

SECTION VII

REVIEWS

*Abbé de Choisy:  
Journal of a Voyage to Siam,  
1685–1686*

Translated and Introduced by  
MICHAEL SMITHIES  
Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University  
Press, 1993. 305 pp. Illustrated.

It was indeed an excellent idea to translate Choisy's *Journal du voyage de Siam fait en 1685 et 1686*. This classic and yet lively and attractive account of the first embassy sent by Louis XIV to Siam has hitherto never been translated in its entirety into English, whereas a Japanese translation (by F. Ninomiya) was published just a few years ago (Tokyo, Iwanami Shoten, 1991). The author of these lines can only applaud Mr. Smithies and the Oxford University Press, since he himself is preparing himself a new annotated edition of the original French text (unavailable since its last printing in France in 1930), and a new Choisy biography as well, to be published together in the spring of 1995 by Fayard in Paris.

A very useful Introduction opens the book. The anglophone reader is not supposed to be fully acquainted with François-Timoléon de Choisy (1644–1724), transvestite, member of the Catholic clergy, coadjutant ambassador of Louis XIV to Siam, dean of the French Academy and prolific author of Memoirs and a series of pious and historical essays (among them an eleven-volume *History of the Church*), and, last but not least, of a quite amazing narrative of his transvestite follies. Michael Smithies's outline of Choisy's life and works helps the reader to enter the strange world of Choisy, who sailed to Siam hoping to convince Somdet Phra Narai and his kingdom to enter the fold of the Roman Catholic Church. Mr. Smithies takes it for granted that the episode in which Choisy seduced young girls calling himself Madame de Sancy happened before his adventures under the name Comtesse des Barres. Recent research seems to point the other way. A misprint on page five suggests that the eleven volumes of the *Histoire de l'Eglise* were pub-

lished 1703–1715, whereas the last four volumes were actually printed between 1716 and 1723.

Choisy's quite unusual role in the embassy sent by Louis XIV to Siam, and in the Siamese embassy sent to France by Phra Narai (1685–1686), is reconstructed from his *Journal of a Voyage to Siam* and from his Memoirs. Smithies clearly shows his constant fears of marginalization, since he only went to Siam as a replacement (the journey was long and dangerous, and Ambassador Chaumont could have died). He had no written instructions, just an oral commission to stay in Siam if the king were to become a Christian. Important additional information on aspects of his role in the embassy can be gathered from six other hitherto unknown texts by Choisy; they are to be published in the forthcoming 1995 edition mentioned above.

The 1685 embassy to Siam is very well recorded. Michael Smithies quotes and summarizes the accounts by Chaumont and the Jesuit Fathers Guy Tachard and Joachim Bouvet, and the Memoirs of Forbin. Other material can be gathered from the *Mercure galant's* special "Siamese" issue of July 1686, the Memoirs of Father Bénigne Vachet, and the hard-to-locate travel account of Father Jean-François Gerbillon, only known so far from excerpts published in the eighteenth century. Further research should establish the exact relation between the often verbatim identical records of Tachard, Bouvet and Gerbillon. Their dull and dusty language highlights Choisy's wit and charm.

A narrative of the subsequent La Loubère/Céberet embassy to Siam, and of the "Siamese Revolution" of 1688, concludes Mr. Smithies's historical introduction. Choisy's reader is supplied with a well-written survey of the ill-fated French-Siamese adventure. Choisy did not play a prominent part in it, but it is mainly thanks to his open-minded, lively and intelligent travel diary that the Siamese adventure has not been forgotten by the French, its unhappy outcome notwithstanding.

It was a pleasant experience to read a French text, well known to me, in Michael Smithies's translation. I enjoyed his deep understanding of Choisy's

seventeenth-century French, and the splendid language in which it was rendered. Choisy's French is often funny, and Smithies's light-footed English captures the spirit of the witty original. I cannot resist the pleasure of quoting part of the 15 July entry in both languages:

*Robin est mort, et nous le mangerons.  
C'était un mouton fameux entre les  
moutons par ses grands voyages. Il  
avait fait plusieurs campagnes fort  
heureusement; avait vu les îles de  
l'Amérique, toujours entre les deux  
ponts à la tête des autres qu'il  
endoctrinait sur la tanguie et sur le  
roulis; et après avoir passé la Ligne,  
doublé le cap de Bonne Espérance, à  
cinq cents lieues de Batavie, la sott  
bête s'est laissé tomber et s'est  
incommodé d'une jambe de derrière.  
Robin était fort gras: on a eu peur qu'il  
ne maigrît, on l'a abandonné au  
boucher.*

Robin is dead, and we shall eat him. He was a sheep famous among all others for his long voyages. He had gone through several campaigns very successfully, and seen the American islands, always between the two bridges, at the head of the others to whom he taught how to withstand the pitching and rolling; and after passing the Line, the Cape of Good Hope, and 500 leagues from Batavia, the stupid beast fell, and damaged one of his rear legs. Robin was very fat; it was feared he would get thin, and so he was handed over to the butcher.

A few spots, mostly where seventeenth century marine terminology is involved, might have been translated by others in a slightly different way, but those shades never affect the meaning of the text. This is just a matter of nuance, not of substance. It is not through pursed lips, as it were, that the fine qualities of this Choisy translation deserve to be acknowledged.

The footnotes, completed by a Glossary of People and Places, provide the

information really needed by the reader to understand and enjoy Choisy's *Journal*. Michael Smithies rightly avoided the pompous over-annotating characteristic of so many academic text editions. He never gets in the way of the text itself, which is indeed a most refreshing attitude.

I would like to wish the English edition of Choisy's *Journal du voyage de Siam* a happy journey on both Eastern and Western seas, hoping that the rather exorbitant price of well over a thousand baht at which it is sold, will not prevent the many readers who might enjoy François-Timoléon de Choisy's (and Michael Smithies's) sparkling wit, from purchasing it.

DIRK VAN DER CRUYSSÉ

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*L'Europe et le Siam du XVIe  
au XVIIIe siècle: Apports  
culturels*

MICHEL JACQ-HERGOUALC'H  
Paris: L'Harmattan, 1993. 302 pp.

Not content with having edited the first published version of Céberet in 1992, following on his massive new edition of the original French text of La Loubère in 1987 and the important catalogue *Phra Narai, roi de Siam, et Louis XIV* in 1986, Michel Jacq-Hergoualc'h has now collected most of the French documents relating to proposed and completed buildings in the reign of Narai, and the orders sent by the king for decorating his palaces in Ayudhya and Lopburi, and the presents from the French court to the King of Siam, Phaulkon and the three Siamese ambassadors, and examines these in relation to the influence they might have had on Siamese art and architecture. In one volume, with

seventy-one illustrative "documents" to back the text, one has most of the information concerning Lamare's proposed fortifications, Phaulkon's palace in Lopburi, the religious structures built and envisaged, and the decoration of the audience chamber at Lopburi, among others.

The whole is preceded by a detailed examination of the historical setting leading to the French involvement in Siam in the period 1685-1688. This repeats ground already recently covered by Van der Cruysse's *Louis XIV et le Siam* (1991), but is nonetheless necessary so as to put the detail into context. There appear to be few documentary sources relating to the churches in Ayudhya of the Dominicans, the Augustinians and the Jesuits (the latter dedicated to St. Paul), except that Tachard in his *Second Voyage...* noted the Dominican church was "fort belle", though perhaps some texts remain to be discovered in Portuguese archives. The archaeological excavations on the site of the Portuguese "village" in Ayudhya, while interesting in themselves, were not particularly revealing in respect of the church buildings.

The Dutch presence, from 1601 in Pattani and a little later in Ayudhya, led to the establishment of the depot of "Amsterdam" below Bangkok at Paklat. Jacq-Hergoualc'h notes that the remains of this could still be seen "at the beginning of this century." Within the last few years a Dutch researcher in a lecture at the Siam Society showed photographs of these remains. The Dutch establishment at Ayudhya was on a grander scale, and this book gives a French translation of a text by a Dutch doctor, Gijsbert Heecq, who visited Ayudhya in September 1655, first published in Holland in 1910-11. The size and importance of the Dutch "comptoir," variously translated into English as godown, warehouse, and factory, are evident in this detailed description of the buildings in the compound and the personnel who worked there: these included not only the director and his assistants, but also surgeons, boatmen, cooks, trumpeters, sculptors, carpenters, two blacksmiths and some sailors, among whom were packers, bakers, stable hands and keepers of animals in the compound. The French and English "comptoirs" were not

on such a grand scale, and no detailed description has come down of them.

There is no shortage of documentation relating to the French Missionary seminary and church of St. Joseph in Ayudhya and the missionary school, first at Mahapram, then Ayudhya, then back again at Mahapram, which last survived, in some decrepitude, at least until 1760. Thanks to the intrigues of Tachard, numerous Jesuit buildings in Ayudhya and Lopburi were planned, and some started, but none were finished, because of the "revolution" of 1688. The Jesuit Maldonade, in a letter to Louis XIV's confessor, Père de la Chaise, of 17 December 1687, did not overly worry about the lack of completed buildings, for "the convents of the *talapains* would, after their conversion, serve us as dwellings and churches." As Jacq-Hergoualc'h notes, such talk today seems to us shamelessly insolent.

Several descriptions exist of the interior decoration of the audience hall of the royal palace in Ayudhya, but there appears to be no description of the French ambassadors' residence in Ayudhya, nor that of Phaulkon there. However, Hutchinson made a detailed study in 1934 of Phaulkon's palace in Lopburi and its central chapel, and is quoted extensively here.

Given in this volume is the text, alas not absolutely in entirety, of the list of all the things the king of Siam ordered his ambassadors to have made or buy in France; the original covers eleven folios and is incredibly detailed. Small wonder, as Jacq-Hergoualc'h remarks, that it made the Marquis de Seignelay angry, though the impossibly tall mirrors which caused Vachet's rustication are not here. The list mostly provides a summary at the end of each section of the order: fifty-four hats, some twenty-six pieces of worked gold, 4,302 pieces of crystal, 1,257 pieces of crystal for male elephants, 722 pieces of crystal for female elephants, a further 408 pieces of crystal for elephants, eighty-two divers objects, 35,660 mirrors and glass items, and some ninety-nine items of silk, cloth and embroidery. King Narai was clearly impressed by luxurious novelties.

The fortifications proposed by Lamare and later Vollant des Verquains

(who naturally thought little of those of the former) are covered in detail, with very valuable maps and plans given in the illustrative documents, and the texts of the military architects are quoted extensively in relation to the structures conceived for Ligor (Nakhon Sri Thammaraj), Bourdelun (Phattalung), Singor (Songkhla), Inbourie (Inburi), Mergui, Louvo (Lopburi), Ayudhya and especially Bangkok, seen as the key to the kingdom and which the French were determined to hold. Among the buildings planned there, apart from the fort and walls, were a powder magazine, an arsenal and military quarters.

At the conclusion to this detailed examination of French texts, Jacq-Hergoualç'h asks what influence all this might have had on Siamese arts and crafts. He opines that it was virtually none, except for the bewigged gentlemen in seventeenth-century dress which continued to decorate temple doors, windows and furniture well into the nineteenth century. He notes the much-vaunted European influence on architecture in Narai's reign was in fact Persian, characterized by massive brick structures and load-bearing walls pierced by window openings. Persian influence at court preceded Phaulkon and the French, and was also to be seen, of course, in the court dress adopted by the Siamese and paraded throughout France by Ok Phra Visut Sunthorn (Kosa Pan), Ok Luang Kanlaya Ratchamaitri and Ok Khun Siwisan Wacha.

The publishers have used different typefaces for quoted texts, but often the source or comments, inserted into the quoted material, appear incorrectly as part of the quote (e.g. p. 123 "poursuit Céberet". p. 128 "Notons au passage que..."). W.A.R. Woods on pp. 18 and 19 should be Wood, as it appears correctly on p. 33 and in the bibliography. Proper names in sources deriving from English need to be capitalized (e.g. p. 158 "from the persian", p. 240 "Evolution of thai ornament"). There is an apparent grammatical slip on p. 46 ("où Monsieur Lambert... fut loger"). It is not "suspected" (p. 219) that Tachard pillaged Bouvet's writings for his first book on Siam, but well known, and ably proved by Gatty (1963). To end the nitpicking, it was not "a few Burmese

troops" (p. 7) who sacked Ayudhya in 1767, but three considerable armies which laid siege to the capital from February 1766 to April the following year.

Notwithstanding such minutiae, this work is an important volume delving into relatively unexplored French archival material, which remains a treasure trove for the period. Michel Jacq-Hergoualç'h has rendered sterling service in publishing these texts. Would that he, or someone else, now turn attention to the memoirs of Vachet, lying in the *Missions Etrangères* in Paris, and only ever partly published in a rare 1865 edition; only this covers in entirety the second Siamese mission to France of 1684 by the graceless Pichai Walit and Pichit Maitri.

MICHAEL SMITHIES

*c/o The Siam Society*

### *The Connection Phuket Penang and Adelaide*

IAN MORSON

Bangkok: The Siam Society, 1983.  
125 pp. Illustrated.

#### I

When Francis Light founded Penang as a trading post under English protection in 1786, he had already spent fifteen years in Phuket, which he always considered the better site for such an enterprise.

Light was forty-six years old in 1786, when years of negotiations between his distant employers in the East Asia Company and the sultan of Kedah, a Malay state on the mainland opposite Penang and reaching almost to Phuket, came to fruition.

When Light landed on Penang to establish his post, the island was inhab-

ited by a few Malay fishermen. Six years later a survey put the population in and around Georgetown at close to 10,000, including 1,000 company staff. When Light died two years later at fifty-four, he owned what would later become extremely valuable land in Georgetown, estates and paddy fields elsewhere on the island, a house overlooking the sea—but almost no other worldly goods.

After brief service in the navy, Light rose to become captain of a coastal trading ship in the East India Company. "To some extent these merchant ships and their 'country Captains' could be considered in the dual role of merchants and maritime mercenaries," author Ian Morson writes. "The opposition were professional full-time pirates whose homelands were the multitude of islands in the Celebes and Sulu Seas. They were available on a 'hire a pirate' basis or if business was slack they just went out pirating for the fun of the game."

Elsewhere, Morson writes of the merchant-adventurers: "Captains of coastal traders were never termed as or considered by England as freebooters, pirates, buccaneers, slavers, drug dealers, gun-runners, distributors of the French disease or anything else which was not gentlemanly. What other countries called them was a matter of complete indifference to England."

But the author has acquired considerable affection and respect for Light himself in the course of his researches. He presents Light as a determined, sober man with a part-Siamese "wife" whom he never married and a devoted father of five children—one of whom, William Light, went on to choose the site and draw up the plan for Adelaide, the capital of the new state of South Australia, in 1836.

Morson has skilfully created an account of Light's life from references to him in a wide variety of sources, many in the library of the Siam Society. He has also advanced scholarship in the field by publishing here for the first time extracts from letters written by an English lady visitor to Penang in 1791. The woman, Anna Maria Davis, was accompanying a friend travelling from England to Macau. The two young women spent six days on

Penang. Miss Davis's letters—saved by a descendant in Canada and made available to Morson by Datuk Lim Chong Keat of Penang—provide a fascinating account of the social life of the English on the island, a social life designed to recreate in the tropics exactly the dinners, balls and other entertainments of English or Scottish country living.

Morson's text is dotted with the kind of observations earned by long government, service and retirement residence in Malaya/Malaysia and Thailand. *The Connection Phuket Penang and Adelaide* is informative and entertaining, and a slim but valuable addition to the library of historical works about this part of the world.

DAVID BUTLER

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## II

The title, without any commas, is followed by a sub-title filling a page: "A Short Account of Francis Light 18th Century Merchant Adventurer Resident of Phuket and Founder of Penang also His son, William, Founder of Adelaide." The capitalization and punctuation are as in the original, and set the standard for the rest of the text.

The author has chosen to eschew footnotes as distractions, but he does not source his quotes, which can be irritating: who, for example, said Lord Cornwallis was "ignobly vain and impotently great"? Whose text is being quoted when the Portuguese settlement in Phuket at Tha Rua is mentioned?

Mr. Morson delves into the private lives of Light and his common-law wife Martinha Rozells, of Portuguese-Siamese extraction, and their five children. The book provides some new material on Light's stay in Phuket from 1771-1786

and his trading from there, but the story of his founding of Penang is well known. It is a coincidence that one of his sons laid out Adelaide, and this part of the story fills only seven pages.

There are several inaccuracies. The long reign of George III (1760-1820) was not "often termed" the Regency period, but only the last nine years, and it is untrue to say "The various races of the East did not speak any European languages;" by the end of the sixteenth century Portuguese was established as the lingua franca for communication with Westerners, which is why Choisy learned the language on his way to Siam in 1685 and why Portuguese interpreters were provided for Crawford to the Siamese court in 1824. There are several other minor slips, but two references to the "Prime Minister of South Siam" in 1792 are intriguing, for at the time there was no prime minister for the entire country.

The author is anxious to remind us we live in a different age: TV, video games, snooker, Ajinomoto, vitamin-enriched food, wallets stuffed with credit cards, the CIA, the KGB and eighteen others all make their gratuitous appearance. The style employed parallels these infelicities: frigates "blast the hell out of anyone," Light enjoys himself "with the local talent" and conducts a "practical study of the Karma Sutra," the East India Company is referred to as Big Brother (and its Court of Directors as Head Office). Mr. Morson finds Light's style "peculiar." It is correctly formal, as befits his age. Once Penang was founded, everyone, the author maintains, must have said "the Georgian version of 'Now that we're here what the heck do we do next?'" The Georgian version would at least have been elegant. Sometimes the metaphors get hopelessly mixed, as with "once the hook had been baited Light jumped in with both feet."

Amidst a treasure trove of clichés, there are other signs of a need for a firmer editorial hand. Date forms vary from page to page; ships' names are sometimes with inverted commas and sometimes without, but never, as they should be, in italics; metric measures are found alongside imperial forms; Warren Hastings's impeachment and acquittal ap-

pear twice; and so on. The illustrations also need attention: "Phuket Island. Eighteenth Century" is in fact an aerial computer-enhanced photograph; the inside cover maps have been taken, without acknowledgment, from D. G. E. Hall, but without his essential qualifier that the places shown illustrate early contacts between Southeast Asia, India and China.

This is not the sort of book that normally comes out of the Siam Society, perhaps deliberately. Whether it will enhance the Society's reputation for scholarship remains to be seen. As reading on a "steamy tropical beach" it might have its advantages, except that the pages fall out of their binding as one turns them.

MICHAEL SMITHIES

*c/o The Siam Society*

### *Forest Monks and the Nation State: An Anthropological and Historical Study In Northeastern Thailand*

J. D. TAYLOR

Singapore: ISEAS, 1993. 377 pp.

J. D. Taylor, with the publication of the book under review, can proudly claim charter membership in the small but illustrious cadre of non-Buddhist foreign scholars who are on the intellectual cutting edge of Thai Buddhist studies. Building on the previous writings of such respected academicians as Tambiah, O'Connor, Terwiel and Keyes, among others, and drawing on a vast array of Thai sources, the author provides us with an insightful analysis of the forest monk tradition in Thailand. The non-academic reader may be a bit

awed and cowed by the specialized jargon of academia as the author uses such terminology as impartable affiliative structures; sodality; preteritic; precisian; climacteric; orthopraxy; stereobate; thaumaturgical elements, etc. The lay reader may also feel he is enmeshed in a web of arcane minutiae as the author delineates forest monk lineages and sub-lineages, pupillary networks, temple affiliation, personal histories, ecclesiastic ranks, elite patronage networks, amulet and medallion classifications, etc. However, all of the above details are simply grist for the academic mill of the author as he examines the forest monk tradition in all its manifold political, social and religious dimensions.

Understandably, the author focuses on the early twentieth century exemplar of the forest monk tradition, [Acharn] Man, and those first, second and third generation forest monks in his lineage. However, such a focus, more importantly, serves as a point of departure for a critical analysis of relationships, ties and interactions central to an understanding of historical, cultural and political processes as they were played out in Thailand in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Thus, the author astutely draws the reader's attention to the conflict and tensions inherent in the centralized bureaucratic state's relationship with the Thai forest monk community; to a sometimes symbiotic, sometimes antagonistic, relationship between the establishment Thammayut leadership in the capital and urban centers and the forest monk entourage on the outer fringes of society; to the mutual wariness and suspicion among the different and largely exclusive communities of forest-dwelling meditation monks, urban scholar and administrative monks, and the community-based and focused rural Sangha; to internal Sangha sectarian rivalries; and to the uncomfortable pressures inherent in the elite lay patronage of forest monks.

The above sets of interactive ties, alliances and confrontations form a constant refrain throughout the author's narrative. It is the ebb and flow of these relationships and the author's informed analysis of the challenge and response, persistence and accommodation/inte-

gration, and of coping mechanisms for the resolution of conflicts and tensions that provide the intellectual excitement and adventure in this scholarly treatise.

The author, with much insight, provides us with a useful paradigm to chart the birth and decay of the forest monk tradition. He outlines four stages: the peripatetic phase wherein small bands of quasi-domiciled forest ascetics may be found wandering to and from remote meditation sites; the settlement phase wherein *samnaksong*, or unregistered and unsanctified monk dwellings, are established usually on land donated by wealthy lay patrons; the climacteric stage wherein the *samnak* is institutionalized and transformed into a sanctified, officially registered monastery; and lastly, the terminal stage wherein the monastery is no longer the residence for practicing ascetic meditation adepts but has been co-opted by institutionalized monks either fulfilling administrative duties or engaged in religious scholarship and teaching. At this later stage, a *chedi* or burial monument in honor of a former resident ascetic meditation master may be built and become an object of cult worship and veneration.

In the initial stages of the formation of [Acharn] Man's lineage and pupillary networks, Man and his forest monk disciples, sometimes wittingly and sometimes not, played the role of pioneer point men for expansion into the hinterlands of the centralized state and Sangha. The forest monks were pressed by the Thammayut leadership in the capital and provincial centers to advance the cause of unified, orthodox, normative standards for doctrine, discipline and ritual. The forest monks became one more tool to subdue, subjugate and control expressions of regional identity and indigenous traditions; in effect, to domesticate the frontier and any uncontrolled idiosyncratic behavior. The forest monks were generally disdainful of, and arrogant and derogatory towards, a perceived impure rural Sangha and rural animistic practices. The forest monks failed to appreciate the valuable and constructive secular community leadership role played by the rural Sangha in addition to their religious role just as

they failed to appreciate and understand how animistic beliefs and practices functioned to attune the villagers to nature and to preserve social harmony and village solidarity and stability.

In a turn of the wheel of the Dharma, one might view it as karmic retribution that the forest monks were themselves ultimately domesticated and routinized, in Taylor's felicitous phrasing, as they were inexorably weaned away from their reclusive separatist existence and their space and isolation compromised and violated. Their forest habitat has fast disappeared subject to invasive pressures from illegal logging and a resource-hungry rural population as well as government agencies. Many of the forest monks themselves have succumbed, at the same time, to the lure of rank and titles; to patronage by a fervid business, political and bureaucratic elite anxious to legitimize their wealth, power or position; to the demands of the merit-making public at large desirous of involving the forest monks in communal religious rituals and in sanctifying and distributing amulets and medallions; and to institutionalization as their informal, unsanctified dwellings ultimately are transferred into official sanctified monasteries. There are, of course, exceptions, but it cannot be denied that it is increasingly difficult to maintain one's seclusion and identity and persevere in the ascetic's lonely and isolated quest for enlightenment and liberation.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to do justice to the wealth of material presented and to the careful, insightful and intellectually provocative analysis of J. D. Taylor in the book under review. Suffice it to say that anyone seriously interested in critical study and analysis of the Thai Sangha and, specifically, the forest monk tradition will now be in J. D. Taylor's meritorious debt with the publication of his *Forest Monks and the Nation State*. This book should be compulsory reading material for both scholars as well as the academically uninitiated in their respective quests for better understanding of the Thai body politic and its religious component.

ISEAS is to be commended for its continued support of academic study of religious forces in Southeast Asia. While

such English-language scholarship has, to date, has been largely the province of Westerners, it is to be hoped that indigent academicians in this field of study will soon make their voices heard within the international academic community.

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*Inventory of Monuments of  
Pagan. Volume One,  
Monuments 1–255*

PIERRE PICHARD

Gartmore, Shropshire, Scotland:  
Kiscadale (Ltd.); and Paris: UNESCO,  
1992. x + 409 pp.

Although several books have been written about Pagan, none has recorded any more than a small fraction of the over 22,000 surviving monuments in that unique complex and given a true picture of the wealth of its architectural remains. All the emphasis has been on the major monuments built during the Pagan Kingdom between the eleventh and latter part of the thirteenth century A. D. The magisterial three-volume *Old Burma—Early Pagan* by G. H. Luce is the most comprehensive work previously published, but it deals only with the most significant monuments of the first half of the Pagan period and does not include the numerous monuments of that period after A. D. 1165, while Paul Strachan's recent *Pagan: Art and Architecture of Old Burma* describes only seventy-five monuments, all of the Pagan period. Long awaited has been a truly comprehensive study which includes not only the major monuments of the Pagan period but the lesser ones as well, and in particular the monuments built in the post-Pagan Kingdom period from the late thirteenth to the twentieth century. Only thereby would one realize

how truly great the Pagan site is, what a richness of varying art styles is encompassed, and how devoted the people of Myanmar have been over the centuries both to Buddhism and the concept of Pagan as a Buddhist center. The inclusion of plans for the later monuments also is very significant for art scholars of Southeast Asia, particular those studying the art of nearby Thailand. Their thorough documentation will be of tremendous assistance to scholars here in determining dating for related designs of Thai architecture, mural paintings, Buddha images and Footprints of the Buddha.

The present book responds to these various needs with a text in English, French and Burmese. The scope of the work begun here can be appreciated when one realizes that the study when completed will comprise nine volumes.

Fortunately Dr. Pichard and his team decided to continue with the official lists of monuments by starting with No. 1 on those lists, the Shwe-zigon Pagoda. By their doing so Volume One concentrates on the area in and around Nyaung U, where building activity has been almost continuous from the eleventh century A. D. to the present. A good proportion of the monuments inventoried, especially the numerous small temples and stupas, date from late periods, i.e. the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries A. D. and sometimes the nineteenth century or beginning of the twentieth century. Thus Dr. Pichard has provided in Volume One the first documentation on the architecture of the later centuries. The documentation of the Shwe-zigon Pagoda complex alone provides a wealth of new information, since the walled compound of that well-known late eleventh century A. D. pagoda includes monuments built in the succeeding twelfth century and in the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries.

Aside from the above, the inventory of the monuments of Pagan is especially important since the site is particularly prone to earthquakes. The descriptions of the monuments will be invaluable should restoration after seismic damage be necessary.

The inventory for each monument gives its name and number (including

the "old list" number) and illustrates it with several photographs showing its overall appearance, often from more than one angle, and including major external and internal details. The location is stated along with the geographical coordinates. The inventory then presents (1) a general description of the monument, (2) a drawing of its plan, (3) a description of its upper parts, (4) the materials from which it was constructed, (5) its present condition, (6) the images, (7) the decorations on the exterior and interior, (8) epigraphy where applicable, (9) references and (10) an estimate of the construction period unless documented by epigraphy. From this information many fundamental questions may be answered, such as: How many monuments of one type are there, and what are their locations? Are these contemporary or do the details indicate an evolution in architectural and decorative elements? How many monuments have a particular style of mural painting or other decorative element and where are they located? Thus the Inventory, as Pichard writes, "will help to define a precise typology of the buildings, clarify their history and evaluation and provide a basis for a systematic survey of their decoration." In addition he points out that it will provide for an objective assessment of their relative importance, essential in determining conservation priorities.

One of the great assets of this work apart from the inventory of monuments itself is its exhaustive definition in a preliminary section of architectural and decorative conventions and terminology applicable to Pagan monuments. All these are meticulously illustrated. In only one case would this reviewer disagree with the definition: the murals depicting the Buddha preaching in Tavatimsa Heaven on top of Mt. Meru and descending from Tavatimsa would have been better titled "the Buddha's preaching in and descent from Tavatimsa" rather than "Section of Mt. Meru."

The volume includes not only an overall map of Pagan but large-scale maps of the area inventoried in the book as well. Even the end papers present a contour map of the entire Pagan area. Also included at the back is a tabular index for

quick reference to the sites, keyed to period, construction type, size, and the like.

Some may not agree with all the estimated dates. This reviewer, for example, considers the murals in the Kyanzittha-U Min to date from the eleventh century A. D. Be that as it may, Volume One represents superb research and production, and the whole world will be greatly enriched not only by it but by the eight succeeding volumes.

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***Dontri Chao Sayam—  
Traditional Folk Music  
of Siam***

(consisting of six compact disks, a set of five plus a separate sampler)

Bangkok: Produced by Saeng Arun Arts Centre, issued in 1993, code SAACI CD-001 to -006. Distributed by Thaicast Company Ltd.

The admirable aims of the producers of this first series of Siamese music on CDs are stated in the introduction to the accompanying text as follows:

The Traditional Music of Siam project was initiated by musicologist Sugree Charoensook of Mahidol University, who firmly believes that the traditional music of the Thai people expresses a unique indigenous talent.

Unfortunately, there has been no systematic recording to capture the creative process behind such music. Knowledge of the art is passed along on a person-to-person basis.

Because of social changes, the circle of teachers and students is shrinking with every

generation. With few persons or resources to preserve the artistic processes, there is the danger that once a master passes away, his skills may be lost forever.

In the urbanized and consumeristic Thailand of today, folk music lacks the socioeconomic strength to compete with the siren songs of extensively and expensively promoted pop music.

The Saeng-Arun Arts Centre, as a private cultural organisation, had had the honour of bringing these noted artists, many of them the best in the fields, to Bangkok for live performances and studio recording so that their life-long work could be more widely appreciated.

To preserve Thailand's indigenous musical treasures is not the only point of this project, for we expect this set of compact discs to speak for the preservation of all native crafts. We hope that others will be inspired to appreciate and promote the true arts of the people.

In addition to preserving the best of traditional Siamese music for posterity with the latest technology, the producers of these volumes have done a great service to ethnomusicologists and lovers of Southeast Asian music as well as for others for whom Siamese music was difficult of access, both because of its inherent "problems" for non-Siamese listeners, and because a broad spectrum of performances was simply unavailable. This collection is comprehensive (or very nearly) permitting those who wish to listen to or to discuss Siamese music to pick the performance they went with their finger-tips. Until the issue of these epoch-making CDs, the potential listener had to rely on some random and poorly produced recordings or to hire performers, in many cases impossible when the performer was aged and located in a remote area. Thanks to these CDs we can now listen to some of the masters in our air-conditioned sitting rooms, or air them in the classroom and lecture-hall.

That said, this collection is a first attempt and it contains some lumps.

Volume 1, containing the music of the North (Lān Nā), gives comprehensive coverage of the ballad tradition, which is important as it is probably dying out. However, a Western listener like the reviewer regrets the absence of the majestic northern processional music with its shawm, long-drums and gongs. This is admittedly a sturdy tradition still frequently performed, but who can say how soon "progress" will murder it? It should be recorded. And where is the haunting and dying music of the Phin Pia?

Volume 2, containing the music of the South, gives bands 1-17 to the music of the shadow play, the Nora dance drama, and funereal music, all stately and extremely archaic, performed on shawm, drums, tala and a pair of gongs. (The sound of the gongs seems to have been lost in these recordings.) This southern music seems to preserve a very early Southeast Asian tradition, influenced (perhaps) by Indian drum rhythms. In striking contrast bands 18-20 contain the Malay Rong-ngeng music of the extreme South with its fiddles and mandolins playing the sweet melodies of the Portuguese and Dutch shipmen of several centuries ago, with an Arabic accent in both scales and rhythms. Here Prof. Sukree has chosen masterfully, bringing out the extreme archaism of the Thai Buddhist tradition in contrast to Malay Islamic innovation.

Volume 3, Ceremonial Music, is perhaps the most controversial disk as almost all Siamese traditional music is "ceremonial" to some extent, and how does one separate "folk" from "classical"?

The sacred tunes for the Piphat (like Maha Roek) are well represented as are the forms of music for royal ceremonies, but where are the chants of the Court Brahmins? The latter is certainly a dying tradition. The music for Siamese boxing receives a nod but it deserves more, as uncivilized promoters are emphasizing blood and gambling at the expense of the traditional dance of worship (Guru Puja) and the music that once sent Siamese armies into battle.

Volume 4, Music of the Central Region, is a difficult (but important) disk

for western listeners as the music of the Central Region is not tuneful and rhythmic like that of the North, Northeast and South. A striking case in point is band 2, *Hey Ruea*, a rowing song for the oarsmen of the royal barge which sounds distinctly "wrong". Suchit Wongthes tells me that this was an arrangement for a stage performance and had nothing to do with the stirring songs of the royal oarsmen. I certainly hope so.

A serious omission from this disk is the *Mangala* drumming from Sukhothai Province, a marvelous preservation of the Indian *Pancaturiyanga* tradition.

This disk also contains the music of a Mon orchestra that might better have been included in Disk 3 (Ceremonial Music), for contrast with the Thai *Piphat*, as the Mon music is certainly ceremonial in character.

Volume 5, *Music of the Northeast*, includes both Lao and Khmer performances that are all easy on the western ear.

These recordings are also extremely important because the Northeastern musical tradition is very much alive and seems to be changing fast. One does not want to arrest that creative change, but it is well that good recordings have been made before too much of the past is lost.

Volume 6, the *Sampler* (a separate volume), is something that Thai listeners do not need as they know the overall content of their musical tradition. If this disk is intended for an international audience it might have been more carefully thought out to include those performances that are easy on foreign ears and to exclude the more "difficult" items.

The texts for all six disks are in general good, but need to be rethought and rewritten. Each should begin with sketches of the instruments together with brief descriptions. A standard system of transliteration should be adhered to, and someone should have noted that the Thai "Pi" is not a flute but a shawm.

The producers of this series of CDs deserve praise and sympathy. If they made a mistake it was in trying to serve two irreconcilable purposes:

1. To preserve dying musical traditions for future generations of Siamese.
2. To introduce traditional Siamese music to an international audience.

As a first try this was admirable. Next time these scholars might achieve more if the core set of disks were designed for local consumption and preservation as well as for musicologists worldwide. In contrast the *Sampler* could be of a more relaxed nature, comprising performances that appeal to less educated ears, like mine.

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