

BOOK REVIEWS

Flood, Chadin (Kanjanavanit), translator, *The Dynastic Chronicles, Bangkok Era, The Fourth Reign (B.E. 2394-2411; A.D. 1851-1868)*, The Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies, Tokyo. Volume One: Text, 1965, pages 267; Volume Two: Text, 1966, pages 292.

In a refreshingly strong, straightforward fashion, un hoped for in such things, the official record of King Mongkut's significant reign—commissioned by King Chulalongkorn—is now made available to the West. I admit to having read it through as an entertainment; I will, as, indeed, will all interested Western scholars, gratefully lean upon the wealth of critical information contained in future—information on audiences, ceremonials, royal tours, public works, treaties with foreign countries and the like. *Volume One* covers the first decade of the Fourth Reign; *Volume Two*, the remaining seven years. *Volume Three: Notes*, containing 'footnotes by the Editor of the Thai Text as well as detailed annotations and commentary on the text by the translator', is to appear shortly. Our debt must become incalculable as our appreciation is heightened; for, in truth, a translation cannot be considered apart from the translator.

Wood, W.A.R., *Consul in Paradise*, Souvenir Press Ltd., London & Toronto, 1965, pages 175.

'If you are seeking for a serious review of Siamese history, politics, social customs, religion, folklore, or anything else, you will not find it in the following pages. This book contains, in fact, no information which is likely to be of practical use to anybody.'

Having thus freed himself from the rigor of a scholarly utterance, and, incidentally, reassured the reader, Mr. Wood proceeds to a thoroughly delightful series of short-short stories based, for the most part, upon his experiences. However, as a student of things Siamese for sixty-nine years must, he fails to offer nothing of practical value. Mr. Wood himself admits to a 'personal experience of Siamese Courts and justice [which] greatly exceeds that of any other Consular Officer either before or since ...' and we may presume that his

knowledge of Consular Courts and justice is similarly unrivaled. Certainly the several chapters devoted to the law retain an authoritative presence despite the 'heightening' of events. Again, the several chapters concerned with spirits of different species, clearly evidencing an enviable store of information in this sphere, will undoubtedly be culled by future generations of social scientists. (Here, may I submit the following: Mr. Wood's hesitancy in accepting the so-called 'water elephant'—*chang nam* of northern Thailand or *ye thin* of Burma, described under 'Oddities', as a *bona fide* supernatural being appears well-founded. For while 'a tiny beast about as big as a rat . . . formed exactly like an elephant, trunk, tusks and all' has not yet been reported, a tiny beast about as big as a rabbit—the hyrax—is, strangely enough, the closest living relative of the largest of land animals; bearing immediate affiliations, upon examination, in the shape of the skull and in the two miniature tusks which serve as front teeth.) And who cannot but learn of elephants from one who has 'been for many years in charge of a good number of elephants, and had to do with dozens of others', of beetle fighting from one who has 'kept a stable of five rhinoceros beetles, all tethered to sticks of sugar cane', and of jails from one who has 'spent three years and three months in the lock-up'?

No, there is much of value here. And if you are seeking insight into Siamese history, politics, social customs, religion, folklore, or anything else, you will find Mr. Wood a Consul in Paradise Extraordinaire.

Bisch, Jørgen, *Why Buddha Smiles*, Collins, London, 1964, pages 158. Translator: Gwynne Vevers.

But for the stong philosophical bias, *Why Buddha Smiles* would be a few hours pleasant diversion with Jørgen Bisch in Burma (and Bangkok and Angkor) in search of 'giraffe women'—camera-shy Padaungs whose necks are purposely elongated through encircling copper spirals; fifty-one brilliant colour plates include these wonderous subjects.

Strangely, despite a 'lightening course in Buddhism' (the author, in fact, is initiated into the monkhood; unfortunately, the chronicle

of this episode is remarkably sterile) or, indeed, perhaps because of it, Jørgen is compelled to compare East and West and, unsurprisingly, finds the latter wanting:

... when you hear the Burmese laugh and see their happy smiles—and then compare these with the love of money in the western world, with the competition for social prestige, a radio, a television set and other brain-washing machines, and when you think of the mental pressure brought about by the western way of life, of the surliness, bad nerves, high blood pressure, gastric ulcers and heart disease, you may well wonder whether the Burmese, without even a shirt to their backs, are not happier than we are.

... I was talking about the smiling friendliness I had met everywhere in Burma.

“What are people like in other countries?” ...

“It is difficult to generalise, but when I have asked the way in New York the man I have asked has often rushed away, almost offended that I should delay his *way of living!* In Africa, on the other hand, I have always been able to get an answer, but have several times been put on the wrong road, because a negro would rather give wrong information than acknowledge his ignorance. In Hong Kong I have been driven half-way round the town so that the taxi-meter should clock up the greatest possible figure, and in Cairo I have been asked an exorbitant price for assistance ...”

“And in your own country?” ...

“Oh, yes, in Denmark it is an article of faith that we are the best and the nicest and most helpful people in the whole world, but I am afraid that we could nevertheless learn an awful lot from the Burmese.”

In the West, Christianity seems to be stifled by those very worldly things against which it is always preaching. But in the East, a man's ambitions are not set so much on accumulating wealth but rather on bringing the inner life into a kind of philosophical harmony with the outside world.

... that Buddhism is primarily a philosophy of life is surely one of the reasons why it has never produced fanatics, has never started a religious war and has only sent forth a very small number of missionaries. It would not dream of disseminating the thoughts of Buddha by force and the sword,

and still less of buying 'souls' with knives, beads and brilliantly coloured cottons, as Christian missionaries have done for centuries.

The more I learned about Buddhism the more it seemed to me that there was a place for its ideas in the cynical materialism of the western world, to combat our worst evils: competition for social prestige, the economic rat-race, the political press and all the stress that afflicts the modern world. If Buddhism were introduced everywhere war would be theoretically impossible.

... wherever the Buddhist philosophy prevails you never see the cruelty to animals which is so common in many other parts of the world.

"We under-developed countries are very behindhand in comparison with you," he said.

"Yes, but you have the spiritual values. You have time to enjoy your family, or a sunset, time to be happy and to laugh and smile."

"But we are poor," ...

"No, you are rich," ... "For you can afford to ignore the rat race, In our Western world almost everything is measured in terms of money, and so we have less interest in the spiritual values, nor have we time to devote to them. I believe that *you* are under-developed, and that we have a lot to learn from you.

It is tempting to account for such naivety through analogy with the week-end guest who, being asked to sample the host family's life without involvement, finds it a beautiful union in complete happiness. Indeed, who would fail to find good in such a situation; more particularly when the invitation was advanced, no doubt, because of an obvious compatibility? Or, again, perhaps these simplicities represent recollections of early childhood; remembrances of things past when the world was a better place because we weren't actually in it? Certainly when speaking of Bangkok (to which place Jørgen worked passage when but sixteen) the author is revelling in the good old days when 'the bare feet of ... rickshaw coolies smacked against the road,' when 'girls collected around ... communal water-taps in the streets, and the old petrol-cans, carried on yokes over their shoulders,

sounded like gongs as they clanked against each other' and 'Behind . . . bamboo walls and curtains Siamese families were lighting . . . carbide lamps and sitting around chewing betel . . . men were playing cards and . . . women were embroidering . . . fine silken fabrics'. In truth, much has passed, but in recognizing this we are not obligated to think only well of that which has gone before, and we must not perpetuate a strangely remembered past—a past from whose realities we are safely withdrawn; as safely withdrawn, indeed, as is a week-end guest. But Jørgen Bisch has traveled extensively in Africa, Asia and South America since the age of sixteen; has taught, imported timber, dug for gold, been a tailor's agent and a mechanic as well as a photographer and writer; has fought with an anaconda, climbed an erupting volcano and consorted with head-hunters—in short it is difficult to see how he could not get *involved*; perhaps, then, the illusion I speak of is reality.

Why does Buddha smile?

He is content.

Larry Sternstein



RECENT SIAMESE PUBLICATIONS

346. Sunthorn Bhū: *A Compendium of Farewell Poems* ประชุมนิราศ
สุนทรภู่. P̄raçand Press, Bangkok, 2508, pp. 239 octo.

This is a cremation memento dedicated by Mrs. Nitya Agra-bandhu to her father, Luang Sārakič-pičān, to whom she wrote a touching message.

Although much has been said about the great poet, Bhū, and much of his poetry has been published from time to time, the present *Compendium* is by no means superfluous. It has been well planned and well edited. The volume consists of a biography written by Prince Damroj quite a few years ago but still the authoritative work; a critical examination of the authorship of the *Farewell Poem of P̄raičēn Doṅraṅ*, hitherto considered an integral part of Bhū's repertoire but now thought by Dr. Dhanit Yūpo to have been written by a contemporary, Nai Mī; and, lastly, the bulk of the poet's work consisting of nine *Farewell Poems* which form the main subject of the *Compendium*.

Bhū's popularity as a poet is too well known to need further comment here. His style was simple and graphic; his rhyming was good; and his diction easy and sonant though often broad and lacking in refinement. He has been compared to Shakespeare by way of raising him to the premier place in the Siamese poetical world. It is a bit difficult to agree to such honouring, for there is the author of *Inao*, whom Bhū in fact served as Private Secretary and for whom the poet expressed unreserved devotion and appreciation, and Rama II excelled as much in eloquent word-pictures, was equally the master of presenting patrician as well as plebeian scenes of drama, was unequalled in the portrayal of human sentiment and was sharp in his refined repartee. Modern readers no doubt are unattracted by Rama II's writing because it takes for granted the polygamous society of those old days when it was not illegal nor immoral as now. And yet the very same apostles of morality think nothing of the irregular relationship of the sexes so delighted in by Sunthorn Bhū, who can almost

be said to have anticipated modern moral standards. Both poets wrote excellent verses which were rhythmic and eloquent; both were gifted with a high sense of humour; but Bhū was broad and often lewd even by old standards. To the argument that writers of plebeian birth should be excused for their lack of refinement, it might be said that Bhu's contemporary, Nai Mī, did not have to resort to such broad language to gain poetical stature. The latter's eloquence is admitted by Dhanit Yūṇo himself in his critical comments, and his work, in fact, was good enough to have been believed to be that of Bhū himself.

347. *Rājanūti*, ราชনীติ attributed to the Brahmans Anantañān and Ganāmisaka, in Pāli verse, 2509, pp. 47 octo.

This publication was sponsored by the heirs of the late Lt.-Gen. P'rayā Śrisorarājabhakdi at the cremation of whose remains it was distributed as a memento.

The Brahmans to whom this old work on polity was attributed were said to have written several other unnamed Pāli treatises in verse. The Pāli here does not seem to be older than the legal treatises of King Dhammaçedi of Burma and may have been written about that time.

According to Tōṅ Hoṅsladārom, a *parien* and once owner of the P'račand Press, Bangkok, the text used for the edition under review was found at Wat Rājabūrna, originally transcribed by him from the Khom into Siamese script and published twice, once at an unspecified date and again in 2470. On the later occasion the text was carefully examined and made consonant with those from Ceylon and Burma by Kasem Buñśri, also a *parien* and incidentally a former Speaker of the House of Representatives. The Siamese translation here published is by Mr. Hoṅsladārom.

The *Rājanūti* consists of 153 Pāli stanzas dealing with the duties and ideals of kingship. There is an interesting alliterated stanza (no 24) which runs :

Nonnānunnonānānuno nānānunnananununo
 Nanunannonanunnonā nanenonunanūnana.

The translator's Siamese version may be rendered in English thus :

Overwhelming one of lower worth is not praiseworthy
nor is overwhelming one of lesser prowess a manly act;
Winning over one of stronger prowess is good;
but no feat is it to overwhelm a slave or one weaker.

The stanza reminds one of the oft-quoted Sanskrit alliteration from Bhāravi's *Kirātārjuniya* (15th canto) :

Na nonanunno nunnono nānā nānānanā nanu
Nunno 'nunno nanunneno nānenā nunnanunnaṇut.

Compared to the *Rājasavanī* of Wienṅand, analysed by Finot in his *Littérature laotienne*, also a treatise on polity, the work under review is more limited in scope, for it deals with only the duties and ideals of a king whereas the other touches on general aspects of polity according to old traditions. The Siamese work is attributed to two Brahmins, that from Wienṅand has no allusion to authorship; doubtless both were inspired by earlier works of Indian origin.

348. Rāma I, H.M. King : *The Dance-Drama of Unarulh* มหกรรม เวียงอุดร พงษ์พรหม *Praçand Press, Bangkok, 2508, pp. 266 octo.*

The cremation of the remains of the late Prince Chatramongol Sonakul at Wat Debasirindra last December was the occasion for the publication of the last of the four dance-dramas, thereby forming a phalanx of the dramatic restoration of that sovereign. Of these four classics the chief was undoubtedly the *Rāmakien*, which, in spite of its mediocre rhetoric, is acknowledged to be the standard version of the story and has exerted considerable influence on later literature. It has been published several times, the latest being the edition of the Teachers' Association in four large-sized volumes which was reviewed in JSS XLI, part 1, 1953 (Recent Siamese Publication no. 118). The later edition in the Klanṅwīyā series in 1963, being merely a reproduction, has not been reviewed. King Rāma I has also been accredited with writing a dance-drama of *Imao*, but as it was incomplete and could not rank in point of literary merit with the later version of King Rāma II, it never received much public attention. The King's

third dance-drama, the *Dālaṅ*, was first reviewed in JSS XLV 2 (Recent Siamese Publication no. 186). The story was critically analysed in JSS XLIII, 2, p. 113. With the *Unaruth* the cycle is complete.

In the volume under review there is the usual biography of the deceased to whom his widow, Her Royal Highness Princess Churai-ratna, dedicates the memento. He was educated for the military in Harrow and Sandhurst; and served his King and country up to the age of forty-six when he was retired in 1932 with most of the other members of the Royal Family who were of general's rank. Devoted to his family, he spent the remaining thirty-odd years of his life educating his four children at home as well as in England.

In the introductory section Dr. Dhanit Yūpo, the Director-General of the Fine Arts Department, critically examines the venue and character of the romance. The learned doctor points out that the story, obviously taken out of the *Vishnu Purāna*, at first appeared as the *Aniruddha in chanda* which dates from Ayudhyā times. It formed again, in the first reign of the Bangkok regime, a dance-drama of *Unaruth*. The names of the characters in the two versions differ: the earlier conforming closely to the original Sanskrit; the latter deviating therefrom considerably. The story however does not vary overmuch. In the dance-drama under review the hero's name has been transformed from Aniruddha to Unaruth; the confidante Citralekhā in the *Purāna* becomes Pīcitrālekhā in the poem *Aniruddha* of Ayudhyā and *Śubhalakṣma* in the dance-drama of King Rāma I; King Bāna of Śonitapura in the *Purāna* is King Pān of Ratanā in the dance-drama; but the name of the heroine remains practically unchanged (Ushas-Uśā). The state to which the hero belongs, given in the *Purāna* as Dvārakā, becomes the etymologically impossible Naroṅkā.

The plot of King Rāma I's dance-drama commences with the libertine King Pān of Ratanā assuming the form of Indra the Lord of Heaven and seducing his Queen Suçitrā. The latter discovers the masquerade and is disconsolate. She leaves heaven and descends to earth where she is adopted by a hermit. Meanwhile in the state of Naroṅkā, Vishnu assumes the incarnation of Krishna who had a son

called Kraisut, the Pradyumna of the Indian classics, who has a son named Unaruth.

The plot develops on almost identical lines with the Ayudhyan *Poem of Aniruddha*. Unaruth, on an excursion in the forest, loses his way and falls asleep upon exhaustion under a venerable Banyan tree. The sylvan god of the Banyan, pitying the youth, transports him, under a trance, to the chambers of the beautiful Usā in Ratanā who falls in love with him. The prince, however, is brought back by the god to his tree in the morning. The two lovers are distraught at their sudden separation, and Usā commissions her confidante, Śubhalakshana, to search for her unknown lover. The confidante, whose name in every version suggests that of an artist, succeeds in bringing back a number of drawings of young noblemen from all quarters of the earth and even the heavens. Usā has no difficulty in recognising the likeness of her lover who turns out to be none other than Unaruth of Naronkā. Śubhalakshana now undertakes a further commission to bring him to the princess's chambers. Here our part of the story ends.

According to Dr. Dhanit Yūṓo, the drama must have been written before the *Rāmakiēn* or *Inao* of the same reign. Its identity as a work from the pen of Rāma I is proved by the existence of a *bān phnêk*, a preface which is invariably attached to all of the writings of that sovereign. The preface gives the date of the conclusion as Wednesday the third of the waxing moon of the first month of the year of the goat, having taken the royal author 5 months and 10 days to consummate. This has been calculated to correspond to the 12 December B.E. 2330 (1788 Christian Era).

349. *The Holy Bhagavadgītā* ศรีมฤคคาพิศิตา Sanskrit text in Siamese characters with a Siamese translation by Dr. Sēṅ Manawifūn and an introduction by the Association of Social Sciences, which includes the preface to the first printing by the late Swāmi Satyānanda Puri, Social Sciences Association Press, Bangkok, 2509, pp. 223 octo.

Those responsible for this publication are to be congratulated for undertaking to make accessible to the Siamese public the great

philosophical poem of India. The reviewer, long champion of Oriental studies—Chinese and Indic—as being important to the study of the development of Siamese language and literature, cannot but declare his enthusiasm for such endeavour.

A Siamese translation of the *Bhagavadgītā* was made by Dr. Manawitūn and published as long ago as 1935. It was later touched up by C. Tōnprasroeth in conjunction with the translator and published in part by the Mahāčulalongkorn University. The translation in the present work has been carefully revised and concurred by the Editorial Staff of the Social Sciences Association.

An interesting feature is the inclusion of Swāmi Satyānand Puri's preface to the earlier work which deals, in a scholarly manner with the age of the *Bhagavadgītā*. Western scholars, in Puri's opinion, were inclined to attribute it to the Buddhist period of Indian history, in order to make it derivative from Greek thought and culture—proving their contention by the occurrence of the technical term *nirvāna*. Puri rightly contended that the term was used in the *Upanishads* which pre-dates Buddhism, basing his argument in philosophy, political history and linguistics. In any case, he concluded, Siam and India had a common cultural origin though Siam was only a part heir.

350. *Rūaṅ Somdeč P̄raboromaśoṇ* ^๔ เรืองสมเด็จพระบรมศพ, a memento of His late Serene Highness Momčao Suddhāsīnodaya Devakul, P̄račand Press, Bangkok, B.E. 2509, pp. 41 octo.

To one belonging to the present generation—in fact to any generation—the name of this work does not convey much meaning. The Fine Arts Department describe it on the frontispiece as *Rūaṅ Somdeč P̄raboromaśoṇ*, adding to this the explanation that it is *a record of a royal cremation in the days of the former capital, published with King Chulālongkorn's comments*. Then comes the preface, signed by the Department, from which we learn that the manuscript was first discovered in the archives of the Royal Scribes Department and was published for preservation as an historical document in the periodical *T̄eśābhībāl* (vol X no 60, Ratnakosind Era 129). It was republished five years later with Prince Damroy's introduction in dedication to

Prayā Dvārāvadi, the Honorary Governor of Ayudhyā. It is interesting to note that the Fine Arts Department quotes Prince Damroṅ's introduction in explaining that the original manuscript bore the name *A Record of the Somdeḥ ṖraboromasōṖ* but that scholars were in the habit of calling it shortly *Somdeḥ ṖraboromasōṖ*. For present readers the original title would convey more meaning, since the honorific *somdeḥ* is now confined to personalities. The old Ayudhyā record seems to use *somdeḥ* to mean *exalted*, a term not necessarily confined as now to personalities. Prince Damroṅ explains further that the cremation recorded was that of the remains of Her Royal Highness Kromaluṅ Yodhādeb; a daughter of King Nārāi who married his successor Ṗetrājā, was exalted to the rank of the King's left consort, and bore a son, Trasnoy, of whom the record notes only his reaching maturity. (Sorasakdi, who was known to be a cruel man, used a stratagem to kill off the elder son of his stepfather and many other courtiers but seems to have tolerated this young prince). The Princess, Kromaluṅ Yodhādeb, on becoming a widow, retired to the south bank of the river and, assuming the robes of a nun, built a house near Wat Ṗutthaiswan where she lived and brought Trasnoy to manhood.

Next comes the usual biography of the deceased in whose honour the publication was issued.

Then follows an historical note by King Chulāloṅkorn which sums up the political intrigue and internecine strife which drained considerable Ayudhyan manhood and, thereby, weakened the capacity to govern for a period of 90 years. The note does not seem to form part of His Majesty's commentary on the *Record* under review for it is published apart from the latter and bears the date of November 1902. Whatever its origins it is most useful for an understanding of the successive murders and intrigues which historians are inclined-and quite rightly-to consider as the cause of the fall of Ayudhyā in 1767.

Lastly come the records of two cremations and a detailed commentary on these by King Chulāloṅkorn. The first record bearing the date of the year of the ox, fifth of its decade, is extremely scanty and ends abruptly. King Chulāloṅkorn fixes this as the cremation of King Tāisra, to which history gives the same year. The description

commences with the actual cremation and proceeds to the gathering of the ashes the next morning. The relics were deposited in the Chapel Royal of Wat *Āra Śrī Sarbej*; the ashes were carried down river to be emptied into the stream at Wat *Ātthaiswan*.

The second cremation is described in greater detail. As to ceremonials there is not much that differs from present day practice, though details of the preparation for the cremation are minutely given, even to the fixing of curtains and the placing of decorations within the crematorium. The record refers to the lady as the Exalted (som-deč) Nun (*Āra Rūpčāo*). The King on learning of her death went down river to pay the customary respects to her remains, and had her body sealed in an urn and brought up river in formal procession to be placed in the audience hall of *Čakravart* in the front section of the Royal Palace. The customary ceremonies were presided over personally by His Majesty *Boromakōś*. It is noteworthy that throughout the ceremonies preceding the actual cremation the King, who had not yet assumed residence in the Royal Palace, never stayed the night there even though he had to be on the scene almost at dawn on certain occasions. As the editor of the work under review points out, the civil war had but recently ended in his favour and he was perhaps not yet ready to trust himself to live in the Royal Palace—headquarters or the nephew who had disputed his succession.

The old records, unfortunately incomplete, must have been compiled by some one fully conversant with Court protocol for there is a wealth of detail even in such minor matters as the hanging of curtains and the serving of food to the monastic celebrants. The language of the document is archaic. The King is referred to as *ดั้นเกล้าดั้นพระหม่อม*, a term not often employed nowadays. The death of royalty is called a *nīpḥān*, which term has since become obsolete. Many articles of the regalia and decoration are called the *mahākathin*, possibly from their primary use at a royal *kathin* presentation.

What presents most difficulty is the topography of the Royal Palace. The *Čakravart* Hall has now been fixed by King *Chulāloṅkorn*, Prince *Damroṅ* and *Ārayā Borān*, who was for long Governor-General of the circle of *Ayudhyā*. The *Āratinaṅ Benčaratna*, whose

location has long puzzled historians has been identified with the *Pratinaṅ Suriyāmarind*, the edifice nearest the river front north of the Palace. There is attached to the *Record* an old map still in good condition which has helped in these identifications.

The commentary of King Chulāloṅkorn, in which he was assisted by the two historians above named, is of great aid.

The Fine Arts Department, as editor, has added interesting footnotes. One tells us that some of the monks invited to take food at the crematorium, while eating their rice out of individual bowls, placed the condiments with which the rice was to be eaten in the covers, thereby doing away with the trays in use nowadays.

The work has not been too well edited. The summary, which King Chulāloṅkorn contributed, states that Kromaluṅ Yodhādeb died in the year of the cock 1097, whereas that year was one of the rabbit. The *Record* states that the first cremation took place in the year of the ox, fifth of the decade. This was understood to have been the cremation of King Tāisra. History has Kromaluṅ Yodhādeb dead two years later, this could be none other than the year of the rabbit.

351. *Memento of Momluṅ Sawēṅ Baryoṅkasenā* อนุสรณ์แม่พ่อกรมหลวง แสวง
บรรพตเสนา *Prācānd Press, Bangkok, 2509, pp. 54 sexa.*

This unpretentious little booklet dedicated to his father by Sawoṅ Baryoṅkasenā, a Royal Household attendant, contains a great deal of material well chosen to perpetuate the good name of the line. Besides the usual biography of the deceased, a descendant of the fourth generation from the second reign Prince of the Palace to the Front, there is included no less than three interesting pieces of historical writing. First there is the *Pathomawoṅs*, an account of the antecedents of the ruling family of Čakri, written by King Moṅkut; secondly, an account of the anointing, as Prince of the Palace to the Front, of King Rāma II's brother; and, finally, a broadcast by Momrājawoṅs Devādhirāj Mālākul concerning the ritual to be observed on the occasion of a royal birth.

The first piece is an authoritative account of the ancestor of the Čakri royal family, posthumously created Somdečpra Pathom.

He served the Ayudhyā régime and had four sons and two daughters. The eldest son cooperated closely with the King of Dhonburi in restoring Siamese independence after the Burmese conquest and became King Rāma I. The second son was his elder brother's Prince of the Palace to the Front, being known previously as Čaoprayā Surasih. The two daughters, older than the sons, actively assisted in reorganising the state. A third daughter, by another mother, became known as *The Wat Pō Princess* because she lived near that monastery. There was in addition a young son, by another mother, who was created Kromaluang Čakračesdā by King Rāma I. The narrative goes on to enumerate the next generation in summary fashion.

The next section, an account of the anointing of the second Prince of the Palace to the Front—brother of Rāma II and confidant in statecraft and artistic creations, contains a wealth of information about ceremonial details. The second Prince of the Palace to the Front is, of course, ancestor to the Baryonkasenā family to which the deceased belongs.

The final section consists of a recent broadcast by Momrājawon Devādhirāj Mālākul, formerly Master of Ceremonies of the Court, concerning the ceremonies attendant upon a royal birth.

352. *Klāi Vasi : A Memento of Cremation* อณฺสรมงานศพนายคตเสวตี Aksornsampan Press, Bangkok, 2508, pp. 108 octo.

Now that complete unpublished works are nearing exhaustion, panegyrics contributed by relatives and friends are often published as cremation mementos. Among the close circle of the family such works are undoubtedly well received; but to a wider public they are not so interesting and the memento is often discarded. The publication under review, though having the appearance of a panegyric, contains much that will interest the general reader. To begin with, there is an essay on *Happiness* by the Ven. P̄ra Dharmapidok of Samud Songrām, written in the classic style of *dharma* literature. Then follows an interesting article by Professor Sud Sēnwijian, Head of the Section of Anatomy in the University of Medicine. However, instead of treating an aspect of anatomy or medicine, the author speaks of

Kānānaburi's Importance in Thai History. Starting with incidents from the romance of *Khun Chāy Khun Phên*, he brings us to the Second World War and the famous cemetery of those prisoners of war who worked on the *Death Railway* and the bridge over the River Kwai. The work of the Thai-Danish Expedition in discovering prehistoric remains all over the district is emphasized. That an anatomist has been able to present an account of this expedition convinces us that scientific work, whether to discover facts of prehistory or of natural science, lies along somewhat similar lines.

Another contribution, from Dr. Uay Ketusiñh, Pharmacologist, is *The Supreme Refuge*. This refers, not to any aspect of pharmacology or physiology, but to the philosophy of Buddhism. It is a short and well-worded essay which can be read by all without boredom.

The last article, from a lawyer Dr. Karaiyawijian, Judge of the Chieṃmai Court of Justice, is entitled *The Law and Corruption*. The subject deserves wide attention. The author sees corruption as a contagious disease in underdeveloped countries. The reviewer finds this difficult to digest. In days gone by when our nation was still ignorant of democracy and, for our modern progressives, less 'civilised', was there not less corruption than in the progressive times of today? Corruption was once something of which to be ashamed; is it now shameful to be corrupt?

The editor of the volume under review has got together a variety of interesting material; a collection that rises well above the usual volume of panegyrics and is certainly worthy of study.

353. Scientists of the Department of Mineral Resources: *The Year's Trip to Sukhodaya* เรื่องเที่ยวสุโขทัย Bangkok 2509, ill. w. maps, pp. 150 sexa.

This is the sixteenth in a series in which we have taken constant interest. Formerly called *Books for Children*, now entitled, more suitably, *Books for the People* these books are highly informative though written primarily for popular consumption. Former numbers of the series have been reviewed in JSS XLIX, 1 (A Tour of Wat Pó); L, 1 (Pimai); L, 2 (Saiyok); LII, 1 (Ranoṅ); and LIII, 2 (The Wondrous Island of Gems).

The introduction to this volume on Sukhodaya evidences an imagination worthy of a writer who harbours not only a legitimate pride of birth and nationality but possesses an enthusiasm born of travel and knowledge.

“Standing on the ground of Wat Sapān-hin atop the hill of the Buddha’s footprint, one could not help being struck with the clear view of the old capital to the east. Though Sukhodaya is now clothed with greenery, a vista of the capital as it might have been rises up into the mind’s eye. From the thin smoke penetrating the tree-tops one could imagine a number of *prāṅ* and *chedi* mingled with spires of palaces and monasteries, softened by wafts of music and singing, of bells and gongs from afar; then arises a long procession of pilgrims stretching from the city gates to the hill upon which we stood. By a stretch of imagination the elephant of the King is seen trodding majestically its way surrounded by the cortège of guards and attendants with ladies of the court, all bent on coming to do homage to religion by paying reverence to the memory of our Lord the Buddha, personified by the dignified standing figure called the Atthāros Buddha. The noise of the royal progress comes nearer and nearer . . . and then in a wink disappears altogether, leaving us ordinary mortals standing on a hill-top with its carpet of greenery and random wafts of smoke around the revered figure of the standing Atthāros.

Such indeed is the impermanence of appellation and form, nothing more than the sorrow of selflessness of existence. Similar was the fate of the old capital lying at the foot of our hill. That was Sukhodaya, which shot glamorously into being—only to disappear in a wink, never to be seen again in such an exalted state. Wherefore? The answer is Carelessness, a neglect to appreciate the ways of the world. It was the same with the ancient Thai who entered the Golden Peninsula. The error should have been learned and avoided; but again committed, cost the ruin of its successor, Ayudhyā, the marvel of travellers from the west. One can but hope that the mistake has now been learned.”

The introduction goes on to trace the history of the Thai in our migration southwards in some detail. It concludes:

“We could not remain bondsmen to others; it was not in our nature to submit that way . . .”

Though we would not care to vouch for the accuracy of all the historical data presented, particularly in view of recent research, it is yet impossible not to give credit for the sincere exhortation to our youth.

The tour commences by road from the capital of Bangkok. Just beyond P̄yūhagiri, before crossing the river via the Dejātiwoṅs bridge to Nakon Sawan, the find some years ago of the fossilized bones of a hippopotamus is mentioned. The discovery seems to have led scientists to believe that in the long past these animals might have inhabited south Asia, later disappearing when the climate became too arid for them.

Highly interesting too is the description (pp. 21-23) of the marble industry of Saraburi which produces white marble with variations in grey and pink. The discovery of marble here is attributed to local men about a century ago for the industry was mentioned in the poem of Luāṅ P̄adhanap̄oṅs of the Sukhyāṅga family who accompanied Cāoprayā Mahin on his expedition to the north-east.

Noteworthy also is the observation that our ancestors built their monuments of devotion in the form of a reliquary or *chedi* which was surrounded by *vihāra*'s and cloisters if it happened to be considered important enough. The hall of assembly, or *bōl*, now the most important feature of such edifices, did not come to be considered so until the time of Ayudhyā.

Detailed archeological descriptions are given of the ruins of the old capital of Sukhodaya supplemented, of course, by equally detailed references to metallurgical features. The main sanctuary of the Relics—wat Mahādhātu—is stated to have been built in three successive periods, on the authority of the great architect, His late Royal Highness Prince Naris. In the precincts of the monastery is a stone half buried in the ground which is believed by the people to be the

petrified remains of the Khmer officer sent to arrest the Thai leader, P̄ra Ruaṅ, the former being duly turned to stone by the latter's curse. This stone is a sandstone with dots of felspar, pyrite and bornite and belongs to a type called *Korat stone* which might have existed some 135 to 230 millenia ago.

Names of scientists responsible for the information presented in this book are given as usual and the guide--presumably writer--is again Sombhob Čandraprabhā.

D.

14 July 1966