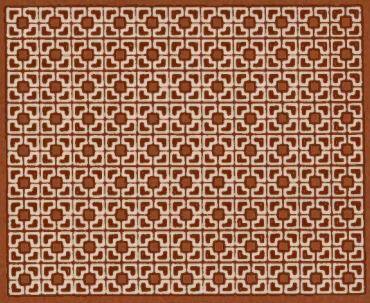
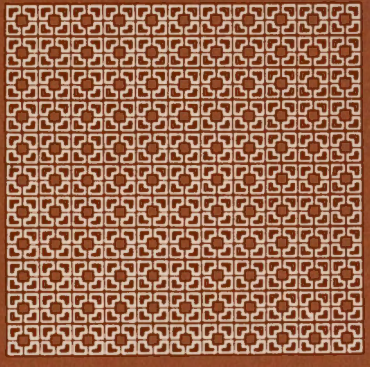


THE KHMÈR TEMPLE OF PRÁḶ VIHĀR



CHARLES NELSON SPINKS

DR CHARLES NELSON SPINKS

Counsellor of the Embassy of the United States of America, was born in California in 1906. He graduated from Stanford University, where he received his Ph. D in 1936. He served with the Reconstruction Finance Corporation in Washington, D.C., and taught history at Stanford University before going to Tōkyō as a Professor of English in 1936. Dr Spinks resided in Japan until May 1941, and, in addition to teaching, studied the Japanese language and pursued research on various aspects of Japanese history. He also edited a number of publications and from 1938 to 1941 was editor of *Japan News-Week*, an English-language newspaper. Dr Spinks served in the United States Navy, 1942-6, as Lieutenant-Commander. He was a division chief of the United States Strategic Bombing Survey which visited Japan after the war and was the principal contributor to one of the Survey's reports, *The Japanese Wartime Standard of Living and Utilization of Manpower*, which was published in 1947. In 1946 Dr Spinks became Director of Research and Analysis in the Headquarters of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, Tōkyō, and served in this capacity until he entered the Foreign Service in 1948, when he was assigned to the Office of the United States Political Adviser and subsequently to the United States Embassy at Tōkyō. In 1952 Dr Spinks was transferred to the United States Embassy at Bangkok as Counsellor. Dr Spinks served in Thailand until 1956 when he was transferred to Djakarta as Counsellor. Dr Spinks was assigned to the United States Embassy at Canberra in May 1957. Dr Spinks has travelled extensively in the Far East, including Korea, Manchuria, China and Inner Mongolia. He has also made extensive trips through Thailand, Burma, Indonesia and other parts of Southeast Asia. In addition to newspaper work, Dr Spinks has contributed articles on Southeast Asian history and culture to various learned society journals. His special fields of study have been Thai ceramics and the archaeology of the ancient Khmèr kingdoms.

THE KHMÈR TEMPLE OF PRÁḤ VIHÃR

CHARLES NELSON SPINKS

The twenty-first

George Ernest Morrison

lecture in ethnology

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THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

CANBERRA

THE KHMÈR TEMPLE OF PRÁḤ VIHÃR

It is a twofold honour to give the 1959 Morrison Lecture, since it is a privilege to be invited to speak before this gathering at the Australian National University and at the same time to have the added honour which this occasion affords to pay tribute to the memory of a great Australian.

There is something immeasurably inspiring about the life of George Ernest Morrison. His remarkable career was an adventurous as well as successful pursuit of friendship and understanding, which carried him to strange corners of the world. He often journeyed the hard way, covering much of Asia on foot and living in intimate contact with its peoples. In thus winning their friendship and trust, he in turn gave to his own countrymen a deeper understanding of these peoples, and it is perhaps not too much to say that he thereby contributed to the solid foundation upon which Australia has built its friendly relations with Asia today.

We associate Dr Morrison principally with China, because that was the country of Asia he knew best and where he resided for so many years. It is with some feeling of hesitancy, therefore, that I propose to depart from the usual pattern of the Morrison Lectures, which have heretofore been so directly concerned with China, and discuss a subject related to Khmèr culture. In doing so, however, I believe that I shall

not be violating an established tradition, for Dr Morrison was also closely identified with Southeast Asia. He travelled extensively in this part of the world and for a time resided in Siam, in consequence of which he developed an attachment for the peoples of Southeast Asia which was probably as deep as his attachment for the peoples of China. Moreover, in recounting a chapter from the history of the Khmèr, it is necessary to maintain historical links with China, for so much of our knowledge of
2 the ancient Khmèr kingdoms comes from Chinese sources.

And so, in describing to you one of the fabulous Khmèr temples, I trust that this seeming departure from the customary pattern of this series will nevertheless provide an equally appropriate tribute to the memory of Dr Morrison.

The twelfth century Khmèr temple of Práḥ Vihãr is one of the archaeological wonders of Southeast Asia,[1] which I am sure, had Dr Morrison seen it, would have excited his interest in the history of the Khmèr as fully as it has aroused my own. Due to its remote and hitherto almost inaccessible location, the temple of Práḥ Vihãr has been largely neglected by scholars and travellers in favour of the more familiar archaeological monuments of Southeast Asia. But in the grandeur of its wild setting and in the magnitude of its plan, Práḥ Vihãr may be ranked with the *chaṇḍi* Barabuḍur of Java, or even with that architectural triumph of the Khmèr, the incomparable Aṅkor Vàt.

The temple of Práḥ Vihãr stands on a rocky spur of the Daṅ Rêk mountains which extend westward from the Mékong River for about two hundred miles. This spur juts out from the mountain range like an abrupt promontory, to drop off a sheer 1,500 feet to the plains of Cambodia. The sanctuary court of the great temple stands at the very edge of this awesome precipice. No other Khmèr monument, and probably no other edifice in the world, has such a breath-taking site.

Práḥ Vihãr lies approximately one hundred and seventy-five miles airline to the northeast of Aṅkor Vàt and about one hundred and eighty-five miles northwest of Phnoṃ Péñ. Access to Práḥ Vihãr from the south

1) The term *Práḥ Vihãr* (*Preah Vihear*) literally means Sacred Monastery. The site of the temple is known as Phnoṃ Práḥ Vihãr, Mountain of the Sacred Monastery. While the word *praḥ* (*braḥ*) appears to be derived from the Sanskrit *vara* (meaning choice, beautiful, excellent), it has more the meaning of exalted or sacred. For example, the deity of a Khmèr village is called *Preah sruk*, the Lord Buddha, *Preah Put*, etc. See François Martini's stimulating study, 'De la signification de "Ba" et "Me" affixées aux noms de monuments Khmèr' in *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient* (hereafter cited as *BEFEO*), XLIV, 208-9. In Thai *praḥ* becomes *phra*; the Sanskrit *vihãra* (monastery) retains this spelling but is pronounced 'vihãn'. The Thai, however, use the word *khao* rather than *phnoṃ* (Thai *phanoṃ*) to designate the site and thus call it Khao Phra Vihãra.

is extremely difficult, however, because of the almost monolithic wall formed by the Dañ Rêk mountains. There are a number of passes through this formidable barrier, but the roads are jungle tracks which permit only the movement of bullock carts and pedestrians. The pass called Darn Ratao, just to the east of Práḥ Vihãr, is the defile used to reach the temple from the Cambodia lowlands. A more direct, if frightening, route for the pilgrim on foot was by a crude stairway cut in the side of the cliff on its eastern face.

From the north, Práḥ Vihãr is more accessible, especially since the recent improvement of the jungle road from the Thai provincial capital of Srisakes on the Ubol rail line, three hundred and twenty miles from Bangkok. From Srisakes to Práḥ Vihãr, by way of the village of Kantaralak, is just under seventy miles, but when I visited the lonely sanctuary in 1956 the journey required the use of a four-wheel-drive truck and consumed an entire day.

Práḥ Vihãr is not only at a remote geographical site but it also occupies a rather obscure place in the history of ancient Cambodia. Considering the size of the temple and the important rôle it undoubtedly played in the religious life of the Khmèr, it is remarkable that more of its history was not recorded. We might be led to conclude, therefore, that the ancient Khmèr, unlike the Chinese who maintained such meticulous and voluminous annals and records, were not an historically-minded people. Nevertheless, we must recognize that Chinese historiography has enjoyed two important physical advantages which were not shared by the Khmèr; namely, a comparatively dry climate which has permitted the preservation of records on such perishable materials as cloth and paper, and the use of wood-block printing by which such records were produced in quantity, thereby vastly enhancing their chances of survival. The Khmèr kept records on paper, the making of which they undoubtedly owed to China, as well as on dried palm leaves, a cultural heritage from India. But for some reason the Khmèr, like their Indian cultural mentors, never adopted the art of wood-block printing, notwithstanding centuries of close contact with China, the home of this great invention. The paper and palm leaf manuscripts of the Khmèr thus had to face not only the ravages of tropical insects and mould but also the hazards of almost ceaseless wars with the Čam, Annamese, Môn, and Thai who frequently overran and devasted the Khmèr kingdoms.

The principal written records of the ancient Khmèr to survive such vicissitudes were their inscriptions cut in stone. While inscriptions on

stele and temple doorways are fairly numerous, they deal principally with religious and dynastic matters, such as the founding of monasteries and the making of endowments thereto, the accession, lineage, and apotheosis of kings, or the commemoration of real or fancied military victories. Such records have helped materially to fill out the picture of Khmèr history, but they are of necessity fragmentary in character and their panegyrical style of composition often obscures the kernels of historical fact. We
4 would probably be less inclined to bestow such historical competence upon the Chinese had we to depend entirely upon epigraphical remains for our knowledge of China's history and civilization.

It is, therefore, to the Chinese awareness of history, together with the fortunate preservation of such a wealth of China's written records, that we owe much of our knowledge of ancient Cambodia. For example, were it not for the accounts of early Chinese traders and travellers and the records of the Imperial courts kept in connection with tributary missions, we would know virtually nothing of the ancient Khmèr kingdom of Fu-nan, the very name of which appears to be a Chinese transliteration of a Khmèr word; and the only eye-witness description we have of the great city of Śrī Yaśodharapura, better known today as Aṅkor, is from the report of Chou Ta-kwan, a member of a Chinese embassy to Cambodia in 1296-7.[2] If only Chou Ta-kwan or some equally gifted observer had visited Práḥ Vihãr, for there is no known direct reference to this supernal temple in any of our Chinese sources.

Before discussing the temple of Práḥ Vihãr it would be appropriate by way of background to this rather obscure subject to review briefly the history of the Khmèr and their underlying religious beliefs in order to appreciate more fully the peculiar characteristics which distinguish this temple from some of the other great religious monuments of Cambodia.

The history of ancient Cambodia falls conveniently into three broad periods, each identified with a distinct Khmèr kingdom — Fu-nan, Chên-la, and Kambujadeśa.[3] The kingdom of Fu-nan extended along the coast and lowlands of Cambodia from the southeastern part of present-day

[2]) Chou Ta-kwan (周達觀), *Chên-la Feng T'u Chi* (眞臘風土記), translated by Paul Pelliot under the title *Mémoires sur les Coutumes du Cambodge de Tcheou Ta-kouan* (Paris, 1951).

[3]) A detailed and thoroughly documented history of Cambodia is the great work of Lawrence Palmer Briggs, *The Ancient Khmer Empire*, published in the new series, vol. 41, pt. 1, of the *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* (Philadelphia, 1951). While some of Briggs's interpretations have been questioned by other scholars, his book is an invaluable guide and source for the study of Khmèr history. Georges Coedès, the out-standing Sanskrit and Khmèr epigraphist, is without doubt the greatest authority on Khmèr history. In addition to his numerous articles in *BEFEO*, his translations of the inscriptions of Southeast Asia, and other studies, his *Les États Hindouisés d'Indochine et d'Indonésie* (Paris, 1948) provides a comprehensive account of the ancient kingdoms of Southeast Asia.

Thailand to what is now the southern part of Vietnam. The kingdom probably came into existence as early as the latter part of the first century of the Christian era, and continued until the beginning of the seventh century, when it was completely absorbed by the Khmèr kingdom of Chên-la.

Chên-la was originally a kingdom of the hinterland, the region north of the Dañ Rêk mountains. It first emerged as a distinct entity in the middle of the sixth century, when it successfully threw off its tributary relationship with Fu-nan. Its first known capital was near the village of Bàsăk in the southern part of modern Laos, where the Mun River joins the Mékong. Chên-la later expanded into the Cambodian lowlands and after absorbing the kingdom of Fu-nan became divided toward the end of the seventh century into two kingdoms — Upper and Maritime Chên-la, the former apparently maintaining its seat of power in the lower Mun valley. In the latter part of the eighth century Maritime Chên-la was conquered by the great Śailendra Empire of Śrīvijaya, which extended over Java, Sumatra, and a large part of the Malay Peninsula. In 802, however, a Khmèr prince successfully liberated Maritime Chên-la from the Śailendra overlord and proclaimed himself king of Kambujadeśa.[4] He is known to history as Jayavarman II.[5]

5

4) According to Khmèr legend, as recorded by the Chinese, Fu-nan was founded by Hun-t'ien (混潨 or 混塡), a Hindu culture-bearer to Southeast Asia, who has been identified with a Brāhman named Kauṇḍiṇya. Hun-t'ien married the naked Liu-yeh (柳葉), a queen of some small principality later to become Fu-nan. Liu-yeh has in turn been identified with a mythological Nāga princess, Somā. This union symbolized not only a fusion of cultures but probably provided a socially acceptable basis for the marriage of Indian migrants with local Khmèr women. The movement of Indians into Cambodia was probably not a direct migration from India but a secondary influx from the region around the Bay of Bandon on the Malay Peninsula which had been settled earlier by Indians. The *nāgini* Somā was a terrestrial deity, for the *nāga*, or serpents of Hindu mythology, were closely identified with the Earth and water. The marriage of Hun-t'ien (Kauṇḍiṇya) and Liu-yeh (Somā) produced the so-called Lunar Dynasty (*Somavaṁśa* or *Chandravaṁśa*, as it is called in India). The Khmèr state of Chên-la had a similar legendary account of its origin in the union of a *mahāṛṣi*, or great hermit, named Kambu Svayamabhuva, with the *apsaras* Merā. This union produced Chên-la's Solar Dynasty (*Sūryavaṁśa*). The descendents of Kambu and Merā were known as the Kambuja and their country as Kambujadeśa. It is from Kambuja that the French and English words Cambodge and Cambodia are derived. While the Chinese have traditionally used the term Chên-la to indicate Cambodia generally, the Japanese from the time of their first recorded contacts with Southeast Asia in the late 16th and early 17th centuries adopted the term Kamboja (generally written 東埔寨) for Cambodia. For the origins of Fu-nan and Chên-la, see Paul Pelliot, 'Le Fou-nan', *BEFEO*, III, 254 ff; Georges Coedès, 'Études Cambodgiennes, I, La Légende de la Nāgī, *BEFEO*, XI, 391-3; Victor Goloubew, 'Les Légendes de la Nāgī et de l'Apsaras', *BEFEO*, XXIV, 501-10; Coedès, 'Études Cambodgiennes, Quelques Précisions sur la Fin du Fou-nan', *BEFEO*, XLIII, 1-8; Pierre Dupont, 'Études sur l'Indochine Ancienne, I, La Formation du Tchen-la et la Formation du Cambodge Angkorien (VIIe-IXe Siècles)', *BEFEO*, XLIII, 17-55. On the basis of an inscription found near Vàt Ph'u, Coedès has reason to believe that the Khmèr kingdom of Chên-la may have originated south of the Dañ Rêk mountains and in the second half of the 6th century extended its power to the north by conquering the Čam, who had long been established in the lower valley of the Mun River: Coedès, 'Nouvelles données sur les Origines du Royaume Khmèr', *BEFEO*, XLVIII, 210-20. The problem posed by this view and its implications are discussed at length by H. G. Quaritch Wales, *Prehistory and Religion in Southeast Asia* (London, 1957), footnote 1, pp. 128-9.

5) The names of the Khmèr kings bear the suffix *varman*, a Sanskrit term meaning 'armour'. Given a politico-religious significance when applied to kings and high-ranking persons, it had the meaning of *protégé*. The term was used in India and first appears in Southeast Asia in the name of a 5th century king of Fu-nan, Kauṇḍiṇya Jayavarman. The name Jayavarman, which a number of Khmèr kings later bore, would thus have the meaning of *Protégé* of Victory; Indravarman becomes *Protégé* of Indra, Sūryavarman, *Protégé* of Sūrya, etc. The term *varman* thus associated the king with the deity or divine quality with which he idenified himself.

Thus began the Kambujadeśa, or Angkorian, period of Khmèr history which witnessed the construction of the astonishing religious monuments we associate with Cambodia today. The Kambujadeśa period lasted for over six centuries until the Thai of Ayuthia finally captured and sacked the great city of Aṅkor in 1430-1. The following year Aṅkor was abandoned by the Khmèr, who established a new capital south of the Great Lake, or Tonlé Sap, where it has remained to the present day.

6 The kingdoms of Fu-nan, Chên-la and Kambujadeśa were populated largely by peoples of Môn-Khmèr stock. They were probably one of the the autochthonous peoples of India who moved eastward as a result of the Aryan conquests. They entered Southeast Asia from the north by the great riverine highways during the second and first millennia before Christ, pushing to the south and to the east peoples of Indonesian stock who had previously entered this area from the north and displaced the earlier Melanesian and other inhabitants.

At the time of their movement into Southeast Asia the Môn-Khmèr peoples possessed an Older Megalithic culture, identified largely with the quadrangular adze. One important aspect of this culture was a religious belief in the life-giving chthonic forces of the Earth. The principal manifestation, or embodiment, of this vital telluric power in the Older Megalithic religion was the mountain, for from this source flow the streams of life-sustaining water so essential to the cultivation of rice and man's very existence. With the dependence of this culture upon the cultivation of rice and the consequent importance of water and irrigation works, the Khmèr naturally had a peculiar attachment to the Earth and the mountain origin of streams and rivers. This religious preoccupation with the mountain, as the symbol or point of concentration of the powers of the Earth, persisted long after the Khmèr were to acquire anthropomorphic gods and goddesses whom they continued for the most part to identify with mountains. Thus, in adopting Śiva, the Khmèr traditionally associated this Hindu deity with a mountain or with the Earth. The frequent use of the terms Giriśa (Śiva of the Mountain) and Gambhireśvara (Śiva of the Depths), together with the *nāgī* myths of the origin of the Khmèr kingdoms, indicate the fundamentally chthonic character of their religion.[6]

[6]) Coedès, *Les États Hindouisés d'Indochine et d'Indonésie*, p. 26. H. G. Quaritch Wales has extensively explored the subject of pre-Hindu religious beliefs in Southeast Asia, especially the Megalithic preoccupation with the mountain, in *The Making of Greater India, a Study in South-East Asian Cultural Change* (London, 1951), *The Mountain of God, a Study of Early Religion and Kingship* (London, 1953), and *Prehistory and Religion in South-East Asia*. Another peculiar feature of the Older Megalithic religious beliefs, especially as expressed by the Môn-Khmèr peoples, was a concept of the universe based upon the antithesis of the male and female principles, one significant aspect of which was a fundamental

The sacred mountain has, of course, occupied an important position in the religious beliefs of many peoples in various parts of the world, from Olympus to Gunung Agung, from T'ai Shan to Kailāsa; but in such instances the mountain served primarily as the abode of gods and spirits rather than as the embodiment of telluric powers.

When peoples with this Older Megalithic religion moved into lowland plains, it was necessary to create an artificial mountain if a real one was not actually present, either as a representation of the real mountain, symbolizing the forces of Earth, or as an abode for the anthropomorphic Earth deity representing these chthonic powers. Initially, this probably took the form of a simple earthen mound, but in time, and over widespread areas, the mountain came to be represented in miniature by a pyramid-like structure made of stone. As Henri Frankfort has made clear, the amazing ziggurat of ancient Sumer was actually a substitute mountain to represent 'the place where the mysterious potency of the earth, and hence of all natural life, is concentrated'.[7] Much as the Sumerians built their substitute mountains, or ziggurats, on the plains of Mesopotamia after leaving the highlands of Iran, so the Khmèr, when they moved into the lowlands of Cambodia, were under a compulsion to erect stepped-pyramids as reductions of the sacred mountain, except at those sites on the plains where there were convenient hills to serve as natural symbols, as at Ba Phnoṃ, Phnoṃ Kulên and Phnoṃ Bàkhèṅ.[8]

The Older Megalithic preoccupation with the mountain was evident in the earliest of the Khmèr organized states. Although Fu-nan was essentially a kingdom of the lowlands, it had its sacred mountain adjoining the capital at Ba Phnoṃ. The word Fu-nan was the Chinese designation of this kingdom, since its kings, like the rulers of the Śailendra dynasty of Śrīvijaya, bore the title *Kurung Bnaṃ*, meaning Kings of the

opposition of Earth and Water. Hence, the Mountain becomes male and the River, female. Among the Khmèr the prefixes *ba* (male, or father) and *me* (female, or mother) were frequently used in names to stress this antithesis, as in Ba Phnoṃ, Phnoṃ Bàkhèṅ, Bàphûon, Bàyon, as the names of mountains, and in the names of rivers, such as Menam, Mékong, (François Martini, 'De la signification de "Ba" et "Me"...', *BEFEO*, XLIV, 201-9). In Bali and in much of Polynesia the Earth-Water antithesis takes the form of an opposition between Mountain and Sea, giving rise to rules for directional orientation, which in Bali have taken the unusual form of the so-called 'Rose of the Winds' (Miguel Covarrubias, *Island of Bali* (New York, 1938), pp. 76, 296).

7) *The Birth of Civilization in the Near East* (London, 1954), p. 54. As Frankfort notes, the term 'mountain' as used in Mesopotamia was so heavily charged with religious significance that a mere translation does it little justice. It was not used to describe merely a geographical feature but 'a phenomenon charged with religious meaning' and 'the normal setting of divine activity'. The deities worshipped in ancient Sumer were predominantly chthonic gods identified with mountains, such as Enlil and Tammuz (ibid.). The term *giri* (mountain) was often used by the Khmèr to mean a temple. In Bali temples are still called Meru, the name of the Cosmic Mountain in Hinduism and Buddhism. (Robert Heine-Geldern, 'Conceptions of State and Kingship in Southeast Asia', *Far Eastern Quarterly*, II, 15-30).

8) Wales, *The Making of Greater India*, p. 167.

Mountain. The name Fu-nan thus appears to be a Chinese transliteration of *bnaṃ*, or *phnoṃ*, a mountain.[9] By the time of recorded Chinese contact with Fu-nan, however, this Khmèr kingdom had already undergone considerable Indianization. The *Nan Ch'i Shu* (History of the Southern Ch'i), as compiled by Hsiao Tzŭ-hsien at the beginning of the seventh century,[10] notes that the people of Fu-nan worshipped the deity Maheśvara who 'ceaselessly descends upon Mount Mo-tan.'[11] Maheśvara was the
8 vocable of the *liṅga* of Śiva Giriśa, Śiva of the Mountain, a Hindu concept which was readily adapted to the indigenous Khmèr cult of the *phnoṃ*.

The Khmèr kingdom of Chên-la,[12] with its capital in the vicinity of Bàsăk, first breaks into recorded history in the *Sui Shu* (History of the Sui).[13] According to the thirteenth century Chinese historian Ma Tuan-lin,[14] the capital of Chên-la was located on a mountain called Ling-kia-po-p'o,[15] consecrated to the deity Po-to-li.[16] Coedès has readily identified this sacred mountain with Liṅgaparvata, Mountain of the *Liṅga*, and Po-to-li as Bhadreśvara, vocable of the *liṅga* of Śiva, the deity worshipped on this mountain.[17]

The temple at Liṅgaparvata dedicated to Bhadreśvara is now an archaeological ruin called Vàt Ph'u.[18] Notwithstanding the Hindu Śivaite

9) The Chinese employed the ideographs 扶南 or 夫南 for Fu-nan. The Thai equivalent of *bnaṃ* or *phnoṃ* is *phanom*; in Lao it becomes *ph'u*.

10) *Nan Ch'i Shu* (南齊書), compiled by Hsiao Tzŭ-hsien (蕭子顯), Book 58, Section 39, under 'Fu-nan'; Pelliot, *Le Fou-nan*, p. 260; Coedès, *Les États Hindouisés...*, p. 106. The information on Fu-nan in the *Nan Ch'i Shu* was derived by the Chinese largely from a 5th century Indian Buddhist monk, Nāgasena, who had been sent to China in 484 by Kauṇḍiṇya Jayavarman, king of Fu-nan, to seek Chinese assistance against the king of Čampā (Pelliot, *Le Fou-nan*, p. 257).

11) Mount Mo-tan 摩弋山.

12) As with Fu-nan, the term Chên-la (眞臘) was a Chinese designation but was employed to denote Cambodia generally. When first adopted around the end of the 6th century it was pronounced T'śiĕn-lăp. A variant term, Chan-la (占臘), pronounced at the time T'śiăm-lăp, was also used for Cambodia. It has not been possible to identify with certainty any Khmèr or Indian words from which these Chinese terms might have been derived; they were undoubtedly transliterations or corruptions of some kind. The *chan* of Chan-la is also used for the first component of the Chinese ideographical compound for Čampā (占城). For a full discussion of this thorny linguistic problem, see Pelliot, *Mémoires sur les Coutumes du Cambodge*, pp. 71 ff. The Chinese also indicated Čampā with the characters 瞻波, and this region was at various times referred to as Lin-yi (林邑 or 臨邑).

13) *Sui Shu* (隋書) under 'Chên-la'.

14) Ma Tuan-lin (馬端臨), *Wên Hsien T'ung K'ao* (文獻通考) contains a description of Chên-la based upon the *Sui Shu* and other Chinese writings. A modern edition was published in two volumes in Shanghai in 1936 as Part 7 of the great compilation of Chinese writings called the *Shih T'ung* (十通). Chên-la is described in vol. II, bk. 332.

15) Ling-kia-po-p'o 陵伽鉢婆.

16) Po-to-li 婆多利.

17) *Les États Hindouisés...*, pp. 114-15.

18) Vàt Ph'u means Monastery of the Mountain. The term was applied to the site by Lao Buddhist monks who established a Buddhist temple in the ruins. Liṅgaparvata is called Ph'u Bàsăk (Mount Bàsăk) in Lao. M.L. Finot, 'Vàt Phou', *BEFEO*. II, 241-5. The fullest description of Vàt Ph'u is to be found in Henri Parmentier, *L'Art Khmèr Classique, Monuments du Quadrant Nord-Est* (2 vols., Paris, 1939), I, pp. 212-47. The second volume of this great work consists entirely of plans and drawings of the temples described. The section of volume I on Vàt Ph'u originally appeared in *BEFEO*, XIV, 1-31, with a number of interesting photographs which were regrettably not reproduced in *L'Art Khmèr Classique*.

character of this temple, its Indian features appear to have been built upon an Older Megalithic base. Long before the Khmèr ever heard of Śiva, Vàt Ph'u appears to have been a Megalithic sanctuary of causeways, stone stairways, and terraces built against the base of a precipitous mountain. It bears a striking resemblance to other Older Megalithic sanctuaries in Southeast Asia, as H. G. Quaritch Wales has so convincingly delineated in the cases of the terraced structure on the Yang Plateau in East Java and the stone sanctuary at Quãng-trị in Annam.[19]

From a grotto behind the uppermost terrace at Vàt Ph'u a small spring flows from a crevice in the rock. This 'manifestation of the divine energies issuing from their chthonic source'[20] becomes a fertility-endowed stream which sustains the rice on the plains below. The same Megalithic symbolism can be seen today on the wooded slopes of Doi Sŭthep, the sacred mountain of the Lawa, which rises so majestically to the west of Chiengmai in northern Siam, where water from a spring is carried by pipes to flow from the arms of Dhôrani, the lovely goddess of the Earth. In a similar way, but subject to Hindu influence, the water from the spring at Liṅgaparvata was made to flow over Bhadreśvara in the form of a *liṅga* to symbolize the god's union, if not identity, with the chthonic forces residing in the divine mountain. This adaptation of the Hindu Bhadreśvara to a Megalithic mountain sanctuary presented no difficult transposition of religious beliefs, since the mountain behind the sanctuary at Vàt Ph'u rises like an enormous menhir, and under Hindu influence it was a simple matter to convert the menhir into a *liṅga*.[21]

In its long approach to the mountain sanctuary by menhir-lined causeways, stone stairways, and terraces, the Khmèr temple at Vàt Ph'u would appear to have a bearing on the temple of Práḥ Vihār. These peculiar features apparently constitute a kind of Megalithic pattern which is found to one degree or another in sanctuaries of this kind. Subsequent Hindu influence contributed principally the *gopura*, or pavilion-like entrance buildings, halls, galleries, and *nāga* balustrades, together with the substitution of the *liṅga* for the menhir mountain and the housing of this deity in a chamber beneath a sanctuary tower, or *pràsàt*.[22]

It is the simple, linear character of Vàt Ph'u that distinguishes this

19) *The Making of Greater India*, pp. 165-6; *The Mountain of God*, pp. 97-100.
20) Wales, *The Mountain of God*, p. 168.
21) *Ibid.* For a full description of the use of water as a lustration at Vàt Ph'u, see Parmentier, *op. cit.*, I, 229, 243-4. Parmentier notes that at Phnom Kulên, as at Vàt Ph'u, the *liṅga* was continuously bathed with water, a practice which also prevailed in Čampā. *Ibid.*, p. 244.
22) *Pràsàt*, from the Sanskrit *prāsāda*, a sanctuary in the form of a tower.

type of mountain sanctuary-temple from so many of the other religious monuments of the Khmèr. The great stepped-pyramid structures which arose on the plains of Cambodia, culminating in the grandeur of Aṅkor Vàt, often developed a system of concentric galleries and enclosures which, with their sculptural art, tend to convey the sense of *pradkṣiṇa*, or circular motion. Like the Buddhist *stūpa* as a reduction of the cosmic Mount Meru, they provide for circumambulation. Such structures thus suggest the more uranic character of Hinduism. The linear concept of Vàt Ph'u, on the other hand, appears to harken back to a pre-planetary cosmology.[23]

The temple ruin of Práḥ Vihãr shares the Megalithic concept of Vàt Ph'u and may have been originally inspired by this ancient Khmèr mountain sanctuary. It is of linear plan with menhir-marked causeway-avenues, a series of stone stairways and terraces built against a mountain side and culminating in a sanctuary.[24] Práḥ Vihãr has one feature, however, which distinguishes it from Vàt Ph'u. Its sanctuary stands on the very summit of a mountain rather than at the mountain's base. Nevertheless, each structure has the common feature of being intimately identified with a mountain, both physically and religiously, and Práḥ Vihãr's great rocky mass and awesome precipice could have suggested to the Khmèr the embodiment of chthonic powers as much as did the menhir-like appearance of Liṅgaparvata.

Práh Vihãr also possesses an association with water which appears to have been an important if not essential attribute of other Megalithic sanctuaries. Almost at the very summit of the rocky mass there is a spring which once fed a small *sraḥ*,[25] or stone basin, constructed about midway up the approach to the sanctuary enclosure. Slightly below this

23) Wales, *The Mountain of God*, pp. 158-60.

24) Parmentier was especially struck by the linear plan of Vàt Ph'u and its great similarity in this respect to Práḥ Vihãr (*op. cit.*, I, 212). As he also notes, a number of Khmèr monuments in the early classical period were constructed in the form of a succession of courts placed along a common axis (p. 272). Several monuments in the northeastern part of Cambodia have, to one degree or another, this linear concept, notably Kòh Ker and Phnoṃ Sandak, both of which also have menhir-bordered causeways which are so characteristic of Vàt Ph'u and Práḥ Vihãr (see the plans in *op. cit.*, II). These temples, however, were built on the level plain, whereas Vàt Ph'u, Práḥ Vihãr and Phanoṃ Rung (to be discussed later) each had an intimate physical and religious association with a particular mountain. Another unusual but little known temple which bears a resemblance to Práḥ Vihãr by virtue of being built on the summit of a mountain and at the edge of a precipitous drop and which also has stairways, terraces and a short menhir-lined approach is Phnoṃ Bàyàṅ (Henri Mauger, 'Le Phnoṃ Bàyàṅ', *BEFEO*, XXXVII, 239-62).

25) *Sraḥ*, from the Sanskrit *saras*, a sacred basin. There is no indication, however, that water was made to flow over the *liṅga* at Práḥ Vihãr as at Vàt Ph'u. The *liṅga* was, of course, mounted on a *yoni* base with a *somāsutra* to carry off water poured over it to provide a lustration by virtue of having come into contact with the sacred stone. Virtually all Khmèr temples were constructed with *sraḥ*, sacred basins, or *bàrày*, large reservoirs, indicative perhaps not only of the chthonic religious character associated with water and its lustral value, but also of the Khmèr genius for using water, by means of elaborate systems of reservoirs and canals, for irrigation.

basin, terraced into the side of the mountain, there was constructed a larger *sraḥ* which was either fed by springs or filled by the runoff from the rocky slopes during rains. And again, a little to the north of the entrance stairway, there is a large natural rock basin called Sraḥ Tràv, which catches water draining from the rock-covered slopes. Even during the dry season the water in this natural basin is remarkably fresh and cool, and it is still regarded with awe and veneration by pilgrims to Práḥ Vihãr today.

The Khmèr temple at Phanoṃ Rung, about eighty miles west of Práḥ Vihãr in the Thai province of Buriram, has similar features. It stands on the summit of a steep hill which rises about six hundred feet above the Northeast Plateau. While constructed on a smaller scale that Vàt Ph'u and Práḥ Vihãr, Phanoṃ Rung nevertheless has a similar linear plan, with a menhir-bordered causeway, stone stairways and terraces leading up a mountain side to a single courtyard containing the sanctuary tower. Although on the very summit of a mountain, there is a natural, spring-fed pond to the north of the causeway approach. Climbing the dry slopes of Phanoṃ Rung in the hot season one would never dream of being rewarded by such a source of clear, cold water.[26]

It might be assumed that the Khmèr built such mountain-top temples merely for the sake of the magnificent views afforded by their sites. Strange as it may seem, however, neither Práḥ Vihãr nor Phanoṃ Rung was constructed in a way to take advantage of the cosmic panoramas which unfold before them. The sanctuary tower of each temple is surrounded by galleries and halls without windows or other openings on their outer sides through which the sweeping vistas might be enjoyed.

This peculiar feature of these Khmèr mountain temples has puzzled archaeologists and scholars, who have been led to conclude that they were essentially *āśrama*, or hermitages of monastic character, for priests and pilgrims whose devotion and meditation would not be distracted by the enjoyment of scenic splendour. In this connection it might also be noted that climbing a mountain for the sake of the view from its summit

26) Parmentier, *op. cit.*, I, 270-342, together with the detailed plans and drawings in volume II, provides the fullest description of Práḥ Vihãr. Parmentier also offers a valuable critique of previous studies made of this temple (I, 340-2). The article by John Black entitled 'The Lofty Sanctuary of Khao Phra Vihãr', *The Journal of the Siam Society*, XLIV, i, 1-31, contains a good description of Práḥ Vihãr, a detailed plan of the temple based upon the author's own survey, and a collection of photographs by Pan Lauhabandhu and C.N. Spinks taken during our expedition to the temple in 1956. The temple at Phanoṃ Rung is described at length by Major Erik Seidenfaden in 'A Siamese Account of the Construction of the Temple on Khao Phanoṃ Rung', *The Journal of the Siam Society*, XXV, i, 83-106. This article also has a plan which reveals very clearly the linear character of Phanoṃ Rung.

is a comparatively recent development in human behaviour. Mountains were climbed for more compelling reasons: because the mountain was a sacred one the ascent of which offered spiritual rewards, or because it provided escape from worldly life and gave the solitude necessary for religious meditation. The motivation of the modern alpinist in climbing a mountain merely 'because it is there' was something utterly unknown to ancient man.[27]

12 To associate Práḥ Vihãr with an Older Megalithic sanctuary like Vàt Ph'u is, of course, conjectural, as no physical evidence has been found of any pre-Hindu establishment at this site. Epigraphical and archaeological evidence indicate that the ruins we see at Práḥ Vihãr today are those of a Śivaite temple. Nevertheless, the plan of this temple, like that at Phanoṃ Rung, appears to have been conceived after the linear arrangement of the pre-Hindu sanctuary at Vàt Ph'u. In the use of menhir-lined causeways, a series of stairways and ascending terraces leading in a linear approach up a mountain slope to an ultimate sanctuary, Vàt Ph'u, together with Práḥ Vihãr and Phanoṃ Rung, are truly unique. There is also something contrary to the Hindu tradition in the spatial arrangement of these temples, a characteristic which, however, pervades Khmèr religious architecture generally and which is one of the notable features of Aṅkor Vàt. The symmetrical, well-proportioned and uncongested grouping of buildings, galleries, and towers and the balanced spacing of causeways and enclosures are far more suggestive of China than of India.

Let us now examine in more detail this unusual temple of Práḥ Vihãr. From the entrance stairway at the foot of the rocky slope to the final enclousure at the edge of the precipice covers a distance of some two thousand five hundred feet, over which the pilgrim must climb five stone stairways of varying heights and traverse three causeways, one over one thousand feet in length. In the course of his progression the pilgrim passes through four imposing buildings of cruciform shape until he reaches the final enclosure with its sanctuary tower. This unusual linear ensemble takes fullest advantage of the natural formation of the terrain, which consists of great sloping surfaces of rock out of which some of the steps and terraces were cut.

As you progress up the stairways and along the ascending causeways

27) In this connection, Parmentier points to the danger of ascribing to the ancient Khmèr a modern Occidental mentality when considering the absence of a view from such mountain-top temples. In essence, the Khmèr were preoccupied with the mountain itself because of its incorporation of divine powers; the view from its summit was an incidental matter apparently of no particular significance. *L'Art Khmèr Classique*, I, 342.

The two reliquary towers to the northeast of the entrance stairway of Praḥ Vihār

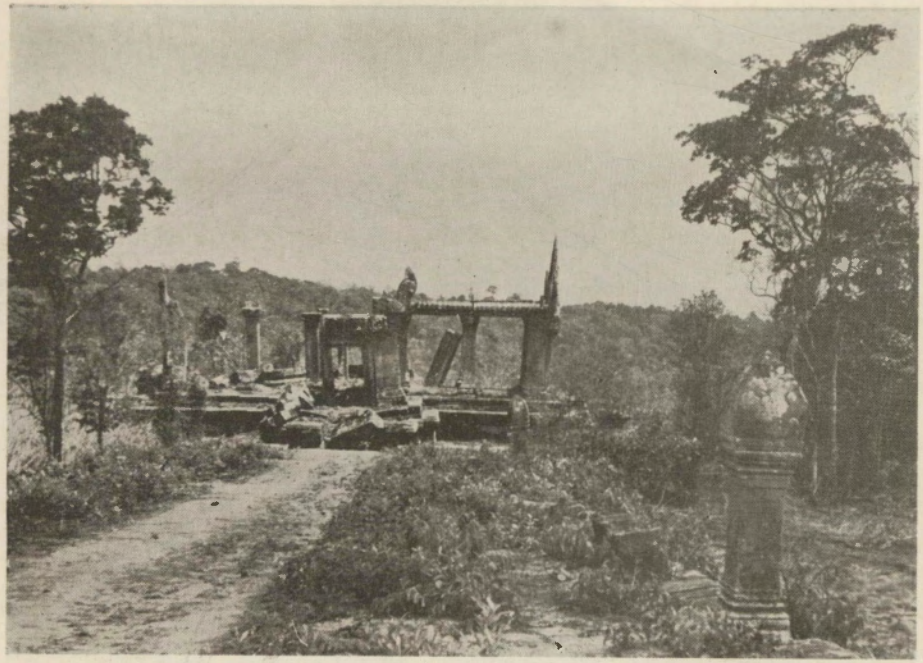
of Práḥ Vihār, you gain the feeling of being transported, as if you were making a passage between the Worlds. Your long journey by jungle track with its prosaic tribulations has been left far behind, and you are now moving back through time to the age when gods and demons, spirits and mysterious forces commanded this supernal height. Like the Khmèr of old, you find yourself being irresistibly drawn by the power of the mountain. Then in one of the deserted ruins you pause to gaze at the slumbering figure of Viṣṇu. The lovely Lakṣmī is about to restore her Lord to consciousness, and in the century-old silence of the mountain top you suddenly detect a faint stirring, as if a new world were about to become manifest. In hushed anticipation, you make your way to the edge of the awesome precipice with the temple ruin at your back. It is at this climactic moment that the spiritual significance of Práḥ Vihār suddenly bursts upon you, for Viṣṇu has come to life, and in transfixed amazement you behold the miracle of his creation in the cosmic panorama spread at your feet. You are now with the gods on the summit of Mount Kailāsa, looking down upon a newly-created World of mundane orders.

But had you been a Khmèr pilgrim to this remote sanctuary, you would probably not have shared this same experience. You would have

The first *gopura* viewed from the east

made the long journey on foot from the great city of Śrī Yaśodharapura across the hot plains of the Tonlé Sap to the base of the Dañ Rêk mountains. Then you would have climbed the appalling stairway cut in the face of the cliff, have refreshed and purified yourself with the cool water in one of the sacred basins, and begun your final progression up the stairways and causeways, passing through the preliminary cruciform pavilions, and at last have reached the sanctuary on the summit. There you would have made your obeisance to the *liṅga* of Śiva of the Summit in the dimly-lit chamber, and having thus attained the purpose of your long, arduous pilgrimage, you would then have quietly withdrawn the way you had come, leaving the supernal view from the edge of the precipice for the enjoyment of the Lord of the Three Worlds and his myriads of heavenly attendants.

The first stairway at the northern end of the ensemble is about four hundred feet in length. It was originally bordered with magnificent *siṃha*, those mythological guardian beasts resembling lions. The steps lead to a terrace flanked with two enormous *nāga* balustrades, the polycephalic heads of the serpents extending upward as if in a gesture of welcome to the pilgrim climbing the stairs. Another but shorter stairway, originally



The first *gopura* viewed from the south, with one of the menhir-like border markers of the first causeway at the right.

lined with *siṃha*, leads to the ruins of the first *gopura*, or entrance pavilion. This building was once an ethereal structure of beautifully carved and fitted stone, its gable ends sweeping gracefully upward like flames and its lintels and pediments covered with delicate reliefs. Today only a small part of this *gopura* is still standing.

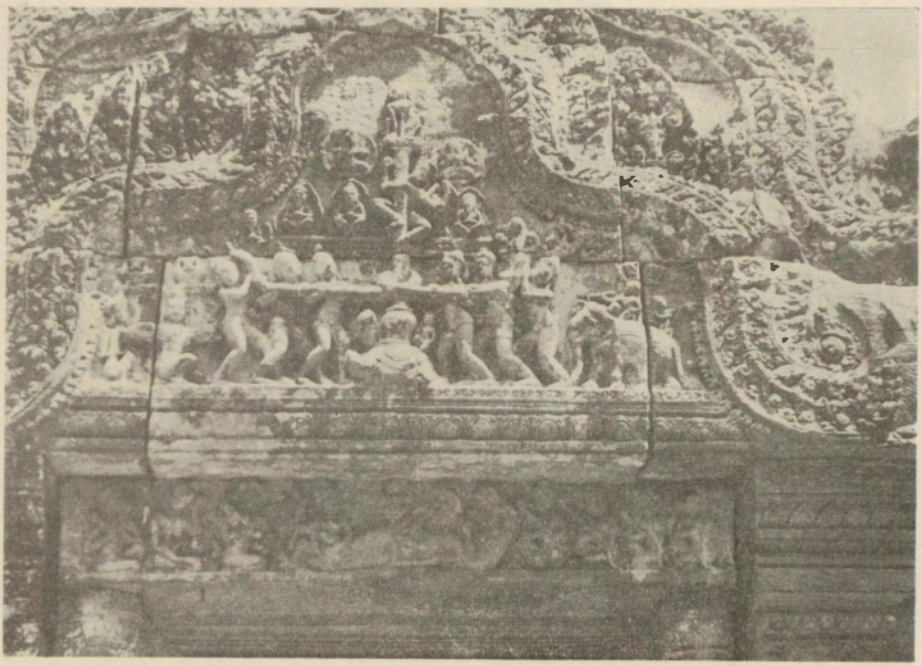
From this once jewel-like pavilion extends the longest of the causeways, which was originally lined with menhir markers set at twelve-foot intervals. Most of these unusual pillars have been overturned, either by the sinking of their foundations or by wild elephants attempting to massage their bodies against them. At the end of this long causeway another stairway leads to a broad terrace on which stands a larger cruciform pavilion containing some of the most beautiful lintel and pediment reliefs in the entire ensemble.

One of these reliefs, which you would be compelled to pause and admire, depicts Viṣṇu asleep on the back of the serpent Ananta in the midst of the vast ocean, or Cosmic Void, into which some previous universe had been resolved at the time of its destruction at the end of the *Kali Yuga*. On each side of the slumbering Viṣṇu sit attendant figures

16

Looking north down the long causeway from the entrance to the second *gopura*, showing the first *gopura* in the distance

among whom is the Lord's beautiful consort Lakṣmī, who is rubbing Viṣṇu's limbs to restore him to consciousness. Already the creation of a new universe has begun, for a lotus in full bloom has sprouted from



A pediment relief in the second *gopura* depicting the Churning of the Cosmic Ocean. The relief on the lintel below depicts the Awakening of Viṣṇu

Viṣṇu's navel with a four-faced Brahmā seated among its petals.

The relief on the pediment above this lintel is also related to Viṣṇu's omnipotent rôle in the universe. It is the Churning of the Cosmic Ocean by the gods and demons in order to extract the *amrta*, the cosmic essence, or elixir of immortality. This familiar scene from Hindu mythology is beautifully depicted in this remarkable relief. The churning is done by means of a great shaft symbolizing Mount Mandara, the axis of the universe. The lower end of the shaft rests in a large water jar which holds the Cosmic Ocean. The jar in turn rests on the back of Kūrma, an enormous turtle, second of the ten *avatāra*, or incarnations, of Viṣṇu. The great serpent Vāsuki, King of the Nāga, is used as a churning rope, his body forming a loop around the shaft. On one side stand the *devatā*, or gods, and on the other, the *asura*, or demons. They alternately pull each end of the serpent, causing the shaft to rotate and thus churn the Cosmic Waters within the jar. Various attendant figures watch the churning, including some of the *apsaras*, the seductive courtesans of Indra's heaven.

From this enchanting pavilion a second causeway, about four hundred

The third *gopura* viewed from the south

feet in length and bordered with the same menhir markers, leads to another stairway and the third edifice, which stands on a broad terrace partly cut into the side of the mountain. This ensemble consists of a large cruciform *gopura* which is flanked with gallery-like halls, the so-called 'palaces'. The entire structure is in a remarkably fine state of preservation and contains a number of unusual reliefs associated with Śiva. One of these shows the Lord of the Three Worlds in amorous dalliance with his *śakti*, or cosmic spouse, the lovely Pārvatī. Another relief on one of the pediments of the cruciform pavilion depicts Śiva and Pārvatī riding on the back of the bull Nandin, Śiva's traditional mount. They are attended by six figures, four of whom hold parasols, an emblem of royalty, as Nandin with his divine riders pauses beneath the cosmic tree Pārijāta.

From this interesting group of buildings it is now but a short distance to the summit. Another causeway, lined with marker columns and *nāga* balustrades, ends at the last short stairway which leads to the final

Lintel relief of the third *gopura* showing Śiva with his Śakti, Pārvatī or Uma

two structures. In a sense, these buildings are one large ensemble which forms two courtyards, each with its inner buildings. Within the first court[28] there is a large hall with a subsidiary building at each side, the so-called 'libraries'. The second court contains the sanctuary tower with its ante-chamber. The ensemble is in a good state of preservation, especially the galleries and halls of the second court, but the magnificent sanctuary tower has collapsed, presumably through some structural fault, and today is a chaotic pile of stone blocks. The southeastern corner of

28) In describing the temple of Práḥ Vihār I have discarded the method of identifying the various units employed by Parmentier and adopted by Briggs and others, who number the units in order from the uppermost, or sanctuary, enclosure. This means that one must, in effect, follow the plan of the temple by working backwards from the sanctuary down the mountainside to the entrance stairway, a rather illogical if not confusing manner of introducing a stranger to this complicated series of structures. The order of numbering I have employed begins with the entrance stairway at the north and progresses southward up the slope to the sanctuary court on the summit at the edge of the precipice. Unless one has mastered the art of levitation, this is the only way it is possible to explore this archaeological and geological wonder. All of the Sanskrit and Khmèr inscriptions pertaining to Práḥ Vihār deciphered and translated by the great epigraphists Abel Bergaigne, Auguste Barth, and Georges Coedès have been brought conveniently together by Black in English translation of the renditions into French in 'The Inscriptions of "Khao Práḥ Vihār"', *The Journal of the Siam Society*, XLVII, i, 1-58. (On pp. 1 and 19, however, Black has incorrectly cited Vol. XLIII of *BEFEO* as Vol. XLII when referring to the article by Coedès and Dupont entitled 'Les Stèles de Sdòk Kàk Thoṃ, Phnoṃ Sandak et Práḥ Vihār.') Briggs, *The Ancient Khmer Empire*, has carefully developed the chronology of the construction of Práḥ Vihār on the basis of translations of the inscriptions, the archaeological surveys, and the analyses of architectural styles made by Parmentier and other French scholars.

A pediment relief in the third *gopura* showing Śiva and Pārvatī riding on Śiva's traditional mount, the bull Nandin, pausing beneath the cosmic tree Pārijāta

the second, or final, enclosure rests on the very edge of Práḥ Vihăr's awesome precipice.

The west gallery of the sanctuary enclosure. The pile of stone blocks in the foreground represents what is left of the sanctuary tower

When was this extraordinary temple constructed? The first known reference to Práḥ Vihãr is in a Sanskrit inscription of Yaśovarman I who reigned from 889 to 900 or possibly 910. Under this king's order, construction of a temple at Práḥ Vihãr was begun. The east and west galleries and the windowless *gopura*, or hall, forming the southern side of the sanctuary court were completed, along with all the entrance pavilions and most of the causeway avenues. The material used in construction at this time was probably largely wood.

When Yaśovarman I came to the throne the centre of Khmèr power had been based on the Cambodian lowlands for almost three hundred years, from the time Īśānavarman I moved his capital from the vicinity of Vàt Ph'u to a site called Īśānapura on the Stŭ'ṅ Sen river near Kòmpoṅ Thoṃ. Following the liberation of Maritime Chên-la from Java in 802, Jayavarman II established a new capital at the hill site of Phnoṃ Kulên, which he called Mahendraparvata, near the source of the Siemrãp river a little to the northeast of Aṅkor Thoṃ. The capital of Yaśovarman I, known as Yaśodharapura, was in this general vicinity at a hill site called Phnoṃ Bàkhèṅ. We generally call this area Aṅkor today, and with the

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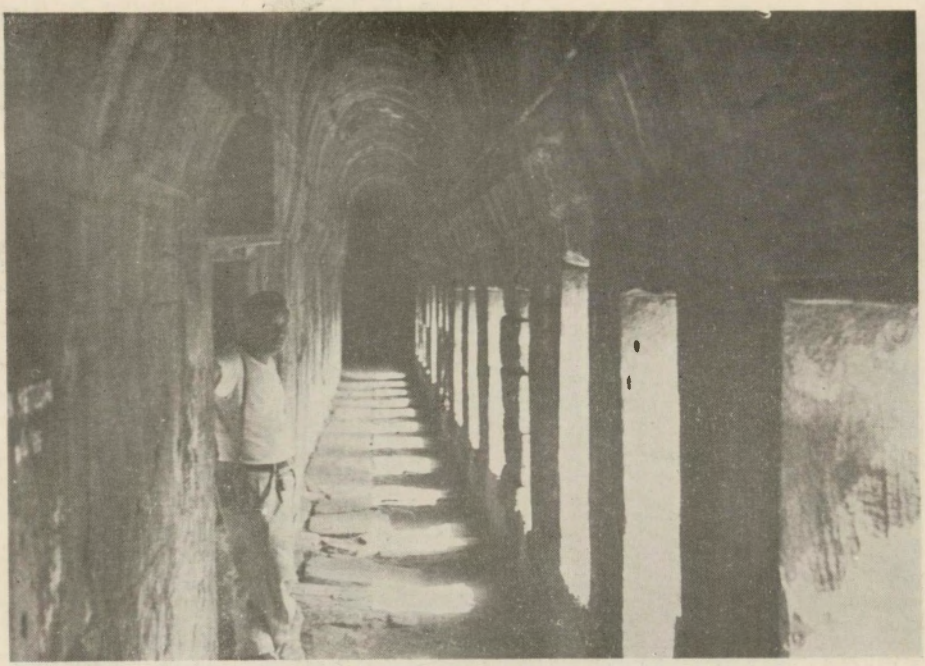
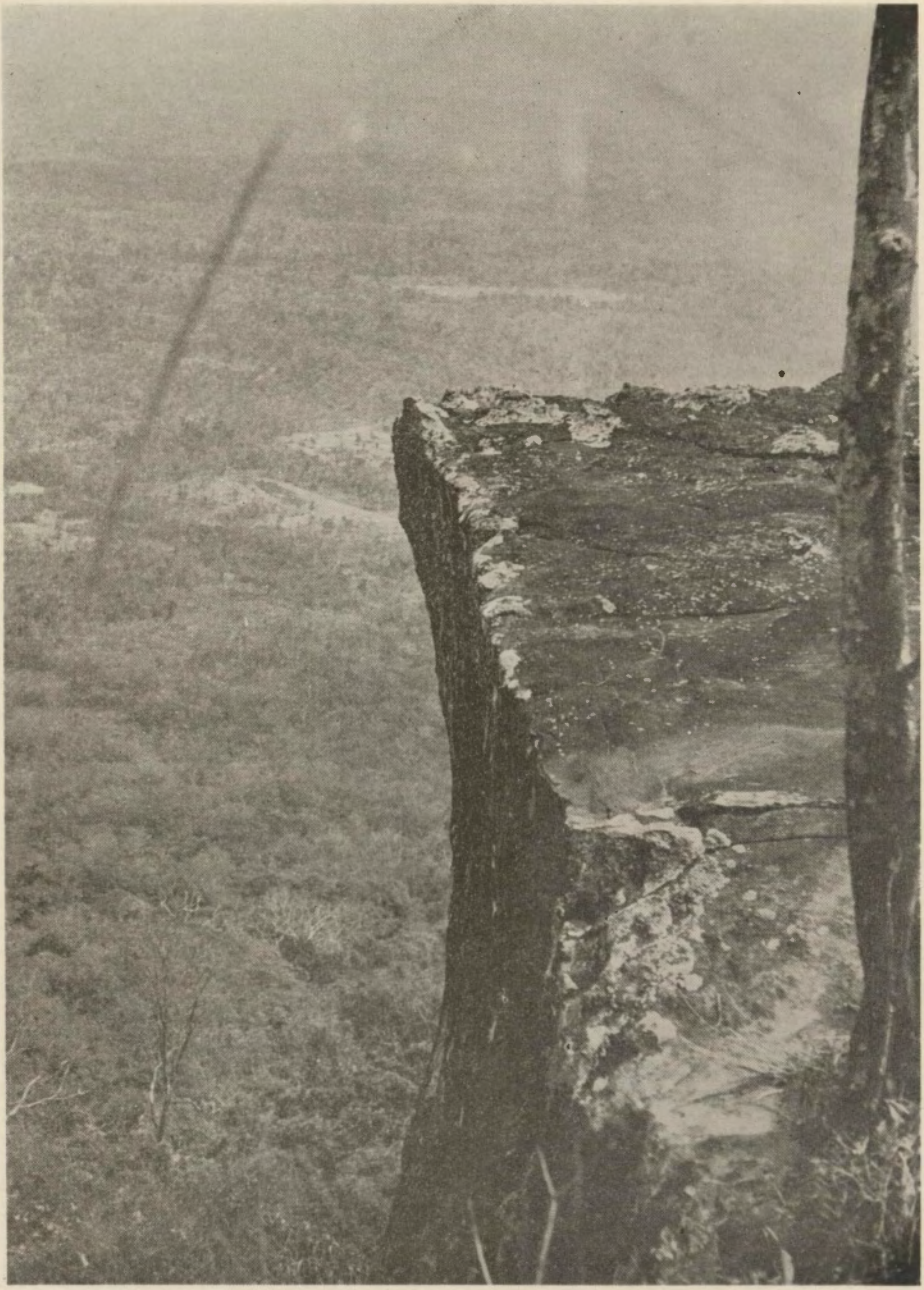


The west gallery of the sanctuary enclosure

one exception of the move to Kòh Ker in the tenth century, the capital remained in this locality until Yaśodharapura was abandoned in 1432 after its destruction by the Thai.

Yaśovarman I has been credited by scholars with having had a predilection for building temple-sanctuaries on isolated summits. This should not, however, be regarded as unusual, since it would reflect a return on the king's part to the traditional Khmèr preoccupation with the mountain as the source of divine power. The small hill at Aṅkor, known as Phnoṃ Bàkhèṅ, was called Yaśodharagiri, the Mountain of Yaśovarman, when he founded his capital of Yaśodharapura at this site. The king thus identified himself with this hill as fully as he identified himself with the Śivaite temple he built on its summit. The hill and the temple were in fact almost inseparable. In the sanctuary of this temple Yaśovarman I installed the Royal Liṅga, thus making this edifice his *Vnaṃ Kantāl*, or tutelarly temple. As the Shrine of the *devarāja*, it was the centre of Yaśovarman's kingdom, the source of his power, and the point from which his power radiated to the four quarters of his realm. The *devarāja* of Yaśovarman, known under the vocable of Yaśodhareśvara,

The southeast corner of the sanctuary enclosure



The great escarpment of Práḥ Vihăr

was, of course, a Śiva *liṅga*.[29]

Yaśovarman I established temple-sanctuaries on several other mountain summits. In 893 he founded a small temple on the summit of Phnoṃ Dei, called Purandraparvata in the inscriptions, north of the East Bàràỳ near Bantãy Sr̆ei. At Phnoṃ Krom, between Phnoṃ Bàkhèṅ and the Tonlé Sap, he established three sanctuary *pràsàt* apparently dedicated to the *Trimūrti*, that is, Viṣṇu, Śiva and Brahmā. Another group of *pràsàt* was consecrated at Phnoṃ Bók, near the Rolûoḥ group, a little to the southeast of Yaśodharapura. Again, a Śivaite temple, dedicated to Bhadreśvara, was founded at Phnoṃ Sandak, a hill on the plains about twenty-five miles southwest of Práḥ Vihãr.[30]

It was at Práḥ Vihãr, however, that Yaśovarman built his most spectacular mountain-top temple. It was consecrated to Śrī Śikhareśvara, Śiva of the Summit. Under this aspect Śiva was enshrined at Práḥ Vihãr in the traditional from of the *liṅga*.[31]

There is no record that Yaśovarman I maintained any special relationship with the ancient Khmèr ancestral sanctuary at Vàt Ph'u. His obvious preoccupation with the mountain, however, would suggest that he did. Moreover, the adoption at Práḥ Vihãr of the linear concept of construction would most likely have had the Vàt Ph'u sanctuary as a model. The construction of a temple at Práḥ Vihãr would have presented an unusually difficult problem, even to the Khmèr with their use of slave labour, due to its isolated and almost inaccessible location. But this strange site undoubtedly had a compelling attraction because of its unique, awe-inspiring character. It is, of course, further possible that Yaśovarman

29) *Vnaṃ Kantāl* means Central Mount, that is Meru, the World or Cosmic Axis. The term *devarāja* literally means 'god-king'. The usual term in Khmèr is *Kamrateṅ jagat ta rāja*, signifying god of the royalty or of the kingdom. It is generally believed that the cult of the *devarāja* was introduced from Java by Jayavarman II at the beginning of the 9th century when he liberated Maritime Chên-la from the rule of the Śailendra overlords. While the *devarāja* cult was highly developed in Java, Wales has shown that the principle of identifying the king with a deity was as much a part of the pre-Hindu Khmèr heritage as the Liṅgaparvata mountain itself (*The Making of Greater India*, pp. 160-173; *The Mountain of God*, p. 170.) Coedès also notes that in placing his divine protector in a temple on the summit of a hill Yaśovarman was in fact merely reviving an ancient Khmèr custom, since the kings of Fu-nan and of Chên-la, from the earliest times, had shown a predilection for the mountain as a sacred symbol: 'Études Cambodgiennes', XXI, *BEFEO*, 124, 128. On the subject of Phnoṃ Bàkhèṅ and the temple-mountain, see also Victor Goloubew, 'Le Phnoṃ Bàkhèṅ et la Ville de Yaçovarman,' *BEFEO*, XXXIII, 318; Jean Filliozat, 'Le Symbolisme du Monument du Phnoṃ Bàkhèṅ,' *BEFEO*, XLIV, 528-54; Philippe Stern, 'Le Temple-Montagne Khmèr. Le Culte du Liṅga et la Devarāja', *BEFEO*, XXXIV, 611-16. What Jayavarman II may have introduced from Java was a more formal development of the god-king relationship having a greater political significance and endowed with Hindu-inspired attributes, thus giving the king's identification with the deity a national rather than a personal character. Briggs reviews the subject succinctly in *The Ancient Khmer Empire*, pp. 108-9. The city of Yasodharapura with Yaśovarman's *Vnaṃ Kantāl* at its centre was, like most of the capitals in ancient Southeast Asia, more than the nation's political and cultural centre. It was regarded as the 'magic center' of the entire country: Heine-Geldern, 'Conception of State and Kingship in Southeast Asia'.

30) Coedès, *Les États Hindouisés...*, pp. 191-4; Briggs, *The Ancient Khmèr Empire*, p. 110.

31) Coedès, *Les États Hindouisés...*, p. 193; Parmentier, *L'Art Khmèr Classique*[4] I, 334.

may have been drawn to Práḥ Vihãr because this isolated summit had been previously associated in some way with the Khmèr and their preoccupation with the mountain.

During the reign of Rājendravarman II (944–68), the work begun by Yaśovarman I was entirely rebuilt in laterite and brick, and the imposing first court, with the exception of the so-called 'libraries', was added to the ensemble. Under Jayavarman V (968–1001) the first and
26 second courts were rebuilt in sandstone. It is also believed that the hall of the second court, the east and west annexes, and the two 'libraries' in the first court were added at this time. In the reign of Sūryavarman I, from the beginning of the eleventh century to 1050, the so-called 'palaces' on the wings of the third *gopura* were constructed in sandstone; the first three *gopura* were entirely rebuilt, *nāga* balustrades erected, and the menhir-like pillars placed along the causeways. It also appears that under the reign of Sūryavarman I, Práḥ Vihãr acquired a new religious significance, its divinity, Śikhareśvara, apparently becoming a reincarnation of the deity Bhadreśvara.

During the reigns of Udayādityavarman II (1050–66) and Harshavarman III (1066–80) the sanctuary tower was reconstructed in sandstone in the Bàphûon style[32] in the form of a redented square *pràsàt* with a staged pyramid tower, the top of which was surmounted with an enormous coronation stone in the shape of a lotus.

During the first half of the twelfth century other architectural refinements were added to Práḥ Vihãr. This final work was carried out during the reign of one of the most famous of the Khmèr kings, Sūryavarman II (1113–50).[33] He was a great builder and apparently entrusted the supervision of his vast construction projects to his learned *guru* and minister, Divākara-paṇḍita. It is believed that this scholar-statesman conceived the idea of the incomparable Aṅkor Vàt, the construction of which was carried on for the better part of Sūryavarman's long reign.[34]

32) The Bàphûon style in Khmèr art and architecture developed during the middle and second half of the 11th century and took its name from a pyramid-temple called the Bàphûon erected by Udayādityavarman II as his *Vnaṃ Kantāl* at Yaśodharapura. For a full description of the Bàphûon and its style, see Briggs, *op. cit.*, pp. 171-3. The Bàphûon was the temple which especially excited the interest of Chou Ta-kwan. Pelliot, *Mémoires sur les Coutumes du Cambodge*, p. 11.

33) Parmentier, *L'Art Khmèr Classique*, I, 339, gives an outline of the various works undertaken at Práḥ Vihãr from Yaśovarman I to Sūryavarman II, which both Briggs and Black have generally followed.

34) Although Sūryavarman II and his preceptor Divākara-paṇḍita were intimately identified with Śivaism and various Śivaite temples, Viṣṇuism was in the ascendancy at this time. Aṅkor Vàt, therefore, was a Viṣṇuite temple. Nevertheless, there was a peculiar syncretism in the state religion of Kambujadeśa. Much as Hinduism, principally in its Śivaite form, and later Mahāyāna Buddhism, were successfully fused with the Older Megalithic beliefs of the Khmèr, so in later periods Theravāda Buddhism readily accommodated itself to the underlying animism of the peoples of Southeast Asia as well

Both the king and his gifted preceptor took considerable interest in the Śivaite mountain sanctuaries of Vàt Ph'u and Práḥ Vihãr. An inscription found at Práḥ Vihãr gives an interesting account of Sūryavarman's ascent to the throne. After his *Vraḥ Guru*, that is, Divākara-paṇḍita, had performed the royal anointment, the king made the prescribed sacrifices and bestowed rich presents. Divākara-paṇḍita then in turn made donations to the deities of various temples, significantly beginning with Śrī Bhadreśvara, the divinity at Vàt Ph'u. The *Vraḥ Guru* also made offerings of ornaments encrusted with precious stones to Śrī Śikhareśvara, Śiva of the Summit, the divinity at Práḥ Vihãr.[35]

As a result of the attention both Sūryavarman II and Divākara-paṇḍita devoted to Práḥ Vihãr, the imposing stairway and causeways were finished and modifications made in the central hall and the *gopura* of the first court. During the reign of Sūryavarman II Práḥ Vihãr was probably at the height of its beauty and popularity as a place of pilgrimage. Soon after his reign, however, the great temple began to be neglected, finally to be abandoned and taken over by the jungle.[36]

There were probably two reasons for the abandonment of Práḥ Vihãr.

as to their Hindu and Mahāyāna heritages. Such syncretism has been one of the significant characteristics of the religious development of this area, and had not Islam been able to adjust itself to the animistic, Hindu, and Buddhist sub-strata of Malaya and Indonesia, it would probably have achieved little success in those regions. It is not surprising, therefore, to find a syncretism of Viṣṇuism and Śivaism in the Kambujadeśa of Sūryavarman II. It was probably the learned Divākara-paṇḍita who brought about this merger and thereby was able to substitute Viṣṇu for Śiva as the essence of the *devarāja* cult. The Viṣṇu residing in Aṅkor Vàt, however, was not in reality the Viṣṇu of the *Trimūrti* in the classical Hindu pantheon. As Coedès (*Pour Mieux Comprendre Angkor*, Paris, 1947, p. 65) has explained, the deity of Aṅkor Vàt was King Sūryavarman II, who would be fully identified and united with Viṣṇu after his death and apotheosis. The image of Viṣṇu was, therefore, a portrait statue done in the likeness of Sūryavarman. The king was thus co-substantial with this particular Viṣṇu who dwelt in the king's mortuary shrine, or temple-tomb, decorated with graceful reliefs depicting the lovely *apsaras*, just as Viṣṇu, the Hindu deity of the *Trimūrti*, resided in his own heavenly palace attended by the same celestial courtesans. (See also, Coedès, 'Études Cambodgiennes', XXXIII, La Destination Funéraire des Grands Monuments Khmèr, *BEFEO*, XL, 316-43 concerning the discovery of the sarcophagi in Aṅkor Vàt and their significance.) In classical Hinduism, however, the *apsaras* more properly belong in Svarga, the heaven of Indra which lies on one of the sidereal planes beneath Vaikuṇṭha, the abode of Viṣṇu. The word *aṅkor* is a Khmèr corruption of the Sanskrit *nagara*, a city or capital. The word *vàt* (Thai *wat*) is a Khmèr and Thai term meaning a temple in the general sense. It appears to have been derived, like the word *thàt*, used in Laos to mean a temple, from the Sanskrit *dhātu*, a relic. With the possible exception of the fantastic Bantāy Čhmar, Aṅkor Vàt is the greatest religious edifice ever built by man. While the pyramids of Egypt undoubtedly contain a greater mass of stone in each structure, they were tombs, not temples. Exclusive of its moat, outer walls, entrance halls and causeways, the temple building of Aṅkor Vàt itself covers an area of about 48,000 square yards, compared with 4,700 square yards for the great Canterbury Cathedral. Reginald le May, *The Culture of South-East Asia* (London, 1954), pp. 134-5. Compared with Aṅkor Vàt, Práḥ Vihãr is a rather small structure, but in the aggregate of its various units it is larger than most Khmèr temples.

35) Coedès and Dupont, 'Les Stèles de Sdòk Kāk Thoṃ Phoṃ Sandak et Práḥ Vihãr', BEFEO, XLIII, 134 ff. give the text and translation of the stele relating to the offerings of gifts to the temples. Also Black, 'The Inscriptions of "Khao Práḥ Vihãr"', *Journal of the Siam Society*, XLVII, i, 29-37. A brief account is given in Briggs, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

36) It appears that soon after the reign of Jayavarman VII (1181-1215) the Khmèr not only abandoned Práḥ Vihãr but also Vàt Ph'u and their entire position north of the Daṅ Rèk mountains: Parmentier, *L'Art Khmèr Classique*, I, 339.

For one thing, the immediate successor of Sūryavarman II, Dharanīndravarman II (1150-60), was an ardent Mahāyāna Buddhist who was probably disinclined to take much interest in the Hinduist temples of his predecessors, especially one as remote and inaccessible as Práḥ Vihār. And secondly, in the following reign of Yaśovarman II (1160–65) there began a period of violent disorders in which Kambujadeśa was conquered and pillaged by the Čam. When the invading enemies were finally repulsed by the great Jayavarman VII (1181–1215), Mahāyāna Buddhism, with a new cult of the *Buddharāja*, had become firmly established as the state religion. Jayavarman VII was himself a devout Buddhist. Under his reign the fabulous city of Śrī Yaśodharapura reached a new if transitory era of grandeur and opulence. He was the greatest of all the Khmèr builders, erecting new temples and palaces, constructing vast irrigation projects which still excite our admiration, founding hospitals, and establishing an elaborate system of highways and post-stations. At the centre of Aṅkor Thoṃ, the last capital of Yaśodharapura, arose his greatest monument, the massive but magnificent Bàyon, each side of its fifty towers bearing the face of the sublime Lokeśvara, the Mahāyāna *Bodhisattva* with whom Jayavarman VII identified himself. It was the Yaśodharapura of this period that we know from the account of Chou Ta-kwan. Although he actually visited Aṅkor a century later, his descriptions of the great city and its vast temples and palaces would without doubt apply equally well to the reign of Jayavarman VII.

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By the time of Jayavarman VII, however, the great kingdom of Kambujadeśa was approaching its decline and ultimate end. Under this Mahāyāna Buddhist king the Khmèr were becoming less preoccupied with the Megalithic cult of the mountain. Other more pressing matters had come to engage their attention, as their empire began to be attacked from without by the rising power of the Thai and to be undermined from within by mounting unrest as a result of Jayavarman VII's exhausting construction projects and the spread of Theravāda Buddhism which had nothing in common with the politico-religious ideology of the Khmèr rulers. It remained for the Thai invasion and sack of Aṅkor in the fifteenth century to bring to a final end the fabulous empire of Kambujadeśa. Thereafter, the jungle occupied the awesome monuments of this unique civilization until they were to be 'discovered' in the nineteenth century by French explorers and archaeologists.[37]

[37]) Many of the Khmèr temples were not actually abandoned and it would be more appropriate to say that they were merely neglected as far as their physical maintenance was concerned. These great edifices of Cambodia were essentially a part of the mechanism of the Khmèr state, and when

the seat of Khmèr administration was moved from Aṅkor to the region south of the Tonlé Sap, in many instances these abandoned Hindu and Mahāyāna Buddhist buildings were taken over by the common people and used as temples for their newly-adopted religion—Theravāda Buddhism—with Buddhist images installed beside the *liṅga* of Śiva and the statues of Viṣṇu or Lokeśvara. Even today Hindu deities continue to receive veneration by Theravāda Buddhists in Siam, Cambodia, and Laos, where they are regarded as minor divinities or servants of the Lord Buddha.

Aṅkor Vàt was well known to the Thai after the abandonment of Yaśodharapura and, while not kept in repair, the temple was used by Thai and Cambodian Buddhists as a place of pilgrimage. Even the ruins of Práḥ Vihār are used for such a purpose today. One peculiar feature of Theravāda Buddhism, as practiced in Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos, is the widespread conviction that more merit is to be gained by building a new temple or pagoda than by repairing an old one about to collapse.

The great temple of Aṅkor Vàt is believed to have been visited by several Europeans prior to its 'discovery' in 1860 by the French explorer and naturalist Henri Mouhot. Strange as it may seem, Japanese pilgrims occasionally visited Aṅkor Vàt in the early years of the 17th century, being under the impression that this awe-inspiring monument was the ruins of the famous Jetavana Vihāra which, according to legend, was built at Magadha for the Lord Buddha by the wealthy Hindu merchant Sudatta. The third Tokugawa Shogun Iemitsu (徳川家光) actually sent the chief translator at Nagasaki, Shimano Kenryō (島野兼了) to Cambodia to make a survey of the supposed Jetavana monastery. Shimano visited Aṅkor some time in the second or early in the third decade of the 17th century. He apparently made a fairly accurate survey of the great temple, and on his return to Japan a drawing was made of Aṅkor Vàt on the basis of his measurements and descriptions. While this drawing shows marked Sino-Japanese characteristics in the architecture of the buildings, its measurements are accurate and the descriptive text on the drawing leaves little doubt that it depicts Aṅkor Vàt. A copy of the drawing is preserved in the Shōkōkan (彰考館), the famous library established at Mito by Tokugawa Mitsukuni (徳川光圀). Another interesting Japanese visitor to Aṅkor Vàt, who possibly accompanied Shimano on his expedition, was Morimoto Kazufusa (森本一房) who was also under the impression that Aṅkor was the Jetavana monastery. He left a votive inscription and four images of a *bodhisattva* in memory of his deceased father. The inscription, in Chinese ink, was made on a pillar in one of the galleries off the central terrace. It was discovered in 1927 by a Japanese journalist Chizuka Kintarō (遅塚金太郎) who wrote under the pen-name Reisui (麗水). Another brief Japanese inscription was subsequently discovered on the opposite face of this pillar. At the time of these Japanese visits Aṅkor Vàt was being used as a Buddhist temple.

These bits of historical curiosa are described in the following sources: Itō Chūta (伊東忠太), 'Gionjōja to Ankoru Watto' (祇園精舎とアンコルワット), *Kenchiku Zasshi* (建築雑誌), no. 313, 1912; Noël Peri, 'Essai sur les Relations du Japon et de l'Indochine aux XVIe et XXIIe Siècles, III, Un Plan Japonais d'Angkor Vat', *BEFEO*, XXIII, 119-26; Kuroita Katsumi (黒板勝美), 'Ankoru Watto Sekichū Kibun ni tsuite' (アンコルワット石柱記文に就いて), *Shigaku Zasshi* (史學雑誌), XLI, viii, August 1930, 974-6; Kuroita Katsumi also discussed this subject in an article entitled 'Nanyō ni okeru Nihon Kankei Shiryō Iseki ni tsuite' (南洋に於ける日本關係史料遺蹟に就いて), which was published in *Keimeikai Kōen-shū* (啓明會講演集), No. 27, December 1928, pp. 3-38; Victor Goloubew, *Religieux et Pèlerins en Terre Asie* (Hanoi, 1944); E. Gaspardone's review of Kuriota's article in BEFEO, XXX, 156-8; a note on the Chizuka's discovery of the inscription appeared in BEFEO, XXVII, 516-17. A number of old Japanese swords and sword guards have been found at Aṅkor Vàt. H. Parmentier, 'Notes d'Archéologie indochinoise', *BEFEO*, XXIII, plate xv, facing p. 282. Other Japanese pilgrims besides Shimano Kenryō and Morimoto Kazufusa visited Aṅkor Vàt in the second and third decades of the 17th century. Iwao Seiichi (岩生成一), *Nanyō Nihonmachi no Kenkyū* (南洋日本町の研究), 2nd ed. (Tōkyō, 1941), p. 108.

Another bit of historical curiosa related to Aṅkor Vàt is the indication that the Khmèr employed Chinese craftsmen around the beginning of the 14th century to carve additional reliefs in one of the galleries. Victor Goloubew, 'Artisans Chinois à Ankor Vàt', *BEFEO*, XXIV, 513-19. A stele with an inscription in Arabic was also found at Phnoṃ Bàkhèṅ, near Aṅkor Thoṃ. *BEFEO*, XXIV, 160 and plate no. xx.

THE GEORGE ERNEST MORRISON LECTURE IN ETHNOLOGY

The George Ernest Morrison Lecture in Ethnology was founded by Chinese residents in Australia in honour of the late Dr G. E. Morrison, a native of Geelong, Victoria, Australia.

The objects of the foundation of the lectureship were to honour for all time the memory of a great Australian who rendered valuable services to China, and also to stimulate interest in Australia in the art, science and literature of the Chinese Republic. The foundation of the lectureship had the official support of the Chinese Consulate-General, and was due in particular to the efforts of Mr William Liu, merchant, of Sydney; Mr William Ah Ket, barrister, of Melbourne; Mr F. J. Quinlan and Sir Colin MacKenzie, of Canberra. From the time of its inception until 1948 the lecture was associated with the Australian Institute of Anatomy, but in the latter year the responsibility for the management of the lectureship was taken over by the Australian National University, and the lectures delivered since that date have been given under the auspices of the University.

The following lectures have been delivered:

Inaugural	: **Dr W. P. Chen** (Consul-General for China in Australia), 'The Objects of the Foundation of the Lectureship, and a Review of Dr Morrison's Life in China', 10 May 1932.
Second	: **W. Ah Ket** (Barrister at Law), 'Eastern Thought, with More Particular Reference to Confucius', 3 May 1933.
Third	: **J. S. MacDonald** (Director, National Art Gallery, New South Wales), 'The History and Development of Chinese Art', 3 May 1934.
Fourth	: **Dr W. P. Chen** (Consul-General for China in Australia), 'The New Culture Movement in China', 10 May 1935.
Fifth	: **Dr Wu Lien-tah** (Director, National Quarantine Service, China), 'Reminiscences of George E. Morrison; and Chinese Abroad', 2 September 1936.
Sixth	: **Dr Chun-Jien Pao** (Consul-General for the Republic of China), 'China Today: With Special Reference to Higher Education', 4 May 1937.
Seventh	: **A. F. Barker** (Professor of Textile Industries, Chiao-Tung University, Shanghai, China), 'The Impact of Western Industrialism on China', 17 May 1938.
Eighth	: **Professor S. H. Roberts** (Vice-Chancellor of The University of Sydney), 'The Gifts of the Old China to the New', 5 June 1939.
Ninth	: His Grace the Archbishop of Sydney, **Howard Mowll**, 'West China as Seen through the Eyes of the Westerner', 29 May 1940.
Tenth	: **Dr W. G. Goddard** (President of the China Society of Australia), 'The Ming Shen. A Study in Chinese Democracy', 5 June 1941.
Eleventh	: **Professor D. B. Copland** (Vice-Chancellor, The Australian National University), 'The Chinese Social Structure', 27 September 1948.
Twelfth	: **Professor J. K. Rideout** (Department of Oriental Languages, University of Sydney), 'Politics in Medieval China', 28 October 1949.
Thirteenth	: **C. P. FitzGerald** (Visiting Reader in Oriental Studies, The Australian National University), 'The Revolutionary Tradition in China', 19 March 1951.
Fourteenth	: **The Rt Hon. H. V. Evatt** (Leader of the Opposition in the Commonwealth Parliament), 'Some Aspects of Morrison's Life and Work', 4 December 1952.
Fifteenth	: **Lord Lindsay of Birker** (Department of International Affairs, The Australian National University), 'China and the West', 20 October 1953.
Sixteenth	: **M. Titiev** (Professor of Anthropology, University of Michigan), 'Chinese Elements in Japanese Culture', 27 July 1954.
Seventeenth	: **H. Bielenstein** (Professor of Oriental Studies, Canberra University College), 'Emperor Kuang-Wu (A.D. 25-57) and the Northern Barbarians', 2 November 1955.
Eighteenth	: **Dr Leonard B. Cox** (Honorary Curator of Oriental Art, National Gallery of Victoria), 'The Buddhist Temples of Yün-Kang and Lung-Mên', 17 October 1956.
Nineteenth	: **Otto P. N. Berkelbach van der Sprenkel**, 'The Chinese Civil Service', 4 November 1957.
Twentieth	: **A. R. Davis** (Professor of Oriental Studies, University of Sydney), 'The Narrow Lane: Some Observations on the Recluse in Traditional Chinese Society', 19 November 1958.
Twenty-first	: **C. N. Spinks** (Counsellor of the Embassy of the United States of America), 'The Khmèr Temple of Práḥ Vihār', ~~6 October 1959.~~