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Editor's Note

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In This Issue

Responding to requests from scholars occasioned by his article, '"LOW" Maps of Siam,' in *JSS* Vol. 73, 1985, LARRY STERNSTEIN provides Lieutenant James Low's maps and geographical memoirs of 1824 and 1830. Despite Low's tantalizingly sloppy if not negligent methods, his detailed listing of place names and associated data, both factual and fanciful, must still be useful to students of the Siamese Empire of his day.

BERND MARTIN presents a narration of the Prussian expedition to the Far East in 1860-1862 led by Count Fritz zu Eulenburg aboard the pride of the Prussian navy, the steamship "Arcona." Eager to follow in the footsteps of other European states which had long since turned to the Orient, especially after the opening of Japan, and wishing to demonstrate the new leading position of Prussia within the German Union, Prussian officials sought commercial treaties with Japan, China and Thailand. Dr. Martin discusses the negotiations between the self-assured Prussians and the dubious Chinese, and draws special attention to the courteous reception of Eulenburg and his colleagues by King Mongkut, whose sophistication and friendly informality made a strong impression on the delegation.

MICHAEL WRIGHT, focusing his attention on Siamese myth and ritual, examines survivals in Siamese popular religion of the primeval cult of the Earth Goddess and the Door to the Underworld, influences from which can be traced in Christianity and Judaism as well. His research is directed toward explaining practices whose origins otherwise would remain obscure and whose symbols can be seen even now as major characteristics of the grotesque and eerie products of certain schools of contemporary Siamese art.

Noting that among the first priorities of Christian churches in Thailand, as they tend to the welfare of the whole person, have been education and the care of the poor, R.A.F. PAUL WEBB discusses the socio-economic developments undertaken by the Catholic Church in Northeast Thailand. The goal is to lift up economic sights and rural values so that by ministering to body as well as soul a climate may be provided where things of the spirit may constructively be discussed. Dr. Webb emphasises the role of priests of the Diocesan Social Action Center (Disac) in this endeavor as well as that of donor organizations, with special attention to their work in Ubon Rachathani.

That branch of the Mong population known as the Mong Njua, or Green Miao, less well known than the Hmong or White Miao, is described by THOMAS AMIS LYMAN with special attention to characteristics of their language. In a concise compendium Professor Lyman notes those features of extreme lin-

guistic interest in the speech of the Mong Njua against a brief background sketch of their history and demography.

Scrutinizing two specific villages, BERNARD FORMOSO explains the parallels between the representation of village space in Northeast Thailand and the structure of the human body. He analyzes the conceptual pattern of head and feet as it is applied beyond the human body to society, human dwellings, the villages themselves, and to rice, both in storage and in the field.

CONSTANCE M. WILSON continues her analysis, begun in our last issue, of the picture of Bangkok in 1883 given by the city's first postal directory, published in that year. She evaluates the role played by women in the economy of Bangkok of that day, discussing their ethnic derivation, occupations, position as heads of households, and status as property owners, etc., all providing evidence of their having been an important economic force in late nineteenth-century Bangkok.

SUNAIT CHUTINTARANOND analyses the system of government in effect in medieval Ayudhya with respect to the exercise of authority from the center of the state to its periphery. He challenges the commonly-held conception that in Ayudhya and its neighboring states the king ruled an "imperial court" and was effectively and continuously able to impose political control through a centralized bureaucratic system. In doing so he discusses the applicability of various geopolitical models: the *mandala* from Kautilya's ancient *Arthasastra* to its modern emphasis by Wolters, Tambiah's "galactic polity," and Southall's "segmentary state," among others. He concludes that the political map of Southeast Asia before the colonial period, including Ayudhya, was characterized by a multiplicity of political centers primarily based on networks of loyalties, kinship relations, and tributary expressions of recognition.

PAMELA MYERS-MORO takes up the applicability of Western-style musical notation to indigenous Thai music, with its advantages and inadequacies, and the generational conflict it brings about between the older traditional musicians and young students acculturated to Western music. To summarize the implications of the modern notation of Thai music she contrasts these with the situation and attitudes prevailing in Java.

Finally, noting the new research and associated discoveries which distinguish the present period in concepts of prehistory in Thailand, T.E.G. REYNOLDS calls for serious critical review of the stone age sequence as evidenced in this country. A new sequence should be reconstructed based on more work in context and chronology, especially in an attempt to fill the gaps in the late Middle and early Upper Pleistocene, and also with an intensive attack on the persistent questions posed by the Hoabinhian.