspondence in Baptist periodicals, Ann’s letters to her supporters subtly challenged the gender roles within the church congregation and the larger Western Christian narrative about the ‘essential parts’ of mission. Returning to James McClendon’s definition of baptist practice of watch-care and “gathered church” ecclesiology, this chapter depicts Ann and Adoniram Judson’s practice of community cultivation as an essential church-making practice.

of the early Baptist mission. The Judsons’ “change of sentiment” to the Baptist tradition contested their prior Congregationalist formation in church community and provided the potential for further shifts toward egalitarian relations between genders and Western and Burmese members. Tracing the development of the American Baptist mission after the opening of the zayat, early indigenous responsibility and agency among both male and female Burmese converts proved vital for the continuance of the Baptist mission in Rangoon under the extreme threat of political persecution. The indigenous Burmese congregants were also responsible for the perseverance of the early Rangoon church and the mission during the Judsons’ medically necessitated sabbatical to Bengal. Unfortunately, when Ann tried to garner more support for world mission efforts in her two publications while on furlough in the United States, Western assumptions about missionary labor hindered her ability to express the centrality of catechesis and community cultivation practices. Gendered literary constraints again muted all non-white male agency, leadership, and responsibility in the Rangoon Baptist mission. Still, by the end of her Account, Ann had added the practice of community cultivation, which focused on conversion and indigenous agency, to the list of the ‘most essential’ labors of mission. Though muted by Western literary constraints, the Triennial Convention, the Baptist Board of Foreign Mission, and the female societies for mission support heard Ann Judson with respect and followed her directions by sending more male and female missionaries to continue the practices of catechesis and community cultivation.

This chapter investigates Ann and Adoniram Judson’s practice of communal care with close attention to formational knowledge as a relational arena of contested ideas and actions that result in tradition. The Judsons’ practice of community cultivation in particular demonstrated the continual negotiations and reflexive influence between authoritative
doctrine, communal memory, and the entrance of new members into the community. To focus on the creative, communal nature of practice, this chapter first investigates and renames James McClendon’s account of the “practice of establishing and maintaining Christian community” as the practice of community cultivation to conform to Ann Judson’s goal of participating in God’s formation of a Rangoon church and to highlight the creative nature of her practice. The chapter then traces the Ann Judson’s formative knowledge in Congregational polity and community life, which was contested by her and Adoniram’s “change of sentiment” to the Baptist tradition. Ann and Adoniram’s practice of community cultivation, including the male missionaries’ authority to decide the future of community, was further adopted, contested, and challenged by the Baptist missions’ community of inquirers. The first Burmese converts, in particular, took up theological and Scriptural reasoning learned from the Judsons to successfully argue for the continuance of the Baptist mission in Rangoon in a semi-hidden manner to escape government persecution. The chapter then investigates further adaptation of the Judsons’ practice to encourage agency and responsibility of the Rangoon Burmese converts in the practice of community cultivation, which was soon tested by Ann’s chronic illness and need for a medical furlough. The last section of this chapter details Ann negotiation of Western literary constraints and mission assumptions in her furlough publications to raise support for the American Baptist mission in Rangoon.

6.1 Creative and Communal Practice

The relationships Ann developed through her church-making practices of catechesis and community cultivation made the Burmese church “a darling object” to which “every
fibre of [her] heart” was entirely attached. The Burmese inquirers, converts, and friends were also very much attached to Ann also, as more than one hundred of them followed her to the Rangoon port when she departed in 1821 for medical care in England and America. Compared to the vigilant distrust between the Burmese and Europeans, the love shared and tearful goodbyes between Ann Judson and the Rangoon Burmese must have been an incredible sight to behold. Without disputing Ann’s personal charms, the strong relations between the Burmese and the Judsons reveal Ann’s hard work of watch-care, or as McClendon calls it, the “practice of establishing and maintaining Christian community.” According to McClendon, the church gathered by Christ also engages in certain corporate practices that shape the community into a certain social morality. Following the Gospel of Matthew, McClendon describes the gathered church community of disciples who are “intentional or voluntary participants” who follow Jesus, follow one another, and follow Jesus in “solidarity with one another.” As brothers and sisters, they also engage in “the rule” of communal meals, the Lord’s Supper, and other activities whereby they are shaped in the way of Christ, in Christ’s commandment greater love toward one another and in solidarity “in the kingdom.” McClendon also warns that the practice of community establishment and maintenance, as a “powerful practice,” is also a potentially dangerous one as it, “like other [powerful practices], may rebel, ‘fall,’ lash out at the reign of the Lamb, and persecute the saints.” Certain church congregations have done and may currently engage in deformative practices, which are not established nor maintained in the way of Jesus.

Although the American Baptist mission and Rangoon church was a newly created community on the other side of the world, Ann and Adoniram Judson were guided by their

predecessors in Christian community tradition. Much like MacIntyre’s placement of Aristotle in the middle of a long tradition of predecessors and successors, this chapter places the Judsons, as the “first Baptist missionaries,” in the middle of their predecessors, supporters, and successors in the practice of community cultivation. Even at this moment of beginning, the new in practice, according to MacIntyre, “is intelligible only as a commentary upon and response to the past in which the past, if necessary, is corrected and transcended.”

Ann extended her practice of community cultivation, much like her earlier practices, from her formative knowledge gained in Bradford, Massachusetts. Prior investigation of First Church Bradford’s recent embrace of Great Awakening revivalism has already demonstrated the contested articulation of congregational life in Ann’s church and among Revivalist New England Congregationalists. Ann and Adoniram’s ‘change of sentiment’ over the practice of baptism counted as another voice of contest in the traditioned practice of community cultivation. Perhaps helped by the Gospel of Matthew as the earliest Scripture translated into Burmese, the early American Baptist mission church also matched well with McClendon’s description of the early Matthean community of disciples, who practiced catechesis and watch-care among one another. The Burmese inquirers and converts, as co-practitioners, also interpreted, adapted, and contested the practice of community watch-care as the successors of the Judsons in the tradition of Christian community practice. Ann Judson’s furlough experience was also a moment where Ann, as a church-making practitioner on the other side of the world, returned home and was confronted by the divergent changes

9. MacIntyre contends that treating Aristotle “as part of a tradition, even as its greatest representative, is a very un-Aristotelian thing to do,” but to follow Aristotle at this moment would exclude “the notion of a tradition of thought...intelligible and justifiable – insofar as it is justifiable – only as a member of an historical series” (Alasdair MacIntyre, After Virtue, 146). For more on Aristotle’s predecessors in the virtue tradition, see “The Virtues in Heroic Societies,” and “The Virtues at Athens,” After Virtue, 121-145.
between American Protestant and Rangoon Baptist religious traditions and mission assumptions.

In this chapter, therefore, the practice of community establishment and maintenance has been renamed the practice of community cultivation in order to embrace the constitutive ‘rule’ of the Lord’s Supper and also to retrieve other, less public and formal activities of Ann Judson and the early Baptist mission. Ann often practiced community cultivation in tandem with catechesis, as she instructed and prepared Burmese inquirers for voluntary commitment through conversion. Ann and Adoniram also expected converts to take on the responsibility and character of the church. Furthermore, a cultivated community maintains Ann’s refusal to describe her role as that of primary establisher and producer, because of her belief in God’s presence and active formation of the church out of the wilderness.

In Ann and Adoniram’s practice of community cultivation, they attended to an ever-growing circle of relations among the Judsons, missionary colleagues, Burmese inquirers, converts, and God. Ann and Adoniram’s simultaneous openness to new relations within the community and their standards of qualification for full membership in the Rangoon church are best explained by McClendon’s Matthean model of church “in the world” as a creatively confrontational and engaging stance, instead of over-against or withdrawal from the world. Along with his confession that “the church and the world run through each individual,” McClendon claims that “if we are Christian, our true sociality is called the church, yet that does not end the matter: we find ourselves, as Jesus did, engaged by a world that enters us.”

10. McClendon, Ethics, 234-235. As the powerful practice of community cultivation, McClendon draws attention to the nature of sociality and community in connection with the cultural forms of human life. In order to attend to the continually growing circle of relations, McClendon’s description of “selective” and “deliberate” negotiation of the church’s existence in the world needs more nuance on the connection between culture and community. Culture connotes a larger sphere of shared habits, social patterns, historical narratives, and intellectual concepts or worldviews (see Paul G. Hiebert, “Characteristics of Worldviews,” Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008], 31-69),
McClendon’s attention lies in Christian communal ‘evangelism or witness’ as selective refusals and certain ways of participating in their surrounding culture and society, while this chapter focuses on the agency of Burmese inquirers as they negotiated their way into the early Rangoon Baptist congregation.

6.2 Formational Knowledge Contested: Bradford Congregationalism and the Judsons’ ‘Change Of Sentiment’

When the Great Awakening swept into Bradford in 1806, it touched every aspect of Ann Judson’s involvement in community life. Her studies at Bradford Academy became more focused toward ‘usefulness,’ dinner parties with family and friends became social gatherings of Christians for prayer and study, and her attention to religion in Sabbath worship expanded to daily reading, prayer, and religious lectures. There was also, as seen in the prior chapter, a revitalization of congregational participation. As a community, Jonathan Allen, the congregation, and the town of Bradford turned their aspirations for social respectability into benevolence activity among the poor and energetic support for missions.

Many aspects of community life within the First Church of Bradford did not change, however. The emphasis on ‘experiential religion’ did shift the congregation’s emphasis on the nature of conversion, but as Congregationalists, and descendants of Puritan separatists, their community life had always been conceived, in some form or fashion, on the marks of conversion. The Judsons’ ‘changed sentiments’ on the manner of baptism was, on the one hand, a full embrace of New Light Congregational logic of regenerate membership. It was which “govern life even in its solitude or in the limiting case where only ‘two walk together’ (Amos 3:3)” (Ethics, 166). Community, while indeed “governed” largely by the sphere of culture, is a relational grouping of people, who daily negotiate their relationships within shared practices. A community is made up of various persons who, by biological design and differences in nurture, already come with varying historical narratives, habits, interests, and intellectual leanings. As a larger culture is made up of diverse and sometimes conflicting habits, patterns, narratives, and intellectual concepts, the community, in order to live together, navigates through these cultural patterns. As a group of relational negotiations, a community may have varying levels of acceptance for diversity, which often coincide with certain polity structures and gender relations, as well.
also, on the other hand, a destabilization of Ann Judson’s received Bradford Congregationalist tradition of church polity, church and state relations, and gender relations within the congregation. With the practice of community cultivation directly affected by the contesting traditions of Congregational covenant and Baptist believer’s baptism, there were future possibilities, but not guarantees, for further changes toward indigenous agency and responsibility in church polity, a church less dependent upon state promotion, and more egalitarian community relations from the outset of the Baptist mission in Burma.

When Ann joined First Congregational Church in 1806, the church’s practice of community cultivation was strongly influenced by Congregational covenant theology. When it organized in 1683, the members of First Church Bradford covenanted together with God as a converted people, who, “by the power of his Holy Spirit in the ministry of his word,…have been brought to see our misery by nature, our inability to help ourselves, and our need of a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ…to keep us by his power unto salvation.”

Giving up themselves to the Triune God and to one another, they promised to “walk together as a right ordered Church of Christ in all the rules of his most holy words;…faithfully to watch over one another’s souls, and to submit ourselves to the government of Christ and his Church; attending upon all his holy administrations, according to the order of the gospel, so far, as God hath, or may, reveal to us by his word and spirit.”

Furthermore, the First Church of Bradford pledged to “give up our offspring unto God…avouching him to be our God and the God of our children.” Following Puritan covenant theology which emphasized the covenant nature of God with Israel through circumcision, the Congregationalists connected the “giving up of their offspring” with baptism of the children of converted adults. The sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, out of

great concern for taking it rightly (1 Corinthians 11), was reserved for those whose
experience of conversion had been approved by the congregation and had been admitted
into full membership of the church. Those who were not full members, like Ann, her sisters,
and her parents before 1806, could participate in worship and community life and have their
children baptized, but could not partake of the Lord’s Supper.

During the century of Great Awakening, the Bradford church covenant and
membership continued to reflect civic polity as well. When the church was founded, only
freemen and landholding males were listed as “original” voting members. As “tithing-men,”
the voting members acted as the magistrates of church and town. Wives and widows were
listed separately on the church roll of later memberships, with the date of 1682 as the only
marker of their status as establishing, though non-voting, members of First Church.12 Even
before the founding of the church and the instillation of Zachariah Symmes as first minister,
the town of Bradford mandated attendance every Sabbath at the meeting-house for prayer
and sermons, as “worship was a necessity, not a matter of taste. Religion in the Puritan idea,
was an essential part of the commonwealth.” Tempering the rules set forth by the
Massachusetts colony in 1677, magistrates of Bradford were charged with enforcing
attendance and orderly behavior; they would fine non-attenders or sleepers, and reprovingly
cuff children who misbehaved during the sermon.13 Though church attendance was not
enforced by the time Ann was admitted into full membership in 1806, church members were
the only men eligible for town citizenship and office. Hence early on at First Church
Bradford, the congregation practiced a form of the “half-way covenant” whereby adults
could express their commitment to the church covenant in hope of salvation. As “half-way
members,” they received necessary membership for the ability to baptize their children and

12. Kingsbury, Memorial History of Bradford, 35.
qualify for office, though they were not “fit to partake of the sacrament” of the Lord’s Supper. As New Divinity theology and Great Awakening revivals contested the ‘half-way covenant’ and reinforced the tenets of full membership by conversion, the pre-requisite of church membership for town citizenship and civic office also came under question.

The Great Awakening enhanced the informal leadership of women in Congregational church life, though restriction of women from formal leadership remained largely uncontested in Congregational churches. Though males were recorded as the founders, the energies of women led to the establishment of new congregations in frontier villages and farm towns. There is no official record, but it is extremely likely that Mrs. Anne Hasseltine, widow of town founder Robert Hasseltine, and the other eighteen women recorded as 1682 members had a great deal of influence in the founding of First Church. Though not allowed full citizenship status or voting rights in the church, Puritan and early Great Awakening women were well respected for their pastoral counsel, Scriptural knowledge, and daily worship practices inside the family home. Honored as “Mothers in Israel,” these nineteen female members likely had as much influence over the calling of Mr. Symmes as pastor as the seventeen men listed as the ‘original members’ who signed the church covenant and could vote. Whereas the only record of the work of the first Ann

14. Kingsbury, Memorial History of Bradford, 64. According to Kingsbury, this was true at the town’s founding and throughout the 18th century. Kingsbury does not mention when Bradford ceased requiring Congregational church membership for male citizenship and office holding.

15. Ulrich, Good Wives, 217-219. Church Mothers did, as in the case of Anne Hutchinson, overstep their bounds and face censorship (and charges of witchcraft, resulting in Hutchinson’s expulsion from the colony), but not always, as in the case of Sarah Osborn, who practiced a flourishing teaching ministry to men and women inside her home for several decades. In the nineteenth century, Female evangelists defended their public testifying and their traveling itinerancy by claiming the status of “Mother in Israel;” in Brekus, Strangers and Pilgrims, 31-33, 74-75, 152-153.

16. For example, Sarah Osborn had great influence in choosing Samuel Hopkins over other pastoral candidates in the First Church of Newport, Rhode Island. Osborn entertained Hopkins in her home, and gave him advice on certain church members. When the male members of the church voted against Hopkins as pastor in March 1770, the weeping in the congregation during his farewell sermon, “with Sarah and her friends probably among them,” caused the male members to vote again. (Catherine Brekus, Sarah Osborn’s World, 279-280).
Hasseltine of Bradford and other women in establishing First Church are their names on the 1682 church roll, the record of women’s activities under the period of Jonathan Allen’s pastorate flourished, as they organized into formal societies for prayer, benevolence, and foreign mission. The revival of 1806 brought the informal influence and work of Bradford women into the realm of standard history.

When Adoniram refused, as an ordained minister, to follow orders from the American Board “to baptize credible believers and their households,” he contested, but did not entirely overturn, the structure of Congregationalist church membership. The Judsons’ rebaptism by William Ward of the Serampore Baptist Mission, declared a different ‘right’ order for their own church membership, and it also held powerful for future reordering of relations between the missionaries and Burmese inquirers. Now a Baptist missionary, Adoniram Judson would not perform baptism on anyone who had not given full evidence of his or her conversion and specifically requested to join the church. Baptism now became the entering rite of full membership of the Baptist church in Burma, and it was often followed closely by the celebration of the Lord’s Supper. Thus the older Congregationalist practice of performing the Lord’s Supper as a sign of full membership in God’s family continued to hold great importance in the Baptist Mission. Following Congregationalist foremothers, Ann’s primary task in church polity continued to be the cultivation of a community to encourage inquirers along the path of conversion and into full membership in the church, with all the responsibility it entailed.

The Judsons’ reordering of sacraments and membership also held the potential for further unforeseen contest to church polity and relations. As seen in chapter three, Ann Judson was highly aware that her ‘change of sentiment’ contested the ordering of

17. Adoniram Judson to Dr. Worcester, September 1, 1812, in MBMM, March 1813, 267.
Congregational community life. By contesting administration of baptism with what she had discerned through Scripture and theological study, other aspects of church polity and structure were open to reinterpretation as they practiced cultivation of community life in Burma. Ties between church and civic polity, for example, required further examination due to Burmese government regulation of a national religion. Tensions between communal formation and personal conversion became another point of contested tradition, as Burmese families and “semi-atheist” religious groups became inquirers and requested church membership together. Ann herself, as Adoniram’s colleague in the Baptist Mission, contested prior limits to the participation of women in relation to church membership, practice, and authority. Relations between missionaries and converts also created points of contest over the governance and the future of the Burmese church. As founding members, Ann and Adoniram held sway over the new congregation, but rather than perpetuating dependence, they encouraged Burmese responsibility for the church’s future.

6.3 The Practice of Community Cultivation

When the Judsons and their newly arrived missionary associates, the Colmans and the Wheelocks, built a Burmese style zayat, the structure itself suggested catechesis and discipleship as the path of Christian religion. As told in the prior chapter, zayat forms of Burmese Buddhist practice consisted of gathering to read and meditate upon sacred texts. ‘Semi-atheist’ branches of Buddhism, perhaps patterned after Buddha’s role as traveling teacher, often formed themselves as groups of disciples who followed a religious teacher and discussed religious doctrines together. This was the pattern that the Judsons encountered, at least, in Moung Shway-gnong and his followers in the Nan-dau-gong neighborhood. While the Baptists distinguished their zayat from Buddhist zayats by whitewashing the walls and
allowing no imagery, Burmese inquirers were surprised by the Americans’ efforts to style their religious conversation and materials after the Burmese way.

As much as they appreciated the *zayat*’s usefulness, Ann and Adoniram did not consider the practice of catechesis to provide all of the structure for the Baptist mission. Ann and Adoniram Judson, in good Congregationalist and Baptist form, considered habitual worship attendance and participation in the Lord’s Supper to be important marks of church membership and, of course, true conversion. The Judsons greatly desired regular gatherings and repeated attendance of their inquirers, much like Ann’s female society, but the Christian cycle of weekly corporate worship and prayer had no easily adopted counterpart in Burmese Buddhist religious tradition, either among the pagoda priests or the *zayat* teachers. The practice of community cultivation pursued by Ann and Adoniram, therefore, provided an important bridge between catechesis and worship, as well as a guide along the path of inquiry, conversion, and full church membership. By practicing community cultivation, Ann also influenced the structure of relations between male and female, and among missionary, inquirer, and convert.

### 6.3.1 Seeking Faith: A Community to Encourage Conversion

When the Burman mission opened their *zayat* in February of 1819, missionary James Colman wrote of the matter as Adoniram’s triumph. Not wanting to discount the prior six years of his missionary colleague’s work, Mr. Colman did mention that Adoniram had proclaimed the gospel to visitors to the mission house. Even so, to the eyes of a newly ordained, recently arrived missionary from the United States, such efforts within the house did not truly count toward Mr. Colman’s ideas of proper missionary labor. Writing to the Corresponding Secretary of the Board, Colman announced, “Brother Judson has performed a mighty task. He has now the great satisfaction of preaching to the poor heathen the words
of eternal life.”  

Enthralled with the numerous travelers passing the zayat on their way between Rangoon and a large Buddhist pagoda, Colman emphasized the public nature of Adoniram’s new venture in holding Sabbath worship in Burmese. “The gospel must be openly preached,” declared Colman, and “the event” of conversion and church formation “must be left with God.”  

Not refuting Western Christian prioritization of public preaching, Ann and Adoniram were preoccupied with the formation of a community that would encourage, but not coerce, religious conversion. The Judsons’ concern for community cultivation arose partially from the Burmese government threat of religious persecution, and also from their theological embrace of true conversion, brought about by God’s grace, as necessary for full membership. Remembering her own great struggle with Christian doctrine before her conversion, the community Ann cultivated safeguarded the agency of Burmese inquirers, as demonstrated in the example of Moung Nau, the first convert.

On the whole, Ann and Adoniram appreciated their new missionary colleagues’ approbation, but their descriptions of the goings on in the zayat differed mightily from Mr. Colman. Ann Judson described the zayat as “a place of public worship,” but informed her readers that Adoniram did not stand there and preach to crowds like a Great Awakening revivalist preacher. Rather, Ann and Adoniram spent every day in the zayat, “in conversing with all who call; he with the men, and I with the women.” Adoniram, likewise, explained to Dr. Baldwin that, though he had commenced holding Sabbath worship in the zayat in February, most of his ‘preaching’ occurred in daily conversation and proclamation with inquirers. Now in an open, public place, fully visible from the road, Adoniram reported that his week was filled with “receiving as many as came in, and preaching to them the gospel of

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the kingdom,” by “conversing with visitors of all sorts, studying occasionally with my teacher, and preparing for the approaching Sunday.” Both Ann and Adoniram recognized the importance of preaching and Sabbath worship in the *zayat*, and Ann reported “the mission…is gaining ground slowly, but I hope surely” through the practices of catechesis and community cultivation.

By both Ann and Adoniram’s account, therefore, the new era of *zayat* work was an improving development of their earlier efforts to cultivate a community to encourage conversion of inquirers. Much like Ann had previously done within the mission house and her first female society, the Judsons knitted inquirers, formerly strangers to the missionaries and one another, into a community that read, conversed, and prayed together. While Ann and Adoniram gladly received visitors into the mission house and the female society at any time, they dearly hoped each inquirer would return to stay longer, hear more, and proffer more questions. Indeed, every time an inquirer came again, Adoniram professed an increased “hope that God is preparing a people in this benighted land.”

Reconvening her female society after the *zayat* opened, Ann recorded that the women were very inquisitive and seemed “loth to go” at the end of their two hour meetings. Observing such a commitment to being together for the purpose of religious study left Ann with “very animating” feelings about the seriousness of the female members in her weekly group.

Open to any who might call, the Baptist mission welcomed Burmese from various backgrounds. Adoniram entertained petty officers, village chiefs, “wild and noisy” young men, common laborers, and even a few Buddhist priests for religious conversation, and

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20. Adoniram Judson to Dr. Baldwin, Rangoon, April 30, 1819, in *ABMMI*, March 1820, 286-287.
invited them to come again the next day.\textsuperscript{24} Ann, likewise, engaged the wives and daughters of various social classes in the \textit{zayat}, but found them less able to spend hours and multiple days with her in the \textit{zayat}. In response to the numerous household responsibilities of Burmese women, Ann moved her female society meeting to Wednesday evenings, “as they are more at leisure in the evening than at any other time.”\textsuperscript{25} Though not so large as her first attempt, in 1819 Ann’s female society consisted of fifteen members, most of whom were young married women. Over time, however, older married women and their adult daughters also began attending, resulting in a multi-generational female society.\textsuperscript{26}

Among this collective of daily inquirers and female society members, Ann and Adoniram Judson encouraged the inquirers to discern signs of religious conversion. For Ann, conversion was evidenced in a change of mind, habit, and heart. Penning her conversion narrative for her Western mission supporters, Ann emphasized self-examination and discerning the experience of faith in the process of conversion. After a description of her former objections to Christian doctrines, her inability to keep devotional habits by her own resolution, and a long period of prayer and anxiety, Ann “examined myself” and “was constrained to own” new feelings and dispositions she had never before known. Along with “sweet communion with the blessed God” in daily prayer, Ann mentioned a growing love of “Christians of whatever denomination,” Scripture reading, and religious study. These feelings and habits led Ann to hope “that I had passed from death to life.”\textsuperscript{27} As seen in the previous chapter, Ann and Adoniram recorded similar behaviors and sentiments of the Burmese inquirers as marks of their ‘seriousness.’ As the women expressed described themselves “as a

\textsuperscript{24} Adoniram Judson’s journal, April 4-April 30, 1819, in Ann Judson, \textit{Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah}, 148-154.
\textsuperscript{25} Ann Judson to Mrs. S, Rangoon, 1819, in \textit{Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah}, 156.
\textsuperscript{26} Ann Judson to Mrs. S, Rangoon, 1819, in \textit{Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah}, 156; Ann Judson to Mrs. Kendall, Rangoon, March 5, 1821, in \textit{ABMMI}, January 1822, 251-254.
\textsuperscript{27} Ann Judson’s account of her conversion, n. d., in Knowles, \textit{Memoir of Mrs. Judson}, 20.
blind person just beginning to see,” reported they had ceased attending the pagoda, and began inquiring about “evidences of believing with the heart,” Ann and Adoniram suspected the women were on the path of conversion toward becoming “real disciple[s] of Christ.”

Along with repeated attendance and promises to return from several zayat visitors, Adoniram recorded his first serious hopes in a “bright” and “sensible” young man named Moung Kyoo, in whom Adoniram felt “a considerable attachment…and my heart goes forth to the mercy seat, in behalf of his precious soul.” Unlike other visitors, Moung Kyoo seemed “ready to drink in the truth, without the numberless cavils and objections which are so common among the Burmans,…and gave me his name to pray for him, that he might be a disciple.”

As eagerly as they wrote of the encouraging prospects in their letters and journals, however, Ann and Adoniram waited for Burmese inquirers to express their own experiences of conversion, and their desire to join the Baptist mission church. Yet true to their “change of sentiment” to baptize only professing believers, the Judsons were wary to do much more than watch and pray that the encouraging behavior of the Burmese inquirers was more constant than “the morning cloud and early dew, which soon pass away.”

While members of the female society continued to express serious interest, for example, it was many years before any of the women professed conversion and requested membership. A Burmese male convert risked imprisonment and torture, especially if he was of low social status and not well connected to the government or royal family. Added to this, Burmese women feared reprisal and excommunication from their husbands and villages. Recognizing the social barriers to conversion and joining the church by baptism, Adoniram and Ann continued to

guide their inquiring community on the path of conversion by the practice of catechesis and assembling for public worship.

With close attention to the community paired with low expectations, Adoniram and Ann were shocked by the first request for baptism from an inquirer named Moung Nau. Beginning his visits in May 1819, Moung Nau was a recent entrant into the Baptist Mission community, especially compared to the female society and the Burmese employed within the household. On his first visit, Moung Nau was so quiet and reserved that Adoniram failed to mention him in his journal, though he stayed for several hours. After he returned the very next day, Adoniram finally took notice, and by his third visit, Adoniram began “to think that the grace of God has reached his heart,” due to the Burmese inquirer’s expression of “repentance for his sins, and faith in the Saviour.” Astonished at such a direct profession “that from all the darkness, and uncleannesses and sins of his whole life, he has found no other Saviour but Jesus Christ,” Adoniram wrote, “it seems almost too much to believe, that God has begun to manifest his grace to the Burmans; but this day I could not resist the delightful conviction, that this is really the case.” Less than two weeks after his first visit, Moung Nau professed that he considered himself “a disciple of Christ,” and hoped the missionaries “would allow him to profess Christ in baptism.”

Moung Nau’s readiness to incorporate himself into the Baptist Mission community also astonished Ann and Adoniram. In her letter to Mrs. S. on June 3, 1819, Ann stated, “little did I think, when I last wrote, that I should so soon have the joyful intelligence to communicate, that one Burman has embraced the Christian religion and given good

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evidence of being a true disciple of the dear Redeemer.” Though Moung Nau had appeared “backward at first,” Adoniram revised his first assessment. Moung Nau proved to be “really thoughtful,” and “manifests a teachable, humble spirit, ready to believe all that Christ has said, and obey all that he has commanded.” As a man of “no family—middling abilities—quite poor—obliged to work for his living” cutting timber, Adoniram considered Moung Nau’s repeated visits to the zayat and his willingness to sacrifice a job that would have paid him well but taken him away to Ava, “stronger evidence that [the truth] has taken hold of his mind.” On his sixth visit to the zayat, Moung Nau spent most of the day speaking to other religious inquirers, “and assisted me much in explaining things to new comers.”

Fitting Ann and Adoniram’s hopes for commitment, behavior, and voluntary profession of faith, Moung Nau had gone a step further and taken on a role as Adoniram’s catechetical assistant. Astonished and encouraged, Ann and Adoniram looked for more ways to incorporate the first convert into the Baptist Mission community. Moung Nau was such a recent addition to the community that the Judsons feared they did not know him well enough to judge the sincerity of his professions. Furthermore, as a timber laborer, Moung Nau’s jobs often required him to travel from Rangoon for unknown periods of time. As a solution, the missionaries invited Moung Nau to join the Baptist Mission community as a copyist, “that we might have a better opportunity to know more of him before he received baptism, and of imparting to him more instruction than the occasional visits.” Employed by the Mission, Moung Nau spent “mornings and evenings...in reading Scriptures” with Ann and Adoniram. He also joined the mission house routine for private prayer, and “when we all meet in the hall for family worship, he comes and sits with us.” According to Ann,

Moung Nau insisted on joining in and “says he can think of God in his heart,” even though daily family worship was conducted in English and he didn’t understand a word.  

In their attempts to encourage Moung Nau’s rapidly growing interest while simultaneously insisting on time to test the sincerity of his professions, Ann and Adoniram followed the Congregationalist and Baptist tradition of convert examination by other members of the congregation. Having successfully cultivated a small community of inquiry, most of whom were not fully converted members, the Judsons substituted the voices of a larger Christian congregation for close proximity and time by incorporating Moung Nau into aspects of the mission house religious life that had previously been attended by the “mission family” alone. As a result, mission house family worship soon became a bilingual event to reflect both Burmese and American participation in the larger community of inquiry.  

Though begun as a solution for Moung Nau, the Judsons continued ‘testing’ serious zayat inquirers by inviting them into the mission house for family worship, Scripture reading, and other community gatherings.  

In his short time with the mission, Moung Nau actively embraced the Baptist mission community, and persistently pressed the Judsons for baptism and full membership in the congregation. According to Adoniram, Moung Nau “regrets the want of a believing associate, but declares his determination of adhering to Christ, though no Burman should ever join him.” Even when told by the missionaries “that he has nothing to expect in this world but persecution, and perhaps death,” Moung Nau continued to “think it a great privilege to be the first among Burmans professing the religion of Christ… [and] he thinks it better to die for Christ, and be happy hereafter, than to live a few days, and be for ever

wretched.” After several verbal requests, Moung Nau submitted a written proposal to receive baptism “in order to become [Christ’s] disciple,” and “dwell one with yourselves, a band of brothers, in the happiness of heaven.” Moung Nau viewed baptism, therefore, as assurance of happiness with Christ and perpetual friendship and brotherhood in the Baptist mission community.

As one of Moung Nau’s primary religious instructors, Ann’s seniority implicitly contested the limit of female participation in official congregational polity. As she was heavily involved in Moung Nau’s invitation and his growing attachment to the Baptist Mission community, the Baptist mission followed her opinion of Moung Nau’s sincere conversion as “this single trophy of victorious grace, [which] has filled our hearts with sensations, hardly to be conceived by Christians in Christian countries.” Moung Nau’s baptismal letter, on the other hand, was addressed to Adoniram, Mr. Colman, and Mr. Wheelock as “the Lord’s three,” and implied the decision to extend full membership into the Baptist mission church officially remained a vote of the men only. It was with Ann Judson, Mrs. Colman, and Mrs. Wheelock’s informal approval, therefore, and the male missionaries formal consideration, that the Baptist mission “voted to receive him into church fellowship, on his being baptized.” After Sabbath worship on June 27, 1819, the Baptist mission company proceeded with Moung Nau “to a large pond…the bank of which is graced with an enormous image of Gaudama, and there administered baptism to the first Burman

The Burmese Baptist Mission church, formerly of six Americans, was now a company of seven.

6.3.2 A Community Tested: How Public Must the Mission Be?

Moung Nau’s confession, behavior, and continued interest in “the truths from Scriptures” led Ann to praise God’s operations, and “hope, that the Lord has other chosen ones in this place.” Recording the conversion and baptism of the first Burmese Christian, Adoniram prayed boldly for “a series of baptisms in the Burman empire, which shall continue in uninterrupted succession to the end of time!” Ann and Adoniram’s exclamations, however, were more of an act of prophetic defiance, than calculated expectations or naïve optimism. Accompanying their high hopes for more converts, Ann and Adoniram described increased taxation, supercilious visits by Moung Shway-thah’s officials, and mounting political unrest in Rangoon. As the Baptist community entered a time of intense cultural pressure that challenged its continued existence, the Burmese converts, taking up the Christian theological reasoning they had learned from the Baptist missionaries, forged a path of semi-hidden religious practice so that the Baptist mission community could stay in Rangoon despite the increased risk of government persecution and decreased public interest in the zayat.

In late June 1819, less than three months after opening the zayat for daily conversation, news of the emperors’ death reached Rangoon, and threw the town into “the utmost anxiety and alarm.” Day by day, the town of Rangoon learned of the ascension of the emperor’s grandson to the throne, the bloody execution of his rivals and their families, and

the new emperor’s immediate interest in re-establishing strong ties between the government and the Burmese Buddhist traditions. Travellers to the great Rangoon pagoda for the first day of “Burmese Lent” took an “oath of allegiance to the new king.” Late at night a company of them appeared at the Baptist Mission zayat “all disposed to condemn, and ridicule, and persecute.” To the Judsons’ dismay, some of their faithful attendants to Sabbath worship had privately resumed offering sacrifices at the pagoda, and even the persistent Moung Nau withdrew from the zayat for a time out of fear of violent persecution. Adoniram feared a “storm was gathering,” and “something worse, and more to be dreaded, than our own personal inconvenience and persecution” was to come. Added to the missionaries’ discouragements, Edward Wheelock had developed a terminal case of consumption. He and Eliza Wheelock departed the Mission for Bengal in hope of his recovery, but he died before they reached India.

This first wave of openly hostile religious intolerance was short lived in Rangoon, however, and the Baptist Mission congregation, now reduced to four Americans and Moung Nau, continued to practice public catechesis and worship from the zayat throughout the remainder of 1819. For community cultivation, Adoniram, Ann, and Moung Nau worked together to receive new visitors of various backgrounds, and Ann continued to provide instruction and communal care for both male and female inquirers. For Adoniram, conversation with male inquirers took on two different forms depending on the inquirer’s education, social status, and interest in religious apologetics. Among the educated and influential, Adoniram engaged in intellectual debates on finer points of doctrine and metaphysics, such as the existence of an eternal deity. If Adoniram carried the argument

well, these men often returned with members of their family, including their female relatives, for further instruction. Ann entertained many female relatives sent to her for religious instruction by their male relatives, and these women often became weekly visitors or members of the female society.

Most of the influential men, however, continued to be very cautious about open connection with the Baptist Mission zayat. For example, Oo Yah, who had invited his household to Sabbath worship, was overwhelmed by the addition of more visitors and kept his distance from Adoniram, seeming “afraid to have it appear that he had any acquaintance with me.”⁴⁴ On the other hand, Moung Shway-gnong, the “semi-atheist” teacher who was notorious for gathering his own followers and propagating a rival version of Burmese Buddhism, had no caution for Rangoon public opinion and began regularly attending the zayat to receive religious instruction from Adoniram. Moung Shway-gnong became so interested in the Christian religion that he began sending all of his disciples to Adoniram and Ann for instruction as well.

Adoniram also welcomed less educated and influential men into the zayat for religious inquiry and conversation, and he quickly learned that these visitors were more likely to remain silent during their first visit, as Moung Nau had done. Rather than pursue open conversation, they would read religious materials and observe the religious debate around them. With these inquirers, Moung Nau often took the lead in providing religious materials, engaging in conversation, and instructing on certain points of doctrine. These men would also bring along family members and friends for more conversation with Adoniram and Ann, and rather than debate lofty doctrine, would, again like Moung Nau, appear

“thoughtful and teachable.” If these men were illiterate, they would be guided to Ann’s literacy school to be taught reading, writing, and religious doctrine by means of the *Catechism*.

Working as partners, both of the Judsons and Moung Nau gave instruction and community care to the second and third Burmese converts, as they were of less educated and less influential status. Ann’s eldest student in literacy school, a man named Moung Byaay, was the second hopeful case of conversion. According to Ann, “he soon began to inquire more particularly concerning the religion of Christ, and manifested an ardent desire to become a true disciple,” though to Adoniram, he was slow to apprehend the fullness of Christian doctrine. Quiet thoughtfulness and lack of formal instruction, however, was not always evidence of slow progression in instruction. Moung Thahlah, a resident of the mission house yard and the third hopeful convert, attended the bilingual family worship inside the mission house as well as Sabbath worship. In conversations with Ann, Moung Thahlah expressed “a clear and distinct understanding of the way of salvation by Christ,” and he would share with much feeling how “the love of Christ is no common love. Besides Jesus, I see no way of salvation.” According to Adoniram, Moung Thahlah exhibited superior intellect and would, “if converted, be a valuable acquisition to the mission” as a translation assistant.

Whereas Moung Nau had ardently petitioned for baptism, however, Moung Byaay and Moung Thahlah challenged the Baptist missionaries on the point of public profession of religion as “indispensable to salvation.” Fearing the “persecution that may hereafter come on

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those who forsake the established religion of the empire,” Moung Thahlah and Moung Byaay asked to join the church by private baptism. Though Adoniram believed the two had long shown evidence of having “experienced Divine grace,” he and the rest of the Baptist Mission decided that the request for private baptism showed too “little love to Christ as not to dare to die for his cause,” and advised the two Burmese men to wait a little longer and “reconsider the matter.”49 In response, Moung Thahlah and Moung Byaay submitted their confession of faith and a petition for baptism in a “semi-private manner.” Moung Thahlah, who most likely composed the confession, defended their request with an argument from the Gospel of Matthew. Finding no precedent in “ancient rules and customs, [and] it does not appear that John and other baptizers administered baptism on any particular time, or day, or hour,” Moung Thahlah requested baptism at sunset on the Sabbath. This time convinced the two men were “desirous of receiving this ordinance purely out of regard to his command, and their own spiritual welfare,” the missionaries relented and offered them membership by evening baptism. To Adoniram, it was an event where all would be exposed to danger, “and needed a spirit of mutual candour and forbearance and sympathy.” Moung Thahlah and Moung Byaay assured the missionaries they would not recant Christ if ever brought before the government, and so the missionaries “could not conscientiously refuse their request.”50 On the evening of baptism, Ann and Adoniram did not boast of the event as they had done with Moung Nau. Instead, Adoniram recorded feeling like “a little, feeble, solitary band,” and hoped that “Jesus looked down on us, pitied and forgave our

weaknesses...perhaps, if we deny him not, he will acknowledge us another day, more
publicly than we venture at present to acknowledge him.”

Public acknowledgement from God in the form of religious tolerance was not given.
Though the zayat was open to the public, the recent converts’ requests for semi-privacy
reflected Rangoon’s expectation that the Burman emperor would begin imprisoning religious
dissenters as rebels to the crown. Shortly after the baptism of Moung Thahlah and Moung
Byaay, the Rangoon priests tested the town’s hypothesis by submitting requests to the
viceoy for the enforcement of their official status. When the Rangoon priests denounced
Moung Shway-gnong before Moung Shway-thah as “having renounced the religion of the
country,” the viceroy ordered his officials to “Inquire further about him.” Though not a
direct summons for religious questioning, the “unprecedented” nature of the viceroy’s
response caused Moung Shway-gnong to prostrate himself before the Mangen priest in
apology, and then to flee Rangoon to evade possible arrest. Practically overnight, attendance
at the zayat evaporated. 52

In response to the heavy fear of the Burmese government in Rangoon, in early 1820
the missionaries decided that that the Baptist Mission must officially petition for religious
tolerance by appearing before the Burmese emperor and offering him a gift of printed
Scriptures, a disastrous interview detailed in chapter four. Adoniram Judson and James
Colman left Ava as marked men; outside the protection of the Burmese emperor, they were
open targets for extortion and harassment. Furthermore, they feared that the Baptist
Mission’s continued presence would result in open persecution, imprisonment, and torture
of the three Baptist converts. While in Ava, the two missionaries became very fearful for the

51. Adoniram Judson’s journal, November 7, 1819, in Ann Judson, Account of the American Baptist
Mission to Burmah, 204.
52. Adoniram Judson’s journal, November 26, 1819, in Ann Judson, Account of the American Baptist
Mission to Burmah, 206.
three Burmese converts when they heard the story of a Burmese man who was imprisoned and tortured with beatings from “an iron mall” for refusing to recant his conversion to Portuguese Catholicism.\(^53\)

On the journey back from Ava, Adoniram Judson and James Colman decided that without government tolerance for public preaching of Christianity and Burmese religious inquiry, there was no future for the Baptist Mission in Rangoon at that time. As a duo, they decided to leave Rangoon for the neighboring region of Arrakan. Controlled by British Bengal, but “really…one component part of the present Burman empire,” the missionaries would be able to publicly preach, and thought they could easily learn the Arrakanese language, as it was “similar to the Burman.” They had also heard that a British missionary had baptized several converts in Chittagong, but he had recently died and left the converts “destitute of all instruction.” The male missionaries thought it the most reasonable plan “in hope of finding that toleration which was denied us in Rangoon,” while also keeping their “intention never to desert Burmah.”\(^54\)

Though Adoniram and James Colman viewed Arrakan as a compromise between duty and Burma, Ann felt that leaving the community of the mission house and the relations she had cultivated was a full desertion of all she had worked for. Ann was surprised when Adoniram and James Colman had returned to Rangoon so quickly, and her surprise quickly turned to dismay as Adoniram informed her “that not the least toleration from the king could be obtained, that we could no longer prosecute our work in a public manner, and that he and brother C. had come to the conclusion to leave Rangoon and go and labour among the Arrakanese.” Outwardly Ann complied with the decision, while inwardly she was in

turmoil. “My heart sickened,” Ann confessed to Mrs. Chaplin, “I felt I ought to be reconciled to the dealings of Providence, and go where the path of duty should lead, yet my thoughts instantly reverted to the women I had been so long in the habit of instructing, and the little children living on our premises, some of whom have lived there ever since our first arrival in the country.”

55 Of the Baptist mission community, only two, Moung Nau and Moung Thahlah, agreed to move to Arrakan with the Baptist Mission. Moung Byaay could not leave his wife and family, and none of the women in the household and the female society would be permitted by the government to leave Burma.

The Burmese converts, however, did not consider the decision of the male missionaries to be the final word. Moung Byaay had initially resigned himself to the Baptist Mission’s decision and pledged to “remain performing the duties of Jesus Christ’s religion” alone, but three days later he came to see the Judsons and pleaded for them to stay for the sake of the community. Bringing two of his friends as examples of serious Christian inquiry, he told the Ann and Adoniram, “I am not willing you should go. Though the king has given you no permission to propagate the religion of Christ, he cannot prevent its spreading.” Pointing to the inquirers with him, Moung Byaay asked, “What will become of those who, having examined this religion, wish to be baptized and profess their faith in Christ? I am incapable of instructing them, or of administering this ordinance.” Astonished at hearing such direct loyalty to “the religion of Christ” which “no Burmese had ever dared utter before,” Ann and Adoniram Judson promised to consider Moung Byaay’s proposal that the

55. Ann Judson to “a friend in Waterville” [Mrs. Chaplin], Rangoon, March 7, 1820, in ABMMI, March 1821, 63-64.
missionaries stay until the anxious inquirers had time to be instructed and consider becoming “disciples of Christ.”

As they had done for their baptisms, the Burmese converts challenged the missionaries on theological grounds, and pressed them to stay with the community. During a second meeting with the Judsons, the three converts and three inquirers, the Burmese “again earnestly solicited us to stay a little longer” for the sake of the community. Moung Thahlah expressed the sorrow that the missionaries’ expected departure was causing the Burmese, and added a theological argument against the Baptist Mission’s decision to prioritize religious tolerance and public preaching. Appealing to God’s ownership of the mission, Moung Thahlah argued, “the work of spreading the gospel in this country, is not yours, is not ours, it is the work of God, and when the time arrives for its establishment, it will surely be established, notwithstanding all opposition.” After Moung Thahlah had spoken, Moung Byaay again “felt the fire burn,” and argued most vociferously for the Judsons to stay until a small Burmese-led congregation was formed. Bringing forward a plan that he had likely heard from the Judsons, Moung Byaay was sure that “there will be one raised up among us, who is more learned than any of us, and who will be qualified to be our teacher.” If only the missionaries would stay until “we can get a little church of ten members, …then if you feel the necessity of going to another place to preach, go, and we will stay here, and perform the duties of religion, in a still secret way, agreeably to the sacred writings.” Both Moung Byaay and Moung Thahlah argued for fear of God above fear of the government. Moung Byaay stated that, “Though government difficulties are before us, hell is also before us, and those who are really afraid of hell, cannot help embracing Christ.” Moung Thahlah appealed to

Matthew 10:28, reminding the missionaries that “Christ has taught us not to fear those who can kill the body only, but to fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.” With these Scriptural and theological arguments, which they most likely had heard from the Judsons during catechesis, Moung Thahlah and Moung Byaay pressed the Judsons to reconsider the community of inquiry and conversion over against religious tolerance and public proclamation.

Declaring their own resolution to keep the faith despite government persecution, the Burmese Christians convinced the missionaries to continue the risk of making a church in Rangoon. According to Ann, she and Adoniram were “melted into tears” after Moung Byaay’s first petition, and “resolved that we would stay with those dear disciples, till we were absolutely compelled to leave them.” However, Adoniram Judson and James Colman continued to feel responsibility for the ‘teacherless’ community in Arrakan, and thought it wise to prepare a second American Baptist Mission as a potential place of refuge from the Burmese government. The Judsons decided to remain in Rangoon, while the Colmans traveled to Chittagong. And even James Colman, who had once professed “the gospel must be openly preached, the event must be left to God,” exhibited a changed perspective upon his arrival in Arrakan. Though at Chittagong, the Colmans “might have lived comfortably in civilized Christian society, under the protection of the English government, and been usefully employed in missionary avocations,” they decided to establish the mission out among the Arrakanese natives in Cox’s Bazar.

61. Mr. and Mrs. Colman lived and worked in this wilderness station for two years, until James Colman died of fever in late 1822. Ann Judson highly praised James Colman, who “in imitation of the Redeemer, and prompted by feelings of compassion for immortal souls,” chose to live among the indigenous
Ann Judson was also moved by the agency and independence of the converts in the future of the Burmese mission. In her letters to Western supporters, Ann valued the Burmese converts’ action above any of her and Adoniram’s successes in home-making or church-making practices to date. Ann also truly believed that it was the arguments of the Burmese converts and inquirers, which brought necessarily clarity and changed the plans of the missionaries. It is possible that the “church of ten” missionary plan had been spoken of by one of the missionaries, but Ann respected Moung Byaay’s agency in contesting the missionaries’ priorities and proposing this idea during the time of crisis.

In Ann’s estimation, Moung Byaay would be “a name… dear to the Burman church in future generations,” as his outspokenness about the future of the Rangoon church was great evidence of God’s “powerful operations” in showing the Judsons their “path of duty.” A naturally “taciturn” man, that the most “bashful and timid” church member would make such exertions to gather serious inquirers and boldly argue with missionaries about the future of the Rangoon congregation was proof of Moung Byaay’s self-giving actions out of his firmly held faith convictions. As Moung Byaay spoke as if he felt “he was about to lose his all,” Ann wrote, he pled “the cause of the perishing souls around with an eloquence foreign to himself, and which would have honoured the most enlightened Christian.”

Rather than interpreting ‘enlightenment’ in terms of Westernization and civilization, Ann Judson here used revivalist language of spiritual enlightenment. She believed Christian conviction could make a quiet man speak boldly and that Moung Byaay’s speech could contain the ‘foreign’ voice of God. In a time of great testing and conflict within the Baptist Mission church,

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people of Arrakan instead of the English colonial society; in *Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah*, 259.

Moung Nau, Moung Byaay, Moung Thahlah, and the other Burmese inquirers had shown themselves to be “a vine planted, small indeed, but green and flourishing, and doubt not but the same invisible hand which planted it, will water and protect it, cause it to shoot out on every side, till the whole country is filled with its branches.” The three Burmese converts, in speaking up, had become her community of equals in God’s church, and had taught her “a way now, in which God could carry on the work of converting the Burmans, though every Missionary should be driven from the country.”  

6.3.3 Cultivation of Community Together: The Early Rangoon Congregation

Ann and Adoniram, for their part, had long proven their determination to establish permanent residence in Rangoon, and they had previously expressed their attachment to the Burmese inquiring community. Moung Byaay, Moung Thahlah, and Moung Nau had shown themselves to be ‘the real friends of Jesus’ in joining the community as converts, and in pressuring the Judsons to stay. Though she would dearly miss the Colmans, who had once brought her great refreshment of ‘Christian society,’ Ann felt bound to the Burmese Christians and religious inquirers. Cognizant of their tenuous status as foreigners in Rangoon, Ann claimed, “no affliction in this world could equal that of being denied this privilege…to live and die among the Burmans either here, or else where.”  

After the Colmans departed in March of 1820, the Judsons and the early converts concentrated their practice of community cultivation in order to instill indigenous responsibility for catechesis, worship, literacy, invitation to the community, and care for one another. These characteristics of community cultivation practice were already at work in Ann and

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63. Ann Judson to “a friend in Waterville” [Mrs. Chaplin], March 7, 1820, in ABMMI, March 1821, 63-68.
64. Ann Judson to “a friend in Waterville [Mrs. Chaplin], March 7, 1820, in ABMMI, March 1821, 66-68.
Adoniram’s early cultivation of a community of inquirers, but the crisis of government brought them forth, challenged their importance, and ultimately shaped the future of community life of the Rangoon congregation.

As a result of religious persecution and early convert insistence that the Baptist mission remain in Burma, the early Rangoon congregation was simultaneously drawn within the bounds of the mission house while paradoxically becoming a more egalitarian community. Whereas the Judsons and their American Mission colleagues had taken chief responsibility for the practice of community cultivation during the six-month ‘public’ zayat period, the next few years of the American Baptist Mission depended primarily upon the responsibility taken by the converts to continue the work of catechesis, worship, and the knitting together of community. Adoniram continued to oversee the community and engage in catechesis, but was rarely able to sit in the zayat with the doors open to visitors as he had done before. Debilitated by chronic liver pain, Ann Judson remained involved in the daily life of the community as inquirers and converts visited her for instruction, prayer, and guidance. In this new role, Ann was able to give specific attention to Burmese growth in Christian character, the particular talents of each convert, and the responsibility they took to care for one another, including Ann. Her condition also provided a further test of indigenous agency and Ann’s personal connection to the Baptist mission as she weighed the possibility of returning to America for medical care.

Voluntary profession and baptism continued to be an important marker of conversion and entrance, but recognition was confined within the Rangoon congregation. Inquirers who submitted their requests for baptism and entry into the community were tested, as the first three converts were, on their readiness to claim their Christian discipleship publicly if called before the government. Adoniram used the story of the Catholic convert’s
torture by ‘the iron mall’ to underscore the probability of persecution and early death if they joined the Christian community. Promising not to recant before Buddhists priests or Burmese officials, the baptized and inquiring community of the Baptist Mission took care not to openly defy the government enforcement of religion. According to Adoniram, only the members within the mission community knew “that a single individual has actually renounced Boodhism, and been initiated into the Christian religion.” Baptisms were not entirely secret, but the Baptist Mission often took precautions to avoid potential harassment. At the request of a Mah Myat-la, for example, the Baptist congregation moved her baptism date so that her community, in uproar over rumors of her intended baptism, would not be able to prevent her from joining the congregation.

With such high risk for conversion and entry into the community, Ann and Adoniram found more evidence of God’s active formation of the Rangoon congregation whenever an inquirer requested baptism. Ann told her supporters “it is converts of this description that we want; we do not desire those of our making, for we feel assured they would not hold out unto the end.” Ann considered the “lack of any earthly benefit” for conversion to Christianity helped deter people from joining the community out of self-interest, and found evidence of grace that any Burmese “even dare to reflect on a religion which has virtually been prohibited, and when, should they become real christians, they have nothing to expect but afflictions, and perhaps death.”

The Judsons and the Burmese converts also continued to be patient with inquirers who feared “taking any decided step” because of family disapproval or immediate


persecution. Adoniram was even patient with Moung Shway-gnong, who long expressed a desire to become a disciple, but continued to visit the pagoda out of fear of government reprisal. Resolute that disciples of Christ could not attend pagoda, Adoniram offered stories of “the apostles and martyrs, the glory of Christ, &c.” Adoniram restrained himself from pressing further, however, because memory of the “iron mall” caused him to wonder, “if I was in his circumstances, I should perhaps have no more courage” than the “semi-atheist” teacher. Ann and Adoniram also exercised patience with Mah Men Lay, the first Burmese woman to profess faith and ask for baptism, who “wished[d] to wait a little, to see whether her husband and some of her friends will not join her.” Though the Judsons considered Mah Men Lay a “true disciple” who had “experienced grace” early on in her visits to the mission house, they also refused to approve her baptism until she firmly requested it. When Adoniram asked if she was ready to receive baptism some weeks after her first request, he did not accept her reply that if Adoniram “thought it suitable for her to be baptized, she was desirous of receiving the ordinance.” Adoniram told her, “I could not consent to baptize any one, who could possibly remain easy without being baptized.” The final vote for baptism and entry into the church was no longer Adoniram’s authority, however; though he still held a great deal of influence, all confessions of faith and requests for baptism were considered and voted upon by the baptized members of the Rangoon congregation.

Ann, Adoniram, and the mission house community had limits to their patience, and expected attendance at community gatherings. Attending worship at the pagoda, even to

70. Adoniram Judson’s journal, Rangoon, April 14, 1820, in Ann Judson, Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 265-266.
avoid persecution, was viewed as a grave breach of Christian discipleship and cause for community discipline. Serious inquirers were expected to display obedience to Christ by regular attendance to Sabbath and evening worship, regular devotion to habits of Scripture reading and prayer, and an increase in affections and communal behavior, which Ann and Adoniram described as evidence of a change of heart. Adoniram had several exchanges with Moung Shway-gnong, some of them quite sharp, over the “necessity of assembling on the Lord’s day,…the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s supper.” Long absences of Moung Shway-gnong from the community also caused Adoniram to question his devotion as a religious inquirer, though Moung Shway-gnong was always able to provide good reason for his absence, and demonstrate his continued attention to study, prayer, and religious habits while away. Mah Bike, Moung Thahlah’s sister and the first serious female inquirer, was eventually “put away from the community” for her inconsistency in attendance, interest in devotion, and behavior. The Judsons and the community forgave the first two times Mah Bike “grew cold” in her request for baptism and subsequent displays of anger in the Rangoon community, but when she lapsed a third time and “gave way to her violent temper, and involved her husband in debt,” the community did not immediately accept her “repentance and desire for baptism.” Ann and Adoniram continued to hope that Mah Bike

72. For example, Adoniram told Moung Shway-gnong that the baptized converts, “when they were accused and persecuted, they could not worship at the pagodas, or recant before the Mangen teacher.” Adoniram would not accept Moung Shway-gnong’s self-defense of visiting pagoda to avoid persecution, though “my heart did not partake in the worship…I have not lifted up my folded hands before a pagoda;” in Adoniram Judson’s journal, Pyee, February 12, 1820, in Ann Judson, Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 242-243.


“is not destitute of grace,” but she received a temporary ban as the community “put her away from us, as a ‘wicked person.’”

Worship among the community also became a more private, communal affair. After the departure of the Colmans, Ann and Adoniram closed the public zayat and made a “sort of prayer chapel” out of one of the rooms in the mission house. Calling it the “new zayat,” the Rangoon congregation and the Burmese inquirers continued to gather every Sabbath for worship in Burmese. As many of the new converts and serious inquirers were residents of the mission house premises or the converts’ personal acquaintances, they would also gather with the Judsons for daily “family worship,” now held in Burmese. Formerly open only to fully baptized members, the Lord’s Supper, held after each baptism, was now open for inquirers to observe but not partake of the elements.

Ann and Adoniram also continued to practice catechesis within the mission house, but they relied upon Burmese converts to bring interested relations and find other religious inquirers. Moung Byaay, in his fervent petition to have the Baptist Mission remain in Rangoon, had roused two such inquirers into joining him in his request. Though Ann feared that Moung Myat-yah and Moung Shwa-Boo were animated more by “the zeal of Moung Byaay” than evidences of grace, in conversing with them she was pleased to find evidence of “real convictions” and “distinct ideas of the Christian religion.” Moung Thahlah, who had already introduced his sister Mah Bike to the mission house community, also brought his relation Moung Shway-bay for an evening of conversation and private worship with the

76. “At night, after dark, we went privately to the accustomed pond, and baptized the new disciple. Afterwards, sat down to the table of the Lord—two foreign and four native communicants. Three inquirers were admitted to be spectators,” Adoniram’s journal, April 2, 1820, in Judson, Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 265.
77. Ann Judson to “her friend in Waterville” [Mrs. Chaplin], Rangoon, March 7, 1820, in ABMMI, March 1821, 63-68.
missionaries. After two more days of “reading, conversing, and praying” with Moung Thahlah, Moung Shway-bay presented a petition for baptism. Adoniram doubted the rapidity of his profession, as “it seems strange to us, that a work of grace should be carried on so rapidly,” but Moung Shway-bay’s eager persistence and satisfactory “evidences of his conversion” to the congregation made him the fourth baptized convert and member in the Rangoon church.

As participants in the community, the converts displayed responsibility and agency in community worship and gatherings. Ann and Adoniram continued to encourage early Burmese initiative in worship and catechetical practice, and they celebrated new activities and opportunities brought forth by Burmese inquirers and converts. Soon after the conversion of Moung Thahlah and Moung Byaay, Adoniram constituted the first regular evening prayer meeting in Burmese with the three converts. With great excitement, registered in all caps, Adoniram recorded that the following evening, the “THREE CONVERTS REPAIRED TO THE ZAYAT, AND HELD A PRAYER MEETING OF THEIR OWN ACCORD.”

Adoniram counted Moung Thahlah a “great advantage” to the mission when “he took the lead in explaining truth to the new [inquirers], and quoted Scripture with singular aptness. He has most evidently very correct views of the doctrines of grace.” Moung Thahlah also showed great skill as leader of Burmese prayer meetings. His cousin, Moung Shway-Bay, exhibited an early concern for the continued promulgation of Christian teachings in Burma. Soon after his conversion and entrance into the church,

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Moung Shway-Bay asked for permission to visit his family’s village to teach the gospel. According to Adoniram, Moung Shway-Bay, “thought, that if two or three disciples could be raised in each of the large towns, it would much facilitate our operations.” It is possible that Moung Shway-Bay did not craft this plan without influence from Adoniram; nevertheless, Adoniram credited Moung Shway-Bay with his initiative for the plan and his “Christian principle.” Adoniram, by his exhortation to Moung Shway-Bay, “to constant self-examination and prayer, as the means of discovering his own duty and the Divine will,” interpreted Moung Shway-Bay’s permission to teach as a possible call for Moung Shway Bay to become an itinerant native evangelist. 81

Burmese female religious inquirers also drew new members into the Baptist mission community before their conversion and membership in the congregation. They continued to send their relations and other connections to Ann and Adoniram Judson for religious instruction. Mah Men Lay, an intellectually astute, married woman in her fifties, was a ‘semi-atheist’ follower of Moung Shway-gnong; she attended private worship in the zayat one Sabbath after Moung Shway-gnong told her to visit the Judsons, who had “the true religion.” She then became Ann’s regular visitor for weekly instruction, and a member of the Burmese female society. Though reluctant to be baptized without her husband and community, Mah Men Lay exerted influence as a senior member in her family and village. By Mah Men Lay’s encouragement, her husband, female relatives, and her family village of Nan-dau-gong joined the Baptist Mission as inquirers. Ann and Adoniram also credited Mah Men Lay with the initiative to form a literacy school for the boys and girls within her village. Her school would

offer the girls education they were not able to receive elsewhere, and would obviate the need for the Nan-dau-gong boys to learn from Buddhist priests. Ann visited Nan-dau-gong to assist Mah Men Lay with the construction of the schoolhouse, and the Judsons promised Mah Men Lay that “some of the Christian females in America would, doubtless, defray the expenses of the undertaking, and make some compensation to the instructress.”

As the Rangoon congregation grew one by one, the Judsons also recorded the converts’ development as Christians. In her published letters after the American Baptist mission withdrew to the mission house, Ann provided reports on further growth in the “true friends of Jesus.” Ann was most excited to inform her “intimate friends” in the American female societies and readers of the ABM MI, that the Burmese congregants and inquirers were taking on the virtues of Christian perseverance, humility, prudence, attention to the Scriptures, and boldness in communicating the gospel. She nicknamed Moung Nau “Peter” for his bold zeal, his mild humility, and “excessive attachment to us and the cause of Christ…[he] would sacrifice any thing to promote the cause of Christ in this country.” Moung Byaay continued to be naturally timid, but when “convinced of duty, is resolute and persevering. He sits in solemn silence and drinks in the truths of the gospel with that eagerness which a hungry soul feels for the bread of life.” He too demonstrated the proper characteristics of Christian discipleship. She praised Moung Thahlah, Moung Shway bay, and Moung Shway-gnong for their superior learning abilities, “remarkable…aptness in quoting and applying passages of scripture,” and their continued interest in Christ, evidenced by constancy in “reading the scriptures and in secret prayer.” Mah Men Lay, too, was a “very judicious, sensible and decidedly pious woman,” whom Ann hoped would “become the first

Christian instructress among the Birmans.”

Moung Ing, an early inquirer who had left Rangoon before he could be baptized, made surprising “advances in the divine life, with no other means of grace than the gospel of Matthew, and a few tracts. The religion of Christ beautifully appeared thro’ all his rusticity.” Convinced of his persevering faith, the congregation “joyfully received [him]…into our little church” by baptism upon his return to Rangoon.

True to their concern for community cultivation, however, Ann and Adoniram also recorded evidence of Burmese converts caring for and instructing one another. Adoniram tended to report evidences of leadership in the congregation. Along with Moung Thahlah’s zayat leadership, Adoniram considered Moung Shway-bay, Moung Shway-gnong, and Mah Men Lay the “flower of our little church” for their assistance in mission work and their influence in the congregation. Rejoicing over Mah Men Lay’s baptism, Adoniram called her “among women, what Moung Shway-gnong is among men” for her “strength of mind, decision of character, and consequent influence over others.”

Ann, in her letters, impressed her readers with the sense of mutual instruction and love throughout the congregation, as she heard “Birman Christians conversing on the wonders of redeeming love, and exhorting one another to put on the whole armour of God, that they may be enabled to persevere.” For example, Ann overheard Moung Byaay, though silent in worship, “conversing with [inquirers] Moung Myat-yah, and Moung Shwaa-boo, and we trust his faithful exhortations will not be in vain.” Moung Shway-bay “was solemn and spiritual in his conversation, and

84. Ann Judson to Mrs. Kendall, Rangoon, March 5, 1821, in ABMMI, January 1822, 253-254.
improves every opportunity to communicate truth to others." 86 Moung Nau, Ann reported, “enters into the feelings of Christians in sending the gospel among the heathens, and says, he hopes the time will come when Birman Christians will be sufficiently numerous to support a teacher, so that the money now expended here may be used in sending a missionary where the gospel has not been yet preached.” 87 During this period of the zayat’s closure, Adoniram recorded the Burmese congregation’s development and exertions to spread the Christian faith among their relations as often as he recorded his own translation work and religious conversation.

As seen by the multiple examples above, Ann’s correspondence overflowed with her appreciation of the Burmese converts as they practiced community cultivation among one another. Ann also received care from the Burmese converts after she developed chronic liver pain. Though often ill and weak from April 1820 to her departure for England and American in August 1821, Ann Judson continued to receive visits from Mah Men Lay and her sisters. They would stay all day with her for prayer, religious conversation, and comfort. 88 Ann’s health worsened, however, and the Judsons left Rangoon for a short time to seek medical care for Ann in July of 1820 – only five months after the first three converts and the remaining Burmese inquirers successfully appealed for the continuation of the Baptist Mission in Rangoon.

Ann and Adoniram’s urgent departure and six-month trip to Bengal, occurring just as the Nan-dau-gong family was strengthening ties with the mission house and long time inquirers were close to professing the Christian faith, turned into a second test of Burmese

88. Adoniram Judson’s journal, April 30, 1820, in Ann Judson, Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah, 268. There are several entries in Adoniram Judson’s journal about the chronic pain Ann experienced and the salivation treatments with doses of mercury, like a nineteenth century version of chemotherapy.
devotion and interest in the continuation of the Baptist mission community. Adoniram tested Moung Gway and Moung Nyo-dway, two inquirers who had requested baptism, by trying to postpone their baptism with his impending departure. The Judsons did not know them well, though “some of the most discerning in the church” had approved their application. When Moung Gway and Moung Nyo-dway insisted that “as they had fully embraced the Christian religion in their hearts, they could not remain easy without being baptized, according to the command of Christ; [and] that no man could tell whether I should ever return or not,” Adoniram conceded to their request and baptized them that very evening. Moung Shway-gnong and Mah Men Lay, who had previously delayed their confessions for fear of persecution, also requested baptism and were accepted into the church the night before the Judsons’ departure.

Ann and Adoniram’s departure and extended absence also tested their prior efforts to encourage indigenous responsibility and the Rangoon congregation’s ability to persevere without their leadership. Ann and Adoniram were deeply affected by the mission house community of nearly one hundred people who had followed the Judsons to the boat. Remembering “the women crying aloud, in the Burman manner, and almost all deeply affected,” the Judsons worried over the state of the congregation while they were away. For example, Ann feared, “of the ten, who had been baptized, we expected to hear that some had apostatized, some grown cold, and some perhaps had suffered martyrdom.” Though most of the Rangoon congregation community had scattered due to government extortion and the emperor’s war with Siam, when the Judsons returned to Rangoon in early 1821, they

92. Ann Judson to Mrs. Kendall, Rangoon, March 5, 1821, in ABMMI, January 1822, 251.
were met with a sizeable crowd on the wharf who accompanied back to the mission house. By the evening of their return, Ann and Adoniram were once more “surrounded by all the converts (excepting one, who was in the country, and had not heard of our arrival,) and once more united with them in praising our heavenly Father for our safe arrival, and for the grace which had been given to enable them thus far to persevere.” Without their missionary leaders and house protectors (from the government), the Rangoon congregation continued to hold firm, though they had been unable to meet together for worship. Furthermore, Moung Shway-gnong had again been accused before the viceroy for Buddhist unorthodoxy and “making every endeavor to turn the priest’s rice-pot bottom upwards.” Fearing for his life, Moung Shway-gnong did not apostatize, and luckily, found relief from persecution with the return of the more tolerant Mya-day-men and his wife to the post of viceroy and vicereine.  

Willing to persevere in the Baptist Mission house under threat of war and government persecution, health problems tested the nature of Ann’s commitment to the Baptist Mission. Committed to the Baptist mission community, Ann tried every remedy that would allow her to stay in Rangoon. Though Dr. Chalmers of Calcutta told Ann in late 1820 that her chronic condition could not be “removed but by a voyage to America, or at least a protracted stay in Bengal…and that a return to Rangoon precludes all hope of recovery,” Ann and Adoniram took the advice of a second physician, who thought he could prescribe a course of treatment the Judsons could manage themselves in Burma.  

When her liver condition returned with even greater ferocity in July of 1821, only the prospect of death, and a “final separation” from Adoniram and the Rangoon congregation induced Ann to travel

back to Bengal. Though “agonizing to all the natural feelings of our hearts,” Ann wrote, she was compelled by “the convictions of reason, to the opinion of an eminent and skillful physician, and the repeated injunctions of Mr. Judson” to travel back to the West for medical treatment.

Ann wrote of her dilemma as if she must defend her medical furlough to the Baptist Board, but it is more likely that she was convincing herself to leave the Rangoon mission. Gifts of hospitality and free passage to England manifested the care and approval of Bengal mission supporters and perhaps divine approbation, but Ann still wrestled with “a severe struggle relative to my immediate return to Rangoon, instead of going to England.” She cautioned the Baptist Board, that if she found full relief from pain in England, she would choose to return to Adoniram and Rangoon, over her desire “to see my beloved friends in America.”

While away from Rangoon, Ann treasured each letter from Adoniram with reports about baptisms of inquirers, and activities of the disciples. And though she received several warnings from physicians that a return to Rangoon would kill her, Ann refused to listen. She was determined “to make another trial,” and return to Adoniram and the Rangoon congregation as soon as her health would allow.

### 6.4 Educating America: Ann Judson’s Appeals for Mission Support and Female Education in The United States

Though only able to fully practice catechesis and community cultivation for eight years, Ann Judson’s letters to the United States exhibited her firm commitment to these as primary church-making practices of the Baptist Mission in Rangoon. Incorporating the

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95. Ann Judson to Dr. Baldwin, Calcutta, December 8, 1821, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 223-224 (emphasis original).
97. Ann Judson to Dr. Baldwin, Calcutta, December 8, 1821, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 226; Ann Judson to her family, Baltimore, February 25, 1823, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 243-244.
98. Ann Judson to her parents, Baltimore, January 5, 1823, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 240.
lessons learned from their “change of sentiment” toward believers baptism, the religious
traditions of Burmese Buddhism, and the agency of the first Burmese converts amidst the
dangers of government persecution, Ann and Adoniram’s certainly valued the activities of
teaching and preaching and incorporated them into their church-making practices. The
Judsons did not consider teaching, in the complex form of catechesis, to be a separate role
for Ann and her female missionary colleagues. The male missionaries and Burmese converts
also engaged in catechetical activities of proclamation of the gospel through translation,
composition, and religious communication. As Adoniram continued to formally preach
every Sunday, the Baptist mission maintained gendered divisions in Sabbath worship, and
perhaps evening family worship as well, but did not maintain strict leadership divisions
between Americans and Burmese congregational and community members. Seriousness of
inquiry and baptism into full membership resulted in a level of Burmese authority and
leadership in the cultivated community of the Baptist mission, as well as increased
attachment and care for one another as ‘true friends of Jesus.’

The complexity of Ann and Adoniram’s mission practices in their published
correspondence, however, are muted in Ann Judson’s widely circulated Address to Females in
America, Relative to the Situation of Females in the East (1822) and her Account of the American
Baptist Mission to the Burman Empire (1823). For example, Ann Judson used the common trope
of America as “the country favored by Heaven…used as we are to view the female mind in
its proper state, and accustomed as we are to feel the happy effects of female influence,”
against the “melancholy subject of female degradation, of female wretchedness…of our
tawny sisters the other side of the worlds” in the opening paragraph of her Address.99 In her
Account, Ann did not include her latest published correspondence, where she declared God

99. Ann Judson, Address to Females in America, Relative to the Situation of Females in the East, first given at
Boston, November 19, 1822, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 401.
“could carry on the work of converting the Burmans, though every Missionary be driven from the country.” Instead, Ann’s Address strictly focused on raising support for female education, and Ann’s editorial remarks in her Account incorporated James Colman’s early belief that open, public preaching was ‘the most essential part of the missionary’s work.’

Ann, speaking of her own convictions, truly believed in the importance of female education and preaching, but as integral parts of her and Adoniram’s church-making practices. Rather than a regression to Western assumptions while on furlough, Ann’s publications during her time in the United States reflect her closely engagement with her Western audiences. As the female voice of American missionary experience, Ann negotiated gender literary constraints to contest and complicate many of her readers’ assumptions by her choice of stories, explanations, and editorial asides.

Even if a sign of her context, Ann Judson’s use of Western tropes and hierarchical polity were powerful descriptors that over time greatly affected the theory, practice, and authority structures of Western mission around the world. However, Ann’s use of Western assumptions did not overpower, or negate, the earlier content of Ann and Adoniram’s correspondence from the early years of the American Baptist Mission to Burma included in the Account, or Ann’s esteem for Burmese women in the stories of her Address. Analysis of Ann’s use of such language in her appeals for female education and mission support, therefore, must take into account her cultivation of Western relations and the method and limits of female publication in the early nineteenth century. By 1820, Ann also encountered an increasingly limited vocabulary available for nineteenth century evangelical and mainline Protestantism, as the urban depictions of feminine domesticity, and the gendered ‘public’

and ‘private’ spheres of Western civilized life, to describe catechesis and communal relations as constitutive practices of American Christianity and modern missions.

In her Address, Ann began with descriptions of “female degradation” that she gathered from her British and American Baptist mission colleagues in Bengal. Ann Judson, while in Rangoon, had continued correspondence with British missionaries in Bengal and their American Baptist missionary colleagues who had departed Burma for Bengal. The Houghs continued to print religious materials for the Rangoon Baptist mission from Calcutta, and both Mrs. Wheelock and Mrs. Colman, as widows, took positions as supervisors of village schools for poor and lower caste boys and girls in Bengal. Ann’s Address highlighted the “secluded, degraded situation” of women in Bengal and Hindostan who were “excluded from the society of men” in zenanas at an early age, and are culturally expected to “burn themselves with the bodies of their deceased husbands” or face communal expulsion and starvation. The minds and behaviors of these women, Ann described, are limited by their situation into “a state of imbecility” and “malignant passions of the souls.”

Ann’s depiction of secluded “females in the East,” however, did not extend to the status of Burmese females in Ann’s Address. Burmese women were not secluded from public, though to be born a female in Burma, according to Ann, was “universally considered a peculiar misfortune.” Burmese women were also vulnerable to domestic violence, according to Ann, because they were “considered by the husband and father as much the subjects of discipline, as younger children; hence it is no uncommon thing for females of every age and description, to suffer under the tyrannic rod of those who should be their

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101. Ann Judson, Address to Females, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 403. According to Dana Robert, however, “Western missionary perception of home life was uniformly negative in the nineteenth century….The overwhelming negativity with which missionaries viewed non-Christian family units in terms of hygiene, sexual practice, gender relations, child-rearing, and household arrangements precluded learning anything positive from them” (“The ‘Christian Home’ as a Cornerstone of Anglo-American Missionary Thought and Practice,” Converting Colonialism, 141-142).
protectors.” In her appeal for Christians of the United States to support female education for both situations, therefore, Ann may have relied upon her missionary connections in British controlled Bengal, and thus also begun her remarks for female education with negative portrayals of Burmese in order to match Western assumptions of civilized superiority and open Western purses for mission support.

Ann did repeat, engage, and use assumptions of Western superiority, civilization, and mission activity in the *Address* and *Account*, but the stories and rhetorical movement of her works move to contest and overturn Western assumptions. Though Ann began with stories of female suffering in her *Address*, she did not end there, and in doing so, she sought to move her audience as well. As shown in prior chapters, Ann negotiated the style, genre, and audience of American letter writing in her earlier published communication as she explained the Baptist mission and formed her audience’s understanding of mission practice and indigenous reception of the Christian faith. Much like Ann’s missionary correspondence followed the literary constraints of female correspondence, Ann Judson’s more formal compositions during her medical furlough also negotiated matters of audience and genre in order to be accepted for even wider publication in America and England.

With the *Address* and the *Account*, Ann used two different forms of ‘female communication’ to break several literary bounds as a woman publishing in the early nineteenth century. Her two publications reached more audiences than Ann’s published missionary correspondence, and both crossed from Baptist publications and into the larger arena of Western religious audiences. Ann Judson’s *Address to Females in America, Relative to the Situation of Females in the East* (1822) first appeared in the Boston *Christian Watchman*, and was reprinted in a matter of weeks in the Washington, D. C. *Columbian Star*, the Hartford

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Christian Secretary, The Pittsburgh Recorder, and the Philadelphia Christian Remembrancer. After this first circulation among local periodicals, Ann’s Address to Females quickly circulated again in denominational periodicals of The American Baptist Magazine and Missionary Intelligencer, The Western New York Baptist Recorder, the Congregationalist Missionary Herald, and even the Boston Unitarian Christian Register. With her Address, Ann broke literary boundaries while posing as one addressing her remarks to women. Her actual readers, on the other hand, were Americans of both sexes and across regions and denominations. By maintaining literary constraints of a supposedly female audience, Ann assumed a direct voice and made a forceful appeal for education of Burmese women and children. Ann’s periodical success was followed by her Account of the American Baptist Mission to the Burman Empire, in a Series of Letters Addressed to a Gentleman (1823), published by Butterworth and sold in England and America. Writing the first history of American missions, Ann again broke literary ground while maintaining the respectable position of a cordial female correspondent. She began each chapter as a letter to “My Dear Sir” Butterworth, and then proceeded to give an authoritative history of the first ten years of the American Baptist mission in Burma. Following the genre of early nineteenth century memoirs and travel journals, Ann provided content from

103. Christian Watchman (Boston; Nov. 30, 1822; entire appeal, original publication based on note from Christian Register; says address originally delivered on the 21st “when the Ladies of the Baptist denomination in this city organized a Society for the instruction of Heathen Females”); The Columbian Star (Washington, DC; Dec 7, 1822; entire appeal, between letter from Colman and reports on United States Congress); The Christian Secretary (Dec 7, 1822; Hartford, CT; entire appeal); The Pittsburgh Recorder, Containing Religious, Literary and Political Information (Dec 26, 1822; whole appeal); Christian Remembrancer (Philadelphia; Dec. 28, 1822; entire appeal); The American Baptist Magazine and Missionary Intelligencer (Jan 1, 1823, entire appeal); The Missionary Herald, Containing the Proceedings of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Jan 1823, an excerpt describing the situation of women in the East, no mention of female education or story of Mah Men La); The Christian Register (Unitarian Boston; Feb 1823, entire appeal); and The Western New York Baptist Magazine (Feb 1, 1823; entire appeal).

104. See Mary Kupiec Cayton’s description of early women’s contributions to magazines “in ways that downplayed the agency and individuality of particular women in favor of their representation as types,” in “Canonizing Harriet Newell,” 76-78.
missionary correspondence letters and Adoniram Judson’s official journal to the Board. Her editorial voice appeared in the selection, ordering, and description of her materials.\textsuperscript{105}

Though the \textit{Address} and \textit{Account} vastly differ in genre, style of address, and content, both documents are consistent with one another in rhetorical flow and editorial suggestion. Similar to Ann’s negotiation of standard genres to break literary grounds as a published female, she began with the standard Western tropes and polity and then contested them with an alternative option for her supporters and readers. In the \textit{Address to Females in America}, Ann’s repeated references to female degradation as “listless idleness, in mental torpor” was a subtle challenge to a possible lack of Western interest in the intellectual acuity of women and investment in their education. Ann Judson’s assertions within her \textit{Address} reinforced connections between intellectual development, moral behavior, and good female character, and suggested that women’s public education and intellectual achievement were essential for the continued “happy effects of female influence” in America’s Christian context.\textsuperscript{106}

More directly, the rhetorical progression of Ann’s \textit{Address} contested Western assumptions of ‘natural’ superiority over non-Western peoples. Within the negative depictions of women in Hindostan, Bengal, and Burma, Ann emphasized the contextual and cultural causes of any perceived superiority of “females in the United States” over “females in the East.” According to Ann, Burmese women were “lively, inquisitive, strong and energetic, susceptible of friendship and the warmest attachment, and possess minds naturally capable of rising to the highest state of cultivation and refinement.” Women’s education, therefore, would not provide superior intellect to Eastern women, but, as it did for women

\textsuperscript{105} Portions of this paragraph, in earlier form, were published in Laura Levens, “Reading the Judsons: Recovering the Literary Works of Ann, Sarah, Emily, and Adoniram Judson for a New Baptist Mission History,” \textit{American Baptist Quarterly} 32, no. 1 (2013): 47-48.

\textsuperscript{106} Ann Judson, \textit{Address to Females}, in Knowles, \textit{Memoir of Mrs. Judson}, 401, 403.
in the West, it would cultivate the “best native feelings of the heart.” Closing her *Address* with the story of Mah Men Lay, Ann demonstrated Mah Men Lay’s active mind and agency in religious inquiry. Before the arrival of the missionaries, Mah Men Lay had persevered in learning to read though no pagoda priest would admit her to school. She had already searched Buddhist sacred texts with an inquiring mind, which, if it had been “early and properly cultivated, would have hardly been surpassed by females in our own country.” In clear, direct terms, Ann described the proper evidences of Mah Men Lay’s rationality and conversion, and then praised her “daily walk and conversation [which] would shame many professors of religion in Christian countries.” Contesting Western doubts about true conversion outside Western civilization, Ann offered Mah Men Lay as a model of experiential religion and mature discipleship. Eastern women were “flesh and blood, intellect and feeling, like ourselves, and of our own sex;” and Christ “has died equally for them as for us.” As a final appeal, Ann laid forth a case “to raise, to refine, to elevate” with women’s educational opportunities and instruction in the Christian faith as a matter of equality and likeness.  

In the *Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah*, Ann partially returned to American gendered constraints on letter writing, and therefore used a more indirect manner of contesting American assumptions of mission policy and Western superiority. Because of the *Account’s* more overt appeal to both male and female audiences, Ann styled her history as private correspondence. This allowed her to include her journals and letters as historical documentation of key practices, such as Ann’s political diplomacy. Following Western expectations of official documentation and male authority, however, Ann prioritized male missionary correspondence above her own to explain significant changes in the American

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Baptist Mission and continued to underreport some aspects of her authority in the mission. For example, Ann Judson chose James Colman’s letter about the opening of the zayat, which concentrated on the commencement of Adoniram’s public preaching. According to Eliza Wheelock’s published correspondence, however, both Ann and Adoniram supervised “the erection of a Zayat, in which they shortly expect to commence instructing the natives in the principles of religion.”

Even though the Judsons practiced parity in catechesis and cultivation of community, therefore, Ann felt literary pressure to conform descriptions of their work toward Western expectations. Ann also conformed to Western literary expectations in her use of Adoniram Judson’s official journals to the board instead of her own correspondence with a different result. As Adoniram joined with Ann in encouraging the agency and responsibility taken by the Burmese converts, he gave further weight to Ann’s appreciation of the Burmese inquiring community by means of Adoniram’s positive documentation of the Burmese converts in the official, authoritative journal of the American Baptist mission.

Negotiating literary constraints, Ann Judson used her editorial authority to contest Western expectations concerning mission practices and authority within the Rangoon congregation. To do so, Ann engaged in a rhetorical redirection. After naming American assumptions, couched in the James Colman’s language about “the necessity of preaching the gospel,” Ann’s editorial remarks quickly switched, mid-sentence, to encourage her readers to look within the letters “to perceive the origin and progress of the first Christian church ever established in the Burman empire.”

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109. Eliza H. Wheelock to Mrs. Baldwin, Rangoon, February 22, 1819, in ABMMI, November 1819, 217. Mrs. Wheelock and Mrs. Colman lived in awe of Ann Judson, and reported her to be excellent and improving company. Ann Judson, in turn, approved heartily of them, along with their husbands, as “of the right stamp.” Ann heartily approved “their correct way of thinking, their fervent piety, and their right views of missionary employment” (Mrs. Judson to Mrs. B, Rangoon, October 2, 1818, in ABMMI, July 1819, 134).

progress of the church, Ann Judson expanded her narrative of the zayat and the American Baptist mission from public preaching to cultivation of community. As editor, Ann later reinforced her first redirection toward “the progress of the church” in her last “letter” detailing the continued growth of the Rangoon congregation after her arrival in the United States. Before including Adoniram’s missionary journal during the period after her departure on furlough in 1821, Ann directed her readers to the “character, and…the evidences of real conversion, exhibited by those who made a public profession of religion” in her prior chapters. Her closing instructions to her readers in the Account further emphasized, much like her Address, the “strength of intellect manifested by several [spiritually] interesting characters.” Above all, Ann told her readers that they would, “I doubt not, form a high idea of the natural capacity of the Burmans” and prayed, “in heaven you may meet an innumerable multitude of heathen souls, whose conversion was effected by your unknown instrumentality.”

Ann maintained her firm commitment to worldwide mission in her Account, and clearly desired to increase American support and responsibility for mission, but not at the expense of the Rangoon congregation. Though not as direct as her Baptist missionary correspondence, Ann’s Account consistently pressed her readers to support Western missionaries and native congregational agency as the future of American Protestant missions.

Within Ann’s direct and subtle rhetorical contests, however, Ann’s choice of language shows the growing difficulty she experienced in explaining the American Baptist Mission in Rangoon to her Western audiences. For Americans fully ensconced in early nineteenth century urban gender ideologies or firmly outside the Great Awakening revivalist circles, Ann’s rhetorical strategies for captivating and instructing her Western audience may

have resulted in a mistranslation of her mission practices into separate, gendered, tasks of teaching and preaching, and muted the organization of practices around her goals of remaining in Burma and church formation. Ann’s network of Western relations, especially among the female societies and American Baptists, at least, understood Ann well and increased their support of her and Adoniram’s mission practices. The Baptist Board of Foreign Mission arranged a meeting with Ann Judson to hear her speak on “the general views [on the state of the Burmese mission] which she may entertain,” and then interviewed both Deborah and Jonathan Wade about their qualifications and call “to be missionaries in the empire of Burmah, or elsewhere.”

In a smaller gathering of mission supporters, Sarah Hall was inspired by Ann Judson’s “emphatic dignity...discussing topics of vast magnitude and weighty importance” and was later appointed by the Baptist Board to Burma in 1825.

When Ann returned to Burma in 1823, Ann intended to extend her home-making and church-making practices into her new plans for the creation of boarding schools, organized like Joshua and Hannah Marshman’s but for indigenous Burmese boys and girls who were orphans, slaves, or whose families could not pay. Returning with over seven hundred dollars of female society money, some of which was given expressly for the redemption of child slaves, Ann began her female school by adopting two Burmese girls into the Judson family. After the Anglo-Burmese War, Ann constructed schoolhouses and collected twenty scholars in the few months she lived in Amherst before her death in 1826. The Wades and the Boardmans developed the schools Ann had planned, continued the translation and composition work into new languages, and encouraged indigenous responsibility among the

112. Abstract of the Proceedings of the Baptist General Convention in the United States, in ABMMI, July 1823, 137-140; Appointment and Departure of Missionaries to Burmah, in ABMMI, July 1823, 144.

113. Emily C. Judson, Memoir of Mrs. Sarah Boardman Judson, 47-48, 159, 170. Sarah established new mission stations and schools with her husband George Boardman, and later took on George Boardman’s traveling evangelistic duties after his death in 1831.
Burmese and Karen tribes. By publication and by practice, Ann Judson educated her supporters and successors in the Baptist Mission to take on her efforts to cultivate community of welcome to inquirers, appreciation of indigenous agency, and encouragement of convert responsibility for community and catechesis if the Western missionaries should, one day, be banished from Burma or be directed elsewhere in obedient ‘usefulness’ to God.

6.5 Conclusion

Recognizing the growing Western ideology of segregated gender spheres, which crossed into early nineteenth century expectations for missionary activity, this chapter followed an alternative construction based on formative knowledge, relationships, and agency in order to retrieve Ann Judson’s second church-making practice of community cultivation. James McClendon’s description of watch-care, or the establishment and maintenance of Christian community, practiced by gathered ecclesial communities, provided the theological and relational framework for analysis Ann’s practice of community cultivation. Alasdair MacIntyre’s historically grounded description of tradition as commentary or response to the past, linked Ann’s practice of community cultivation as a negotiated and contested extension of her formative knowledge into her new context. With attention to the manner and agency with which Burmese inquirers and converts entered and engaged the Baptist mission, they and the Judsons’ future colleagues are recognized as successors of the Judsons in the practice of community cultivation within the gathered ecclesiology tradition.

For formative knowledge, Ann Judson inherited the classic institutional structures and the informal, communal memory of New England Congregationalism on community

cultivation. Puritan and eighteenth century practice of community cultivation, especially concerning the issue of membership, was already contested during her membership in the church during the Great Awakening revival period. Many of the older patterns remained the same, while female members received more formal recognition and augmentation of their otherwise traditional participation in the church. Ann and Adoniram Judson’s ‘change of sentiment’ to the Baptist denomination further challenged and contested the administration of baptism, and also held potential for further contests and change over issues of church and government relations, communal entry and personal conversion, and the authoritative participation of women and newly converted Burmese congregants.

Ann and Adoniram’s practice of community cultivation progressed and changed during three significant periods of the Baptist mission. In the first period, there was a great deal of public inquiry when the _zayat_ first opened, a growing participation under the Judsons’ catechesis, a steady gathering of serious inquirers, and culminated, much to the missionaries’ surprise, in the conversion and baptism of Moung Nau, a recent entrant into the Baptist mission community. During this period, the construction of the _zayat_ and the Judsons’ catechetical practice the contributed to the structure of community life. Ann and Adoniram extended the practice of community cultivation to welcome new inquirers, incorporate their continued participation in the Baptist mission community, and encourage them to discern signs of religious conversion.

The ascension of a new emperor in Ava and the investigation of Moung Shway-gnong resulted in the cessation of public visitation by Burmese in the _zayat_ and the desertion of regular inquirers out of fear of persecution. The atmosphere of persecution provided a test of the inquirers’ and converts’ agency, and the Judsons’ reception of them, within the practice of community cultivation. Out of fear of reprisal, the next two Burmese converts
had extensive discussions with the Baptist missionaries about the necessity of public profession and baptism. Listening to the new converts’ concerns and Scriptural reasoning, the missionaries and converts agreed to a semi-private baptismal service. The male missionaries traveled to Ava and petitioned the Burmese emperor for tolerance. Their utter failure to achieve this goal led Adoniram Judson and James Colman to decide to move the mission to the neighboring region of Arrakan. The Rangoon mission would have been deserted by the Americans if not for the agency of the three Burmese converts, who would otherwise have been left in Rangoon to practice the Christian faith alone. Employing theology, Scriptural reasoning, and mission plans they had learned from the missionaries, the Burmese converts successfully convinced Ann and Adoniram Judson to stay in Rangoon and continue their practices of catechesis and community cultivation despite the threat of government imprisonment and torture of Burmese converts.

In the third period of the Baptist mission practice of community cultivation, the Judsons expressed their devotion to the Rangoon community and concentrated their practice to instill indigenous responsibility for worship, catechesis, evangelism, and care for one another. Ann and Adoniram continued to be very patient with voluntary profession of conversion and requests for baptism, and interested inquirers were told directly of the dangers involved in joining the Christian community. The Rangoon congregation as a whole heard petitions for baptism, seriously discouraged any attendance at pagoda, and expected continued attendance and regular devotional habits of reading and prayer. Though baptism, worship, and catechesis became more private, communal events held within the Baptist mission house and grounds, Burmese inquirers and converts displayed more responsibility and agency for the Baptist mission. Converts and inquirers were primarily responsible for bringing in new inquirers into the community, for example, and Moung Shway-Bay and Mah
Men Lay, respectively, proposed plans for evangelism and education to their village communities. Ann Judson, suffering from chronic liver pain, received care and attention from the Rangoon congregation, and her and Adoniram’s hasty departure to obtain medical care for Ann in Bengal provided another test of Burmese convert perseverance of community during their six month absence.

Firmly committed to the Rangoon congregation as her ‘home’ and ‘family,’ Ann returned to the West on medical furlough after great protest and promises to return if she became well. Her journey and lengthy recovery in England and the United States provided, however, a opportunity for Ann to raise support and express her views on mission practices to a Western audience with assumptions of superiority over Eastern peoples and interest in proper and “essential” mission activity. After assessing Ann Judson’s use of Western tropes and assumptions, the last section contends that Ann did not strictly agree with her audience’s expectations. Negotiating Western literary constraints to enter a wider realm of publication in her *Address to Females of America* and her *Account of the American Baptist Mission to the Burmah*, Ann Judson used ‘female communication’ style, stories, and rhetorical redirection to contest Western assumptions and promote her and Adoniram’s practices and their continued encouragement of indigenous agency as the future of Burmese Christianity. Ann convinced her network of Western relations and mission support, as they sent money and appointed male and female missionaries to continue Ann and Adoniram’s practices and extend them to new mission stations across Burma.

Throughout every chapter of this project, attention has been given directly and indirectly to Ann’s theological framework in her efforts to detach from the United States, identify with her new context of Rangoon, maintain relations with Western supporters, and her organization and extension of home-making and church-making practices. In Ann’s
published correspondence, any ‘success,’ including the mission’s continued survival in Rangoon, was due to God’s grace, God’s formation of the church, and God’s redeeming work in Burma. Indeed, in her Account, Ann Judson may have intentionally muted her authority, the agency of the Rangoon congregation, and even the official authority of Adoniram Judson and her male colleagues, in order to demonstrate the overwhelming presence of God in mission. Ann believed she had won over her audience to mission if Western Christians believed and took part in the providential works she claimed God had done and would do in Burma. Her exertions and activities, by comparison, were secondary. The continued appearance of Ann’s theological framework and Ann’s conscious reflection upon it points toward the last practice this dissertation will consider – Ann’s practice of theology.
CHAPTER SEVEN

FINDING HOME: 
THE PRACTICE OF THEOLOGY

Rangoon, from having been the theatre in which so much of the faithfulness, power, and mercy of God had been exhibited — from having been considered, for ten years past, as my home for life — and from a thousand interesting associations of ideas, had become the dearest spot on earth.

—Ann Judson, 1822

Against the advice of physicians in Bengal, Britain, and America, Ann Judson refused to retire in the United States after ten difficult years as a pioneer missionary. Writing to her Bradford family from Baltimore and Washington in 1823, Ann told them that her London friends had written to urge Adoniram’s return to America as well, as “I shall not live if I return to the East…But I say no, – I must make another trial.” Ann told her sisters that she wished to return to “promote the cause of Christ in Burmah, and to be successful in winning souls,” but she wrote more often of seeking grace, heavenly consolations, and dependence on the Holy Spirit. Ann explained that when she felt a “sense of divine things,” she longed “more than ever to return to Rangoon.” Adoniram, the Baptist mission community, and, above all, the “interesting” work of the Holy Spirit now held sway in her heart. Like a moth to a flame, Ann was drawn to Burma as “the theatre in which so much of the faithfulness, power, and mercy of God had been exhibited.” Once the dreaded den of horrors, Ann Judson had found her “home for life” with God in Rangoon, now “the dearest spot on earth” and the perfect place to prepare herself for heaven.

Ann’s commitment to Rangoon certainly involved her deep attachment to Adoniram and the growing affection and concern she felt for the Rangoon Baptist mission community. On a deeper level, Ann’s steadfast commitment to Burma was an effect of her theological convictions. Embarking on mission in 1812, Ann Judson believed that God was present and reigned over all the earth. Ann believed God to be the primary agent involved in all of her experiences, relations, and practices in mission, and the ultimate goal of her life in mission. In her acknowledgement of the irresistible presence and power of God in Rangoon, Ann employed a theological framework that she had used ever since her religious conversion in 1806. Jonathan Edwards, catalyst of the Great Awakening and the great American practical theologian of the eighteenth century, became, by way of his published works, Ann Judson’s formative theological mentor. That Ann Judson focused on Edwards on the one hand is no surprise, as Edwards has been judged “the theologian of a vast international revival and the chief intellectual ornament of its American phase.” On the other hand, Ann Judson stands out among other revivalist theologians and Edwardsean intellectuals due to her concentration on the doctrines of redemption and religious affections rather than free will and predestination.


5. According to E. Brooks Holifield, there were four major strains of Calvinist Baptist debates, at least two of which were influenced by the thought of Jonathan Edwards. While Philadelphia Confession Calvinists and eclectic populist Calvinists were anti-Edwards and the populists were anti-mission, a Baptist Edwardseanism did emerge through the works of Isaac Backus, Francis Wayland, and others. Similar to Edwardseanism, Baptist Fullerism was promoted by Jesse Mercer, though according to Holifield, Mercer’s Fullerism was more concerned to distinguish itself from broader New Divinity thought on imputation, depravity, and substitutionary atonement than a clear distinction between the thought of Jonathan Edwards and Andrew Fuller. Both Fullerites and Edwardsean Baptists tended to promote missions, while eclectic populist Calvinists like John Leland were anti-mission, resisting mission societies as unbiblical Christian organization and theologically condescending urbanites seeking to take rural Baptist money for mission projects. Ann Judson’s Edwardseanism mirrors that of Backus, considering her similar path out of New Light Congregationalism. A personal correspondent with Wayland, Ann also fell into the broad swath of Baptists who, according to Francis Wayland, believed in a doctrine of regeneration “understood as the renovation of character ‘in consequence of a change in the affections…very nearly to those of the first President Edwards, and the writers of that class.’” Ironically, Ann Judson’s doctrine of sin paralleled Leland’s “thought of sinners as laboring under a natural, not merely a moral, necessity to sin and as lacking both the desire and power to
explored and developed a theology of God’s character and work of redemption, a devotional spirituality of religious affections, and a theology of mission for the West.

Teleologically and pastorally oriented, Ann developed a theology of mission as a way of life in pursuit of participation and communion with God on earth and preparation for heaven. Mission as a way of life, according to Ann, was not triumphalistic, but a way of continuation of the process conversion to God and a growth in religious affections, understanding, and habits to bring the Christian into closer relations with God and God’s people. Ann grounded her missionary identity and practices upon her doctrines of redemption and religious affections, even though the journey of mission and the daily struggle to make home and church tested her convictions over and over again. Moreover, Ann believed that her fellow American Christians had lost a sense of urgency about God’s salvific presence, in their lives as well as in worldwide mission. Her *Account of the American Baptist Mission to the Burman Empire* displayed her sharpened sense of God’s work and movements within the history of the Baptist mission, making it both a history and a theological invitation to worldwide mission as participation in God’s work of redemption.

Ann Hasseltine Judson continued to seek after the presence of God as she engaged in theological reflection upon her practices and acted as a pastoral theologian. In order to explore Ann’s practice of theology, this chapter first investigates the teleological theory of practice, wherein practitioners move and are directed toward becoming a certain kind of person in a certain kind of life. This chapter returns again to James McClendon’s description of embodied theology and the role of theologians in the search for truth. Ellen Charry’s...
investigation of the pastoral purpose within classic premodern theological writers, also provides a structure for retrieving Ann Judson’s place as a pastoral theologian within classical Christian theology. The following two sections explore the key theological doctrines of redemption and religious affections. First, Ann drew from older Reformed theology and Jonathan Edwards to shape her understanding of God’s cosmic and intimate presence of “providence.” Second, Ann borrowed from Edwards’ theology of religious affections in her practice of catechesis and as a personal spiritual discipline. The final section of this chapter moves to consider the Ann Judson’s theological project within her *Account of the American Baptist Mission*. Ann’s furlough experiences in England and the United States provided the context of her attempt to portray her and Adoniram’s need to learn the way of mission from God through trials and dangers and her theological invitation to worldwide mission. Structured within her understanding of Christian life as continuous conversion and growth, Ann Judson offered a theological account of history designed to cultivate in her readers the desire, understanding, and support for mission as relational participation in God’s great work of cosmic redemption.

### 7.1 *Teleological, Pastoral Practice*

In the introductory remarks to her “particular and connected account of the origin, progress, and success of the American Baptist mission to the Burman Empire,” Ann specifically thanked Mr. Butterworth, her publisher, for the opportunity to “recall to my recollection the tender mercies of our heavenly Father.” As Ann’s composed her history as a series of private letters to Mr. Butterworth, Ann’s gratitude to God flowed unchecked by historical scholarship standards. From the beginning of her *Account*, Ann witnessed to God’s providential presence, “whose unseen hand has supported, sustained, and delivered, when no created arm could succour, and whose loving-kindness has been richly experienced in the
very storms of adversity.” Perhaps unaware, or even in defiance, of the future danger to come in the Anglo-Burmese War, Ann honored “Divine grace” by explicitly recording God’s continuous provision of a “way for escape from imminent danger and peril” and the Baptist Mission’s ability to weather several trials.6

While Ann had recently met Mr. Butterworth in London, her interest and reflection upon God’s active presence predated her engagement to Adoniram and the idea of living overseas as a missionary. In her personal journal, Ann regularly reflected upon, “the sense of a God-given road or journey or way,” one of the central “motifs or strands” of the baptist vision.7 As early as her first serious interest in the 1806 revival, young Ann had been searching for and courted by “the light of God’s reconciled countenance.”8 While aching for “some little spot, that I can call my home, while in this world,” Ann prayed for the gift of “thy presence. Give me thyself, and I ask no more,”9 for God “dost make me to feel the sweetness of deriving comfort from thee, when worldly comforts fail.”10 According to Ann, God would give her an earthly mission field, and bring her to her true home to come in the close relationship of heaven, where “the face of Jesus will be unveiled, and I shall rest in the arms of love, through all eternity.”11 Her journey away from the United States and toward Rangoon, therefore, was a testament to God’s journey with her, as well as her journey with God, and toward God.

Prior chapters have given significant attention to Ann Judson’s use of theological reflection to identify with the indigenous people of Rangoon, to maintain spiritual and supportive bonds with Western relations, and her work as a theological practitioner of

7. James McClendon, Ethics, 49.
home- and church-making. This chapter places Ann Judson in the cadre of baptists who have wrought what is more traditionally known as theology. Lamenting the small number of baptist theological productions, James McClendon chides baptists for their “distrust of their own vision, their common life, their very gospel...[as] the resource for their theology, and theology in turn the means of exploring that gospel, revitalizing that life, focusing that vision.”

Ann Judson’s published correspondence and works were probably not included in McClendon’s survey, even though her theological practices and reflections, in various memoirs, biographies, or missionary ‘hagiographies’ have been preserved and ravenously consumed, especially by American Baptists of the twentieth century.

Ann Judson practiced teleologically oriented theology in two senses: expression of her convictions, and exploration of greater understanding of God. According to James


McClendon, convictions “show themselves not merely in our professions belief or disbelief, but in all our attitudes and actions.” By interrogating one’s convictions, “we can come to know ourselves as we truly are.”\textsuperscript{14} Offering theological reflection within her published correspondence and her Account, Ann too provided an expression of theology “as biography,” wherein she tested her religious convictions and her embodiment of them.\textsuperscript{15} As she practiced catechesis, moreover, Ann also contributed to the practice of doctrine as a theologian committed, even driven, to “the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, the drive to fully explore salvation in Jesus’ name, to learn better the old, old story Scripture tells, to find the way of faith in hard times.”\textsuperscript{16} This kind of theologian, according to McClendon, risks all in conversations with people of other intellectual disciplines and other faiths to explore truth.

In her Account, Ann purposely included both her confident expressions of convictions, such as her testament to God’s sustaining hand in the midst of adversity, alongside her prayerful or reflective entries, wherein she wondered at God’s decisions and expressed her anxiety in the midst of several tense periods.

Ann Judson’s purposeful inclusion of all sides of the mission for her readers, which she called both ‘the encouragements and discouragements,’ and her careful narration of her personal journey toward greater understanding and attachment to God, also demonstrates Ann’s continuation of the pastoral, or aretegenic, purpose of theology. Ann carried forward the classical theological interest in knowing and loving God, or “to be bound up in the life of God,” outlined by Ellen Charry in her investigation of epistemological assumptions and character formation intentions in premodern theology. Classical theologians, such as the Apostle Paul, Augustine of Hippo, and Julian of Norwich, assumed the central pursuit of

\textsuperscript{14} McClendon, Doctrine, 29; referencing McClendon and Smith, 4-13, 87-91.
\textsuperscript{15} McClendon, Ethics, 120.
\textsuperscript{16} McClendon, Doctrine, 48.
human happiness, “the foundation of human self-knowledge and direction,” and life’s ultimate goal was conformation to God. Knowing God still required a great deal of respect for the mystery, or unknowability, of God, and a trust in “a softer rationality that views transcendent knowledge as reliable though mutable.” Living after the Enlightenment and in the midst of the Great Awakening, Ann Judson followed other early American evangelicals who neither wholly accepted Enlightenment ratiocination nor completely rejected it, but sought to explain sapiential, relational knowledge of God in Enlightenment terms of experience and certainty.

Pastorally oriented theologians, according to Charry, assumed knowledge of God as the foundation of human happiness and excellence, and also wrote their theological works in order to form, guide, convince, and otherwise pedagogically lead their reader toward greater knowledge and love of God. The tradition of writing a constructive form of theology “as an aid in cultivating a skilled and excellent life,” according to Charry, actively seeks “the salutary formation of believers,” to persuade them that life with the triune God is “good for

17. According to Ellen Charry, before the Enlightenment deconstruction of non-deductive, non-rationalist, non-repeatable knowledge, Christian theologians followed sapiential knowledge based on trust, inductive reasoning, and attention to emotion, action, and intellect. Sapiential knowledge, therefore, was primarily relational, as it “establishes a bond of common purpose, even care and concern, between the knower and the know.” Charry, By the Renewing of Your Minds: The Pastoral Function of Christian Doctrine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 1, 4, 8.

18. Charry, By the Renewing of Your Mind, 11.

19. Catherine Brekus, in her investigation of Sarah Osborn’s memoir writing, argues that evangelicalism should be understood as an Enlightenment form of Protestantism, and that many evangelical women, like Sarah Osborn and Ann Judson, “were troubled by many strands of the Enlightenment, [but] they embraced the new emphasis on evidence and certainty because it gave them greater religious authority” (“Sarah Osborn’s Enlightenment: Reimagining Eighteenth-Century Intellectual History,” The Religious History of American Women: Reimagining the Past, ed. Catherine Brekus [Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007], 110).

20. Charry, By the Renewing of Your Minds, 17. Classical pastoral theology also assumed a relationship between the author and the reader, and “the responsibility of the interpreter to assist the reader in participating” in the knowledge relationship. Charry follows Hans-George Gadamer, William Christian, and other literary critics to further tease out the relationship between author and reader, and the similarities between fiction and theology for moral development. Charry concludes, however, that theology differs from fiction in two key points. First, theological authors assert the reality of God as a present partner and relation, whereas fictional characters only live between the pages. Second, Christian pastoral theology presupposes a Christian reading community, whereas literature’s “interaction with the reader… [often] happens in isolation” (By the Renewing of Your Minds, 21, 27).
you.” Pastoral practice of theology does not promise immediate gratification, and seeks to facilitate human “dignity and excellence” by convincing their readers that “dignity lies not in their own power but in their obedience to Christ.”

In her correspondence, for example, Ann often combined reflection upon her experience of journeying toward God with a pastoral concern to direct her readers along the way. In her *Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah*, as well, Ann offered an account of missionary life as a window for her readers to learn about Burma and the Baptist mission, a picture of missionary life as chastened trust in God’s mysterious activity, and an invitation to know and love God by learning about God’s growth of a church among the Burmese through mission.

### 7.2 Redemption

If Ann Hasseltine had been born a man, and had been able to pursue a divinity degree at Andover Theological Seminary, perhaps she would have been a good Hopkinsian, and expressed her early desire for usefulness to God in terms of human “disinterested benevolence.” As a woman educated at Bradford Academy during the revival of 1806, however, Ann gravitated towards Jonathan Edwards’ contemplation of divine benevolence as she committed herself to “the privilege of contemplating and loving so glorious a Being” during her conversion in 1806. Ann Hasseltine also read Edwards’ account of *The Life of* 

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22. Samuel Hopkins proposed a “disinterested benevolence” morality, wherein the Christian expresses “a willingness to sacrifice self for the good of others, especially the good of those most in need of benevolence” (Thomas S. Kidd, *The Great Awakening: The Roots of Evangelical Christianity in Colonial America* [New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007], 229). Dana Robert attributes the rise and motivation of American interest in foreign missions to Hopkinsian “disinterested benevolence” morality, as Hopkinsians started the *Massachusetts Missionary Magazine*, which later combined with the Edwardsean *Panoplist* as both groups of New Divinity Congregationalists joined forces against the Unitarians in their publications and the founding of Andover Theological Seminary (*American Women in Mission*, 6-7).

23. Dana Robert also notes the deeply Edwardsean doctrines of providence as “God’s benevolence to ‘beings in general’” and “God’s ultimate beauty and majesty” in Ann’s thought, though later Robert makes no distinction between Edwardsian and Hopkinsian views of benevolence when she places Ann Hasseltine in the “typical…ethos of the New Divinity [that] was so pervasive among antebellum missionary women that even non-Congregationalists felt its influence” (*American Women in Mission*, 7-9). A thorough investigation of how
in 1809. Impressed by Brainerd, in her journal Ann recorded her “desire to live as near to God as that holy man did,” to pray for the world, and “felt a willingness to give myself away to Christ, to dispose of as he pleases.”

Years later, Ann Judson named Jonathan Edwards’ writings on redemption as the sustaining, “precious” subject that had “instructed, quickened, [and] strengthened” her. Provided with theological works by the town of Bradford, Ann Hasseltine had “transcribed, with her own hand, Edwards’ leading and striking remarks on this great subject,” and still spoke animatedly, with “beaming countenance,” on redemption during her furlough in the United States.

“typical” Ann Hasseltine Judson’s theological views were among women’s societies, missionaries, and foreign mission supporters is beyond the bounds of this study, but of great interest, as it may explain some aspects of the ways in which Knowles and others edited and interpreted her private journals, letters, and published works for the posthumous memoir. For example, Ann’s first biographer, James Knowles, was uncomfortable with Ann Judson’s emotional expressions. He explained Ann’s self-deprecatory religious sensibility as part of her nature, for “the fervor of her affections made her, indeed, more liable than persons of a more equable temperament, to the changes, which physical as well as moral causes occasion in the spiritual joys of Christians.” Such sensibility and submission did not fit well with Knowles’ depiction of Ann as a rational, courageous, “noble minded woman” (Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 23, 174). On the other hand, Daniel Eddy, pressed disinterested benevolence to the extreme, and interpreted the deaths of Ann Judson and other female missionaries as their greatest act of sacrifice for the cause. Any bodily, mental, or emotional suffering responded to with feminine endurance and submission, was a testament to the disinterested benevolence and sacrifice of the missionary enterprise (Eddy, preface, The Three Mrs. Judsons, and Other Daughters of the Cross [Boston: Wentworth, Hewes, & Co., 1859; see also Dana Robert’s interpretation of Eddy, “Missionary Practice: Martyr or Failure?” in American Women in Mission, 48-51). Yet Ann Judson gave Eddy trouble for her unwillingness to remain passive in the face of adversity, or to lay down and die when afflicted with chronic liver pains and fever. In short, Ann had too much sense for Eddy, and for Knowles, too much sensibility.


In her published writings, Ann never directly quoted Jonathan Edwards, but she did engage, appropriate, and extend many of Edwards’ arguments as she crafted her theology of redemption, which permeated all of her writings. Ann incorporated reflection upon redemption in her journals and letters so often, that it was arguably her most deeply self-involving conviction narrative. Redemption framed Ann’s desire for usefulness, and her openness to identify with the indigenous people of Rangoon, who “like us are destined to the eternal world—and yet have none to tell them of Christ.” Redemption connected Ann to her Bradford family and friends, her mission supporters, and Adoniram, as they assisted one another through prayer and anticipated the great heavenly meeting when God would gather them in, never more to part. Redemption also directed Ann’s goals for home-making and church-making practices, as she sought a sustainable life the formation of the church in Burma. Both of these goals drew from her search to recognize God’s active working out of redemption and to participate with God, even if she never experienced her anticipated joy of seeing a church in Burma. “God grant that we may live and die among the Burmans, though we should never do anything more than smooth the way for others,” was Ann’s prayer in the early years, and she rejoiced over the early converts as “a vine planted…green and


26. According to James McClendon, convictions “show themselves not merely in our professions belief or disbelief, but in all our attitudes and actions” (Doctrine, 29; referencing McClendon and Smith, Convictions, 4-13, 87-91.)
27. Ann Judson to her sister, at sea, June 16, 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 65.
flourishing,” and the way “in which God could carry on” in Burma.  
Her redemption theology, therefore, informed the manner with which Ann engaged with her context, relations, practices, and every event detailed in prior chapters.

Ann’s sense of redemption as central and all-consuming, moreover, mirrored the centrality of the doctrine in Jonathan Edwards’ set of thirty sermon-lectures delivered in 1739, and posthumously published in 1774. Entitled *A History of the Work of Redemption,* these sermon-lectures explained and defended the doctrine of redemption as “the grand design of all God’s designs.”

Taking Isaiah 51:8, “For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation,” as the Scriptural pinpoint, Edwards reframed the Old and New Testaments as the working out of God’s redemptive work in history. Isaiah’s coupling of eternity (for ever) with temporality (generations) provided Edwards with an important cosmic as well as a Trinitarian frame for redemption. Edwards disagreed with

31. Jonathan Edwards’ letter to the trustees of the College of New Jersey, in *Letters and Personal Writings,* The Works of Jonathan Edwards, ed. George S. Claghorn, vol. 16 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 728. A full exploration of Edwards’ doctrine of redemption in all of his published works is beyond the scope of this chapter. According to Sydney Ahlstrom, Edwards’ works display “the remarkable unity of his vision.” While all of Edwards’ literary works arguably incorporate his doctrine of redemption and Ann could have drawn from any of them for her transcriptions on redemption, the structure, argument, and narrative of these posthumously published sermon-lectures display the cohesion and systematic attention Edwards would have given to his future summa unified in his exposition “of God’s whole work of redemption as it is revealed in sacred history, world history, and even nature itself” (Sydney Ahlstrom, *Theology in America,* 151).
32. Flush with the confidence of Enlightenment rationality, Edwards crafted a “hermeneutic with which to interpret history itself” and added it to older methods of Augustinian “theories concerning the nature
those who imparted a small view of redemption as “the purchase of salvation” and “deliverance” that was “begun and finished with Christ’s humiliation, or it was all wrought while Christ was upon the earth.” Rather, when “taken more largely,” as Edwards desired his hearers to do, redemption included “all Christ does in the great affair as mediator in any of his offices, either Prophet, Priest or King, either when he was in the world in his human [form], or before or since,” and “also what the Father and the Holy Ghost have done as united or confederated in this design of redeeming sinful men; or in one word, all that is wrought in the execution of the eternal covenant of redemption.”

In the very first sermon of A History of the Work of Redemption, therefore, Edwards pressed both the eternal and the temporal together toward a cosmic, all encompassing view of redemption.

In her deliberations upon and defense of mission, Ann often expressed her theology of redemption in the language of providence. Shortly after her arrival in Rangoon, Ann wrote, “the existence and perpetuity of this mission, still in an infant state, depend in a peculiar manner on the interposing hand of providence, and, from this impression alone, we are encouraged still to remain.”

33. Jonathan Edwards, “Sermon One,” A History of the Work of Redemption, 117-118. Edwards’ bold statement on the expansiveness of redemption placed him squarely in Enlightenment discourse on creation and nature. In A History of the Work of Redemption, Edwards offered a mediated, theological account of creation to address Lockean and Newtonian presuppositions of the universe. Edwards’ account of creation did not defy laws of science, and he also sought to uphold God’s sovereignty and creation ex nihilo. According to Edwards, “it was [God’s] last end, that there might be a glorious and abundant emanation of his divine fullness of good ad extra, or without himself, and the disposition to communicate himself or diffuse his own fullness, which we must conceive of being originally in God as a perfection of his nature, was what moved him to create the world.” There was no lack in God requiring creation, or, against the Deists, a distance between God and creation. Rather, Edwards used consciously Trinitarian language to describe the communication of God’s glory to Godself. As the Persons of the Trinity dynamically and relationally communicated glory to one another, God also created the world in order to communicate the “fullness of [God’s] perfections, beauty, and happiness.”

The telos of creation, so conceived by Edwards, was a relational communication springing from God’s perfect character “originally” disposed to communicate, or reveal, Godself (Edwards, A History of the Work of Redemption, 428-435, quoted in Stephen Holmes, God of Grace and God of Glory, 110, 47).

the hands of God, and in his own time he will turn them unto himself.”

Far away from church bells and Christian society, Ann found she could “find comfort and peace in feeling that [God] is everywhere present,” rejoiced over the “inestimable privileges” of Christian worship in a foreign land, and reinforced her sense of God’s character as “a faithful, covenant-keeping God, who is worthy of the entire trust and confidence of all his creatures.” In her sense of God’s sustaining and gracious providence on both sides of the globe, Ann crafted a theological sense of redemption much like Edwards’ closing arguments of *A History of the Work of Redemption*. He too argued that ultimately, “the Work of Redemption is the greatest of all God’s works that we have any notice of, and that ‘tis the end of all his other work…. all other works of providence are reducible hither; they are all subordinate to the great affair of redemption.” God’s providence, therefore, sustained creation, preserved the Baptist mission, if God willed, for the larger purpose of redemption.

As the descendent of Massachusetts Puritans and Congregationalists, Ann continued to believe in the close, “interposing hand” of God’s providence, including within afflictions and suffering. Searching for signs of personal damnation and election, introspective Puritans interpreted trials as opportunities for spiritual instruction, testing by Satan, and God’s punishment for sin. Ann Judson often interpreted her experiences of affliction as opportunity for further instruction and perseverance, borrowing the phrase from the book of Job, “though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.” Ann used this line shortly after her engagement to Adoniram in 1810, for example, when she experienced little feeling or interest in religion though she had “been much engaged with divine truth.” Ann wrote, “I


have long since given myself to God; he has an undoubted right to dispose of me, and try me as he pleases. Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.\textsuperscript{39} In 1816, Ann quoted Job as “the language I would adopt” in response to the death of her first born son, Roger Williams Judson. In her grief, Ann wrote that her and Adoniram’s “one source of recreation” in their lonely existence in Rangoon, “is denied us – this must be removed, to show us that we need no other source of enjoyment but God himself.”\textsuperscript{40} In 1818, Ann wrote of the temptation “to complain of these dark dispensations of Providence” during the growing political troubles between Burma and Bengal, before quoting Job once again.\textsuperscript{41} Ann’s interpretation of difficulty and tragedy as God’s interposing hand, reveal the continued influence of older, Reformed Congregationalism’s emphasis on God’s sovereignty and humanity’s obedience.

In her understanding of God’s providential work in creation, therefore, Ann combined the “larger sense” of God’s character and the purpose of creation in regards to redemption, with older, Reformed views of providence as God’s “interposing hand.” Whenever Ann reflected upon her proper response, even in periods of trial or affliction, she turned to the “larger sense” of God’s dynamic, cosmic work of redemption. In her first trials of religious apathy, Ann turned from Job to prayer and thanksgiving for, “he who has styled himself a prayer hearing God, graciously manifested himself to my soul, and made it easy and pleasant to pray.” Near to God, Ann felt “desirous that the whole world should become acquainted with this Saviour” and expressed her willingness to go leave “give up temporal comforts” as a missionary.\textsuperscript{42} In her grief over her son, Ann turned toward the fulfillment of redemption in heaven, Ann drew comfort in the promise that her little Roger, “is now, I

\textsuperscript{39} Ann Judson’s journal, November 25, 1810, in Knowles, \textit{Memoir of Mrs. Judson}, 47.
\textsuperscript{41} Ann Judson to her parents, Rangoon, June 18, 1818, in Ann Judson, \textit{Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah}, 118-119.
\textsuperscript{42} Ann Judson’s journal, November 25, 1810, in Knowles, \textit{Memoir of Mrs. Judson}, 47.
doubt not, in the immediate presence of that Saviour, of whom he was ignorant in this
world, …Who would not, from motives of gratitude, love a Being who has made such
provision for a perishing world?” Quoting Lamentations, “‘Behold, and see if there be any
sorrow like unto my sorrow,’” Ann wrote, “I would also say with him, ‘It is of the Lord's
mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.’” 43 And in 1818, when
“nothing but darkness, gloom, and disappointment” surrounded the mission, Ann wrote, “I
am easy and tranquil, because I am resolved on a course which may appear to you and
others, rash and presumptuous, but to me the path of duty, and the one I ought to pursue.”
Though George Hough pressed for the entire removal of the Baptist Mission for Bengal,
Ann trusted her internal misgivings, and decided to stay on in Rangoon, alone, to wait for
Adoniram. 44 Crafting a theology of providence of God’s close and overarching cosmic work
of redemption, Ann quoted Job not as a fatalistic slogan, but as a lens for viewing the cosmic
nature of redemption and discerning her proper response.

Ann wrote often of God’s providence and the cosmic, all-encompassing nature of
redemption, and she also, like Edwards, continued to view the work and person of Jesus
Christ as “the hermeneutical key to redemption and history.” 45 For Edwards, though the
work of redemption “‘tis but one design…in which all the persons of the Trinity do
conspire,” 46 the work and person of Jesus Christ from the incarnation to the resurrection
ordered “all that was done before the beginning of time in the eternal councils of God, and
that eternal transaction there was between the persons of the Trinity, chiefly respected this

43. Ann Judson to Mrs. C., May 10, 1816, in Ann Judson, Account of the American Baptist Mission to
Burmah, 58-59.
44. Ann Judson to her parents, July 14, 1818, in Ann Judson, Account of the American Baptist Mission to
Burmah, 120-121.
period.” Likewise, Ann described Jesus as “precious, amiable, and glorious, as the author” of the Christian religion, offering both “instruction and consolation” in his death on the cross. After conversing with Adoniram upon the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension narratives in the New Testament, Ann reflected upon them by entering “into the feelings of the disciples, when receiving his last instructions; when deserting him through fear; when following him to the cross; when consigning him to the tomb. And I could almost participate in their joy, when they saw him risen from the dead; when he appeared in the midst of them, telling them that he had all power in heaven and earth.” Just as she perceived the disciples “felt that Jesus was indeed the Christ—the Son of God…, and announced themselves the followers of Jesus,” Ann too exhorted, “Let the whole world hear the story of thy dying love. Let heathen nations know that thou didst dwell in flesh, and die for sinners, and now art able and mighty to save.”

Whenever Ann described her mission work as participation in the “cause of Christ,” she referenced Jesus as Savior, and the Lord of the kingdom, whom she loved and desired to serve. “Our hopes of future happiness are fixed on the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world,” Ann wrote of herself and Adoniram. Freed from laboring for her salvation, Ann’s “one wish” was to be “instrumental in leading these Burmans to partake of the same source of happiness with ourselves.” Using language concerning ‘future happiness’ and ‘partaking…with’ in connection with redemption, she appropriated Edwards’ sense of atonement as the “purchase of eternal happiness” of the saints before God in

heaven.\textsuperscript{52} In the times between Christ’s ascension and his parousia in glory, “the completeness of the purchase has been made.” According to Edwards, no person, in self-righteousness, can attain redemption, but must “seek an interest in Christ,” and put all trust in Christ’s redemptive work.\textsuperscript{53}

There is no doubt that Ann, like Edwards, saw her historical period as “taken up in bringing about the great effect or success of Christ’s purchase.”\textsuperscript{54} Also like Edwards, Ann remained ecclesially oriented in her participation in God’s accomplishment of redemption through her church-making practices. Edwards described the church as following Christ’s humiliation, in a “suffering spirit.” The testing of the suffering spirit of the church in trial, was also ordered by God’s providence, though under God’s larger cosmic Work of Redemption, through which “God would go on to accomplish deliverance and salvation for the church from all her enemies.”\textsuperscript{55} Ann interpreted experiences of danger and opposition, especially early on in the Baptist mission, along the lines of the “suffering spirit” of the church. She was convinced, “that the gospel must introduced into this country, through many trials and difficulties; through much self-denial and earnest prayer…. But all things are possible with God, and he is our only hope and confidence.”\textsuperscript{56}

Ann’s appreciation and appropriation of Edwards’ account of redemption also included Edwards’ millenialism, though she rarely mentioned them in her published correspondence. Once, in 1821, positive news about other worldwide mission efforts in the Baptist Magazine and the steadfastness of the Burmese Baptist church led Ann to exclaim, “What wonders God is performing in America, and what interesting missions are established

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\textsuperscript{52} Edwards, \textit{A History of the Work of Redemption}, 307. \\
\textsuperscript{53} Edwards, \textit{A History of the Work of Redemption}, 342. \\
\textsuperscript{54} Edwards, \textit{A History of the Work of Redemption}, 453-454. \\
\textsuperscript{55} Edwards, \textit{A History of the Work of Redemption}, 453-454, 116. \\
\textsuperscript{56} Ann Judson’s journal, Rangoon, April 16, 1815, in Judson, \textit{Account of the American Baptist Mission to Barmah}, 35.
\end{flushright}
in different parts of the world! Who can doubt that the millennial glory is at hand, and that
time is rapidly advancing when the whole world will be filled with the knowledge of the
Lord?"\textsuperscript{57} Here, Ann echoed Edwards’ account of worldwide preaching and acceptance of the
gospel within his account of the millennium, where “one nation shall be enlightened and
converted after another, one false religion and false day of worship exploded after another”
would be a work accomplished by “preaching of the gospel, and the use of ordinary means
of grace.”\textsuperscript{58} The work of worldwide preaching to the heathen nations in Edwards’ sermons,
was a sign of God’s bringing about the completion of the redemption.

More often, Ann followed Edwards’ emphasis upon the comprehensive and
consistent work of God in redemption to encourage persistent and prayerful support, rather
than promising or exhibiting confidence that a great number of Burmese would join the
Christian faith right away. In her correspondence with the United States, Ann described
herself as a participant in the spread of gospel enlightenment by ‘ordinary means of grace.’
Hoping that “our friends and patrons will not be discouraged, because not one of the
Burmans who have heard the gospel have embraced it,” Ann reminded her readers, “God
will not call us to account for not converting the heathen. This, this is the work he reserves
for himself.” However, Ann fully believed that God “will call us to an account for not using
the means; this part of the work he assigned to his creatures to perform.” On judgment day,
warned Ann, “the very blood of their souls will be required at the hands of Christians, who

\textsuperscript{57} Ann Judson to Mrs. Kendall, Rangoon, March 5, 1821, in \textit{ABMMI}, January 1822, 254.
\textsuperscript{58} Edwards follows Revelation and Daniel quite closely in these last sermons for a chronology of
events; In Edwards’ chronology following Daniel and Revelation, a last great apostasy and the ultimate triumph
of Christ over Satan in the second coming is yet to come. Edwards is a postmillennial, though he describes a
gradual enlightening, a time of peace, and then a final trial of apostasy, suffering, after which Christ comes
again to earth for final judgment. The overall rhetorical sense of Edwards’ Last Day sermons emphasize the
dynamic working out of Redemption, and the intimate, providential presence of God throughout the last days
(\textit{A History of the Work of Redemption}, Sermons 26-30).
neglect to make exertions to send the gospel among them.” Conceived as an act of faithfulness, Ann included her readers’ support of modern missions, as well as her life and work “the post to which God hath appointed for us,” as participation in the overarching work of God’s redemption.

Above any visions of ‘millennial glory,’ however, Ann understood her ‘interest’ in the ‘cause of Christ,’ or the atonement, as a relational event. Jonathan Edwards’ description of atonement also focused less on “abstract ‘Justice,’ or even ‘Goodness’ that must be satisfied.” Despite his use of legal and mercantile vocabulary of “satisfaction” and “purchase,” Edwards argued “the life, death, and resurrection of Christ must make sense as a relational event between Christ, His Father, and the elect.” Edwards understood all of creation and redemption as a dynamic theosis event, occurring both temporally and outside of historical time. Drawing creation toward Godself through self-giving love, Edwards explained, “the happiness of the creature aimed at is the happiness in union” with God, making the very definition of love relational, as “consent of being to being.”

According to Edwards, heaven and the Last Day promised an eternally dynamic rest, “with the saints

61. Holmes, God of Grace and God of Glory, 146. In such a relational history of redemption, God is “simultaneously other than, and involved with, His world;” God communicates, and creatures participate in response. For example, according to Edwards, “God communicates divine knowledge, but the creature’s knowledge of God is simply participation in God’s knowledge of Himself.” Just as the creature is dependent on God for all divine knowledge, any virtue and holiness is a participation in “God’s own moral excellency.” Even creaturely happiness, “rejoicing in who God is,” is a participation in “God’s own joy in [God]self” (Holmes, God of Grace and God of Glory, 48, quoting Edwards, End of Creation, in Ethical Writings, 440).
62. According to Edwards, as God created to “gratify his benevolence” and “exercise his goodness,” God makes Godself God’s ultimate end, which means creation’s final home is in God, and with God, eternally (Holmes, God of Grace and God of Glory, 48, quoting Edwards, End of Creation, in Ethical Writings, 440).
63. Jonathan Edwards, Ethical Writings, 533; quoted in Stephen Holmes, God of Grace and God of Glory, 62 and James McClendon, Ethics, 137. The relational nature between God and creation requires a two-sided tension here, as Jenson, Holmes, and McClendon all recognize a danger of making God coercively selfish, or worse, excusing human selfishness by making creatures God’s ultimate end (Jenson, America’s Theologian, 38-39; Holmes, God of Grace and God of Glory, 62; McClendon, Ethics, 137). The endless circle of self-giving and receiving love between God and creatures mirrors Trinitarian perichoresis, but God’s priority, perfection, and ultimate end requires the distinction of communication and participation.
moving into closer and closer union with God for all eternity.” Edwards did argue there
would be an end to the work of redemption but the fruits of redemption, the ever-closer
union, “never will have an end.”64 As seen above in her prayer for God to “Give me thyself,
and I ask no more,”65 Ann too understood heaven, Christian perfection, and the telos of
redemption “as our coming to live in God, to be embraced by his life.”66 Ann’s visions of
heaven also reflected her sense of ever-closer union with God in heaven, where “the face of
Jesus will be unveiled, and I shall rest in the arms of love, through all eternity.”67 To journey
home to God, Ann narrated her teleological direction toward Christ through her account of
religious affections.

7.3 Religious Affections

On her seventeenth birthday, Ann Hasseltine reflected upon the monumental change
of life direction that had been wrought by the Bradford revival during the past year. “If I
know anything,” declared Ann, “I do desire to live a life of strict religion, to enjoy the
presence of God…I find more real enjoyment in contrition for sin, excited by a view of the
adorable moral perfections of God, than in all earthly joys.” As a result, prior social
enjoyments paled in comparison to the “solid happiness” Ann experienced “in one evening
meeting, when divine truths are impressed on my heart by the powerful influences of the
Holy Spirit.” Even so, Ann continued to examine the “sincerity and truth” of her
conversion. “Either I have been made, through the mercy of God, a partaker of divine

64. Holmes, God of Grace, and God of Glory, 62, 112-113. Edwards specified that “The Work of
Redemption is not an eternal work, that is, it is not a work always a-doing and never accomplished. But the
fruits of this work are eternal fruits. The work has an issue, but in the issue the end will be obtained, which end
never will have an end” (Edwards, A History of the Work of Redemption, 119). The eternal dynamism of relations
between God and God’s creatures greatly contributed to Edwards’ millenarianist descriptions of the eschaton (see
E. Brooks Holifield, Theology in America, 122-124).
66. Robert Jenson, America’s Theologian, 177. In his description of Edwards’ eschatology, Jenson draws
primarily from Edwards’ journals and miscellanies. As a unified, cohesive thinker, Edwards’ journals and his
published A History of the Work of Redemption were probably similar.
grace,” she wrote, “or I have been fatally deceiving myself, and building on a sandy foundation,” as “I feel myself to be full of sin and destitute of all strength to persevere.”

Examining her feelings, her “present views of divine things,” and her “desire to live a life of strict religion” in comparison with “what they were, at this time last year,” Ann confessed, “I cannot but hope I am a new creature, and have begun a new life.”

Such a pious entry, so true to Puritan self-examination and Great Awakening concern for experience, marked Ann’s early interest in religious affections. Though brought up as a Congregationalist and a latecomer to the Baptist tradition, Ann’s theology of religious affections closely aligned with her fellow New England Baptists. According to Boston pastor and mission supporter Francis Wayland, most Baptists believed in a doctrine of regeneration “understood as the renovation of character ‘in consequence of a change in the affections…very nearly to those of the first President Edwards, and the writers of that class.”

By the early nineteenth century, Samuel Hopkins’ emphasis upon self-sacrificial human effort without “a thought, that God loves him and designs to save him,” known as disinterested benevolence, had turned Andover Seminary toward a social-reform oriented theology of religious affections. Ann Judson, however, claimed her ability to sacrifice all “good things of this world,” was due to an increase in her ardent desire for “a heavenly inheritance that will never fail me.” “I would rather be deprived of [worldly things],” wrote Ann, “than that they should deprive me of the enjoyment of the light of God’s countenance…I desire that the great, the infinite God, may be my portion, my friend, my

all.” Most concerned with God’s benevolent presence and designs to save, Ann Judson appropriated more Edwards than Hopkins in her attention to affections in the process of conversion and Christian life.

Often despairing of her indifference toward God’s greatness, Ann desired more “ardor,” “zeal,” and “engagement” toward the “cause of Christ.” These and other affections, according to Edwards, were much more than emotions or feelings, and consisted of “the more vigorous and sensible exercises of the inclination and the will of the soul.” Affections incorporated the intellect and the will into a “sense of the heart.” To Edwards, there was no division in the heart and affections, and therefore true religion arose from “an awareness of both the excellency of divine things and the right understanding of them” which also brought forth “the ability to see the beauty of the gospel story, and a conviction of its truth.” Edwards’ most comprehensive treatise, Religious Affections, Edwards argued, “the Holy Scriptures do everywhere place religion very much in the affections; such as fear, hope, love, hatred, desire, joy, sorrow, gratitude, compassion and zeal.”

Throughout her years in Burma, Ann firmly believed that her usefulness to God depended firmly on her “advancement in divine life,” but like Edwards, she remained concerned about possible self-deception. According to Edwards, even Satan mimicked the experience of conversion and awakening. Some people had false certainties of conversion,

73. Edwards elevated the mind like other modern theologians and philosophers, but also provided an alternative that transcended older Puritan and Reformed arguments about the primacy of understanding above desire, or vice versa. Rather than the mind or the will, Edwards located the “spring of man’s actions,” or the energy that inclines and animates human beings toward certain activities and preferences, within the affections. As a spring or directing force, affections also disinclined, or animated human beings against other activities and preferences that lie in the opposite direction. Therefore “true religion,” to Edwards could be nothing other than “of a practical nature”; hence the emphasis on “experiential” or practiced faith (Holmes, God of Grace and God of Glory, 175, 181).
75. Ann Judson’s journal, at sea, April 6, 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 59.
which would naturally bring about great “transports of joy, and be filled with fervent affection, to that imaginary God or Redeemer, who he supposes has thus rescued him from the jaws of such dreadful destruction,” but were not attended with spiritual fruits or Christian virtues. Concerned with her growth in likeness to God, Ann submitted all of her practices to critical examination of whether they fulfilled her journey to God, and encouraged others around her toward God as well.

In her self-examination, Ann developed a pattern of “experimental religion” spirituality to orient herself within the journey toward God, much like Edwards’ concern “to enable individuals to know their own state and to enable right discrimination of true religion from false.” With great caution against certainty in judging truly awakened from false, unawakened professors of religion, Edwards described twelve signs of growth in grace and religious affections. Describing his signs “like giving a man rules, how to distinguish visible objects in the dark,” Edwards provided a complex map of marks and paths along the journey toward Christ. Assurance of the “right way,” according to Edwards, is sensed in the growing perception of God’s beautiful activity, and an increasing love of God and all

76. Taking aim at those who zealously professed true religion that lead toward dissension and separation from the church, for example, Edwards argued that such a lack of brotherly love evidenced the counterfeit nature of this type of joy and zeal, because it did not flow from “true divine love” (Religious Affections, 148-150).


78. Though the twelve signs of religious affections truly awakened by God’s grace consisted of three-quarters of the entire volume, Edwards insisted it was “never God’s design to give us any rules” for certainty of separating truly awakened from false, unawakened professors of religion. Edwards warned ministers on this point, as well as those engaging in self-examination. Neither certainty nor uncertainty was signs of true religion, especially in a person without much understanding, or inclination to God in their current state. Like a cataract or colorblindness, “the feebleness of grace and prevalence of corruption…darkens the sight as to all spiritual objects” (Edwards, Religious Affections, 194-195).

79. Edwards, Religious Affections, 195. However, Edwards does believe that Scripture shows God’s “ordinary manner in working salvation in the souls of men…before he gives men a comfort of a deliverance from their sin and misery, to give them a considerable sense of the greatness and dreadfulness of those evils, and their extreme wretchedness by reason of them.” This ordinary manner does not, according to Edwards, require feelings of terror and “amazing fears of hell….Convictions of conscience, through the influences of God’s Spirit, consist in conviction of sinfulness of heart and practice, and of the dreadfulness of sin, as committed against a God of terrible majesty, infinite holiness and hatred of sin, and strict justice in punishing it” (155-156).
creation. Such beauty and such love, are no “bare sentiment or feeling” but relational affections with God as their object, which are themselves a sharing in “God’s delight in His own perfections” and a glorification of God.80

In her concern for religion and growth in ardent for God, Ann adopted Jonathan Edwards’ signs of religious affections at an early stage in her theological development. In her propensity to “bewail the depravity of my heart” and the faintness “of the infinite excellence of God” to her senses,81 Ann appropriated Jonathan Edwards’ first six signs of religious affections, which balanced desire for and appreciation of God’s beautiful glory with a humble, somber vision of one’s own lack in relation to the excellence of divine things. According to Edwards, desire for knowledge of God is the result of “spiritual operations in the heart,” and therefore cannot emerge from human self-serving interests. Edwards emphasized the external and transcendent source of grace upon affections, culminating in the sign of, “the love of divine things for the beauty and sweetness of their moral excellency, [which] is the first beginning and spring of all holy affections.”82 A truly awakened awareness of the supreme reality, excellence, and beauty of divine things, Edwards argued, enlarges the “sense of the heart,” the heart’s conviction of the “reality of divine things,” and the reality of the absence of God due to “the heart’s corruption.” Awareness of presence and absence,

80. See James McClendon, *Ethics*, for an explanation of “God’s own being and thence created being, as the necessary object or target of benevolence” (136, quoting DeLattre, 1968:18). Stephen Holmes reinforces the relational orientation of atonement and gracious affections, and demonstrates how they, in the end, reinforce Edwards’ understanding of the self-glorification of the Triune God, as the purpose of creation and redemption (*God of Grace and God of Glory*, 146-147, 178-179).


82. Roger Ward pairs the four considerations within Edwards’ “A Divine and Supernatural Light” sermon with the twelve signs of *Religious Affections*, dividing them by four, in “The Structure of Religious Affections,” 7-8.
both given by the Spirit, leads to “evangelical humiliation,” or the “spiritual knowledge of one’s own failure” and wretched, sinful situation.  

Ann’s sense of the “adorable” nature of God’s presence and how “all unholy and polluted” she was in comparison, however, were often prelude to the ecstasy she felt when animated or revived by thoughts of the “precious, amiable, and glorious” appearance of Christ and his authorship “of such a religion.” In her attention to “real enjoyment,” and moral perfections, Ann appropriated Edwards’ next three signs of religious affections her self-examination as well. According to Edwards, the process of conversion continues into the Christian life as divine knowledge “assimilates the nature [of the soul] to…the glory that is beheld in Christ.” Converted persons display “the spirit and temper of Jesus Christ,” “yield a softening of the heart and Christian tenderness of spirit,” and also grow in discernment of their own sins, and sensitivity to the great “sinfulness of that which is sinful.”

Ann Judson’s interest in the greatness of God and her comparative weakness was matched by her concern for increased religious practice. Answering her friend’s inquiry about “evidences of growth in grace” in persons, Ann explained that more knowledge of

83. Ward, “The Structure of Religious Affections,” 6, 8-9, 16-17. In his account of Edwards’ critique of religion, Robert Jenson connects Edwards’ return to the doctrine of “free and sovereign grace” to his rejection of any religious programs of the Half-way covenant or converting ordinances. “What is ‘discovered’ in ‘such exercises,’ if the Spirit perseveres, is the ‘corruption of the heart.’ If the Spirit perseveres, the outcome is ‘a conviction of their absolute dependence on [God’s] sovereign power and grace . . . ; that they can in no wise help themselves, and that God would be wholly just . . . in rejecting them and all that they do.’ And just then, when religion and irreligion are equally helpless, God either does or does not, and in any case in his own time and in whatever way he each time chooses, reveal “the true remedy in a clearer knowledge”—and so not in an achievement but in the registering of fact!—“of Christ and his Gospel” (America’s Theologian, 63-64.) Jenson’s interest to prove Edwards’ role as a critic of religion and the champion of free and sovereign grace, “justified by faith,” against the Arminians, leads him to downplay Edwards’ pastoral rhetoric and the importance of sapiential knowledge in Edwards’ description of religious affections and theosis. Rather than transformation and prayer, Jenson locates Edwards as critic over self-interested religion, predating Karl Barth. For Jenson, Edwards gives no firm ordering of religious affections and conversion to protect God’s freedom to justify “by unity with Christ given or not given by God,” rather than out of deference to the mystery and complexity of God’s work of redemption (Jenson, America’s Theologian, 64).


“Jesus Christ, and the great need they have of him for a whole Saviour,” would “necessarily lead them to pray more often, earnestly and fervently, give them a disrelish for the vanities of the world, and a sincere and hearty desire to devote all they have to him, and serve him entirely.”

In her recommendations, Ann mirrored Edwards’ final three signs of religious affections. According to Edwards, as the perception of “a beauty of symmetry and proportion inhabiting their affections” grows, a person evidences a growing “appetite for more complete spiritual attainments including practical service.” In the final sign of religious affections, the power of “godliness has its full exercise and fruit in a moral Christian practice,” which is ordered by “the soul’s desire” for “perfect obedience.”

As a practiced faith, Ann Judson and Jonathan Edwards believed that experience and action served as tests to reveal, refine, and strengthen religious affections. Spiritually awakened persons, Ann told her friend, “will watch their improvement from time to time,…[and] if we have made none, under the rich cultivation we have enjoyed, then we may be sure we are unacquainted with that path which is as a shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.”

Trustingly in signs of conversion and growth in grace, Ann employed the religious affections in her journal as she discerned whether she was willing to become a missionary for God. Writing of her submission to God who “has my heart in his hands,” Ann borrowed


87. Edwards’ description of sign twelve as the “chief” sign should not turn the signs on their head so that “public moral action is the key to understanding the affections,” as Samuel Hopkins’ doctrine of moral perfectionism did. Rather, sign twelve is “chief” in that it is the visible, or “temporally present manifestation” of the deeper, foundation of the love of God’s nature and divine beauty, described in sign three. Ward, “The Structure of Religious Affections,” 8-9, 19.

88. Edwards’ emphasis on the lack of assurance by evidential examination, however, led him to emphasize the importance of obtaining assurance by active pursuit of affections, understood as “giving all diligence to grow in grace, by adding faith, virtue, etc…for making our calling and election sure” (2 Peter 1:5-11). Not that Edwards discounted self-examination, but he felt that in his era, “many persons, in such a case spend time…poring on past experiences, and examining themselves by signs they hear laid down from the pulpit, or that they read in books; when there is other work for them to do, that is much more expected of them” (Edwards, Religious Affections, 93, 195).

Edwards’ language of the “heart” to express the conversion of her mind and will. Enabled to see herself as “a creature of God,” Ann wrote that God “has an undoubted right to do with me, as seemeth good in his sight.” God, in turn, was “everywhere present, and can protect me in one place as well as another.” Within this comprehensive schema of her conversion and dependence on God for redemption and providential direction, Ann then considered “it my duty to go to the heathen,” though much like assurance of election, she worried about self-deception on this point.⁹⁰ All of her aspirations for mission must be tested, according to Ann, by her desire, “whether I spend my days in India or America,…to spend them in the service of God, and be prepared to spend an eternity in his presence. O Jesus, make me live to thee, and no more.”⁹¹ During this period of discernment, therefore, Ann’s vocabulary directly referenced Edwards’ signs of religious affections, from ‘the love of divine things,’ to the sense of the heart, and finally to commitment of complete obedience.

Whenever Ann employed her theology of religious affections to help her discern the path of obedient duty, she continued to prioritize the beauty, sweetness, and enjoyment of God’s presence as the fount of all other religious affections. Ann’s use of religious affections to discern her obedient duty to God, paralleled her desire, as stated above, to “be prepared to spend an eternity in [God’s] presence.” She also, like Edwards, continued self-examination and theological reflection on her own “immediate, personal, and ‘spiritual’ experience.” In journal entries of continual self-examination of her thoughts, desires, and actions, Ann expressed evangelical humiliation, couched in terms of unworthiness, ill-equipment for mission work, and a renewed sense of “my dependence on [God],…for my only portion.”⁹² For example, after the Judsons’ change of sentiment to the Baptists, Ann

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specifically prayed, “our Heavenly Father, wilt thou be our friend….enable us to live to thy glory, and make us useful in some retired part of this eastern world, in leading a few precious souls to embrace the Saviour whom we love and serve.” A few days later, Ann expressed one of her strongest affirmations “of the goodness and care of my Heavenly Father. When prospects are dark and gloomy, when my soul is cast down with distressing apprehensions, he leads me to feel my dependence on him, and lean on the bosom of Infinite Love…I feel confident that Jesus will go with us, and direct our steps.” Raptures “of how good God is,” experiences of “great consolation,” and a general willingness to commit “all my concerns into the hands of a faithful God,” followed for several days.⁹³ Ann’s self-examination through the sequence of religious affections, therefore, reinforced the relational nature of true religion.

Ann prized her experience of the immediate presence of God in her journal, but not at the expense of her sense of community – even when she and Adoniram, on breaking with their Congregationalist missionary associates, “felt we had no home in this world, and no friend but each other.”⁹⁴ Instead, Ann’s desire for increased dependence on God alone, for which she worked to lessen her attachment to the “fleeting, transitory objects” of earthly relations, resulted in a growth in appreciation for her relations, be they Bradford, Western, or Burmese. In Calcutta, Ann considered good relations to be an expression of God’s favor, for if “God has made it our duty to leave our home and friends, he has given us a home here in a land of strangers, and friends who are kind and sympathizing.”⁹⁵ And in Rangoon, the mighty “theater…of the faithfulness, power, and mercy of God,” Ann counted her

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⁹³. Ann Judson’s journal, Calcutta, September 1-5, 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 77-78.  
⁹⁴. Ann Judson to her family, Isle of France, [February 14, 1813], in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 74.  
⁹⁵. Ann Judson to her parents, Calcutta, October 9, 1812, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 83.
friendships with the vicereine, her missionary colleagues, the women in her prayer meeting, and above all, the Burmese inquirers and converts, as a mighty gift of God.

In her practices, therefore, Ann’s theological redemption narrative combined with her spirituality of religious affections to express her understanding of mission as a way of life toward God. Ann tested her missionary practices by whether or not they were directed toward the ultimate telos of dynamic communion with God, which was evidenced by religious affections. For example, Ann’s catechetical offering of self-examination along with worship, reading, and prayer sought to inculcate her account of religious affections to Burmese inquirers and early converts, which they in turn could practice individually and together. Ann also tested whether she loved her ultimate home in heaven with God and the saints above her home in Rangoon, her friendships on earth, and her work in the Baptist mission. Often in the course of writing about her discouragements or journaling her anxieties, Ann reminded herself of the shortness of her time on earth compared to “the eternal world [which] will open to my view” upon her death, and the larger view of redemption. And likewise, Ann’s interest in cultivating community that would foment and support a Burmese congregation, was intentionally tested along relational lines. Love of brothers and sisters in Christ and perseverance in times of persecution were tests of the true virtue of love of God, revelations of God’s great and glorious work in preserving the church in its suffering, and a hopeful sign of their eternal relationship together as saints in glory.

7.4 A Theology of Mission for the West

After ten years of missionary labor in Rangoon, Ann’s return to the United States propelled her into relational, cultural, and theological shock. Ann struggled to adjust to her popularity across New England, but the greatest challenge to her composure was the stark theological difference she perceived between herself and American Christians. Out of the
context of her medical furlough in the United States, Ann composed her *Account* to portray a theology of mission as participation in God’s work of redemption. In her theological history of the American mission to Burma, God, as primary agent of mission, draws men and women redemptively to Godself through providential activity and the path of spiritual awakening. As people grow in religious affections, their lives become ordered in the way of mission as a necessary aspect of humanity’s dynamic communion with God. To demonstrate Ann’s theology of mission for the West, this section first describes Ann’s period of cultural and theological crisis, and then comparing her private words with her published editorial remarks in the *Account*. By introducing and editing prior published correspondence, Ann crafted a pastoral theology to encourage her readers to consider and take up mission as part of their journey home toward God.

When Ann arrived in Bradford in 1822, she didn’t sleep for two weeks, as “the idea that I was once more on American ground banished all peace and quiet in my mind.” She had looked forward to the reunion with her friends and family, but returning home “occasioned the most alarming apprehensions” and agony.96 After six weeks of anxiety and agitation, her liver pains and exhaustion returned and Ann feared she might die if she wintered in Bradford. She removed to Baltimore to stay with her brother-in-law and new physician Dr. Elnathan Judson, and under his supervision, she underwent an intense course of mercury salivation until she regained sufficient health to return to Burma.

From her sickbed, Judson returned to correspondence, and reflected on why her homecoming had caused her incredible anxiety. Unlike her prior missionary correspondence, these letters were private exchanges with her family, and two longtime supporters of mission, Mrs. Chaplin, wife of Waterville College president Jeremiah Chaplin, and Boston

Now physically adjusted to the Burmese climate, she admitted her “Indian constitution” suffered from being unused to wintry, New England cold. But in a letter to Mrs. Chaplin, Ann confided that she “had never fully counted the cost of a visit to my dear native country and beloved relatives. I did not expect that a scene which I anticipated as so joyous, was destined to give my health and constitution a shock which would require months to repair.” Ann found her old home and the daily visits of acquaintances left her “in a state of constant excitement.” As her physical health declined, Ann’s emotional state also deteriorated. Ann wrote, 

my nervous system had become so much affected, that the very sight of an old dear friend was quite distressing, and I really desired to get away from the sight of every human being, as it had become very painful to talk… I knew that retirement, and freedom from company and excitement, were as necessary as a milder climate, neither of which could be obtained in Bradford.

If she continued with her beloved Hasseltine family, she risked destroying her physical and emotional health and ruining any chance of returning to Burma. Leaving Bradford was therefore a choice of “duty to myself and Mr. Judson,” though it pained her to leave.

Temperature and culture shock were not, however, Ann’s most worrisome troubles. She found the religious atmosphere of Bradford, and America and England as a whole

97. Francis Wayland became president of Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island in 1827. Mrs. Chaplin, a native of Massachusetts, had been active in mission support since 1811. While her husband, Jeremiah Chaplin, was pastor at Danvers, Massachusetts, they were both involved in the Salem Bible Translation and Foreign Mission Society (“Salem Bible Translation and Foreign Mission Society,” The American Baptist Magazine and Missionary Intelligencer vol. 1, no. 2 [Mar 1, 1817], 71-73). Ann Judson’s Baptist Mission colleagues, James Colman and Edward Wheelock, were both ministerial apprentices of Jeremiah Chaplin in Danvers, under the patronage of the Boston Baptist Foreign Mission Society and the Baptist Massachusetts Education Society (Edward Wheelock to the Baptist Board of Foreign Mission and James Colman to the Baptist Board of Foreign Mission, The Western New York Baptist Magazine vol. 2, no. 3 [Aug 1, 1817] 85-87). In 1817, the Chaplins moved to Waterville, Maine to establish a school that became Waterville College in 1820 (Robert Torbet, A History of the Baptists, 3rd edition [Valleystroke, PA: Judson Press, 1963], 310).


extremely frustrating. First, she was uncomfortable with her new status as a minor celebrity. Contrary to Mrs. Chaplin’s concern that fame and “lavish attention” would result in pride, Ann professed she deserved little attention for her missionary work from her friends, “as I was far, very far from being what they imagined.” Unable to see herself as a hero, Ann was “affected to tears” as she thought of the “thousands of poor, obscure Christians, whose excellences will never be known in this world, who are a thousand times more deserving of the tender regard of their fellow Christians, than I am.”100 Something about her popularity rang false; it did not feel like true Christian brotherly love. Being the center of attention drove Ann to “spiritual distraction,” and Ann’s self-examination yielded a high degree of “evangelical humiliation” about her failings. At times Ann felt so undeserving of human or heavenly “consolation,” that she interpreted her serious illness resulted from her having “done very little for the cause of Christ.”101

In great anxiety about her reception in America, Ann treaded the line between evangelical humiliation and self-damnation.

Ann also lost sleep as she discovered missionary support in America to be much less that she thought it ought to be. In letters to Francis Wayland, Ann fretted over his question, “What can be done to excite a missionary spirit in this country?” She delayed a response, and told Wayland the subject would “take up my whole soul, and retard my recovery.”102 Her months in Baltimore did not ease her worry, as Ann wrote Wayland, “my heart sickens at the apathy and unconcern relative to the subject of Missions…I sometimes say to myself, Will not the missionary flame become entirely extinct, and the mission already established in

Burmah, die for want of support?" Ann’s letters to Wayland were private and not published until after her death, and therefore Ann was much less sanguine about the support of her Western relations in regard to overseas missionary efforts than she had ever been in her prior published correspondence.

More drastically, her entire understanding of the providence of God and the nature of the church was at stake. If, as Edwards said in _A History of Redemption_, the work of missions to the nations was a sign of the eschatological work of God, Ann believed that every Christian in the United States should feel as deeply impressed with the importance of making continual efforts for the salvation of the heathen, as though their conversion depended solely on himself. Every individual Christian should feel himself guilty if he has not done and does not continue to do all in his power for the spread of the gospel and the enlightening of the heathen world.\(^\text{104}\)

Ann soothed her worried critique with remembrances of God’s providential support when “no created arm could afford the least assistance” during the War of 1812, and expressed gratitude for Wayland and others “who would, I have no doubt, risk their all” to support missionaries. But these memories, by themselves, could not tame Ann’s criticism of American churches. Taking up Old Testament prophecy of the Spirit of God on the tongues of sons and daughters, young and old, Ann asked Wayland where are “our young men, fired with the love of Christ and compassion for immortal souls, who are desirous… to serve their Redeemer in foreign lands?” And where, thundered Ann, were “our fathers, who, lamenting their former want of zeal in erecting the standard of the cross in those countries so long given up to the control of the prince of darkness, now exert their dying energies to

\(^{103}\) Ann Judson to Francis Wayland, Washington, D. C., April 22, 1823, in Knowles, _Memoir of Mrs. Judson_, 248-249.

\(^{104}\) Ann Judson to Francis Wayland, Baltimore, January 22, 1823, in Knowles, _Memoir of Mrs. Judson_, 240.
build mission support and encourage the younger generation?” If, as Ann believed, the commission of God to “Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature” was Christ’s “last,…most benevolent command,” too few American Christians willingly obeyed, though they readily claimed conversion and experiential religion. Like her heroic status, Ann was also unsettled by her passionate reactions to mission apathy. She dared not “trust my feelings on this subject,” and instead turned her invalidity into a state of seclusion for the purpose of prayer and contemplation.

Ann’s theological crisis tested her convictions on matters of redemption, and her theology of religious affections, forged into a spiritual discipline of self-examination and prayer, led her back to peace and purpose. Finding peace and composure, Ann claimed her solitary lifestyle was “more favorable to religious enjoyment” than when she was “kept in a continual bustle of company” in Britain and the United States. In letters to Mrs. Chaplin, Ann explained that in prayer, she sought to “live near the threshold of heaven,” and it was there, “in retirement that our languishing graces are revived, our affections raised to God, and our souls refreshed and quickened by the influences of the Holy Spirit.” She became an avid promoter of prayer and contemplation in her letters to Chaplin and Wayland, as she felt American Christians socialized together too much and did not take fellowship with God seriously enough. “Strange as it may seem,” she told Mrs. Chaplin, “I do believe there is something like religious dissipation, in a Christian’s being so entirely engrossed in religious company, as to prevent his spiritual enjoyments.” To Wayland, Ann criticized the

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indifference in seeking “to enter into [God’s] presence in heaven” displayed by Christians during their prayers.  

Ann continued to express a great deal of concern for the promotion of mission support, and in her later letters to Wayland, she commended the pursuit of prayer as the foundation for interest in mission. Considering prayer an exercise of relational intimacy, in which “we professedly converse with God,” Ann much preferred “heavenly minded” companions who “lay the case of their friends before their Father” in fervent prayer than general Christian sociability. Circling back to self-examination, Ann considered any future “usefulness” in Rangoon depended entirely upon her “religious state of feeling,” which came from habitual enjoyment of “intimate communion with God which allows our entering in, and bringing a portion of the spirit possessed by the very inhabitants of heaven.” For Ann, prayer and revivals were key to keeping “the enjoyment of God” in heaven the main pursuit of every Christian, “the preservatives of our Christian graces,” and furthermore, the only way Baptist missionary “efforts and lives will not be in vain.”

Ann’s composition of An Account of the American Baptist Mission to the Burman Empire, in a Series of Letters, Addressed to a Gentleman in London, reflects Ann’s reactions and theological reflections during her medical furlough in the United States. Engaging her theology of redemption and religious affections, Ann sought to portray her understanding of mission as participation in God’s work of redemption, and part of the spiritual awakening along the path of religious affections dynamic communion with God. Since Ann had written

reflectively in this manner during the course of her missionary tenure, much of her theological work was already present in her correspondence sources. As editor, Ann guided and refined the historical and theological narratives to highlight the providential preservation and blessing of the mission through its ‘discouragements and encouragements.’ And by tracing her own journey of awakening, of being disciplined by God and learning ‘the way God would proceed with mission in Burma,’ Ann’s *Account* as a narrative whole became her autobiographical confession of missionary humiliation before the mighty, overwhelming love of God at work in Rangoon.

Ann crafted her *Account*, as both a historical and a theological account of the Baptist Mission in Burma. From her preface, Ann linked the history of the Baptist mission to a theological description of God’s overarching work of redemption in history. Indeed, Ann described her volume as “a concise view of the faithfulness and mercy of God, as exhibited in the formation of a little church, in one of the largest heathen empires in the world.” Though “poor as is the garb in which these letters are attired,” Ann confidently supposed “that the providential circumstances therein detailed, will have a tendency to excite grateful emotions in the hearts of many of God’s dear children.”¹¹³ From the very beginning, therefore, Ann employed her Edwardsean influences as she invoked the larger sense of redemption and the work of providence.

Throughout Ann’s historical chronology, her editorial remarks alert readers to the presence and work of God toward the end of redemption in Burma. Commenting on her period of searching for a mission field, Ann claimed that it was God who protected them from being deported, and also prepared them, through such trials, for Burma. Hard pressed to leave Madras at once, God “shut up every door,” and “we now saw the hand of

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Providence pointing to that region [of Burma], as the scene of our future labors.”

In the early years of mission, when she and Adoniram spent the majority of their time learning the language, making connections, and overcoming illnesses, Ann claimed it was entirely the work of God which “suffered us not to despond.” Furthermore, it was entirely the power of the God, which enabled them to “feel the full force of those precious promises, relative to the conversion of the heathen, which encouraged us to look forward with a degree of hope.”

As an effect, Ann’s editorial account emphasized the largeness and surprising nature of God’s work, to which she and Adoniram responded with “astonishment.”

Ann was careful, however, to dissuade her readers from assuming that the mighty power of God would prevent “whatever trials would have a tendency to retard or impede its [the mission] advancement.” The true force of God’s redemptive promises, therefore, was something to hold onto even when “afflictions and trials…began to effect a revolution in our missionary plans, hopes and prospects.”

Ann narrated most of the trials affecting Adoniram Judson in this manner, so that his physical breakdown from overwork in 1816, his disappearance abroad during 1818, and the unsuccessful interview with the Burmese emperor in 1820 were all events that required hope in God’s larger work of redemption without the benefit of “sanguine” feelings that the Judsons, and the Baptist mission, were surely the way forward in the spread of the gospel around the world. Written after the establishment of a Rangoon congregation that had already, by itself, weathered several trying times, Ann could write of the early “dark clouds” and “gloomy appearances,” in the future of the Baptist mission, as “only the harbinger of a brighter day.” Even so, Ann emphasizes the difficulty of these experiences, “so threatening in appearance as nearly to annihilate our

most cherished hopes,” instead of hiding them.117 Ann’s editorial remarks made for an exciting narrative, and they also heightened the degree of the mission’s dependence on providence for its survival. The hand of providence, as well, did not set a course of ease for the mission, but rather, in Ann’s opinion, formed the mission after the pattern of Christ through trial and adversity. A mission to foreign lands in the brilliancy of Edwards’ narrative on the outpouring of the Spirit in the last days, still, according to Ann, followed in the church’s path of suffering, like its Lord, for the world.

The success of the mission, according to Ann, was bound up in God’s gradual opening of “the way… for the promulgation of the gospel,” and in the conviction that “God would yet make it manifest, that he had not, thus far, continued the mission for naught.” The opening of the zayat, according to Ann, resulted from providential prompting through “an unusual spirit of prayer and supplication…it seemed the inquiry of every individual, ‘What can, what shall we do, for the conversion of the heathen?’”118 Likewise, Ann emphasized, “What hath God wrought!” within Adoniram’s official journal to the Board, which detailed “the origin and progress of the first Christian church ever established in in the Burman empire.”119 The conversion of the first Burman, likewise, was a display of “the power and grace of God…[which] so soon after the commencement of public preaching, far exceeded our most sanguine expectations.” Even so, according to Ann, God’s manifestations of providential purpose for the Baptist mission in the grand work of redemption did not, even at this stage, forbid future trials, and “future discouragement.”120

From start to finish, Ann proposed that every step of the Baptist Mission was for the purpose of bringing God glory, just as the larger narrative of God’s work of redemption in

history was ultimately, for glory. Ann counted each trial to the glory of God as well, as God’s “loving-kindness has been richly experienced in the very storms of adversity.” It was “to the honour of Divine grace,” that Ann could glorify God’s actions of providing the Judsons with gracious forbearance in affliction, and also in God’s provision, thus far, of “a way for escape from imminent danger and peril.”\textsuperscript{121} The erection of the \textit{zayat} was an act of glorification as “God, the Creator of the universe, had never before seen an altar erected in Burmah for Himself; had never before heard the voice of prayer and praise ascend in the Burman language.”\textsuperscript{122} For Ann, the cultivation of gathered communities of inquirers and converts, of which she took such an integral role in forming, were brought forth by God and to the glory of God because the missionaries pleaded for “a sense of the greatness of this undertaking,” and “acquiesced” to God’s will.\textsuperscript{123}

Ann’s account of the closing of the \textit{zayat}, and the failed trip to Ava for religious tolerance, was her most complex demonstration of God’s glory occurring through disappointments and surprises. Ann first collapsed the authority of the Burmese emperor with the work of God. The context of government intolerance obstructed the Baptist mission from “the use of those means, which presented the fairest prospect for the rapid success of the gospel.” Ann’s letter to Mrs. S., which she placed directly before Adoniram’s official journal to the Board, expressed her conviction that, “we leave for God to determine, on whom alone we depend, and to whom alone we look for success,” in the outcome of the expedition.\textsuperscript{124} Greater danger and intolerance from the Burmese government was the disappointing result of “presenting a petition,” in Ann’s narration, and prelude to the

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\item[121.] Ann Judson, \textit{Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah}, 2.
\item[122.] Ann Judson, \textit{Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah}, 145.
\item[123.] Ann Judson to Mrs. S., Rangoon, November 20, 1819, in Judson, \textit{Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah}, 218.
\item[124.] Ann Judson to Mrs. S., Rangoon, November 20, 1819, in Judson, \textit{Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah}, 218.
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surprising power of God at work in Moung Byaay’s passionate speeches for the missionaries to stay until a small, semi-private congregation of Burmese could sustain themselves in Rangoon.¹²⁵

Ann Judson’s second editorial theme highlighted the development and appearance of religious affections in the missionaries and in Burmese inquirers and converts. The missionaries’ ability to discern and obey, in Ann’s Account, depended entirely upon God’s grace, and their active pursuit of religious affections and true religion. Again, much of the work was already displayed in her sources, and Ann’s editing highlighted particular aspects of religious affections. As a result, her editorial remarks bent the historical figures into typological characters in her narrative, already seen above in the case of Adoniram as the ‘Christ-like sufferer.’ These types were sub-themes, as her choice to incorporate large swaths of missionary letters and journals reinforced the many sided humanity of each person. Only toward herself did the “character type” threaten to overtake the historical complexity of her account, which also potentially reinforced negative assumptions on gender, ethnicity, and even providence.

In Ann’s description of the early years of the Baptist mission, Ann followed Edwards’ opening statements of Religious Affections, in which he claimed the persecutions suffered by the early Christians, and trials suffered in his day, “are of a threefold benefit to true religion: …[they] distinguish between true religion and false, …they make its genuine beauty and amiableness remarkably to appear, …and again…they purify and increase it.”¹²⁶ As the chronology of the Baptist Mission consisted of cyclic periods of uncertainty, difficulty, and anxiety followed by periods of openings, activity, and excitement, Ann incorporated her theology of ‘true religion’ as the journey of religious affections, through

which religious understanding, desire, and awareness of the presence of God deepened over time. For example, upon the Judsons’ arrival in Calcutta in 1812, Ann explained that she and Adoniram thought they “had endeavored to count the cost, and expected a frequent cloudy sky in our missionary atmosphere.” The “providential occurrences” that followed, of homelessness, Harriet Newell’s death, Ann’s illness, and the Judsons’ narrow escape to Burma, were therefore “solemn” providential lessons demonstrating the Judsons’ “unfitness to engage in [God’s] service, previous to our entering a disciplinary school.”¹²⁷ This ‘disciplinary’ period, according to Ann, “strengthened our trust and confidence in God,” and assured the Judsons that God “had something for us to do” that would remain unclear until God “in his own time and way, mark[ed] out the path for us.” In the process, Ann and Adoniram learned “that our dearest plans might be defeated by the call of death,” and that the “hand of Providence” pointed to Burma, the place “we had been in the habit of viewing with a kind of horror.”¹²⁸

Throughout her narrative, Ann emphasized the “precious moments we enjoyed, in sweet communion with God” brought on by such trials.¹²⁹ Moments of communion, according to Ann, evidenced the Judsons’ growth in religious affections, which they dearly needed to persevere in the Baptist mission. However, early in her narrative, Ann abruptly shifted to an ominous disciplinary event, in which the death of her son revealed false religion. Ann’s early letters expressed her usual corresponding consolation, as in learning from her child’s death “that we need no other source of enjoyment but God himself” and to praise God for little Roger’s entrance into heaven. In 1822, however, Ann’s editorial remarks changed the consoling lesson into God’s judgment against the Judsons. Ann narrated her

son’s death as an event she could not “prevail upon myself to omit” though it was “not strictly connected with my missionary relation.” According to her Account, isolation bred too strong an attachment to her son:

“deprived, as we were, of every source of enjoyment…our every affection was entangled by this darling object. When our heavenly Father saw we had converted the precious gift into an idol, he removed it from us, and thereby taught us the necessity of placing our supreme affections on Him.”

Subtly contradicting her Western popularity as a missionary saint, Ann located herself, and Adoniram as well, in a place of “unfitness” for mission due to their improperly ordered, or irreligious affections. In doing so, Ann drew upon an older, common Puritan mourning refrain, where parents wondered if “God took children to punish adults for hearts set too much on worldly affairs.” While she may have narrated this event in order to emphasize her lack of perfection and display a high degree of evangelical humiliation, in doing so she reinforced Great Awakening anxiety over women’s roles and loyalties between family and God. She also turned the invisible hand of God into a cruel and jealous figure, a description drastically out of place in her overarching narrative of trust in God’s benevolent, redemptive providence.

In contrast to her self-judgment, Ann’s editing emphasized James Colman’s character of true religious affection and true missionary zeal. Introducing Mr. Colman and Mr. Wheelock, Ann described them as men who “had thought and felt much on the subject of missions, and could not rest contented…They literally panted to become the heralds of

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131. Along with anxiety over the state of their child’s soul, seventeenth and eighteenth century Puritan parents of all stations, including Increase Mather, concluded that their child had died from their worldly hearts or “their lack of sufficient gratitude when He bestowed mercies, and for overt sins of thought and deed.” According to Peter Slater, “these ideas were so common a refrain among Puritans that they can be considered a standard element in the mourning process” (Children in the New England Mind: In Death and In Life [Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1977], 44-45). Ann Judson’s acceptance of this idea in her history could be a passing moment of her mourning process, but does not entirely explain her editorial writing in judgment against herself and Adoniram over her earlier expressions of grief and emphasizing it in her story about the American Baptist Mission.
salvation, to those who were in darkness, and the shadow of death.” Ann praised her missionary colleagues for relinquishing “their prospects of being early and happily settled, over opulent congregations,” and exhibiting a spirit of unwavering, joyful, and sacrifice for missions.132 These colleagues, with their wives, provided prayers and support to the Judsons’ early public zayat ministry. Though Mr. Wheelock’s early departure from Rangoon due to terminal consumption was unfortunate and another reminder of death’s blasting of missionary plans, James Colman’s death, occurring shortly after he had begun public preaching in Arrakan, was a heavy affliction that Ann deeply lamented. Hearing of his death while in the United States on furlough, Ann’s editorial remarks concentrated on Colman’s choice to forego protection and society of the British government in Chittagong. “In the imitation of the Redeemer,” Colman “chose his residence in a native village, ”which also left him without acute medical care for his fever, and he “fell a martyr to his zeal!” Indirectly contrasting Colman’s character with American society, Ann introduced Mrs. Colman’s letter about death of James Colman as “one of the most striking instances of Christian decision and pure missionary zeal” given to the Christian world.133

Ann provided depictions of Moung Ing and the other Burman converts that were equally positive in terms of true religion. Ann’s editorial comments about the Burmese congregation always emphasized evidence of religious affections, such as the “child-like spirit and heavenly temper” of Moung Ing. As a sure sign of “the power and grace of God displayed,” Ann pointed to the “evident marks of a new disposition” in the first Burman convert, though her choice of “child-like” description, sounds, when separated from her theology, a mark of American superiority. Yet as discussed in prior chapters, Ann sought to display the “strength of intellect,” the high “natural capacity,” and the “lively, industrious”

and advanced character of the Burmese.\textsuperscript{134} Ann did not shed her assumptions of American superiority entirely, but she also flipped Western assumptions of elevated and enlightened Christian civilization on their head by claiming her friendship with and appreciation for converts who showed perseverance in the face of religious persecution.

Within Ann’s project of religious affections, Ann placed herself as one finding comfort and inspiration from “our faithful and affectionate Burmans, [who] often comforted our hearts, by the daily exhibition of spiritual mindedness, and sincerity in their profession.”\textsuperscript{135} Just as Ann had expressed gratitude for ‘heavenly minded’ friends in her private letters to Mrs. Chaplin, the Burmese community of inquirers and converts assumed the place of ‘warm attachment’ in her \textit{Account}. Moreover, Ann explained that the “toil and privation” she experienced on behalf of the small church in Rangoon had made it a “darling object,” to which “every fiber of the heart adhered” with “tender solicitude and anxious affection.” The Rangoon church could claim such intense attachment, according to Ann, because it was the manifestation of God’s glory and grace in Rangoon, the “dearest spot on earth.”\textsuperscript{136} And as proof of the inclination of her heart, by God’s grace, she loved the Burmans, whom God loved and sought to redeem.

By repeatedly invoking the language of religious affections and offering several models for emulation, Ann invited her readers into self-examination as they read her work, that they might discover the religious affections within, and with it a growing interest in participating in God’s work of redemption through missions. Ann’s recognitions of her wider readership were few, but two instances stand out as direct invitations to self-

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{134} Ann Judson, \textit{Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah}, 299, 4.
\item \textsuperscript{135} Ann Judson, \textit{Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah}, 258.
\item \textsuperscript{136} Ann Judson, \textit{Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah}, 312-313. By another reading of Ann Judson’s editorial narrative, God takes away one ‘darling object,’ Ann’s son Roger, and also gives Ann a second ‘darling object,’ the Burmese congregation in Rangoon.
\end{itemize}
examination, pursuit of religious affections, and participation in mission. At the end of her preface, Ann prayed that through her work, readers would be guided toward more spiritual awakening. Her “sincere and constant desire,” was that “the blessings of thousands, ready to perish, may descend upon all interested in the missionary cause, and that every individual who shall peruse these letters may raise his heart to God, in prayer for the conversion of the heathen.” To close her Account, Ann prayed that her dear friend Butterworth, and by extension her readers, would “in heaven…meet an innumerable multitude of heathen souls, whose conversion was effected by your unknown instrumentality.”

When understood through her Edwardsean influence, Ann’s editorial prayers expressed her rigorous attention to religious affections, the conversion of the ‘heart’ as human will and desire, and the glorious benefits of experiencing the presence of God. Ann’s prayer, therefore, was that the spiritual awakening of her readers would increase their appetite for more communion with God. In seeing God’s presence and redemptive work around the world, they would be drawn, by the love and beauty of God, to participation with God in support of foreign mission.

Pairing the spiritual disciplines of religious affections and the support of missions, Ann risked the implication that missionary zeal was the ‘moral mandate’ of all Christian affections and the mark of any true religion. Yet compared to the strong language of Ann’s private comments to Francis Wayland before her retreat into prayer and self-examination, Ann intentionally held herself back from strong mandate language or direct rebuke of American Christians in her Account. Her beliefs in the American Christianity’s responsibility for missions were certainly present, but they were not the guiding principle of her narrative. By placing herself as the one in need of discipline and more spiritual awakening to

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understand God’s redemptive work in mission, despite the extremities of self-condemnation as ‘idolater,’ Ann rhetorically deployed her autobiography as an invitation for her readers, especially those apathetic or disinclined to support missions, to prayerfully examine the case with her in search of truth and duty, as she had done many times. To her supporters, Ann Judson pointed past herself to God’s hand of providence in the modern mission movement, and pointedly reminded them to continue self-examination, prayer, and the pursuit of God as the primary telos of mission as a way of life.

7.5 Conclusion

This final chapter followed the doctrinal foci and theological project of Ann Judson, adding another layer to Ann’s activity in mission and her contributions to theology of mission. Ann connected to her context, relations, and practices through her sense of the largeness of God’s redemption. She explored the vast reaches of religious affections, and painstakingly instructed both Burmese and Westerners in the journey toward God. To narrate Ann’s practice of theology, this chapter drew upon teleological and pastoral theological methods. James McClendon recovered the baptist theological vision as ‘the sense of a God-given road or journey or way.’ Teleologically oriented theology, according to McClendon, is embodied, self-involved, and convictional in nature. Parallel to this vision, Ellen Charry added a description of classical theology as pastoral, or aretegenic, in nature. Though Ann Judson and Jonathan Edwards lived after the Enlightenment, they carried forward traditional theological interest in knowing and loving God, or “to be bound up in the life of God,” and sought to explain relational knowledge of God in Enlightenment terms. In her practices and her correspondence with the United States, Ann Judson extended baptist theology into mission practice and introduced it to the Burmese inquirers.
God’s work of redemption functioned as Ann’s deepest theological conviction and the teleological framework for mission as a way of life. Redemption theology permeated all of Ann Judson’s correspondence and her organization of practices. As representative, and Ann’s likely source, Jonathan Edwards’ *A History of the Work of Redemption* (1774) comprehensively set forth a large and cosmic view of redemption as Trinitarian, cosmic, and teleological. Edwards extended the doctrine of redemption, understood in the small sense as deliverance wrought in Christ’s incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection, into his understanding of the nature of the Triune God, as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are united in an eternal covenant of redemption. Ann also interpreted God’s providential action in terms of redemption, and often made sense of her new context by drawing upon the cosmic, ever-present nature of God’s redemptive activity. Though at times she over-interpreted God’s providential activity within daily events and struggles, she also drew upon the larger, cosmic framework to find comfort in the eternal covenant of redemption and orient all the activities of the Baptist Mission.

Ann Judson also invoked the doctrine of redemption whenever she called her mission work as participation in the ‘cause of Christ.’ Like Edwards, Ann continued to express the atoning work of Christ as necessary and overarching. She did not view herself as bringing salvation to the Burmese, and rather hope to help the Burmese ‘partake of the same source of happiness.’ Ann also engaged in Jonathan Edwards’ millennialist expectations, which included the suffering of the church for the introduction of the gospel around the world. Ann emphasized God’s comprehensive redemption and the church’s obedience through persistent use of ‘ordinary means of grace’ above grand expectations in numerous conversions. Above all, Ann continued to understand redemption as a relational event, and

the *telos* of redemption as coming to live in God, and to be embraced by his life.’ Ann’s sense of God’s overarching purpose in redemption formed her conviction her life as journeying toward God, trusting in God’s divine benevolence, participating in God’s redemption through mission, and joyfully anticipating eternal communion with God and the saints as the ultimate *telos* of her life.

In her theology of religious affections, Ann Judson aligned more with Jonathan Edwards’ emphasis on enjoyment of God’s presence than Samuel Hopkins’ stress on self-denying disinterested benevolence. Concentrating self-examination on affections, Ann Judson understood the “sense of the heart” as the seat of human intellect, will, and action. Early in her theological development, Ann appropriated Edwards’ signs of religious affections which balanced desire for and appreciation of God’s beauty with recognition of one’s own sinfulness, lack, and ‘heart’s corruption.’ As Ann expressed feelings of evangelical humiliation in her journal, and she petitioned for a softened heart, tenderness of spirit, and more knowledge of Christ’s glorious nature. Ann believed that taking on more knowledge of Christ would lead her to increased religious practice, greater abhorrence of sin, and entire devotion and service to God.

Ann Judson closely adopted Jonathan Edwards’ emphasis on love of God’s nature and beauty as the spring of religious affections. Extending Edwards’ recommendation to actively pursue all religious affections, Ann employed her sense of religious affections as she discerned her willingness to become a missionary. The desire to prepare herself to spend an eternity in God’s presence became Ann’s test for obedience to God and decision making as a missionary. Ann’s promotion of religious affections also shaped her mission practices, as Ann balanced introspection with action. She also looked for a changed heart in herself and others, which would issue in embodied practices and a greater desire to know God. In her
practices, therefore, redemption and religious affections combined in Ann’s understanding of church community and mission as a way of life toward dynamic communion with God.

Ann’s return to the United States resulted in culture and theological shock. Ann was uncomfortable with her fame as a missionary, and disheartened by the lack of interest in knowing God and supporting mission that she perceived in British and American Christians. After processing her reactions of self-guilt, angry condemnation, and anxious worry over the continuance of the Burmese mission, she returned to her devotional practices of prayer and pursuit of religious affections. Ann’s concerns and critique of Western Christianity became the catalyst, therefore, for Ann’s editorial remarks emphasizing of the power and largeness of God’s work of redemption despite the weakness of the Judsons and the vulnerable position of the Baptist Mission in Rangoon. Using Edwards’ argument that trials revealed true from false religion and brought forth God’s beautiful glory, Ann described the difficulties as moments of discipline and enjoyment of sweet communion with God.

Employing religious affections, Ann described different missionaries and Burmese inquirers as examples of heavenly minded, sincere professors of experimental religion focused on growth in Christ-like temper and obedient participation and communion with God. Capturing the imagination with the powerful action of God and historical models of religious affection, Ann invited her readers see God’s beautiful presence and participate with God through their support of missions. In spiritual awakening, Ann, her readers, and the “innumerable multitude” of converts, anticipated the sweet, eternal communion with God and one another at the end of their journey and at their final home in heaven.
CHAPTER EIGHT  
CONCLUSION

When I retrace the scenes through which I have passed, the immense space I have traversed, and the various dangers, seen and unseen, from which I have been preserved, my heart is filled with gratitude and praise to that Being, who has at all times been my protector, and marked out all the way before me....And I think I feel, more than ever, the importance of being spiritual and humble, and so to cherish the influences of the Holy Spirit, that in the communication of divine truth, powerful impressions may be made, and that I may no more wander from Him, who is deserving of all my services and affections.

— Ann Judson, 1824

Adoniram Judson was in Ava when he received the black-sealed envelope announcing Ann’s death on October 24, 1826. He had journeyed to negotiate again for religious tolerance throughout the remaining Burmese empire, and left Ann in charge of constructing the new mission in the newly founded British outpost of Amherst. After two years of warfare, imprisonment, and interrupted missionary labor, Ann and Adoniram were ready to build, connect, and begin a new mission community, but this time within British territory conceded by the Burmese emperor. The Rangoon congregation had been scattered by war, and some had died, but a few had gathered with the Judsons in Amherst. In her four months of residence, Ann had overseen construction of a new mission house and two school buildings. She and a Burmese convert, Moung Ing, had started the boys school, and Ann was making plans with her two adopted Burmese daughters to begin the girls school when young Maria fell ill and passed it onto Ann.1 Weakened from deprivation and fevers during the war, Ann had no strength left for another recovery or even one last letter to tell Adoniram she was ill. The residents of Amherst buried her beneath a hopia tree, and when

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1. Maria Butterworth Judson died on April 24, 1827, six months after her mother (Adoniram Judson to Mrs. Hasseltine, Amherst, Burma, April 26, 1827, in Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Judson, 339).
Adoniram returned in February, he and the Burmese converts burst into tears together over their loss.²

After Ann’s death in 1826, mission supporters hailed her war period efforts as further evidence of her missionary bravery, while others pointed out the futility of her sufferings as entirely “uncalled for…that she had better remained at home.”³ As Ann Judson’s life ‘and the history of the mission were the same,’ mission supporters and detractors had a central figure through which to argue over the doctrines, duties, and prospects for American missions throughout the world. As the first American missionary woman to publish an appeal for missionary support and a historical account of God’s activity in Burma, Ann Judson had been the first to offer her life as a window on mission, women’s education, and God’s growth of a church among the Burmese through mission. The rise of Ann Judson legends, much like George Washington’s cherry tree, was perhaps unavoidable, as Ann’s post-war fame heightened Western respect she had earned through her earlier publications.

Ann wrote her way into the hearts and policies of American Baptist mission in her indirect, personal style. Her missionary colleagues came expressly to answer Ann and Adoniram’s descriptions of the needs, and requirements of the American Baptist mission. They agreed to common life, they followed in Ann and Adoniram’s pattern of shared partnerships, and they enabled the continued work of both the Judsons in translation work and zayat activity. American Baptist missionaries arriving after the Anglo-Burmese war aimed to make Burma their home for life too, and to address the needs of Burmese congregations.

By the close of 1828, American Baptists and Burmese converts had formed missions in Ava, Rangoon, Maulmain, and Tavoy.

Ann also left a legacy of possibilities for female missionary colleagues. Baptist women to Burma took to Ann’s organization toward central goals of stable residence and participation with God in church formation, and continued Ann’s home-making and church-making practices wherever they went. Sarah Boardman declared the love of indigenous Karens, newly converted Christians, and her duty to God required her to stay in Burma after the death of her first husband, George. As the American Board’s first single female missionary, Sarah oversaw the Tavoy mission schools, trained new missionaries, and traveled the jungles, with little George Dana in tow, to lead worship and catechize in village zayats. After her remarriage to Adoniram Judson in 1834, Sarah turned to translation and composition, including a translation of Pilgrim’s Progress and composition of several hymns in Burmese. Deborah Wade, who lived for over forty years in Burma, took over Ann Judson’s plans for boarding schools, and she also traveled with her husband Jonathan Wade on evangelistic tours, educated male and female converts, and translated and composed in the Karen language. Like Ann, Deborah also assumed a pastoral role toward the West for a time. In her early years, she instructed American mission supporters in a “simple living” spirituality, which American Baptists female societies wedded to their fundraising efforts for missions.

The first Burmese congregation, though scattered and reduced by the Anglo-Burmese war, lived up to Ann’s estimation of ‘God’s way, though all missionaries be thrown from the country.’ Some of them gathered with Ann and Adoniram Judson in Amherst,

others regrouped in Rangoon, and a few partnered with the Wades, Boardmans, and other new missionaries. Mah Men Lay and Mah Doke, members of Ann Judson’s female society and the earliest female converts, rejoined Ann in Amherst. Until her death in 1828, Mah Men Lay superintended the school with Deborah Wade, and left half of her possessions to the mission in her will. Rangoon converts Mah Doke, Moung Ing, and Moung Shway bay followed Adoniram Judson and the Wades to Maulmain; Moung Ing became a traveling evangelist, and Mah Doke became a central figure in the Maulmain congregation. As late as 1853, Mah Doke and Ann Judson’s Bengali cook were still in Maulmain among the Christians. Moung Tha A, who joined the Rangoon community as an inquirer in 1820 and was baptized in 1822, began preaching tours around Rangoon in 1826, and was ordained in 1829. Given the honorable Burmese title ‘Ko’ for his age and wisdom, Ko Tha A became the first native pastor of the Rangoon congregation, as the Baptist missionaries were indeed barred from Rangoon for several years. By 1854, Ko Tha A and the Rangoon congregation were actively establishing new congregations, ordaining native pastors, and calling ecclesiastical councils as part of the Burmese Baptist convention. 

Ann Judson’s practice of community cultivation to welcome inquirers and encourage Burmese responsibility and agency had fully flowered in Rangoon.

Alongside these demonstrations of Ann’s legacy, following her efforts to uproot and replant in a new context, her relational connections, and her ordering of life toward two specific goals has revealed Ann’s theological rationale throughout her life as well as her theological voice toward the West. Ann worked toward identification with the Burmese through Christian devotional habits, while she sought to maintain connections with her Bradford and other supporters through prayer. She extended formative practices of

\[6. \text{“Rangoon Baptist Mission: Likeness of Ko Tha A, Church Constituted at Pazoondoung,” } \textit{Baptist Missionary Magazine}, \text{January 1855, 20-24.}\]
household economy, diplomacy, catechesis, and community cultivation through her theological understanding of good relations, religious convictions, and God’s primary agency in church formation. Looking back, Ann’s theology of redemption and religious affections tinted every attempt to make sense of her environment, experience, and encounter, and she also pressed her received theology into a guiding spirituality and journey toward God through mission for the West.

Rather than striding toward peril and sacrifice, it would be nice if the Ann Judson of legend took on more qualities of her love for the Burmese, her efforts during her missionary labors, and her theological brilliance. To learn the most from her, however, it is best to remember Ann Judson as a negotiator of contexts, relations, formative knowledges, and practices. She carried a sense of American superiority and even Christian triumphalism throughout her time as a missionary, and also counter-principles of spiritual equality and openness to identification. She continued to negotiate Western assumptions and gender constraints while establishing a stable residency and defining the role of missionary to the Burmese of Rangoon. She crafted practices of catechesis and community cultivation while negotiating difference between New England revivalism and Burmese Buddhism, as well as the contested difference between Congregational and Baptist ecclesiology and polity. When confronted by the lack of revivalism and mission support in the United States, Ann narrated herself in need of discipline to negotiate her critique of America as a published female author. To the last, Ann negotiated the difference between her life toward God and her life as a missionary to both sides of the globe.
Appendix A:
Lists of Abbreviations and Names

Abbreviations
MBMM Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine
ABMM American Baptist Magazine and Missionary Intelligencer
ABCFM American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions
Triennial General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States of America, for Foreign Missions
BBFM Baptist Board of Foreign Missions

Hasseltine-Judson Family
Ann Hasseltine (1789-1826) and Adoniram Judson (1788-1850):
  Roger Williams Judson (1815-1816)
  Maria Eliza Butterworth Judson (1824-1827)
  Mary Hasseltine Judson (Burmese, adopted)
  Abby Hasseltine Judson (Burmese, adopted; d. 1827)

Western Missionary Colleagues
Gordon Hall American Congregationalist, served in Bombay, India
Harriet (d. 1812) & Samuel Newell American Congregationalist, served in Bombay, India
Samuel & Roxana Nott American Congregationalist, served in Bombay, India
Luther Rice American Congregationalist/American Baptist, served in United States
William & Mrs. Carey British Baptist, served in Serampore, India
William & Mrs. Ward British Baptist, served in Serampore, India
Joshua & Hannah Marshman British Baptist, served in Serampore, India
Felix Carey British Baptist, served in Rangoon, Burma
George & Mrs. Hough American Baptist, served in Rangoon, Burma, Calcutta, India
James (d. 1822) & Elizabeth Colman American Baptist, served in Rangoon, Burma, Chittagong, Arrakan, Bengal (Elizabeth)
Edward (d.1819) & Eliza Wheelock American Baptist, served in Rangoon, Burma, Calcutta, Bengal (Eliza)
Dr. Jonathan & Mrs. (d. 1822) Price American Baptist, served in Rangoon and Ava, Burma
Jonathan & Deborah Wade American Baptist, served in Rangoon and Maulmain, Burma
George (d. 1831) & Sarah Boardman American Baptist, served in Maulmain and Tavoy, Burma
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Burmese Inquirers, Converts, and Other Noteworthy Persons</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ko (Moung) Tha A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mah Bike</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mah Myat-la</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mah Men Lay</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary &amp; Abby Hasseltine</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mah Doke</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moung Byaay</td>
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<td>Moung Gway</td>
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<td>Moung Ing</td>
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<td>Moung Kyoo</td>
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<td>Moung Myat-yah</td>
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<td>Moung Oung-hmat</td>
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<td>Moung Nau</td>
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<td>Moung Nyo-dway</td>
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<td>Moung Shwa-Boo</td>
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<td>Moung Shway-Bay</td>
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<td>Moung Thah-ee</td>
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<td>Moung Thahlah</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mya-Day-men &amp; vicereine</td>
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<td>Oo Oungdet</td>
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<td>Oo Yah</td>
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Appendix B: 
Ann Judson Chronology

1788

August 9  Adoniram Judson, son of Rev. Adoniram and Abigail Minor Judson, born in Malden, Massachusetts.

1789

December 22  Ann Hasseltine, daughter of John and Rebecca Hasseltine, born in Bradford, Massachusetts.

1806

Spring  Great Awakening revival at Bradford Academy, First Congregational Church of Bradford.

September 14  Ann Hasseltine becomes full member of First Church of Bradford.

1807

May 12  Ann Hasseltine begins teaching in seasonal village reading schools of Salem, Haverhill, and Newbury, Massachusetts.

September 2  Adoniram Judson graduates from Brown University.

1808

September 22  Adoniram Judson returns to Plymouth in great “religious crisis.”

October 12  Adoniram Judson enrolls in Andover Seminary.

1809

May 28  Adoniram Judson becomes full member of Third Congregational Church of Plymouth, Massachusetts.

September  Adoniram Judson reads Claudius Buchanan’s widely published sermon on missions, “A Star in the East.”

1810

February  Adoniram Judson resolves to become a foreign missionary.

June  General Association of Congregationalists meets at Bradford, Massachusetts. Adoniram Judson and other Andover associates propose a denominational mission society. Adoniram Judson and Ann Hasseltine are
introduced and become engaged soon after.

1811

January 1  Adoniram Judson embarks on a ship to England to discuss a mission partnership between the London Missionary Society and the ABCFM in India.

September 11  ABCFM meeting resolves to undertake support of Adoniram Judson, Samuel Newell, Gordon Hall, Luther Rice, and Samuel Nott as foreign missionaries.

1812

February 5  Adoniram Judson and Ann Hasseltine are married in Bradford, Massachusetts.

February 6  Ordination of the ABCFM missionaries in Salem, Massachusetts.

February 19  Adoniram and Ann Judson, Samuel and Harriet Newell sail for India on the brig Caravan.

June 18  Judsons and Newells arrive in Calcutta, are welcomed by William Carey, and the next day travel to stay at the Serampore Baptist Mission.

August 1  Harriet and Samuel Newell sail for the Isle of France.

August 23  After several weeks of study, Adoniram Judson is convinced of believer’s baptism as the proper method of administration, sends a letter of resignation to the ABCFM after conferring with fellow missionaries.

August 27  Adoniram Judson requests baptism for himself and Ann from Carey, Marshman, and Ward in Serampore.

August 31  Adoniram Judson sends letters to Dr. Baldwin and Dr. Bolles to inform them of the Judsons’ change of sentiment and to inquire about support from American Baptists.


October  Luther Rice is baptized.

November  Adoniram and Ann Judson, and Luther Rice flee Calcutta to avoid deportation to England, sail to Isle of France.

1813

January 17  Judsons and Rice arrive in Isle of France; learn of Harriet Newell’s death.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>Luther Rice sails to America to raise support among Baptists.</td>
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<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>Ann and Adoniram Judson arrive in Rangoon, take up residence in the British Baptist Mission house.</td>
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<td>1814</td>
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<tr>
<td>January-April</td>
<td>Ann Judson travels to Madras alone to receive medical care.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1815</td>
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<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>Felix, Mrs. Carey, son, and servants begin traveling to Ava; brig upset, Mrs. Carey, son, and many servants drowned. Felix leaves employ of British Baptist mission.</td>
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<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Mya-day-men begins reign as viceroy of Rangoon, Ann begins relationship with his wife, the vicereine; Ann gives birth to Judsons’ firstborn son, Roger Williams Judson.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1816</td>
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<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Adoniram begins translation of Gospel of Matthew into Burmese.</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 4</td>
<td>Death of Roger Williams Judson.</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 15</td>
<td>George and Mrs. Hough, with two young children, arrive in Rangoon; Houghs and Judsons agree to common living arrangement.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1817</td>
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<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>George Hough completes first printing of Adoniram Judson’s <em>View of the Christian Religion</em> and Ann Judson’s <em>Catechism</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>George Hough completes first printing of the Gospel of Matthew.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>Ann Judson reports her female society has a membership of 15-20.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>Adoniram Judson departs for Arrakan region to repair health and employ a Arrakanese Christian convert as an assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1818</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>Ann hears that Adoniram Judson’s boat never reached port and fears he is lost at sea; Ann Judson intervenes for mission in the official court of the Rangoon viceroy. Ann’s female society suspended due to political tensions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
July  
George and Mrs. Hough decide to leave for Calcutta for fear of war between Burma and British Bengal; Ann almost leaves but changes her mind and returns to mission house; Ann hears news of Adoniram’s ship.

August 2
Adoniram Judson returns to Rangoon.

September 19
James and Elizabeth Colman, Edward and Eliza Wheelock arrive in Rangoon and take up residence in the mission house.

1819

February
American Baptist mission purchases property adjoining the mission house on the Pagoda road; Ann and Adoniram Judson superintend erection of a zayat for religious meetings and conversation.

April
Adoniram and Ann open the zayat; Adoniram begins preaching in Burmese during Sunday worship; Ann begins a literacy school for Burmese men and women and resumes female prayer society; Ann completes translation of Burmese tracts and Gospel of Matthew into Siamese.

June 6
Moung Nau, a male zayat inquirer, submits a written confession of faith and petitions for baptism.

August
Edward and Eliza Wheelock depart for Bengal seeking medical care for Edward; Edward Wheelock dies at sea from consumption and fever.

November 14
First Burmese-led prayer meeting.

December 21
Adoniram Judson, James Colman, and Moung Nau depart for Ava, seeking religious tolerance for Burmese inquirers.

1820

January 27
Adoniram Judson and James Colman meet the Burmese emperor; their petition offends the emperor and he dismisses them without royal favor.

February
Adoniram Judson and James Colman return to Rangoon; Burmese converts convince the Judsons to stay in Rangoon and keep the Baptist mission open.

March 28
James and Elizabeth Colman depart for Chittagong, Arrakan.

April 15
Ann Judson has first serious attack of liver complaint, continues female society and religious conversations from her bed.

July 19
Ann and Adoniram Judson sail for Bengal due to Ann’s serious illness, temporarily leaving the Rangoon congregation and mission house.
1821

January 5  Ann and Adoniram Judson return to Rangoon; find all Burmese converts have remained Christian; Mya-day-men and his wife are again ruling viceroy and vicereine of Rangoon.

August 21  Ann Judson sails for Bengal due to return of liver complaint.

December 13  Dr. Jonathan and Mrs. Price arrive in Rangoon.

1822

January  Ann Judson sails for England to receive further medical care, visits England and Scotland for several months; George Hough returns to Rangoon with the printing press.

August 22  Adoniram Judson and Dr. Price travel Ava; second visit more successful, as Adoniram visits with several members of the royal family and other influential government officials; Adoniram engages in religious conversation with the Burmese emperor.


December 3  Ann Judson arrives in Baltimore; stays with her brother-in-law Elnathan Judson to receive medical care and rest in seclusion; completes Account of the American Baptist Mission to Burmah.

1823

January  Dr. Price remains in Ava; Adoniram Judson and Moung Nau return to Rangoon.

April  Ann Judson attends the Triennial Convention; meets privately with the Baptist Board for Foreign Mission and submits written recommendations to the convention.


December 5-December 8  Ann Judson and the Wades arrive in Rangoon; Ann and Adoniram Judson depart for Ava with Moung Ing and the two daughters of Moung Shway-Bay; Ann and Adoniram adopt the girls and name them Mary and Abby Hasseltine.

1824
February 10  Ann and Adoniram Judson and cohort arrive in Ava.

May  British invade Rangoon, beginning of Anglo-Burmese war; the Wades and the Houghs evacuate to Calcutta.

June 8  Adoniram Judson and Dr. Price arrested as British spies and imprisoned; Ann begins two years of diplomacy work to ensure their survival.

October  Ann Judson gives birth to Maria Eliza Butterworth Judson.

1825

January  Adoniram Judson, Dr. Price, and other Western prisoners taken from Ava prison and forced to walk to jungle prison of Oung-Pen-La; Ann Judson follows with her infant and two adopted daughters; Mary Hasseltine, Maria, and Ann contract small pox; Ann inoculates the rest of the village.

March  Ann Judson contracts typhus fever; confined for two months.

June  Adoniram Judson and other prisoners return to Ava; Ann Judson and the family also return to Ava; Adoniram Judson conscripted into diplomatic translation service for the Burmese emperor.

July  Ann Judson contracts spotted fever; Dr. Price released from prison to attend to her.

August  Ann Judson intervenes with Ava governor to keep Adoniram Judson from returning to prison; Ann and Adoniram take up residence in the Ava governor's house until the end of the war.

December  The Burmese emperor sends Adoniram Judson and Dr. Price as emissaries of to the British camp to negotiate a peace treaty.

1826

February 21  Ann and Adoniram Judson, and Dr. Price, released to the British.

April 26  Ann and Adoniram Judson, their children, Moung Ing, Moung Shway-Bay, Mah Doke, Mah Men Lay move to Amherst, a new city founded on the line between Burmese and British held regions in Burma.

July 5  Adoniram Judson departs for Ava with British emissaries to petition for religious tolerance in remaining Burmese empire; Ann Judson remains in Amherst, builds school houses and new mission house.

September  Moung Ing opens school for boys in Amherst.

October 24  Ann Judson dies, and is buried in Amherst.
November 23  Jonathan and Deborah Wade arrive in Amherst, take charge of mission house and schools.

1827

January 24  Adoniram Judson returns to Amherst.

February 1  Abby Hasseltine Judson, daughter of Moung Shway-Bay and adopted daughter of Ann and Adoniram Judson, dies at Amherst.

February 25  Moung Ing commissioned by the Amherst congregation as evangelist, travels to his home in Mergui to preach the gospel.

April 17  George and Sarah Boardman arrive in Amherst.

April 24  Maria Judson dies, is buried next to her mother in Amherst.

May 25  George and Sarah Boardman prepare to open a second Baptist mission at Maulmain, the capitol of British controlled Burmese territory.

September 16  Mah Men-la dies at Amherst.

November 10  Adoniram Judson, Jonathan and Deborah Wade, Moung Ing, Moung Shway-Bay, Mah Doke, and several students close the mission at Amherst and move to Maulmain.
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Biography

Laura Rodgers Levens was born January 7, 1983 in Louisville, KY. In 2005, she graduated magna cum laude from Baylor University in Waco, Texas, with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. Laura earned a Masters of Divinity, summa cum laude, from Duke University Divinity School in 2008. She was the recipient of the Duke Scholarship (2006-2008). In the fall of 2014, Laura accepted a position as Assistant Professor of Christian Mission at Baptist Seminary of Kentucky in Georgetown, Kentucky. In the spring of 2015, she completed the Doctorate of Theology from Duke University Divinity School, with the generous assistance of the Duke Evangelism Fellowship, funded by the United Methodist Foundation for Evangelism (2008-2012).