

THE KHMER KING AT BASAN (1371-3) AND THE RESTORATION OF THE CAMBODIAN CHRONOLOGY DURING THE FOURTEENTH AND FIFTEENTH CENTURIES

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INTRODUCTION

Students of Cambodian and Thai history have recognized the importance of the second half of the fourteenth century and the early decades of the following century. 1431 is commonly accepted as the year when the kingdom of Ayudhyā was able to exert sufficient military pressure on Cambodia to require Ponhea Yat to withdraw from the venerable but now exposed capital of Angkor first to Basan (Srei Santhor) and then to the site of the present city of Phnom Penh.¹ The Thai of Ayudhyā during these years were, to their advantage, adapting from Angkor, or inheriting from the ancient Mon-Khmer kingdom of Lavo, autocratic institutions, thereby becoming the latest practitioners of an ancient style of government in South East Asia.² Finally, in the same period, the kings of Ayudhyā, in spite of their geographical location on the remote south-eastern limits of Thai infiltration into South East Asia, were already making a bid for overlordship in the Menam basin. By 1376 they had virtually extinguished the independence of Sukhodaya, and by 1387 they had mounted their first attack on Ch'eng Mai.³ The alacrity with which the early rulers of Ayudhyā made an impression on their neighbours is a remarkable feature of mainland South East Asian history in this period.

Nevertheless, in spite of the interest of the period and especially its relevance for an understanding of the cultural continuities of the region, the details are by no means fully established. Warfare has taken its toll of

documents, and the historian is dependent to a large extent on recensions of Thai and Khmer chronicles undertaken not earlier than the end of the eighteenth century. Nor do these late documents always agree in their rendering of important matters. Thus the "Luang Prasroeth" abbreviated version of the *Annals of Ayudhyā*, which is as old as the second half of the seventeenth century, does not substantiate the tradition, reproduced in later recensions of Thai and Khmer chronicles, that Angkor was attacked and occupied before 1430. Briggs, after a searching analysis of a number of sources, decided that the relatively early "Luang Prasroeth" version contained the correct information for the first and only Thai capture of the city.⁴

A tradition of South East Asian historical studies has been, when practicable, to consult Chinese records as a cross-check on other sources. Thus Briggs found support in Rémusat's translations of Ming documents to reinforce his arguments that Angkor was not in fact captured before 1430.⁵ He observed that the Chinese records were significantly silent on the subject of Thai-Khmer warfare in this period.

But Rémusat in 1829 misunderstood one important expression in the *Ming-shih*, which Mayers in 1875 rendered correctly.⁶ The expression indicates that the Khmer king was not living in Angkor at least from 1371 to 1373. The precision seems to provide a basis for reconstructing the chronology of this period in Khmer history and also for interpreting the dating systems used in the earliest published Khmer records relating to the reigns of Nippean Bat and his successors from about the middle of the fourteenth century to the beginning of the sixteenth century. An analysis of the Khmer records, controlled by the Chinese records, suggests that the Khmer information is susceptible to correction if the sequence of reigns is removed from an artificially contrived framework in time, based on the tradition that Nippean Bat began his reign a few years before the foundation of Ayudhyā in 1350 by Rāmadhipati, and if the major preoccupations of the Khmer chroniclers are identified. Their chronologies do not seem to have been carelessly constructed.

The procedures which have led to these conclusions will be described in the following pages. Other students may be encouraged to seek alterna-

⁴ L. P. Briggs, "Siamese attacks on Angkor before 1430", *Far Eastern Quarterly*, VIII, 1 (1948), 3-33. Briggs did not consult the sixteenth-century *Finakālamāli*, translated by Professor Cœdès in "Documents sur l'histoire politique et religieuse du Laos occidental", *BEFEO*, XXV (1925), 73-140. Nor did he pursue his enquiry beyond the date of the accession of Ponhea Yat.

⁵ J.-P. Abel-Rémusat, "Descriptions du royaume de Cambodge", *Nouveaux mélanges asiatiques*, I, Paris, 1829, 89-97. Aymonier, writing before the evidence of the "Luang Prasroeth" version became available, had also noted this significance of the Chinese evidence; E. Aymonier, *Le Cambodge*, 3, Paris, 1904, 737-46.

⁶ W. F. Mayers, "Chinese explorations of the Indian Ocean during the fifteenth century. III", *The China Review*, 4 (1875), 64.

¹ 1430-1431 are the years given for the siege and sack of Angkor in the abbreviated version of the *Annals of Ayudhyā*, known as the "Luang Prasroeth" version. Frankfurter's translation is in the *Journal of the Siam Society*, VI, 3 (1909), 5.

² Professor George Cœdès has discussed the prompt way in which Khmer-type institutions were welcomed by the early rulers of Ayudhyā; "L'art siamois de l'époque de Sukhodaya (XIIIe-XIVe siècles). Circonstances de son éclosion", *Arts asiatiques*, I, 4 (1954), 299-320.

³ G. Cœdès, *Les peuples de la péninsule indochinoise. Histoire. Civilisations*, Paris, 1962, 141.

tive and perhaps more appropriate analytical methods for establishing the true sequence of events during this period in the history of mainland South East Asia.

The Khmer king at Pa-shan (1371-3)

The Ming records do not contain a great amount of information about Cambodia, but their contents deserve to be treated with respect.⁷ These records disclose a series of Khmer kings in tributary relationship with China, and, in several cases, a reasonably accurate estimate of the minimum length of a reign can be calculated from the dates of the king's first and last missions. Moreover, during this period, unlike in so many other periods of the Sino-South East Asian relationship, the Chinese court often sent its own envoys overseas. T'ai-tsu, the *Hung-wu* emperor (1368-98), sent no less than five missions to Ayudhyā and four to Cambodia. The *Yung-lo* emperor (1403-24) sent three to Cambodia. The latter's interest in Ayudhyā was more considerable, and he did not always heap favours on the Thai kings.⁸ In 1419 a mission was sent to rebuke Ayudhyā for attacking Malacca.⁹ Chêng Ho in 1431 was instructed by the *Hsüan-tê* emperor (1426-35) to warn the Thai not to interfere with communications between Malacca and China.¹⁰ Political intelligence should therefore have been available to the early Ming emperors on matters of concern to them.

The attitude of these emperors towards South East Asia reflected the traditional Chinese view of the problems and needs of the region. According to this view, the countries of South East Asia were distant and weak ones and could not become a serious military threat to China. On the other hand, their inherent political instability and their tendency to fight among themselves could damage Chinese communications with the countries of maritime Asia. The *Hung-wu* emperor (1368-98), whose reign is of special significance for the subject under discussion, often reminded the "bar-

⁷ The records have been obtained chiefly from the *Ming shih-lu*. The copy used is from a microfilm of the *Hung-kê* text of the National Library of Peking, edited by the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica, Taipei. For comments on the *Ming shih-lu* see W. Franke, *Historians of China and Japan* (edited by W. G. Beasley and E. G. Pulleyblank), London, 1961, 60-77. T'an Ch'ien's *Kuo-ch'üeh* has, where possible, been used as a cross-check on information in the *MSL*. The first draft of the *Kuo-ch'üeh* was completed in 1647. Professor Franke says that "it is probably the most important work of this kind (*Pien-mien*), supplementing or correcting the *Ming shih-lu*"; "Preliminary notes on the important Chinese literary sources for the history of the Ming dynasty (1368-1644)", *Studia Sinica*, Monographs, Series A, No. 2, Chengtu, 1948, 19-20. The *Ku chi ch'u pan shê* edition, Peking, 1938, has been used.

⁸ The *Ming-shih* mentions favours conferred in 1404, 1408, 1409, 1412 and 1416; T. Grimm, "Thailand in the light of official Chinese historiography . . .", *JSS*, XLIX, 1 (1961), 6-8.

⁹ *Yung-lo SL*, 217, 1 a-b.

¹⁰ *Hsüan-tê SL*, 67, 7a.

barians" of South East Asia of the importance of respecting each other's boundaries.¹¹

The emperors' concern that peace should be maintained in the region and the ubiquity of the imperial envoys are the background to the Ming references to Ayudhyā and Cambodia in this period. Neither the *Hung-wu* nor the *Yung-lo* emperor seems to have commented on Thai-Khmer warfare, and to this extent the conclusions of Aymonier and Briggs are reinforced. Nevertheless, reasons will now be given for believing that the Thai occupied Angkor much earlier than 1431.

On 12 September, 1370, Kuo Chêng was commissioned to announce in Cambodia the recent Ming accession.¹² The Khmer king responded by sending envoys with tribute, who arrived on 14 December, 1371.¹³ The king was called *Hu-êrh-na*, and his regal style noted by the Chinese in 1371 is interesting. He was described as the '*Chên-la* (Cambodia) kingdom *Pa-shan* king *Hu-êrh-na* 眞臘國巴山王忽兒那'.¹⁴

Rémusat, and those who followed him, understood *Pa-shan* to be a title equivalent to "sovereign",¹⁵ but comparable descriptions of royal styles in Chinese passages relating to the early Ming period make it certain that *Pa-shan* represented a toponym and not a Khmer word for "king". For example, in 1373 the Ryu-kyu ruler of the Chūzan kingdom in central Okinawa was called the "Ryu-kyu kingdom *Chung-shan* (Chūzan) king *Ch'a-tu* 瑠球國中山王察度".¹⁶ *Pa-shan* in the Khmer king's style in 1371 was

¹¹ The *Hung-wu* emperor observed in 1380 that he had read the section in the *Sung-shih*, completed in 1345, which described the Khmer conquest of Champa during the reign of Jayavarman VII; *Hung-wu SL*, 133, 7a. The author has found nothing in the *Ming shih-lu* to modify his views on Chinese political thinking about South East Asia contained in "China irredenta: the south", *The World Today*, 19, 12 (1963), 540-52.

¹² *Hung-wu SL*, 55, 4a.

¹³ *Hung-wu SL*, 69, 1a. *Ming-shih* (*Po-na* edition), 324, 12b, also mentions *Pa-shan*, as does *Kuo-ch'üeh*, p. 456.

¹⁴ A student of Khmer may be able to reconstruct the origin of *Hu-êrh-na* 忽兒那. *Hu-忽* is the first character used to transliterate "Ormuz" as *Hu-lu-mo-ssu* 忽魯謨斯 (*Kuo-ch'üeh*, p. 1394). *Hu-胡* is the first character in the transliteration of the Malay word "orang" (*Hu-lang* 胡郎); E. D. Edwards and C. O. Blagden, *BSOS*, VI, 3 (1931), 739. For *êrh-* the *Ming-shih* gives 兒 and the *Ming shih-lu* 兒. The *Chia-yeh-t'ang* version of the *Shih-lu* gives 見 *chien-* (*kien-*), but Professor Franke says that there are false characters on nearly every page of this manuscript; "The Veritable Records . . .", 76. *Êrh-* is used in transliterations of Malay and Cham words to supply "r"; Edwards and Blagden, *BSOS*, 3 (1931) and *BSOS*, X, 1 (1939), 53-91. The present writer has failed to discover *ôkna* or *ponhea* in *Hu-êrh-na*.

¹⁵ Rémusat, *op. cit.*, 89: "le pa-chan ou souverain de ce royaume, nommé Hou-eul-na . . ."; Briggs, "Siamese attacks . . .", 14. Mayers preferred "the King of Pa Shan (Basan?) of that country"; "Chinese explorations . . .", 64. Mayers had read Garnier's "Chronique royale du Cambodge", *Journal asiatique* (octobre-décembre 1871), 336-85.

¹⁶ *Hung-wu SL*, 77, 4b. The *Ming-shih*, 324, 15b, refers to "the heir-apparent, the Subarnapuri prince, Chao Nakon In". The *Kuo-ch'üeh*, p. 1144, refers to the "Sulu country, the eastern king, *Pa-tu* . . ." In all these instances the toponym occupies the same position in the phrase as *Pa-shan* does.

a toponym, which must refer either to the part of Cambodia which he ruled or, more likely, to the name of his capital city. No other king, before or afterwards, was similarly described. Nevertheless, *Hu-érh-na* was recognized by the *Hung-wu* emperor as the legitimate king of Cambodia, for in 1371 his envoy was given ritual dress and a Chinese calendar, the formal gifts to South East Asian rulers at this time.¹⁷ *Hu-érh-na*, still described as the *Pa-shan* king of Cambodia, sent another mission in 1373. It arrived on 7 November, and on the same day tribute was presented on behalf of the ruler of Ayudhyā.¹⁸

Pa-shan is a straightforward transliteration of "Basan", where Ponhea Yat is supposed to have established himself some years after the sack of Angkor in 1431.¹⁹ At this stage of the study, however, the identification of *Pa-shan* is not so important as the grounds provided by the appearance of the toponym for believing that, at least in the 1371-3 period, the Khmer king was not ruling in Angkor. The period represents the minimum duration of time for such a situation, and the Chinese evidence does not contradict the assumption that *Hu-érh-na* was already at *Pa-shan* when Kuo Chêng visited Cambodia after 12 September 1370, when he was commissioned to announce the Ming accession.

The evidence about the second Khmer king mentioned in these records reinforces the view that *Hu-érh-na* did not rule in Angkor. On 6 January 1378, the "Samdach Kambujādhirāja of Cambodia 真臘國王參答甘武持達志" presented tribute.²⁰ He was ruling at least as early as 1377. This king described himself as "the ruler of Kambuja". The Chinese had known *Hu-érh-na* merely as "the king of Cambodia who ruled at *Pa-shan*", but the style of the new ruler was much more impressive. "Kambujadesā", the "country of Kambuja", had been a central theme in Khmer history since the ninth century, when hegemony over the Khmer-speaking world was claimed from the Angkor region. Inscriptions of Yaśovarman I (889-c.900) and Rājendravarman II (c.943-68) even mention "Kambupuri" as a name

¹⁷ Thus the Ayudhyā envoy of 1373 received these gifts on behalf of his prince; *Hung-wu SL*, 85, 7b.

¹⁸ *Hung-wu SL*, 85, 7b. Only the *Shih-lu* provides the toponym *Pa-shan*, but the *Kuo-ch'üeh* as well as the *Shih-lu* calls the king *Hu-érh-na*; *Kuo-ch'üeh*, p. 493.

¹⁹ Examples of the use of *pa-* to represent "*ba-*" are contained in E. D. Edwards and C. O. Blagden, "A Chinese vocabulary of Malacca Malay words and phrases", *BSOS*, VI, 3 (1931), 715-49.

²⁰ *Hung-wu SL*, 116, 6a. Professor Coedès is followed for the reconstruction of this Khmer title; *Les états hindouisés* . . . , Paris, 1964, 424-5. The *Kuo-ch'üeh*, p. 557, gives the same date for this mission. The *Ming-shih*, in its section on Cambodia, does not mention the mission; instead it attributes one to the 12th year of the *Hung-wu* period (1379-80); *Ming-shih*, 324, 12b. Neither the *Shih-lu* nor the *Kuo-ch'üeh* supplies a mission for 1379, and the *Ming-shih* must be incorrect on this point. The effect of correction is to give the "Samdach Kambujādhirāja" a slightly longer reign.

for the city of Angkor.²¹ The contrast in the titulature of the first two rulers mentioned in the Ming records indicates that some time between 1373 and 1377 a Khmer ruler was able to return from *Pa-shan* to the traditional capital of Cambodia.

On 12 November 1380 envoys from "the Samdach Kambujādhirāja" presented tribute, and the evidence does not indicate that the Chinese treated him as a new ruler.²² "Cambodia" also presented tribute on 14 October 1383;²³ the identity of the king is not disclosed, but the Chinese mission earlier in 1383 in connexion with "documents of mutual confirmation" would certainly have discovered the accession of a new ruler if the "Kambujādhirāja" had died.²⁴

By 1386, however, the third ruler mentioned in the Ming records had appeared on the scene, indicating that the minimum span of the previous reign was from 1377 to 1383. In October 1386, Liu Min and T'ang Ching were despatched to Cambodia "and other countries" on a routine imperial gift-presenting mission.²⁵ In Cambodia they were received by a new king, the "Samdach Pao-p'i-yeh Kambuja 參烈寶昆邪甘菩者", who took the opportunity of sending tribute-bearing envoys to accompany T'ang Ching on the latter's return to China. The tribute was offered on 7 September 1387.²⁶ That the ruler on this occasion was a new one is verified by the circumstance that, almost immediately after the return of T'ang Ching, a further Chinese mission was sent to Cambodia to present the king with a gold seal of office.²⁷ The Khmer king responded by sending envoys, who presented tribute on 15 October 1388, and also proffered *Pao-p'i-yeh's* thanks for the seal.²⁸

For some years after 1388 the Ming sources become less definitive for

²¹ G. Coedès, "Le site primitif du Tchen-la" *BEFEO*, 18, 9 (1918), 3, in respect of Yaśovarman I; G. Coedès, *Inscriptions du Cambodge*, 1, Paris, 1937, 136, in respect of Rājendravarman II.

²² *Hung-wu SL*, 134, 2a.

²³ *Hung-wu SL*, 156, 4a; 5b. The *Kuo-ch'üeh* does not mention this mission.

²⁴ *Hung-wu SL*, 153, 5a. Professor Grimm is followed for the expression "documents of mutual confirmation"; "Thailand in the light of official Chinese historiography . . .", 5. The mission had nothing to do with the overseas Chinese, as Rémusat and Briggs thought. The occasion for the Chinese visit to Cambodia in 1383 was the application that year of the imperial "passport" system for the purpose of identifying tributary personnel arriving in China; Chang Têh-ch'ang, "Maritime trade at Canton during the Ming dynasty", *Chinese Social and Political Science Review* 17, 2 (1933), 1933, 271-2.

²⁵ *Hung-wu SL*, 179, 5a.

²⁶ *Ming-shih*, 324, 13a, transliterates the ruler's name as *Pao-p'i-yeh* 寶昆邪. *Kuo-ch'üeh*, p. 674, gives *Pao-p'i-yeh* 保昆邪. *Hung-wu SL*, 183, 4a, does not supply the ruler's name on this occasion, but elsewhere gives 寶 instead of 保.

²⁷ *Hung-wu SL*, 184, 3a. The mission was sent on 1 October. On 30 October the emperor rewarded many envoys, including the envoys of the "Samdach Pao-p'i-yeh Kambuja" 寶昆邪甘菩者; *Hung-wu SL*, 185, 4a.

²⁸ *Hung-wu SL*, 193, 6b.

distinguishing the sequence of Khmer reigns. The later years of the *Hung-wu* period and the disturbed interval in China between T'ai-tsu's death in 1398 and the usurpation of the *Yung-lo* emperor in 1403 saw an interruption in widely ranging imperial relations with South East Asia. Though T'ai-tsu in 1394 and 1397, disturbed by what was happening in the Indonesian archipelago, observed that Cambodia and Ayudhyā were behaving as normal tributary countries, imperial missions to Ayudhyā and Cambodia ceased with the single exception of a mission to Ayudhyā in 1395 in connection with Rāmeśvara's death.²⁹

The last Khmer missions in the *Hung-wu* period came in 1389 and 1390.³⁰ Unfortunately, the ruler's name is not given. Thus we do not know when *Pao-p'i-yeh* ceased to rule or when the fourth ruler known to the Chinese, *P'o-p'i-ya* 婆毘牙, succeeded him. We have only one glimpse of *P'o-p'i-ya* at the end of his life, when he sent a mission in 1404 in response to the *Yung-lo* emperor's mission in 1403 to announce his accession.³¹ On 10 August 1405, *P'o-p'i-ya*'s successor, "Samdach Chao *P'ing-ya* 平牙", reported "his father's death".³² *P'o-p'i-ya* died either in 1404 or early in 1405.

Were *Pao-p'i-yeh* and *P'o-p'i-ya* the same person? The Chinese scribes certainly took the trouble to select different characters for the first syllable of these two names and also for "*P'ing-ya*", while T'an Ch'ien, in his *Kuo-ch'üeh*, though he provides a different character for *Pao-* (保), gives one with the same Chinese sound.³³ *Pao-p'i-yeh* and *P'ing-ya* are demonstrably different persons. No doubt all these names represented parts of elaborate honorific titles, and the possibility that *Pao-* and *P'o-* were separate attempts to render the first part of the same word such as, perhaps, "Barom/Parama" or "Ponhea" does not mean that the rulers were the same person. The assumption will be made that *Pao-p'i-yeh* and *P'o-p'i-ya* were different kings, whose combined reigns extended from at least 1385 to 1404-5.

The Chinese records provide hints that some of these years were disturbed ones in Cambodia. In 1387, when *Pao-p'i-yeh* was ruling, the Khmers sent 59 elephants and 60,000 catties of incense as tribute to China.³⁴ On 14 May 1388 the emperor despatched an envoy to Champa to rebuke

the ruler, Chê Bông Nga. T'ai-tsu had just discovered that, when the imperial envoy, Liu Min, was leaving Champa with the Khmer tributary mission sent in 1387, the Cham king ordered the seizure of some of the Khmer elephants intended to be given to the emperor.³⁵ In this period Chê Bông Nga was waging war against Vietnam,³⁶ but his relations with the Khmers may also have been disturbed. M. Jean Boisselier has commented on the implications of the Bien-Hoa inscription, generally dated at 1421 and commemorating a Cham victory over the Khmers. The author of the inscription is Ngauk Klaung Vijaya, who in 1400 had succeeded Jaya Simhavarman as king of Champa. Jaya Simhavarman had succeeded Chê Bông Nga when the latter was killed in Vietnam in 1390. But in this inscription Ngauk Klaung Vijaya does not describe himself by a royal title, and M. Boisselier suggests that the inscription refers to events during Jaya Simhavarman's reign (1390-1400).³⁷ Thus grounds exist from both Chinese and Cham sources for supposing that the years 1387-1400 were troubled years in Khmer-Cham relations.

But more significant for the reconstruction of the chronology of the Khmer chronicles is a hint of an unusual situation in Cambodia during the year 1389. The *Ming-shih* states that in 1389 three missions were sent from Cambodia to China,³⁸ and the *Hung-wu Shih-lu* supplies the dates when these missions arrived in the Chinese capital of Nanking: on 20 May a variety of tribute was presented; on 7 July Cambodia and Ayudhyā presented tribute; "in the ninth month" (the day is not given) a Khmer minister offered tribute and presented a "gold memorial".³⁹ The date of the arrival in the capital of this third mission would have been between 20 September and 19 October. 1389 is the only year in the period under examination when Cambodia sent more than one mission in a single year. A likely explanation for three missions hot on the heels of each other is that the Khmer king had some special matter to bring to the notice of the emperor. We shall later reconstruct the situation in which the king found himself.

The last mission to the *Hung-wu* emperor arrived on 15 December 1390. Its vessel had been damaged in a storm.⁴⁰

The *Yung-lo* period in China (1403-24) coincides with the resumption of tributary relations between Cambodia and the Ming dynasty. On 15 September 1403 Chiang P'in-hsing and Wang Ch'ü were commissioned to

²⁹ *Hung-wu SL*, 231, 2a-b; 254, 6b. The mission to Ayudhyā is given in *Ming-shih*, 324, 16b.

³⁰ These missions are discussed below.

³¹ *Ming-shih*, 324, 13a; *Yung-lo SL*, 24, 1a. *Kuo-ch'üeh*, p. 940, gives *P'o-p'i-ts'ai* 婆毘才, but on p. 956 *P'o-p'i-ya* is given.

³² *Ming-shih*, 324, 13b; *Yung-lo SL*, 44, 4a. *Kuo-ch'üeh*, p. 956.

³³ *Kuo-ch'üeh*, p. 674, in respect of the mission of 1387. *Pao-* appears in the Chinese transliteration of the name of the Ayudhyā king Paramarājadhira in 1373; *Hung-wu SL*, 86, 5a. *Pao-* also appears as the first character in the transliteration of "Palem-bang" in 1374; *Ming-shih*, 324, 25a.

³⁴ *Hung-wu SL*, 183, 42.

³⁵ *Hung-wu SL*, 190, 1b. *Kuo-ch'üeh*, p. 683, mentions the sending of the Chinese envoy to Champa but not the reason.

³⁶ G. Coëdès, *Les états hindouisés* . . . , 428.

³⁷ J. Boisselier, *La statue du Champa*, Paris, 1963, 360-1.

³⁸ *Ming-shih*, 324, 13a.

³⁹ *Hung-wu SL*, 196, 2a; 4b; 197, 5b. These missions are not mentioned in *Kuo-ch'üeh*.

⁴⁰ *Hung-wu SL*, 206, 1a. The *Kuo-ch'üeh* does not mention this mission.

announce in Champa and Cambodia the new emperor's accession.⁴¹ In September 1404 *P'o-p'i-ya*'s mission arrived, accompanied by three Khmer prisoners sent to placate the emperor for the desertion of three Chinese during the imperial mission in 1403.⁴² Though the Khmers were suspected of persuading the deserters to remain in Cambodia, the emperor was magnanimous and refused to detain the Khmer substitute prisoners. On 10 August 1405 the Samdach Chao *P'ing-ya*'s envoys arrived to announce the death of *P'o-p'i-ya*, and two days later Wang Tsung was commissioned to install the new king.⁴³

Evidence is available to identify the location of the Khmer capital at the beginning of the *Yung-lo* period (1403-24). The following passage occurs in Yen Ts'ung-chien's *Shu-yü chou-tz'u lu*, 殊域周咨錄, dealing with foreign countries and their relations with China; the work was completed in 1574-83 and was the product of the *Hsing-jên-ssü*, the office responsible to the Ministry of Rites for relations with foreigners:⁴⁴

At the beginning of the *Yung-lo* period the accession (of the emperor) was announced everywhere among the barbarians beyond the seas. The censor Yin Shou went to this country (Cambodia). When Shou received the imperial order, he left Canton by ship and went by the sea route to Champa. From Champa he crossed the lake of fresh water, (passed) *P'u-t'i-sa* province (Pursat), skirted Lu Pan's temple, and reached (the capital of) Cambodia. . . . When Shou returned to China he sketched a map for the emperor in which he included all the ocean routes he used, the islands and islets, the curving mountains and streams, the dangerous places, and the boundaries of the countries he had seen.⁴⁵

Yin Shou 尹綬 is not included among the envoys commissioned on 15 September 1403 to visit Champa and Cambodia.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, he is not a fictitious person, and his biography is contained in the *Lan-t'ai fa chien lu*, written by Ho Ch'u-kuang and others in 1597.⁴⁷ The imperial

mission would have been composed of a number of officials, and we have seen that three members deserted in Cambodia. Yin Shou's itinerary corresponds exactly with the itinerary which Chou Ta-kuan used during his famous visit to Angkor in 1296, taking him through Pursat province to the southern entrance of Angkor Thom.⁴⁸

Yin Shou's evidence reveals that *P'o-p'i-ya* at the end of his life reigned at Angkor. Thereafter the Chinese evidence throws no light on the location of the Khmer capital.

P'ing-ya had a long reign from at least 1404-5 to 1419, the year of his final mission. His is the longest of the five reigns mentioned in the Ming sources for this period. His later missions to China arrived on 23 December 1408, on 23 February 1414, on 3 August 1417, and on 5 April 1419.⁴⁹

Though the length of this reign suggests some stability in Cambodia, the country was not without its troubles. In 1414 *P'ing-ya* complained to the emperor of "continuous" Cham attacks, and a Chinese mission was sent to warn Ngauk Klaung Vijaya that he should respect the boundaries of other kingdoms and behave as a good neighbour. Khmer envoys were conducted home by Chinese officials.⁵⁰ A Chinese maritime expedition was overseas in this period, but it was not used to convey the warning to the Chams. The records of the famous maritime expeditions of the early fifteenth century do not assist in resolving problems of Thai-Khmer relations; even Fei Hsin, who provides a section on Cambodia in the *Hsing-ch'a shêng-lan*, wrote on hearsay.⁵¹

The *Ming-shih* states that missions came in the 1426-35 and the 1450-7 periods,⁵² but the only completely satisfactory confirmation is in respect of the mission that arrived in September 1452.⁵³ The envoys were generously treated, but the Khmer ruler's name was not recorded. The *Hsüan-tê shih-lu* states that on 28 April 1435 the emperor informed the ruler of Malacca of his arrangements for sending foreign envoys, including Khmers, to Malacca so that the Malay prince would send them back to their countries of origin.⁵⁴ The reason for this curious message was the cessation of the Chinese maritime expeditions, which had ferried envoys of the Indian Ocean countries to and from China; the last expedition returned to China

⁴¹ *Yung-lo SL*, 22, 2b; *Kuo-ch'üeh*, p. 909.

⁴² *Yung-lo SL*, 24, 1a; *Kuo-ch'üeh*, p. 940.

⁴³ *Yung-lo SL*, 44, 4a-5a; *Kuo-ch'üeh*, p. 956.

⁴⁴ J. J. L. Duyvendak, "The true dates of the Chinese maritime expeditions in the early fifteenth century", *TP*, 34, 5 (1939), 396. On the *Hsing-jên-ssü* ("the Messenger Office") see Charles O. Hucker, "Governmental organization of the Ming dynasty", *HJAS*, 21 (1958), 34.

⁴⁵ *Shu-yü chou tz'u lu* (Ku-kung po-wu-yüan edition, Peiping, 1930), 8, 1b. Ch'a Chi-tso's *Tsui-toei lu* 罪惟錄, written in 1644-72, ch. 36, 31b (Ssu-pu ts'ung-k'an edition), mentions Yin Shou's mission and the map he brought back.

⁴⁶ The *Ming-shih k'ao-chêng chün-i* (Po-na edition, ch. 40, 12a) notes that Yin Shou, mentioned in the *Shu-yü chou-tz'u-lu*, is not included in the *Ming-shih*'s list of envoys in 1403.

⁴⁷ *Hung-wu chüan* 2, 40. Yin Shou came from Ting-yüan hsien in Chihli province and was a *chü-jên* in 1396. He was appointed as an "investigating censor" for the Fukien circuit. On this post see Charles O. Hucker, *HJAS*, 21, 49.

⁴⁸ Paul Pelliot, *Mémoires sur les coutumes du Cambodge de Tchou Ta-kouan*, Paris, 1951, 9-11; G. Coedès, "Notes sur Tchou Ta-kouan", *BEFEO*, 18 (1918), 4-5.

⁴⁹ *Yung-lo SL*, 86, 3b and *Kuo-ch'üeh*, p. 1013; *Yung-lo SL*, 148, 1b and *Kuo-ch'üeh*, p. 1099; *Yung-lo SL*, 190, 2b and *Kuo-ch'üeh*, p. 1142; *Yung-lo SL*, 210, 1a and *Kuo-ch'üeh*, p. 1159.

⁵⁰ *Yung-lo SL*, 149, 2b and *Kuo-ch'üeh*, p. 1099.

⁵¹ Paul Pelliot, "Les grands voyages maritimes chinois au début du XVe siècle", *TP*, 30 (1933), 330.

⁵² *Ming-shih*, 324, 13b.

⁵³ *Ying-tsung SL* (*Ching-t'ai*), 219, 10a; 220, 3a; *Kuo-ch'üeh*, p. 1936.

⁵⁴ *Hsüan-tê SL*, 4, 1a.

in 1433.⁵⁵ The emperor's plan did not succeed, and on 11 August 1436 the new emperor, Ying-tsung, ordered these envoys, who came chiefly from the Indian Ocean, to accompany returning Javanese envoys, and the Javanese king was told that he was entrusted with the responsibility of getting them home. It is surprising that Khmers should have been unable to get back by a less circuitous route, though Pasai envoys were in the same predicament. The date of the Khmer mission between 1426 and 1435 cannot be traced, but the evidence in 1435 and 1436 of its presence in China seems to guarantee that the mission came.⁵⁶

"The Year of the Cock"

The Chinese evidence will now be examined within the context of certain Khmer reconstructions of their history, undertaken in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.⁵⁷

In 1918 Professor Cœdès published in French a translation into Thai of a Khmer fragment from a narrative chronicle. The fragment was presented to Rāma I of Thailand in 1796 by Ang Eng, king of Cambodia.⁵⁸ This document, which will be referred to as the *Ang Eng* fragment, is the oldest dated version of any part of a Cambodian chronicle so far published, though the date of the Khmer original is unknown. More recent is Nong's *Royal Chronicle of Cambodia*, completed about 1818 and made available through a translation obtained by Doudart de Lagrée in the 1860's.⁵⁹ The Khmer king, Ang Chan, declaring that the *Royal Chronicle* had been lost, instructed Nong to rewrite it. Professor Cœdès considers that Nong had at his disposal at least lists of kings similar to the one which De Lagrée also obtained.⁶⁰ The "Chronological List of the Kings of Cambodia", published with the records of the De Lagrée mission, will be referred to as the *List*. Moreover, according to Professor Cœdès, princes and officials would no doubt have possessed, as they continued to possess, fragmentary copies of an earlier recension of the chronicle.⁶¹

⁵⁵ Chêng Ho reached Peking on 22 July 1433, after his last voyage; J. J. L. Duyvendak, "The true dates of the Chinese maritime expeditions in the early fifteenth century", *TP*, 34, 5 (1939), 390.

⁵⁶ Neither the *pên chí* section of the *Ming-shih* nor the *Kuo-ch'üeh* record a Khmer mission in these years, and no reference has been found in the *Ming shih-lu*.

⁵⁷ At the end of this article a brief statement is provided of the important dates contained in the Chinese and Khmer sources. The statement also summarizes the chronological reconciliations proposed by the author.

⁵⁸ G. Cœdès, "Essai de classification des documents historiques cambodgiens conservés à la bibliothèque de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient", *BEFEO*, 18, 9 (1918), 24-8.

⁵⁹ A. B. de Villemereuil, *Explorations et missions de Doudart de Lagrée*, Paris, 1883, 21-38.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 15-20.

⁶¹ Professor Cœdès' views on Nong and Nong's sources are in "Essai de classification . . .", 16-19.

Later in the nineteenth century another recension of the chronicle was undertaken, and a paraphrased version was made available by Moura.⁶² For the purpose of the present study this recension will be ignored. Reasons will be proposed for regarding the *Ang Eng* fragment, Nong's recension, and the probably more ancient *List* as repositories of facts as well as of traditions for which the later recension is unlikely to have been better served.

The *Ang Eng* fragment begins, as all Khmer chronicles begin after their attempt to reconstruct the earlier Angkor period, with the accession of Nippean Bat. The year for this event is unambiguously stated to be "1346". The narrative ends with a description of a civil war several decades later, as a result of which the Khmer king, Sodaiya, fled to Ayudhyā. "1346" is the only date specifically mentioned. The chronology is sustained by the lengths which the author assigns to the reigns he mentions, though he did not commit himself on the length of the reigns of Gāmkhāt or of Ponhea Yat. The fragment contains, however, two dates in the form of unidentified years in the "animal" cycle: the "Year of the Cock" and the "Year of the Hare". These years reappear every twelve years, and the author does not specify the cycles he has in mind.

The "Year of the Cock", which must have been later than "1346", was when Angkor, after a long siege, was captured by Rāmādhīpati of Ayudhyā. In Khmer tradition this was the occasion of the first capture of the city, and the *Ang Eng* fragment insists, as do the other Khmer sources, that the Thai remained in occupation of the city for some years.

The hypothesis will now be formulated that the "Year of the Cock" was 1369, the second such "animal" year after 1346 and only two years before the Ming sources refer to *Hu-êrh-na* in *Pa-shan*. If the "Year of the Cock" were 1369, this circumstance would explain why *Hu-êrh-na* was known to the Chinese as "the king of Cambodia at *Pa-shan*", where he lived in 1371 and 1373. Provided that the synchronism of these two pieces of evidence is not a coincidence, a key becomes available for attempting to enclose at least part of the traditional Khmer chronologies within a historical framework. But did the author of the *Ang Eng* fragment realize that the "Year of the Cock" represented "1369"? If he did, why did he not say so?

His understanding of the true meaning of the "Year of the Cock" is revealed when his treatment of the events from Nippean Bat's accession to the year of the first capture of Angkor is compared with the treatment by Nong of the same period. The *List* too, probably drawing on material which existed before Nong wrote, is helpful in unmasking the attitude of the *Ang Eng* compiler to the real significance of the "Year of the Cock", though the chronology in the *List* begins with Nippean Bat's accession in "1382", three "animal" cycles of twelve years later than the year "1346" in the other

⁶² J. Moura, *Le royaume du Cambodge*, Paris, 1883, Vol. 3.

two sources. A comparison of the contents of the three documents shows that the author of the fragment realized that, if he wished to avoid the implications of some record mentioning the "Year of the Cock" in the sense of meaning "1369", he had to improvise in order to alter the usual rendering of the period.

In the *List* and in Nong's narrative the siege of Angkor begins in the seventh year of a sequence of years where the year of Nippean Bat's accession is the first year. Nong states that Nippean Bat ascended in the "Dog" year of 1346, which is the year given in the fragment; in the *List* the "Dog" year is 1382. The *List* then gives Nippean Bat a reign of four whole years, while Nong gives him five years and a fraction of a year, attributing his death to the sixth year of the reign. The king who died in the first attack on Angkor is the *List*'s second king and Nong's third. In Nong's "1351" three kings reign: Nippean Bat, his younger brother, and his eldest son. In the *List* the siege and capture of the city happened in the same year (the "Dragon" year of 1388), while in Nong's account the operation extended from the "Dragon" year of 1352 into the "Snake" year of 1353.

The *Ang Eng* account is very different. The attack begins in the thirtieth year as from 1346. Its author provides Nippean Bat with a reign of 5 years, and he does not entirely ignore the tradition of an attack a few years after 1346. He modifies the tradition, however, by stating that, in Nippean Bat's reign, Rāmādhpati sent a "message of alliance", which the Khmer king rejected. The author must have been aware of the conventional treatment of the period but chose to indicate a different form of friction between the two kingdoms, which, according to him, took place during and not soon after the reign of Nippean Bat. A sequence of reigns is then provided to account for 19 years from 1351, the year following Nippean Bat's death, until and including 1369, the "Year of the Cock". The reigns for this period, known only in the *Ang Eng* fragment, have the following spans: 1351-61, 1362-6, and 1367-9. The spans of the two later reigns are significant. 1362 would be when, if the "Year of the Cock" were 1369, Nippean Bat became king, provided that the author subscribed to the tradition, exemplified in Nong's account, that eight years separated Nippean Bat's accession from the fall of Angkor. In Nong's chronology the period was from the "Dog" year of 1346 to the "Snake" year of 1353. The subdivision of these two reigns is remarkably similar to Nong's subdivision from 1346 to 1353. The only difference is that Nong allows Nippean Bat to share the "Hare" year of 1351 with two other kings, while in the fragment the ruler who is supposed to have become king in 1362 had only 5 years' reign and not 5 and a fraction. Nevertheless, the *Ang Eng* compiler when dealing with the 1362-9 period, with its significance if 1369 were the true date for the year of the fall of Angkor, evidently found it convenient to adapt the reign sequences used in Nong's records for 1346 to 1353 to fill up a short but awkward period

in his chronology. The "Year of the Cock" in 1369 therefore becomes the end of a short reign of three years but not the year when Angkor fell.

For the year corresponding to "1370" the *Ang Eng* compiler creates the accession of a "very powerful king", Lāmbān Paramarājādhirāja. This person, like his predecessors since Nippean Bat, is unknown in the other published documents. Lāmbān ascended in a "Dog" year, as Nippean Bat had done. Like Nippean Bat, he ruled for 5 years in peace. In the sixth year of his reign ("1375") Rāmādhpati attacked Angkor. Lāmbān resisted "courageously", and "at the end of a year Angkor was not yet taken". Lāmbān then died, and, like Nippean Bat in Nong's account, he was succeeded by a "younger brother" who ruled for three months. This brother, whose name is not given, died. Another 'Lāmbān' ruled, but after a reign of only one month he, too, died when Angkor fell in the "Year of the Cock".

The treatment of the period from what, in terms of the reign sequences, was "1370" to the year of the fall of Angkor in the so-called "Year of the Cock" is especially significant for an understanding of the compiler's intentions. Not only did he have to organize his narrative in such a way that his chronology could proceed beyond the critical year of 1369, a year which tradition apparently did not associate with the fall of Angkor. Besides concealing the real 1369, he had also to conclude this part of his narrative in an acceptable way. His underlying motive is seen in the details he is careful to supply in connexion with the "very powerful king", Lāmbān Paramarājādhirāja.

This reign would have begun in "1370", a "Dog" year as was the year of Nippean Bat's accession. Lāmbān, like Nippean Bat in the *List* and like the fragment's ruler who became king in "1362", had a peaceful reign of 5 years, which took him into the sixth year of his reign. The peaceful months before the Thai attack in what would have been "1375" resemble the fraction of 1351 at the end of Nippean Bat's reign in Nong's account. 1375 and 1351 were both "Hare" years. In Nong's system this "Hare" year was when Nippean Bat died and was succeeded by his younger brother and then by his eldest son, but in the fragment a modification occurs, for in "1375" Rāmādhpati attacked Angkor. According to the *List* and Nong the attack came only in the following and "Dragon" year of 1388 or 1352. But the *Ang Eng* compiler immediately removes this discrepancy in terms of traditional reckoning by "animal" years when he emphasizes that Lāmbān resisted courageously and that "at the end of a year Angkor was not yet taken". The implication of the expression "not yet" is that Angkor survived the attack on an unprecedented "Hare" year ("1375"), which would have been launched in the campaigning months of the dry season, beginning approximately in November.⁶³ Thus the end of the dry season early in

⁶³ In a Khmer account of the war between Ang Chan and the usurper Kan early in the sixteenth century the approach of the rainy season is represented as an excuse for interrupting hostilities; A. Leclère, "Le Sdach Kan", *BSEI*, 59, 1 (1911), 40.

"1376", a "Dragon" year, would have found Angkor still intact. In Nong's account Angkor fell after only one campaigning season beginning in a "Dragon" year (1352-3), but in the fragment two seasons were necessary before the Thai captured the city. By means of the device of inventing the "courageous" Lāmbān the compiler had been able to bring his fictitious chronology into line with convention, as a result of which the fatal campaign could also begin in the "Year of the Dragon" ("1376" as compared with Nong's "1352").

The compiler could have been basing this part of his narrative on the *List's* chronology, in which Angkor was both attacked and captured in the "Dragon" year of 1388. If this was his precedent, the intended implication was that Angkor fell in what would have been "1376". The details about the "younger brother and eldest son" suggest, however, that he was using the records which Nong later used, and the intention behind the successful resistance of Lāmbān is clear. The compiler wanted to connect the first fall of Angkor with a "Year of the Snake". Nong's "Snake" year was "1353", and the compiler's implied "Snake" year was to be "1377". He achieved his purpose by permitting Lāmbān to die during the "Year of the Dragon" (1376), and then he cleverly exploited another available parallelism between Nippean Bat and Lāmbān, both of whom had started to reign in "Dog" years. In Nong's records 1351-3 ("Hare", "Dragon", and "Snake") had comprised the death of Nippean Bat (1351), the short reign of the younger brother (1351), the accession of the eldest son (1351), the attack on Angkor (1352), and the death of the eldest son in the sack of 1353. In the fragment the corresponding years of the "Hare", "Dragon", and "Snake" were 1375-7. The compiler, having purposely prolonged Lāmbān's reign into the "Dragon" year of 1376 (the equivalent of 1352), could now conveniently invoke the precedents of the two short reigns of Nippean Bat's successors as the means of filling time after the death of the "powerful king" Lāmbān. Nong's reign sequences of 1351-3 were therefore transferred to 1376-7, the difference of one year already having been accounted for by the fact that Lāmbān, unlike Nippean Bat, was given a reign of 6 and a fraction years, while Nippean Bat, in Nong's account, only ruled for 5 and a fraction years. The "younger brother" in both cases ruled for three months, but the reign of the king who died in the fragment's account of the sack could be reduced by the length of time the great Lāmbān's reign had been extended in comparison with Nippean Bat's reign. Thus he reigned for only one month. He was the equivalent of the king with the same name in Nong's records, and his reign of one month was therefore merely a token reign to represent him, by implication, as ruling and dying during an appropriate year for the fall of Angkor, which was a "Snake" year. The parallelism in the pattern of "animal" years was now complete. Angkor fell in the "Year of the Cock" but also in a year which could be identified with a "Snake" year (1377).

The following chart reveals the intended parallelisms:

			<i>Nong</i>		<i>Ang Eng</i>
"Cock"				1369	The concealed "Year of the Cock"
"Dog"	1346	Nippean Bat		1370	Lāmbān
"Pig"	1347	" "		1371	"
"Rat"	1348	" "		1372	"
"Bull"	1349	" "		1373	"
"Tiger"	1350	" "		1374	"
"Hare"	1351	Nippean Bat dies		1375	Rāmādhpati attacks
		His younger brother rules for three months			Lāmbān resists
		Nippean Bat's eldest son, Lāmbān, succeeds			
"Dragon"	1352	Rāmādhpati attacks		1376	Angkor is "not yet taken"
					Lāmbān dies
					His younger brother rules for three months
					The second season of the campaign begins
					Lāmbān (II) rules
"Snake"	1353	Lāmbān dies in the fall of Angkor		1377	Lāmbān (II) dies in the fall of Angkor

This analysis of the implied chronology of the *Ang Eng* fragment is an artificial one, but it is no less artificial than the way the chronology was constructed by the author of the fragment. He was looking for a ready-made solution for filling up his narrative in an acceptable way, and he found his solution in the form of Nippean Bat's chronology. His "Nippean Bat" has a reign of 5 years. Likewise the king who succeeded in 1362 has a reign of 5 years; this person would have been Nippean Bat if the author had acknowledged 1369 as the year of the fall of Angkor and had subscribed to the Khmer tradition, represented by Nong's interval from 1346 to 1353, that 7 years separated Nippean Bat's accession from the first capture of Angkor. Finally the powerful Lāmbān has 5 peaceful years before the attack. The shadow of Nippean Bat dominates this strange chronology. The background to the construction was the author's determination to reconcile two accounts of the sequence of events. One account, which Nong followed, stated that the first capture of Angkor took place in the "Year of the Snake", and the fragment's implied date was therefore a "Year of the Snake". The other account, which becomes significant in view of the *Pa-shan* evidence, stated that the first capture took place in the "Year of the Cock". The author was not concerned to identify and follow the more

accurate account, nor did he mind that his narrative should be involved and exhibit novelties and inconsistencies. No doubt he felt that, by providing a revised and interesting list of reigns and by showing that Angkor fell after the death of a "powerful" king comparable with Nippan Bat, he had embodied the two accounts in his narrative and had contrived a skilful reconciliation by mentioning the "Year of the Cock" and by implying a "Year of the Snake" as the years in which the two accounts dated the first capture of Angkor.

If the Khmer tradition is correct that Nippan Bat began his reign 8 years before the capture and if the attack began in the campaigning season of 1368 and succeeded early in 1369, Nippan Bat became king in 1362.⁶⁴ But the author of the fragment would have rejected this implication of the "Year of the Cock" because he felt himself unable to depart from an entrenched tradition that Rāmādhīpati attacked Cambodia soon after the foundation of Ayudhyā in 1350. Recensions of the *Annals of Ayudhyā* reflect the same tradition,⁶⁵ and Thai records were probably consulted by the Khmers when they sought to enclose the sequence of events preserved in their own scattered records in what seemed to them to be a probable chronological framework.

The methods used by the author of the *Ang Eng* fragment to reconcile two dates for the year of the first capture of Angkor are sufficiently deliberate to mean that he had at his disposal a document which mentioned a "Year of the Cock" in the sense of being "1369". The "Year of the Cock" and the *Pa-shan* evidence must be related pieces of evidence.

The analysis of the compiler's treatment of the first part of his narrative is wearisome, but the conclusion which has emerged is important. At least one item of evidence concerning the true dates of the period survived in Cambodia until an undisclosed time before the end of the eighteenth century. This survival gives significance to other facts incorporated in the Khmer chronologies, permitting an attempt to identify true information by means of controls provided by Chinese sources.

The only other "animal" year mentioned in the fragment is the "Year of the Hare", and the narrative breaks off too soon to show how the author would have accommodated this date in his system of reign sequences. Because of the correspondence between the "Year of the Cock" and the Ming evidence, the "Year of the Hare" may also be a truthful disclosure of fact. We shall see later that the date in question was probably an important one to the author of the fragment.

⁶⁴ The wars between the Mongols and the Ming coincided with the period when Nippan Bat began to rule, and Chinese records are not available as a cross-reference. The last Khmer mission to China before 1371 had been in 1331; *Yüan-shih pên chi* (Po-na edition), 33, 8b.

⁶⁵ Thai traditions concerning the attacks on Angkor will be noted in the final section of the article.

Let us first consider whether further correspondences exist between the Ming sequence of reigns and the evidence contained in the *Ang Eng* fragment.

The fragment, the *List*, and Nong agree that Thai princes ruled in Angkor for 6 years. According to *Ang Eng*, Kalamegha ruled elsewhere in Cambodia and, after a reign of three years, made way for his nephew Gāmkhāt. Gāmkhāt was "a powerful king, who could not admit that Brah Nagara (Angkor) was normally ruled by Ayudhyā". He waged war against the Thai and recovered Angkor. But his military successes were impeded by the Chams, who attacked Cambodia as far north as Phnom Penh. Gāmkhāt chastised the Chams and then resumed the war against the Thai. He died when women poisoned him.

The *List* and Nong assign four years to the reign of Gāmkhāt. The author of the fragment, in spite of his bold improvisation of the reigns between the death of Nippan Bat and the first capture of Angkor, does not commit himself on the length of Gāmkhāt's reign, but he describes its successes. If the first fall of Angkor were in 1369, and since *Hu-érh-na* ruled away from Angkor, Gāmkhāt would, in terms of Ming chronology, appear as "the Samdach Kambujādhīrāja", who was ruling at least as early as 1377 and seems to have sent his last mission in 1383. The contrast between *Hu-érh-na*'s humble style of titulature and the flaunting style with which his successor made himself known to the Chinese emperor may conceal the return of Gāmkhāt to Angkor. The Ming records do not, of course, make the identification certain beyond doubt, though the military power of "the Samdach Kambujādhīrāja" may be reflected in the circumstance that the Chinese, while referring to hostile Cham relations with Cambodia in the next reign, *Pao-p'i-yeh*'s, and in *P'ing-ya*'s reign in the early fifteenth century, do not mention Cham aggression in this reign.

The "Kambujādhīrāja" ruled for at least 7 years, while the *List* and Nong state that Gāmkhāt ruled for only 4 years. The fragment does not give the length of the reign, and the omission may have been intentional because the author knew that the sources at his disposal did not agree on the subject. The fragment agrees, however, with the other Khmer documents on the length of the reign of Dharmāsokarāja, Gāmkhāt's successor, which was 3 years. This king died in the second sack of Angkor, which Nong places 20 years after the first attack.

If the identification of kings, mentioned in the Ming records, with the kings in the fragment is maintained, *Pao-p'i-yeh* would correspond with Dharmāsokarāja. *Pao-p'i-yeh* sent his first mission in 1387, having been visited by Chinese envoys towards the end of 1386 or early in 1387. When the *Hung-wu* emperor received the Khmer mission of 1387, he at once sent his own envoys to confer a seal of office on the king. *Pao-p'i-yeh*'s thanks were proffered on 15 October 1388.

Except for the Chams' tampering with the Khmer mission sent in 1387 there is no Chinese evidence of what was happening to Cambodia during *Pao-p'i-yeh's* reign. Nor do the Chinese records permit us to determine the length of his reign. Only one piece of Chinese evidence has a possible bearing on events described in the *Ang Eng* fragment, and this is the strange circumstance that in 1389 a Khmer king sent three missions to China, arriving between 20 May and 20 September/19 October.

The synchronism between the Ming dates and the narrative of *Ang Eng* in respect of the first attack on Angkor and the general consistency in the evidence of "the Samdach Kambujādhirāja" and Gāmkhāt suggest the following reconstructions of the time of the second capture of Angkor, which would have been 20 years after the first attack according to Nong and the *List*. If *Pao-p'i-yeh* were Dharmāsōkarāja, the seal-bearing Chinese mission visited him in Angkor in the dry season of 1387-8, and he would have sent his thanks in the next sailing season during the mid-year months of 1388. But in the dry season of 1388-9, approximately from November to April, the Thai again attacked Angkor. The *Ang Eng* fragment and Nong agree that the siege lasted seven months, suggesting that the length of the campaign was the whole of the dry season, extending into the following year. *Pao-p'i-yeh* would have been killed, but his successor, *P'o-p'i-ya*, escaped and sent three missions in 1389 within about five months of each other; the last mission was led by a minister, who presented a gold memorial. *P'o-p'i-ya* would have been "Paramarājādhirāja Rāmādhīpati Śrī Dharmikarāja" in the fragment and "Prea Reach Angka Prea Barom Reachea Thireach" in the *List*. Historians prefer to call him "Ponhea Yat".

Alternatively, the attack could have taken place in 1389-90. In this case, the three missions sent in 1389 would have come from Dharmāsōkarāja with requests that the emperor should warn the Thai to cease plans for invading Cambodia. Ponhea Yat's first mission would have been the one which ran into a storm towards the end of 1390. But if *P'o-p'i-ya* had asked for help in 1389, one would expect the Chinese records to mention the fact, just as they mention Khmer complaints against the Chams. The more likely interpretation is that, if the three missions of 1389 had any connexion with an attack on Angkor, they were sent by Ponhea Yat to inform the emperor of his accession, recovery of Angkor, and right to rule in Cambodia.

These reconstructions do not rest on the same secure basis as the reconstruction of the date of the first attack rests. The most that can be claimed of the Ming records is that they do not contradict the proposition that the second attack ended in 1389 or in 1390. Nevertheless, the possibility that Ponhea Yat's reign was from 1389 to 1404 and that he died after ruling for 15 years will be recalled when we examine the singular treatment given to his reign in the *List* and by Nong.

The author of the *Ang Eng* fragment avoided committing himself on

the length of Ponhea Yat's reign. According to the fragment, Ponhea Yat was a successful warrior who quickly drove the Thai from Angkor. But, in spite of the recovery of his capital, he decided to establish himself at Caturmukha, or Phnom Penh. He then raised an army and was able to recover Candapuri from the Thai. He lived a "long time" after the return of this expedition. When he died he was succeeded by his son Gāmkhāt, who went to reign in Angkor and took the name of Nārāyaṇa Rāmādhīpati. In the *List* and in Nong this king is known as "Prea Noreay Reamea Thyph-dey". Nārāyaṇa had an uneventful reign of 25 years.

Again, there are elements in this account which are consistent with the Ming chronology. *P'o-p'i-ya* was succeeded by his son, *P'ing-ya*, who announced his father's "death". According to the *List* and Nong, Ponhea Yat "abdicated". Nārāyaṇa ruled for 25 years, while *P'ing-ya's* reign was at least from 1404 to 1419. The fragment's mention of the length of the reign is interesting in view of its author's silence concerning the length of the reigns of the great Gāmkhāt and of Ponhea Yat. The Ming records give reason to doubt whether Gāmkhāt ruled for only four years, as the *List* and Nong state, while reasons will later be proposed for doubting the length of Ponhea Yat's reign as described in these two sources. Evidently the author of the fragment felt sufficiently confident of his facts to state the length of Nārāyaṇa's reign. Finally, Nārāyaṇa's decision to rule in Angkor is consistent with the evidence of Yin Shou's itinerary that in 1403 the capital was at Angkor. If the Chinese evidence were reliable as a control for Khmer chronology in this period, Ponhea Yat, after some years at Phnom Penh, returned to die in Angkor. His base at Phnom Penh could have been used for action against the Chams, whose attacks in this period are inferred from M. Boisselier's interpretation of the Bien-Hoa inscription.

The *Ang Eng* evidence peters out with the civil wars in the reign of Nārāyaṇa's successor, Sodaiya. This king is called "Srey" in the other documents. Sodaiya had a son called Dharmarājā, whom he did not trust. Dharmarājā revolted, and Sodaiya had to fly to Ayudhyā. Nong also preserves the tradition of civil war in this period; Srey ruled in Angkor, and then "there were great dissensions among the members of the royal family".

The fragment concludes with the measures Dharmarājā took to defend himself against a cousin's revolt. Dharmarājā was born in the "Year of the Hare".

The reader will decide what substance lies in this attempt to interpret the *Ang Eng* narrative in terms of the sequence of reigns listed in the Ming records. The interpretation rests on the crucial identification of the "Year of the Cock" with 1369 and on the identification of *Pa-shan* in 1371 and 1373 with the temporary headquarters of the Khmer king when the Thai were in possession of Angkor. A series of correspondences between the Chinese and Khmer sources in respect of the events after the first sack of

Angkor suggests that the Chinese sources may contain a faint echo of events recorded in the fragment. The proud title of the "Samdach Kambujādhirāja" was held by the conqueror, Gāmkhāt. The Chams stole elephants sent to China by the harassed Dharmāsokarāja, or *Pao-p'i-yeh*. The intensive Khmer mission activity of 1389 was an aftermath of the second capture of Angkor in the dry season of 1388-9. The author of the fragment refrains from supplying the length of Ponhea Yat's reign, which, if Ponhea Yat were *P'o-p'i-ya*, would have been 15 years, provided that *P'ing-ya* succeeded in 1404. Nārāyaṇa, however, ruled for 25 years, while *P'ing-ya* was not yet dead after a reign of 15 years.

"The Year of the Hare"

The dates of 1369 and 1389 have now been proposed for the true years for the Thai captures of Angkor. The dates are 20 years apart, and there is no inconsistency between the length of this reconstructed interval and the interval recorded in the Khmer chronicles. But we have been considering only a short period of time and on the basis of a comparison of the Ming records with the virtually undated narrative of the *Ang Eng* fragment. Flexibility of interpretation was therefore possible in suggesting correspondences in the evidence, while the interpretation was dominated by the control provided by the *Pa-shan* evidence.

We shall now consider whether the proposed dates of 1369 and 1389 help to interpret a much wider span of Khmer chronology.⁶⁶ Tentative proposals, by no means innocent of hypotheses, will be formulated for restoring the correct chronology. Once again the calculations involved will be artificial, but they will not be more artificial than the calculations which the present writer believes were made by the Khmer chroniclers. The conclusions reached may not be correct beyond all possible doubt, but other analysts may resume the subject with some confidence that the reckoning of the reign periods in the chronicles was systematic.

The chroniclers seem to have had three preoccupations. Certain years, expressed in terms of years in the "animal" cycle of twelve years, were regarded as unavoidable elements in their chronologies.⁶⁷ Secondly, the chronology represented by the *List* enjoyed considerable prestige early in the nineteenth century, when Nong was instructed to rewrite the chronicle. Finally, the chronology which began with the accession of Nippean Bat was acknowledged by the Khmers to be less reliable than that which began with the birth of Ang Chan, the great king of the sixteenth century. As a

⁶⁶ The Khmer chronologies are those of the *List* and of Nong, whose important dates are contained in the statement at the end of the article.

⁶⁷ The Khmers had used the cycle of twelve animals at least from the beginning of the eleventh century; G. Cœdès, "L'origine du cycle des douze animaux au Cambodge", *TP*, 31 (1935), 321-4.

result the chroniclers realized that, at an appropriate stage in their systems, they had to contrive the abandonment of the "Nippean Bat" chronology in favour of its successor.

The importance of certain "animal" years was illustrated by the efforts of the compiler of the *Ang Eng* fragment to assimilate the "Year of the Cock" with a tradition which required the first capture of Angkor to be in a "Year of the Snake". Another instance of this preoccupation is provided in the *List*, whose compiler telescoped the two successive years of the first attack and capture into one year, which he called "1388" (a "Dragon" year). For him the "Dragon" year was more important than the "Snake" year was for Nong or the author of the *Ang Eng* fragment. But the compiler of the *List* felt himself committed to the tradition which required Nippean Bat's accession to be in a "Dog" year ("1382") and Ponhea Yat's accession to be in a "Bull" year (1409). Nong's identical "animal" years were "1346" and "1373". Because the compiler of the *List* made his "1388" serve the function of two years (Nong's 1352 and 1353), he compensated for the circumstance by adding the displaced year to the reign of Sorijovong, Gāmkhāt's predecessor, who therefore ruled for nine instead of eight years, as he does in Nong's chronicle. The compensation ensured that Ponhea Yat's reign began in a "Bull" year.

The origin of the tradition that some key events happened on certain "animal" years is probably to be found in the role played by Thai records as a means of reconstructing the Cambodian chronicle,⁶⁸ while other "animal" years would have been sacrosanct because they were mentioned in the records concerning Ang Chan and his immediate predecessors. An illustration of an "animal" year in the "Ang Chan" tradition is provided by the "Year of the Hare", which we shall see was the year when Ang Chan's father was born. The importance of these animal years meant that the chroniclers were more concerned to incorporate them than to show the true lengths of the reigns through which their chronologies were constructed. Their practice would therefore have been to use, when available, the true length of a reign and add to it sufficient years to ensure that the next reign began on the appropriate "animal" year. Some examples of the practice will be suggested below.

The prestige of the *List* is reflected in Nong's painstaking attempt to identify his chronology with that of the *List* after Ponhea Yat's reign. Both sources agree that Noreay, known in the *Ang Eng* fragment as Nārāyaṇa, began his reign in "1433", though their base years are "1346" and "1382". Nong, writing early in the nineteenth century, knew that the foundation of Ayudhyā was in 1350 and that the first decades in the *List* were therefore

⁶⁸ Thai "animal" years will be mentioned in the final section of this article. Professor Cœdès, in his review of Leclère's *Histoire du Cambodge* . . . , notes the influence of the *Annals of Ayudhyā* on the Cambodian chronicle; *BEFEO*, 14, 9 (1914), 53.

unreliable. Evidently he felt that he could safely follow the *List* only from "1433".

But the chief preoccupation of these writers, more clearly seen in Nong's chronicle, probably was to make certain that the "Nippean Bat" chronology was conveniently superseded by the "Ang Chan" chronology. Ang Chan was the great warrior king of the sixteenth century, who inflicted defeats on the Thai. The accuracy of some of Nong's dates in his chronology after the birth of Ang Chan can be tested by comparing them with dates contained in or implied by European records of the sixteenth century and also by a Khmer inscription of 1579.⁶⁹ The prestige of Ang Chan and the belief that his chronology was more trustworthy than that of "Nippean Bat" would have influenced the decisions of the chroniclers when they had to reconcile inconsistencies between the two systems. It can hardly be a coincidence that, from the reign of Dharmarājādhīrāja (Prea Thommo Reachea Thireach), Ang Chan's father, Nong's chronology begins to supply the age of the kings at the time of important events in their lives. More ample records were available for these later reigns.

"1512", the year when Srey Sukonthor, Ang Chan's brother, was murdered, was probably regarded by Nong as the last year in the "Nippean Bat" sequence of reigns. Then there was an interregnum under the usurper Kan until 1516, when Ang Chan returned from exile in Ayudhyā to begin his long and successful reign. He died in 1566, having been born in 1486, and would have been 80 years old at the time of his death, though Nong's chronicle, following the Khmer practice in calculating ages, states that he was "81 years" old.⁷⁰ A short overlap therefore existed between 1486 and 1512, when the two dating systems were available, and errors in the "Nippean Bat" system would now cause difficulties to the "Ang Chan" system. The 1486-1512 phase of the "Nippean Bat" system had therefore to be modified to avoid compromising the sequel.

The key reign in the older system was that of Dharmarājādhīrāja, Ang Chan's father. With the account of this king Nong begins his practice of giving the age of the kings at important events in their lives. Dharmarājādhīrāja, according to Nong, became king in "1468" at the age of 22 years. The *List* also dates this accession in "1468". Since Khmer ages have to be reduced by one year, the king was 21 years old in "1468". Thus he was born in "1447", which is a "Year of the Hare". But a "Year of the Hare"

is the only other "animal" year in addition to the "Year of the Cock" which is mentioned in the *Ang Eng* fragment, which states that "Dharmarāja" was born in that year. Dharmarāja was the son of Sodaiya. Sodaiya must be the "Srey" of the *List* and Nong and therefore Dharmarājādhīrāja's predecessor. Nong states that in Srey's reign great dissensions occurred among the members of the royal family, while the *Ang Eng* fragment describes the civil war in some detail, including the flight of Sodaiya from his rebellious son, Dharmarāja, to Ayudhyā. Dharmarāja and Dharmarājādhīrāja are clearly the same person; the bearers of both these names were born in a "Year of the Hare". The fact that the fragment mentions this year in the context of a description of Ponhea Yat's descendants does not mean that Dharmarāja was born in Ponhea Yat's lifetime but instead that the writer was taking the opportunity of supplying the year of the birth of the prince who was destined to be the father of the great Ang Chan.

So much, then, for the preoccupations of the compilers. We shall now try to identify the problems which the compilers, on account of their preoccupations, faced and the solutions they adopted in order to achieve their ends. The investigation will have as its objective the determination of the true date represented by "1468", the year when Ang Chan's father became king. The *List*'s date for the accession of Ponhea Yat after the second capture of Angkor was "1409", which is 20 years later than the proposed date of 1389. Are we to assume that the same degree of error existed in respect of "1468"? The assumption is impossible. If Dharmarājādhīrāja became king in 1448 at the age of 21 years, he would have been born in 1427, a "Goat" and not a "Hare" year. The *Ang Eng* fragment also mentions this "Year of the Hare", which may be regarded as the true date, just as the "Year of the Cock" is a true date. The nearest "Year of the Hare" to 1427 is 1423. If the "Year of the Hare" were in fact 1423, the date of Dharmarājādhīrāja's accession would be 1444 and the error reflected in "1468" would become 24 instead of 20. 1444, like 1468, is a "Rat" year.

We shall return to the possibility that Dharmarājādhīrāja became king in 1444 after we have examined the treatment given in these records to the reigns of Dharmarājādhīrāja's three predecessors, Ponhea Yat, Noreay/Nārāyaṇa, and Srey/Sodaiya.

According to the *List* Ponhea Yat became king in 1409, the year after the second attack on Angkor. He had a reign of 24 years and was succeeded by Noreay in 1433. Nong, however, dates Ponhea Yat's accession in 1373 and attributes to him a reign of 60 years, ending with his abdication in favour of Noreay in 1433.

Nong's reign of 60 years is clearly an artificial device to enable him to bridge the gap between 1373 and 1433. The Ming records make it certain that not one king but several kings ruled between 1373 and 1433. Nong needed this device in order to adopt the *List*'s date of 1433. As a result Ponhea

⁶⁹ B. P. Groslier, *Angkor et le Cambodge au XVI^e siècle d'après les sources portugaises et espagnoles*. Paris, 1958, 13-19, 26. Professor Coedès' views on the accuracy of Khmer records relating to the sixteenth century are in *BEFEO*, 14, 9 (1914), 44-7.

⁷⁰ Thus, in Nong's chronicle, a prince described as born in 1574 and dying in 1596, was "23 years" old at the time of his death. De Villemereuil observed that this chronicle added one year to the real age of the princes; *Explorations et missions de Doudart de Lagrée*, 26, n. 4. Moura reported the Khmer practice of regarding a child as being one year old at birth; *Le royaume du Cambodge*. Paris, 1883, 1, 373.

Yat has obtained an undeserved reputation among historians for longevity. Even before the end of the eighteenth century, when the *Ang Eng* narrative was translated into Thai, Ponhea Yat had this reputation, for the narrative notes that the king lived for a long time after he reconquered Candapuri.

Nong's treatment of Ponhea Yat's reign merits attention. If this writer had been concerned merely to catch up with the *List*, two straightforward solutions would have occurred to him. He could have stated simply that Ponhea Yat ruled for 60 years. Alternatively, he could have taken into account the difference of 36 years between his own base year of 1346 and the *List*'s base year of 1382; the remaining 24 years could then have been supplied by following the *List*'s estimate of the length of this reign, which was 24 years. Nong's concern to conform to the chronology of the *List* should have recommended the latter solution to him. But he deliberately rejected it in favour of another and more complicated expedient for fabricating a reign of 60 years. He chose a solution which incorporated three subdivisions in Ponhea Yat's reign: a period of 11 years in Angkor after the killing of the Thai prince ruling in the city (1373-84); a period of 4 years between Ponhea Yat's coronation at Angkor and his departure to Basan (1384-8); finally, a period of 45 years at Basan and then at Phnom Penh (1388-1432), when the king eventually abdicated. Instead of a simple calculation of $36+24$, Nong chose to total up $11+4+45$, of which 15 years represented the reign at Angkor and 45 years the reign away from Angkor. The figure of "45" is suspiciously long. Moreover it corresponds to 36 years (the difference between the two base years of 1346 and 1382) and 9 years. The unit of "9" happens to be the difference between the *List*'s reign of 24 years for Ponhea Yat and the unit of "15", which Nong had isolated as the time when Ponhea Yat ruled at Angkor. We shall consider later whether the compiler of the *List* artificially extended the length of the reign from 15 to 24 years.

Two comments may be made on Nong's solution. Evidently he was not prepared to ignore a tradition which recognized the existence of the two periods of 11 and 4 years. Indeed, he made these 15 years the basis of his solution for bridging the gap of 60 years. But 15 years would have been the length of *P'o-p'i-ya*'s reign if he had become king in 1389 and died in 1404, the 16th year of his reign. The suggestion was made earlier that *P'o-p'i-ya*, in terms of the rulers mentioned in the *Ang Eng* fragment, represents Ponhea Yat. Nong's isolation of these 15 years in Ponhea Yat's fictitious reign of 60 years is significant, suggesting that Nong had at his disposal sufficiently convincing evidence to require him to preserve in his chronicle the separate identity of these 15 years. Since the author of the *Ang Eng* fragment was aware of the true date of the "Year of the Cock", two instances of the survival of correct information seem to have found their way into the Khmer narratives.

The second comment on Nong's solution concerns his long sub-period of "45" years at Basan and Phnom Penh. These 45 years, which represent the units of 36 and 9, enabled Nong to reach "1433", and no detail associated with them can be taken for granted. The *Ang Eng* account, the earliest surviving and dated account, says that Ponhea Yat went to Caturmukha, or Phnom Penh, but does not mention Basan. Nor does the *List* mention Basan in connexion with this reign. Nong may have wanted to provide circumstantial detail to make his device of 45 years less transparent and a visit to Basan would have been convenient for his purpose. Basan appears as a temporary capital in the early sixteenth century, and the name could have caught Nong's eye in this way. A more likely context from which Nong removed "Basan" would be, however, a record concerning the years immediately after the "Year of the Cock", when, according to the Ming sources, the Khmer king lived at *Pa-shan*. *Pa-shan* is a perfect transliteration of "Basan". Nong probably transferred this earlier reference, appearing in the context of the aftermath of the first sack, to his account of Ponhea Yat's reign. *Pa-shan* can be confidently rendered as "Basan". The sub-periods of 11 and 4 years, on the other hand, may conceal true facts; Ponhea Yat could have been at Angkor for the first 11 years, and the *Ang Eng* fragment states that he returned there not long after his accession, while in the last 4 years he could have gone to Phnom Penh, arranging a coronation ceremony to celebrate the establishment of a new capital. The campaign whereby, according to *Ang Eng*, Candapuri was recovered was waged when the king was at Phnom Penh. His success would have brought relief to the Angkor region and would explain why, in 1403, Yin Shou found the Khmer king there. Nārāyaṇa/Noreay, Ponhea Yat's successor, also ruled in Angkor.

The compiler of the *List*, and therefore Nong as well, record that Ponhea Yat "abdicated", but the author of *Ang Eng* states that the king died. Moreover, *P'ing-ya* informed the emperor that his father *P'o-p'i-ya* had died, and in 1405 a Chinese envoy was sent to Cambodia to install *P'ing-ya*. The reference to the "abdication" was probably a convenient means of ending Ponhea Yat's reign in time to enable his successor to be represented as beginning to rule in 1433, a "Year of the Bull".

Nong's evidence about the reign of Ponhea Yat indicates that, early in the nineteenth century, the Khmers still possessed some true information which they wanted to reconcile with the "animal" years required by tradition as the first years of the reigns. Nong had deliberately added 45 years to 15 because 45 years were needed to enable him to associate his chronology with the *List*'s "Bull" year of 1433, when Noreay's reign had to begin. Noreay's accession in a "Bull" year was evidently established tradition, and it is reasonable to suppose that the same motives which made Nong add 45 years to Ponhea Yat's reign of 15 years made the author of the *List* add 9 years to this reign. The origin of the belief that Ponhea Yat began his reign

in a "Bull" year (Nong's 1373 and the *List's* 1409) may be derived from the Thai tradition that Rāmesvara attacked Angkor between 1384 and 1387; 1385 is a "Bull" year.⁷¹ A similar explanation is not available for the origin of Noreay's "Bull" year⁷² or for Srey's "Snake" year. In order to allow Srey to become king in the "Snake" year of 1461 the compiler of the *List* probably added three years to the 25 years attributed to Noreay/Nārāyaṇa in the *Ang Eng* fragment. One conclusion, however, seems certain. The Khmer kings clung obstinately to these animal years, and their unanimity was in spite of the different lengths they attributed to the reigns. Their agreement on the all-important matter of the identity of the animal years on which the reigns began is convincingly illustrated by the treatment given in the *List* and by Nong to the reigns of Noreay and Srey. In the *List* these kings ruled for 28 and 7 years respectively, while Nong gives 4 and 31 years. Yet both sources agree that Noreay ascended in a "Bull" year (1433), Srey in a "Snake" year (1461, 1437), and Dharmarājādhirāja in a "Rat" year (1468).

Nong's short reign of 4 years for Noreay is markedly inconsistent with the reign of 25 years in the *Ang Eng* fragment for Nārāyaṇa, the same king, or with the *List's* 28 years. There is a possible basis for Nong's calculation. The *Ang Eng* author had contrived to imply that the first capture of Angkor was in a "Year of the Snake", corresponding to 1377, and we saw how his treatment of the period between the accession of Nippan Bat and this event was an adaptation of the records later used by Nong. If the *Ang Eng* author had chosen to develop a chronology based on "1377", Ponhea Yat would have become king the conventional 20 years later in the "Bull" year of 1397. The length of Ponhea Yat's reign was not given because, we have suggested, the compiler of the fragment realized that the records were not consistent on the subject. If, however, he had given Ponhea Yat 15 years (the Ming 1389-1404 period) and Nārāyaṇa/Noreay 25 years, which is the figure given to Nārāyaṇa's reign in the fragment, Srey would have become king in the "Snake" year of 1437, which happens to be Nong's year. Nong's date of 1437 can hardly have been haphazardly chosen; no date in the Khmer chronicles seems to have been calculated without a reason. Thus a record probably existed, consulted by the author of the fragment and later by Nong, which not only mentioned the "Year of the Cock" but also 25 years for Noreay's reign as well as 15 years for Ponhea Yat's reign. But Nong wanted to agree with the *List* in dating Noreay's accession in 1433, and he would have reduced the length of Noreay's reign from 25 to 4 years.

We can now return to the possible errors in the dates provided in the

List. We have suggested that its compiler had records of the lengths of the reigns, to which he added a number of years to conform to dates of "animal" years required by tradition. He therefore added 9 to Ponhea Yat's reign of 15 years and 3 years to Noreay/Nārāyaṇa's reign of 25 years. If these two assumptions are made, the original error in the *List's* chronology would have increased from 20 in 1409 to 32 by 1461, the "Snake" year of Srey's accession. The question now arises: was this error affected by the *List's* treatment of Srey's reign, to which 7 years are assigned? The determination of the error by the end of Srey's reign would enable us to establish a hypothetical true date for "1468", the year of the accession of Ang Chan's father, Dharmarājādhirāja.

The Ming records contain evidence with a bearing on the length of Srey's reign. These records state that missions came to China in the 1426-35 period and in 1452. If the *Ang Eng* fragment is correct in stating that Nārāyaṇa/Noreay ruled for 25 years, and if the identification of Noreay with *P'ing-ya* is upheld, *P'ing-ya*, who sent his last mission in 1419, became king in 1404 and died in 1428. The mission in the 1426-35 period could have been sent by Srey before Dharmarājā was old enough to rebel against his father. Similarly, the mission of 1452 could have come from Srey's son and successor, Dharmarājādhirāja, after the civil war ended and the new king had consolidated his authority.

The Ming records therefore lead to the surmise that Dharmarājādhirāja became king several years before 1452. But the Khmer records agree that he was born in a "Year of the Hare" and was 21 years old (the Khmer "22 years") when he became king. In which "Hare" year was he born? The following "Hare" years are available for consideration: 1399, 1411, 1423, 1435, and 1447.

If he had been born in 1399 or 1411, the birth of his son, Ang Chan, in 1486 cannot easily be imagined. Moreover, if he were born in 1411, his accession in 1432 is inconsistent with the indications of the Chinese and Khmer evidence analysed so far; one implication, for example, would be that *P'ing-ya*, becoming king in 1404, was Srey. Difficulties would also arise if Dharmarājādhirāja were born in 1435 or 1447, becoming king in 1456 or 1468. The *List's* span of reigns up to 1468 represents an interval of 80 years from the first capture of Angkor (1388-1468). If either 1456 or 1468 were the correct date for Dharmarājādhirāja's accession, the *List's* interval of 80 years would correspond to a true interval of 87 or 99 years (1369-1456 or 1369-1468). Some of the *List's* reigns would therefore have been reduced. Yet we have seen that the evidence suggests that two reigns, those of Ponhea Yat and Noreay, were in fact lengthened in the *List* by 12 years. No reason has been found for querying the *List's* treatment of the interval between the two sacks of Angkor, which is in general conformity both with Khmer tradition and the Chinese evidence. Thus, if the *List's*

⁷¹ See the final section of this article.

⁷² The Thai have the tradition of a third attack on Angkor in 1421 under Paramarāja II, though this king did not begin to rule until 1424. Neither the *List* nor Nong acknowledge this attack, but 1421 happens to be a "Bull" year.

interval of 80 years corresponds to a true interval of 87 or 99 years, an arithmetical calculation reveals that Srey's reign, remembered in Khmer tradition as a period of civil war, would have been 27 or 39 years in length. It is true that Nong attributed 31 years to Srey, but we have suggested that this author, in respect of the "Snake" year of 1437, could have reflected a chronology based on the *Ang Eng* fragment's implied date of 1377 for the first capture of Angkor. Moreover, Nong wished to catch up with 1468, and his 31 years for Srey were as artificial as his 60 years for Ponhea Yat's reign.

These considerations lead to the theoretical conclusion that the "Year of the Hare" in question was 1423, which means that the 80 years in the *List*'s interval from 1388 to 1468 represent a true interval of 75 years from 1369 to 1444. On this basis of argument the rectification of the *List*'s chronology would be as follows:

	<i>List</i>	<i>Proposed dating</i>
1. From the first capture of Angkor to Ponhea Yat's accession	1388-1409 (21 years)	1369-1389 (20 years)
2. Ponhea Yat's reign	1409-1432 (24 years)	1389-1404 (15 years)
3. Noreay's reign	1433-1460 (28 years)	1404-1428 (25 years)
4. Srey's reign	1461-1467 (7 years)	1429-1443 (15 years)
5. Accession of Dharmarājādhirāja (who was born in 1423 and became king at the age of 21 years)	1468	1444
	80 years	75 years

In 1388 the *List*'s error is 19 years because the first attack and capture of Angkor were telescoped into one year. By 1409 the error has become 20 years. By 1461 the error has increased to 32 years. The decision of the compiler to identify the first "Rat" year after Srey's accession with the accession of Dharmarājādhirāja means the reduction of Srey's reign by 8 years. The error in the *List* in "1468" is therefore reduced to 24 years, the difference between 1468 and 1444.

The rectification of the *List*'s chronology was the result of a number of assumptions. We have assumed that Nong's period of 15 years for Ponhea Yat's reign is verified by the Ming evidence; the Chinese records confirm 1369 as the year of the first capture of Angkor, and they are generally consistent with the reigns after this event; they describe the extraordinary despatch of three missions in 1389; they state that *P'ing-ya* in 1405 announced his father's death. *P'o-p'i-ya* sent a mission in 1404, and we have assumed that he died later that year and not in 1405. We have also assumed that the author of the *Ang Eng* fragment had access to true information when he stated that Nārāyaṇa ruled for 25 years. This assumption was

reinforced by the *Ang Eng* author's knowledge that 1369 was the true date for the first capture of Angkor and by his evident caution in avoiding committing himself on the length of those reigns whose traditional rendering happens to be at variance with the indications from the Chinese records. The difference between 25 years for Nārāyaṇa and the *List*'s 28 is small and explicable in terms of the *List*'s identification of the next "Snake" year with Srey's accession. *P'ing-ya*, who seems in terms of the kings in the Ming records to represent Noreay/Nārāyaṇa, had a relatively long reign of at least 14 or 15 years. Dharmarājādhirāja had to become king in a "Rat" year because he was born in a "Year of the Hare" and was 21 years old (the Khmer "22" years) when he became king. A number of possible "Hare" years were considered for Dharmarājādhirāja's birth, and objections were found in respect of all of them except 1423. The compiler of the *List* saw no reason for prolonging Srey's reign, a period of weakness and civil war, and he therefore cut it off by the time of the first "Rat" year after his "Snake" year of 1461. This year was 1468. The true "Rat" year was 24 years earlier and in 1444.

When the present writer, through this process of reasoning, had reached the conclusion that "1468" represented a year which was in fact 24 years too late, Professor Cœdès brought to his notice evidence of unassailable validity and considerable significance for the present study.⁷³ In 1954 several Khmer-language inscriptions were found in Tenasserim, and they reveal that between 1462 and 1465, the dates on these inscriptions, a Cambodian king lived in Tenasserim. Here we have evidence of a Khmer court in exile on territory under the control of the ruler of Ayudhyā.⁷⁴ Professor Cœdès related this evidence to the tradition in the Khmer chronicles that a Thai king intervened in a Khmer civil war and brought royal captives to Ayudhyā.

Nong's account of this episode is as follows:

1476. At the request of Prea Reaches Thireach (*i.e.* Dharmarājādhirāja) the king of Siam sent troops to fight the elder brother and the *Somdach phacnyea* of the king. They were taken and led to Srey juthia.

If 24 years are subtracted from Nong's date of 1476, this event would have happened in 1452, which was the year when a Khmer mission was sent to China. In other words, the chronological correction, proposed on grounds which are almost entirely theoretical, is consistent with reliable evidence

⁷³ This evidence is contained in an article contributed by Professor Cœdès to the second of the *Felicitations Volumes* offered in 1965 to His Highness Prince Dhaninivat Kromamun Bidyalabh, pp. 203-9. The author wishes to express his gratitude to Professor Cœdès for courteously lending the page proofs of the article in honour of Prince Dhaninivat and for his invariably valuable advice.

⁷⁴ Courts in exile are not a rare phenomenon in South East Asian history. One thinks, for example, of the Thaton court in Pagan.

that there was an exiled Khmer king in Tenasserim at least as early as 1462, and Professor Cœdès, on the strength of the Tenasserim evidence, concluded that the chronology of the Khmer chronicles on this occasion was at least 15 years too late.⁷⁵

The question arises of the identity of the exiled king. His name and titles are described in the inscription of 1462 as: *saṃtac brah̃ rāmādhīpati s'ris'rindraparamacakrabaritti rājādhirāja rāmes'vara dharmarāja tejo jayabarma debātideba tribhubanādhīpes'a paramapabitra*. The present writer, because he has come to respect the contents of the *Ang Eng* fragment, is inclined to identify this prince with Dharmarājādhirāja's cousin, whose name is not supplied in the fragment. This cousin was Nārāyaṇa's son; Nārāyaṇa was Dharmarājādhirāja's uncle and Srey's brother by another wife of Ponhea Yat.⁷⁶ Dharmarājādhirāja captured Angkor and apparently soon afterwards drove his father, Srey, into exile in Ayudhyā. Dharmarājādhirāja probably now proclaimed himself king, which would have been in 1468 or, according to the proposed restoration, 1444. The fragment then mentions the rebellion of Nārāyaṇa's son; the latter had initial successes and was crowned king at Pursat. The fragment ends with Dharmarājādhirāja in temporary retreat. One can imagine that there were some years of civil war, which came to an end only with the intervention of the Thai and the capture of Dharmarājādhirāja's rival. According to the proposed chronology, the rival was captured in 1452, which could have been why the successful Dharmarājādhirāja sent his mission to China. At the same time the exiled court would have been established somewhere in the kingdom of Ayudhyā.

A possible explanation for the Thai intervention may be found in the *Ang Eng* fragment. According to this source, Dharmarājādhirāja's grandmother was a "Siamese concubine" and related to the Thai prince Indarājā, who had been left in Angkor after the second capture of the city. The grandmother was called Nān Keṣara, and she married Ponhea Yat; her son was Srey. She had a special affection for Dharmarājādhirāja, for she warned him that his father, Srey, did not trust him and enabled him to escape and launch his successful rebellion against his father. Perhaps she, or other

⁷⁵ Moura's recension of the second half of the nineteenth century construes this episode as a Thai attack on Cambodia, as a result of which Dharmarājādhirāja rallied the country and expelled the invaders. According to Nong, Dharmarājādhirāja invited the Thai to help him against the rebel. The later modification of Dharmarājādhirāja's role is suspiciously like an attempt to rewrite his history in an acceptable way. Dharmarājādhirāja was the father of the great Ang Chan. The recensions of the Cambodian Chronicle known through Moura and Leclère should, perhaps, be studied less for their information on earlier Cambodian history than as documents which throw some light on the mood of the Khmer court in the later nineteenth century.

⁷⁶ According to the *Ang Eng* fragment, Srey at the beginning of his reign was opposed by his elder brother, Śrī Rāja, who was captured and killed. If the fragment is believed, Śrī Rāja could not have been the exile in Tenasserim.

Thai relatives of Dharmarājādhirāja, sponsored the Thai intervention against Dharmarājādhirāja's cousin.

The Tenasserim inscriptions indicate that the Khmer chroniclers, at least in respect to this event, had post-dated the beginning of a reign, that of Dharmarājādhirāja. To this extent the hypothetical restoration of the chronology seems less improbable than it was before the present author had access to Professor Cœdès' information. The conclusion is therefore permissible that the chroniclers may have realized, as they approached the "Ang Chan" chronology, that they would have to manipulate the final and inaccurately late dates in the "Nippean Bat" system in such a way that the dating of Ang Chan's career early in the sixteenth century could proceed without modification and in accordance with the much more reliable records concerning Ang Chan and his successors. If the estimate of the accumulated errors in the "Nippean Bat" chronology is correct, the chroniclers would have to contrive discreetly to remove 24 years at the end of the "Nippean Bat" system.

The *List* only supplies the first year of each reign. Nong wrote a chronicle, containing details which do not appear in the *List*, and to Nong we must turn for evidence that the Khmers recognized and solved their chronological problem. Both sources agree that Dharmarājādhirāja ascended in 1468 and that he was succeeded by his eldest son, Srey Sukonthor, in 1504. The next date in the *List* is the accession of Ang Chan in 1520, but Nong states that Srey Sukonthor was murdered in 1512 and that Ang Chan returned from Ayudhyā in 1516 to rally the people against the usurper Kan.

Nong's account of the reign of Dharmarājādhirāja contains a curious piece of information which suggests how the unwanted 24 years may have been eliminated from the final part of the "Nippean Bat" chronology.

Under the date of 1486, the year of Ang Chan's birth⁷⁷ and therefore the beginning of the new and more reliable chronology, the following notice appears:

The king went to Phnom Sonthok to perform the funeral rites there. He then returned to Phnom Penh. He had a beautiful white elephant.

The king in question is Dharmarājādhirāja, and no more information is provided about him until he dies in 1504 at the age of "58 years".

The context in which the "funeral rites" are mentioned is remarkable. An event of such a nature, sufficiently important to be recorded in the chronicle, is incomplete and meaningless unless an explanation is given of the identity of the dead person. In Nong's chronicle this is the only mention of a funeral before 1595, the end of the chronicle "for the time that the

⁷⁷ Nong states that Ang Chan died in 1566 at the age of "81". He would have been 80 at his death and therefore born in 1486.

kings resided at Lovek",⁷⁸ though the *Ang Eng* fragment carefully describes the funeral after the death of each king. The person whose rites were performed in 1486 was certainly of princely rank. Phnom Sonthok is in the Kompong Thom region, to the east of the Tonlé Sap. Here was the site of the capital city of the great Īśānavarman I early in the seventh century. Here, too, Srey Sukonthor was murdered in 1512. Phnom Sonthok was evidently a region with which the Khmer kings at this time had associations, and the dead person can be safely presumed to have been a member of the royal family. Who was he?

The recension of the Cambodian chronicle, undertaken in the second half of the nineteenth century and used by Moura, states that in 1473 the Thai invaded Cambodia, captured Srey, and took him back to Ayudhyā.⁷⁹ This account is a modification of the civil war, discussed above in connexion with the Tenasserim evidence, in which Dharmarājādhirāja became king and was able to rid himself of his cousin. According to Moura's recension Srey died in captivity, and his corpse was returned to Cambodia for burial. Moura also mentions the funeral rites at Phnom Sonthok, but the ceremony is not connected with Srey. Nevertheless the possibility arises that the ceremony was in honour of Srey or even of the exiled Khmer prince in Tenasserim.

If, however, the rites were not in honour of an exiled prince, the corpse in question may have been that of Dharmarājādhirāja. No other identifiable candidates are available.

Let us examine the implications of his death in 1486. If he had become king in 1444 and died in 1486, he would have ruled for 42 years and not for 36 years, which is the figure given by Nong (1468-1504). The reign would have been 6 years longer.⁸⁰ If Srey Sukonthor, his successor, had become king in 1486 and ruled until 1512, this reign would have been 26 years and not 8 years long; it would have been 18 years longer than Nong represented it. In other words, the suppression of a reference to Dharmarājādhirāja's death in 1486, the shortening of his reign by 6 years, and the reduction of his successor's reign by 18 years would have enabled the "Nippean Bat" chronology to shed the 24 unwanted years by the time it reached its

⁷⁸ The "kings who resided at Lovek" were Ang Chan and his successors. The expression indicates the emphasis Nong had in mind during this part of his chronicle even though it began with Nippean Bat. Garnier published De Lagrée's translation and added embellishments, including the funerals of each king; *JA* (Oct.-Déc. 1871), 336-85.

⁷⁹ J. Moura, *Le royaume de Cambodge*, 2, 40.

⁸⁰ If Nong had stated that Dharmarājādhirāja died in 1486, this reign would have been 18 years. Though Moura's recension cannot be invoked in support of the proposed restoration of the Khmer chronology, it at least suggests that Khmers were not unfamiliar with the notion of a shorter reign for Dharmarājādhirāja. Moura's recension states that he ruled for 17 years, having come to the throne at the age of 21.

conclusion in 1512. If, however, the 24 surplus years had not been removed, Srey Sukonthor would have been murdered in 1436, which was in the reign of his younger brother, Ang Chan. Many inconsistencies would have arisen, requiring correction at the expense of the "Ang Chan" chronology. The first of these inconsistencies would have been in respect of 1508, the year when Ang Chan, at the age of 22 years, fled to Ayudhyā on account of Kan's rebellion. Nong could never suggest that Ang Chan fled during his father's reign. Infinitely more satisfactory would have been the sacrifice of 6 years of Dharmarājādhirāja's life and 18 years of the reign of the unfortunate Srey Sukonthor in order to achieve the reconciliation of the two chronologies.

If this were the background to the reference to the funeral in 1486, all that was allowed to remain of the record of Dharmarājādhirāja's death in 1486 was his funeral. Ang Chan would have been born the same year, when his father was 63 years old. His birth would not have been a physical impossibility.

Does the cremation at Phnom Sonthok in 1486 conceal the key to the "Nippean Bat" chronology? The enquiry which has led to 1486 was originally limited to the earlier part of the period under review, and, before the present writer considered Dharmarājādhirāja's reign, he had already suspected that the Khmer chronologies incorporated true information and therefore contained opportunities for identifying measurable errors in their dating systems. Thus he may have been too ready to see some special significance in the curious evidence about 1486. Alternative methods of analysis, supported by a better understanding of Khmer culture⁸¹ or even by better arithmetic, may produce a more scientific basis for the restoration of the Khmer chronology of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and other students of the subject may now be encouraged to experiment. Further manuscripts and inscriptions may come to light, and the Tenasserim inscriptions have already provided an exciting instance of the way, unexpectedly, guidance can be made available from the surest form of documentation. The records which have been used in this article seem to have sufficient internal consistency as well as agreement with details in the Ming records to make a restoration of their chronology a practicable objective. But no progress will be made if the chroniclers are not regarded with respect. Professor Cœdès has noted a reference to "annals" in an inscription of the early eleventh century during the reign of Sūryavarman I, when the

⁸¹ Mme. Porée-Maspero has discussed the importance of the "animal" years in Khmer life. She writes that "the essential fact is that the unrolling of time has been associated with a series of animals which have a determining influence on human life"; "Le cycle des douze animaux dans la vie des Cambodgiens", *BEFEO*, L, 2 (1960-2), 322. Here may be one means of exposing the secrets of the earlier Khmer chronology.

animal dating system was already being used.⁸² Moreover, by the eleventh century the Khmer language had developed as the vehicle for writing historical accounts on inscriptions.⁸³ It would be surprising if the care for accuracy and detail exhibited by those who prepared texts for the inscriptions was not extended to the compilation of the chronicles, even in the troubled centuries of Cambodian history. We may have become too accustomed to disregard the *Royal Chronicle of Cambodia* because of the most recent and obviously elaborated versions used by Moura and Leclère. The author of the *Ang Eng* fragment's conscientious effort to reconcile two traditions for the year of the first capture of Angkor, Nong's hint of the manner in which he felt compelled to fabricate the length of Ponhea Yat's reign, and, above all, the chroniclers' sound instinct in recognizing the accuracy of the "Ang Chan" chronology may persuade us to treat their handiwork with more respect.

CONCLUSION

This study has been concerned with why, in the context of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the spans and intervals of time in the *List* and in Nong's chronicle sometimes differ and why both these chronologies differ from that of the *Ang Eng* fragment, which has been reconstructed with assistance from Ming records and may therefore be the most accurate Khmer account of this period. Whatever else in this study should be discarded in the light of subsequent research, perhaps the *Ang Eng* fragment will be recognized as an important source for the last period of Angkorian history.

The discrepancies in the Khmer chronologies were explained not because the chroniclers were indifferent to truth but because they were not prepared to abandon the practice of dating key events by means of specific and apparently invariable "animal" years. This practice, imposed on true facts, had the result that the chroniclers tended to lengthen some of the reigns registered in their chronicles.

The circumstances which led these writers to incorporate the "animal"

years in question are unknown. Evidently they believed that the first fall of Angkor took place soon after the foundation of Ayudhyā in 1350. This assumption is most clearly expressed by Nong, who stated that Nippean Bat became king in 1346 and that the first siege and capture of Angkor took place in 1352-3. The author of the *List* dated Nippean Bat's accession in 1382, three animal cycles later than 1346, but his rendering of the course of events was similar to that of Nong. Even the author of the *Ang Eng* fragment mentions 1346 as the time when "Nippean Bat was reigning at Angkor", and "1346" is the only unambiguous date he provides. In terms of "animal" years Nippean Bat became king in a "Dog" year and the first attack on and fall of Angkor took place in the next "Dragon" and "Snake" years. Because of the chroniclers' base year of 1346 related to the foundation of Ayudhyā in 1350, their 20 years' interval between the two captures of Angkor could never be dated by what seem to be the true years of 1369 and 1389, and even the *Ang Eng* author was embarrassed by his reference to the "Year of the Cock". For the Khmers' construction of the chronology after the second fall of Angkor the *List*'s system was adopted, but this system was already 20 years too late at the time of Ponhea Yat's accession. The need to retain specific "animal" years increased this error by lengthening the reigns of Ponhea Yat and Noreay, while the reigns of Srey, Dharmarājādhirāja, and Sukonthor seem to have been reduced when the more reliable "Ang Chan" chronology was approaching and had to be incorporated in the Khmer chronicle.

This treatment of the reigns was a consequence of the adoption of an artificial framework of time apparently stemming from a supposed synchronism between the reign of Nippean Bat and the foundation of Ayudhyā. The origins of this synchronism may be reasonably attributed to a Khmer adaptation of Thai records when the Khmers began to recompile their own scattered materials and were uncertain how to enclose their information within a suitable time span. When this adaptation took place is unknown, and the subject cannot be investigated until more is known of the process whereby the *Annals of Ayudhyā* were compiled. The frequent presence of Khmer exiles and captives in the court of Ayudhyā during later Cambodian history probably has a bearing on the subject.

The suggestion was made that the Thai contribution to the Khmer chronology was in the form of the "animal" years with which the Khmers dated the sacks of Angkor and the beginning of certain reigns. Students of the Thai sources for the early Ayudhyā period will therefore wish to consider whether these "animal" years can in fact be identified in the Thai records. But more important for Thai students are two other questions. Does the proposed reconstruction of the Khmer chronology imply a criticism of Thai chronologies when the latter are concerned with events in Cambodia? What bearing does the restored Khmer chronology have on the

⁸² BEFEO, 14, 9 (1914), 53; G. Cœdès, *Inscriptions du Cambodge*, volume VI, Paris, 1954, 266. A long-established family of official archivists is mentioned in a Preah Vihear inscription; the records of the departments of government and of the great deeds of the rulers were deposited in three centres. A tenth century inscription refers to a silver plaque, confirming property rights, which was deposited in the Sacred Hall of Justice, while a gold plaque was deposited at one of the centres mentioned in the Preah Vihear inscription; G. Cœdès, *Inscriptions du Cambodge*, volume II, Hanoi 1942, 67-8. The practice of keeping copies at different places may have helped to ensure the survival of Khmer records.

⁸³ G. Cœdès and P. Dupont, "Les stèles de Sdok Kak Thom...", BEFEO, 43 (1943-6), 75-6.

strange circumstance that the *Paramanujit* recension⁸⁴ and the "Luang Prasroeth" abbreviated recension of the *Annals of Ayudhyā* differ markedly in respect of the dates of the Thai attacks on Angkor? The former mentions no less than three attacks, while the latter mentions only one.

1369, the "Year of the Cock", was the last year of the reign of Rāmādhīpati, the founder of the new city of Ayudhyā. The siege would have begun in 1368. The "Luang Prasroeth" recension ignores this attack, while the *Paramanujit* recension dates it ambiguously. The latter states that Ayudhyā was founded in 1350 (a "Tiger" year) and that in 1353 (the "Snake" year which, for Nong, was the year of the first capture of Angkor) the Vat Buddhaisvarya was built at Ayudhyā. Between these two entries it is stated that "at that time" many cities were subject to Rāmādhīpati, including Malacca which had not yet been founded. After this list of cities we are informed that Rāmādhīpati's son, Rāmeśvara, attacked the city of "Kambujathibodi". The attack did not go well, and Paramarāja, Rāmādhīpati's brother-in-law and governor of Subarnapuri, was sent to assist. As a result many Khmer captives were taken.

The ambiguous dating of the attack in the *Paramanujit* recension means that this text neither confirms nor contradicts the proposed date of 1368-9. Perhaps the *Īnakālamāli*, of the early sixteenth century, helps to distinguish the true sequence of events telescoped in the *Paramanujit* account. The *Īnakālamāli* states that, when Lū T'ai was king of Sukhodaya, Rāmādhīpati "coming from Kambuja" took Jayanādapura from him.⁸⁵ Here may be an early reflection of the tradition, later accepted by the Khmer chroniclers, that at the beginning of Rāmādhīpati's reign warfare took place between Ayudhyā and Angkor. The *Īnakālamāli* also states that Rāmādhīpati was "king of Kambuja and Ayudhyā" at the time of his death.⁸⁶ When

⁸⁴ The present writer is grateful to M. R. Akin Rabibhadana, who has translated the relevant contents of the *Phrarāṭchaphongsāwadān krung sī ayutthayā*, Bangkok, 1962 (the transcription used in Cornell University Library, which is adapted from the system of transliteration proposed by the Royal Institute of Thailand). This text incorporates the recension of the *Annals of Ayudhyā* customarily known as the *Paramanujit* recension, which Pallegoix used; *Description du royaume thai ou Siam*, Paris, 1854, Vol. 2. The text will be referred to as the *Paramanujit* recension. According to the introductory note, written in the Department of Fine Arts, Bangkok, the date of compilation was in the reign of Rāma I and is believed to have begun in 1797. The compiler was Somdet Phra Phonnarat. The period dealing with the events from 1350 to 1698 is considered to have been based mainly on the *Phrarāṭchaphongsāwadān chabap phan ḥanthanumāt (ḥhoem)*, compiled in the reigns of kings Bedarāja (1688-1703) and Phra Chao Sūya (1703-9). The recently rediscovered "Kachorn Sukhabanij" recension (*Phrarāṭchaphongsāwadān krung sayām*, Bangkok, 1964) agrees, with unimportant elaborations, with the details of the attacks on Angkor set forth in the *Paramanujit* recension.

⁸⁵ G. Cœdès, "Documents . . .", *BEFEO*, XXV (1925), 99-100. Professor Cœdès notes that this text's chronology for the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries has always proved to be accurate whenever it could be tested by epigraphy; *ibid.*, 12.

⁸⁶ "Documents . . .", 100.

he died, however, Vattitejo, or Paramarāja, left Subarnapuri and conquered the kingdom of Kambuja.⁸⁷ This detail may be the background to the statement in the *Paramanujit* recension that Paramarāja was sent by Rāmādhīpati to assist Rāmeśvara in the campaign. The proposed date of 1368-9 may help to explain why Paramarāja was able to depose Rāmeśvara after the death of the latter's father.^{87a}

Both the *Paramanujit* and "Luang Prasroeth" recensions agree that Paramarāja, after his accession, was preoccupied with wars against Sukhodaya and Ch'eng Mai. His reign is believed to have been from 1370 to 1388,⁸⁸ years comprising the career of the great Khmer king Gāmkhāt. According to the *Ang Eng* fragment, Gāmkhāt took the offensive against the Thai.⁸⁹ Thus, for these years, no damaging inconsistency exists between Thai tradition and the proposed Khmer chronology.

1388 and 1389 are awkward years in terms of Thai chronology for the second capture of Angkor because they saw the death of Paramarāja and the usurpation of Rāmeśvara. According to the *Paramanujit*, Rāmeśvara was responsible for the second attack on Angkor, while the Khmer sources attribute it to Paramarāja. The *Paramanujit* states that Rāmeśvara captured Ch'eng Mai in 1384. "At that particular time" the Khmers attacked Čantaburi and Chonburi. Rāmeśvara sent his general Chainorong, who then captured Angkor. In this context the expression "at that particular time" may refer to 1384-5, and these two years happen to be years of the "Rat" and "Bull". The *List* states that the second capture of Angkor took place in a "Rat" year (1408) and that Ponhea Yat became king in the following year, the "Bull" year of 1409. Nong's "Rat-Bull" sequence was 1372-3. Thus the records incorporated in the *Paramanujit* may account for the Khmer tradition that Ponhea Yat's reign began in a "Bull" year. According to the *Paramanujit*, Rāmeśvara became king in 1382, and the attack would have been early in his reign. But the dates of the *Paramanujit* have to be advanced by six years to agree with those in the "Luang Prasroeth" recension, which are considered by historians to be the correct dates for the

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

^{87a} M. R. Akin Rabibhadana informs the author that Prince Damrong, in an explanatory note to the Royal Autograph version of the *Paramanujit* recension (1962 edition, volume I, 367-8), already suggested that Paramarāja's success, after Rāmeśvara's failure, in capturing Angkor on behalf of Rāmādhīpati assisted him in securing the throne of Ayudhyā when Rāmādhīpati died. Though Mr. W. A. R. Wood (*A history of Siam*, Bangkok, 1924, 76, note 3) quotes Prince Damrong as stating that the first sack took place in 1357, which also happens to be a 'Cock' year, Prince Damrong, who was aware of the relevance of the *Ang Eng* fragment, may have suspected the possibility that 1369, implied in the fragment, was the correct date, with its bearing on the circumstances of Paramarāja's accession.

⁸⁸ G. Cœdès, *Les peuples de la péninsule indochinoise . . .*, 141.

⁸⁹ According to the *Ang Eng* fragment Gāmkhāt captured Visnuloka and founded a *vihāra* there.

reigns of the kings of Ayudhyā. 1388 and 1389, the proposed dates for the second capture of Angkor, would have been early in Rāmeśvara's reign, and to this extent no major inconsistency exists between the proposed date for the second capture of Angkor and Thai tradition represented by the *Paramanujit*. The attack may have been initiated by Paramarāja and concluded by Rāmeśvara.

Difficulties begin, however, when we consider the contents of the "Luang Prasroeth" recension, where the first attack is as late as 1430-1. This attack presumably corresponds to the third attack mentioned in the *Paramanujit* recension, which states that Paramarāja II captured Angkor in the "Bull" year of 1421. Though this king did not begin to reign until 1424,⁹⁰ here we may have the origin of the Khmer tradition that Noreay became king in a "Bull" year. The two Thai texts agree that the Thai prince Indrarāja was left behind to rule in Angkor, though the Khmer accounts associate Indrarāja with the second capture and do not mention the third attack.

According to the proposed restoration of the Khmer chronology, 1430-1 would have been early in the reign of Srey. The only reference to Ayudhyā in this reign mentioned in the older surviving Khmer records is Srey's flight there when his son rebelled. The weakness of Cambodia during Srey's reign could have been responsible for another Thai attack. Alternatively, Thai tradition may have transformed into an attack what had really been Thai support for Srey at the beginning of his reign, when, according to the *Ang Eng* fragment, his elder brother, Śrī Rāja, contested Srey's right to rule. We noted in connexion with the Tenasserim inscriptions that Srey's mother was a "Siamese concubine" who was related to the Ayudhyā prince left behind in Angkor after the second capture. It may even be possible that the memory of a third attack in Thai tradition was derived from the help the Thai king gave Dharmarājādhirāja against his cousin, though Thai intervention on this occasion would have taken place some years later than 1430-1. It is certainly tempting to see the background to the "Luang Prasroeth" account of the attack in 1430-1 as the first instance of Thai manipulation of disputes within the Khmer royal family.⁹¹

We can now sum up the results of confronting the proposed restoration of the Khmer chronology with the Thai sources. The information in the *Paramanujit* and the *ġinakālamāli* is not completely discredited in respect of the first and second attacks on Angkor. The *ġinakālamāli* may elucidate

⁹⁰ G. Cœdès, *Les peuples* . . . , 142.

⁹¹ One detail in the *Ang Eng* fragment may be noted in connexion with Srey's reign. Srey's accession was disputed by his brother, Śrī Rāja. Śrī Rāja was defeated and established himself in the *muang* of Jo Ra'hyoñ. Is "Jo Ra'hyoñ" connected with the name of the Thai general, Chainorong, who, according to the *Paramanujit* recension, was left behind after the second attack in Rāmeśvara's reign to keep Cambodia in subjection?

the ambiguous statement in the *Paramanujit* about the time of the first attack, while the correction of the dating in the *Paramanujit*'s account of the second attack tends to confirm the view that another attack took place early in Rāmeśvara's reign, or in 1388-9 according to the proposed restoration. The third attack mentioned in the *Paramanujit* is not confirmed in the Khmer sources, which are never reticent on the subject of Cambodian misfortunes in this period. Perhaps the third attack in the *Paramanujit* is based on a later misunderstanding of what happened in Cambodia during the disturbed reign of Srey.

Because of the general agreement between the *Paramanujit* and the *ġinakālamāli* on the one hand and the restored Khmer chronology on the other hand, the absence of references in the "Luang Prasroeth" recension to the first two attacks on Angkor is remarkable. Rāmādhpati's wars against Cambodia are not mentioned. Moreover, no event of any kind is associated with Rāmeśvara. "Inaccuracy" does not seem the appropriate comment on the contents of the "Luang Prasroeth" recension, which can hardly be regarded as supplying an alternative chronology of Thai-Khmer relations in this period. The "Luang Prasroeth" recension is certainly an "abbreviated" one, but the abbreviation seems to have been deliberately at the expense of Rāmādhpati and his son.

The present writer is not competent to discuss the question when the inaccurate "animal" years of Thai tradition, reflected in the *Paramanujit* recension, became established and subsequently passed into the Khmer chronicles. We may note, however, that these years seem to have been recorded at a time when the Thai records also incorrectly dated the early reigns of the kings of Ayudhyā. A suggestion may be made, however, to account for the difference in the treatment of the Cambodian wars in the *Paramanujit* and the "Luang Prasroeth" recensions.

The two families who contested the throne of Ayudhyā in the second half of the fourteenth century could have represented distinct traditions. The fusion of these two traditions would account for the alacrity with which Ayudhyā made an impression on its neighbours. Rāmādhpati and his son may have been more interested in fighting the Khmers, while Paramarāja, Rāmādhpati's brother-in-law, may have been more interested in establishing his hegemony over other Thai kingdoms. Paramarāja came from Subarnapuri, while Rāmādhpati probably came from the region earlier known as the kingdom of Lavo, on the borders of the Khmer empire. At least as early as the beginning of the eleventh century Lavo had been involved in warfare with Angkor.⁹² The feud continued in the twelfth century, when Lavo on two occasions managed to break away from the Khmer

⁹² G. Cœdès, *Inscriptions du Cambodge (Stèle de Prasat Ben)*, volume 7, Paris, 1964, 164-189.

empire.⁹³ At the end of the thirteenth century Lavo was again independent.⁹⁴ Thus Rāmādhīpati may have seen himself as the latest champion of a tradition of struggle against the Khmers for the independence of the Lavo Ayudhyā region and for the control of the borderlands. The *Ang Eng* fragment says that Rāmādhīpati's father was called "Mahācakrabarti rājādhīrāja", and the title may conceal a career of military successes which brought this royal family to the fore.

But in later centuries the memory of wars against the Khmers for the independence of Lavo-Ayudhyā would have been less significant in comparison with the achievements of Ayudhyā in the Thai world. Perhaps, too, the careers of Rāmādhīpati and his son were felt to belong too much to the Mon period in the history of the region. When the time came for the author of the "Luang Prasroeth" recension to abbreviate the history of the first decades of Ayudhyā, he may therefore have decided that the campaigns of Rāmādhīpati and his son against Angkor could be ignored but not the tradition of an attack on Angkor by Paramarāja II, a descendant of the Subarnapuri family whose members ruled Ayudhyā throughout the fifteenth century and until the Burman invasion in the sixteenth century.

Yet the Mon background in early Ayudhyā may have been important at the time, and, in this context, one implication of the proposed revision of the date of the first capture of Angkor cannot be avoided. A connexion is sometimes seen between the alleged sack in 1431, with the capture of Khmer statesmen and Brahmans, and the appearance not long afterwards of apparently Khmer-style autocratic institutions in Ayudhyā during the reign of Paramatrilokanātha (1448-88).⁹⁵ But if the sack had already taken place about eighty years before the beginning of this reign, the Thai adaptation of Angkorian political experience is unlikely to have taken so long. Perhaps the contribution of Angkor to the political education of the Thai has been over-emphasized. Instead, the so-called Khmer features of kingship in Ayudhyā, with the divinisation of the king, may have been an extension into the Thai period of similar, but not necessarily Khmer-imposed, institutions evolved in Mon Lavo. M. Jean Boisselier, in his recent archaeological report from Thailand, has confirmed Professor Cœdès' observation of the significance of Brahmanical cults in the Mon period and has also suggested that the *prang* architecture of earlier Ayudhyā should be studied as a continuation of the architectural traditions of Lop'uri rather than as a simple development of the Khmer *prasat* formula.⁹⁶ Early Ayudhyā's heritage

⁹³ In 1115 and 1155. G. Cœdès, *Les peuples*, . . . 104.

⁹⁴ Lavo sent missions to China from 1289 to 1299; G. Cœdès, *Les états hindouisés* . . . , 379.

⁹⁵ H. G. Quaritch Wales, *Ancient Siamese Government and Administration*, Paragon Book reprinting, New York, 1963, 3-4.

⁹⁶ G. Cœdès, "Nouvelles données épigraphiques . . .", *Journal asiatique*, 1938, 131; J. Boisselier, "Récentes recherches archéologiques en Thaïlande. Rapport préliminaire . . .", *Arts asiatiques*, XII (1963), 131-2, 136, 143.

from its Mon past may therefore have involved much more than a feud with the Khmers of Angkor.

So much, then, for problems arising from the Thai accounts of this period. Their study is within the province of Thai scholars. By way of conclusion, the significance of this period in Khmer history will be briefly suggested. The Khmers, unlike the compiler of the "Luang Prasroeth" recension, had reason never to forget the challenge of Ayudhyā, and their traditions conceal nothing of the wars. The *Ang Eng* fragment states that Gāmkhāt could not tolerate the control of Angkor by Ayudhyā, and the Khmer accounts describe the way the kings continued to resist the Thai. If, however, the Khmers were so deeply involved in this war, why is there no reference to the war in the Chinese records of the period? It is particularly curious that no Ming comment appears in connexion with the residence of the Khmer king at Basan in 1371 and 1373. The *Hung-wu* emperor, though he was concerned about warfare elsewhere in South East Asia, was apparently not disturbed to learn that *Hu-érh-na* was not living in Angkor.

The reason may be that the Khmers did not complain to the Chinese envoys. Like Rāmādhīpati, they may have seen the situation as the latest phase of the ancient struggle for control of the borderlands between Angkor and Lavo, borderlands represented by such cities as Candapuri, Visnuloka, and Ramyapuri mentioned in the *Ang Eng* fragment as the scene of battles between the Khmers and Thai. This ancient Mon-Khmer, and now increasingly Thai-Khmer, struggle in the eyes of the Khmer rulers probably resembled a civil war rather than a war between two independent kingdoms such as their war with Champa. The Mongol court, as far as we know, received no Khmer complaints about the Thai attacks, whose effects Chou Ta-kuan noted.⁹⁷ The Khmer kings in early Ming times may, for reasons of pride, have been at pains to minimize the significance of the struggle when they met Chinese officials. If they had reported the rebellion of their "vassal", the *Hung-wu* emperor might have lectured them on the need for good government, one of his favourite themes in his statements on South East Asian problems. Even after the second capture of Angkor, for which the year 1389 has been proposed, Ponhea Yat, sending three missions to China in quick succession, was probably chiefly concerned to obtain recognition from the emperor.

The Khmer sources insist that Noreay and Srey ruled in Angkor. The loss of the capital by Thai attack was always temporary. Angkor ceased to be the permanent capital only after the civil war in Srey's reign, when Ang Chan's father, Dharmarājādhīrāja, decided to rule from Phnom Penh. If the reconstruction of the Khmer chronology is acceptable, Angkor was abandoned about 50 years after the second Thai sack and not as a result of

⁹⁷ Paul Pelliot, *Mémoires sur les coutumes du Cambodge*, 32.

the second attack, as is generally believed. Feuds within the Khmer royal family, aggravated and manipulated by the Thai in Ayudhyā, were the immediate cause of Cambodian withdrawal from Angkor, and the consequences of the feuds were civil war and a wasteful consumption of manpower. M. Groslier has called attention to the participation of "primitives" during the civil wars of the fifteenth century.⁹⁸ "Primitive" manpower would have become increasingly necessary to supplement the gradually reduced resources of the contestants for royal power. The civil wars also brought in their train another weakness, which was an accentuation of the regional divisions within the country. Rival capitals multiplied and the administrative talent of the kingdom would have been dispersed. The association of Dharmarājādhirāja and his unfortunate son, Srey Sukonthor, with the Kompong Thom region is an example of the revival in importance of an ancient regional centre.⁹⁹ Finally, the civil war engendered the habit among rivals for power of looking beyond the borders of Cambodia for allies. Srey fled to Ayudhyā, while, according to Nong, Dharmarājādhirāja sought Thai aid against a rebellious brother. The young Ang Chan was an exile in Ayudhyā. Sooner or later Thai protection would lead to the Thai assertion of the "vassal" status of the Khmer kings.

If the proposed restoration of the Khmer chronology for this period is correct, with its implication that Angkor was finally abandoned because of civil war rather than because of Thai attacks, historians may wish to pay more attention to what Professor Cœdès has called the "trame" of events described in the Khmer records.¹⁰⁰ Perhaps we have become too ready to regard the decline of Angkor in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as being on a catastrophic scale, tending to attribute it to Jayavarman VII's exploitation of his country's resources and to the revolutionary appeal of Theravāda Buddhism among the Khmer people. Thus Briggs referred to Theravāda Buddhism as a "superbolshevism" in the eyes of the Khmer rulers.¹⁰¹ Professor Paul Mus has recently reminded us that Briggs' view is

⁹⁸ B. P. Groslier, *Angkor et le Cambodge au XVe siècle...*, 11. The author of the *Ang Eng* fragment provides this useful information. Oral traditions from Pursat also reflect the involvement of "primitives" in Khmer warfare, but, as in Moura's recension dealing with the beginning of Dharmarājādhirāja's reign, the Thai are assumed to be the enemy; E. Porée-Maspero, "Traditions orales de Pursat et de Kampot", *AA* XXIV, 3/4, (1961), 394-98.

⁹⁹ Mr. M. E. Osborne, of Cornell University, has recently studied the published inscriptions from the Kompong Thom area, which contained the seventh century capital of Isānapura. As late as the tenth century this region was the object of religious foundations by the kings at Angkor, and in 974 it was still an important intellectual centre. Sūryavarman I began his campaign there to recover Angkor from an usurper. One of Jayavarman VII's hospital inscriptions, of the late twelfth century, has been found in this area.

¹⁰⁰ G. Cœdès, "Essai de classification...", *BEFEO*, 18, 9 (1918), 15.

¹⁰¹ L. P. Briggs, *The ancient Khmer empire*. Philadelphia, 1951, 259.

as old as the youth of Cambodian historical studies, and he has also provided evidence of the subtle ties of Mahāyāna Buddhism which Jayavarman VII believed bound him to his people¹⁰². Probably it is no more than a coincidence that the time when the Thai were reinforcing Lavo was also a time when Mon-Thai links with the reinvigorated Buddhist Church in Ceylon were increasing. The rulers of Ceylon, in the grand tradition of Aśoka, had effectively combined their role of champions of Ceylon against the Hindu Cōlas with their role of protectors of Buddhism. Buddhism, seen from Angkor, would have been the cult professed by the victorious Sinhalese, Mons, and especially Thai. In these circumstances it would not be surprising if the Khmer kings were favourably impressed by Theravāda Buddhism, a cult already familiar to them when they occupied Lavo early in the eleventh century. Thus Chou Ta-kuan in 1296 observed that the Khmer king consulted Theravāda monks on matters of grave importance.¹⁰³ The gradual and by no means revolutionary influence of Theravāda Buddhism, with the royal patron rather than the humble disciple as the main agent in its expansion, is what one would expect in the history of religion in South East Asia. Nor were the Brahmanical aids to kingship discredited, as the subsequent history of both Cambodia and Ayudhyā shows.

The Ming envoys were not witnessing a dramatically disturbing period in Cambodian history, nor was the temporary return of the kings to Angkor in the sixteenth century remarkable. By the sixteenth century even the physical damage to the ancient capital was not yet irreparable. According to Do Couto, Angkor still had sufficient water supplies to make it a suitable royal base. Five or six thousand men were able "in a short time" to clear the undergrowth.¹⁰⁴ But the Khmer kings were never allowed to enjoy the many years of peace needed before the Angkor waterworks could provide sufficient food to restore the country's depleted manpower. In the event, the superior resources of Ayudhyā and, before long, of the Vietnamese were too great for the Khmers.

¹⁰² Paul Mus, "Le sourire d'Angkor...", *Artibus Asiae*, XXIV, 3/4 (1961), 363-81; "Angkor vu du Japon", *France-Asie*, XVIII, (1962), 521-38.

¹⁰³ Paul Pelliot, *Mémoires sur les coutumes...*, 15.

¹⁰⁴ B. P. Groslier, *Angkor et le Cambodge au XVIe siècle...*, 69-72.

A STATEMENT OF THE PROPOSED CHRONOLOGY OF THE "NIPPEAN BAT"
SECTION OF THE CAMBODIAN CHRONICLE

Event	Animal year	List	Ang Eng	Nong	Proposed dates
Accession of Nippean Bat	Dog	1382	1346	1346	?1362
Siege of Angkor	Dragon	1388	Implied	1352	1368
		Angkor captured in 1388	1375 "Hare" year		
First capture of Angkor	Snake		"Year of Cock" and implied "Snake" year of 1377	1353	1369 = "Year of the Cock"
			Kalamegha rules away from Angkor		1371-3 <i>Hu-érh-na</i> at Basan
Accession of Gāmkhāt	Horse	1402	Dates and length of reign not given.	1366	-1377-83+ Kambujādhirāja = Gāmkhāt
			Rules at Angkor		
Accession of Dharmāsokarāja	Dog	1406	Reigned 3 years	1370	-1386 <i>Pao-p'i-yeh</i> = Dharmāsokarāja
Siege of Angkor	Rat	1408	No date given	1372	1388
		Angkor captured in 1408			
Second capture of Angkor	Bull		No date given	1373	1389
Accession of Ponhea Yat	Bull	1409	Dates and length of reign not given	1373	1389
		Reign of 15+9 = 24 years		11+4+45 = 60 years	<i>P'o-p'i-ya</i> = Ponhea Yat. He sends 3 missions in 1389.
Accession of Noreay	Bull	1433	Reign of 25+3 years	1433	1404 <i>P'ing-ya</i> = Noreay. He sends his last mission in 1419.

	Animal year	List	Ang Eng	Nong	Proposed dates
Birth of Dharmarājādhirāja	Hare	—	"Year of the Hare"	1447 (implied)	1423
Accession of Dharmarājādhirāja	Snake	1461	No date	1437	1429
			Fragment ends with civil war	Civil war	Khmer envoys still in China in 1435.
Accession of Dharmarājādhirāja	Rat	1468	—	1468	1444
					Mission in 1452. His rival is taken captive to Ayudhya. (Tenasserim inscriptions of 1462-5).
Accession of Srey Sukonthor	Rat	1504	—	1504	1486 His father is cremated at Phnom Sonthok.
Order of Srey Sukonthor	Monkey	—	—	1512	1512

THE BEGINNING OF THE "ANG CHAN" CHRONOLOGY

Birth of Ang Chan	Horse	—	—	1486 implied	1486
Flight of Ang Chan to Ayudhya	Dragon	—	—	1508 at age of 22	1508
Return of Ang Chan	Rat	—	—	1516	1516
Death of Ang Chan	Tiger	1566	—	1566 at age of 80	1566