

NOTES

From a batch, received recently after being held up by the war, of some 11 numbers of the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, several contributions are of particular local interest. Most of them are from the pen of Sir Richard Winstedt. The following notes might be of some value for the comparative study of such material.

I. A Literary device common to Homer and the East.

In J.R.A.S. part 3 1941 (pp. 199-203) Sir Richard Winstedt drew attention to a literary device of an iterated inquiry from a bystander as to the identity of warrior princes passing by.

The first instance cited is one from the *Hikayat Indraputra* in which Raja Talela Shah, awaiting the arrival of the hero, Indraputra, his son-in-law, turns to his son as the head of the escort passes and asks, "Indra Jilani, is that Indraputra?" The son answers, "Nay, Your Highness. That is Ghuran, captain to the jinn Raja Gohar," and he tells of the captain's fight with Indraputra, so that the Raja marvels at the wiles and the might of Indraputra. A moment later there are seen 140 gilded pennons and umbrellas of many colours, under which two fairy princes ride on dragons with sword and quivers hanging from their shoulders and wondrous javelins in their hands. Again the Raja asks, "Is that Indraputra?" "Nay, Your Highness. Those are two fairy princes from the lake called the Sea of Marvels." A moment later are seen 240 golden pennons and gilded umbrellas with fringes of pearls, under which ride Raja Puspa Pandai and his son Dinur Pandai with quivers of pearls inset with gold and jewels and with sharp swords and lances hanging from their shoulders. And again the Raja asks, "Is that Indraputra?" "Nay, Your Highness. Those are Raja Puspa Pandai and his son Dinur Pandai with their retinue of wild beasts."

In a second instance, from a Malay collection of beast-tales, called the *Hikayat Pelandok Jinaka*, exhibiting Indian and Persian influences, Sir Richard detects a clear copy or parody of the *Hikayat Indra putra* to give some life to the tedious description of a procession, thus :

“When he had got near Mousedeer the Wily, the King of the Lions beheld the subjects of the Shaikh of the Jungle World approaching in lines like the waves of the sea, and he said to the King of the Monkeys, ‘Which is Mousedeer the Wily? Show me where he is!’ Then the King of the Monkeys bowed in homage, saying, he is!’ Then the King of the monkeys bowed in homage, saying, ‘Your Highness, this is the King of the Bears with all his company.’ Then the King of the Lions went nearer to where was the Shaikh of the Jungle World and he saw a great crowd and said, ‘King of the Monkeys, is that the place where the Shaikh of the Jungle World is?’ But the King of the Monkeys said, ‘Nay, Your Highness. That is the King of the Jackals with all his subjects.’ A moment later the King of the Lions saw mountainous rows of animals one after the other and he said, ‘King of the Monkeys, is that Mousedeer the Wily?’ But the King of the Monkeys made answer, ‘Nay, Your Highness. They are his friends.’”

And so on and so on with deer and tiger and porcupine until at last the mousedeer is reached.

With these he compares a passage in the third book of the *Iliad* of Homer.

Here Priam is sitting on Troy tower along with elders too old for war, who talk in the “thin voice of grasshoppers.” Helen passes and Priam calls on her, “Come here, dear child, and tell me who is that warrior so goodly and so huge. There are others taller by a head but never yet have I seen one so handsome and so kindly.” And Helen, fair among women, answers, “... That is Agamemnon, son of Atreus, a great king and mighty spearman.....” Then Priam sees Odysseus and asks, “Come, tell me, dear child, who is that? Shorter by a head than Agamemnon but broader of chest and shoulders. His armour lies on the bountiful earth while like a

bell-wether he ranges among the warrior ranks. Yes, he looks like a fleecy lamb ordering a big flock of white ewes." Then Helen, sprung from Zeus, makes answer, "That is Laertes' son, crafty Odysseus, who was reared in rugged Ithaca and is skilled in all the ways of wiles and cunning..." And thirdly Priam sees Aias and asks, "Who is this other Achaian warrior, goodly and tall, outdoing the Argives in height and breath of shoulder?" And Helen, fair among women, makes answer, "That is huge Aias, bulwark of the Achaians. And on the other side, among the Cretans, Idomeneus stands like a god with the Cretan captains gathered about him."

"Is it perhaps possible, asks Sir Richard, that the literary device of iterated inquiry from a bystander as to the identity of warrior princes passing by has come to the Malay by way of Seleucia or Bactria from Homeric Greece? Almost certainly parallels are to be found in Indian literature. And the human mind is not so inventive that one can encounter identical *motifs* in art or literature or philosophy without looking round for some connection between them, however remote."

It may be of interest to corroborate Sir Richard's statement by reproducing the following passage from Siamese literature, thereby demonstrating at least that the device has travelled further east still. It is from an XVIIIth century Siamese adaptation of the Javanese Panji romance, which no doubt came to our country through Malacca, and is known as the *Dalang*. On pages 1032-3 of the edition of R.S. 109 (1891 of the Christian era) there is an episode in which Panji, sojourning in Mongkol, one of his tributary states, permitted a forester chief, Misa Pramangkuning, whom he knew to be Busba his love under a man's disguise, to march with all her army through his capital in order to proceed to Kalang. Panji himself with his brother went among the sightseeing crowd. The brother acted as his guide. Panji asked: "Who are those that go before the mount of the disguised princess, since their penetrating glances are aimed at us? And who is the little lad there? Is he of our kith and kin?" And as he asked, his affection and yearning for the princess increased.

The brother replied: "The officer leading the disguised princess is named Misa Paranala, who is really Bayan the maid; whilst the one on the left is Misa Rapanca, formerly Praseran the sharp-witted. The little boy is a hostage from the royal family of a tributary state whom the disguised princess has adopted as her son. From him she is never separable."

II. *Kingship and Enthronement in Malaya.*

In a later number (1945 parts 3-4) the same author analyses the processes of enthronement in Perak and Negri Sembilan, the seats of Malay aristocratic dynasties which maintain a tradition of having been descended from a common ancestor, Bichitram, reputed kinsman of the Sri Maharajas of Srivijaya, the Buddhist Empire (fl. A.D. 750-1350).

The nature of the Malay monarch, then, is threefold, that of a shaman or wizard, of a Hindu god, and of a Caliph. In the second capacity he undergoes a ceremonial enthronement which may be compared with similar ceremonials in neighbouring countries, especially Siam.

The processes of a Malayan enthronement are thus shortly analysed:

1. Lustration and anointment;

2. Dressing up as a Hindu god, and circumambulation of the royal demesne, which was considered to be representative of a *Meru*, the Hindu Olympus;

In Siam the latter item comes last;

3. Is officially and ceremoniously proclaimed sovereign seated on his throne in full state and addressed by a prominent master of ceremony, and

4. Exhibition of the regalia etc;

Sir Richard's comparison of the third item with the Siamese item on the Octagonal Throne does not seem exact, it being rather in correspondence with a later item when the Siamese monarch seats

himself on the Bhadrapiṭh Throne *surrounded by pages bearing all the regalia* and *addressed for the first time* as a fully qualified sovereign since he had immediately before that gone through the Brahmin ceremonial of inviting Siva and the great gods of Hinduism to pervade the royal person;

5. Territorial chiefs pay homage;

This, in fact, is the item that would really correspond to the Siamese episode of the Octagonal Throne although their sequence is different, for in the Siamese ceremony the Brahmin priests and learned men of the Court pay homage and offer anointment to the monarch in the capacities of representatives of territorial chiefs from all quarters of the Universe.

III. *A Ceylonese version of the Story of Rāma.*

In J.R.A.S., London, 1946 parts 1-2, Mr. C. E. Godakumbura is responsible for an article of great interest on this subject. This version of the story of Rama is related during the performance of the Kohoṃba Yakkama, 'one of the most interesting of ceremonies extant among the Sinhalese'. It contains many parallels to the Siamese *Rāmākien*, some of which have not been traced so far to any other origin. Shortly the gist is as follows:

Before the abduction of Sītā by Rāvana to Lankā, Viṣṇu, incarnate in Rāma, wishing to avert the ill-effects of an inauspicious aspect of Saturn, left Sītā; and, taking the guise of an elephant, roamed the forest for seven years. Meanwhile Sītā was abducted by Rāvana to Lankā his capital.

At the end of seven years Viṣṇu came back. Not finding Sītā he started again to roam the forest in search of her. Meeting Vālin, also lamenting the loss of his wife who had eloped with the King of the Apes, Viṣṇu allied himself with him and on his behalf killed the King of the Apes. Such an interchange of parts between Vālin (in Siamese P'ālī) and his brother Sugrīva (in Siamese Sukrib) has a parallel in the Lao story of Rama, known as the *Ramā Jātaka*

(cf. J.S.S. XXXVI, 1, 1946, pp. 1-22). Vālin then proceeds to Lankā, wrecked the royal park of Rāvana and set fire to the demon-king's palace. He then brought Sitā back to Viṣṇu. The havoc wrought in Lankā is of course attributed to Hanumān and not to Sugrīva in every other version of the story including the Siamese *Rāmakiēn*. Nor is the restoration of Sitā effected in that way in all these versions.

Back home, Sitā was visited by Umā during Viṣṇu's absence. At her request in order to satisfy her curiosity, Sitā made a sketch of Rāvana. The Siamese *Rāmakiēn*, however, identifies the inquisitive visitor with a she-demon named Adul, under a human disguise. At this point, so the story goes on in both versions, Rama returned. Sitā in confusion hid the drawing under a bed on which the husband happened to sit down. The Sinhalese version has it that the majesty of Rāvana shook the bed and aroused Viṣṇu's curiosity, so that he looked under and saw the sketch. In a rage of jealousy he commanded his brother Saman to take her away and kill her. The author explains here that the Sinhalese form of *Saman* corresponds to *Sumana* in Sanskrit. It is worthy of note that the *Rāmakiēn* while calling this prince Laks (from Lakshman) names his mother Samud. The Sinhalese form of *Saman* might probably have been an abbreviated form of *Lakshman*, the intermediate corruption being possibly *Lak-saman*.

To resume our story, Saman led Sitā to the Himālaya, left her near a hermitage, and returned with his sword wet with the blood of a wild animal, thus satisfying his brother that the mission entrusted to him had been fulfilled.

Sitā was picked up by Vālamīga the seer and given shelter near his hermitage. From the classical form of Vālmīki, the Sinhalese has corrupted the name to Vālamīga, thus showing great affinity to the Siamese corruption of Vajamṛiga. She then gave birth to a boy.

While Sitā was out one day this baby fell off his cradle and gave a loud cry. The old seer discovered him lying on the ground

but being forbidden to touch him he created out of a lotus flower another baby to take the former's place in the cradle. The *Rāmākien*, however, has it that the seer could not find the first baby and therefore created another to replace him, which latter version sounds at least more logical.

So far the Sinhalese version corresponds with the *Rāmākien* in all its main aspects in such a manner as to suggest a Sinhalese origin to this part of the Siamese version, especially since many of the above episodes are to be found nowhere else.

Then, the story goes on, Sītā came back. On being told by the seer as to what had happened, she said "I shall not believe you unless you create for me another child." This is meant no doubt to imply her disbelief in the seer's claim to have been able to create a separate child. So the third child came into existence from a blade of sacrificial grass.

The first one was named Saṅḍaliṅḍu. The classical *Rāmāyana* of Vālmīki called him Kuśa, the name for sacrificial grass. The *Rāmākien*, taking shape at a time when every body in this country was already ignorant of Sanskrit, turns Kuśa into But (no doubt a corruption of *putra*, 'son') and often into Mongkut. It was conjectured by the late King Rama VI that the name Mongkut given to Kuśa might have been earlier than But. It was probably handed down by Indian minstrels as Kuś, which the Siamese could not make any meaning of and therefore prefixed Mong to it, thus giving it the meaning of 'a crown'. The final consonant would not in any case be sounded in Siamese.

To resume our story as told in Ceylon, the second son was given the name of Mālaya from the fact that he was born out of a flower, in Sanskrit mālā, that is to say the lotus. This character is called Lob in the *Rāmākien* and therefore very much nearer to the original Sanskrit form, Lava.

The third son, whose counterpart neither exists in the *Rāmāyana* nor the *Rāmākien*, was called Kistrī. He seems to be mixed

up somewhat with the first son who was named Kuśa, i.e. sacrificial grass, out of which this prince was born in this Sinhalese version.

IV. *Buddhism in Ceylon.*

In parts 1-2 of the 1947 number of J.R.A.S. is a highly interesting contribution by Sir Josiah Crosby (41-52) on the above subject. After a historical sketch of the Buddhist movement in that country, the author goes on to remark upon a feature of Ceylonese Buddhism that is not found in other countries professing the same school of Buddhist thought, Siam, Burma and Cambodia. This feature is a Hindu influence on the local type of Buddhism as evident from its maintenance of a certain type of the Hindu caste system, its active support of certain members of the Hindu Pantheon and the popular propitiation of *yakkhas*, maleficent beings who, Sir Josiah might have added, were supposed to have been predecessors of the Aryans in old Ceylon and who were doubtless identical with the aboriginal Dravidians of no mean culture ousted later by Aryans colonists led by the divine national hero Rama.

To the above two topics concerning Buddhism in Ceylon Sir Josiah has had added into a pamphlet additional sections forming no doubt part of a further number of J.R.A.S. (pp. 166-183), dealing with Buddhist sects and other present-day aspects of the Buddhist movement. Of the sects, the oldest and most numerous is the Siam Sect established soon after 1753 by King Kirti Siri ruling in Kandy. It was organised by a delegation of Siamese monks under the presidency of Phra Upali, sent in response to King Kirti Siri's invitation by King Boromakos, 'His Majesty of the Sublime Urn'. 'The ancient religious foundations, with their often rich endowments, are mostly in its hands.' It is also exclusive, being only accessible to candidates of certain castes. Its members go out with the right shoulder uncovered, contrary to general practice in this country; but are distinguished from other sects also by their shaving of the eyebrows, which is a general practice here. Among its charges are the Temple of the Tooth in Kandy and the ancient and highly venerated ruins

at Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa. The Amarapura or Burma sect was founded about 1802; and the third, Ramanna, sect about 1862 by Mon monks. Sir Josiah has not neglected to include in his sketch modern movements which are necessarily of considerable interest to the statesman, the Buddhist revival of the Anāgārika Dharmapāla (1864-1933), Monks and politics, ecclesiastical organisations, art and other things. A bibliography is also attached.

V. *A Portrait of Constance Phaulkon.*

Mr. D. C. Rivett-Carnac, of the British Embassy has been so good as to forward to me in November 1947 a photograph of a portrait of Phaulkon, which he had discovered in an Italian translation of Father d'Orleans' *Histoire de Monsieur Constance*, "a hitherto unknown (or rather, forgotten) portrait" as Mr. Rivett-Carnac says. He went on to point out that this is only the second known picture which professes to portray Phaulkon's features that he had heard of. The translation from which it has been taken is dated 1758, though the original engraving might have been earlier. Mr. E. W. Hutchinson of Chiangmai, when shown this picture by Mr. Rivett-Carnac, wrote in reply that "... It is undoubtedly the same round head, forehead, nose and chin shown half face in my illustration taken from the engraving of him on his knees at the audience given to Chaumont by Phra Narai, which I obtained from the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris."

I have compared the photograph with the picture of Phaulkon at the audience of King Narai, referred to by Mr. Hutchinson and found that the likeness is sufficient to identify the two figures as being of the same personality. The noses are similar, and the plumpness of figure seems identical. Although one cannot vouch for the accuracy of the drawing in the book with regard to other details, such as the supposedly kneeling posture of the Siamese officials, the physiognomy of Phaulkon, doubtless one of the most important figures to the artist, may be accepted as accurate.

The photograph is herewith reproduced.