

# The Grand Palace in the *Description of Ayutthaya*: Translation and Commentary

Chris Baker<sup>1</sup>

“The Kings Palace is seated upon the River, resembling a little Town apart, great and magnificent, many of its Buildings and Towers being entirely gilded.”  
(Caron and Schouten, *True Description*, 125)

The only significant account of the Ayutthaya Grand Palace<sup>2</sup> appears in the *Description of Ayutthaya*, a document probably compiled in early Bangkok from the memories of residents of the city prior to its sack in 1767 (see details at the head of the translation below). Here I present a translation from the document along with some analysis of what the palace tells us about Siamese kingship in the late Ayutthaya era.

This account of the palace is important because no other historical source offers much information. All that can be gleaned from the Palace Law are the names of a few buildings and arrangements for guarding the walls. Most European accounts comment on the size of the complex but have almost nothing on the interior because the authors had not seen it.

At the visit of the French embassy in 1685, Chaumont, de Choisy, Forbin, and Tachard were among the party that went inside and all wrote accounts of the experience. However, each was intent on recording the process of the audience rather than its surroundings. All describe the spectacle of elephants, horses, soldiers, and “mandarins” amassed in the courtyards as they walked to the audience hall, but have little to say about the layout and architecture of the palace other than some vague (and mutually conflicting) accounts of the number of gates and courtyards they traversed.

During the second embassy two years later, La Loubère dined at King Narai’s residence in the inner section of the palace – possibly the only European to penetrate this area – but had no idea of the significance of this visit and left no account of how

<sup>1</sup> With thanks to Winai Pongsripian, Barend Terwiel, Kennon Breazeale, Dhiravat na Pombejra, Edward Van Roy, Bhawan Ruangsilp, Patrick Vandenburg, Pasuk Phongpaichit, and Thawatchai Tangsirivanich.

<sup>2</sup> พระราชวังหลวง, *praratchawang luang*, where *luang* can mean both “grand” and “royal.” In the city there was also a Front Palace and Rear Palace, occupied by kin of the king.

he got there and only the briefest description of what he saw.<sup>3</sup> Engelbert Kaempfer, who spent only a month in Ayutthaya in 1690 and was denied entry to the palace, left sketches of buildings probably made by peering over walls and through doorways, and a map (see Figure 4) probably compiled with help from European residents, such as the Brochebourdes, who served as royal surgeons.<sup>4</sup>

The *Description*'s account of the Grand Palace is valuable also because little has been added by modern research. By all accounts, the sack by the Burmese was very thorough.<sup>5</sup> At the foundation of Bangkok, remaining walls and buildings were pulled down and the bricks ferried downriver to speed the construction of the new capital. Only the plinths of a handful of major buildings and some small sections of the walls remained *in situ*. Parts of the palace area were later settled and cultivated. When Phraya Boranratchathanin took up an official post in the old capital in 1898, he found "inside the palace there were just mounds of broken bricks, and shards of plaster, overgrown with trees. People had cleared the trees and planted custard apple, limes, tamarind, and *madum*, and they considered themselves owners of the plots."<sup>6</sup>

Guided by the *Description*, Phraya Boranratchathanin began to locate buildings and clear the site. However, his archaeological work was neither comprehensive nor systematic. Because the buildings in Ayutthaya had gradually sunk into the alluvial mud, and because flooding deposited a layer of silt in most years, foundations that survived the sack and subsequent pillaging are below the present-day surface. In the 1900s, around 0.5 to 1.5 metres of earth and rubble were removed to bring the surface around the major buildings back to its late-Ayutthaya level.<sup>7</sup> Foundations of buildings from the early Ayutthaya era are reckoned to be 1.5 metres below that.<sup>8</sup> The Fine Arts Department (FAD) has concentrated on restoring the most substantial remains – Wat Phra Si Sanphet, five audience halls, and some sections of walls and gates. It has done only a modest amount of digging – locating the bases of some walls, opening up the foundations of the main treasury, and discovering some of

<sup>3</sup> La Loubère, *New Historical Relation*, 33. His visit was probably the source of Gervaise's slightly fuller description (p. 32), quoted below. Schouten, who attended audience in 1628, left a rather better description, summarised in Bhawan, *Dutch East India Company Merchants*, 59–61.

<sup>4</sup> Dhiravat, "Ayutthaya at the End of the Seventeenth Century."

<sup>5</sup> The Danish botanist, J. G. Koenig, described the site twelve years later as "a terrible spectacle" of ruins already buried in undergrowth and roamed by tigers and wild elephants. But fascinatingly, an audience hall was still standing: "The palace has very big dimensions, but only the very high walls of the audience hall of the king and the queen are still to be seen, which with some smaller parts must have formed a very high storey.... It is a matter of wonder that the walls are still standing, because the woodwork has been burnt, and they rest only upon some single bricks. The king's hall is distinguished by four strong high pillars, which formerly surrounded the throne and are still standing." (Koenig, "Journal of a Voyage," 134–5).

<sup>6</sup> *APA*, 36 n. 82.

<sup>7</sup> Boranratchathanin, "Tamnan krung kao," 136–8.

<sup>8</sup> Prathip, "Phraratchawang boran," 211.

the water supply system. A project to locate gardens and other structures did not progress beyond a preliminary stage.<sup>9</sup>

Recent Thai writing on the palace has largely focused on matching the description presented here with historical sources and with the remaining evidence from the site. The Fine Arts Department published an essay of this sort in 1968, and an updated and extended version in 2008 by Prathip Phentako.<sup>10</sup>

First I summarise the construction history of the palace, relying heavily on Prathip's work. Then I look at the layout, and three aspects of the "drama" of the palace revealed in the *Description*. Palaces are not simply the residences of rulers, but stage sets for the theatre of power.

### Phases of construction

The Grand Palace as it appears in the *Description* accrued over five main phases of construction.<sup>11</sup>

*Phase 1.* The palace of King U Thong (Ramathibodi I, r. 1351–1369) was probably built of wood, including a surrounding palisade, so no traces remain. The chronicles state that the palace site was later converted into Wat Phra Si Sanphet, but it is unknown whether the palace occupied the same area as the *wat*. Possibly it extended further south and Wat Phra Ram was built opposite its frontage. This site was chosen because the ground was slightly elevated. The main palace building may have become the principal *wihan luang* at the eastern end of the *wat*, as digging showed this building has very deep foundations.<sup>12</sup> The *Description* states that three buildings, which date from this early phase and which are named in the chronicles, were still in existence and used for votive purposes. Perhaps these had become ancillary buildings within the *wat*, but cannot now be identified.

*Phase 2.* After two fires late in the previous reign in 1440 and 1441, King Trailokanath (r. 1448–1488) built Wat Phra Si Sanphet on the old palace site,<sup>13</sup> and founded a new palace further to the north towards the river, but not on its bank. Here the ground was lower, partly underwater, and needed to be filled. Wat Phra Si Sanphet, which served as the *wat* of the palace and became a reliquary for the remains of successive kings, was situated outside the walls of this new palace complex. So too possibly was the garden of the palace (assuming that the area called the Phaichayon Benjarat Garden in the *Description* had indeed been a garden in this second phase) and the parade ground used for royal rites and spectacles.

<sup>9</sup> Branigan and Merrony, "Gardens."

<sup>10</sup> Prathip, "Phraratchawang boran."

<sup>11</sup> This account depends heavily on Prathip, "Phraratchawang boran," 211–215.

<sup>12</sup> Piriya argues that this *wihan* dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, yet it still could have been built on old foundations ("Revised dating (II)," 14–15).

<sup>13</sup> Cushman, *Royal Chronicles*, 15–16.

*Phase 3.* In a year given in the chronicles as 1632, King Prasat Thong (r. 1629–1656) built a new hall, the Jakrawat Phaichayon, outside the palace to the southeast, probably to overview the parade ground. Beginning four years later,<sup>14</sup> he massively expanded the palace in three directions. First, he enclosed the space to the north between the palace and the city wall, relocating a Brahmin temple that had occupied this site. Sometime later, he built a new wall to the east to enclose the parade ground, and walled the Phaichayon Benjarat Garden, thus enclosing the space between the palace complex and Wat Phra Si Sanphet. The result was a distinctive shape, indented on the west where the Grape Garden and Crystal Pond areas were not enclosed, as shown on the “Engineer’s map” by La Mare and the map in La Loubère (Figure 1).

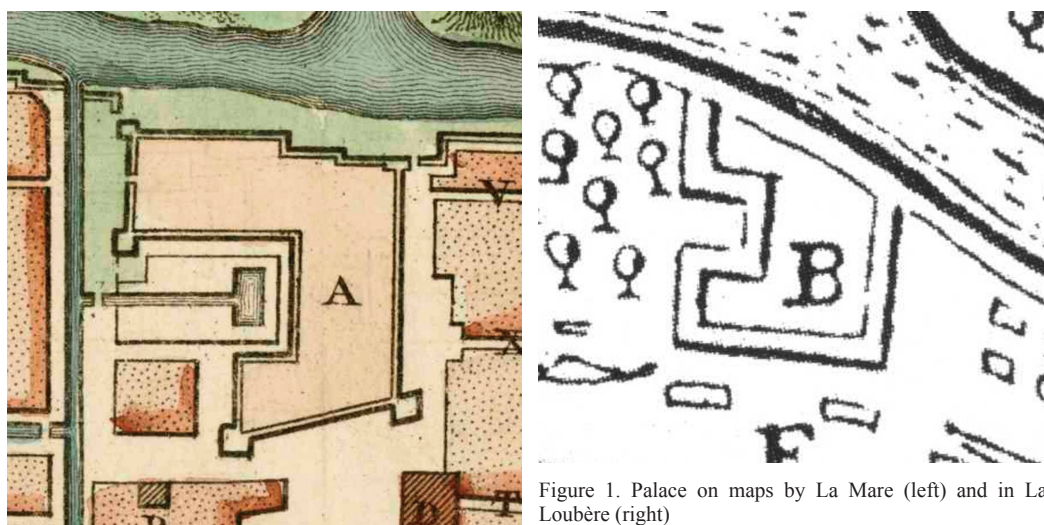


Figure 1. Palace on maps by La Mare (left) and in La Loubère (right)

*Phase 4.* King Narai (r. 1656–1688) made significant changes to the palace complex, but surprisingly little detail appears in either Thai or western sources. Perhaps again the spur was a major fire which occurred in the year before his accession.<sup>15</sup> In the west of the palace complex in an area which had probably been part of the “inside,” he dug ponds, used the earth to raise the land around them, and then built a new principal palace for residence and audience, the Banyong Rattanat. In the chronicles, this building is dated to the start of the reign of King Phetracha, Narai’s successor, but clearly occurred earlier as the Banyong Rattanat is described by French visitors in 1687, and its distinctive shape and orientation appears in the VOC’s Judea painting and the Vingboons’ map, published in the 1660s.<sup>16</sup>

The flamboyant conception of the building matches Narai’s development of

<sup>14</sup> Cushman, *Royal Chronicles*, 220.

<sup>15</sup> Heeck, *A Traveller in Siam*, 39; Cushman, *Royal Chronicles*, 226–7.

<sup>16</sup> Could this passage in the Chronicles have been shifted from the start of the Narai reign to the start of the Phetracha reign?



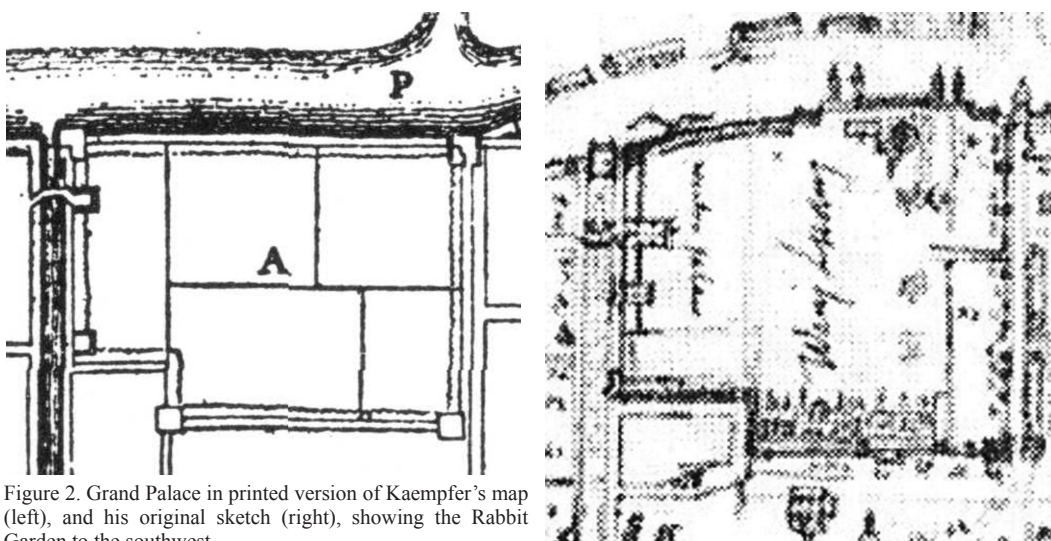


Figure 2. Grand Palace in printed version of Kaempfer's map (left), and his original sketch (right), showing the Rabbit Garden to the southwest.

Lopburi. Narai also built a new residence for his queen and daughter nearby.<sup>17</sup> At some time not known, the *sala luk khun nai*, the principal administrative building of the “front” section, was transferred to this area of the palace along with many other administrative buildings, and the “inner” female section was confined to the northwest corner. Possibly at this time, an additional wall was built on the western side, enclosing the areas known as the Grape Garden and Crystal Pond, and giving the whole palace complex a roughly oblong outline, visible on Kaempfer's map.

*Phase 5.* King Boromakot (r. 1732–1758) further extended the palace area by enclosing the Rabbit Garden on the southwest corner (Figure 2).

The area occupied by the Grand Palace (not including Wat Phra Si Sanphet) thus expanded from around 40 hectares in the first phase, to 95 hectares in Trailokanath's rebuilding, 165 hectares after Prasat Thong's expansion, and 220 hectares after the additions during the Narai and Boromakot reigns (Figure 3).

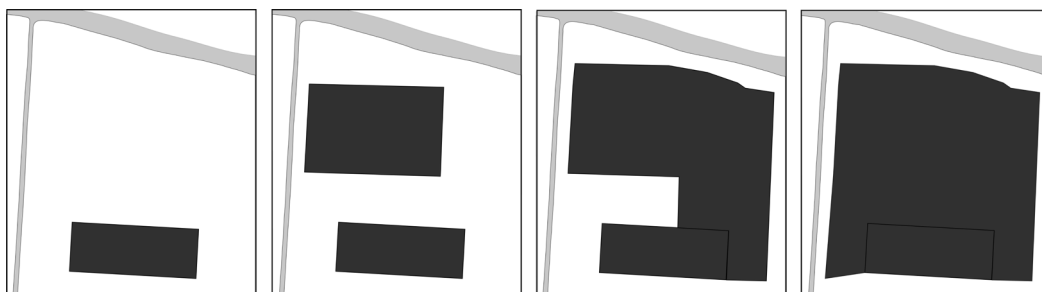


Figure 3. The palace in phases 1, 2, 3, and 5

<sup>17</sup> Piriya (“Revised dating (II),” 13) reckons Narai also made major alterations to Wat Phra Si Sanphet.

## Internal design

What principles dictated the internal design of this palace?

Both the first two phases of the whole palace complex, and all the early major buildings that have survived, were aligned roughly east-west, but each is aligned differently and none exactly to the compass. Probably they were aligned to the river, a common practice in Thai settlements.<sup>18</sup> The site of the first palace, which was neither central to the island nor close to the river bank, was probably chosen because of slightly raised land, important in an area subject to annual flooding. The extensions to the palace area by Prasat Thong and after seem dictated by opportunism and practicality.

Internally the palace was divided into three zones, progressing from public to private: the “front,” devoted to administration and government; a central part housing the audience halls and residences of the king; and the “inside” with women’s quarters and private gardens. In Trailokanath’s new palace, which was a “green field” design, these three zones were arrayed from east to west in a block design, separated by north-south dividing walls. This usage of space seems to have been the main factor determining the elongated rectangular shape found in the first two phases of construction.

The audience halls at the core of the palace were organised with a similar tripartite division of zones along an east-west axis<sup>19</sup> from public to private, and with a similar elongated rectangular shape. On the east side was an open portico used for everyday audiences. In the centre was a closed area for major audiences, such as with foreign embassies. To the west was a section used for residence and dining.

Although Prasat Thong’s expansion obscured any overall design in the palace complex, it retained the east-west progression from public to private in the palace layout and in the principal audience halls. Narai’s construction of the Banyong Rattanat, however, disrupted everything. The building was placed in the western side of the palace, at the heart of the old “inside”, resulting in many administrative buildings migrating to this area. The Banyong Rattanat abandoned the long rectangular shape of earlier audience halls in favour of a cruciform design. Even though this design strongly recalls a mandala, the Banyong Rattanat was set about 10 degrees askew from the compass, and not obviously aligned to the river or any natural feature.

Set in gardens, surrounded by a pond, and flanked by three pavilions for viewing the heavens, feeding fish, and reciting poetry, the Banyong Rattanat suggests a very different set of aesthetic values to those that shaped earlier palace buildings. Although in the *Description*, the Banyong Rattanat is used as an administrative building, it

<sup>18</sup> Stuart Fox and Reeve, “Symbolism in city planning,” especially 122–5.

<sup>19</sup> The preferred orientation of ordinary dwellings in Siam, probably to catch the north-south flow of the wind.

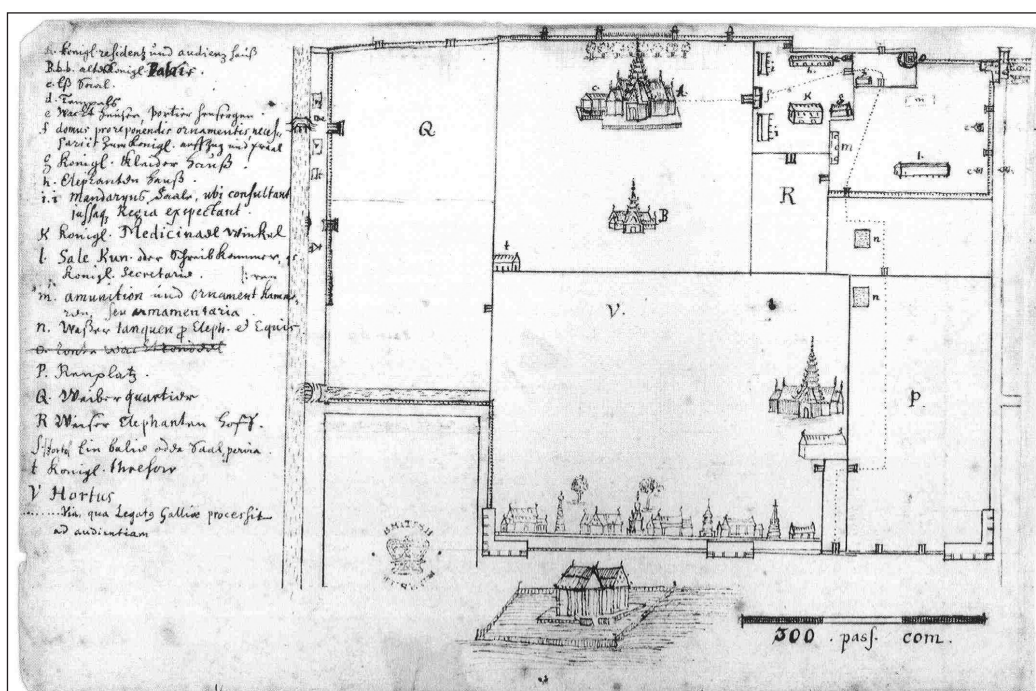


Figure 4. Kaempfer's original sketch of the Grand Palace

Translation of key (thanks to Barend Terwiel and Bhawan Ruangsilp)

- A Royal palace and audience hall
- B.b.b Old royal palaces
- c Dining Hall
- d Temples
- e Sentry posts, doorkeepers' cabins
- f Building for keeping ornaments required for the royal procession and spectacle
- g Building for royal garments
- h Stables for elephants
- i.i Halls where the mandarins deliberate legal matters and await the king
- k Royal medical hall
- l *Sale Kun*, scribes' room and royal secretariat
- m Chamber for ammunition and ornament room, or armoury
- n Water tanks for elephants and horses
- P Parade ground
- Q Women's quarter
- R Court of the white elephant
- S In the garden, a gate to the audience hall
- t Royal treasury
- V Gardens
- .... The route taken by the French Embassy going to their audience

Kaempfer got the route of the embassy slightly wrong. He assumed the embassy passed through a gate (p32 on our map, to the Suriya Amarin) but in truth the embassy would have used a gate further south (p25, to the Sanphet Mahaprasat). It seems that Kaempfer knew about the Sanphet Mahaprasat, where the embassy was received, and another audience hall to the south (Wihan Somdet), which he included on his map as an "old royal palace," but not the Suriya Amarin, perhaps because it was obscured by the trees he drew to the north of the Sanphet Mahaprasat.

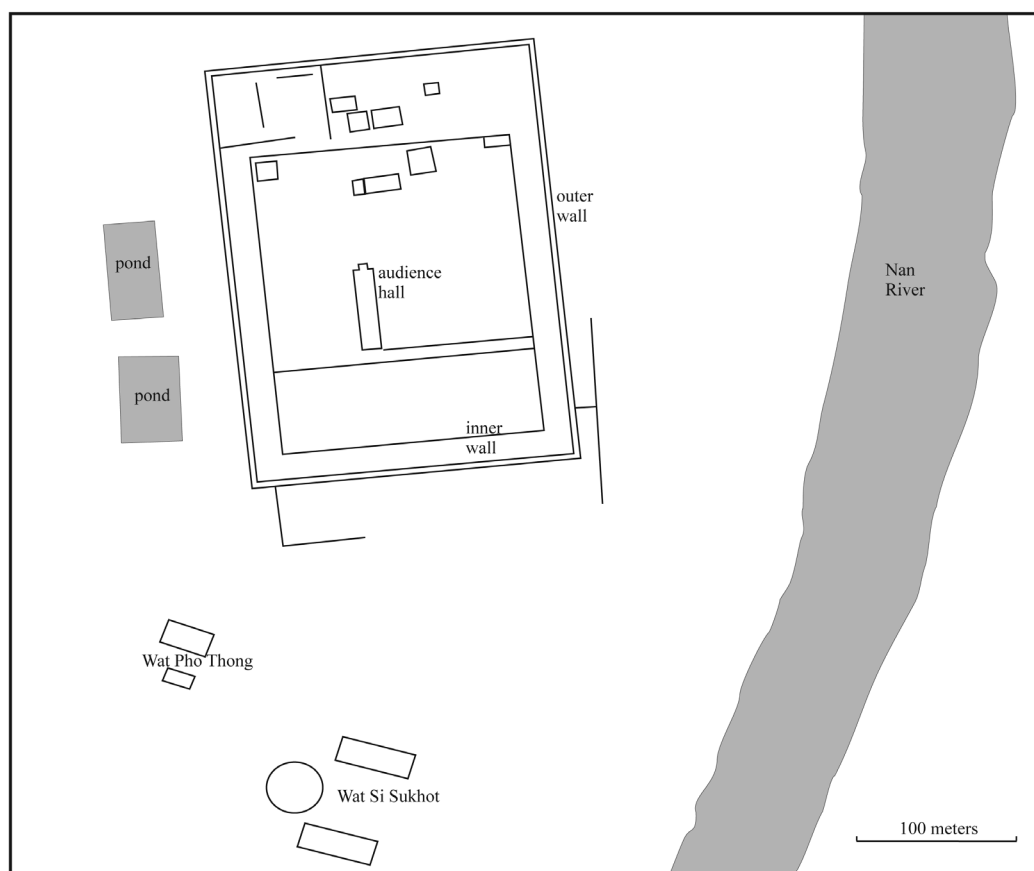


Figure 5. Wang Jan, Phitsanulok

was clearly built by Narai as a residence, and also used in that way by his immediate successors. Sadly, the building has been little studied. Probably, like many of Narai's buildings in Lopburi, the inspiration came from Persia.<sup>20</sup>

### *Wang Jan, Phitsanulok*

There is only one other palace site available for comparison, Wang Jan in Phitsanulok, but it has scarcely been studied. The site has now been cleared (until recently it was a school playing field), and the outline is clear (Figure 5). There appear to be two phases, which might correspond to the eras of King Trailokanath (r. 1448–1488) and Prince Naresuan before his succession in 1590. As at Ayutthaya, there is a rectangular shape with a progression from “front” to “inside”, here set on a roughly north-south axis not aligned to the compass but possibly aligned to the river which may have shifted course slightly since.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> “The King’s estates include temples built of wood and bricks as well as private houses which were actually constructed by the Iranians” (O’Kane, *The Ship of Sulaiman*, 139). Two palaces built in Isfahan in the same era, Hasht Behesht (eight paradises, 1669) and Chehel Sotoun (forty columns, 1647), are set in parkland and front onto pools, like the Banyong Rattana.

<sup>21</sup> The palace at Kamphaeng Phet may also have been rectangular in shape and aligned to the river,

The main organising principle of palace design seems to have been the progression from “front” to “inside”, from public to private. Thai manuals of fortune pay a lot of attention to signs in nature and to the geometry of time, found in the movements of heavenly bodies and the intricacies of various calendars, but pay little or no attention to the geometry of space. Indic concerns over symmetry and compass orientation were important in the design of many Thai *wat* and *prasat*, but in the design of cities and layout of palaces are compromised by orientations to nature and sheer practicality.<sup>22</sup>

To understand the drama of the Ayutthaya Grand Palace, we need to look at its components.

The buildings inside the palace compound can be categorised into five main types: audience halls and residences; administrative buildings; guard posts and armouries; treasuries and storehouses; and stables for animals and other conveyances. The halls, guard posts, and administrative buildings are predictable. More distinctive are the large number of animal stables and treasuries or storehouses. Another feature of the *Description* is the attention paid to the very large number of gates, both internal and external, each with a name.

### Audience, wealth, and gifting

The principal activity of the Grand Palace as a seat of government was the royal audience, held twice a day according to European reports and the Palace Law. The inputs and outputs of the royal audience were managed in the “front” zone of the palace. At the *sala luk khun nai*, the most senior nobles met with one another and with petitioners bringing matters to government prior to audience, and executed royal decisions in the aftermath. Several “swordstores” were scattered around the front for other officials to work, along with a Translation Hall and Scribes Hall for handling documents.

In the area enclosed to expand the “front” portion of the palace in the Prasat Thong reign, the most numerous buildings are *khlāng*, treasuries or storehouses. The increase in such buildings undoubtedly signalled the growing wealth of the monarchy, but also the increasing role of relationships of gifting and exchange.

The main exchequer, the Treasury of the Great Wealth, tucked beside the Sanphet Mahaprasat Throne Hall, had existed before this era. In the Phaichayon Benjarat Garden, enclosed in Prasat Thong’s expansion, an extension was built to this main treasury along with several other storehouses. Moreover, such buildings

---

not the compass. The palace at Lopburi is not useful for comparison because of the European and Persian influences on its design.

<sup>22</sup> See Sumet, *Naga*, especially Ch. 5. There was plenty of cosmological symbolism in the detail of the grand palace, particularly the capping of gates, thrones, and buildings with *monthop* and *prang*, representations of Mount Meru, but not in the overall design.



spilled out into the town, and the *Description* lists another dozen beyond the palace walls.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Siam prospered from growing foreign trade. In King Naresuan's wars at the turn of the century, Ayutthaya regained control over the portage route at the neck of the peninsula, and thus became an axial point between rising empires of Muslim rulers to the west and Japan and China to the east. The monarchy profited most from this expansion of trade, partly by becoming the chief merchant, and partly by raising new taxes on internal trade and wealth. Of the 234 trading voyages departing Ayutthaya between 1629 and 1694, 153 belonged to kings and royal kin.<sup>23</sup> King Narai dominated the import of textiles from India and "not contented with selling by Whole-sale, he has some Shops in the Bazaars or markets, to sell by Retail."<sup>24</sup> Forbin claimed he was taken to see the main treasury and waxed lyrical about the "heap of gold, silver and precious stones of immense value" which constituted "all the riches of the royal treasure, which are truly worthy of a great king, and enough to make one in love with his court."<sup>25</sup> Gervaise claimed the king had "eight or ten warehouses... that are of unimaginable wealth", piled "to the roof" with jewels, metals, exotic goods, and "great lumps of gold-dust".<sup>26</sup>

The treasuries and storehouses contained many items besides specie. The Phiman-Akat or Storehouse of the Palace of the Skies in the Phaichayon Benjarat Garden was used to store foreign imports, particularly European glassware imported from Dutch Batavia and other exotic items. In the same area, the Cardinal Storehouse contained varieties of cloth while the Monastic Storehouse kept robes and other religious items. Outside the walls, there were several stores for weapons, several for horse and elephant tack, and two Inner Storehouses with miscellaneous items ranging from umbrellas to planks. Some of these articles would have been used within the palace, but others were deployed in relationships of gift and exchange.

These relationships were very varied. At one extreme lay the exchange of gifts with fellow monarchs. A list of the presents sent by Narai to the court of Louis XIV included many Siamese articles, but mostly weapons, receptacles, clothing, furniture, carpets, porcelain and other goods from China, Japan, Persia, and India.<sup>27</sup>

Such diplomatic gifting was regular practice in Asia. But at Ayutthaya, the presentation of gifts was also a major part of the everyday drama of royal power in the audience hall. The latter part of the epic poem, *Khun Chang Khun Phaen*, which takes place in and around the court, portrays many of these scenes. Envoys from a tributary state are presented with "clothing and good silk," and entrusted to convey "colored silk, silver, gold, other valuables, and a royal cow elephant with a gold-

<sup>23</sup> Smith, "Princes, nobles and traders," 11.

<sup>24</sup> La Loubère, *New Historical Relation*, 94.

<sup>25</sup> Forbin, *Siamese Memoirs*, 60.

<sup>26</sup> Gervaise, *Natural and Political History*, 183–4.

<sup>27</sup> Chaumont and de Choisy, *Aspects of the Embassy*, 137–49.

roofed howdah” back to their master.<sup>28</sup> A Lanchang princess, destined to become a royal consort, is presented with “a gold cloisonné betel box, twenty *chang* of silver, golden bowl, wasp-nest ring, snake ring, tasseled diamond earrings, bodice with ornamental glass, golden *yok*, silk *yok*, and embroidered *sabai*,” all from the Inner Treasury.<sup>29</sup> On appointment or promotion, *khun nang* (nobles) are given cloth, betel boxes, and exotic containers as marks of rank, along with items useful in their work such as weapons and boats. Soldiers departing for war are given cloth and weapons instilled with the king’s power to bring good fortune. Soldiers returning from war in victory also receive cloth and cash.

Throughout maritime Asia, there are legends about great merchants who arrive from the sea and become king. A similar story is found among the several myths of Ayutthaya’s origin, and at Luang Prabang. In these stories, the ruler is the great merchant, possessor of the greatest stock of wealth, and hence the patron of everyone else.<sup>30</sup> Possibly in its early years as a capital when the city was politically oriented southward to the sea, Ayutthaya shared in this pattern.<sup>31</sup> The idea of a treasury, tucked beside the principal residence of the king, entitled the “Great Wealth”, and fabled (as in Forbin’s report) to be stuffed with riches, preserved the essence of this form of kingship, which enjoyed a new lease of life when the monarchy prospered in a new era of overseas trade.

### Enclosure, concealment, mystification

Over the course of its history, the palace not only enclosed more, but became more enclosed.

In the first phase, the walls were only 1.5 metres high and had ramparts, but no forts.<sup>32</sup> Even after Trailokanath’s expansion, the life of the palace spilled over the walls as the royal *wat*, gardens, and parade ground were outside the perimeter. Prasat Thong’s expansion enclosed all the palace functions within a boundary wall, and made this wall more imposing. In the north, he extended the palace up to the higher and thicker city wall. On other sides, he had the walls raised and strengthened. Narai completed the process by walling the western end of the Grape Garden, sealing the palace compound closed like a box turtle. In the palace depicted in the *Description*, royalty is buried deep inside, shielded on the north by the river, on the west by gardens, on the east by the parade ground, and on the south by Wat Phra Si Sanphet.

Gates were a key prop of this drama of enclosure. Van Vliet reported in

<sup>28</sup> Baker and Pasuk, *Khun Chang Khun Phaen*, 510.

<sup>29</sup> Baker and Pasuk, *Khun Chang Khun Phaen*, 720.

<sup>30</sup> Manguin, “The Merchant and the King”; Charnvit, *The Rise of Ayudhya*, 60–70; Souneth, “The Nidān Khun Borom.”

<sup>31</sup> Baker, “Ayutthaya Rising.”

<sup>32</sup> Prathip, “Phraratchawang boran,” 211.

the 1630s that access to the palaces was limited to “only one street and two little pathways.”<sup>33</sup> La Loubère in the 1680s stated, “The Gates of the Palace are always shut.”<sup>34</sup>

In fact, this was not true. Nobles, petitioners, parties to court cases, and various functionaries passed in and out of the Boundary Landing Gate into the administrative quarter at the northeast corner. Palace women exited through the Earth Gate in the northwest to a nearby fresh market, and hopeful Lotharios loitered there to flirt with them. Vendors entered the palace to sell cloth and imported goods along two paths in the western section. After his visit in 1655, Heeck reported, “However whenever His Majesty left for Phrabat [a Buddha Footprint in Saraburi] or one of his other country estates, the Dutch could, having paid proper respect, enter the court in order to see part of it, though not the largest, most magnificent halls.”<sup>35</sup>

La Loubère’s claim that the gates were “always shut” may be technically incorrect yet capture the message that the gates conveyed. The Ayutthaya palace gates had great importance as symbols. Some 46 listed in the *Description* were named, and most of the names were in Pali, a language for sacred things, incomprehensible to most people. Many of the gates were assigned to specific uses involving only royalty – for attending cremations, for removing corpses, for ritual bathing in the river, for processions – and thus served to emphasise the gap separating royalty and commoner. At the few gates where others might be admitted on legitimate business, visitors had to leave their weapons, have their breath sniffed for traces of liquor, and remove their shoes “though it is so dirty, that people sometimes step in the mud up to the calf of their Legs, if they do not keep an exact balance in walking over the small planks, that are laid for them.”<sup>36</sup> Though nobles paraded elsewhere with great retinues, in the palace this visual statement of their status was removed: “even an ordinary Mandarin dare not enter but attended only with one servant.”<sup>37</sup>

This enclosure was part of the mystification of Ayutthaya monarchy that seems to have begun in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. Earlier, the image projected by the monarchy had been very different. According to Jacques de Coute, an adventurer from Bruges who visited in 1595, Naresuan “rode out stark naked, with only a small piece of cloth covering His secret parts, without any other clothes. On His head he wore a miter of the same style as the bishops, a bit serrated on top, completely made of gold with many gems and other jewels.”<sup>38</sup> In the chronicle’s account of his reign, Naresuan’s physical body is graphically present in the narrative – fighting duels, scaling fortifications, leading armies. Coute describes two audiences with Naresuan

<sup>33</sup> Van Vliet’s *Siam*, 110.

<sup>34</sup> La Loubère, *New Historical Relation*, 96.

<sup>35</sup> Heeck, *Traveller in Siam*, 60–61.

<sup>36</sup> Kaempfer, *Description*, 44–45.

<sup>37</sup> Kaempfer, *Description*, 44–45.

<sup>38</sup> Coute, *Andanzas Asiáticas*, 119.

which lack the restrictions and the degree of formality experienced by the French ninety years later.<sup>39</sup> In Naresuan's reign, the exposed royal body was a key element of a martial style of royalty.

Perhaps beginning with Naresuan's brother and successor, Ekathotsarot, but certainly by the reign of Prasat Thong, this open style of kingship was replaced. Prasat Thong seems to have taken some inspiration from Angkorean Cambodia. Possibly his enclosure of the palace was inspired by reports of Angkor Thom.<sup>40</sup> In the chronicles of his reign, the language becomes more formal, the titles of anything royal – kin, palaces, elephants – become more elaborate, and the usage of Pali or Pali-fied words increases. Possibly his reign saw the introduction of *rajasap*, a vocabulary used only when talking of royalty, that in fact employs very simple Khmer words but serves to disguise and dramatise everything royal.

Concealment of the royal body was a key part of this drama of mystification. Schouten noted that Prasat Thong “seldom shews himself to the People, and very sparingly to the Grandees and Officers of the Kingdom.”<sup>41</sup> Van Vliet added that “His Majesty very seldom goes outside the palace. He only visits three or four times during the year the temple, Wat Syserput [Si Sanphet], to make offerings to the gods.”<sup>42</sup>

Similarly, French visitors in the 1680s recounted that Narai appeared outside the palace only on a few ritual occasions, particularly processions by land and water to present *kathin* robes at royal *wat*. They also reported how people were expected to be awed by the spectacle, yet were forbidden to gaze on the body of the king; pellet archers targeted the eyes of offenders. At royal audience, blasts of music warned nobles that the king was about to appear so that they could bend forward and keep their eyes fixed to the ground. A curtain was whisked open to reveal the king framed in a window, and then whisked closed before another blast of music announced that courtiers could safely raise their eyes. Theoretically, the king's name was a secret, not disclosed until after his death. Europeans were told this was “for fear lest any Enchantment should be made on his Name.”<sup>43</sup>

Public spectacles and royal audiences in which the king's body was forbidden to view were powerful dramatizations of concealment. The box-turtle enclosure of the palace and the paradox of gates that are “always shut” were key parts of the same drama, designed to evoke both fascination and fear.

<sup>39</sup> Coutre, *Andanzas Asiáticas*, 111–2, 122–23.

<sup>40</sup> Prasat Thong “sent artisans to copy and bring back plans of the Holy Imperial Metropolis and of the palaces of the Capital of the Kamphucha Country.” Cushman, *Royal Chronicles*, 216.

<sup>41</sup> Caron and Schouten, *True Description*, 97–98.

<sup>42</sup> Van Vliet's *Siam*, 110.

<sup>43</sup> La Loubère, *New Historical Relation*, 101.

## Spectacle

In paradoxical fashion, this drama of concealment co-existed with a drama of spectacular display that recalled the era of military kingship in the past.

Elephants with special characteristics recorded in manuals – including the “white” elephants – were considered auspicious and treated as if royalty. They were stabled as close as possible to the audience halls at the core of the palace where they acquired a secondary function of being shown off to visitors. But these Palladian animals were only a small part of the palace’s total livestock. Animal stables were the most numerous among all the buildings in the “front” area. In addition, they overflowed from the palace, occupying space outside the eastern wall and along streets leading over a kilometre away from the palace along the northern side of the city. Similarly, the main storage for royal boats was just west of the palace on the opposite bank of the river, but another five royal boatyards were scattered around other parts of the city.

The primary use for these animals and conveyances was not waging war but staging spectacle. Between the final battles of Naresuan around 1600 and the Burmese attacks in the 1760s, Ayutthaya was largely at peace. The only significant war involving a major mobilization was conducted against Lanna in the 1660s, while a handful of expeditions to Cambodia, and four defensive actions against Burmese incursions, were on a much smaller scale. None of these involved the king or close relatives as military commanders, and recruits were drawn from the outer provinces rather than the capital or its immediate environs. The military utility of elephants had diminished because gunpowder explosions scared them.<sup>44</sup> Ayutthaya’s primary strategy for defence in this era was to fortify the capital to withstand a siege. To this end, it had improved the walls and bought guns from the Chinese, Persians, and Europeans in quantities which astonished the Burmese when they broke open the arsenals in 1767.<sup>45</sup> In the engagements with the Burmese in the 1760s, the elephants and horses which crowded in and around the Ayutthaya palace made no contribution.

In this era of relative peace, the traditional military arts were adapted into spectacles designed to awe the king’s subjects, neighbouring rulers, and foreign visitors. The intricate arrangement of horses and elephants in a military column, described in military manuals, was adapted into vast processions held regularly on festival days and at other special occasions. The arrangement of naval flotillas was formalised into royal barge processions, staged for the king’s visits to royal temples during Buddhist Lent and to the Buddha Footprint in Saraburi.

All of the Frenchmen who wrote up their visit to the palace in 1685 included

<sup>44</sup> Charney, *Southeast Asian Warfare*.

<sup>45</sup> Phraison Salarak, “Intercourse between Burma and Siam,” 52



graphic descriptions of the elephants, horses, troops, and weapons lining their passage. Tachard's version began:

In this manner we entered into the first Court of the Palace, where on one side were fifty Elephants of War harnessed with Gold, and on the other two Regiments of Guards, to the number of eight hundred Men drawn up in Batalia. From thence we advanced into the second Court, where were eight Elephants of War more, and a Troop of three score Mores on Horseback; they were armed with Lances, and had a very good Meen. In the third Court were sixty Elephants with Harness richer than the first, and two Regiments of Life-Guards that made two thousand Men under their Arms.

He also saw 200 of the “painted arms” guards, 500 “Persians” sitting cross-legged, and two courtyards full of “mandarins” prostrate on mats.<sup>46</sup>

Local rulers and their envoys were subject to similar treatment. In the epic poem *Khun Chang Khun Phaen*, in a passage probably written in the Ayutthaya era, the king of Ayutthaya gives orders in preparation for the arrival of a defeated king of Lanna:

Now to tell of the king at Ayutthaya. He summoned all the chaophraya.  
 “Arrange for our city to be beautifully decked out to look splendid,  
 so that the Chiang Mai people fear our power as if this were the abode of the fatal Lord of Darkness. Have all the traders, great and small, moor their junks along the banks of the river  
 together with all the rafts, so that the place looks busy. On both sides of the roads, have rows of shops crammed together. Make sure all the troops are on duty.

Let them see the might of the Thai city so that they are as shocked as if they were being killed by Lord Matjurat and will all want to flee in panic.”<sup>47</sup>

Elephants and horses were also used for kings to go hunting deer, wild buffalo, crocodiles, and yet more elephants. Ekathotsarot “found great pleasure in going on the hunt, going horseback riding, fighting on elephants”<sup>48</sup> Narai initially favoured living in Lopburi because he could hunt there almost every day. Several reports estimated the king captured around 300 elephants every year. While some were needed for staging spectacles, and others were exported for profit,<sup>49</sup> the elephant hunt and other hunts and contests also had symbolic purpose. They displayed the

<sup>46</sup> Tachard, *Voyage to Siam*, 165–66.

<sup>47</sup> *Khun chang khun phaen* (Wat Ko edition), 703–4. Lord Matjurat is a name for the god of death.

<sup>48</sup> *Van Vliet's Siam*, 208.

<sup>49</sup> Dhirawat, “Catching and selling Siamese elephants.”

king “in the field”, commanding men, capturing magnificent animals. Just outside the city of Ayutthaya was an elephant enclosure where the king presided over representations of the hunt staged for foreign visitors and others.

These processions and hunts required the mobilization of far more people than were recruited for warfare in this era. Foreigners estimated that seven or eight thousand people were mobilised when the king went to visit *wat* in the city, and as many as fifteen to twenty-six thousand for the land and water processions to present *kathin* robes.<sup>50</sup> Gervaise reckoned that thirty thousand were required for Narai’s elephant hunts, lasting several days.<sup>51</sup> In the 1700s, King Sua “issued a ... royal command to the chief magistrate to have all the elephants, horses, troops and naval forces inspected and prepared in complete readiness” for a hunt.<sup>52</sup> King Borommakot arranged massive processions for both hunts and visits to religious places. In 1740, he travelled to Phitsanulok “proceeding in great military formations both by land and by barge, accompanied by the four divisions of His many brave warriors, elephants and Sindhu horses and by boats in great numbers.”<sup>53</sup>

In eras of relative peace, ruling elites everywhere tend to convert old military arts into ritual and sport. Consider the ritualisation of samurai skills in Japan and the European aristocracy’s enduring passion for equestrianism.

These hunts and displays performed several functions, both practical and dramatic. They kept the machinery of mobilisation in good trim. They reminded the people who took part of their subjecthood. They recalled in dramatic form the military vigour of the kingdom in the Naresuan era. Most of all, they signalled the unique power of the king, who alone could stage such spectacles. After seeing the court and public ritual, the republican Dutchman Schouten found “this reverence better becoming a celestial Deity, than an earthly Majesty,”<sup>54</sup> while the royalist Frenchman Gervaise found it rather wonderful: “In the Indies there is no state that is more monarchical than Siam.”<sup>55</sup>

## Conclusion

The analysis of Siamese kingship tends to focus on the relationship to religious sources of power (*devaraja*, *thammaraja*). The Ayutthaya Grand Palace suggests some other aspects. The design of the palace complex seems built around the royal

<sup>50</sup> Van Vliet’s *Siam*, 116-9; Gervaise, *Natural and Political History*, 179-82; Tachard, *Voyage to Siam*, 176-8, 187-90.

<sup>51</sup> Gervaise, *Natural and Political History*, 177; see also Tachard, *Voyage to Siam*, 233-34.

<sup>52</sup> Cushman, *Royal Chronicles*, 386.

<sup>53</sup> Cushman, *Royal Chronicles*, 434.

<sup>54</sup> Caron and Schouten, *True Description*, 98.

<sup>55</sup> Gervaise, *Natural and Political History*, 53. Even Forbin, who derided almost everything he saw in Siam, conceded there were “few sights in the world finer than when the King of Siam goes abroad in public” (*Siamese Memoirs*, 77).

audience as the daily drama of kingship. Many storehouses kept goods that the king gifted to others as a display of the “Great Wealth” that qualified him to be king. Gates that were forbidden and “always shut” were part of a metaphor of concealment and mystification that made kings special, fascinating, and feared. Elephants, horses and boats were deployed in hunts, contests, and processions that recalled the martial past of king and kingdom.

## Translation

INTRODUCTION—A verbal description of the old capital of Ayutthaya surfaced in three slightly differing versions in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>56</sup> Although two versions were published together with the *Testimonies* believed to have been taken down from Ayutthaya prisoners swept away to Burma in 1767, this account of the capital has different origins. (The much shorter description of the palace that did originate from that debriefing is also translated below.)

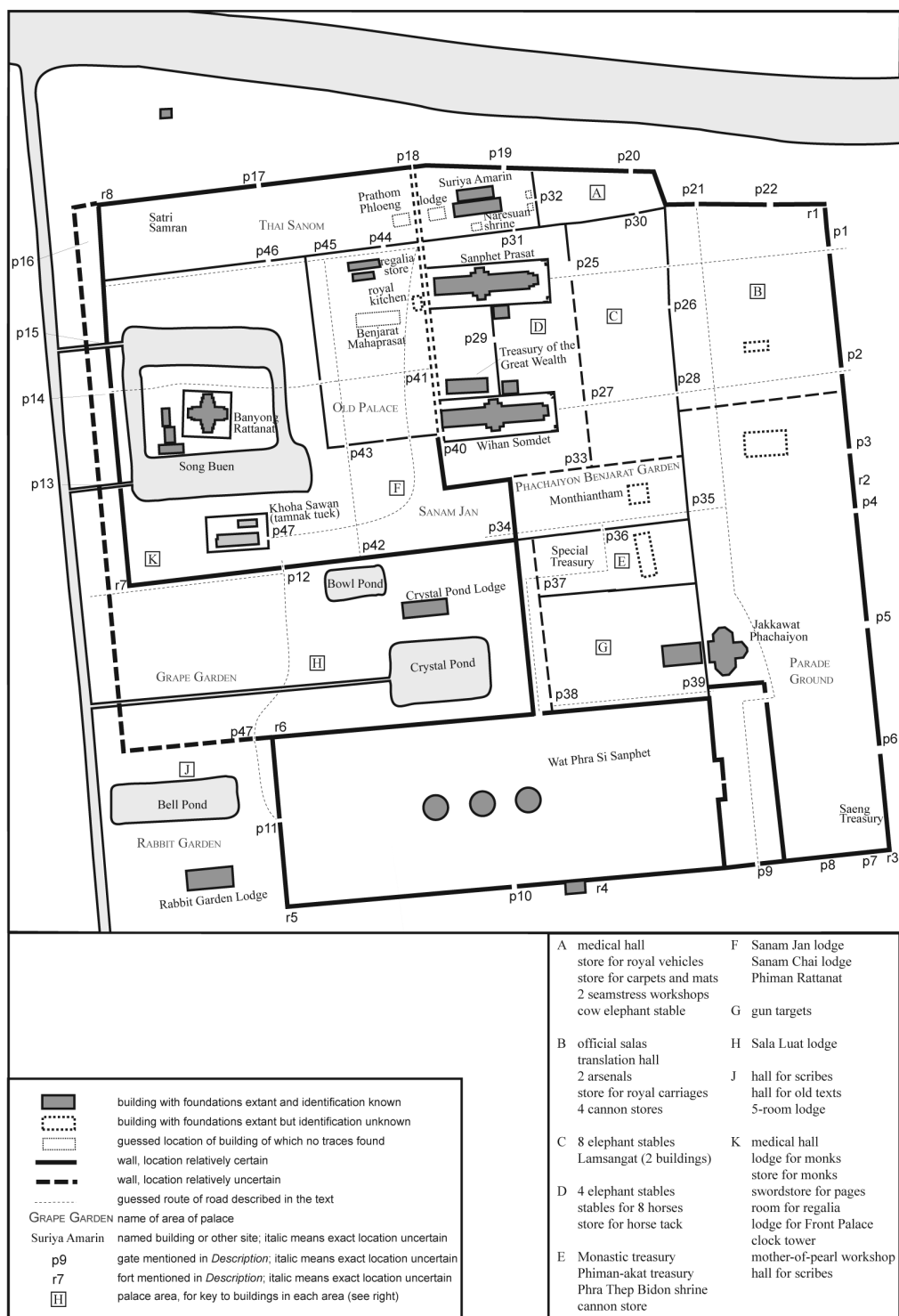
Prince Damrong Rajanubhab suggested that “on examination, the author was born when Ayutthaya was the capital, but authored the book in the Bangkok era,”<sup>57</sup> and Winai Pongsripian has surmised that the description was compiled early in the First Reign to aid planning of the new capital at Bangkok.<sup>58</sup> The slightly shorter of the three versions of the document was published in 1926 and 1929 as *Athibai phaenthi phranakhon Si Ayutthaya* which I render as *Description of Ayutthaya* and use as the title for the text in all its forms. The document covers walls, gates, ferries, roads, bridges, checkpoints, markets, production sites, customs posts, boathouses, palaces, storehouses, jails, and other major sites. The excerpt presented here covers only the main palace and some associated buildings – stables, boathouses and storehouses.

Text [in square brackets] appears only in *KLHW* (see bibliography for abbreviations). Text {in curly brackets} appears only in *APA*. *KWPS* is missing all but the latter part, from the Suriya Amarin onwards, and is the same as *KLHW* except for very minor changes. Passages on royal boathouses, stables, and treasuries in the town, which appear before the passages on the palace in the original, are placed at the end of this translation, followed by the much shorter description of the palace from *KCKK*. Notes marked (B) are based on those by Phraya Boran in *APA*, and those marked (W) on those by Winai Pongsripian in *Phanna phumisathan*. Bracketed letter-numbers (pi, r1, etc.) are inserted for reference to the map. This map was made by laying the latest

<sup>56</sup> For a fuller account of these documents, see Baker, “Note on the *Testimonies*.”

<sup>57</sup> Prince Damrong’s preface to the 1929 edition of *APA*, 32

<sup>58</sup> Preface to Winai, *Phanna phumisathan*, and personal communication.



(1989) FAD map of the archaeology of the palace and Sumet Jumsai's map of Ayutthaya over an image from Google Earth. Also used were a FAD map from 1966, Kaempfer's sketch of the palace, research by Patrick Vandenburg, and some legwork.

[*Grand Palace*]<sup>59</sup>

The Grand Palace is situated in the centre of the long northern side of Ayutthaya city, surrounded by a wall eight cubits high from ground level to the base of the parapet which is two cubits high, making the palace wall in total ten cubits high and six cubits thick.<sup>60</sup> Along the walls are sentry-boxes and a wall-walk running below the crest.<sup>61</sup> In the walls around the palace are [twenty-four] peaked [or elephant-ear<sup>62</sup>] gates, and [eight] forts

Starting from the eastern side at the corner of the palace:

(r1)<sup>63</sup> a fort;<sup>64</sup>

(p1) Jakra Mahima Gate;<sup>65</sup>

(p2) Si Chaisak Gate;<sup>66</sup>

(p3) Sawan Phijit Gate at the parade ground in front of Jakrawat [Phaichayon] Mahaprasat;

(p4) Saman Phisan Gate;

(r2) a fort at Jao Phrom Market;<sup>67</sup>

(p5) Sila Phirom Gate;

(p6) Akhane Yatra Gate;

(r3) a fort at the corner of the parade ground {in front of the Jakrawat} by the Registration Hall;<sup>68</sup>

—end of the eastern side.

<sup>59</sup> These titles are inserted in the printed versions, but did not appear in the original manuscripts.

<sup>60</sup> A ศอก *sok* cubit is 50 to 60 cms. Phraya Boran measured the palace wall south of Wat Si Sanphet and confirmed the height as 10 cubits but the width as only 4 to 5 cubits (APA, 59, n. 34).

<sup>61</sup> เื้องเทินใต้เตี้ย, *choeng thoen tai tia*; *choeng thoen* is a platform inside the wall, and *tai tia* means creep low (see Figure 1).

<sup>62</sup> A gate in which the tops of the door panels protrude above the gateposts, often as twin half-moons (Choti, *Phojananukrom sathapattayakam*, 305–306). Probably this is a mistake and should say “elephant gate,” meaning an arched gate tall enough for an elephant (see Figure 4).

<sup>63</sup> These bracketed numbers are added for plotting locations on the map.

<sup>64</sup> Called Boundary Landing Fort in the Palatine Law (B).

<sup>65</sup> Behind Wat Thammikarat on the line of the wall of Sanphet Mahaprasat (B).

<sup>66</sup> Behind Wat Thammikarat (B).

<sup>67</sup> Midpoint of the wall (B).

<sup>68</sup> Called the Registration Hall Fort in the Palace Law (B).





Figures 6, 7, 8. Above: wall with wall-walk and parapet on the palace's western side. Below left: Peaked gate (mural, Wat Mahathat, Phetburi). Below right: Corner fort (mural, Wat Dusidaram, Thonburi)



Along the southern side of the palace:  
 (p7) Wichit Phimon Gate;  
 (p8) Mongkhon Phisan Gate;

(p9) an elephant-ear gate called Ritthi Phaisan<sup>69</sup> at the end of the parade ground in front of Jakrawat for entry of officials to take the water of allegiance in Wat Phra Si Sanphet;

(r4) a fort in the middle at Wat Si Chiang;<sup>70</sup>

(p10) Bowon Nimit Gate where queens, royal children, and palace consorts leave to attend cremations [in the city];

(r5) a fort at the corner of Wat Phra Si Sanphet;<sup>71</sup>

—end of the southern side of the palace.

On the western side of palace:

(p11) a tunnel gate at the end of Wat Phra Si Sanphet;

(r6) a fort at the corner of Crystal Pond;<sup>72</sup>

(p12) Bowon Jesadanari Gate for wives of officials entering to take the water of allegiance at [the rear of] Wat Phra Si Sanphet;<sup>73</sup>

<sup>69</sup> At the corner of Wat Si Sanphet, elsewhere called Nakhon Chai Gate, for elephants to exit en route to cremations in the city (B). Also the gate entered by the French embassy in 1685.

<sup>70</sup> Called Sala Mongkhonbophit Gate in the Palace Law, near the midpoint of Wat Phra Si Sanphet, between Wat Mongkhonbophit and Wihan Klaep (B). Built in the early 16th century, this temple housed the Phra Mongkhon Bophit image and was, according to Van Vliet, “marvelous” and one of the largest in the city, but much dilapidated. King Prasat Thong moved the image a little west to its current location, demolished the old *wat*, and converted the area to a cremation ground (*Van Vliet’s Siam*, 157, 243–4; Van Vliet and the chronicles call it Wat Chi Chiang Sai).

<sup>71</sup> In the Palace Law (*Kotmai tra sam duang*, 1:77), this is called Wat Ramawat Corner Fort, possibly named after a *wat* that once was around here.

<sup>72</sup> Probably a fort on the old palace wall before the old palace became Wat Phra Si Sanphet (B). The term “Crystal Pond” here and elsewhere refers to the area of the palace in which the pond is situated.

<sup>73</sup> The next section of the wall is a subject of debate. Phraya Boran (and Sumet Jumsai later) assumes that, from the northwest corner of Wat Phra Si Sanphet, the wall ran westward to the Pak Tho Canal and then north to the Thai Sanom Fort, enclosing the Grape Garden and Crystal Pond area. Thus this gate is gate p12. But Phraya Boran noted that the usage of this gate to enter the *wat* for the water-of-allegiance ceremony was “unlikely as the gate leads from the palace into the Rabbit Garden, not from outside into the *wat*” (*APA* 63, note 49).

Prathip Phentako (“Praratchawong boran”, 223) argues that the wall described here runs *east* along the north side of Wat Phra Si Sanphet, then turns north and circles the area known as the Grape Garden and Crystal Pond. This gate is thus p46, close to *tamnak tuek*, used by palace women to go from the inner palace to the *wat*. The western end of the Grape Garden was thus not walled. The “Engineer’s Map” clearly shows this area unenclosed. Clause 20 of the Palace Law prescribes punishment for guards who fail to prevent “anyone who comes into the channel at Crystal Pond, lying down in a *khot*, *pathun* or *kup* boat, and that boat has weapons, and he wears a helmet covering his head; or a man and woman coming together; or people abusing or beating each other, singing boat songs with a pipe, flute, fiddle, lute, or drum” (*Kotmai tra sam duang*, 1:78). The existence of this law, specific to the Crystal Pond area, suggests it was open.

According to Prathip’s interpretation, the Grape Garden Fort is at the *northwest* corner of the Grape Garden, and the Cholachat Thawarasakhon Gate is an outflow from the Banyong Rattana Pond. According to the Boran-Sumet interpretation, the Grape Garden Fort is at the *southwest* corner of the Grape Garden, and the Cholachat Thawarasakhon Gate is an outflow from the Crystal Pond. APA says this gate is for an outflow from a pond inside the palace, but does not name the



- (r7) a fort at the corner at the end of [Crystal] pond;
- (p13) a gate called Chalachat Thawarasakhon for outflow of water from the [Crystal] pond inside the royal palace;<sup>74</sup>
- (p14) Mahapokharat Gate for officials to enter for royal audience in the Song Buen Throne Hall<sup>75</sup> at the end of the pond [in front of Banyong Rattanat Mahaprasat Throne Hall];
- (p15) Udom Khongkharahat Gate for inflow of water into [Crystal] pond;
- (p16) Janthawan Moranaphirom Gate beside Si Samran<sup>76</sup> [for discharge of excrement from the palace, and] for carrying out corpses of palace officials;
- (r8) Pak Tho Fort<sup>77</sup> at the corner of the palace;  
—end of the western side.

- The northern side of the palace from the fort on the corner at the west:
- (p17) Bowonnari Mahaphopchon Gate, [that people call] Earth Gate;
  - (p18) Mahatraiphopchon Thawara Uthok, [that people know as] the Water Cloister Gate for the royal landing;<sup>78</sup>
  - (p19) Victory Flagstaff Gate, an elephant-ear gate;<sup>79</sup>
  - (p20) Jao Prap Landing Gate for [royal kin] going out for [royal] ceremonies;
  - (p21) White Elephant Gate for white elephants and *niam*<sup>80</sup> elephants to go down to the water [without mixing with black elephants];
  - (p22) Khoi Landing Gate for the ferry used by officials [and people on royal command entering the palace, colloquially known as Nobles Landing Gate];  
—end of the northern side of the palace.

---

pond. *KLHW* has an extra word naming the *Crystal* Pond, which seems to support the Boran-Sumet interpretation, but *KLHW* also has the same insertion for the Udomkhongkharahat Gate (p15) which is clearly wrong.

Possibly the western end of the Grape Garden was once open (at the time of drafting the clause in the Palace Law), but was enclosed when King Narai built the Banyong Rattanat and many other administrative buildings in the western part of the palace.

<sup>74</sup> See previous note.

<sup>75</sup> The major buildings are called พระที่นั่ง, *phrathinang*, “royal seat,” translated as “throne hall” though they may be used for both residence and ceremony.

<sup>76</sup> Probably *satri samran*, women’s joy, a toilet for palace women.

<sup>77</sup> Called Thai Sanom Fort in the Palace Law (B). Thai Sanom was an area for palace officials who took care of cremations and who also detained royal family members undergoing punishment for some offence (Winai, *Kot monthianban*, I:73, n. 113).

<sup>78</sup> Gate out from the cloister to Wasukri Landing (B).

<sup>79</sup> Phraya Boran doubts this on grounds that in the “picture printed by the French” (probably Kaempfer’s sketch of the palace) all the gates on the river side have spires (*monthop*).

<sup>80</sup> เ็น็ญ, technical term for an elephant with tusks that are naturally short with tips that look as if spiked with a lotus bud. There are three levels: first, with tusks less than two inches, shaped like a coconut heart; second, with tusks between two and five inches; third, with tusks longer than five inches, shaped like a banana shoot. They are usually placed in the Akhani lineage. Most of the titled royal elephants appearing in the Ayutthaya chronicles are *niam* (*Tamra chang*, 61, 68).

Altogether eight forts around the exterior wall of the palace, ten [nineteen] peaked gates, [one tunnel gate,] and four elephant-ear gates [, giving a grand total of twenty-four<sup>81</sup> gates].

Inside the palace<sup>82</sup> are [three main] inner official sala,<sup>83</sup> [twin buildings with swan-tail finials and protruding front porches. There is a pond in front of the official sala for trying litigants by ordeal by water. In that pond is] a brick building for translation of royal documents. There are arsenals for guns, large and small, one on the left and one on the right; a store [with swan-tail finials] for royal carriages beside the wall bordering the parade ground in front of Jakrawat;<sup>84</sup> four cannon stores for Phra Mahathep, Phra Mahamontri, Phra Ratchawarin, and Phra Intharadet,<sup>85</sup> all four outside the second-level<sup>86</sup> wall of the palace which has peaked gates called Surinthon Thawan (p28) and Samran Phaichayon (p26).

Inside this wall there are eight stables [for beautiful bull elephants of unusual colour, all eight stables] with peaks [and swan-tail finials,] and two brick buildings called Lamsangat<sup>87</sup> with three rooms [and walls painted green].

The third-level wall has a wall-walk,<sup>88</sup> a peaked gate called Phisan Sila Gate

<sup>81</sup> Only twenty-two listed (including one tunnel gate) in both *KLHW* and *APA*.

<sup>82</sup> This description begins in the courtyard at the northeast corner. Most of the buildings mentioned here are shown on Kaempfer's sketch of the palace. However, the Translation Hall is not on Kaempfer's sketch, and in *KCKK* (see below) it is located in the southeast corner, where Phraya Boran found foundations that are now covered by the statue of King U Thong.

<sup>83</sup> ศาลาสุกขุนไน, *sala luk khun nai*. *Luk khun* was a term for judicial officials, but also for officials in general. The *sala luk khun* were the main offices for conducting government business. On Kaempfer's sketch, the "Sale Kun or office of the royal secretaries" is in the south of the northeast courtyard, and could be on the site of the unidentified foundations marked on our map. La Loubère described these buildings as "inclosed with a Wall, no higher than one may lean over, and covered with a Roof, which bears only upon Pillars placed at equal distances in the Wall. These Halls are for the chief Mandarins, who do there sit cross-legged, either for their Functions of their Offices, or to make their Court, or to expect the Prince's [king's] Orders, viz. in the Morning very late, and in the Evening until the approach of Night, and they stir not thence without order. The less considerable Mandarins sit in the open Air, in the Courts or Gardens" (*New Historical Relation*, 33).

<sup>84</sup> The "parade ground in front of Jakrawat" means the open area running down the eastern side of the palace, overlooked by the Jakrawat Phaichayon throne hall. Kaempfer's sketch of the palace shows two east-west walls across this area, but these have disappeared. On the map, we have drawn one east-west wall in roughly the position of the northernmost wall in Kaempfer's sketch, that is, to the south of two gates in the eastern wall.

<sup>85</sup> Mahathep and Mahamontri are heads of the left and right divisions of the inner palace guard, *sakdina* 2000, while Ratchawarin (Ratcharin) and Intharadet (Indecha) are heads of the right and left divisions of the outer palace guard, *sakdina* 1600 (*Kotmai tra sam duang*, 1: 283, 284, 289, 290, where all have Luang rank).

<sup>86</sup> Meaning the wall on the west of the parade ground.

<sup>87</sup> ล้ำสัจด์, more likely ล้ำสัจด์, "surpassing silence", perhaps because these buildings were close to the white elephants which were not to be disturbed (or perhaps were occupied by the elephants). Alternatively these might be the buildings that Tachard (*Voyage*, 166) noted: "In two Halls more forward there were five hundred *Persians* of the Kings Guard sitting on the Ground cross-legg'd."

<sup>88</sup> Foundations excavated by the FAD seem too narrow for such a wall, or the peaked gate that

(p27) right in front of the Wihan Somdet Mahaprasat Throne Hall; and a peaked gate called Phichai Sunthon Gate (p25) right in front of the Sanphetarom Mahaprasat Throne Hall.

In the courtyard in front of the two [aforementioned] throne halls are four elephant stables, all with peaks, to keep royal elephants, one per stable; a horse stable with four stalls [and a roof with swan-tail finials] to keep royal mounts, two per stall, [a total of eight horses, of different colours according to the day. This stable for royal mounts is] right in front of the Treasury of the Great Wealth.<sup>89</sup>

*[About the inner palace and the various halls]*

Suriya Amarinthon Mahaprasat Throne Hall<sup>90</sup> [with five-level *monthop* spire] is inside the main palace wall on the northern side beside the river. It has a wing [extending out on the northern side] as an Evening Pavilion<sup>91</sup> [with a glasswork<sup>92</sup> throne under a *busabok* baldachin<sup>93</sup> placed in the wing].

Beside the terrace {to the north} [of the Mahaprasat Suriya Amarin], there is a [large] lodge of five rooms, [with wall panels,<sup>94</sup> floor and walls painted red and decorated with patterns of offertory rice,<sup>95</sup> votive deity,<sup>96</sup> and Brahma's face in gold. It is a lodge of the inner palace.<sup>97</sup>

There is a large lodge with five rooms] in a row [and walls painted plain red,] used for lying by the fire, <sup>98</sup> beside the Pomelo Tree Gate (p44). [It is in the inner palace.]

To the south of the Suriya Amarinthon Mahaprasat there is a [small brick] building housing a statue of King Naresuan along with royal weapons. [The walls are gilded, the roof has swan-tail finials, and there is a mounting platform in front of its wing.]

---

follows (Prathip, "Phraratchawang boran," 225).

<sup>89</sup> Digging has located foundations of two square buildings in this area; the southern one is right in front of the Treasury, as described here.

<sup>90</sup> Probably built when King Prasat Thong enlarged the palace in 1636.

<sup>91</sup> This was probably on a raised level for seeing over the city wall to the river. The records report that King Borommakot watched from this building when the deputation of Siamese monks departed for Sri Lanka (B).

<sup>92</sup> แก้วฟ้า, *waen fa*, term to describe a throne with glass inlay.

<sup>93</sup> A kind of kiosk enclosing a throne with a roof and corner pillars but open on all four sides. Deities often appear in *busabok* in mural paintings.

<sup>94</sup> หุ้มฉัตร, *lang jiat*, decorative inner wall panels. KWPS is missing everything up to this point.

<sup>95</sup> เขabin, *khao bin*, a motif based on popped rice in a folded leaf or almsbowl in a shape resembling a lotus bud.

<sup>96</sup> เทพนม, *theppanom*, a motif depicting a deity sitting with crossed legs and hands in *wai*.

<sup>97</sup> This building must be to the west of the throne hall, towards the cloister, as there is no room on other sides (B).

<sup>98</sup> ประทมเพลิง, *prathom phloeng*; in the tradition of the Thai and many others in Southeast Asia, a postpartum mother went to lie beside a stove or fire constantly kept burning for a certain period, usually an odd number of days between seven and twenty-nine, as a preventive against infection or other complications.



Wihan Somdet Throne Hall<sup>99</sup> [which has four *prang* towers, roofs tiled with tin, and the peaks clad in tin affixed with gold] is [a major palace of the city] for the *butsayaphisek* bathing ceremony<sup>100</sup> [of kings] since the past. It has a [long] wing with a [separate *monthop* spire extending out from the main building, housing a throne under a] glasswork *monthop* as a royal seat. In front of Wihan Somdet Mahaprasat there are [L-shaped<sup>101</sup>] swordstores<sup>102</sup> to left and right. Around the hall is a crystal wall two cubits high. [The terrace of the hall is paved with marble and has lantern posts of Chinese stone placed at the eight directions, and stone lions and statues of Chinese soldiers placed at intervals.]

Sanphet Mahaprasat Throne Hall<sup>103</sup> has {a wing containing a golden *monthop*} [nine-level<sup>104</sup> *monthop* spire with arrow finials, short wings on two sides, long wings on two sides, and porches extended out from these wings but with no spires, only three-level roofs. The decorative gable ends of the wings have pillars with lion's back patterns<sup>105</sup> and votive-deity patterns, and a pendant figure of a standing Narai.<sup>106</sup> In one wing,<sup>107</sup> there is a throne in a golden *busabok* baldachin with a *monthop* roof] where the king converses with official foreign guests [who come to pay homage at the front of the hall]. In the central hall of the Sanphet Mahaprasat is the Banyong [Kanjana Naowarat] throne with a three-level *benja* platform<sup>108</sup> [and no *monthop* but a holy white umbrella placed behind the Banyong throne which is made with pure grade-nine<sup>109</sup> gold decorated with valuable diamonds and

<sup>99</sup> Date of construction unknown, originally named the Mangkhla Phisek, and first mentioned in the chronicles during the Naresuan reign.

<sup>100</sup> บุญยาศิษะ, a bathing ceremony held when the moon resides with the eighth of the 27 *naksat* constellations (Praesepe), usually in January.

<sup>101</sup> คด, *kot*, crooked, not straight, probably L-shaped.

<sup>102</sup> ทิมดาบ, *thim dap*, meaning literally a storehouse for swords, but in practice working space for officials inside the palace walls.

<sup>103</sup> Built by King Trailokanath at the start of his reign in 1448. It was the site of the audience for the French embassy in 1685, and is described by Tachard, La Loubère, de Choisy, and Kaempfer.

<sup>104</sup> The text states “nine *monthop*”, meaning a spire with nine levels. The renderings of this building on the Judea painting, Vingboons map, and Kaempfer's sketches all show a single large central *monthop* spire. In 1735, King Borommakot renovated the building, including stripping the roof, and having the main *monthop* spire clad in gold (Cushman, *Royal Chronicles*, 428, 431–2). The Ceylonese ambassadors who visited in 1751 were struck by the amount of gilding, both inside and outside the hall (Pieris, *Religious Intercourse*, 15–16).

<sup>105</sup> ครีพลึง, usually ครีบลึงสิงห์, *krip lang sing*, a pattern used for the back of the Rachasi mythical lion.

<sup>106</sup> Vishnu.

<sup>107</sup> The long wings are at the front and back, and this throne wing is at the front (B).

<sup>108</sup> เบญจา, meaning five, a stack of platforms of diminishing size, usually with pillars at the four corners and a canopy. This is probably the throne described by Schouten (Bhawan, *Dutch East India Company Merchants*, 60).

<sup>109</sup> นพคุณน้ำเก้า, *nophakhun namkao*, two epithets meaning “grade nine,” the highest level on a scale of purity.

various gems, three cubits high, clad in 90 *chang*<sup>110</sup> weight of gold, coated with blue enamel, embellished with nine gems of all colours. The floor of the Banyong throne is gold] covered with a lion skin [existing since ancient times. This throne is] where the king sits [when receiving state visitors or rulers of tributary states, or when appearing before nobles] for coronation [day, with lofty regalia placed around the throne].

In front of the Sanphet Mahaprasat Throne Hall are L-shaped swordstores to left and right [. On the terrace there is] a crystal wall two cubits high all around the building [with eight small elephant-ear gates in the wall. Between the Sanphet Mahaprasat and Wihan Somdet there is a road] and a gate called Phiman Mongkhon Sala Luat<sup>111</sup> Gate (p29) out to the road in front of Sanphet Mahaprasat for royal family members to go in procession to tonsure and down to the river.

In the courtyard in front of the two palaces there are four elephant stables [all with arched peaks]; a stable for [*thet*<sup>112</sup>] principal horses<sup>113</sup> with four stalls, one horse per stall;<sup>114</sup> and [beyond this stable is] a storehouse for principal horse tack that official guests are shown; [and beyond that] the Treasury of the Great Wealth [for storing the silver and royal wealth of the kingdom]; and a workshop to make shapes [of cash, set into the wall around the Treasury of the Great Wealth].

There is a wall along the boundary of the parade ground on the north side with a peaked gate called Chaiyamonkhon Traiphopchayon (p30), which is opened for royal kin to go down to river for royal ceremonies, and a tunnel gate [called the Khoha Tunnel Gate (p31)] going out to the Victory Flagstaff Gate. In the boundary wall of the courtyard in front of the Suriya Amarin Mahaprasat Throne Hall is a gate called the Phaichayon Thawan Gate (p32), with a swordstore for the palace staff on the right, and a swordstore for the inner guard on the {right} [left]. Outside the [Phaichayon Thawan] Gate is a medical hall; a store for various royal vehicles with ear-decoration<sup>115</sup> officers; a store for carpets and mats looked after by consorts; {two seamstress workshops} [a workshop for Chinese seamstresses sewing cloth; a

<sup>110</sup> 90 x 1.2 kg = 108 kg.

<sup>111</sup> ศาลาลวด, the wire/mesh sala. Perhaps “Mongkhon Sala Luat” is a variant of Mangkhla Phisek, the old name of Wihan Somdet. Alternatively, it might refer to a craft workshop (*sala luatlai*) or even a birdcage, similar to one constructed by King Mongkut in the Bangkok Grand Palace. There was a building of this name in the Grape Garden which figures in the contest over the succession to King Borommakot (e.g., Cushman, *Royal Chronicles*, 463 where it is translated as the Residence of the Wire Pavilion).

<sup>112</sup> เทศ, foreign, usually meaning from India or Arabia.

<sup>113</sup> ม้าต๋น, *ma ton*, meaning royal horses.

<sup>114</sup> When this area was mentioned above as “the courtyard in front of the two aforementioned palaces,” these stables housed two horses each, for a total of eight.

<sup>115</sup> ก้นเจี๊ยก, *kanjiak*, from a Khmer word for “ear,” usually meaning an ear decoration in *kanok* design, worn by actors. Perhaps the usage here is related to the phrase, ต่างพระเนตรพระกรรณ, *tang phranet phrakan*, “in place of the king’s eyes and ears”, meaning acting on behalf of the king.

workshop for Thai seamstresses sewing drapes and various cloth]; and a stable with a peaked roof for a white cow elephant.<sup>116</sup>

The wall of the Phaichayon Benjarat Garden runs past<sup>117</sup> the Treasury of the Great Wealth<sup>118</sup> to the corner of the Cardinal Storehouse.<sup>119</sup> A gate called the Sawan Phirom Gate (p33) leads into the Phaichayon Benjarat Garden where there is the Monthiantham Hall in the middle of a pond; a workshop to mint baht, *salueng*, and *fueang* coins at the mouth of the pond; the Monastic Storehouse for keeping *jiwon*, *sabong*, and triple robes; the Phiman-akat Storehouse to store foreign mirrors {with golden frames, large and small}, foreign carpets [, and crystalware from Batavia];<sup>120</sup> and the Phra Thep-bidon Hall where {*chaophraya*, *phra*, *luang*, and palace nobles with rank (*bandasak*)} [royal kin and subjects both inside and outside] carrying salvers, betel trays [incense, candles, and flowers] enter to pay respect [to the image of King U Thong in the Phra Chesada Udon<sup>121</sup> Hall] before entering Wat Phra Si Sanphet to take the water of allegiance.<sup>122</sup>

Beside the Phra Thep-bidon Hall, a gate called the Sawan Phaichayonrat Gate (p34) in the wall around the Phaichayon Benjarat Garden leads out to the {area} [road]<sup>123</sup> between the walls around the Brick Wat Lodge.<sup>124</sup> From this road a gate named

<sup>116</sup> Kaempfer's sketch shows the two swordstores flanking the gate, the medical hall, and a "royal wardrobe," which probably means the seamstress workshops.

<sup>117</sup> *KLHW* has โรง but *KWPS* has ลง which in this context may mean "past" or "passing by."

<sup>118</sup> This probably refers to a new Treasury, built in the reign of Prasat Thong, *not* the one referred to earlier. The location of the new treasury is unknown but probably was south of the Wihan Somdet.

<sup>119</sup> วิเศษ *wiset*, used to store cloth, in the charge of Phra Ratchaprasit, *sakdina* 3,000 (*Kotmai tra sam duang*, 1:271). Probably this area of the palace was divided into many small courtyards for various treasures and other buildings.

<sup>120</sup> กาลาปา, Sunda Kelapa, river of coconut forest, an early name of Batavia, now Jakarta, the principal Dutch settlement in Southeast Asia, often used to mean Java as a whole.

<sup>121</sup> This should be Chesada-bidon, with the same meaning as Thep-bidon.

<sup>122</sup> Phra Thep-bidon (holy deity-father) was the name of an image of King U Thong (Ramathibodi I), founder of Ayutthaya. The origin of the image is unknown. The image apparently survived the sack of Ayutthaya and was placed by King Taksin in Wat Suwannaram. When King Rama I decided to revive the water oath ceremony, he brought the image to Bangkok to preside at the ceremony and built Phra Thep-bidon Hall inside the palace for the purpose. In 1785, however, the king decided that the Emerald Buddha should be substituted for this purpose, and had the image of U Thong encased in silver and plated with gold as an image of the Buddha under the name Phra Thep-bidon (*APA*, 73–5). In 1855, King Mongkut built a new *wihan* inside Wat Phra Kaeo for the Emerald Buddha but then decided it was too small for royal ceremonial so continued to use the old location. In 1902, this new hall was repaired, renamed as the Prasat Phra Thep-bidon, and used to house images of the Chakri kings and be a site for celebration on Chakri Day. The Phra Thep-bidon image was also moved to this site.

<sup>123</sup> *APA* has ถนน *sanon*, possibly a miscopying of ถนน *sanam*, a courtyard or garden, while *KLHW/KWPS* has ถนน, *thanon*, road. Possibly an original had "area," which makes more sense, but successive miscopying converted this into "road."

<sup>124</sup> This is ambiguous. It could mean the Khoha Sawan Lodge to the west, but in that case this gate would cross the cloister. More likely, it means the building behind the Jakrawat Phachaiyon, mentioned below.

the Phirom Chesada Gate (p35) leads out beside the store for the cannon called the White-clad Ascetic Sweeps the Wat<sup>125</sup> to the parade ground in front of the Jakrawat.

This road leads through a gate called Sunthon Phusit (p36) into the Cardinal Storehouse. A gate called Udom Phasatra (p37) in the wall around the Cardinal Storehouse leads to the road to Wat Phra Si Sanphet. From this road another road turns towards the [Brick] Lodge in front of the Jakrawat through the Phiromthara Gate (p38), and then reaches an elephant-ear gate by the wall of Wat Phra Si Sanphet called the Elephant Gate (p39) leading to the Saeng Storehouse<sup>126</sup> for storing all craftsmen's tools.

Behind the rear recesses<sup>127</sup> of both the Wihan Somdet and Sanphet Throne Halls, there is a walled cloister ten cubits wide<sup>128</sup> and screened on both sides. There is a cloister gate called the Khoha Phopchon Gate out to the Phopchon [Thawan Uthok]<sup>129</sup> Gate down to boats at the royal [Wasukri] Landing. There are two lions at the foot of the steps. This [lion] gate is looked after by Granny {Aen} [Waen]. The gate at the end of the cloister leading to Wat Phra Si Sanphet is called the Sawan Khoha Gate (p40) and is looked after by Granny Yom.<sup>130</sup>

A gate (p41) on the side of the cloister leads to Ironflower Tree<sup>131</sup> Road where women from Sand Landing Village<sup>132</sup> and Khaek Landing Village come to sit at shops selling various cloth. This road<sup>133</sup> runs from Sumen Gate (p42), through Goat Bridge Gate (p43), through the cloister gate<sup>134</sup> to the pond, and to the Banyong Rattanat Mahaprasat [. The Banyong Rattanat Mahaprasat has a single *monthop* spire with an arrow finial, four wings extending from the main building in the

<sup>125</sup> ปะชาวกวาดวัด, *pa khao kwat wat*, name of a heavy cannon firing shot almost 20 inches diameter, used in the 1767 defense of Ayutthaya (KCKK, 244). The name is probably based upon a story about the legendary King Ruang of Sukhothai taking refuge in a *wat* and turning to stone a Khmer enemy who came upon him sweeping the *wat* grounds.

<sup>126</sup> This treasury might have been in the southeast corner, where Phraya Boran found foundations which he thought were the translation hall and *sala luk khun*, or outside this corner of the palace; a list of treasuries elsewhere in this document states: "The Saeng Sapphayuthon Treasuries are beside the Nakhonban Canal and at Wat Si Chiang, along with the Saeng Nok Treasury."

<sup>127</sup> จัระหน้า, usually จระนำ, *jaranam*, from *jalaram*, a Tamil word for a window, used in Thai for an arched recess on the rear of a *wat* building, often for holding an image (W, 50, note 45).

<sup>128</sup> Equal to 5–6 metres. KCKK states that the cloister ran all the way to Wat Phra Si Sanphet and it is often depicted that way on modern maps and reconstructions. But here it states that it ran only behind the throne halls, and the remains of wall foundations tend to confirm that. On entering the Phaichayon Benjarat Garden, it seems to have become a paved walkway, still relatively well sheltered by the many walls in this area.

<sup>129</sup> In the list of palace gates earlier, this gate is called Mahatraiphopchon Thawara Uthok Gate. In KCKK it is Thawara Uthok.

<sup>130</sup> Phraya Boran (APA, 75, n. 76) noted, "dug and found the pathway in the cloister but the walls have completely disappeared."

<sup>131</sup> ต้นดอกเหล็ก, *ton dok lek*, probably ขี้เหล็ก, *khi lek*, *Cassia siamea*, a tree with edible yellow flowers.

<sup>132</sup> At the eastern end of the north side of the island, near the Front Palace.

<sup>133</sup> This road is very difficult to locate as the gates mentioned are not identified elsewhere.

<sup>134</sup> Here probably meaning a gate onto a covered bridge across the pond.

four directions, and a pond for royal passage around all four sides. In front of the Banyong Rattanat is a road] to the Jakraphatiphan Gate (p45),<sup>135</sup> which Granny Ming looks after as gatekeeper. Sentinelle officers<sup>136</sup> [and lady attendants] take care of the inner palace, while {men} [palace officials] look after the outer.<sup>137</sup>

To the rear of the pond,<sup>138</sup> there is a medical hall in front of a gate to the Grape Garden; a lodge of two rooms for royal monks and teachers to rest<sup>139</sup> while on royal affairs; a monk's store with five rooms [for monks to rest while waiting to chant the funeral prayer or other Buddhist prayers]; a swordstore for off-duty<sup>140</sup> royal pages; a room of regalia in the care of the pages; a lodge where the Front Palace waits before entering audience [, with a bedroom for his use]; a clock tower that announces the time; [a hall for regalia;] a store for the tack of principal horses; a store for royal regalia weapons; and a hall for mother-of-pearl craftsmen in front of the Song Buen Throne Hall.

There is a hall for *alak* scribes beside the wall of the Rabbit Garden; a royal hall for keeping texts passed down from the past, sited in the pond at the corner of the Rabbit Garden's wall; a lodge of five rooms [with walls decorated in gold and lacquered floors] in [the middle of] the Rabbit Garden; and a gate leading to the large brick lodge with outer walls painted red, known as Khoha Sawan Lodge<sup>141</sup> which was formerly for Somdet Phra Phanwasa [Yai],<sup>142</sup> the queen of King Narai, and later became the Inner Treasury in the care of Thao Song Kandan.<sup>143</sup>

In the wall around the lodge, there is a gate called Sawan Phirom (p47) which leads out to Sanam Jan, and there turns onto a road beside the wall around a brick building of five rooms where royal lady-cooks prepare food for royalty.<sup>144</sup> {On this

<sup>135</sup> Since the modifications in the Phetracha reign, the inner (female) palace was confined to the northwest corner, screened by a wall to the north of the Banyong Rattanat. Presumably this gate is in that wall.

<sup>136</sup> จ้าโขน, *ja khlon*, female guards of the inner palace.

<sup>137</sup> KWPS states that the palace officials look after "both inside and outside."

<sup>138</sup> These buildings seem to have been north of the Banyong Rattanat, including a new *sala luk khun nai*, not mentioned here. During the family in-fighting towards the end of his reign, Borommakot entered the palace from the river at Si Samran and "saw many people sitting at the *sala luk khun nai* at the end of the pond," and then went to sit in "the lodge of two rooms beside the monks' store" (see *Phraratchaphongsawadan krung si ayutthaya chabap mo brattle*, 413–4; and less clearly in Cushman, *Royal Chronicles*, 455). Possible "Grape Garden" later in this sentence is a mistake, and should be Thai Sanom.

<sup>139</sup> จำวัด, *jamwat*, a word used mainly for monks, meaning to sleep, especially during the day.

<sup>140</sup> KLHW and APA have *non wen*, maybe sleeping (overnight) duty, but *nok wen*, off-duty, in KWPS makes more sense.

<sup>141</sup> โคหาสวรรค์, heavenly cave.

<sup>142</sup> Often known as Queen Yothathip.

<sup>143</sup> Title of one of the senior ladies in the palace service, in charge of treasuries containing gold, silver, cloth, and articles of brass and white gold (*Kotmai tra sam duang*, 1:331).

<sup>144</sup> Location unknown but probably adjacent to the cloister behind the Sanphet Mahaprasat, as the rear of this hall was used for dining (Kaempfer, *Description*, 45).



road, women from Nai Kai Village<sup>145</sup> come to sit at shops to sell goods from Chinese junks.} The road turns to the Lion Corner at the front of the main cloister.<sup>146</sup>

In the boundary wall<sup>147</sup> there is a peaked gate called Udom Nari Gate (p46)<sup>148</sup> leading out towards a fresh market at Earth Gate (p17). [Inside is a large courtyard with a channel to drain rainwater through Pak Tho terrace into the main river below Earth Gate. There are waterworks staff on duty in a sala at the mouth of the channel.]

Banyong Rattanat Mahaprasat Throne Hall<sup>149</sup> has [a single *monthop* spire and long wings extending out from the main buildings in four directions, each with a glass-decorated throne in a *busabok* baldachin, a mounting platform in front of the wing, and a *naga* staircase.<sup>150</sup> There is a crystal wall around the terrace of the hall and] a pond around [the wall on all four sides, six fathoms wide in each direction].

In the pond [by the north wing] is a lodge [built on pillars over the water with five rooms, walls painted in water-pouring pattern<sup>151</sup> and affixed with gold leaf, lacquered floors, swan-tail finials, two-level roofs, windows with metal balustrades, a balcony with rounded pillars<sup>152</sup> all around, and a bridge with balustrades crossing from the throne hall to the lodge. This lodge is] used for performance of the Mahachat [Khamluang<sup>153</sup> every year without fail].

<sup>145</sup> Nai Kai is the easternmost of the canals running north-south across the island.

<sup>146</sup> Presumably meaning the cloister gate out to Wasukri Landing where there were guardian lions (see above).

<sup>147</sup> Meaning the wall running along the south of the women's quarters.

<sup>148</sup> Called Bowonnari Mahaphopchon gate above.

<sup>149</sup> In *KWPS*, this description of the Banyong Rattanat comes immediately after its first mention above. This palace, the "seat of the jeweled chair," was built according to the chronicles by King Phetracha at the start of his reign in 1688, but more likely in the Narai reign as it must be the building that Gervaise, who stayed in Siam from 1683 to 1687 and who probably got this information from La Loubère (see note 99 below), described as follows: "The king's apartment is in the last court. It is newly built and is easily distinguished from the others by the gold which glitters all over it in a thousand places. It is in the form of a cross, in the middle of which there rises from the roof a tall, many-tiered pyramid, which is the sign of a royal residence. It is covered all over with tin and adorned on all sides with carving of the very best workmanship. The apartment of the princess-queen [i.e., Khoha Sawan Lodge, see above], the king's daughter, and his wives, which is next to the king's, looks magnificent enough from the outside. Like the king's, it looks out onto large, well-tended gardens. The walks are intersected by little streams, which make everything fresh, and the gentle murmur of their waters lulls to sleep anyone who rests on the evergreen grass on their banks." (Gervaise, *Natural and Political History*, 32; see also: Cushman, *Royal Chronicles*, 324; Prathip, "Praratchawong boran," 233–37; Choisy, *Journal*, 170).

<sup>150</sup> *KWPS* has the *naga* staircases on two sides only.

<sup>151</sup> ลายรดน้ำ, *lai rot nam*, black lacquer with gilding.

<sup>152</sup> ลูกมะหวด, *luk mahuat*, rounded uprights, shaped rather like a string of beads, often seen in window openings of old *wat*.

<sup>153</sup> A recital of the royal edition of the *jataka* story of Phra Wetsandon (Vesantara), the last incarnation of the Buddha before his birth as the Buddha. This royal edition is believed to have been compiled by King Trailokanath in 1482, according to the Luang Prasoet chronicle (Cushman, *Royal Chronicles*, 18, lines 3–4).

In the pond [by the south wing] is a lodge [for scattering popped rice, built on pillars over the water with a two-level roof, swan-tail finials, no walls only a balustrade with rounded pillars around the balcony, pillars coated with lacquer and decorated with gold leaf in offertory-rice pattern with a Brahma's arrow<sup>154</sup> frieze<sup>155</sup> at top and bottom, and a bridge with railings from the throne hall to the lodge. This lodge is] for the king to scatter popped rice for feeding man-face fish,<sup>156</sup> giant carp,<sup>157</sup> golden barb,<sup>158</sup> and other fish in the pond.<sup>159</sup>

In the pond by the east wing is a lodge built on pillars over the water for the king to view stars. It has no roof only a floor, a balustrade with rounded pillars all around, and a bridge across the pond from the wing of the throne hall. This lodge is for viewing the sun, moon, and stars. Monks and Brahmans perform ceremonies offering *klot*<sup>160</sup> water and conch water on days of the sun and moon, and after a lunar eclipse,<sup>161</sup> on every occasion.

In the pond by the west wing is a bridge with a cloister and roof. The pillars of the bridge are far enough apart for a small paddle boat to pass under the bridge. The bridge crosses from the Mahaprasat to the side of the pond at the Song Buen Throne Hall,<sup>162</sup> a large brick building with a multi-level roof and swan-tail finials, a hall where the king graciously emerges to address servants of the realm, royal kin, and courtiers in audience.

Around the pond is a crystal wall six cubits high with gates at the four directions. Inside the wall is a road around the pond. On the wall there are a thousand lamp niches one span apart for placing lights for the celebration of Visakhabucha<sup>163</sup> in the middle of the sixth month. The pond water is not stagnant or odorous but flows in and out, clear, clean, and attractive.

<sup>154</sup> กาบพรมหตร, *kap phrommason*, a frieze design frequently used on pillars.

<sup>155</sup> กริพวิน (*KLHW*) กริมวิน (*KWPS*), *kripwin* or *krimwin*, possibly a miscopying of กริพริม or ขลิบริม, meaning "fixed to the edge".

<sup>156</sup> ปลาหนาคณ, *pla na khon*. "When we din'd in the Palace of Siam, 'twas in a very pleasant place under great Trees, and at the side of a store-pond, wherein it was said that amongst several sorts of fish there are some which resemble a Man and Woman, but I saw none of any sort" (La Loubère, *New Historical Relation*, 33).

<sup>157</sup> กระโท, *kraho*, *Catlocarpio siamensis*, giant barb or Siamese giant carp, a freshwater species that can grow to 3 metres long.

<sup>158</sup> ตะเพียนทอง, *taphian tong*, *Puntius altus*.

<sup>159</sup> In APA, everything from here on is missing.

<sup>160</sup> A lidded pot used by Brahmans to carry sacred water.

<sup>161</sup> โคมขบวิสุทฺธิ, *mok borisut*, after an eclipse, when the moon is no longer obscured by the earth's shadow.

<sup>162</sup> Phraya Boran located the Song Buen ("gun-shaped") at a mound on the northwest corner of the pond. FAD found this mound was only remains of the wall, and suggested a location slightly to the east (Prathip, "Praratchawong boran," 226). However, this text seems to position the Song Buen directly to the west of the Banyong Rattanat.

<sup>163</sup> The birth, the enlightenment and the passing away of the Buddha all fell on this full moon day in the sixth lunar month.

The Benjarat Mahaprasat Throne Hall<sup>164</sup> has five *monthop* spires and four-level roofs on wings in all four directions. Long wings extend out from the main building in all four directions, each with a *monthop* spire, low floor, and a quatrefoil gable<sup>165</sup> on the front. All four wings are throne halls, three for the king to conduct royal business in three different seasons, and the fourth at the rear to conduct the business of the inner palace. The walls of the throne hall and the four large wings are mortar coated with lacquer, decorated with glass and plated with gold leaf in offertory-rice pattern. Under each window is the figure of a lion and above each window is the face of Brahma. The base of the throne hall has moldings with crocodiles on the first level, Garuda seizing a *naga* at the second, votive deities with clasped hands at the third, and then the lion supporting the window. The window shutters are carved in the shape of a male and female deity on each pair. The door panels have images of Narai in ten postures, one on each door. Around the throne hall are swordstores, and a gate on one side. This throne hall is where the king passes judgments on lawsuits and conducts important city affairs, as well as a site for major meetings of senior officials.

Jakrawat Phaichayon Mahaprasat Throne Hall<sup>166</sup> has a single *monthop* spire, no *prali* ridge crest,<sup>167</sup> and wings with multi-level roofs in four directions. On east and west, the wings are short with two-level roofs, while to north and south the wings are long with four-level roofs and entrance doors. Built into the palace wall, this hall is open, without walls, and with three storeys. The lowest storey is for courtiers of the front to attend in audience; the middle for courtiers of the inside to witness processions and entertainments; and the uppermost for the royal family, both of the inside and the front, to watch various processions. In both long wings under a quatrefoil roof on the upper level there is a throne for the king to watch processions, entertainments, and parades of troops. In front of this hall is a large courtyard, stretching the length of the palace wall, with a road over six fathoms wide in front of the hall. These are known as the road in front of Jakrawat and the courtyard in front

<sup>164</sup> According to the chronicle, built by King Trailokanath as part of the major remodelling of the palace at the start of his reign (1448–1488), and mentioned in the Three Seals Law as Trailokanath's residence (*Kotmai tra sam duang*, 1:219). King Prasat Thong resided there when ailing shortly before his death in 1656 (Cushman, *Royal Chronicles*, 227). The location is unknown but is thought to be at the spot where King Rama V built the Trimuk Pavilion.

<sup>165</sup> จตุรมุข, *jaturamuk*, four-faced

<sup>166</sup> Built in 1632 in the reign of King Prasat Thong. Originally it was outside the old palace area but the king subsequently expanded the palace to the east, enclosing the parade ground and this building. The hall was originally called Siyasothonmaha Phiman Banyong, but was changed to "Great Palace and Residence of the World Conqueror Indra" on the court seer's advice after the king dreamed Indra had descended to sit on his bed. The hall was set into the eastern inner wall of the palace, and its upper levels were used for the king to view processions, entertainments, and military exercises on the parade ground (Cushman, *Royal Chronicles*, 216).

<sup>167</sup> ๒๑๑, rows of spikes along the ridge of a roof.

of Jakrawat. Behind the hall is an inner courtyard with roads and gun targets. The Jakrawat Phaichayon Mahaprasat is on the wall of the palace to the east.

Phaithun Mahaprasat Throne Hall has a single *prang* tower, wings of equal length, no one longer than the others, and four-level roofs.

Phaichayon Mahaprasat Throne Hall<sup>168</sup> has a single *monthop* spire, four-level roofs, and a single short wing.

Aisawan Mahaprasat Throne Hall has a single *monthop* spire and four-level roofs on the main building, long wings extending north and south up to the wall in front of the L-shaped swordstore, and long wings on east and west, but shorter than those to north and south.

These three buildings on the southern side of the palace are old royal throne halls from the past.<sup>169</sup> The king no longer stays there. All three are used for keeping potent Buddha images for worship inside the palace grounds every evening and morning, and for giving alms to monks in large numbers. All three buildings are important religious places, residences of the Buddha, in the palace.

*[Stables and storehouses]*

[In Ayutthaya,] bull and cow elephants which have been registered with names have their [regular] stables. The stables [for bull elephants] have walls built with brick, roofs with *luk-fuk* tiles,<sup>170</sup> and swan-tail finials [painted red. Bull elephants stand in stables with a finial], one per stable [. These stables are sited here and there] on the right-hand side from the head of the road in front of the palace up to the corner turning to Coconut Quarter Road. The stables for cow elephants are on the left-hand side in rows with {ten or} fifteen stalls each, one per elephant, from the head of Lead Quarter Road up to the Elephant Bridge. [Altogether there are stables for thirty bull elephants and fifty cow elephants, a total of eighty animals.]

Stables for principal horses of the left and right are sited along the road outside the wall of the parade ground in front of Jakrawat. The building for principal horses of the right, {fifteen} [twenty] stalls long, each housing one horse, is sited on the right-hand side from the head of Jao Phrom Market Road all along behind the Phra Banchon Sing Shrine.<sup>171</sup> In front of the stables there is a mounting platform [and an

<sup>168</sup> *KWPS* omits the rest of this sentence and the name of the Aisawan Mahaprasat, thus giving the Phaichayon Mahaprasat the description for the Aisawan Mahaprasat.

<sup>169</sup> All three are believed to date from the earliest phase of the palace's construction, prior to the renovation in the Trailokanath reign (Prathip, "Phraratchawang boran," 211–4), and thus may have been inside the walls around Wat Phra Si Sanphet, and had perhaps been converted into ancillary halls or shrines.

<sup>170</sup> ลูกฟูก, wave-shaped tiles with a hooked end; corrugated.

<sup>171</sup> พระบัญชรสิงห์, holy lion window. The chronicles for CS 736 (CE 1374) state that Boromracha I, the third king of Ayutthaya, built Wat Mahathat "to the east [? of the palace] in front of the Banchon Sing" (*Phraratchaphongsawadan krung si ayutthaya chabap mo bratle*, 14; Cushman translates as "royal lion gable," *Royal Chronicles*, 12).

eye-level shrine for making offerings to the guardian spirits]. Stables for procession horses<sup>172</sup> continue beyond in {three stables} [five rows of thirty stalls, each for a single horse], up to the wall of Wat Phraram. A building for principal horses of the left, {fifteen} [twenty] stalls long, each housing one horse, is sited on the left-hand side from the head of Jao Phrom Market Road along behind Suphachai Phaeng Kasem Court.<sup>173</sup> In front of the stables for principal horses of the left is a mounting platform [also]. Another {two} [three] stables for inner procession horses [, with thirty horses per stall,] continue beyond up to the wall of Wat Thammikarat. Stables for {five} [fifty] post horses<sup>174</sup> [, also one per stall,] are sited from the corner of Wat Thammikarat up [close] to the Jakra Mahima Gate. Stables for outer procession horses are sited along the sides of Four Ways Road, one to the right and one to the left, from the head of Green Cloth Quarter Road {and another at} [behind the jail up to] Banana Leaf Quarter. [On both right and left there are thirty stalls, each housing a single horse also.]

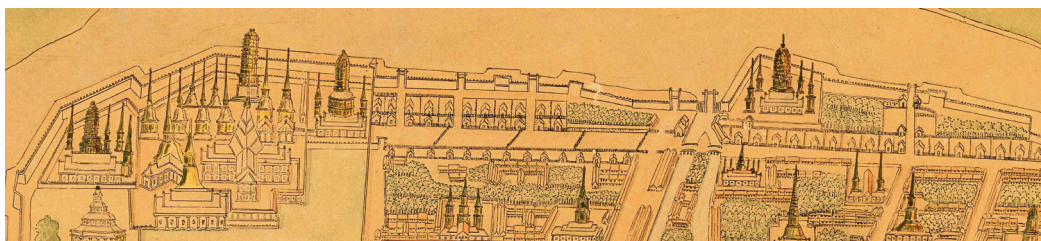


Figure 9. Elephant stables on the road leading east from the palace, on the Vingboons map

The Inner Storehouse is beside the [throne hall at] {the outer palace wall at the quarter of } Crystal Pond.

The Official<sup>175</sup> Storehouse is beside the road in front of Wat Pa Fai.

The Goods Storehouse is beside the Banana Leaf Quarter.

The storehouse for tack for war<sup>176</sup> horses is beside the wall of Wat Thammikarat.<sup>177</sup>

The Inner and Outer Customs Storehouses are beside Jao Phrom Market Road.

One War Materials<sup>178</sup> Storehouse is along Nakhonban Canal and another by Wat Si Chiang [, as is the Outer Arms Storehouse as well].

<sup>172</sup> มาแข่ง, *ma saeng*, horses trained for processions.

<sup>173</sup> ศาลคู่ซ้ายแพ่งเกษม. In the section on judicial officers in the Three Seals Law, there are two divisions, *phaeng kasem* and *phaeng klang*. Each has a department head and two deputies. All have *supha* (meaning “judge”) as part of their official name. Khun Suphachai is under *phaeng klang* (*Kotmai tra sam duang*, 1:266).

<sup>174</sup> มาใช้, *ma chai*, “horses for use,” especially by messengers.

<sup>175</sup> ราชการ, *rachakan*.

<sup>176</sup> KLHW has ศึกษา *sueksa*, study, but KPWS has ศึกษา *suek*, war.

<sup>177</sup> In APA, this sentence has been garbled into a fragment: “The treasury for storing saddles and for the realm of the city.”

<sup>178</sup> แสงสรรพายุทธ, *saeng sanphayut*.



The Brick-Building Storehouse to store guns and gunpowder is in front of Wat Jan and behind Wat Sangkapat.

The Brick-Building Storehouse for elephant harness and stirrups is beside Wat Yanusenthon.

At new year, there are mask plays, dramas, shadow puppets, firework tower displays, and celebrations every year without fail.<sup>179</sup>

[*About various boats in boathouses*]

[Ayutthaya has several boathouses,<sup>180</sup> mostly outside the city walls. In the vicinity of Wat Tha Ka Rong Village,<sup>181</sup> there is a row of thirty boathouses for freshwater war boats. The pillars are of *makha* wood<sup>182</sup> and roofs of *luk-fuk* tiles. Some house ten boats, some six, according to the size of boat. There are minor officials and royal *phrai* to look after them each month. If there is a war, two hundred boats can be caulked, hauled out from the dry docks in the boathouses, and used immediately on royal service.

Below the mouth of Ironwood Canal<sup>183</sup> there are boathouses for various sea-going war boats, large and small. They are kept in a row of dry docks alongside the main river, each with the hull perpendicular to the river and the stern at the mouth of the dock. Some house one boat, some two. There are thirty large sea-going war boats with junk sterns, and a hundred small sea-going war boats with fish sterns, all made from ironwood.<sup>184</sup> The boathouses have pillars of *makha* wood, roofs of *luk-fuk* tiles, walls, and doors. There are officers and *phrai* to take care of them. Phraya Ratchawangsan<sup>185</sup> is in charge as unit head, but Phraya Maha-ammatt<sup>186</sup> looks after the freshwater war boats. There is a row of eighteen dry docks for building royal ships<sup>187</sup> and junks at the end of Tiger Crossing Landing Village,<sup>188</sup> four dry docks for

<sup>179</sup> This rather detached line appears in all versions. Perhaps originally it was preceded by a line about a treasury for storing articles for festivities.

<sup>180</sup> In *APA*, the section on boathouses appears among the material found later and published as an appendix. The content is the same, but much shorter.

<sup>181</sup> The *wat* is half a kilometre to the northwest of the island on the south bank of what is now the Chaophraya River.

<sup>182</sup> *Azelia xylocarpa*, a large deciduous tree prized for wood carving.

<sup>183</sup> Ironwood Canal runs southeast from the south side of the city to meet the Bangkok (Chaophraya) River around 4 kilometres south of the city. The boathouses mentioned here were at the southern end, on the right bank of the Bangkok River just below the junction with the canal. They are clearly shown on the Valentyn map as “38 ‘S Konings warf.”

<sup>184</sup> ตะเคียน, *takhian*, *Hopea odorata*, Malabar ironwood.

<sup>185</sup> พระยาวาฬวังสัน, superintendent of the left division of the Cham militia, *sakdina* 2,000. The suffix –wangsan (sometimes –bangsan) is distorted from Hassan. Cham were expert at seafaring, hence this position (*Kotmai tra sam duang*, 1:307; Winai, *Phanna phumisathan*, 57, note 68).

<sup>186</sup> พระยามหาอำมาตย์ (หลวง in *Kotmai tra sam duang*), an officer in Mahatthai, in the division in charge of the north, *sakdina* 3,000 (*Kotmai tra sam duang*, 1: 225).

<sup>187</sup> กำนัน, *kampan*, a term used for European-style sea-going craft.

<sup>188</sup> บ้านท่าเสือขาม, *ban tha suea kham*; 2.5 kilometres south of the city downriver towards Bangkok.



Figure 10. Palace boatyard (mural, Wat Mahathat, Phetburi)

ships and junks<sup>189</sup> beside the city wall, two below the Victory Gate,<sup>190</sup> and two old royal dry docks at Banana Leaf Quarter.<sup>191</sup>]

<sup>189</sup> KWPS omits the junks here.

<sup>190</sup> Roughly in the middle of the south side of the island.

<sup>191</sup> In the southwest corner of the island.

There is a left and a right boathouse for royal barges, each one *sen*, one *sen* five fathoms,<sup>192</sup> [or one *sen* ten fathoms long,]<sup>193</sup> with {square} [octagonal] pillars [of *makha* wood,] roofs with eaves<sup>194</sup> on both left and right sides, and swan-tail finials. [Each boathouse has plastered brick walls with wind passages.<sup>195</sup>] Boathouses for boats of the right are lined up along the river to the front of Wat Tin Tha<sup>196</sup> [—in total twenty boathouses, each with five or ten boats, including animal-shaped boats, principal boats, and victory boats.] Beside the patrol sala<sup>197</sup> are boathouses on land [with pillars constructed of brick, walls of brick, and tiled roofs with finials. One is] for the royal barge with a Garuda head and screening<sup>198</sup> for the king [, and one for the royal barge known as the Asura Wayuphak<sup>199</sup> with the head of a *yaksa* and wings]. Boathouses on land for boats of the left stretch from Mai Rong<sup>200</sup> Canal to Wat Tin Tha. One houses the royal barge with the head of a swan and screening, and another the Lord Garuda boat, both for the king to go fishing on the sea coast.

The major branch-class<sup>201</sup> royal barges are called: Kaeo Jakramani of the right and Suwanna Jakratana of the left.

The minor branch-class royal barges are called: Suwanna Phiman of the left and right; Sommuti Phimanchai of the left; Kaeo Tokrong<sup>202</sup> of the right; Salika Long Lom of the left; Thong Phaen Fa of the left; Thong Phaen Fa of the right.

The four primary-victory<sup>203</sup> class royal barges of the left {and four of the right} [are called: Sithep Phayakon,<sup>204</sup> Amon Rattanat, Prasat Amarinthon, and Sinthu Prawet.

<sup>192</sup> *KWPS* has “five *sen*” here, which seems unlikely.

<sup>193</sup> 40, 50, or 60 metres.

<sup>194</sup> ฟัไล, *phalai*, a projecting roof, pent roof.

<sup>195</sup> Openings to allow the passage of air, usually just under the roof.

<sup>196</sup> On the north bank of the river along the north side of the island, to the west of the palace. This was the main royal boathouse.

<sup>197</sup> At the mouth of Lotus Pond Canal, to the north of the palace.

<sup>198</sup> กำปาง, *kampang*, meaning with something to protect the occupant from view.

<sup>199</sup> Asura (giant, ogre) class barges include two barges with half-bird, half-ogre figureheads. The Wayuphak or “eater of the wind” is a legendary bird usually identified with the *karawek* which, in the Three Worlds cosmology, has a voice so beautiful other animals cease whatever they are doing to listen (Reynolds and Reynolds, *Three Worlds*, 175–76, where it is called a “fabulous nightingale”). The bird has never been seen, but the feathers can be collected by doing a ritual and placing a bowl of water on a platform in a treetop; the bird will bathe there and shed some feathers (Phlajnoi, *Wannakhadi aphithan*, 30–31).

<sup>200</sup> ไมรวง, *mai rong*, “crying wood,” the squeals of boat timbers against the dock were heard as cries of the wood spirit (Boranratchathanin, “Tamnan krung kao,” 205). Given in *KLHW* as ไมร้อย, *mai roi*.

<sup>201</sup> กิ่ง, *king*, the premier class of royal barges. The name is said to have come from a custom of returning war boats setting up a branch in the bows to signal victory, resulting in branch designs being painted on the prows.

<sup>202</sup> More likely ตากรอง, *ta krong*, the analytic eye (W).

<sup>203</sup> เอกไชย, *ekkachai*, a class of royal barges slightly below *king*. Only these first two classes are for royal family members alone.

<sup>204</sup> *KLHW* has ทายกร, *thayakon*, probably wrong.



The four primary-victory class royal barges of the right are called: Rattana Phiman Amaret, Phiset Ballang, At Phuchanong, and Banyong Nawet.]

The two royal barges with [seven] *naga*-king heads [are called Phiman Wasukri and Simongkhon Nakhinthon, each with a *busabok* baldachin amidships for the royal throne.

All of the above are conveyances for the king. Some have a canopy with four wings<sup>205</sup> and a *monthop* spire, while others have only a *busabok* baldachin with a plain *monthop* and no wings. The Hera Loi Long Samut<sup>206</sup> barge has a roof over the throne with four wings and finials.<sup>207</sup> Other boats of various animal shapes are too numerous to describe.

All these boats are in boathouses with finials.] Each has a dry dock, dug out with a dyke at the entrance to block water, and stanchions.<sup>208</sup> To take a boat into the boathouse, the dyke at the front is broken to allow water to fill the dry dock, and beams are placed on the stanchions. When the water level falls, the hull of the boat rests on the beams. The dyke is then closed and all the water bailed out of the dry dock.

The *si sakkalat*<sup>209</sup> and *krap*<sup>210</sup> royal boats of left and right [are kept in the rows of boathouses around Wat Tin Tha. The many *dang* and *kan* flanking craft<sup>211</sup> and various procession boats are in the boathouses of the left and right.] The {five hundred} oarsmen of the royal barges are from Phoriang Village<sup>212</sup> and Phutlao Village.<sup>213</sup> [They are official rowers with a head and deputy head of department, and commanders of units and brigades.] Phra Inthorathep<sup>214</sup> is in charge of the oarsmen of the left and [Phra Phirenthorathep<sup>215</sup> those of the] right. [According to the ancient manual of royal customs handed down from the past, a royal order under seal exempts all units of oarsmen from all custom dues and farmed taxes, and commands them to be manpower for royal service as oarsmen for three months of each year.]

<sup>205</sup> มุก, *muk*, gable ends projecting in four directions. This sentence describes the roofs over the royal seat on the barges.

<sup>206</sup> เหาะลอยลงสมุทร, *hera loi long samut*, serpent floats down to the ocean.

<sup>207</sup> In *APA*, this sentence is totally garbled, reading roughly “placed in *sangket* with a four-winged *monthop* in the shape of a Buddha image going in front of a branch-class royal barge.”

<sup>208</sup> เตาหมอ, ตะหมอ, usually ต่อมอ; the function is clear from the passage that follows.

<sup>209</sup> ครีส์กหลาด, holy/glorious felt, probably so named because felt was used on the roofs; a boat for royal use other than processions.

<sup>210</sup> กวาบ, planking to raise the gunwales on war boats; name for two classes of boats used by the king but not in processions. *Krap* are small, suitable for entering small canals.

<sup>211</sup> ดั่ง, *dang* (shield) and กัน, *kan* (guard) are two classes of flanking boats in royal barge processions. *Dang* boats are not painted or patterned.

<sup>212</sup> โพธิ์เรียง, “row of bo trees,” a village name now found in several places but not around Ayutthaya.

<sup>213</sup> พุทเลา, 8 kilometres northwest of Ayutthaya on the main northward waterway; probably the same as Mutthalao, which appears in the chronicles as the site of a naval action during the Burmese attack on Ayutthaya in 1586–87 (Cushman, *Royal Chronicles*, 114).

<sup>214</sup> Head of the left division of the major guard, *sakdina* 2,000 (*Kotmai tra sam duang*, 1:287).

<sup>215</sup> Head of the right division of the major guard, *sakdina* 2,000 (*Kotmai tra sam duang*, 1:286).

## Appendix 1: The palace in the *Testimony of the Inhabitants of the Old Capital*

*Khamhaikan chao krung kao (KCKK)* was printed in 1925 with an introduction by Prince Damrong and notes, inserted into the text within brackets, probably by the translator, and here converted into footnotes marked (T). This excerpt comes from pp. 204–209 of the 1925 edition.

### *The royal palace*

The King of Ayutthaya's palace has a surrounding wall ten cubits high and four cubits thick with a ledge two cubits wide for guards on duty to stand. The walls all around measure ninety-five *sen*<sup>216</sup> with sixteen palace gates, each named differently as follows.

On the northeast: Phrommasukut<sup>217</sup> Gate, Mongkhon Sunthon Gate, Niwetwimon Gate, Thawara Wijit Gate.

On the southeast: Sumon Phisan Gate,<sup>218</sup> Thawaranukun Henjasa Gate, Thawara Jesada Gate, Thakkhinaphirom Gate.

On the northwest:<sup>219</sup> Chatinawa Gate, Mahaphokharat Gate, Udomkhongkha Gate, Moronaphirom Gate.<sup>220</sup>

On the northwest, the gates are also for the city as the palace is sited alongside the city wall on this side: Mahaphaichayon Gate, Thawara-uthok Gate, Victory Flagstaff Gate, and White Elephant Gate. There are also two tunnel gates, upper and lower, known as the Red Gate. There are eight bastions<sup>221</sup> around the palace.<sup>222</sup>

### *Royal residences*

Within the palace, there are three royal halls: the Wiha Somdet Throne Hall to the south, Sanphet Prasat Throne Hall in the center, and Suriya Amarin Throne Hall to the north. In each of these halls, there is a large throne inside, and a small throne in the portico.<sup>223</sup>

The throne halls have beams four fathoms wide and are twenty-five fathoms high. The peak has a face of Brahma, with a gilt five-tiered umbrella above. The

<sup>216</sup> One *sen* equals 40 metres, so 3,800 metres.

<sup>217</sup> Probably Phrommasukhot (T).

<sup>218</sup> Probably Somonphisan (T).

<sup>219</sup> These directions refer to quadrants not sides. This should be southwest.

<sup>220</sup> Probably Kalayaphirom (T).

<sup>221</sup> หมอดินดำ, *mo din dam*, black earth pots, annotated in the original “seems to mean forts.”

<sup>222</sup> The names of some palace gates are missing: Sadaeng-ram Gate, Sado-khro Gate, Phra Phikanesuan Gate, Si Saphthawan Gate, Phonthawan Gate, Nakhonchai Gate (T).

<sup>223</sup> Here there is a list of thrones, followed by an inserted note: “I think the eight thrones cited here are thrones in Burmese palaces inserted in error by the Burmese who composed this text.” This list is omitted here.



roof is covered with tin tiles. While the others have two long wings to west and east, the Suriya Amarin has four wings—to the north and south as well—and no portico or connecting corridor. Inside the throne is placed at the centre.

All of these throne halls have walls of brick pierced by windows surmounted by gilt decorations. The three are of equal height.

Behind these three throne halls to the west, there is a lake with a throne hall named the Banyong Rattanat, twenty fathoms high, with beams only three fathoms wide, nine spires, a face of Brahma, umbrella, and roof also tiled in tin. But there is no throne in this hall.

The palace wall has two levels, outer and inner. There is a roofed cloister running all the way from the south to the landing on the river to the north. To the southeast is the Translation Hall, to the northeast the official sala, and a scripture hall in a lake. There are two elephant stables in the middle courtyard. Outside the gate to the middle courtyard are two further elephant stables, two stables for principal horses, two stores for royal chariots, six stores for cannon, two armouries to store small arms, a store for miscellaneous weaponry such as swords and pikes, the Treasury of the Great Wealth, the Storehouse for Royal Articles, Monastic Storehouse, a store for glassware, crockery, and brassware,<sup>224</sup> a doctor's hall, a store for royal vehicles, and a fruit store.<sup>225</sup>

## Appendix 2: The palace in the Vingboons map and Judea painting

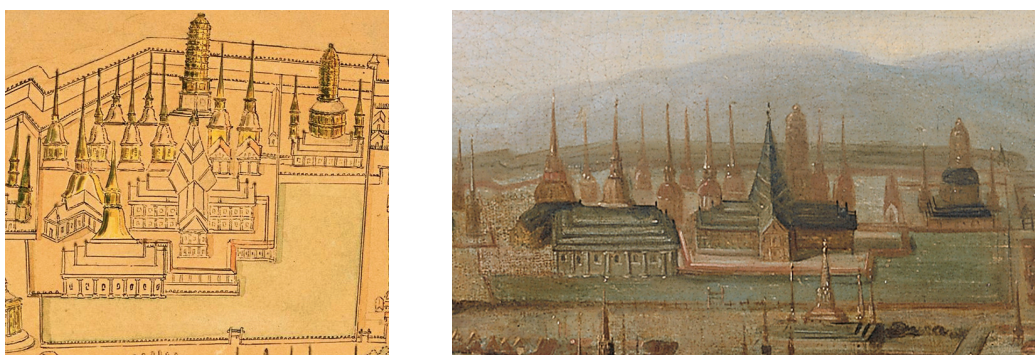


Figure 11. Ayutthaya Grand Palace on Vingboons map (left) and VOC's *Judea* painting (right)

Johannes Vingboons map of Ayutthaya was first published in 1665. The “Judea” painting hung in the offices of the Dutch East India Company. The map and painting show the same information rendered in differing styles. Although the overall layout of the city is badly wrong, individual buildings and small areas seem to be rather

<sup>224</sup> The Phiman-Akat Storehouse (T).

<sup>225</sup> Probably the royal kitchen (T).

accurately depicted, presumably based on sketches made *in situ*, though the styling is strange because the final artist had little idea of Thai architecture. What then is shown of the Grand Palace?

In the left foreground is probably the main *wihan* of Wat Phra Si Sanphet. As Piriya has argued,<sup>226</sup> the three bell stupas were probably not constructed until the early 18th century, and the main *wihan* would have been the most prominent building of the *wat*. In the Vingboons version, it is surmounted by a bell-shaped dome, but on the Judea painting, this is clearly a stupa behind the *wihan*.

To the left immediately behind this *wihan* must be the Banyong Rattana as it has the quatrefoil plan and unusual orientation of this building.

To the right is an audience hall, most likely the Sanphet Mahaprasat. The ground plan, with a short wing in the middle of the south side, matches the remains. It has a three-layered roof, and a tall *monthop*. The plinth remaining today has the bases of four brick pillars just over a metre square which would have supported this roof. The hall is clearly two-storeyed, which was true of the Sanphet Mahaprasat where the king appeared at a window on the level of a second storey.

To the far right is the parade ground. At the end is a building that might be the *sala luk khun nai*, or a cannon store. Behind that is a round building with a *prang*, which is very difficult to explain.

To the left in the rear is a single *prang* and what appear to be several stupas. From the outside, most of the buildings within the palace would have been obscured by the walls and trees. As with the Bangkok Grand Palace viewed today from *sanam luang*, only the roofscape would have been visible. Perhaps an artist on the spot sketched the roofscape, but the final artist interpreted the *prang* and *monthop* as being the same as the stupas found elsewhere in the painting.

## References

- APA Boranaratchathanin, Phraya. *Athibai phaen thi phranakhon Si Ayutthaya* [Description of Ayutthaya]. Bangkok: Ton chabap, 2007 [1929]. A facsimile of the 1929 edition, including extensive commentary by Phraya Boranrat-chathanin and a preface by Prince Damrong, with the addition of a facsimile of *Phumisathan krung Si Ayutthaya* [Geography of Ayutthaya], extra material from the same original document, added in 1939.
- KCKK *Khamhaikan chao krung kao* [Testimony of the inhabitants of the old capital]. Bangkok: Chotmaihet, 2001 [1925].
- KLHW *Khamhaikan khun luang ha wat* [Testimony of the king who entered a wat]. Bangkok: Sukhothai Thammathirat University, 2004.

<sup>226</sup> Piriya, "Revised dating (II)," 11–15.

*KWPS Khamhaikan khun luang wat pradu songtham: ekkasan jak ho luang* [Testimony of the king at Wat Pradu Songtham: documents from the palace]. Edited by Winai Pongsripian. Bangkok: Committee to Edit and Print Thai Historical Documents, Office of the Cabinet, 1991.

Baker, Chris and Pasuk Phongpaichit. 2010. *The Tale of Khun Chang Khun Phaen*. Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books.

Baker, Chris. 2003. "Ayutthaya Rising: From Land or Sea?" *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 34, 1 (February), pp. 41-62.

Baker, Chris. 2011. "Note on the *Testimonies* and the *Description of Ayutthaya*." *Journal of the Siam Society*, 99, pp. 72-80.

Bhawan Ruangsilp. 2007. *Dutch East India Company Merchants at the Court of Ayutthaya: Dutch Perceptions of the Thai Kingdom, c. 1604-1765*. Leiden: Brill.

Borannaratchathanin, Phraya. 2010 [1908]. "Tamnan krung kao" (History of the old city). In *Krung kao lao rueang* (Relating about the old city), edited by Wansiri Dechakup and Pridi Phitphumwithi. Bangkok: Sinlapa Watthanatham.

Branigan, Keith and Colin Merrony. 1999. "The Gardens of the Royal Palace at Ayutthaya." *Journal of the Siam Society* 87, pp. 17-31.

Caron, François and Joost Schouten. 1986. *A True Description of the Mighty Kingdoms of Japan and Siam*. Bangkok: Siam Society.

Charney, Michael W. 2004. *Southeast Asian Warfare, 1300-1900*. Leiden: Brill.

Charnvit Kasetsiri. 1976. *The Rise of Ayudhya: A History of Siam in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press.

Choisy, Abbé de. 1993. *Journal of a Voyage to Siam, 1685-1686*, ed. Michael Smithies. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press.

Choti Kalyanamit. 2005. *Phojananukrom sathapattayakam lae silpa kiao nueng* [Dictionary of architecture and related arts]. Bangkok: Muang Boran.

Coutre, Jacques de. 1990. *Andanzas asiáticas* [Asian adventures], edited by Eddy Stols, B. Teensma, and J. Werberckmoes. *Cronicas de America* 61 series, Historia 16. Madrid: Información y Revistas.

Cushman, Richard D. 2000. *The Royal Chronicles of Ayutthaya*. A synoptic translation by Richard D. Cushman. Edited by David K. Wyatt. Bangkok: Siam Society. [RCA]

Dhiravat na Pombejra. 1993. "Ayutthaya at the End of the Seventeenth Century: Was There a Shift to Isolation?" In: A. S. Reid, ed., *Southeast Asia in the Early Modern Era: Trade, Power and Belief*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

- Dhiravat na Pombejra. 2012. "Catching and Selling Siamese Elephants in the Seventeenth Century: A Preliminary Study." Unpublished paper.
- Forbin, Count Claude de. 1996. *The Siamese Memoirs of Count Claude de Forbin 1685–1688*. Introduced and edited by Michael Smithies. Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books.
- Flood, Chadin (Kanjavit) with E. Thadeus Flood. 1965. *The Dynastic Chronicles Bangkok Era The Fourth Reign B.E. 2394–2411 (A.D. 1851–1868)*, Volume II, Text. Tokyo: Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies
- Gervaise, Nicolas. 1998 [1688]. *The Natural and Political History of the Kingdom of Siam*. Translated by John Villiers. Bangkok: White Lotus.
- Heeck, Gijsbert. 2008. *A Traveller in Siam in the Year 1655: Extracts from the Journal of Gijsbert Heeck*, translated by Barend Jan Terwiel. Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books.
- Kaempfer, Engelbert. 1998. *A Description of the Kingdom of Siam*. Bangkok: Orchid Press [facsimile of 1727 edition].
- Khun chang khun phaen*. 1890. Bangkok: Ratsadoncharoen (Wat Ko).
- Koenig, J. G. 1894. "Journal of a Voyage from India to Siam and Malacca in 1779", *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 26 (January), pp. 59–201.
- Kotmai tra sam duang*. 1994. 5 vols. Bangkok: Khurusapha.
- La Loubère, Simon de. 1793. *A New Historical Relation of the Kingdom of Siam*. Translated by A.P. Gen. London.
- Manguin, Pierre-Yves. 1991. "The Merchant and the King: Political Myths of South-east Asian Coastal Polities", *Indonesia*, 52 (October).
- O'Kane, John, trans. 1972. *The Ship of Sulaiman*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Phlainoi, S. 2006. *Wannakhadi aphithan* [Literature lexicon]. Bangkok: Phim dam.
- Phraison Salarak, Luang. 1916. "Intercourse between Burma and Siam as Recorded in Hmannan Yazawindawgyi, (Part II)", *JSS*, 11, 3 pp. 1–66
- Phraratchaphongsawadan krung si ayutthaya chabap mo bratle* (Dr Bradley's version of the Royal Chronicles of Ayutthaya). 1964. Bangkok: Kosit.
- Pieris, P. E. 1908. *Religious Intercourse Between Ceylon and Siam in the Eighteenth Century: I. An Account of King Kirti Sri's Embassy to Siam in Saka 1672 (1750 A.D.)*. Bangkok: Siam Observer.
- Piriya Krairiksh. 1992. "A Revised Dating of Ayudhya Architecture (II)." *Journal of the Siam Society*, 80, 2, pp. 11–26.
- Prathip Phentako. 2008. "Phraratchawong boran" [The ancient royal palace], in *Boranasathan nai jangwat phranakhon Si Ayutthaya* [Monuments in Ayutthaya Province]. 2 vols. Bangkok: Fine Arts Department and James H. W. Thompson Foundation. Vol 1, pp. 211–237.

- Reynolds, Frank E. and Mani B. Reynolds, trans. and ed. 1982. *Three Worlds According to King Ruang: A Thai Buddhist Cosmology*. Berkeley, University of California Press.
- Smith, George Vinal. 1980 "Princes, Nobles and Traders: Ethnicity and Economic Activity in Seventeenth-century Thailand." In *Royalty and Commoners: Essays in Thai Administrative, Economic and Social History*, edited by Constance M. Wilson, *Contributions to Asian Studies*, 15, pp. 6–14.
- Smithies, Michael, ed. 1997. *The Chevalier de Chaumont and the Abbe de Choisy: Aspects of the Embassy to Siam 1685*. Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books.
- Souneth Phothisane. 1996. "The Nidān Khun Borom: Annotated Translation and Analysis." Ph.D. diss., University of Queensland.
- Stuart-Fox, Martin and Paul Reeve. 2011. "Symbolism in City Planning in Cambodia from Angkor to Phnom Penh" *Journal of the Siam Society*, 99, 105–38.
- Sumet Jumsai. 1997. *Naga: Cultural Origins in Siam and the West Pacific*. Bangkok: Chalermnit Press and DD Books.
- Tachard, Guy. 1981 [1688]. *Voyage to Siam Performed by Six Jesuits Sent by the French King to the Indies and China in the Year 1685*. Bangkok: White Orchid.
- Tamra chang chabap ratchakan thi 1* [Manual of elephants, First Reign edition]. 2002. Committee for Memorial Books and Records for Celebration of the King's Age Equalling that of King Rama I in 2000. Bangkok: Ruansin.
- Terwiel, B. J. 2007. "The Drawings of VOC Chief Surgeon Engelbert Kaempfer and the History of Siam." In: Dhiravat na Pombejra et al. (eds.), *Proceedings of the International Symposium 'Crossroads of Thai and Dutch History' 9-11 September, 2004*, Bangkok: SEAMEO-SPAFA, 233–260.
- Terwiel, B. J. 1989. "Kaempfer and Thai History: The Documents behind the Printed Texts." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1, 64–80.
- Thawatchai Tangsirivanich. 2006. *Krung si ayutthaya nai phaenthi farang* [Ayutthaya in western maps]. Bangkok: Matichon.
- Van Vliet's Siam*, ed. Chris Baker et al. 2005. Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books.
- Winai Pongsripian, ed. 2007. *Phanna phumisathan phrakhon si ayutthaya: ekkasan jak ho luang* [Geographical description of Ayutthaya: Documents from the palace library]. Bangkok: Usakane.
- Winai Pongsripian. 2005. *Kot monthianban chabap chaloemprakiat: phon ngan wijai* [Palace law, royal anniversary edition: research report]. 2 vols. Bangkok: Thailand Research Fund.