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REVIEWS

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**Art Styles in Thailand: A Selection from National Provincial Museums, and an Essay
in Conceptualization**

*Piriya Krairiksh, with an appendix by HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn
Bangkok, Department of fine Arts, 1977
in Thai and English, illus., 236 + x pp., 180 baht*

TWO VIEWS OF A NEW CLASSIFICATION OF ART STYLES

I

This superbly illustrated catalogue, with its careful description of each of the sculptures presented at a Bangkok exhibition in 1977, is preceded by an introduction advocating a novel system of classification which is sure to provoke considerable discussion. And it is in this catalogue that the system receives its first implementation. The present review will be mainly concerned with the introduction, in which the new proposals are set out. The author is already known for his competent analysis of the Chula Paton bas-reliefs¹, and the details of his catalogue leave no doubt as to his thorough familiarity with the Indian art history which forms the basis of any serious study of the religious sculptures of Thailand. It is with the greater regret, therefore, that I do not feel able to extend the welcome to his new proposals that I should have wished. However, Dr. Piriya also includes some quite acceptable propositions, but these are by no means so new or unacknowledged as he apparently thinks them to be. Nevertheless their reiteration may serve a useful purpose.

The author's thinking emerges clearly enough in the first four pages, which are concerned mainly with his wish to have the term "Môn art" substituted for "Dvāravatī period or school". While he admits that it may be desirable to relate art styles to historical periods that are strongly documented, that is not the case with Dvāravatī. To this we may reply that we know enough of

¹ *Buddhist Folk Tales Depicted at Chula Pathon Cedi* (Bangkok 1974).

the approximate position of Dvāravatī, and of its duration from late sixth to eleventh centuries A.D., to attach a definite style of art to this political entity without having to be in possession of a chronicle of events such as we possess for the Khmer empire or the kingdom of Ayudhya. Of course he is writing in the rather narrow context of an exhibition of sculpture and for art historians. But there are also historians of wider interests, and archeologists. They may want to study such entities as Dvāravatī or Śrīvijaya, **in all their aspects**, despite, or more likely because, they are at present less well documented than it is to be hoped they will become.

What is really fatal to Dr. Piriya's primary conception is that we cannot be certain that all that appears to be similar to Mōn art is in fact the work of Mōns. In particular there can be no justification for labelling the sculptures and other Buddhist art objects found at Yarang, Patani, as Mōn art. There is no reason to suppose that the inhabitants of Patani were ever Mōns. Yarang is almost certainly the site of the capital of the ancient state of Lankasuka, and the objects found there are best described as Lankasuka art. The same difficulty occurs with the art of Fu-nan, whose people cannot certainly be described as Mōns or as Khmers, though they were probably a Mōn-Khmer speaking people. So to describe the ivory comb from Chan Sen, illustrated at the beginning of the catalogue, as "Mōn art" is questionable, whereas to label it "art of Fu-nan" provides a clear distinction from its successor the art of Dvāravatī. Similarly to use the aspirated form "Thai" to include Chiengsen art is inaccurate, for the people of Chiengsen were a different branch of the Tai race from the Thai (Siamese) of Sukhothai and Ayudhya.

The author divides his Mōn art into a number of styles according to provenance. This seems to me to be acceptable only in such well-determined cases as Fa Daet style or Lamphun style, which may be held to correspond to similar well-marked divisions of Khmer art. But we are all too often concerned with images lacking documented context whose true place of origin is unknown. Thus we have in Cat. No. 6 a standing Buddha from Buriram, classified as "Mōn art, style of Buriram", which in fact is almost identical with one in the Bangkok Museum from Śī Mahā Phot². The author himself recognizes that the latter belongs to the same "iconographical series", but according to his system it would have to be labelled "Mōn art, style of Śī Mahā Phot". Indeed on the very next page the author recognizes the existence of such a style in its Hindu facies, and I shall return to it below.

On the other hand the term "Mōn art, central Thailand style", under which Dr. Piriya classifies several of the exhibits, is simply too wide to be meaningful. In the present state of knowledge (which controlled excavation should improve) Dupont's typological classification is surely preferable. While Dupont realized that each of his Buddhist sculptural groups was probably derived from a particular Indian prototype, and made at a specific centre, such as Nakhon Pathom or Lop Buri, identification of the atelier concerned is not at present possible. But he was able to indicate the direction of change within each group³.

² P. Dupont, *L'archéologie mōne de Dvāravatī* (Paris, 1959), fig. 373; H.G. Quaritch Wales, *Dvāravatī* (London, 1969), pl. 70 B.

³ The recent excavations at In Buri, where unfinished images have been found, suggest that here is one site where a specific atelier can be identified.

I return now to the Viṣṇu, Cat. No. 7, "style of Śī Mahā Phot", which is Dr. Piriya's only example of the long-robed mitred Viṣṇus which account for the greater part of the Hindu facies of what he calls Mōn art. He actually notes that this statue "is related" to the images found at Wieng Sra, which however he would have to describe as "Mōn art, style of Wieng Sra". Apart from the doubt as to whether the people of Wieng Sra were ever Mōns, both the Viṣṇu illustrated as Cat. No. 7 and the Wieng Sra Viṣṇus belong to what Dupont classified as Group A of his three groups of long-robed Viṣṇus⁴. These have been found not only at Śī Mahā Phot, central Thailand and several places in the Peninsula, but also in Khmer Chen-la! More recently Professor O'Connor has shown that the characteristics which Group A images have in common are due not to provenance but to their close post-Gupta affinities. Again it was on the basis of Dupont's **typological** classification that O'Connor was able to elucidate the nature of the changes from Group A to Group B⁵.

With the pre-Angkorian statues found in recent years on the Khorat Plateau we have the making of a similarly confused situation if Dr. Piriya is to classify them by their find-spots, as of Pra Khon Chai and Lam Plai Mat styles (p. 39). In fact the images found at both these places (the former collected in the crypt of a later temple) have been identified by Boisselier as belonging to the well-known pre-Angkorian style of Kompong Prah⁶.

One must also take note of the sort of misunderstanding that can be caused by the author's exaggerated attachment to provenance, even where the place of origin is actually known. This occurs in the case of the head and torso, Cat. No. 52, which was found *in situ* at Wat Pra Pai Luang, Sukhothai (first state). It is described as "Thai art, style of Sukhothai". How misleading this is will be appreciated immediately one recalls that its pronounced Chiengsen characteristics are a prime piece of evidence for the anteriority of the early style of Chiengsen to that of Sukhothai. Indeed the author himself refers to its resemblance to an image in the Pagán Museum, Pagán being a likely source of the Chiengsen style. It is necessary to realize that early Chiengsen-style images did not have to be made exclusively at Chiengsen, any more than Ayudhyan style images were made only at Ayudhya. Indeed the latter were so widely made that they have been called "the national style"⁷.

In referring to the sculptures from the Peninsula, other than those above mentioned, as "Peninsular art", Dr. Piriya seems obsessed with the desire to ignore the influence of the great empire of Śrīvijaya. So we have the remarkable statement that "as an historical entity the existence of Śrīvijaya is attested by one inscription found at Nakhon Śī Thammarat bearing a date equivalent to 775 A.D." (p. 45). Even if recent excavations in the Palembang district have failed to find a site earlier than 1000 A.D. (and such negative evidence can never be finally convincing), the existence of a Śrīvijayan empire can hardly be reduced to the evidence of the

4 P. Dupont, "Viṣṇu mitrés de l' Indochine Occidentale", *BEFEO*, XLI no. 2, 1941.

5 S.J. O'Connor, *Hindu Gods of Peninsular Siam* (1972), chapter IV.

6 J. Boisselier, "Notes sur l'art du bronze dans l'ancien Cambodge", *Artibus Asiae*, vol. XXIX pt. 4 (1967).

7 Luang Boribal and A.B. Griswold, "Sculpture of peninsular Siam in the Ayudhya period", *JSS*, vol. XXXVIII pt. 2 (1951).

inscription of 775 A.D. However, it is on this premise that the author is able to give exaggerated importance to works showing Cham characteristics, and the relatively late Pallava and Cola sculptures, all most probably attributable to the requirements of foreign merchants which, like the Khmer occupation of the Chaiya region in the eleventh century, had no bearing on the main efflorescence of Peninsular art from the eighth to the twelfth centuries. An objective study of all the evidence can only ascribe this to the influence of Śrīvijaya, both Mahāyānist and Hindu.

Of course, within this compass I have no objection to the author's desire to distinguish a number of styles proper to the Peninsula, as for example of Chaiya⁸. This is precisely what I have myself envisaged as work for the future art historian⁹. But so long as there is uncertainty as to true places of origin this will have to be undertaken on the typological lines worked out by Dupont in the case of the art of Dvāravatī.

I have remarked above that the author also makes a few proposals which I find quite acceptable but which lack the flavour of novelty. That the religious sculpture of Dvāravatī, like that of Sukhothai, had a Hindu facies, represented more particularly by the long-robed mitred Viṣṇus of the Prachin valley, was certainly stressed by me in my book *Dvāravatī*¹⁰. Then again others have already made us aware of the need to recognize a Chiangmai style, besides that of Chiengsen. As to the U Thong style, which the author states is a misnomer for the early Ayudhyan, that is a fact that has surely been long appreciated. I have myself always thought that a clear distinction ought to be made between purely Khmer works of art found in Thailand, ranging from the pre-Angkorian to the style of the Bayon, and the Lop Buri school which is a product of the interaction of Khmer and the preceding Môn. However, this does not seem to be accepted in some quarters, and the author's insistence on it may be useful if it leads to further consideration of this particular question.

I must once more adopt the role of adverse critic in regard to what Dr. Piriya has to say of the later phase of Thai culture. Certainly the object of the early Bangkok intelligentsia was to revive and perpetuate every aspect of the vanished glories of Ayudhya. But to say that stylistic changes in a traditional art "are generally the results of such external factors as political upheaval and social disruption" (p. 44) is contrary to one of the best-established principles of culture change. Where a foreign culture has something attractive to offer, this can be easily and peacefully introduced by a very few teachers, as happened in the early Indianization of Southeast Asia. It happened similarly in the mid-nineteenth century with the introduction of perspective in Thai painting. Later in the very same paragraph the author states that in the latter part of the nineteenth century "there was wholesale acceptance of Western culture", rather an exaggeration one might comment, but certainly accomplished quite without political upheaval and social disruption.

⁸ This should not be confused with the post-Śrīvijayan school of Chaiya identified by Dupont ("Le Buddha de Grāhi et l'école de Caiya", *BEFEO*, vol. XLII [1942], pp. 105f.) and further studied by Griswold (*loc. cit.*). An example is shown in Cat. No. 55.

⁹ H.G. Quaritch Wales, *The Malay Peninsula in Hindu Times* (London, 1976), p. 119.

¹⁰ P. 124. The continued accretions of Indian influence seem to have kept the facial features relatively unchanged.

In sum, I must conclude that the author's main contentions appear to be overambitious. To me there seems to be no justification for the sudden imposition of a new and highly questionable system of classification on the arts of Thailand. Modifications in detail of the present system will certainly be called for, but they should be introduced gradually as and when the progress of knowledge, largely through controlled excavation, tends to clarify the picture.

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II

For the Seventh Conference of the International Association of Historians of Asia, held at Bangkok, Thailand in August 1977, the Fine Arts Department arranged a special exhibition of a selection of ancient objects from National Provincial Museums, cataloguing them after a new classification scheme proposed by Dr. Piriya Krairiksh. The book under review is the outcome of that exhibition.

Dr. Piriya's proposals for the classification of Thai art, published for the first time in this book, should be evaluated according to whether they are reasonable, provided with concrete evidence, made to facilitate the study for students or on the contrary to render it more complicated. One should bear in mind that the classification of art styles is usually made long after the art objects were produced in order to facilitate the study of art history. Artists normally produced their own works after the taste of their own period without thinking of the art style.

Dr. Piriya says that the terms "period (of history)" and "school (of art)" should not be interchangeable. I agree totally with him on this point. When I came back from study abroad in 1953 I tried to introduce the word "style" instead of "period" in the Thai language but the Thai public had already been used to the word "period". The word "style" would puzzle them and would make them think that the art object was made in imitation of another object in an earlier period. I therefore was not successful in introducing the change and would normally use the word "Dvāravatī art" instead of "Dvāravatī period" or "Dvāravatī style" in the Thai language. Dr. Piriya suggests that the use of the term "Dvāravatī" might make the reader misunderstand that the political power of the Dvāravatī kingdom spread to many parts of Thailand such as the northeast. But I think if one will use the phrase "the influence of the Dvāravatī art spread to northeastern Thailand", nobody will misunderstand it so far as political influence is concerned. On page 37 of the book where it is stated that Dvāravatī art spread to Yala in southern Thailand, it is in reality to Yarang District in the Province of Pattani.

Dr. Piriya proposes that the word "Dvāravatī art" should be substituted by "Mon art". I totally disagree with him as the use of the ethnic name might make the reader misunderstand that that type of art was produced especially by the people of that race. Though one can admit that there was quite a number of Mon people in central Thailand in the old days, as a few dedication stone inscriptions in ancient Mon language have been discovered, one has never found such documents in northeastern Thailand. Those that have been so far found are only Mon words mixed with the Khmer language or the name of some *jātaka* which might have appeared there through Mon culture and Theravāda Buddhism from central Thailand. One example can be cited from the Ananda Chedi in Burma which was constructed by command of King Kyanzittha, the second son of King Aniruddha. There exist terracotta plaques decorating the base of the monument bearing Mon inscriptions. This is because during that period

the Burmese had just received Mon culture, and King Kyanzitha especially admired it. Dr. Piriya, I think, probably would not say that the Ananda Chedi belongs to Mon art. The Dvāravatī art at Yarang, Pattani, does not prove either that there were the Mon people at that time in southern Thailand. It might just again be the spread of Mon culture down south from central Thailand. Dr. Quaritch Wales, in discussing a Buddha image found at Yarang, Pattani, has given the opinion that the image does not exactly look like those found in central Thailand.

Dr. Piriya also suggests that the Dvāravatī art wherever it is found, should be called the Mon art of that local school. I disagree with him again on this point because before one can set up a style or a school, one should have found first enough examples of common characteristics. One cannot just classify one piece as a school. Otherwise in Thailand we might have 72 schools of art (from 72 provinces) or more if one will go down to individual districts. Dr. Piriya might, however, just wish to register them first and then try to study their common characteristics in order to form styles or schools afterwards. If this is the case then one can say that he works from Z to A instead of from A to Z.

The reviewer has coined the phrase "ancient Hindu images in Thailand" for a group of early Hindu images in order to differentiate them from Dvāravatī statues which are mostly Buddhist. Though these two groups have been found in the same place and might have been produced at the same time, one has never found one early Hindu image that has the same facial characteristics as those Dvāravatī sculptures of the middle (native) phase: a flat face, curved and connected eyebrows, protruding eyes, a flat nose and thick lips. If they belong to the same school of art, at least these facial features should have existed commonly among both groups. These early ancient Hindu images (Vishṇu wearing a cylindrical hat) have never been found in southern Burma which is believed to have been the habitat of the Mons. They also resemble Khmer sculpture (Vishṇu from Kompong Cham Kau) more than the Mon art. For Cat. No. 7, of which Dr. Piriya says that the earrings resemble strongly the Mon earrings, one can notice that they are much smaller and might reflect only the Dvāravatī influence. Regarding Buddha and Hindu images of the Sukhothai period, the reviewer has not separated them into two different art groups because their facial features and expression are the same, the difference lying only in the dress and ornaments. Therefore the reviewer has not thought of separating sculptures according to religious differences.

It would be rather interesting to know how Dr. Piriya would classify those early Hindu images found at Si Tep in the Province of Phetchabun, northern central Thailand. At the town of Si Tep no Mon inscriptions have been found, but a Sanskrit inscription mentioning King Bhavavarman of Cambodia about the middle of the seventh century A.D. has been discovered. Those who agree with Dr. Piriya's theory propose that the art at Si Tep should be labelled as Mon-Khmer. This is rather subjective and should not be used as principles in art history nor archeology. Otherwise soon we will have as well Indian-Mon and Mon-Thai arts which will be totally subjective and create nothing but confusion.

As for the word "Lop Buri art", the reviewer admits that it is now not a very convenient term to use as we have expanded it to cover the art resembling the Khmer artistic expression

from the seventh to the fourteenth centuries A.D. instead of between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries as before. The term has also been used to cover the Khmer works of art found in Thailand. The reviewer therefore welcomes any suggestions from scholars to coin a new, appropriate name, but at the same time he disagrees with the use of the word "Khmer art", suggested by Dr. Piriya, as it might make people misunderstand that this type of art was produced only by the Khmer people. In Thailand it might have been fabricated by the Mon or the Thai after the Khmer prototype. The French expert on Khmer art, Professor Boisselier, also differs on this issue. He explains that the works of art in Thailand resembling the Khmer art have their own special characteristics up to the point that they should not be labelled as "Khmer art". He cites as an example the octagonal stone window-balustrades found at Prasat Panom Wan, Nakhon Ratchasima which have never been found in Cambodia. The epithet "provincial Khmer art" is also opposed by the eminent scholar because the word "provincial" usually contains a pejorative meaning. Professor Boisselier explains that during some periods Khmer-derived art in Thailand was even more remarkable than that in the Khmer capital. He cites again as another example a stone lintel from Prasat Ban Noi, Wathananakhon District in the Province of Prachin Buri, which according to him is even more beautiful than the Khmer lintels of the contemporary Prei Kmeng style (the second half of the seventh century). As for the word "Lop Buri art" which also covers the Khmer works of art in Thailand, the reviewer thinks that it is very difficult to separate these art objects into two distinct groups. Sometimes they are hardly distinguishable; for instance, there is one stone Buddha head in the Bangkok National Museum, which if sculpted in Cambodia, would have been the head of Prajñāpāramitā, because of the feminine facial expressions of the Bayon style. But here it is known as a Buddha head. Should we classify it as an example of Khmer art, or a Lop Buri object? This classification must be worked out piece by piece. However, if anybody has the ability to do so, the reviewer would be glad to listen to his opinion.

For Thai art, Dr. Piriya suggests that it should be classified according to locality, such as Thai art of Chiang Mai style, Sukhothai style, Kamphaeng Phet style or Ayutthaya style, etc. This type of classification will again create so many styles that it would be tremendously confusing for students. The reviewer is of the opinion that the former classification into broad styles such as those of Chiang Saen or Lan Na, Sukhothai, U Thong, Ayutthaya and Bangkok are already convenient, and if we have enough antiquities of the same characteristics we can subdivide them again into smaller schools without any difficulty. In his classification Dr. Piriya combines the U Thong and Ayutthaya styles into the same group. Now the reviewer would like to ask the reader to examine Cat. Nos. 56 and 57 in the book. One will see that they do not possess the same characteristics. The first one has received influence from Khmer art, and used to be classified as U Thong B. The second figure belongs to the Ayutthaya style imitating the Sukhothai characters. But according to Dr. Piriya, they both belong to the same style and the same period, the difference being only the provenance. How much perplexity will this new classification create among students? The reviewer again agrees that the term "U Thong" is not much justified either and welcomes new suggestions, but to incorporate it into the Ayutthaya style is not feasible as the reader might think that it dates only from the construction of the city of Ayutthaya from 1350 onward.

It is even more surprising that Dr. Piriya says that the Bangkok style originated from the middle of the nineteenth century onward, and proposes that the art preceding that period should be labelled "Ayutthaya style". The reviewer would like to ask the reader to consider here that for the phrase "Ayutthaya style of the First Reign of Bangkok", and "Bangkok art of the First Reign in imitation of Ayutthaya style", which one will be easier to understand? More than that, in the Third Reign in the early nineteenth century, Chinese art was so influential that the *ubosoth* and *viharn* of that period have no roof decorations, and the round or octagonal column became a square pillar without any capital. Did this change occur during the 'Ayutthaya period', and does Dr. Piriya call it 'Ayutthaya style'?

For the art of southern Thailand, the reviewer agrees with Dr. Piriya that there are many styles and they should be studied according to their prototypes. However, if one believes in the late Professor George Coedès's theory about the Śrīvijaya kingdom, one must admit that Śrīvijaya spread its power up to southern Thailand from 775 A.D. (from an inscription) and that in the middle of the twelfth century Khmer power extended only to Grahi or Chaiya (after the Chinese Sung chronicle). In 1183 a bronze Buddha image in the attitude of subduing Māra under the *nāga* was cast at Wat Wieng, Chaiya, in the Province of Surat Thani. Though this image displays some Khmer influences, the local characteristics exist such as the pleated end of the robe over the left shoulder and the plain cranial protuberance with a halo in the form of a *bodhi* leaf attached in front. If we would not label this type of art as Śrīvijaya, what should we call it? One must also remember that the name of the king who had this image cast resembles that of the king of Malāyu on the island of Sumatra, which is believed to be the centre of the Śrīvijaya kingdom during that period. In 1225 Śrīvijaya still controlled Chia-lo-hsi or Grahi (Chaiya; from Chu-fan-chih of Chao Ju-kua). It is therefore rather difficult to deny the existence of Śrīvijaya in southern Thailand and not to call the art of that period Śrīvijayan art. The reviewer would also like to express his opinion that the original classification of Śrīvijaya art was not based mainly on Mahāyana Buddhist antiquities. If one will enter the Śrīvijaya room of the Bangkok National Museum, one will notice the image of Śiva which has also been labelled as belonging to Śrīvijaya art. In any case, the reviewer still agrees with Dr. Piriya that the study of Śrīvijaya art or the art of southern Thailand should be based on its prototypes, and the right-hand image on the cover of Dr. Piriya's book should be classified as Chaiya school as it is already contemporary with the Ayutthaya period.

In conclusion the reviewer thinks that regarding the study of art history, although the main research is focused upon the history of art and its evolution, it must in the end be synchronized with historical periods. One cannot separate them totally. The use of ethnic name for the art style might be easily misleading, and the most important thought to consider is whether it is worthwhile to change the name that has been used for a long time. Will it create better understanding or confusion? The example might be given here of Gothic art in Europe, which is now known not to have been created by the Goths. Yet, the name has not been changed because of the popularity and the general use of the term.

The objects on display in the book will be reviewed below according to the catalogue numbers of the photographs. Only differing opinions from Dr. Piriya's ideas will be mentioned, excluding the photographs already discussed. When the reviewer went to Paris in early November 1977, he discussed Dr. Piriya's book with Professor Boisselier. So the following contents will also contain some of Professor Boisselier's ideas.

Cat. No. 1: The reviewer agrees that the influence of the Indian Gupta art exists, and the work might be dated around the fifth century. But since only one piece has been discovered, it is not sure whether it should be classified as belonging to Mon art or as an Indian object imported into Thailand.

Cat. Nos. 2-4: The date of the sixth century might be too early; a better dating would be around the seventh, for the following reasons. *Cat. No. 2:* The image of Skanda is carved from sandstone which was popular in Khmer workmanship and during the Lop Buri period. During the Dvāravatī period, limestone was much preferred. The reviewer would therefore like to classify this image among the ancient Hindu image group. For workmanship, if one compares it to the image of Skanda at Angkor Borei in Cambodia which dates from about the sixth century, one will see that the Skanda in Thailand is much superior. Therefore the seventh century might be a preferable date. *Cat. No. 3:* The necklace resembles strongly that of the image of Sūrya at Si Tep, and the belt of Umā or Lakshmī at Koh Krieng in the Khmer Sambor Prei Kuk style (first half of the seventh century). Therefore their dates should be more or less contemporary. *Cat. No. 4:* The reviewer thinks that it should also be attributed to the seventh century because of the Indian Pallava style influence.

Cat. No. 7: If the image is at the end of the series of Vishṇu wearing a cylindrical hat (according to the Thai text), its age should have been about the eighth or ninth century.

Cat. No. 9: The lintel in the Khmer Sambor Prei Kuk style should have the figure of *makara* at each end, but here it is replaced by the figure of a griffin; therefore it should have been classified into the early Khmer Prei Kmeng style (middle of the seventh century). It should also be noted that the middle parts of the three medallions on the centre of the lintel were originally plain and not carved.

Cat. No. 10: Professor Boisselier's idea is that it is quite difficult to date. He would attribute it to about the eighth century.

Cat. No. 11: Professor Boisselier thinks that it should be dated in the Khmer late Kulen or early Prah Ko styles, about the middle of the ninth century, as the floral designs form the *kāla* face as well as the garland or the body of the *nāga*, pointing to the strong influence of the Khmer Kompong Prah style (eighth century) even though the *nāga* announces already the Prah Ko style. The lintel therefore does not correspond to the new inscription which was found at Prasat Panom Wan and deciphered by H.R.H. Princess Sirindhorn as published in the appendix of the book. Professor Boisselier says that that inscription concerns another stone lintel which

has been preserved at the Fourth Fine Arts Department Branch, at Phimai, Nakhon Ratchasima Province. That red sandstone lintel was also found at Prasat Panom Wan. It is a rather low piece of lintel at the centre of which represents Vishṇu riding on Garuḍa who is holding the tails of two *nāga*. The three heads of each *nāga* appear at each end of the lintel. Above the bodies of the *nāga* are dancing angels and *narasiṃha*. Professor Boisselier suggests that this last lintel really belongs to the Khmer Bakhaeng style (late ninth century) and corresponds to the inscription deciphered by the Princess, which is dated 891.

Cat. No. 12: The wavy lines of the monastic dress falling from the left wrist of this Buddha image denote the influence of the Indian Gupta style (*circa* fourth-sixth centuries). Therefore this image should have been carved in the seventh rather than the eighth century. The *tribhaṅga* posture also denotes its early date. Professor Boisselier classifies this standing image in the Śrīvijaya style.

Cat. No. 13: The reviewer does not understand why Dr. Piriya classifies this image as “Mon art, central Thailand style”. Since it was found in the crypt of the main *prang* of Wat Ratchaburana, Ayutthaya, it could have been brought from any part of Thailand, for instance from the northeast.

Cat. No. 14: The left hand is placed upon the right one which probably originated from the wrong carving of the mould. Though it cannot be seen quite clearly in this photograph, it can be easily distinguished from other Buddha images made from the same mould.

Cat. No. 25: The reviewer still holds to the idea that the face of this image is much softer than that of the Pāla Buddha image No. 381 in *The Art of Indian Asia*, vol. II, by H. Zimmer. He would like to think that the influence on this image came more from the Indian Gupta and post-Gupta styles, and the date should have been seventh-eighth centuries rather than Dr. Piriya’s tenth century.

Cat. No. 26: The date should have been about the eleventh century.

Cat. No. 27: Professor Boisselier suggests that the image belongs to the Khmer Baphuon style (eleventh century).

Cat. No. 30: Professor Boisselier says that though this image imitates the Khmer Angkor Vat style (early twelfth century), it was probably cast in the thirteenth or fourteenth century.

Cat. No. 33: According to Professor Boisselier, such a beautiful image should not have been attributed to “provincial art”.

Cat. No. 34: It should have also been explained that the image receives the Indian Pāla influence *via* the town of Pagan in Burma.

Cat. Nos. 38-39: Professor Boisselier maintains that they belong to the Khmer Angkor Vat style, as can be proved from an esthetic point of view and the details of the ornaments. One should also notice the sharp ridge and the slenderness of the legs in contrast to the short and stout ones of the Khmer Bayon style (*Cat. No. 43*). Five of these images, both male and female, were found in a monument called San Ta Pha Daeng at Sukhothai. They are therefore probably not figures of door guardians.

Cat. No. 40: This head was probably carved locally at Prasat Muang Singh, Kanchanaburi, as it was carved from red sandstone and not from gray sandstone as the other sculptures of the Khmer Bayon style found at the same site. It is rather difficult to know whether it was carved by a Khmer artist or a local artisan.

Cat. No. 45: Professor Boisselier says that this sculpture cannot be classified as Khmer because the posture, ornaments and symbols have never existed in Khmer art.

Cat. No. 47: This image was found in the crypt of the main *prang* of Wat Mahathat, Ayutthaya. If one will follow Dr. Piriya's principles, it should have been labelled as "Thai art, Ayutthaya style" rather than "Thai art, Lop Buri style".

Cat. No. 49: Dr. Piriya classifies this image in the twelfth century by comparing it to Buddha images at Nāgapaṭṭinam in southern India. This supposition is totally opposed by the reviewer as the estheticism is totally different. The Buddha image at Nāgapaṭṭinam wears the same kind of monastic dress, but the end of the robe always exists on the left shoulder and a flame-like halo appears on the cranial protuberance. This image the reviewer thinks bears Indian Amarāvātī influence (second-fourth centuries) in the monastic dress, and derives its slenderness of the body from the Indian Gupta style (fourth-sixth centuries). The reviewer therefore thinks that the image should be attributed to the fifth-sixth centuries and should be classified as an early Buddha image in southern Thailand.

Cat. No. 52: This image is probably seated in a folded-leg posture (*virāsana*) like other stucco Buddha images at Wat Pra Pai Luang, Sukhothai, rather than a crossed-leg one (*vajrāsana*), and was probably moulded later than 1220.

Cat. No. 59: This image is much more beautiful than those inscribed Buddha images in Mr. A.B. Griswold's book. It probably was cast before the late fifteenth century.

Cat. No. 66: The Sukhothai influence in this image should have been mentioned.

Cat. No. 67: The end of the robe over the left shoulder may not necessarily be the end of a *saṃghāṭi* (shawl), or the end of the uppergarment (*civara* or *uttarāsaṅga*), as is stated in the catalogue. The back part of the image should have been examined for verification.

Cat. No. 69 : The term "Peninsular art, south Indian influence" should not have been used. These images were probably imported into Thailand from southern India.

Cat. No. 73: Should it not be worded in Thai language as "the attitude of calming the ocean" ?

Cat. No. 76: Should it indeed be classified as "Thai art, Nakhon Ratchasima style", as the image could have been brought quite easily from Ayutthaya or carved at Nakhon Ratchasima in the Ayutthayan style?

Cat. No. 77: The reviewer disagrees in classifying this image as "Thai art, Ayutthaya style" because from the Ayutthaya period Buddha images are not Buddha's disciple figures wearing monastic dress decorated with floral patterns. This type of *civara* exists

only in the Bangkok period. Therefore it should have been classified as belonging to the Bangkok period.

Cat. No. 78: This, as *Cat. No. 76*, should be classified as belonging to the late Ayutthaya or early Bangkok styles.

Cat. No. 79: The floral design which exists on the lower part of the frame and the base of this sculpture was very popular during the Third and Fourth Reigns of Bangkok, so this image should have been classified as Bangkok style although the general characteristics still follow those of Ayutthaya.

Cat. No. 80: At the end of the Ayutthaya period, the base line of the architecture was always curved. This characteristic disappeared at the beginning of the Bangkok period, probably from the Second Reign onward. This throne with a straight base line was probably erected at the command of the Prince of the Palace to the Front, in the Third Reign. It should therefore be classified as Bangkok style.

This review is written by the reviewer in order to "provoke discussion and encourage young art historians to put more effort into study and research into Thailand's art history", as stated in the foreword of the Director General of the Fine Arts Department at the beginning of this book. Let us hope that his wish will be fulfilled.

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