

REVIEWS

The Buddha's Words. Extracts from the Pali Canon translated by various scholars, collected by Bhikkhu Khantipalo for the Buddhist Association of Thailand, published on the auspicious occasion of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej's Forty-Eighth Birthday Anniversary (Thai Watana Panich Press, 5th December B.E. 2518(1975 A.D.), pp. 282.

One way, usually accepted as the most reliable, to know the real teachings of the Buddha is to learn what the Buddha himself said, that is, the sayings of the Buddha as handed down to us in the Scriptures. Among the Scriptures, only the Pali Canon, formally called the Tipitaka, purports to record the exact words of the Buddha. Thus, to learn the real sayings of the Buddha means to read the Pali Canon. The Pali Canon or the Tipitaka, however, is usually not readily accessible to the general reader. Though it is available in translations, in Thai, complete in 45 volumes, and in English, nearly completely published, the Tipitaka is too voluminous for the average reader to read in his workaday life, and for any publisher to publish in a wide-circulating manner, not to speak of a pocket Tipitaka. Till now, the study of the Tipitaka has been confined to a few scholars.

As a solution, there have been attempts by various scholars to publish selected portions of the Pali Canon. These works fall into two categories. One is the publication of some specific canonical sections or selected Suttas. The other is the collection of extracts from the Pali Canon arranged within a specific framework or according to a set outline. Works of the latter category look in one way like the attempts to create pocket-sized Tipitaka. Excluding earlier works such as H.C. Warren's *Buddhism in Translations* (published in 1896), which include also non-canonical selections, the attempts in this line can be traced back to the Venerable Nyanatiloka's *The Word of the Buddha*, published in German in 1906 and in English in 1907, and F.L. Woodward's *Some Sayings of the Buddha* first published in the *World's Classics* in 1925 by the Oxford University Press. In Thailand, the first Thai collection is, as far as can be traced, Bhikkhu Buddhādāsa's *A Life of the*

Buddha as Related by the Master Himself (พุทธประวัติจากพระโอษฐ์) first published in 1936. Now comes the present work under review as the latest publication in this category. In fact, it is not merely the latest, it is also the first, that is, the first English collection ever published by a Thai hand or a Thai organization. Notably, this work is a synthesis of works in the two categories, as the collector uses as his material a number of extant translations by various scholars, some belonging to the first category, others to the second one. The names of noted translators like Ven. Nyanamoli Thera, Ven. Nyanaponika Mahathera and Ven. Narada Thera speak well for the selections.

Also characteristic of this book is the aim of its production which is more of dissemination, carried to the extent of having its copies placed in all leading hotels. As accepted in the Foreword, the idea is derived from the B.D.K. (The Bukkyo Dendo Kokai or Buddhism Promoting Foundation) which has achieved the popularity of the Teaching of the Buddha by managing to place copies of it in almost all hotels in Japan.

The extracts in the present work are arranged in eight chapters, beginning with (1) The Buddha and His Teaching. Then follow six chapters on the Dhamma dealing with (2) The Round of Birth and Death, (3) Wrong Views and Right Views, (4) Faith and Understanding, (5) Good Conduct, (6) Mind-Training and Meditation, and (7) The Development of Wisdom. The eighth chapter, The Enlightened Community, is devoted to the teachings on the Sangha. Thus, roughly speaking, the book deals with the Three Treasures of the Buddhists: the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha respectively. For the six chapters on the Dhamma (Chapters 2 to 7), the Collector takes the well-known Threefold Training as the theme. The first three of these (Chapters 2, 3 and 4) serve as an introduction to the knowledge of the Dhamma, distinguishing between Buddhist and non-Buddhist beliefs, and thus as a theoretical foundation, establishing in the beginners the right view which is required before practice. The three theoretical chapters are followed by the three practical ones on *Sīla* (Chapter 5: Good Conduct), *Samādhi* (Chapter 6: Mind-Training and Meditation), and *Paññā* (Chapter 7: The Development of Wisdom). This is a meaningful arrangement, proving the work to be a systematic collection of the Buddha's teachings.

Of the approximate number of 114 selections, few are short extracts, many are long passages and not a small number are whole Suttas. Of these, Suttas like the Kesaputtiya Sutta, the Upāli Sutta, the Sigālovāda Sutta, the Vyagghapajja Sutta, the Potaliya Sutta, the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta, the Māluṅkya Sutta, the Vatthūpama Sutta, the Bhaddekaratta Sutta and the Raṭṭhapāla Sutta are of medium length and occupy a large number of pages. Moreover, several of them are furnished with introductions and learned notes, adding to the impression of a scholarly work. In sum, *The Buddha's Words* is helpful not only to the general reader, but also to those who have some knowledge of Buddhism and would like to go further in their studies. It not only gives to the beginners and the outsiders some ideas of what Buddhism is, but, to a greater degree, deserves the attention of scholars.

The fact that the book was published on the auspicious occasion of the 48th birthday anniversary of His Majesty the King should be the cause of great delight. H.M. the King is Himself a Buddhist and Upholder of Religion. Specifically, he is the Royal Patron of the Buddhist Association of Thailand, by whose initiative and energetic efforts this book has come into being. In fact, the work is a joint effort of persons and parties, namely, the Buddhist Association, the publisher, Bhikkhu Khantipālo, the collector, the Thai Watana T. Suwan Foundation, the supporter, and the editor and staff of *Visākha Pūjā*, who steered the manuscript through the press. This is a work of unity and thus will be a worthy tribute to His Majesty and a valuable contribution to the celebration on this great occasion.

May this attempt of the Buddhist Association of Thailand "to propagate Dhamma to those who visit our Buddhist Land" meet with anticipated success. May the merit accrued from the conscientious efforts be, as wished by the publisher, for the blessings to His Majesty and the Royal Family, and for the welfare and happiness of His Majesty's subjects throughout the long days to come.

Phra Rajavaramuni (Prayudh)

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Puey Ungphakorn, *Best Wishes for Asia* (Klett Thai Publications, Bangkok 1975), pp. 107.

For the past fifteen years, Dr. Puey Ungphakorn has held—or has had thrust upon him—a unique position in Thai society. In a nation that has been somewhat bereft of living heroes, he has become a major symbol of Thai integrity: an economist and educator of considerable talent and influence who has also embodied honesty, rationality, humanism, patriotism, and a delightful subtlety in the conduct of his public affairs. This small volume is a testament to some of these qualities.

Urged (or perhaps harrassed) by some of his friends to bring his views together in a single place, Dr. Puey prepared this collection of sixteen lectures, essays, and interviews given during the period 1967-1974. Reflecting the complexity of the man, the tone and purpose of the papers is highly varied. A few are religious-philosophical statements, almost ritualistic in intent; others, mainly the public addresses, are expositions on the interrelationships between the technical decisions of bureaucrats and the daily lives of the Thai people; and others are statements of Dr. Puey's views on contemporary Thai and Southeast Asian political issues.

The most striking attribute of the essays is the attitude of pragmatic humanism that they convey. Dr. Puey is a man preoccupied with enhancing the quality of life of the Thai people, and these pages are studded with numerous specific suggestions for accomplishing this end. In a 1974 interview, he recommends a program for subsidizing the nation's poor, a policy that was later taken over by the 1975 Kukrit government. Equally imaginative—but, unfortunately, ignored—was his recommendation in December 1973 that “in a spirit of national reconciliation” (following the events of October 1973) the government should declare a truce in its military operations against various insurgent groups and attempt to bring insurgent leaders to the conference table where differences might be ironed out.

The book contains two selections that are required reading for any person who claims an interest in Thailand. One is his 1972 letter from “Khem Yenying” (his World War II *nom de guerre*) to “My Beloved

Brother Thamnu" which is probably the most poignant plea for Thai democracy to be written in the decade prior to October 1973. The other is his "The Quality of Life of A Southeast Asian: A Chronicle of Hope From Womb to Tomb." This simple 54-line essay is probably the most eloquent and perceptive essay yet to be published on the aspirations of the peoples of Southeast Asia, and on what government policies ought to be about and can reasonably attain. It is the kind of statement that should be translated into numerous languages, read by bureaucrats, and taught to school children.

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Barbara and Leon Hawell, Editors: *Southeast Asians Speak Out, Hope and Despair in Many Lands* (Friendship Press, 1975), pp. 132, 14 plates, appendices and notes.

Despite a short descriptive chapter summarizing historical, economic and political currents in Southeast Asia, the reader will be disappointed in this book if he is searching for an academic definition of the social, cultural and economic patterns that prevail in the varied countries that comprise Southeast Asia.

At first reading, it is difficult to grasp any common theme that would give this collection of articles a sense of purpose and identity. On reflection, what emerges are the very personalized reflections of socially and politically concerned Asian citizens on what they perceive to be crucial problems facing their societies: the lack of social justice, national identity, and democratic systems fostering basic personal freedom and the rule of law, the need to achieve a more equitable redistribution of income and overcome economic exploitation.

A related dimension of this book is an analysis and assessment of the extent to which the Christian churches in Asia have been responsive to the needs, concerns and struggles of the poorer, and often times, oppressed elements of Asian societies as they strive to overcome the institutional and political barriers to a better life measured in terms of social justice, personal freedom and economic advantage.

This book is divided into four sections: People, the Setting, the Places and the Religions. In the first section, the People, several authors relate their personal histories and experiences as they attempt to define what it means, in very personal terms, to be a Thai, a Filipino, or an Indonesian. The Setting, written by the editors, briefly outlines the historical and cultural influences which have helped to mold present day Southeast Asia; the impact of the colonial experience; the role of overseas Chinese; the struggle for independence; and the pace of economic development and the related patterns of maldistribution of income and lack of social justice. The Places section is concerned with the social, political and economic strains and tensions in Southeast Asian societies and the diverse attempts to develop systems of government which will facilitate economic development and maintain national security while, at the same time, preserving personal freedoms and social justice. The different variations on the sliding scale of autocratic to democratic forms of government are described and assessed in the Philippines, Thailand, Burma and Malaysia. The economic role of Japan and the U.S. in Southeast Asia and its impact on these societies is also analyzed. In the last section, the Religions, several authors describe the activities and status of various religions in Southeast Asia. Special attention is given to outlining the history of the Christian movement; present activities of various church groups; the search by Christian churches for an identity that is particular Asian; and the desirability of establishing a viable and meaningful relationship with those elements of society that have been discriminated against and have not benefitted either economically, socially, or politically from the strides made in reaching national development goals.

This book is dedicated to bringing to its readers a new perspective on Southeast Asia. We hear voices of dissent, of despair, of hope; voices of concern and committment. To fully understand Southeast Asia today, these voices should be heard.

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P.B. Lafont et D. Lombard, *Littératures Contemporaines de l'Asie du Sud-Est* (L'Asiatheque, Paris, 1974), pp. 327.

Even if the dépôt légal was only made in 1975, this collection of papers, presented at a colloquium at the 29th International Congress of Orientalists held in Paris in July 1973, has seen the light of day with fairly surprising rapidity, by current standards at least. Credit for this doubtless goes to the joint editors, who had most of those giving papers to hand in Paris, as relatively few contributors came from outside the inner circle associated with French Southeast Asian studies. Lafont at the colloquium took charge of 'peninsular' Southeast Asia and Lombard of 'archipelagic' Southeast Asia (including Malaysia): both give brief introductions to their sections.

The 22 papers are here presented, and cover 8 countries (9 if Vietnam is two); only Singapore is left out. Having reference not just to literatures in the various national languages but regional languages as well, this volume is a fascinating pot-pourri of which it is very difficult to distinguish anything but a few main odours.

Appropriately, Indonesia, as by far the largest country in the region, is accorded the largest number of papers, and the range is wide, including Ajip Rosidi's rather unscholarly if interesting account of recording Sundanese *pantun* and Mme Lombard-Salmon's fascinating paper on the translation of Chinese novels into Malay from 1880-1930. Labrousse's presentation, a 'Sociologie du Roman Populaire Indonésien', raises important sociological questions to which we shall return, and Bonneff deals in a rather flat way with the strip cartoon, a theme taken up by several other contributors in the context of other countries. Considering the potential wealth of regional literatures in Indonesia, it is surprising to find only the Sundanese *pantun* and Mas Marco (*sic*) Kartodikromo (who as he died in 1932 is hardly contemporary) representing somewhat tenuously the corpus of modern Javanese writing.

Malay literature is covered by two articles in English badly in need of editing. Tham Seong Chee's contribution starts off with no reference to literature for several pages and in a style scarcely conducive to the subject e.g. 'This was further given leaven in the iteration given to the ethos of loyalty to the rulers on the one hand and the severe

condemnation against treason on the other'. If he had supported some of his generalisations with facts drawn from texts, his paper would be more acceptable as a scholarly contribution instead of being a somewhat abstract sociological survey. He does, however, have some interesting things to say on the stereotyped portrayal of non-Malays in current Malay writing. Ismail Hussein's short paper, introducing the neologism of 'literators', is interesting in placing Malay writing firmly in its rural origins (since the cities, if occupied by Malays at all, caused them to write in English) which sets it apart from all the other contemporary literature in the region.

The presentations of Yabes and Salazar from the Philippines would have gained from some coordination, or at least better editing. The former, after a schoolboy division of the periods of modern literature in the Philippines (the Feudal-Medieval, the Pre-modern, the early Modern, the Contemporary Modern) and using another neologism 'fictionists', is very fair about the linguistic problems inherent in a consideration of the literatures of the islands. Yabes firmly tells us that since 1971 'the name of the (national) language is changed to 'Filipino' to indicate the expanded and more inclusive dimensions as distinguished from the narrow and exclusive dimensions of 'Pilipino' (i.e. Tagalog). Filipino may be slower in development but it will be more easily acceptable throughout the country than Tagalog because the non-Tagalog population constitutes fully four-fifths... of the whole population.' But two pages later Salazar tells us that 'à partir de la fin des années '50 se constitue une tradition littéraire en *pilipino*, le tagal devenu véritable langue nationale'; the assertion is repeated and in conclusion, in case one had not got the point, one is told 'la nouvelle littérature en pilipino (i.e. Tagalog) est maintenant vraiment la littérature nationale'. The confusion wrought by the use of two colonial languages seems not to have been cleared up in the establishment of a national language, and literature follows. Whether the Filipinos are right to put back their literatures and their languages into the melting pot of nationalism only time will tell: certainly their authors are not likely to get a very wide public even in the islands by using Tagalog. The language problem becomes more important than the literary content, but the admiration, from the safe distance of the

town, of rural simplicity, in contrast to urban degradation, is apparently a theme to be found in the Philippines in common with other countries.

If the Philippines presents an extreme case of linguistic chaos, with eight local languages having more than a million speakers each, and so compounding the problems facing would-be authors, most of the mainland states present in this respect a picture of blessed simplicity; the one country, Burma, where, because of the existence of belligerent minorities, one presumes there to be healthy writing in minority languages is treated strictly from the point of view of contemporary writing in Burmese and Mme Bernot glosses over complications (literature provides 'une dénonciation vigilante de tous les défauts qui font obstacle au bonheur') and anything more recent than 1960. However, she introduces a complication of her own, to be repeated by all the writers dealing with the mainland other than Vietnam, of using a phonetic transcription so eccentric as to make one wish she had stuck to the Burmese (properly Mon) script. Manda' lé one can guess, but how does 'Çéing Phé Mying' normally write his name in a western script?

Jacqueline de Fels gets round the transliteration problem by having the original Thai in footnotes (thank heavens, otherwise one would never guess that 'Ron' was ร็อน) but sometimes forgets: 'bao samong' apparently obtains for เบาสามอง. Peltier uses a different transcription for Thai, though goodness knows which, since it is peppered with numerals e.g. sām kǒk3 is สามก๓๓. It looks remarkably like the system used for Lao by Saveng Phinith which one suspects to be the Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient's very own. The problems with atonal Khmer in Mlle Piat's article are less acute, and thanks to the Jesuits, those raised by Vietnamese were regularised long ago. Vietnam, as one would expect from so very French a production as this work, gets after Indonesia the lion's share of space, including two articles devoted to the literature of North Vietnam, though whether the love stories of Nguyễn Đình Toàn and the novels describing 'la vie heureuse du Sud-Vietnam et les malheurs provoqués par le régime communiste' will survive is rather doubtful. Võ Văn Ái, in a brief article on Buddhism in South Vietnam, makes the point that from 1954 the divergent literary forms of the divided country were only a

prolongation of the political struggle. Dauphin admires the positive aspects of the North Vietnamese novel, dealing with 'purely national problems of Vietnamese evolving in a society undergoing complete transformation' and points out that there are no schools but only socialist realist writers. Boudarel is probably right to point out that.

'La littérature d'un pays en lutte pour son indépendance ne peut se juger uniquement sur le critère de ses oeuvres purement littéraires'

and in his article on North Vietnamese literature stresses the use made of literacy: everyone was systematically encouraged to write, and the lead was given by the Popular Army, which in 1959 produced 34,000 texts on the theme "the most striking recollection from my time as a soldier", with the best being collected and printed in a volume that ran to more than 20,000 copies.

When the colloquium took place, Cambodia was also still at war, though this was not apparently reflected in its popular literature in Martine Piat's brief but penetrating study paying particular attention to comic strips. The themes of thwarted love, rape, the taste for the Brahminical marvellous and the unreality of the situations (orphans with neither brothers nor sisters nor relatives, even Khmer usurers with no Chinese or Vietnamese in sight) show this 'literature' to be completely escapist; Khmer heroes fight single handed the country's traditional enemies, Siamese, Vietnamese, or French (in Mlle Piat's text, only the French were sufficiently important to be capitalised) in night clubs, the most extravagant description of which does not go beyond a taudry Phnom Penh establishment. Mlle Piat concludes

"Il nous paraît donc inquiétant de voir le Cambodge passer directement du stade de l'incursion à celui de la lecture de cette littérature commerciale."

This comment sufficiently roused Chau Seng, then Prince Sihanouk's representative in France, at the Paris proceedings to launch, in the subsequent discussion of the paper, into a splendid attack on 'la littérature décadente alimentaire' without stopping to think that much of it was produced under him when he was Minister of Information. He

also praised the products of the Pathet Lao presses but admitted he had not read any. A straightforward collection of the colloquium papers misses these enlivening scenes. However, Mlle Piat's reservation and Chau Seng's criticisms are probably justified and presumably this undignified rubbish has been swept away by the new order. Yet it obviously filled some need in catering for the tastes of a newly if barely literate public: it is no good having literacy as a goal without supplying reading material thereafter.

The three papers on Thai literature are likely to be of greatest interest to readers of this journal. Mme Jacqueline de Fels gives a useful overview of popular literature defined as cheap paperbacks costing less than 10 baht a volume in 1973. The different genres of detective novels, erotic and sentimental works, humorous writing, ghost stories and social satires are briefly considered, the use of popular conversational Thai noted (*l'oral devient écrit*); and the problems facing authors in the struggle for survival are well chronicled, squeezed between publishers only likely to produce something sure to sell and a limited and economically depressed public interested in being distracted. Not everyone appears of course, but then not everyone appears in cheap editions. The reservation expressed that Thailand might be jumping the literacy stage and going straight into audio-visual communication, given the spread of television and radio, is not without foundation but the very wealth of popular literature, judging only by titles available and their profusion at meeting points like bus stations and in front of cinemas, makes one think the written word is still playing a role, albeit not always an edifying one, as illustrated by *คุณชายเล่นชู้*.

The theme of the difficulty of survival is taken up by Peltier in his survey of 'Le Roman Contemporaine Thaïlandais'—

"il est presque impossible à de jeunes auteurs d'exprimer des idées qui n'entrent pas dans les goûts des lecteurs, ce qui fait obstacle à l'apparition de tendances nouvelles dans la littérature romanesque contemporaine"

Peltier gives a superficial division of fourteen different genres, some of which seem remarkably similar (for example, 'le roman de cape et d'épée' and the 'roman d'aventures'; or the 'roman de critique sociale', the 'genre

progressiste' and the 'genre realiste'). The mania for classification, often pushed to extremes by the French, becomes totally meaningless, especially as, having decided on his labels, Peltier does nothing with them, but promptly dives off into thumb-nail summaries of the main novelists, who for him are Prince Akat Damkoeung, Dorkmai Sod, Kukrit Pramoj, Bunlua, K. Surang Khanang, and Botan. Not everyone will agree with this selection, and Botan's claim to attention rests mainly on one novel only which was penetratingly reviewed in these pages a couple of years back by Napa Pongpipat. A curious fact about Peltier's article is that it takes almost no account of the literary milieu—as opposed to genre—and this would seem to us to be important: the atmosphere of literary cliques and hatreds, the wealth of recent critical comment, is completely ignored.

Sataree Chitanonda, writing in what passes for English, appropriately examines 'M.R. Kukrit and his literary work', though in the summer of 1973 it could hardly have been foreseen he would have become the Prime Minister within two years. Miss Sataree's contribution to scholarship is minimal; she does not know the difference between a printing and a publication of a book and only skims the surface of the volumes she mentions; she misnames Unger, who becomes Unker, speaks of Kukrit as a 'culumnist' which is an unhappy slip, gives different transliterations for the same word from one line to the next, and has such perceptive comments as 'The novel' (Huan Nang) 'is regarded as one of the good novels' and 'Among our living writes (*sic*), he (Kukrit) is highly esteemed by his contemporary writers... His choice of some (*sic*) interesting themes suchas (*sic*) Thai ancient customs (*sic*) and traditions inspire (*sic*) some (*sic*) novelists to produce the some (*sic*) type of novels'. All this is very unfortunate, for a critical evaluation of Kukrit's work would be very apposite. Even an analysis of *Red Bamboo* in comparison with Gallico and what Kukrit makes of his material would have critical value, and a general study of his source material would be most interesting. However, this is not to be here.

The two contributors dealing with Lao literature, Saveng Phinith, giving a broad survey of whole field, particularly the Vientiane scene, and P.B. Lafont dealing with 'La Littérature Politique Lao', being very largely the work of the Front Patriotique Lao, between them put their

finger on the whole problem facing contemporary literature in the area. Is one going to have, in Saveng's inappropriate phrase, 'un calque de scenarii pour midinettes', exemplified in the story improbably transliterated as 'Khā2 mĕy dān aam2', where, on the suggestion of a friend, a man decides to undermine the health of his wife by endless nights of love and so get rid of her. Of course, the friend returns two months later to find the wife radiant, like a rose bush that had just been fertilised, and the husband panting for breath and as pale as a grilled crab, with a fairly direct conversation of explanation following. Or is one going to have the edifying and moralising publications of the F.P.L., one of which Lafont cites lyrically describing the heroes defending a strategic point for 1,000 days and nights against the reactionary forces of Vientiane and the might of the American Air Force.

When your reviewer took part in the 1973 colloquium, he was inclined to dismiss Lafont's concept of 'political literature' as a tautological chimera. One could not have, or so it seemed, political literature, though one could have political writing. But if one looks at what is produced in the free economies, it is scarcely less like literature for the most part, and often a good deal worse—like Ram Narakorn's *Women like fun* (ผู้หญิงชอบสนุก) where the Thai prostitute lives in a flat, drinks beer, eats hotdogs, but having always been bought herself now wants to buy a man for her sensual gratification. It is easy to say that the F.P.L. writing and other committed works are moralistic, but ultimately is it not as valid as literature if not more so than the nonsense that is churned out by the presses of those ideologically committed to no more than cash rewards? If Thailand and Indonesia, to take the most important examples, are to satisfy their newly literate reading publics, there has to be some real encouragement, preferably financial, of works of greater value than the mass produced. The presses of Hanoi are politically slanted, and in consequence tend to see things in black and white, and their products are undoubtedly often boring; but they can lay claim to be more pedagogically wholesome and they are not irredeemably frivolous. They also make, or at least apparently the F.P.L. publications make, the attempt to simplify the grammar of the language and to use terms within the range of the comprehension of the peasants. This

certainly seems a service worth performing. To polarise the two possibilities as pornography or propaganda, smut or socialism, rubbish or rhetoric would be as simplistic as some of the literature considered at both ends of the political spectrum. There is no reason why either extreme should be held; valid works of literature can be and sometimes are produced by both systems under existing conditions. But these same conditions tend to force the polarisations, and the unedifying gutter press of at least one country in the region only exists because people want to read something and think they know what they do not want to read.

Lastly the juxtaposition of town versus country throughout the region needs to be considered. Malaysia is here, up to very recently, an exception, for writers using the national language have come from the country. But the authors of most other countries, at least the non-communist regimes, are very largely the products of the cities which do not represent the main elements of Southeast Asian life. This allows Salazar to claim primacy for Tagalog because Manila is the centre of the area using the language. Bonneff notes that Indonesian comic strips demand that 'le lecteur est censé adhérer à l'image d'un univers matériel qui lui est généralement étranger ... La Mercedes y est le symbole du statut, pour une élite en apparence oisive qui partage son temps entre la plage à la mode, la station de montagne proche de Jakarta et, le soir, les night-clubs'. Village life remains pure, but hopeless—'la perspective d'un départ est riche de promesses'. These are not realised however: 'on ne voit pas de héros gravir les échelons de la société. A chacun son destin'. The same is noted by Labrousse in the popular Indonesian novel: the permanent framework of the metropolis, its smart districts, and at the other end of the scale the village representing an ideal to which to return, dead or rich, but usually neither; in literature the men become tramps, women whores and morality is black—'il semblerait qu'on ne sorte pas impunément de son rang et que la déchéance soit infiniment plus fréquent que le bonheur ou la réconciliation'. Bunlua and most of the Thai authors named are products of, or have been assimilated by Bangkok (it is significant that Khamsingh Srinawak is not mentioned). Botan's succès de scandale was achieved precisely because she attempted an examination of the mostly urban society by an outsider having only his native Chinese village as a point of comparison.

It would seem that one has to choose. Either one has 'literature' in the accepted sense, or one has popular writing catering for the taste of a newly literate public. Whether this popular writing need pander to the worst tastes is another matter. One knows the reading habit hardly exists in the region; there is respect for writing but no great desire for it. As Labrousse notes, 'La promiscuité familiale, l'entassement des habitations et les problèmes quotidiens réduisent à néant les moments de disponibilité', so the writing has to be accessible. But need it be a denial of literature? Perhaps the presses of the Plain of Jars and the Red River valley, even if they may not have found the answer, at least provide an alternative which makes one pause for thought.

This volume then, uneven and infelicitous as it sometimes is, does provide a general insight into some aspects of literary creation in the Southeast Asian region in 1973, even if the picture is somewhat changed by political events two years later in at least three of the countries considered. It could certainly have gained from casting a wider net for its contributors. But no collection of this kind is perfect; these are essentially papers presented at a conference sideshow (there were 6,000 delegates and 22 sections and subsections to the congress, as well as 2 colloquia and 13 seminars) and at least one paper contributed has been wisely dropped altogether. The emphasis given by four contributors on popular literature, including comic strips, breaks relatively new ground and is challenging. In ways perhaps not intended the collection is also deeply disturbing and one is left wondering what literature and literacy should really be about.

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G. William Skinner and A. Thomas Kirsch, editors, *Change and Persistence in Thai Society; Essays in Honor of Lauriston Sharp* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 1975) pp. 386.

It is difficult to know how to handle such a collection of essays, united for the most part only by their reference to Thai society. So I shall concentrate on the two essays that interest me most—those by Akin Rabibhadana and Steven Piker: then try to fit in some comments on the nine other essays in relation to the major theme arising from Akin's and Piker's articles, that is, the impact of economic change on traditional values and social arrangements; and finally consider their relevance to the current situation.

Akin's outstanding essay on "Clientship and Class Structure in the Early Bangkok Period", starts with the historic need of the state to use or control manpower for cultivation and war, the latter in particular requiring the rapid mobilisation of the peasantry under members of the nobility. Because of the scarcity of manpower in relation to abundant land, the kingdom was perceived, not in terms of territorial sovereignty as it developed in the West, but of a people owing allegiance to the king: the boundaries of the state were left vague, for it was the people who mattered. An elaborate ranking system involved the entire population, but the basic distinction was between the *phrai*, the common people and thus overwhelmingly the peasantry, and the *nai*, masters or nobility. The fundamental dichotomy between "high" and "low" is expressed in norms of superior-subordinate relations. These norms are realised in the appropriate behaviour of a client towards his patron: to show respect, comply with his wishes, fear to do anything (*krengchai*) that would displease. The patron in turn, as a morally superior person—his possession of merit is in practise recognised through his ability to exercise power—is expected to behave in a manner which gains the respect of his inferiors; this usually means being calm, kind, generous and protective.

Now this formal patron-client relationship, expressed in the reciprocal behaviour of superior and subordinate according to the established system of stratification, increasingly became eroded by

informal relations. The latter reflected the impact of economic change, apparent for some time but especially marked from the middle of the nineteenth century. The vast expansion of international trade, the influx of Chinese immigrants (who both provided a more convenient form of labour than the traditional peasant *corvée* and who came to dominate internal trade by the 1850s), the commercialisation of rice farming and reforms of the tax system transformed the character of the Thai economy. Economic changes brought about concomitant changes in patron-client relations. First, as a result of the increasing opportunities to share, directly or indirectly, in the new wealth being generated and to seek advancement in the expanding bureaucracy, members of the *nai* class began to compete vigorously among themselves by means of informal clientship. Secondly, wealthy Chinese traders, bidding to farm taxes, were seen as desirable clients because they could afford large gifts. Finally, within the administration, the chain of command was increasingly disrupted as informal clients of powerful patrons tended to disregard or disobey their own formal superiors. An informal client could even build up his own clientele, rivalling the formal clientele of his direct superior, because of the status he had acquired as informal client of a *phuyai*. Thus power stemmed, not merely from clients as in the old days, but also from wealth.

Steven Piker, in "The Post-Peasant Village in Central Plain Thai Society", also investigates the effect of economic and demographic changes on traditional values and social arrangements, in this case the continuance of "kindred associations" of two or three closely related village families. These associations, based on the regular exchange of goods and services (at harvest time, building a house) provide the major source of village stability and security. But during the present century, with virtually an end to cultivable land in the Central Plain, because of the growth of population and consequent fragmentation of holdings as land is distributed ever more sparsely among family members, the problem of insufficient holdings or actual landlessness has become acute. In the village near Ayuthaya studied by Piker in the 1960s, just over half the families were without land. These landless, poorer families simply have not the means--either in income from farming or in

assets—to play their role in the *reciprocal* functioning of the kindred association. Piker found that one-third of village families were no longer members of such associations, and keenly felt their loss. To seek other forms of security they had three choices: to rent land, but the proportion paid in rent or kind reflected sharp increases in the price of land; to become an agricultural wage labourer, supplementing meagre and casual earnings by handicrafts and petty trade; or to migrate to other regions seeking land, or to towns and especially to Bangkok. (The author estimated that about a quarter of the village population has left the village since 1945). Piker considers that two generations of landless farmers have so far maintained themselves at a reasonable level of subsistence by providing services for their better-off, landed neighbours: because the increased earnings of those who do own land have enabled them to pay for these services. But the *social* relations of the landless have drastically altered for the worse: they no longer revolve around the enduring form of a reciprocally based kindred association, but are settled according to a precarious and inferior employer-employee relationship. With these changes in occupation and status, Piker concludes, can be seen the emergence of a rural proletariat and of social class distinctions, even though these are as yet poorly recognised.

Now for the other contributions, roughly in order of appearance. A.B. Griswold and Prasert na Nagara skilfully depict the differences between rule in Sukhothai and Ayuthaya: the one based on personal loyalty to a paternalistic ruler, who protected his people, promoted welfare and settled disputes in accordance with his sense of justice; the other depending on a fixed body of civil law and a large and increasing bureaucracy, which encouraged stability rather than (as they put it) personal liberty. The editors in their stimulating introduction draw attention to the continuing dialectic between bureaucratised formal hierarchy and personalised informal clientship. (Unfortunately, the rather high expectations aroused by their introduction are not altogether realised in the body of the work.)

Thomas Kirsch and Jasper Ingersoll discuss the understanding of identity through merit-making (especially in groups) and belief in *karma*, which place the individual in a recognised hierarchy of stages on the way

to Nirvana. I must confess that I found Kirsch's thesis—or more correctly the way he applied Geertz's thesis, that religious motivations may induce predispositions influencing activities in non-religious contexts—somewhat unconvincing: to over-simplify, Thai Buddhism is said to explain the occupational differentiation between men (bureaucratic, political) and women (economic).

Lucien Hanks writes sensibly about patron-client relations ("entourage"), but the wider concept of a "circle" (extending beyond the entourage and characterised by impersonal, contractual relations) formulated at Cornell, does not seem to provide any significant insight into either business monopolies or government activities. Michael Moerman argues in his piece that "in the old days" there was a different sort of "economic man" in the North from that of the Centre; yet judging by his evidence the "entrepreneurial" qualities of Northern traders are distinctly limited: they almost never bought on credit for sale, or hired oxen for trading, and buying and selling prices were generally stable. David Wyatt summarises elegantly his major work on the beginnings of modern education, showing how new schools were set up to produce efficient, trained personnel to meet the needs of expanding government services, rapid economic development and military requirements.

Charles Keyes writes perceptively on kin groups in a Thai-Lao community. (Georges Condominas describes Phiban cults in rural Laos). Keyes underlines the importance of migration when he shows that over the last 40 years 75 families have permanently migrated from the village he studied (present population: 703) near Mahasarakham. He also reports that nearly three-quarters of all the men of the village, aged between 20 and 40, had at some time worked in Bangkok and/or Vientiane. Finally Herbert Phillips treats briefly the perennially fascinating topic of Thai intellectuals. It is a pity, however, that he reproduces without alteration an investigation carried out in the years before 1973—although this is being remedied in his present work—as the picture is undoubtedly a conservative one. He notes the overwhelming attraction of Bangkok for the 153 "distinguished", "famous" or "contributing" intellectuals on

his list, well over half of them were born and reared outside Bangkok. Phillips gives pen portraits of half a dozen or so leading intellectuals; he classifies his list into broad categories of "Royal Traditionalists", "Social Technicians", "Panel Discussants" and so on, claiming (but again this will no doubt be rectified) that they tend to be "literati" elaborating on the acceptable, rather than "intelligentsia", implying the dissenting or heretical innovators.

Finally, what is the relevance of these findings to the current situation? To my mind they give rise to a series of questions. Are the traditional norms of patron-client relations cited by Akin—deference and service on the one hand, protection and assistance on the other—being eroded by Western material values? Just as, for example, the formal patron-client ties of the early nineteenth century were eroded by the informal ties? More specifically, are the "new men", the financial, industrial and commercial magnates, the technocrats, the Western-educated professionals and officials, are they effectively displacing the old-style military-bureaucratic leaders? Are the "modernising" values of entrepreneurial society—rational, calculating, impersonal, thrusting, competitive, resourceful, experimental—are these de-stabilising values beginning to prevail over traditional norms of behaviour, i.e. as a reflection of the growth of industry, the inflow of foreign capital, increased mechanisation of agriculture, wider use of fertiliser and insecticides, and the innovative response of farmers, all of which indicate the shift to a more differentiated and developed economy? The case of Chinese immigrants to Thailand suggests one answer: given the *need* to make good in a strange land and the *opportunity* to do so, sons of poor peasants, fishermen and artisans were certainly not inhibited by traditional Chinese values of attachment to the land, occupational status and social obligations. Students after 1973, too, in spite of continuing ambivalence in regard to traditional values, have demonstrated on certain issues a remarkable change in attitude from one of deference, respect, pragmatism

and career concern to that of challenging authority, probing abuses and demanding redress of grievances on a nation-wide scale—although the current degree of militancy may well subside. Yet despite this evidence of change the history of Thai society in the last two or three decades may provide another answer: the absorption of “new blood” by a rejuvenated military-bureaucratic-technocratic elite, rather than the reverse.

This prompts a related question. Are not the values of superior-subordinate relations and the practice of reciprocal arrangements of mutual (though unequal) benefit the “form”, that is to say the *style* in which things are done and people interact, rather than the substance, which is basically a matter of power (institutionalised, but ultimately resting on superior force) and possession (the preferential allocation of goods and services)? Of course, the organisation of power and of possession is not necessarily monolithic, and may even be differentiated, but in general power and possession are either interlocking, at one end of the scale, or else overlap, at the other, more “pluralistic”, end. Indeed Akin’s discussion of the transition from formal patron-client relations (according to the then stratification system) to informal relations, reflecting new sources of wealth and new kinds of power, would appear to support this contention. To take the argument further: there is no need to suppose the imminent demise of deference, respect, protection and assistance in *contemporary* Thailand, given that these traditionally sanctioned attitudes and practices are functionally *effective*: that is, they provide a recognised and acceptable way of legitimising authority (provided the latter *does* “protect” and “assist”) and, at the same time, of ensuring a certain distribution (“trickle down”) of material benefits from superiors to subordinates. Certainly the degree of benefit may be contested—as shown by labour unions’ and farmers’ demands—but the principle remains.

Such is the case today—in spite of the diverse and contrary trends of student populism, communist-led insurgencies, and growing political consciousness both at national and local levels. But it is the rural situation which in the long term presents the most ominous challenge.

For it is hard to see how a substantial part of the rapidly growing population, faced with limits to cultivable land and quite inadequate employment opportunities, cannot but suffer a serious decline in its living standards. The "green revolution" alone, i.e. without institutional reforms, is no answer: it may well increase production in the aggregate—but at the expense of employment and at the cost of further polarisation between the rural elite and the poor. The danger is a very real one. For if the system cannot fulfil its reciprocal obligations and becomes obviously one-sided and exploitative—as, for example, in warlord and Nationalist China—then it will *either* increasingly rely on force for survival *or else* will break down because of internal fissures and/or the pressures of organised opposition.

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Prateep Sondysuvan, editor, *Finance, Trade and Economic Development in Thailand: Essays in Honour of Khunyng Suparb Yossundara* (Sompong Press, Bangkok, 1975), pp. 318.

This extremely interesting collection of essays by Dr. Puey and a number of younger Thai economists has been published at a time of great economic and political stress for Thailand and it can be used as a base for a review of the political economy of Thailand in the post-Vietnam era.

Many of the contributors are, or have been, associated with the Department of Economic Research at the Bank of Thailand where *Khunyng Suparb Yossundara* worked from 1948 to the time of her death in March 1974. She was Director of Economic Research from 1960-1966 before becoming Assistant to the Governor responsible for international relations and economic policy and crowned an exceptional career by becoming the first woman Executive Director of the World Bank in 1971-1972. Her death at the early age of 53 led to the publication of these essays.

The essays are extremely interesting because they reflect the public policy debates among Thai economists. Over the past fifteen years, a great deal of material has been written on the Thai economy by "visiting economists" on the staff of USOM, the major Bangkok universities and the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations. These foreigners have published a considerable body of work, but whether they worked for six months or sixteen years their preoccupations were necessarily not distinctively Thai and their understanding (or lack of understanding) of Thai language and culture has inevitably limited the scope of their enquiries. A very large amount of work has been produced in Thai and English in the Bank of Thailand, the Ministry of Finance, the National Economic and Social Development Board and the other ministries. Much of this material is unpublished and even the establishment of the *Thai Economic Review* in May 1971 has only partially solved the problem of discovering the younger Thai economists' views of the major policy problems of the Thai economy. The present volume not only covers these major policy issues: rice policy, income distribution, efficiency of industrialisation over the last decade, monetary policy etc., but also a number of minor issues.

The biography of *Khunying* Suparb is too short (less than one page) and only gives the bare dates and details of an extremely interesting life. A longer essay dealing with *Khunying's* work in economic policy-making would have been valuable and normally expected by the reader of such a *festschrift*.

Dr. Puey Ungphakorn's own useful essay on "Steps to International Monetary Order" (the Per Jacobsson Lecture in 1974) (Part 1 Special Essay pp.5-22) is preceded by a very emotional letter dated 22nd of August 1974, which records his difficulties in fighting for democracy (p. 4):-

"In my fight for freedom inside and outside the National Legislative Assembly during the past seven months, as to be expected, I have had to contend with much hypocrisy, distortion of facts, and even downright lies."

Dr. Puey can take considerable credit for his battle to reestablish democracy in 1973 and 1974. The present Thai Government certainly

does not represent the "Westminster model", but it is welcome nevertheless. His essay, however, is rather peripheral to the theme of the volume, but his view on the present instability of the international monetary system has already been justified by events. (p. 17) :—

"I cannot venture to predict how long the present upheavals in the payments positions and prospects will last. This may take 2-3 years. But for all we know monetary conditions may take as long as a decade to stabilize."

Thailand has benefited considerably from Dr. Puey's conservative monetary management over the period from 1965. Dr. Puey's views on policy changes (pp. 17-21) are virtually all being gradually accepted, although his preference for a system of "stable exchanges" (p. 20) is unlikely to be realised for some years. The central role of the SDR (Special Drawing Right) predicted by Dr. Puey has already been accepted.

The book then begins (Part 2) with an excellent overview, "Stability, Growth and Distribution in the Thai Economy" (pp. 25-48) by Ammar Siamwalla. He correctly stressed the remarkable stable growth of the open and agricultural-based Thai economy from 1955-1972. The inflationary difficulties of 1974-1975 are ascribed not to the "commodities boom" and sharp increase in the price of imported crude oil and petroleum products, which left Thailand "a *small* net loser" (although by the end of 1975 Thailand was a large loser), but the problem caused by fixing the baht in terms of the dollar at a time when the dollar was falling. Again the rise of the dollar from June-September 1975 is presumably a factor favourable to lower inflation in 1975-1976. Certainly Thailand is not likely to return to the stability enjoyed during the period up to 1972. Thai growth is hampered by the problem of rice production (p. 37) "which has now been roughly static for about 8 years" and a rather disorganised industrial policy run by the Board of Investments which has been uncritical on foreign investments and lacked any strategy on industrial exports. Dr. Ammar concludes by focussing on income inequality and (p. 47) "the government policies which tend to accentuate the inequality, . . .". The problem of increasing rural/urban

disparities and the continuing rapid growth of the Bangkok-Thonburi conurbation will remain major problems into the 1980's.

A series of specialist essays on finance topics (Part 3 Section 1. Institutions) follow Dr. Ammar's lucid introductory essay. Paiboon Wattanasiritham (p. 51-78) has compiled a very useful set of statistics on Thailand's financial institutions (1963-1973) (pp. 65-78) and his paper describes very accurately the dominance of the commercial banks. (p. 61):—

“Commercial banks have shown clear dominance among all financial institutions throughout the period under review. There is no clear indication that this picture will change significantly in the foreseeable future, except the possibility that finance companies may take some of the business hitherto belonging to commercial banks.”

A short paper by Sangob Punnaragsa on “Profitability of Commercial Banks in Thailand” (pp. 79-91) is handicapped by lack of data on “excessive profits” in other industries as Thai data on company profits is largely unavailable and where available is unreliable. His conclusion is sensible (p. 90):—

“In spite of the lack of information regarding an average return on other industries, at least it could be concluded that the banking industry in Thailand makes a satisfactory rate of return to shareholders.”

The next paper “Thai Commercial Banking of the 1980's” by Thep Roongtanapiram (pp. 93-97) should not have been published. It is very short and contains no evidence of any original thought and makes no attempt to construct a quantitative framework. The quality of the paper can be captured in one sentence (p. 93): “This paper intends to indicate in which directions Thai commercial banks seem to be in the 1980's...”.

The next paper (Part 3 Section 2. Policies) “An Evaluation of Thailand's Monetary Policy in the 1960's” by Warin Wonghanchao (pp. 99-114) is proof that Dr. Warin received his Ph.D. from Cornell in 1970 and is a master of Theilian models for policy evaluation with maximization of prescribed welfare functions. However his “Decision

Model" is extremely difficult for a non-econometrician to understand and the conclusions are not clearly stated. However, it does broadly support the Bank of Thailand's monetary policy in the 1960s when *Khunying* Suparb and Dr. Puey were most active. Sataporn Jinachitra's short essay on money supply (pp. 115-121) emphasises the importance of the monetary base. The final paper in the Finance section by Supachai Panitchpakdi "Inflation : The Case of External Disturbances" (pp. 123-138) provides a very interesting model of the Thai inflation and balance of payments deficits, which has been confirmed by events in 1975 (p. 136) :—

"With price rise the trade deficit widens which is mainly due to the increase in the demand for international goods because of the rise of nominal income."

A better description of events in 1974-1975 could hardly be imagined.

Part 4 "Trade" opens with Dr. Ammar Siamwalla's essay "A History of Rice Price Policies in Thailand" (pp. 141-165). This paper not only has a very valuable policy appendix giving a chronology of Thai rice policy 1955-1973 but is analytically clear in summarising the foundations of the policy on price (p. 147):—

"The basic elements of control used by the Thai Government to regulate rice prices were as follows:—

- a) Premium rates
- b) Quantitative controls on export volumes, including outright ban on exports
- c) Government-to-government sales."

He is excellent on the mismanagement of rice policy from 1972's poor harvest into 1973 (p. 155):—

"For most Thai consumers, standing in line for any commodity is an indignity, doing so for rice is an affront to their sense of decency. The government (Field Marshal Prapass (my insertion) was pushed into action."

However, Dr. Ammar is reluctant to admit the full extent of the diversification of Thai agriculture (p. 157):—

"From being a monocultural economy, Thailand now has a somewhat more diversified structure."

In the export sector at least, rice has declined from 70% in the early 1960's to 33% in 1974 on high world prices and will be down to 20-23% of total export value in 1975 with further prospects of decline in 1976 and 1977.

The next essay "Thai Rice Exports: An Analysis of Its Performance in the 1960's" by Chaiyawat Wibulwasdi (pp. 167-190) is a thoroughly inadequate piece of work taken as a chapter from his 1973 M.I.T. Ph. D. dissertation supervised by Jagdish Bhagwati. Chaiyawat starts with a simplistic oligopolistic model of the world rice market. This model was originally developed by Manmohan Singh in his book, *India's Export Trends* (Oxford, 1964), which presumes that the optimal strategy for every supplier is to protect its existing share. In the case of Thailand there is no discussion at all of the merits in the early 1960's of agricultural diversification away from the sharply fluctuating world rice export economy. There is no mention of the critical role of heavily subsidised U.S. sales of PL-480 rice to key markets. On close examination of Chaiyawat's Tables A-I - A-VIII one finds that Thailand's share held up well over the decade in the commercial markets of Hong Kong, Singapore and Japan, but lost to the U.S. in Indonesia, Malaysia and Saudi Arabia and to China in Ceylon. The key question: "Should Thailand have competed on price with U.S. and Chinese rice exports?" is never asked.

Olarn Chaipravat's work on the production structure of paddy cultivation from 1951 to 1973 (pp. 191-205) is a valuable compilation, which emphasises the low level of input usage in Thailand and his conclusion (p.205) will certainly arouse controversy, although it might do a great deal to mitigate rural/urban disparities if carried out energetically:—

"It is most urgent for the government, therefore, to introduce the programme of providing productive farm inputs for the farmers at subsidized prices in order to maximize the welfare of the farming population and increase the net foreign-exchange earning of the country without jeopardizing too much of the government revenue on the welfare of the urban consumers, especially during the period in which the foreign demand of Thai rice remains buoyant."

This policy will be costly and difficult to administer, but measures to raise rise yields in Thailand will be vital in the period 1976-80.

The final section (Part 5) is on "Economic Development" and the first essay is by Virabongsa Ramangkura "A Macroeconometric Model for Thailand: A Classical Approach" (pp. 209-221). The model is definitely for specialist econometricians. It was tested on the economy from 1953-1969 (a period of great stability) with rather good results (p. 220) :-

"Taken as a whole, the simulation solutions derived from 1953-1969 are fairly satisfactory."

However, there is no doubt that for 1970-1975 (a period of great instability) the results would have been worthless. Medium-sized econometric models do not work very well during global crises.

Phisit Phakkasem's first contribution "Development Planning and Implementation in Thailand" (pp. 223-234) is a useful summary and review of the experience of development planning in the First and Second Plan periods 1961-1966 and 1967-1971. Phisit also prepared a gloomy piece on "Regional Planning Within a National Framework: The Case of Thailand's Northeast" (pp. 236-243), which emphasises the continuing difficulties of regional development and regional income disparities.

The essay by Chaktip Nitibhon "Urban Development and Industrial Estates in Thailand" (pp. 245-255) is a useful summary of an area of planning, which has been spectacularly unsuccessful. Bangkok-Thonburi continues to grow and industrial estates have not been an important factor in the limited industrial dispersal from 1965-1975.

Narongchai Akrasanee's excellent paper "Import Substitution, Export Expansion and Sources of Industrial Growth in Thailand 1960-1972" (pp. 257-277) summarises the ongoing experience of Thai industrialisation as little has changed in basic direction from 1972-1975, although the prospects of the garment industry and textiles are now blighted by severe U.S. quotas and global restrictions under the GATT Multi-Fibres Agreement. Narongchai rightly concludes that Thailand is experiencing difficulties in the transition from import substitution to export production policies and that (p. 275) :-

"...industrialization of Thailand was characterized by import substitution and production for the domestic market, with a growing contribution from export expansion in a number of industries in the early 1970's."

Export promotion expansion will be difficult from 1976-1980 as slower growth in O.E.C.D. markets and quota combine with increasing competition to limit Thailand's potential for expansion of industrial exports, but the road back to import substitution appears to be a closed option in the minds of Thai economic planners.

The final paper "Distribution of Income and Wealth in Thailand" by Udom Kerdpibule (pp. 279-316) is perhaps the best. Thai "data on income and wealth are relatively scattered and fragmentary" (p. 283) and the methodology and the data used show considerable ingenuity in handling both income and wealth for urban and rural families. The rural area is very difficult to cover (p. 293) :-

"A vast majority of the Thai population are living in agricultural household (s), but there is little information on their level of living."

The data assembled is excellent and the presentation balanced, which means that taxation and education are both recognised as sources of inequality. The principal conclusions are modest and the institutional factors are correctly identified. Thailand has a severe problem of rural/urban inequalities and a further severe problem of inequality between rural families (p. 315) :-

"(1) The mean income of rural families is less than half of the urban-family income and the differential is getting larger. The distribution is also more concentrated than that of urban income, the tendency is also toward a higher degree of inequality."

Thailand and Thailand's economists face many severe difficulties in the post-Vietnam era. This volume is evidence that the problems are recognised and are being analysed, but there are few concrete proposals in this volume and no evidence that the political economy will be quickly or easily altered to face the challenges of 1976. Thailand's policy-makers recognise their problems, but find politically acceptable solutions difficult to devise within the present social and economic structure, but this volume shows they can adjust to changing conditions.

Angus Hone

Chakrit Noranitipadungkarn *Elites, Power Structure and Politics in Thai Communities* (Research Center, N.I.D.A., Bangkok, 1970), ix+199.

It is not always fair for a book to be reviewed some five years after its publication. Theoretical perspectives change and a reviewer has to consider the work in its historical context rather than attempt a contemporary assessment. If written now, Dr. Chakrit's book would probably include a more sophisticated analysis of social competition and conflict, it might employ the concepts of social network, action set, quasi-group, etc., to complement or replace the use of sociograms which indicate one or two way communications between elite members without reference to context. Given such qualifications, however, the volume remains important for anyone interested in Thai social organization because of its pioneering nature and the information it provides about small town politics and social organization.

In what was his Ph.D. project Dr. Chakrit sought to specify and study the local elite in two Thai municipalities (*tesaban tambol*) which he then compared in order to provide some idea of the underlying similarities as well as of the types of variation which can occur. The first community is a small coastal town in Cholburi referred to as Bang Saai; the second, Ban Hin, is located in Saraburi where it is important as a regional headquarters for the railway.

In both towns the local elite was first specified by evidence furnished from a ten per cent sample survey of all household heads plus interviews with "key" persons in the public and private sectors. A second survey was then conducted in which those assessed as elite members were questioned in depth as to their own views of the local elite, their wealth, family background, participation in public affairs, etc. In so doing the author was able to compile a simple biographical profile of each individual as well as obtain a lot of information about local politics, decision making, disputes, and the complexities of relations with the central government.

The manner of presentation is for a brief outline of the history of the town, its administrative arrangements and general social organization, to be followed by the biographies of those finally classed as constituting the elite. These are followed by comments on the most salient features as well as by reference to some of the issues which have affected political life in the town. In the concluding chapters the author discusses comparatively the characteristics of local elites, the relative importance of wealth, education, friendship etc. and the way in which the various sectors of local society, the administrative, the religious and the private business, are related to one another. He also refers in the final chapter to the problems associated with the development of a responsible and responsive system of municipal government, a discussion which is limited by the fact that at the time of research the government had restricted opportunities for the election of municipal councils.

Concentration on 'the elite' as a category is at the expense of some important aspects of the context in which elite individuals operate. What, for instance, of rich Chinese businessmen or head teachers not included in the study or of the non-elite support that local leaders can mobilise? The lack of such information clearly weakens the evaluation of the necessary conditions for elite status. What does emerge though is a fragmented but nonetheless fascinating picture of the way in which individuals formulate policies, attempt to implement them, and on occasion compete amongst themselves.

In conclusion the strength of the book lies not so much in the formal analysis of the material, which within the constraints of the methodology employed appears well conducted, as in the fact that the data collected is presented in such a way as can be used by others. In terms of the background it provides, the work is valuable for any who consider research into non-rural social organization or social differentiation in Thailand, as well as to those generally interested in learning something of a regrettably understudied area of Thai society.

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Likhit Dhiravegin, *Political Attitudes of the Bureaucratic Elite and Modernization in Thailand* (Thai Watana Panich, Bangkok, 1973), vi+94.

The terms 'bureaucracy' and 'elite' understandably figure prominently in much of the general social science literature on Thailand yet comparatively little systematic research has been published other than in the realm of administrative science. (Riggs, Siffin, et. al.)* Unfortunately Dr. Likhit's book does little to remedy this lack despite his treatment of a number of topics of interest to the specialist as well as to the more general reader. Moreover a number of basic methodological and analytical issues raise doubts as to the real value of this type of research project.

The work, originally a Ph.D. dissertation in political science, commences with a heavily footnoted theoretical introduction on the approach used followed by a cursory and sometimes inaccurate outline of the development of the Thai bureaucracy from 1237 A.D. to 1971. In Chapter 3 the author presents data on the background of his sample of high ranking civil servants in terms of father's occupation, place of origin, age distribution, education, and membership of associations. In Chapter 4 the political attitudes of the sample members are assessed

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| Fred W. Riggs 1966 | <i>Thailand: The Modernization of a Bureaucratic Polity</i> . Honolulu, East-West Center Press. |
| W.J. Siffin 1966 | <i>The Thai Bureaucracy: Institutional Change and Development</i> . Honolulu, East-West Center Press. |

with respect to change, equalitarianism, and tolerance, along a "Liberal-Conservative Scale" and these are then correlated with age, educational experience, and inter-generational mobility. Chapter 5 consists of a discussion of the role of the bureaucratic elite in facilitating modernization with reference to the three values discussed earlier. The author also criticises the National Development Plans of Thailand as being too concerned with purely economic factors at the expense of the development of political participation, which is one of the core criteria in his definition of modernization. Nevertheless the author is forced to recognize that in the light of the power of the military in Thailand "Political participation and the democratic process are antithetical to the existing political power structure." (p. 54.) He argues that "economic development without the development of a participant political structure cannot lead to a viable political system and is likely to lead to political instability." (p. 57.) Nonetheless the author is hopeful in his opinion that the "substantial number of liberal members of the bureaucratic elite suggests that there is a potential for a change of the strategy of modernization . . ." (p. 60) Finally, in his conclusion he reviews his findings and outlines a strategy of political development by means of a combination of elite groups under a strong leader. In the absence of any charismatic leader he calls for a strong and progressive dictator like Sarit Thanarat. "The party which consists of a coalition of elites under a strong benevolent dictator would perform two functions: solidarity and participation through membership," (p. 69.) that is, "participant political culture" would be developed among the grass-roots to stimulate political consciousness as a preparation for the institution of some eventual democratic competitive party system.

The somewhat grandiose title of the work bears little relation to the empirical study contained within it. Dr. Likhit attempted to use ninety-six informants (predominantly male and Buddhist) of high rank in three ministries, he obtained answers to his questionnaire from fifty-six of which he was able to use fifty-two. The disadvantage of working with such a small group is aptly illustrated in the discussion of the background of members of the Ministry of Interior when the author relates that "the number of the elite who are from families of the

peasantry (20.83%) is larger than the number of the elite who are from families of businessmen (16.66%)" (p. 20.) which he then associates with the traditional concern of the Ministry of Interior with local administration. What is not pointed out is that the discussion is about five and four individuals respectively. As for the treatment of mobility which indicates that forty-eight per cent of the sample had fathers in government service, it is surprising that the issues raised by Evers and Brand as to whether or not there is a declining level of mobility are not mentioned. It should also have been recognized that a simple question about a father's position is not an adequate indicator of mobility in a social system such as the Thai where kin links are important for sponsorship, educational support, etc. It really is necessary to know something of the status of grandparents and of the siblings of both parents. Clearly then if the extent to which the bureaucracy is self-recruiting and the consequences arising from this are to be examined meaningfully one must go far beyond the questions asked here.

The relevance of educational achievement is rightly linked to occupational mobility and interesting variations relating to age and the prestige of the ministries concerned are noted. The question of whether or not a high level of educational achievement, by which is usually meant a higher degree in the U.S. or a European country, takes place before or after gaining entry to government service is not mentioned. In other words does mobility follow as a direct consequence of the American Ph.D. or rather is the requisite government scholarship the crucial factor, the sign that one is destined for the top so that the degree itself is in a sense a formality, the issue of a licence for success?

Appraisal of the second part of the questionnaire which is concerned with the expression of attitudes reveals a similar problem of superficiality. This part of the survey consisted of twenty-four questions but the results of only twelve were finally used, the others revealed an inadequate level of discrimination. Significantly of those retained there were only two out of the eight asked on 'equality' whereas six of the eight on 'tolerance' could be used. The fact that twelve of the questions showed an inadequate level of discrimination and that the results of the remaining

twelve indicate a distinct bunching towards the liberal end of the scale suggest over-all a remarkably homogeneous set of responses. Why should this be so? Does it reflect an underlying genuine homogeneity of attitudes in the Thai elite or really is it a formal expression of a general bureaucratic ideology, the expression of safe and standard views. One has to ask whether or not the responses of these highly trained, very sophisticated and professional individuals to such questions as "The foreign policy of Thailand since the second World War has been pro-Western. We should not change this policy. Do you agree?" or "Do you agree that people with strange ideas that go against customs cannot be trusted?" really do reveal much of the respondents' underlying opinions or of the way in which they are likely to make decisions.

As for the analysis of the contemporary political situation and the author's proposals, subsequent events must not be used to unfairly condemn some of his statements. There are, however, some general points which are relevant to what is now happening. Firstly the statement that the ideal leader is a charismatic one and that in the absence of such a person one requires a strong benevolent dictator is particularly suspect. Too many dictators have ceased to be benevolent once challenged. Furthermore if the dictator is in a strong position backed whole-heartedly by a unified elite why should any attempt be made to politicise the peasantry? One of the interesting features of Thai society when compared to others which experienced colonialism is the very fact that the indigenous elite did not have to reach out and mobilize the countryside and in the process create an effective political party system in order to wrest power from the colonial overlords. In conclusion it would seem that the author manifests a very traditional Thai attitude in expecting the impetus for social and political change to come from the top, others might contend that a more satisfactory approach would be to examine the basic socio-economic structure of the society and the changes which are now affecting it.

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Wibha Senanan, *The Genesis of the Novel in Thailand* (Thai Watana Panich, Bangkok, 1975), pp. xii+168.

This short volume is the first to appear in a Western language by a Thai that deals with an aspect of recent Thai literature. Up to now most Westerners have had to be content with Schweisguth's volume in French (which is not even listed in Dr Wibha's bibliography) and scattered articles in the pages of the *Journal of the Siam Society*, of which none of those by Westerners are mentioned. It is a pity that Dr Wibha did not refer to these, for one has the impression that a good deal of academic debunking could have taken place; it is unlikely that Westerners viewing the Thai fictional genre would have very similar optics to a Thai literary critic.

Dr Wibha's volume 'was written originally as a doctoral thesis' for London University, and seems to have suffered remarkably few textual changes. Even the biographical notice for Si Burapha (Kulap Saipradit) says that he is still living in the text, though this is modified by a footnote saying he died in Peking in June 1974. Does one see here the traditional Thai respect for a text so that one does not modify it, even when it is one's own and more recent information makes the original inaccurate? PhD theses for some reason do not make good reading, and it would have been expedient for Dr Wibha to have exercised greater editorial freedom with her text. There are far too many repetitions, jumps backwards and forwards and apparent irrelevancies to permit the reader to formulate a coherent picture. There is a long aside in Chapter V on the Franco-Thai dispute of 1893, with another on the same subject, of shorter duration, in Chapter IX. Inevitably King Vajiravudh's plays are given fairly fulsome treatment, though they are not pertinent to the subject.

Starting off with an outline of the poetic tradition, Dr Wibha moves on to a consideration of the prose tradition and then deals, after a survey on the introduction of printing, with the influence of journalism at some length. Indeed one might with reason feel that this volume could be accurately described as a survey of the early printed word in Thai as much as a study of the rise of the novel. Not until we reach

Chapter VII are we at the subject of the early novels, and then all that remains are two chapters covering the reading public and the novelists, and the novel and society.

One is left with the impression that the novel is very alien to the Thai ethos. It was not until Dr Bradley in the 1830s, and later Dr Smith, got going with a printing press that the physical means readily existed for the creation of the novel. The early newspapers, frequently produced on the presses of these two, were the vehicles of early prose fiction which was considerably influenced by Western models. The early novels themselves are frankly linked to the Westernised environment which gave them birth.

Si Burapha published his first novel, *Luk Phuchai*, in 1928. Manot, the son of a carpenter, rises on the educational ladder, goes to study in France, returns to find his wife has eloped and ends up successful, titled, and marrying the only daughter of his old friend and former girlfriend who is some twenty-two years younger than he. This complicated entanglement of loves and likes was clearly a successful formula, for by 1929 Si Burapha was in the middle of his third novel when Dokmai Sot's first, *Sattru Khong Chao Lon*, appeared. This represents more clearly the conflict between a traditional Thai and a Westernised way of life, with Mayuri, the daughter of the Thai Amdassador to the US, having progressive views about marrying for love and her childhood friend, to whom she has been engaged by her family, Prasong, who goes to study in France. They return, have tiffs, and after much raising and lowering of the emotional temperature, decide they really are made for each other after all and settle down a happy couple. The third major early novelist, whose volume *Lakhon Haeng Chiwit* appeared in 1929 in book form when Dokmai Sot's first novel was appearing serially, is Prince Akatdamkoeng Raphiphat. This is still more frankly Westernising. Wisut goes off to England, takes up with journalistic English ladies (one titled) and follows their profession, moves to Paris, Monte Carlo, Geneva, the United States, goes on to Hawaii, Japan, and China, and returns to Thailand, poor in health and heart but rich in experience.

The society described in these three novels is definitely that of the gilded few. Dokmai Sot describes the traditional nobility with a veneer of Westernisation, Prince Akat's hero is the son of a Phya moving in elevated society abroad, and Si Burapha's hero's heartthrob is the daughter of a rich nobleman and his friends at school the children of senior ministry officials. But Si Burapha's hero, Manot, rises in society, a poor boy who makes good, a sort of *Paysan Parvenu*. Prince Akat's hero, Wisut, feels friendless at home where his only friend a half Chinese niece of his nurse and he roughs it in Fulham, in the East End of London and in Bexhill. Otherwise he courts Hungarian countesses in Monaco and antiquarian baronets in New York, though still being attached in sentiment to Maria Grey, the reappearing love symbol that by his own volition he will not attain.

What is interesting, from the point of view of comparative literature, is the similarities between these plots and attitudes and eighteenth century French and English novels. *Luk Phuchai* resembles Marivaux's novels describing a rise in society, *Sattru Khong Chao Lon* could be straight from Jane Austen in its amorous comings and goings and *Lakhon Haeng Chiwit* almost any picaresque novel one cares to name with a recurring love theme—*Tom Jones* comes most readily to mind. The characters have however a certain Western un-Thai *angst*, a restlessness brought about by contacts outside their normal social environment. It is difficult to believe that these novels could interest a general Thai public in 1928-9, but then they almost certainly did not. Mass literacy is a much more recent phenomenon, and the reading public in the late 1920s was limited to the class the novels described, just as 18th century novels in the West were socially limited to the affluent few.

If consideration here is concentrated on the first novels of the first novelists, this is simply a reflection of the volume under review. Si Burapha's other novels are only mentioned in passing as 'a development in his style of presentation', though *Khang Lang Phap* is said to be on the

same theme as Prince Akat's first novel, the unattainability of love; Prince Akat's other novels are presented as an extension of the first but not examined in detail; and of Dokmai Sot's many other novels only six are mentioned by title and not even *Phu Di* is examined closely. There is also no consideration of possible non-Thai sources of the three novels, no reference to other literatures, and no examination of the influence, if any, of these writers on subsequent novelists, or a general consideration of the situation of the Thai novel today.

The volume as a whole appears then to be curiously isolated in time and place. There is a long warming up process, a brief examination of three books by three authors, and a quick rounding off with fashionable lip-service to sociology really being the occasion for a further review of Thai 19th century history. This is not to say that this viewpoint is without value; on the contrary, as it comes from a Thai, it is pertinent. But here the source of the volume, a PhD thesis, interferes with the broader approach. We have a pinhead closely examined, but all the other pins in the cushion are ignored. If Dr Wibha could extend this work in another volume in two directions we should indeed have cause to thank her; the early Thai home still needs to be put in the international context of world literature, and the influences of the early Thai novelists (not just with their first novels) traced up to the present, with the radical departures in recent times also being noted.

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หนังสือรวมบทความ พระยาอินทรมนตรีศรีจันทรมุขาร พิมพ์เผยแพร่โดยกรมสรรพากร ในโอกาสที่กรมสรรพากรตั้งมาครบ ๕๐ ปี (Collected Articles of Francis H. Giles (Phya Indramontri), published by the Revenue Department on its 60th anniversary), pp. 260.

This anniversary volume does the academic community a great service in focusing attention on the writings of Francis Henry Giles, a keen and astute recorder of Siamese customs and folklore. It is particularly appropriate that the Revenue Department and the Siam Society co-operated in making this volume available as *Chaokhun* Indra was both a founding member of the Siam Society and the first Director-General of the Revenue Department. Mr. Giles, better known as *Chaokhun* Indra, served Siam not only as a faithful and efficient civil servant in the fiscal realm for more than thirty years but as a scholar who studied Siamese history, literary traditions, and customs and beliefs with insight, understanding and appreciation. His interest and support of scholarship in Siamese studies was in evidence during his fruitful years as President of the Siam Society.

This collection of *Chaokhun* Indra's writings displays the breadth of his academic interests and clearly demonstrates his exceptional command of the Siamese language. Those concerned with the state of youth in Siam today would do well to ponder the wisdom embodied in *Chaokhun* Indra's lecture on moral education of youth delivered to the Teachers' Association in B.E. 2473 (A.D. 1930). His articles on the Koh Lak Tradition show his imaginative, inquiring and adventurous academic spirit and are sufficiently provocative to encourage continuing debate among historians and scholars of Thai literary traditions. In his accounts of the ceremonies and rites performed by elephant and wild ox hunters and by fishermen who catch the fabled Pla Bük, *Chaokhun* Indra provides us with exhaustive verbatim renditions of magical chants and descriptions of rites performed. He traces the derivation of ideas, words and symbols and evidences his erudition in drawing on Sanskrit literature and Brahmanic lore and tradition. These studies will remain as classics in descriptive ethnography.

In his lengthy article on manners and customs of the Chinese people as gleaned from historical narratives and novels, *Chaokhun Indra* provides the reader with insight into Chinese attitudes and concepts ranging from art of healing, suicide and law to the role play of the Emperor officials and women. But, as important, the author provides a framework for literary analysis that might be profitably applied to the novels of modern day Thailand or the poetry of Sunthorn Pu.

This volume has value not only in the wealth of academic information provided but in presenting the portrait of a *farang* nobleman scholar who might well serve as a model for the western harbingers of modernization who continue to descend on Siam.

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Suthiwong Phongphaibun, *หนังตะลุง* (Nang Talung) (Bangkok, no date), 137 pp., illus.

In this admirable study, the southern Thai shadow play called Nang Talung, perhaps the most charming of all popular Thai dramatic forms, is sympathetically and exhaustively examined. *Khun Suthiwong's* study offers a detailed description of all aspects of the southern shadow play, its origins and relationships with the Malay and Javanese forms, its content— the conventions of invocation, verse forms, plot, etc., and the social context of performance, that is, the customs attached to it. The highly limited evidence for what we know of the origins of Nang Talung is judiciously weighed, and the author offers his own opinion, that this Thai form of shadow play is most likely external in its origins, deriving from Malaya and Java, judging from Indic elements in the invocation and in the plot content. A detailed comparison is offered between the

Thai Nang Talung and the Malay and Javanese shadow plays. *Khun Suthiwong* provisionally accepts Prince Damrong's assertion that the Nang Talung does not date further back than the mid-nineteenth century. Invocation passages for the shadow play cite a succession of teachers dating back to about this period, and there is a lack of any literary reference to the Nang Talung earlier than this date. Regarding the source of the name Nang Talung itself, he rejects a popular etymology tracing it back to an old word *talung* denoting an elephant driver, and takes it rather to be a shortened form (in the usual manner of the southern Thai dialect) of the name Phatalung, the southern Thai province.

The next section extensively records verbatim examples of the puppet master's art, his wit and humor, his use of different forms of verse and their varying effects, in the speech of characters of high rank, as well as in narrative and descriptive passages. This is a particularly valuable record of a fast disappearing art, and its preservation, at least in written form, is an important service to southern Thai culture. It is followed by details on the customs and technique of performance, particularly those of the introductory music (*hôm rông*), the proper order of introducing each puppet on the screen, each with its appropriate incantations, invocations, and musical background, then details about the musical background, the instruments, the supporting members of the troupe, and the various paraphernalia of performance. The various occasions appropriate to the performance of the Nang Talung are next explained.

A separate section at the end describes the various clown characters and their personalities. For instance, the clown named *Sî Kao* is thought to represent a man from *Ranôt* in *Songkhla*, learned in astrology, charms and incantations. This clown character is of honest, upright nature; he speaks slowly and firmly, but with sharp wit and good sense. When angry he is stubborn, and prone to lose his head. In contrast, the clown *Yôt Thổng* is a loud boaster, but a coward at heart, a woman chaser, strident and argumentative in speech, intrusive into other people's

business, and a follower of Si Kaeo who keeps him in line, and often pulls him out of a scrape. The clowns are based on real life characters, sometimes actual persons, and they embody all the human foibles as in any great comic tradition.

Even a brief acquaintance with Nang Talung will indicate that the puppet master needs great skill to at once manipulate the different puppets in turn from behind his screen, while at the same time speaking the part of each character with instantaneous changes in voice, accent, and characterization, as appropriate. His handling of verse passages, spontaneously contrived on the spur of the moment, and his comic speech for the clowns (always in the southern Thai dialect) constitute the height of his skill. One master plays an entire troupe of characters, in a performance usually lasting through the night to dawn, with the sole assistance of a few musicians. The most exciting performances are competitive between two or more puppet masters of great repute, vying to attract the majority of the audience to their own performance. In older times the Nang Talung was performed at celebrations of a general nature rather than on the occasion of specific auspicious ceremonies, and occasionally at funerals as well. Most interestingly the shadow play was suitable for *kae bon*, the fulfillment of a vow. In this context the performance constitutes an offering to a particular spirit as thanks for the granting of a boon sought by a supplicant. In the *kae bon* performance the story presented must come from the Ramayana, but in ordinary performances a great variety in plot has become common, deriving from popular tales, jatakas, and modern fiction. This volume, the fruit of one of several projects by *Khun* Suthiwong aiming to record and preserve southern Thai cultural traditions, lives up to its admirable purpose.

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William R. Roff, ed. *Kelantan: Religion, Society and Politics in a Malay State* (Oxford, Kuala Lumpur, 1974), p. 371, bibliography and index.

Kelantan is one of the least known and least understood states of the Malay Peninsula. Often presented as a backwater and a stronghold of all that is archaic and reactionary in the Malay cultural context, Kelantan has rarely been treated from any viewpoint other than an outside one, and more often than not, a hostile one.

The state is populated primarily by Malays, the vast majority of whom have no historical recollection of outside origins. This is in contrast to the West Coast of Malaysia where almost every other Malay will inform you that he is not really a Malay, but a Bugis, or a Minangkabau or a Javanese. Most Kelantanese are either traditional rice farmers or fishermen, living in small villages at close to a subsistence level. The changes of the past 150 years which have transformed the rest of the Federation seem to have barely touched Kelantan. The state has generally been isolated. As Professor Roff points out, as little as a decade ago the 400 mile journey from Kuala Lumpur to Kota Baharu required no less than 13 ferry crossings.

This isolation has, however, been misunderstood. Kelantan maintains one of the best established and most active Malay language printing enterprises in the Federation. The Kelantanese are well known as one of the most industrious groups of Malays in the country. Since the beginning of this century communications between Kelantan and the Muslim heartland of the Middle East have been surprisingly active. It is thus of utmost importance that the role of Islam in Kelantanese society be understood. It is this presentation of Islam, in its various historical, social and political manifestation that is the major contribution of this book. It is also one of the first volumes in recent years to treat Kelantan as an entity rather than an enigma.

The book is an anthology of twelve selections. Four are primarily historical, four are anthropological and the other four, all by Kelantanese, deal with biography, religion and Malay periodicals. Since five of the twelve contributors are Kelantanese and the Western scholars

generally seem to share a pro-Kelantan sentiment, a novel and welcome perspective is added to the work as a whole. The pieces are arranged so as to give the impression of a kind of continuous narrative relayed from a succession of viewpoints. This carries the reader from a court history by David Wyatt, translated from the Siamese chronicles, to a radical reinterpretation of Kelantanese social history by the anthropologist, Clive Kessler.

Four of the first five selections are primarily historical works. Wyatt's translation of the Siamese *Phongsawadan Muang Kelantan* presents a Siamese version of Kelantan's history from its most recent documented origin. For practical purposes, Kelantan's "official" history begins in about 1790. It was then, shortly after the re-organization of the Siamese state under the present Chakri dynasty, that the Thai resumed their involvement in the dynastic squabbles of the Malay states in this part of the Peninsula. The Wyatt piece is primarily concerned with court rivalries and with building a case for Siamese hegemony. Although it has little to do with Islam, it provides an appropriate beginning for the book. Malay history, generally dominated by British and British-trained Malays, is rarely presented from a purely Southeast Asian point of view. This look at Kelantan from the northern end of the Malay Peninsula forces the reader to re-orient his perspective and helps to prepare him for what is to come.

Kelantan's transition, from Siamese overlordship to British domination, is the subject of the second study by Mohd. b. Nik Mohd. Salleh. This young, western-trained Kelantanese historian offers a competent treatment of official developments within the state's deeply divided ruling class. It is important for its treatment of the diplomatic and political maneuvers among the Siamese, the British and the local Malays which led to the establishment of British colonial government over the state. An essential part of this story is his account of the Duff Development Co., an excellent example of the manner in which the flag followed trade in the heyday of European imperialism.

The third selection, by Ibrahim Nik Mahmood, another young Kelantanese historian educated in the Federation, is a narrative of the To' Janggut rebellion. This movement was the first open expression of popular sentiment against the bureaucratic changes which had resulted from the introduction of British rule. It provides an introduction to a consistent theme in Kelantan's history; that of a kind of "traditionalistic" resistance to alien influences. It is unfortunate that Ibrahim was forced to rely so heavily on official accounts of the rebellion written by those who suppressed the movement. As a result one gets little information about how the rebels saw themselves, or what they thought they were doing.

This piece is followed by a short biography of To' Kenali one of Kelantan's most prestigious religious leaders and reformers. The author, Abdullah Al-Qari b. Haji Salleh, is a well-known Malay literary figure and this is the first appearance of his work in English. This departure from formal history is a valuable social document. To' Kenali surely had a more significant impact on the life of the people than did the actual rulers. He was one of the first of the highly influential Kelantan *ulama* who today dominate hundreds of Kelantan communities.

William Roff's study of the origins of the *Majlis Ugama dan Isti'adat Melayu* (Council of Religion and Malay Custom) takes us back to formal history, but continues the religious theme. In Kelantan, lacking all other avenues to power, members of the state's traditional aristocracy established a religious bureaucracy by which they could levy taxes, and exercise certain police and judicial functions. The Majlis Ugama was founded as an attempt to circumvent the power of the Shari Courts and to act as an agency of the Sultan. Its organizer, Haji Nik Mohamed, was able to gain sweeping powers for the Majlis and within a few years it had taken over the collection of the *fitrah*, a religious tax, and had launched an ambitious program of school-building and publishing.

Roff presents this phase of the Majlis' operations as the beginning of an "indigenous social revolution." It was not long however, before the radically innovative program of the Majlis came under criticism and was checked by more conservative forces. It was required also to undertake the building of an expensive mosque in the capital and soon found itself in deep financial troubles, which limited its effectiveness of its educational programs. Prof. Roff's piece is indeed one of the most valuable contributions in this book.

Another equally fascinating piece of reading is the selection entitled "Theological Debates" by Muhammad Salleh b. Wan Musa and S. Othman Kelantan. This is primarily a work of piety, being both a discussion of the history of Islam in Kelantan and a biography, first of Wan Musa and secondly of his son, Muhammed Salleh (one of the authors). It represents the family history of two generations of radical Kelantanese *ulama*. This supplies a necessary personal note and gives the reader a first-hand insight into the type of people who have made Islam such a dynamic force in Kelantan. As such, it is an excellent complement to the more formal studies by Winzeler and Kessler which conclude the book.

The history of Kelantan, much of it depressing and uninspiring (because of the events, not the writers) needs the anthropologist to give it perspective. The Firth piece, somewhat out of place in this collection, due to its relatively limited scope, at least provides the reader with a few more facts. He presents Kelantanese villagers and examines the pragmatism of their view of folk magic. This, and the Raybeck study of social stress in the villages, show folk magic as a sort of medical practice. The Raybeck study offers an interesting description of the *main putri*, a kind of primitive psycho-drama.

The three final essays deal specifically with the role of Islam in the modern life of the state. Here religion emerges as one of the major

social and political forces in Kelantanese society. Nash defines some of the dimensions of conflict between "modernizing" elements as represented by the bureaucracy and the kampong ideology which holds that "... a Malay should live in the sweet shade of his own *dusun* (house orchard), engaged primarily in padi farming, among a group of co-religionists and many kinsmen. In this setting he is to exhibit the grace and charm of relaxed primitive sufficiency as he orders his life according to Islam and treats his neighbors with the 'soft and gentle' manners involved in face to face social interaction." The educational system, run primarily by the central government, appears, according to Nash's survey, to be replacing this value system with one based on western ideas and aimed at encouraging competition and social and economic achievement. He sees no way in which the aspirations and expectations instilled by the system can be fulfilled given the present social and political situation and thus predicts increased ethnic competition.

The Winzeler essay is largely descriptive. He outlines the basic components of the Islamic social and political order of a Kelantanese community. The roles and functions of the various religious figures are defined together with the structure and operation of the *pondok* (village religious schools).

The book is concluded with an outstanding study by Clive Kessler titled "Muslim Identity and Political Behavior in Kelantan". This is an attempt to, among other things, explain the success of the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party (PMIP) in Kelantan. He outlines the conflict between UMNO and the PMIP as one between a party of salaried urbanites, traders, money-lenders and land-lords against a radical peasant party. Kessler takes a large step toward destroying the notion that the driving force of the PMIP is simply attributable to an "outbreak of archaic religious fanaticisms". But rather, he demonstrates that the appeal of the PMIP brand of Islam is that it provides an idealistic social theory which makes possible a critique of the established order and offers a

moral basis for reform and opposition. The conflict, placed in the terminology of Malay Islam is that between *nafsu* and *akal*. The UMNO offers modernization, creature comforts, and material prosperity which appeal to the physical senses (*nafsu*). This view presents the PMIP and the peasant movement behind it as appealing to *akal* (the mind in its moral and spiritual sense). Kessler's quotations from speeches by political leaders of both sides add much to his case.

It is difficult to pass judgement on the anthology as a whole. Perhaps some may think that it holds together no better than a tightly edited issue of the *JSS* or some other scholarly journal. One might question the inclusion of the piece on Malay periodicals and perhaps even the Firth study. One might also raise issue with the mixture of historical and anthropological studies in the anthology. There is, however, an interesting kind of cohesion about the book, particularly in regard to its treatment of Islam.

Given the present state of scholarship there is a real need for such a book. It should be seen more as a beginning, rather than finished product. It provides a take-off point for additional and more detailed studies of Malay history and society. The inclusion of the valuable bibliography of Kelantan reinforces this estimate of the book. As a whole, the anthology provides much material for thought and opens many avenues for further research. It is definitely a book to be read and consulted by all students of Malaysia and its culture. The book should be given the widest possible distribution in Malaysia itself where it is certain to be controversial. For this reason it is to be hoped that a reasonably priced paper-back edition will be available. A book priced at £ 11.85 is well beyond the reach of most Asian students.

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Francisco De Sa De Meneses, *The Conquest of Malacca*, translated by Edgar C. Knowlton Jr. (University of Malaya Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1970) pp. 234.

This is a translation of a seventeenth century epic poem. The translator has provided the reader with a series of interesting essays regarding the historical background, the poet, the significance of the poem and the relevant textual commentaries. The translation, so far as the non-reader of Portuguese can tell, appears to be a competent and, one presumes, a faithful one. A pair of helpful glossaries of personal and geographical names has also been appended.

The poem itself is a glorification of the conquest of the Malay city of Malacca by Afonso De Albuquerque in 1511. The form of the poem is that of a heroic epic in twelve books of somewhat uneven length. Like other such works of this period and genre, it is filled with the usual collection of classical and Biblical allusions together with a cosmic backdrop. The translation is in prose.

The plot of the story follows the basic sequence of the actual events. The action begins with Albuquerque at sea with his fleet, presumably somewhere in the Bay of Bengal. Blown off course by an adverse wind he has a vision of the Portuguese who died in an expedition to Malacca under Sequeira in 1509. Now sainted crusaders (having been killed by Muslims) the specters convince Albuquerque to conquer Malacca. After weathering a storm sent by Asmodeus (the demon spirit who guides the Malays) he reaches Pedir in North Sumatra. Here he meets Joaõ Viegas, a member of Sequeira's company who managed to escape. He gives Albuquerque intelligence of Malacca.

After making friends with the king of Pedir, Albuquerque sets off for Malacca once again. On the way he has a couple of encounters with Southeast Asians. One of them, an ousted Sumatran king called Genial (Zainal) allies himself with the Portuguese. During the voyage, Alaida, a Pedir princess who has fallen in love with Viegas, recounts the history of Malacca. On the fleet's arrival in Malacca, the King asks one of the Portuguese prisoners to tell him of Albuquerque, so he recounts the story of Albuquerque's campaigns in the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean.

Asmodeus visits Hell in the meantime and marshalls forces to incite the Malays to attack the Portuguese. In Malacca, the factions desiring peace with the Europeans are defeated and the "wicked" Bendahara prevails. After a series of negotiations, betrayals, brave speeches and prophecies, including a supernatural voyage by one of the Portuguese captains to "Cathay" where he rescues some comrades being held by the Queen Titonia, battle is joined and the Portuguese gain their victory.

For the historian of Malaya, and perhaps for Malays as well, the book is disappointing. It teaches nothing new, or worth knowing about the conquest of Malacca and that era. The period of its composition (ca. 1630) was a time when metropolitan Portugal had little to do with Southeast Asia, and it strikes one that the poem is only of interest within the field of Portuguese literary history.

Knowlton tells the reader that the poet's objective was to inspire his contemporaries to emulate their forefathers and to refurbish their empire. In this respect, his poem was a failure in its own time. Knowlton offers his effort to Malaysian students in the hope of interesting them in Portuguese history, literature and culture. He suggests that it could also "... present to them features of European epic style in a setting already partially familiar from their study of the history of Malaya." Unfortunately, like Sa De Meneses, the translator's hope may also be in vain.

While it is true that the epic is in a Malayan setting, the nature of the piece is such that it appears more calculated to repel than to attract the Malaysian reader. The entire tone of the epic is not only pro-Portuguese and anti-Malay, but also violently anti-Islam. Such a theme can gain little appreciation in the modern Malay world.

As epics go, *The Conquest of Malacca* cannot be ranked as an outstanding example of the genre. It is both artificial and prosaic. Sa De Meneses conjures up rococco heavens of cherubs and archangels to aid the Christian Portuguese and smoky hells populated by red devils with pitchforks to connive hopelessly with the Muslims. They do not fit well with the actually pragmatic and brutal spirit of Albuquerque's conquests. This is not to say that there is not real romance and

adventure of epic proportions in the Portuguese story of their empire, but Sa De Meneses misses it, one feels, in his ambition to propagandize.

The book gives us no real taste of any age or place. The characters nowhere approach the status of real personalities. Albuquerque himself is so much of a cardboard archetype that he has no character whatsoever. His emotions are god-like and fluctuate between universal beneficence and righteous wrath. His words are all formulas, in fact the whole epic strikes one as a kind of fill-in-the-blanks contrivance.

Knowlton tells us that the poem has been faulted by literary critics for its "historicity". Never having been to Southeast Asia himself, Sa De Meneses relied on the accounts of Albuquerque and de Barros. Disregarding one or two minor episodes, he followed his sources with some fidelity, at least so far as the sequence of events was concerned. However, one feels that the actors themselves have already recounted their story more eloquently in ordinary prose than has Sa De Meneses in this patchwork epic.

The Portuguese sea ventures of the sixteenth century were phenomenal undertakings. For one who has been fascinated by Albuquerque's Commentaries and other contemporary works, Sa De Meneses' account is rather a bore. In the epic, the Portuguese actors speak only of "honor", "religion" and "fortune", and never of trade, spices and pillage. The adventures of this small band of forceful men sailing (what were for them) uncharted seas and conquering cities almost sight-unseen, is impressive by itself and needs no romanticizing. All of the smoke generated by Sa De Meneses' battle scenes is only steam. We never smell the gun-powder, much less get a taste of the grape.

It is indeed unfortunate that Mr. Knowlton chose this particular work of Portuguese orientalia. The actual translation reads well and the background chapters which introduce it are more fascinating than the epic itself. The work is well turned out and it is really everything that a good translation ought to be. One only wishes that Prof. Knowlton had been attracted by a work more worthy of his manifest talents.

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Milton Osborne, *River Road to China: The Mekong River Expedition, 1866-73*. (Liveright: New York, 1975) xxii+249pp. Maps, Brief Chronology, Sources, Index, 20 Black and White Illustrations.

From the voluminous records of the French Mekong River Expedition of 1866-68, later events stemming from this journey, the comments of others who dreamed of the project, and his vast knowledge of the scene surrounding French interest in Southeast Asia, Dr. Osborne has compiled an exciting introduction, the first in English, to the trials of this effort, and a fitting summary to Western adventurism in Mainland Southeast Asia. The work is written by a Westerner for Westerners about a Western undertaking. Seen from this perspective, the Mekong River and its people become a backdrop for presenting two interwoven stories: the physical and mental trials of the principal members of the Expedition, and the political and commercial atmosphere of Western Europe that provided a rationale for such striving.

A major contribution of this book is that it gives the Mekong River Expedition, led by Doudart de Lagree, some of the recognition that is its due; recognition that is traditionally accorded contemporaneous explorations in Africa, such as those of Livingstone and Stanley. A major weakness of the book is the inclusion of a postscript chapter detailing later efforts, on the Red River, by Francis Garnier, second-in-command, of the Expedition; this unfortunately partially undercuts the significance the author had intended to give the Mekong effort itself.

The Expedition's charter was to find a new, French, commercial entrance into southern China to offset an anticipated British effort through Burma. Since the acquisition of Cochinchina in 1859 and the establishment of a protectorate over Cambodia in 1863-4, French colonial circles had become suffused with this idea. Riches for the greater glory of "la patrie" were to be found, to offset anticipated losses for the territories already acquired. The answer lay to the north, in the fabled hinterlands of China, where multitudes of people and an infinity of resources would complement the industry and commercial enterprise of France.

From the beginning the attempt was flawed. Over 500 cases of "necessities", including gold, rations, flour, bread, wine, trade goods and scientific instruments, left Saigon with the six principal explorers and sixteen secondary personnel, but little planning for transport itself took place. Knowledge of the dangers held in store by the Mekong's Sambor Rapids was available—indeed Lagree had previously been that far—but this did not hinder the explorers from pushing up what was meant to be a conduit for large, ocean-going ships. The subsequent attainment of the Khone Falls placed almost all hopes for continuous navigation from the sea out of the picture, but still the Expedition persevered. Disease was a continual problem, so much so that sickness, except the most acute, was considered routine. Interestingly, the greatest fear of the journey was not of local peoples or rulers, new physical wonders or discomforts, but of a rumored contingent of British officers out to reinforce their country's reputation south of Luang Prabang. Actually, the Expedition a naturalized Frenchman and his associates who had been sent by Rama encountered IV to survey distant northern boundaries of the Thai kingdom.

The members of the Expedition, groping their way along channels of which they had no record and through political quagmires of which they had little knowledge and less facility for understanding, finally passed into what they hoped would be a more easily comprehensible situation in mid-October 1867, when they crossed into Imperial China. Yet, from that point until the reaching of Hankow and Shanghai in June of the following year, the primary purpose of tracing the route of the Mekong had to be forgone. In fact, the explorers encountered almost as many difficulties in China, what with a Moslem rebellion and nearly disastrous attention from multitudes of Chinese, as they had elsewhere. Nevertheless, the party crossed the Red River and ascertained its navigability that far inland, a point which proved of paramount importance not only for Garnier and French intentions in the area, but also for Dr. Osborne in his closing of this sequence of events in Southeast Asia.

The next-to-last chapter of the volume describes not adventures on the Mekong, but rather the attempt by Jean Dupuis and Francis Garnier to exploit the Red River for commercial purposes. While navigation on

this waterway was proven feasible, the necessity of proceeding against the wishes of the Vietnamese rulers made this effort as hazardous as the Mekong Expedition itself. One hundred years later, we find buccaneering, such as evidenced by Dupuis in forcing his way up the Red River and by Garnier in temporarily conquering the Hanoi citadel, resulting in his death in 1873, as extremely foolhardy. Dupuis and Garnier were good men in the context of mid-to-late Nineteenth Century Europe, but their effort was extraordinarily misapplied in Southeast Asia.

Dr. Osborne concludes with an Epilogue recounting his impressions, from his own visits, of famous Mekong landmarks, physical and cultural, visited or missed by the explorers. He rightly notes that "much of the great river over which they traveled remains unchanged . . . There have been physical alterations . . . , but these are dwarfed by the political transformation" (p. 222). While the volume was completed prior to the even greater transformations of the Spring of 1975, the remark serves as a prescient observation concerning current conditions.

The book is symbolic of Western involvement in Southeast Asia; it is an effective general summary of the last hundred years. It highlights the enthusiasms of many people who rushed to fill a frontier which did not exist for them; who visualized possibilities in contexts they were unable to comprehend. There is no doubt that the record of the Expedition is exciting material, but it is time to begin a new era by writing in ways that are attuned to the potentials of the Mekong River and the desires of its people. Dr. Osborne refers to two folio volumes written by Garnier as the Expedition's report. There is also an atlas and compilation of beautiful, larger pictures, some in color. What more details can be gathered from these and the reports of other explorers, including their letters and journals, and other sources which could shed light on the demography, nutrition, agriculture, commerce, religion, and ideals of these people? Perhaps a new age can open with a reassessment of these early explorations not in terms of Western problems, but in terms of past and present conditions of the people and resources of the region.

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D.G.E. Hall, *Henry Burney: A Political Biography* (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), pp. xv, 331, maps, bibliography, index.

This book deserves our attention for two simple reasons. First, the author is one of the greatest Southeast Asian historians of our time. All students of Southeast Asian history, to pass a course of study, must first familiarize themselves with his works, especially his master piece, *A History of South-East Asia* (1955), which is widely acknowledged as indispensable for basic understanding of Southeast Asian historical background, and which has been a compulsory text and reference since its first publication two decades ago.

The second reason why Professor Hall's new book is important lies in the importance of its central figure, Captain (later Major) Henry Burney, who was, in Professor Hall's words, "one of the most noteworthy servants of the East India Company of his time, [and] one who . . . came to play a markedly important part in the histories of two South-East Asian kingdoms, Siam and Burma". (Preface, p. ix). Henry Burney was born in Calcutta, at that time the seat of the Supreme Government of India, in 1792, to one prestigious scholar family of Great Britain. His father, Richard Thomas Burney, was Master of the Company's Orphan School in Bengal. This background greatly influenced Henry Burney's professional life as a career diplomat, orientalist and humanist.

He entered the Company's Military service in 1807. It is quite clear that at this time he began to develop his scholarship. His appointment during 1810s brought him into contact with Southeast Asia and its civilization for the first time. Soon afterwards, this region became his main interest. This interest, in turn, served him well as a diplomat deputed by the Governor General of India to the two most powerful courts of mainland Southeast Asia—Bangkok and Ava.

In 1825, the British found their newly established but substantial influence and interest in Southeast Asia in a critical position. After the recent failure of John Crawfurd's mission, new developments called for another mission to be sent to make a treaty on friendly terms with the Siamese court. After serving at Penang for several years, Henry

widely known Burney Papers, these sources include Burney's other journals, his academic articles and the East India Company's official documents throughout the period. The documents clearly show how Burney's judgement on individual conflicts or crises developed, and how he, as an agent of British interests and with his wit and self-confidence, came to his solutions. Burney's character, his grasp of local affairs and Company's policies are well represented.

Unfortunately, however, this book is seen from Burney's side and that of the British. Professor Hall makes little effort to arrive at a well balanced presentation of history. Few substantial parts could be claimed that Siamese and Burmese reactions toward Burney's mission in particular and British sanction in their affairs in general have been treated with equal impartiality. This, in addition to Professor Hall's prejudice against local chronicles, obviously arises from the fact that local historical sources regarding this period are very poor.

Reading this biography is not without its disappointments. Professor Hall's rather conventional approach to and style of writing history makes the book somewhat boring to read. Dealing with details seems to be his great pleasure. He also prefers the technique of "let the document speak for itself", as one might have sensed throughout the book. In too many cases, what he quotes from Burney's journals or other official documents unnecessarily runs to several paragraphs.

The organization of this biography is clear enough. There is but one thing that seems unlikely to be justified. Apparently, he wants to maintain the balance between Burney's two separate diplomatic careers—that with Siam (Parts One and Two) on the one hand, and that with Burma (Part Three) on the other. Perhaps, Professor Hall has his specific reasons in balancing these two accounts. But one could hardly be convinced that Burney's career as Resident at Ava for 8 years, is less complicated and less substantial than his mission to Siam.

More seriously, this biography fails in defending Burney as one who played a markedly important part in the histories of two South-East Asian kingdom. Students who want to learn more about the impact of

Burney's missions on Siamese and Burmese history from this book will be disappointed. Little effort has been shown to analyse the real, long-term impact of Burney's achievements as a diplomat on, especially, the Thai social, economic, cultural and political scene which he encountered.

Nevertheless, Professor Hall's success in giving Burney his rightful place among the great ambassadors of British India is unquestionable, and Burney as an orientalist and, to a lesser extent, a humanist, has been well defended. Finally, Professor Hall's information and comments on all the sources relating to Burney and especially on Burney's writings are invaluable for students who have a special interest in this period and area.

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