

# REVIEWS

Barend Jan Terwiel, Editor, *Seven Probes in South East Asia* (Centre for South East Asian Studies, Gaya, India, 1979), pp. 108.

One of the central issues of our time is change. Everywhere change has become central to people's awareness. In every society there is technological change, demographic change, rapid ecological change, and change induced by internal incongruities in economic and political patterns and by conflicting ideologies. The fundamental questions relate to what is changing, at what level, and how. Moreover, we want to know what type of change is taking place, and what its magnitude, scope, and direction are. Furthermore, we would like to know what the mechanisms of social change are and to what extent such change affects the lives of the people.

This volume of essays is intended to provide the readers with such knowledge. The editor makes it clear in his introduction that "the seven main chapters may be regarded as seven separate 'straws' to show the wind; to wit the wind of change". However, the seven reports on the transformation of rural communities cover only five Southeast Asian countries, namely, Burma, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand. Each essay attempts to report the change that has taken place in each village in the time span of a decade or so (1960's to 1970's). It is basically a "longitudinal" study of each village. However, the methodology employed to study the community varies according to the author's academic orientation.

The first report, *A Burmese Village - Revisited*, by Mya Than, is an attempt to answer the question: "Is there any significant social and economic change in the 1970's in a village in Burma?". The author compared the socio-economic conditions of the village at three points in time, namely, in 1956, 1969 and 1978, and described primarily visible changes in such periods. For example, demographic, occupational, economic, educational, health and administrative changes. The author concludes that "there are no visible changes in the village's economic and social life since 1969". The author also asserts that "social and economic changes in this village will occur at a significantly rapid rate, only when forceful external forces . . . are applied continuously. This is due to the fact that the internal generating forces have not been as strong in this village . . . .".

Two reports on Thai villages provide us with different pictures regarding rural changes. The case of *Bàan Wád Sǎancâw*, by Barend Jan Terwiel, is simply a description of what has happened in the village at two points in time. It is clear from the report that *Bàan Wád Sǎancâw* has been modernized, As the author puts it:

“... It is undoubtedly more comfortable to live in Bâan Wád Săancăw in 1977 than it was in 1967, and those who think back to the 1950's cannot but be grateful for the benefits of technology”. (p. 37)

Yet, the author seems to admit that material comforts has brought certain negative “side effects”. For example, the village has become part of a much more intricate larger world and its fate could no longer be determined at home. Competition for material well-being becomes increasingly tense. People become more individualistic. In sum, the village has lost its rural character and peaceful life and could no longer be self-sufficient.

In the case of Baan Taa, Richard Davis reports that there is little change in the village during 1969 and 1977. The argument put forth by the author on why little change has taken place is very convincing. Those who optimistically believe that rural development, as has been practiced in many parts of the Third World, can realistically improve the quality of life of the majority of villagers without asking the question concerning the distribution of power – be it economic or political, should read this report.

Two reports from the Philippines provide us with information regarding the impact of land reform and of urbanization on the improvement of the quality of life of the villagers. The first report, “Land Reform and Rural Transformation”, by Jesucita L.G. Sodusta, presents the socio-economic conditions of Paltok village in 1972 (before implementation of the Land Reform Programme) and compared them with those in 1977 (five years after the Land Reform Programme had been implemented). The author reports that by and large, the implementation of the Land Reform Programme slightly improves the standard of living of the villagers, increases agricultural production and re-structures the socio-economic system of relationships between land-owner and tenant. Despite admitting that the Land Reform Programme has limited success and worse still fails to improve incomes and the standard of living, the author seems to believe that the Land Reform Programme is crucial to the rural transformation process. The second report, “The Capampangan Changing Life-Styles: A Case Study”, by Realidad Santico-Rolda, describes the extent to which urbanization changes the life-style of the villagers in Cabetican, Pampanga. The author said that from 1968 to 1978 considerable quantitative change has taken place in Cabetican. The author also asserts that such changes are attributable to the increasing emphasis on education, migration, and to less emphasis on agricultural production. In other words, such changes are brought about by the urbanization process. It would have been more interesting had we known to what extent urbanization has generated socio-economic problems in the village. It's a pity that such a discussion is not presented in the report.

Dean K. Forbes's "Peasants in the City: An Indonesian Example" deals with the process by which an "informal sector" is created in an urban area. The author examines certain characteristics of a selection of trishaw riders in the city of Ujung Pandang and asserts that it is a part of the transformation of peasant society within the colonial mode of production. The author apparently employs a structuralfunctionalist explanation to such a social phenomenon.

The last report, "Problems and Accomplishments: Kampung Asam Riang 1967-1978", by Rosemary Barnard, presents an overview of changes in Kampung Asam Riang that have taken place during the period 1967-1978. Several aspects of quantitative change are reported, for example, population change, employment situation, occupation of women, mechanization of agricultural production and so on.

The author contends that such changes are mainly caused by the introduction of government projects such as the irrigation scheme and the change in related infrastructures in the community. This essay is purely a description of what has taken place, in a particular period, in the village.

Even though it is clear from the reports that changes have indeed taken place in rural Southeast Asia, many more important fundamental questions need to be asked, particularly, the consequence or the impact of such changes. Many people tend to assume that rural transformation is a "good thing" and uncritically attempt to have it done. For the reviewer, questions like: Does any effort to bring about change originate with the people involved? Does the project strengthen the economic and political power of a certain group, creating a more prosperous enclave, which then becomes resistant to change that might abolish its privileges? Does change generate a shift in power to the powerless? Does it generate a process of democratic decision-making and a thrust toward self-reliance? Does it reinforce dependence on outside sources for materials and skills? and so on and so forth.

Answers to these questions are crucial, for it is evident that most changes that occur in the rural areas are change in form not in context. As we already know, the cause of rural poverty and other related socio-economic problems is not scarcity of agricultural resources, or lack of modern technology. Rather, the root of the cause is the increasing concentration of control over resources in the hands of fewer and fewer people.

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John L.S. Girling, **Thailand, Society and Politics** (Ithaca, New York, Cornell University Press, 1981), pp. 306.

Several books have been written by foreign scholars on Thailand or Thai politics, such as John Coast's *Some Aspects of Siamese Politics* (1953), David Wilson's *Politics in Thailand* (1962), Fred W. Riggs's *Thailand: The Modernization of a Bureaucratic Polity* (1966), and Clark D. Neher (ed.)'s *Modern Thai Politics* (1976). Most of these books are done in the late 1950s or the early 1960s, and become out-of-date. In the meantime, Thai scholars, who have studied abroad and done their theses on Thai society and politics, start to publish their work, for example, Thawatt Makarapong's *History of the Thai Revolution* (1972), Thak Chaloemtiarana's *Thailand: The Politics of Despotic Paternalism* (1979). These books are excellent and add new knowledge and understanding about Thai history and politics, but are narrow in scope or deal with a short time period, or specific aspect of Thai politics. What is needed is the comprehensive analysis of Thai society and politics.

Thailand is a complex society and its politics is even more dynamic and fluid than one expects. In analyzing Thai politics, one not only has to unravel the complex relations of values, structure and process, but also, as one scholar puts it, to "dare to think carefully about Thai society, history and culture *as a totality*." A new book, *Thailand, Society and Politics* by John L.S. Girling, seems to be the answer to the challenge. This book is published by Cornell University Press as one in the series on Politics and International Relations of Southeast Asia, whose general editor is George McT. Kahin.

The author of *Thailand, Society and Politics*, Professor John L.S. Girling of Australian National University, is an "old hand" and has published many articles and books on Southeast Asia. He is also a keen observer of Thai politics. In *Thailand, Society and Politics*, Professor Girling presents his analysis in 7 chapters as the following :

Chapter I Past and Present—This chapter presents a brief historical evolution of Thai society and the formation of Thai state from Sukhothai, to Ayuthaya and to Ratanakosin or Bangkok period with the emphasis on the influence of the *Sakdina* system and values as the basis of power, authority and social structure in traditional Thai society.

Chapter II Economic Change—Political and Social Implications. This chapter deals with the modernization processes in Thailand in the twentieth century, especially the economic development after the Second World War, and their impacts on contemporary Thai society.

Chapter III Course of Events—A brief description of political events and changes in Thailand from the 1932 Revolution to the present time is presented here.

Chapter IV Political structure—This chapter analyzes the dynamic relationship between the military leadership and bureaucratic structure, as well as the emergence of “extrabureaucratic” elements in Thai society, such as political parties, professional associations, academics, and labor groups, etc.

Chapter V Political Performance—This chapter focuses the analysis on the October 1973 events and the democratic interregnum between 1974-1976. The reactions after the 1976 coup d’etat is also analyzed.

Chapter VI External Involvement—This chapter analyzes Thai foreign relations with respect to the Super powers, and the neighbouring ASEAN as well as Indochinese countries.

Chapter VII Revolutionary Alternative—This chapter traces the evolution and expansion of the communist movement in Thailand. The recent dilemma facing the Communist Party of Thailand is also discussed.

Professor Girling’s *Thailand, Society and Politics* is well-organized and well written and also quite comprehensive in the coverage. The main theme of the book seems to be based on his earlier work on “Conflict or Consensus?” Thai history is seen here as having been “fashioned around consensus, based on traditional Thai values, patterns of behavior, and institutions—in some aspects adapting to, and in others resisting, the impact of change.” (p. 11) Such a consensus does not mean simply mutual cooperation. In fact, clique rivalries among the leaders, such as those between Phao and Sarit, are parts of the rules of the game or rather understandings, which form the basis of the traditional Thai consensus.

Professor Girling also points out that this consensus is expressed through personality, patronage, customary values, and the embodiment of all three—the bureaucracy, where the relations between superior and subordinate, or ‘patron-client’ are the natural form of interaction. These personal, reciprocal relationships cut across the “formal” organizational structure of the modern centralized bureaucracy. Thai political system as such “receives the symbolic support of the monarchy and the Buddhist hierarchy.” (p. 12).

This is the political order that only in the past two decades has been substantially affected by the modernization and economic development. Professor Girling correctly observes (p. 101) that “modernization in Thailand has taken the form of uneven rural development, on the one hand, and business-bureaucratic partnership, on the other, both within an international orbit of powerful strategic and market forces.” These forces create newly “aware” groups and movements, in this book called “extrabureaucratic” elements, that no longer fit the traditional political system.

These new groups' demand and desire for political participation clash with the traditional order and explode in the dramatic ousting of top military leaders in October 1973, thus launching Thai society onto the path of democratic experiment. The experiment lasts for three years and is reversed by the coup d'etat in October 1976, bringing down the fragile structure of democracy. A large number of students, intellectuals, labor leaders, and other "extrabureaucratic" elements left for the jungle to join the Communist Party of Thailand. The coup has the effect of speeding up the process of polarization in Thai society, even though some of its effects has been limited by the present government's moderation; and many who left for the jungle have returned home.

Professor Girling believes and I agree with him that Thailand cannot return to the old "accepted" system, because the consensus on which it was based has been lost. The political problem facing Thai political elite now is whether they can create new conditions for rebuilding consensus or not. In addition to this, the fundamental social problem of Thai society, according to Girling, is whether even political consensus is sufficient to carry out, through the existing machinery of government, those rural reforms (notably land redistribution, tenancy laws, availability of credit, and so on), combined with the administrative reforms (putting an end to "feudal" attitudes and abuses, subjection to "influence," and bias in favor of the rural and urban elite) that the situation demands. Whether Thai elite can solve these problems remains to be seen.

In general, *Thailand, Society and Politics* is well-researched and well-balanced in presenting facts and interpretations. Professor Girling should be congratulated for his fine efforts. Although the work relies heavily on secondary sources, this does not reduce the value of the book. In fact, Professor Girling's perceptive analysis and insightful interpretations make this book one of the best on Thai politics and contribute significantly to the field of Thai studies. A small suggestion here is that the book will be more complete if the formal political structures, central as well as provincial levels, are included for those who are not familiar with the complexities of Thai political structures. In a word, Professor Girling's *Thailand, Society and Politics* is highly recommended for scholars as well as laymen and others who are interested in Thai society and politics.

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Somsakdi Xuto, et al, **Thailand in the 1980's : Significant Issues, Problems and Prospects** (Bangkok : Printing Co-Ordination Co., Ltd., 1981), 84 pages.

This is a booklet of four contributors reviewing the socio-economic and political phenomena which had taken place in Thailand from the 1960's to the end of the 1970's with an attempt to forecast what the 1980's Thailand would be like. It is rather a brave as well as dangerous enterprise on the part of prominent Thai scholars, who are quite aware of the nature of their undertaking, when a sentence saying "Some major exogenous factors may change which might affect considerably the course of events, and this is beyond the ability of the present state of arts to predict" is inserted. On the other hand, it seems that some of the so-called "significant issues" and "problems" are perennial within Thai society, such as the characteristics of Thai politics, bureaucracy and economic structure, and will stay with us for years to come. As such, predictability is enhanced to a certain extent. Understandably, a decade-long forecast like this has to be granted a certain degree of imprecision. Also granted is the assumption that the forecasters base their assessment on broad enough indicators yet do not compromise their insight to generality.

Population growth occurs unevenly (perhaps, in a sense, evenly) in Thailand owing to the fact pointed out in the study that higher population growth takes place in the northeast and the south while the north and the central plains experience a lower growth rate. This is linked to the need for labour in the former case because mechanization in the agricultural sector is still implicitly low due to rural poverty. In other words, mechanization in agriculture at some stages in the central plains area influences lower population growth. Or does it? It is pointed out that "regional fertility are mostly due to topographical economic and social structural variants", and fertility means population growth. This still seems to be proved by the historical perspective of population growth of Thailand: that is to say, has the central plains remained an area of low population growth throughout? Rightly, population growth and unemployment do not directly correlate. But to play up a demographic element too much will cause misunderstanding. Australia which has zero population growth is facing unemployment.

Evidently, the Thai economy since the 1960's has become more and more tied up with "exogenous" factors: capital, market, investment, pricing, credit, money value, industrialization, etc. It is hopeless to see the emergence of independent Thai capitalists. The encroachment of or the irreversible course of Thai economy in relations to world capital and multi-national corporations makes it next to impossible for Thailand to be able to manage her economy the way she might like, to say nothing of various constraints acting upon that policy. How the quasi-developed and undeveloped sectors of the Thai economy will survive is very significant for Thailand.

The bureaucracy has been given a very predominant role in modern Thai politics. In fact, it has been so since the beginning of the Thai polity. The military is also a bureaucrat. What Riggs called the "constitutive system" in Thai politics will never be able to rival the executive branch of government with the bureaucracy at its command no matter how earnestly we might wish for it. No drastic change that can upturn the present situation is foreseeable in the 1980's Thailand. Party development? How? Through regulations in party bill (s)?

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**Puey Ungphakorn, A Siamese for All Seasons** (Komol Keemthong Foundation, Bangkok, 6 October 1981), pp. 351

*Puey Ungphakorn, A Siamese for All Seasons* is a collection of articles by and about Dr. Puey Ungphakorn, one of the outstanding leaders of present-day Thailand. The book takes the reader on an exciting journey through recent Thai history, starting with Dr. Puey's experiences in the Free Thai Movement during World War II, his struggles to help build a truly democratic Thailand with a strong and just economy, and his deeply personal views of the events that led up to and through the events of October 1976.

For serious students of Thailand who wish to better understand recent Thai history, and who would like to better know one of the figures who played such an important part in that history, this book is a must.

Dr. Puey is an economist, and served as Governor of the Bank of Thailand from 1959 to 1971 and later as economic adviser to the government of Mr. Sanya Dharmasakti. He was later to also serve as the Rector of Thammasat University, a post which he was holding when the university was put to siege by rightist elements and many students killed, hanged and burned. Dr. Puey left the country at that time and went to England where he now lives. Included in this book is an article written by a Thai journalist who recently visited Dr. Puey in England, and through that article one can see the fierce love and loyalty which Dr. Puey still holds for his beloved Thailand.

Dr. Puey's clear and strong analysis of the Thai situation, and his welcome sense of humor make this book easy reading, yet powerful and thought-provoking.

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**Pridi Banomyong, Political and Military Tasks of the Free-Thai Movement to Regain National Sovereignty and Independence** (Bangkok: Amarin Press, 1981), 79 pages.

This is a booklet which Mr. Pridi Banomyong wrote in 1979 in letter-form to *Phra* Bisal-Sukhumvit after he read the latter's book in Thai entitled "Report of Free Thai His Mission in Kandy, New Delhi and USA" (Bangkok: Thai Khasem Press, 1979). Some crucial points relating to the subtlety of activities pursued by the Free-Thai Movement during the Japanese occupation of Thailand in the last war in order to regain independence for Thailand and to salvage Thailand from becoming a war criminal country, are explicated in an impassioned manner. Mr. Pridi takes pain to substantiate virtually most of his statements by non-partisan sources. The main thrust of Mr. Pridi's argument is twofold: (1) armed resistance activities must be carried out in conjunction with vigorous diplomatic initiatives and (2) cooperation of Thai people and officials is indispensable. Admittedly, in this booklet, Mr. Pridi draws more attention to the diplomatic course of action. The validity for this argument is quite evident. Field Marshal Pibul's martial adventures so angered the Chinese that they pressed for the occupation of Thai territory above the sixteenth northern latitude, while the British were as displeased as to want to keep the Thai government's authority outside Thai territory below the twelfth northern latitude. Pridi rightly emphasises significance of the mission to clear up the mess with the Allied Powers. It should be clear here that in the circumstance in which the sovereignty of the nation was at stake, wise and rational thinking as well as diplomatic skill once again came to the rescue, thanks to the predominant role of Pridi.

Financial matters connected with the activities of the Free-Thai Movement are also clarified. Granted the secret measures undertaken by the group, it is indeed amazing that things were handled so admirably well. Perhaps it is timely to point out at the present when money seems to be heavily involved in all political acts that political motivation need not be propelled by financial expectations or entail dubious financial manipulation. Mr. Pridi refers too to the rather complicated situation of the period in which groups such as the Communist Party of Thailand were making claims about their role in the event and to the anti-Japanese activities of the local Chinese. Evidently, the CPT's part begs for research.

Amazingly, a man of his age (81) Mr. Pridi's quest for truth and knowledge is as vigorous as ever, a quality that transcends all praise.

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M.R. Nimitmongkol Nawarat, ๗  
**รอยร้าวของมรกต (A Drama: The Emerald's Cleavage)**, translated from the English by Charnvit Kasetsiri, Introduction by Chai-anan Samudvanija (Thammasat University Press, 1981), (24) + 187 pp., paperback.

Even in the rather eccentric world of Thai letters M.R. Nimitmongkol Nawarat is an unusual figure. A member of the royal family, he showed considerable interest in democracy, socialism, and more radical political doctrines; though apparently having no foreign education he often wrote, and wrote well, in English; he spent a great part of his adult life in prison on political charges, and yet when not in jail he held various positions in the military and civilian bureaucracy; and when he died, aged less than 40, of illnesses contracted during his imprisonment his cremation was royally sponsored. In literary terms his career has also been erratic, for it was only with the republication, long after his death in 1948, of his utopian political novel *Muang Nimit* (original title: *Khwanfan khong nak udomkhati*, Dreams of an Idealist) that he came to the attention of a younger generation, and it is upon this work and his autobiographical *Chiwit haeng kankabot song khrang* (rather freely rendered in English by M.R. Nimit himself as *The Victim of the Two Political Purges*) that his reputation largely rests.

However political authors are particularly prone to leave behind unpublished works (cf. Chit Phumisak), and this is the case with the work under review. Written in English, it was preserved by M.R. Nimit's son and first published in 1974 in Thai translation in the journal *Phuan*. In the present volume Thammasat Press makes available both the original English text and the Thai translation, augmented by a lengthy introduction by Chai-anan Samudvanija and a biographical section on M.R. Nimit written by his widow for a 1949 memorial volume.

The original date of composition is not known, but from internal evidence the setting of the drama is about 1940/41, and it is probably safe to assume that the work was written not long after the period with which it deals. Thus the setting is the first Phibun era, though as Chai-anan correctly observes--and despite the author's highly political earlier writings--this is more or less incidental to the central theme, and the story could have been placed in almost any historical context. Indeed apart from some mention of special courts, with which the author's alleged involvement in the 1933 Bowaradej rebellion and the 1938 'Phya Song Suradej' conspiracy had provided extensive firsthand experience, there are less specific references to the Phibun era than to Wellington Koo and (in somewhat more veiled form) Chiang Kai-chek, references which many presentday readers will find obscure at best.

The real subject however, alluded to in the title but not made explicit until the last of the four acts, is not politics but human nature, and specifically that 'all men are flawed'. The emerald of the title finally makes its appearance in the guise of a rather heavy-handed symbolism: the heroine, Ara, on the verge of leaving her husband Dilok after having discovered his less than spotless past, is wearing an emerald ring. Bairojana, the wise protagonist and voice of the author, makes a pretence of criticizing the ring on the grounds the stone is flawed, suggesting that hence she should discard it; Ara indignantly replies that all emeralds have imperfections, and the reader sees at once, and Ara eventually, that Bairojana's comments really concern not jewelry but her errant husband, and mankind in general.

The format of the volume is excellent, with Chai-anan's introduction followed by the biographical section, and finally the text of the drama itself with English and Thai versions on facing pages. This commendably, if perhaps a bit rashly, facilitates comparing the translation with the original text. On the whole the Thai version seems somewhat 'flat', generally conveying the 'meaning' of the English but often without the 'flavor' of the original, and with little sense of the word-play and verbal sparring that characterize much of the English dialogue (one rather suspects that M.R. Nimit was an avid reader of G.B. Shaw). Thus for example in the exchange over the emerald ring, when Ara comments that it is "inherited" Bairojana's rejoinder is that as it is flawed she "had better disown it"; however in Thai this latter is rendered simply "*thoe mai na ja keb man wai*" (You ought not to keep it), which hardly does justice to the literary style and balance of the original (pp. 168-169). And at times even the meaning of the English seems to be missed, as in the third act when the black-mailing Supatra complains of cigarette smoke at Bairojana's, and tracking down the source announces "There it--*they* are fuming" (emphasis added). The reader is to understand of course (as is made explicit on the following page) that she is well aware that Bairojana has just received another visitor, undoubtedly Dilok, who has made a hurried departure upon her arrival; the Thai however (*Nan ngai Kamlang khwan khamong*) gives the reader no indication of the singular/plural distinction and its significance, or even why the cigarette(s) should be mentioned at all (pp. 118-119).

What then of the work as a whole? Chai-anan's Introduction draws--one might say 'overdraws'--comparisons with Machiavelli; but then Introductions by their nature are more or less required to make a case for the significance of that which they introduce. The four characters (there are also several servants, serving mainly to set the scene and for comic relief) can hardly be said to 'develop', except in coming to realize the obvious. The symbolism seems a bit contrived and labored, nor is the struc-

ture particularly distinguished; indeed by the third act when Dilok is hiding in a bedroom and Supatra in a "telephone box" we are hardly above the level of farce. Perhaps the greatest merit of the work is in the clever and polished dialogues, though as noted above this at times suffers somewhat in translation. And the English text itself has a number of obvious faults, though it is not clear to what degree these are simply misprintings or are reflections of the original text (apparently a pencil draft).

In narrowly literary terms then one might say a 'minor' work. But such a judgment does less than justice to author and translator. 'Thai literature' in English is a fairly rare phenomenon, and works of M.R. Nimit even more so, though he was one of the most original and innovative writers of his age. 'The Emerald's Cleavage', as Chai-anan observes, is a significant departure from Nimit's earlier writings, and deserves to be read as both a product and a reflection of the post-1932 political scene. This attractive, inexpensive Thammasat edition is to be commended in making available both the Thai and English texts along with the substantial background materials. It is a valuable work in its own right, and will be even more so if it inspires some scholar to give M.R. Nimit's career and writings the comprehensive study they deserve.

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William L. Bradley, **Siam Then** (William Carey Library, Pasadena, California, 1981), pp. 205 including index, notes, acknowledgments, etc.

The librarian who is a purist may find it hard to classify the book under review. Perhaps it can best be described as 'history, slightly fictionalized". However, the emphasis must lie heavily on the history aspect, and it is in that section I would place it in my library.

The author is a descendant of Dr. Daniel Beach Bradley. It draws on many sources— 'missionary journals, correspondence, printed articles in missionary magazines, and the official records of denominational boards and the National Archives of the United States.' Dr. Bradley himself kept a journal for most of the 38 years he spent in Siam, and it is this and his other writings which provide most of the material. William Bradley states, 'For a number of years prior to his death in 1873 Dr. Bradley published an almanac entitled "The Bangkok Calendar". On two occasions the "Calendar" included his "Reminiscences from a Journal of the Oldest Living Missionary to the Siamese." It is in the style and manner of these recollections that I have cast the series of accounts that constitute this book. Some of the events that follow were observed and reported by Dan Bradley; some were not. Because he saw himself as the spokesman of the foreign community, however, he seems an appropriate narrator of the totality". (Preface).

One other important point must be made. The book's sub-title, "The Foreign Colony in Bangkok Before and After Anna" must be taken seriously. Those who seek a description of the Siamese people and administration will not find it here, except for scattered, incidental references. The forty short chapters are described under the rubric "Cast of Characters: The Siamese, The Missionaries, the Bradleys, and Other Foreigners.", and it can be quickly seen that amongst these the *farangs*, their ways and their doings, are predominant. That, of course, is not a drawback, but just a sensible limitation imposed by the author on his material. Sometimes, reading this book, one feels that some characters are encountered without adequate introduction, e.g. the French Consul-General, Aubaret, or Charles Redman (first mentioned on page 99, not p. 98 as per index). This drawback is slightly alleviated by pp. xvii-xix of the Preface, where, under the heading "Cast of Characters", very brief notes explain the roles of the "dramatis personae".

When all this has been said, we have in this book a most entertaining and informative account of the people and incidents which it records. The style is crisp and clear, avoiding repetitions and wearying detail, and making the people concerned

very real and believable people in their own right, be they seamen, consuls, courtesans, merchants, adventurers, or Anna herself, who comes out of the telling, brief though it is, with dignity and our respect.

Above all, this is not a work of hagiology. The doings and characteristics of the missionaries, comprising the major part of the book, are presented "in the round". We are told not only of their successes, but also of their failings and failures; not only of their united efforts to bring Christ to the Siamese nation, but also of their not infrequent fallings out with each other, and their sometimes undignified squabbles and feuds. Like all other expatriates in an isolated situation there was a degree of social claustrophobia which did not always lend itself to mutual appreciation or harmony. Bradley himself may not have been the easiest of men to live with at times. Perhaps because of the book's concentration on the foreign community one sometimes wonders to what extent these first missionaries failed to really identify with the local population, and to what extent this accounts for the very meagre results they obtained in terms of building the Church in Siam into a strong indigenized, Christian community. But this does not deny the vital contribution they made to the nation's life. In the Epilogue William Bradley says: "Dr. Bradley died more than a century ago, but his name is known to every schoolchild in Thailand as the one who introduced Western surgery, vaccination, and the newspaper to their country. His widow spent the remainder of her life in Bangkok, continuing in the printing business that had sustained the family throughout the years. The missionary enterprise was continued through three more generations. . . . The story of those Americans who lived in Bangkok a century ago reads like a fairytale now. Most of them were in their twenties, restless and in search of adventure, fortunate enough to become the friends of princes and nobles in an exotic land that still entices Americans by its charms. For whatever their reasons, they went forth as conquerors, and they all succumbed to a nation that could accept Christianity but remain staunchly Buddhist, welcome democracy but maintain an absolute monarchy, and open its port to foreign trade while preserving a monopoly for its own citizens."

The book also contains much that is humorous or quaint to our modern minds. Dr. Bradley is claimed to have written, "Our last day before departure was spent in a delightful visit to the Charlestown Prison, the Insane Asylum and the beautiful new Mt. Auburn Cemetery". Daniel and Emilie had been married less than a month! They sailed on July 1st, 1834, and took more than a year to reach Bangkok. An interesting

map shows their route, and that of Bradley's second, return trip in 1849. (When they first went, they never expected to see America again, and Emilie never did.). Two other maps, one of Thailand and one of Bangkok are considerably less helpful.

There is some evidence of haste in preparing this book for the final stages of its publication. One Index error has already been noted; there may be others. There is also a serious mistake in pagination in the Preface, between pp. xi and xv. Page xiii must be read after page xi, then pages xii and xiv, in that order.

The illustrative photographs are excellently reproduced.

This is a most readable and interesting insight into the life of the 19th century *farang* inhabitants of Bangkok, and I warmly recommend it.

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George Vinal Smith, **The Dutch in Seventeenth-Century Thailand** (N. Illinois University, Center for Southeast Asian Studies Special Report No. 16, 1977), pp. 203

Published in 1977, this monograph is likely to remain for some time the standard work on Thai-Dutch relations during the Seventeenth Century and on the Siam trade of the Dutch United East India Company (Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie, or V.O.C.). The book's two focal points are the V.O.C. and the kingdom of Ayutthaya. It is therefore likely to be of use both to historians of the Dutch "seaborne empire" and to anyone studying Siamese history. George Vinal Smith's is a pioneering work, the first to use Dutch sources comprehensively, and to present a Dutch point-of-view, in the study of Seventeenth Century Ayutthaya. New factual evidence is brought to light, and new interpretations put forward, making several historical events and episodes far less obscure or muddled than they had appeared. For example, the circumstances surrounding the Pattani rebellion of the 1630s and the background to the Thai-Dutch conflict of 1663-1664 emerge more clearly than ever before, thanks largely to the availability of V.O.C. archival documents, and to Dr. Smith's careful study of these invaluable sources.

The first chapter of the book is a concise but informative introduction to the "Historical Background" of the period which the author has chosen to study (1604-1690). It is in the subsequent chapters, however, that the bulk of the new data may be found. Chapter II, on the political history of the V.O.C. in Ayutthaya, is probably of the greatest general interest. Dr. Smith is especially illuminating when dealing with the period during which the Dutch became most involved in Siamese political affairs, a period roughly corresponding with the reign of King Prasatthong (1629-1656). The King asked the V.O.C. for military assistance against his rebellious vassals the Queen of Pattani and the King of Cambodia. In 1634 the V.O.C. sent six vessels to help the Siamese forces then besieging Pattani, but the Dutch fleet arrived two weeks after the Siamese had abandoned the siege. In 1644 the Dutch Governor-General asked King Prasatthong for military cooperation in attacking Cambodia, where several Dutchmen had recently been massacred by order of the new Khmer King. King Prasatthong sent some ships to help the V.O.C., but once again the Siamese and Dutch forces failed to find each other. Although little came of these joint operations, it is significant that the V.O.C. valued its commerce in Siam enough to involve itself militarily in Siamese foreign/tributary affairs. Batavia wanted a steady supply of Thai rice and coconut oil, and a hides export monopoly in Siam. An alliance with King Prasatthong was thought to be one way of securing these trade objectives.

Dr. Smith deserves credit for portraying King Prasatthong as much more than a regicidal monster given to bouts of drunkenness. Prasatthong was an able and energetic King. Even Jeremias van Vliet, who has left to posterity a detailed account of Prasatthong's cruelty when seizing the crown, saw fit to praise the usurper's qualities as a ruler. After King Prasatthong's death, the V.O.C. tried to avoid any involvement in Siam's political affairs. Nevertheless Thai-Dutch relations during King Narai's reign (1656-1688) were far from uneventful. Dr. Smith cogently refutes the idea that King Narai was constantly on bad terms with the Dutch, pointing out that only in 1663-1664, and from circa 1682 to 1685, did the V.O.C. have strained relations with the Siamese court. However, the significance of the Dutch blockade of 1663 and the unequal treaty of 1664 is played down rather too much. The August 1664 treaty between Siam and the V.O.C. cannot be interpreted as anything other than a humiliation of the Siamese, and an attempt by the V.O.C. to stop Siamese crown trade to Japan (by forbidding the use of Chinese pilots and crews on the King's ships). The V.O.C. never had any intention of conquering Siam, but King Narai must have retained enough fear of the V.O.C. to have taken seriously the rumours in 1682-1685 that the Dutch, fresh from their conquest of Bantam, were about to attack Siam.

Dr. Smith provides a detailed account and discussion of the V.O.C.'s trade in Ayutthaya, and of the Seventeenth Century Siamese economy (Chapters III and IV). The V.O.C.'s Siam office was not one of its most important: Siam had neither silk nor spices. These two chapters on the V.O.C.'s commerce in Siam are noteworthy for their accounts of the various markets and types of merchandise in which the V.O.C. competed. The Siamese King emerged as a major competitor of the foreign merchants, for he had at his disposal a great amount of manpower and a system of warehouses and monopolies. The Dutch nevertheless managed to obtain a hides export monopoly from King Prasatthong and a tin export monopoly at Ligor (Nakhon Sithammarat) from King Narai. Having suffered from the monopolistic practices of Phaulkon in the 1680s, the Dutch must have been relieved to witness the fall of the "Greek mandarin" in the succession conflict of 1688, especially when King Phetracha decided that he would henceforth deal with no European nation other than the Dutch. Although it appears that the V.O.C.'s Ayutthaya trade declined in intensity towards the end of the Seventeenth Century, there was a Dutch presence in Siam right up to the sack of the Siamese capital in 1767.

The survival of the V.O.C. in Ayutthaya says much for its employees' ability to adapt to conditions in Siam, an approach which George Vinal Smith calls keeping a "low profile". His chapter on the V.O.C.'s personnel and their interaction with Siamese society and institutions (especially the crown) is full of fascinating informa-

tion. It constitutes, in fact, a social history of the Dutch in Seventeenth Century Ayutthaya. The Siamese could not have been naive enough to perceive the V.O.C. personnel in Siam as a group of *phrai* under a *nai*, but they appreciated the Netherlanders' attempts to conform to their system of hierarchy and manpower organisation. Dr. Smith tells how, from experience, the Dutch learned to maintain this "low profile" while the French made social and diplomatic *faux pas*. He also corrects the impression that the French were the ones who supplied King Narai with all things European. The V.O.C. often obliged the King by supplying him with scientific tools, luxury goods, and skilled personnel. The French arrived in Siam much later than the Dutch, and supplied the Siamese court with fewer artisans.

Last but not least, Dr. Smith's work establishes once and for all the importance of Dutch sources in the study of Ayutthaya history. His Appendix I is an excellent survey of Dutch sources on Seventeenth Century Siam, bringing to our attention hitherto neglected works such as those by Gijsbert Heecq and Joannes Keijts. Matters of authorship and authenticity are also cleared up. For instance, Dr. Smith convincingly argues that the "Desfarges" account of the 1688 upheavals was indeed written by the French commander, and not by a Dutchman. He also raises strong objections to the validity of Jan Struijs' highly coloured account of Siam as a primary source. The most important sources, however, are the V.O.C. archives at the Algemeen Rijksarchief in The Hague. The author rightly emphasizes the special value of the *Overgekomen Brieven* collection. The documents in this collection, mostly written in Ayutthaya, are necessarily limited in the scope of their subject-matter, being in the main merchants' letters. Nevertheless the V.O.C. records form the most complete set of archives relevant to the history of Siam from 1604 to circa 1765. George Vinal Smith's book will surely inspire more historians to use Dutch source material in their study of Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Siam.

*Dhiravat na Pombejra*

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Klaus Wenk, *The Art of Mother-of-pearl in Thailand*, German and English, English translation by Seán and Elisabeth O' Loughlin (Inigo von Oppersdorff Publishers, Zurich, Switzerland, 1980), Illustrated, pp. 140

Although the art of mother-of-pearl inlay is usually counted among the "secondary arts", perhaps because a large portion of it is handicraft, it is yet surprising that literature on it should be so scarce, considering the intriguing character and effect of this material and the wide range of its application. This is particularly true in the case of Thailand whose mother-of-pearl art has been neglected abroad even more than Thai art in general, compared to the affluence of what has been published on the arts of other Asian countries.

Such an indifference seems both regrettable and unwarranted. We do find in Thailand examples of mother-of-pearl art creations, as for instance at the Ubosot of the Wat Phra Chetuphon in Bangkok, which are outstanding not merely for their subtle craftsmanship and almost incredibly delicate treatment of this brittle material but, for the exquisite beauty of the artists' conceptions and the splendour of every detail filled with a live, iridescent, almost unearthly beauty attained by hardly any other technique.

All the more welcome is a volume published recently under the title *'The Art of Mother-of-pearl in Thailand'*. It is a valuable addition to the by now impressive series of works on Thai art by Dr. Klaus Wenk, Professor of Hamburg University, Germany, a man who combines a passionate dedication to the Thai genius with a scrupulously discriminating scholarly mind. It may be mentioned here in parentheses that Wenk, after completing his juridical studies and being comfortably installed as a young lawyer chanced to come across Thai mother-of-pearl art – and was so struck by it that he abandoned his profession to devote himself to the study of Thai language and literature. He is now a professor of Thai language and literature at his University and enjoying a reputation as a leading expert in this field.

The volume presents samples of all possible applications of mother-of-pearl inlay, from objects of everyday use like small boxes, trunks or chests (*čiet*), tobacco boxes (*hip burī muk*), and so forth; to the containers for the bodies of the deceased (*ruk*, and *řalum*), or to a bride or highly placed personages; to the thrones of kings and nobles; to the seats of monks' chairs, throne seats and regalia; all the way to the crowning achievements of the artists which those at Wat Phrā Chētuphon are as crowning achievements. The volume contains sixteen magnificent plates. The subtle colours and iridescent effects are brought out fully in the photographs of high quality for which the Swiss publisher Inigo von Oppersdorff is well known.

The author, in modest scholarly understatement, defines as his intention merely to offer "a stimulus and an introduction" to further studies in this field. He refers to the existing works of Thai authors like Lūong Wisānsinlapakam, Somphop Phirom and others listed in his bibliography. But the significance and merit of Wenk's book seems rather that, in preparing it, he sifted and probed all the existing knowledge on Thai mother-of-pearl art and assembled in this slender volume whatever could be termed scientifically certified. His hope, evidently, is that on these solid, if measured, foundations others may feel encouraged to build and enlarge.

How slim this basis is as yet in some areas become most apparent in the historical chapter. Wenk's principal conclusions are that, although mother-of-pearl was used for decoration already in the Dvaravati period, there is no line of development from there to the "Footprint of the Lord Buddha" in the Chiangmai Museum, nor to the Ubōsot doors of Wat Phrā Chētuphon in Bangkok; that, contrary to other fields of art, we have no evidence thus far of any neighbouring country's influence on Thai mother-of-pearl art, prior to the Ratanakosin period; and that, with very few objects of this art datable, there is only one rather reliable historical dividing line: the earlier, ornamental period before the Chētuphon doors, and a late period from then on, turning to more naturalistic forms and to scenic representations.

What the book brings out clearly is that the Ratanakosin era did not merely achieve a development of the formal elements in mother-of-pearl art but, a nearly revolutionary change of conception. Whereas the classic style is almost entirely decorative, with an overwhelming predominance of geometric and plant-derived forms, sometimes ending up in stylized mythical heads or figures, the new style attempted in its masterpieces the presentation of vivid scenes of action set in complete landscapes, in the manner and style of classical Thai painting. It is not surprising that in this – considering the material – utterly ambitious proposition some of the new creations did not at once attain to the harmonious perfection of the decorative style at its best, such as we find it for example in the doors of the Phrā Monthop Phrā Phutha Bāt at Sarā-buri. What one marvels at is rather that by carving brittle shells one should have succeeded in vying with the delicacy and elegance of the nimble pencil or pen.

A magnificent mother-of-pearl creation of an entirely different kind is reproduced and commented on in conclusion. It is a dance mask of Hanuman embellished by lavish application of this material – a decorative piece not for actual use. Only four of these precious masks exist, two of them old, of which one is in the possession of His Majesty the King, the other one of the National Museum in Bangkok. The mask reproduced in the book is one of the only two built by a contemporary master, the late *Nāi* Chit Kāudūongčai. It is in the possession of the author and was built in 1970 at the request of H.H. Prince Ajavadis Diskul, to the memory of whom the book is also dedicated.

A detailed description of the manufacturing processes for mother-of-pearl art, including a brief comparison with Chinese and Vietnamese techniques, gives an impression of the enormously labour-intensive character of this craft and some indication for the superior quality of Thai-produced work.

Being published in English, in addition to German, the book is accessible to a wide audience. Those outside Thailand will find it helpful that a chapter has been added to introduce the reader to the *krăčang* and especially *krănok* ornaments in their various forms recurring in all mother-of-pearl designs.

All in all, this volume should be warmly welcomed by both Thais and Westerners because it opens up to the outside world another field of art in which the Thai genius has excelled. It may even be that such an enhanced reputation abroad might kindle, not altogether superfluously, a broader attention to, and appreciation of, this precious heritage in Thailand itself. In any case, the author and his publisher, after a series of works in a similar vein, most notable among them the monumental opus *Mural Paintings in Thailand*, have added another distinguished feather to their already well-bedecked caps.

*Volkmar Zuehlsdorff*

Santosh Nagpaul Desai, **Hinduism in Thai Life** (Popular Prakashan Private Ltd., Bombay 1980), pp. 163.

Reading *Hinduism in Thai Life* by Prof. (Mrs.) S.N. Desai reminds me of a poem written by that illustrious son and savant of India, Rabindranath Tagore, on the occasion of his visit to Thailand (then Siam) in 1927. The last stanza of that poem entitled "To Siam" reads :

"I come, a pilgrim, at thy gate, O Siam, to offer my verse to  
*the endless glory of India sheltered in thy home, away from her own  
deserted shrine, to bathe in the living stream that flows in thy heart,*  
whose water descends from the snowy height at a sacred time on which  
arose, from the deep of my country's being, the Sun of Love and  
Righteousness."

The underlining is mine. Readers will kindly forgive my impudence for I just want to point out "the glory of India" that inspired Tagore to compose the above poem and dedicate it to Siam.

In her preface to the book under review, Prof. Desai writes that during her four-year stay in Thailand, she "acquired a knowledge of and developed a warm feeling for Thai religious and cultural life." I presume that this "warm feeling" on the part of the authoress, though not expressed in the same vein as Tagore did half a century ago, moved her in no small measure to bring out the present book.

In any case, there is no denying the fact that countries of South-east Asia have been in cultural contacts with India since ages past. Georges Coedès, the renowned French archaeologist of Indo-China and Thailand, says that these contacts date back to the early centuries before the Christian era. If language is to be any criterion of such contacts, Thailand, among countries of South-east Asia, perhaps, has been in very close cultural relations with India, for there is a significantly high percentage of Sanskrit and Pali words in the Thai language, especially so in respect of literary Thai and terms for technical expression. Indeed, without the component of Sanskrit and Pali vocabulary, the Thai language would not be what it is today.

"The object of this book is to assess the role of the Hindu traditions in Thai life--their functional value, their significance to the Thai, and the extent to which they were modified," writes Prof. Desai at the very commencement of her preface. Accordingly, *Hinduism in Thai Life* is divided into six chapters, namely :

- I. Thai History and Archaeology: Evidence of Indian Contacts
- II. Thai Religion, Festivals and Ceremonies: Elements of Hinduism
- III. Thai Political Theory: The Hindu Components
- IV. Thai Literature: The Rama Story, The Hindu Religious Epic
- V. The Ramakirti and the Non-Valmiki Versions of the Rama Story: In India and in other countries of South-east Asia
- VI. Conclusion

Each of the above chapters deals cogently with the subject concerned. To those not familiar with Sanskrit and Pali terms, the book may prove a little irksome. But thoughtful readers will sympathize with the authoress since books on such subjects could hardly be written without referring to Sanskrit texts and sources.

Coming from a Brahmin family, herself a professor of Hinduism and Buddhism, and, above all, having studied the subject on the spot, Prof. Desai is fully merited to undertake this scholarly job.

The authoress took great pains to explain the elements of Hinduism in Thai religion, festivals and ceremonies in Chapter II, and in Chapter III dealing with the Hindu components in Thai political theory, we find her exerting the same efforts. In Chapter IV, a careful comparison is made between the Ramakirti, the Thai Ramayana, and the Sanskrit Ramayana of Valmiki. The comparison sheds useful and interesting information with regard to differences in various aspects of the Thai Ramayana and the Ramayana of Valmiki. Chapter V is even more interesting because here the Ramakirti is compared with the non-Valmiki versions of the Rama story prevalent in India as well as in other countries of South-east Asia, such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Finally, in Chapter VI, we have the authoress' conclusion of her *Hinduism in Thai Life* which sums up as follows:

“Hinduism has existed in Thailand in a syncretistic relationship with Theravada Buddhism since the pre-Thai period (at least since the fifth century B.C.) . . . . . The role of Hinduism, therefore, is subordinate and peripheral to Buddhism. Hinduism exists not as a total tradition as it does in India; rather it is there in a piece-meal way, lacking in depth, structure, inner unity and cohesiveness. . . . . But that Hinduism in this modified form is universally encountered and all pervasive in Thai life is, on the other hand, beyond question.”

Dr. Ainslie T. Embree, Professor of Indian Studies, Columbia University, in his foreword to the book, writes of the authoress as follows:

“In her (Prof. S.N. Desai’s) writing, there is none of the cultural chauvinism that has characterized much writing of this kind, for she writes from a warm understanding of both Indian and Thai cultures that prevents her from making easy value judgements.”

The above view of Dr. Embree will be readily shared by anyone who goes through the book reflectively.

Apart from the copious bibliography and glossary of Sanskrit terms, the book is furnished with useful appendices and an index. Notwithstanding typographical errors appearing in several places, *Hinduism in Thai Life* is heartily recommended to all those interested in the subject.

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Heinz Bechert, Editor, **Die Sprache der ältesten buddhistischen Überlieferung. The Language of the Earliest Buddhist Tradition** (Symposien zur Buddhismusforschung II) (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1980), 193 p. (Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, Philologisch-Historische Klasse. Dritte Folge 117).

In contrast to the first symposium held under the auspices of the Academy of Sciences at Göttingen and organized by Heinz Bechert *Buddhism in Ceylon and Studies on Religious Syncretism in Buddhist Countries* (1978), the second meeting has concentrated on a much narrower and more precisely defined subject: the language of the earliest Buddhist tradition. Eight contributions, five in English, two in German and one in French, are framed by a general introduction to the subject and abstracts of the discussions that succeeded each paper.

The "Introduction" and the "Allgemeine Bemerkungen" (General Remarks), both by Heinz Bechert, furnish an excellent guide to the present state of research reached and the methods applied in dealing with the problems of historical linguistics in early Buddhist texts. Within the twenty years since the posthumous publication of H. Lüders' (1869–1943) fundamental book *Beobachtungen über die Sprache des buddhistischen Urkanons* (Observations on the language of the original Buddhist canon) (1954), the contents of which have been summed up conveniently in English by M.A. Mehendale, *Some Aspects of Indo-Aryan Linguistics* (1968), the idea of an original canon, from which all existing canonical Buddhist texts are derived somehow or other, has become more and more doubtful. Therefore the word "Urkanon" has been banished from the headline of this symposium, as it is dropped from the discussion on linguistic and literary problems.

Thus the discussion focusses on the means and ways of how to get a clearer picture of the lost language or languages at the time of the Buddha. One of the major difficulties, which has yet to be overcome, is the lack of an investigation similar to Lüders' work into the earliest language used by the Jains. The articles of Ludwig Alsdorf (1904-1978), to whom this volume is dedicated, "Ardha-Māgadhī" and of Colette Caillat "La Langue Primitive du Bouddhisme" (the original language of Buddhism) deal with this aspect, while K.R. Norman "The Dialects in which the Buddha Preached" tries to reconstruct different dialects used by the Buddha on different occasions from the wording of parallel passages known from the Northern and Southern Buddhist traditions and showing a similar, but not an identical Text. At the same time he tries to revive the opinion of Hermann Oldenberg (1854-1920) that the home of Pāli is

to be found in Eastern rather than in Western India as generally assumed now. Both proposals met with some doubt and criticism at the conference as can be gathered from the discussion in the respective appendix to this volume (on the home and early history of Pāli see also my forthcoming article "Pāli as an Artificial Language" to be published in *Indologica Taurinensia* 9. 1982).

John Brough again very carefully investigates the much debated *sakkāya niruttiyā* and *chandaso āropetum* in the Cullavagga of the Vinayapitaka with the result that the latter probably means "Vedic" especially in the light of the Chinese translations of the relevant passage. Later views on language held by the Buddhists themselves are examined by Akira Yuyama "Bu-ston on the Language Used by Indian Buddhists at the Schismatic Period".

Finally Gustav Roth re-edited the Sanskrit version of the Dhammapada found in Tibet by Rāhula Saṅkrtyāyana and preserved today in Patna thus superseding the earlier edition by N.S. Shukla (1979). This article also surveys the "Particular Features of the Language of the Ārya-Mahāsāmghika-Lokottaravādins and Their Importance for Early Buddhist Tradition". Ernst Waldschmidt describes the present state of knowledge in the field of "Central Asian Sūtra Fragments and Their Relation to the Chinese Āgamas". This contribution also contains a re-edited text : the Mahāsamāja-sūtra found at Turfan.

The equally high standard of all articles and the brilliant survey of the research done on this subject during the last two decades make this book indispensable reading for everybody who wants to work in the field of Pāli or early Buddhist languages and literature in general. (A more detailed review by J.W. de Jong has appeared in the *Indo-Iranian Journal* 24, 1982, 215-218; a second one by myself discussing especially the relation of Pāli and Vedic is forthcoming in *Indogermanische Forschungen*).

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พระราชวรมุนี (ประยูร ปรยุตโต), พุทธธรรม ฉบับปรับปรุงและขยายความ  
มัชฌิมนิเทศนา/มัชฌิมาปฏิปทา หรือ กุฎธรรมชาติ และคุณค่าสำหรับชีวิต  
(The Venerable Phra Rajavaramuni (Payutto), Buddhadhamma) (กณัฏฐกถาธรรม  
พิมพ์เผยแพร่ พิมพ์ครั้งที่ 1 กรุงเทพฯ พ.ศ. 2525-Bangkok, 1982), pp. 940

In 1971 the Textbook Project on Social Sciences and Humanities under the chairmanship of Dr. Puey Ungphakorn produced two big tomes as a *festshcrift* in honour of H.R.H. Prince Wan's 80th birthday anniversary. Among the scholars invited to write all those learned articles, there was only one monk, the Ven. P. Payutto who was then Phra Srivisudhimoli, deputy secretary general of Maha Chulalongkorn Buddhist University.

His writing 'Buddhadhamma' was the longest (206 pages) and was considered the best article in the two volumes. Hence he was invited to deliver it in a concised form as a special lecture on the Prince's birthday at Thammasat University's Auditorium. The article was later published separately as a book in itself. The book *Buddhadhamma* made a real impact on the Thai Buddhist community: for the first time Buddhism was explained with such clarity that even Thais who were trained traditionally in Buddhist monastic schools as well as those who were educated abroad both could easily understand it. They found it beautifully written and extremely stimulating.

Since then the book had been reprinted on a number of occasions, especially for free distribution at cremation ceremonies. Most Buddhist clubs at various universities prescribed the book as a handbook for those who wished to study the Dhamma seriously.

In the first edition, the learned author only explained two main parts of Buddhism namely (1) The Principles concerning the Truth which is the core of Nature, and (2) The Middle Path, or the way of practice to reach the ultimate truth. Yet each part is explained with such profundity. For instance, in the first part, he began by asking 'What is Life?' Then he explained the five aggregates in detail and with rationality so that those who had no knowledge of Buddhism would be able to understand the Buddhist analysis of the so called 'Mind and Body' into Corporeality, Feeling or Sensation, Perception, Mental Formations or Volitional Activities and Consciousness. This is the basic concept in Buddhism which is much misunderstood not only in the West but in this country as well. This section in itself is worth translating into English.

Another question the author posed was 'How is Life?' and he answered this by explaining the Three Signs of Impermanence, Conflict and Non-self or Soullessness. To understand this, again, is to understand the essential teaching of the Buddha concerning the universe and its natural phenomena, including the so-called self.

The author then asked 'How life comes into being?' and he answered this by explaining the Law of Dependent Origination or Conditionality. This is the essence of Buddhist philosophy, which denies the First Cause or the *Causa Causan*. This law is the most difficult and the most profound. One Supreme Patriarch of the Thai Sangha even admitted that he could not understand this properly. All schools of Buddhism stress and explain this law or principle. In Theravada Buddhism alone, there are so many commentaries and sub-commentaries on this. If one understands this thoroughly, then one would appreciate the Middle Path and could really proclaim oneself a true Buddhist. Otherwise one could easily fall into a trap, emphasising such as Extreme Realism, Nihilism, Eternalism, Annihilationism, Self-Generationism or Karmic Auto-genesisism. Unfortunately, too many so-called Buddhists in this country make one of these errors.

Among contemporary Thai Bhikkhus, the Venerable Buddhadasa and the Venerable P. Payutto seem to be among the very few who could explain this very delicate law for a wide audience. Both rely heavily on Pali canonical works of the Buddha more than on commentaries or sub-commentaries, although they also consult them.

Part 2 dealt with guidelines for practice in order that life could be led in accordance to the Middle Path, i.e. all would be harmonious according to the law of nature.

The author began by asking 'What should life be?' He then answered the question by explaining the Noble Eightfold Path in detail. Right and wrong views as well as right and wrong practices were stressed and explained clearly. Within less than one hundred pages, the author managed to present these very delicate matters to readers in a clear and concise manner. His explanation was orthodox yet so rational and convincing that one could not help but marvel at his grasp of the Dhamma and the lucid way in which he expounded it.

The first edition ended here, although the author felt that the complete *Buddhadhamma* should consist of two more parts, namely – Part 3 : dealing with liberation i.e. the meaning of life after the ultimate end. What would be the meaning and condition of that ultimate end, as well as its value for those who achieved that state; Part 4: the practical purpose of the Middle Path i.e. how should individuals and society function by applying these Principles for daily life both for carrying out daily activities as well as for educating members of the younger generation in order that all could live together as happily and harmoniously as possible.

The learned author has since been promoted by H.M. the King to his present title—Phra Rajavaramuni (the Best Sage for the Sovereign). He was invited to teach once at Swarthmore College and once at Harvard University. Although he resigned from the abbotship of his monastery at Wat Prapirendra in Bangkok and from the

deputy general-secretaryship at his Buddhist University in order to fulfill his wishes in completing the book, he was unable to do so for a decade, partly because of his commitments to other writings and to his duty as a monk in helping laymen in their spiritual needs. Besides, he was not in good health.

So it was a great joy to most of us when the complete and revised edition of *Buddhadhamma* was published in 1982. Despite difficulties and imperfections in printing as well as a lack of index (which is very crucial), I, for one, feel that the book is certainly the most welcome event in the Thai publishing context. As for all the minus points they could easily be overcome in the next edition which, one is certain, will be soon. Indeed its publication this year is a very good omen too as it coincides with the two hundredth anniversary of Bangkok. It should be translated (even in a concised form) into English. Then it would be the best gift from Siam to the world, as the Buddha says, the gift of Dhamma is the best gift of all.

So many *farangs* attempt to understand Thai Buddhism through existing academic disciplines. With this book, anyone can understand Theravada Buddhism about as well as the best contemporary Thai Buddhist scholar. I feel this is the best single volume on Buddhism ever written in any language.

*The Three Worlds* of King Ruang offered the best explanation of Buddhism during the Sukhothai period, which unfortunately was distorted for the purpose of the ruling elite. *Kijjanukij* was the best exposé of the Thai worldview of the last century which Chao Phya Divakaravamsa relied heavily on for his understanding of Buddhism to show that we were not inferior to the *farang*, especially after so many attacks by missionaries. Alabaster put forward the essence of *Kijjanukij* in his book *The Wheel of the Law*. Unfortunately King Mongkut never wrote his magnum opus on Buddhism. His son, the Prince Patriarch Vajirañāna, wrote many books on many aspects of Buddhism, but he never wrote a single volume on the whole Buddhist Philosophy and its practice like this one. Let us hope therefore that someone will do justice to *Buddhadhamma* soon, by translating it into English.

In the 1982 edition of *Buddhadhamma*, the Venerable author did not divide the book into 4 parts. In fact, he still divided it into 2 main parts as previously, but he more or less answered all the points which he felt should be answered. The subtitle *Buddhadhamma* still remains the same—*The Law of Nature and Its Values for Life*. However, he expanded it sixfold.

In this edition, the author still referred to Pali texts—not only to the Thai and Roman scripts but also to the Burmese edition. He also consulted and sometimes contradicted English books on Buddhism by giving definite and precise points when he was sure that those authors had gone wrong. Yet he does so in an inoffensive manner.

In part I, the first chapter dealing with the Five Aggregates has been much expanded, especially in dealing with memory and mindfulness, as well as with consciousness and knowledge. At the end of this chapter and of every chapter the author always refers to ethical values on that topic. And at every chapter, there is an appendix for scholars who wish to pursue some points further.

Chapter 2 deals with the six senses—doors (eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind) and the three channels of action (bodily, speech, mind). This is an addition.

Chapters 3 and 4 deal with the Three Signs and Dependent Origination as in the first edition, but Chapter 4 is much expanded by referring to the Nikayas as well as the Abhidhamma, since there has been much controversy lately among Thai Buddhist scholars on this very topic and the Ven. Buddhadasa was the centre of this controversial issue. Perhaps this Chapter will help to clarify the issue.

Chapter 5, dealing with Karma, is a long addition to the new edition. As the Law of Karma is very important and is usually misunderstood, it is quite right that the learned author spends much time explaining the law of act and result or moral laws (karmic laws). He differentiates this from (1) law of energy or law of physical phenomena, (2) law of hereditary or biological laws, (3) psychic law or psychological laws, and (4) the general law of cause and effect, or order of the norm.

This Chapter has been thoroughly explained with long quotations from the Discourses of the Buddha, since it deals with the Theory of Rebirth too. Without proper understanding, one could easily commit the wrong view of past lives and future lives—not to mention the prevailing misconception ทำดีไม่ได้ดี (doing good without any good result). The author explains about good, goodness, good result etc. with lucidity. Anyone who has read G.E. Moore's *Principia Ethica* will appreciate the Buddhist approach to ethical language.

The first five chapters in Part I have been divided into 3 sections:

- (1) What is Life?
- (2) How is Life?
- (3) How Life comes into being?

This is on the main the same as in the first edition.

In this new edition, the author adds section (4) How Life should be? Chapter 6 deals with Knowledge, Liberation, Purity, Peace and Nirvana. Chapter 7 deals with the state and stages of those who achieve Nirvana. Chapter 8 deals with the practice in order to achieve various stages of Nirvana—i.e. Mindfulness of Calm, Insight, Liberation through the Mind and Liberation through Wisdom. Chapter 9 explains the main principles in helping one to achieve Nirvana. And Chapter 10 concludes about Nirvana.

Chapters 6 to 10 are the most profound and difficult. Those who have difficulty in reading *The Path of Purification* (Visuddhimagga), *The Path of Liberation* (Vimuttimagga) and *Questions of King Milinda* will find these chapters a great help. For those who come across serious Buddhism for the first time, if they understand the first 5 chapters or have read the first edition of *Buddhadhamma* thoroughly, they will understand and appreciate these five chapters better.

Chapter 11 to 15 are called 'Additional Articles' starting with explaining about life and basic quality of the four divisions of the Noble Disciples: Stream Enterer, Once-Returner, Non-Returner and the Worthy One (Arahant). An appendix on this chapter deals especially with Dana or Generosity, which is the first step in practising Buddhism.

Chapters 12, which is still in section 4, deals with Morality and Society. This chapter is very relevant especially for those who think Buddhism only dealt with individual salvation. In fact this chapter explains clearly social responsibility of those who study and practise Buddhadhamma. The Buddhist concept of development is also dealt with.

Chapter 13 deals with "extraordinariness", beyond ordinary perception, such as miracles and other beings, like ghosts and gods or other worlds, subjects which those who want to make Buddhism rational often tend to overlook. Yet the author explains this rationally just as he explains other matters and phenomena. This is according to the canonical Texts as expounded by the Buddha himself, indeed it is *The Miracle of Being Awake* as Thich Nhat Hanh puts it.

Chapter 14 deals with Motive or Aspiration for Moral life. This is particularly interesting because it is this idea that is most often subject to misinterpretation. Because the Buddha taught us to get rid of craving, people think that in order to be detached, one must not have any incentive, one should sit still and be inactive. Nothing is further from the truth. The whole Buddhist threefold training on Morality, Mindfulness and Wisdom is in fact to set one in the right frame of mind for proper action.

Indeed the path of accomplishment or basis for success, both for worldly gains and spiritual attainments, must begin with willingness or proper motivation. Then one must direct one's energy, effort or exertion to it. After that one must use active thought, or apply thoughtfulness to each action—whether mind, speech or body. In addition, investigation, testing, examination or reasoning are needed in order to accomplish the desired result.

Chapter 15 deals with Happiness in its various aspects and levels. It starts with the sensual realm which could actually be harmful, to non-sensual happiness which could be attained through the practice of mindfulness in various aspects of Jhanic meditation, for instance, the First Three Absorptions include Happiness, whereas the Fourth Absorption only has two qualities—Equanimity and one-pointedness of mind. One must realize of course that Buddhism wants to lead those who practise Dhamma to walk on beyond Happiness to Liberation.

Part II of the new edition starts with Chapter 16, which has a long introduction on the Middle Path or the Noble Eightfold Path.

Having understood the map of the Middle Path, one is ready to walk along the way, and the essential element for the wayfarer is Good Friends. Indeed the Buddha regards himself only as a Good Friend who could but point out the way. At this stage, one should hear or learn from others or be induced by others—namely Good Friends who know the Path and who could point out the way. Bhikkhus, teachers and meditation masters can all be regarded as Good Friends.

Once one is convinced of the way, one has faith or confidence to walk on that path. The whole of chapter 17 deals with Good Friends in all aspects. Then Chapter 18 deals with directing one's thoughts in order to develop wise consideration.

If chapter 17 deals with counsel or advice from others, then this chapter deals with developing one's own frame of mind. In Buddhism, these twin aspects are crucial prerequisites for the noble life. To me, no one has explained those two main pillars of Buddhism as clearly as is done in this book.

Chapter 19 deals with wisdom, i.e. Right View and Right Thought. Chapter 20 deals with Morality i.e. Right Speech, Right Action and Right Livelihood. Social aspects are taken into full consideration. Chapter 21 is about Mindfulness or the rest of the Noble Eightfold Path, namely Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration. This chapter in itself can be a useful handbook for intellectuals who wish to practise meditation, as it gives the theoretical framework as well as good guidelines for putting theory into practice.

The last chapter—chapter 22—summarises the whole Buddhadhamma in its essence, namely the Four Noble Truths.

The reader who pursues the book to its end will surely understand Buddhism much more thoroughly.

The book will make a new person of the reader. Even if he still clings to his 'self' and may not be much better spiritually, he will surely have a new and deep understanding of the Buddha and his teachings. Non-Buddhists who read this book need not be converted but would appreciate Buddhism better as a philosophy, a religion and a noble way of life.

This book may thus be proclaimed as the best exposé of the whole corpus of essential teaching of Theravada Buddhism in Thai ever written.

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**Dialogue, Vol. 8 : Buddhist-Christian Renewal and the Faith of Humanity**  
(Ecumenical Institute for Study & Dialogue, Colombo, Sri Lanka, 1981)

**Buddhist-Christian Studies, Vol. 1** (East-West Religions Project, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii, 1981)

These two volumes have been published as a result of the international conference of religious students, scholars, and teachers held at the University of Hawaii in June 1980 and sponsored by the University of Hawaii Department of Religion, the Hawaii Council of Churches, and the Hawaii Buddhist Council.

*Dialogue* contains seven papers presented at the conference, each emphasizing the new awareness resulting from interfaith dialogue between Buddhism and Christianity:

1. "Interfaith Dialogue as a Source of Christian-Buddhist Renewal: Creative Transformation" by Paul O. Ingram. The encounter between divergent beliefs can serve as a source for spiritual renewal. Interfaith dialogue presents an opportunity for greater knowledge and insight when we relate to one another based on our common humanity as persons, not merely through such abstract labels as "Christian", "Buddhist", "Hindu", or "Muslim".

2. "Reformist Buddhism in Thailand, Bhikkhu Buddhadasa" by Donald K. Swearer and Sulak Sivaraksa\*. Bhikkhu Buddhadasa, a controversial reformist monk, reinterprets the Buddha's teachings according to contemporary life. This article explains the basic structure of his philosophy, the reformulation of basic Theravada teachings, and his critique of Thai Buddhism.

3. "Dialogue: Spiritual Transformation", by Donald K. Swearer, examines the life and teachings of two modern religious spokesmen: Thich Nhat Hanh and Thomas Merton.

4. "Buddha, Man and God", by Hsueh-li-Chang, presents a discussion of Buddhism in relation to the existence of a theistic god.

Additional essays include:

5. "The Ethic of the Dhammapada and the Sermon on the Mount" by Roy C. Amore;

6. "Dialogue of World Religions" by Arvind Sharma;

7. "Mother Teresa's Boundless Compassion and Voluntary Poverty: An Evaluation by a Buddhist" by Neville Gunaratne.

*Buddhist-Christian Studies*, a scholarly journal based on historical research and contemporary religious practice, has evolved in response to the enthusiasm generated from the University of Hawaii conference. The first annual issue consists of nine papers:

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\* This article was reprinted as a booklet by Suksit Siam, Bangkok, to mark the 50th anniversary of Suan Mokh (The Garden of Liberation) which was created by Buddhadasa Bhikkhu on 27 May 1932.

1. "A Framework for Buddhist-Christian Dialogue" by Donald K. Swearer. A radical, personal transformation and acceptance of moral responsibility for the welfare of humankind is central to both Buddhism and Christianity.

2. "Buddhist-Christian Dialogue: Past, Present and Future" by Masao Abe and John Cobb (interviewed by Bruce Long). The establishment of a spiritual foundation for the realization of a deeper religious dimension can be attained only by cutting through "innate" conceptual and cultural patterns. This article mentions some of the difficulties regarding the character of the contemporary Buddhist-Christian encounter.

3. "The Pluralistic Situation and the Coming Dialogue Between the World Religions" by Peter Berger. The religions of modern technological society must progress beyond mere tolerance of one another and inquire into the deeper truth that underlies them. The Buddhist-Christian dialogue provides an immense challenge for attempting to answer the most profound questions of human existence.

Additional essays include :

4. "Christians, Buddhists and Manichaeans in Medieval Central Asia" by Hans-J. Klimkeit;

5. "Bengal Blackie and the Sacred Slut: A Sahajayana Buddhist Song" by Lee Siegel;

6. "Buddhist Attitudes toward Women's Bodies" by Diana Y. Paul;

7. "Feminism from the Perspective of Buddhist Practice" by Rita Gross;

8. "*The Cloud of Unknowing* and the *Mumonkan*: Christian and Buddhist Meditation Methods" by Robert Aitken;

9. "*The Cloud of Unknowing* and the Buddhist Logic of Not-Two" by Masaaki Honda.

"We have arrived at the most serious crisis point the civilized world has ever known. Threatened by overpopulation and food shortages, the possibility of widespread chemical contamination, the prospect of atomic holocaust, international political confrontation, and the dissolution of traditional communal structures and values, some reel in confusion, others react with mindless violence, while still others, anticipating the apoclypse, retreat to self-sufficient existence cut off from a world apparently gone insane."<sup>1</sup> *Dialogue* and *Buddhist-Christian Studies* provide a challenge for those seeking a deeper and more complete spiritual reality. It is hoped that both journals will continue to explore the depths of interfaith dialogue and human consciousness as exemplified by these two issues.

Terry A. Silver

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1. Donald K. Swearer, "Dialogue : Spiritual Transformation" (*Dialogue*, Vol. 8, p. 52).

Roy C. Amore, **Two Masters, One Message** (Abingdon, Nashville), pp. 186.

Professor Roy C. Amore, with much intellectual ingenuity, attempts herein to prove that the New Testament was strongly influenced by Buddhism. He cites the striking similarities in the biographies of the Buddha and Jesus; their comparable lifestyles; the comparability of the two masters' teaching; the shared message. Further correspondences can be seen in their efforts to communicate this message through the working of miracles and teaching through similes, parables. He then, with a dramatic flair, presents the thesis that Matthew and Luke in their Gospels drew on a "Sayings Source", Q, which incorporated Buddhist teachings and was partially influenced by the biography of the Buddha. The author points to the Buddhist content of the temptation of Jesus; the Sermon on the Mount; the invocations of Jesus to love your enemies; judge not; and overcome anger. The author places especial emphasis on the very Buddhist account of the birth of Jesus found solely in the Gospel of Luke and the inclusion in Luke of the greatest number of Buddhist sayings. The author closes his presentation expressing the conviction that Jesus drew upon Buddhist, as well as Jewish concepts and images, and that the Buddhist presence in Christianity continued after Jesus' death.

While the author's thesis is provocative and challenging, it is not entirely convincing. There is no doubt as to the striking similarities in the ethical teachings, parables, metaphors and similes used; the miracles performed; the birth and infancy narratives and lifestyles of the Buddha and Jesus. However, the author only fleetingly refers to the specific means through which such actual contact between Buddhist teachers and both the Q community and with Jesus and his disciples and followers might have been established e.g. sea and land trade routes, commercial contacts, archaeological evidence etc.

Perhaps, of more significance, the author neglects to analyze the equally provocative writings of Sir James George Frazer, Carl Gustav Jung and Joseph Campbell who, each from their different perspectives, argue the universality of the World Savior mythology and stress the universally recurrent patterns of human thought (the psychological, as well as biological and social, characteristics, common to all man), first evidenced in myths, which find expression in the masterpieces of world literature as well as in the philosophical teachings of religious mystics. It is the hero, the World Savior, who plumbs the depths of the "mythical consciousness", the "collective unconsciousness"; who overcomes illusion and ignorance after the adventurous quest, suffering, release. Carl Jung refers to "archetypes", Adolf Bastian to "Elementary Ideas". The

tradition of "subjectively known forms" (Sanskrit : antarjñeyarūpa) is co-extensive with the tradition of myth. The mythologists point to a set of symbols common to all communities throughout time; to recurrent themes of guilt, fear, anxiety; to cyclic patterns of withdrawal and return; death and rebirth; guilt and expiation; sacrificial suffering; propitiation and initiation rites common to all people from time immemorial. Campbell speaks of the imagery shared by the two religious traditions, Christianity and Buddhism, as being older than both : serpent, tree, garden of immortality, all described in the earliest cuneiform texts and old Sumerian cylinder seals, in the art and rites of primitive cultures. Campbell also refers to the enlightenment of the Buddha under the Bo tree as the most important moment in Oriental mythology. He cites it as a counterpart to the Crucifixion of Christianity. He sees Buddha under the Bo tree and Christ on Holy Rood (Tree of Redemption) as analogous figures, incorporating an archetypal World Savior, World Tree motif, which is of immemorial antiquity. Other variants of the theme may be found in the Immovable Spot and Mount Calvary as images of the World Navel, or World Axis of mythology. He further contends that productions and projections of the psyche evolve from man's imagination in the same mythological motifs throughout the world i.e. myths and legends of Virgin Birth, Incarnations, Resurrections.

Thus, in the language of anthropology, cannot the similarities and correspondences between Buddhism and Christianity which Professor Amore attributes, in diffusionist terms, to Buddhist influence on Christianity be rather seen as the result of independent development or parallelism? Both Buddhism and Christianity may well have independently drawn on mythic patterns and motifs, recurrent themes and imagery and a common set of symbols, universal projections of the psyche. Drawing from a common well of hero and Savior myths and legends and mirror reflections of biological, psychological and social characteristics common to all man, it is not surprising that similar patterns of birth, lifestyle, ethical teaching, miracles, parables, would emerge in the religious traditions of Buddhism and Christianity. As cultural form has limits set by natural conditions which makes for resemblances i.e. the law of limited possibilities, so too do the life and teachings of the religious mystics, culture heroes, World Saviors evidence striking correspondences. In the transformation of man's consciousness and achieving purity of mind; in liberating truth from the illusion of the individual ego; in overcoming ignorance, does not the law of limited possibilities also apply?\*

Sir James Frazer, in his seminal work "The Golden Bough", eloquently outlined this thesis : "We

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\* At the same time, it must be appreciated that the cosmology and epistemology of the two religious traditions, Buddhism and Christianity, are distinctly different.

need not . . . suppose that the Western peoples borrowed from the older civilization of the Orient the conception of the Dying and Reviving God, together with solemn ritual, in which that conception was dramatically set forth before the eyes of the worshippers. More probably the resemblance which may be traced in this respect between the religions of the East and West is no more than what we commonly, though incorrectly, call a fortuitous coincidence, the effect of similar causes acting alike on the similar constitution of the human mind in different countries and under different skies."

Thus, Professor Amore, as a religious diffusionist, visualizes "Two Masters, One Message"; Campbell, Frazer, Jung, as exponents of mythic and psychic parallelism, visualize "The Hero With a Thousand Faces", the title of Campbell's brilliant, though controversial, treatise.

Professor Amore's well reasoned, succinct and challenging argument in this work should provoke readers to begin their own historical journey and exploration to seek the truth as to linkages, or their absence, in the great religious traditions of Buddhism and Christianity.

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Antony Fernando, **Buddhism and Christianity: Their Inner Affinity** (Colombo, Ecumenical Institute for Study and Dialogue, 1981)

One of the evidences of the positive nature of religious pluralism is the increasing number of very helpful basic guides to the comparative study of Buddhism and Christianity, Dr. Antony Fernando's book is such a guide. It is one in a series of thoughtful publications from the Ecumenical Institute for Study and Dialogue in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

At each step of interpretation, Fernando suggests a few carefully chosen parallels to the Christian faith. His purpose is to write a guide to Buddhism for Christians. To those already acquainted with the rudiments of Buddhism, basing a major part of a book on the four noble truths may seem elementary, but the author manages to approach his subject with freshness and insight. For advanced students he provides sufficient technical terms and depth to provide a helpful review. Dr. Fernando also is careful to offer enough social and historical material to give some sense of the context and development of Buddhist teaching. Particularly interesting are his references to the place of laypersons in early Buddhism. He emphasizes the anti-ascetical and anti-ritualistic aspects of the Buddha's teaching. His clarification of the levels of meaning of *karma* and *samsara* provide needed corrective to popular usage. He points to the teaching of the Ven. Buddhadasa of Thailand to indicate the present "here and now" emphasis of *karma* and *samsara*.

Fernando proposes a reconception of Nirvana in modern terminology. After working his way through the old terminology and imagery, he suggests that, "Nirvana denotes a well developed personality or 'humanhood' in its ideal form". (p. 42). Earlier he comments that "This vitality of the Nirvanic personality comes from the very power of dharma or the power of truth and goodness to which he adheres." (p. 40) Whether this modernization of nirvana is an adequate restatement may be questioned, but it indicates the bold strokes that the author makes in his interpretation. His exposition of mindfulness and concentration are clear and include very practical illustrations. This is useful in approaching the sometimes very complex psychology of Buddhism.

Fernando draws a parallel of Buddhist mindfulness to the New Testament "expectation of the Parousia" or the imminent coming of Christ. This is an interesting but surely questionable comparison. Would it have been more fruitful to look for affinity with the mystical tradition in Christianity? Maybe that has been overworked. His description of Buddhist meditation is clear and concise.

The author recognizes the difference between Jesus' sense of personal relationship to God and Buddha's criticism of the Hindu conventional belief and practices concerning gods. In suggesting that Jesus' emphasis was a "behavioral acknowledge-

ment" of God, Fernando indicates the common emphasis on anti-ritualism and the quality of personal transformation in both faiths. "Both have one common aim: to awaken people to a sense of realism and responsibility in their day to day life". (p. 98)

The author carefully works through the experimental dimension of the Christian faith in God, the forgiveness of God and Jesus' teaching of man's relatedness to man. He holds as a hope that persons may genuinely benefit from both religions. "It is quite possible that as forms of personality upliftment the two systems have elements that are complimentary to each other" (p. 109). The Christian need not compete with the Buddhist but should collaborate with him.

Fernando has penetrated the deeper meaning of both faiths and the book is very illuminating for the Christian exploring Buddhist teaching. It will also assist in reflections on his own faith. It may be that not all the examples of "inner affinity" are adequate, but the book as a whole is an important and very helpful contribution to the dialogue between the faiths.

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C.F. Keyes (ed), **Ethnic Adaptation and Identity** (Insitute for the Study of Human Issues, Philadelphia, 1979)

A witty, elegant collection of essays about the Karen of the Thai-Burmese frontier areas, edited and introduced by Charles Keyes, who also supplies a chapter on Karen ethnohistory. Other contributors, several of whose papers circulated for some time before the book was printed, include Lehman and Hinton, Kunstadter, Ijima, Stern and Marlowe. An interesting mixture of history and ethnography, the work makes a major theoretical contribution to the debate about ambivalent ethnicity initiated by Leach's work on the Kachin<sup>1</sup>. Many of the papers focus on what Lehman sees as the equivalence of cultural change with 'a change in ethnicity, an alteration in identity'. Thus Marlowe compares the way British colonial policy in Burma defined a hierarchically ordered state in terms of locality and culture, to recent changes in the state's conception which, in the North of Thailand, have meant a schism in the hierarchy which once encompassed Karen identity as part of the domain of Chiang Mai. The resultant 'loss of their status as holders of the wild for the 'sown' 'has deprived the Karen of any political power in the real world. Similarly Ijima examines the impact of wet rice agriculture on traditionally swiddening groups of Sgaw Karen in Mae Sariang, which has transformed land tenure patterns and the social relations arising from them, resulting in the abandonment of the long house as settlements have become more permanent. Ijima emphasises the *religious* basis of Karen ethnicity, which, organised around the ancestral spirits of matrilineal kin groups, has survived such changes, demarcating a continuum for the Sgaw Karen from the tribal, consanguineally based society more associated with the hills, to the peasant community, based on territorial criteria and oriented towards the plains. Stern too shows how the Pwo Karen of Sangkhlaburi have forsaken the joint lineal community in 'their adjustment to a cash economy, and examines the place of the Pwo *language* as a marker of cultural identity by comparison with three other communities. From a survey of some historical data, he concludes that the Pwo are 'far from a people exposed for the first time to the impact of a lowland civilization', but represent an accommodation between Mon and Thai interests, currently readapting towards the latter.

Many of the writers complain of the injustice with which the Karen are often classed with recent migrants to the hills such as the Hmong. As Keyes puts it, the new ethnic label of *chao khao*, extended to include the Karen, falsely stigmatises them as invariably upland swidders, opium cultivators and recent migrants, and he also draws attention to the potential 'explosiveness' of the lack of (citizenship rights in the

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1. Leach : *Political Systems of Highland Burma* (1954)

hills. Kunstadter's paper, describing the heterogeneity of relationships between Lua' and Karen, Karen and Khonmuang groups, also refers to the increasing land shortage in the area, accelerated by lowland immigration up into the hills, which has caused the Hmong to oust the Karen from their fields with no legal redress, and deplores the official tendency to 'lump' Karen in the same category as Hmong.

Millennialism is, as Keyes observes, frequently an attempt to restructure or 'come to grips with radical structural change', and he shows how the Christian conversions of Karen, both in Burma and Thailand, had the effect of 'strengthening the ethnic boundaries between Karen and others' (p. 21). Hinton's paper examines in some detail the role of millennialism as an accommodation to lowland states, based on an earlier work of Stern's<sup>2</sup>, describing how Baptist missionaries in the early 19th century were taken to be the fulfillment of an old Karen prophecy about the return of a white, younger brother who had taken away a golden book 'containing all the secrets of literacy wealth and power' denied to the Karen, and how this precipitated a rebellion against Burmese hegemony. Hinton suggests that such cults, which survive among the Karen to this day, together with the influence of Khae Chae Uae<sup>3</sup> in the hills (a defrocked Buddhist monk, disciple of the Khruba Siwicai who was a symbol of resistance to the centralised control of the North during the '20's), made an appeal to the national sentiment of the Karen, which has to be understood, like the influence of the KNDO<sup>4</sup> in Burma, as a response to their harsh political realities. This is expressed in folk tales which cast the Karen as the perpetual orphan, always missing out on the opportunities presented to others, myths of insecurity in face of an increasingly hostile world.

Lehman's concluding paper draws many of these threads together, and is perhaps the most important of the collection. Examining linguistic and archaeological evidence which suggests contacts between Tai and Karen well before the late 18th century, and pointing out that the Burmese-Thai wars would surely have involved some relocation of the Karen, Lehman is led to differentiate importantly between an 'ethnic category, and 'the ethnolinguistic grouping' to which it may, at different times, refer. The issue of whether a category such as 'Karen' was of old standing in Thailand has to be separated from the issue of whether the present Karen population has ancient roots in Thailand. This is a most important point, possibly the most important in the book, since it allows some credence to be given to folk memories of the past as well as often

2. Stern : 'Ariya and the Golden Book : A Millenarian Buddhist Sect Among the Karen' *Journal of Asian Studies* 27 (2) : 297-328 (1968)

3. (*Alias*) Khruba Khao.

4. Karen National Defense Organisation.

scant official records. Lehman re-examines some of the evidence for supposing that the Kayah (Karenni) emerged out of a mixed Shan-Karen polity somewhere before the end of the 18th century, associated with various Buddhist messianic movements and concludes that 'an overall pattern of adaptation to non-Karen people . . . has characterized the general category of Karen', proffering a cognitive view of ethnicity and the various taxonomic constraints under which it is defined. Although the views of ethnicity range from Lehman's to Marlowe's emphasis on behavioural features, with Ijima emphasising religious and Stern linguistic factors, the contributors are united by a common agreement that ethnicity, especially where the Karen are concerned, is not something fixed, bounded, or static, but dynamic, mobile, relative and closely associated with processes of sociocultural change.

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Jacques Lemoine (with the assistance of Donald Gibson), **Yao Ceremonial Paintings** (White Lotus Company Ltd., Bangkok, 1982). 168 pp.

A beautiful book, for the art collector and historian as well as the scholar, with more than 280 well-reproduced colour prints which do full justice to the rich sheen characteristic of Yao paintings, achieved through a glue base made from boiling the hide of an ox. Now that full sets of these paintings, ideally numbering 17, have in many cases been broken up and dispersed after the flight of impoverished Yao refugees from Laos, the work is additionally valuable in compiling information on the dating and background of individual sets, and identification of the figures they portray.

The paintings illustrate the pantheon of Yao deities and episodes from their mythological history, and as paintings have a purely religious function. Usually commissioned by well to do families from priests or itinerant Chinese artists, they were executed in a specially consecrated place; in a partitioned room or outhouse, the walls of which had been pasted over with white paper and covered with cloth. During the one or two months it took for the work to be completed, strict celibacy was enjoined on all the inhabitants of the house to ensure the spiritual purity of the work finally produced. This in turn was considered to contribute to its aesthetic beauty. As Lemoine puts it (p. 36), 'A similar beauty and sense of piety illuminates the Italian primitives of the *duecento*'. The paintings are only exhibited on ritual occasions, such as the mass ordinations at which young men are admitted to the various grades of the Yao priesthood, as iconographic representations fulfilling the part played by idols and statuary in other cultures. Each painting has 'a position and a role to play in the rituals' (p. 42), and on the ownership of a certain number of them depends progress through the ranks of the priesthood, and ultimate salvation for oneself and one's family. When they are not so exhibited, the scrolls are carefully stored in basket-work boxes to one side of the domestic altar (p. 34).

The author's identification of the Yao religion as a branch of Taoism allows him to embark on an entrancing excursion into the mythological origins of the Yao as illustrated in the paintings, such as the myth of P'an Hu, the five-coloured palace dog who was allowed to marry one of the Chinese Emperor's daughters as a reward for defeating his enemies, from whose six sons and daughters the 12 Yao clans trace their descent. The Charter in which this legend was inscribed granted the Yao in China traditional exemption from the duties of taxation and corvée military labour, as well as the freedom to cultivate 'by the sword and fire' (i.e. by swidden agriculture) 'all the mountains of the Empire' (p. 13). As Lemoine notes, early colonists in Laos and

Vietnam were handed versions of this document by the Yao, and the story it enshrines is the reason why the eating of dog is today taboo for the Yao, and why the traditional wedding veil should cover the bride's head 'as a device to hide from her the bestiality of the groom'.

Their voyage across the sea from China after a great drought has become a second origin myth for the Yao, and this too is illustrated in the paintings. Thus the paintings provide a full graphic model of the Yao cosmology, seen in Taoist terms to begin with the origins of creation from the expansion of the body of the cosmic man after death. The text examines and explores this cosmology. Also illustrated are many culture heroes and Chinese deities, besides the father of historical Taoism, the Celestial Master Chang, who (p. 75) founded a theocratic state in the Western Marches of the decaying Han Empire after his researches into alchemy had resulted in the discovery of the Pill of Immortality, where among Han and tribal people a doctrine was taught which attributed illness and suffering to immoral behaviour, expiable through priestly confession. Today similar sets of paintings are in use among Chinese Taoist priests of the Taiwan area, and the book also illustrates various aspects of Yao religious and ceremonial life, as well as providing information on the life circumstances and village situations of the Yao today, showing why, how and where the paintings are exhibited and what part they play in the spiritual community of the Yao. Thus there is also material on the masks and wreaths depicting the gods which are worn by priests at rituals. Altogether an absorbing work, and one which throws much ethnographic light on an insufficiently known and currently fragmented culture.

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Jennifer Lindsay, **Javanese Gamelan** (Kuala Lumpur, Oxford University Press, 1979) pp. 59.

Edward C. Van Ness and Shita Prawirohardjo, **Javanese Wayang Kulit** (Kuala Lumpur, Oxford University Press, 1980) pp. 95.

In a rather discrete, almost furtive way, the Kuala Lumpur branch of Oxford University Press launched, officially in 1979, a new series called Oxford in Asia Traditional and Contemporary Arts, under the unacknowledged guidance of Dr. Jack Richards, and the two volumes discussed here were the only titles available by the end of 1981. Both appeared the year following the date given on the title page, both are profusely illustrated with colour and black-and-white photographs; Lindsay's volume also has a map and line drawings. Neither pretends to be more than an introduction to the subject, each vast in itself, and the Van Ness-Prawirohardjo volume emphasises this in its subtitle.

There is certainly room for such a series, and with the authority that Oxford commands, one's expectations are high. The authors are well-qualified to tackle their subjects: Jennifer Lindsay, better remembered to those who knew her during her years in Yogyakarta in the 1970s as Jenny Meister, comes from a distinguished New Zealand musical family; Edward Van Ness teaches at the Yogyakarta Academy of Music and his wife Shita Prawirohardjo comes from a courtly family in Solo where the shadow play tradition is as strong as in Yogyakarta.

It is therefore rather with regret that one feels somewhat less than happy with these two volumes. Of the two, Lindsay's book on the gamelan is the more satisfactory. She briefly covers the historical background, lists in detail the different musical instruments and their making, comments on the tuning and intonation, discusses the structure of gamelan music and lastly writes about the gamelan in Javanese society. There are a glossary, notes on pronunciation, suggestions for further reading and a list of gamelan recordings.

The limitations of the introductory nature of the volume are perhaps most clearly seen in the ten-and-a-half pages (including four photographs and four poems in Javanese with translations) on the structure of gamelan music. The subject is clearly enormous. There is a footnote referring the reader to Mantle Hood's booklet of 1958, not included in the suggestions for further reading, which also curiously omit Oxford's recent reprint of McPhee's *House in Bali*, but rightly and inevitably include Kunst's works.

A point of debate is whether the *siteran* really can be said to belong to the gamelan, which by definition involves percussive instruments that are struck with a hammer. The *rebab* (viol) and *suling* (flute) were both added under external influences, but neither the *siteran* nor the *celempung*, both zither-type instruments and both presumably introduced under Chinese influence, belong inherently to the gong-chime cultures of Southeast Asia. Neither has been heard by this reviewer taking part in a full gamelan orchestra performance. There might possibly here be some confusion between Javanese music in general and gamelan music proper.

Nevertheless, Ms. Lindsay writes clearly, reasonably objectively and necessarily succinctly on an extensive subject which has tremendous cultural ramifications within Javanese society.

The longer though still brief Van Ness-Prawirohardjo volume is chiefly disappointing in the poor quality of some of the photographs; the colour plates of the warung, the street scene, the dalang, golek heads and Arjuna, like the black-and-white photographs of paper wayang and the cempala, are ill-defined, or out of focus, or unintelligible. Whilst it is a good idea to allow a reader to compare the static coloured figure with the silhouette form it presents on the screen, to repeat with both coloured plates and black-and-white photos the figures of Kayon, Wayang Prampogan, Arjuna, Bima, Adipati-Karma and others, separated and without any cross-referencing, either between plates or to the text, is singularly unhelpful. To include an illustration of a Cambodian shadow-play figure and a Chinese one from Yogyakarta without any reference to them in the text indicating why they are there and what they signify is also unhelpful.

Because the wayang culture so profoundly permeates Javanese culture and affects Javanese attitudes, perhaps it is impossible for any volume, least of all one as short as this, to do justice to the subject. The book starts by placing the wayang in the past and the present, elaborates on the epics and important personages in them, discusses the dalang and his art, and then describes a particular wayang performance. The introductory chapter does not develop clearly and one has, almost inevitably, a confused picture of wayang kulit and its relationship to other Javanese theatres. The most satisfactory section is that dealing with the dalang, though this is confused by the insertion of descriptions of typical scenes from wayang kulit performances, which have little directly to do with a description of the dalang's role and functions. The last chapter, describing a specially-arranged performance at Mrs. Prawirohardjo's family house, is the least successful. Perhaps here the style of the text is most obviously intrusive, being on occasions chattily housewifely ('It is amazing how efficiently all the preparations are realised with no one person really coordinating things'). There is no

conclusion to the chapter at all, though the dismantling of the screen and figures and the dispersal of the dalang and musicians at the end of the story merit comment in the same way that the setting up for the performance is elaborated. There is no general conclusion to the whole book either, which just peters out. There is however a helpful and necessary ten page glossary.

The difficulty of explaining anything Javanese to the outsider is great: the complex Javanese world is entirely self-contained and self-reflecting. It cannot be said that this book is likely to be very helpful to someone who has not already some acquaintance with this world and the wayang, and such a person is likely to want more than an introduction to the subject. In other words, it falls uneasily between two stools, being neither sufficiently simple nor sufficiently detailed. Firmer editing would have improved matters, in style, order and detail. Lindsay's book is referred to as 'another book in this series by Jennifer Meister', whereas Ms. Lindsay's married name nowhere appears in her volume. The copyright symbol is blacked out in the copy acquired by this reviewer; one wonders why.

This series, which one assumes will not be confined to Java, promises more than it has given to date, and it is to be hoped that further volumes will not give too little and, unlike the wayang kulit volume, will clearly explain to an outsider the subject without appearing to make it and the culture it is part of almost impenetrable.

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