

**ABSTRACTS*****Travel to Siam, 1904***

*Louis FINOT, director of the École française d'Extrême-Orient.*

Upon his arrival in Rangoon, Louis Finot makes a series of courtesy visits to influential members of the European community to develop his network of contacts (and that of the young academic institution he heads) in Burma. Once impregnated with the Shwedagon Pagoda thanks to the archaeologist Charles Duroiselle, he rushes to discover the ancient Burmese royal capitals: Pegu, Mandalay (where he is puzzled by the Khmer bronzes of the Mahāmouni pagoda) and Pagan, more attracted by the archaeological remains and their epigraphs than by the contemporary heirs of the fallen kingdoms.

***1940-1947: the First Political Crisis of the French School of Far-Eastern Studies***

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A period of great turbulence began at the end of the Second World War for the École française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO): like for the whole Indochina, the Japanese coup on March 9, 1945 was a turning point in its history. Driven out of its historical premises in Hanoi, which had been taken over by a Vietnamese institution whose missions overlapped with those of the EFEO, its staff numbers reduced by the departure of a large part of its employees to this new scientific institution, the EFEO underwent the first crisis of its history.

***Lao Epigraphy and historiography: the case of an inscription from Wat Vixun relating to Phra Bang***

*Michel LORRILLARD, Associate professor, École française d'Extrême-Orient*

If Lao chronicles were sometimes inspired by the text of certain stone inscriptions, it is obvious that epigraphic sources were often themselves copies of administrative acts engraved on other lighter and more mobile supports, notably precious metal sheets. A very interesting insight into this type of ancient practice is provided by several documents relating to the donations made in the early 16th century to the famous Phra Bang statue and to the Wat Vixun (Luang Prabang) that was built to house it. While the

complete original acts have disappeared, in particular the foundation stele of the temple, the importance of the subject was such that collective memory has preserved in other forms most of the stipulations of the time. A short inscription on schist at Wat Vixun, long forgotten, recalls certain essential decisions and must have had a secondary function. These same decisions are retained in a much more precise manner in various texts on palm leaves, notably in the hagiographic tradition relating to Phra Bang, whose composition itself dates from the 16th century.

***A historical presentation of Cambodia by Western maps: About the weak echo of Angkor in the 15<sup>th</sup> century to the French Protectorate in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.***

*Nasir ABDOUL-CARIME, president of the Association for Exchange and Training in Khmer Studies (AEFEK).*

As a historical seismogram, the analysis of European maps from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries illustrates the increase in the geographical knowledge of these newcomers. Beyond, it reveals that the dynamism of “European discoveries” in the Far Eastern part of the Indian Ocean was shaped by military, diplomatic, economic, and even religious commitments. As a corollary to this heuristic approach, the exploitation of cartographic sources also contributes to the historical knowledge of post-Angkorian Cambodia, particularly because it informs the trends of regional geopolitics. But while these maps tend to add local and European written sources to the historical narrative, insights into post-Angkorian Cambodia would benefit from further integrating their disruptive dimension, particularly concerning the royal Khmer capitals. This dimension is gaining momentum with the detection of weak signals about the Khmer Kingdom in the European mapping of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, before the arrival of the first Hispanic ships in South-East Asia.

***Letter from Paul Mus to Mr. and Mrs. Morazé, April 1968***

*Paul MUS, Professor at Collège de France and University of Yale, edited by Gregory MIKAELIAN, research scholar at CNRS (UMR 8170, CNRS/EHESS /INALCO)*

Preserved in the Paul Mus collection of the Institut d'Asie Orientale, this letter from the Orientalist addressed to one of the proponents of the Annales school, Charles Morazé (1913-2003). Dated spring 1968, it sheds new light on his famous ‘project for a work on the civilizations of Southeast Asia’, which he never completed. Mus exposes in detail his structural vision of the history of Southeast Asia, in a form that is certainly compact and more like a

detailed plan than an extensive summary, but with the advantage for the reader of more easily bringing out the logical architecture of a complex thought.