

REVIEWS

ผลงาน ๖ ศตวรรษของช่างไทย

Six Hundred Years of Work by Thai Artists & Architects

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TWO VIEWS OF A PIONEERING REFERENCE WORK

I

The reviewer, Somphob Phirom, was Director-General of the Fine Arts Department and professor of architecture at Silpakorn University until his retirement a few years ago. While he commends the volume under review as far as it goes, he feels it should have focused on the objective of promoting the works of artists who have themselves advanced the cultural accomplishments of Thailand and stimulated others to do so. Professor Somphob sees three main categories of artists or artisans in Thai culture: draftsmen, sculptors/carvers, and constructors. He lists a number of artists who are not mentioned in the volume but whose works entitle them to a place in Thai art history; e.g. HSH Prince Itthepasan Kridakorn, Nart Bhothiprasart, Silp Bhirasri, Ekart Manfredi, Daeng Keh and Chitr Buabut. In some cases of artists who are mentioned, only some facets of their work are represented while others have been ignored (e.g. the building achievements of HRH Prince Prisdang). Professor Somphob discusses technical aspects of terminology, art objects and their history; offers corrections on some erroneous data and explanatory material; and corrects a few typographical errors. He comments that he is in general pleased with the volume, which he sees as the result of a project he himself had initiated when he was Dean of the Faculty of Architecture at Silpakorn University.

คำนำ ท่านอาจารย์ ม.ร.ว. คึกฤทธิ์ ปราโมช ได้เขียนคำนำเป็นข้อความ
ที่ส่งเสริมคุณค่าของหนังสือนี้ โดยเฉพาะคำนำอ่านแล้วทำให้
ข้าพเจ้านึกถึง คำพูดของชาวตะวันตกที่ว่า “คนนะไม่สำคัญตอก
งานของคนสำคัญ”

คำว่า “ช่าง” ในภาษาไทยมีความหมายกว้างขวางลึกซึ้ง เข้าใจว่าโบราณมิได้แบ่งว่าเป็น “นายช่างหรือช่าง” เรียกรวมนำช่าง เช่น ช่างเขียน ช่างปั้น และช่างก่อสร้าง ซึ่งต่อมาใช้จำกัดว่า “สถาปัตยกรรมและวิศวกรรม” ซึ่งแคบไปกว่าการก่อสร้าง เพราะการก่อสร้างอาจไม่ใช่สถาปัตยกรรม วิศวกรรมก็ได้ ข้อสังเกตจะเห็นว่าไม่มีคำว่า “นายช่างเขียน นายช่างปั้น” เรียกกันแต่ว่า ช่างเขียน ช่างปั้น ถ้ามีคุณวุฒิสูงขึ้นครู ย่อมยกย่องเป็น ครูช่างเขียน ครูช่างปั้น มีการให้ครูช่าง แต่ต่อมาเกิดการแบ่งแยกโดยเฉพาะงานก่อสร้าง ซึ่งมีทั้งช่างที่ใช้ความคิดและฝีมือสูง กับช่างซึ่งใช้แรงงาน จึงเกิดคำว่า “นายช่าง” และ “ช่าง” ขึ้นมา เป็นการแบ่งแยกความรับผิดชอบมากน้อย ส่วนคำว่า “นายदान” คือ ผู้ควบคุมงานด้านต่างๆ จึงมีตำแหน่งเป็นนายदान และนายदानอาจจะไม่เป็นช่างก็ได้ ซึ่งสมัยนี้อาจจะใช้เรียกว่า ผู้บริหารหรือผู้อำนวยการ และคำว่า นายदानนั้นหายตายจากไปจากภาษาไทย ไม่นิยมเรียกกันจะเป็นเพราะอะไรไม่ทราบ ต่อมาเมื่อประเทศไทยได้ส่งนักเรียนไทยไปศึกษาต่างประเทศ ครั้นสำเร็จกลับมา ย่อมเกิดแบ่งชั้นวรรณะของพวกช่างในประเทศและช่างสำเร็จจากนอกประเทศ (ส่วนใหญ่จากยุโรป) เช่นเดียวกับคำว่า เปรี๊ญ ซึ่งใช้กับผู้สำเร็จการศึกษาระบบจากวัด ต่อมาผู้สำเร็จการศึกษาจากต่างประเทศก็ใช้คำว่า จบเปรี๊ญ บี.เอ. เหมือนท่านมหาจึงเกิดการรังเกียจ แบ่งชั้นวรรณะ คำว่า เปรี๊ญจึงใช้กับท่านมหาและท่านทิดจากวัด ส่วนพวกจบจากต่างประเทศ เปลี่ยนคำว่า “เปรี๊ญเป็นปรีญญา” ด้วยประการฉะนี้

ข้าพเจ้าขอชมหนังสือเล่มนี้อย่างหนึ่งคือ หนังสือนี้ ไม่มีคำว่า “นายช่าง” อยู่เลย แต่มิคำว่า “นายดัน (ซึ่งเป็นคำตายไปแล้ว)”

อยากจะชมว่าหนังสือนี้ไม่มีคำว่า “อาจารย์” แต่บังเอิญหน้าสารบัญลำดับข้อเลข ๖๔ มีคำว่า พระภิกษุอาจารย์แดง โดยต้องดชม เพราะปัจจุบันนี้ คำว่าอาจารย์มากมายเหลือเกิน จนไม่รู้ว่าจะดับไหนคือครู ระดับไหนคืออาจารย์

งานช่าง

คำว่าช่างนี้ โบราณนิยมเรียกว่า “ช่างสิบหมู่” ซึ่งความจริงมากกว่าสิบ ทำไมเรียกสิบหมู่ ข้าพเจ้ายังไม่ได้ศึกษา แต่ทราบจากบางท่านว่า “สิบปหมู่ หมายถึง ศิลปหมู่” และคำว่า “สิบป” จึงกลายเป็นภาษาไทยว่า “สิบ” เพื่อจริงไม่ประจักษ์

งานช่างนอกจากช่างเขียน ปั้น แกะสลัก ช่างก่อสร้าง ช่างปูน ช่างไม้ ช่างกลึง ช่างลงรักปิดทอง ฯลฯ ซึ่งนับว่าเป็นงานช่างอย่างสามัญชนเข้าใจแล้ว คำว่า “ช่าง” ยังมีความหมายมากไปกว่านั้นอีกคือ ช่างตัดผม ช่างเซตผม ช่างเสริมสวย ฯลฯ ช่างพ่อนของชาวเหนือ หมายถึงการร้ายร่าอย่างหนึ่ง ช่างเครื่อง หมายถึงช่างทำอาหารสำหรับกับข้าว พอกวิเสท โภชนาหาร เข้าใจว่าจะย่อมาจาก “ช่างเครื่องเสวย” ปัจจุบันช่างเครื่อง มักจะเข้าใจกันว่าเป็นช่างเครื่องยนต์ มากกว่าช่างเครื่องโภชนาหาร อนึ่ง คำว่าช่างปัจจุบันแยกออกได้อีกมากมาย เช่น ช่างกล ช่างยนต์ ช่างเครื่องปรับอากาศ ฯลฯ

ท่านผู้ประพันธ์หนังสือนี้รวบรวมรายพระนามและนามของช่าง (นายช่าง) ได้ ๑๓๓ นาม นับได้ว่ามากพอควรแก่หนังสือ

แต่ยังมีช่างอีกมาก ย่อมต้องใช้เวลาอีกกว่าต่อไป แต่บังเอิญขาดบุคคลสำคัญในทัศนของข้าพเจ้าอีกหลายท่าน คือ—

- หม่อมเจ้าอิทธิเทพสรรค์ กฤดากร สถาปนิกเอก สถาปนิกปริญญากคนแรกในประเทศไทย ในสมัยรัชกาลที่ ๗
- นายนาถ โพรประสาธ สถาปนิกริเริ่มก่อตั้งการสอนวิชาสถาปัตยกรรมศาสตร์คนแรกในประเทศไทย
- นายศิลป์ พีระศรี (ซี. เฟโรซี) ผู้ให้กำเนิดมหาวิทยาลัยศิลปากร ชาวอิตาลีคนแรกในประเทศไทย เป็นข้าราชการไทย และถึงแก่กรรม ณ ประเทศไทย และเป็นคนไทย
- นายเอกฤทธิ หมั่นเพินดี (อี. มั่นเฟรดี) มีผลงานก่อสร้างพระราชวังเจ้านายหลายชน ชาวอิตาลีคนแรกในประเทศไทย เป็นข้าราชการไทย และถึงแก่กรรม ณ ประเทศไทยและ เป็นคนไทย
- นายแดง แกะ ช่างทำบล็อคมือชื่อเสียง
- นายจิตร บัวบุศย์ ช่างเป็นช่าง เรียนจบจากเพาะช่าง และมีชื่อเสียงในปัจจุบัน

ฯลฯ

จากการพิจารณาเห็นว่า ท่านผู้ประพันธ์หนังสือเข้าใจว่า ตั้งใจจะรวบรวมช่างไทยจึงไม่กล่าวนามของช่างชาวยุโรปที่เข้ามาทำงานช่างในประเทศไทย และเข้าใจว่าตั้งใจเฉพาะเจาะจงงานช่างที่เกี่ยวข้องด้วยศิลปหรืองานฝีมือเป็นส่วนใหญ่ จึงไม่กล่าวถึงงานทางวิศวกรรม แม้แต่ผู้ที่เป็นวิศวกรโดยแท้จริง เช่น พระองค์เจ้า

ปฤษฎางค์ แต่หนังสือนี้กล่าวถึงผลงานของพระองค์ท่าน จะกล่าว
 แต่งงานศิลปทางจิตรกรรม และสถาปัตยกรรมเท่านั้น

ขอบเขตของหนังสือ หนังสือนี้จะเขียนขอบเขต (scope) ของการบรรยาย หรือ
 วัตถุประสงค์ของการแต่งหนังสือให้ชัดเจนว่า “เผยแพร่งานของ
 ช่างที่ได้มีส่วนในศิลปวัฒนธรรมที่บันดาลให้ชาติไทยได้มีเอกลักษณ์ของ
 ชาติ” ความนี้ปรากฏอยู่ในคำปรารภของผู้แต่ง ควรยกออกมาแสดง
 ให้เห็นวัตถุประสงค์อย่างชัดแจ้งแท้จริงจะเป็นการสมควรยิ่ง

การแบ่งประเภทของช่าง ช่างศิลปโดยทั่วไปตามแบบโบราณ หากจะแบ่งเป็น
 ประเภทใหญ่ได้แก่

๑ ช่างเขียน ๒ ช่างปั้นแกะสลัก ๓ ช่างก่อสร้าง
 ช่างเขียนไม่มีปัญหาเพราะเป็นการเขียนตามแบบประเพณี ไม่สู้จะ
 มีการดัดแปลงอย่างใด แสดงออกให้เห็นแตกต่างก็ด้วยฝีมือความ
 ประณีต และปัญญาเท่านั้น จะแยกออกได้บ้าง เป็นช่างเขียน
 ภาพผนัง ช่างเขียนภาพพระพุทธรูป ช่างเขียนลายลงรักปิดทอง เป็น
 ส่วนใหญ่ อย่างไรก็ตามช่างเขียนเป็นแม่บทของช่างทุกประเภท จะ
 เป็นช่างปั้น แกะสลัก ช่างก่อสร้าง ก็ต้องฝึกหัดช่างเขียนให้พอ
 ใช้งานได้ก่อนจึงจะสืบต่อเป็นประเภทอื่น

ช่างปั้นนั้น นอกจากจะปั้นด้วยดิน ด้วยปูนแล้ว ยังแยก
 ออกไปเป็น ปั้นห้วยโชน ปั้นลวดลายอันเป็นองค์ประกอบของ สถา-
 ปัตยกรรม เช่น ลวดบัว ฐานบัว บัวหัวเสา ลายกนกหน้าบัน ฯลฯ
 นอกจากนั้นแล้ว ยังต้องแกะไม้ สลักไม้ ฉลุไม้เป็นลวดลาย
 ตลอดไปจนแกะสลักหยาบกลัวยสำหรับงานศพ แกะสลักผลไม้
 มะละกอ ฟักทอง ให้เป็นรูปดอกไม้ ใบไม้ รูปสัตว์เพื่องานศพเป็น

ส่วนใหญ่ และแกะสลักล่องล้าเข้าไปในการแกะสลักผักเป็นอาหาร
เป็นช่างเครื่อง (โภชนาหาร) อีกด้วย

สมัยรัชกาลที่ ๔ การแกะสลักบนรูปสัตว์หิมพานต์ สำหรับ
เข้ากระบวนแห่ในงานพระบรมศพ เป็นงานที่ยิ่งใหญ่มาก งานนี้
มาดเมือรัชกาลที่ ๕ ซึ่งทรงพระราชดำริว่าเป็นการสิ้นเปลืองมาก
และประกอบด้วยประเทศไทย จำต้องติดต่อกับชาติในยุโรป การ
ทำงานพิธีหรืองานใดๆ ย่อมต้องคำนึงถึงโลก ในขณะนั้นนิยม
อย่างไร ค่านิยมสมัยนั้นเป็นอย่างไร ในสมัยรัชกาลที่ ๕
ประเทศไทยกำลังเจริญสัมพันธไมตรี รับอิทธิพลทางวัฒนธรรมจาก
ยุโรป การเศรษฐกิจจึงเป็นสิ่งที่ต้องคำนึงถึง งานพิธีใดๆ ที่ต้อง
เกณฑ์ไพร่, ทาส ผู้คนทำงานเพื่อราชวงศ์หรือกษัตริย์ย่อมต้องตัด
ให้น้อยลง เพราะโลกสังคมนิยมเริ่มมีบทบาทต่อสังคมของมนุษย์
งานแกะสลักแบบโบราณ นับแต่รัชกาลที่ ๕ มาจนปัจจุบันจึงมี
น้อยลง จะเห็นงานแกะสลักได้เพียงแต่เป็นส่วนประกอบของ
สถาปัตยกรรมตามวัดเท่านั้น งานช่างแกะสลักในสมัย ร. ๖-ร. ๗
อยู่ในกำมือของช่างจีนกว้างขวางเป็นส่วนใหญ่ ช่างไทยเวลานั้นน้อย
ตัวแล้ว คำว่า ช่างก่อสร้างแต่เดิมนั้นมิได้แยกว่าเป็นสถาปนิก หรือ
วิศวกร คำว่า ช่างก่อสร้างนั้นย่อมหมายถึง ช่างชั้นครูที่ เขียนได้
แกะสลักได้ คุมการก่อสร้างทางศิลป (สถาปัตยกรรม) ได้ ทางช่าง
ให้ความมั่นคง แข็งแรง (วิศวกรรมโครงสร้าง) ได้ ตัวอย่าง ช่าง
ก่อสร้าง ซึ่งออกแบบสร้าง พระปรางค์วัดอรุณราชวรารามนั้น ย่อม
ประมาณแกะความแข็งแรงของฐานราก ไม่ให้ทรุด ไม่ให้แตกร้าว
จะต้องสร้างให้ได้ส่วนศิลป (สถาปัตยกรรม) ซึ่งมีรูปทรงงดงาม
จะต้องเข้าใจในการออกแบบลวดลาย ที่จะประดับติดกับองค์ปรางค์
ให้โค้งงดงาม จะต้องเขียนภาพต้นแบบสำหรับขึ้น สำหรับก่อสร้าง

ได้ด้วย และจะต้องเข้าใจวิธีการก่อสร้าง กล่าวคือสร้างส่วนใดก่อนหลัง จัดทำนั่งร้าน (ร่างร้าน) อย่างไร ทำการก่ออิฐหรือปูนอย่างไร ต้องเข้าใจในการสร้างให้ได้ดังไม่เอียง จะต้องให้ได้ระดับอย่างแน่นแน่ ฉะนั้นช่างก่อสร้างโบราณจึงเป็นทั้งสถาปนิก วิศวกร โครงสร้าง เป็นช่างเขียน ช่างปั้น ช่างรับเหมาก่อสร้างไปในตัวคนเดียว คือท่านสามารถทุกสาขางาน ท่านเลือกใช้คนลูกหน้ที่ด้วย ท่านเป็นอัจฉริยะบุคคลโดยแท้ ท่านสามารถกว่าช่างปัจจุบัน (คือตัวผม)

ในหนังสือผลงาน ๖ ศตวรรษนี้คำว่า สถาปนิก วิศวกร นั้นเขียนลงไปตามลักษณะของงานในปัจจุบัน ไม่ใช่ภาษาเดิม คำว่า “สถาปนิก สถาปัตยกรรม วิศวกรรม วิศวกร” เป็นคำเกิดใหม่ หลังจากนักเรียนนอกได้กลับมาทำงานในประเทศไทย เพื่อจะแยกออกให้เห็นว่างานช่างนั้นแบ่งแยกกันตามแบบประเทศตะวันตก พระบาทสมเด็จพระมงกุฎเกล้าเจ้าอยู่หัวเป็นผู้ทรงพระราชทานศัพท์ต่าง ๆ นี้ และนิยมใช้ต่อมาจนบัดนี้

หนังสือเล่มนี้ยังมีข้อความที่ขบคิดเคลือบ คอ.—

๑. พระโกศ หมายถึง โถเหล็ก-หรือเงินอยู่ภายในสำหรับบรรจุพระศพ

๒. พระลอง หมายถึง ไม้ ประกอบลงรักปิดทองหุ้มพระโกศ

ในหนังสือ เรียกพระลองกับพระโกศ สลับกัน หลักฐานดูจาก พจนานุกรมฉบับราชบัณฑิตยสถาน และสารานุกรม ของราชบัณฑิตยสถาน

๓. หน้า ๘๑ ข้อ ๓๕ พานแว่นฟ้า ที่ถูกต้องควรเป็น

พนมหมาก

๔. หน้า ๕๒ พระที่นั่งภาณุมาศจำรูญ ร. ๕ ทรงสร้าง ถวายสมเด็จพระเจ้าฟ้ามหาวชิรุณหิศ พระบรมโอรสาธิราช สยามมกุฎ ราชกุมาร องค์แรก แต่พระองค์ท่านสวรรคตไปก่อน จึงเป็นมรดก ตกทอดมายัง สมเด็จพระเจ้าฟ้ามหาวชิราวุธ (พระบาทสมเด็จพระมงกุฎ เกศเกล้าอยู่หัว) พระบรมโอรสาธิราช สยามมกุฎราชกุมารองค์ที่ ๒ ปัจจุบันยังมีตราของสมเด็จพระเจ้าฟ้ามหาวชิรุณหิศติดอยู่ที่หน้าจั่ว ชุ่มทางเข้า

หน้า ๘๘ ข้อ ๑๒ ที่ถูกต้องเป็นพระที่นั่งศิवालย์

หน้า ๘๖ ภาพ ๗ และภาพ ๘ ข้อภาพสลับกัน

หน้า ๑๐๒ ภาพ ๑ เป็นภาพนรนาří ไม่ใช่ภาพนรสิงห์ คือเป็น เพศหญิงไม่ใช่เพศชาย

หน้า ๑๑๐-๑๑๑ เมรุมาศของ ร. ๕ สถาปนิกพระยาจินดารังสรรค์ ณีต ที่ถูกต้องพระยาราชสงคราม (กร หงสกุล) ในสมัย ร. ๖

หน้า ๑๑๒-๑๑๓ ภาพ ๒.๑ และ ๒.๒ ภาพสลับกัน

หน้า ๑๑๔ ภาพ ๒.๔ และ ๒.๕ ภาพสลับกัน

นอกจากนี้ข้อผิดพลาดเล็กน้อยในการพิมพ์ต่อไปควร จะได้ตรวจทานแก้ไข

หนังสือนี้เป็นหนังสือดีเล่มหนึ่ง และสมใจของข้าพเจ้า ที่เมื่อข้าพเจ้าเป็นคณบดี คณะสถาปัตยกรรมศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัย ศิลปากร ได้ขอร้องให้อาจารย์ทุกคนช่วยกันเขียนหนังสือเกี่ยวกับ วิชาการ หนังสือนี้เป็นผลอันหนึ่งที่ได้อากำขอร้องในสมัยนั้น

สมภพ ภิรมย์

กรุงเทพ ฯ

II

Joti Kalyanamitra, Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Architecture, Silpakorn University, states that his collection of data on the lives and works of Thai artists and architects is intended as "an appreciation of their unique contribution to Thai culture and identity [and] as a testament for posterity so that it may learn about those who never wanted to be recorded in history" (p. 2 of the introduction). The intentions are highly admirable; the results, unfortunately, are not worthy of them.

In setting out to compile a biographical dictionary of traditional Thai artists and architects, Professor Joti has taken on a huge and difficult task that has not been attempted before. The compiler acknowledges the incompleteness of his work, and expresses the hope that additions and corrections may be included in subsequent editions.

The compiler arranges the artists and architects chronologically from the Sukhōthai period to the present, but those working primarily in the international styles of the last 100 years are not included. For each artist the lineage and birth and death dates are given, when known. Then the artist's known or supposed works are listed with occasional brief descriptions or explanations. The entries are sometimes annotated with references. One or two, or as many as a dozen, illustrations of the artist's works are included, and, for nineteenth- and twentieth-century artists, often a photo of the artist as well. In addition to the compiler's introduction, and a foreword by M.R. Kukrit Pramoj, there is a "name index" according to chronological period (which serves as a table of contents), but neither a bibliography nor an alphabetical or subject index.

Professor Joti's book is clearly of interest and has its virtues. Nowhere else will a non-Thai-speaking reader find so much basic information on Bangkok-period artists and architects so conveniently accessible. While using the book, readers will be reminded of truths that we all sometimes allow to slip away to the backs of our brains. For instance, the illustrations of the buildings designed by Phrayā Chindārangsan and Prince Naris (pp. 110-118) show again how vigorous traditional Thai architecture was even at the beginning of the twentieth century. For sheer beauty and splendor, it is hard to think what comparable buildings of the same period anywhere in the world can top certain ones of them. The depressing repetition on page after page of 'now destroyed' or the like (pp. 28, 33, 34, 37, to mention a few) brings home to us how terribly Thai art even of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries has suffered from the elements, fire,

war, and bungling restorers. The paucity of information about artists living as recently as 150 years ago—contemporaries of Ingres and Turner, in other words—recalls how few decades it has been since the Thai artist emerged from his age-old anonymity. These early-nineteenth-century artists' **names** we do know, but usually not very surely what works they produced, or when or where they were born or died. How much less do we have any inkling of their personalities, their opinions, or their concerns.

Some of the photos in this book are handsome and well reproduced. The many old ones, showing buildings unblocked by Toyotas and telephone poles, or structures that have long since disappeared, such as elaborate royal funeral pyres (*phra men*), are especially welcome, hard as they are to find elsewhere. The photos of the artists frequently seem more revealing of the characters of the persons they represent than the biographical facts or even the images of their works: one remembers the intelligence and gravity of Phrayā Rāṭhasongkhrām (spelled "Rājsongkhrām" in the text) or the modulated soulfulness of Krommamun Thiwākōrawongprawat ("Krom Mūn Thiwākōrawongpravat").

The virtues of Professor Joti's book are constantly undermined by the incompleteness and unreliability of the compiler's efforts, combined with the variable accuracy of the translator ("S.J.") and the carelessness of the editor. Taking these problems in reverse order: first, there is a large number of typographical errors and inconsistencies in both the Thai and English texts. On page 19 the reference in the notes is given correctly in English as *Sān Somdet*, letter dated 23 July 1940, in volume 18, page 261. In the Thai text parts of the lines have apparently been lost so that the reference reads (in Thai) "volume of the 18th day, page 261". On page 24, in the English version of note 2, the Buddhist Era date 2505 is converted incorrectly as 1952 rather than 1962. In the same note the Thai text refers us to page 18, the English to page 8. I do not know which is correct. Elsewhere, notes mention numbered items in the lists of artists' works that do not exist, and artists die years before their birthdates. Similar typos are too numerous to list.

The translator of such a work as this faces difficult problems. Some of them might have been solved more satisfactorily by having the text looked over by a native English speaker who is familiar with the technical vocabularies of art and mythology in Thai, Sanskrit, and English. Of course no one will fail to understand "potterer" or "inlaid artist" each time they appear, but the unsuspecting English reader cannot know that "shadow masks and shadow puppets" (p. 55) is a mistranslation of "*nang yai, nang talung*", i.e. two different types of shadow puppets; or that "mythical half-angel half-bird" (p. 102) mistranslates "*nōrasing*" (Sanskrit "*narasimha*"), which means a creature half-human, half-lion. For many names and technical terms a simple transcription or

translation is inadequate; the translator must find the equivalent name or term commonly used in English. "*Ruan kāeo*", which has a special and specific meaning, should be rendered not as "niche" (p. 102) but as "*ratanaghara*", the Pali term used in English, with some such translation as "House of Gems" added. The translator's "Narai" (p. 115) should be replaced by "Vishnu"; "Thodsakan" and "Hasdayu" (p. 120) by "Ravana" and "Jatayu"; "Buddha Khayā" (p. 3) by "Bodhgayā"; "Vithunchādok" by "Vidhura (-paṇḍita)-jātaka"; etc. Who but a specialist would recognize "King Sirithamčhakpadiphilokrājāthirāj" (p. 3) as the king usually known in English as "Tiloka"?

An inconsistent and haphazard method of transliterating Thai terms has been used throughout the book. The translator's statement in an introductory note, that "there is no satisfactory system of transliteration in the Thai language", is unsupportable. The so-called graphic system, which reflects Thai spelling rather than pronunciation, is perfectly satisfactory for transcribing Indic loan-words. For broader purposes, the general system, which reflects pronunciation but not spelling, was promulgated by the Thai Royal Institute in 1939 (and described in vol. 33 of *JSS*). It is not only satisfactory but, with minor modification, has achieved wide currency among scholars writing in English. It forms the basis of the Library of Congress system, and thus is used by all university libraries in the USA having significant holdings of Thai language books. If non-Thai-speaking readers wanted to find a Thai-language book in an American library—to look at the illustrations, for instance—they could find the book in the catalogue if they had its title and author's name transcribed by the general system. By translating, but not transliterating, book titles mentioned in Professor Joti's work, the translator has made this impossible.

Another difficulty for readers is that the illustrations are uncaptioned, though usually they have numbers corresponding to a numbered entry in each artist's list of works. In no instance is the source of illustrations given, even though in many cases, particularly the old and unusual photos, we would like very much to know the source. Sometimes the illustrations even lack numbers. What does the photo on page 33 show, and how is it related to the text? Are the theatrical masks on pages 34-35 known to be the handiwork of the mask-maker Pān, or are they here only to show what masks look like? Will the ordinary reader know that the photo on page 36 goes with the entry on the previous page, and shows Wat Nā Phra Mēn in Ayutthayā ("Ayudhyā")? What is the building in the photo on page 92? Figure 15 on page 105 illustrates a Buddha image; the entry accompanying it mentions two Buddha images in two different places. Which one does the photo show?

A much more serious difficulty is that no reference at all is cited for many of the textual entries. The reader has no idea where the author's information comes

from, and cannot check it. What references there are may include the author and title, but no date or page number. Numerous important sources relating to the various works of art and architecture—sources in both Thai and Western languages—are not mentioned. Perhaps a Thai writer is not to be condemned for ignoring the works of Western scholars, but for a Thai writer not to make the best and most thorough possible use of Thai materials is harder to excuse.

The very first entry, for instance, is for “Phyā Thurieng” supposedly sent by the emperor of China to the Sukhothai of King Rām Khamhæng to improve the pottery industry there. No source of this information is given. I do not know where this artist is mentioned in the historical sources (perhaps in the *Phongsāwadān Yōnok*), but the notion of artisans from China helping to set up the potteries in the time of Phra Ruang (Rām Khamhæng?) is found on page 12 of the *Phongsāwadān Nua* (*Prachum Phongsāwadān, phāk thī 1*; Bangkok, Wachirayān Library, 2457 B.E.). Ideally, Professor Joti should have cited not only this reference but also the translations of the relevant passage in Camille Notton’s *Légendes sur le Siam et le Cambodge* (p. 23) and E. Thaddeus Flood’s “Sukhothai-Mongol relations: a note on relevant Chinese and Thai sources (with translation)” (*JSS*, vol. 57 part 2, p. 229; Flood also translates a passage from the *Čhunlayutthakārawong* mentioning the bringing of Chinese potters to Sukhōthai, p. 231). Whatever sources are cited, the reader unfamiliar with Sukhōthai history needs a warning that in all likelihood “Phyā Thurieng” is a mythological figment.

On page 2 Professor Joti illustrates a large and important walking Buddha in Chiang Mai, calling it the work of a sculptor named “Kādthōm”, and saying it was cast in 1290 during the reign of King Mengrāi. He notes that “there is no definite evidence concerning this work; but it is attributed to Kādthōm who was a leading sculptor of the period”, and cites a guidebook by Chin Yudi that I have not seen. Where does the name “Kādthōm” originally come from, one wonders. And the precise date 1290? Griswold suggests a date around 1370 for this image, mentioning, however, that “tradition assigns” the image to the period of Mengrāi (Bowie *et al.*, *The Arts of Thailand*, p. 124 and fig. 104).

In the entry on “Master Dam” (p. 19), who is said to have worked during the First Reign, Professor Joti lists four works by the artist: (1) “heads of Naga at the main staircase of the Buddha’s Foot Print in Saraburi Province”; (2) similar nāga balustrade-terminals at the library of Wat Phra Kāō (“the Royal Chapel”); (3) guardian giants “at the gate of the Library at the Royal Chapel”; and (4) “statues of Guardian Giants in the Royal Chapel”. One reference is given, which is intended to cover the whole entry. However, when that reference, a letter from Prince Naris to

Prince Damrong included in *Sān Somdet*, is checked, it is found to say only that "[some other figures of guardian giants] cannot compare [in quality] with those by Master Dam at the *mondop* of Wat Phra Kāeo". Is there another source that attributes the other works listed by Professor Joti to Master Dam, or is Professor Joti attributing them himself on the basis of their style? What about Prince Naris's statement: did the Prince have solid evidence that the guardian giants he mentions were by Master Dam, or is he reporting hearsay?

Exactly which nāga balustrade-terminals is Professor Joti referring to at the Shrine of the Buddha's Footprint? There are three pairs, two on one staircase and one on another. One of the first two pairs is said by Prince Damrong to have been cast during the First Reign, the other he says was added by King Chulalongkorn; the third pair he dates to the reign of King Bōrommakōt (1733-1758) without giving his reasons for doing so (Prince Damrong, "Tamnān phra phutthabāt tām nangṣū phra rāṭchaphongsāwadān", in Luang Boribai Buribhand, *Ruang phra phutthabāt, ḥangwat saraburī*; Bangkok, Fine Arts Department, 2492 B.E.; p. 27).^{*} The nāga balustrade-terminal that Professor Joti illustrates is not one of the pair said by Prince Damrong to have been cast in the First Reign, however; it is one of the pair supposedly dating from Bōrommakōt's reign. Does Professor Joti mean to propose a reordering and redating of the nāga balustrade-terminals, or has someone mixed up the photos? (Boisselier has suggested that the third pair of nāga balustrade-terminals was cast not in Bōrommakōt's reign but in that of Prāsāthōṅg [1629-1656]. This possibility is considered in detail in my dissertation, "The art and architecture of the reign of King Prāsāthōṅg of Ayutthayā", pp. 183-185, 253-256.)

On page 21 the murals in the library of Wat Rakhang Khōsitārām, Thon Buri, are listed among the works of the Venerable Nāk, but with no source for the attribution given. The reader would be helped by having the reference *Mural Paintings at Wat Rakhang* by Fua Haribhitak, in Thai and English (Bangkok: Khana kammaticān anurak sinlapakam, 2513 B.E.). In the entry on King Rama II one reads that the face of the main Buddha image in the *bot* of Wat Arun was modeled by the King. We are not told that the source of this information is Prince Damrong (*Tamnān phra phuttharūp samkhan*, reprint for the cremation of Udom Wēthasāt, Bangkok, 2516 B.E.; p. 26), and is based on nothing firmer than an "it is said that..." (Prince Damrong may, of course, have had a source he does not mention.) In the entry on Khun In Āyā, the Third Reign inscription at Wat Nā Phra Mēn, Ayutthayā, is quoted in part, but no reference is made to the publication of the entire inscription in *Prachum*

^{*} The source volume mentioned has been translated by Luang Suriyabongs as *The Buddha's Footprint in Saraburi Province* (Bangkok: Chetandhara Chakrabandhu, 1955).

silāṅhārūk, phūk thī 6, tōn thī 1 (Bangkok: Khana kammakān ṣhatphim ēkkasān thāng prawattisāt samnak nāyok ratthamontri, 2517 B.E.), on pages 54-57.

Examples of the inadequacies of Professor Joti's documentation—or of the arguable or imprecise nature of many of his attributions—need not be multiplied. For the recent decades covered in the later pages of the book, attributions are less likely to be controversial and the inadequacy of the documentation is sometimes felt less strongly. Even so, the entry on an artist as important as Prince Naris includes not a single reference or a single suggestion of where the reader might look for more information. It is just very regrettable that the usefulness of a book that might have become a standard and often-used reference work for all those interested in Thai culture, particularly of the Bangkok period, is gravely diminished because readers constantly find themselves asking “is this reliable?”, “how do we know this?”, or “who says so?” and not getting answers. If Professor Joti can provide the answers systematically in a future edition, he will have produced an interesting and valuable book indeed.

Forrest McGill

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ศิลปสุโขทัย

Sukhothai Art

L'art de Sukhothai

by Professor M.C. Subhadradis Diskul

Bangkok, The Cultural Committee of the Thailand National Commission
for UNESCO, 1978

in Thai, English and French; 292 pp., illus.; 280 baht (US\$ 14.-)

This splendid album of pictures has been compiled and edited by Professor M.C. Subhadradis Diskul, Dean of the Graduate School, Silpakorn University, and recently elected President of the Siam Society. Few art historians are better qualified to write about the art of Sukhothai. Although his erudition covers the whole range of Thai history and prehistory, his speciality has been the kingdom founded in northern Thailand in the first half of the thirteenth century A.D.

He explains in his foreword that although the Sukhothai kingdom lasted for only about 200 years, its "sublime art" is regarded as the best artistic expression of the Thai people, and its influence over subsequent styles in Thailand has been all-pervasive.

The 73 plates in the album cover not only the ancient city of Sukhothai and the neighbouring viceregal town of Si Satchanalai, but also Kamphaeng Phet and its environs. The general impression received is of the absolute mastery wielded by the builders and sculptors over the iconography and materials of their period. Added to that is the gentle atmosphere of melancholy which usually surrounds ruins, be they in Siam or Ctesiphon.

At the same time, the pictures reveal in many instances the highly successful restoration work carried out by the Department of Fine Arts, often with the help of archeologists and students from Silpakorn University.

This album heralds the first major, integrated restoration of Sukhothai since it was founded by King Sri Indraditya in about 1240. In the preface, *Khun Sman Sangmahli*, Deputy Undersecretary of State for Education and Chairman of the Cultural Committee of the Thailand National Commission for UNESCO, observes that the publication of *Sukhothai Art* coincides with the holding of the general conference of UNESCO in Paris late in 1978, when the international campaign for the preservation of the monuments and site of Sukhothai was launched.

The campaign will not only continue and extend the restoration of the temples and *chedis*; it will also establish a national park in Sukhothai, where the ambience of gardens and orchards described in King Ram Kamhaeng's famous inscription will be recreated.

M.C. Subhadradis's album is in effect the first fruits of an international project to enhance the rich cultural heritage of Thailand—an heritage which in spite of neglect and pillage remains the greatest treasure of this country. And at this juncture in history, it is more important than ever before for the world to be reminded of Thailand's deep roots as a cultural and national entity. For this service, UNESCO and M.C. Subhadradis deserve our sincere thanks.

John Stirling

Bangkok

Thailand and the Japanese Presence, 1941-45

by Thamsook Numnonnda

Research Notes and Discussions No. 6

*Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1977; 142 + vi pp.,
app.; S\$ 13.-*

This recent addition to the Singapore Institute series of research monographs provides a comprehensive survey of an important but little-studied period in modern Thai history. The five chapters cover the immediate impact of the Pacific War on Thailand, the nationalist programs of the government of Field Marshal Phibun, the Thai response to the Japanese presence, the various Thai resistance groups, and wartime economic conditions. Six appendices include the texts of several of the wartime agreements between Thailand and Japan, a 'who's who' of leading Thai personalities of the period, and a list of members of the "Free Thai" movements in England and the United States.

The study is based upon Thai, Western, and Japanese sources, and the author notes (p. iv) that she is the first scholar to have been allowed access to Thai government documents relating to foreign affairs after 1930 (presumably 1932 is meant, as the Seventh Reign records in the National Archives extend to this date). On the whole it would seem that these materials, as well as some previously unpublished records of the Office of the Prime Minister and the National Assembly, while adding some valuable detail and corroboration, do not substantially differ from or enlarge upon previously existing accounts of the period.

There is also a question about the nature of the Japanese sources, for while Japanese archives and newspapers are mentioned no Japanese titles are given, and it is never made clear in what sense or form 'use' has been made of materials in Japan, or even in fact whether the materials referred to are in the Japanese language.

The study shares several qualities—largely negative—common to earlier writings on the period. There is a frequent tendency to moralize, to look for heroes and villains, and to allot merit and blame, especially concerning the highly controversial role of Phibun. The verdict on Phibun is somewhat mixed, though tending to give the wartime Thai leader the benefit of the doubt, especially when the author asserts (p. 12, citing a highly laudatory biography by Phibun's son) that "one should also believe Pibul when he swore that he never had any prearrangements either in verbal or written form with the Japanese". Research of the late Thaddeus Flood in Japanese archival sources (cited elsewhere in the study under review, but not in this regard) produced extensive Japanese language documentation which would contradict this assertion. Flood's Japanese records may or may not give an accurate picture of events but in any case his findings should not simply be ignored, as has largely been the case to date with those whose primary interest is Thai events (in part, presumably, because of Flood's often questionable handling of the Thai side of Thai-Japanese relations).

One might similarly question the assumptions implicit in the study's concluding sentence (p. 95), that "widespread corruption during the Japanese presence was Thailand's worst wartime legacy".

Throughout there is frequently a style and choice of wording implying subjective and often apparently inconsistent value judgments. Thus, for example (p. 52):

By this time [1943-44] too most Thais had become resentful of Pibul's ultranationalist programmes. Weighted down by the régime's many rules and regulations, the Thais felt that they had been deprived of all freedom and right. Thus the pendulum of popular opinion began to swing against Pibul. . .

Nonetheless, when the Phibun government is toppled in a parliamentary *coup* in July 1944, and is replaced by a Pridi-backed administration headed by Khuang Aphaiwong which rescinded the more controversial parts of Phibun's nationalist program, we are told (p. 40) that "the new government began to demolish Pibul's many reforms towards modernization". In numerous other cases a similarly colored style and language intrude on the narrative, and many of the resulting assertions are at least open to question.

There are also, as in many of the earlier published accounts, frequent factual inaccuracies. While it is neither possible nor useful to catalogue these in the limits of a brief review, a few typical instances may be noted. It is stated (p. 22, fn. 3) that in addition to the premiership "Pibul held the other three Ministries [Interior, Foreign Affairs, Defence] throughout the term of his office", which is both incorrect and contradicted by the (Thai) work cited as source. The date of the abortive Pridi-led *coup* attempt is several times given as 1947 (rather than 1949), and presumably to fit this chronology Pridi is said (p. 112) to have "lived in exile in the People's Republic of China, 1947-70", i.e. commencing two years before the founding of the PRC. Prince Athit is described (p. 105) as Member of the Council of Regency, 1933-44, and Chairman of the Council from 1935 onward. In fact in 1933 King Prajadhipok was in Siam and there was no regency; from the King's departure for Java and Europe in January 1934 to his abdication in March 1935 (another date repeatedly given incorrectly), Prince Naris was sole Regent for the absent monarch; and when a Council of Regency was established in 1935 to act for the young King Ananda, Prince Athit was one of three members of the Council, later in the year becoming Chairman. The 'who's who' appendix as a whole contains a great deal of useful information, but with so many inaccuracies that any particulars should be used only after checking with other sources.

Numerous other examples could be cited, and at times the carelessness in detail obscures the meaning of the text. For example, in a discussion of Khuang's 1944-45 relations with the Japanese apparently based upon an article by the present reviewer published in this journal (July 1974; the relevant passage is on pp. 115-116), the original article reads:

... while after the war Phibun went to lengths to show the extent to which he had betrayed the Japanese, Khuang has denied doing so. Khuang even offered repeatedly to make the trip to Japan which Phibun had always refused, even though by 1944-45 the journey had become an extremely hazardous one ...

In the present text (p. 58) the passage has become

In contrast to Pibul who had tried to explain at great length how he had frustrated the Japanese war efforts through his programmes, Khuang never did so. After the war he even offered to go to Japan to consult with the Japanese even though by 1944-45 such a journey would be extremely hazardous. Pibul on the other hand had refused to undertake such a trip when he was Prime Minister ...

in which the chronology is not even internally consistent, and the meaning is problematical.

A final point may be mentioned as suggestion rather than criticism, for it goes beyond the author's stated scope of study. It is that, as is so often the case in the writing of Thai history, Thai-Japanese relations are discussed in a relative vacuum, with minimal attention devoted to the experiences of Thailand's neighbors in the same period. There has been extensive research in recent years on the impact of the 'Japanese presence' on other Southeast Asian societies, most notably— but by no means exclusively —Indonesia. As the Thai case has been relatively little studied to date it would seem especially useful, the more so in a work published in Singapore in English, if some attempt could be made to compare and contrast the Thai case with others, and particularly to discuss the extent to which Thailand's independence made her interaction with Japan qualitatively different from the wartime experiences of the colonial areas of Southeast Asia.

As a whole the work provides a comprehensive study, from a Thai perspective, of the impact of the war and the Japanese. Rather surprisingly the best section is the chapter (based largely, though not exclusively, on Western sources) dealing with the various Free Thai groups, a good integrative account of a complex and difficult subject. As noted above, one might wish for some discussion of studies of the Japanese presence in other areas of Southeast Asia, and comparisons with the Thai case. Also, a more substantial treatment might have been given of the background of Thai-Japanese relations and their rather erratic course of development from the time of the 'twin' reigns of King Chulalongkorn and the Meiji Emperor. The language and style, as pointed out, are often rather subjectively colored; a number of assertions are questionable or dubious; and minor factual errors abound. In sum, a work with much valuable information, but one to be used with caution.

Benjamin A. Batson

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Family Life in a Northern Thai Village : A Study in the Structural Significance of Women

by Sulamith Heins Potter

University of California Press, 1977

This book is a fascinating study of a northern Thai family, which reads like a novel with anthropological substance whose characters emerge as engaging human beings rather than impersonal or statistical grist to the academic mills.

In the interaction between individuals and groups that make up the behaviour of a community, the anthropologist may see certain formal relations that persist over time. Anthropological phenomena include kinship, jokes, magic and economics. In these, she or he may attempt to perceive the rules on which the social system is based, the rules whereby activities, kinship or whatever are organized and rendered meaningful to the members of the society.

The author of the study perceptively distinguishes two sets of rules : one relating to kinship, which is female-centred; and one relating to authority, which is male-centred and shows that the northern Thai family is ordered in a dynamic but delicate and complex way by these two elements.

The crude hypotheses of John Embree and his followers, that Thai social systems are loosely structured with minimal recognition of obligations, are not only swept away but replaced by a subtle and acute analysis.

Potter describes a system in which the ties which determine kinship are those between women. Lineality is traced through women, and the matriline includes the spirits of its previously living members, both male and female. Men marry into matriline; they can retain membership in their natal spirit groups only if they remain unmarried. The society is thus female-centred.

The spirits protect all the members of their matriline but only if they are politely treated, receive offerings and are formally informed of all events. They are particularly concerned with the sexual behaviour of the daughters of the matriline. If a young woman sleeps with a man, her mother must be told so that the spirits may be propitiated. These rules clearly have not been formulated to protect the purity of the line, since this is determined by the women; that is, lineality is not male-centred as in most other societies, but rather to place a value on premarital purity for women.

The relations between women also determine the important relations between men. Rather than the men forming the basic structure to which women are coupled, it is the men who are distributed around to female-determined lines.

However, Potter points out that this structural primacy of women does not leave the male role, a functionless one. Indeed, men within this social system have higher social status and formal authority than do women. Authority is passed from man to man, but by virtue of their relationships to the line of women.

The third principle which moderates these two is respect for age. Since it is very rare for a woman to marry a man her junior, this principle reinforces the position of the man.

The crucial structural nexus is therefore marriage. The woman holds the right to confer matriline membership by virtue of marriage to her; the man holds the formal authority and power—economic, political, religious and social—which is vested in men. The wife, however, is the mediator within the family between father, husband and son-in-law, who are separated from each other by avoidance taboos. Thus, in the management of family life, women have a position of power.

Consequently the formation of the marriage bond is an important process. The description of the formal conversation of courtship is an enchanting section of this book. This ritual is a verbal game using rhymes and playing with words. The key lies in answering a conventional question, for example 'what did you eat for dinner?', using words rhyming with one's true feeling: (English rhyme) 'roast **dove**' or if she feels shy 'creamcheese on **rye**'. Such games create an ambiguity in the interchange: to outsiders or even to herself it is possible to deny an involvement. Yet it also allows both the women and men to control and shape their feelings behind an entertaining verbal screen.

Should a women not get married, however, there is little social stigma. It is recognized that she can still lead a full life. The concern is more with economic success or failure.

The economic enterprises described in the study are equally of interest. Subsistence agricultural production is a collective enterprise, with all the family participating and with a clearly defined and customary sexual division of labour within the family. When work on the ricefields is finished, individuals are free for economic enterprises of their own.

Within the family studied, the children were responsible for buying almost every necessity, other than food and shelter, with the money they themselves had made. Money for clothing, trips, entertainment, gifts, education, equipment, and the outlay required for these enterprises had to be earned from the age of 10 or 11. The range of enterprises included marketing; growing peanuts, garlic or soybeans; raising chickens, ducks and pigs; selling their labour during the agricultural cycle or on construction projects; doing domestic service; or establishing an own-account enterprise such as hairdressing.

A proportion of the profits of every enterprise was supposed to be given to the parents both as a gesture of respect and to increase their assets. However, the exact proportion to be given rested upon the discretion of each child, and depended both on their character and their future prospects. Those hoping to marry or to establish their own enterprises would have to balance this with a sense of responsibility and family loyalty. This manipulation of economic relations, particularly by women, is unknown in most other societies.

The individual enterprises, particularly trading and contract labour, serve as a source of information about the world outside. Markets and workplaces function as effective news exchanges and sources of new social ideas and innovations. Thus women's access to them balances the formal authority of the men in that men cannot filter into the family only such information as they adjudge suitable.

Methodologically this book is strictly a family study, a chronology or history of their activities and aspirations. It is an interesting but very limited approach. Since we are given no indication of how typical is the family studied, we can make no generalizations. Perhaps it would have been better if the author had taken more families for comparison, or had given a more general structural account both of the village and of the relation between the village and the wider society.

The first chapter on the theoretical setting of the study is the weakest in the book, apparently the vestigial remains of an academic thesis—but not even well-chosen remains. Since the author's approach is both unusual and capable of eliciting extremely valuable material, it would have been more satisfying to have found an honest examination of the limits and strengths of the methodology. For example, how was the family chosen? Was it the only family in the village prepared to be subjected to such thorough and public observation? Did the family see it as another way of making money? Or was the choice deliberate?

Again the question should be raised: did the fact that the anthropologist was a woman either give her access to otherwise inaccessible data, or give her the insight to perceive a female-centred structure where other male anthropologists have been left to grope towards such an explanation [her references: Davis (1974), Potter and Turton (1972)]? Had the earlier anthropologists, Embree *et alii*, found the social system formless or unstructured because they had been blind to the possibility of women being a structural principle, and perhaps because of difficulty of male access to much relevant information?

There is a most insensitive and irrelevant lapse of taste in quoting reference material on pages 14-15.

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Mon-Khmer Studies VI

ed. by Philip N. Jenner

Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 1977; 322 & viii pp.

Mon-Khmer Studies (MKS) I, II, and III appeared in 1964, 1966, and 1969, respectively, as joint publications of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) and the Linguistic Circle of Saigon; MKS IV (1973) was a joint publication of the Center for Vietnamese Studies at Southern Illinois University and SIL; MKS V (1976) appeared from SIL/Manila shortly after the evacuation of SIL from Viet Nam in 1975. The contributors to these first five volumes were for the most part SIL linguists and field workers, and the series has been a valuable source of (primarily descriptive) linguistic data on the minority Mon-Khmer languages of mainland Southeast Asia. At the First International Conference on Austroasiatic Linguistics held in Honolulu in 1973, it was decided to broaden the scope of MKS to accommodate scholars in the whole field of Austroasiatic linguistics, and in 1976 Philip N. Jenner of the University of Hawaii was asked to assume the editorship of what is intended to be an annual journal of Austroasiatic studies, devoted primarily to synchronic and diachronic linguistic studies of Austroasiatic languages, but open also to contributions from ancillary disciplines "such as anthropology, archeology, art history, folklore, history, literature, and philology" (p. viii). Reflecting these new editorial directions, the eleven articles in MKS VI are by scholars from five different countries; three are in French, and two deal with non-linguistic but related disciplines.

The following review is a brief description and/or critique of each of the eleven articles.

(a) "Ditransitive goal verbs in Vietnamese" (pp. 1-38) by Marybeth Clark is a detailed application of Fillmorean case-grammar, as modified by Starosta and others, to the analysis of a class of Vietnamese verbs, with comparative examples from Thai, Khmer and Rhadé, and suggests that this verb class is an areal feature of Southeast Asian languages in general. The class is defined in large part by its concurrence with "coverbs", which are defined as "locational and directional prepositions derived from homophonous and synonymous verbs" (p. 2). However, it is not at all clear whether such verbs and coverbs are homophonous forms or whether they are simply separate occurrences of the same verb whose meanings must be **translated** differently in English; in other words, it may be an English semantic distinction rather than a Vietnamese one. This reviewer's views on case grammar can be read in the *Journal of Asian Studies* 33 (1973). 1:152-5, so they will not be repeated here; however, the following point illustrates one of the paradoxes of the search for language universals: if this particular feature is, as the author asserts, "believed to exist in all languages" (p. 1), it is difficult to see what its discovery in all Southeast Asian languages will add to our description of those particular languages.

(b) Gérard Diffloth's "Mon-Khmer initial palatals and 'substratumized' Austro-Thai" (pp. 39-57), based on published sources on Palaung, Mitani's data on Lawa and Khamet, and his own data on the Aslian languages of Malaysia, uses reconstructed initial palatals, including /s/ and /h/, to refute Benedict's claim of a "substratumized Austro-Thai" which would have died out after leaving its imprint on the phonology, but not the lexicon, of Austroasiatic. While the data on Lawa is not quite so clear-cut as the article suggests, Diffloth has a broad grasp of Austroasiatic languages, and can be credited with having almost singlehandedly brought the Aslian languages out of obscurity; his conclusions can therefore be accepted with confidence.

(c) In his "Etude d'une state de changements phonétiques dans l'ancien Cambodge", Michel Ferlus provides an interesting set of correspondences in which words with initial stop+stop or spirant in some Bahnaric languages regularly correspond with words having initial stop+sonorant in other Bahnaric languages and in the Pearic languages, with sporadic occurrences of such reflexes in Khmer and Mon; his further hypothesis, based on evidence from "*vieux khmer*" (which he believes to have been a Pearic language), that this phonological change was unique to Pearic, and that it spread by borrowing to Bahnaric, Khmer, and Mon, seems unwarranted by present evidence.

(d) Robert K. Headley's "A Pearic vocabulary" (pp. 69-149) is an attempt to draw together and to present in glossary form all the published and unpublished data from diverse (and often old and unreliable) sources on Pearic vocabulary. The glossary lists about 1,000 items, and provides valuable data on a little-known group of Austroasiatic languages, but the format is somewhat puzzling: the entries are alphabetized by a kind of generalized transcription of the Pearic form, followed by the original transcriptions and their sources, and by the English gloss; surely it would have been preferable, for comparative purposes, to have listed the English gloss first, followed by the original transcriptions for the gloss in the various sources (and languages), and then, if desired, to propose a suggested reanalysis, canonical shape, or quasi-reconstruction at the end.

(e) The main point of Judith Jacob's "Sanskrit loanwords in Pre-Angkor Khmer" (pp. 151-168) seems to be that, in Pre-Angkorean, in addition to Sanskrit words borrowed to fill lexical lacunae, many Sanskrit words were borrowed for already existing words in the interest of style, and because of the cultural prestige of Sanskrit; but the most interesting aspects of the article to this reviewer are the identification of those early Sanskrit loans which have survived in modern Khmer, and the semantic specializations which developed from Khmer and Sanskrit doublets.

(f) Philip Jenner's "Anomalous expansions in Khmer morphology" (pp. 169-189) is a fascinating attempt to explain what appear to be irregular derivations in the Khmer lexicon; he assumes that words of shape CVC are the bases for primary derivatives, which in turn are the bases for secondary derivatives; e.g. /luəh/ 'to insult' > /cluəh/ 'to quarrel' > /cumluəh/ 'a quarrel'. The hypothesis that all derivatives in Khmer are based on a derivational chain of this kind is interesting from an

etymological point of view, but it requires, as Jenner points out, the positing of hypothetical links when they do not exist in the modern lexicon, and results in some rather tenuous semantic connections between bases and their derivatives. The reader should be aware, furthermore, that 'morphology' and 'derivation' are being used in the historical or etymological sense, and do not refer to synchronically functional derivation.

(g) "Les chroniques royales khmères" (pp. 191-215) by Khin Sok is a thorough discussion of the historiography of the Khmer royal chronicles, and is thus an example of the "contributions from sister disciplines" signalled in the Editorial Note (pp. vii-viii) which prefaces the volume.

(h) Saveros Pou's "Deux extraits du Rāmakerti" (pp. 217-245) is a translation, with cultural and etymological notes, of two episodes from the Khmer version of the *Rāmāyana*, and is thus, like the preceding article, ancillary to linguistics *per se*.

(i) "Gender in Khasi nouns" (pp. 247-272) by Lili Rabel-Heymann is a very interesting description of gender classification in Khasi which reveals that while Khasi nouns follow natural gender up to a point, gender assignment in the great majority of Khasi nouns, except for some partially-consistent semantic categories, is simply arbitrary or 'grammatical', just as in such Indo-European languages as French and German; the best example of this arbitrariness is that while most fruits are masculine, bananas are feminine!

(j) Yasuyuki Sakamoto's "The sources of Khmer /wə/" (pp. 273-278) contains some cases of over and under-representation in its analysis of modern Khmer vowels; nevertheless he makes a convincing case that the diphthong /wə/ in modern Khmer is a recent development from Thai and Vietnamese loanwords.

(k) Although this reviewer is not conversant with the literature on discourse analysis, Richard Watson's detailed study "Discourse elements in a Pacoh narrative" (pp. 279-322) illustrates the structural complexity of discourse, and amply demonstrates that any theory of linguistics which is based on an analysis of context-free sentences is an empty exercise indeed.

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Southeast Asian Affairs 1978

Editorial Committee: Kernial S. Sandhu (Chairman), Leo Suryadinata (Co-ordinator), Lim Joo-Jock, Lim Yoon Lin, M. Rajaratnam, Christine Tan Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies and Heinemann Educational Books (Asia) Ltd.; 324 pp.

Among the many very useful functions performed by the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore is the publication of its annual volume *Southeast Asian Affairs*. The issue under consideration in this review, *Southeast Asian Affairs 1978*, is the fifth in the series and it deals with a wide range of issues and subjects concerning the Southeast Asian region and the individual states within it. The volume commences with an overview that provides a helpful account of the major developments during 1977, followed by five articles of a general or regional character. The remainder of the book focuses on the states that make up the Southeast Asian region, including Brunei but, for understandable reasons given the problems associated with research on the country, excluding Kampuchea (Cambodia).

Reading the overview chapter, written by Dr. Harold Crouch, it is striking to reflect on the magnitude of the changes that have taken place in the region since 1977. Dr. Crouch's chapter offers an able account of the principal events of 1977 and points accurately to fundamental problems that exist throughout the region. Seen in the perspective of events during the subsequent year, however, the period that is considered by Dr. Crouch reveals itself as one that had, particularly for the mainland, a prolegomenous character. The war in Viet Nam that ended in 1975 had brought a period of pause and although certain events, which are indeed noted in this chapter, were casting their shadows before them, it was not until the succeeding year that the full potential for conflict in the Indochinese area was revealed.

To write in these terms is not to suggest that *Southeast Asian Affairs 1978* has acquired a dated character. Indeed, quite to the contrary. Just as the introductory chapter and the more general regional chapters that follow provide a useful summary of developments up to a certain date, so too do the chapters relating to the individual Southeast Asian states offer insights into the political and economic dynamics of these states and the problems that confront their governments. With no less than 25 chapters in this volume, excessive space would be required to comment, even briefly, on each contribution. If the observations that follow are selective this should not be taken to indicate dissatisfaction with chapters that do not receive mention.

Among the virtues of this volume are that it does not have any notable homogeneity of approach, and the subjects that are treated are diverse. There are already a substantial number of publications that provide, in greater or lesser detail, chronological reviews of the political developments in the various countries of Southeast Asia. *Southeast Asian Affairs* does not attempt to duplicate this approach. Instead,

the contributors, roughly two thirds being Southeast Asian and one third non-Southeast Asian in terms of nationality, write about issues of importance in the states that are the subject of their research interests. Thus Professor William Liddle contributes a valuable and sceptical assessment of the 1977 elections in Indonesia, while Dr. Peter Chen surveys the socio-political results of government-backed birth disincentives in Singapore. Viet Nam is examined in terms of its foreign policy by Professor William J. Duiker, and post-war economic planning by Dr. Ta Huu Phuong and Mr. Guy Ta, while the treatment accorded Malaysia is concerned with three vital political issues: the role of the National Front by Dr. Chandra Muzaffar; the part played by the Pan Malay Islamic Party in Malaysian politics by Encik Alias Mohamed; and the role of ethnic Chinese ("Chinese Malaysians", to adopt the author's usage) in Malaysia by Dr. Tjoa Hock Guan.

Read as a whole, *Southeast Asian Affairs 1978* leaves the impression of Southeast Asia as a region deeply troubled by both internal and external problems. The end of the 'Second Indochinese War' was rightly regarded as the end of an era. But that view does not imply the belief that an era's end necessarily spells peace and stability. As the various contributions concerned with mainland Southeast Asia in this volume stress, the problems associated with conflict in the Indochinese region were only some of the factors that existed to test the stability and the will of the various governments in the region. As for maritime Southeast Asia, no comparable conflict has rocked that part of the region, but this volume draws attention to the problems—economic and social, as well as political—that must be faced by the maritime states in the years ahead, many of them in the short-term future.

Southeast Asian Affairs 1978 is a valuable testimony to the work being done by scholars at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, or by those who have at various times had some association with that organization. Those with a serious interest in developments in Southeast Asia, and not just professional scholars, will consult this volume with advantage.

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Contemporary Southeast Asian Arts and Crafts

by *Thelma R. Newman*

New York Crown Publishers, 1977; ISBN 0-517-52729-4; 306 + xii pp., illus.

This lavishly illustrated book (with 800 photographs and 26 colourplates) attempts to survey the entire field of Southeast Asian arts and crafts from both the historical and practical points of view. The emphasis is more on the practice of the crafts, as the cumbersome subtitle indicates ("Ethnic craftsmen at work with how-to instructions for adapting their crafts"), as does the inclusion of a list of commercial supply sources, all with one exception in the United States of America.

A survey of this kind is inevitably somewhat superficial since the field covered is enormous—geographical, temporal and, to use the style of the subtitle, media-wise. Ms Newman, whose previous works include volumes on candle-making and sculptural plastics, is at her best when dealing with techniques, though she is inclined to overpower her reader with related technical terms. Practical tips are included to guide the experimenter willing to turn his hand to a traditional craft.

The book is divided into nine main sections, dealing respectively with applied design on textiles (mostly batik), weaving, plaiting (including twining and coiling), bamboo and lacquer work, carving, pottery, metalwork, beads, and a rather loose and flimsy final section entitled "Ritual expressed in painting, paper and parchment". The text is accompanied by an introductory chapter on the transmission of culture in Southeast Asia, a concluding note relating only to the position of the artist in Bali (with the erroneous implication that this is representative of the whole of Southeast Asia), a map, a bibliography and a most inadequate index.

There inevitably are lacunae. Traditional painting, with the exception of Bali, receives no mention, so the frescoes of Thai temples and book illustrations are ignored altogether (perhaps because the reader is unlikely to be in a position to copy either). Viet Nam merits but one passing mention, but given the orientation of Vietnamese culture to China this can be understood. However, the virtual exclusion of Burma in a consideration of this subject is not so easily forgiven; there is no mention of the sewn jewelled hangings which are only found in Burma (introduced, it is true, after Chinese models) and Burma's preeminence in lacquerwork is largely ignored. Cambodia and Laos have four mentions each. Such crafts as vegetable-carving in Thailand, kite-making in Malaya, Cambodian silk *ikat* hangings and repoussé silver are not referred to. The list could be extended. But the author does include, rightly, some little-recognized craft forms, like the Kasongan pottery from central Java and the magnificent *ikat* cloth of Sumba.

Ms Newman is weakest when giving the historical background, and makes wild guesses for dating the introduction of techniques into different areas. We are told for example that "in the third century BC the epic Indian stories *Mahabharata* and *Rama-*

yana proliferated throughout Southeast Asia": there is no evidence of any kind that this is so, and indeed it is most unlikely, since Indian penetration of the region does not appear to have started until several hundred years later. We know that the earliest state, Funan, was founded some time during the first century AD and was organized in the manner of an Indian kingdom: but that is different from saying that the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* proliferated in the whole area long before. Neither epic ever reached the Philippines, and the earliest concrete evidence is in the bas-reliefs of Prambanan of the ninth century. However, Ms Newman may not have noticed those: the photograph of this central Javanese monument is at one point in her book given the caption "Indian influence can be seen in the *wats* of Thailand" and three other photos of Prambanan are attributed to Borobudur, of a different place, century, style and religion. The *parang rusak* design, we are told, was worn only by members of the royal house at Jakarta; Jakarta never had a royal house, but Yogyakarta has been the seat of a sultanate since 1755 which did reserve to itself the use of the *parang rusak*. Ms Newman's sense of history is as vague (*canting* did not "emerge until the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries"; emphasis mine) as it is inaccurate (contact between Bali and Java was cut off "after the fourteenth century when the Muslim states fought among themselves for control of Java", a proposition which ignores the Hindu hold at Balambangan until 1639 and the position of the Dutch). How *ikat* techniques can be firmly attributed to Dong-son, when literally not a shred of evidence points in that direction, is inconceivable. Ayutthaya finds itself relocated in the south of Thailand, and the *stupas* of Wat Phra Ram, unnamed in the identification to the illustration, are dated "to about the mid-fourteenth century"; according to the chronicle of Luang Prasart, the temple was founded in 1369 but it is known to have been completely renewed in the fifteenth century by King Boromatrailokanat. The Buddha is confused with a *bodhisattva* at one point because of loose phraseology. Such stylistic laxness can at times cause total confusion, as in

ancestor figures, carved from the soft wood of the sago tree, are not deemed permanent, as the memorial of Borobudur is, but rather are often discarded in the forest so that supernatural power can help the sago trees prosper.

The Rangda-Barong dance is erroneously placed in the *Ramayana-Mahabharata* tradition, and Thai and Burmese court dances, we are told, were originally religious in content and came to be enjoyed as folk art; they were not the former and are not the latter. Two stone figures illustrated as being examples of Thai carving are in fact Chinese carvings imported as ballast during the nineteenth century and to be seen at Wat Suthat in Bangkok. In 1294 we are told King Ramkamhaeng brought 300 Chinese potters to Thailand: historians would love to know the source of such figures which have hitherto eluded them: dubious overaccuracy is however compensated for by splendid vagueness, since we are told that "after the war laid waste to the celadon potters' villages, celadon pottery did not see a revival until recent times"; unfortunately we have no idea which war is referred to, where, or when. We are on even more shifting ground when conjectures are thrown in: because glass beads found in a Borneo tomb proved to be of early Venetian manufacture, it is suggested that Marco Polo

visited the spot. No one has yet been so wild as to assume that, because a Pompeian bronze lamp was found in the Pong Teuk excavations in Thailand, the Romans went there; but doubtless that will come. *Dalang* is spelt correctly three times but also thrice as *daland*, and one wonders if the author knows which in fact is right. Prince Panji becomes Prince Pankji, and the Mekong River the Mekcong, perhaps corrupted by the Viet Cong. A Cirebon cloud batik is placed sideways up, which makes nonsense of its symbolic significance.

Apart from these inaccuracies, there are other irritants to the book. There is an excess of personalization: we are shown pictures of unexplained but named Westerners beside unnamed Southeast Asian artists. Sometimes the artists are named, but to the exclusion of others, so one particular batik artist in Yogya and a particular furniture factory owner in Chiang Mai both receive free publicity (only one of them makes it as far as the index, however). The author appears in at least two of the photographs; and one plate appears, deliberately, twice, since she took the photo and thought it good. The style is often lax to the point of inaccuracy, and it occasionally jars; there is no justification for calling a craftswoman a "craftsperson", other than by fashionable analogy to 'chairperson', and the making of unrecognizable noun forms such as "ikating" should be punishable by death. There is rather too frequent reference to sources of such materials as bamboo and precatory beans in North America, but this is presumably justified by the anticipated audience, who would be familiar with the antique imperial measures used throughout. While some subjects are left out, others are gratuitously thrown in; at one point the text becomes dangerously though superficially involved with dance which if an art does not seem to be the plastic arts that Ms Newman is dealing with. Finally there is an extraordinary lack of cohesion as one jumps from a village in Mindanao to one part of Bangkok and over to a family in the southern Celebes; the book is in radical need of ordering.

In spite of its sloppiness and errors, the volume has a value in its basically accurate descriptions and photographs of craft techniques, and even though it is hard to imagine the bored housewives of Plains, Ga., settling down to make *wayang* figures or produce Sukhothai celadons, it is handy to have these descriptions of diverse crafts brought together. The book is, as the reader will have gathered, very much thinner on the arts, and this is not a volume to turn to in order to find out something about, say, the evolution of the Buddha image in mainland Southeast Asia or the styles of temple carving in central Java. Essentially it is a coffee-table book, as the extent of the illustrations suggests. It is unfortunate that the field has been somewhat preempted by the publication of this so often unsatisfactory work; rather more scholarship and care could have made it a valuable contribution to the thin literature on the subject.

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The Demography of the Semai Senoi

by Alan G. Fix

Anthropological Papers No. 62

University of Michigan, Museum of Anthropology, Ann Arbor, 1977

The Semai are the largest of the several aboriginal populations in Peninsular Malaysia. They numbered about 12,750 in 1965, and live along the edges of the Main Range, principally in the States of Perak and Pahang. Their language is of the Austroasiatic family which suggests that their origin may have been in northern Southeast Asia, but they have inhabited the Malaya Peninsula for several centuries.

Traditionally, the Semai have practised swidden, or shifting, cultivation; however, contact with a broader environment has brought some changes. The Malays have gradually occupied lands formerly settled by the Semai and have used them for large-scale tin mining or rubber cultivation. Some Semais now have rubber holdings, grow wet rice, or engage in wage labour on tea estates. The western, lowland population has been more acculturated with the rest of the country than the eastern, highland population, which has fewer contacts with Malays.

The Semai live in hamlets of only a few houses which form settlements, generally oriented along streams or rivers, of 50 to 300 persons. Land is not owned by individuals or kin groups. Perhaps because of such a lack of 'territorial imperative' warfare does not occur in the society. Families frequently move for a variety of reasons, so the settlements continually experience compositional changes.

The author of the study under review lived in the Semai area for 13 months, from April 1968 to May 1969. During that time he conducted a household census in seven settlements and recorded genealogies and reproduction histories in the main settlement of study. His understanding and description of the population are clear, but the absence of photographs in the book is a serious obstacle to the reader's perception of the society.

Anthropologists have recently increased the degree of quantification of their study subjects. Greater quantification allows for more precise demographic statements, e. g. regarding birth rates or infant mortality rates, than would be possible from a researcher's perceptions based on simple observation. It permits comparison with other groups on a wide range of critical factors, and it forces internal consistency of estimates (the population's growth rate must be the difference between its birth and death rates, taking migration into account). Fix, in this volume, quantifies to the near total exclusion of the ordinary anthropological description of ceremonies, work technology, dress, daily schedule, etc.

Marriage is a rather amorphous institution among the Semai. The society does not celebrate marriages and there is no formal bride-price. Young men and women may enter into two or three marriages, more like an 'affair', which last for a short time and produce no offspring. A young girl may subsequently marry a man many years her senior. Such a marriage is also unstable, commonly ending in death or divorce. The woman thereupon usually marries a man more nearly her own age. Those marriages,

especially if children result, are quite stable. If a woman becomes a widow or is divorced during her childbearing ages, she is likely to remarry again soon. Among more than 700 persons censused by the author, there were 128 males for every 100 females. Fix argues that this high sex ratio helps to explain the rather large age difference between spouses, and also the quick remarriage of widows and divorcees.

Divorce is every common among the Semai; perhaps as many as two thirds of marriages terminate this way. However, once children are born only 10 to 12 per cent of marriages ends in divorce.

The Malaysian Department of Aboriginal Affairs (Jabatan Orang Asli) regularly enumerates aboriginal populations. Fix bases most of his demographic analysis on the census of 1965 and on his own count referring to 1969, and considers only the less acculturated East Semai population. In the settlement which Fix studied in depth, he found the crude birth rate to equal 39 births per 1,000 population per year since 1960. The total fertility rate, or average number of children born to a woman in her lifetime (if she survives through her childbearing years) was equal to 5.69 when computed both from current fertility rates of women aged 15 to 44 and from completed family size of women over age 45.

These fertility rates are high, but not near a physical maximum. The crude birth rate in both Pakistan and Bangladesh is near 47 per 1,000, and in certain anthropological populations has been 50 per 1,000. Fix's research does not provide an explanation of why fertility among the Semai is not higher, but the author speculates about some causes. Ten of 117 women were childless and presumed sterile. The high (8.5 per cent) rate of sterility is partially a reflection of the small sample size, and the author feels that the rate of 3.6 per cent found among women older than 45 years is probably closer to the underlying level of sterility. Fecundity among girls younger than 18, and women older than 39 is relatively low. Disease associated with childbearing probably explains the latter case.

The less-than-maximum fertility among women aged 18 to 39 results from rather long intervals between births. These intervals may exist because Semai women breastfeed their children for three to four years, and lactation inhibits conception. The author states that there is no deliberate attempt to limit fertility, but apparently he did not explore the extent to which women nurse their children for long periods because they do not yet want another birth. Fix believes it is possible that fertility is somewhat impaired by poor nutrition. He found no evidence of abortion or infanticide.

The author was able to make mortality estimates for one settlement by tracing each person who had been alive during the 1960 census. This method yields a crude death rate of about 30 per thousand. About 30 per cent of children die before age 2, and 35 to 40 per cent die before age 15. The birth and death rates indicate that the population is growing by a little less than 1.0 per cent a year. There is a fair amount of local migration (10 per cent of the population in 10 years), but net migration is negligible.

Fix compares the age distribution from the 1965 census with that of various stable populations in order to select a stable population and model life table which represent the Semai population. This analysis indicates that the underlying crude birth rate of the population is 40 per 1,000 and the crude death rate 33 per 1,000; hence the population is increasing at an average rate of 0.7 per cent a year.

The sex ratio of the population (118) is quite high. For every 100 female births there are 107 male births (the international average is about 105). The sex ratio increases above age 15 because of high female mortality. Female life expectancy is just 28.3 years, compared with 31.3 years for males. Higher female mortality is somewhat rare, but not unknown (it occurs in India, for example). This somewhat unexpected finding should be investigated further by the author. He attributes it primarily to deaths connected with childbearing. Mortality for both sexes is equal under age 15, thereafter rising more rapidly among females. Only 40 per cent of women reaching age 15 survive through the reproductive period. Yet the risks associated with childbearing are not the full explanation of higher female mortality, because the differential continues above age 50.

In perhaps the most interesting chapter of the book, Fix projects the initial settlement population with the Monte Carlo simulation technique to assess the degree of random variation in vital rates and age structure which may occur in a small population. He finds that in a population of under 500, the crude birth rate may fluctuate by as much as 20 per cent from year to year (or between subgroups of the same population), given constant underlying rates. He also concludes that the age structure is not a good indicator of vital rates, again owing to random fluctuations in birth and deaths.

In summary, Fix provides a concise and well-reasoned description of the demography of the Semai people. By quantifying several aspects of the population, he gives a great deal of information about life and death in their society. Technically his approach with the use of stable population analysis and simulation techniques is very competent. But he does not bring the Semai to life for the reader because his approach is too mechanical. In fairness to the author, he does fulfill his objective, which is only to describe the demography of the society since other anthropologists have written more comprehensive descriptions about the Semai.

Still, he fails to interpret fully his more interesting demographic findings; for example, that fertility is substantially below the biological maximum although there seems to be no deliberate attempt at limitation, and that female mortality is higher than male mortality even after the reproductive years.

The volume will be of interest to anthropologists and demographers, as much for the technique as for the conclusions, but not for a more general audience.

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Plants of Khao Yai National Park

ed. by Professor Dr. Tem Smitinand

Bangkok, Friends of Khao Yai National Park Association, 1977
in Thai and English; 74 + viii pp., illus.; 200 baht (US\$ 10.-)

As a layman and nature lover I particularly welcome the book *Plants of Khao Yai National Park*, published by the Friends of Khao Yai National Park Association "as a handbook to the study of botany of the Park for tourists, students as well as laymen . . .", as stated in the foreword. Indeed, information about plants and flowers native to Thailand is often hard to obtain, as most people are not acquainted with the names of even the most common species. This book is thus a joy for me personally, and partly fills a serious gap in the documentation on wild plants of Thailand. A nice surprise inside the cover page is a very clear and colourful map of the Park showing types of vegetation, rivers and streams, innumerable villages, roads to and within the Park, the heights of mountain peaks, and the provincial boundaries. The text furnishes a concise description of the geographical features and types of vegetation, accompanied by photographs in colour. This is followed by a catalogue of some 92 species of plants native to Thailand stating their particular features and their use as food, if any. Best of all—and here is why I will have this book frequently in hand—are beautiful close-up photographs in colour of these native plants and flowers, a great help in identifying living plants as we find them.

It is worth mentioning how the Thai common names of flowers are charmingly apt; those who originally named them must have had a humane and special sensitivity. Here are a few examples: No. 45, *Mussaenda sanderiana* Roxb., has the Thai common name of *kaem khao* meaning "white cheeks". Indeed, the delicate whiteish colouring of the four leaves surrounding the flower cluster reminds one of very young children or young ladies whose cheeks have been patted with cooling lotion and powder; and No. 87, *Eria stricta* Lindl., has the common name *takhaab khao* meaning "white centipede", an apt name to describe a long-speared and spindly flower resembling a centipede. What a pity that the Thai common names have not been translated into English for the benefit of those unfamiliar with Thai!

The Association hopes the sale of this book will help to build up its fund for further work in identifying plant species in Khao Yai National Park (which are estimated to number some 2,000 to 2,500 as the Park lies on the 'flower belt'), and its other projects. A sequel to this volume will be compiled if demand warrants. This book is well worth acquiring, not only as a ready reference on native plants, but also in support of the cause of nature conservation at the Park.

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Tribute and Profit : Sino-Siamese Trade, 1652-1853

by Sarasin Viraphol

Harvard University East Asia Monograph No. 76

Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University

Cambridge, Mass.; Harvard University Press, 1977; xx + 419 pp., US \$15.-

Siam's traditional relations with China had their most explicit expression in the series of some 200 tributary missions sent by the Thai to the "Court of Heaven" over a period spanning six centuries. Superficially, the flow of Siamese envoys with offerings to the Chinese throne served as a continuing affirmation of Siam's client status under the Middle Kingdom. But it has long been recognized that underlying the political and cultural functions of China's network of tributary contacts with neighbouring states the flow of missions served as a cloak for trade. "Trade and tribute in the Confucian view were cognate aspects of a single system of foreign relations. The important thing to the rulers of China was the moral value of tribute. The important thing for the barbarians was the material value of trade."¹

While Siam's tributary position within the Sinitic world order has been widely remarked on, the role played by the concomitant Sino-Siamese trade in the development of Siam's economy has not generally been appreciated. The popular view has it that with the decline of Ayudhya's contact with Europe following the reign of Phra Narai (c. 1657-1688), Siam entered a period of isolationism out of which it fully emerged only with the Bowring Treaty (1855).² The failure to recognize that China continued to serve as an important trading partner during the intervening period is largely attributable to the tendency of historians to emphasize the influence of Siam's relations with the West, a bias stemming from the Western grounding of modern scholarship as well as from the relative abundance and accessibility of Western source materials.

Sarasin Viraphol's *Tribute and Profit: Sino-Siamese Trade, 1652-1853*, represents a major effort to right the balance. This study seeks "to bridge the information gap in the long and eventful history of the two countries' commercial intercourse" (p. viii). In so doing, it touches on so many related aspects of Siam's history that it stands virtually as a general-albeit 'internationalist'-introduction to the economic development of Siam from the mid-seventeenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries.

1. J.K. Fairbank, *Trade and Diplomacy on the China Coast* (Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 1969), p. 33.

2. An exception to this rule is J.C. Ingram, *Economic Change in Thailand, 1850-1970* (Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 1971), p. 21, who states that "From 1700 to 1850 Siam was carrying on a brisk trade with China and her neighbours in Southeast Asia". A more typical example is Ammar Siamwalla, in "A history of rice policies in Thailand" (*Food Research Institute Studies*, vol. XIV, no. 3, 1974, p. 233), who states that "Thailand began its career as a rice exporter in 1851 when King Rama IV, who had just ascended the throne, lifted the traditional ban on the export of rice. Previously Thailand had exported rice to a few countries, such as China, ... but these irregular exports were made for diplomatic reasons."

Because of the diversity of subjects it attempts to integrate into the main theme, the book has a complex structure. Its core (contained in chapters III, V, IX and XI) consists of a chronological survey of two centuries of Sino-Siamese tribute and trade. The remainder is divided into a series of article-length discussions of special topics: the rise and fall of Siam's seventeenth-century Dutch and Japanese trade ties (chapter I) and further details of the structure of the Siamese-Japanese trade (chapter IV), the organization of Siam's royal monopoly trade in the seventeenth century (chapter II), the structure of the Chinese "commenda" trade (chapter VI), the organization of Siam's tribute missions and their latent trade functions (chapter VII), and the role of Chinese immigrants in the Siamese economy and its overseas trade (chapters VIII and X).

Viraphol is to be congratulated for endeavouring to weave this broad range of topics into a single fabric, a task made none the easier by the requisite detailed re-examination of the scattered Chinese, Thai, Japanese, English and French historical materials. The book's thematic segmentation is in large measure the result of its dependence on this diversity of sources. Thus, the discussions of Siam's royal monopoly and seventeenth-century European trade contacts lean heavily, both directly and indirectly, on the standard contemporary French sources; examination of the Japanese trade relies on various recent studies of the traditional Japanese records; interpretation of the Chinese trading establishment follows Chinese source materials and recent American historical analyses of the traditional Chinese trade system; the review of Chinese participation in the Siamese economy is largely based on the major Thai sources. The result is a series of informative treatments of individual topics, the whole being marked by discontinuities in transition from one topic to the next.

As a multifaceted interpretation of two centuries of Siamese economic development this book is destined to serve as a basic reference and inspiration for future Thai historians. Its place is assured because, as the first major English-language treatment of Siam's pre-1850s economic development, it presents a forceful 'revisionist' argument that Siam maintained an 'outward-looking' orientation to the East throughout the long period that it kept its doors closed to the West.

Equally telling as a determinant of the book's future importance—given the Thai scholarly community's patrimonial tendencies—are the book's impeccable credentials. Originally prepared as a doctoral thesis at Harvard University under the supervision of John K. Fairbank, dean of American sinologists, it was selected for publication by Harvard's prestigious Council on East Asian Studies for publication in its East Asian Monographs series. These elitist credentials give rise to serious concern, for—while the book has considerable merit as an exploratory exercise—it contains a number of conceptual and factual shortcomings that may well be ignored and thus replicated by those scholars bound up in the patrimonial tradition of Thai historical studies.

The study's basic conceptual weakness is reflected in the two forms of its title. As printed in English, the title, *Tribute and Profit: Sino-Siamese Trade, 1652-1853*, indicates that trade is to be examined within the context of the tributary relationship—

the time span 1652-1853 specifically referring to the period during which Siam actually maintained the flow of tribute missions to Ching China. As expressed on the book's cover in Chinese calligraphy, however, the title, *The Development of Sino-Siamese Trade During the Ching Dynasty*, indicates that trade history pure and simple forms the book's subject matter. This titular confusion would amount to little more than a quibble were it not representative of an ambiguity that haunts the text from preface through conclusion—an ambiguity deriving from a persistent indecisiveness whether the study's intent is to examine the course of the Sino-Siamese trade or to identify the connexion between this trade and the contemporaneous tributary relationship between the two countries. The latter issue could have been readily accommodated as a subsidiary motif, but as it is, neither theme gains ascendancy, resulting in an exposition that lacks focus. While the 'tribute' theme is not carried through to any identification of the impact of the tributary relationship on trade, the 'trade' theme is not adequately explored because of the study's arbitrary limitation to the period of Siam's tributary status under the Ching.

The book's struggle with periodization offers a prime example of the acute discomfort inflicted by this Procrustian bed. In addition to the 1652 and 1853 terminal dates, three intermediate benchmark years are singled out: 1717, when Chinese overseas trade was prohibited to Chinese merchants and restricted to Siamese and certain other foreign trading partners; 1767, which saw the destruction of Ayudhya; and 1834, when Siam started the transformation of its maritime fleet from junks to Western-style square-riggers. Each of these benchmark years refers to events having a direct bearing on the Sino-Siamese trade, a characteristic which is absent from the terminal years of the study. Considerable trade was apparently underway not only during the Ming dynasty but also during the years preceding Siam's first mission to the Ching court in 1652, years during which China's coastal controls were weak and domestic turmoil disrupted production and increased demand for imported staples. Similarly, the cessation of tributary missions after 1853 did not coincide with a cessation of trade, nor was it a significant contributory factor in the decline in Sino-Siamese trade during subsequent years. The 1652 and 1853 terminal dates thus impose artificial constraints on the study's inquiry into the changing fortunes of the Sino-Siamese trade, while the intervening dates have no direct bearing on the evolution of the tribute system.

Though considerable attention is devoted to descriptions of the outfitting, itinerary, protocol and activities of Siamese tribute missions to the Chinese court, little evidence is presented of the connexion between these missions and the substantial Sino-Siamese trade ongoing in the mercantile sector throughout the two centuries covered in the study. One simple test of the existence of such a connexion would be to examine the correlation between the frequency of tribute missions and the volume of private trade over time. Though no quantitative estimates of the volume of Sino-Siamese trade are presented by Viraphol, some qualitative indication is offered by the descriptive terms attached by him to the various phases into which the study is divided: "initial" (1652-1717), "developmental" (1717-1767), "flourishing" (1767-1809), "height"

(1809-1834), and "declining" (1834-1853). The study also provides no systematic information on the timing and number of tribute missions.³ Taking Promboon's authoritative chronology as a guide, however, the following tabulation is derived.

PERIOD	TRADE PHASE	TRIBUTE MISSIONS	
		Number	Frequency
			No. per decade
1652-1717	Initial	15	2.3
1717-1767	Developmental	13	2.6
1767-1809	Flourishing	24	5.7
1809-1834	Height	20	8.3
1834-1853	Declining	12	6.3

The weak correlation between trade phases and mission frequencies in this tabulation does little to substantiate the thesis that the tributary relationship served as a cover for trade. There is no clear evidence in the mission frequencies of any "development" between 1652 and 1767, nor do they indicate any sharp "decline" following 1834, especially in comparison with the increases registered during earlier phases. What these data do show is a clear-cut discontinuity in the intensity of the tributary relationship upon the shift of the Siamese capital from Ayudhya to Thonburi/Bangkok. Viraphol suggests that this discontinuity was the product of Rama I's discovery of the great economic value inherent in tribute missions, resulting in his and his successors' strenuous efforts to increase their frequency. Tribute missions were certainly economically rewarding to the Siamese court, but Viraphol's reasoning begs the question why earlier Siamese kings had not taken similar advantage to the situation. It also fails to consider what impact this accelerated mission schedule had on the mercantile trade, which from all other accounts was considerably more significant economically than the royal trade conducted in the course of tribute missions.

3. A reconstruction of the chronology of tribute missions referred to in the course of Viraphol's discussion is presented below. For purposes of comparison, a summation of the full chronology for the time period covered (derived from Suebsaeng Promboon, "Sino-Siamese tributary relation, 1282-1853" [Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1971], pp. 118-122) is also presented.

REIGN	MISSIONS		PAGE REFERENCES (Viraphol)
	(Viraphol)	(Promboon)	
Prasat Tong	1 (?)	7	30
Narai	5	7	31, 32, 36, 41
Phrachao Sua	1	1	46, 140
Taisra	11 {	4	36, 85, 87, 90, 140, 142, 143
Boromokot		6	
Ekatat		3	
Taksin	6	2	114, 145
Rama I	22	22	153, 154, 166, 168, 181
Rama II	13	13	169, 181
Rama III	13 (?)	17	194, 231
Rama IV	2	2	235

In addition, the validity of Viraphol's assessment that the Sino-Siamese trade started to deteriorate in 1834 is extremely doubtful. He states, "The junk trade . . . reached its peak in the early 1830s and thereafter began a slow and steady decline" (p. 223, emphasis added).⁴ This essential point appears to be in error on each of the italicized terms. First, there is no evidence that the decline in Siam's trade with China started before the 1850s. Secondly, the decline was neither slow nor steady but accelerated rapidly over the third quarter of the nineteenth century to be virtually eclipsed by the Western trade in the 1870s. The information cited by Viraphol in tables 13 and 14 (pp. 207-9), for instance, indicates no reduction in Sino-Siamese trade from the 1820s through the 1840s; supplementary data scattered through the text consistently support this view.

Such phasing errors raise serious implications with respect to Viraphol's discussion of related issues. As illustration I refer to his contention that "Rama III consciously resorted [to tax farming] for the first time as a means of enhancing the royal treasury" (p. 215), and that he did this as a means of offsetting declining trade revenues (p. 223) long before the Bowring Treaty's adverse impact on customs earnings forced increased dependence on tax farms. To begin with, tax farming had been an important revenue source since long before the reign of Rama III. Viraphol himself notes that "tax farming had formerly existed in the Ayudhya dynasty, when between 1688 and 1756, gambling was institutionalized and its taxes farmed out" (p. 215). A variety of other tax farms were also established from time to time (p. 77), though specific information is lacking. No documentary evidence is available on the extent to which total revenues rose with the addition of new tax farms during the reign of Rama III, and we thus have only Viraphol's intuitive judgement to go by in leaping to the conclusion that a veritable tax revolution occurred during this reign.

The dubiousness of this assertion is compounded by its even more questionable explanation that falling trade revenues from the mid-1830s on impelled resort to tax farms as an alternative revenue source. The growth of tax farming under Rama III may more plausibly be argued to have been induced by the increased demand for exportables to supply the **expanding** royal trade, itself associated with the growing demand for imports to support the conspicuous consumption of Bangkok's elites and the king's many projects in support of religion and the public welfare. A complementary explanation for the growth of tax farms under Rama III stems from the state's emerging dependence on wage labour due to (a) the increased availability of

4. The terminological shift from "Sino-Siamese trade" to "junk trade" as the discussion drifts into the nineteenth century raises a red herring by implying that the decline attributed to the post-1834 years refers to a decline in junk (as distinct from windjammer) traffic rather than in total trade between the two countries. With the development of a Siamese fleet of Western-style square-riggers it is apparent that following 1834 a decreasing share of the Sino-Siamese trade was carried on junks. But this technological change is of only minor relevance to Viraphol's examination of the economics of the bilateral trade. There can be no doubt that the decline described is, in the over-all context, meant to refer to the course of trade between the two countries irrespective of the transport technology involved.

cheap and efficient Chinese wage labour, (b) the increasing scarcity of slave labour with the reduced frequency and intensity of warfare and its harvests of captives, and (c) the increased difficulties of securing adequate and willing *corvée* labour as Siam's population dispersed over the Central Plain and as personal saving opportunities improved to the point where tax payments in commodities or cash became preferred to payments in labour time. Whatever combination of these stimuli to increased tax farming is accepted, the essential point remains that it was not declining trade revenues that lay at the heart of the matter. To relate these two developments as Viraphol does is, in effect, to warp time.

In addition to such conceptual complexities, the exposition is studded with technical errors in dating, quantitative estimation, and factual information. This problem is so fundamental that a thorough 'cleansing' is called for, a job that neither Viraphol's thesis committee nor his publishers appear to have aided him in. The limitations of the present review permit only an abbreviated survey of some of the more glaring examples. In the case of dating, for instance, Viraphol's chronology of Chinese and Siamese dynasties and reigns (p. 341) would have been more useful had it been accurate; among its errors is a tendency to cite one reign as ending in the year preceding the start of the next, thus shifting the end of the Ming dynasty from 1644 to 1643, the Ayudhya dynasty [sic] from 1767 to 1766, and the Thonburi dynasty from 1782 to 1781. Elsewhere (p. 40), the reign of Rama IV, said to have been 1868-1909, is presumably meant to refer to Rama V, who reigned from 1868 to 1910; the title to chapter 10 (p. 210) incorrectly refers to the reign of Rama III, which actually ran 1824-1851, as lasting to 1850; the second fall of Ayudhya to the Burmese, which ended the Ayudhya period in 1767, is three times stated to have occurred in 1776 (pp. ix and 342) and three times stated to have occurred in 1766 (pp. 107, 140, and 190).

China's recurrent port closings and openings to Chinese and foreign traders, a complicated sequence even if clearly described, is so confusingly documented that the chronology is lost in the telling, thereby eliminating the opportunity to analyse the connexion between this important determinant of trade flows and the pattern of tribute missions. For instance, the dates of the "decades of the *hai-chin* restriction" (p. 42) are not indicated, though inferences drawn from other sections of the text would have it appear that they lasted from 1644 to 1684; a subsequent closure of the Southeast Asian trade to Chinese exporters occurred in 1717, not 1712 as stated (p. 56); the closures of Amoy and Chekiang to foreign trade, said at one point to have lasted to 1727 (p. 71), are later said to have lasted to 1728 and 1729, respectively (p. 130); it is noted that Cantonese firms were engaged in foreign trade in 1726 (p. 131, fn. 31) while it is elsewhere stated that a petition requesting the reopening of Canton was submitted after the 1727 or 1728 reopening of Amoy (p. 71).

In his use of quantitative data, especially weights and monetary values, Viraphol creates further confusion. Fortunately, most of his Chinese and Siamese statistics are accompanied by their English equivalents, and this plus the textual context permits

reestimations in most cases. In the case of weights, for instance, it is stated that 8,000 kan equal 4 million lbs. (p. 67), whereas they actually equal 5.3 million lbs. Similarly, 1 koyan equals 25 piculs, not 26 (p. 112), and 270,000 piculs equal 36 rather than 26 million lbs. (p. 116). "Over 53 million lb." (p. 116) is actually 52.7 million lbs.; 8,000 piculs (p. 181) is actually 7,142 piculs; "Siamese junks . . . from 7,500 piculs (933,150 lbs.) to a mere 850 piculs (113,305 lbs.)" (p. 187) should read "Siamese junks . . . from 850 piculs (113,305 lbs.) to a mere 700 piculs (93,315 lbs.)"; and in table 8A (p. 119) the column of weights in million lbs. should be 8.0, 9.3, 6.7, 12.7, and 17.1 instead of 7.0, 7.3, 6.7, 12.7, and 15.0, respectively. Among the more striking misprints, 60-10,000 piculs (p. 101) should be 60-100,000 piculs; 800 koyan (p. 118) should be 8,000 koyan; and 4,200 tons (p. 234) should be 4,700 tons.

In the case of currency errors, Chinese prices are several times incorrectly expressed in mace rather than taels (pp. 78, 89, and 94); "£33 and 337" (p. 93) should read "£333.3 and 336.7"; "100,000 taels (£30,000-35,000)" (p. 135) should read "100,000 taels (£33,333); similarly, £213,333 (p. 164, ft. 13) should read £200,000; 3 Siamese taels (p. 183) equal £1.5 rather than £6; and the logic of the argument indicates that a 400-ton vessel could be built for 10,000 baht, or 2,500 Siamese taels, rather than "20,000 baht or merely 4,000 taels" (p. 202). Finally, the misprint of 1,529,225 taels in place of the correct figure of 1,529.2 taels (p. 68) is a particularly grievous example of editorial oversight.

Among other types of quantitative errors the following three examples may be referred to as indicative. (a) In summarizing the taxes imposed on junk construction in Siam during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the rate is said to have been "250 Siamese taels per wa (£125 for 6 ft) . . . calculated on the ship's breadth and length" (p. 24). It is extremely unlikely that this tax was calculated in terms of both breadth and length; it is equally unlikely that the tax was set at the equivalent of £125 per wa as this would have amounted to an enormous sum in those days; and it is to be noted that one wa actually equals 6 ft. 6 in. (b) A statement of total and average cargo weights on junks returning to China from Southeast Asia in 1726 indicates that the number of junks was 15, not 12 as stated (pp. 72-73). The difference is important as it leaves unaccounted for only 6 rather than 9 of the 21 that had set sail the year before. (c) A contemporary observer, John Crawford, is quoted to the effect that the export price of Siamese rice was in the late 1810s one third the price of Java rice, which fetched a 150-200 per cent profit at Kwangtung (p. 112). This would imply that Siamese rice exports to Kwangtung yielded a profit of 450-600 per cent. Yet Viraphol states in the following sentence merely that "Siamese rice fetched at least [as] much profit at Kwangtung, if not more, [than Java rice]" (pp. 112-113).

Lastly, many instances of misinformation can be cited. Camphor, for example, is said to have been imported into Siam from Japan (p. 59), a strangely roundabout route when Southeast Asia was the principal producing area. It is suggested that Japan's copper exports had twice the value of silver per unit weight (pp. 66-67), a

situation that must (at minimum) have been the reverse. "Canton rivers were filled with rice ships while other types of ships numbered about the same" (p. 110); were the rivers thus doubly filled? Chinese immigrants to Siam coming from Chao-chou are said to have brought with them the skills of plantation agriculture (p. 178); if so, where in Chao-chou had plantation agriculture been practised? The Chinese emperor is said to have granted the Siamese the "favour" of importing their rice at 0.5 tael per picul at a time when the rice price stood between 1.0 and 1.8 taels (p. 85)—a strange favour indeed. And so forth.

Despite its conceptual and technical flaws, Viraphol's sweeping study of Sino-Siamese economic relations over the two centuries preceding the 1850s forms a major contribution to the literature on Thailand's economic history. It is a pathbreaking venture into a field where much further definitive work remains to be undertaken. As such, it merits close attention.

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