

REVIEW.

G. Coedès: *Pour Mieux Comprendre Angkor.*

Hanoi, Imprimerie d'Extrême-Orient, 1942.

To Understand Angkor Better consists of 8 lectures given during recent years by Professor Coedès, Director of the Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient, short extracts of which have been published in the Cahiers of that Institution. The idea of publishing these lectures complete in book form is an excellent one, and should be instrumental in opening the eyes of the general reading public to the meritorious work of the French School of the Far East, and give them a clearer insight of what Angkor really is, and what its temples stand for. By Angkor is, of course, meant the group of monuments within and without the old capital of Angkor Thom, including its central sanctuary Bayon, the mystery of mysteries, with Angkor Wat, Phra Khan, Phnom Bakheng, Nak Pan, Ta Phrom, Bantai Kdei and still others, not forgetting lovely Bantai Srei and the two huge water reservoirs, the eastern and western Baray.

His Excellency Vice-Admiral Jean Decoux, the Governor-General in his preface to this book, rightly styles Professor Coedès a Master of all knowledge pertaining to ancient Cambodia and praises his, to us so well known, talented and elegant exposition of the facts laid before us.

We would fain call the Professor a *Master Mind* even because of his at once lucid and sober penetrating mind which has opened up to others so much of this fascinating world of ancient Hindu thought here made manifest in stone and, formerly, in bronze. Professor Coedès, as the accomplished epigraphist, Sanskritist and archaeologist that he is, possesses just the qualifications, very brilliant ones at that, necessary for undertaking such a task. Those, who have read this book, will agree that he has carried it out very well indeed.

As a considerable part of the information, given here in book form, has already been treated in our appreciations of the *Cahiers de l'Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient* (1) and in our review of M. Marchal's book *Musée Louis Finot, la collection Khmère* (2) we shall only here mention certain points not found in the said extracts.

The last sentences of Professor Coedès' own preface to his book read as follows: "In a word I have tried to get the stones to speak (3). These stones that never in the thoughts of the builders (of the temples) were but lifeless matter without a soul the imperishable charm of which is made of that spirituality with which they are all endowed." That saying characterizes the book.

In the first chapter on the historical and religious frame of Cambodia, the land of the Kambujas, the author says that the Khmer monuments are found from Wiengchan in the north to the Gulf of Thailand in the south, and from Saigon in the east to the Menam valley in the west. Why not say the Meklong valley where Mu'ang Sing represents a typical Khmer temple construction from the XII or XIII century C. E.?

The essential part of these monuments are, however, limited to the east, with the Korat plateau in the north and the lowlands of present Cambodia in the south, so characteristically called by the Thai *Khamen tam*, the low-lying Khmer country, in contrast to the high-lying, to the north of the Dongrek chain. There has always ruled a certain antagonism between these two parts of ancient Cambodia separated by this forbidding mountainous barrier which still to-day is not easy to cross. Both the northern and southern region formed, of course, parts of the vast Hinduized empire of Funan, from the first to the middle of the sixth century C. E. The name of Funan is a Chinese corruption of the Khmer word Phnom, a mountain. The kings, or emperors, of Funan called themselves *kings of the mountain* which refers to the sacred central world mountain of Meru, and as such they claimed to be universal monarchs. The Kambujas were the inhabitants of (at least) the southern and eastern parts of the Korat plateau, the author says from

(1) *Vide JTRS.* XXXIII, Pt. 1, 1941, 24-28 and XXXIV, 1, 1943, pp. 34-38.

(2) *Vide JTRS.* XXXIII, Pt. 1, 1941, 78-91.

(3) A book by Professor Coedès bearing the title *J'ai essayé de faire parler les pierres* is now being published in Hanoi.

Khṇ in the south to Thā Khēk in the north with their capital in Cammon. (4)

Between the Kambujas and the Funanites of Lower Cambodia there was no ethnic difference, though there may have been, as still is the case with the present Khmers living north and south of the Dongrek chain, a difference of dialect.

The Kambujas seceded from Funan by the middle of the sixth century C. E., and declared themselves independent, afterwards annexing Lower Cambodia in the VII century C. E. and thus making an end of the Funan empire. However, already in the VIII century the Khmer realm again became separated into two states; in Tchen-la of the dry land or Upper Cambodia and Tchen-la of the water of Lower Cambodia, so called by the Chinese (5). It was during that period that Java became the overlord of a part of Southern Cambodia. Jayavarman II, the first great king of Cambodia, unified the kingdom and introduced the royal cult of the Godking, the king's "Subtle I" residing in the *linga* placed in a sanctuary.

Then followed great kings such as Yaçovarman, who built the oldest Angkor Thom under the name of Yaçodharapura; Suryavarman II, apotheosed under the name of Paramavishnuloka, builder of the wonderful Angkor Wat, and finally Jayavarman VII, mighty conqueror and builder of the present Angkor Thom with Bayon, Phra Khan, Nak Pan, Tā Phrom, Bantai Kdei, Bantai Chmar and a host of other temples, perhaps the greatest of all the Khmer kings, who was also in part at least responsible for the decline of his country, are well known to the readers of this journal. Their reigns dated from 802 to 1202 C. E., and Angkor Thom still lasted for two and a half centuries longer until it was finally deserted owing to the devastating wars with the Ayuthya Thai. It is interesting to learn that the famous Sanskrit inscription at Vo-can, province of Nha-trang, Annam, is *not*, as hitherto believed, a Chām king's inscription but a Funanite king's in the 3rd century C. E.

The task of dating correctly the various periods and schools of Khmer art and architecture has not been an easy one. Distinguished

(4) See however our remark about this in *JTRS*. XXXIII, 1, 1941, p. 78 bottom.

(5) Cambodia was divided for a third time into two states during the XII century when a foreigner, Jayavarman VI, made himself king of the territories of the Khorat plateau.

savants and archaeologists (such as Louis Finot, G. Coedès, H. Marchal and Ph. Stern) have made mistakes of several hundreds of years in trying to fix the correct dates. The age of Bayon and the city walls of Angkor Thom was thus for a long time made 800 years too old. Especially the intricate but fascinating Bayon baffled the speculations of the archaeologists for a long time. However, finally due to the studies of M. Parmentier and especially to the ingenuity of Professor Coedès the riddle was solved, and correct dates arrived at. It has now been proved that the 12 kilometres-long stone walls of Angkor Thom with its five gate towers cut in the likeness of Lokésvara's face, at the same time being the portrait of the great king Jayavarman VII, as well as Bayon, that Bodhisattva sanctuary *par excellence*, with its towers showing to the four cardinal points the 160 faces of this benign Buddhist Messiah, Lokésvara, which in this case also represent portraits of King Jayavarman, are not older than about 750 years, three quarters of a millennium, or dating back to the end of the XII century C.E. only.

Though it is true that the amazing flourish of sculpture and temple construction in ancient Cambodia was a product of the Hindu civilization transplanted into Indochina some 1500-2000 years ago, this did not exclude a certain originality in this art directly attributable to the artists and builders themselves *who were Khmer*, and who no doubt possessed a non-Indian but Indonesian tradition of art (shown in their wooden constructions and carving). With regard to religion we are told that from the days of Funan and up to the XIV century C.E. the two faiths of Hinduism and Buddhism existed side by side in Cambodia, but when the learned author says that the small vehicle (Hinayana) of Buddhism held sway from the IX to the XIII century C.E. we take it that the word *Petit* (Véhicule) is a misprint for *Grand* (Véhicule). It was first in the XIII century C.E. that the Singhalese form of Buddhism with its Pali canon penetrated from Thailand (where it had been the religion of the local Môn population for more than a thousand years). The author warns his readers against believing that the temples in old Cambodia should be considered as places for public worship like our Christian churches or Buddhist temples. They were *not* destined for such popular assemblies but were considered as the residences or palaces of the gods who, through their images erected therein, were believed to animate the place by their real presence.

The second chapter of the book deals with some erroneous opinions concerning the origin of the ancient Khmer people and the composition of the present one which have already been treated in our appreciations of the Cahiers.

As regards the "discovery" of the Angkor ruins, which really must be ascribed to Rev. Father Bouillevaux in 1850, and not to Mouhot, a decennium later, we really wonder why we Westerners speak about it as a discovery? Instead of saying discovery we should use the word *acquaintance*. The Khmer and the Thai had of course the whole time along, from their being deserted about 1440 C. E. down to our days known about the existence of the old capital and the other Angkor monuments whereas we Westerners were first *acquainted* with them during the time of Rev. Father Bouillevaux and Mouhot by the middle of the last century.

With regard to the age of any monument in Indochina, whether in the Angkor district or elsewhere, not one of them can claim any high age compared with that of the really ancient ones in Egypt, not to speak of Mesopotamia or Elam, some of which go back almost to the dawn of human civilisation. The oldest monuments in Indochina, even when including the megaliths and the giant jars of Chieng Kwang or Assam, cannot possibly claim an age of more than about 2000 years, while the pyramid of Cheops⁴ was built 5600 years ago, and excavations in Mesopotamia and Elam have already brought to light monuments of an age exceeding that by several thousands of years.

Thanks to the patient and persistent work of such French archaeologists, epigraphists and historians as Professor Coedès, we *do* know that the mighty stone enceinte and the five gates with their towers of Angkor Thom including Bayon were built during the years 1182 to 1202 C. E.; and so on.

Angkor Wat, which preceded all these grand buildings, was built during the reign of King Suryavarman II from the beginning to the middle of the 12th century, and though fixed dates are not yet known it can hardly have taken more than 30 years to construct this masterpiece of architecture. With regard to the destruction of the temples Professor Coedès says that such was due to both man and nature, both the vile treasure-hunter and the exuberant tropical vegetation. Earthquakes have, however, not, contrary to the opinion of some people, had any part in the destruction of the temples in Cambodia.

The third chapter of Professor Coedès' book treats of *Personal cults, the apotheosis of princes and the Godking*. The Professor says that of the innumerable statues of Vishnu, Siva and the other Hindu, as well as Mahayanist divinities which the ancient Khmer empire has left us, only a minority really represent the gods themselves. The large majority represent kings, princes, princesses or high dignitaries under the traits of that particular god in whom they were thought to have been absorbed after their death.

Well known evidently was the case of the two brave and faithful *sanjaks* (army officers) who laid down their lives in order to save that of their prince, a son of Jayavarman VII, during a campaign against Champā. Their reward was the erection and honouring of their statues in the mighty temple-convent Bantai Chmar whose central tower housed the statue of that prince they had saved.

The aspects under which many of these images are executed show such a mixture of the attributes of Siva, Vishnu and the Buddha that it is often difficult to decide exactly to which cult they belong. The cult of personages was in reality neither Hindu nor Buddhist, says the author. It was a cult apart, and rather was it a sort of ancestor worship the goal of which was the obtaining of immortality through the adoration of these "glorious bodies." M. P. Mus has most admirably elaborated the idea of the *stupa* as not being a tomb in our occidental sense but a combined tomb and sanctuary which becomes an artificial body of the defunct, a "cosmic man" in which dwells that magic entity that enables the defunct to continue to exist. (6) Professor Coedès says that this is exactly the rôle played by these "glorious bodies" being animated like the *stupa*'s "living tomb" by the *dharma*. The exact significance of the *dharma* is the Law (Buddha's) or religion, but in Cambodia extended to mean the *well established monarchical order* which served as a bridge between parents and their descendants, i.e. preserving the continuity, that precious desire so dear to all humanity. The *devaraja* or godking under the form of a *linga* has already been mentioned in our appreciations of the *Cahiers*.

(6) *Vide Paul Mus: Barabudur* BEFEO. vol. XXXII—XXXIII & XXXIV. His paper, which runs to over 800 pages, not only treats the symbolism of Borobudur but gives a survey of man's religious thoughts from the very lowest fetish-stage up to the high philosophical religious systems.

When Jayavarman VII ascended the throne the *devaraja* or King's "subtle I" quitted the *linga* to dwell in an image of the Buddha, the image which was found by the late M. Trouvé in an interior well in the Bayon. It seems to us that this change of abode of the "subtle I" of the king to an image of the Buddha constitutes a far higher, nobler, and wholly chaste, conception that the gross veneration of the *linga*. Professor Coedès also remarks that whether the king's "subtle I" resided in a *linga* or in an image of the Buddha, it is not an exaggeration to say that the great God of ancient Cambodia (in reality) was the king. And Bayon was thus the national temple of the Khmer. The cult of the *devaraja* or godking, the ancestors and the deified personages was essentially an aristocratic one within the frames of Hinduism and Mahayanism, Buddhism of the *Great Vehicle*, and the Professor concludes this chapter by saying: "With the introduction and victory of the Hinayana Buddhism, the "Lesser Vehicle," which is fundamentally hostile to the idea of a personality (of an Ego), whose existence it denies, the spirit of this aristocratic cult was destroyed, a spirit which had hitherto united the people in the adoration of their kings and great nobles." And he adds that in this (fatality) one should perhaps see one of the grounds for the rapid decadence of the Khmer empire which set in during the XIII and XIV century C. B. When the sovereign ceased to be Siva descended to the Earth or to be the living Buddha, the dynasty could no longer inspire the people with that respect that formerly had enabled their kings to do great things.

Through the anarchic spirit of Singhalese Buddhism the prestige and the temporal power of the Khmer kings declined too. The downfall of the godking from his throne signified at the same time the *Götterdämmerung* of gods and kings. Still a little of this personal cult lingers in the court rituals of Cambodia and Thailand. In Phnompenh, the capital of modern Cambodia, in the Silver Pagoda within the Royal Palace grounds, is seen a golden image of the Buddha studded with jewels which belonged to the late King Norodom, and which has the exact height of the late King. One cannot deny that there is a certain relationship between this image and the deified ones in ancient Angkor. And again in Bangkok, in Wat Phra Kaeo, the two gilt standing statues, one on each side of the tall altar on which is throned the Emerald Buddha, the palladium of the Kingdom of Thailand, which are said to personify the two first Kings of the Chakri dynasty, do they not also recall the idea of the personal cult of the "subtle I?" We think so.

The contents of the fourth chapter *Temples or Tombs* has already been treated in our appreciations of the *Cahiers* and especially by His late Highness the Prince Dewawongs in the *JTRS* Thai number 2, May 1942.

The statue of the so-called Leper king, so well known to all visitors to Angkor Thom, may now be considered to represent the Dharmaraja *i.e.* Yama, the Hindu counterpart of King Minos, judge of the dead. Professor Coedès adds that originally there were most probably four such statues in situ on the terrace called the terrace of the Leper king. And this terrace itself with its superposed rows of fabulous animals represented without doubt the cosmic mountain, Meru, pronounced in our days Men, and was in reality a permanent catafalque (and most likely during royal cremations there was built on it a wooden *prasāt* as is the custom in modern Thailand and Cambodia).

In the fifth chapter Professor Coedès treats architectural symbolism as expressed in most of the Angkor monuments. This architectural symbolism of the ancient Khmer must be taken as an endeavour to establish an intimate link between the universe and the terrestrial world. Professor Baron Robert von Heine Geldern says in his fine essay *Weltbild und Bauform in Südostasien* that the reciprocal relations between cosmology and architecture in the civilized Indochina and Indonesia rest on a conception of the world (*Weltanschauung*) which originated in the ancient Orient, namely the belief in a magical relation between the microcosm and the macrocosm, or between humanity and the universe, between the worldly manifestations and the star constellations (as in ancient Babylonia). To obtain the harmony between this microcosm and macrocosm the ancient Khmer and Indonesians organized their kingdoms, built and arranged their capitals, palaces, temples and monasteries like microcosms, replicas of the cosmological edifice. This system was even extended to the royal courts, the administration, the provincial divisions, weight and coins, etc., all according to space and time in conformity with the laws of nature. So far the distinguished Austrian savant. In China a like system was in vogue for several millenniums. Professor Coedès says that it was due to the inspiration fostered by such ideas that the ancient Khmer raised their grand monuments. Angkor Thom with Bayon and Nak Pan are the translations into stone of the great myths of Hindu cosmology

The Buddhist system, though different in detail, rests also on the idea of a central mount Meru, on which are situated the various heavens, and surrounded by the seven concentric chains of mountains separated by an equal number of seas which are again walled in by a huge ring of mountains outside and on the four sides of which rolls the great ocean. In this are situated four continents of which the southern, Jambudvīpa, is ours, the world of men. On the top of Mount Meru resides the great god Indra with the 33 other major gods.

The central tower, the "high place" or temple mountain, whether Phnom Bakheng, Baphuon or Bayon where the *linga*, housing the king's "subtle I," fulfilled the same function as the *ziggurat* in ancient Mesopotamia, the real "tower of Babel" the gate to the heavens, through which man was to enter the celestial abode.

This architectural symbolism we also find in Java in the grandiose stupa-temple of Borobudur. In Hindu cosmology the connection between man and the gods is represented by the rainbow. M. P. Mus, a master in solving the riddles of symbolism, has shown that the Khmer stone bridges with their balustrades of *nagas*, which give admittance, over the city moats, into the city itself, also stand for the idea of the passing from the world of men, outside, to the world of the gods, inside the great sacred city, and thus then also symbolize the rainbow. (7)

Professor Coedès adds that the ladders of gold, silver and crystal, by means of which the Buddha ascended to the heavens in order to preach the Law to his mother, is nothing else than the rainbow.

M. P. Mus points out that the occurrence of the thundergod Indra mounted on his threeheaded elephant, on either side of the Angkor Thom gateways, also allude to the rainbow connection. Indeed this god is to-day known in Cambodia under the name of the rainbow. It would take up too much space to mention all, however tempting that may be, that Professor Coedès has to say about the symbolism of Khmer architecture so we will limit it to one or two examples more. The central portion of the Elephant's terrace of the Royal Palace in Angkor Thom is decorated with the figures of large *garudas* which serve as atlantides. As the royal pavilion (of wood) was erected on this terrace there can be no doubt that the presence of the *garuḍas* symbolizes a floating aerial palace, a *vimāna*.

(7) In the old Nordic mythology the rainbow was the bridge between Asgaard, the abode of the gods, and Midgaard, the world of men. The parallel is of course due to a common origin of both conceptions.

The unique monument of Nak Pan, which we have called "*The jewel in a lotus pond*" with its single tower standing in the midst of a water filled basin on a tiny island encircled by the sinuous bodies of two giant nagas (Nak Pan—Nagas encircle) should be taken as the symbol of the famous sacred lake Anavapta, in Thai *Sra Anodat*, which is situated in the Himalayan regions, on the roof of the world. The four gargoyles, through which the health-giving water poured, were made in the likeness of the heads of a man, an elephant, a horse and a lion. M. Marchal's discovery of many images of Lokésvara proves that this sanctuary was dedicated to this merciful Boddhisatva, and as such it was a much sought for place of pilgrimage for sick and suffering people who by drinking of and bathing in the sacred waters, and by praying to the merciful One, believed they could obtain a cure for their various maladies.

In the sixth chapter of his book Professor Coedès treats the mystery of Bayon with its cluster of towers decorated with the 160 enigmatically smiling faces of Lokésvara, at the same time portraits of Jayavarman VII. Bayon is mysterious because of its complicated plan; mysterious by reason of its bas-reliefs partly still unexplained and mysterious finally by the eerie decorations of its towers, unique in the history of art. There must have been an earlier building of which we know nothing but even the original plan of Bayon was different from what we see now. It had at first the form of a cross which later on was altered to a rectangle by linking up the arms of the cross by walls built at right angles.

In the same chapter, p. 144, Professor Coedès, speaking about the Baphuon temple, says that in the middle of the XI century C. E. this temple played the rôle of the central sanctuary in the capital whose enceinte had a contour not much different from that of the actual enceinte (of Jayavarman VII's town). We do not quite understand this passage. Was the capital which the Châm pillaged and destroyed in 1177 C. E. not the same as that built by Yaçovarman I? Were there three capitals more or less on the same place; namely Yaçodharapura with Pnom Bikheng as the central sanctuary built by King Yaçovarman at the end of the IX century C. E.; a second in the middle of the XI century C. E. with Baphuon as its central temple, and then finally Jayavarman's capital with Bayon as the central sanctuary?

The two last chapters of this very interesting book are devoted to the two greatest of the kings bearing the name of Jayavarman, namely the second and the seventh. As we in our appreciations of the Cahiers have

mentioned most of this information, we shall confine ourselves to call here and there some points of interest new to readers. Jayavarman II's reign is interesting for several reasons. He pacified and unified the country, which was in a state of anarchy when he took over the power; he made himself independent of the Malay overlordship, of the Maharaja of Srivijaya and he introduced the cult of the Devaraja, the royal *linga* housing the "subtle I" of the king. Jayavarman II resided in a number of more or less temporary capitals during his long reign of 52 years (802-854 C.E.) The reason for all these peregrinations was no doubt connected with the unsettled state of the country. Our knowledge of Jayavarman II is almost wholly due to the famous inscription on a *stela* found at Sdok Kak Thom in the Aran district, Changvad Prachinburi, now kept in the National Museum in Bangkok, which tells about the rather fictitious relationship of Jayavarman II with the princes of Tchen-la of the water whose capital was in Aninditapura, so far unidentified. The first in the series of Jayavarman's capitals was Indrapura, localized by Professor Coedès somewhere in the province of Thbong Khmum, east of Kompong Châm, perhaps at the site of Bantai Prei Nokor; the second was in the Angkor group region at Kuti, identified by Professor Coedès as Kutigvara a little to the north of Bantai Kdei, where there are ruins dating back to the beginning of the IX century C. E. From here the king moved to Hariharalaya lying southeast of Angkor. This third capital has been identified with the group of temples called Roluos, consisting of the sanctuaries of Bakong, Phra Ko and Lolei. As his fourth capital Jayavarman II built Amarendrapura, which, after much discussion, has been localized to the west of the great occidental Baray (water reservoir), and near to its western embankment, where through aerial reconnaissances ancient earth work have been discovered. After some years in residence at this fourth capital the king moved to Mahendraparvata i. e. the rocky plateau of Pnom Kulen, to the northeast of Angkor. It was here in his fifth capital that the king let his chaplain, the Brahman Çivakaivalya compose a new ritual worthy of an independent king who no longer, first thing in the morning, needed to kowtow in the direction of the residence of a foreign overlord, and here also was erected the Devaraja, the godking, namely the *linga*, symbol of the creative power of Siva, in which was thought to dwell the king's "subtle I" or the essence of royalty, which was to be worshipped for more than four hundred years in almost unbroken succession till Hinayana Buddhism

made an end to it in the XIV century C. E. The *linga* of King Jayavarman II was believed to have been obtained from the god Siva through the intermediary of the king's clever chaplain. The kings of Cambodia, and a dynasty in Java, as well as the emperors of Funan, formerly took as their titles that of the *King of the Mountain*, Sailendra, from the sanctuary housing the royal *linga* erected on a natural hill, or simply on a stone pyramid, which symbolized Meru, the central mountain of the universe. King Jayavarman II finally returned to Hariharalaya (accompanied by his Devaraja) where he died in 954 C. E. He was a great king who made his country free and strong. Certain architectural features occurring during the reign of this king have enabled us to bridge the gulf formerly existing between the pre-Angkor and Angkorian schools of art. The art of King Jayavarman II's reign shows the distinct influence of both Champā and Java. From the first it is a case of planning of the temples from the latter decorative details.

About the other great Jayavarman, the seventh of these "protégés of victory," as their names signify, so much has already been said in our appreciations, and during this review, that we shall add here only a few words. Of special interest is what we are told about the sister of Jayavarman's queen "whose knowledge was superior to that of the wisdom of the philosophers," and whom the king appointed supreme teacher in a famous Buddhist monastery where she taught the women. Her Sanskrit, says Professor Coedès, was of the purest. It is interesting to us in Thailand to learn that the image of the so-called Thao Phromthat, formerly *in situ* in the central tower in the Mahayanistic sanctuary of Phimai,(8) and now in our National Museum, represents the great King. Jayavarman VII was perhaps the much discussed Leper King, and because of suffering from this terrible malady he built, out of compassion for fellow sufferers, his 102 hospitals which were spread from south to north over his extensive realm. He was a very fervent Buddhist of the Mahayana sect, and as such a special devotee of Lokésvara, and he made of Bayon a real pantheon where were centralized the cult of the royal family, and of the various provincial cults. There can be no doubt of the king's considering himself a living Buddha. To promote the cult of himself 23 statues of the Jayabuddhamahanatha (the enlightened great Lord of Victory) were erected and consecrated in as many towns, among which figure Lopburi, Suphanburi,

(8) See our paper *An Excursion to Phimai JSS. XVII, 1.*

Rajaburi, Phetchaburi and Mu'ang Sing. This piece of information is of great interest to us in Thailand, and should incite us, as soon as normal conditions return, to make a rational search for these statues which may be discovered hidden in the ground at the respective temples dating back to the year ca. 1200 C.E. In Lopburi the search should be carried out at Wat Mahathat, in Phetchaburi at Wat Kampeng Laeng and so on. Jayavarman VII not only restored the Khmer empire to its former boundaries but extended these. The ever invading and pillaging Châm were completely subjugated, and from 1203 to 1220 Champā was a veritable province of Cambodia. As his inscription at Say Fong shows Jayavarman VII's conquests reached in the north to Wiengchan but he also conquered a part of the Malay Peninsula and pushed on into Burma even. From the inscriptions regarding the construction of the 102 hospitals goes forth the conception of the King's being responsible for the prosperity of the state. This is quite analogous to the conception held in China where the emperor was likewise considered responsible for the welfare, as well as the misfortunes, of his subjects. These ideas are directly traceable back to the divine kingship of the ancient Orient.

Alas! this last, and in a certain sense greatest of all the "protégés of victory," was also responsible, through his megalomania, his excessive and colossal building and constructing of temples, towns and roads, by which he crushed and exhausted the strength of his people to such a degree that the common man may even have hailed the Thai as deliverers from his intolerable *corvées* just as he accepted the new doctrine of Hinayana as a deliverance from the old rapacious gods.

This review of Professor Coedès' book has become rather long but the subject is so fascinating, and the book so interesting, and well written, that we do not think an apology is needed. To all French reading members of our T.R.S. this book is therefore recommended most heartily. No one will regret having read it because having read it means having had one's knowledge enriched.

Bangkok, 1st August 1943.

ERIK SEIDENFADEN

Corresponding Member of Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient

REVIEW.

Collection de textes et documents sur l'Indochine. III,

Inscriptions du Cambodge, Vol. II

by G. Coedès. Hanoi 1942.

This second volume of ancient Cambodian inscriptions, of which the first has been reviewed by us in *JSS*, Vol. XXXI part 2 pp. 181-23 covers 73 inscriptions which, with translations and notes, comes to altogether 235 pages in the text.

In an introductory notice the learned epigraphist says that this second volume contains the texts already published in 1926 in volumes I and II of the *Corpus des inscriptions du Cambodge*. The book ends with a second supplementary list of the newest inscriptions found in Cambodia and Champā, thereby increasing the number of inscriptions, so far known, from 877 to 913 for Cambodia, and from 197 to 209 for Champā. There is also an *addenda et corrigenda*.

In a linguistic note preceding the texts Professor Coedès gives an interesting list of certain Khmer words under the form they were pronounced and written during the Angkor period, compared with the same words under their respective forms in pre-Angkor days and in modern times. It will be seen that the difference between the pronunciation of modern times and that of pre-Angkor days is much less than that of both compared with the pronunciation in vogue during the Angkor period. The author says that all the inscriptions of the pre-Angkor period which have supplied the words for the aforementioned list, are from temples situated either in the southern or eastern part of Cambodia *i. e.* that part of the kingdom which at first, during pre-Angkor days, and thereafter in post-Angkor days (XV century C. E.), constituted its centre. This would explain the close resemblance of the pre-Angkor pronunciation with that of modern times.

On the other hand, when the capital was fixed at Angkor, the form of the words in the inscriptions changed according to the local pronunciation and that of western Cambodia. It is also interesting to note that words borrowed from the Khmer by the Thai show regularly the diphthongued form of the Angkor pronunciation. So words which have been adapted to the peculiarities of the Thai tongue, belonged no doubt to the dialect of the Khmer language spoken at Angkor and that of Western Cambodia. Furthermore a number of these words borrowed by the Thai at that period, and thereafter changed to suit Thai pronunciation, have come back into modern Khmer *in their Thai form*. Take for instance the word for clerk or scribe, which in original Khmer was *smer*, and thereafter changed by the Thai into *samien*, has been adopted by the modern Khmer in its Thai form.

The 73 inscriptions treated in the present volume are either in the Khmer or Sanskrit language or in both. The greater part of the contents of these ancient inscriptions is rather monotonous as it is generally confined to the invocations of some Hindu god or goddess and enumerating the gifts offered to his or her temple in the form of land, paddy, rice, animals, gold or silver utensils, slaves, musicians and dancing girls even. The inscriptions usually conclude with calling down the wrath of the gods on any trespasser threatening him and his whole family including both the previous and future generations, with the dire punishments of the 33 hells. However, as all the temples have been thoroughly plundered for all their valuables it seems that posterity has not paid any heed to the terrible menaces uttered by the pious donors!

In the following we shall mention some of the more interesting inscriptions such as the one found on a *stela* at the entrance to the cave temple of Phra Kuhā Lu'ong near Kompot. It was set up to the honour of Siva, it praises Jayavarman I, and is dated 674 C. E. It mentions two dignitaries who lived during the reign of Rudravarman of Funan (515—545 C. E.). The town Dhanvipura also mentioned therein must have been a locality in the southernmost part of Cambodia and is not to be understood as another name for Vyadhapura, the capital of the Funan empire.

In another inscription, dated 611 C. E., is mentioned a number of female musicians and dancers, almost all with Sanskrit names, while other servants offered to the god are named by their Khmer names which curiously enough are very contemptible ones!

An interesting inscription is one of the two found in Prasat Nang Khmau. It is an invocation of Vishnu under the name of Lokanatha (Lord of the world) and under the aspect of Trivikrama. The inscription praises Jayavarman IV, who reigned in 928 C. E. Professor Coedès says that the Vishnuite invocations harmonise well with the frescoes (1) that decorate the interior walls of the two towers, and which represent Krishna lifting the mountain, and a dancing Vishnu which may be Trivikrama covering the extension of the universe in three steps.

The inscription, on a *stela* from Kompong Thom, which contains an edict by King Jayavarman V, dated 974 C. E., is interesting as it contains a royal command to create two new castes (2) or corporations. One of these, the Khmuk, was perhaps destined for the work of preparing the food for the gods, which shows that food was offered before the images of the Hindu gods in ancient Cambodia. It was probably a daily rite.

It furthermore appears from this same *stela* that purchases of land were made, or might be made, by payment not in money (3) but in kind, so for instance the price of some paddy fields was paid by various utensils in silver (?) and copper, bars of metal, axes, paddy, rice, and cooking pots!

When one reads about the number of slaves offered for service at the various temples, in one case, according to the inscription from Lonvek, VII century C. E., the King, perhaps Jayavarman I, at one time, presented 400 to various temples, one wonders whether they were not these poor Samrae which the Khmer hunted regularly for servitude? (4) Most probably.

It also seems that dancing girls performed before the images of the Mahayanistic gods—a thing unthinkable of happening in the severe puritanical Hinayana cult.

An inscription from Cho'n Ek mentions the name of the god Siddhayatana (VII century C. E.). This name is also found in an inscription from Chantaburi.

(1) Prasat Nang Khmau is the only temple in Cambodia where frescoes have, so far, been found.

(2) Though there were castes in ancient Cambodia that institution never became so all-embracing or rigorous as in India.

(3) Minted money was probably unknown in ancient Cambodia.

(4) Vide M. Baradat's excellent monograph *Les Samrê ou Pêar* BEFEO. Vol. XLI, Part 1, 1941.

Of interest for us Thai is the mention, in stanza LVII, of a prince whose name ended in -indravarman, and who was Lord of Lavodaya (Lavo = Lopburi). (5) Queen Jayarajadevi, it seems, practised television (stanza LX—LXI), being able to see her absent and adored husband, the great warrior and temple-building king. From stanza LXXXVIII it appears that she presented the Buddha Vimaya image (in Phimai) with a gilt silver drum.

ERIK SEIDENFADEN.

Bangkok, 7th November 1943.

(5) *Vide* page 176 footnote 3 bottom lines.

REVIEW

Recherches de Géographie Musicale en Indochine

par

Georges de Gironcourt.

(*Bulletin de la Société des Etudes Indochinoises*, Tome XIII, No. 4)

At a time when the sounds of war reverberate around the world and civilisation seems about to crash to its fall amid scenes of horrid strife, it is pleasing and solacing to know that there yet remain learned men of good will whose minds are bent, not on devising new means of destruction, but on preserving those arts that give joy to mankind, and on enquiring into their origins. Such must be the thought of one who peruses in the *Bulletin de la Société des Etudes Indochinoises* (Nouvelle Serie, Tome XVIII, No. 4) a monograph by Georges de Gironcourt entitled *Recherche de Géographie musicale en Indochine*, published at Saigon this year.

Musical Geography is a new science which was first presented as such at a meeting of the Geographical Society of Paris in 1928 and has since been developed by research in many countries. It is a science with a wide appeal, for music is one of the links in the chain that binds men into one great family. It is one of the marks that distinguishes man from the lower creatures. Not without reason is music called the divine art for, having its origin in Heaven, its influence on mankind as a civilising and refining agent cannot be over-estimated.

The monograph covers a very wide ground. Among many others, it touches upon such subjects as the origin of human song; the influence of climatic conditions on music; the music of ancient China; and the origins of jazz. As far as this part of the world is concerned, the researches have extended not only over the whole of French Indochina but also to Bangkok, Yunnan-fu, and the districts round that ancient capital.

While some parts of the work can be fully appreciated only by the musician well versed in the theory of his art, most of it can be followed with pleasure and profit by the ordinary reader. Nearly all of us have some interest—be it ever so slight—in the origins of things; and the author has written in a way to stimulate that interest. To those—few though they may be—who are interested in primitive music and the instruments by which it is produced, the work is a veritable mine of information, presented in a manner so orderly and scientific, that every page bears witness to the author's erudition.

The instruments of music used by the indigenous peoples of Indo-china are of the stringed, woodwind, and percussion families, so that—with the exception of brass—they are in line with the families into which our own symphonic orchestras are divided! In the monograph these instruments, whose names are as weird in sound as the instruments themselves in appearance, are represented by excellent photographs and sketches, the mode of holding the instruments and the position of the fingers and lips in producing the sounds being also shown. Moreover, in many cases, the author has given the scale to which the instrument is tuned, and also its range. This is a matter of extreme interest to the musician for the following reason.

The scale used in most Western music is spaced tone, tone, semitone; tone, tone, tone, semitone and is based on the 13th or Ionian Mode. There were originally 14 Modes, but they have become obsolete except the one just mentioned and the 9th, or Aeolian, on which the modern minor scale is founded. The remaining 12 have only an academic interest. It is surprising, therefore, to find that some of the scales used in Indo-chinese music approach very closely those Modes used in ancient Western music. It would seem, then, that despite its differences, Eastern and Western music have a common foundation. During the course of centuries, however, the Western ear has become so accustomed to the tone, tone, semitone; tone, tone, tone, semitone scale that when an air, founded on some other scale is played or sung, the Westerner has the utmost difficulty in memorising it, for to him it appears to "make no sense." The fact that most European music is barred or measured music, while Eastern music is in free rhythm, adds to the difficulty. Western music is, for the same reasons, equally incomprehensible to the Easterner. The Eastern ear, however, seems able to tune itself very readily to our Western scale; hence the rapidity with which Western songs and dance

tunes are picked up by Oriental peoples. On the other hand, it is most rare for a Westerner to be able to pick up even a fragment of an Oriental melody.

Some of the instruments illustrated in M. de Gironcourt's paper are very simple in construction, such as the bamboo straight flutes (the *flauto traverso* seems to be unknown to primitive peoples) with only two or four holes; so also is the *brak*, a one-stringed instrument one end of which is grasped between the toes of the player's left foot while he sets the string in vibration with a bow of very simple design. In another form of this instrument, a string is tied to the stretch cord and fastened to a small disc of wood which the executant holds in his mouth. Some of the more complicated instruments have gourds attached to them as sound-boxes. One such instrument is a kind of harp with eight strings. There are other instruments, however, that show no little ingenuity in construction, among which may be mentioned certain forms of the *khene*, especially one made from a gourd fitted with a variable number of pipes inserted obliquely. This weird instrument, the *m'buat*, is common in Annam. Very ingenious also is the *ding-bout* which consists of ten bamboo tubes fixed on a frame to form five V's, and is played by ten executants who, bending their bodies, clap their hands before the orifices of the tubes, thus setting up a vibration of the column of air within each tube. Another ingenious instrument is a three-holed flute fixed in a gourd. In the gourd is also fixed a tube leading to a sound-box. This instrument, known as *rlep*, is capable of producing pleasing notes. Astonishing indeed are the *orchestres hydrauliques* which are not musical instruments but contrivances for producing sounds loud enough to scare away destructive beasts and pillaging birds. Some of these contraptions are set in motion by water, others by the wind. The lithophone, or sonorous stone, is used for the same purpose.

These instruments, primitive though they be, should not be despised; for they evince in their construction a gradual accumulation of knowledge—knowledge gained empirically, of course—but still knowledge. It has taken generations of experience to teach the flute-maker the diameter of the bamboo he needs for his instrument and the way the holes must be spaced and where the embouchure must be placed. He knows—though he knows not why—that, if he deviates from the rules experience has taught his forebears, his flute will not be satisfactory. The maker of stringed instruments has also found by the experience gained by his

predecessors over long periods of time just how tightly he must stretch his strings to get his rudimentary violin in tune. He does not know why, but experience has taught him that if his strings are stretched over an hollow body, greater resonance will result; and so he attaches his instrument to a gourd or an empty coconut-shell. The same kind of experience has taught the gong-founder that certain notes are associated with certain degrees of thickness of metal. But with all Eastern instruments there comes a time when experience can teach no more and an instrument comes, so to speak, to be stereotyped. The instruments found today in the orchestra of an ordinary Chinese theatre were ancient in the days of Confucius. In twenty-four centuries little or no development has taken place.

An outstanding feature of M. de Gironcourt's monograph is the wealth of musical *motifs* with which it is illustrated. Some of them are but snatches of melody; others of considerable length. There are *motifs* proper to all occasions of rural life such as the planting and harvesting of rice; the return in the evening from the ricefields; the sacrifice of a buffalo; a marriage feast; a mortuary ceremony; the invocation of the spirits that preside over the growing crops. Cradle-songs are numerous, some of them not without charm. Love songs, in which the village Romeo makes a musical appeal to his Juliet who responds in a second musical *motif*, have a prominent place. All primitive peoples seem to indulge in this form of love-making and doubtless the serenading of one's lover practised in some Southern European countries is derived from this age-old custom. *Motifs* for more sinister purposes are used by sorcerers when by their incantations they proceed to call up foul fiends from the infernal regions. The *motifs* used by Annamite warlocks for this purpose seem to be derived from Chinese sources.

Very interesting are the examples of *motifs* employed in Buddhist, Taoist, and Confucian liturgical music. We know from the Classics the great extent to which music was employed in the ancient Chinese worship, and there are many references to its grandeur. Examples are given of *motifs* that have been adapted to Christian service in Mission schools by the Catholic Fathers, some of them sung to French words.

Putting down these elusive *motifs* on paper must have been a task requiring not only great skill but enormous patience. Anyone who has ever tried to take down an air, even when played in an accustomed scale on a well-tuned instrument, knows how hard it is to do so. To take

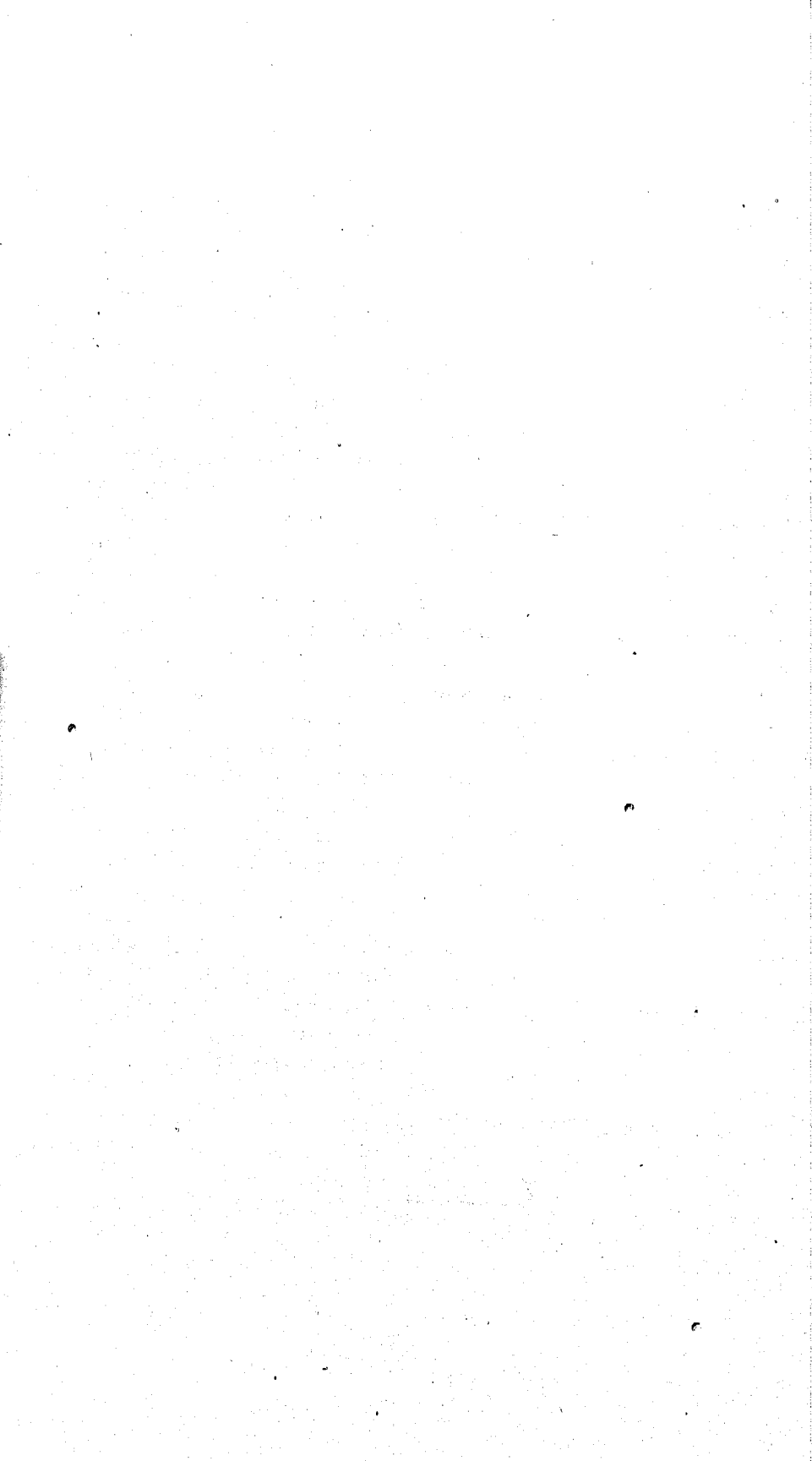
down *motifs* in free rhythm, based on outlandish scales, and executed on primitive instruments of faulty intonation, is a task of extreme difficulty and M. de Gironcourt is worthy of the highest praise for his achievement.

It may be that there are those who consider the study of primitive music only a waste of time. This is by no means the case. "The proper study of mankind is man" and the steps of man's progress in the realm of music are as worthy of study as those he has taken in other directions. We should not be too proud to remember that music in the West was once as primitive as that heard in Indo-china today; and that the accurate and intricate Boehm flute, for instance, is but a development of the two-or four-holed reed flute on which in ancient times the European rustic played his simple airs and on which the Indo-chinese villager of our times produces his quaint *motifs*. Why should primitive music be scorned as barbarous when there are thousands of "cultured" Westerners who would rather run a mile than listen to a Beethoven symphony yet who find delight in the lost-soul-like wailing of a saxophone and fall into ecstasy at the hideous cacophony of a jazz-band?

In writing and publishing his paper M. de Gironcourt has rendered timely service; for the primitive music of Indo-china is doomed. Everywhere the gramophone, the radio, and the cinema are making such inroads, even into the remotest regions, that little by little the indigenous music is being supplanted by that produced in the West. The old *motifs* will be forgotten and the instruments on which they have been played for ages will be less and less used until their manufacture will altogether die out. The profound changes brought about by the War will but hasten the process. Well is it, then, that M. de Gironcourt has rescued so many *motifs* from the oblivion into which they are fated to fall and that his pages are rich with the descriptions of instruments that, in a few generations, will have vanished from the dwellings of men.

ANONYMOUS.

Bangkok, Thailand, 1943.



RECENT THAI PUBLICATIONS.

(1) *The Annals of Ayudhya* (พระนิพนธ์พงศาวดารกรุงรัตนโกสินทร์), version of Prince Paramanujit in three volumes:

Vol. I, From the foundation of Ayudhya to the end of King Naresuan's reign, publ. by royal command in memory of His late Excellency General Um Bijayendrayodhin, member of the Council of Regency, December 2485 (1942), pp. 1-240;

Vol. II, From the reign of King Ekathosaroth to the death of King Narai, publ. by royal command in memory of Her late Royal Highness Princess Phong, Dec. 2485, pp. 241-382;

Vol. III, From the reign of King Petraraja to the sack of Ayudhya, publ. by royal command in memory of Her late Royal Highness Princess Bugban, Dec. 2485, pp. 383-513.

The above volumes being published on the occasions of the cremation of the remains of distinguished personages, each one therefore though not prefaced as usual by a short biography, contains a photograph of the respective personage. In a preface to each of the volumes, the Fine Arts Department states that the Annals published used to be known as the *Phra Rajapongsawadan in two volumes* or as *Dr. Bradley's Version of the Annals*. The latter name was due to the fact that Dr. Bradley of the American (Presbyterian) Mission was the first to print the work (in 1863). The preface goes on to say that when the fact became widely known that Prince Paramanujit was the author of the work, later historians came to know it as Prince Paramanujit's version of the history of the country. Since its first publication some 78 years have elapsed and copies of it are hard to find. The Fine Arts Department has been using the work for verifying dates in history and is of opinion that it is not very inaccurate as regards chronology. It is therefore reprinted in order to aid historians in their task of comparing historical facts.

As a matter of fact there have of course been published, since the original edition of Dr. Bradley in 1863, other editions such as that of the King Mongkut Pali Academy and the abridged edition of the Ministry of Public Instruction in R. S. 131 (1912). The original edition of Dr. Bradley contained a summary—*Phra Rajapongsawadan Sankhep*—which was placed in front of the full text of the Annals.

In his introductory sketch of the sources of Thai history prefaced to the *Royal Autograph History* (B. E. 2456—1912) Vol. I, p. 6 *et seq.*, His Royal Highness Prince Damrong made it clear that the version of Thai History popularly known as *Prince Paramanujit's Version* was really much older than its reputed author. What that learned scholar wrote was the *Summary* or *Phra Rajapongsawadan Sankhep*, placed in front of the Annals in the edition of Bradley. Monsieur J. Burnay, in *JTRS.* XXXIII, 2, pp. 137-141, has gone further with additional information confirming nevertheless the dictum of Prince Damrong regarding the authorship of the *Phra Rajapongsawadan Sankhep*, and refuting, to the relief of scientifically minded students of historical research, the connection of Prince Paramanujit with the full text of the Annals, saying "in the first place Paramanujit had a reputation for talent and knowledge which hardly accorded with the absurdities and blunders to be found in the Bradley edition of the *Annals of Ayudhya*".

Besides the achievement of the primary purpose of preserving a work which is becoming rare, the main feature of the present edition is the adoption of the new spelling. In view of the times, the paper is not as good in quality as might be wished for. The fact cannot however be helped. It is certainly good to see a rapidly disappearing work of reference being resuscitated.

(2) *The Annals of Ayudhya*, version of Luang Prasoet, publ. for presentation on the occasion of the cremation of Colonel P. Mitrabhandi, former Phya Narind Rajaseni, B. E. 2486 (1943), pp. 1-48.

This is another reprint of a document, written in 1780 but lost sight of till R. S. 126 (1907), which has been deemed the most accurate of all Thai annals as regards chronology. This edition follows former ones save in spelling. A biographical notice of the late nobleman and a foreword are from the pen of H. E. Pridi Panomyong, who compares in the foreword

the pronouncement of a verdict in historical criticism to its judicial counterpart. Among his instances of bad evidence in historical criticism are some "absurdities and blunders," the sort of which were mentioned by Burnay as quoted above.

(3) *The Diary of His Royal Highness Prince Sommot*, part I, selected and edited by M. R. Sumonajati Svastikul, published for presentation on the occasion of the cremation of the remains of Momchao Vipulya Svastivongs, B. E. 2485 (1942), octo. 90 pages.

His Royal Highness Prince Sommot was King Chulalongkorn's Private Secretary and Keeper of the Privy Purse for some thirty odd years. An extremely taciturn personality, of studious habits and inexhaustible energy, he was greatly trusted by his Sovereign and generally considered as an ideal Secretary to a King who was his own Prime Minister, through whom important and often very confidential matters had to pass and obtain their decision. The diary of such a man, therefore, can not fail to be of interest. As the Prince himself admitted, he often had the greatest difficulty in keeping up writing his diary. An example of such an admission is quoted in the preface of the editor, a grandson of Prince Sommot. It is worth the following reproduction:

"Monday, the 11th of the waxing moon of the first month, corresponding to the 10th December 1883 : An excessive amount of work today. No rest possible. Everything seems to have to be carried over because I have neither the strength nor time left. No one to take some of it off my shoulders either. Arrived at the office about fifty minutes past one. Looked in at the lower office (the Privy Purse) till about two, and then went to the upper office (the Private Secretariat). Went into the King's study and worked with Him till four. Came out and did some work till half past five. Had something to eat and worked on till eight. Went in again to work with the King till past eleven Hands ached through writing. Came home and wrote diary. Sick to death with it, but it would be a pity to leave off after keeping it up regularly for almost a year. Seems as if coming out of a scorching sun to bask before a fire"

It is presumed that the diary has been selected for the present publication primarily with a view to assemble all the data concerning the life-history of Momchao Vipulya, his eldest son, in whose memory the

book has been issued. It contains nevertheless other matters of great interest for the historian, the philologist and the archaeologist. Among those for the former are :

"19 June 1883 (p. 24) His Majesty received in audience the French Consul (there being no Minister in those days) who expressed a wish that the King might send an expeditionary force of perhaps 500 men to help France in her campaign in Tongking. His Majesty said that He would have to consult the cabinet first."

"25 June 1883 (p. 24) A Chinese official arrived today . . . on a mission to remind our Government that the periodical tribute (cống) is due. This is an old custom which was discontinued by King Mongkut in C. S. 1214 (1852). No record exists as to whether the Chinese Government sent any further reminder to that effect in that reign, but in C. S. 1231 (1869) the Regent (during the minority of King Chulalongkorn) asked permission for the passage through Tientsin instead of the usual route via Canton of a Thai mission bearing tribute to the Chinese Imperial Court. This proposal was however turned down. Nothing was therefore done till 1243 (1881) when the Chinese Government reminded us that the tribute was due. The present mission is again repeated with that object. It is suspected however that the real object of this mission is to ascertain whether we are going to help France or not in her Tongking campaign against China."

"26th June 1883 (p. 26) Went in at eight to work with His Majesty. Read a report of the first Thai mission to America from Prince Nares The mission was very well received by the American Government and American social circles. Invitations poured in almost every day. American beauties excel English ones . . ."

"29 July 1884 (p. 31) In connections with law-suits against Chinese protégés of Western powers we are at a disadvantage. Bail, for instance is required of a Thai; whereas a foreign protégé needs none when a consul stands surety A foreign protégé can often delay indefinitely his appearance in Court whilst if a Thai does not put in an appearance his bail is arrested The Chinese protégés of Western powers are mostly not genuine natives of the Western colonies or protectorates, but have just bought certificates

of nationality here in Bangkok. If a Chinese Dutch protégé, for instance, is questioned regarding the town of Batavia he would probably be quite at a loss for an answer, having never been in the colony."

Philological interest is served for instance on pages 21-23, where technical terms in the science of Elephant Service are given.

The archaeologist will find much of interest throughout the collection. On page 11 there is a full explanation of the significance of the eight *Prangs*, pagoda-like structures of different colours to the east in front of the Pantheon at Wat Phra Kaeo. Guides and sightseers usually misunderstand or do not know what these mean even to the present day. According to Prince Sommot, then, they are as follows:—

- 1 white, dedicated to the Buddha,
- 2 ultramarine, dedicated to the law (Dhamma),
- 3 pink, to the noble community of monastic disciples,
- 4 green, to the now extinct community of women monks,
- 5 purple, to the Pratyeka or Pacceka Buddhas,
- 6 light blue, to the ideal Imperial sovereign,
- 7 red, to the Bodhisattva,
- 8 yellow, to Sri Arya Maitriya, the future Buddha.

Pages 42-7 contain the text of the so-far unpublished inscriptions, set up by King Mongkut at two vicinities of the Phrabad shrine, much respected by local inhabitants as well as the Bangkok tourists of the old schools. The gist is mainly propitiatory, bearing however dates and information regarding the effigies of the *thewadā* set up at those places.

On page 51, on his visit to the Bodleian Library at Oxford, the Prince was shown, among other objects of interest, a royal autograph letter from the King at Ayudhya bearing the date of B. E. 2230 written on fibre paper with a black pencil and a letter from Phya Pipat dated C. S. 1048, written on foreign paper with ink and signed with a lotus seal.

(4) *Memoirs of Forbin*, translated into Thai by Momchao Damras Devakul, published for presentation on the occasion of the cremation of His late Highness Prince Devavongs Varodaya, 1943, pp. 196, with a biography of the deceased, 35 pages.

That Momchao Damras Devakul should be responsible for the first translation into Thai of yet another of the XVII century French

memoirs dealing with the Court of King Narai and with Thai affairs in general is doubly fitting. The Prince was by profession a diplomat trained in the *Ecole libre des Sciences Politiques* of Paris, and attained, in the practice of his profession, to the goal of a diplomat's career—the office of an Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary accredited to a foreign Court. It might be said, therefore, that he has lived in an atmosphere, the counterpart of which, however distant in regard to their chronology and situation, Forbin had been writing memoirs of. It is moreover fitting that Prince Damras' translation was published as a memorial book on the occasion of the cremation of the remains of his own brother.

The book is prefaced, as is the custom in this country, by a biography of the deceased to whom it is intended to serve as a memorial.

The author of the memoirs was a man of high spirits and his youthful escapades before the time of the embassy fill up some 51 pages. They are nevertheless interesting and help one to understand many developments of his subsequent career.

Forbin was selected by the Grand Monarque to serve as a member of his first embassy to King Narai under the leadership of the Chevalier de Chaumont, and was later loaned for military service under the Thai King. He attained to the high rank of Okphra Salsri Songgram. Intrigue, he says, relegated him later to a provincial command at Bangkok, whence eventually he left the country.

Prince Damras' style in writing happens to fit in with that of the original, which was short, direct and unburdened with literary adornments. The commutation of French weights and measures as well as contemporary monetary values into present-day Thai standards may not be generally approved by readers for it detracts somewhat from the XVII century atmosphere of the original. The substitution of Buddhist clerical terms for Catholic dignitaries, such a *abbé*, sounds hardly congruous, but it cannot be helped and the hitch can not be attributed to the translator. The book is in any case a valuable contribution to the series of Thai translations of French memoirs of the XVII century which must be by now nearly complete.

Bangkok, 7th September 1943.

Under the Shelter of the Yellow Robes (ใต้ร่มกาสาวพัสตร์), by the Rev. Dr. Bunrod Sujiva of Wat Kanmātuyārām, 4 + 178 pages, King Mongkut Pali Academy Press, B. E. 2486 (1943).

Under the Shelter of the Yellow Robes is the title of a pioneer work along the lines of a historical novel in the Thai language. It is true that original historical novels in Thai have been written ere this and it is not claimed here that this work is a pioneer in that respect. It seems however that a historical novel constructed out of the Tipitaka and other Buddhist literature has never been written in our language. The author is a young Buddhist monk who graduated in the highest—the ninth standard—of the clerical examination in Pali and Buddhist Literature. His talents seem to have been duly appreciated for he has been selected to a seat on the Grand Council of the Church—an honour extended to very few of its younger members even though they have graduated in the ninth standard. In the preface the author admits that he drew inspiration from an English translation of Gjellerup's *Der Pilger Kāmanīta*, a work of propaganda on behalf of the Buddhist Faith as well as a literary accomplishment, which has been done into Thai from the English translation by two well-known writers under the pseudonyms of Sathan Koses and Nagapratip. The literary merit of the Thai version is widely recognised here and it has just been prescribed as a school classic for Thai Literature.

The Rev. Dr. Bunrod's work, like the *Pilgrim Kāmanīta*, interests itself in the taming of the murderer, who came to be known as "Finger-Garland" (*Angulīmāla* in Pali) on account of his resolve to murder a thousand persons for the reckoning of which record he attached a finger of each victim to a string worn round his neck garland-wise. Gjellerup, however, treated the disagreeable personality as a side-issue, while the Rev. Doctor adopts him as the *raconteur* of his plot.

Prefaced by an introductory chapter setting forth the period and scene of the story, incidentally the first resumé I have come across in Thai of the political situation in the lands in which the Master lived and disseminated his doctrines, describing more especially the city of Sāvatti, capital of the Buddha's friend and supporter King Pasenadi, as an administrative as well as a cultural centre, the narrative takes us in its twelve chapters through the story of how a young man of good breeding entering upon the final stages of an academic education became led astray by an idea of trying to accomplish a thousand murders in order to complete his education; how he set himself to the task in earnest until he became the terror of the countryside and gained the name of Finger-

Garland: how he came to be tamed by the Buddha and sought the Master's guidance by adopting His way of life as a disciple; how he came across a pregnant woman and helped her through the pains of childhood by his *act of truth*—an episode held up in this country as a classic example of the *saccakiriya* and recited on every occasion of a benedictory service; how he lived under the Master in the Jetavana Monastery of Sāvatti where his conversations with fellow-monks are utilised for setting forth the main doctrines and teachings of the Buddha; ending, in chapter 12, in the night scene within the dark chasm of a ruined Hindu sanctuary where in the solitude of a cold snowy night the former murderer's outlines could be discerned, tall and majestic, silent at first as if in deep meditation but finally giving vent to ecstatic utterances of joy at having realised the inner meaning of the Master's doctrines. This scene forms the climax to the plot which thus dramatically ends.

By way of criticism, it would be no use to maintain that a pioneer work like this is flawless. The absence of an element of love and woman in a popular novel is of course a factor which handicaps. The introduction however of such themes would be absurd for an author of monastic standing and therefore a greater handicap than their absence. After all, romances like the *Jongleur de Notre Dame* and the Arthurian legends have been able to succeed without having to depend much upon the love-element. The author has evidently tried to use very simple language and yet in many places, such as in the dialogue between the monk Nandiya and the leader of the sect of Jatila, the language is somewhat technical tending to follow the oral method of the over two-thousand-year-old Holy Scriptures so much that its repetitions would seem to be tiring to the ordinary lay reader.

A very useful feature of the book is the references given of the sources of all the more important statements of doctrine and in fact of any data of importance with regard to the historical, geographical and sociological descriptions which have been welded together to present a complete picture of Buddhist India. The chief merit of the book would seem to be on the one hand that it leads the way in presenting a—could we say—technical subject to the general reader and thereby serves to popularise Buddhist ethics. For those Thai readers on the other hand who though habitual students of Buddhism yet neglect any other aspect of the study but those of ethics and philosophy, the book should help to broaden their outlook through its free introduction of social, political and descriptive elements.

History of the Thai Diplomatic Service (ประวัติศาสตร์ทูตไทย) 11+71 pages, 8 pl. 2 maps. Phra Chant Press 2486 (1943), by His Royal Highness Prince Wan Waithayakon.

In the preface to this volume, Prince Wan traces, clearly and concisely, the growth and development of international intercourse in the modern age which resulted in International Law primarily to govern intercourse between the Christian nations of Europe. When these nations began to have dealings—mostly commercial and missionary—with the non-Christian nations, Turkey at first, others more to the east afterwards, it was deemed fit to apply the system of capitulations, later to be known as extraterritoriality, to safeguard their interests. The Industrial Revolution in the West over a century ago aggravated matters and the old commercial activities took the shape of quests for raw material and for markets to dispose of their industrial products, finally becoming quests for new territories. China, among others, resisted that aggression by force and paid her price very dearly. The Thai nation, valuing its independence, no less than the European ones, unencumbered by religious intolerance for Buddhism inculcates love for all men, has always professed the open-door policy in its foreign relationship and managed to survive. This, concludes the author, is the diplomatic culture of the Thai, in illustration of which the present work is written. Starting with the earliest times of Nanchao, passing through those of Sukhothai and Ayuthya, we come step by step to the modern period. We are told how the impact of western might and diplomacy limited our sovereign rights by the system of extraterritoriality, how a real danger threatened our sovereignty from east and west and how the nation began in the time of King Chulalongkorn to recover gradually and with no small amount of trouble the full sovereignty that was not complete till 1937. How such a restitution was accomplished is best illustrated by the moral of a simple story told by King Mongkut reproduced in the conclusion of this book. It is:

“There were two men of the forest carrying bundles of primitive merchandise such as jute bound for a trade emporium. On arriving at the first stopping place, a little less primitive than their homeland the cleverer of the two sold his jute for the more valuable commodity of cotton. This was again sold at the next stopping place in order to obtain money to buy a more valuable commodity still—silk. At the end of their journey the cleverer one realised his sale for an infinitely

"greater amount than his friend who insisted on keeping his heavier
"bundle of the inferior commodity of jute."

One is tempted to think, in addition to what the Prince has said, that it is a fitting quotation, for was it not that King who with his successors took the leading share in that liberal movement resulting in the complete emancipation of the Thai's sovereign rights?

The author of this monograph is of course the leading authority on Thai diplomacy both in theory and practice. No better choice could have been made by those responsible for the publication of this series of cultural monographs in asking Prince Wan Waithayakon to write on this subject.

D.

Bangkok, 13 December 1943.

PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST IN OTHER JOURNALS.

BULLETIN DE LA SOCIÉTÉ DES ETUDES INDOCHINOISES.

Tome XVIII, nos. 1 & 2.

Paris, P.: *L'Amerique précolombienne et l'Asie meridionale* (2e article), pp. 45-68.

Here is an additional contribution on the similarity between American pre-Columbian art and that of south Asia by the same author whose article was mentioned in our columns before (*JTRS* XXXIV, 1, p. 88). In the present article M. Paris examines among other items the problems of elephant-representation, of the turban, the linga and the prolongation of the eyelids and eyebrows towards the temples in a horn-shaped curve. This last feature is found among us on the Khon masks of demons. Both the American and the South Asiatic arts have traces of Chinese influence. The author touches again on the transocean relationships and the problem of navigation. Recalling the theory of Laufer that though America had been from an early period peopled by Asiatic migrations she eventually followed an evolution of her own completely independent of Asiatic influence, the author comes to the conclusion that inspite of its larger dimensions it was across the Pacific rather than the Atlantic that cultural connections were made between the two continents.

Dupont, P.: *La Propagation du Bouddhisme indien en Indochine occidentale*, pp. 91-106.

This very interesting opinion based on strong arguments may be summed up in the words of its owner that the form of religion now prevailing in western Indochina, which is taken by M. Dupont to consist principally of Burma, Cambodia and Thailand, has been that kind of Buddhism which was developed in these countries from the first centuries of the Christian era and maintained to the present-day without much interruption.

Meridat, L.: *La Nouvelle Année laotienne*, pp. 107-117.

A veritable work of reference for students of ethnography with detailed descriptions of the Lao calendar, the different eras in use in that country, going on then to describe how the Lao new year is reckoned and celebrated.

