

CAHIERS DE L'ECOLE FRANÇAISE D'EXTRÊME-ORIENT.
NUMBERS 23 TO 29: A FURTHER APPRECIATION.

Due to the interest caused by our appreciation of the *Cahiers de l'Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient*, as published in JTRS. Vol. XXXIII, Part 1, 1941, the Editorial Board of this journal have expressed the wish for some further notes on the Cahiers. We accede to this request with great pleasure and shall in the following note treat the most important of the contents of the Cahiers, numbers 23 to 29, covering the years of 1940 and 1941 which represent the continuation of the Cahiers already treated in our above-mentioned appreciation.

In order to facilitate the survey of the activities of the School the contents of our note are again arranged geographically.

CAMBODIA. During the years 1940-41 further discoveries of temple ruins, of images as well as of inscribed *stelae* have been made, and the restoration by the process, called anastylosis, of certain monuments has been continued. Among the latter is Bantay Samrè, to which is attached the not very probable myth of a Samrè melon gardener becoming king of Angkor. Repairs of the vast temple of Bakong (Toluos) have also been going on with good results. Further repairs to the Bayon, and of the interior of the gigantic Phra Khan temple have been carried out too (1). Prof. Coadès lectured, on the 26th August 1940, about the work of the Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient at Angkor (2), during which he surveyed the work of classification, preservation and restoration executed by the School since 1907 under the various conservators such as Commaille, Marchal and Trouvé, while such experts on ancient Khmer architecture and art as Parmentier, the Nestor of archaeologists in Indochina, Messrs. Ph. Stern, Dupont and P. Mus as well as Mme. de Coral-

(1) Cahier 23 pp. 11-13 & 24 pp. 8-9.

(2) Cahier 24 pp. 13-16.

Rémusat, not to forget M. V. Goloubew, the discoverer of the first Angkor, have extended and made more precise our knowledge of this wonderful old group of stone monuments.

We now know for certain that the present walled town of Angkor Thom dates back to the end of the XII century C. E., furthermore that the Bayon originally was dedicated to the Mahayanistic Boddhisatva Lokesvara, and that the faces on the towers, as well as the beautiful image of the Buddha found in the central tower by the late M. Trouvé, all represent portraits of King Jayavarman VII idealized under the traits of the Buddha or the Avalokitesvara (Lokesvara). The Professor concluded his lecture by saying that we now know also that the huge sanctuaries of the Angkor group were funerary temples, such as Angkor Wat, which was the mausoleum of King Suryavarman II, the great conqueror living during the first half of the XII century C. E. The central tower of Angkor Wat no doubt housed a statue of Vishnu. Mausoleums also were the temples of Phra Khan and Tā Phrom (2a), of the father and mother respectively of Jayavaman VII. On the 31st August 1940 M. V. Goloubew delivered his lecture on *L'hydraulique urbaine et agricole à l'époque des rois d'Angkor* which has already been reviewed by the writer in JTRS. Vol. XXXIII. Part 2.

The repairs of the Bakong temple have revealed débris of statuary from which it has been surmised that there formerly existed here, as mentioned in one of the inscriptions, a group of three statues, called Umagangapatiçvara (3). A statue of a kneeling Prajñāpāramitā has been found in the jungle to the south of Phra Khan. It will be remembered that King Jayavarman VII deified his mother under the traits of Prajñāpāramitā to whom the temple of Tā Phrom was dedicated. Prajñāpāramitā is the spiritual mother of the Buddha.

Prof. Coedès has also delivered two very instructive lectures on ancient Cambodia's temples. One, delivered on 18th November 1940, was called *Some erroneous opinions about ancient Cambodia and her temples* (4) and the other *The grand monuments of Angkor, are they temples or tombs?*, delivered on 24th March 1941 (5). In the first lecture the learned Professor combats the still widespread, and false, idea

(2a) Cahier 24 pp. 13-16.

(3) Cahier 25 p. 4.

(4) Cahier 25 p. 8-11.

(5) Cahier 26 p. 25-29.

that we are ignorant as to who the builders of these temples were and for what purpose they were erected. The idea commonly held is that the Khmer or Cambodians, who were the builders, came from India (since disappeared). The truth is quite otherwise. The Khmer belong to a group of peoples, which have been living in Indochina since prehistoric times, and who are represented outside their proper country by closely allied peoples in the Moi or Khāland of Annam and Laos as well as in Lower Burma. The Khmer are autochthons, who have received some infusion of Indian blood, but they did *not* come from India. These Khmer never disappeared and never changed their name, and they have continued to speak that language which we find in the stone inscriptions, and which was used by their ancestors of the VI century C. E. The reason for the decline of the Khmer was due to devastating wars during which their wonderful irrigation system on the plains to the south, east and west of Angkor was destroyed. Depopulation and the transfer of the capital to another place followed, and this amply explains the difference between ancient Cambodia and the weak state of latter times. Quite an important factor contributing to the decline of the virility of the Khmer was the insatiable desire of their kings for constructing huge and often useless stone monuments to their own or their family's glory. The crushing and endless *corvées* maintained for several hundreds of years did, no doubt, sap the strength of the common people (6). We also know now that the oldest architectural vestiges do not go back prior to the VI century C. E., and that the Angkor monuments were built during the period from the IX to the end of the XII century C. E. The first of these was the group at Roluos 879-893 C. E. and the last Phra Khan 1191 C. E. The Bayon and Angkor Thom's walls are from the last years of the XII century C. E.

The grandiose Angkor Wat was probably built during the reign of Suryavarman II (1112-1152 C. E.), and its construction may have taken about thirty years. It will be remembered that this king's posthumous name was Paramavishnuloka which shows that he was a vishnuite. The late General de Beylié's theory, developed in his booklet *Le palais d'Angkor Vat, ancienne résidence des rois Khmers* must now be rejected. The true destination of this incomparable monument was that of a mausoleum for the above-named king. In the other lecture Professor Coedès mentions that in the annals of the Leang dynasty (first half of the VI century

(6) *Vide* Prof. Coedès' moving words quoted by M. Marchal in his *Musée Louis Finot, la collection Khmère* and in our review of this book JTRS, Vol. XXXIII, Part 1, p. 84.

C. E.) it is said that in the ancient empire of Funan (preceding that of the Khmer) there were current four kinds of disposal of the dead, namely by water, by fire, by earth and by birds. The Chinese ambassador, Tchou Ta-Kwan, at the end of the XIII century C. E., describes with some detail the exposure of the corpses to the wild beasts. With regard to the kings, he says that their remains were interred in a tower but he did not know whether of their corpses or only of their bones.

In ancient Cambodia there existed a cult of great men which consisted in the erection of divine statues that bore a name in the composition of which entered the name of the personage it represented under idealized traits. These images are called in several inscriptions *glorious bodies* and represented Brahmanic gods or goddesses or some Buddhist divinity or even a linga wearing a name that at the same time reminded one of the divinity represented and the personage deified under its traits. As this matter has been more fully discussed by Prof. Coedès in his admirable paper published in BEFEO, Vol. XL, 1940, Part 2, under *Etudes Cambodgiennes, XXXIII La destination funéraire des grands monuments Khmers* (7), we shall only shortly treat the remainder of this lecture. Prof. Coedès goes on to say that in India images cannot receive a cult before they have been made "living," i. e. animated by the real presence of the god. This is done through a rite called "opening the eyes" of the image or the mask sculpted on the linga. The "opening" is done by piercing the eyes with a needle. In Tibet Buddhist statuettes are made "living" by inserting a piece of holy writing in the socle of them. As far as we know such ideas and ceremonies are unknown among the Hinayana Buddhists. In Cambodia such images representing living persons were considered to contain their essence or *subtle I*. However, if the person died, or when a statue of a defunct person was to be consecrated, what was then the procedure? In order to reply to this question it is necessary to find out what were the customs in ancient Java and Bali. Dr. Stutterheim has given an excellent *résumé*, in a book on Bali, of these customs. He says that after the cremation of the corpse of a king, divers rites were carried out with the purpose of conducting his soul to heaven, concluding with a ceremony which procured for the dead the deliverance from the circle of incarnations. Some time after a piece of ground was consecrated, and the bones of the king, encased in a reliquary,

(7) This has been analysed with profound scholarship by H. H. Prince Devawongs in the Thai Journal of the TRS, issued in May B. E. 2485.

were buried there. Over this reliquary an image was erected representing the deceased king. This image was enclosed by an edifice with all the characteristics of a temple, and here the royal descendants would come to celebrate certain rites destined to call the soul of the king down to animate his statue for a time.

Reliquaries of stone have been found in several monuments in Java containing ashes and pieces of burnt bones. In Cambodia, whose temples have been the object of a systematic pillage, nothing in the way of relics have been encountered. In Java was known another kind of burial, probably a pre-Hindu custom, namely in stone *sarcophagi*. During the work of conservation of the Angkor group a dozen stone vessels were discovered of which one has still its lid. They are all provided with a hole as for the outlet of some liquid. Though the dimensions of these vessels (1.20 m. x 0.60 m. in diameter) seem too small for the placing of a fresh corpse, Prof. Coedès nevertheless arrives at the conclusion that these stone vessels were made for such a purpose, as the dimensions would suffice for placing a corpse in a kneeling position. The hole in the stone vessel would correspond to the hole in the urns used in Thailand for draining the liquids from the decomposing corpse inside. The hole might also serve as a means of exit for the soul to the world of the gods, or again for communication with those living outside. All this information helps us to recognize the funerary character of the grand monuments of Cambodia, such as Phra Khan especially. According to a stela in this enormous temple, King Jayavarman VII offered 13,500 villages to the Dharmaraja, Sovereign of the Law, i. e. Yama. Should we therefore consider such a temple as a tomb only? No! Professor Coedès replies: All tends to the conclusion that it was both a temple and a tomb, i. e. a funerary temple or a mausoleum. And this holds good for a whole series of other grand temples in Cambodia: Prah Ko; Lolei; Bakheng; Mebon; Pre Rup; Phimanakas; Angkor Wat; Bantay Samrè; Tā Prohm and Bayon where either *sarcophagi* or statues of deified princes have been found.

The idea of building a temple in their life time and then consecrate an image bearing their name and containing their essence or *subtle I* is also met with in ancient China whose emperors followed the same custom.

On 31st March 1941 Prof. Coedès lectured on medical service in Cambodia at the end of the XII century C. E. (8) The great warrior,

(8) Cahier 26 pp. 29-31 and also the Professor's article in *Revue médicale Française d'Extrême-Orient* Nos. 3-4, Mars-Avril 1941.

temple and road builder, King Jayavarman VII, also constructed no less than 102 hospitals, ruins or traces of 33 of which have so far been found. The northernmost seems to have been at Say Fong near Wiengohan. (We have ourselves visited several of them, such as Phnom Wan and Khomburi in the *changvât* of Nakhon Ratchasima). Stelae containing detailed and exact instructions for the upkeep and administration of the hospitals have been found. To the hospitals, which were built of wood, were attached stone chapels dedicated to the all merciful *Bodhisatva*, *Lokesvara* or *Avalokitesvara*. The inscriptions give detailed instructions for the upkeep of these hospitals and the medicines (mostly herbal ones) to be used. Still, one clearly understands from them that the most effective cure was obtained through the gracious help of the merciful *Bodhisatva* when duly appealed to.

At the end of last year M. Glaize, conservator of the Angkor group, delivered a very interesting and instructive lecture on the anastylosis, i. e. the method of reconstruction of ancient (ruined) monuments (9). This method was invented by the Dutch Engineer-general Van Erp in Java and through it a whole series of splendid Buddhist and Brahmanic temples, such as the world-famous Borobudur, Prambanan, and others, have been reconstructed or completely repaired, regaining almost their original appearance. M. Marchal has studied this art, because it is an art in itself, in Java in 1930 (10), and he has successfully applied same to several of the finest Khmer monuments, among them the exquisite Bantay Srei, his masterpiece. M. Marchal's successors are following in his footsteps, and by and by a whole series of famous temples will rise again as it were from the dead. When one contemplates the photographs published in Cahier 29 one marvels at the able reconstruction of beautiful, perfect buildings out of a former confused heap of stones.

We in Thailand have, especially in the Northeast, *Phāk Isān*, a great number of fine Cambodian stone or brick temple ruins such as Phnom Wan, Phimai, Phnom Rung, Mu'ang Tam, Phra Vihārn, Sra Kampheng, Phnom Chao Mu't and many, many more which could easily be reconstructed by the method of anastylosis. Having visited and studied these temple ruins during our long term of government service many times, we are in the position to say that almost all the material required is there already, lying on the ground round the buildings. The government of

(9) Cahier 29 pp. 25-32.

(10) BEFEO. tome XXX, No. 3-4.

this country some years ago did us the honour to ask our opinion about a possible reconstruction of these and other outstanding monuments, and we sent in a detailed report in due course (11).

Let us hope that, when peaceful times return, this work will be taken up without further delay. But why limit this work of anastylosis to the Khmer monuments? Do the ruined cities of Sawankalok and Sukhothai and Ayuthia not belong to some of the proudest memories of the Thai of Thailand? We think that these old cities could easily be restored to life beginning with the repairing of their fine temples and *chedis*.

COCHINCHINA. In this former province of ancient Cambodia, finds of beautiful pre-Angkorian statuary is continually made, such as of the Buddha Lokesvara, Siva, Ganesa, Vishnu, besides of lingas, Nandins, somasutras, water basins, fine lintels and fine female divinities with beautiful busts and strongly developed hips, also the crowned head of a horse was found (11a). As many of the images found in Cochinchina belong to the pre-Angkor period they are of great interest for the past history of Cochinchina. Cahier 23 gives a list of the recent discoveries made in Cochinchina of points of archeological interest which runs to no less than 65 numbers. In the province of Chaudoc remains of an old Annamite citadel have been found, also an inscription mentioning the name of a King Baladitya. All this indicates that Cochinchina in ancient days, prior to the Annamite conquest, was a highly civilized country with a Khmer population.

As a curiosity is mentioned the find of two small bronze images in Tibetan style from My-tho, one representing a Simhanada Kuvera, the other a Dharinapala (12).

The excavations in the town of Saigon itself have given still more results in the form of a curious little image of bronze representing a personage kneeling on one knee, its forehead adorned with a diadem and its clothing consisting of a striped *sampot*. Its two hands hold a large circular receptacle which in its bottom has a kind of "eye" that perhaps means that it was used as an oil lamp. The architectural vestiges found

(11) For correctness' sake we would like to add here that in the convention concluded between the Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient and the Fine Arts Department in 1937 concerning co operation and common interests there was also stipulated, in clause V of said convention, that Thai students might be sent to the E. F. E. O. for higher studies and technical training.

(11a) Cahier 23 pp. 2, 3 & 5.

(12) Cahier 24 p. 3.

in Saigon may represent the ancient Prei Kor or Prei Nokor that, according to tradition, occupied the site of present Saigon prior to the Annamite penetration (13).

M. Boudet delivered in February 1941 a lecture on the conquest of Cochinchina by the Nguyễn emperors of Annam (14) who settled there considerable numbers of Chinese emigrants from Canton; these, together with Annamite emigrants, by and by succeeded in chasing out or absorbing the original Khmer inhabitants.

ANNAM. At the village of Thoi-an (Phanri) is a Chām cemetery. Here have been found two female statues and two stelae, besides remains of a brick tomb where there was a silver jar containing pieces of a petrified skull (15).

In the Museum, called Khai-dinh, in Hué, an Annamite house, complete with furniture, has been built in order that tourists may obtain a correct idea of Annamite home life (16). This seems a good idea to adopt here in our National Museum where there might be erected a Thai peasant's house complete with furniture and all the various agricultural tools, etc.

The school is also carrying out valuable work in consolidating and repairing several old Annamite fortresses which are of considerable historical interest. Such is the citadel of the Ho in the Thanh-hoa province with its first lines of defence, consisting of a half circular earthen rampart. Another, but unfinished, brick-built citadel is at Binh-ca. It goes back to the beginning of the XVI century (17). Thailand possesses, or did so until quite recently, a number of brickbuilt forts such as at Samut Songkram, Samut Sakorn, Samut Prakarn, Phra Pradaeng and opposite (Pom Saming), Patriu or Chasoengsao, Prachinburi and the vast fortress outside the town of Chandaburi. It is true that all these places are of recent origin, mostly only a hundred years or less of age. Still, a plea for their conservation might be made here in order that not all should share the fate of the city walls of Ayuthia and Bangkok. This we say purely from the motives of a love of the past.

(13) Cahier 24 p. 7.

(14) Cahier p. 20-21.

(15) Cahier 24 p. 7.

(16) Cahier 25 p. 2.

(17) Cahier 26, p. 4-5.

Of great interest are the frescoes discovered in the cave of Thien-Khe. They seem to date back to the IX century C. E., and the connection of these paintings with those of the famous cave of the Thousand Buddhas at Pouen-houang and in Khotan is striking. Thus a link with the formerly flourishing Buddhist art of Central Asia has been forged (18).

TONGKING. The survey of local spirits (*génies tutélaires*), already mentioned in our review of Phya Anuman Rajathon's book *On Funeral Customs in Thailand* (19), is going on, and maps with the repartition of such spirit abodes have been made by M. Nguyễn-van-Huyên (20).

As the result of the School's demand for an ethnic census, it had already (in the third quarter of 1940) received 18 replies to its linguistic questionnaires distributed in the province of Lao-Kay, where many different hill tribes are domiciled (21).

M. Paul Lévy gave on 24th August 1940 an interesting lecture on the coordination of agronomical and ethnological research work in Indochina. The lecturer said that the man tilling the soil, besides doing his own work, could, because of his intimate connection with the peasant's soul, assist ethnological science in a most important way. He also underlined the predomination of the spiritual side in the character of the "primitives" (22).

The talented Annamite historian M. Nguyễn-van-Huyên has lectured on the style of the Indochinese house and typical rural Annamite home (in January 1941) (23). Both lectures are of great interest and might be imitated by some of our young Thai architects who, no doubt, could give us a very instructive and useful talk on the Thai peasant's house. In this connection it must not be forgotten that Prof. Credner, both in *Siam, das Land der Thai* and elsewhere, has given some very good descriptions of the Thai rural dwellings as well as the village formations here

(18) Cahier 26, p. 5-6.

(19) JRS. Vol. XXXIII, Part 2, p. 198.

(20) Cahier 23, p. 3. A whole staff of Annamite scholars and research workers of great ability is now attached to E. F. E. O.

(21) Cahier 24, p. 4 & 5.

(22) Cahier 26, p. 8-14.

(23) Cahier 24, pp. 12-13.

M. Bazacier lectured in February 1941 on the military art and constructions of the Annamites, a very interesting lecture of historico-military importance (24). The Annamite army may be said to have been created in the X century C. E. for the purpose of driving out the Chinese invading armies. Their armament is well known from the contents in tombs from the Han period. They were axes, lances, poignards, bows and cross-bows. The soldiers wore leather cuirasses (Chinese) or bark cuirasses (Indonesian). The officers had metal or bronze cuirasses, also helmets of bronze. Swords of three different lengths were in use. Throwing spears were much employed to judge from the number of these found. Also a kind of bayonet (a poignard) fixed to a bamboo pole! In the XV century Annam possessed a well organized army commanded by a hierarchy of officers with marshals at their head. With such well trained and disciplined armies the Annamites beat the Chāms completely. In the XI century C. E. war-elephants were introduced, and at the end of the XVII century the Annamite army had 3000-4000 war elephants! That the real art of war was not understood is, however, seen by the fact that all military decisions were based on geomancy!

In the beginning of the XIX century C. E. elephants were no longer used for war, though the great emperor Gia-long had a corps of such pachyderms. The Annamites were great masters in building fortified places, and the ruins or traces of quite a number of such have been found. The wall of the Mae, to protect Tongking's northern boundary, and the "gate of Annam" to the south, are well known examples of "Chinese walls".

During Gia-long's reign French officers constructed a great number of citadels on the system of Vauban. It will be remembered that King Narai's citadel in Lopburi and the fortifications of Mu'ang Nakhon Ratchasima or Khorat were also built by French officers, but at the end of the XVII Century C. E.

KHA or MOILAND. M. Ner has been collecting material for Moi Mnong and Moi Gar *coutumiers* in their villages to make similar ones as that of the Rhadae made by Sabatier, already reviewed in this Journal (25). M. Ner had already during a stay in Dalat during March-April 1940 obtained 79 such documents. The translation and study of

(24) Cahier 26, p. 17-20.

(25) Cahier 23, p. 3 & 4, see also the writer's review of L. Sabatier's *Recueil des coutumes Rhadées du Darlac* in JTRS, vol. XXXIII, Part 2.

these are, of course, of the greatest importance for our knowledge of the history and culture, not only of the Indonesians of Indochina, but also in assisting us to elucidate hitherto difficult cultural traits found among the Indonesians of Iusulinde and the Melanesians. In a Mnong village, B. Ba Tul, centre of the elephant hunters, M. Ner got hold of new texts—oral ones of the almost forgotten customs of the Bu-dòng. We are not told what is meant by Bu-dòng. Here also were found the two enormous Mnong epics which are true summaries of the history, morals and knowledge of this tribe. M. Ner has got a Mnong teacher to write down one of these epics, Mprò Ling Yang; the text of the other was known in its entirety by an old woman, now unfortunately dead. There is, however, a hope to obtain it from some other source. M. Ner is also collecting the *contumiers* of the Gil, Gar, Ma and So're tribes (26). M. Ner, during August 1940, visited several groups of *Sea Moi* to the north of Nha-trang. These Moi are fishermen, hunters and firewood traders, and though completely annamitized they still know that they are Moi. They are, however, now on the way of being absorbed by the Annamites (27).

M. Ner has begun to translate into French the texts of the *contumiers* collected through his efforts, and to judge from the versified contents of that of the Gar tribe, they promise to be just as interesting as that of the Moi or Khã Radae (28).

The School has received an ethnological map of the district of Attapeu showing the location of the Khã Tamung villages (29); and, from M. Jacquemart, an important note on Darlac with a glossary of five Khã dialects spoken in that district (30).

LAOS. M. Paul Lévy, chief of the Ethnological service of the School, has collected new information concerning magic, customs and the religious life of the Lāo of Luang Prabang. He also discovered near to Luang Prabang a pre-historic station of great extension—two kilometres at least—which is of quite an exceptional importance not only because of the abundance of the lithic material there but also because of the composition of it which is so far unknown in Indochina. The *Cahier* says (31) that *here is a place which has not ceased to be inhabited since the period when man had as his only tool grossly shaped bits of stone—coliths.*

(26) & (27) Cahier 24 pp. 6 & 5 respectively.

(28) Cahier 28 pp. 3-8.

(29) Cahier 24 p. 10.

(30) Cahier 26 p. 1.

(31) Cahier 23 pp. 13 & 14.

This *Indochinese palaeolithicum* closely related to the lithic culture of the Hoabinhian, as discovered in the caves of Southern Tongking by Mlle. Colani, has besides the value of proving that in Indochina, like in the valleys of the Somme (France) and Solo (Java), the river banks were inhabited by man from the most distant periods of pre-history. In this case it is the Mekong (32), a mighty river, and an ancient road of communication between the interior of the Asiatic continent and the southern archipelago.

Mlle. Colani, who has continued her prehistoric researches in Mu'ang Phu-Eun and at Song Men (altitude 1,200 metres), discovered, in an immense forest of pine trees and oaks, a new vast field of funeral jars with their "lids" and discs. When turning the "lids" upside down they were found to be sculptured showing in relief grimacing monkeys, grass eating animals, toads and reptiles. What does this new find mean? The local inhabitants are in great fear of the black magical powers of these animal sculptures. Mlle. Colani has arrived at the conclusion that the real significance of the monolithic jars is connected with a phallic cult analogous to that which Messrs. Kruyt and van der Hoop *think* they found in Celebes (33).

The School has received an ethnological map of Hua Phan Hā (34) showing the repartition of the various tribes of Thai, Khā, Mæo and Yao inhabiting this old Thai principality. M. P. Lévy delivered in November 1940 an interesting lecture *The Lāo Kingdoms of Mekong* (35). He begins by mentioning *the profound and attractive character of the Lāo* and continuing says that according to geologists this Indochinese peninsula of the Asiatic continent was shaped as follows: Long before man appeared on earth, the present French Indochina constituted, together with Southern China, and a part of Burma and India, a very ancient continent, and it took its form before there occurred those mighty movements of folding that created the chains of the Himalayas. While the other Indochinese rivers, due to the lay of the land, have got their courses orientated north to south, the Mekhong has had to force its way through

(32) *vide* Prof. Credner, who, in his admirable work *Siam, das Land der Thai*, states that the Mekong is one of Asia's most ancient rivers.

(33) Cahier 23 p. 14 & Cahier 24 p. 10. We are not sure that we agree with this new theory.

(34) Cahier 24 p. 10.

(35) Cahier 25 pp. 11-17.

many physical obstacles, which have resulted in the difficult navigation, of this giant water course.

The migration of the various peoples, who entered Indochina, took also the direction from north to south, and to-day the Maeo, the Man (Yao) and the Lollo still follow this direction in their migrations; the net-like nature of the easternmost part of Indochina has allowed the preservation of a whole ethnic collection of such a variety that would be difficult to find anywhere else on this planet.

The Indo-Khmer, Chām, Annamites and Lāo, arrived at the rich river delta lands or in the river plains either by sea or by river, but their civilizations originated rather by symbiosis and mixture than by great ethnic displacements, says M. Lévy. Instead of using the term Indo-Khmers we would prefer that of Indian colonists.

After a short survey of the expansion of the Khmer cultural and political power which extended over the whole of N. E. Thailand up to Wiangchan and Luang Phrabang, the lecturer says that the immigrant Lāo (to begin with) were under the rule of the Khmer whose civilization they adopted. The Thai of Thailand were, of course, more favoured in their obtaining the broad and fertile plain of the Menam, which after all is destined to play the most important rôle in the future history of the Indochinese peninsula.

The life of the easy going and peaceful Lāo was made difficult by the incessant attacks by powerful neighbours, and they suffered much from the incursion of the Annamites and, especially, the Burmese. Father Marini, who visited the kingdom of Wiengchan in the XVII century C. E., tells us about a Jesuit father (de Leiria), who proposed to construct sluices in order to facilitate navigation over the rapids of the Mekhong. The King of Wiengchan, however, vetoed this by saying that the rapids in this mighty river constituted his best protection against invasions of enemies. To adopt the proposal of the Jesuit father would mean the surrender of the keys to his kingdom.

It would be very interesting if one could obtain the plans and calculations for these proposed sluices. They might be of practical interest, even at present. The wild and rugged mountain chains, which surrounded the kingdom of Wiengchan, did, of course, for a long time, act as powerful obstacles for any intending invader. Still the Lāo had for a very long period to be a Burmese protectorate, during the XVI and XVIII centuries

C. E. Traces of this are still visible in Lāo temple architecture (as also seen in North Thailand). The Lāo, as the other Thai of Thailand or Siam, entered the Mekhong valley and the extensive Khorat plateau from northeast which they conquered from the aborigines, the Indonesian Khā and later the Khmer. History in the strict sense of the word seems to begin with the brilliant reign of King Chao Fa Ngom (XIV century), who, by his upbringing at the court in Angkor Thom and his marriage to a Khmer princess, was instrumental in introducing the Hinayana form of Buddhism to his new empire, Lān Nā Chāng, with its capital at Chavā or Luang Phrabang. He introduced the Khmer forms of administration and other cultural elements which to-day are integral parts of Lāo civilization. The kingdom of Wiengchan seems to have had its heyday in the XVI century when its power and civilization was much admired by several European travellers such as the Dutch merchant Van Wusthof and the Italian Jesuit Father de Leiria, the latter staying in Wiengchan for five years (1642-1647). Their descriptions of the daily life of the Lāo are of great historical value.

In the beginning of the XVIII century Luang Phrabang and Champassac separated from Wiengchan, as a result of the Burmese invasion and cruel yoke. The Burmese were finally forced to retreat by the victorious campaigns of the Thai warrior kings, Taksin and Phra Phuttha Yot Fa, and when Wiengchan rebelled against Thailand in 1827, the sad destruction of this formerly splendid capital followed. What has happened since then is recent history and is not necessary to treat here.

We would add that though there cannot be any doubt of the Thai origin of the Lāo of Luang Phrabang, Wiengchan, Champassac and north-eastern Thailand, it seems to be a curious fact that these Thai people have always called themselves Lāo. Could this have any connection with the former Ai-Lāo kingdom in southern China?

M. Lévy also lectured, in December 1940, (36) on the Lāo new year ceremonies in Luang Phrabang. The new year begins on the 15th April, and thus coincides with our *Krut Songkran*. The customs still followed by the Lāo of Luang Phrabang seem to include all those formerly in vogue with the Thai of Thailand with the exception of the *cours d'amour* held in the Lāo temples which would hardly harmonize with the stricter Buddhist conceptions observed by the Thai here.

THAILAND. In accordance with a mutual arrangement made between the archaeological services of Thailand and French Indochina, M. P. Dupont has carried out important excavations, during the first part of 1940, at Wat Phra Pathon, five kilometres to the east of Nakhon Pathom (37). Here came to light a monument with the dimensions of 16 metres in square resting on a double base. Of the body of the monument, remains to a height of 2.5 metres are still standing. Each face of the monument, a stupa no doubt, has five niches containing five images of the Buddha, of which three are sitting *à l'euro péenne* and two on *Nagas*. The niches are flanked by small columns and pilastres. A great number of stucco-*débris* of heads, garlands, etc. were also found. Soundings in the substructure showed that this monument is the outcome of several successive constructions, the original parts being hidden by later exterior shells. The base of the original and first monument was thus only 2 metres in square, with a single substructure of the same height. The decorations consisted of geometrical and vegetal patterns, and, on each corner, a *makara* holding a small personage in its mouth. The substructure, about 1.50 metres square, was decorated with alternating elephants and garudas in bas relief, except at the axial flights of steps, which were flanked by lions. These staircases had balusters decorated with human heads.

This first substructure was afterwards masked by an exterior building, (the same procedure which has taken place twice with the grand Phra Pathomchedi). More recently, this substructure was again enlarged about 0.50 metre and given a second step wherewith the old flights of steps were hidden. Such successive alterations are also met with in Wat Phra Men or Sumeru (already mentioned in the *Appreciation*).

There were found also a small head of the Buddha of bluish granite and several bronze bangles, as well as four votive plates of metal; one of bronze, two of silver, and one of gold and silver. Three hundred photographs were taken of this monument. M. Dupont's detailed report of the excavations has not yet been published, but we may presume that this newly discovered monument goes back to the same period as Wat Phra Men, i. e. to the Indian-Môn of the 6th century C. E.

GENERAL. M. Paul Lévy has made a series of maps showing the repartition of the various ethnic groups of French Indochina. Such maps are of course of great usefulness to anthropologists and ethnologists alike (38).

(37) Cahier 23 pp. 14-16.

(38) Cahier 25 p. 5.

At the commemorative celebration held in honour of the late Admiral Lartigue, who was a distinguished archaeologist, M. Victor Goloubew delivered a long and interesting speech in which he described the late Admiral's valuable scientific work carried out in the interior of China where he visited, among other places of great historical interest, the still intact tomb, a huge tumulus, of Emperor Ts'in-Che-Houang-ti (39). Here lies buried the 24-year-old heroic emperor who died in the year 214 B. C. He was the greatest of ancient China's rulers, and with an army of 10,000 men he successfully beat the redoubtable Hiong-nu, Turkish nomad warriors, and drove them back beyond the western borders of his empire. Ts'in-Che-Houang-ti was a great horseman, and, as a fitting memory, a stone horse stands at the side of the hero's tomb. The tomb lies some 30 kilometres west of Si-ngan-fu.

The Reverend Father Savina, so well known for his philological works on the tribes of South China, Hainan and Upper Tongking, his *History of the Miao* etc., is dead. A real loss to science, this (40).

At the fair held in Hanoi in December 1941 the Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient had its own pavilion where, by means of pictures, texts and museum-specimens, the great work carried out for more than 40 years was shown. In the various rooms were displayed the historic development of the art, architecture and culture of the countries belonging to the French Indochinese Union. A prehistoric department was of special interest. Professor Coedès, at the inauguration, while conducting the guests through the School's exhibition, delivered a very appropriate lecture tracing the history of the civilizations represented in his pavilion. We think that the organization of something akin to the EFEO's pavilion, with appropriate (i. e. popular) lectures on the cultures represented in Thailand, might be a good idea for a future Constitution Fair.

ERIK SEIDENFADEN.

Bangkok, 31st May 1942.

(39) Cahier 27 p. 11-19.

(40) Cahier 28 p. 1.