

## REVIEWS OF BOOKS.

MAURICE COLLIS, *Siamese White*, 8vo, XIII-322, Faber and Faber, London, (1936).

The title of this book is ambiguous. Two brothers, George and Samuel White, were connected with Siam during the last three decades of the XVIIIth century. George, the elder, was well-known in London after his retirement from Siam as an adversary of The East India Company. He appears to have had more influence both there and with Phaulkon in Siam than Samuel, the hero of this book.

The main source of authority for the book is a couple of long and most interesting Pamphlets at the British Museum entitled: *An historical abstract of Samuel White etc.* and *A true and impartial narrative of Captain Anthony Weltden*. They were printed by order of The East India Company to substantiate its case in the action brought against it in 1689 by Samuel White and continued after his death by his brother George White. They are called by Mr. Collis "The Davenport Papers."

Both documents bear the signature of Francis Davenport who acted as Secretary to Samuel White at Mergui in 1686-87 and then accompanied Weltden and White on their retirement from that place when driven out by the Siamese. The literary style is at times above the average in excellence, at other times it is involved and difficult. The narrative, which concerns the little English colony at Mergui, is startling and dramatic.

In the course of researches on Phaulkon in the summer of 1931 I made an extract at the British Museum of both documents for subsequent use in book I am preparing. I am therefore in a position to state that "Siamese White" contains a true and most lively presentation of the substance of both pamphlets. I have only found one trifling variation from my extracts. In Ch. xxv. Phaulkon's

offer of high office to White is placed after the extermination of the Macassars. In my extract it is given under date 10. August, after the discovery of the conspiracy, but before the fighting with the Macassars which occurred in September 1686.

In order to introduce his subject in its right setting Mr. Collis has drawn upon Dr. John Anderson's *English Intercourse with Siam* (London 1890), and *The Records of the Relations*.. (Bangkok 1916-21). Use has been made of De Choisy, Le Blanc, Lanier, and others but *not* of Launay, or vols. xxvi and xxvii of the JSS.

Adrien Launay's monumental work, *Histoire de la Mission de Siam* (Paris 1920), contains many copies of valuable historical MSS. in the Archives of The Foreign Missions in Rue du Bac, Paris. When working in these Archives, in the autumn of 1931, I found an unpublished MS. in Volume 854. ff. 887-942, which gives an account of Phaulkon's early years prior to 1681, as a corrective to the fulsome accounts by Tachard and the Jesuits. This MS. helps to fill the gap of four years, 1677-81, which exists between documents No. 3. and No. 4 in the third volume of *The Records of the Relations*....

P. 40, also pp. 44-45: Phaulkon is represented as the employé of George White in 1679, also in 1677 as associated with him in obtaining Samuel's appointment as skipper of the Mergui-Coromandel packet-boat. The French MS. states that Phaulkon first came to Siam as a seaman in the Company's ship which conveyed Burnaby from Bantam to Siam in 1678. In 1679 he was still working for Burnaby and George White in the interest of The East India Company in Siam. In 1677 he was not in Siam at all.

On p. 54, Phaulkon is said to have *emerged* in 1680 at the moment when it became apparent to the Siamese that the E. I. Coy was "a broken reed."

According to the French MS. Phaulkon worked as Burnaby's assistant, rendering the Company valuable service when it got into trouble with the Siamese Government for attempting to evade the blockade exercised by the Siamese against their rebellious dependency Singora. Phaulkon is said so to have impressed Burnaby with his success with the Siamese in overcoming that difficulty that Burnaby encouraged him to join the Siamese service, hoping thereby to have a friend at Court. This was in 1680.

On p. 62: "A person called Potts" is said to have succeeded to the charge of the English Factory after Burnaby joined Phaulkon;

also on the same page, that Potts became abusive when refused one of "the magnificent jobs which were being handed out to Englishmen" by Phaulkon.

The sequence of events set out in Vol. 3, Nos 19-26 and No. 45, in *The Records of the Relations* is as follows: Burnaby was relieved of his charge by Gosfright in the autumn of 1681. He accompanied Gosfright to Bantam early in 1682 in order to clear himself of the charges under which he had been relieved. He was back in Siam in 1683 at the end of which year he and Samuel White were appointed to office at Mergui through Phaulkon's influence. On Gosfright's departure from Siam the English Factory was left in the charge of Burnaby's two remaining junior Assistants, Potts and Ivatt. They were superseded by Strangh, who arrived in the autumn of 1683. Strangh closed down the Factory and left Siam early in 1684, taking Potts home with him. Ivatt, who sympathised with Phaulkon, was engaged as Siamese trade Agent on the Coromandel coast about the same time.

These records tell of the enmity that existed between Potts and his chiefs, both Burnaby and his predecessor at the English Factory. They also give details of the wrangle which occurred between Potts and Phaulkon after Burnaby's departure. The incidents assume significance in the light of the French Manuscript which shows both Potts and Phaulkon as Burnaby's Assistants in 1678-79, when the energetic Phaulkon was Burnaby's favourite.

Potts' wrangle with Phaulkon took place in 1682-83, when he and Ivatt on behalf of the English Company were pressing Phaulkon for settlement of a debt which Phaulkon admitted, while at the same time he pressed them on behalf of the Siamese for settlement of the Company's debt to the Treasury. It was not until the end of 1683, after Potts had been replaced by Strangh and Phaulkon's power at Court had increased, that Sam. White and Burnaby received their appointment at Mergui to which presumably the "magnificent jobs" refer.

P. 55, and p. 123: Credit for introducing French traders to Siam is attributed to Phaulkon.

In November 1673 two French Bishops had been received in audience by P'rāḥ Narai. Mgr Pallu reported to Louis XIV. that Siam was then meditating the despatch of an embassy to France and urged Louis to send out merchant-ships to Siam.

The development of Colbert's policy made it desirable for France to enter into trade relations with Siam. P'rah Narai on his side was eager to welcome any Europeans who were opposed to the predominant Dutch. When the Franco-Dutch war was over and the seas were open to French ships, A. Boureau-Deslandes opened the first French Factory in Siam in 1680, and a Siamese embassy sailed for France.

It is obvious from the dates given above that Phaulkon can have had no possible share in these events.

P. 279: "By the end of 1687 Phaulkon was a millionaire."

P. 284: "After the Siamese had found his valuables."

When Phaulkon died, his fortune appears to have consisted of little more than his shares in the French Company amounting to fr. 150,000. The Siamese refused to allow his widow to retire to France, both because they feared she would claim these shares which the Siamese held should be used by the French to liquidate their claims on Siam, also they feared she might smuggle away with her treasure which they had failed to discover after Phaulkon's arrest. In 1692, Kaempfer found the widow penniless in Ayut'ia. Phaulkon lived very lavishly while he was in power, and it is improbable that he left much wealth other than his sumptuous household goods and his foreign investments.

P. 282: "Lady Phaulkon, daughter of a Christian Samurai."

The French MS. says that she was of mixed Japanese and Indian descent. As a widow she wrote under the name Doña Guimar de Pina begging for support to maintain her family. In this letter she makes no claim for herself other than that of widow of the once successful Phaulkon. Had she been of noble birth, the above-mentioned letter to a French Bishop would have been a suitable occasion for stressing the fact. The whining tone of this letter, which is extant, is suggestive of a tiresome rather than a "charming" woman.

P. 280: "Phaulkon, by turning Catholic himself, and suggesting that P'ra Narai should do the same, had led the French on. . . ."

Phaulkon was converted to Catholicism by the well-known Flemish Jesuit Fr. Antoine Thomas, long before he came within the orbit of French politics. So far from suggesting that P'rah Narai should become a Catholic he did his best to persuade the Ambassador de Chaumont to drop this fantastic idea. The Ambassador's own statement is evidence of this.

P. 287: "Phaulkon posted French troops in Bangkok to cover the capital."

The Jesuits, not Phaulkon who was their tool, were responsible for the errors in French policy in Siam in 1687. It was the French who insisted upon occupying Bangkok instead of Singora, which was offered to them by the Siamese. It was Phaulkon who earned their hostility by driving a hard bargain with them on behalf of the Siamese, and only admitting them to Bangkok as mercenaries of Siam. The details of the negotiation will be found in the JSS, vol. xxvii, pt. 2, pp. 183-244.

Dr. Anderson, whom Mr. Collis follows, is largely responsible for these misapprehensions of Phaulkon's relations with France which hinged entirely on the Jesuits and their influence over Louis XIV. after Colbert's death.

Le Blanc, who is quoted for details of Phaulkon's end, came out with the troops in 1687 and left Siam with them in November 1688. He belonged to the second batch of Jesuits from France who came to Siam. He travelled out with Tachard, Phaulkon's spanegyrist, whose apocryphal history of Phaulkon's early days is pilloried in the French manuscript mentioned above.

Le Blanc's party of Jesuits were with the French troops in Bangkok during the summer of 1688 when the Siamese invested them. It is doubtful therefore whether he had any facilities for obtaining first-hand information of the tragedy at Lopburi when Phaulkon's power was broken.

The fact that portions of a pamphlet of his, published at Dijon in 1690, two years before his book, were excised by the censor because of their violently partisan character does not tend to recommend him as an unbiassed or quite reliable authority (v. Cordier, *Bibliotheca Indosinica*, vol. I, col. 960).

These critical notes are offered in the hope that a second edition of "Siamese White" may be found to be justified both by the dramatic interest of its contents and by the clever and artistic manner in which Mr. Collis has presented it.

25th April 1936.

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## PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST IN OTHER JOURNALS

*Journal of the Bengal Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.*

Vol. XXX, Part 1, 1934.

Chattopadhyāy, K. P., and Basu, N. K.: *The Maṇḍa Festival of Chota Nāgpur*; pp. 150-161.

A conspicuous feature of the festival is the performance, in some localities, of dances depicting scenes from the Hindu Epics, in which masks are used for certain characters of the Ramayana.

*Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.*

Vol. XXXII, No. 85, 1932.

Paranivatana, S.: *Religious Intercourse between Ceylon & Siam in the 13-15th Centuries*; pp. 190-213.

A critical summary of relations between Ceylon and this country as recorded in the Pali literature of Siam, especially in the Jinakālamālinī. The *Annual Bibliography of Indian Archaeology* has a notice of this article (Vol. VIII, 1933, p. 98).

*Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.*

Vol. XIII, Part 2, 1935.

Wilkinson, R. J.: *Early Indian Influence in Malaysia*; pp. 1-16.

Braddell, R.: *An Introduction to the Study of Ancient Times in the Malay Peninsula and the Straits of Malacca*; pp. 70-109.

Vol. XIV, Part 1, 1936.

Hanobian, M.: *A Translation of "The Siege and Capture of Malacca from the Portuguese in 1640-1"* (by the Dutch), extracted from the Archives of the Dutch East Indies Company by P. A. Leupe, with a map; pp. 128-429.

*Mitteilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen an der Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Berlin.*

Jahrgang 37, 1ste Abt., 1934.

Trittel, W.: *Die Verfassung des Königreichs Siam vom 10. Dezember 1934*, pp. 169–194.

The Siamese text with a German translation article by article, a short summary of the previous form of Government and a glossary of terms employed. There is no comment of the subject-matter.

*Ostasiatische Zeitschrift.*

5. Heft, 1935.

Strzygowski, J.: *Der Amerasiatische Kunststrom*, mit 3 Tafeln pp. 169–192.

Plumer, J. M.: *Notes on the Chien Yao (Temmoku) kiln-sites*, With 2 plates, pp. 193–4.

The sites are situated in three villages in Northern Fukien.

*Journal asiatique.*

Tome CCXXVI, No. 2, 1935.

Goloubew, V.: *La première ville d'Angkor*; pp. 293–299.

This comes under the heading of "Mélanges", treating of the important theory that Phnom Bakhèng was the former pivot around which an older Angkor was built.

Tome CCXXVII, No. 1, 1936.

Lin Li-kuang: *Punyodaya (Na-T'i), un propagateur du tantrisme en Chine et au Cambodge à l'époque de Hiuan-Tsang*; pp. 83–90.

Consisting of a biography of the priest Punyodaya and descriptions of the three works which he translated from the Sanskrit into Chinese. The last of these was the *Āṭānāṭiya*, a Hinayāna text which is still regularly recited in this country with special ceremonial on new year's day.

*Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême Orient.*

Vol. XXXIV, fasc. 1, 1934.

Gaspardone, E.: *Bibliographie annamite*; pp. 1–174.

Mus, P.: *Barabuḍur. Les origines du stūpa et la transmigration. Essai d'archéologie religieuse comparée*; pp. 175–400.

This is the sixth chapter dealing with the genesis of Mahayanist Buddhology. Further chapters are to follow.

*Journal of the Burma Research Society.*

Vol. XXV, Part 2, 1935.

Phra Phraison Salarak: *Intercourse between Siam and Burma as recorded in the "Royal Autograph Edition" of the History of Siam*; pp. 49-108.

A summary rather than a translation of the Chronicles from the foundation of Ayudhya to the accession of P'rah Māhath'āmmārac'a. Other instalments to follow. The summary is still inaccurate in places, but otherwise readable.

Vol. XXV, Part 3.

*Burial Mounds of the Lawas*; p. 162.

*T'oung Pao.*

Vol. XXXI, livr. 3-5, 1935.

Robert Lingat: *Une lettre de Véret sur la révolution siamoise de 1688*; pp. 330-362.

This letter, found at the Archives de la Seine, in Paris, was written at Pondicherry on the 3rd of March 1689. It relates the events which has occurred in Siam from the date of Céberet's departure to that of the retirement of the French garrison from Bangkok.