

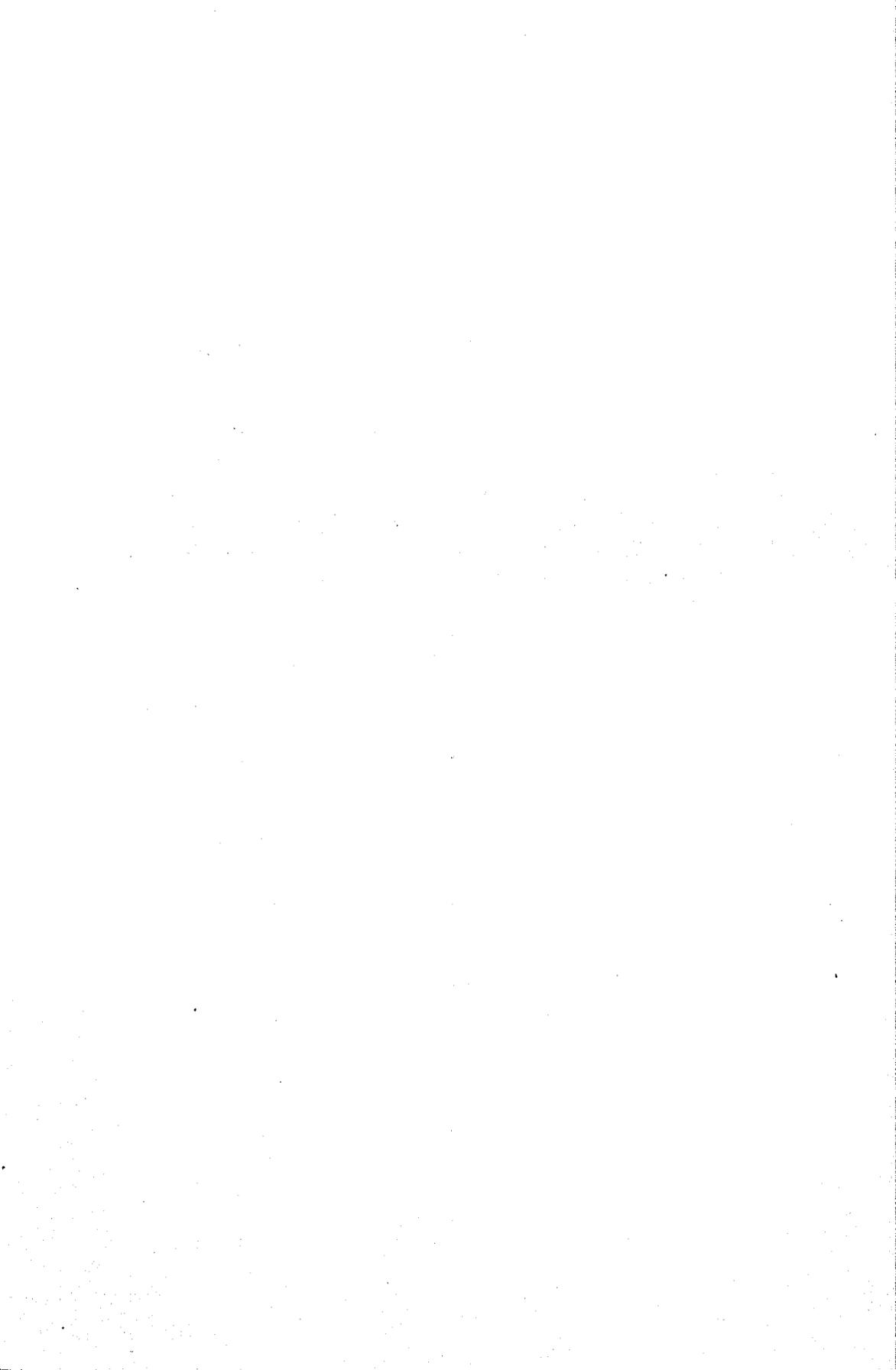
Aerial: Conversion of Coasters 1 and 11 in July. Approximate the Time the Temple Was in Use
(Source: compiled by the (unintelligible) based upon the (unintelligible) survey data)

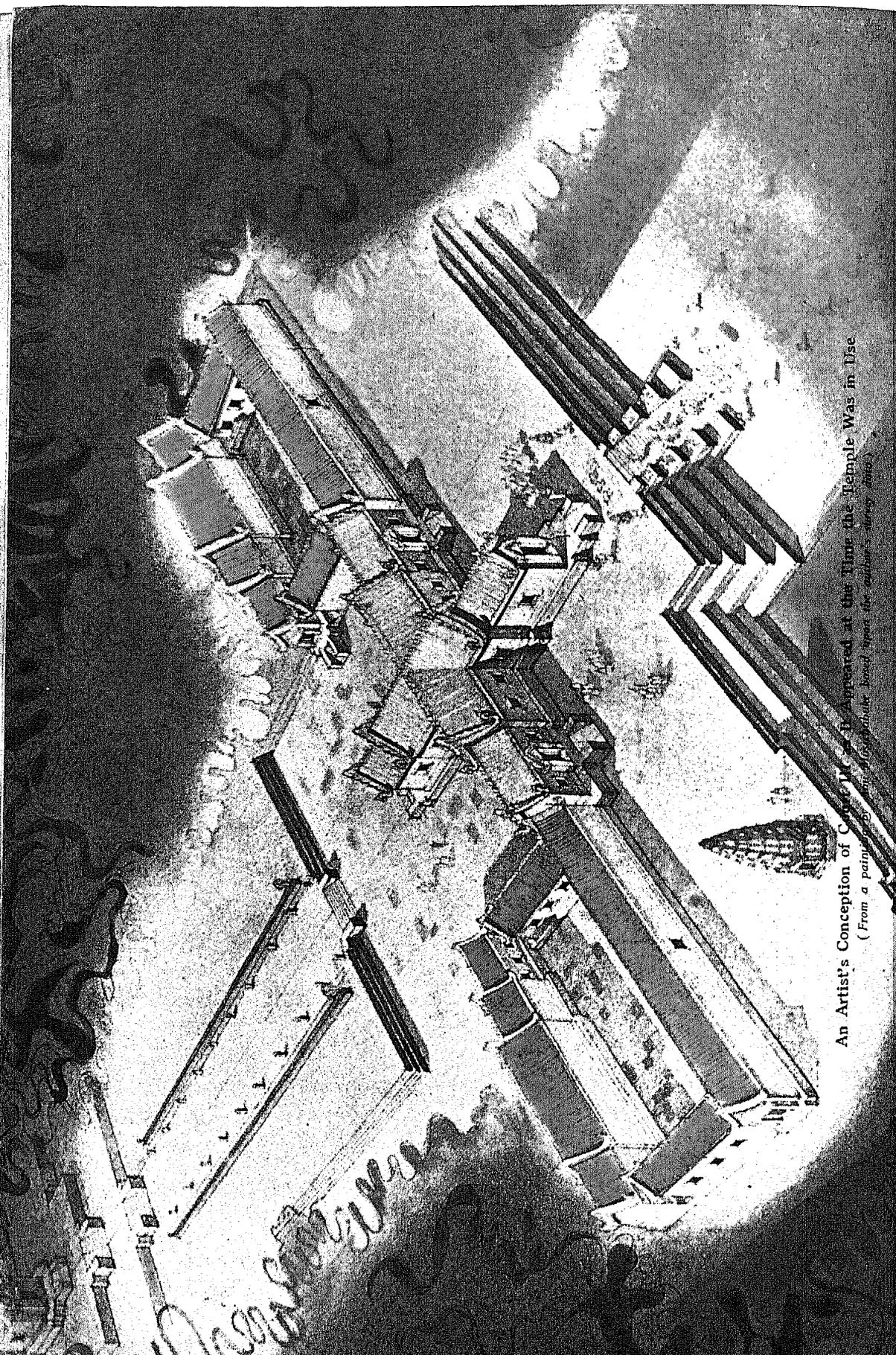
INTRODUCTION

The sanctuary which forms the subject of this article has, after centuries of oblivion, commenced to attract world notice in the last half century or so. Archeologists certainly, and French colonialists, have known of it before others. Phra Vihār is distinguished for its majestic *ensemble* and situation, towering, as it does, over the Cambodian plains from the highlands of Siam. It is still difficult of access from the Siamese side, and is still more so from the Cambodian, where the steep promontory on which it is perched is practically inaccessible except through Siamese territory.

The approach to the subject by the author is that of the explorer more than the archeologist. Mr. Black has of course had wide travelling experience which entitled him to his Fellowship of the Royal Geographical Society of Great Britain. The attention he pays to what seems to be extraneous information in the form of legend and tradition deserves commendation. Legend and tradition have helped in the past to solve problems of scientific archeology if examined in their proper perspective.

Prince Dhani Nival, Kromamune Bidyalabh





An Artist's Conception of Cairo, U.S.A., as It Appeared at the Time the Temple Was in Use
(From a painting by *Wm. G. Schickel* based upon the author's theory, 1911)

THE LOFTY SANCTUARY OF KHAO PHRA VIHĀR

by

John Black

F.R.G.S.

It is an honour and privilege for me to present to you this evening through illustration, by word and finally coloured slides, a picture of the Lofty Sanctuary of Khao Phra Vihār and some of the history associated with this, one of the most remarkable temples in the whole of the Indo-China peninsula.

Before describing the journey and acquainting you with the position of Khao Phra Vihār in relation to other better known monuments in this and the neighbouring country of Cambodia,* may I say, by way of introduction, that no matter what our position is in the structure of society here, we are all in some way or another connected with the needs of South East Asia and I would venture to say that a true picture of those needs cannot be obtained unless we possess an intimate knowledge of its past. The greatest historian of the present generation, Arnold J. Toynbee, in his voluminous work *A study of History* draws a comparison between civilizations and goes on to show us the lesson we may learn from such a study. We would do well to take time out from the rush and tumble of every-day life and give some thought to his arguments. I even dare to introduce this evening an element of the romantic into my subject and what could be farther removed from this than the ruins of an early Khmer temple.

The Journey To Khao Phra Vihār

To orientate those of you who are not familiar with the position of the monument which, though still remote, is not so inaccessible these days, I propose to give a brief description of the route from the rail points of Ubol and Srisakes.

During 1955 I was fortunate to make the journey on two occasions, from Ubol in the late spring, just before the rains and, then, in November, from Srisakes, which is the shorter and better route. Leaving the Ubol/Dejudom highway at kilometre 23, the forest track to Kantaralak is very rough and undefined. The

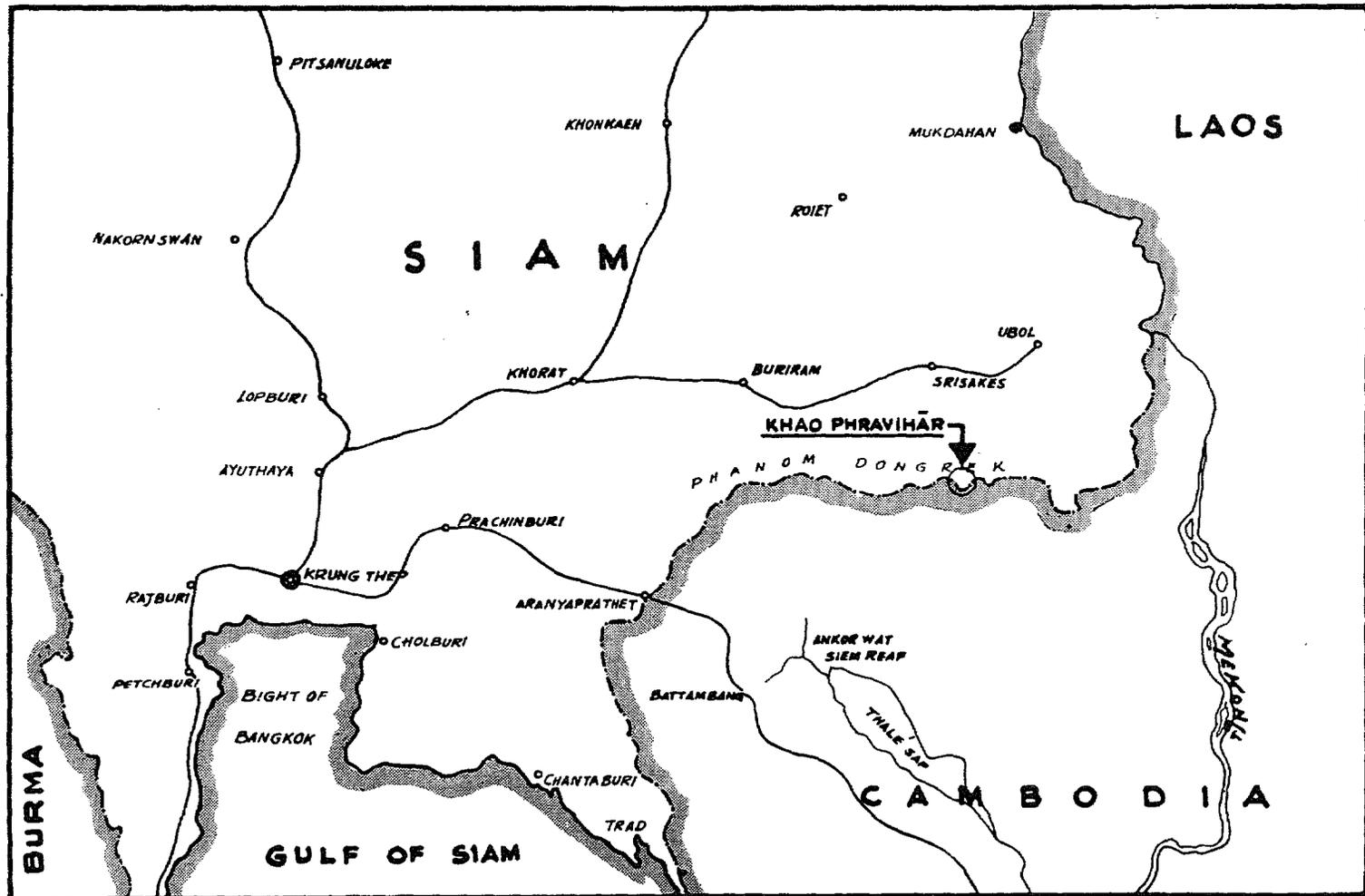
*The Historical Map used to illustrate this description at the lecture is not reproduced in the Journal.

delightfully vague answers about direction given by the people, whose life and activities are confined to the immediate neighbourhood, only add to the difficulties of the trail and make the journey longer. The forest track is cut by cart wheels and is a menace to the low slung vehicle with tree stumps just sufficiently concealed by grass to deceive the unwary driver. The villages are few, and under the rough riding circumstances, seem far between. The deeper the penetration the more obvious it is that the people are of old Khmer stock. The rigours of the trail are softened by the beauty of the woodlands, the unusual wild flowers and the birds. For the most part the soil is of a sandy nature and there is little cultivation in the 80 kilometres between Ubol and Kantaralak.

The more direct route between Srisakes and Kantaralak can be covered in three hours. On this part of the journey the road is at least defined and can be negotiated without too much difficulty. The distance is just over 62 kilometres, the latter half of which is in very poor condition and calls for the use of a vehicle with a four wheel drive. The surroundings are pleasant and, when it is necessary to leave the road, about half way, the track takes you through pine woods. Then, with remarkable definition, the way leads into a country of deep red soil in a belt of over 6 kilometres. In contrast to the Ubol approach, the area given over to rice cultivation on this, the north side of Amphoe Kantaralak is considerable.

The stretch between Kantaralak and Khao Phra Vihār is interesting and the path, though difficult in stretches, provides a variation for the traveller and there is seldom a dull moment. If the journey is made following the rains when vegetation has covered the trail, and trees, unable to stand the lashing of the monsoon, have fallen, obstructing the jungle path, then your equipment must include an axe and large knives.

The easy slope on the north side of the Dangrek Chain makes it possible for a vehicle to go through the foothills and climb to an elevation of 500 metres without too much difficulty. From Kantaralak it is about 47 kilometres to within sight of the mountain sanctuary. Two tributaries of the Se Mun have to be crossed, the



Map Showing Location of Khao Phra Vihār

Huay Kayung at 8 kilometres and Huay Ta Ngerd at 12 kilometres. After the rains both streams were running high and the bridges were shaky, but strong enough for a light vehicle. Before reaching the forest belt the path is narrow but is easy to negotiate, though there are many flooded stretches.

The people of the villages are all of Khmer stock and, apart from their ability to cultivate, they are hunters of considerable skill, this of necessity because of the need to protect crops and add to income. In the village of Pong Sorn, just before entering the thick forest belt, about 10 kilometres from Khao Phra Vihār, the men were out hunting. In a number of houses the trophies of the hunt could be seen, deer antlers of almost majestic proportions and horns of wild boar, bull and barking deer. One felt almost certain that tusks were hidden close by, but had to be concealed because of the law protecting the wild elephants. At Pong Sorn, a village of about 10 houses only, the trail forks, on the one hand to the heights and Khao Phra Vihār and on the other to the Cambodian lowlands, over the Darn Ta Tow path.

The track such as it is from here onwards is difficult and steep in parts for a vehicle. The jungle is dense and even in daylight only shafts of sunlight penetrate the trail. Diversions are necessary to get round a fallen tree when the axe and knives come into play. Steep rock faces can be negotiated only with care. A rash move would ruin a petrol tank or a differential and then transportation would really be a problem.

The forest belt is a country of wild animals and just after the rains they are plentiful, having had everything of their own way for months. The huge footprint of the wild elephant is common and there was ample evidence even on the steep stairs of Phra Vihār of their presence. The tiger is now seldom seen but one was heard in the near vicinity of the monument during my last visit. At roughly 500 metres elevation, the thick forest clears and you come out of the jungle into the daylight on a rocky plateau. From this vantage and out of the forest-clad slopes of the final rise to the summit, two large Naga heads stand out. This is the entrance to the mountain ensemble of Khao Phra Vihār.

On my last visit the plateau was reached just 22 hours after leaving Bangkok.

Distance Table.

	Kms.	
Bangkok-Ubol	575	Rail
Bangkok-Srisakes	515	Rail
Srisakes-Kantaralak	62.5	Road
Kantaralak-Khao Phra Vibār	47.5	Road

The passion for building sanctuaries on isolated hills is characteristic of the great religions of the east. Whether it be the ancient and mystic Hinduism or the gentle and peaceable Buddhism, one may see in many parts of the Asian mainland temples and sanctuaries on hill and mountain top. I should like now to take you, in imagination, using the illustrations I have here, to the most remarkable site for a temple in the whole of the Indo-Chinese peninsula on which stands the Lofty Sanctuary of Phra Vibār.

A Description of The Monument *

Few have visited Khao Phra Vibār and, a much smaller number still have recorded with any accuracy the many features and architectural details of the mountain ensemble. All, however, agree with the words of Aymonier written over 50 years ago in his *Le Cambodge*, "Amongst all the temples of Kambuja the most remarkable, without doubt, is that of Khao Phra Vibār". This lofty temple crowns a spur of the Dangrek Range, some 600 metres above sea level and its position on the map is latitude $14^{\circ}-23'-20''$ North and longitude $104^{\circ}-41'$ East. It is built lengthwise through a

* I have adhered to the custom of numbering courts in the plan, starting at the principal and working outward, i.e., in the case of Khao Phra Vibār from south to north. The grand entrance, however, is from the north through two entrance pavilions or gopuras. These are numbered from north to south.

The architectural plan shows a system of alphabetical lettering from south to north, with a key, in the form of a table below the plan. These letters have been used, within brackets, as an aid to interpretation in "A Description of the Monument".

number of Courts and Gopuras, as was common in the early classic style, in contradistinction to the arrangement of concentric enclosures of the later Angkor Wat period. The monument is characterised by the perfection of its edifices which are carved in that reddish brown sand-stone so dear to the architects of the period.

The length of the ensemble is 850 metres and it is composed of three courts with their entrance pavilions, and two separate gopuras. All are on different levels and separated by avenues and imposing stairways. From the lowest point of entry at the north, i.e., the first step of the main stairway, to the level of the principal sanctuary in Court I there is a rise of 120.3 metres. The compass shows the position of the monument as facing magnetic north and not the geographic pole. In the important ceremony to determine the position of the sanctuary in relation to the cardinal points, it would appear as if a compass had been used, although the deviation from true now recorded may be due to altered conditions in the intervening period. It is, of course, well known that the compass was in common use in the Far East by the end of the 3rd century A.D., indeed, Chinese historians ascribe its discovery to a period long before this time.

The grandeur of the approach lies in the long steep stairway with large stone blocks on either side in the form of giant steps. Before entering the causeway of Nagas, that mythical and semi-divine but graceful motive used with great effect by the Khmers, the stairway narrows, but the total width is maintained. Some of the stairs are cut from virgin rock while others are quarried from nearby rock sites. The blocks of the giant steps are recessed on their face. This simple ornamentation softens the hard effect of the stone mass in front of you although the staircase as a whole achieves the grand effect of the "heavenly" approach.

The lion, never known to inhabit the Indo-Chinese peninsula, is used at Phra Vihār as a guardian of the entrance to the stair and door ways of the two gopuras or pavilions, through which all must pass on their way to the galleries, courts and sanctuary tower on the upper levels. Two distinct designs were observed, one with front legs in a standing position and rear legs half crouching, the other, unusual in Khmer architecture, had a mane and was in full

standing position. This lion was found immediately below the gopura at the entrance to the third court. It was broken from its base, but the paws and legs on base, together with the body section close by, indicated a standing position.

The Naga balustrade over 30 metres long is almost intact. The unadorned polycephalous Naga head denotes a period prior to Angkor Wat. There are 23 stone blocks in the body which is curved on top and about 1 metre thick. The whole gives a rampant or poised effect, but unfortunately the curved tail of the east balustrade has been displaced. Many are the displacements attributed to elephants, particularly among the mile-stone-like pillars which must have given a majestic appearance to the avenue approaches between the gopuras. In all, there are about 180 of these pillars; very few are now standing. They are used, with only slight variation according to the period, in a number of Khmer temples for ornamental effect along causeways. As far as is known, no interpretation exists of the motive, though it is safe to say they have some significance in the Khmer scheme of design.

The first gopura or entrance pavilion (S) from the north is largely in ruins. The two sections of both east and west wings and the centre bays of the cruciform edifice were open by design. The significance of this building was possibly no more than a resting place on the way to the summit, but its decorative effect was not neglected. The sculptor devoted as much attention to the ornamentation of the doorways, a key point in the Khmer sanctuary design, as was done in the many other porches of the monument. The lintels have as their principal element the Rahu head on which is mounted a divinity. This gopura is beautifully set as if on a stand in the form of a huge tiered foundation, fully a metre above ground level. This is characteristic of Khmer design and applies to all the structures of Phra Vihār; indeed, it is a feature which reached its crowning glory in the central monument of Angkor Wat which rests on a steep massive tier.

The weather or west side of this first entrance pavilion has completely collapsed, unlike the second pavilion and the whole of the third court which are in a better state of preservation because

of their natural protection from the S.W. monsoon. If ever restoration work is undertaken, and there is every reason to do so, each building or courtyard can be tackled as an individual unit. Nature in the form of afforestation will require to be harnessed to provide natural protection for the restored work.

Proceeding due east from the wing of the first gopura, a path is encountered. At first this is no more than a footpath, with fragments of well-cut rock appearing above the vegetation on either side. Then, there is clear evidence that the path was once an avenue six metres wide and bordered by heavy sand-stone blocks. These were covered with moss but, when examined were found to be blocks with a chiselled surface, laid one on the other. This avenue from the Cambodian lowlands was about one kilometre in extent and led to a steep spiral stairway solidly made in stone.

On the northern flank of this now largely overgrown avenue, the hill side falls almost abruptly into a large depression or basin before it rises again just as steeply to the rocky basalt plateau, where Nai Amphoe has so kindly built a rough sala for the traveller. But for the elephant tracks it would be difficult to wedge a way through the thick vegetation of this basin along which courses a stream. Local legend has it that this was a former reservoir. Making use of the natural depression, the builders are said to have converted it into a dam, by controlling the east outflow to provide the large water supply needed by thousands of workmen who must have been engaged on a task the magnitude of Phra Vihār. There was, however, no evidence that this natural depression had been used as such, though the job of creating a reservoir would have presented no difficulty to the Khmer who were unsurpassed in the art of water conservancy.

Returning to the monument itself; the long avenue separating the two entrance gopuras has an easy slope paved with flag stones. In places, uneven sections of living rock have their surface cut to fit in with the pattern as a whole. The mile-stone-like pillars which line both sides of the avenue, though now for the most part knocked down, must have added an air of the imposing to all approaches. Chiselled from solid rock, nearly two metres high

they were placed at three metre intervals along the avenues. At their base, a roughly cut projection of the pillar fits into a hole in the virgin rock of the mountain to keep them erect and in position.

Before reaching the second pavilion or gopura a short pathway to the east leads to a reservoir hewn out of the rock. Over the length and breadth on all sides, steps have been made not only for the very practical reason to assist the water carrier but obviously for artistic effect. Such a setting surely indicates that although the jungle has now largely obscured the pool, it was part of the whole at one time. Indeed, it is not unreasonable to assume that for some distance on either side of the ensemble nature was harnessed in a like manner to stone, in order to provide a setting for the sanctuary.

The second cruciform gopura (R) is a development of the first, with basic dimensions and design being identical but having an additional section on the east and west wings as well as north and south. The causeway immediately below, as well as many of the steps on the steep staircase, are hewn to pathway smoothness and dimension from a sandstone outcrop. But for the roof, this structure is almost intact. Lions guarded the entrance to all doorways at cardinal points. These are now largely displaced. The lintels and pediments are a work of ornamental artistry which reflect the Baphuon period. One lintel depicts a Garuda on top of a Rahu head above which is a four-armed figure, the head having a divinity on either side. The sculptor has carved scenes from the sacred books of India on other lintels and pediments. Inscriptions in Sanscrit and Khmer dated 1037, 1038 and possibly 1049 are to be seen on the uprights of some doors in the corridor running north to south.

Parmentier truly says, "We find all the various forms of Khmer sculpture and ornamentation in the lintels, the major decorative point of the Khmer sanctuary". In the case of Phra Vihār, although the lintel is the focal point, I would say that the whole façade of the doorway and the work of artistry in stone so beautifully moulded around the door is of great ornamental richness. It is the outstanding work of craftsmen whose enterprise approaches perfection. The pediments of all porticos throughout are bordered

by the undulating body of the Naga. Sometimes this effect is arranged in two tiers, there being two polycephalous heads, one above the other on the pediment extremities. On many doorways the central head of the Naga has an ornamental trunk which styles the whole as late Kleang—early Baphoun period, one of the most perfect in Khmer art. Surmounting the whole, as if to crown the artistry of lintel and pediment, is a foliage of flame-shaped leaves. No surface over the entire façade on the many impressive entrances is left bare. Indeed, in this, as in other Khmer temples, the designers and craftsmen have left nothing undone in their stone picture to achieve fine geometrical decoration with persons, animals and flowers all set in a tapestry of foliage.

The door of the second gopura, facing north, has the double Naga effect on each side of the pediment with the bombed undulating bodies of this graceful motive arranged in traditional style. The Rahu head appears on the lintel while the figure of a divinity in the form of a *debpranom* is sculptured below the colonettes. This latter feature is common on practically every doorway throughout the monument. The entrance facing east is well preserved and has a Rahu motive with a divinity above, on the lintel. The decoration of the inner doorway facing east is unusual for Phra Vihār: here a god sits on a coiled seven-headed Naga; above are a number of gods with hands resting atop their heads. The inner doorway facing west has a Rahu motive with a god on top. Above the main door looking south, the well-known churning of the ocean scene is depicted and on the lintel itself Vishnu is reclining on the serpent Sesha with his wife Lakshmi at his feet. A lotus stem springs from the navel of Vishnu and out of the flower appears the four-headed Brahma.

None of the mile-stone-like pillars which once lined the avenue, between the second gopura and the third court, are left standing. The lion-head pool is on the east side of the avenue. This water storage reserve is much smaller than the other and takes its name from the stone head of a lion which is built into the south side of the pool in such a setting that water flows out of its mouth through seepage or a pipe laid to channel water for storage,

The use of the lion-head to symbolise water in Khmer architecture is unusual.

The courts are three in all and they have been numbered, as is customary, from the courtyard of the principal sanctuary. We are now about to enter the third court. Although the avenue of approach from the second gopura is now largely overgrown, it was wide enough at one time to provide wing causeways on either side of the central avenue which was lined with pillars. The grand scale of this court allows three passages through its cruciformed gopura (N). For this reason it is obvious that the width of the approach was much greater than the central avenue suggests in the monument's present state. The tiered mount setting is again a feature, covering as it does in this court a width far exceeding any of the others. At this stage on the way to the summit sanctuary tower, the ceremonies, ritual and use of the buildings, dictate the design and setting. In the symmetrical arrangement of their edifices, the Khmer architects achieved the well-nigh perfect. Lions, in pairs, graced the large steps flanking the short steep stairway leading to the main entrance. Indeed, at all entrances to this gopura, the lion was used to give that impressive guardian effect.

The artistry of the decorative entrance follows the same pattern as in the second gopura. The scenes from Hindu mythology differ, but the Rahu head is again prominent. At the north entrance the work of the craftsmen on the lintel and pediment is partly obliterated due to weathering, and identification is difficult. On the lintel there is a two-legged figure with a divinity above and on the pediment what appears to be a male figure is warding off two animals. Deer-like figures are on the right and left of the pediment scene and a tree shelters the entire setting. Truncated polycephalous Nagas, as previously described, stand on the extremities. On the lintel of the inner doorway there is a Rahu head with two divinities on either side. Above the head a Garuda carrying the four-armed figure of Vishnu is depicted. The decoration on the pediment of the inner door facing south has as its principals, Siva and his wife Uma sitting on a bull, under the shade of a tree in full foliage. There are six human figures also in the scene, three in front of the

animal and three behind, the two nearest on both sides are carrying chatra-like canopies on long poles. On the lintel the central figure is the Nara-Sinha, or man lion, the form assumed by Vishnu to deliver the world from tyranny. Right and left of the principal are two similar interpretations of the Nara-Sinha.

On the lintel of the doorway facing south, the fineness of chiselling portrays a Rahu head with male and female figures on both sides. As if resting on the head, three birds—swans or geese—carry three figures of Brahma. A particularly well preserved lintel and pediment face south on the west wing of the gopura. The Rahu head with god on top is the motive. Throughout this court the fine decorative effect of the octagonal colonnette enhances the principal ornamental feature, the door. They are characteristic of classic Khmer art and in combination with the lintel and pediment it can be said that the richness of decoration is a fantasy of inspiration in detail.

Facing north on the east side of Court III, but isolated from the rest of the structure, is a tower (Q) which was possibly 10 metres high. It is now in a state of ruin with a tree growing out of its centre. There seems no doubt that this tower was used as a look-out and at one time, with the mountain promontory largely stripped of jungle, it must have provided a vantage point overlooking the northern approach and the avenue east from the first gopura. Parmentier attributes the building of the "palaces" (P & P') on the north side of Court III to Suryavarman I (1005/1007-1050). These structures are to the east and west of the gopura but separate from it. The entire wall facing north is closed, but for one door in the centre, and all the light comes from the inner court where baluster windows face south. To form a 'U' shape, on both sides there is a short 'arm' at right angles, which is part of the "palaces". On the fourth side of the enclosures at (O & O') facing south is a structure, slightly telescopic in design, which is divided into four sections. The two palaces are symmetrical and although stone buildings were not used as residences by the Khmer, it is quite likely, due to remoteness, that this part of the monastery sheltered honoured guests and even kings themselves. The many inscriptions found in the "palaces", dated 1026, indicate the construction period.

The entire ensemble of Court III is best preserved of all and it is possible, with little difficulty, to construct in the mind's eye something of its former state and thereby get closer to the glory of the past. The roofs have collapsed almost entirely but there is ample evidence that the gopura itself was immense and beautiful, cruciform in design, and supported by square stone pillars. The tiled roofs were mounted by a ridge crest of pike heads. There is ample evidence still of brickwork built-up in the tiered corbel arch design in the telescopic enclosure buildings facing south.

Along the much shorter avenue separating Courts II and III the causeway of pillars has an outer frame of a Naga balustrade on either side. Much of this man-made setting has fallen out of place, though by no means beyond restoration. The forest has taken over and there is almost an archway of vegetation over the avenues separating gopura II from Court III and between the latter and Court II.

The entrance pavilion or gopura (K) of Court II has partly collapsed due to age and weathering, though there is still ample evidence of stone artistry on colonnettes, lintels and pediments, as described on our way through the lower parts of the monument. The two long halls or galleries (M & M') constructed at right angles to the gopura practically enclose courtyard II, within which is the main hall (I) and the east and west libraries (L & L').

The long or main hall forms the antechamber to the principal sanctuary. It consists of three naves, divided by two rows of heavy square stone pillars. Its roof was in three parts in relation to the naves and the central section was ridged with pike-heads and ended in gables with pediments. The roof has entirely collapsed and the eight massive pillars stand upright stark and mute, a reminder not only of the ravages of time, but of one of the weaknesses in Khmer design, the corbelled roof. Khmer architects, not knowing the true arch design, found themselves handicapped in spanning wide openings, although it should always be remembered that the magnificent edifices of the Khmer were for the few. They were not designed for the great gatherings or congregation of people associated with the cathedrals of the West.

The first mention of libraries and books goes back to the Funan period in the early centuries of the Christian era, but it was not until the second quarter of the ninth century that the architectural innovation of the library appeared in the Kambuja period. In the transition stage when styles were changing and light brick-work was giving way to the more heavy and lasting construction in sandstone, it is thought that the libraries were the first, in the ensemble, to be recreated in stone. Certainly the two libraries at Phra Vihār were not built to take care of a collection of books. The buildings here, as in other sanctuaries, are too small and not at all suitable. In a recent conversation with H.H. Prince Dhani, A. Boisselier of l'École française d'Extrême Orient suggested that they might have been used for the safe keeping of astronomical instruments. This would appear to be more in keeping with the interior design of the building, bearing in mind that at this time the importance of such instruments in East Asia was very marked; for instance, at the Court of Peking. The two libraries at Phra Vihār are regularly placed on either side of the main hall with their doors facing the hall and false ones looking east and west. The lintel of the true door of the west library has a Rahu head with mouth wide open and teeth exposed. On top there is a male figure half standing on an elephant. The ornamental work of the false doorway facing west has weathered considerably but it is still possible to make out the Rahu element. The corbelled arched roof of brick is now in a state of collapse.

A continuation of the main hall (H) of Court II leads into the final entrance pavilion (D) facing the sanctuary antechamber (C) and *prasat* (B). This, the last true gopura prior to entering the Holy of Holies, is in the form of a long hall with telescopic ends. At right angles to the gopura on the east and west of the court are covered galleries (E & E') of sufficient width only to allow passage for two people. The court is bordered on the south by a blind gopura (A) which shuts off entirely the magnificent view over the lowlands of Cambodia. The principal edifice is set in the centre of the courtyard on a tiered mount, fully a metre above yard level. At Phra Vihār the pyramid temple so intimately associated with

the worship of the god-king is dedicated to Siva who was represented in the temple under the form of a linga or phallic emblem. The contention is that during his lifetime the king was exalted to the rank of the god Siva, one of the great Hindu Triad.

The sanctuary tower was a redented square *prasat* with doors, preceded by porches on all sides. Its tower, crowned by a coronation stone in lotus, was a terraced pyramid intended to symbolise Mount Meru the abode of the gods and centre of the universe in Hindu cosmology. It is possible to calculate from the base, still remaining, and the proportions of the coronation stone that the height must have been about 20 metres. This tower in its setting almost on the edge of a cliff 600 metres above sea level must have presented an imposing sight. Indeed, no better position could have been chosen in the whole of the Indo-China peninsula as the Olympus of the Khmer. The antechamber of the sanctuary is almost intact but the massive sandstone blocks of the *prasat* lie strewn around the courtyard. What remains of the *prasat* about 3 metres above the esplanade is a revelation in quality and the amount of work that must have been involved in its construction. The blocks of sandstone appear to have been ground almost face to face, so close and accurate is the fit. Each block of stone on the section still standing weighs no less than five tons and several were dowelled in 24 places, the holes being used for lifting and to key or dowel in position. Nothing short of a major natural disaster could possibly have led to the collapse of this almost solid structure. Such is the reason given for the shattering of the sanctuary tower, although it is difficult to imagine how the antechamber which is structurally connected with the tower, not to mention the surrounding buildings, remained intact under such circumstances. It has been said that the fall of the *prasat* has much to do with the ruined state of the second court. There is no evidence to support this contention. Very little of the ornamentation which graced the sanctuary tower can now be seen. The fall either destroyed the light decoration or much, if not all, is buried below the ruin. One displaced lintel was among the many blocks thrown off, depicting Vishnu on the Naga couch, whose hooded head was the god's canopy.

The galleries, including their corbelled arch roof of sandstone, are well preserved. Interior windows are the only source of light, but doorways pierce the outer walls leading to the annexes (F & G) and the cliff. The brick roof of the blind gopura has collapsed, but the same type of roof on the telescopic ends of the gopura, which joins the east and west galleries is in a better state of repair. Parmentier has recorded that the blind gopura was used as the rice barn of the monument. While there appears no definite proof of this, it may well have been the case due to the remoteness of the sanctuary. The number of people who were associated with it in its heyday of fame surely made it necessary to store large quantities of grain.

It is a striking characteristic of the ensemble, apart from its orientation towards the north, that on the east—favoured by tradition—there are a number of features not common to the west. For instance, on the annexes situated on either side of Court I, the architect has favoured the eastern building with a more elaborate design. From the vantage point of the east annex the view is second only to the wonderful panorama looking south. Both these buildings are now in a ruined state though possibly at one time they were used for the performance of devotional rites by the king and for ritual ablutions and dances.

About one kilometer to the N.E., aligned north and south, are two unusual chedi-like structures built with some care using large blocks of rough yellow sandstone. Local legend has it that they were used as treasure store-houses and associated with Khao Phra Vihār. There are, however, no supporting facts to connect these *prasats* with the temple. The design is unknown elsewhere and nothing exists that would indicate a construction date. One sandstone block has been removed showing the inside to be empty. In appearance they have a square base with a simple cup-shaped design, above and below a square pedestal 2 metres high. As if to crown the monument the masonry on top reflects the form of a priest's cap.

It must be acknowledged that the whole subject of the Khmer monument of Khao Phra Vihār has been dealt with at some

considerable length, both by word and in plan, by that eminent authority H. Parmentier in his *L'Art Khmer Classique (Monuments du Quadrant Nord-Est)*. It will, however, be observed in comparison with Parmentier's interpretation, that there are certain differences in some basic dimensions on the plan herein presented. Although they do not alter the design, as such, it is considered that they reflect a more accurate interpretation of the mountain ensemble. Also, for the first time, as far as is known, the elevation shows the levels of the various temple structures related to the lowest point of the northern approach stairway, which is taken as zero. Again, the geographical position, in terms of calculated longitude and latitude, is clearly set down on a separate map to a scale not hitherto recorded.

A Description of the Portico Facing South – Second Gopura.

The doorway measures 1.15 metres in width by 2.09 metres high, and is ridged on all sides with four distinct frames.

The colonnettes adjacent to the ridged framework of the door are octagonal with *deb pranom*-like divinities in diamond-shaped ornamental frames at the foot of each column. The colonnettes which support the lintel are artistically sculptured with floral decoration between circumferential ridges.

The lintel portrays a scene from Hindu mythology. The god Vishnu whilst asleep during the intervals of creation is using the Naga as a couch and canopy. His wife Lakshmi, sometimes known as the daughter of the sea of milk, sits at Vishnu's feet with her arms round his legs below the knee. According to legend, she sprang like Aphrodite from the froth of the ocean when it was churned by the gods and the *asuras*. Vishnu is shown with a lotus stem coming out of his navel, from the flower of which springs the four-headed naray or the active creator Brahma. He has four hands; one holds the conch-shell; another a chakra or discus; the third a club and the fourth, a lotus. Close to the Naga head are four figures—one male, two females and a monkey. The humans appear to have clubs in their hands. At the tail of the Naga,

figures of a male and female can be seen, also a monkey, the former and latter carry clubs.

The pillars supporting the pediment are identically sculptured throughout with heart-shaped floral design. The footings and heads of the pillars are tiered for effect and strength. They are heavy, as they must be, to support the mass of the pediment which is a picture in ornamental artistry. The scene illustrated is the legend which is told with variations in the Ramayana, the Maha-bharata and the Puranas, the churning of the ocean by gods and demons.

Vishnu in the form of a tortoise placed himself at the bottom of the sea of milk and made his back the pivot of the Mountain Mandara. The gods and demons twisted the great serpent Vasuki round the mountain and dividing into two parties, each took an end of the snake as a rope, and thus churned the sea until they recovered the desired objects.

Turning to the art of the sculptor on the pediment, the tortoise supports an earthen jar and on each side of the jar sit two small figures. The churning stick, within the jar, has the body of a three-headed Naga twisted around it. To make the churning motion three gods on the left are pulling the snake's body at the tail end and three demons at the head or right side facing the doorway, pull in opposition. The churning of the ocean produces the *amrita* and other precious things which had been lost and caused the gods to appeal to the mighty Vishnu. The gods at the tail are kept cool by the clouds, always in this vicinity, while the hot breath issuing from the Naga's mouth makes it a very uncomfortable exercise for the demons. Further up the churning stick is the climbing figure of Vishnu with an animal perched on top. On the left, as if supporting the gods, is a Garuda with a human nose—pre-Angkor Wat period—and a male figure with headgear. To the right, as if on the side of the demons, is an elephant with two humans on its back. An array of god-like creatures supports the scene, six on the right side of the churning stick and two on the left. The whole is surmounted by the bombed undulating bodies of the Naga with flame-shaped foliage riding over the undulations. On either side the

cornice has two Naga heads carved to blend in with the mount in characteristic Khmer style.

A displaced lintel found in the west side of the second court is worthy of comment for the excellency of its work and artistry. The lower part of the sandstone block is a mass of carving with the Rahu head as the central figure. The hands of the god pull his lower jaw down at the corners of the mouth, allowing as if to escape from the cavern thus created two serpent-like creatures. At the right and left of this scene are two *Apsaras* or heavenly nymphs in different poses and on the extremities of the dancers the Nara-Sinha or man-lion is portrayed. A floral design fills in the picture to provide a setting for those minor characters from Hindu myths. Above, the lintel depicts a group of eight figures—the two central persons are the principals. One is in the act of pouring, possibly a liquid, into a cup held in the hands of the other. The picture is symbolic of the act of giving, usually associated with a large gift which may even be a parcel of land or an elephant. The central figures are supported by three minor personages on either side, all with hands meeting in traditional fashion just below the chin. The lotus is prominent behind the central personages and may have some significance.

Local folklore which is not without interest, even if it is not supported by ancient Cambodian background, has attributed to the picture on the displaced lintel just described the well-known story in this country of the hero Chandakorob and the lady Morā.

It is said that a Prince who had been studying in a far country under a celebrated holy man is shown on the lintel receiving a gift from his teacher before returning to rule in the country close to Khao Phra Vibār. The gift was a jar which must not be opened until he reached his own country, otherwise disaster would overtake him. Consumed with curiosity on the way, he opened the jar and found a beautiful lady inside whom he married. Continuing their journey they encountered bandits whose chieftain demanded his wife and they fought for her possession. During the fight the Prince

called to his wife for a knife but by this time the affections of the lady had been transferred to the bandit chief and the knife was placed between the two men with the handle towards the latter, who seized it and killed the Prince. The lady of the jar then became the wife of the bandit, but the gods, who were displeased with such behaviour, turned her into a gibbon who cries continually on the mountain side to this day for her first husband.*

There is an old man of the mountain, Khun Sri Kukhan Ketr, who lives in a village near Khao Phra Vihār and spends much of his time in a cave less than a kilometre from the stairway ascent to the monastery. He is a fund of lore and has an interpretation of his own for almost every lintel scene. Those who go to Phra Vihār should not fail to seek him out and if time permits take the opportunity of recording some of his own and the present day local interpretations of the mountain sanctuary.

Symbolism of the Architecture.

Professor Coedès said "The temples of ancient Cambodia were the habitations of the gods who animated the temples by their living presence".

To appreciate Khmer architecture it is necessary to know something of the ritual surrounding the temple. This is no place

*The Librarian of the Vajiravudh Library advises that a version of this story is well known and oft repeated in the N.E. in the dialect of that region. The same authority mentioned that the gist of the story is to be found in one of the Jataka tales which H.H. Prince Dhani has been good enough to look up for me and makes the following reference:- The story is found in Nipāta-Jataka, Pancaka nipāta, pp. 114-125, edition B.E. 2468. There it is related that a young Brahman of Bārānasī who had been sent to Takkasīlā to learn archery received as a reward for his scholastic success the hand of his teacher's daughter. On the return journey they encountered 50 robbers and he fought with them, over powering all but the Chief with whom he wrestled until finally he was on his back on the ground. Then, as if to deliver the coup de grâce the Brahman called out to his wife for his sword which was in her hand. The reason for the lady's animosity towards her husband is unknown, or perhaps it was a change of affection. At any rate, she placed the handle of the sword in the hand of the robber who promptly killed the Brahman and then departed leaving the maiden to her fate. The story concludes with Indra coming down from on high to administer a strong rebuke for her infidelity.

to record the intricacies of the god-king worship, even if it were fully known. Suffice it to say that the mountain temple with its great stairway approach represents Mount Meru the navel or centre of the earth, the abode of the gods and habitation of celestial spirits. The temple of Phra Vihār is crowned in the principal courtyard, at the south end of the ensemble, by a pyramid tower or *prasat*. This may be compared to the Tower of Babel in Mesopotamia and is sometimes referred to as 'the door of heaven'. Within this central tower, the most important feature of Khmer architecture, rested the *linga* or phallic emblem, representing Siva, to whom the sanctuary of Phra Vihār was dedicated. The temple tower has an antechamber within which the king sat on a throne. This central edifice is enclosed by galleries and gopuras and the other courtyards are occupied by lesser sanctuaries. The faithful prostrated themselves in the lower gopuras of the ensemble while the priests officiated at the top.

Khao Phra Vihār although a monument built in the transition period, when the architects were feeling their way towards new styles, contained nevertheless a purity of plan, unhampered by annex structures and ancillary buildings which contributed at a later date to a deterioration in architectural skill and religious degeneracy of the god-king cult.

The Kings

What manner of men were the kings associated with Phra Vihār from its original light construction, through the transition period, and on to its final achievement in ornamental artistry, when brick gave way to stone?

Conflicting accounts make the establishment of dates difficult. It seems certain, however, in the early years of the ninth century, possibly 802, Jayavarman II by divine sanction made Kambuja-Deça independent of Java and that he introduced into Cambodia the cult of the Deva Raja (the god king) which had its special sanctuary and priestly hierarchy to conduct its ritual. This king had no association with our mountain ensemble, but the date is an important one as it marks the beginning of the Angkor period of Khmer history.

It was shortly after the appearance of Yásovarman I about 890 that we first hear of the mountain sanctuary of Phra Vihār. This outstanding ruler had a passion for building shrines on hills and mountain top. Though most of his monuments were dedicated to Siva, as is the case with Phra Vihār, monasteries were also established during his reign to devotees of Brahma, Buddha and also Vishnu. He had that characteristic of tolerance which was not uncommon in other rulers of this remarkable empire. Abroad, he expanded the empire, and at home, gangs of workmen by hundreds of thousands were engaged in the servile task of building temples and monasteries and creating irrigation systems. He it was who founded Yásodharapura which remained the capital city, but for a short period, until the 15th century. Legend has it that he became a leper and retired into seclusion. Suffice it to say that he merits a place beside the great kings of the Kambuja period.

Rājendravarman II who came to power in 944 took Phra Vihār out of the light brick construction period to the mixed material, using laterite. This ushers in the early transition period, the beginning of the move towards the classic style. The time was one as if groping after new forms. Five kings ruled between Yásovarman I and Rājendravarman II. It was a time of dynastic struggles but the latter's reign was peaceful and prosperous. The extent of his kingdom bordered on the north the mountains of Yunnan, on the west, the range east of the Salween forming the backbone of the Malay Peninsula to the Bay of Bandon, and on the south the China Sea and Gulf of Siam.

Jayavarman V's reign from 968 to 1001 saw the introduction of sandstone, of which there is a plentiful supply in the vicinity, in the construction at the mountain sanctuary. An outstanding feature of Khmer history is the prominent part played by families devoted to religious matters. Matrilineal succession is recognised and the continuity of these ministers, regardless of the ruling king, played a very important part in preserving a high standard in architecture and ornamental sculpture.

Sūryavarman I, the conquering alien and Buddhist, came to power about 1005 and reigned until 1050. He was perhaps the greatest of all the ancient Cambodian Kings. His strength lay in balanced

judgment and religious tolerance. He conquered Louvo and it was held for two centuries, until its conquest by the Thai. He began the Khmerisation of the Chaophya, Meklong and Se Mun valleys. Above all, his work endured. This ruler made the greatest contribution to our mountain ensemble. He built the "palaces" at the north end of Court III, where many inscriptions were found, and constructed the rampant Naga balustrade of the Northern approach.

Then followed a transitory period when several kings flitted across the stage of Khmer history, contributing little to our subject.

It was Sūryavarman II who reigned during the first half of the 12th century and particularly this king's great *guru* and minister, Divakarapandita, who put the final touches on the monastery after which it seems to have been abandoned and neglected. This reign saw the Style of Angkor Wat emerge. Sūryavarman II was a great builder as well as a warrior and religious reformer. It was early in his reign that the greatest and best preserved monument of Khmer history, Angkor Wat, was started. It is to an inscription found at Phra Vihār that we are able to trace something of the echoes of the construction of the crowning glory of Khmer architecture after five hundred years of steady and continuous development.

It may be asked how such information is available to us—the answer is simple! It was the custom to record by inscription reigns and feats of the Kings of Kambuja, as well as the building of temples and gifts offered to gods. They were composed by learned men deeply versed in the sacred books of India. It was not so simple, however, to translate their Sanscrit and Khmer texts; for this, a great debt is due to Professor Coedès, a past president of this Society and an outstanding savant of Indo-Chinese history, archaeology, philology and literature.

The Outlook From The Cliff Edge At Khao Phra Vihār, 600 Metres Above Sea Level

Looking eastward from this summit of vantage, the observer is impressed first by the forest covered ridges of the Dangrek Chain and then by the incised valleys which separate these spurs. As far

as the eye can see, a series of ridges dominate the scene to the finger or pap promontory, the well-known topographic feature of the Dangrek, which projects beyond all others into the Cambodian Lowlands. The ridges or promontories reach their highest point, without exception, at the southern extremity or 'mountain wall' in Khmer terminology. Some are lower than the cliff edge at Khao Phra Vibār, while others are undoubtedly higher. The striking thing, however, is that these promontories are the culmination of a gentle slope from the Se Mun Valley in the north, rising to their maximum at the southern tip of the projection. The terrain has the appearance of a giant saw with uneven teeth. In some places the space between the teeth takes the form of a valley, higher than the plain, but through which tracks have been made to provide for the coming and going of people and their animals in this marginal area. A number of promontories facing south are outstanding because of the precipitous nature of the cliff-face on which bare rock outcrops are unable to support vegetation. This view outstrips in grandeur all others from the lofty summit of Khao Phra Vibār.

Again, from the same vantage point looking south over the great plain of Cambodia, there is a 500 metre drop here which is almost breath-taking. The day was beautifully clear and the visual distance was fully 100 kilometres. Such days without haze are rare but just at the end of the rainy season is the time of the year to visit the mountain sanctuary. The carpet of forest green spread over the slightly undulating plain represents a vast area of vegetation at its best after the monsoon drenching. In the near distance villages may be seen in the middle or sheltering at the edge of vivid green rice patches. It is a view possibly unrivalled in its scope for sheer unobstructed vision. Roads and rivers cannot be seen but away on the southern horizon Phnom Kulen is quite clear and again to the south-west is a more broken range beyond which is Angkor and the Tonlé Sap.

Looking west, the topographical pattern is similar to the east, but the view is obstructed by a high promontory close to Khao Phra Vibār summit. The features are a series of promontories stret-

ching fingerlike into the lowland country and rising to their maximum height at their southern extremities. The slope to the north is densely wooded and villages, even of a few houses, are only encountered when cultivable land is reached. In the region of Khao Phra Vihār a forest belt about 10 kilometres deep lies between the mountain tops at 500/600 metres and the high lands of the Se Mun Watershed, where cultivation is possible.

Surveying the scene, just described from its cliff edge vantage, the observer is struck by the natural line provided by the physical feature of the jagged Dangrek edge. Geographically at any rate, nature has made this escarpment a divide which forms an abrupt wall at the north of the great valley of Cambodia. Ethnographically the villages beyond the forest belt to the north are Cambodian speaking, though many are able to read Thai script. The landward depth of this ethnic background is not within the scope of this lecture, but it is safe to say that a considerable proportion north of what I have termed the natural line are distinctly of old Khmer stock.

Although the tangled background of jungle romance has now been largely stripped from the great monuments of the Cambodian plain, it still lingers around Phra Vihār in its mountain eyre. It is difficult to say what the country-side was like a thousand years ago, but one must try to look at today's scene bearing in mind that apart from other considerations, world climatic conditions from poles to the tropics are slowly changing, with a tendency towards higher atmospheric temperatures and increased rainfall. As we see the setting of the lofty sanctuary of Khao Phra Vihār today, surrounded and now very much encroached upon by jungle, this does not necessarily mean that the vegetation and dense growth was as thick one thousand years ago. Indeed it is safe to say that Khao Phra Vihār was much more accessible during the 10th and 11th centuries when it was at its zenith than it is now. Furthermore, the cradle of the Khmer race was in this region, the middle Mekong, and this may have been a powerful influence on Yásovarman I in laying the foundation of this Sivaite temple on such a rare site. Nevertheless,

there seems no doubt from its setting, the direction in which it is orientated, and its remoteness from what must have been the struggling and toiling life on the plain, that Phra Vihār was a mountain retreat, a sanctuary for meditation where quietness prevailed. Herein lies the romantic in our temple at the summit.

For two hundred and fifty years the kings and priestly hierarchy of this Indo-Khmer civilization, one of the greatest empires that Asia has ever known, found it necessary from time to time to retreat to the quietness of Khao Phra Vihār. Above all, it was for this reason that such a remarkable site was chosen.

Much has to be done, with only little accomplished, in the work of maintaining and restoring ancient monuments in this country. It is a heritage which ought to carry with it a proud responsibility. Many are the inscriptions not yet come to light which have much to tell us about the life of the times. In the mass of the Khmer Empire during the reigns of Rājendravarman II and Sūryavarman I there are many rich fields for restoration and interpretation. I refer, in particular, to that part of their empire which was in this country and where Khmer viceroys held sway. Our concern for the present and the immediate future holds the centre of the stage and is by the very nature of things vastly more important to us. Nevertheless, I have no hesitation in saying that valuable lessons can be learned from the past and it behoves those responsible, particularly governments, to shoulder the task and make money and time available to yield results.

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THE LEGEND OF KHAO PHRA VIHĀR

A Siamese translation from Rajaphongsāvādūr Krung Kambūjā, "The Royal History of Cambodia," written in 1877 and translated into Siamese in 1917.

A princess of the Royal House and grand-daughter of the King fled with her husband into the forest, fearing the vengeance of a usurper who seized the throne. The couple lived in the forest for many years, but when the princess was about to give birth they sought refuge in near-by villages. The vigilance of the tyrant, however, had not relaxed and they were finally tracked down, although the husband escaped. Orders for her death, using the cruel methods of the time, were given by the Usurper King Phromkel, but the child within the womb escaped by a miracle. It is said, in fact, that the royal infant was hidden by the birds of the air who spread their wings over him to provide shade from the noon-day sun. Hence the name by which he is known to posterity as Phrabad Bakséy Chāmkrōng, i.e., His Majesty whom the birds (Bakséy) gave cover (Krōng) of protection (Chām).

A passing herdsman, known as Old Man Kuhe, recognising the child to be of royal blood, took the infant and brought him up as his own. He was made skilful on horse-back in order to guard the cattle which was their livelihood. They lived in the province of Battambang and legend has it that all sayings of the prince came true, as he desired. He grew up to be very handsome and even at the age of seven had many faithful followers. At this time in his life, too, a strange happening occurred! As if to distinguish the boy from his fellows, outstanding identification marks in the form of circles appeared on the palms of his hands and the soles of his feet.

This phenomenon became known to King Phromkel who immediately held council with the soothsayers who said that this was an indication of the divine nature of the boy and they resolved to bring about his death. To identify the prince, King Phromkel instructed his immediate advisers to carry out the suggestion of the

soothsayers to round-up all the boys in the neighbourhood in order to obtain an imprint in powder from their hands and feet. The boy prince was escorted by his guardian who, on seeing the ruse, quickly made off with the boy while the advisers were examining the prints on powder. This caused consternation and an army was sent out to apprehend the fugitives. So hot was the pursuit that Kuhe and the prince were forced to flee in the direction of Battambang and the forest. This place of refuge became known as Old Man Kuhe's village.

It was during this time that the guardian taught the boy how to pray so that no danger would befall them. They were in the district of Ban Kuhe and from there they journeyed further until they came to the banks of a large river where no boat could be found to aid their crossing. Finally they came to a point on the river-bank named Chruôitonlé where a promontory-like arm extended into the river. On the far side there was a large fig tree and on the same side as the fugitives a tall kapok tree was growing. Just at this time the army had almost overtaken them and Kuhe was in despair. The young prince felt that only prayer could save them and he beseeched the gods to bend the trees on either side of the river to provide a bridge for safe crossing. His prayer was answered and these two places are known to this day as Raka-kōng and Lovéaté.

The story goes on to relate the wanderings of the herdsman and his princely fugitive and how at one time Kuhe broke a branch from a banyan tree to serve as shade for the boy. The place is known even to this day as Phra Vihār Sawan because the branch took root and is now a great tree. At another time, the boy prince, thoroughly fatigued, fell asleep under the shade of a banyan tree. While asleep, a flock of birds flew low to a near-by pond in search of food. This frightened Kuhe as he imagined the army must be approaching. He quickly roused the boy who, on discovering there was no need for alarm, was very angry and he resolved to take revenge on Kuhe when he became king.

The wanderings in hiding by the herdsman and prince pursued by soldiery of a usurper king were many and tortuous. At one point the army used elephants to trample down all the trees in the vicinity hoping to force the fugitives out of hiding. This place was named Kōk Yiebyam, i.e., the mount where the trampling took place. Again at Chōngvéal, i.e., the end of the plain, the pursuers set fire to fields and bushes only to find that their quarry had escaped. The prince fell in love for the first time at Bhūm Phteas Neang and then fled to the forest of Préipuôn when later pursued. A narrow escape and an encounter with one hundred deer at Phun Kradanruoy finally took them to Mount Baset where they shook off their pursuers for good.

The miraculous escapes of the boy prince convinced the king of the usurping dynasty that nothing he could do would prevent the boy from ascending the throne and he died of grief in B.E. 1600, at the age of 66 years, after a long reign. The councillors and high priests were unanimous that the boy prince should be offered the crown of the kingdom as he was a descendant of Phra Ketmala. The fugitive returned from Mount Baset to the Royal Palace and was crowned His Majesty Phra Kamradaeng-añ Bakséy Chāmkrong and all councillors and officials took the oath as loyal subjects. Among the first acts performed by the newly enthroned monarch was to appoint his guardian and protector Kuhe as Grand Councillor.*

The King, ever mindful of the bounty received in his days of hiding, returned soon afterwards with all his officials to the place where he rested under the banyan tree and constructed a temple there, naming the shrine Phra Vibār Sawan. He then went to Mount Baset and created a monastery with a reclining Buddha. At each hiding place he ordered caves to be excavated, inside which he engraved his name in stone and ordered the place-names to be changed in keeping with incidents in his early nomad life.

*More than passing interest is attached to the term in Siamese, Tā Kuhe, referred to as Old Man Kuhe, or literally ancestor Kuhe, in the legend.

There is a character in the Sanscrit Rāmāyana of Valmīki, by name Guha who is described as a forester living in the wilderness and who gave help to Rama in his exile.

A similar character appears in the Siamese Ramakien, named Kukhan the Forester who lived "at Buriram which was surrounded by a range of hills". Those who know Buriram, will recall that a physical feature of the neighbourhood is a semi-circular range which almost encompasses the town.

The link between Khao Phra Vihār and the Forester Kukhan who lived at Buriram would appear to have a stronger relationship when it is recalled that our sanctuary is within the amphoeship of Kukhan in the province of Srirakes, indeed the whole province was at one time known as Kukhan. This connection, together with the name of Old Man Kuhe, suggests that something more than the mere coincidence of names unites the mountain temple with the epic and legend.

I am indebted for this reference to H.H. Prince Dhani who drew my attention in the first instance to the legend of Khao Phra Vihār in "The Royal History of Cambodia".

GENEALOGY OF KHMER KINGS ASSOCIATED
WITH KHAO PHRA VIHĀR

- Jayavarman II
Parameśvara
("Supreme Lord", i.e., Śiva)
802 - 845
- The beginning of the ANĠKOR period. Made KAMBUJADEĠA independent of JAVA. No association with PHRA VIHĀR, but period is outstanding in KHMER history.
- Yāsovarman I
Paramaśivaloka
889 - 900/910?
- Constructed in light material (a) the main sanctuary, its east and west galleries and blind gopura, (b) all five gopuras or entrance pavilions, (c) the avenues between the first gopura at the north and Court III, (d) the whole system, though crude, of steps and stairways.
- Rājendravarman II
Śivaloka
944 - 968
- Probably built in mixed material, i.e., laterite and red brick, the long hall and gopura of Court II. In fact all buildings which make up the second Court except the libraries.
- Jayavarman V
Paramaśivaloka
968 - 1001
- The introduction of stone between two stages of art.* Courts I and II partly rebuilt. Gopuras and galleries surrounding Court I rebuilt in masonry. Probably erected, hall of principal sanctuary, east and west annexes outside of Court I, and the two libraries at south end of Court II.
- Sūryavarman I
Nirvānapada
1005/1007 - 1050
- Built the "palaces" on the wings and the little tower, all at the north end of Court III. The first and second gopuras entering the monument from the north. At a later date rebuilt gopura of Court III. Stairs and avenues

lined with naga balustrades and "milestone" posts are almost entirely the work of this reign. Many inscriptions were found in the "palaces" dated 1026.

{ Udayādityavarman II .
 { Posthumous name, not
 { come to light
 { Harshavaraman III
 { Śadāsivapada
 { 1050 - 1080

Principal sanctuary rebuilt in sandstone in Baphuon style. The sanctuary in the form of a redented square prasat, staged pyramid - wise, and crowned by a coronation stone in lotus form.

Sūryavarman II
 Paramavishnuloka
 1113 - 1150

Put the final touches on all stair and causeways. Made some modification to the long hall and gopura of Court II. This king's geat guru and minister, DIVĀKARAPANDITA, paid some attention to the monument. After this it seems to have been bandoned a and neglected.

Posthumous name of King
 is shown immediately
 below reigning title

Style:

Transition : Middle of XIth
 Century

Baphuon : Second half XIth
 Century

Authority : Gilberte de Coral
 Remusat, L'ART
 KHMER



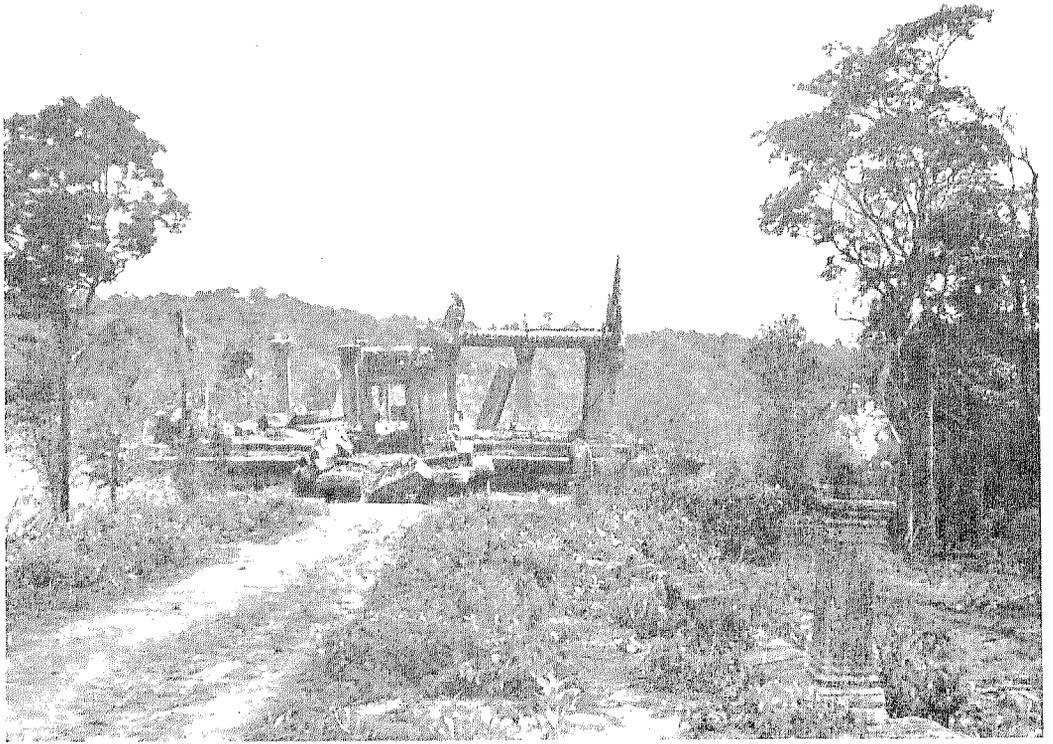
Grand Stairway of Northern Approach
(All Photographs by C. N. Spinks and Pan Lauhabandhu)



Naga Balustrades at Top of Grand Stairway, Looking North



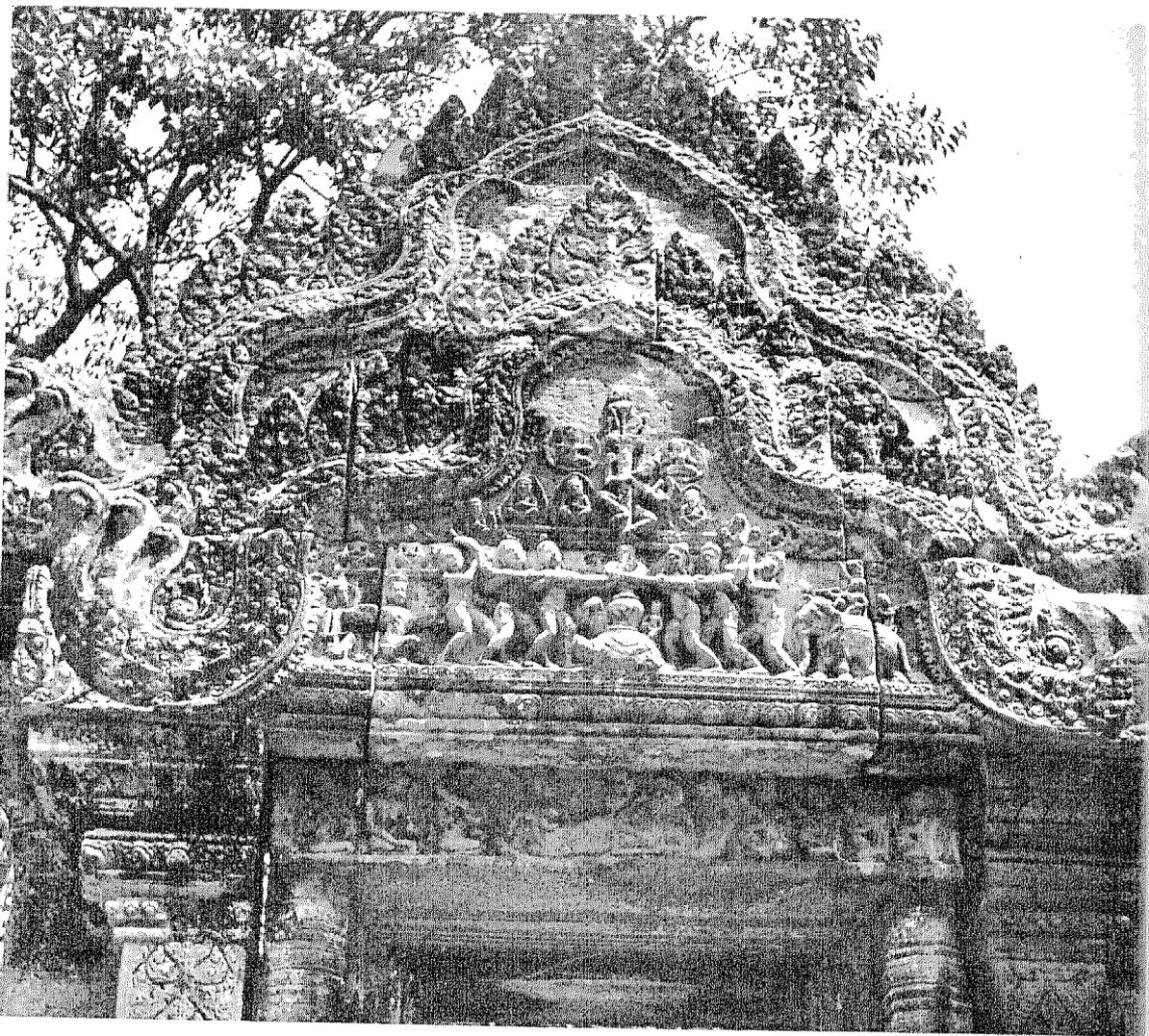
East Wing of First Gopura or Entrance Pavilion



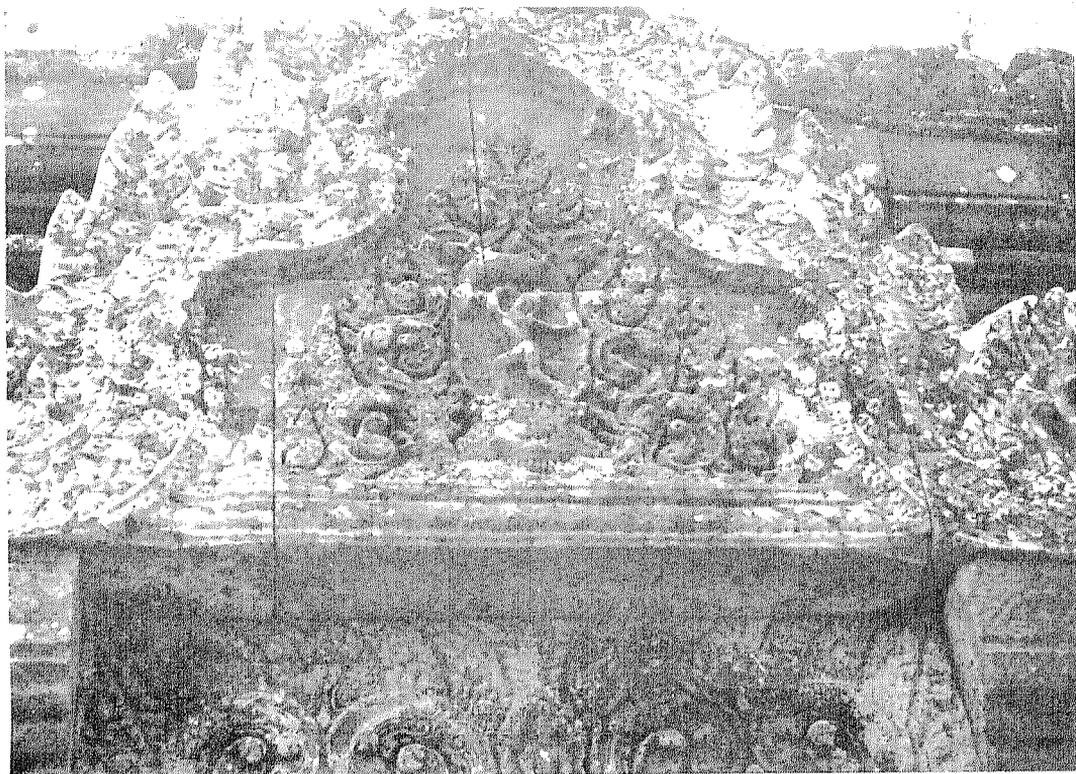
General View of Ruins of First Gopura with one of
Milestone Pillars on Right



Part of First Court



Lintel and Pediment on Second Gopura Depicting
Vishnu Reclining on the Cosmic Serpent and the Churning of the
Ocean, Respectively



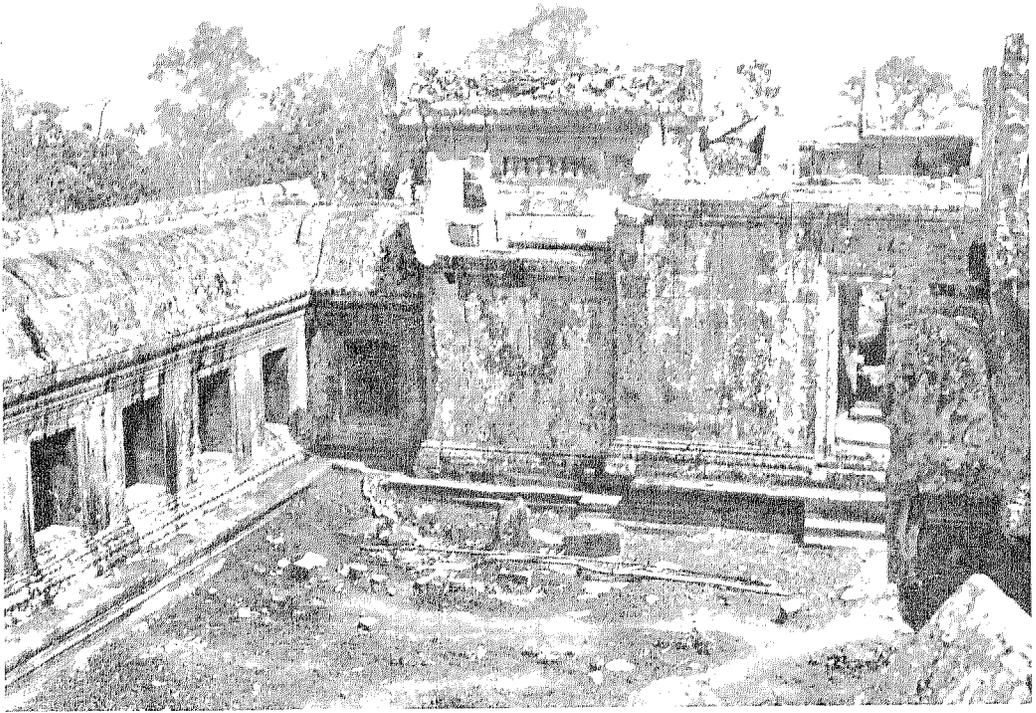
Lintel and Pediment of Third Court



Lintel of Third Court Depicting Siva and Uma



Lintel with Nara—Sinha and Pediment Depicting Siva and Uma Riding
on the Bull Nandi, Third Court



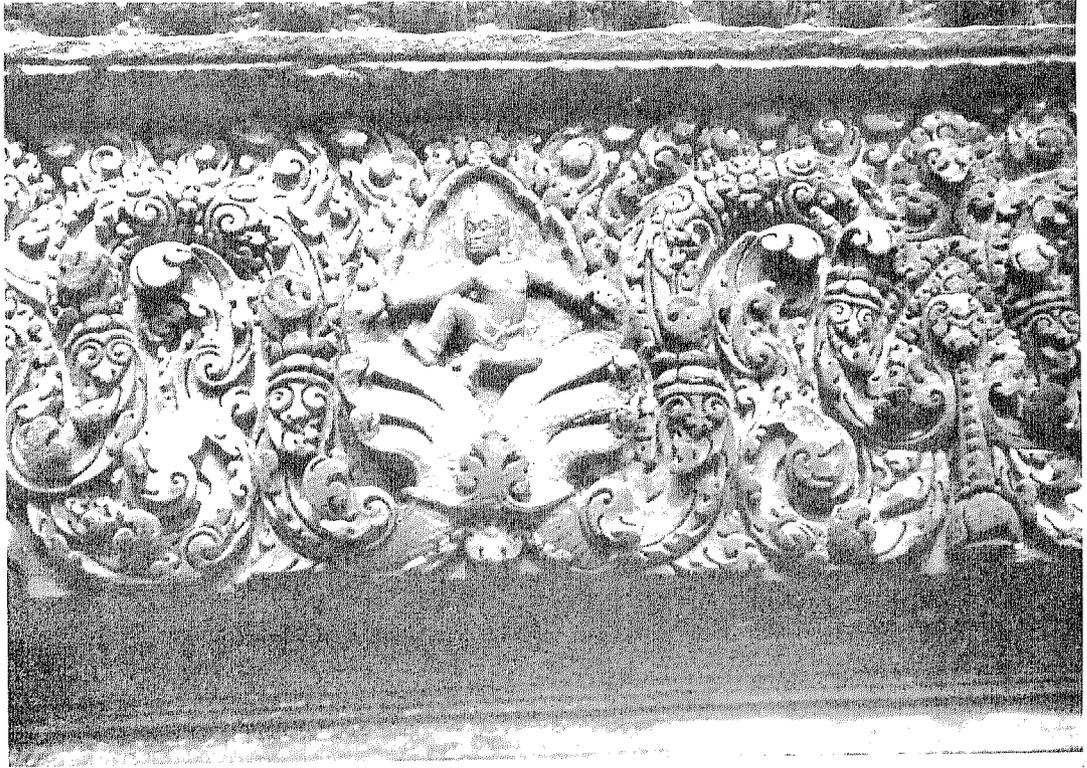
Northwest Corner of First Court Showing Roof of
Library in Second Court



Two unusual Chedi-like Structures Built of Large Blocks of
Sandstone about One Kilometre Northeast of the Temple



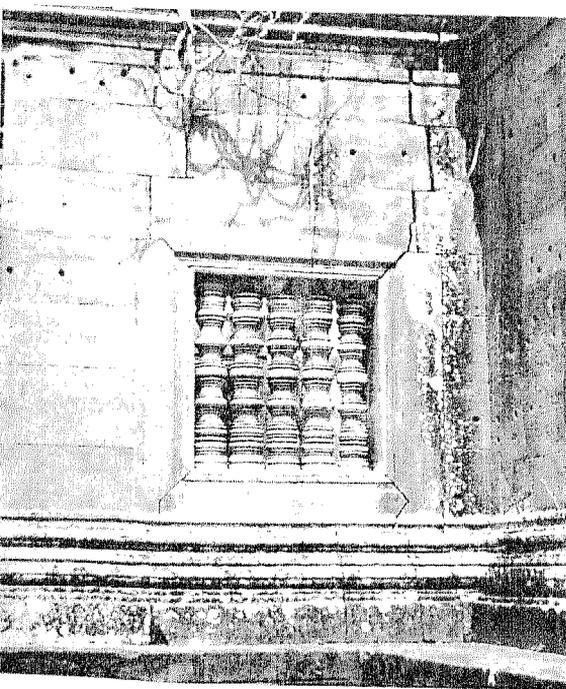
South Wing of Cruciform Gopura of Third Court



Lintel on East Wing of Second Gopura Showing a Divinity
Seated on a Naga with Unusual Floral Ornamentation



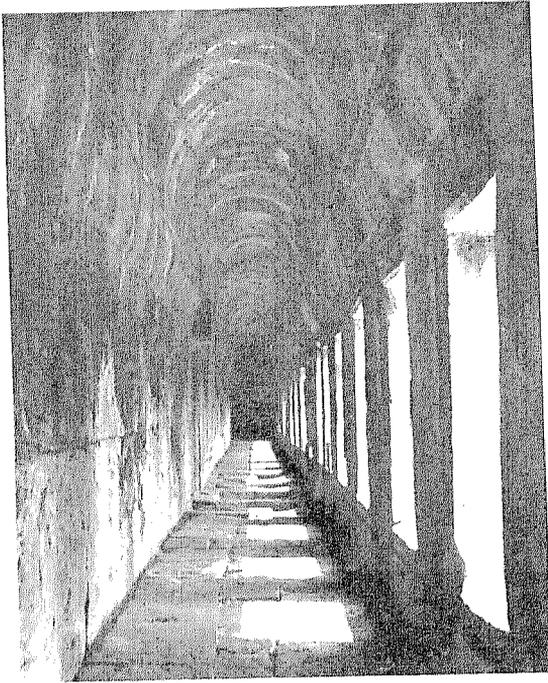
View of Southeast Corner of
First Court Built at Edge of Precipice



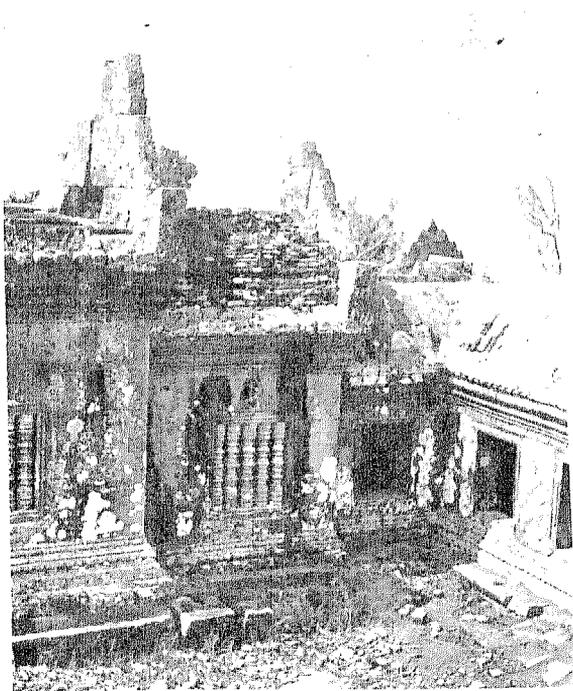
Baluster Window in Cruciform
Gopura of Third Court



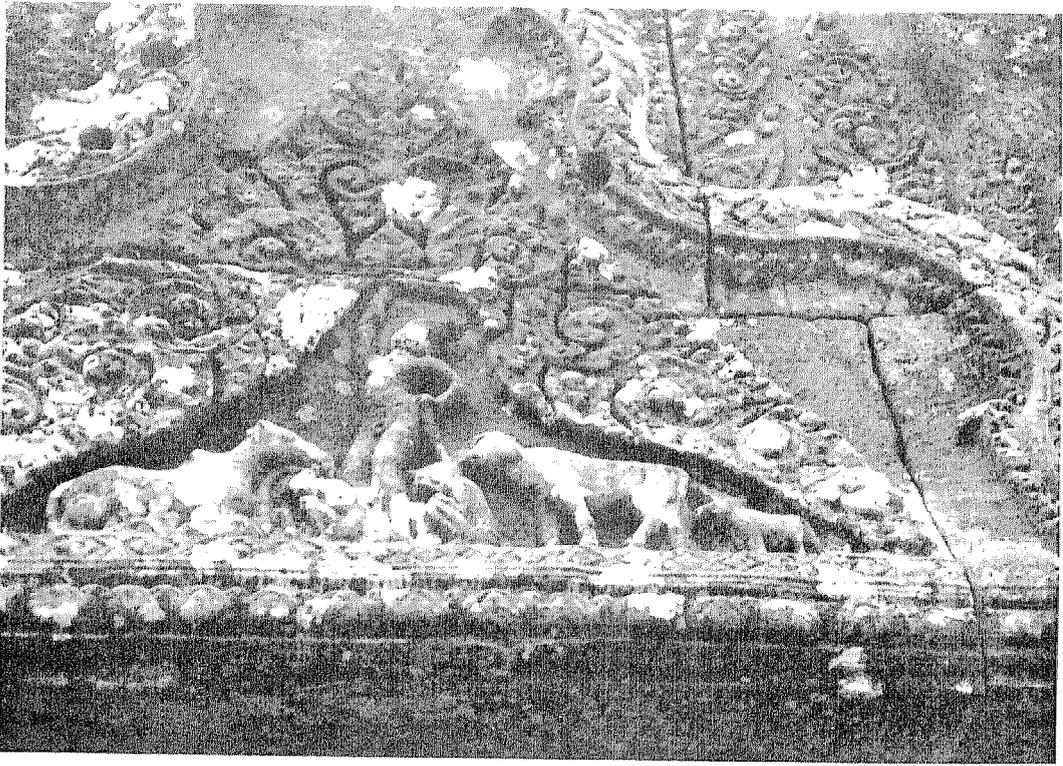
Palace at North Side of Third Court



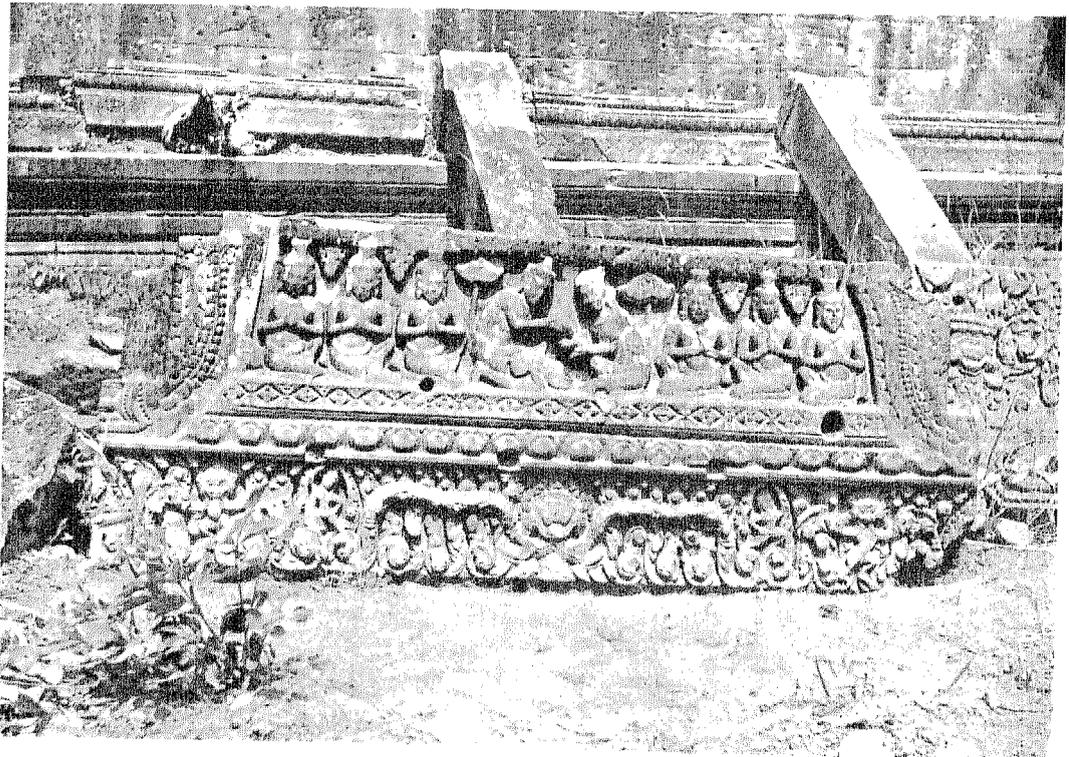
West Gallery of First Court



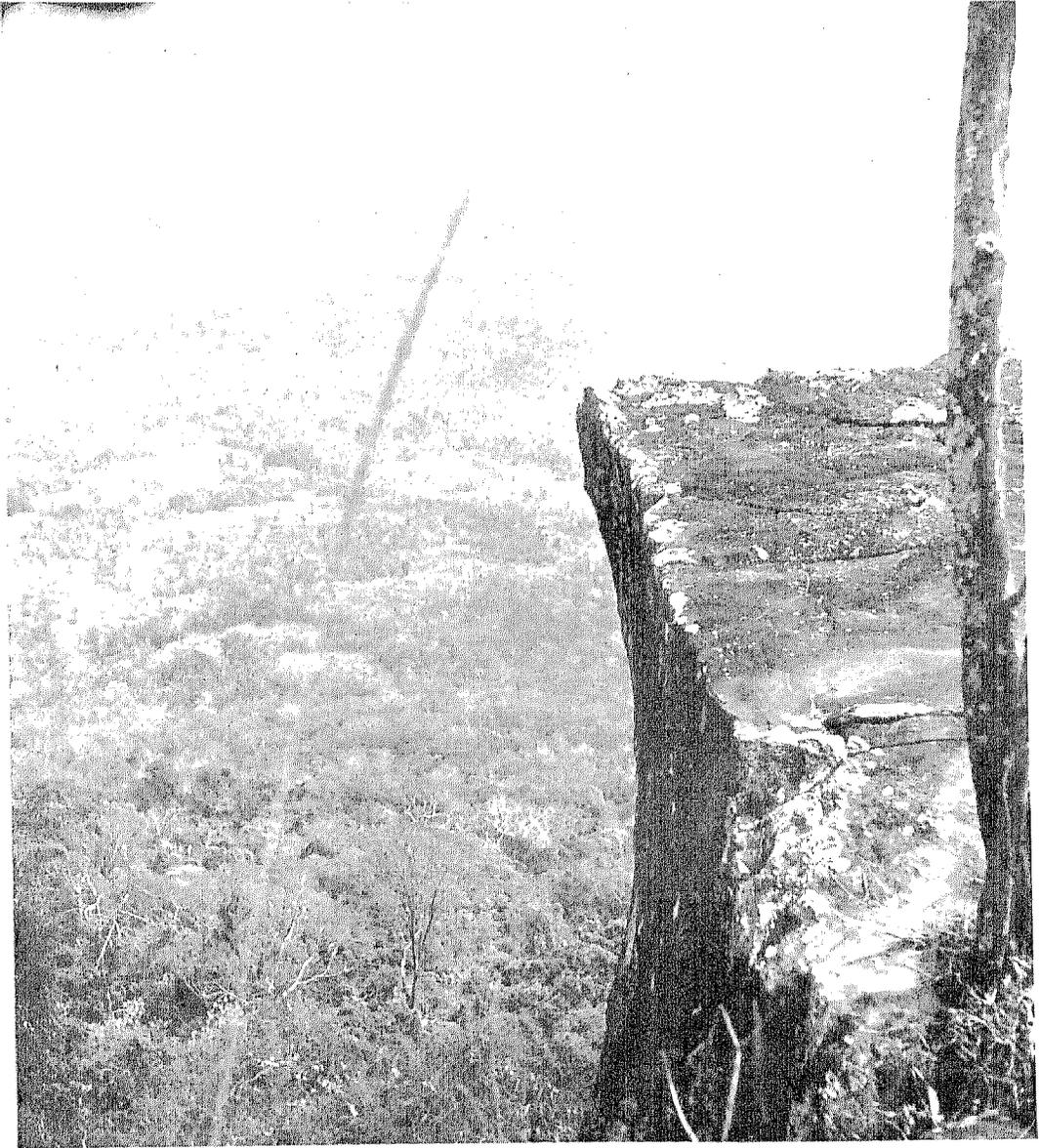
Northeast Corner of First Court



Krishna Holding up Mountain to Protect the Animals Depicted
on a Pediment of the Second Gopura



Displaced Lintel in Second Court Described on
Pages 18-19

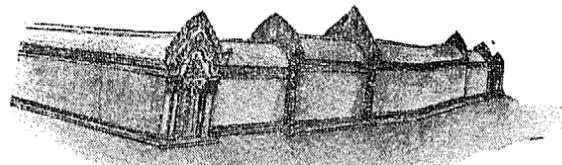


Breath-taking View from Top of Precipice Looking Southwest

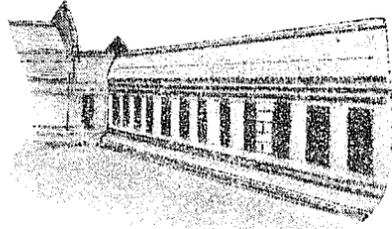


เขาวังวิหาร

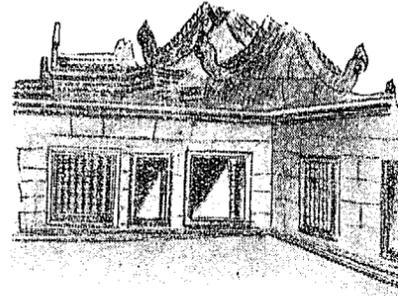
Khao Phra Vihār



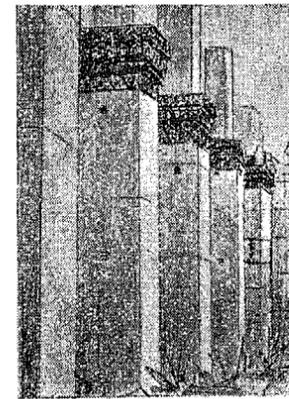
LOOKING NORTH-EAST AT THE EXTERIOR OF THE EAST COURT, SHOWING WEST GALLERY, FALSE DOORWAY AND BLIND GOPURA, THE LATTER FACING SOUTH.



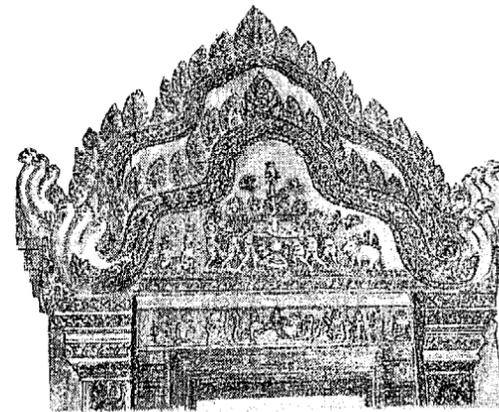
THE COVERED GALLERY ON THE WEST SIDE OF THE FIRST COURT - PRINCIPAL SANCTUARY.



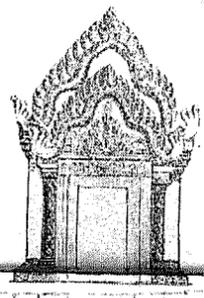
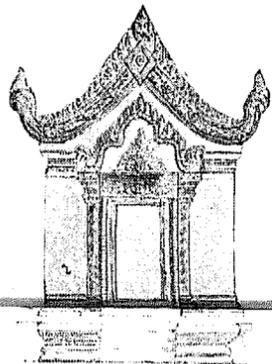
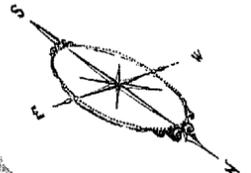
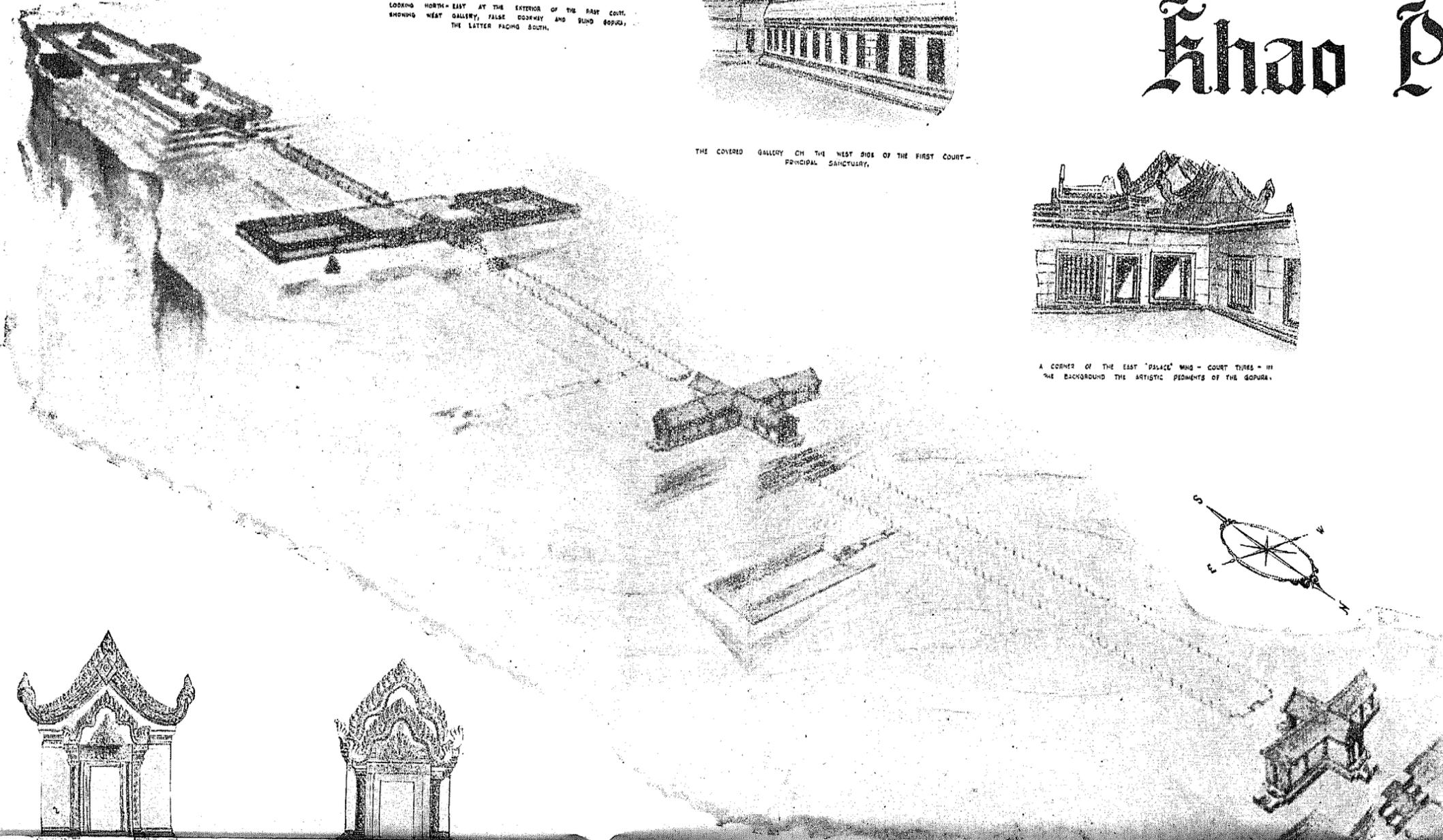
A CORNER OF THE EAST "PALACE" WING - COURT THRESH - IN THE BACKGROUND THE ARTISTIC PEDIMENTS OF THE GOPURA.



THE MASSIVE PILLARS OF THE CENTRAL HALL IN THE LONG HALL OF THE SECOND COURT.



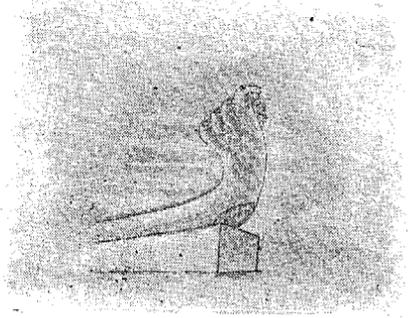
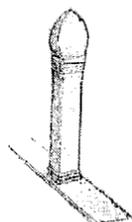
THE LINTEL & PEDIMENT OF DOORWAY FACING SOUTH - SECOND GOPURA. THE SCENE ILLUSTRATES THE CHURNING OF THE SEA OF MILK FAMOUS IN HINDU MYTHOLOGY.



ORNAMENTAL ARTISTRY OF THE PORTICOS IS OUTSTANDING & ARE VARYING FEATURES IN ALL THREE, BUT THEY HAVE COMMON THE CRIST OF FLAME SHAPED FOLIAGE.



THE MILE - STONE - LIKE - PILLAR MANY OF WHICH FLANK THE MAIN AVENUES. THE ORIGIN OF THE DESIGN IS UNKNOWN.



ONE OF THE UNADORNED NISĪ - HEADS FACING NORTH OVER - LOOKING THE MAIN STAIRWAY APPROACH.

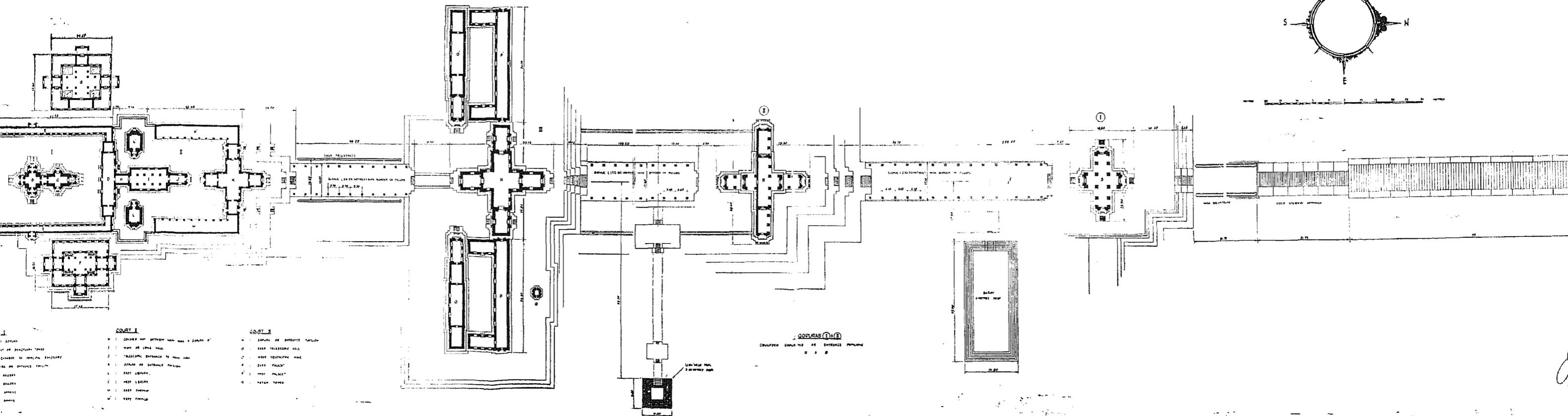
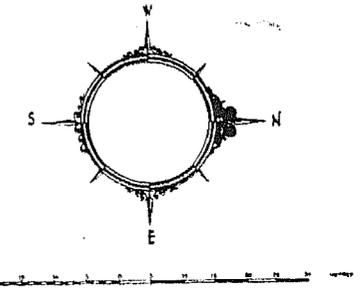
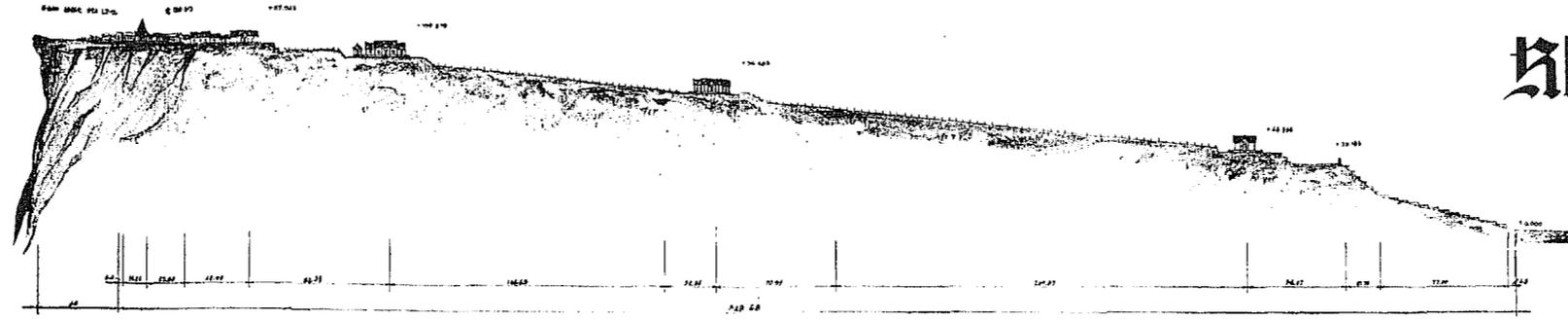


LIONS OF DIFFERENT POSTURE AND DESIGN GUARD ENTRANCE TO GOPURAS AND FLANK STAIRWAYS

*John Blake Esq.
January 1956*

khao Phra Vihar

เขาวัง: วิหาร



- COURT I**
- M: COVERED WAY BETWEEN MAIN WALL & 2nd WALL
 - N: WALL OF 1st WALL
 - O: WALL OF 2nd WALL
 - P: WALL OF 3rd WALL
 - Q: WALL OF 4th WALL
 - R: WALL OF 5th WALL
 - S: WALL OF 6th WALL
 - T: WALL OF 7th WALL
 - U: WALL OF 8th WALL
 - V: WALL OF 9th WALL
 - W: WALL OF 10th WALL
 - X: WALL OF 11th WALL
 - Y: WALL OF 12th WALL
 - Z: WALL OF 13th WALL
- COURT II**
- M: ROOMS OF ENTRANCE TOWER
 - N: EAST TELEPHONE HALL
 - O: WEST TELEPHONE HALL
 - P: EAST PALACE
 - Q: WEST PALACE
 - R: WATER TOWER

GOPURAS (1) & (2)
 CONCRETE GATEWAY TO ENTRANCE PASSAGE