

REVIEW

Indonesian Sociological Studies, Selected Writings of B. Schrieke, Part Two, "Ruler and Realm in Early Java". W. van Hoeve, Ltd., The Hague and Bandung, 1957, 491 pp. Distributed by the Institute of Pacific Relations.

This volume is the third in the series, "Selected Studies on Indonesia by Dutch Scholars" which has already brought forth a collection of essays by the author. This new work, however, presents previously unpublished material rather than a translation. The title essay is an unfinished manuscript which is being published posthumously.

The section on the ruler draws on historical notes and inscriptions from the empires of Majapahit, Singasari and Mataram. The author emphasizes the continuity of concepts surrounding the position of the ruler throughout these discrete periods. This continuity is manifested in the permanence of ideas and symbols, despite the overthrow of dynasties. A great deal of illustration and documentation is here presented for the general thesis earlier introduced to English readers by Heine-Geldern in his article "Conceptions of State and Kingship in Southeast Asia" (Data Papar 318, Cornell Southeast Asia Program, 1956).

This essay and its companion piece on the realm lend strength to Schrieke's argument that Indonesian history should be viewed in continuous time perspective. He opposes segmentation into pre-historic, Hindu-Javanese, Islamic and colonial periods, arguing that each successive period requires interpretation from the viewpoint of that which preceded it. The flavor of cultural determinism here parallels the historical interpretations of many anthropologists.

The second essay on the nature of the realm contains a wealth of material on subjects of more general sociological interest: the Javanese landscape, waterways, political structure and the penetration of Islam. The theme of historical continuity is again emphasized.

The volume is completed by an essay on the decline of Central Java at the end of the Hindu-Javanese period (circa 900 A.D.) The author's position is that "central Javanese royal culture was destroyed by its own temples", i.e. oppressive demands of the rulers for labor on the monuments resulted in outward migration of the population.

These three essays are sure to become required reading for the prehistorian, anthropologist, sociologist and general student who is interested in Indonesian culture.

Robert A. Hackenberg

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Groslier, Bernard and Arthaud, Jacques: The Arts and Civilization of Angkor. Frederick A. Praeger, New York, 1957.

The startling visual impact of this work may conceal the valuable research materials it contains from the casual reader. Some of these materials are themselves visual, e.g. the city plan of Angkor (pp. 28-29), the temple floorplans (pp. 56-57), and the interpretive maps (pp. 20-21). But the non-visual materials may escape notice because of the arrangement of the book and the absence of a table of contents.

Though not apparent from the format, the book has both narrative continuity and a central argument. The text chapters are roughly chronological, spanning the entire history of old Cambodia. The major argument seeks to establish a deterministic relationship between the environment and the architectural styles of Angkor. A brief topic outline may clarify these points.

The text begins with an account of the impact of geography on Khmer history (pp. 7-20). Against this setting are then presented summaries of the major cultural institutions of Cambodia: religion, social structure and the position of the ruler (pp. 22-32). The authors then proceed to the major business of the text: the discussion of the architecture of Angkor (pp. 53-62). The next section "The Century of Angkor Wat" (pp. 97-100) describes the pinnacle of both architectural and historical attainment in Cambodia.

The final text sections describe the decline of the empire. They are titled "The Apotheosis of Angkor" (pp. 153-164) and "The Death of Angkor" (pp. 195-199). These last two chapters abandon the environmental hypothesis and seek the sources for the late modifications of art and architecture in cultural factors.

Additional research materials are appended in the form of a summary "Main Stages in the Development of Khmer Art" (pp. 200-214) and a synoptic chronology (pp. 218-219) which synchronizes the development of historical periods and art styles across several continents from the Second through the Thirteenth Centuries. Comparative data is assembled for the Mediterranean, India, Southeast Asia and China.

This review has dwelt upon the merits of the text, since the pictorial excellence of the book is immediately apparent, and elevates into the "art gift" class. However, the work also presents a complete, if brief, historical outline of Cambodia, completely

and profusely illustrated and is recommended for classroom use as a reading assignment. It seems singularly apt for this purpose since it employs a prose style rich in imagery to evoke and communicate the authors' deep emotional attachment to their subject.

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