

BOOK REVIEWS

H. G. Quaritch Wales, *Prehistory and Religion in South-East Asia*
Bernard Quaritch, Ltd., London, 1957, 180 pages.

This scholarly probe into the depths of Southeast Asia's prehistory and religion is, in a manner, the concluding volume of a provocative but stimulating trilogy which Dr. Wales began with *The Making of Greater India* (1951) and developed further in *The Mountain of God* (1953). The first volume reviewed the penetration of Indian cultural influences into Southeast Asia and the extent of their modification by the resurgence of the local genius; the second volume was mainly an elaboration and refinement of earlier conclusion concerning the significance of the pre-Hindu Megalithic culture, especially its preoccupation in Southeast Asia with the chthonic, life-giving forces of the Earth. The present volume now traces another development in the prehistory of Southeast Asia, namely, the shift in religious emphasis from Earth to Sky. This departure from the earlier chthonic bias towards an ouranic religion, "over and above what was inculcated by the Indian sky influences," is attributed by Dr. Wales to religious ideas which first appeared in Southeast Asia during the Bronze Age.

The trend from Earth to Sky represents in a sense a return to the Palaeolithic past, where the sky, as the only constant in the lives of nomadic peoples, gave religion ouranic forms of expression, with the All-Father type of deity exhibiting "an overwhelming connection with the sky." This initial outlook on the cosmos had been changed during the Neolithic revolution by an entirely new set of religious responses associated with the newly discovered productivity of the soil by peoples who, through the discovery of new food-producing techniques, were able to pursue the more stationary life of agriculturalists. One may suppose,

Dr. Wales suggests, "that the productivity of the earth, coupled with the prior importance hitherto accorded to the sky, quickly led to the recognition of an animistic Mother Earth, Father Sky couplet."

In Dr. Wales' view it was not the advent of Hindu cosmological ideas alone which later gave the religious life of Southeast Asia a renewed ouranic emphasis. More important, or at least more fundamental, in his view were influences associated with the relatively late coming of the Bronze Age to Southeast Asia. The religious views of this Bronze Age culture, which takes its name from the Annamese village of Đông-s'ôn, differed radically from the chthonic direction taken by the religious ideas which had grown out of the Neolithic revolution and had become so widely diffused in the Older Megalithic world. On the basis of his re-examination of the significance of the Dongsonian bronze drums and the beliefs and practices prevalent among some of the nomadic peoples of Central and Northern Asia, Dr. Wales concludes that the religious form associated with the Bronze Age in Southeast Asia was "a developed shamanism, together with the worship of celestial deities." One of the most prominent features of the Dongsonian culture, therefore, was the celestial and at times solarized character of the supreme deity. This had been a notable characteristic among the supreme beings of the Turco-Tartars and Mongols, but it was "at variance with what we find among the Older Megalithic peoples, where the religion is so largely chthonic."

With the spread of Dongsonian culture the chthonic preoccupation of the Megalithic peoples of Southeast Asia was challenged by religious impulses which pointed to the sky, and the consequent polarization of religious thought is succinctly expressed in the headings of the two concluding chapters of this book: "The Pull of Earth" and "The Quest for Sky." The

results of this confrontation of Earth and Sky varied, according to Dr. Wales' working hypothesis, with the local genius actuating the different peoples of the area. The direction the local genius gave to the evolution of Khmèr religious development was in conformity with its older chthonic pattern; with the religion of the Cham it took a primarily Dongsonian, or ouranic character; but with the Indo-Javanese religious evolution the operative force appears to have been composed of both Older Megalithic and Dongsonian elements, with the former, as the older, not coming into open resurgence until just prior to the advent of Islam.

Thus Dr. Wales is led to conclude that "it was pre-eminently the celestial nature of the supreme deity in the religion of the Dongsonians that made Mahāyāna Buddhism more acceptable to the Chams and the Indo-Javanese than to the Khmers." For example, in India and wherever there was Indianization, Śiva has been sufficiently affected by ouranic beliefs (as shown by his third eye) to have acquired omniscience. The Khmèr with their marked tuleric heritage, on the other hand, preferred Śiva in the more chthonic form of the *līṅga*; and again, the Bodhisattva Lokéśvara, as represented by the Khmèr on the four-faced towers of the Bayon, is not the omniscient central deity, but the means by which the chthonic power of the Mahāyāna *Buddharāja*, whose statue in the likeness of King Jayavarman VII was enshrined in the central tower, radiated to the four terrestrial quarters of the realm. This statue in turn was itself "the personalized focus of the chthonically-conceived deity whose 'substitute body' was the whole pyramid."

It was in Champa and Java that the predominantly celestial character of the Dongsonian religion gained ascendancy over the chthonic basis of the Older Megalithic culture. The original shamanistic trend toward a supreme, omniscient sky deity

gradually acquired some of the forms of Hinduism and Mahāyāna Buddhism through that peculiar religious syncretism which has been so characteristic of Southeast Asia, and eventually lost its identity in Indonesia with the coming of Islam. Possible modification of the chthonic ideas of the Khm̃r by Dongsonian influences (as happened in Champa and Indonesia) was forestalled in Cambodia by the popular acceptance of Theravāda Buddhism.

The interaction of the Older Megalithic and Bronze Age cultures and their varied responses to the introduction of the more sophisticated and formalized religious ideas of India in historical times have served to confuse the cultural history of Southeast Asia to such a degree that there is still far from general agreement among scholars in their analysis and interpretation of these complicated developments. It is not surprising, therefore, that many of Dr. Wales' views have been vigorously challenged. Accordingly, much of his book is in the nature of an equally spirited rejoinder to his critics. Even though many of the conclusions reached by Dr. Wales have not received general acceptance, he has nevertheless presented a considerable body of weighty evidence in support of his position. Moreover, the courageous manner in which he has been willing to depart from the more deeply worn ruts of academic speculation and conjecture, together with his readiness to revise or modify his views in the light of fresh evidence, give a validity to his work which cannot be brushed lightly aside and should provide inspiration and encouragement for renewed efforts to unravel the confused story of Southeast Asia's cultural evolution.

Charles Nelson Spinks

Jane Gaston Mahler, *The Westerners Among the Figurines of the T'ang Dynasty of China*. Instituto Italiano per il medio ed estremo Oriente, Roma, 1959. 192 pages, 42 plates.

China in the T'ang dynasty (610-906 A.D.) was truly the "Middle Kingdom," the center of the civilized world. There were nations elsewhere of economic and cultural importance but none was as powerful and prosperous, or as creative and sophisticated as China at this time.

Her power and influence extended far beyond her own borders. Certain areas of Afghanistan and Northwest India were classed as protectorates, and garrison towns were established throughout Central Asia. China maintained supremacy in these outlying districts by a balanced mixture of diplomacy and military force, protecting the weak and dividing the strong to prevent them from forming dangerous alliances. One of the main objectives of this policy was to keep the trade routes to the West open and reasonably safe. From India, one could go over the Khyber Pass and follow the southern route through Kashgar, Khotan, Miran, Tun-huang. From present Russian Samarkand and Tashkent, the northern route went through Qizil, Kucha, Turfan. Both roads led to Ch'ang-an, the capital of T'ang China.

It must have been a colorful crowd that poured into the city: foreign ambassadors bearing gifts or tribute, sharp businessmen from small kingdoms who frequently operated under self-appointed embassy status to gain better trade benefits, ordinary peddlers, craftsmen, refugees, and Buddhist pilgrims. Thousands of these foreigners—Greeks, Syrians, Persians, Arabs, Indians, Central Asians, and Southeast Asians—came into Ch'ang-an and they made it a thoroughly cosmopolitan city. Usually these aliens lived in special districts where they were granted extra-territorial privileges of customs and religion. The city was a noted center of Buddhist scholarship, but with true Buddhist tolerance. Nestorians, Manicheans, Moslems, Hindus and Zoroastrians were permitted to practice their own form of worship.

The Chinese may have been blandly sure of their own superiority but they were, nevertheless, fascinated by the

foreigners. Any alien item that was valuable or amusing was freely adopted, and the aliens themselves were deftly portrayed in small statuettes. These clay figurines of dancers, musicians, wine merchants, horsegrooms, guards, etc., were as colorful a part of the miniature retinue put into a tomb as they must have been in the real life of Ch'ang-an.

It would be easy to romanticize this era, or to find its richness and variety almost indigestible, but Jane Gaston Mahler has taken the only possible road for a scholar. She has isolated one ingredient of the T'ang civilization, the foreigners as portrayed in funerary figurines, and has treated that subject with both depth and breadth.

A look at the table of contents will give an idea of the detailed information on each group of Westerners treated in the first chapter. For example, under the heading of "Western Turks and their Vassals" are the following sub-divisions: Early History, Clash with the White Huns, Division of the Turks, Alliance with China, Description of the Land and People by Hsuan-tsang, Men with Braided Hair, Grooms for Horses and Camels, Audience of Hsuan-tsang with the Khan, Diplomatic Exchange with China, The Sha-T'o Turks.

The second chapter is a study of Chinese costume in its relationship to the figurines. By comparing them to donor portraits on dated memorial steles, and by reference to the literature of the period, many of the statuettes can be accurately placed within the century. Far more than great monuments, these little clay figures can reflect the life and the changing fads and fashions of the age. One can picture the court ladies of the 7th century viewing the exotic costume of the Central Asians and adopting the low décolletage and other ideas. By the 8th century this fashion was out, and a round neck, long-sleeved blouse and Persian stole was the only style considered chic. Men, while more conservative than women, also make several changes in the cut of their costumes.

No archeologist regards the fashions of the past as a trivial subject because the length of a sleeve on a painted or sculptured figure can often determine its age, and even its validity.

The third chapter contains a valuable technical analysis of the figurines, the clays and glazes used, the methods of assembly, T'ang regulations concerning their use (size and number were determined by the rank of the deceased), the composition of a typical retinue, etc. There is also a page on the faking of these popular objects with the sound advice that even the expert should beware of buying an unglazed piece. It may be made from an old mould, and of clay from the original T'ang site, but have been buried for rather less than a thousand years.

There are also several informative appendixes, charts, maps, bibliography and 42 good black-and-white plates of the figurines discussed.

Plates XXIV, c and d, and XXV are identified as dancer and drummer from Southeast Asia. They have curly hair, non-Chinese features, and are wearing heavy jewelry and a garment that seems to be a cross between a dhoti and a pannung. The pose and modeling of the body is similar to the Gupta style. Mrs. Mahler cautiously identifies them with the K'un-lun people of whom there are several confusing references in Chinese texts. Scholars have not agreed whether the homeland of the K'un-lun is Siam-Cambodia, Champa, Indonesia, or the east coast of Africa. Mrs. Mahler feels that the closest stylistic connection is with the 8th century reliefs on the Prambanan. One might also look at the sculptures of the Tra Kieu style of Champa.

No doubt, many readers who are told more than they wish to know by this book will object to the card file style of presentation. It is true that there is more literary grace in the quotations than in the author's text, but she is to be congratulated on having compiled a work which is not only valuable for the study of one special type of tomb figurines, but which can be used as source material in other areas of research on the T'ang dynasty.

Elizabeth Lyons

Starling, Miss L.: *Dawn over Temple Roofs*, World Horizons Inc., New York, 1960, 182 pages ill.

The author has been in the missionary calling from 1909 to a very recent date; but she reflects much of the thoughts and feeling of an older generation of missionaries in these writings. Her work was mostly in the north, where, one gathers from her writing, the people were made up of a governing class and the ignorant and grossly superstitious plebeian class, both of whom however were steeped in superstition. And these formed her world of the Siamese. "To the peasant, she says, if a tree is uprooted by the wind, it is the act of an enraged *pee*. An eclipse of the moon is the work of a dragon which must be frightened away with firecrackers and drums.... Leafy groves are supposed to be inhabited by hordes of *pees*. The early evangelists pitched their tents in such groves, but the timid villagers refused to assemble there..." Further on she says "All the *pees* are supposed to have been embodied at one time. But for lack of merit, some fail at death to pass into another body. If they have been monks, they are fated to haunt temple grounds and are known as "tiger *pees* of the temple". The *pees* of departed kings are called "tiger *pees* of the land "and roam the scene of their former glories, venting their spleen on the living. Those who die away from home, as did Prince Kawilorot, are known as "tiger *pees* of the forest" and are doomed forever to wander in the dark jungle. She ends up of course "... the missionary came with the message of a great Spirit who loves his children and protects them from evil." (pp. 51-53). This was at least a practical conclusion. Though nominally Buddhists, these people seemed to have been more of animists than anything else. They were thus easy to convert.

The book may be summed up as notes and incidents of the working and experience of a missionary, who spared no effort to go about mixing with the peasantry whom she set out to save spiritually according to the missionary tradition perhaps of a former generation. In such an effort the author spared no personal inconvenience and was so generous as to adopt more or less

a few of the converted among them. Her treatment in this book is sympathetic though perhaps she should have recognised that the people of the northern jungles were but a section of the Siamese race and their characteristics are not shared by a greater number of Siamese.

Wells, K.E.: *Thai Buddhism: its Rites and Activities*, second edition, Police Press, Bangkok, 1960. 320 pages ill.

The first edition of this work appeared 21 years ago and was duly reviewed by the present reviewer in these pages (pp. 55-9. JSS, XXXII, pt. 1, Sept. 1940). The impression it then gave was good; and, as stated in the preface to this 1960 edition, its reprint had been requested by many students, among whom the reviewer would like to count himself one because he has been entertaining admiration for that first edition for its understanding and sympathetic treatment.

In the second edition under review there are several additions mostly in connection with the rites which form one of the two aspects of his presentation. One would have expected more of the second aspect—activities—to be given more detailed consideration. Some of the former edition's statements seemed to need correction or amplification, such for instance as the Pali Buddhist literature of Lānnātai of the XVth century and their translations in the first reign of the Čakri dynasty towards the end of the XVIIIth century; a few other mistakes such as the discussion of the inclusion of the term Buddha in the names of the first two kings of the same dynasty both of which instances were suggested for correction in the review above-mentioned. More, too, might have been said with profit about the increasing interest being taken in Buddhist teaching as evidenced by the numerous institutions such as the Gana Dharmadān (Institute of the Propagation of the Dharma) of Jaiyā and the numerous Buddhist and Young Buddhist societies all over the Kingdom which have been acknowledged by the Siamese public as having done much towards sound living.

To sum up we may say nevertheless that this book in spite of its 20 years still remains in its second edition the best exposition of the Buddhist rites practiced in Siam if not its activities and as such remains unchallenged in its understanding of the subject.

Artibus Asiae, Vol. XXII, pts. 1-2.

This special number is dedicated by his colleagues and pupils to the memory of the late Alfred Salmony. It consists of their writings, among which is the Note on an Indian slab of the Pāla epoch discovered in Aynḍhyā (pp. 9-14). The *stela* was found among the treasures buried probably by King Paramarājādhirāj II (1424-48) underneath the monument of Wat Rājabūrna dedicated to his elder brothers who lost their lives in an elephant duel. On its front is a gilt *haut-relief* of the traditional octette of scenes in the life of the Buddha; whilst on the back is inscribed the famous couplet often reproduced on monuments erected by Asoka commencing with the words *Ye dhammā hetup-pabbhavā*.. Coedès dates it XI or XII centuries.

Griswold has a short note on two Shan Buddha-images of the XVIth century. D.T. Devendra surveys his government's work in connection with Ceylon archaeology (pp. 23-40).

The rest of the number is full of interest, dealing with localities outside this country.

Bangkok, 4 October 1960.

D.

Wening, R. and Somm, A.F.: *Siam, pays des merveilles*, with 90 coloured photogravures by Michael Wolgensinger, Editions Silva Zürich, 1959, 122 pages quarto.

The work was originally written in German under the name of *Wunderbar Siam*. The edition under review is a French translation and one learns that a third will be issued in English. The first impression one obtains is the beauty of its photogravures

in colour. The choice of subject for photography is not exaggerated and really characteristic of the scope of the book. On reading the running commentary which touches on all aspects of Siamese life, religion, food, geographical situation, racial sections, language, time-reckoning, elephants, life at Court, monasteries, art, drama, music, concluding with modern Siam and politics, etc. one obtains a good impression of the information therein contained, though a few inaccuracies exist such as in figure 7 where the widely familiar theme of the Buddha's temptation by Evil, here defectively reproduced thus leading to the mistake in the inscription being that of a scene from the *Rāmākien*. The commentary modestly limits itself to a succession of topics rather than aiming at a systematic planning; but it is a wealth of observation which is not necessarily high-brow but is intelligent and sympathetic all through.

The most noticeable section of the book is the short preface by Wening. A propos of the ties of friendship between the two nations, his and ours, arising from the close connection made by the Siamese monarchy with the Swiss people, he says:

...cette sympathie n'est pas unilatérale; même après un séjour de courte durée, les Suisses reviennent du Siam enthousiasmés. Il y a les mystérieux paysages tropicaux, les temples aux lignes harmonieuses, le va-et-vient des bateaux sur les rivières et les fleuves; mais il y a surtout les Siamois eux-mêmes, dont l'amabilité et l'inaltérable bienveillance trouvent les chemins de tous les coeurs. Les Siamois sent continuellement portés à la bonne humeur, vis-à-vis des étrangers ils ont toutes les prévenances, ils s'oublient eux-mêmes pour se mettre au service des autres; autant de qualités qui font disparaître la différence de race et préparent la voie à l'amitié et à des rapports tout empreints d'estime réciproque!"

The credit for such sympathies he attributes to our Buddhism, thus:

"Ce peuple aime passionnément sa religion, et celle-ci l'a amené à un haut degré de civilisation. La tolérance

manifestée par les rois à l'égard des autres cultes est connue depuis longtemps; et cependant, c'est au Siam que le Bouddhisme s'est conservé dans la plus grande pureté. La plupart des pays ayant adopté la doctrine de Bouddha ont gardé leurs anciennes croyances, parce qu'ils n'ont pas compris toute la grandeur et la noblesse de cette doctrine."

In paying credit to the wisdom of Kings Chulalongkorn and his father Mongkut, he cites the now large circle of friendly states who are represented at the King's Court and says :

"Le ton sec et cassant malheureusement trop répandu dans les colonies est inconnu dans les milieux dirigeants du Siam..."

and cites, by way of evidence of the King's liberal viewpoint passages from his letter to his sons then being educated in Europe, thus :

"Ne vous imaginez pas que vous pouvez outrager les autres et leur infliger de mauvais traitements, sous prétexte que vous êtes mes fils et que vous ne courez aucun risque... Si vous commettez une injustice, vous serez punis; le fait que votre père est roi ne vous évitera pas le châtiment..."

"Souvenez-vous continuellement que le roi de votre pays n'a pas l'obligation de vous procurer des postes importants simplement parceque vous êtes des princes royaux... Les emplois supérieurs exigent des aptitudes spéciales..."

The author finally sums up in the preface :

"Que penser d'un monarque absolu qui se montre aussi excellent père de famille et un éducateur aussi parfait? Le pays qui possède des ministres formés à une noble école a les meilleurs raisons de s'estimer heureux."

"Par la suite, les bouleversements politiques qui ont secoué l'Europe et l'Amérique n'ont pas épargné le Siam. La Monarchie absolue a fait place à un gouvernement constitutionnel, comme celui de l'Angleterre. An-

jourd'hui le pouvoir législatif est assuré par le Parlement. Quelle sera l'influence exercée sur le moral du peuple par le nouveau régime? Nul ne saurait le dire. Au Siam il existe évidemment aussi des milieux se tenant plus ou moins à l'écart du Bouddhisme; il n'en reste pas moins que dans son ensemble, le peuple s'efforce de se confirmer à la doctrine du maître et de rester fidèle à l'héritage spirituel et artistique qui lui est été transmis d'une génération à l'autre."

 "Mais le temps va vite, et le Siam ne néglige rien pour prendre dignement place à côté des autres États civilisés. Lorsque les Siamois sont gagnés à une idée, ils sont capables de tout."

What an encouragement indeed. It is up to us to deserve the complement.

Birasri, S. and D. Yupo: *The Origin and Evolution of Thai Murals etc. with A Catalogue of Murals in the Śilpākorn Gallery*, Śivaporn Press, Bangkok, with maps, plans and illustrations, 1959, 55 pages.

Professor Birasri's learned treatise on the Origin and Evolution of Thai Murals is a chronological résumé of the development of Siamese pictorial art as evidenced by murals from the earliest specimen thought to have dated from the epoch of Dvāravati, inclusive of the ones in the caves of Yalā down through the times of Sukhodaya, Ayudhyā, Dhonburi and Bangkok, concluded by an analysis of the technique of old Thai painting. The professor here enlarges upon his former theory (cf. JSS XLVII, part 2, under Recent Siamese Publications no. 251, pp. 216-7) by the statement that the Thai knew the technique of *fresco* from the Chinese who made some murals at Wat Rājabūrṇa in Ayudhyā at the beginning of the XVth century but could not use such technique on small and very detailed figures. Hence the more general use of *tempora*, which involved the application of vegetable solutions specifically indicated by the Professor (p. 24),

Then follows an historical and touristic description of the edifices containing murals of Siam with plans and charts, brought up at the end by a catalogue of murals in the Śilpākorn Gallery, which latter is reproduced in 121 figures in colours as well as in black and white.

One may say without exaggeration that both parts of the book, each written by the respective authors mentioned make up a scientific and artistic handbook of murals.

Lichfield, Whiting, Browne Associates : *The Bangkok-Dhonburi City Planning Project*—Historical Growth—with maps, plans and illustrations 17 pages.

This technical monograph is the first of a series of papers being planned by the Bangkok-Dhonburi City Planning Project—a joint undertaking of the Thai government represented by its Ministry of the Interior and the International Corporation Administration represented by the United States Operation Mission to Thailand.

The volume under review consists of historical sketches from 1500 years ago when the Hinduized Mon kingdom of Dvāravati dominated the valley of the Chaoṇṇayā river down through the days of Ayudhyā and Dhonburi to Bangkok. The presentation is carefully made up and is supported all through by old maps (from 1693 A.D.) and reproductions of old prints of the XIX century. More interesting still are the four maps of the successive development of the area of the cities of Bangkok and Dhonburi. From the one of 1900 when the combined area of the two cities was approximately 3,330 acres; to that of 1936 when the area spread towards east and north to 10,660 acres; then in 1953 when it spread mostly east to cover some 16,490 acres; and finally in 1958 it spread in all directions especially east and north to an approximate area of 23,805 acres.

The historical narration takes its authority from reliable authorities as dela Loubère and Pallegoix.

There is also an appendix with interesting details of the topography of the Grand Palace in the citadel of Bangkok. Some old maps here reproduced are not within the easy reach of students and should be valuable in research work.

Ohula Chakrabongse, H.R.H. Prince: *Lords of Life*, Alvin Redman, Ltd. London, pp. 352, ill, maps.

Some 22 years ago I started to write down my experiences in the service under the sixth and seventh sovereigns of the Chakri Dynasty touching on the work and nature of their paternal kingship under the title of *Kings I have served*. An esteemed friend to whom I showed the mss. pointed out that, though it was planned along the lines of an autobiography, the self became obliterated as the narrative proceeded till disappearing altogether it ceased to be what it purported to be. It was then decided that the work should be revised to take shape of a History of the Chakri Dynasty so that I would not be bothered with trying to write an autobiography which seemed a task beyond my inclinations. This new idea got under way but the mss. was later lost in travelling. It is still my intention to reconstruct this history from memory, but time and application failed me and laziness took the upper hand. This is, I believe, as much as I care to say about myself.

It is with a great deal of satisfaction, therefore, that I welcome the work under review of a younger and abler writer, who, without being aware of my conception of that type of a monarchy which after all was no less of a democracy than some of the modern democracies of the world with the exception that it frankly called itself an absolute monarchy, has intelligently observed it from a close point of vantage though at an age when one cannot be expected to realise all its whys and wherefores. Now, that the institution is past and gone, an academic interest-for no practical purposes-deserves the attention of the historian.

The author is to be congratulated on securing an introduction by Professor Trevor-Roper of Cambridge in which he has summed up the characteristics of the book succinctly, thus:

"In the first chapter he will find eighteenth century Siam placed in its long historical perspective. He will see it, as it were, developing out of the past, out of itself, out of contact with its immediate neighbours. He will learn the terms of its existence, the basis of its nineteenth century problems. And he will see the state to which it was reduced just before the accession of the new dynasty. After a century of anarchy and isolation, the ancient capital of Ayudhya had been sacked by the Burmese, its buildings and records destroyed, its life and government and culture dislocated. A successful usurper for a time restored order, only to lapse into whimsical megalomania, on one hand unfrocking the clergy by thousands, on the other hand seeking, by concentrated private devotion, 'to enable himself to fly in the air'. It was a palace revolt against this interesting *dérot* which brought his most successful general in haste from Cambodia to accept the throne and become the first Chakri king. Such was the inauspicious beginning of the dynasty which, from its new capital of Bangkok, would soon have to face the mounting pressure of imperialist Europe throughout the Far East.

Through the rest of the book we can follow the fortune of this new dynasty: a dynasty which ruled absolutely, taking its ministers from its own numerous members, but which nevertheless first rebuilt and reformed the fabric of the state and then, by understanding the realities of power—by study, imitation, adaptation, and occasional timely surrender—carried its country independently through the nineteenth, the colonial, into the twentieth, the ex-colonial century."

Having thus given the reader the above general idea of the book, so succinctly stated, there only remains the following reaction of a Siamese reader.

The survey of the period prior to the rule of the Chakri kings has been very well written. A few points need correction. One would prefer, for instance, to be more explicit about our predecessors in the land, to lay it down without hesitation that

the Australasian negroids were followed among others by people of a Mon Khmer stock, among whom were probably those of the state now called Dvāravati who had been either the Mon or the Lawā. Another point is the date of Pimai (p.19) which has now been definitely determined by savants to be within the Classic Khmer period and therefore contemporaneous with several of the better known ruins such as Angkor Wat.

Into the debate of Thailand versus Siam as a terminology (p.23) I prefer not to enter save to call to mind that the use of the name Siam as that of the country can be found long before the time of King Mongkut. Literature abounds in instances of this.

The arrangement of the main portion of the book is divided into 9 chapters: "Before", dealing with events prior to the Chakri dynasty already commented upon; then a chapter to each of the first seven sovereigns, who are given individually a well-chosen epithet; and "After" dealing with events after the abdication of King Prajadhipok. Throughout the length of the book one comes across details of the protocol and relationships within the Royal Family, which had been criticised in former works as being unnecessary in a scientifically written history even of a dynasty. On an unbiassed consideration, however, one must admit that in order to take in all aspects of a situation for the writing of a history what appears as a detail is often important for the balanced view. This work may not after all have been intended to be a standard history of the time. It forms a valuable source material for future histories. No history or account so far written in English or any of the better known languages of the world has paid much attention to Siamese sources for information. Among the more recent works there is only this work and that of Vella on Rama III which take Siamese sources into serious consideration.

In writing this account of the Siamese sovereigns, the author has no case to defend. He tries to be fair in his condemnations; he is quick to put right any misunderstanding especially

of misinformed foreigners. As evidence of such may be cited his presentation of the case of the Franco-Siamese dispute of 1893 (pp. 249-253) and the calumnious statements prevalent in certain quarters during the first decade of the democratic régime.

The book is an evidence of much reading. The Prince's authorities are judiciously chosen; but, though born and partly bred in the most intelligent circles of the Siamese Court, he has lived the greater part of his life detached from his people. Not all his judgments are accurate. In a source material such as this book should be, accuracy of detail is important. For the general reader, on the other hand, the inaccuracies do not detract much from the book's value and will be left uncommented upon.

Bangkok, 20 November 1960

D.

RECENT SIAMESE PUBLICATIONS

256. Paramanujit, H.R.H. Prince: *Pathomasom'podhikathā* (Pathamasambodhikathā) Mahā-Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, publ. S. Krityākom, B.E. 2503, 484 pages quarto.

The *Pathomasom'podhikathā* has been a well-known work for several generations past. It deals with the life and time of Gotama the Buddha. It should be of interest to give here a sketch of its origin and development for the work is a literary monument of national importance. According, then, to the well-known scholars, Sathienkoses and S. Sālitul, who wrote the *kam thalēy* prefaced to the present edition, there exist in the National Library two works of the name in Pāli verse. One, of 22 cantos, gives no clue to its authorship or date though it is obviously old. The second says "The King... commanded Prince Kraisorawijit to invite the monk, Prince Nujit of Wat P'ra Jetubon, to examine (๑๓๓๕) an old work of the name and the result of his work was a version of 30 cantos which was concluded in the year of the snake, B.E. 2388 (1845). The scholars mentioned above seemed to have decided that the Prince wrote this translation which is the subject of our review. It does not seem clear whether the version brought about by the Prince was the one finished in 1845 or the revised Pāli text of 30 cantos mentioned above. In any case the material of the 30-canto-version covered an identical field as the version of the 22 cantos, the enumeration of more cantos being merely due to rearrangement and the addition of minor details.

The two scholars also pointed out that there are four other versions of translations of the *Pathom'podhikathā*, which were written later, frankly intended for public delivery. They bear definite data regarding authorship and date. They have nothing to do with the work under review.

As for the work itself, it has been a source of wonder in literary circles that Prince Paramanujit, having lived all his life since the age of 12 in the monastery, should have been able to

portray so many different aspects of life through his eloquent writings. As pointed out in the short biography attached to this work, the best known of his creations was the heroic poem of *Taleṇṇāi*, depicting in lofty and majestic wording the essence of chivalry in King Naresvara of Ayudhyā which has been acknowledged to have aroused feelings of patriotism among its readers and inspired them to write other works along the same theme. His art is also detectable in the contrast he made of the vanquished adversary, the Crown Prince of Burma, who has not been made to suffer from any lack of good ideals expected of such a highly placed prince of a reigning royal family. Turning then to another aspect of his writing, his *Exhortations from Krishnā to her sister* shows a remarkably unexpected knowledge of the feminine heart and virtues. His prose, such as the *History of Siam*, reflects elegant rhetoric.

The monastic purist may indeed question the Prince's inspirations and even accuse him of paying attention to frivolous details unbefitting of "a son of the Śākya"; the linguistic purist too may be shocked by the liberty he has taken over rules of prosody in favour of melodic sonance. One can almost imagine the poet murmuring aloud to himself his new compositions as they turn up in his mind. His indeed was an idea of melody triumphing over pedantic rules of quantitative requirements.

In calling this work a "translation", it should be borne in mind that it is really more of a dissertation based on the theme of the original Pāli poem which was much shorter. The "translation" here abounds in additional facts and details and does not shrink from taking advantage of literary license. In spite of its length it used to form the material of a series of sermons delivered on the occasion of the Viśākha festival of three days and three nights in the royal palace. Hence the later versions to make such deliveries more practical.

257. *The Pictured Pavilion of Suan Phakkād Palace* สวนพุดแก้ว
 สว่างผกแก้ว Sivaporn Press, Bangkok, B.E. 2502 ill. by 33 figures
 in black and gold and also in black and white, 76 pages.

There is also a description of the design and subject of the pictures in black and gold by Luang Boribāl and Nai Tīnakorn Tōṅswet, an article on Ayudhyan repositories of the Canon by Professor S. Birasri, translated into Siamese by Momchao S. Diskul and yet another—intelligent and witty—article by Momrājawōṅs Kūkriddhi Prāmoj with apt quotations from a eulogy of King Nārāi by P̄ra Sri Mahosoth, one of that King's poets at court, bringing to light many interesting and humorous features of the portrayal. No better memorial could have been chosen to perpetuate the late Prince's memory as a connoisseur of art.

Dealing with an identical topic as the above is a little brochure issued this year as a souvenir of the festival of Viśākha by the Fine Arts Department. The book was given away to monks and novices who visited the Museum during that festival. The subject deserves the wide publicity thus given for no less than 15,000 copies were printed for this first edition.

The short booklet describes the lacquered cases and boxes of the collection in the Hall of Sivamokkhaṇimān in the Palace of the Prince of the Front (Waṇṇā) which has been turned now into the National Museum. It is stated therein that the Siamese translation of an original—presumably English—of Professor Birasri is by Kian Yimsiri of the Fine Arts Department.

According then to the booklet this art of the lacquer flourished in the time of Ayudhya about the XVIth century. It has been handed down to the periods of Dhonburi and Bangkok (and is still practised). It originated in China as indicated in the treatment of nature-motifs such as mountains, fauna and flora. It developed into scenes of everyday life especially at Court whence came all artistic inspirations.

As for material, backgrounds of wooden wicker or plain wood are first coated over with black or red lacquer, designs are then drawn on its surface and what surface is to remain outside the design is coated over with gamboge mixture. Another coating of lacquer is then applied over the whole surface, then the gilt of gold leaves. After about 20 hours the surface is washed with water. The soluble gamboge comes off with all the lacquer and gold which lays on it, leaving only the design in gold because it has not been treated with gamboge. Hence the name given to the process "watered design".

Decoration by this process is also applied to door- and window panels. Then follows a description of the collection, in which the Professor gives full rein to his artistic eyes and his love of nature. There seems to have lurked an error in his description of figure 1 which is described as a design depicting Rama and Tōsakanth borne by a Hanumān and a *yaksh*. No Tōsakanth is really there, though the bearer other than Hanumān looks like a *yaksh*. This bearer might have been Oṇkod but was turned into a *yaksh* by mistake, for he wears an identical crown as Oṇkod's.

There is no doubt that this kind of a souvenir publication can do much to keep alive the traditions of the national art vis-à-vis the increasing materialistic tendencies of modern technology.

This is an interesting handbook of one of the recent art exhibitions organised by the Department, containing articles by experts in their respective fields. Such are K. Indakosai's *Excavations in the Neighbourhood of the River Ping*, Luang Boribāl's *Buddha Images from the North of Bhumibol Dam* and M. Vallabdom's *Čedi Type of Hod District* etc. With the exception of Professor Birasri's 3 pages of an English description of a printed flag some four or five centuries back which had been found in a terracotta vase in the crypt of a *čedi* at Wat Dokpoen, District of Hod, all has been written in Siamese. Specialists in the technique of Thai *objets d'art* and pottery will profit largely from the contents of the book, which contains several maps, plans and 24 pages of illustrations.

The bilingual report deals with the object and scope of the survey. Of much interest is the part dealing with excavations and restorations in the three provinces treated, Nakon Rājasīmā, Buriram and Jayabhumī. Some of the smaller monuments are described in detail regarding what is found and how they have been restored or receiving an application of anastylosis, such as Nōn Kū โนนกู่ (fig. 3); Wat Pnomwan วัดพนมวัน (figs. 62-63) and Muang Khék เมืองแขก (figs. 4, 48-61, 64-78). Muang Khék, where considerable finds have been made, was the old Gorākhapura which has been suggested as the original of the name of Korat. One is tempted to add that here is an instance of the adoption of an Indian name—the modern Gorakhpur.

261. P.E.N. International, Thailand Centre, *Bhāsā lē Naṇṣiī*,
ภาษาและหนังสือ Vol. 2, part 1, Sept. 2503. Strisār Press, Bangkok,
155 pages.

In JSS XLVII, 2, Nov. 1959, we reviewed in the series of Recent Siamese Publications No. 252 the first number of the Journal above named and decided that it indicated a promising sign of greater interest being taken in scholarly research in Siamese circles. Further publications have since appeared which are keeping up the "promising sign".

Among the contents of this first number of the second year there is an interesting note by H.R.H. Prince Wan, Kromamun Narādhīp, tracing the origin of the 20 *ai* sounds written with the *mai muan* (ไม้มวน) thus ใ to Ahom sources. Foreign readers may perhaps be reminded that in Siamese there are two *ai* vowels written ใ and ไ. It has been a constant source of wonder why it should have to be represented by two separate vowels. This note now explains that the 20 sounds of the "twisted vowel" or *mai muan* have a different origin. We would like to offer an opinion that these 20 vowels could have been the original representatives of the sound and that the other vowel represent loan words which could just as easily be written with another vowel the ัย as อัยการ (Aiyakārṇ) or ใัย ai in ใศวารีย์ (Aisvariya).

The scholarly paraphrase of the *Nirās Haripuñjai* by P. na Nakon is continued to its conclusion with notes on local topography and names of personalities in the poem. Khun Wichit's article on the origin and venue of the romance of *Kāwi* is a piece of scientific research worthy of the Journal. Mme K. Sribunrūaṇ's English and French translation in verse of the *Nirās Narind* is generally accurate and elegant piece, even though a translation, of *belle-lettre*. P. Srijalālai's discussion of the spelling in the famous Rāmakamhēṇ inscription of the name of that monarch's

father deserves the consideration of scholars and is really convincing. The rest of the number is none the less of high quality.

262. Amātyakul, T.: *Guide to Saraburi*, นานทิพย์วรรณศิลป์ Bhakdi-prasroeth Press, Bangkok, ill. B.E. 2500, 16mo, 64 pages.

Saraburi, it is pointed out here, though a new town of modest proportions, is distinctive through her shrine of the Buddha's footprint, which has been highly venerated all over the country. It is accessible by road, rail and river. In the days of Ayudhyā it was a summer resort. The famous shrine is built on a promontory within a group of hills with interesting grottoes and picnic grounds. Besides the Buddha's footprint there are various other touristic attractions. One is the so-called Reflection of the Lord on the side of a cliff and beyond it the glen of three cascades at Pathavi Hill some 3 km from the Hill of the Lord's Reflection. Other spots within easy reach from here are the high waterfall of Muak Lek, 40 km, and the Government Botanical Park a little before Saraburi on the mainroad from Bangkok.

The shrine itself of the Buddha's footprint occupies a rather large area with innumerable shrines of smaller sizes. Within the main shrine are panels inlaid with mother-of-pearl designs of great beauty made under the sponsorship of King Rama I of the Chakri dynasty to replace the original mentioned in a late Ayudhyā poem, the *Bunnovād*, which had been destroyed by fire in 1766 and left in ruins for some 20 years.

Bangkok, 29 October 1960

D.

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Krishna Devi.: The Temple of Khajuraho
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Boisselier, J.: La Statuaire préangkorienne
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Vol. XXI, nos 3-4, 1958

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