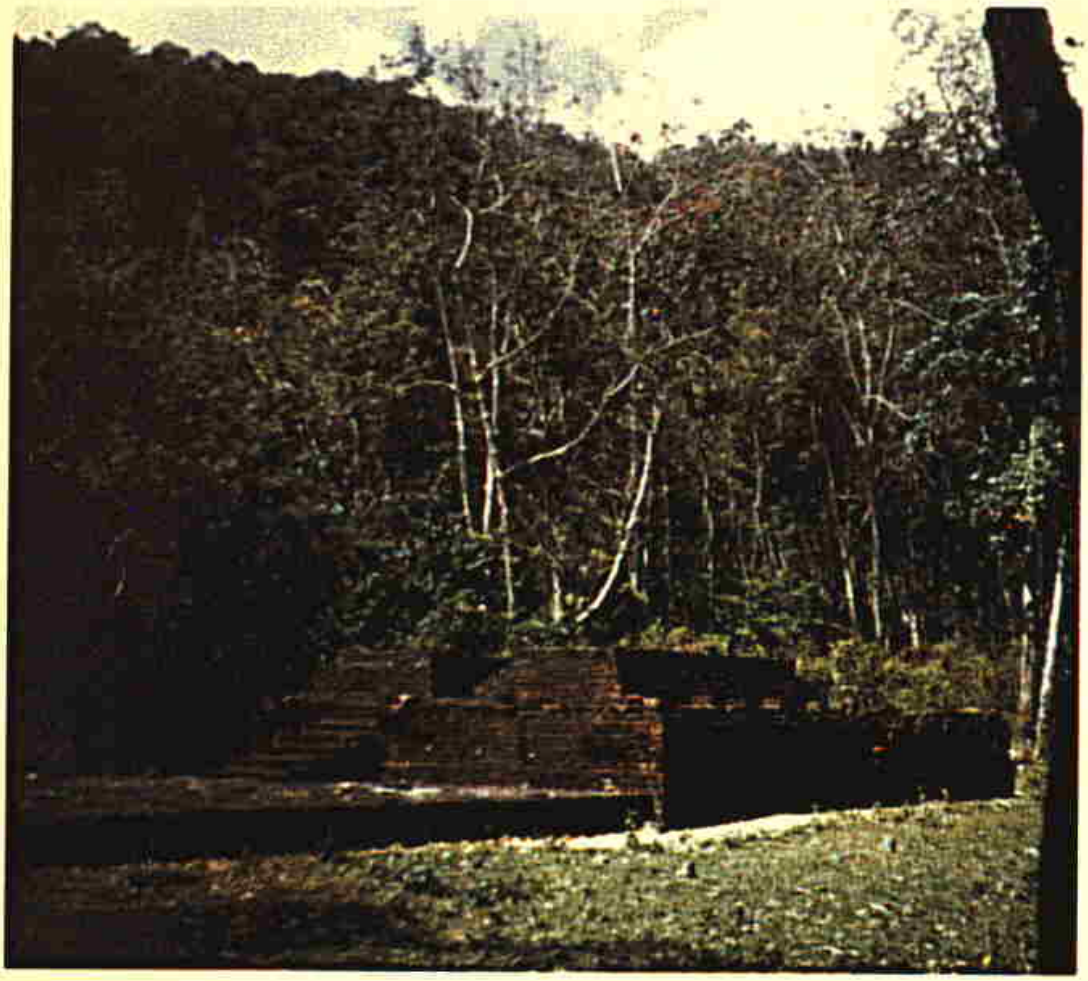
THE MALAY PENINSULA IN HINDU TIMES



The Bukit Batu Pahat temple, Kedah: restored stone basement and plinth.
See also Plate 9

The Malay Peninsula in Hindu Times

by
H. G. QUARITCH WALES
Ph.D., Litt.D.

LONDON
BERNARD QUARITCH, LTD.
5-8 Lower John Street, Golden Square
1976

SBN 85388 093 x

PRINTED BY W. S. MANEY AND SON LTD LEEDS ENGLAND

PREFACE

WHILE I have devoted a number of books to the cultural history of Indianized South-east Asia, in the present volume I deal specifically with that truly fascinating region, the Malay Peninsula, of which we now begin to have a comprehensive understanding. Admittedly one reason for my giving it such special attention is that there, more than elsewhere, I have taken a considerable part in the accumulation of the archaeological evidence on which must be largely based a study of the "Hindu period", a term here used for the Indianizing period generally.

Though writing primarily as an archaeologist I have taken due note of other sources of information that may enable the formation of well-balanced judgements. But I have not gone into the *details* of trade (so ably handled in recent years by others), of which the items have all too infrequently left their mark on the archaeological record; and I have stopped short of the immediately pre-Islamic period of such places as Singapore and Malacca which, for lack of archaeological material, must remain purely within the historian's domain.

My researches in what is now Malaysia were carried out with the support of the Governments of Malaya, and in Peninsular Siam I have enjoyed the helpful co-operation of the Thai Department of Fine Arts, as previously of the Thai Royal Institute. My wife, who has throughout been associated with me in the field-work, has read the manuscript and made valuable suggestions.

H.G.Q.W.

CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following plates are from photographs reproduced by kind permission of the Thai Fine Arts Department: 3A, B; 4A; 12; 13; 18A; 19. The remaining plates and the figures are from my own photographs and drawings.

ABBREVIATIONS

ABIA	*Annual Bibliography of Indian Archaeology.*
Arch. Researches	H. G. Quaritch Wales, "Archaeological Researches on Indian Colonization in Malaya", *JMBRAS*, Vol. XVIII, Part 1, 1940.
BCAI	*Bulletin de la Commisson Archéologique de l'Indochine.*
BEFEO	*Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient.*
FMJ	*Federated Museums Journal* (Kuala Lumpur).
I. A. & L.	*Indian Art and Letters.*
JASB	*Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.*
JGIS	*Journal of the Greater India Society* (Calcutta).
JRAS	*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.*
JMBRAS	*Journal of the Malayan (or Malaysian) Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.*
JSS	*Journal of the Siam Society.*
Les États	G. Cœdès, *Les États Hindouisés d'Indochine et d'Indonésie*, New Edition, Paris, 1964.
MASI	*Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India.*
Recueil	G. Cœdès, *Recueil des Inscriptions du Siam*, II, Bangkok, 1929.

Fig. 1. The Malay Peninsula

INTRODUCTION

THAT the Malay Peninsula qualifies for consideration as a distinct geographical entity must be apparent when one glances at a map showing this tropical appendage stretching southwards for well-nigh a thousand miles from continental South-east Asia. The same may be said of it culturally during the well over a thousand year period that immediately preceded the coming of Islam or Ceylon Buddhism. But just as it is difficult to be precise about the beginnings of the Indianization process, opinions have differed as to where we should regard the Peninsula as beginning, at least in a cultural context. I would certainly prefer the 12°50′ N. of O'Connor,[1] the latitude of Mergui, to the 14° N. of Wheatley,[2] latitude of Tavoy, but even more would I like to take the Isthmus at its narrowest as the northern border, that is to say at Kra, latitude 10°50′ N. I do not doubt that travellers to and from China, like the Roman acrobats of A.D. 120, the Roman embassy of A.D. 166, and the Han traders noticed in the *Ch'ien Han Shu*, occasionally made use of a short cut considerably north of Kra. But I believe that the Three Pagodas Pass and the route down the Meklong river are better regarded as a continental route in historical times, and as such I have treated it elsewhere.[3] The area around Ratburi and P'etburi, at the western end of this route, facing the Bight of Bangkok, shares the same geographical and cultural environment as

[1] S. J. O'Connor, *Hindu Gods of Peninsular Siam*, Ascona, 1972, p. 1.
[2] Paul Wheatley, *The Golden Khersonese*, Kuala Lumpur, 1961, p. xvii.
[3] H. G. Quaritch Wales, *Dvāravatī*, London, 1969.

the padi growing region of central Siam, which it adjoins. Proceeding southwards the mountains close in until the Kra isthmus is reached, leaving little habitable land, with no sheltered east coast port. It is served by only one possible route, that from Mergui, which seemingly was not utilized in early times.

The Malay Peninsula is often spoken of as having constituted a barrier to communication between west and east, which once its character was known was transformed into a bridge. From the point of view of many of the early Indian adventurers, it was neither: it was their goal. One need do no more than mention the references in *Jātaka* stories to the voyages of Indian navigators to the Land of Gold antedating the Christian era. There is little doubt that gold, and possibly some rare forest products such as the fragrant gharu wood, were the objectives of the Indian merchants, long before they became acquainted with the ultimately more important tin. Their first need, however, was to find safe anchorages and, when later a certain proportion decided to settle, the existence of enough land in the vicinity suitable for agriculture was essential.

In their voyages across the Indian Ocean the navigators had to avoid, especially in rough weather, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, since in case of shipwreck they were likely to be eaten by the cannibal inhabitants. It was a fortunate coincidence that the two finest harbours on the west coast of the Peninsula, those of Takuapa and Kedah, happened to be nearly opposite the wide channels north and south of the Nicobars, through which the Indians, to be safe, must navigate. At the end of last century, when Takuapa was already silted up, an experienced yachtsman wrote thus of its potentialities:

"The harbour of Kopa (Takuapa) is a very fine one, consisting of a magnificent estuary protected from the sea by a series of islands, behind which vessels can lie in depths varying from four to seven fathoms. The chief entrance is to the north, round Kopa Head. The deep-water channel runs thence in a southerly direction for some twenty miles to the mouth of the Kopa River proper, where the local trading craft, which are, of course, never of very deep draft, lie in two fathoms, some fourteen miles below the town ... Kopa could at trifling cost be made the first harbour of Siam, and the port of the whole of this part of the peninsula".[4] In the middle of last century the timbers of an old ship 74 feet long were found buried in sand at Pong, at the foot of the hills near the source of the Takuapa river. I myself was shown in a Takuapa monastery the figure-head dating from 1820–30 of a European ship of about 200 tons which would have drawn ten feet of water.

As to Kedah it is evident enough that the wide Merbok estuary, sheltered behind Penang island, and the high mass of neighbouring Kedah Peak providing a welcoming landmark, must have early attracted voyagers (Pl. 1A). To the north of Kedah the Trang river would appear to have offered an attractive haven, with ample fertile land at hand. A good case has been made out for its having been the site of Ptolemy's Takola, the second-century mart. If that was so it evidently did not prosper and we shall shortly suggest a reason. South of Kedah, in the Perak river valleys, enough scattered objects of our period have been dredged up in mines to indicate that here also were the sites of one or more Indianized settlements, but

[4] H. Warington Smyth, *Five Years in Siam*, London, 1898, Vol. II, pp. 24 f.

their prosperity was probably limited to Śrīvijayan times, and we can attach no names to them.

Another unfortunate circumstance which those sections of the coast opposite the Andaman or Nicobar Islands happen to share is that access to any harbours is not merely protected by a sheltering island or two but is cluttered by a thick scattering of islands and shoals making navigation difficult, especially to Indian pioneers who perhaps had not the skill of the Arabs who came later. This applies particularly to the extended Mergui Archipelago as well as to the islands crowding upon Phang Nga and Krabi further south. And, despite its favourable situation opposite the Ten Degree Channel, the Pakchan inlet, giving access to the much publicized Kra route, is no better in this respect. Nor is it in several others. This steep-banked fjord, for such it is, much encumbered by shoals, stretches for over forty miles without offering adequate space for an entrepôt, much less settlement. Early would-be settlers would not then have known that at the head of the inlet, on both banks of the Pakchan river, there was considerable land suitable for padi cultivation, later opened up by Burmese and Thai. The porterage across the short Kra pass would have presented no difficulty, but while on the east coast at Chumphon there is considerable open country the anchorage is completely unprotected: "It is a terribly wind-swept place at any time, for the south-west monsoon blows with particular violence across the narrow and comparatively open isthmus, and I never saw it but it was blowing hard here, while from the north-east this place is even less protected."[5]

[5] Ibid., p. 52.

Early texts, to which reference will be made in the next chapter, indicate that equally prior to the Christian era, merchants had already made their way up the east coast, and by the first or second century A.D. marts were established at Langkasuka (Patani) and Tamali (perhaps = Tāmbraliṅga). But access to the east coast may also have been gained quite early overland. The constant and increasing arrival of Indians during the early centuries A.D. naturally led to exploration beyond the anchorages. Such was facilitated by the fact that the river whose estuary initially provided a foothold went some way to opening up the interior. Since the Indians had to deal with a peninsula, not a continent, a little persistence soon led to the discovery of an east-flowing river and more fertile land, which, where fortune favoured, would coincide with an already known settlement on the east coast.

These considerations lead us to glance at the physical configuration of the Peninsula, from the point of view of the settlers, for such indeed there is no doubt that in course of time many of the Indians became: probably tin mining soon claimed a good share of their attention, and the numerous early shaft workings may well be in part theirs. The mountainous heavily afforested character of the southern half of the Peninsula was fortunately not shared by most of the Isthmian tract, which I propose to define rather generously as the northern part of the Peninsula extending from Kra down to Patani and Kedah. Had that been generally the case the Indians would have found little congenial environment in which to settle, nor indeed would the more advanced of the peoples they settled amongst. Like the itinerant Chinese and Arabs they would never have been able to do more than take part in the life of an entrepôt.

Running more or less parallel down the broader southern portion of the Peninsula, and often not starting far back from the coast, are no less than eight ranges of green mountains, a formidable barrier indeed, though penetrable by certain lengthy river routes which were probably in the main left to indigenous miners and collectors of jungle produce. The short rapid-flowing streams to which these mountains give birth on the west coast are often the cause of destructive floods, and some such natural disasters in early times have overwhelmed any ancient settlements that may have existed in the Perak river valleys. Indeed it is necessary to postulate such occurrences prior to the conversion of the local Malays to Islam, for otherwise, as in Kedah, no bronze images would have survived to be discovered in the course of modern mining operations.

Very different is the configuration of the Isthmian tract, as above defined. Here hill ridges are generally lower and often run aslant to the coast, with wide level passages between them. Through these crossing could be effected by short riverine routes over low watersheds. Often there are quite extensive alluvial plains from which here and there rise the great limestone massifs with their characteristic cave formations. Thus the main range that forms the frontier with Burma further north keeps near the west coast and is reduced to easily traversed proportions by the latitude of Takuapa. However on the east coast a new range starts south of Bandon and runs due south to somewhat below Nak'on Si Thammarat, with peaks reaching 6,000 feet. This range separates the broad arable plain of the Tapi (Luang) River on the west from the coastal stretch on the east, with its several fertile valleys. Such an environment with its equable temperatures and

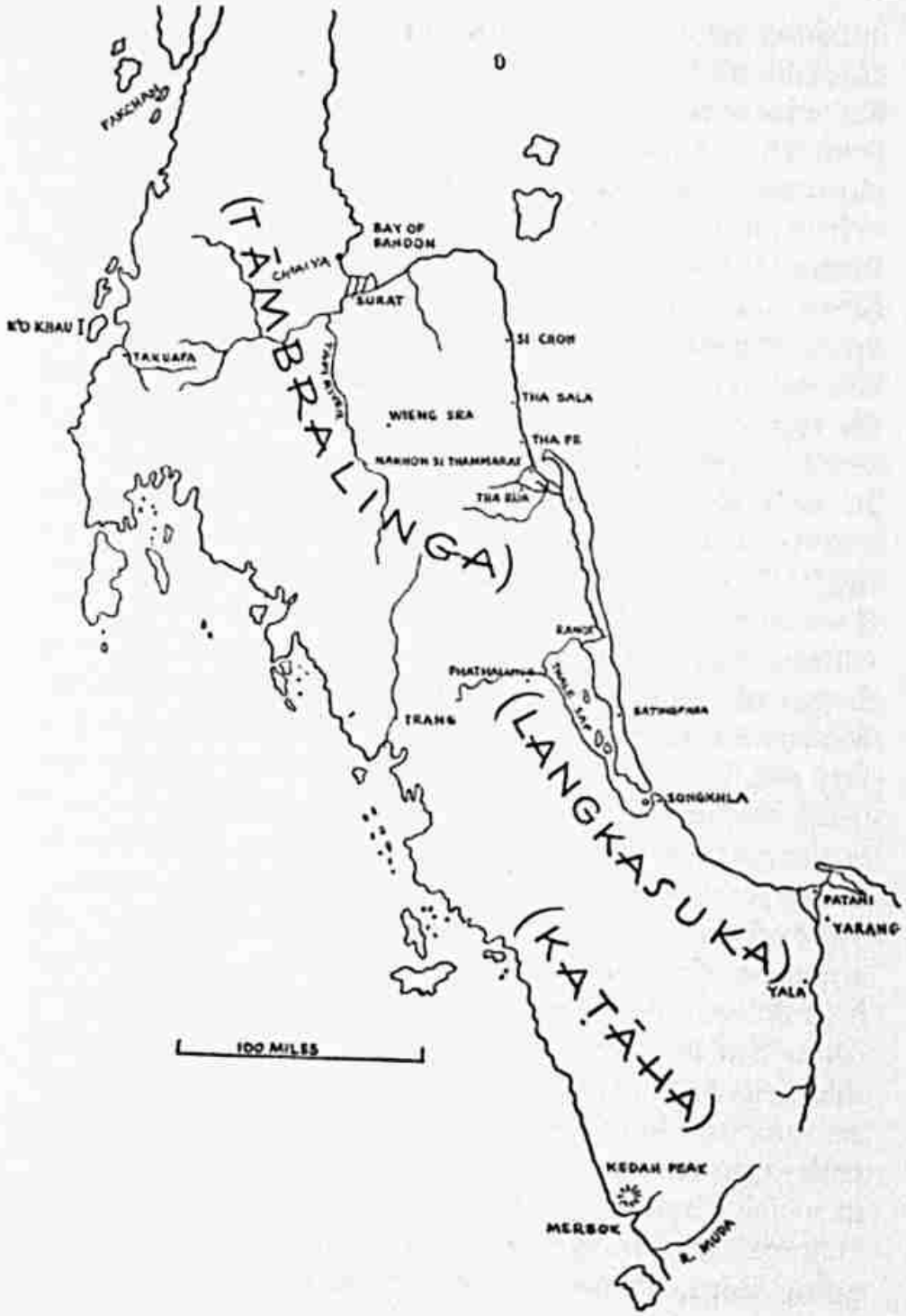


Fig. 2. The Isthmian tract

unfailing rains was ideal for human settlement. But the naturally divided character of the territory, together with the widely separated positions of the west coast ports from which most Indians started, made for the growth of city-states rather than of any unified kingdom.

It is well known that ancient voyaging to the Malay Peninsula was very much circumstanced by the periodicity of the monsoons, the eastward passage being undertaken during the summer prevalence of the south-west monsoon, and the westward passage during the winter months when the steady north-east wind could be relied on. A stay of several months in the ports was thus often necessitated. In such idyllic surroundings, and among well-disposed natives, it is not difficult to imagine that many a mariner might forget his original purpose, marry and settle down. That only the Indians seem to have been thus susceptible, Chinese and Arabs remaining aloof, seems to argue in favour of those who suppose that the emigration of the Indians was at least in part encouraged by the contemporary political and religious disturbances in their homeland; but an increasingly Indianized environment could but encourage newcomers. One fairly general distinction between the west and east coast is that, while the usually more sheltered waters of the west coast allowed the accretion of forbidding mangrove swamps, the east coast is so thoroughly cleansed by wind and waves of the South China Sea as to present long white beaches bordered by thin belts of feathery casuarinas. This may have facilitated exploration along the east coast in the quest for fertile valleys; and at the same time provided few hidden channels in which pirates could lurk.

Some early Indian voyagers, in their efficient ocean-going ships, known to the *Periplus* as *kolandia*, did not

stop for long in the Peninsula but sailed on to Sumatra, which as Suvarṇadvīpa, the Island of Gold, was no doubt an equally attractive goal. Soon, on its south-eastern coast, intensely Indianized settlements were established. Other Indian adventurers reached Oc Eo, the port of Fu-nan, where an Indianized state came into being by the second century A.D., partly as a result of influences reaching it overland by the Meklong route. But at Oc Eo the abundance of sherds decorated with multiple undulating zig-zag lines were considered by Malleret to imply connexions with Malaya and South India by the all sea route. Both at Kuala Selinsing and Pontian in Malaya identically decorated sherds predominate, whereas they are not known from the northern part of the Peninsula.[6] Again, the absence of Amarāvatī style Buddha images in Burma, as compared to Fu-nan and elsewhere in South-east Asia, which led to the inference that traders and others from South India travelled by the maritime route, is certainly borne out so far as the early spread of Buddhism is concerned, by the results of excavations at the early Pyu capital, Beikthano: "The conspicuous absence of Buddhist statuary and relics such as votive tablets, gold and silver plates bearing excerpts from the Tipitaka, indicate that Buddhism was not firmly established at Beikthano."[7]

Other Indians again, after passing through the Malacca Straits, reached Borneo and West Java, but their settlements in these islands did not succeed, though in the case of the latter island they were re-established at a later date. The reason for this early failure is to be sought in the

[6] L. Malleret, *L'Archéologie du Delta du Mékong*, Paris, 1962, Vol. III, pp. 402 ff., Vol. IV, p. 453.
[7] Aung Thaw, *Report on Excavations at Beikthano*, Rangoon, 1968, p. 62.

growth of piracy, for many of the coastal Malays had discovered that with the increasing maritime traffic a good living was to be obtained by preying both on the Indian vessels and on those of the "barbarians" who, before the fifth-century expansion of Chinese shipping in these seas, carried the Chinese merchants and Buddhist pilgrims. It was indeed the fifth-century pilgrim Fa-hien who placed on record the serious threat to navigation that piracy had by then become.

Hence the demand for those trans-peninsular routes which I formerly thought came into use about A.D. 400. On the analogy of the Meklong River route, and in view of the information we have about third-century Tun-sun discussed in Chapter 1, I am now prepared to believe they were already in limited use well before that time. It may have been the recognition of the growing importance of such routes, or it may have been merely the desire to acquire the gold sources in the Malay Peninsula, that inspired Fan-shi-man, the Fu-nan ruler, to extend his power over the little states of the Peninsula in the third century. However that may have been, there is little doubt that it was during the sixth and seventh centuries, before the rise of Śrīvijaya restored the sea routes, that these trans-peninsular routes experienced their heydey. It was to their good fortune in being situated on a trans-peninsular route that led to certain settlements developing as the capitals or chief ports of city-states, now expanded into small kingdoms which enjoyed independence during the period late sixth to early eighth century. This was after they had freed themselves from the control of Fu-nan and before they became subordinate to the new empire of Śrīvijaya.

I still think that the most important trans-peninsular

route was the one which crossed from Takuapa to the Bandon region (Pl. 1B), and for which I already gave adequate reasons after crossing it in 1935: "The settlers in the Takuapa neighbourhood were particularly favoured, because it is only at this latitude that two rivers run approximately east and west respectively from the watershed, being separated at their sources by only five miles. Takuapa harbour then formed one of the finest anchorages on the west coast, and was thus an encouragement for traders to call and succeeding waves of Indians to settle. Moreover, it was opposite the finest harbour on the east coast, the Bay of Bandon, sheltered by two large islands from the north-east monsoon, which provided an admirable base for further adventuring across the seas. This route, which is still used occasionally by the local people, was from the fourteenth century until 1805 the official route for transporting tin from the west coast mines to the Bay of Bandon whence it was shipped to Ayudhya, the Siamese capital. In early times its crossing presented none of the difficulties that it does today, because the rivers were much deeper before the process of emergence, which the land has undergone, even within historical times, had made much progress, and before the Chinese miners had silted up the streams. Once they had reached the eastern side of the watershed, the colonists were in a broad fertile region, watered by two rivers, a place eminently suitable for settlement."[8] Though the archaeological evidence does not take us back so far, since P'an-p'an was undoubtedly centred in this area there can be little doubt that this was the route by which

[8] H. G. Quaritch Wales, "A Newly-Explored Route of Ancient Indian Cultural Expansion", *J. A. & L.*, Vol. IX, no. 1, 1935, p. 5. A scenic motor road now crosses the isthmus by approximately this route.

the second Kauṇḍinya crossed on his way to Fu-nan early in the fifth century; it may already have been a route in the time of third-century Tun-sun.

Corresponding as it were to the Takuapa–Ch'aiya route across the northern part of the Isthmian tract was the Kedah–Patani route crossing the southern part. The Muda and Patani rivers, however, running less directly west–east, made for a somewhat longer journey. Probably the Muda, which now has a separate mouth, entered the Merbok via the Sungai Trus in earlier historical times. Whereas the territory covered by the first-mentioned route from Takuapa seems to have been restricted enough always to have been kept within the domain of one state, the Kedah–Patani route usually had a divided allegiance. I should now be inclined to consider this to be, in the Peninsula proper, the only important route of Indian cultural expansion of those "other land routes that remain to be investigated" for which I once prudently made reservation.[9] From the detailed descriptions given of it by European travellers it would not appear that the crossing of the watershed presented much difficulty, and the Patani river waters a valuable expanse of agricultural land.[10]

Surely, it may be said, there must have been a route from the Trang river district which, as we have seen, affords a tolerable harbour with ample land for settlement, and which in the opinion of our best historical geographers was the most likely site of Ptolemy's Takola. The existence of such a route has indeed usually been

[9] Ibid., p. 27.
[10] A. W. Hamilton, "The Old Kedah-Pattani Trade Route", *J. Straits Branch R.A.S.*, Vol. 86, 1922, pp. 389–92; W. E. Maxwell, "A Journey on foot to the Patani frontier in 1876", *J. Straits Branch, R.A.S.*, Vol. 9 (1882), pp. 1–67.

taken for granted. However the archaeological evidence obliges me to question this, at least in so far as the centuries of Indian cultural expansion are concerned. Certainly transportation would have been easy across this region of mainly low relief, either to Phathalung or to Nak'on Si Thammarat (Nagara Śrī Dharmarāja). The latter, by the way, is the Ligor of scholarship to which I shall most often refer by its simple local abbreviation of Nak'on. As we shall see, any evidence for the existence at either of these two places of the remains of a considerable ancient city are as lacking as they are in the Trang neighbourhood. I think it more likely that we are here concerned with a stretch of border country, which owed allegiance either to the established state on the north or that on the south, in which area no large town or major route is to be expected. So Takola mart, if it were indeed located at Trang, soon withered away. That did not mean that Trang did not enjoy a limited prosperity in Śrīvijayan times: the abbot of a monastery on the outskirts told me that the remains of an old shrine, destroyed in rebuilding operations, was of distinctly Śrīvijayan style. It is probable that in the thirteenth century Trang was used by Tāmbraliṅga (then centred at Nak'on) as a port of embarkation for Candrabhānu's overseas expeditions (Chapter VII, below).

If the city-state of Ch'ih-t'u, of undoubted early importance, was situated, as is now supposed, up the Kelantan river, I should be inclined to attribute its early demise — it lasted only into the seventh century — also to communication difficulties, in this case to its being badly situated in regard to trans-peninsular facilities. Not only trade, but cultural expansion, took place along these two routes, and we shall see that it assumed a distinctive

character in each case. I am referring more particularly to the formative sixth to early eighth centuries. Inevitably there came a change when Śrīvijaya re-established the sea routes, and overland routes were of less importance. There was, for example, renewed activity in Perak estuaries, in connexion with the shipping of tin. But the overall control of Śrīvijaya was, as we shall see, far from imposing a cultural unity on the two Isthmian regions which had developed somewhat independently along the main trans-peninsular routes.

The present work is one of cultural interpretation. The more such interpretation takes account of *all* the evidence, the more it is likely to succeed. I failed to do this when years ago I came to the conclusion that Ch'aiya, so rich in Śrīvijayan remains, must therefore have been the capital of Śrīvijaya. Later, fuller use of the available evidence enabled me to correct it.[11] Now in recent years we have seen important contributions made to our knowledge of South-east Asian history by exploitation of the data on ancient commerce contained in inscriptions and contemporary Chinese texts, which had previously been somewhat neglected. In particular I am thinking of Professor O. W. Wolters's valuable *Early Indonesian Commerce* (1967). In this he has shown how it was that an apparently improbable region, the south-east coast of Sumatra, on a basis of successful native trading and skilful navigation, developed in the seventh century from an earlier state of Kan-t'o-li into the far flung thalassocracy of Śrīvijaya, with capital Palembang. Yet from such a specialized economic approach one could easily take a false step. That I think was precisely what Wolters

[11] *JRAS*, 1948, pp. 30–32.

did when he endorsed as "an inspired statement" the opinion expressed (surprisingly enough) by G. Cœdès that the paucity of Śrīvijayan architectural remains and inscriptions was due to preoccupation with matters of commerce. One need hardly trouble to think whether any emergent nation of antiquity thus dared to neglect the gods: the plain fact is that the so-called Ligor inscription of A.D. 775 informs us that one of Śrīvijaya's first acts on occupying the Isthmus was to found three temples as a memorial to the occasion. One good reason why we should not expect such momentous remains at Palembang as we find in central Java (by no means uninterested in commerce) is that they were built of brick, not stone. So they must have fallen easier victims to fanatical destruction in the early days of conversion to Islam. That is a point which I should have done well to have borne in mind when contrasting the relatively well preserved remains, both architectural and sculptural, at persistently Buddhist Ch'aiya with those of Palembang. There is another aspect of the matter, calling for cultural interpretation, which will emerge more fully as this work proceeds: that concerns the relative degree of originality achieved under more or less intense Indianization.

While we shall not need to delve deeply into the actual details of commerce, we shall certainly do well to bear in mind such major gains from the economic approach as recognition of the basis for Śrīvijaya's rise to supremacy above mentioned. In this connexion I would mention a potentially fruitful parallel proposed by Wang Gungwu: "The South China Sea was the main route of what may be called the Asian East–West trade in commodities and ideas. It was the second Silk Route. Its waters and its island straits were as the sands and the mountain passes of

Central Asia; its ports were like the caravanserais."[12] But not only caravanserais. To leave it at that is to make very incomplete use of a valuable analogy. I should like to develop it a little further. Indeed the ports or capitals of the city-states on the Peninsula, and the settlements like Palembang and Malāyu on the Sumatran coast, corresponded to the oases on the Central Asian routes. However, just as the Central Asian oases were much more than caravanserais, and had a settled culturally rich life for a number of centuries, so had these maritime oases of the south. It will I think be useful to extend Wang Gungwu's comparison by taking a somewhat closer look at the cultural aspect of life in these Central Asian city-states.

Typical examples were Kashgar, Yarkand, Kucha, and Khotan, to mention only four, the last mentioned being the largest and most important. Even today the territory of Khotan extends for forty miles along a terrace of fertile loess at the northern foot of the Kun-lun mountains. But the fertility depends on irrigation from two rivers, and its area was much more extensive in early times. But that necessitated a constant fight against the invading desert sand which, as Sir Aurel Stein discovered, eventually succeeded in engulfing most of the remains of antiquity. In our day there are three towns in the oasis, there is a population of more than two hundred thousand, excellent crops of cereals and cotton are raised, and fruits of many kinds are grown. Gold, which may have been an early attraction to Indians here as in the Malay Peninsula, is still washed in the riverine alluvium. In the early centuries of the Christian era these oases were occupied by the Yue-chi, a central Asian people who, as with the

[12] Wang Gungwu, "The Nanhai Trade", *JMBRAS*, Vol. XXI, pt. 2 (1958), p. 6.

natives of the Malay Peninsula, had accepted Indianization. In the case of Khotan this took the form of the Buddhist religion and an art that was characteristically Gandharan. According to Buddhist tradition the oasis had been colonized by Indians coming from North-west India in the time of Aśoka.[13] Ancient documents show the early existence there of a dynasty of Indian origin — just as there is reason to believe that sometimes the rulers of Peninsular kingdoms were Indians who had gained possession of the throne. In Kashgar also rulers claimed to be of Indian royal stock.

These Central Asian oases became wealthy city-states that were at times independent but often owed allegiance to India or China, just as in the Malay Peninsula the city-states were often in no position to resist the suzerain power of empires — in this case Fu-nan or Śrīvijaya. So it was that the early Buddhist missionaries taking the overland route to China through Central Asia, as also the traders over a period of several hundred years, found a warm welcome as they passed through the oases. Each of these centres became seats of many Buddhist monasteries. These acted as relay stations in the spread of Buddhism, the Kucheans and the Khotanese monks taking a leading part in proselytizing China. The Chinese pilgrims, just as was the case at Palembang, and as we shall see there is reason to believe, also at peninsular centres, broke their journey there to spend time studying the Buddhist canon with Indian masters who had taken up their abode there. We have seen that the Malay Peninsula has been described as "a barrier and a bridge". So it is not surprising to find these Central Asian kingdoms being collectively

[13] P. C. Bagchi, *India and China*, second edition, New York, 1951, p. 13.

referred to in almost the same terms as forming "a barrier and a link".[14]

This brings us to the vitally interesting question as to what was the character of the art that came into being in these monasteries of the Central Asian oases. This has been well summarized by the author just quoted, on the basis of the discoveries of Sir Aurel Stein and other archaeologists. While for the most part the sculptures and paintings found at Khotan closely reflect the Gandharan style, at the ruins of Dandan Uiliq, also in the Khotan oasis, sophisticated paintings have been found with an elegant vitality "unmistakably Indian" comparable to the Gupta murals of Ajanta.[15] At the wealthy oasis of Kucha, the site of Kizil has revealed a number of Indian styles, which Rowland suggests may be due to craftsmen coming to the oasis with different stylistic backgrounds. And sometimes there is evidence of the style, though essentially Indian, having absorbed elements of Iranian art of the Sassanian period. This is not surprising in view of the fact that the Silk Route was also used by travellers from Persia.

The point that finally emerges with regard to the art of these Central Asian oases is that there is no suggestion of any originality, any variation of the art introduced from India, other than the limited form of originality that comes from combining different Indian styles or introducing something Persian. Of a Yue-chi art, or of any sign of the influence of such an art on what has been introduced with Buddhism, art historians have detected nothing. This we may well bear in mind now that such an

[14] B. Rowland, *The Art and Architecture of India*, third edition, London, 1967, p. 111.
[15] Ibid., p. 113.

evident analogy between the life and cultural conditions of the Silk Route and the Malay Peninsula routes has been established.

CHAPTER I

TEXTUAL EVIDENCE

To establish the early importance of the Malay Peninsula as a bridge by which Indian influences reached the further east, and indeed acted as a relay of such influences, we have to concern ourselves with all the evidence, not merely those kinds that happen to appeal to our individual taste — perhaps as archaeologists rather than sinologists. Most of the textual evidences considered in this chapter have long been known, but they have not been always allowed their full weight. Here I shall confine myself to those texts which have a direct bearing on the Peninsula. This is necessary because, while most authorities have taken the common sense view that, owing to the geographical position of the Peninsula, evidence of early Indianization in neighbouring countries implies similar acculturation in the Peninsula, a minority opinion (based on partial examination of the evidence), one which when first advanced attracted some attention, was to the contrary. It sought to maintain that the Peninsula was in fact missed out in the spread of early Indian influences.[1]

The early Indian references to Suvarṇabhūmi (gold land) and Suvarṇadvīpa (gold island) in the *Rāmāyana* and *Arthaśastra*, also the *Jātaka* stories of Indian merchants' voyages thither, while indicating an acquaintance with

[1] A. Lamb, "Kedah and Takuapa: some tentative historical conclusions", *FMJ*, Vol. VI, N.S., 1961, pp. 69–88.

countries to the east of India long antedating the Christian era, make no specific mentions of the Peninsula. More valuable in this respect is a story in the *Kathāsaritsāgara* which mentions Kaṭāha (Kedah) as the object of a voyage; still more so the canonical Buddhist text the *Niddesa*, which not only shows considerable knowledge of eastern centres reached by Indian traders, but specifically mentions Takola. This, as we have seen, was certainly situated on the Peninsula, probably in the vicinity of Trang. The *Niddesa* dates from not later than the second century A.D., and its information, on this point, is borne out by the almost contemporary text of Ptolemy. The same text further refers to a place called Tamali, possibly to be equated with Tāmbraliṅga.[2] A valuable independent support for such early attributions is found in the Chinese *History of the Liang* which refers to Lang-ya-hsiu (Langkasuka) as having been founded in the second century A.D.

The Chinese texts, though not generally taking us so far back as do the vaguer Indian references, are more informative for the early centuries of the Christian era. Not only do they contain much descriptive material but they have in a number of cases enabled the historical geographers to locate with reasonable certainty the settlements concerned. It occurred to me[3] that they can also enable us to estimate the relatively greater intensity of early Indianization in the Peninsula as compared with that elsewhere in South-east Asia. Thus it is of states undoubtedly situated on the Peninsula, and of them alone, that Chinese texts referring to the third–sixth centuries

[2] S. Lévi, *EA*, Vol. II, pp. 26 f.
[3] *JMBRAS*, Vol. XLIII, pt. 1, 1970, pp. 5 f.

A.D. indicate (1) a populous colony of Indian residents in a state, which nevertheless one need not suppose was actually ruled by other than an Indianized native, and (2) that closer relations were maintained with India than was the case in Indochina or Java.

Perhaps the most striking example is that of Tun-sun of which the *T'ai-p'ing Yü Lan* encyclopaedia, quoting the third century *Fu-nan Chi* states: "In the country there are five hundred families of *hu* (? = merchants) from India, two *fo-t'u* (*stūpas* or Buddhas) and more than a thousand Indian Brahmans. The people of Tun-sun practise their doctrine and give them their daughters in marriage; consequently many of the Brahmans do not go away. They do nothing but study the sacred canon, bathe themselves with scent and flowers, and practise piety by day and night."[4] The location of Tun-sun has generally been accepted as somewhere on the Peninsula. Wheatley proposed to see in it the pre-Dvāravatī state, situated at the very head of the Peninsula (as defined by him),[5] but I have been unable to agree because the preponderantly Buddhist character of the remains found at Dvāravatī sites accord ill with the strong Hinduism suggested by the text. If one accepts Waley's emendation of "an ocean stepping stone", where merchants from east and west meet, as superior to "on a precipitous coast" as a translation of the topographical indications given, one must be inclined to think, as indeed most have, of a position on the Isthmus and stretching across it. Situated on the Bay of Bandon its territory may have incorporated the earlier mart of Tamali, perhaps = Tāmbraliṅga, a

[4] P. Wheatley, op. cit., p. 17.
[5] Ibid., p. 286.

toponym which reappears in the region many centuries later.

P'an-p'an is a country which virtually everyone is in agreement over locating on the Isthmus in the Bay of Bandon latitude. It would appear to have succeeded to the territory of Tun-sun, and Wolters gives good reasons for believing this to have been the case.[6] The Chinese information about it confirms the impression already gained as to the degree of Indianization of this region, through which ran the main trans-peninsular route. P'an-p'an sent several embassies to China in the fifth and sixth centuries, so the *Liang-shu* was in a position to give us a very important piece of information that has become famous: "Chiao Chen-ju (Kauṇḍinya), one of the successors (of Chu Chan-t'an, king of Fu-nan in A.D. 357) was originally an Indian Brahman who received a divine fiat to reign over Fu-nan. Chiao Chen-ju rejoiced in his heart. He arrived in P'an-p'an to the southward. When the Funanese heard of him, they all welcomed him with delight, went before him and chose him as their king. Once more he modified all the laws to conform with the usage of India."[7]

In case one might think that this means nothing more for P'an-p'an than that Kauṇḍinya happened early in the fifth century to travel from India by way of the relatively safe trans-peninsular route I would attach more importance to the less often quoted passage from Ma Tuan-lin: "In the country are numerous Brahmans come from India in search of wealth. They are in high favour with the king." But it would seem that in P'an-p'an Buddhism was well established for Ma Tuan-lin adds: "There are

[6] Op. cit., p. 45.
[7] P. Wheatley, op. cit., p. 48.

ten monasteries where Buddhist monks and nuns study their canon."[8]

P'an-p'an's neighbour on the south was Lang-ya-hsiu (Langkasuka). A certain amount of misunderstanding was long rife owing to the *Kedah Annals* having located it in Kedah, but it is now recognized to have been situated in the neighbourhood of Patani. Ma Tuan-lin tells us of a dynastic crisis which occurred there in the fifth century A.D., while the state was still under Fu-nan suzerainty. The royal power having weakened, there was "in the king's household a man of virtue to whom the populace turned. When the king heard of this he imprisoned this man, but his chains snapped unaccountably. The king took him for a supernatural being and, not daring to injure him, exiled him from the country, whereupon he fled to India. The king of India gave him his eldest daughter in marriage. Not long afterwards, when the king of Lang-ya died, the chief ministers welcomed back the exile and made him king."[9] In this case the interest is that in the fifth century there was such a close cultural and social connexion with India that a prince could take refuge there and was so acceptable in the Indian ruler's eyes as to be given his daughter in marriage. His return from exile further indicated the closeness of the relations with India.

If by way of comparison we examine Chinese accounts of contemporary Java, Champa or Cambodia, we find a striking contrast to the Peninsula: there are no suggestions (1) of large numbers of Brahmans from India being resident in these countries or (2) of continuing close

[8] Ibid., p. 49.
[9] Ibid., p. 254.

relations with India, both of which seem characteristic of the Peninsula. There are of course references to Indian religions, however much modified we cannot tell from the Chinese texts; while Ma Tuan-lin speaks of the men of the highest families in Champa as Brahmans, which is not the same thing as specifically connecting them with India. In the case of Chen-la no actual mention of Brahmans is made. Since we know how much they later became Khmerized, the Royal God being ministered to by a family of Khmer Brahmans of matrilineal descent, it is not surprising if the local Brahmans did not strike the Chinese as so distinct from their co-nationals as to merit specific description as Brahmans from India.

If the early voyages of Indians to the east were primarily actuated by the desire for wealth, Cœdès did well to point out that Buddhism, abolishing among its adherents the barriers of caste and fear of pollution, removed the restraints on travel which at first handicapped the Hindus.[10] Traders who were mere peddlers, if they were Buddhist laymen, would not have been much handicapped in spreading the simpler doctrines of their religion, even though they were poor and not very deeply versed in the tenets. So doubtless they spearheaded the Indian cultural invasion, the Buddhist mariners having special devotion to the Buddha Dipankara "calming the ocean". Where Hinduism is concerned no one would now deny that Brahmans soon accompanied the merchants, bringing their desirable magic, while it is further accepted that after a certain time a part in Indianization was played by local people visiting the sacred places in India.

[10] G. Cœdès, *Les États* . . . p. 48.

What is particularly important about the Tun-sun information, referring to such an early period as it does, is the number of Indians stated to have been resident there, and married to the local women. What were they then but settlers, or colonists, the latter term having no necessarily political connotation? This deduction cannot be avoided without doing violence to the texts on whose general reliability sinologists and historical geographers seem satisfied. I appreciate that the more advantageous a cultural innovation appears to be, the fewer need be its introducers; nevertheless such intense cultural influence as is above indicated may well have been more immediately effective, and among a wider circle, than that of the individual Brahman adviser at the court of an Indianizing ruler in the eastern zone of Greater India.

The indigenous inhabitants of these peninsular lands were probably a mixture of Môns and Proto-Malays, later to be joined by Indianized Sumatran Malays. One can hardly deny that their chiefs and upper classes were in a particularly favourable situation to absorb to the full those sacral and magical aspects of Indian civilization that we now realize made most appeal to the peoples of South-east Asia.

Ch'ih-t'u, the Red-earth Land, was too long ingenuously identified with Kedah on the strength of the Raktamṛttika (Red Earth Kingdom) mentioned in an early Kedah inscription. Now an east coast localization seems to be generally acceptable, Professor Wheatley favouring the Kelantan river, which he points out is navigable for a hundred miles. This accords with the requirement of the Chinese statement that the capital was at a month's journey from the coast.[11] Such a situation

[11] P. Wheatley, op. cit., p. 36.

would seem to me as far south as any early Indianized settlement could possibly have occupied, if it was to have access to a recognized overland route during the crucial centuries of piratical domination of the straits. And indeed it appears that Ch'ih-t'u did not long survive the sixth century, perhaps for the very reason that seems to have weakened Langkasuka: competition from *the* trans-peninsular route further north. However that may be, it is an early seventh-century embassy to China, the record of which is preserved for us, among others, by Ma Tuan-lin, that provides the most detailed description of any early Indianized state of the Peninsula. It would apply certainly to the sixth century, probably earlier. Since we have now established the closeness of the relations at this period between neighbouring peninsular city-states and India, we need not doubt that the references to very Indian appearing customs in Ch'ih-t'u may be taken at face value. That is to say we need not suspect that they would have been modified by pre-Indian usage. We may I think take the further step of supposing that very much the same descriptive details, had we such ample material, would equally apply to the other states of the Peninsula, any variations being largely due to the relative intensity of Hindu or Buddhist influence and of course the parts of India from which the influence chiefly originated.

So when we are told that at the court of Ch'ih-t'u several hundred Brahmans sat facing each other it may be of no great account that in this case they are not specifically said to be from India. The ruling king's father was a Buddhist who had abdicated in favour of the religious life. There were Buddhist pagodas guarded by impressive *dvārapālas*, and Bodhisattvas adorned the city gates. A

golden ox (?Nandi) in a recumbent position was enshrined near the king's throne. By the seventh century it would appear that Hinduism was preponderant for "it is the custom to worship the Buddha but greater respect is paid to the Brahmans". Everyone practised the custom of ear-boring: marriage was patrilocal; mourning customs appear similar to those of India and cremation was practised, the ashes of a king being deposited in a gold jar in a temple. The Chinese ambassador was welcomed with conches and drums. After being conducted to the palace by two Brahmans he and his retinue were entertained with "Indian music" and food on leaf platters.

The Malay Peninsula has often been regarded[12] as acting as a relay of Indian influences to the further east, which means that the city-states were not merely the homes of Indianized communities. They were active centres of Indian thought, affording such encouragement to missionaries as would tend to reinforce their zeal and their competence to carry their message further afield. This indeed we know was the case with Śrivijaya (Palembang) where I-Ching testified of the numerous monks resident there that "they investigate and study all the subjects that exist, just as in the Middle Kingdom (India)"; and we know specifically that the last great Buddhist missionary to China, Vajrabodhi, broke his journey there for five months. We have seen that at such Central Asian oases as Khotan and Kucha Buddhist studies were so flourishing that native monks who had never been to India were qualified to carry the teachings to China. So on these analogies we may suppose that, just as many Chinese pilgrims did not find it necessary to

[12] e.g. by G. Cœdès, op. cit., p. 68.

go further than Khotan or Kucha to learn all they desired, and Chinese pilgrims taking the sea route to India were advised by I-Ching to break their journey for a couple of years of study at Palembang, there may well have been more than one similar centre of international study on the Peninsula. Such statements in our texts, pointing in this direction, however much the primary objective of the earlier navigators had been material gain, include the notice of P'an-p'an that "there are ten monasteries where Buddhist monks and nuns study the canon". Furthermore the local monks were evidently anxious to take part in the proselytizing abroad: among the presents despatched from P'an-p'an by an envoy to China in A.D. 536 were "Buddhist relics, miniature painted *stūpas*, leaves of the Bo tree". We further know of Langkasuka, a strong centre of Buddhism, that it was recommended by I-Ching as an alternative to Śrīvijaya for the Chinese pilgrims. He remarked that they were treated there "with the courtesy appropriate to distinguished guests".[13] So we may imagine that it was not without facilities for study similar to those that were available at Palembang.

It is in the light of the reliable evidence of the Chinese records for early Indianization in the Peninsula that we may now turn to the early inscriptions with considerable confidence that most of them do in fact support this interpretation.[14] I will first take the Pallava *grantha*

[13] Wheatley, op. cit., p. 45.

[14] The exception is a Buddhist credo inscribed on a small bar of stone found by me at Bukit Choras (Kedah site 1) which was dated by J. Allan of the British Museum as fourth century A.D. This was rejected in favour of the eighth or ninth century by F. D. K. Bosch and J. G. de Casparis, and it is little likely that they are wrong. (Cf. A. Lamb, *FMJ*, N.S., Vol. VII, 1962, p. 67.) The *stūpa* of which remains were found at this site, may nevertheless be older than the inscription.

inscription on a slate slab discovered by Lieut.-Colonel James Low beneath the floor of a small ruined brick building near Bukit Meriam, Kedah. The site has not been rediscovered and the slab is now lost. But a surviving hand-copy has been studied by B. C. Chhabra and others. It consists of two stanzas in Sanskrit, dating about the beginning of the fifth century. The first stanza is the Buddhist credo *ye dharma* etc.; the second is a less common statement of doctrine.

Low's second inscription is the one he found in 1834, engraved on the upper part of a stone pillar which he believed had been associated with a Buddhist temple and which was found on a sandy site in the northern part of Province Wellesley. The stone is preserved in the Calcutta Museum, and the inscription is engraved on either side of a representation of a *stūpa*, crowned by a staff having seven superimposed umbrellas. This early style of finial may be compared with the actual terracotta finial recovered from the ancient site of Langkasuka.[15] It was the existence of this *stupa* engraving that led me to believe that the pillar (possibly the support of a *dharmacakra*) may have been found at the site of a small ruined *stūpa* we excavated in Province Wellesley.[16] The inscription, incised on both sides of the *stūpa* design, in part comprises the second stanza already mentioned as occurring in the Bukit Meriam inscription. It is dated by Chhabra on palaeographical grounds as being a little later than that inscription. Of the rest, the line to the outermost right is of most interest to us. It has been translated by Chhabra as follows: "... of the great sea-captain Buddhagupta, a

[15] See below, Chapter IV and Plate 5A.
[16] *JMBRAS*, Vol. XX, pt. 1, pp. 3–6.

resident (?) of Raktamṛttika . . . by all means, in all, in all respects, . . . be (they) successful in their voyage!"[17] Kern, who first translated the inscription, identified Raktamṛttika with Ch'ih-t'u (as also meaning red earth), which latter thus came to be thought of as probably referring to Kedah. Others sought a locality in India as seeming more likely. This view easily led to the supposition that neither of Low's inscriptions betokened actual settlement, but were merely the work of seafarers temporarily ashore. If the Ch'ih-t'u with which Raktamṛttika is identified is now correctly believed to have been situated on the east coast of the Peninsula, and Buddhagupta came from there, this would hardly be an argument against the early Indianization of the Peninsula.

The inscription that I found at site 2 on the Sungai Bujang, Kedah, is not, I think, to be lightly dismissed. Like the others already mentioned it is in Pallava *grantha*, inscribed on three faces of a small rectangular bar of sun-dried clay. I discovered it when clearing one side of the laterite basement of what had probably been a small *stūpa*.[18] Whatever its relation to the site may have been it is improbable that it would have been brought from outside the Peninsula. In that case its dating, and if early its subject matter, would be of importance for the cultural history of the area. Now all the scholars who studied it at the time it was found, including J. Ph. Vogel, E. H. Johnston, and N. P. Chakravarti, were agreed, that it dated from the fifth or sixth century. It consists of three Sanskrit stanzas concerning the Madhyamika school of Mahāyāna Buddhism, and if this dating is correct, it

[17] *JASB Letters*, Vol. 1, 1935, no. 1, p. 18.
[18] "Arch. Researches", pp. 8–10 and pl. 8.

would be much earlier than the dated seventh-century Sumatran inscriptions which were previously considered to be the earliest South-east Asian texts including Mahāyānist references. Now more recently this early dating has been questioned by de Casparis, who suggests the first half of the seventh century.[19] In that case the inscription would have no bearing on our present discussion. However it is noteworthy that Cœdès, whom many would accept as an adjudicator in such matters, while aware of this new suggestion, maintained in the 1964 edition of *Les États* . . . (p. 100) the dating originally proposed.

We now turn to two inscriptions long preserved in monasteries in or near Nak'on (Ligor). I should preface my remarks on them by pointing out that the fact that they, like a number of ancient sculptures, were long preserved in *wats* in or near Nak'on affords no clue to their exact original provenances. We shall see later that there is reason to believe that this city may not itself date from earlier than the eleventh century A.D. But it was the custom in capitals and larger towns in Siam to collect up (and not destroy as in the Malay country) old sculptures and inscriptions, affording them a measure of protection in later monasteries. That was before collectors and the trade entered into competition, at least for the sculptures. The point is that such an object preserved in a Nak'on *wat* may in fact have originated from a shrine less than five or more than fifty miles away.

This is well illustrated by our first Nak'on inscription,

[19] *Prasasti Indonesia*, II, 1956, p. 104.

published by Cœdès.[20] It is no more than a fragment of an inscription on a stone re-employed in the stairway at the entrance to the museum of Wat Mahathāt, the principal monastery at Nak'on. It consists of seven large characters of which nothing can certainly be made out; but the archaism of the characters enabled Cœdès to date it as of fifth–sixth century A.D.

Finally there is a document which, even if we had no other inscription from the Peninsula, would be decisive as to the existence of an early Indianized settlement there. I refer to the inscription from Wat Maheyang, near Nak'on. This is now in the National Museum, Bangkok. Previously it had spent many years built into the porch-wall of King Mongkut's residence when he was a monk at Wat Bovoranives, Bangkok: a further illustration of the traditional method of preserving respected relics of this sort. It was Gerini who showed that it had in fact come from Wat Maheyang, near Nak'on, rightly adding: "The fact of its having been found in the Ligor district is no certain proof that it originally stood there."[21]

Inscribed on a slab of schist measuring 0.46 by 0.87 m., the Wat Maheyang epigraph consists now of six lines of Sanskrit, the beginning and the end being lacking. Cœdès finally expressed his definitive opinion that it dates from the sixth century at latest.[22] It is a Buddhist

[20] G. Cœdès, *Recueil*, p. 55. Publication of this Inscription has also undergone some strange vicissitudes at the hands of non-epigraphists. A. Lamb, who thought he had discovered it, published it upside down in *FMJ*, Vol. VI, 1961, pl. 117. De Lajonquière, who actually did discover it, reproduced it inside out (à l'envers) in *BCAI*, 1912, p. 158 (c). In the caption to Lamb's plate we are informed that de Casparis is "inclined to date it to the sixth century or earlier". S. J. O'Connor (op. cit., p. 27) mentions Lamb's discovery as though it were a different inscription from the one published by Cœdès.

[21] G. E. Gerini, *Researches on Ptolemy's Geography*, London, 1909, p. 492, n. 2.

[22] *Les États* . . . p. 79.

inscription giving rules concerning the domestic discipline of a monastery. As it provides detailed evidence of the existence of such a monastery at this time in the Peninsula I here give a full English rendering of Barth's original French translation, which Cœdès saw no reason to alter.[23]

I . . .

II . . . the covered walk, and the refectory, with the hall for (the celebration) of the upoṣadha, which is required each day, as much as for the community as for its members . . .

III . . . the cult of the Pāramitā (the exercise of), writing with the provision of ink and paper, the offering, the food for the community of the dvijas of the illustrious Agasti . . .

IV . . . do not lack (alms), accompanied with edifying discourses, provided with incense and lamps, with garlands, streamers, baldaquins, and fly-whisks, (ornamented) with standards of Chinese material . . .

V . . . and also prescribed meritorious acts (the observance), uninterrupted of the Law, the protection of the subjects (or, of the people), equanimity in both good and bad fortune, victory over the senses, despondency . . .

VI . . . by (him) who has obtained wealth by (his heroism) . . . called arnāya . . .

Such a centre seems well qualified to act as a relay of the doctrines, and the mention of standards of Chinese material betokens contact with the further east.

[23] G. Cœdès, *Recueil*, p. 53.

CHAPTER II

THE EARLY SCULPTURES

RATHER unexpectedly it is from Buddhist and Hindu sculptures, themselves undated, that perhaps the most decisive evidence for the existence of early Indianization in the Peninsula has now been obtained. We owe this in the first place to the work of Professor A. B. Griswold who concerned himself entirely with the early Theravāda Buddhist sculptures. As a result we now know that such Buddhist images were actually made in the Isthmian region during the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. Though these are small enough to have been easily carried, it would nevertheless appear from their provenances that the early Buddhism was concentrated more in the southern Isthmian area. On the other hand the Hinduism which we shall afterwards discuss would seem to have taken root rather in the Takuapa–Bandon latitude.

Griswold's work comes not unnaturally as a culmination in this particular direction of the gradual progress of art historical analysis. One may credit L. Bachhofer with having begun on the right lines when he recognized already in 1935 that in the early centuries A.D. "forms and ideas" from north, south and western India, had probably fused in Fu-nan.[1] His hypothesis, if correct, would certainly establish the existence of early workshops in Fu-nan. But he seems to have been thinking in terms of

[1] L. Bachhofer, "The Influx of Indian Sculpture into Fu-nan", *JGIS*, Vol. II, 1935.

the combination of contemporary influences from different parts of India, whereas for a better understanding it is important to recognize that Indian influences came in successive waves. The earliest produced images of Amarāvatī style which when small could easily be dismissed as mere imports, not indicative of Indianized settlements. But it so happens that there are also images of the Gupta and late or post-Gupta periods which, by retaining certain Amāravatī or Anurādhapura characteristics, indicate that they were made locally by sculptors previously familiar with the Amarāvatī style imports.

It was in the course of my investigation of the mechanics of culture change in Indianized South-east Asia that I recognized the part played by what has subsequently come to be known as hold-overs. This I did exclusively with regard to what I called "Indo-Malaysian" sculpture, the "Malaysian" not at that time having any political connotation.[2] We are not concerned with this Indo-Malaysian art until a later chapter, except to note the principle on which I concluded that composite art of this sort came into existence. It had first to be appreciated that such art did not represent the reflection of one particular school of Indian art, however generally Indian in appearance; nor could it be explained on the basis of the local mixing of contemporary Indian influences. I ascribed it rather to "a tendency, due to the extreme conservatism of deity sculpture, for the effects of earlier waves to survive . . .". This I think fully accounts for the composite character of most of the Indianized sculpture during the earlier centuries. Although an increased importance has been attributed of late to the eclectic

[2] *The Making of Greater India*, London, 1951, Chapter II; and subsequent editions.

combinations of impressions received by pilgrims to the holy places in India, we should be making a mistake to over-estimate this during the early centuries. It would seem obvious that the growth of Indianization must then have been very much the result of the activities of the Indians who acted as missionaries. A satisfactory explanation of what in fact we find during these early centuries can certainly be found in accordance with this principle.

The late Pierre Dupont developed this approach systematically and exhaustively in the case of the Buddhist sculpture of Fu-nan and Dvāravatī, and, as we are about to see in some detail, this culminated in so far as the Malay Peninsula is concerned in the work of A. B. Griswold. It seems that Dupont had arrived at his understanding of the composition of the Buddha type of Dvāravatī before he had done so of that of Fu-nan, even though his conclusion as regards Fu-nan was actually published first: "One finds oneself led here, for the majority of pre-Angkorian images of the Buddha, to conclusions which examination of seated images of Dvāravatī had already imposed: the actual type from which they spring is not purely post-Gupta [late Gupta], but has assimilated earlier stylistic and inconographic elements, issuing from the Amarāvatī and Ceylon tradition. This implies the existence in South-east Asia, prior to the sixth century, of a production inspired by the Buddhist art of South India."[3] At that time he found support for his conclusion from the bronze Buddhas dating third–fifth centuries, and of Amarāvatī or Ceylon style, that had been found at Dong-dzu'o'ng, Djember,

[3] P. Dupont, *La Statuaire Préangkorienne*, Ascona, 1955, pp. 204 f.

Korat, and Celebes, while so far as one can tell from the magnificent head found at Romlok, it also belongs to the Amarāvatī style. Furthermore he added the spendid large granite statue found at Bukit Seguntang, Palembang, which from its geographical situation is of more immediate interest to us as a support for an Amarāvatī period of Buddhist settlement. Its size precludes the likelihood that it was made far from its findspot, and granite, though not found in Sumatra, is available on the neighbouring island of Bangka.

We may now examine Griswold's application of this approach to the material from the Malay Peninsula, to which he has been able to add a few new documents.[4] One of these is a fine standing bronze Buddha (height 22 cm.) which was found in a field near Sungai Golok, Patani, near the Malayan border. It closely resembles the Dong-dzu'o'ng bronze from Champa, and he considers that both could have been Amarāvatī products, but were probably made in Ceylon about the fifth century, where the slightly modified Amarāvatī style lasted longer than in India. However he notes that Miss M. L. d'Ancona, in a study of the early images, ascribed the Dong-dzu'o'ng Buddha to the fourth century. He further brings to notice a similar bronze which is at present in the Bejrapali Monastery, Bejrapuri (P'etburi), but which originated further south. So the Peninsula is no longer an exception to most of the rest of Greater India in boasting no images of the Amarāvatī style. All the same, had they been known earlier, they would doubtless have been dismissed, as were the somewhat later "Gupta" images, as having

[4] A. B. Griswold, "Imported images and the nature of copying in the art of Siam", *Essays offered to G. H. Luce*, Vol. II, 1966, pp. 37–73.

been chance imports of no value as evidence of the intensive spread of Indian influences of the period. Only the fact that the Seguntang, Sumatra, granite image must have been made locally might have given cause for reflection.

Now, in weighing all the data, Griswold takes a very different view as to the evidential value of these imported Amarāvatī style images, which he expresses as follows: "The Malay Peninsula served as a relay in the Indianization of Fu-nan, and particularly in the second wave of Indian influence in the fifth century. The Sungai Golok and Bejrapuri images may be considered new documents relating to this process, showing that the rulers of the small Indianizing states in the Peninsula were importing images from abroad as early as the fifth century. They were not content with that alone; as we shall see in a moment, they also imported artists from abroad to instruct local apprentices and create a school of image-makers. This Peninsular school was flourishing before the end of the sixth century, with workshops on both sides of the present border between Siam and Malaya. It had a mixed heritage, which can best be explained by supposing that it sprang up under the tutelage of Amarāvatī or Ceylon in the fifth century, and later got new teachers from India — first from the Gupta school of Sārnāth, and then from the post-Gupta — from which it learned new lessons, without wholly forgetting those taught by its earlier masters."[5]

Having enunciated this general proposition, Griswold proceeds to demonstrate it, after the manner of Dupont in regard to Fu-nan and Dvāravatī. This he does in the cases

[5] Ibid., p. 57.

of several images from the Peninsula which had previously been loosely designated "Gupta", and could not have been shown to have been made locally. To take first the bronze Buddha from site 16A, on the Sungai Bujang, Kedah (Pl. 2A), the following is an excerpt from his analysis: "The form of the *uṣnīṣa* and the lug at the back of the head remind us of Ceylon, while everything else about the image points to the post-Gupta, in which 3/o (robe worn in open mode, right hand down, left up) is overwhelmingly dominant. The robe has been pre-pleated, but most of the pleats have been stretched out of existence . . . We might almost believe that the image was made by one of the post-Gupta schools in western India, but certain things about it prove otherwise. The flat *uṣnīṣa*, inherited from Ceylon, is characteristic of the Peninsula. Post-Gupta images *en ronde bosse* are very rare, and I doubt if the man who made this image had ever seen one; I suspect the model he worked from was a relief. But the local school in which he was trained preferred bronze, and bronze invites *ronde bosse*. So he had to improvise a back, and he did it with considerable skill: the pleats must have been observed from nature."[6] He then goes on to say that in one respect the robe perpetuates the Ceylon tradition, though there having a different meaning; and he dates the image as of the sixth century. To the same school he assigns a somewhat similar bronze (height 50 cm.) of mixed heritage from the Songkhla province, now in the collection of Prince Bhanubhandu Yugala.

Referring then to the bronze Buddha dredged up at Pengkalen, near Ipoh, Griswold recognizes this as closely

[6] Ibid., p. 59.

related to the Gupta school of Sārnāth, and then concludes as follows: "The robe strongly recalls the school of Sarnath both in the way it is arranged and the way it is rendered. Its testimony is so emphatic that we might consider this image to have been imported from Sārnāth; and we need not hesitate to assume that the missing right hand was in the *abhayamudrā* as in Sārnāth's dominant type. But the large curls, the low *uṣnīṣa*, and the lug at the back of the head provide a different clue. It must have been made by the same school as the Songkhla and Kedah images, but a little earlier, — at a time when it was thoroughly imbued with the lessons of Sārnāth, and before it absorbed the lessons of the post-Gupta. A date in the late fifth or early sixth century is suggested. The image is a copy of a Sārnāth model, but a few old habits, learned from Ceylon or Amāravatī still persisted."[7]

Of the small sandstone relief found by me at Wieng Sra (Pl. 2B), Griswold's observations run in part as follows: "It is copied from a Sārnāth model, but of type 3/C, which is recessive at Sārnāth. The Buddha holds his right hand down in the *varadamudrā*, while the left, now missing, was raised to shoulder height . . . If we compare this image with one of the same type from Sārnāth [fig. 23] we shall see how close the relationship is . . . But the resemblance is not total. The flatness of the *uṣnīṣa*, in contrast to its crisp delineation in fig. 23, suggests the same Peninsular school that made the Pengkalen figure, and approximately the same date."[8]

[7] Ibid., pp. 61 f., and fig. 21.

[8] Ibid., pp. 62 f. So important for the Hindu sculpture is the work of Professor S. J. O'Connor, *Hindu Gods of Peninsular Siam* that I must point out that he misquotes Griswold when he says on page 36 that the Wieng Sra Buddha image "is believed by Mr. Griswold to be either a product of a north Indian workshop or a very close copy made on the Isthmus".

Griswold's conclusions appear to me to be entirely justified, being quite compatible with results obtained independently by others in comparable fields of Greater Indian art. Nevertheless it might well occur to anyone to ask whether the mixture could not have taken place already in Ceylon, whence a few of the images with the composite characteristics might have been exported to the Peninsula. Such a doubt could not exist in the case of Dvāravatī sculpture where there was such an enormous output over many centuries that local manufacture could not be questioned. The required evidence was in fact incidentally supplied by Dupont.

Among stone images in Ceylon Dupont noted only one, in the neighbourhood of the Ruanveli *stūpa*, which showed a *rather limited* Gupta influence in the smooth robe, all other features being characteristically Amarāvatī.[9] He mentions that this example is exceptional amongst the stone images, but some bronzes seated in Indian posture show the same degree of modification. In the latter, despite some Gupta influence in the robe, the *uṣṇīṣa* is low, the facial features are Sinhalese, and most important of all the image is seated in the *paryaṅkāsana* pose which is very uncharacteristic of India. Dupont makes virtually the same observations in regard to those Ceylon images of the Buddha seated on the *nāga* which appear in the later Anurādhapura style, and also show a Gupta influence limited to the smoothness of the robe.[10] So the decisive difference between the composite images of Ceylon and those contemporary ones of the Peninsula, is that the former are essentially of Ceylon style, with only very limited Gupta modification, whereas the latter to the

[9] P. Dupont, *L'Archéologie Môn de Dvāravatī*, Paris, 1959, p. 158.
[10] Ibid., pp. 253 ff.

superficial eye are almost indistinguishable from Sārnāth or late Gupta models, but on a closer view show distinct hold-overs from the Amarāvatī school.

We now turn to the Hindu sculptures, certain rather unprepossessing images found in the northern part of the Isthmian tract, and which no one has ever doubted were made in the Peninsula. Indeed such a doubt would hardly have arisen in the case of images which, in so far as they had received any attention from scholars, were until recently regarded as of late and crude workmanship. The type example is the so-called "aberrant" Viṣṇu of Ch'aiya, of which the provenance is said to be Wat Sala Tung. It was at this site that when I visited Ch'aiya in 1935 my attention was drawn to two finely carved *snānadroṇī* with double spouts that had recently been dug up, leading me to conclude that "no doubt Hindu influence was at one time strongly in evidence at Ch'aiya".[11] But their exact original provenance is unknown. For reasons that will appear in a later chapter I am disposed to believe that the two similar Viṣṇus formerly housed in the Brahmans' temple at Nak'on (now in the Museum) originated not in that city, but from some other site in the region.

The recognition of the high antiquity of these statues we owe to the work of Professor S. J. O'Connor, who arrived at his results by a simpler and more direct approach than was possible in the case of the early Buddhist images.[12] But these results are no less decisive for early Indianization in the Peninsula. O'Connor first considered the so-called "aberrant" Ch'aiya Viṣṇu, height 27 inches,

[11] *I. A. & L.*, 1935, p. 19.
[12] S. J. O'Connor, op. cit., Chapters II and III.

and made of greyish limestone (Pl. 3A). It is a four-armed standing figure of which the most interesting features are that the anterior left hand holds a conch shell on the hip, the head is crowned with a tall mitre decorated with a leaf and vine pattern, the rather small and round face has drawn out almond eyes, the ears are large and have heavy rectangular ear-rings, and ornaments consist of a flat torque and simple armlets. Apart from the *dhoti* the most remarkable feature of the attire is the broad sash which falls in a semi-circular fold before the thighs. The two four-armed images at Nak'on very closely resemble the Ch'aiya Viṣṇu, and most importantly in the conch on hip and the mitre headdresses, the latter similarly decorated but a little taller. As O'Connor remarks, all three are completely frontal, with a flat two-dimensional representation. Despite the close relationship to the Ch'aiya Viṣṇu he thinks the two others show sufficient differences to be somewhat later and to come from different workshops.

In his search for Indian prototypes O'Connor takes us first to Mathurā, where he successfully locates the ultimate source in Viṣṇu statues of the Kuṣāna period. He points first to very similar Viṣṇu statues having, as in the Ch'aiya example, the posterior right hand carved in relief against the club, the anterior right hand in *abhayamudrā*, and a similar disposition of jewellry. But there are significant differences in *dhoti*, in the style of the *mukuṭa* headdress, and in a nectar flask being held instead of a conch. He is then able to show two images also from Mathurā in which a very remarkable development has taken place later in the Kuṣāna period: the headdress has become more cylindrical to resemble a mitre, and it is a conch that is now held on the hip!

O'Connor then takes what appears to me to be a rather unnecessary sidestep, which temporarily slows the momentum of his demonstration. He refers to a schist image of Viṣṇu found at Bhinmāl, Gujarat, considered to date from about A.D. 400. Clearly inspired by such Mathurā types as above considered, it also has much in common with the Ch'aiya Viṣṇu, particularly the unrelieved frontality, similar attributes including conch shell on left hip, and similar facial features; but there are conspicuous differences in attire. This leads O'Connor to what he himself calls a "laboured quest" for material links between the Malay Peninsula and north-west India, for he is well aware that the known evidence for such links mainly concerns commerce. On the other hand there is ample evidence that cultural influences have overwhelmingly travelled to the Peninsula from India's east coast, from Vengi at the period with which we are here concerned. To my mind the most that can really be said of the Gujarat image is that it represents a parallel development to the Ch'aiya Viṣṇu from the same Mathurā source. So one's interest is revivified when O'Connor turns to what was undoubtedly the main line of contact between Mathurā and the Peninsula. He now produces some really striking evidence which, as he well realizes, is of key importance.

First he illustrates a headless two-armed statue of Viṣṇu discovered in the course of recent excavations near the well-known Buddhist site of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa in Andhra Pradesh, hence just the region where one might expect to find illuminating traces of influences on their way to the Peninsula. The right hand holds a columnar club, the left holds a conch on the hip, but of greatest interest is the sash which falls in an arc in front of the legs, exactly as in

the Peninsular Viṣṇus but not so far found in the Kuṣāna images from Mathurā. The image has been dated as of the fourth or fifth century. O'Connor concludes that in such images from the Andhradeśa region one can recognize the immediate prototypes of the Ch'aiya Viṣṇu.

This conclusion is admirably supported, as O'Connor appreciates, by the evidence of a relief found in coastal Andhra Pradesh. One of the figures depicted on it shows a standing two-armed Viṣṇu, wearing a mitre-like crown, holding a conch on the left hip and with a sash falling in an arc in front of the *dhoti*. It has been dated as of the last quarter of the third century, a time when, as we know from inscriptions at Nāgārjunakoṇda, northern Vaiṣṇava influences were being felt in Andhradeśa.

So, taking the evidence as a whole, O'Connor appears to be well justified in his conclusion that the Ch'aiya Viṣṇu "can be traced back to ultimate prototypes from the period of Kuṣāna rule at Mathurā, though the most immediate stylistic influence seems to be from the fourth-century art of Andhradeśa". It should then be dated not later than A.D. 400. This conclusion has, moreover, been accepted by the French art historian J. Boisselier, who formerly saw the sculpture as late and the work of a mediocre artisan.[13] Since the Nak'on images, instead of having the anterior right hand in *abhayamudrā*, appear to have held the *padma*, which was a later evolved symbol at Mathurā, O'Connor would date these images in the fifth century.

Also dating from this slightly later period is a four-armed mitred Viṣṇu, with conch shell on hip, found at Oc Eo in the Mekong delta. One of the few differences

[13] *Arts Asiatiques*, Vol. xx. 1969, p. 59.

between this and the peninsular examples is that it has an undecorated mitre, which might suggest simplification, and so do one or two peculiarities of the dress. Thus it seems to be a copy, of somewhat later date. The great interest of this image, as O'Connor points out, is that it gives us some tangible confirmation of the Chinese text which tells us of the second wave of Indianization being introduced into Fu-nan by Kauṇḍinya early in the fifth century. Now P'an-p'an, the peninsular kingdom by which Kauṇḍinya is said to have travelled, is generally agreed to have been situated in the Takuapa–Bandon area through which ran the main trans-peninsular route. If Ch'aiya, where the earliest of these Viṣṇus was found, was not the actual centre of P'an-p'an, this would not have been very far away.

In the sixth century these Viṣṇus of ultimately Mathurā style were replaced by large stone long-robed Viṣṇus of predominantly Gupta or late Gupta style. These are the earliest of the so-called "mitred Viṣṇus" which were first studied by Pierre Dupont, and classified by him as Group A (Pl. 3B). The low mitre is usually somewhat widened at the top, the *dhoti* is held in place by the upper hem being gathered in a knot while a sash is wrapped horizontally round the hips. The powerful modelling of these sculptures is such that they have been considered akin to the Fu-nan style of Phnom Da. The statue (Pl. 3B), perhaps also a relief,[14] come from Wieng Sra, another from P'etburi,[15] while a damaged one has been found at Ban Hua Kao, Surat.[16] The P'etburi image retains the archaic arc of cloth falling from the waist, an

[14] O'Connor, op. cit., fig. 15.
[15] Ibid., fig. 19.
[16] Ibid., fig. 25.

interesting hold-over from the "aberrant" Viṣṇu style. Its provenance might be regarded as a step in the direction of Dong Śī Mahā P'ot in eastern Siam, where two Viṣṇus of this style were found. Furthermore it ultimately reached the art of Chen-la, the early Khmer state.

This movement shows clearly enough that the impetus begun by Kauṇḍinya in introducing the second wave of Indian influence to Fu-nan was well followed up by his successors in the sixth century. In the next chapter we shall be examining the further fortunes of these long-robed mitred Viṣṇus. For the moment I only wish to emphasize that the evidence for the existence of peninsular workshops making Buddha statues of predominantly late Gupta style in the sixth century does not stand alone; it is paralleled by the manufacture of contemporary mitred Viṣṇus.

The above interpretation of the early sculptures of the Peninsula, both Buddhist and Hindu, entirely supports the inferences drawn from Chinese texts and Indian inscriptions considered in the previous chapter. It confirms the existence of Indianized states in the Peninsula during the fifth and sixth centuries. In view of such local material we have no need to enlist parallel evidence from neighbouring countries to support the common sense view that the Peninsula, during the period of Indianization, is not likely to have remained a place apart. On the contrary, as I have always thought, it was a key link in the chain of heavily Indianized territory stretching from the Môn country of Burma to Sumatra.

CHAPTER III

TĀMBRALIṄGA

We have seen that the Takuapa–Bandon region of the Isthmus was apparently long occupied by the state of P'an-p'an, whither many Brahmans came from India, and by way of which much early Indian influence spread eastwards. This state, though under the the hegemony of Fu-nan, sent a number of embassies to China during the fifth and sixth centuries, with the last one as late as 635. After this it is no more mentioned, not even by I-Ching. The reason for this may be that it had become ever more predominantly Hindu, a trend which seems to be suggested already by the success of the early Viṣṇu images discussed in the last chapter. The sculptural remains belonging to immediately succeeding centuries are sufficient for us to believe that there was no recession in such trend, and that a strongly Indianized state continued to flourish in this region. It was indeed during this period that Indian cultural expansion across the main trans-peninsular route is likely to have been at its height. We cannot be sure of this state's name, but I feel justified in supposing that it was probably the same Tāmbraliṅga which was later to become an important vassal of Śrīvijaya. It may well have displaced P'an-p'an soon after that state's last embassy to China. Taking full advantage of the dissolution of Fu-nan it could then have revived the old name of Tāmbraliṅga, which there is some reason to believe existed in the area in the second century A.D.

The cultural evidence at our disposal, in what I shall regard as the Tāmbraliṅga territory, for the period roughly seventh to late eighth century, is again almost entirely sculptural. The long-robed mitred Viṣṇus classified by Dupont as Group A are now largely replaced by those of Group B. These are characterized more particularly by the sash passing diagonally from the right thigh to the left hip in front, while the mitre is taller and more cylindrical. The type example is the fine image found at Śrīvijaya Hill, Surat (Pl. 3c); but again there is evidence of diffusion to eastern Siam, two having been found at Dong Śī Mahā P'ot. Recently another example, now in the Nak'on Museum, was found at Hua Kao village, Surat, hence near the findspot of the type example, which it closely resembles.

We now turn once more to the work of Professor O'Connor who has clearly established the nature of the relationship between Groups A and B.[1] He shows that there is nothing Pallava about the Group A images. It is only the lack of the detachable jewels, which there is good reason to suppose were used to adorn such head-dresses, that gives the relatively low mitre a superficial resemblance to the Pallava *kīrtimukha*. He illustrates this by means of a Viṣṇu figure in private ownership of Group A style which has the jewelled adornment indicated in relief.[2] The effect is immediate in banishing the preconceived idea of Pallava affinity, in favour of closely Gupta or post-Gupta affinity. He concludes as to the historical connexion between the two groups as follows: "If we follow the changes in the tradition of the long-robed

[1] *Hindu Gods of Peninsular Siam*, 1972, Chapter IV, with illustrations of all the images then known.
[2] Ibid., fig. 27.

Viṣṇu image, we can discern an original impulse from the earliest Hindu art of the Andhradeśa, which was later modified by Gupta and post-Gupta influences. This is particulary evident in figures 15 and 16 (Group A images), which are close in style to the Funanese tradition of Phnom Da and can be dated *c.* sixth century . . . The Viṣṇu images of Group B, those with the tall cylindrical mitre, appear to reflect a response to Pallava art of the seventh century, assimilated into an earlier tradition."[3]

A third group, Group C, was also recognized by Dupont. At the time when he wrote this group was comprised of images found in Chen-la, with the single exception of the splendidly modelled Viṣṇu from P'ra No' Hill, Takuapa. Since that time others less well preserved have been discovered in the Peninsula: one from Satingphra is in the Songkhla Museum, one from the Sichon district and two from near Tha Sala are in the Nak'on Museum, and one has been found at Hua Kao village, Surat. I illustrate the well-known type example from Takuapa (Pl. 4A) and one of the more recently discovered torsos from near Tha Sala (Pl. 4B). The images of this group have no hip-sash. Their lower hands, instead of being attached at the hips, were held well away from the body and rested on vertical reserves of stone. Dupont saw the Takuapa Viṣṇu as occupying a somewhat isolated position, and he was of the opinion that it was of purely Pallava style and workmanship and could be dated sixth century. Indeed he thought it was the prototype of all the long-robed Viṣṇus of the region. On the contrary O'Connor has now shown conclusively that, apart from the mitre, the statue lacks Pallava characteristics, and that

[3] Ibid., p. 48.

its anatomy and surface modelling remain predominantly post-Gupta. Furthermore, Group C, to which it belongs, is the latest of the three groups.

As to the mode of formation of this series of Viṣṇu images, O'Connor comes to the very acceptable conclusion that there has been "the same kind of accretion of styles that Pierre Dupont traced in the development of the Dvāravatī images of the Buddha". It is also in line with what Griswold has been able to show was the case in regard to the development of the early Buddhist images of the Peninsula. It accords perfectly with the composite nature of the art — its limited originality — that generally characterizes western Greater India. But there are one or two points on which O'Connor's conclusions do not enlist my agreement.

In the first place it must be said that O'Connor would suddenly terminate the process of the accretion of Indian styles when he ascribes the salient feature of the Group C images to "local preoccupations" directed to opening up the image by extending the arms away from the body. Bearing in mind the uniquely excellent plastic quality of the modelling of the Takuapa statue, I should be more inclined to suspect some Indian initiative. Early cult images, which stood in the centres of Indian shrines, and might exhibit such development, were most vulnerable to damage and destruction. The Takuapa Viṣṇu, alone of Group C images in Siam, has largely escaped damage.

There is another point which has to be faced in any fuller discussion of the Takuapa Viṣṇu, and that is its dating in relation to the Chen-la Viṣṇus of Group C. It was O'Connor's omission in his book (except for an indirect reference in footnote 9, page 43) of this question that enabled me in my review of it to stress my agreement

with his very important conclusion as to the composite character of the long-robed Viṣṇu style.[4] However such omission cannot now be permitted to restrict the scope of our inquiry.

O'Connor may be right in regarding the Isthmian and Chen-la Viṣṇus as parallel developments from the early Andhradeśa style that reached both regions, though I would doubt this in view of the possibility of the Dong Śī Mahā P'ot Viṣṇus representing a connecting link. If, however, he is right, this would preclude, as he states in the above-mentioned footnote, the Takuapa Viṣṇu from being the prototype of the Chen-la statues of Group C. Nevertheless he has elsewhere indiscriminately classed both the Isthmian and Chen-la Viṣṇus of this group as dating from the second half of the seventh century through the eighth.[5] He failed to stress that, as was already noticed by Dupont, the Chen-la examples show much inferior modelling to that of the Takuapa statue, indeed to most of the Isthmian Viṣṇus. Nor did he give due weight to the tell-tale fact that all the Chen-la Viṣṇus of this group, in so far as they are undamaged, give evidence either on the sides of the mitre, or on the attributes, of the existence of lateral ties attaching the upper arms to the mitre. On the other hand such ties are generally absent in Isthmian examples. We do find it in the exceptional black stone Group A Viṣṇu found at Satingphra, which he says here indicates both lateness and a lack of technical facility.[6]

We may, therefore, arrange the two supposedly parallel series of Goup C Viṣṇus roughly in order of time,

[4] *JMBRAS*, Vol. XLVI, pt. 1, 1973, pp. 171 ff.
[5] *JMBRAS*, Vol. XXXIX, pt. 1, 1966, p. 140.
[6] Loc. cit., p. 141.

according to their relative excellence. We must undoubtedly place first the Takuapa Viṣṇu, for there can be no question as to its pre-eminent quality. Then might be placed the fine Satingphra torso,[7] the two more recently found Tha Sala torsos, the statue from Ban Hua Kao,[8] and finally the Sichon Viṣṇu first reported by O'Connor.[9] For the Chen-la series we have, corresponding to the Takuapa Viṣṇu, the early statues from Oc Eo placed on record by Malleret.[10] These may perhaps be regarded as providing a link between the Mathurā style Viṣṇu also from that site (and possibly the sixth century Tuol Koh Viṣṇu), and the later examples of inferior quality which employed lateral ties for the upper arms.

This proposition does not have merely the rather obvious corollary of ascribing the Takuapa Viṣṇu to a date much nearer the A.D. 650 mark than the 800. It brings us back to the question of more basic importance: who was responsible for the change which brought about the great difference between Group C and what had preceded it? Can we really believe with O'Connor that "what occurred in the development of this type, both in Chen-la and on the Isthmian tract, is a passage from a rather compressed spatial ambience to a greater spatial complexity by moving the hands away from the body".[11] To so believe would involve the improbable supposition that two South-east Asian communities would have independently arrived at the same original development. It would indeed have been remarkable for even one such

[7] *Hindu Gods*, fig. 21.
[8] Ibid., fig. 24.
[9] Ibid., fig. 22.
[10] *L'Archéologie du Delta du Mekong*, Vol. 1, Paris, 1959, pp. 393–6, pls. lxxxii, lxxxiii.
[11] *JMBRAS*, Vol. xxxix, pt. 1, 1966, p. 140.

community to have made this striking innovation at a time when in deity sculpture all South-east Asia was still adhering rigorously to the *śāstras*. It is not until the ninth century that in the style of Kulen the Khmers showed their ability to start an evolution on truly original lines. It seems to me more likely that this development would owe its introduction in both regions (if it is in fact a parallel development) to some common inspiration of Indian origin, in accordance with what O'Connor has so well described as an accretion of culture.

That the innovation was due to Indian inspiration seems to be confirmed in each case by its subsequent fate. In the case of a true evolution, such as that which began with the Khmer art of Kulen, we should expect to find further development. But here, in both the Isthmian and Chen-la series, we see only decline, with in Chen-la reliance on lateral ties for the upper arms. In the Isthmian series this seems to be confirmed by one outstanding fact of geographical distribution: it can hardly be mere chance that the finest example of Group C was found *in situ* at the very apex of the triangle from which Indian influences spread through Tāmbraliṅga.

It would seem very probable that the capital of Tāmbraliṅga, and indeed of P'an-p'an before it, if not actually at Ch'aiya was situated somewhere in the Bay of Bandon region. However nothing in the nature of a city site of that period has so far been identified. There is only one early town settlement that would appear to date from approximately that period: Wieng Sra. Being some thirty-five miles off the main trans-peninsular route, south of Bandon, on a small tributary of the Tapi (Luang) River, which waters the wide plain south of that area, it would be unlikely to have been the capital. It rather evidences the

early spread of Indian influences deep into the southern territory of the kingdom.

Wieng Sra was first visited by Lajonquière.[12] He gave a tolerably accurate plan of it, a square enclosure, regularly oriented, measuring about 250 metres each side. When I visited it in 1935 I was able to survey it and make a few corrections. Thus the narrow moat and external low earth rampart can be traced throughout the entire length of the south and east sides, the north side being formed by the lake from which the place derives its modern name. The west side is bordered by the little stream which soon joins the Tapi. The only distinguishable break in the enclosure is at the centre of the east side, where a gap may represent the position of an ancient gateway. The interior was filled with jungle and, so far as was known, the only ancient foundation was at the centre. There we found on excavation the base of a small brick shrine, only one brick thick, of a shape which could not be determined since the bricks were very old and rotten. Only a few sherds of domestic pottery were found; but it was in the roots of a tree at the edge of this brick structure that we found the nearly Gupta sandstone Buddha relief (Pl. 2B) that has been discussed in the last chapter. We now appreciate, as we did not at the time, that it must have been made somewhere in the Peninsula, if not in this immediate vicinity.

It is the presence of this early Buddhist relief that suggests the possibility that the town of Wieng Sra might even antedate Tāmbraliṅga. But it is equally likely that the figure might have been placed there later, in a shrine that was evidently then associated with Vaiṣṇava worship.

[12] *BCAI*, 1912, fig. 29.

However the fact that the fine mitred Viṣṇu that had previously been found there, whence it finally went to the Bangkok Museum, belongs to Group A, probably of sixth-century dating, does emphasize the very early period from which this foundation may date. Such bricks as may have remained above ground had evidently been used, as Lajonquière noted, by the monks of the modern *wat* situated near the remains of an Ayudhyan foundation. This custom of utilizing such bricks from ancient mounds is widespread, no doubt long antedating the modern form of depredation for road-repairing. It contrasts regrettably with the respect that is usually shown for ancient images in the non-Islamic part of the Peninsula, and has almost entirely deprived us, as far as at present known, of direct knowledge of the architecture of the early period in this region.

One such example of a site destroyed by road repairers, only just before my visit to the Sichon neighbourhood in 1974, came to my notice. It was at a site situated about a mile west of Tha Sala, at Tambon Thaiburi. At this site the more complete of the two fine Group C Viṣṇus, the one illustrated here (Pl. 4B), then recently transferred to the Nak'on Museum, had been found. It came to light in the mound of bricks that the road repairers had been in process of removing to the rough track that runs a hundred yards to the north of it. When I visited the spot there were only scant remains of the bricks, with an adjoining *sra* (pond or tank). The place was an island in the padi fields, measuring about forty by a hundred yards, insufficient for any habitation site, and there were no pot-sherds. The main interest was that it gave an indication of the sort of isolated spot at which I believe such small sanctuaries were often built. In India, as all who

have travelled at all widely in the sub-continent will have noticed, besides town and village temples "one finds many erected in isolated spots, in woods, on the highways, in the middle of rivers . . .".[13] And as in India, so also in Chen-la, many of the primitive Khmer temples that are roughly contemporary with the sites of Tāmbraliṅga, appear to have been scattered about the countryside, often not in immediate proximity to a habitation site. The better then their chance to escape the attentions of the monastery builders — and to survive until there is demand for a motorable road in that direction.

I have often found that little trace remains of ancient buildings erected on hilltops, or even of the mounds to which time had reduced them. This can be due entirely to the erosion during the rains, to which their situation renders them particularly exposed. The example in the region and of the period we are now considering that immediately occurs to me is P'ra No' Hill, Takuapa. It is about two hundred feet high and situated on the mainland opposite K'o Khau island, seat of the mart we shall be considering later. It is reached by a little creek running through the mangrove swamps. It was on the truncated summit of this hill that I found, after clearing the undergrowth, no more than the foundations of the little shrine where had been recovered the splendid Group C Viṣṇu. Only a few scattered bricks were found on the twenty-five foot square earth and laterite basement on which a brick sanctuary had once stood. Excavation revealed, at a depth of eight inches, brick steps followed by a brick slope which seemed to have had balustrades, and led a

[13] Dubois and Beauchamp, *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, Oxford, 1905, p. 577.

short way down the hillside. In this case I am inclined to think that the destruction might well have been due to natural causes. The heavy monsoon rains to which this site is particularly exposed could have been sufficient in the course of centuries to wash the brick detritus down the hillside.

Another similar site must at one time have existed on Śrīvijaya Hill, near Surat, this being the provenance of the type example of the Group B mitred Viṣṇus. The hill is apparently covered with dense vegetation and has not yet been explored by any archaeologist.

At present, then, it is not possible to form from direct evidence any idea of the architecture of the shrines which formerly contained the long-robed mitred Viṣṇus of Tāmbraliṅga, other than to say that they must have consisted in each case of a small single *vimāna*. So far as analogy goes we should, I think, be fairly safe in concluding that, given the more probable use in the Peninsula of brick than laterite, be fairly safe in supposing that the lost sanctuaries would, at an earlier stage in their decay, have borne considerable resemblance to the Hindu *vimāna* excavated at Dong Śī Mahā P'ot in eastern Siam, an old town site which produced several of the Viṣṇu images. I have illustrated in my book *Dvāravatī* the remains of this *vimāna*, describing them as consisting of a substantially built square basement of laterite blocks, regularly oriented, with stairways on three sides (not on the north). Resting on this basement were the lower courses of the sanctuary tower, showing plinth mouldings and traces of pilasters.[14] Still on the grounds of analogy, though more adventurously, we might allow ourselves to

[14] *Dvāravati*, p. 92 and pl. 59B.

imagine temples much in the style of those of Chen-la. These, as I have elsewhere indicated, depend for their variety largely on the proportions in which Gupta and Pallava influences are mixed in a composite structure.[15] But there is nothing to suggest that the fine carved stone lintels, which with them was such a salient feature, ever existed in the Peninsula.

Though the Vaiṣṇavism to which the long-robed images bear such eloquent witness was undoubtedly the predominant facies of the Tāmbraliṅga religion, I feel sure that it would be a mistake to regard it as the only one. Several Buddhist statues of apparently Dvāravatī style have been preserved at Ch'aiya, and the surviving influence of this style seems to have made itself felt, as we shall see in Chapter VIII, in images made even in post-Śrīvijayan centuries. In the compound of the new psychiatric hospital at Surat, the square basement of a *stūpa* was excavated by the Fine Arts Department. Boisselier illustrates it in one of his reports, and states that the type of bricks used, and the mouldings of the basement, recall those found in Dvāravatī structures. He is prepared to regard it, in the present state of knowledge, as the most southerly evidence of Dvāravatī architecture.[16] There are, however, reasons why this ascription might not be altogether exact.

During the seventh and eighth centuries, Buddhism was undoubtedly more prevalent in Dvāravatī than it was in Tāmbraliṅga, for in the former country the Vaiṣṇavism which had spread from the Bandon area was a relatively minor element, whereas Hīnayāna Buddhism was constantly reinforced by Môns arriving down the Meklong

[15] *The Making of Greater India*, Appendix.
[16] *Arts Asiatiques*, XX, 1969, p. 63 and figs. 27, 28.

route from Burma. We do not hesitate to ascribe the early Buddhist remains found on the Korat plateau of eastern Siam to Dvāravatī influence, even if that region may not have formed part of the Dvāravatī kingdom. But it is not necessary to see the Buddhist remains of Tāmbraliṅga entirely in that light. They could, at least in part, represent the survival of a parallel development, which had existed from the fourth or fifth century, but which was now much restricted owing to the greater success of Vaiṣṇavism. The early sandstone Buddha relief excavated at Wieng Sra has nothing to do with Dvāravatī, while the same might be said of the sixth-century inscription of Wat Maheyang, Nak'on, which witnesses to the existence of a Buddhist monastic establishment at that time. In the next chapter we shall see further reason for supposing that not all that seems to smack of Dvāravatī in the Peninsula is in fact due to Dvāravatī influence.

CHAPTER IV

LANGKASUKA AND KAṬĀHA

As has been mentioned in the Introduction, the route that crossed the southern portion of the Isthmian tract appears to have run through territory divided between two states: an east coast state, Langkasuka, and a west coast state, Kaṭāha (Sanskrit) or Kaḍāram (Tamil). These two city-states or small kingdoms were both spoken of by early Chinese chroniclers as very favourably disposed to Buddhism, and recommended as stations by which monks would do well to travel or at which they could break their journey to and from India. Both founded perhaps in the second century A.D., they soon came under the suzerainty of Fu-nan, from which however they freed themselves in the second half of the sixth century. Thereafter they enjoyed a period of independence for a couple of centuries, prior to the advent of Śrīvijayan power. The traces of the predominantly Theravāda Buddhist culture that then flourished is more clearly to be distinguished in Langkasuka than in Kaṭāha. This is because, as we shall see, in the latter the early Buddhism came to be overlaid by a strong wave of Hindu influence that appears to have been less acceptable to the people of Langkasuka. I say that this Buddhist culture is probably more clearly distinguishable in Langkasuka despite the fact that there has been no systematic excavation in that area; for what has already come to light points in that direction.

While such leading authorities on the historical geography of the Peninsula as Sir Roland Bradell and Professor Paul Wheatley had already made it seem certain that the capital of Langkasuka was situated somewhere in the Patani district, the actual discovery of the ancient site was made by Stewart Wavell of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition in 1962.[1] An incomplete survey was then made by a Siamese official who accompanied the anthropologists, and a rough copy of this plan was subsequently published by me, in connexion with my visit to the place in 1974.[2] The anthropologists were able to give little information of archaeological value, other than to make it clear that a number of antiquities had been found at the site in the course of clandestine digging.

The old city is situated about three miles from the small town of Yarang, near the right bank of the Patani river, under fifteen miles from the sea. Its discovery was undoubtedly delayed, and its subsequent exploration virtually prevented, by the chronic state of unrest and insecurity that has so long prevailed in the Patani province. What little I have been able to place on record results almost entirely from my visit in January 1974. It was not considered safe to remain long enough to carry out more than an unfortunately ineffective trial excavation, intended to provide ceramic evidence as to the date of the city site. There were three concentric enclosures. The large outer one, some 1200 metres square, entirely occupied by padi land, had a low rampart but no moat. It appeared to have been an extension of the

[1] Stewart Wavell, *The Naga King's Daughter*, London, 1964.
[2] H. G. Quaritch Wales, "Langkasuka and Tāmbraliṅga; Some Archaeological Notes", *JMBRAS*, Vol. XLVII, pt. 1, 1974, pp. 15–40, pls. 1–8.

city rather than part of the original defences. The innermost enclosure, measuring only about 400 metres square, had a low rampart and distinguishable external moat, which was closely surrounded by a second similar line of defences. Evidently these were all that remained of the city walls, with their double gates, towers and pavilions of which the *Liang-shu* speaks so enthusiastically. At the time of our visit conditions were scarcely conducive to the reflection that the gap through which we entered was probably the gate through which, according to this Chinese source, the king went forth riding on an elephant. "He is accompanied by banners, fly-whisks, flags and drums and he is shaded with a white parasol. The soldiers of his guard are well-appointed."

The site was regularly oriented and, just within the south rampart of the inner enclosure there was a hamlet of padi farmers, with adjoining small gardens. In one of these, not far from a mound of broken bricks, it was decided to dig a trial trench. This unfortunately proved sterile, but for one or two rough sherds, not necessarily ancient. There was no certainty that there had been early habitation at this particular spot. The greater part of the enclosure was overgrown, and there was no time to clear it and look for a more promising site. So the undertaking had to be abandoned. It could only be said that there were no Chinese sherds lying about, and the villagers were not aware of any. However this circumstance, together with the rather rounded corners of the ramparts, predisposed me to think that the site might be relatively ancient.

I had already been shown an extensive area south of the old city where it was said that numerous finds had been made by unofficial diggers over the years. Signs of such

digging were indeed everywhere to be seen, often with the remains of brick mounds, among gardens which were to a large extent overgrown. It would appear that this had been a district of monasteries, such as we often find in the proximity of Buddhist cities. In this case their being situated on the side of the city away from the river would seem to have offered a peaceful location free from the bustle of commercial traffic. Such finds as were now available for inspection consisted of those that were being safeguarded by the local education officer in his house at Yarang, prior to their being transferred to the museum at Songkhla, as well as a few objects preserved in a Patani *wat*.

The former consisted of fragmentary terracottas which are really the most important because their fragile nature, and relatively frequent occurrence, give assurance that they were made locally. Besides they bear the stamp of a Buddhist civilization obviously similar to, and contemporary with, that of early Dvāravatī. A terracotta votive *stūpa*, height about 20 inches, and lacking the summit, closely resembles the Dvāravatī type (Pl. 5A); but I have not seen in Dvāravatī examples the decoration with short pilasters between strongly moulded encircling lines. The fragment of another specimen showed decoration with a double band of incised rectangles, reminding me of the design found on the façade (first state) of the temple of P'ra Pat'on, Nak'on Pathom. I was also shown a photograph of several similar fragmentary examples which bore out the frequent occurrence of such objects in the vicinity. Most significant, however, from the point of view of dating, was a terracotta *stūpa* finial, height about 15 inches, which I photographed (Pl. 5B). It was made up of several interlocking segments, each having a flat

parasol disc, and thus resembling the Gupta style of *stūpa* finial. The large stone Dvāravatī example, exhibited in the courtyard of the Bangkok Museum, bears an inscription of the sixth century A.D. Nearer at hand, it might be compared with the superimposed umbrellas represented as crowning a *stūpa* on Colonel Low's Province Wellesley inscription of the fifth century.

The impression given by these terracottas of the former existence of early Buddhist monasteries on the south side of Langkasuka city, is well supported by the objects from the site now in the Patani *wat*. Perhaps the most striking is a small stone *dharmacakra*, 5½ inches high, carved in the round with eight spokes, and represented as mounted, by means of a rectangular connecting block, on the round capital of a pillar (Pl. 6A). Though admittedly a miniature, it is of a class of object that in central Siam would be considered absolutely indicative of the Dvāravatī civilization. The spokes being in the round would be regarded as an early feature if found in a Dvāravatī wheel; unfortunately the object is so small that the sculptor has not attempted any carved decoration, which would have been of value in dating it. Then there is a well-proportioned Buddha image, of greenish stone, height two feet, the Buddha represented as standing on a lotus base (Pl. 6B). It has what in central Siam would be considered the hallmark of the Dvāravatī style: both arms extended forward with hands in the *vitarka mudrā*. It seems to me that the facial features show slight differences from the Dvāravatī style. I was told that a smaller bronze Buddha, also regarded as of Dvāravatī style, had unfortunately been stolen.

Further, there was a slab of stone (height about one foot), carved with a bas-relief showing a meditating

Buddha seated beneath a Bo tree and attended by the Bodhisattvas Maitreya and Avalokitésvara. In the Mahāyāna these Bodhisattvas replace the Brahmā and Indra found in Hīnayānist representations. The small *dhyāni* Buddha in the headdress of the figure on the Buddha's right identifies this figure as Avalokitésvara. The relief can thus be dated as of the eighth or ninth century, and betokens some Mahāyānist influence from Śrīvijaya, in the same way as at that time the predominantly Hīnayānist kingdom of Dvāravatī also came under some degree of similar influence. This is the only object known to me from Yarang that exhibits this influence, which in view of the Śrīvijayan expansion over the Peninsula in the eighth century would be expected here even more than in Dvāravatī. I was given to understand that not one single example of a bronze Bodhisattva of Śrīvijayan style, such as are relatively common at such known Śrīvijayan sites as Ch'aiya and Satingphra, has ever come to light; nor are any Sung ceramics known from the city site. At the same time one could not go so far as to deny the possibility of finding Śrīvijayan style objects in the Patani district. It became part of the Śrīvijayan dominions, and Śrīvijayan votive tablets and murals have been found in Yala caves.[3]

Already removed to the Songkhla Museum at the time

[3] It is interesting to note that Dr A. Lamb (*JMBRAS*, Vol. XXXVII, pt. 2, 1964, pp. 57 f. and pl. 7) illustrates two votive tablets in the Raffles Museum, Singapore, probably coming from Yala, which are of a style what in Bangkok would be thought of as Dvāravatī rather than Śrīvijayan. The larger one shows the Buddha seated beneath a *nāga* and flanked by, it would seem, Brahmā and Indra, having late Gupta hair style. Lamb recognized that this would upset his earlier speculation (*FMJ*, Vol. X, 1961, p. 87) that evidence was unlikely to be found of early Indianization much south of Nak'on — for which of course we now have abundant data. With regard to the apparently late Śrīvijayan style murals in a cave near Yala, see Silpa Birasri, *The Origin and Evolution of Thai Murals*, Bangok, 1959.

of my visit were two large stone objects coming from the same area as the other finds. They each have a little more to tell us about the probable character of some of the religious establishments formerly existing there. The first is a door sill, measuring 3 ft. 11 in. across, with a square mortise for a jamb at each end and, at a slightly lower level, a round mortise on which the posts of the doors rotated. From this we know that in addition to the *stūpas*, which may account very largely for the visible remains at the site, there was at least one structural building; but we cannot be sure whether this building had a Buddhist or Hindu association.

I make the above reservation in view of the nature of the other large stone object now in the Museum. Of greater stylistic interest, this is a highly polished granite *liṅga*, height 20 inches. As O'Connor has pointed out,[4] basing himself on the comparative studies of L. Malleret,[5] even with conventional type *liṅgas* such as is this one, relative antiquity can be judged by the degree of realism shown, and the extent of the disproportion between the three sections into which the *liṅga* is divided. In this example the upper section shows pronouncedly oval swelling and raised marking of the contours of glans and frenum, while the disparity of the three sections is particularly emphasized by the shortness of the octagonal section. So sixth or seventh century is its probable date. The *snānadroṇī* (*yoni*) on which this *liṅga* stood had not yet been removed from the site. The presence of this *liṅga* is not out of keeping with the supposed predominantly Hīnayāna religion of Langkasuka. I do not think it is to

[4] *Hindu Gods of Peninsular Siam*, p. 23.
[5] *Archéologie du Delta du Mekong*, Vol. 1, pp. 377–88.

be regarded as evidence that the Śaivism which, coming from Pallava sources, so strongly influence Kaṭāha in the seventh century, made an impression also on Langkasuka. At the Dvāravatī sites of U T'ong and Dong Śī Mahā P'ot evidence exists, in the presence of *liṅgas*, of a subsidiary Śaivite facies; but here again it is noteworthy that this Yarang example seems to differ considerably from any known from Dvāravatī sites.

On the evidence of the finds at present available, one must come to the conclusion that they are entirely homogeneous, dating from between the late sixth and early ninth centuries. Such evidence virtually did away with the need of a trial trench in the city, that is to say for dating the site, especially in view of such confirmatory features as the rounded corners of the ramparts and the absence of Śrīvijayan bronzes. Only the bas-relief exhibited Śrīvijayan Mahāyānist influence, which indeed by this date could also be found in Dvāravatī. That this mainly Hīnayānist art, formed to a great extent under the aegis of Fu-nan, would bear a strong resemblance to that of Dvāravatī is only natural; but it is to be regarded as a parallel, deriving equally from Indian influences, in which variation in detail is to be expected.

This proposed dating of the Yarang site fits in with the Chinese textual evidence as summarized by Wheatley.[6] Though possibly of very early foundation as an independent city-state, it was long under Fu-nan suzerainty, emerging as the sovereign kingdom of Langkasuka in the second half of the sixth century. It must have taken advantage of the dissolution of Fu-nan in the same way as did Dvāravatī. In the sixth century it already sent four

[6] *The Golden Khersonese*, p. 264.

embassies to China, and during the seventh and eighth centuries it remained an important entity. Langkasuka was well known to Buddhist monks who no doubt often made their way overland to Kaṭāha when that kingdom was enjoying what has been called its "early Buddhist phase". Probably it was fame gained at this time, and its close relations with Kedah, that obtained for Langkasuka a lasting place in Malay folk mythology. By the ninth century the site may well have been deserted, for Lang-ya-hsiu has no mention in T'ang histories. I doubt if the latter-day port of Patani was its adequate replacement in Śrīvijayan times — a question to which we shall revert in Chapter VI.

We now turn to Kaṭāha (Kaḍāram), the present-day Kedah, which was known to the early Chinese as Chieh-ch'a. It was the port at which pilgrims making the journey to India by the all sea route could await the favourable monsoon, as did I-Ching in the seventh century. There is little doubt that some, after landing at Langkasuka, would have preferred to make their way overland to Chieh-ch'a. We have already seen that there is adequate evidence to show that this region of Kedah was the recipient of early Buddhist influences stemming from Vengi and bringing first the Amarāvatī and then the Gupta and late Gupta sculptural styles. As the Pallavas rose to power at their capital of Kanci, the Indian influences tended to come from this region of southern India. Naturally the sea route south of the Nicobars, arriving at Kedah, rather than the one north of these islands in the direction of Takuapa, commended itself to the South Indian navigators. As we have seen, while an element of seventh-century Pallava influence is still recognized in the Groups B and C of Tāmbraliṅga Viṣṇus, this is now held

to be less important and less basic than an older Gupta element in them. Now in the territory south of Tambrāliṅga it can certainly be said that this strong Vaiṣṇava strain is not impressive; indeed in Kedah not only has no whole statue of any Vaiṣṇava deity been discovered but, it may be added, not one tiny portion that could be attributed to any such deity sculpture has to my knowledge been found.

On the other hand, that Pallava influence was strongly felt in Kedah would be undeniable, even if we only had evidence of the early inscriptions. These are without exception written in Pallava *grantha* script, as also are the early inscriptions of West Java and Borneo. The earlier Pallava kings were Buddhist, and so their influence would not differ much from what had already reached Kaṭāha from Vengi. So I am inclined to think that the remains of Buddhist *stūpas* excavated at Kedah sites 1 and 2, also in Province Wellesley, even if no earlier than the seventh century, may be attributed to a time when there was still some Pallava Buddhist influence. However, by the seventh century, Pallava cultural influence had become predominantly Hindu, and of mainly Śaiva complexion, so that by the eighth century Chieh-ch'a was looked upon with less favour by the Chinese pilgrims. From what we know of Langkasuka, on the contrary, certainly not enough to form any firm conclusion, that state would seem to have remained preponderantly Buddhist, resisting the intensive Hinduism that had taken hold in Kedah. This might have been at least a contributory cause of the decline of the Kedah–Patani overland route, and of the fortunes of Langkasuka. At the same time the South Indians in Kedah may have been finding that they could co-operate with the Śrīvijayans who we know from

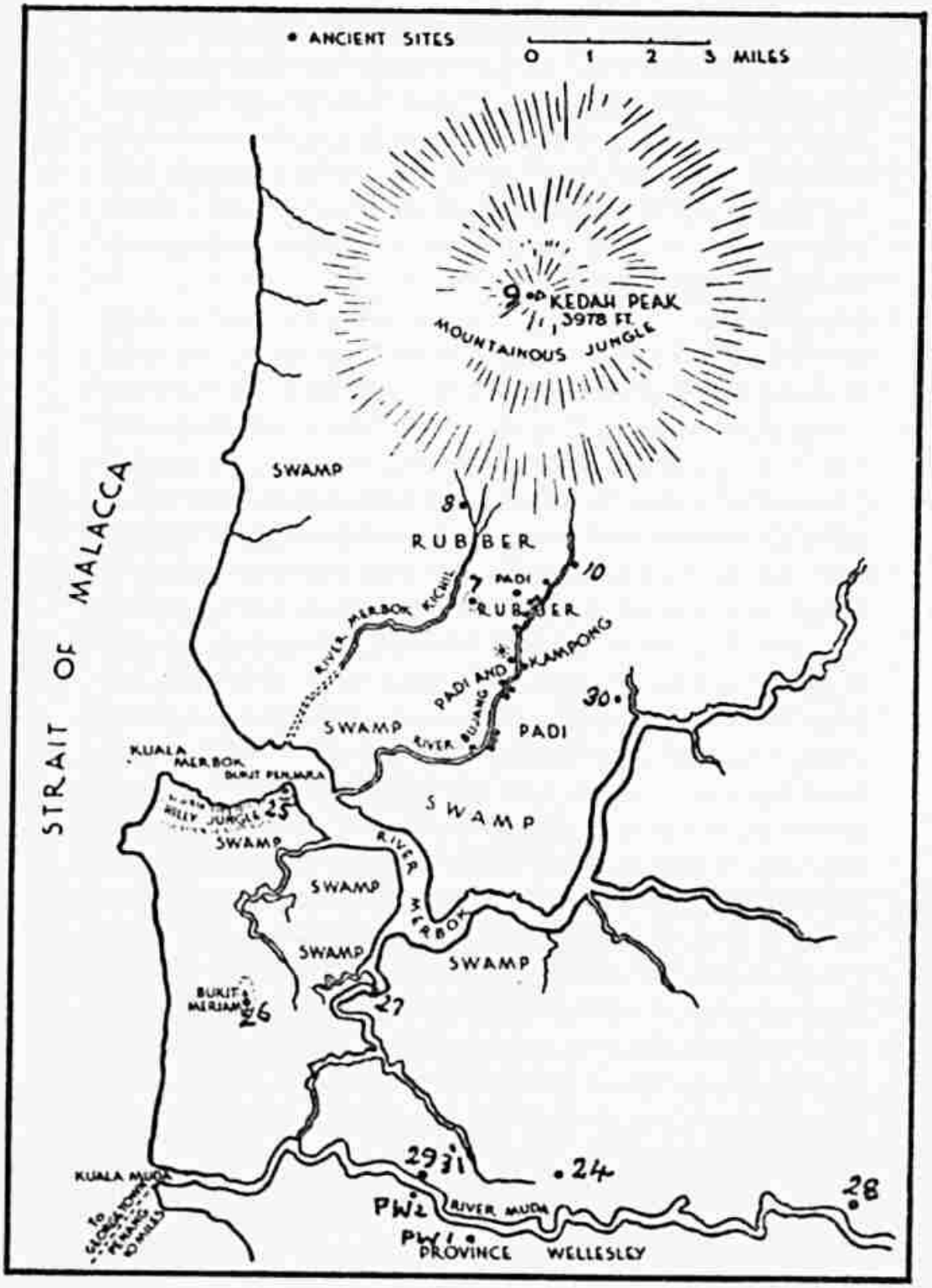


Fig. 3. Part of Kedah, showing positions of the ancient sites (see also Fig. 4)

I-Ching had gained a foothold in Kedah by the end of the seventh century.[7]

To provide direct proof from the Kedah excavations that the Peninsula was not omitted by the bearers of Pallava cultural influences is certainly less of an onus now that proof of the Peninsula having formed a relay for early Indianization is as well established as we have seen to be the case. However it would be surprising if the considerable excavations that have been carried out in Kedah had revealed no traces of such Pallava influences, at a time when Pallava overseas enterprise is known to have been at its height. Such a hiatus would indeed be inexplicable. But in my interpretation of the results obtained in these excavations there is no such hiatus. I have always attributed my sites 4, 5, and 6, on the right bank of the Sungai Bujang, Merbok estuary, to Pallava settlement, or at least to the work of craftsmen strongly imbued with Pallava concepts.[8] The distance between sites 4 and 6 is over three-quarters of a mile, thus indicating the considerable size of the settlement. Site 6, though sufficiently recognizable as of the same type as the others, had been so largely destroyed by the river's change of course at this point, that it will be sufficient to mention its existence. All three sites originally had *vimāna* opening to the east, as is usual in South Indian *liṅga* shrines.

In the case of site 4 the *vimāna*, or sanctuary tower, was situated almost in the middle of a regularly oriented rectangular enclosure, the lower courses of the enclosing wall of river boulders being still extant. The sanctuary itself had been much despoiled for estate road building,

[7] O. W. Wolters, *Indonesian Commerce*, p. 238.
[8] H. G. Quaritch Wales, "Arch. Researches", pp. 11–17, pls. 10–23.

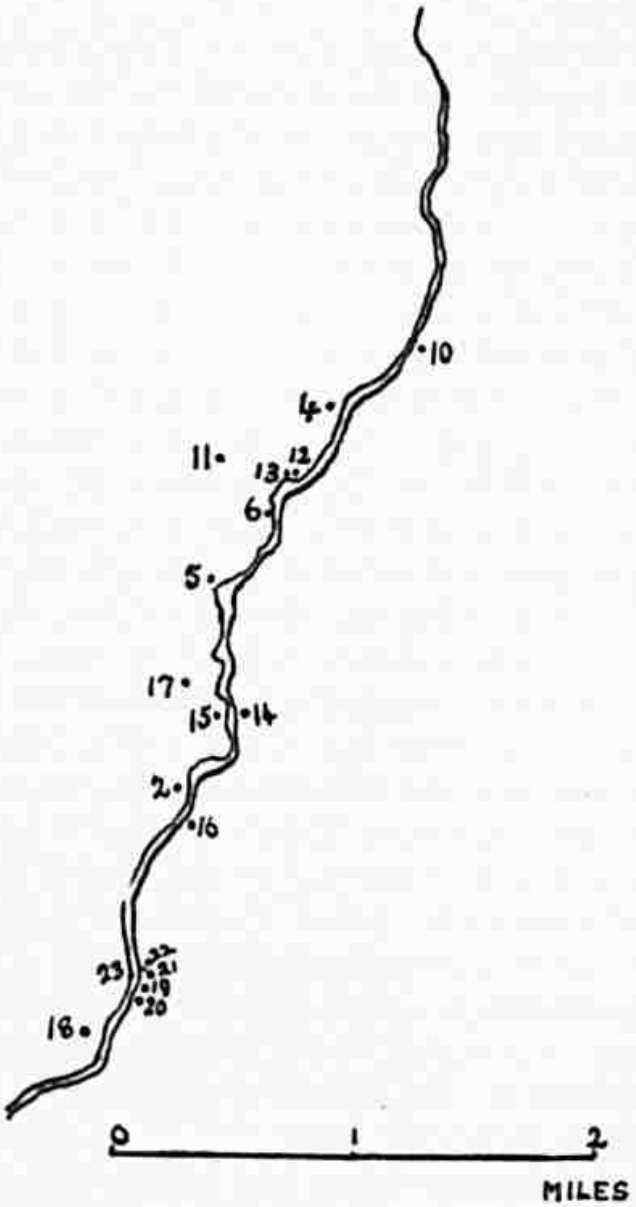


Fig. 4. Part of the River Bujang, Kedah, showing positions of ancient sites

but excavation revealed its basic character. Measuring externally about fourteen feet square, it stood on a solid river-boulder foundation of two courses. Of the plinth and lower courses of the walls of the *vimāna*, built of massive laterite blocks, only part remained standing. A curious point of construction was that a few bricks were laid at each corner beneath the plinth on the stone foundation. Traces of plain pilasters were visible on the comparatively well preserved south and west sides (Pl. 7A). At the entrance on the east face there was a door sill of two well-dressed granite slabs, with rectangular mortises for jambs. The shrine had at some time been pillaged, so that the *snānadroṇī* was found overturned and the *somasutra* (drain) destroyed.[9] On an eastward extension of the boulder basement there had probably been a wooden *maṇḍapam*, supported on timber pillars. On this and some other points a little further light was shed by the excavation of site 5, which I discovered when exploring along the river bank.

The *vimāna* of site 5 stood in a similar enclosure of which only traces of the boulder wall were found. The plinth of the sanctuary rested on a foundation of boulders with a central core of laterite rubble. Projecting from the eastern face of the plinth was a very plain laterite *maṇḍapam* platform, without stone foundation. A small portion only remained of a brick path leading down the centre of the *maṇḍapam* platform to the *vimāna* entrance (Fig. 5). The square, spouted *snānadroṇī* had been displaced, but piercing the north wall a section of the *somasutra* was found. Four small stone socles (pillar bases)

[9] The *snānadroṇī* was found by I. H. N. Evans in his tentative excavation of this site, and is illustrated in his *Ethnology and Archaeology of the Malay Peninsula*, Cambridge, 1927, pl. xxvi.

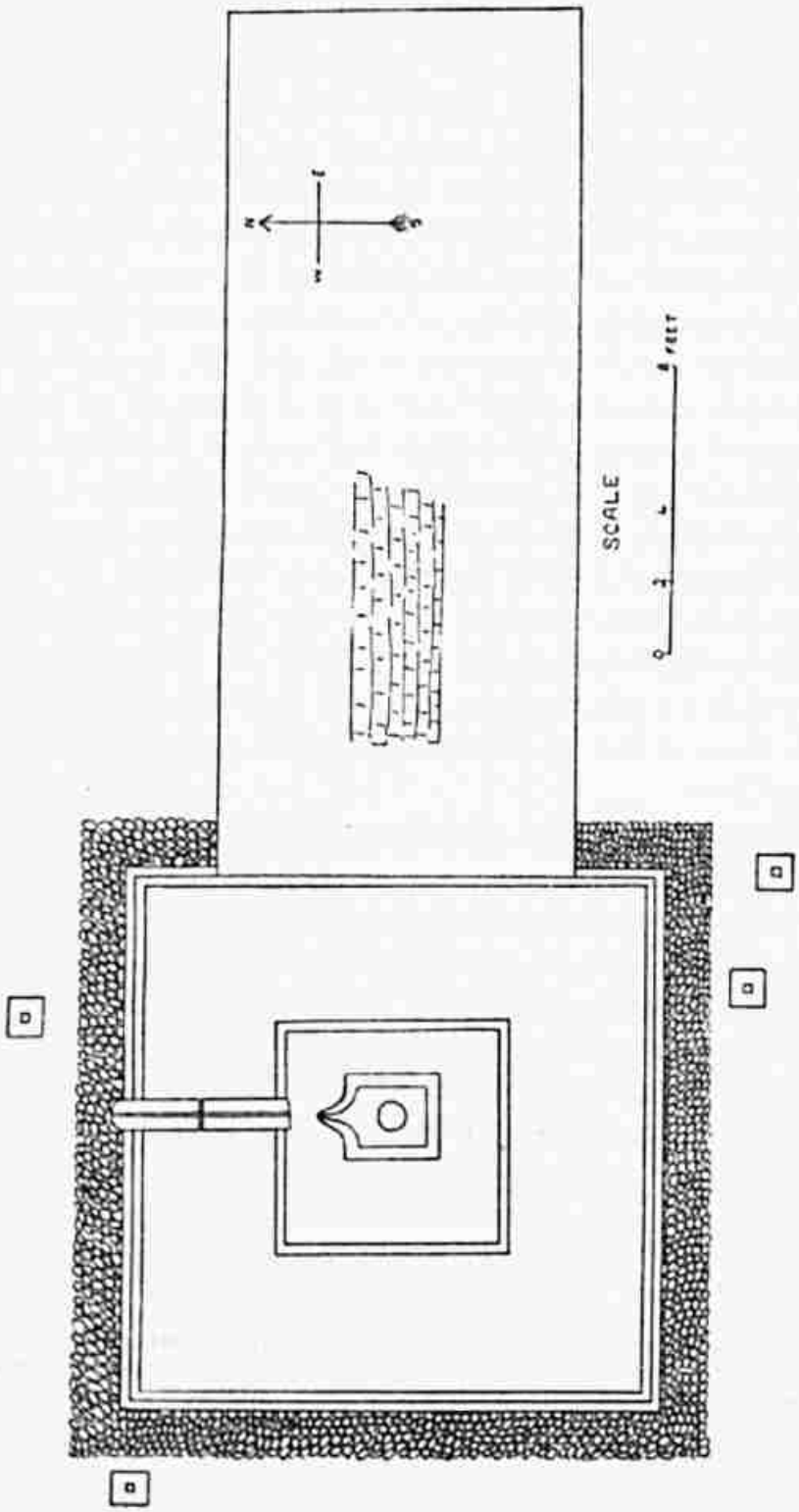


Fig. 5. Plan of Kedah, Site 5

with square mortises were found outside the sanctuary. Their presence, and the scanty remains of laterite blocks in a temple not known to have been exploited for road material, suggest that the superstructure of the *vimāna* itself was of wood. The same could apply, despite its apparently massive construction, to the sanctuary of site 4, since if stone socles had been discovered by the villagers they would certainly have removed them.

There is nothing in the apparently mixed materials of construction of these Kaṭāha temples, employing timber, bricks, laterite and river boulders, that would ill accord with what we know of Pallava temple construction. According to an early seventh-century inscription of Mahendravarman I, the Pallava structural temples were of "brick, timber, metal (stone) and mortar". There was nothing in the least "cyclopean" about them, for it is well known that the so-called *rathas* of Mahābālipuram (Seven Pagodas), with their simulated rafters, barge-boards etc., are rock-cut models of structural temples mainly built of timber. Furthermore there is nothing particularly Indonesian about the use of pillar-stones; we find them at a Dvāravatī site at Dong Śī Mahā P'ot, eastern Siam. Some of the Pallava *rathas* which lack rock-cut pillared porches have square socket holes cut in the terrace floor in front of the shrine to take wooden pillars.[10] This indicates that had the ground not provided a solid stone surface, stone socles would have been used.

The architectural information provided by these Kedah basements certainly gives little enough to go on. The plain plinth and pilasters of site 4 are fairly closely

[10] A. H. Longhurst, *Pallava Architecture*, pt. 1 (*MASI*, no. 17), Simla, 1924, p. 33.

paralleled in Sahadeva's *ratha*;[11] but most of the *rathas* have more complex mouldings. Then I am by no means inclined to dismiss the evidentual value of the roof of the miniature bronze shrine or incense-burner found in the Bujang river a short distance below site 4, despite the criticisms of Lamb[12] and Nilakanta Sastri.[13] This immediate section of the river bank was not occupied by later temple constructions, and it seems to me therefore that this object has a good claim to association with site 4. To dismiss it as valueless might be to make the same mistake as did those who saw the early images in the same light.

Like the Bhima and Gaṇeśa *rathas* of Mahābālipuram, the Kedah miniature has a waggon-roof with a horse-shoe shaped gable window at each end of it (Pl. 7B). Simplifications such as are to be expected in a miniature are the lack of dormer windows and the presence of only one "flower-pot" on the roof. The most striking difference is certainly the presence of a cross-legged ascetic at each corner of the roof, never found on the roofs of the *rathas*, but possibly a feature of contemporary timber constructions. I say this in view of the fact that in the later structural Pallava temples a *nandi* is found at each of the four corners of the roof; and for this Śaiva symbol a *rishi* is an obvious alternative. Moreover in some later Indian temples, such as the Vijayanagar style temple of Kumbakonam, this substitution can actually be seen.[14] As the sanctuaries at Kedah sites 4–6 had a square, not rectangular, base, the roof, that is to say the terminal stage

[11] Ibid., pt. II, pl. XI.
[12] *Chandi Bukit Batu Pahat*, Singapore, 1960, p. 9.
[13] *JMBRAS*, Vol. XXII, pt. 4, 1949, p. 18.
[14] M. Hurlimann, *India*, London, 1967, pl. 40.

of the roof structure, would not have had a waggon-roof shape as in the miniature. It would have had the dome-like form that we see in those *rathas* which have square bases, such as Dharmarāja's Ratha.[15] This dome would probably have been of light material.

Apart from some fragments of Middle Eastern glass, which could have been brought by Arab traders any time from the seventh century, the small objects found in the excavation of these three sites have little bearing on the question of style and dating. The main *liṅgas* or statues, which it is presumed were in each shrine, have disappeared without trace. However a number of sculptural objects, in each case indicative of Śiva worship, have been found. It appears that a weathered bas-relief, especially if it happened to lie face downwards, had the best chance of being taken for a mere natural boulder by the converts to Islam carrying out the destruction of "all the idols which they were wont to worship, and the idols which had been handed down by the old men of former days".[16] Thus may well have escaped detection the granite boulder carved with what was evidently intended as a representation of Gaṇeśa, despite its lack of attributes, which I found a few yards south of the *vimāna* at site 4. If this be the correct identification of what may never have been intended as a serious cult image, it is of the early two-armed form, very simply and plainly engraved. The soles of the feet are represented as touching, an attitude characteristic of, but it would appear not exclusive to, Javanese

[15] A. H. Longhurst, op. cit., pl. xiv.
[16] *Kedah Annals*, translated from the Malay by Lieut.-Colonel James Low, reprinted Bangkok, 1908, p. 172.

Gaṇesaś.[17] Near the Gaṇeśa was found a river boulder which appeared to be a rough representation of a *liṅga*.

The fragment of the head of a granite Nandi discovered some years before our excavations by I. H. N. Evans in the north-east part of the enclosure of site 4 suggests, though it can do no more, the former existence of statuary of a superior quality. This is moreover borne out by a relief of Durga triumphing over Mahiṣasura, also found by Evans on the river bank a hundred yards from this site.[18] One may agree with Dr Sullivan that it invites comparison with a *dvārapāla* relief that he found near Kampong Batu Lintang on the Trus river which connects the Merbok with the Muda. Though this *dvārapāla* relief is so sadly weathered he speaks of "the subtlety and strength of modelling that is characteristic of Pallava style sculpture".[19] He compares it for pose and style with *dvārapālas* found in an eighth-century cave temple at Vizhinjam, Travancore, which Stella Kramrisch thought had "much in common with later Pallava work".[20] The resemblance is undeniably striking, but I should put the Bujang relief somewhat earlier than that from Batu Lintang.

[17] Examples of seated Gaṇeśa figures in India in which the right knee is certainly not raised as in the attitude of royal ease (*mahārājalila*) and the soles are apparently more or less together, include one found at Paharpur (*MASI*, no. 55, pl. xxxii (d)), and another illustrated by W. Crooke, *The Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, Vol. 1, London, 1896, plate facing page 110.

[18] I. H. N. Evans, op. cit., pl. xx.

[19] M. Sullivan, "Excavations in Kedah and Province Wellesley", *JMBRAS*, Vol. xxxi, pt. 1, 1958, p. 211 and pl. 18b.

[20] Stella Kramrisch, *Dravida and Kerala in the Art of Travancore*, Ascona, 1955, pl. 21.

CHAPTER V

ŚRĪVIJAYA AND RELIGION

FROM the last quarter of the eighth century A.D., for some three hundred years, the Malay Peninsula may be considered to have formed an undivided political whole. Culturally, however, it will not be surprising to find that the character of the various regions during this period is to a certain extent conditioned by their differing experience of Indianization during preceding centuries. The whole Peninsula, right up to its narrow neck at Kra, had now submitted to the rule of the great Sumatran empire of Śrīvijaya, which had in the seventh century developed from the commercially important state of Kan-t'o-li. As Wolters has shown, this early development was based partly on its favourable geographical situation as the "coast that faced China", partly on the seafaring qualities of its people.[1] Śrīvijaya was no less Indianized than the Peninsula. After having earlier been mainly Hīnayāna Buddhist it was, at the time it gained control over the Peninsula, experiencing the increasing influence of the Mahāyāna; and its capital at Palembang became a centre for the diffusion of this religion to the provinces and beyond.

To the greater part of that more rugged section of the Peninsula south of the Isthmian tract, this Śrīvijayan expansion meant little or nothing; it remained undeveloped, the habitat of non-Indianized peoples. But

[1] O. W. Wolters, op. cit., p. 227.

further north, this new Mahāyānist wave, largely fostered by the Śrīvijayans, came into contact with, and was to some extent modified by, the cultural situation as it had already taken shape along the Kedah–Patani and Takuapa–Bandon routes. Though a foothold in Kedah was a stepping-stone, occupation of Tāmbraliṅga, giving control of the main trans-peninsular route, was the main aim of Śrīvijayan expansion. It was this area that received and absorbed to the full the impact of the new Mahāyānist influences. So we should not be surprised if we find that it reflects more clearly than any other part of the Peninsula the fully fledged Mahāyānist culture of the Sumatran metropolis.

Before proceeding further it will be well to remind the reader of the relatively happy position in which the student of the Malay Peninsula finds himself today with regard to the history of Śrīvijaya, as compared to his predecessor of forty years ago. At that time George Cœdès, who had discovered Śrīvijaya in 1918, was still maintaining that the Śailendras, who we now appreciate were of Javanese origin, had always been a Śrīvijayan dynasty. Incidentally he then held, on the inadequate evidence of the *Kedah Annals*, that Langkasuka was Kedah. A history of Śrīvijaya had been written on this basis by one scholar, while others had been quick to attribute the great monuments of central Java to the Śailendras of Sumatra. In 1929 doubt on this interpretation was first thrown by W. Stutterheim, while five years later R. C. Majumdar correctly dissociated the two faces of the so-called Ligor inscription. This led to his rightly ruling out Sumatra, and feeling the need to choose between Java and the Malay Peninsula as the home of the earlier Śailendras. Mistakenly he decided on the latter. In

doing so he was certainly much influenced by the fact that certain Arab authors gave the impression that Kalah, on the Peninsula, was the seat of the Mahārāja, while the Cola inscriptions persistently gave Kaḍāram a certain priority of mention. Sufficient allowance had not been made for the fact that these observers from the west had unwittingly overstressed those parts of the Mahārāja's domains best known to them.

My acceptance in 1935, in connexion with my exploration of the main trans-peninsular route, of Majumdar's main conclusion, did not help matters, especially as such views were locally welcomed. I did, however, differ from Majumdar in making the point that Ch'aiya, later superseded by Nak'on Si Thammarat, was the capital of Śrīvijaya, whereas he had favoured Nak'on throughout. In what follows I shall endeavour to show that there is still an element of truth in this, to the more limited extent of Ch'aiya having been the earlier capital of Śrīvijaya's peninsular possessions.[2]

What had weighed most heavily with me in favouring Ch'aiya rather than Palembang as the Śrīvijayan capital was the wealth of Mahāyānist remains found at Ch'aiya as compared with the paucity at Palembang. I did not then, any more than I should now, accept the argument that an emergent trading nation of antiquity could afford to neglect the gods. But at that time I had had no experience of Kedah, which was to teach me how very thorough Malay converts to Islam could be in their destruction of pagan relics. If a cultural consideration thus led me astray,

[2] In view of Cœdès criticism of the remote situation of Ch'aiya as the possible capital of a thalassocracy, I later suggested as an alternative a city in the Perak valley, considered to be Kaḍāram. This idea was automatically negatived by Braddell's definitive identification of Kaḍāram (not Langkasuka) as Kedah (*JMBRAS*, Vol. XXIII, pt. 1, 1950, pp. 152 f.).

this certainly provides no condemnation of the cultural approach when correctly applied. This is immediately illustrated by the fact that it was a further cultural consideration that led me to publish in 1948 my realization that the characteristic Indo–Javanese artistic influence, so different from that of the Peninsula and Sumatra, would not have been introduced into Cambodia early in the ninth century by a power having its capital anywhere else than Java.[3]

So we now have the advantage of studying the history of the Peninsula during this period within a *generally* accepted framework which recognizes the Śailendras as a Javanese dynasty. They had become adherents of Mahāyāna Buddhism, which was intensifying its influence over the region in the eighth century, and for the time being they had displaced the Hindu dynasty of the house of Sanjaya. It was probably as the result of marrying into the Śrīvijayan royal family that a Śailendra became ruler of Śrīvijaya, and the connexion with Java was abandoned soon after A.D. 824.[4] Śailendras continued to occupy the Śrīvijayan throne, the empire extending over both Sumatra and the Peninsula. If it had not led some of us mistakenly to propose a peninsular location for the Śrīvijayan capital, this whole question of the origin of the Śailendras would have had little concern for peninsular cultural history. Śrīvijaya was always too intensively Indianized for its culture to be seriously modified by the Javanese origin of its most famous dynasty.

As we know from the seventh-century Śrīvijayan inscriptions, Mahāyāna Buddhism was then already

[3] *JRAS*, 1948, p. 31.
[4] J. G. de Casparis, *Prasasti Indonesia*, I, 1950, p. 200.

attested in Sumatra, although Hīnayānism was still predominant. But the situation changed greatly in the following century and "there must have been much silent going over from Hīnayāna to Mahāyāna".[5] Now a consideration that has important bearing on our interpretation of eighth–tenth century Kedah temple remains is that, although the source of the Mahāyānism which influenced them was ultimately Bengal, we must recognize that at first it came wholly via South India. Kāñcī, the Pallava capital, had from early times been a centre of Buddhism, despite the prevailing Hinduism of later rulers. It may well have been Dharmapāla of Kāñcī, who had previously spent thirty years of study at Nālandā, who actually introduced the Mahāyanā to Suvarṇadvīpa in the seventh century. He was a member of the school of Dinnāga, the great Mahāyānist logician, who was himself the follower of the famous thinker Asaṅga who, with his brother Vasubhandhu founded the Yogācāra school in the fourth century or a little later. It does not seem to have been until early in the ninth century that Mahāyānist influence was greatly intensified by the establishment of direct contact with Nālandā and Bengal.

The temple remains dating from the eighth to tenth centuries A.D. that I discovered on the Sungai Bujang, Kedah, would appear from their architecture and religious context to be correctly interpreted in terms of a composite product. They were basically South Indian, but modified by the accession of a certain degree of ultimately Pāla influence. In some cases their remains were so ruined as to provide little architectural information, yet their excavation yielded valuable data as

[5] K. A. N. Sastri, *History of Śrivijaya*, p. 39.

to the presence of the Mahāyāna. Thus at site 10, situated apart from the Pallava Śiva temples, and furthest up the river, there was a ruined sanctuary situated within an enclosure. It was when digging beneath floor level inside the sanctuary that a gold and six silver discs were discovered, each about 1½ inches in diameter.[6] The silver discs were each inscribed in South Indian script with the name of a Bodhisattva, such as Sarvv-āpāya-jaha, one who has removed all evils, Amoghadarśi, infallible, Gandhahastī, musk elephant. Professor Bosch thought the inscriptions could have been the names of devotees who called themselves after these Bodhisattvas, and he dated them late ninth century. Site 14, situated on the same bank of the river, equally far from the Śiva temples, though very ruined, indicated in general the sort of architecture that appears to be most characteristic of this period: a laterite substructure with a few remaining stone socles indicating some kind of wood superstructure.[7] Most interesting, however, was the finding, one in each of two earthenware jars beneath the floor, of silver half and quarter dirhem coins of the Abbasid Caliph al-Mutawakil (A.D. 847–861), the half-dirhem bearing the

[6] H. G. Quaritch Wales, "Arch. Researches . . .", pp. 22–4, pls. 34–6. In a recent article (*JMBRAS*, Vol. XLVIII, i, 1975) F. E. Treloar and G. J. Fabris, suggest on the evidence of chemical analysis that the gold and silver discs from site 10 and the gold discs from site 8 are probably of the same period. This indeed had long before suggested itself in view of their similarity of size and appearance. What Treloar said in a previous article (*JMBRAS*, Vol. XLI, pt. 1, 1968) about the probable Sarawak origin of the ores for the site 8 discs is interesting, but I can see no reason why such imports, direct or indirect, to the Merbok estuary, should not have begun well before twelfth–thirteenth century Pengkalen Bujang. One could hardly wish for a site more securely dated than is site 10 by its foundation deposits, there being complete agreement on the part of epigraphists that ninth century is the latest date for them. Supporting evidence seems superfluous, but may be found in the absence of Sung type ceramics at both site 10 and site 8.

[7] "Arch. Researches . . .", pp. 31–3, pls. 49, 50.

quite legible date of 234 A.H. = A.D. 848.[8] Apart from thus throwing light on Kedah's trading relations with the Arabs, to which we shall return later, as foundation deposits these coins leave no doubt as to a late ninth-century dating of this building.

Site 11, situated about midway between sites 10 and 14, but some distance from the right bank of the river, may have been an audience hall or council chamber rather than a temple.[9] However its construction in the form of two halls, each of which made use of stone socles for the support of the vanished superstructure, gives the impression that it belongs to the same class as do the other two sites above mentioned. If the fragments of a greenish glazed ware found at the old habitation level are correctly identified as late T'ang, this would confirm a similar dating. Again a construction of comparable type was found at site 12. Here fragments of two Chinese mirrors, considered to be of T'ang style, would also tend to support a ninth-century dating, and bear witness to trade with China of the period. At the same time there was found an iron dagger with bronze hilt, of characteristically South Indian style.[10]

It is from the remains at sites 15 and 16 that we begin to gain a better idea of the sort of structure usual to the temples of this period. At site 16 enough had survived of the lower laterite courses of a square sanctuary to show that it differed from what I shall describe below in the case of site 15 only in being somewhat smaller and preserving a laterite floor. The stone socles it had probably once possessed had all disappeared. But the

[8] Ibid., pl. 51.
[9] Ibid., pp. 24 ff., pls. 37, 38.
[10] Ibid., pp. 26 f., pls. 39–43.

similarity was sufficient to suggest that any information supplied by the associated objects, particularly a number of bronze fragments found at floor level, throw light on the purpose and dating of both buildings. These bronze objects included a bell, temple lamps, and the fragments of an aureole which can be paralleled in images of about the ninth century. In a brick lined chamber beside the doorway I found an intact bronze casket containing foundation deposits in the form of gold and silver models of animals, Indian style weapons and other implements. These included a miniature *damaru* drum, an instrument of purely South Indian type.[11]

Site 15 was first seen as a low mound in kampong rubber about sixty yards from the right bank of the Bujang.[12] On excavation there were found the fairly well preserved moulded laterite lower courses of a square sanctuary, surrounded by the lower courses of a plainer but otherwise similar concentric outer laterite structure (Pl. 8 and Fig. 6). The laterite was laid directly on the contemporary ground level without stone foundation, but small stones were scattered between the two enclosures. Pillar stones, most of them still *in situ*, stood within the inner edge of the inner sanctuary, and also on the laterite of the outer structure. So the superstructures must have been supported on timber pillars. The building opened towards the east, the approach to the outer entrance being bordered by low laterite balustrades. At the right side of the entrance to the inner shrine a brick-lined cavity in the laterite indicated where there had originally been ensconced a foundation deposit receptacle

[11] Ibid., pp. 54–6, pls. 57–64.
[12] Ibid., pp. 53 f., pls. 53–5.

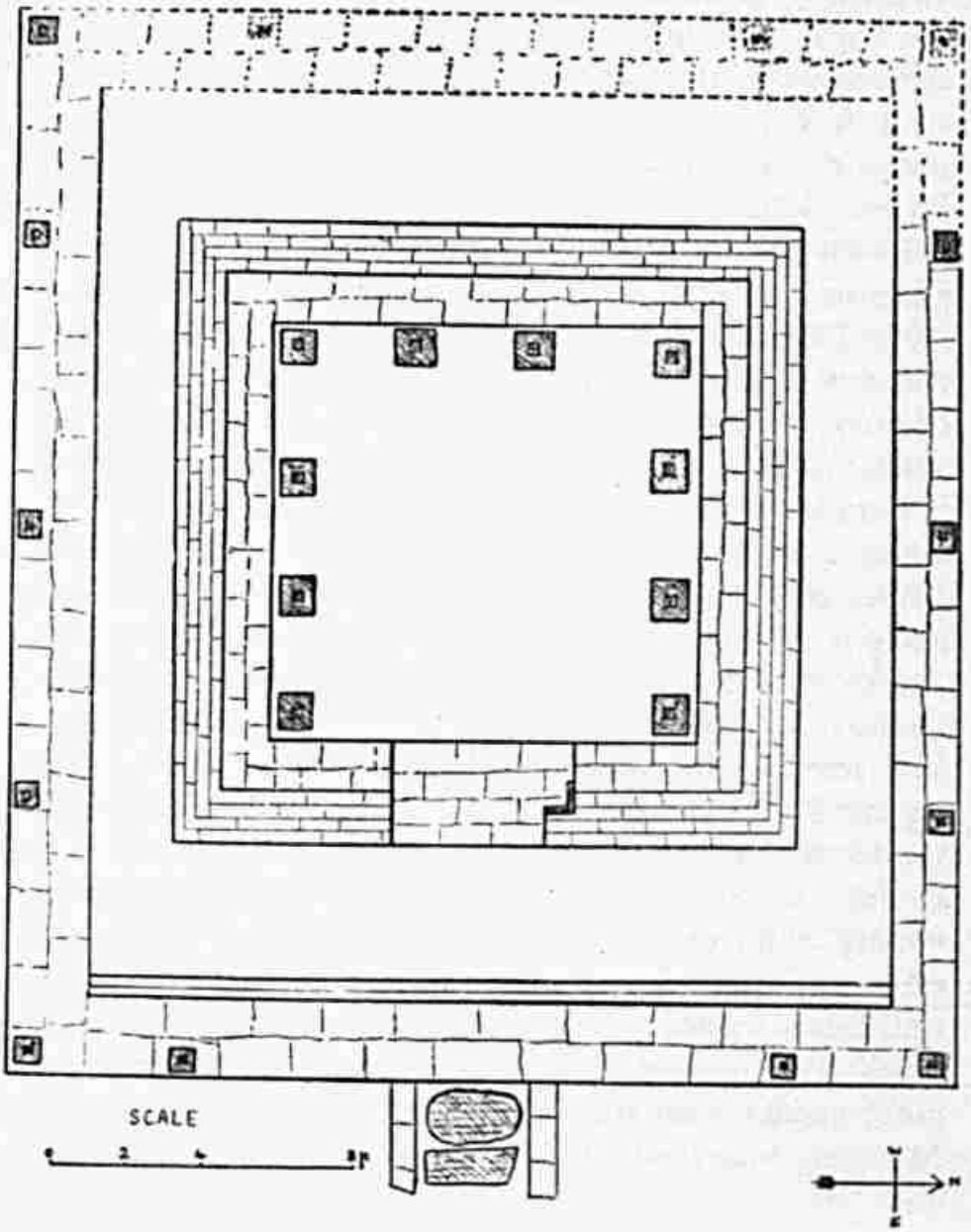


Fig. 6. Plan of Kedah, Site 15

in the same way as had been found at site 16. The most interesting of the associated finds were the fragments of the upper portion of an earthenware jar found inside the sanctuary. Its decoration recalled certain pottery reliquaries from the Nilgiri Hills preserved in the Madras Museum, and also earthenware vessels excavated at Rajgir (Bihar).[13]

In 1948[14] I called attention to the similarity of the plans of sites 15 and 16 to that of the Sumatran temple of Biara Sitopajan, Padang Lawas. Although it appears that this temple does not date from earlier than the twelfth century it could well perpetuate a considerably earlier style. On grounds of analogy with the Sumatran temple, it would appear likely that at sites 15 and 16 there had been a *maṇḍapam* separated from the sanctuary, which was not suspected at the time of my excavations. Such a feature, exceptional for Kedah sites, was later found by Lamb at site 31.[15] At site 13, where I excavated the base of a brick sanctuary, I also uncovered the floor of a structure (13A) a few feet to the south-east of it. This I said in my report I should have taken to be the *maṇḍapam* had it been attached to the sanctuary. I think we can now take it that it was in fact the *maṇḍapam* (of the detached variety).[16] Incidentally, it was beneath the brick sanctuary of site 13 that I found four earthenware jars containing foundation deposits, including the largest series of glass beads found at any Kedah site. These and beads from other Kedah sites were afterwards placed in the Raffles Museum, Singapore. In this work I make no more than

[13] Ibid., pl. 56.
[14] *JRAS*, 1948, p. 10, n. 9.
[15] A. Lamb, "Further Research at Matang Pasir", *FMJ*, Vol. VI, 1961, pp. 10–17.
[16] "Arch. Researches . . .", pp. 28–31, pls. 44–7 and fig. 9.

passing reference to beads because I consider them in the present state of knowledge as of no value for dating, for reasons I have given elsewhere.[17]

The most remarkable of the class of sites we are now considering, indeed the most remarkable of all Malayan temple sites, is the Bukit Batu Pahat temple (site 8). It is not situated on the Bujang, but high up the more westerly Batu Pahat or Merbok Kichil River, on a low spur of Kedah Peak (Frontispiece and Pl. 9). Here I carried out considerable excavation.[18] But being rather remotely situated this site could not receive the same degree of attention from me as did most of the other Kedah sites, although I was never in doubt, from its careful stone construction, as to its exceptional importance. This inadequacy of treatment was later repaired by Dr A. Lamb who undertook its complete excavation, and furthermore, with the help of a French expert, restored the basement and plinth. Before turning to his results I should like to mention one or two conclusions which I already drew from my excavation and which are quite in accord with conclusions later drawn by Lamb. In the first place I found that the building had evidently fallen towards the north, for there was found a large mass of fallen masonry. I thought that the "upper structure was mainly, if not entirely, built of stone, though the use of timber pillars and struts as supports strongly suggests that the builders were by no means accustomed to the use of a non-perishable medium". Among the debris that had fallen to the north I found "a number of worked granite blocks having rather severe mouldings which had

[17] *Dvāravatī*, pp. 114 f.
[18] "Arch. Researches . . .", pp. 18–21, pls. 25–33.

evidently ornamented the superstructure". I thought that the large curvilinear block of stone, that had been removed by the local landowner to his garden, was the finial of the sanctuary. Stone segments of the *somasutra* were found by me outside the temple.

Dr Lamb, following his complete excavation, was able to give a fuller and better documented description, for the details of which the reader may refer to his publication.[19] His full elucidation of the plan enabled him to compare it with the plan of Biara Sitopajan, Padang Lawas, just as I had already done with sites 15 and 16. It was now recognized as belonging to the approximately ninth-century group of temples. In his account, Lamb was able to throw light on a number of details of construction, and on the probable function of several stones that had baffled me: in particular he made comprehensible the rather complicated *somasutra* system. Here it will be important to concern ourselves only with two major aspects of his conclusions: his tentative reconstruction of the superstructure of the temple, and his interpretation of the religious meaning of the foundation deposits.

The use of small granite blocks implies that the builders had formerly been used to bricks. A square-based *vimāna*, of which only the plinth remains, had stood on a basement of rubble, paved and faced with granite blocks forming several mouldings. From this steps led down to an extensive *maṇḍapam* platform. The distribution of stone socles indicates that not only had the *maṇḍapam* a roof supported by wooden pillars, but that the sanctuary was also surrounded by a roofed verandah. A minor

[19] A. Lamb, *Chandi Bukit Batu Pabat*, Singapore, 1960. Also "Additional Notes" in *FMJ*, VI, 1961, pp. 1–9.

difference from site 15 was that here the sanctuary pillar bases stood outside the plinth, and each corner socle was flanked by two smaller socles with mortises so cut as to have supported each a diagonal pillar or strut. There had also been a large mortised socle on the basement, beside the centre of each face of the plinth, on which had evidently stood a pillar designed to receive the upper ends of the two struts concerned.

Now I agree with the main features of Lamb's tentative reconstruction of the sanctuary as a *vimāna* with tiered roof, built largely of stone but relying in part on timber pillar supports, and having a covered verandah around it. What I do not agree with is his strained attempts to explain it in terms of Javanese or Cham analogies. To begin with the large curvilinear stone which Lamb agreed was probably the temple's finial. It seems to me that it would have been well if he had stopped at his first suggestion that it was best compared "to a square plan *śikhara* of Orissan type".[20] It obviously corresponds to the simplified *śikhara* that we may see on many a Pagán (Burma) temple, reflecting the vanished Pāla architecture of Bengal. The corner pieces which probably decorated the first tier of the roof structure can equally find parallels in contemporary Orissan temples. No doubt one should distinguish between a surrounding verandah and a circumambulatory passage round the cella within an Indian temple. Both are found at the sixth-century early Calukyan Durga temple, Aihole, but only the passage frequently persisted in later temples. Nevertheless a feature so well adapted to the Indian climate as the verandah must have been preserved in the perishable

[20] Ibid., p. 45.

architecture, and it reappears in the sixteenth-century Chandranatheśvara and Narāyana stone temples at Bhatkal.[21] So I can see no reason to ascribe the verandah at the Kedah site to other than Indian influence.

Since Lamb's suggested reconstruction of the superstructure of the Bukit Batu Pahat temple was rightly put forward as only tentative, this has presented a standing invitation for others to offer an alternative. So far this seems to have drawn only one response, which in my opinion is not to be preferred. According to the interpretation of B. A. V. Peacock we have to do with a building that was purely of timber or light construction above the stone plinth.[22] There was, of course, always a light architecture existing side by side with non-perishable constructions in Indian and Indianized cultures, as can be seen for example in the *phyathats* represented on Pagán temple reliefs. So it is hardly necessary to offer an anachronistic comparison to the Balinese *meru*. But the weakest feature of Peacock's argument is his evident need to treat as irrelevant not only the large curvilinear stone, but also the carved stone pieces ascribed by Lamb to the decoration of the roof tiers. Furthermore the fallen masonry around the north corner, quite absent in sites 15 and 16, is a fact that cannot be lightly dismissed. Then again to give the existence of a mere rubble-filled basement as a reason why a stone tower could not have been built on such inadequate foundation is not realistic in the context of Greater India. The Chams built the temple of Thap-mam on an insufficiently hardened laterite basement, a material not previously used by them, with the

[21] H. Cousens, *Chalukyan Architecture*. pl. CLXVIII.
[22] B. A. V. Peacock. "Pillar base architecture in ancient Kedah", *JMBRAS*, Vol. XLVII, pt. 1, 1974, pp. 66–86.

result that it prematurely collapsed.[23] At site 8 we have seen that the builders were previously used to brick not stone construction. Nor would partial reliance on timber supports in a stone built temple necessarily seem incongruous to them. It is notorious that the Khmers committed what appear to us gross errors in this respect; but from such errors the Indians, at least in the Tamil country, were not exempt: this is evidenced by the Shore Temple at Mahābālipuram, where the stone ceiling of the cella was supported on timber joists.[24] Persisting reliance on part timber construction might be particularly expected where the South Indian tradition of mixed materials was deeply engrained. Finally we may regret Peacock's attempt to reintroduce an interpretation in terms of local ancestor worship, in view of the extent to which this has been discredited by the intensive study of the foundation deposits of site 8, as outlined below.

One characteristic of this Bukit Batu Pahat temple, as indeed of all Kedah temples, is the extreme lack of ornament, beyond a few plain mouldings. Since a distinctive ornamentation is the most characteristic feature of Cham and Javanese art, the way in which local genius most definitely manifests itself, and quite by the period with which we are here concerned, we should surely expect those who wish to speak in terms of such influences to point to some more definite proof than is provided by these undecorated stones. My own opinion is that affinity is rather with the severe and restrained mouldings and ornament of the considerably later Padang Lawas temples of north Sumatra. The art of this

[23] *ABIA*, 1934, p. 25.
[24] H. Marchal, *L'Architecture comparée dans l'Inde et l'Extrême-orient*, Paris, 1944, pp. 39, 114; A. H. Longhurst, op. cit., pt. III, p. 2.

great island is for the most part very different from that of Java. It is a composite product of succeeding waves of Indian influence to the exclusion of any expression of local genius. At the same time we must expect differences due to the relative strength of the different Indian ingredients.

Both with the architecture, and with the cult practised at the Bukit Batu Pahat and other related temples, the correct interpretation seems to lie in thinking in terms of a composite product. This was the result of the interaction of two waves of influence, the tendency of certain Pallava characteristics to survive a limited degree of Mahāyānist acculturation, which as we have seen was of Pāla origin but came via South India. The temple would then be basically South Indian — which led me at first to confuse site 8 with the earlier Pallava sites — but modified by the accession of a certain degree of ultimately Pāla influences. The composite character of the contemporary Mahāyānist sculpture, which I recognized many years ago, and which has been more recently recognized in the earlier Buddhist sculpture, I shall be referring to later in this chapter. The cult associated with site 8 was probably mainly Śaiva. In the sanctuary I had found the damaged trident of a bronze image, probably Śiva, as well as a portion of a bronze image base. Among the small objects found by Dr Lamb, among the foundation deposits, were various miniature Śaivite symbols such as *liṅgas*, bulls, and particularly female deities which suggest a Tantric complexion. These were accompanied by gold discs, each inscribed with a single character datable as of the eighth or ninth century. They call to mind the silver discs of exactly the same size, each inscribed with the name of a Bodhisattva, which I found at site 10. While Mahāyānist influence was probably general in the sites of this class, we have seen

that a miniature *damaru* drum at site 16 and a dagger hilt at site 12 were characteristically South Indian.

As to the supposed composite character of the architecture, the Pāla element being particularly suggested by certain stones of the superstructure at site 8, there is I think one significant point of difference between the sanctuary of this site and that of Biara Sitopajan which was not noticed either by Dr Lamb or, at first, by myself. This is the fact that from each of the three faces of the sanctuary-base of Biara Sitopajan (that is, other than the one having the porch and steps) the central third is set forward, thus giving a slight projection and hence an incipiently cruciform plan. This is in some degree characteristic of all the Padang Lawas temples, and indeed of all temples evincing Pālā influence, from Paharpur and its prototypes in Bengal to every region where Pāla influence was intense. Quite different is the situation in Kedah. Neither in the class of temples to which site 8 belongs, nor at later sites at Pengkalen Bujang, is there the slightest sign of any construction showing this tendency to cruciform plan. Lack of this significant feature in these Kedah temples, and the fact that it is equally lacking in South Indian temples, leads to the deduction that as in South India so in Kedah such innovations were rejected; consequently in essential plan the Kedah sanctuaries remained South Indian. This does not mean that various North Indian features, such as would appear to have characterized the roof tier decoration and its type of finial, were not accepted. So we get a composite structure.

Foundation deposits, some of which have already been mentioned, were a feature of this class of Kedah constructions, the most important being the six intact granite

nine-chambered caskets Lamb found at site 8, of the same type as the two empty ones I had found there. The contents consisted mainly of the Tantric symbols already referred to, together with gems and other small objects considered precious or magically powerful. It is the correct interpretation of the ritual significance of these deposits that is of great importance for our understanding of the nature of the Indianized culture with which we are here concerned. Consequently I must repeat here in some detail the main points of the discussion that this matter has provoked.

I had myself originally supposed that these Kedah caskets had the same function as the nine-holed reliquaries buried in *chandis*, or tomb-temples, in Java, in which the central hole contained a portion of the dead king's ashes, but I thought that the practice was of ultimately Indian origin. Subsequently[25] I corrected this view, after Cœdès had pointed out that when such receptacles contain only gold or gems, with no trace of ash or bone, they are likely to be only foundation deposits serving to consecrate the temple site in accordance with foundation rites described in the Hindu architectural treatises. Since there was no convincing evidence of ash or bone relics in the Kedah receptacles, it seemed that they were foundation deposits; and this view received support from there being eight such receptacles disposed in such way as to make the temple a microcosm. I concluded, therefore, that the Javanese practice, for which evidence was lacking in Kedah, was an adaptation of an originally Indian usage to the requirements of royal ancestor worship. However Dr Lamb, in accordance with his general desire to explain

[25] *JRAS*, 1946, p. 144.

his findings in "Indonesian" rather than Indian terms, sought to deny the Indian origin of the multi-chambered casket.

The importance attaching to the discovery of the correct solution to the problem led to my recalling the *yantra-galas* which are to be seen at Anurādhapura and Polonnaruwa in Ceylon. These provide adequate confirmation that the original purpose of multi-chambered caskets, with their foundation deposits, was to ensure by magical means that the shrine, image or *stūpa* erected above them, had the power and attributes of a microcosm. I further noticed in the Songkhla Museum a five-compartmented stone casket, found somewhere in the neighbourhood of Satingphra, which seemed to represent the simplest form; and this supposition was borne out by the finding beneath a *stūpa* at the Dvāravatī site of Ku Bua, Siam, of a five-holed "*yantra-gala*", above the central cavity of which had been placed the Buddhist reliquary. The evidence thus adduced left no doubt as to the Indian origin of the multi-chambered foundation deposit receptacles. The placing of a Buddhist relic at the cosmic centre in a *stūpa* was a development from the original Hindu practice which undoubtedly smoothed the way for the Javanese to take the further step of adapting the foundation deposit casket to the requirements of royal ancestor worship.[26]

While the Ceylon evidence was in itself sufficiently convincing, two years after I had published the results of my investigations into this matter there appeared a more

[26] H. G. Quaritch Wales, "A stone casket from Satingphra", *JSS*, Vol. LII, pt. 2, 1964, pp. 217–21.

intensive study by Professor O'Connor.[27] This was particularly welcome because, while repeating the Ceylon evidence on which I had relied, O'Connor supplements this in several important respects, and notably in quoting references to the practice in India as summarized by Stella Kramrisch in her book *The Hindu Temple*. He expresses himself as of the same opinion as myself that in Java and Bali a local tradition, involving the addition of the dead king's ashes to the contents of the caskets, incorporated the more conventional *maṇḍala* symbolism. He further makes the important point that while ritual deposits (not in boxes) have been recovered from the foundations of Cham temples and also, contained in boxes with a varying number of cells grouped round a larger cavity, in Khmer temples, it is scarcely credible that, despite differences in contents, chronology and liturgical prescription, they should be independent inventions not indebted to the ancient religious and cosmographical ideas coming from India. He concludes: "It would seem that, on the basis of this survey, the existence of ritual deposit boxes in the foundations of the ancient sanctuaries of South-east Asia can be easily integrated into the religious traditions of India. It is also evident that the mere existence of such boxes in a sanctuary does not in itself indicate the practice of enshrining the ashes of dead kings as in Java, nor is the existence of stone nine-chambered boxes of itself any evidence of Javanese cultural influence."[28] It remains to be said that Lamb, having subsequently located a compartmented

[27] Ritual deposit boxes in Southeast Asian sanctuaries", *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. XXVIII, pt. 1, 1966, pp. 55–60.
[28] Ibid., p. 60.

casket at Pondicherry, South India, modified his views accordingly.[29]

The apparently exceptional importance of the Bukit Batu Pahat temple (site 8) can find adequate explanation in its relation to the sacred character of the Kedah Peak mountain, which in the eyes of a very thoroughly Indianized people at this period involved no cult of dead kings. Though the use of stone in a Kedah temple is unusual this case is not absolutely unique. Traces of a temple construction employing stone have recently been reported much higher up the Merbok Kichil river, though no adequate account has yet been published. Again, at site 9, on the very summit of the mountain, I noticed granite blocks similar to those at site 8. Unfortunately this site on the summit has been too long exposed to depredations of all sorts for anything to be made of it, but it is possible that here once stood a largely stone-built temple worthy of its majestic setting.

We have so far considered only the effects of Śrīvijayan influence on Kedah. But the occupation of this state was only an essential first step in an expansionist policy designed to re-establish the Straits as the main channel of commercial traffic between east and west. Almost as a by-product of this preliminary step must have come control of the Kedah-Patani land route, which had seemingly long before yielded primacy to the main Takuapa–Bandon overland route. Control of the latter thus became the essential objective of Śrīvijayan

[29] A. Lamb, "A stone casket from Satingphra: some further observations", *JSS*, Vol. LIII, pt. 2, 1965.

expansion during the latter part of the eighth century, after which trade could be directed and maintained along the maritime lines which came natural to a thalassocracy. Whether this northward movement was made in one step or several, whether after securing a beachhead at Takuapa the Śrīvijayans advanced to the Bay of Bandon overland, or whether, monsoon permitting, they landed on the east coast, or both at the same time, we have no information. But to me it seems likely that once the time appeared ripe, the operation would have been quickly carried out. Not only could Tāmbraliṅga have put up little resistance, but Chen-la in the divided condition in in which it found itself in the eighth century, was in no position to make any objection to the occupation of a region in which, as it later realized, it had vital interests, just as formerly had its predecessor Fu-nan. What may be said with some confidence is that from the time of this occupation by a great sea power, overland routes had less international trading importance, though continuing to provide means of local communication in the Isthmian region. This must soon have come to be recognized as a fertile and altogether most desirable addition to the provinces of the empire of Palembang.

We now come to the intriguing question of the location of the capital of the peninsular provinces which could hardly have been situated, one might think, elsewhere than in the area that it was the main purpose of the Śrīvijayan expansion to dominate. It would indeed scarcely have been situated elsewhere than in the broad fertile east coastal region around the Bay of Bandon, where indeed we have already supposed was situated the capital of Tāmbraliṅga. So inevitably Ch'aiya comes to mind, as the provenance of most of the finest antiquities

of the Śrīvijayan period known from the Isthmian region. No doubt it was already the silting from the big rivers that obliged the city to be established eccentrically. But, as being only a short distance to the northward of the trans-peninsular route, Ch'aiya suggests itself as much more suitable than Nak'on Si Thammarat which is far away to the south and separated from the main habitable area by a range of mountains which makes it relatively difficult of access even today.

That Nak'on should ever have been considered as the main early Śrīvijayan centre is largely due to a combination of misleading circumstances. These are the known importance of this city from the thirteenth century onwards, the fact that pre-Śrīvijayan sculptures from ancient sites have been preserved there from time to time, but most of all from what I believe to have been an unfortunate mix-up of the findspots of two inscriptions. It would not be the first time such confusion has led to a misreading of South-east Asian cultural history, as anyone familiar with Khmer and Cham studies will know. In this and subsequent chapters we shall find cumulative evidence which points in only one direction, namely that the Śrīvijayans chose for their headquarters in the Isthmian region the obvious site which would enable them not only to supervise the old land route but to control the north-eastern sea approaches to the Straits.

The inscription primarily concerned is face A, of date equivalent to A.D. 775, of the so-called inscription of Ligor (Nak'on). Its attribution to that place was suspect from the moment when Cœdès found it necessary to alter, in the Corrigenda to his *Recueil*, pt. II, the provenance from Wieng Sra to Nak'on. It was largely on the grounds of the relative wealth of Śrīvijayan remains at Ch'aiya as

compared to Nak'on that in reference to this inscription I commented in 1935 "now said to have come from Nak'on but quite possibly originating from Ch'aiya".[30] This suggestion was taken up by Mr Dhammadasa Banij of the Dhammadana Society of Ch'aiya, who saw the possibility that the provenance of this inscription had been confused with that of a later inscription mistakenly supposed to have come from Ch'aiya.[31] Inevitably his lead suffered from being linked with a local patriotism wishing to maintain my abandoned theory of Ch'aiya having been the Śrīvijayan capital. But such prejudice aside, as Griswold has rightly remarked, "a re-examination of the two inscriptions in the light of Mr Dhammadasa's theory of the transfer of labels might produce useful results".[32] It is obvious that this inscription retains all its importance as evidence concerning the place where the Śrīvijayans established their headquarters in the Isthmian tract in A.D. 775; and where it would appear that at a later date a Śailendra emperor, in circumstances unknown, added his regrettably unfinished text (face B).

Now the inscription of 775, after first eulogizing the victorious king of Śrīvijaya, speaks of his founding three brick buildings, firstly the abode of the Bodhisattva Padmapāṇi, secondly that of the Buddha and thirdly that of the Bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi. According to Mr Dhammadasa's theory, these buildings are to be identified respectively with Wat Hua Wieng, Wat Long, and Wat Keu. The accompanying sketch map (Fig. 7) of the Ch'aiya district was made by me many years ago. It shows

[30] *I. A. & L.*, Vol. IX, no. 1, 1935, p. 30.
[31] B. Buribhand and A. B. Griswold, "Sculpture of Peninsular Siam in the Ayudhya period", *JSS*, Vol. XXXVIII, pt. 2, 1951, pp. 26 f.
[32] Ibid., p. 27.

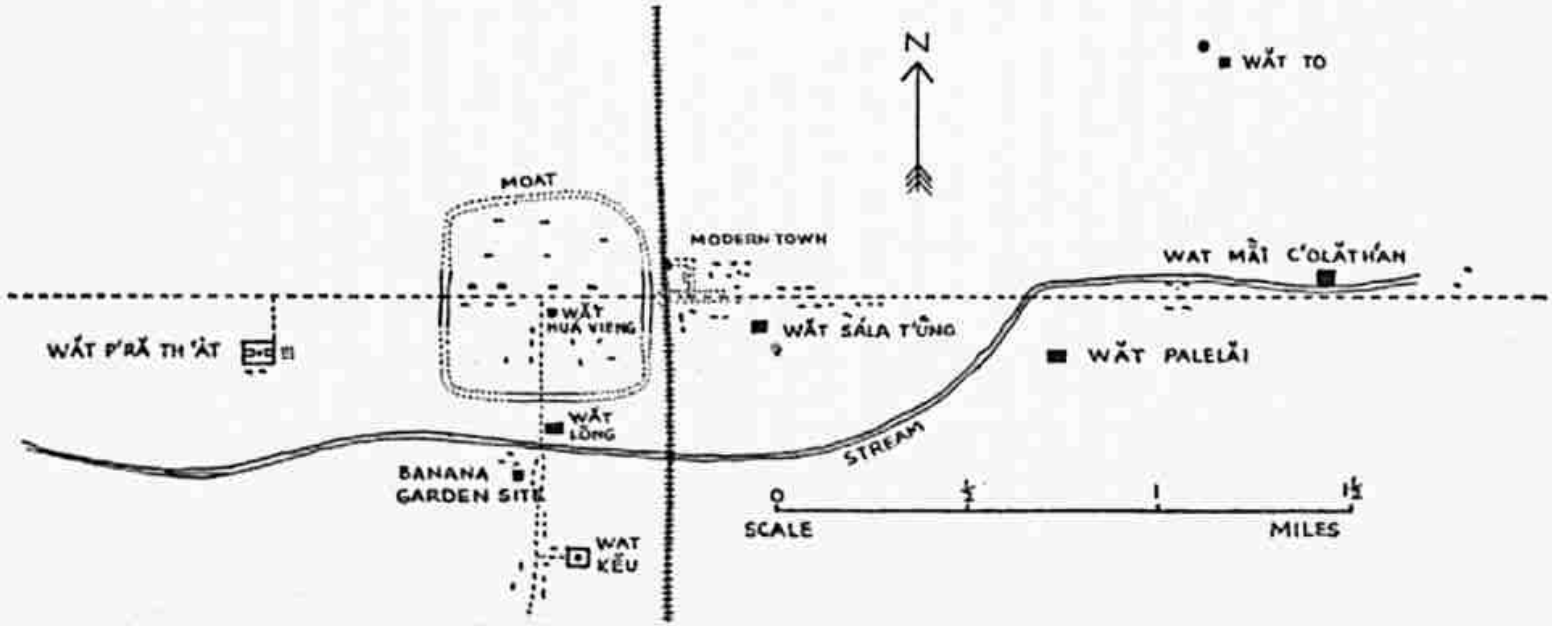


Fig. 7. Sketch map of Ch'aiya district

approximately the position of the old city proper, consisting of a moated enclosure less than half a mile square, while, as is so often the case, most of the monasteries were established outside the urban centre. Indeed, in a place rendered secure by the might of Śrīvijaya, one may say it is probable that, as Chao Ju-kua remarked in the case of Palembang, the people no doubt lived "scattered about outside the city". It will be seen that Wat Hua Wieng is situated at the centre of the city, Wat Long is at about the same distance south of Wat Hua Wieng, on a north–south axis, as Wat Keu is from Wat Long. So at first sight the three readily lend themselves to identification with the three brick buildings whose foundation is recorded in the inscription.

It must be admitted that the remains at Wat Long and Wat Hua Wieng, as Claeys saw them in 1929, and as I saw them a few years later, gave little enough support for any such identification as above proposed. Claeys remarked that what met the eye was nothing more than in each case a terrace built up by the Siamese from re-employed ancient bricks, on which terrace had been respectfully placed Buddhist images of any period that had been found in the neighbourhood. This terrace was twelve metres square in the case of Wat Long (many of its bricks were said to have been used for the restoration of Wat P'ra Thāt), six metres square at Wat Hua Wieng.[33] Then Cœdès had already noticed the Cham characteristics of Wat Keu, as well as of a stone Lokeśvara image.[34] Since then it has generally been agreed that Wat Keu, as we see it, is a Cham construction of the ninth century. It could have been built by Cham

[33] J. T. Claeys, *L'Archéologie du Siam*, 1931, pp. 26 f.
[34] *J. A. & L.*, 1927, pp. 65 f.; *Ars Asiatica*, XII, p. 25 and pl. XIV.

merchants having an establishment at Ch'aiya, just as the town of Kompong Cham on the Mekong seems to indicate the former existence of a Cham trading community at about the same time in Cambodia. Incidentally they would have built their temple in a quarter which, as I shall shortly suggest, was probably the commercial district.

I think it can now be said that excavations that have been carried out at these three Ch'aiya sites, though strictly limited, are sufficient to show that doubts as to their Śrīvijayan origin are unfounded. In 1946 excavations made by local intelligentsia at Wat Long, though not adequately published, are sufficient to show that beneath the Siamese terrace, there was a further extensive brick terrace measuring thirty metres square up to which led a flight of stairs.[35] It would appear that this was built by the Śrivījayans, and on it they had constructed a sanctuary from the ruins of which the Siamese had assembled their terrace, all that remained visible above ground. Wat Wieng, it appears, could not also be excavated, because a modern *vihāra* has been built on the old site; but the abbot stated that it stood on a brick terrace larger than that of the new building, and having the same measurements as that discovered at Wat Long.

Wat Keu is in an extremely precarious condition and, as I remarked after my first visit, while "its complete excavation should throw more light on the early history of Ch'aiya, this should only be undertaken with the most elaborate safeguards to ensure the preservation of the structure". Nevertheless I was able to dig one deep trench

[35] Brah Guru Indapaññacharya, *A Brief Account of the Antiquities surrounding the Bay of Bandon*, Ch'aiya, 1950 (in Siamese), pls. 36, 37. Also information contained in private letter to me from Mr Dhammadasa Banij, dated 27 December 1951.

up to the east, or principal, face of the building, with results, hitherto unpublished, which have an important bearing on the identification of these sites. The photograph showing this trench is the only one of this temple that I give here, since it has frequently been illustrated elsewhere, and is indeed of very limited interest for the history of architecture in the Peninsula. The stairway ascending the terrace can be discerned (Pl. 10A). The terrace was about five feet high, and probably covered about the same area as in the case of the other two temples. Local potsherds only were found.

The significant result of this limited excavation is that it shows Wat Keu to have been built on an extensive terrace, and we know that Cham temples of the period, though sometimes built on natural elevations, usually lacked any comparable substructure.[36] Clearly we have here, as at Wat Long, evidence of a pre-existing Śrīvijayan terrace on which the Cham temple was subsequently built. What is more, the cruciform plan of Wat Keu, with side chapels, is foreign to Cham styles. Their false porches, though often emphasized, were not sufficient to produce this effect. This indicates that the architect of Wat Keu was influenced by the plan of the previous Śrīvijayan building. The ninth or early tenth century dating of the Cham temple indicates that the Śrīvijayan sanctuaries, hurriedly constructed to commemorate the occupation, had poor stability and probably collapsed in a hundred years or less.

Fortunately we are not in any need to exercise our imagination in the attempt to reconstruct the kind of buildings that were erected in 775. The sanctuary of Wat P'ra Thāt, situated three-quarters of a mile east of the city

[36] H. Marchal, op. cit., pp. 173 f.

enclosure, though dating perhaps from considerably later than the first Śrīvijayan foundations, perpetuates for us without a doubt the chief characteristics of the Śrīvijayan style. But here, as at the *circa* twelfth-century temples of Padang Lawas, such as Bahal I and Si Pamutung,[37] the side chapels are much reduced as compared with what may have been the case in some of the Palembang temples. On this main trans-peninsular route, as we have already seen, the impact of Pallava influence was never strong, and both in architecture and in sculpture the transition from mainly Gupta antecedents to what is perhaps almost pure Pāla must have been easy. The Pāla was itself a natural outgrowth of the late Gupta, and so called for none of the adjustments needed to make an acceptable Pallava–Pāla hybrid.

The *thāt* or sanctuary of Wat P'ra Thāt was restored by order of King Chulalongkorn in 1901, and has since been maintained in such manner that at least the main features of the ancient construction are still preserved (Pl. 10B). Lajonquière, who immediately recognized that the building had nothing in common with Siamese types, gave the first detailed description of it.[38] Since then this temple of unique architectural importance has so frequently been illustrated that I shall confine myself to mentioning the essential features of its style. The sanctuary itself stands, as one would expect, on a square basement which it would appear likely has not yet been fully excavated down to the old ground level. The plan is distinctly cruciform, though probably on a reduced scale as compared with earlier Śrīvijayan constructions. The

[37] F. M. Schnitger, *The Archaeology of Hindoo Sumatra*, Leiden, 1937, pls. XXIX, XXXII.
[38] *BCAI*, 1909, fig. 7; 1912, pp. 135 ff.

porch opens to the east, with corresponding projections from each of the other faces, surmounted in each case by an ornamental fronton. Engaged pillars at the corners of the cella, and of the annexes, support a strongly moulded cornice. On the basement at each of the four corners stands a restored miniature *stūpa* on a plinth whose mouldings, corresponding to those of the main plinth, are obviously original. The roof structure consists of three stages, each repeating more or less faithfully the same pattern of frontons, angle *stūpas*, and in addition corner pieces which remind one of the pieces that I believe had a similar function at Kedah site 8. The decoration of frontons and angle pieces cannot be trusted as reproducing anything original. The same may apply to the crowning *stūpa* above, on its octagonal base representing a lotus cushion, and surrounded by eight little bell *stūpas*. In 1928 the restored crowning *stūpa* seen in Lajonquière's illustration was destroyed by lightning, but this was soon replaced by a similar one.

Near the sanctuary I noticed in 1935 a stone pillar, height about four feet, carved with lotus petal decoration.[39] At Padang Lawas several comparable stones were photographed by Schnitger. He referred to them as *stambhas*, and thought that they were a form of Buddhist memorial.[40]

There are other *wats* at Ch'aiya, namely Wat Palelai and Wat To, which have sanctuaries illustrated by Claeys, and of which one can go so far as to say that they must originally have been Śrīvijayan constructions.[41] But the superstructures of each has undergone such drastic

[39] Similar ones are illustrated in Brah Guru Indapaññacharya, op. cit., pl. 38.
[40] Op. cit., p. 20, pls. XXIV, XXXVIII.
[41] Claeys, op. cit., figs. 46, 47.

simplification as to point to their being comparatively late foundations. Then again they have suffered superficially as a result of abbots having allowed their stucco redecoration to be undertaken by Chinese entrepreneurs. The latter have certainly incorporated features of their own into the stucco covering. Claeys observed that in each case the base of the central body of the sanctuary rests on "meubles chinois" which are in effect the same motifs as "the low wooden benches carved to simulate seats" noted by Griswold in his description of the late *cetiya* on the Lesser Footprint Hill, Sukhodaya.[42] He states that this motif is common in Ayudhyan architecture from about the seventeenth century on. So this may give us a clue to the date of restoration — in both areas of Chinese co-operation.

It was to be expected that in searching for a prototype of temples of the style of Wat P'ra Thāt one would first turn, as did Parmentier,[43] to Indo–Javanese models and in particular to the miniature edifices represented on Barabadur bas-reliefs. But without any support from Indo–Javanese ornament, and especially the ubiquitous *kāla-makara* arch, a little reflection must convince one that there is no justification for postulating more than a common Pāla influence in each case. Other parallels, though later, equally inspired from Pāla sources, are to be found among the brick built temples of Pagán, and the above-mentioned temples of Padang Lawas, Sumatra.

While during the Śrīvijayan times Ch'aiya was of course predominantly Mahāyānist Buddhist, fragments of Brahmanic images and their pedestals have been found at Wat

[42] A. B. Griswold. *Towards a History of Sukhodaya*, 1967, p. 59 and fig. 69.
[43] *Études Asiatiques*, II, p. 210.

Mai Colathan and at Wat Sala Tung. Also at Ch'aiya there was found a remarkable stone *ekamukhaliṅga* (height 1.19 metre), of which O'Connor made a detailed study.[44] He concluded that it is of the rather early conventional type, probably derived ultimately from a Gupta prototype, and not datable more exactly than probably seventh or eighth century. So it may well be a product of Tāmbraliṅga prior to the coming of Śrīvijayan influences.

At the time of my stay in Ch'aiya in 1935 an incident had recently occurred which, in the light of what we now know of peninsular entrepôts, suggests that the foreign trading quarter of Ch'aiya had been situated just outside the city to the south. Here the proprietor of a banana garden, named Nai Son, when digging a well had come across a vast store of Sung type bowls (probably from Tongking), some thousands in number, of which I was able to secure a specimen for identification. Then, during our stay, he had unearthed elsewhere in his garden a small bronze figure of Tāra, from a depth of four feet.[45] In view of this I arranged to dig a couple of trial trenches in his garden. This was sufficient to confirm that this had indeed been a habitation site during Sung times: some fragments of good Sung celadons and wares of Sung type came to light, together with a number of blue and yellow beads, a pierced stone ornament, and a fragment of a Chinese mirror of a known Sung type. This would thus provide considerable evidence for the former existence of an entrepôt at Ch'aiya. So far as Śrīvijaya was concerned it was probably replaced by Satingphra as we shall see in the next chapter. Since it is just in this vicinity that Wat Keu was apparently rebuilt by a Cham trading community, it

[44] *JSS*, Vol. LIV, pt. 1, 1966.
[45] *I. A. & L.*, Vol. IX, no. 1, 1935, pl. V.

would seem likely that here a mart was established long before we have Chinese ceramics to provide evidence of it.

It will be convenient here to deal with the sculptural art of Peninsular Śrīvijaya, as mainly evidenced by some of the very striking examples found in or near Ch'aiya. But we must not omit what is of equal importance for the understanding of the whole: such material as has been spared to us from what I will call Kaṭāha or Kaḍāram *in the wider sense*. We have already seen that only the most pitiful fragments have survived from any Kedah site attributable to the earlier Śrīvijayan period. However, since no separate names can be attached to them, it would seem quite likely that settlements made during these times in the Perak and Kinta valleys may be regarded as extensions of the Kaṭāha state to the inviting tin-producing valleys on its southern border. Under Śrīvijayan protection navigation along the coast had become safe, and it would have been possible to build upon more tentative earlier settlements of Buddhist exploration. I have already suggested that the recovery of several widely scattered Mahāyānist bronzes,[46] through modern mining operations, may be regarded as evidence of settlements overcome by some flood disaster to which these river valleys are known to have been particularly subject. As such we may take these Mahāyānist bronzes as supplying the missing evidence as to the style of the images which have been destroyed in Kedah.

Bearing further on the existence of such settlements is the site of Kuala Selinsing on the Perak coast. Here excavations have provided much evidence as to the location, probably from the sixth to the twelfth century A.D.,

[46] "Arch. Researches . . .", pls. 79–81.

of a Malayo–Polynesian settlement where the non-Indianized inhabitants were skilled craftsmen engaged in bead manufacture. The beads may have been largely intended for trade with primitive peoples of the interior. But it would appear that the craftsmen were also in touch with a market such as a neighbouring Indianized town would have provided: among the objects that they appear to have made with an eye to such a market were the somewhat controversial "Pallava seal", a spelling mistake in which suggests to me the work of a copyist, and a gold ring with a relief vaguely suggestive of Viṣṇu mounted on Garuḍa.[47]

Having already in 1946 published my opinion that there was no true artistic evolution in the Malay Peninsula, I first recognized in the 1951 edition of *The Making of Greater India* the peculiar — yet Indian — character of what I called Indo–Malaysian (mostly Mahāyānist) sculpture as due to interaction of the different waves of Indian influence. This is no doubt synonymous with the usual term Śrīvijayan as applied to the sculpture of the period in the Peninsula and Sumatra. But I needed a wider term to include also the sculpture of such eastern zone regions as Central Java, where equally deity sculpture was closely controlled by the Indian *śāstras*, even though here local decorative designs in architecture were able to manifest themselves and evolve. My conclusions in this matter having by now become sufficiently well known, it will be enough for me to recall here the main grounds on which I came to them. But I shall also suggest one or two directions in which the study of these sculptures should be extended and refined.

[47] Ibid., pp. 54 ff.; see also résumé of work on the subject by R. Braddell, *JMBRAS*, Vol. XVII, 1939, pp. 168 f.

Indo–Malaysian sculpture remains so closely bound to Indian canons that it is not possible to distinguish national manifestations such as we find in Champa and Cambodia. At the same time it was composite art in that it combined the effects of more than one of the successive waves of Indian influence. This, may I repeat, I ascribed to "a tendency, due to the extreme conservatism of deity sculpture, for the effects of earlier waves to survive . . .". Eclectic combinations of impressions received by pilgrims to the holy places in India, would later have been a factor. The result, lacking the element defined by me as *local genius*, would show only what I have called "limited originality". What I did not sufficiently stress was that such combination of influences would allow room for considerable differences in local style according to the relative proportion in which the effects of various waves of Indian influences became fused in a particular district.

In analysing the nature of this sculpture I had first to show the groundless character of Bernet Kempers's contention that the majority of Central Javanese sculptures, as well as the bronze Bodhisattvas of Palembang and those of Ch'aiya, had no Pāla features, a contention which had indeed been at least tacitly disregarded by most authors. But it is still worth quoting, at least in part, the very adequate reasons given by Devaprasad Ghosh for rejecting Kempers's views. Thus in reference specifically to the Palembang bronze Bodhisattvas,[48] he said that "their design and conception along with certain details, e.g. *jaṭāmukuṭa*, the full squarish face, the necklace and *uttariya* (shawl), and lastly the flowing curves of the

[48] Schnitger, op. cit., pl. VIII.

swelling sensuous body fashioned with delicate touches are reminiscent of the Pāla art of Bengal".[49]

It is such general characteristics as are mentioned in the last part of the above sentence that are quite sufficiently decisive. They cannot be discountenanced by the fact that, as was quite to be expected, certain specialized features of Pāla art, such as loops or ribbons behind the ears, or Pāla form of nimbus, on which Kempers laid too much emphasis, were evidently rejected by the conservative sculptors concerned. They found them incompatible with former usages largely governed by Pallava and Gupta preferences such as pedestals without feet, a plain nimbus and the tendency for upper waist belts (crossed belts in female deities), as well as multiple hip girdles or encircling folds of drapery, all of which are absent even in late Pāla art, to persist in the attire of at least a proportion of Indo–Malaysian Bodhisattvas.

Yet while Kempers failed in his main contention, the denial of Pāla influences in the majority of these sculptures, he was right in making no claim for anything in the nature of *local genius* in these heavily Indianized products: he ascribed their "peculiarity" simply to the Javanese artist's combination of purely Indian elements.[50] It is precisely this "peculiarity" that will call for closer study by the art historians of the future. By this I mean particularly that it will be important to bear in mind, in the analysis of the factors concerned in the formation of sculptural style in any given part of the Indo–Malaysian area, the background against which the local sculptor was working at the time he began to receive the Pāla

[49] *JGIS*, Vol. I, p. 55.
[50] *I. A. & L.*, Vol. IX, 1935, p. 99.

influence. For it is the extent and nature of the hold-over from previous Indian influences that will tend to give distinction to his product.

Here I will limit myself to comparing two outstanding examples which clearly exhibit the differences between the composite products of two regional workshops. They are both bronze images of Avalokiteśvara, the one the superb image recovered from a mine at Bidor, Perak (Pl. 11), the other the Bangkok Museum masterpiece which is the finer of the two bronzes obtained by Prince Damrong near Wat P'ra Thāt, Ch'aiya (Pl. 12). In the case of the Bidor bronze, prior to the coming of the Pāla influence, Kaḍāram sculptors had been working mainly in Pallava styles, so one can well appreciate Nilakanta Sastri's reaction: "this image is unmistakably South Indian in its appearance".[51] The sort of Pallava sculpture that preceded it cannot unfortunately be exemplified from this area of rare survival, but a stone Avalokiteśvara from Bingin, Sumatra, gives an idea of it.[52] And in both cases there is a significant detail: a tiger head is represented on the right thigh, as part of the tiger skin worn over the *dhoti*. This, as Dr Lamb points out,[53] is in India a characteristic of Śiva not found in Avalokiteśvara images. Its presence here, and in some other Indo–Malaysian images, could thus be a hold-over of a pre-Pāla, and indeed pre-Mahāyānist, feature.

Turning now to Prince Damrong's masterpiece from Ch'aiya, we cannot do better than quote Cœdès description of its charm, in the first publication that gave it fame: "La bienveillante sérénité du visage, la noblesse du port

[51] *History of Śrivijaya*, p. 106.
[52] Schnitger, op. cit., pl. x.
[53] *FMJ*, Vol. VI, 1961, pp. 89 f.

des épaules, la magnificence de la parure classent cette statue, malheureusement incomplète, parmi les chefs-d'œuvre de la sculpture indienne en Indochine."[54] In seeking to determine the background against which the sculptor of this magnificent figure was working we recall the long-robed Viṣṇus of Tāmbraliṅga. In these we now recognize that Pallava influences had but a small share while, on the other hand, late Gupta influences were preponderant. Now at Ch'aiya, where so much more has been preserved than in the region of Kaḍāram, we have a most valuable connecting link with these long-robed Viṣṇus of Tāmbraliṅga. This is the stone Avalokiteśvara, height 45 inches, found at Wat Sala Tung (Pl. 13). It is deftly modelled in terms characteristic of the late Gupta style, wears a simple long *dhoti*, and has a hair style equally characteristic of that great Indian school. It is clearly an early example of the Śrīvijaya school in Peninsular Siam, before this had undergone enrichment from much contact with the Pāla art of Bengal. So it cannot be dated later than the eighth century, thus a little earlier than the masterpiece.[55] A somewhat later bronze Avalokites'vara, but in much the same tradition, was found at Surat (Pun Pin).[56]

This comparison of the Bidor and the Ch'aiya statues will I think sufficiently illustrate what I have in mind about the importance of recognizing the differing background of any particular Śrīvijayan sculpture, in order to

[54] *Ars Asiatica*, XII, pls. XV–XVI.

[55] Our illustration (Pl. 13) shows clearly the antelope skin over the left shoulder, which is sometimes found in images of Avalokiteśvara. Cœdès mistook it for a lion's skin in publishing this image in *Ars Asiatica*, XII, pl. XII, and stated that this was a "characteristic attribute of Lokeśvara". Actually it can hardly be discerned in his rather poor illustration.

[56] Illustrated in Bowie, Diskul, Griswold, *The Sculpture of Thailand*, New York, 1972, pl. 24.

estimate the extent and nature of the hold-over entering into its composition. At the same time it may well be that the strength of the Pāla influence in any one case could also be a factor. Thus it is that I have felt inclined, on this particular ground, to equate the Ch'aiya bronze more closely with the above-mentioned Palembang bronze Bodhisattvas than might otherwise be the case; for both Palembang, and the chief seat of Śrivījayan power in the north, Ch'aiya, are likely to have felt to the fullest extent the Pāla influences of the ninth century. One negative detail which perhaps indicates this reflection of more intense Pāla influences is the absence in both the Palembang Avalokiteśvara, and in the more complete of Prince Damrong's two Ch'aiya bronzes (which alone of the two could show it), of the tiger skin noticed in the Bidor and Bingin Avalokiteśvaras.

As we have seen, both Griswold and Dupont, subsequently having recognized the composite character of the early Buddhist sculpture of the Peninsula and of Dvāravatī respectively, were able to make notable advances in their understanding. Dupont had the advantage of having a very large range of examples to study. Consequently he was able to distinguish a number of different series, probably parallels and produced at different centres, from different prototypes. With the exception of the last point, which may be rendered undetectable by the greater complexity of the hybridization, the art historian of the future has the same task before him in the Peninsula as had Dupont. Perhaps before too long we shall see some practitioner of Philippe Stern's now well-tried method bring us enlightenment. Naturally such a work will have to take note of all the Śrīvijayan, not merely the peninsular material, and I am

inclined to think that, to be really adequate, all that could be called Indo–Malaysian: Indo–Javanese, Indo–Balinese, and Indo–Bornean. Fortunately the very nature of the material, so obviously indicative of several centres of formation, and the parallels already demonstrated in the case of the Dvāravatī schools, virtually preclude the old mistaken conception of diffusion from one centre — which of course was taken for granted to have been Java. Inevitably in this field of Indo–Malaysian sculpture, where extreme Indianization precluded true evolution, such a study must have an apparently thankless outcome. So I should expect to see the correctness of Dupont's conclusion confirmed, when cataloguing the downward trend of each of his series, namely that poor images were usually late ones, and not the products of incompetent or provincial craftsmen.

CHAPTER VI

ŚRĪVIJAYA AND COMMERCE

We have seen that one of Śrīvijaya's first acts on securing control of the Isthmian region was to found three Mahāyānist temples, this soon to be followed by the making of bronze and stone images of the highest quality. But that was in or soon after the eighth century when Indian influence was still at its height. A century or so later, when this source of inspiration was no longer active, the very intensity of the Indianization undergone induced a period at best described as static. Temples were of less impressive design, and statues usually smaller and less well modelled. Such was the case in Dvāravatī, to mention perhaps the clearest example of extreme Indianization, but very different was it in Champa and Cambodia where a lively local genius assured growth and evolution. Contemporary Sumatra has indeed little more to show than the Peninsula, while in Java, the sculpture of the long and static Kaḍiri period (A.D. 1049–1222) provides a close parallel to the Śrīvijaya situation. Yet decline in art, due to absence of new stimulus or of local impulse to mould the old, does not necessarily imply a decline in religious observance. Certainly during the eleventh century the continuing piety of the Śailendras of Śrīvijaya is evidenced by their foundations in India. The wide distribution of Mahāyāna votive tablets in the caves of the Isthmian tract suggested to O'Connor that the Mahāyāna "had a wide base and

considerable social importance".[1] That is a conclusion to which I also came in regard to the influence of the Mahāyāna, after studying the comparable situation in China.[2]

It is necessary to stress the above because it is owing to a change in the nature of the archaeological evidence that we inevitably become more preoccupied, in the eleventh to thirteenth centuries, with Śrīvijaya's commercial activities, just as previously we were mainly concerned with the empire's cultural achievements. Trade articles such as camphor, gharu wood, muslins and silks leave little mark on the archaeological record; while ceramics, particularly those of Chinese origin, are the main currency of that approach. Since there was comparatively little export of ceramics from China before the Sung period, it is only then that this important source of evidence becomes generally available. But there is at least one site that gives us confirmation that Śrīvijaya was just as vitally interested in trade expansion in the early centuries as it was later. That site is Takuapa.

As a thalassocracy Śrīvijaya naturally re-established the main sea route of international trade through the Straits of Malacca, after the long period covering the sixth, seventh and part of the eighth centuries during which piracy had forced much of this trade to seek safer land routes across the Peninsula. Doubtless the Śrīvijayan capital was the empire's chief entrepôt and also the main centre for the local collection and distribution of goods by Malay merchants. But Palembang (later succeeded by Malāyu) was not the only Śrīvijayan entrepôt, and there

[1] Op. cit., p. 60.
[2] *The Indianization of China*, pp. 102 f.

is good reason to believe that one of almost equal importance was established on the west coast of the Peninsula, a place frequently mentioned in Persian and Arab accounts as Kalah. To my mind there is little doubt that from the eighth to the tenth century this Kalah was in fact the excellent harbour of Takuapa. It seems obvious that the Śrīvijayans would have sought to foster as an entrepôt this place which in previous centuries had functioned as the port of disembarkation for the main trans-peninsular route across Tāmbraliṅga. The actual site of the entrepôt was K'o Khau island, widely strewn with unstratified deposits of T'ang and Persian pot-sherds which there is general agreement in dating as of the eighth to tenth centuries.[3]

It was because such ceramics had not been found anywhere on the east coast (and if they had they would by now be represented in the museum and private collections of Ch'aiya and Nak'on) that, when first studying the implications of these deposits at Takuapa, I concluded that they provided no evidence of trade across the trans-peninsular route. This was broadly true for the period from which these sherds dated, though it may be said that the fragile Middle Eastern pottery was probably exclusively for use by merchants and ships' companies during their stay ashore. Where I went astray was in applying this conclusion to earlier centuries, and denying that the Takuapa–Bandon route was previously one of trade. I was then thinking of the route almost entirely in terms of Indian cultural expansion, but I now appreciate

[3] These were first identified for me by the well-known authority A. L. Hobson of the British Museum. He also considered some yellow glazed sherds from the same site to be of Six Dynasties type, which would point to Chinese use of Takuapa harbour at least as early as the sixth century (*I. A. & L.*, Vol. IX, no. 1, 1935, p. 10).

that Fu-nan's conquest of this region in the third century was largely stimulated by the desire to control the overland trade.

Leaving aside for the moment such ancient remains as have been found on the neighbouring mainland at Takuapa, and concerning ourselves only with the entrepôt proper, one might possibly come to the conclusion that there is nothing there that can be definitely identified as pertaining to a Hindu or Buddhist temple, while the presence of Indians is at most suggested by some of the earthenware sherds and a few beads. The entrepôt occupied the southern part of the low sandy expanse of K'o Khau island, and is known locally as T'ung Tu'k, "the plain of the brick building".[4] What I described as a temple site, and partially excavated, consisted of the remains of an extensive brick terrace structure, measuring about sixty by thirty yards, raised about six feet above ground level and having a core of unworked laterite blocks. A brick paved approach thirty-seven feet broad led up to the middle of the terrace on the south side. This approach was apparently bordered on both sides by a low brick wall, with buttresses, each wall terminating at the end away from the terrace in a small brick-walled vestibule. Round the edges of the terrace were found a number of water-worn boulders, some of them partially worked, and one having a square mortise for the support of a wooden pillar. Many small narrow earthenware tiles were found which indicated the former existence here of a tiled building of light construction. On the whole I am still inclined to think of this having been some kind of temple, but not of course of anything like Kedah site 4

[4] *J. A. & L.*, Vol. IX, pt. 1, 1935, pp. 9–13 and fig. 2.

which at the time of my original article I knew only from Evans's preliminary survey. It is more likely to have been some Buddhist *vihāra* established by the Śrīvijayans, though not on the same scale of munificence as their foundations at Ch'aiya. There are some suggestions of similarities with Ch'aiya, and also with Mahāyānist sites in Kedah, that tend in this direction; but failing the discovery of any associated cult objects certainty is unattainable.

However that may be, the importance of Takuapa as a centre of the entrepôt trade during the earlier centuries of Śrīvijaya rule is securely based on the evidence of the contemporary Persian and Chinese pot-sherds so widely scattered over the "plain of the brick building". And, in addition, Lamb found many fragments of Near Eastern glass of approximately the same period. A short distance to the north of the terrace were the remains of a smaller brick construction. Near here it was that mining engineers had found gold dust of foreign origin which they believed had been used as a medium of exchange in early times.

Doubtless traders of many nations frequented Śrīvijayan ports and marts. While Arabs and Chinese left readily recognizable traces in the form of ceramics or glass, either brought for their own use or as articles of trade, the Indians seem to have been content with less distinctive earthenware, but on the other hand were accompanied, as they always had been, by religious paraphernalia that has left its mark on the record. Most noteworthy of course are the images that the traders either brought with them or had made locally in their own contemporary style, and now essentially for their own use. Unfortunately in the past a failure to identify these as purely foreign traders' icons proved at first a stumbling

block to our proper interpretation of their evidential value.

This brings us to the famous stone sculptures entwined by the trunk of a large tree located about twelve miles up the Takuapa river, opposite the little P'ra Narai Hill (Pl. 14). It was their curious situation, as much as their artistic excellence and the historical problem they posed, that had excited so much attention and wonder ever since their existence was made known by a mining engineer early in this century.[5] Their partial destruction by vandals some years ago was a tragedy which, however, has been partially offset by the fact that it has been possible to extricate the almost complete central figure. Its lower portion had become quite buried in the ground, and its missing original headdress was found at its feet. Now this fine statue stands in a deservedly commanding position in one of the galleries of the Nak'on museum, together with what could be salvaged of the other two figures. It is now apparent that they were carved fully in the round, not in high relief, as formerly supposed.

Despite the local Siamese identification with Narai (Viṣṇu), and the lack of all attributes, there has been general agreement with Lajonquière's belief that the central four-armed figure represents Śiva. Many, including Nilakanta Sastri, have been inclined to accept my opinion (which I have since sometimes doubted) that the triad is a Gangadhara group, resembling the well-known Pallava group at Trichinopoly. When I saw these sculptures in 1935, and then examined the scant foundations of a

[5] W. W. Bourke, "Some Archaeological Notes on Monthon Puket", *JSS*, Vol. II, 1905, pp. 49–62. This volume has a supplement (lacking in some sets of the Journal) with a photograph of the P'ra Narai group, which is actually the first published photograph of these sculptures, and antedates Lajonquière's sketch by several years.

small shrine on the top of the hill on the opposite bank, I did not think that the shrine could have been large enough to accommodate them. That was also Lajonquière's first opinion, which he subsequently changed. I thought that they had been brought to the position in which I saw them from K'o Khau island. Many years later Dr Lamb re-examined the site of the small shrine on the hill and, on what seem to me adequate grounds, came to the conclusion that this was indeed the original site of the sculptures.[6]

The Tamil inscription found near the images had been considered by Hultsch to date from the eighth century, but Nilakanta Sastri, in his improved re-study of it, suggests that the royal name mentioned in the first line must be restored to Nandipottaraiyavarman in the light of the title Avani-nārāṇam occurring in lines 3–4 as the name of the tank and as a well-known title of the Pallava king Nandivarman III (A.D. 826–50). He goes on to render the remaining five lines as follows: "The tank dug by Nāṅgūr-udaiyan (and) called Avani-nārāṇam (is placed under) the protection of the Maṇigrāmam, the residents of the military camp and . . .". He notes that in spite of his title Avani-nārāṇam (Viṣṇu of the earth) this king was an ardent devotee of Śiva, and he thinks that the sculptures are of the same age as the inscription.[7]

While Nilakanta Sastri was inclined to think, in view of this evidence of a Tamil military presence, that some peninsular territory was actually annexed for some time by the Pallavas, it has generally been considered that this

[6] A. Lamb, "Three Statues in a Tree: a note on the P'ra Narai Group, Takuapa", *FMJ*, Vol. VI, 1961, pp. 64–8.

[7] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, "Takuapa and its Tamil Inscription", *JMBRAS*, Vol. XXII, pt. 1, 1949, pp. 25–30.

would have been out of the question while Śrīvijayan power was at its zenith. It is rather thought that a local Tamil trading post was established with the goodwill of the Śrīvijayan government, the soldiers employed by the Indian merchant guild being merely a kind of local security police. It was the practice for the South Indian merchant guilds to seek and obtain such trading privileges on foreign soil, no doubt building their own temple. The Loboe Toewa inscription in Sumatra testifies to the activities of such a guild there in A.D. 1088. Possibly this Tamil trading station at P'ra Narai Hill was located several miles up the Takuapa river, then navigable to ships of some size, because it was more concerned with the local trade still using the old trans-peninsular route, than with the entrepôt trade of the island. It would thus have been maintaining relations with inland markets that had been pioneered by Indians centuries before.

When I first saw these fine P'ra Narai statues I not unnaturally seized upon their presence as providing valuable evidence for the spread of Indian cultural influences across the trans-peninsular route. I was however a little disturbed by the relative lateness of their style, as compared with the long-robed Viṣṇu of P'ra No': it was difficult to squeeze them into the period of active Pallava cultural influence. Recently the question of their style and dating has been satisfactorily cleared up in the course of a careful study by O'Connor.[8] He shows them to be late Pallava, of purely Indian workmanship, and of a date which could well be that which Sastri assigned to the inscription. This places them in the mid-ninth century, which would be late for Hindu influence

[8] Op. cit., pp. 52–60.

in Śrīvijaya where by this time a composite Mahāyānist statuary was well established with a strong Pāla element. The P'ra Narai statues were made, it would seem, entirely for the benefit of the Indian residents at the trading centre, in the temple which the guild had no doubt, as was their practice, established for the use of its members. It would have been in connexion with this temple that the inscription commemorated the digging of a sacred tank.

In continuation of the same study O'Connor has also satisfactorily identified the style of three later Brahmanic stone figures.[9] One, a Surya, was found at Chai'ya, the other two at Wieng Sra. These latter were first published by Cœdès, the one a four-armed Viṣṇu the other, a Śiva Bhairava.[10] He described them as quite Indian in regard to costume and ornament, though the treatment of facial features suggested the work of a native artist. I was prepared to accept this as evidence for a local Indianized people doing their best to copy some such model as that provided by the P'ra Narai statues! Now O'Connor has shown their purely Coḷa character, and he dates them as of the tenth or eleventh century. They probably indicate the continuation of the South Indian trading enterprise across the route, and in that case their influence outside the Indian community might have been small. At the same time O'Connor very rightly considers an alternative possibility, namely that the statues were made for Brahmans who, as we know, had long been resident in the peninsular city-states. Some of them had found employment at the courts of the local Buddhist rulers, for the performance of state ceremonial which remained

[9] Ibid., pp. 60–3.
[10] *Ars Asiatica*, Vol. XII, pl. X.

largely Hindu. In this case they were in a position to exercise considerable influence on the beliefs and conduct of affairs of the rulers. Bearing on this possibility is the Tamil inscription kept at Wat Mahāthāt, Nak'on, which dates from the same period as the Takuapa inscription, and is seemingly of religious import since it refers to the protection of Brahmans.[11] There is, after all, considerable evidence both from Ch'aiya and other sites that Śrīvijayan religion was not without its Hindu facies: Tantrism and a gradual syncretism of Indian cults became increasingly in vogue in later pre-Islamic religion in the Peninsula, so far as we know it.

To understand the nature and import of the later contacts with South India it is necessary to interpret correctly the very considerable information we have as to the relations of Śrīvijaya with the Coḷa empire during the eleventh century. It is clear from the inscription of the Coḷa ruler Rājarāja I, known as the Larger Leiden Grant, that at the beginning of the century the two empires were on the friendliest footing. The grant refers to the founding about 1005 at Negapatam by the Śrīvijayan emperor Māravijayottunga, just as his predecessor had done at Nālandā, of a Buddhist temple bearing his name. The grant records that to this temple the Coḷa king dedicated the revenues of a large village. Incidentally it was as a result of the friendly relations thus pertaining with the Coḷas, and at the same time also with China, that this Śrīvijayan emperor's son was able to take his revenge in 1016 on aggression committed somewhat earlier by Java, after which these two island powers remained on peaceful terms.

[11] Cœdès, *Recueil*, p. 57.

One would like to be able to say that the harmony between the Śrīvijayans and the Coḷas evidenced by the above-mentioned inscription was maintained in perpetuity. To do so might in fact give a less misleading impression than to make too much of the unfortunate quarrel which led to the Coḷa raids of 1025, with the capture of the emperor and probably considerable damage to many cities, including Palembang and Kaṭāha. The cause of the quarrel is no doubt to be found in the jealousy which Śrīvijaya could not but feel of the challenge to her maritime supremacy offered by the comparatively new Coḷa sea power. A seemingly detailed account of the expedition is given by Rājendra's inscription, mentioning the names of the cities attacked. Many of these can be equated with known place-names on Sumatra and the Peninsula, including, in addition to those above mentioned, Mādamāliṅgam (Tāmbraliṅga), Ilangāśoga (Langkasuka), and Talaittakolam (Takkola). The mention of the latter, which I take to be anachronistic, together with the fact pointed out by Cœdès,[12] that the epithets describing these places consist merely of a play on words, warn us that we must not look for much of documentary value here. The whole composition is that of a court poet rather than the factual report of a war correspondent.

Such effective but short-lived action reminds one of the hot-tempered response said to have been made by the earlier Śailendra ruler of Java to the Khmer king who had foolishly expressed the desire to see the head of his rival on a plate. There seems to have been no continuing occupation of Śrīvijaya by the Coḷas, the material damage was

[12] *Les États . . .*, p. 262.

soon repaired, and there was no permanent bitterness. Śrīvijaya appears to have continued as very much the same powerful trading empire as formerly, but she had learnt the same lesson that shortly before she had taught equally harshly to Java: that of living at peace with her maritime neighbours.

Already in 1028 a new and evidently fully independent Śrīvijayan emperor was sending an embassy to China, which was there received with high honour. About 1068 we have a curious record of the Coḷa king Vīrarājendra coming at the behest of the Śrīvijayan king to aid him in suppressing something in the nature of a revolt that had broken out at Kaṭāha. Whatever the cause of this incident, the sequel points to resumed friendly co-operation between the two powers. This is further indicated by two other pieces of evidence. Firstly the above-mentioned inscription of Loboe Toewa, Sumatra, of A.D. 1088, recording the establishment there of a celebrated commercial guild comparable to that mentioned in the Takuapa inscription. Secondly, in the religious field, the friendly understanding is again illustrated by the Smaller Leiden Grant of the Coḷa king Kulottunga I, dated A.D. 1090. This records a new charter to the Śrīvijaya king in favour of the Negapatam sanctuary founded by his forerunner in 1005.

It is against this background of mainly friendly relations with the Coḷas that the Indian archaeological remains of the period found in the Peninsula reveal their meaning. First it is necessary to bear in mind the relatively superficial and ephemeral nature of the damage inflicted by the Coḷa invasion. There is not the slightest reason to suppose that any one city or port was so badly devastated that the site had to be abandoned, or that the Coḷa power

dictated that for their convenience one should be maintained at the expense of another. Thus Wheatley's supposition[13] that, as a result of the Coḷa aggression, Kedah lost its prestige is entirely contrary to the archaeological evidence, as Lamb recognizes.[14] But while I agree with the latter that from the eleventh century Kedah, not Takuapa, was the port then known to the Arabs as Kalah, I would not subscribe to his view that the evident increase in Kedah's importance from this time is in any way a bonus deriving from the Coḷa invasion. I would rather attribute it to the continuing pressure of a rival on the north, the Khmers, who were now seeking to gain power over the Peninsular sphere of interest that had formerly belonged to Fu-nan. Indeed it may well be that the revolt which broke out in Kedah about 1068, and was put down by the combined Śrīvijayan and Coḷa forces, was in some way instigated by the Khmers. Such an interpretation fits well into the picture of a general withdrawal of the Śrīvijayans from the northern Isthmian area under Khmer pressure, which we shall be considering later in this chapter. But first we must examine the archaeological evidence which supports the recognition of Kedah as a later Kalah, and as a Kaṭāha of considerably increased prosperity.

In the course of my 1937–8 exploration I found ample evidence that sometime in the eleventh century the main habitation area of Kaṭāha had been transferred some two-thirds of a mile lower down the Bujang river from the earlier sites. Here among padi fields, reclaimed at some time from the mangrove swamps which adjoin it on the south, there is an area of higher ground of a very sandy

[13] Op. cit., p. 281.
[14] "Kedah and Takuapa: some tentative historical conclusions", *FMJ*, Vol. VI, 1961, p. 84.

nature, known as Pengkalen Bujang. It was there that I located site 18 some distance from the right bank of the river.[15] It consisted of a low mound from which villagers had obtained some large fragments of worked granite which appeared to be parts of a lintel and moulded door-frame. To quote from my report: "Excavation of the site brought to light, at the northern end, the lower courses of a considerable rectangular building, regularly oriented, and divided into two apartments, the smaller or northern one only having a brick floor. The walls consisted of three courses of laid laterite blocks, the upper course edged with bricks (of variable dimensions), while a few of the stone socles with square mortises, that had formed the bases of the timber pillars supporting the roof, were found towards the northern end of the building."

While laterite was substituted for river boulders, and the roof had been tiled, the structure in general reminded me of sites 11 and 12, and may well be considered a continuation of the same building tradition. It was this similarity, coupled with the absence of ritual objects, but with the finding of a nearly complete Arab glass lamp (Pl. 15) and much good quality, though fragmentary, Sung celadon, that made me think that here also we had to do with some palace building. That remains a possibility, but I think it more likely that we have here the remains of a Mahāyānist temple, such as one would expect to find in a Śrīvijayan city of the period. It would of course have been completely devastated at the time of the Islamic conversion, and judging by what we shall see at contemporary Satingphra, any Buddhist images would have

[15] "Arch. Researches", pls. 65–8.

been small. A little higher up the river I found traces of three more brick buildings, two of which had had tiled roofs (sites 21–3). These can also well have been Buddhist *vihāras*, but the only finds made were fragments of celadons which leave no doubt as to their dating from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries. Many years afterwards a boy found at Pengkalen Bujang a stone carved with a grotesque face which, it has been thought, may have been part of the balustrade of a temple.[16]

The credit for recognizing in 1961 the entrepôt character of the settlement at Pengkalen Bujang goes entirely to Dr Lamb.[17] In the course of his investigation of the neighbourhood he found that ceramic sherds were far more widely distributed than I had realized. At certain spots, particularly places on the right bank of the river (points B and C on his map) he found vast deposits of Sung and Yüan sherds. In addition to good Sung celadons, and a type similar to the bowls probably originating from Tongking that I have mentioned as being found at Ch'aiya, the deposits contained various porcelainous wares and stonewares, also much earthenware, some of which Lamb thought might have come from India. The ceramics in these two deposits were so fragmentary and so jumbled that he concluded that here were dumped the sweepings of a market or wharf where the trade in such goods was carried on. Miscellaneous objects and great quantities of beads could also be ascribed to the same commerce. While Lamb dug trial trenches at a number of points, which produced at least some sherds, it was these heterogeneous deposits on the river bank that left no

[16] *JMBRAS*, Vol. xxxviii, p. 254 and pl. 13.
[17] "Research at Pengkalen Bujang", *FMJ*, Vol. vi, 1961, pp. 21–37.

doubt that here was the port — *pengkalen* as it is still called — up to which ocean-going ships in Sung times came to discharge and load their cargoes. Thus Kaṭāha was at this time a great entrepôt, and perhaps also an important centre for the distribution of these imports of ceramics and other goods to the interior.

Though Lamb found no Arab lamp, such as I had been fortunate in recovering at site 18, he did find many fragments of Arab glass bottles, a number of which I also had found. By comparing these with glass fragments found on the middle Bujang, and those which he had found at Takuapa, he came to the interesting conclusion that the Pengkalen Bujang Arab glass was later than the fragments found at the other sites mentioned.[18] At the same time none of the T'ang period ceramics so common at Takuapa have ever been found at Pengkalen Bujang. The evidence from the glass, which like the Chinese ceramics was an object of trade, supports Lamb's contention that Pengkalen Bujang replaced Takuapa as the Kalah of the Arab traders. Only a few fragments of the Persian pottery, such as were found so abundantly at Takuapa, are reported by Lamb as having been found in these Pengkalen Bujang deposits. He is no doubt right in concluding that these fragile wares were brought merely for the Arab merchants' own use, much as in modern times amphora-like jars as water containers appear to have been brought to Sarawak on board Arab dhows. That Kedah was now primarily engaged in the entrepôt trade, and perhaps in the collection and shipping of local produce, rather than the terminus of an overland route, will I think emerge more clearly as probably the correct

[18] "The Bases of Glass Vessels from Kedah and Takuapa compared", *FMJ*, Vol. VI, 1961, p. 59.

conclusion, after we have examined the evidence from what I take to have been the corresponding east coast entrepôt, Satingphra.

Before leaving Pengkalen Bujang we should note that there are two more definitely temple sites which I excavated, the character of which is now more readily understandable in the context of an entrepôt. These are sites 19 and 20, situated on the left bank of the river, a little below site 21 already mentioned. Both were porched brick shrines, but only site 19 was sufficiently well preserved, with some associated finds, to be of much interest.[19] In fact it happens to be one of the best preserved temple remains in Kedah, and the ritual objects found there leave us in no doubt that it was a Hindu temple dedicated to the cult of the Śaivite deities.

The site 19 temple had probably been built entirely of brick, its porch opening to the east (Pl. 16 and Fig. 8). Its comparatively good preservation is likely to be due to its having been silted over by the river sand soon after it was abandoned, only a slight mound marking the site. However this would not have happened before the newly converted Moslem Malays had wrought their havoc, judging by the damage suffered by the ritual objects. The thick walls, which at their highest point stood four feet above the foundation of water-worn stones, had a plinth with rather elaborate mouldings. From direct evidence it is not possible to say anything of the roof structure. Fragments of celadons at the old occupation level provided a dating of eleventh–thirteenth centuries. The associated cult objects included two fragments of a terracotta Gaṇeśa, which had been seated in the attitude

[19] Arch. "Researches", pp. 39 f., and pls. 69–73.

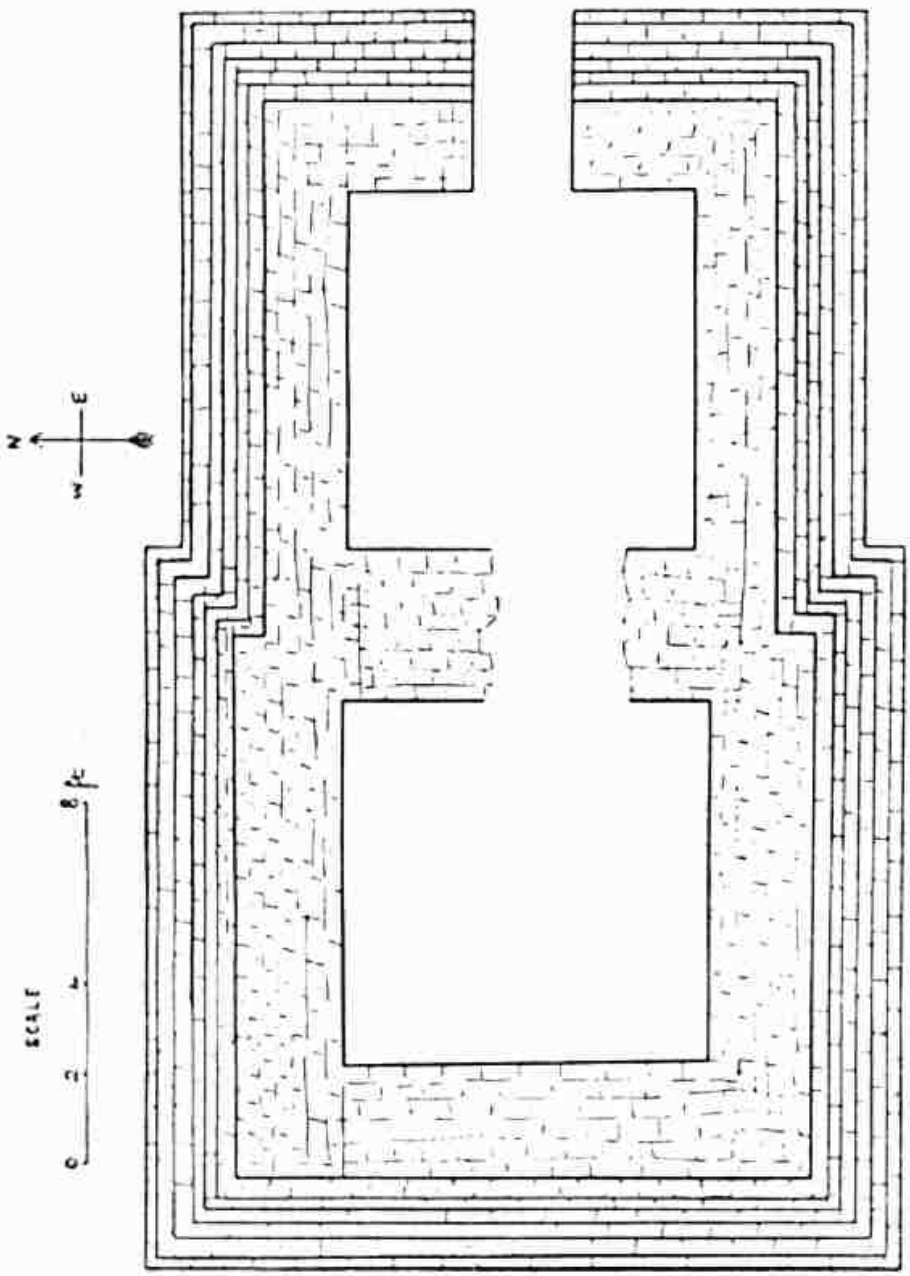


Fig. 8. Plan of Kedah, Site 19

of royal ease usual to seated Indian Gaṇeśas. A bronze object formerly taken by me for the central prong of a Śiva trident, was subsequently identified by Nilakanta Sastri as the Śakti-weapon of Kārttikeya or Subrahmaṇya.[20] And recently, within a yard of my excavated perimeter, there was found a much damaged massive *liṅga* of iron, now in the Kuala Lumpur museum. Just outside the porch I had found part of a stone nine-chambered casket where it had evidently been thrown by the despoilers of the temple.

I no longer think that this temple is a prolongation of what I have taken to be a Pallava style of architecture at sites 4–6 on the middle Bujang. Indeed the style is quite different. Probably the temples of both sites 19 and 20 were built in a simple form of contemporary Indian style by or for Indian merchants at the Kedah entrepôt. They would thus supply a further example of the custom for which we already found evidence a couple of centuries earlier in the neighbourhood of Takuapa, the earlier Kalah. Incidentally the fact that a nine-chambered casket had been provided for what seems to have been a rather ordinary Indian temple situated in a commercial centre gives support, were it necessary, to the conclusions at which we have arrived as to the foundation deposit function of the chambered caskets at the Bukit Batu Pahat temple (site 8).

Such later Indian contacts, of an essentially commercial nature, seem to be further indicated by a finely carved sandstone pedestal located by me at site 24 (Tikam Batu) some distance from the right bank of the River Muda.[21]

[20] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, "Recent Progress in Malay Archaeology", *JGIS*, Vol. VIII, 1941, p. 5.
[21] "Arch. Researches", p. 41 and pl. 74.

Since, on the hillock on which it was found, it was associated with some very crudely carved stones of poor quality, and apparently late ruined brick shrines, it seems possible that the pedestal was at some time brought here from elsewhere. Perhaps it was transported from Pengkalen Bujang, as it easily could have been by inland waterway. I concluded after examining it that it was a Hindu *vedika* (fire altar) or the pedestal of an image, being misled by the absence of a *snānadroṇī*. But in an interesting re-study of it Dr Sullivan showed that this would originally have been present.[22] He reached his conclusions on the basis of analogy to certain Cham stone pedestals, and especially the well-known one from Tra-kieu. The latter shows in the centre of the upper surface a very similar redented recess, into which the still extant *snānadroni* bearing the *liṅga* is fitted. Sullivan's tentative restoration on the Cham analogy enables us to recognize without a doubt what was the function of the Tikam Batu pedestal. However he rejects Cham influence, and I think rightly so, since the pedestal lacks any distinctive Cham decoration. He concludes: "It is more likely that this is a South Indian style which left its mark on Kedah in its passage to Champa. Sri P. R. Srinivasan, Curator of Archaeology in the Government Museum, Madras, is of the opinion (expressed in a private letter to me) that it is a comparatively late piece and has some affinities with early Coḷa works of art." He thinks that so fine an object would not be likely to have been made after the Coḷa raid of A.D. 1025, but in view of the rapidity with which the old

[22] *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. XX, pt. 4.

wounds healed, I do not think it is necessary to insist on that.

Satingphra, situated on the narrow spit bordering the Inland Sea (Thale Sap) north of Songkhla, was practically unknown to historians before the early 1960s, but it is now clearly recognizable as the east coast counterpart of Pengkalen Bujang. I was at first inclined to think of Satingphra from the point of view of its having replaced the languishing Patani by what might have appealed to the Śrīvijayans as a better port, yet still in Langkasuka territory and inheriting its name. I now think that this perhaps makes too much of Langkasuka, which the Śrīvijayans may have simply by-passed in favour of the all important Ch'aiya which controlled the main trans-peninsular route. Moreover this leaves too long a hiatus between the decline of Patani, probably by the ninth century, and the earliest date we can give to the foundation of Satingphra in the eleventh century. It could still be that Satingphra inherited some of the prestige of Langkasuka, and was the place known to the Coḷa raiders of 1025 as Ilangāsogā (if their inscription is to be taken literally) and to Chao Ju-kua as twelfth-century Ling-ya-ssu-chia. Otherwise we must feel suprised that so important a place as Satingphra then was, remained unknown to this well-informed Chinese Commissioner of Foreign Trade.

However that may be, I now feel that the foundation of Satingphra may best be seen as fitting into the picture of Śrīvijayan withdrawal from the northern Isthmian region, under Khmer pressure in the eleventh century. It would seem likely that Śrīvijayan commerce requires only one major entrepôt on each coast, and that under this hostile pressure Ch'aiya as an entrepôt was replaced by

Satingphra just as at the same time Takuapa was replaced by Kedah. But there is reason to believe that, as political and religious capital of peninsular Śrīvijaya, Ch'aiya was otherwise replaced, as we shall see later in this chapter.

The old town of Satingphra is situated about twenty miles north of the tip of its narrow sandy peninsula. It is only about 300 yards from the old coast line on the east, and about two miles from the Inland Sea on the west, to which it was connected by canal. Its small size for such a late foundation — it measures only about 350 yards square — is in keeping with its purpose as being purely that of an entrepôt, rather than a normal urban centre, although many of the inhabitants would have lived outside in peaceful times. The enclosure has a ten-yard wide moat with right-angle corners, inside which was a brick wall about 3 ft. 8 in. broad. Little sign of this wall now remains above ground. The existence of such defences might suggest that, whereas nothing of the sort appears to have been needed at west coast sites (so far as the archaeological evidence goes),[23] even the Śrivijayans, like Langkasuka previously, seem to have felt the need for such precautions on the China Sea. Or was it merely a matter of protecting valuable cargoes against dacoits and robbers for which even in modern times the district has an unenviable reputation?

My first visit to Satingphra in 1964 was just a brief visit of inspection to the site, during which I noticed the frequency of Sung type ceramics in the soil. I devoted more attention to the objects said to have come from

[23] The "great walls" with which the Arabs endowed Kalah (Wheatley, op. cit., Chapter XIV) could have been merely palisades magnified by the travellers' imagination.

the neighbourhood which were preserved at the Wat Machimawas Museum, Songkhla. It was the existence among these of several more ancient sculptures, dating from perhaps the eighth century, including the long-robed Viṣṇu torso and the five-chambered stone casket already discussed, that led me, and also quite independently O'Connor, to the now evidently erroneous conclusion that Satingphra was founded as early as the eighth century. My trial excavations, carried out at the site ten years later, convinced me that this was not the case. They pointed rather to the probable existence of some pre-Śrīvijayan shrines in the district (perhaps comparable to those above mentioned at Sichon), from which at some time these older objects had been gathered in. Over a number of years prior to my first visit, ceramics found by cultivators and others had been presented to the Songkhla museum, and these were carefully studied and described by Dr Lamb.[24] On the evidence of these ceramics alone (for some reason he ignored the pre-Śrīvijayan sculptures) he dated the site from about A.D. 1200, continuing as late as the fourteenth or fifteenth century. In doing so he took into account surface finds, in a place which may have known sporadic later occupation, as well as gifts to the museum not certainly coming from Satingphra. These included Sawankalok ware which the abbot categorically informed me did not come from Satingphra.

Since the greater part of the Satingphra enclosure is occupied by a school, the buildings of which border a central football ground, my trial trenches had to be limited to the northern fringe within the enclosing wall.[25] The

[24] A. Lamb, "Notes on Satingphra", *JMBRAS*, Vol. XXXVII, pt. 1, 1964, pp. 74–86, with 25 plates.
[25] H. G. Quaritch Wales, "Langkasuka and Tāmbraliṅga: some archaeological notes", *JMBRAS*, Vol. XLVII, pt. 1, 1974, pp. 30 f., and pls. 10, 11.

ceramic deposits found in my trenches extended down to a depth of about 3 ft. 9 in., at which natural sand was reached. Sung type glazed sherds were found down to this level, together with fine-grained local earthenware, only exceptionally showing any sign of stamped decoration. There was no blue and white, and nowhere did I see anything from the trenches that I should identify as Sawankalok. The local wares were of a homogeneous character, which precluded any suggestion that sherds from an older stratum might have become mixed with the Sung types. Besides fine Lung-chuan celadons there were greenish glazed sherds of wares with moulded decoration similar to those found at Ch'aiya and Pengkalen Bujang, possibly of Tongking origin. There were also fragments of other Chinese wares described by Lamb from whole specimens in the Songkhla museum, including crackled wares, stonewares, white porcelains, with one fragment of the same ware as the white porcelain jar with moulded decoration shown in Lamb's plate 13a. A lady who occupied a house just beyond the northern moat, produced an example of this ware, a vessel $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, lacking only the lid and spout, which had been found between the wall and moat by men digging for bricks to build the foundations of her house. No fragments of glass and no beads were found in our excavations.

A number of Śrīvijayan style bronzes, mostly Mahāyānist, have been found in or near Satingphra. In view of the schematic character of their ornament, I doubt if they can be dated earlier than the eleventh or twelfth century. I do not think there is any reason to suppose that they were objects of trade, but one must always bear in mind that those images that are of Hindu gods, especially

if not definitely of Śrīvijayan style, might have been brought by Indian merchants. The others, I should suppose, come from Śrīvijayan Buddhist temples or, in view of their relatively small size, may have been private icons. It appears likely that, as in the Tāmbraliṅga region, many small Śrīvijayan Buddhist temples have been built over by Hīnayānist *wats*. This is indicated in the case of the local *wat* situated just outside the Satingphra enclosure, its *stūpa* having a cruciform base apparently of Śrīvijayan origin.

Of the Mahāyānist bronzes in the Songkhla museum, Lamb illustrated the extant upper half of a four-armed Avalokiteśvara (height 6 inches), a seated Bodhisattva, evidently Padmapāni, height just over 6 inches, and another standing four-armed Bodhisattva, height 5 inches. Boisselier illustrated in addition a seated image, perhaps Maitreya, $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches.[26] Lamb also illustrated three Hindu bronzes, one a Kubera, height just under 6 inches, a standing figure which appears to represent a Śaivite ascetic, about 5 inches high, with which may be compared the evidently earlier bronze found at Jalong, Perak,[27] and a standing Śiva, about a foot high. Contrary to Lamb's statement, it appears that the Śiva was not found within the Satingphra enclosure, but in a mound destroyed in road construction at Nong Hoi, half-way between Satingphra and the southern tip of its peninsula. Near it was found a *snānadroṇī* having three round mortises, into one of which the Śiva image had evidently been fitted. I was further told that the balustrade terminal in the

[26] *Arts Asiatiques*, Vol. XX, 1969, fig. 34. Another four-armed Avalokiteśvara is illustrated in *Borannakhadi*, IV, pt. 4, 1973.
[27] A. B. Griswold, "The Jalong Bronze", *FMJ*, Vol. VII, 1962, pp. 64 ff.

museum, which I formerly understood to have come from Satingphra, also came from this mound. The site appears to have been one of an isolated sanctuary, perhaps in the twelfth century situated not far from the then tip of the sand-spit. I illustrate here two small bronzes more recently found in the Satingphra vicinity, and donated to the museum: one is an Avalokiteśvara with tiger head represented on the right thigh, the other is at present unidentified (Pl. 17).

The absence of both Middle Eastern glass and pottery at Satingphra would indicate that the Arabs did not themselves frequent this entrepôt. While the pottery, as we have seen, would have been for the merchants' own use ashore, glass-ware being an item of commerce its absence might make one hesitant to see an overland trade route between Pengkalen Bujang and Satingphra. Nevertheless such is the similarity of the Chinese ceramics at both entrepôts that Lamb proposed to see in each of them the terminus of a land route in Śrīvijayan times. With this I at first agreed, suggesting that Satingphra, rather isolated on its sand-spit, must have been a kind of outpost for Phathalung, on the western shore of the Inland Sea. However I abandoned this view after making enquiries at Phathalung for any ancient site there or in its vicinity. I discovered that the present town of Phathalung is quite modern, and although I was shown a couple of ramparted enclosures within a few miles, which might have been earlier sites of the town, my examination convinced me that neither went further back than the Ayudhya period.

There were of course the well-known deposits of Mahāyānist votive tablets of the period, stamped with Bodhisattva figures, which have been found in large

quantities in the caves of Phathalung's remarkable limestone massifs.[28] But such objects can be found in many places between Ch'aiya and Perlis, as for example the one I illustrate from Trang (Pl. 18A). They do not necessarily betoken the existence of a town in the neighbourhood: they are the result of the pious activities of pilgrims who brought them from afar to the limestone caves. These remote retreats were often turned into sanctuaries, and in one near Yala there still survives what is perhaps the only known example of Śrīvijayan mural painting.[29] Again, the well-known Brahmans of Phathalung and Nak'on, or rather their ancestors, do not take us back to Śrīvijayan times, for they were frequent arrivals from South India. Those that made their way to Ayudhya or Bangkok brought with them manuscripts, known from later copies, which were written in a Pāṇḍyan script of not earlier than the thirteenth century.

That there was no town of Phathalung in Śrīvijayan times is further supported by local tradition, as told to the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition in 1962 by the Phathalung education officer, and independently repeated to me by a Phathalung abbot twelve years later. According to this tradition Phathalung was a replacement of Satingphra some time after the fall of Śrīvijaya, the people having decided to come inland; the two places had no contemporary existence, apart from later sporadic occupation by Thai villagers, and the present quite new settlement at Satingphra. Thus no doubt is felt locally that Phathalung is a successor to Satingphra.

We do know, after all, that Śrīvijaya was essentially a

[28] The classic study of these objects is G. Cœdès, "Tablettes votives bouddhiques du Siam", *Études Asiatiques*, Vol. I, 1925, pp. 145–67.
[29] Silpa Birasri, *The Origin and Evolution of Thai Murals*, Bangkok, 1959.

sea power, and her primary purpose in expanding to the Peninsula had been to re-establish the sea routes. Land routes under her jurisdiction were mainly used for the local distribution of imports and the collection of produce for export. Later in this chapter we shall see that it was probably with Nak'on, not Phathalung, that Satingphra's local intercourse was concerned. In this context of primarily sea-borne traffic, similarity of the Chinese wares at Pengkalen Bujang to those of Satingphra finds a simple explanation in that they emanated from the same sources in China. It would appear that only one entrepôt was required at a time on each coast, and the simultaneous establishment of Satingphra and Pengkalen Bujang further finds an equally simple explanation as the inevitable response to the increasing pressure of Khmer power on the northern frontier.

The decline of Ch'aiya after the tenth century seems to be indicated culturally by the absence of any further building of temples of the style or magnitude of Wat P'ra Thāt, and by the absence of large stone or bronze images of a quality comparable to the splendid products of the eighth–tenth centuries. That Ch'aiya actually fell into Khmer hands during the eleventh century, and became a province of the Khmer empire, cannot be doubted, despite the confused statements of Chao Ju-kua, as de Casparis has pointed out.[30] It was formerly thought that Suryavarman I was the son of a King Sujita of Tāmbraliṅga, which as Tan-lieu-mai sent an embassy to China in 1001, thus securing its complacency. It was supposed that this prince, soon afterwards, and acting independently of

[30] "The Date of the Grahi Buddha", *JSS*, Vol. LV, pt. 1, 1967, p. 39, note 27.

the Śrīvijayan suzerain, invaded Kambuja and succeeded in gaining the Khmer throne. However Cœdès later showed that this was not the case, and that Suryavarman was the rightful heir who defeated a would-be usurper from Tāmbraliṅga.[31] This makes it the more understandable that Suryavarman, after securing his succession, and embarking on a career of conquest in Siam, did not stop at the occupation of Dvāravatī, but went on to take possession of the northern part of his defeated adversary's homeland, including its capital. Śrīvijaya was evidently unable to prevent the loss. This new interpretation of the relationship of Kambuja to the northern part of Tāmbraliṅga as one of annexation is much more logical than the former supposition that they were allies. It does not lead one into the difficulty experienced by Wolters[32] of having to think that the Tāmbraliṅga attacked by the Coḷas in 1025 was part of a Śrīvijaya–Tāmbraliṅga–Kambuja bloc.

The extensive rectangular enclosure of Nak'on Si Thammarat, with its medieval brick walls and many Buddhist temples (mainly of the Ayudhya period) is too well known to require description, especially since its principal and always well-maintained monastery of Wat Mahāthāt was minutely described by Lajonquière.[33] What I am chiefly interested in is in attempting to determine the age of this city, and the period during which it may have played a leading role under Śrīvijayan hegemony. We know that the great bell-shaped *stūpa*, with statues of

[31] G. Cœdès, "Stèle de Prâsât Bèn", *Inscriptions du Cambodge*, Paris, 1964, Vol. 7, pp. 164–89. That the Chiengmai Pāli chronicles would have referred to eleventh-century Tāmbraliṅga by its later name of Śridhammanagara is quite understandable.

[32] "Tāmbralinga", *Bull. School Orient. Afr. Studies*, XXI, 1958, p. 597.

[33] *BCAI*, 1912, pp. 144–57.

elephants emerging from its base, was built in the thirteenth century under Ceylon influence. From then on the temple became a much venerated shrine of Hīnayāna Buddhism, and the city continued as a leading provincial centre under Thai rule. But how long previously had a temple, and indeed a city of note, existed on this spot?

Some light is initially thrown on this problem by the existence of a rough model of the early sanctuary as it appeared before the Ceylon *stūpa* was erected over it (Pl. 18B). It was Claeys who first drew attention to the existence of such models, both here and in other cities in Siam, preserving to a large extent the appearance of earlier shrines prior to their reconstruction in a different style.[34] In this case the reduced model stands near the central court, towards the east gate. It has a cruciform plan with a niche on each face, and above this central massif the body of the building rises in decreasing stages towards the crowning member, a tall bell-shaped *stūpa*. Over each projection from the base is a miniature building provided with a niche and crowned by a pointed *stūpa*. Now in comparing this with the probably ninth or tenth century Wat P'ra Thāt sanctuary at Ch'aiya, we must bear in mind that the superficial decoration is unlikely to be original and that a model could not be expected to show all the minor features of an actual sanctuary. Nevertheless one cannot but be struck by the simplification of the rapidly reducing stages of the superstructure. This does not suggest that the original could have had, as at Ch'aiya, the stages reproducing more or less faithfully the features of the central massif. The suggestion of this model is that its original was already of a far more schematic and less impressive design than is preserved for us by the

[34] J. Y. Claeys, op. cit., pp. 14 f.

Ch'aiya building. It might well date from a couple of centuries later.

As we have already seen, there are images at Nak'on that long antedate the Śrīvijaya period. Such was the case also at Satingphra, but at Nak'on, as was similarly the custom at Ayudhya, these had at sometime or other been brought into a *wat*, principally Wat Mahāthāt. That is to say, unless they had indeed originated on that spot. Excavations at anywhere so sacred as Wat Mahāthāt may never be undertaken; and one may say that it would need a great many trial trenches to be convincing that there was no earlier occupation of any part of the city enclosure. However such trial excavations as I have been able to undertake at Nak'on suggest that the city may not antedate the eleventh century. The supposition of O'Connor[35] that "the ruined walls of an old city" beyond the southern end of the present city are probably the remains of a much earlier city has been shown by Nikhom Suthiragsa to be incorrect.[36] He concluded that it was a thirteenth-century foundation of King Candrabhanu, including several *wats*, which were afterwards abandoned owing to an epidemic.

In the interior of the Nak'on enclosure are the remains of two brick built Brahmanic temples in connexion with which, until the end of last century, the Brahmans regularly performed ceremonial similar to that of the Bangkok court Brahmans. One was a Śiva temple (incorrectly referred to by Lajonquierè as Na P'ra Narai),[37] now protected by a modern structure built over it, the other is an older Śiva temple. This is situated some six

[35] *Hindu Gods of Peninsular Siam*, p. 23.
[36] "The Archaeological Story of Phra Wieng City", *Silpakon*, Vol. 15, no. 4, 1971.
[37] Op. cit., p. 159.

hundred yards further south, and has been deserted for many years. It was there that I was able to carry out limited trial excavations in 1935.[38] As to the original style of these temples it is difficult to form any precise idea, since they have obviously been rebuilt with modern bricks during the Ayudhya period, and probably more than once. But in general it can be said that they are likely to have been porched shrines somewhat resembling the Hindu temple at site 19, Pengkalen Bujang; and, as with that temple, nothing can be said of the roof structure which has entirely disappeared. The double wall at the back of the sanctuary of the deserted temple indicates that its enclosure wall is likely to be a later addition. Both temples are much more likely to have been founded for Brahmans arriving from South India, and taking service at the court of Nak'on, than to have any connexion with Java, as was at first suggested. If one of the *liṅgas* found is of a style which O'Connor[39] thinks suggests its early date, this, as indeed he appreciates, could no more provide an early date for the temple and city than can the other early sculptures preserved at Nak'on.

Though in 1935 I dug five considerable trenches beside and in front of the cella of the deserted Śiva temple I found only Sung type sherds down to the lowest level of the deposits. This gives good grounds to suppose that the temple did not exist prior to the eleventh century. That such dating could probably be applied to the city more generally is indicated by what I saw in 1974 of two extensive private collections of Chinese ceramics at Nak'on. These collections were made both in the city and in its environs, and comprised fine examples both of

[38] *J. A. & L.*, Vol. IX, no. 1, 1935, pp. 23–5 and fig. 3.
[39] Op. cit., pp. 23 ff. and fig. 5.

Sung wares and of blue and white. The presence of the latter is not surprising in view of Nak'on's having remained a prosperous centre down to the present day. What I think is of importance is that one of the collectors, who had himself taken part in much digging, assured me that there never was any stratum with only local sherds beneath those of Sung type.

During my stay in Nak'on in 1974 I heard of a place called Tha Rua, some four miles south of the city. Its name appeared to denote that it had been the old port or landing place of Nak'on. In garden land less than a hundred yards from the road there was a mound which had been extensively dug into. The remains appeared to be those of a brick structure, and three stone bracket capitals which had come to light had been removed to the Nak'on museum. Since they probably date from the fourteenth century, after the period with which we are here concerned, I will leave consideration of them until a later chapter. What primarily interested me was the adjoining habitation area, which I thought might throw light on the age of the city of which it had been the port.

Having arranged to carry out a trial excavation at this place, I had a trench dug on the apparently undisturbed area not far from the mound.[40] Down to about twenty inches there was only sterile sand, but below that was humus containing frequent fragments of Sung celadons and white porcelain, to a depth of just below a yard, when natural sand was reached. Together with the Sung there were found sherds of domestic pottery often having stamped designs which differed in detail from similar ware known from Johore (Pl. 20A). Only one or two

[40] *JMBRAS*, Vol. XLVII, pt. 1, 1974, p. 35 and pl. 12.

similarly decorated fragments were found at Satingphra. The conclusion of this trial excavation is that nothing was found to suggest an earlier date here, and possibly also for Nak'on, than eleventh century.[41] It would seem probable that Tha Rua continued to be used as a port for some time when the area passed under Thai rule, but as Nak'on's interests became more oriented towards the north the present port of Tha Pe would have taken its place. It appears likely that Nak'on was only thus accessible by sea to the Thai in fair weather. The experienced yachtsman Warington Smyth remarked that the Nak'on Bight "is no place to be in when there is any chance of an on-shore gale, for there is no shelter for an ordinary vessel for eighty miles; it is entirely exposed, and an awful sea rolls in upon the banks".[42]

Did this apply also to the Śrīvijayans, and was their shipping equally restricted? The answer is no, for the Malays were adepts at making use of sheltered inland waterways, and it so happened that nature had provided them with one, requiring only small improvement, which gave all weather safe navigation to the Inland Sea — and Satingphra. A canal some fifteen miles long running east from Nak'on connects it with the mouth of the Phanang river, not far from where it empties into the Nak'on Bight. This river flows along the east coast from a point near the northern end of the Inland Sea, to which a short canal and the Ranot River give access. Before the silting process had gone so far as it has today this waterway was doubtless in regular use by boats bringing merchandise from Satingphra, including the Chinese ceramics which

[41] In Chapter VIII I shall consider further evidence pointing to the relatively late founding of Nak'on.
[42] Op. cit., Vol. II, p. 123.

we can now admire in the Nak'on museum and in the private collections of the city. The existence of this waterway was known to Lajonquière who remarked that, at the time he wrote, it could still be used in times of high water by "boats of five or six rowers".[43]

So here we discover the purpose of Satingphra's contemporary existence, so far as this was concerned with the inland as distinct from the purely entrepôt trade: its purpose was to serve not the as yet non-existent Phathalung but Nak'on Si Thammarat, which probably in the eleventh century became the capital of Śrīvijaya's peninsular dominions. From this situation control of the old trans-peninsular route was no longer practical politics but its loss was of no great importance since Kambuja was not a sea power. Indeed it is evident that, situated in its fertile plain, with the near proximity of both jungle clad hills producing forest products and of rich mining areas, the fortunate conjunction with the finest harbour on the east coast offered northern Śrīvijaya two final centuries of prosperity. Looking northwards only defensively, Nak'on's vital interests lay in the south, and one must admire the ingenuity and skill with which the Śrīvijayans adapted to a changing situation and made the most of the natural advantages open to them.

Yet this Khmer proximity must have presented a continuing threat to the northern part of the Isthmian tract, so that we may well suppose that Kedah had now become in effect the chief centre of Śrīvijayan power in the Peninsula. It was there that the Śrīvijayans had obtained their first foothold and, as we shall see in the

[43] *BCAI*, 1912, p. 148. The inland waterway is indicated on his map in *BCAI*, 1909.

next chapter, it was thither that early in the thirteenth century the pressure of events forced them to withdraw.

I must add that in a recent article[44] O'Connor seeks to establish that the Khmers occupied the whole of Tāmbraliṅga in the eleventh century. He bases this conclusion on evidence that at present consists mainly of a few small Khmer bronze objects preserved in regional collections. Not long ago I entertained a similar view;[45] but such considerations as the undoubted Śrīvijayan style of the architectural model at Wat Mahāthāt, Nak'on, and the difficulty, in the context of a Khmer occupation of all Tāmbraliṅga, of explaining the apparent rise of Nak'on at the expense of Ch'aiya, and the connexion with Satingphra, lead me to prefer the interpretation I have given above.

[44] "Tāmbraliṅga and the Khmer Empire" *JSS*, Vol. 63, pt. 1, 1975, pp. 161–75.
[45] *JMBRAS*, Vol. XLIII, pt. 1, 1970, p. 33.

CHAPTER VII

CANDRABHĀNU AND THE BUDDHA OF GRĀHI

THE thirteenth century was a critical period for much of Greater India, seeing as it did the weakening of the Khmer empire in the face of Thai pressure, and the downfall of Śrīvijaya. While the latter was ultimately brought about by simultaneous attacks by the Thai and the Javanese, it is important to realize that this had been largely facilitated through a deterioration in the trading conditions of the great thalassocracy. It appears that foreign shipping, especially the Chinese during Sung times, had become increasingly impatient of the Śrīvijayan monopoly, and often tried to trade directly with the producers at such ports as Lamuri in northern Sumatra. Whereas formerly only local shipping had been obliged to bring their produce into Palembang, Chou Chü-fei, writing in 1178, and Chao Ju-kua who largely copied from him half a century later, state that any ship passing Palembang without entering would be attacked.[1] No doubt, where applicable, the same conditions applied to the Śrīvijayan entrepôts on the Peninsula. The encouragement given by the foreign shippers must have led to increasing restiveness on the part of vassals in Sumatra and on the Peninsula who were ready, when opportunity offered, to resume their original position as independent states.

[1] O. W. Wolters, *Early Indonesian Commerce*, pp. 240, 252.

Then there was a new cultural factor for much of northern Greater India, including the northern part of the Peninsula, which played a part in undermining established regimes. This was the reintroduction of Hīnayāna Buddhism, coming from Ceylon.[2] Though Martaban subsequently became an important centre for the relay of these teachings it would seem that the earliest emissaries from Ceylon made their way to Siam and Cambodia via Nak'on. Conditions became ripe for a zealous Buddhist ruler of Tāmbraliṅga to assert his independence of Śrīvijaya, just as at almost the same time at Sukhodaya the Thai King Śrī Indraditya was establishing at the expense of the Khmer empire the independent kingdom of Sukhodaya. This new Isthmian ruler was Candrabhānu. While throwing off the yoke of Śrīvijaya it seems probable that, owing to the weakening of the Khmers on the north, he was able to reincorporate the lost district of the old capital Ch'aiya, the *sruk* Grāhi as it had become known under Khmer control (Kia-lo-hi to the Chinese). If Candrabhānu's main role in history was, like his Thai contemporary, to aid in ushering in what was to be the religion of Siam down to the present day, the fact remains that he is virtually the only individual mentioned in this book of whom our information allows us to form some idea as a personality. So we must try to do him justice.

We can judge of Candrabhānu's status, paying homage neither to Śrīvijaya nor to Kambuja, from his Sanskrit inscription of A.D. 1230, which could only have been

[2] In contemporary Java the situation was entirely different, as a result of the arrival of monks fleeing from Nālandā, bringing with them what I have elsewhere referred to as a "fifth wave" of Indian influence. This temporarily reinforced the official Mahāyānism there, introducing a purely Pāla style of sculpture, all of which was quickly superseded in the fourteenth century by the Javanese resurgence of the Majapahit kingdom.

indited by a king who felt himself completely independent: "Fortune! There was a king Śrī Dharmarājā, Lord of Tāmbraliṅga, who gave extreme felicity to the religion of the Buddha . . . having for origin this lamp which is the family of those who begat the Family of the Lotus, like unto Cupid having the radiance of the moon (candrabhānu), as expert in policy as Dharmāśoka and Lord of the family of the five . . . Fortune! Happiness! There was a king, support of the Family of the Lotus, Lord of Tāmbraliṅga, strong in the arm . . . by the power of his good works with regard to all men (possessing) in some degree the power of the sun and moon . . . the bearer of world-famed glory, Śrī Dharmarāja, named Candrabhānu. In Kaliyuga 4332 (A.D. 1230)."[3] Most of the inscription is illegible but seems to commemorate gifts to a Buddhist foundation. We have seen that, as one might expect from its contents, there is reason to believe that it was found at Nak'on, not at Ch'aiya.

Now this remarkable king, turning from the Mahāyānism which had been the religion of his forbears for centuries, was, like some other more famous Buddhist rulers, no passive convert. He seems to have entertained ideas of aggrandisement which led to the desire to possess some of the most sacred relics of his newly adopted faith. Though he appears to have held the centre of the peninsular stage for the best part of forty years, his aggressive policy finally led to a weakness which paved the way for his state's loss of independence to his more successful Buddhist rival, the Thai king of Sukhodaya.

Both Candrabhānu's very real independence and his

[3] From the French translation of G. Cœdès, *Recueil*, p. 43.

efforts to rank as a great Buddhist king are clearly indicated by the account of his warlike activities that is given in the *Cūḷavaṁśa*. This Ceylon chronicle provides much relevant information of events in the reign of the Sinhalese king Parakrāmabāhu II: "When the eleventh year of the reign of this king had arrived, a king of the Jāvakas (the Tāmbraliṅga Malays) known by the name of Candrabhānu, landed with a terrible Jāvaka army under the treacherous pretext that they also were followers of the Buddha. All these wicked Jāvaka soldiers who invaded every landing place, and who with their poisoned arrows, like to terrible snakes, without ceasing harassed the people whomever they caught sight of, laid waste, raging in their fury, all Laṅkā."[4]

This was in 1247, and it seems that Candrabhānu had made his plans carefully, for not only did he at first pretend that he had come on a peaceful mission, but at some time earlier he had sent a party of Malays who had been allowed to make a settlement in Ceylon. When Candrabhānu's hostile intentions became apparent, Parakrāmabāhu sent his nephew at the head of a force which defeated the invader who seems to have been obliged to leave the island. However the settlement of Malays remained, with Candrabhānu's own son at their head. One may suppose that at that time the Sinhalese king was anxious not to lose population, just as in Siam and Burma one of the actual purposes of warfare was to carry off civilians from one side to the other. According to Pāṇḍyan inscriptions the Pāṇḍyans subsequently invaded Ceylon, in 1258 and again in 1263, and were successful in establishing their rule over a part of the island. It would

[4] W. Geiger, *The Cūḷavaṁsa*, English version, London, 1973, Chapter 83, verses 36 ff.

appear that the Indians saw in Candrabhānu's son a useful ally, for after their victory they confirmed him in his rule over the Malay settlement, though whether he was thus aligned willingly or by force is not known.

However this may be, it appears that Candrabhānu, on his second expedition to Ceylon in 1270, took the precaution of adding to his own forces a large number of soldiers recruited in South India, but all to no avail, as the *Cūḷavaṁśa* informs us: "At that time the Lord of Men, Candrabhānu, formerly beaten after hard fighting, having collected from the countries of the Paṇḍus and Coḷas and elsewhere many Damiḷa soldiers representing a great force, landed with his Jāvaka army in Mahātittha. After the king had brought over to his side Sīhalas dwelling in Paḍī, Kurundi and other districts, he marched unto Subhagiri. He set up there an armed camp and sent forth messengers with the message: 'I shall take Tisīhala; I shall not leave it to thee. Yield up to me therefore together with the Tooth-Relic of the sage, the Bowl-Relic and the royal dominion. If thou wilt not, then, fight!'" Again, and this time finally, the outcome was disastrous for the aggressor. The *Cūḷavaṁśa* continues: "After Vijayabāhu (Parakrāmabāhu's son) had thus fought and slain many soldiers, he sent the Lord of Men, Candrabhānu, flying defenceless. But, the loveliest women of his court and all the elephants and horses, with swords and many other weapons, the entire treasure, the trumpets of victory, the umbrella of victory, the drum of victory, all these he sent to his father."[5]

There is another source which perhaps sheds an additional ray of light on Candrabhānu's relations with Ceylon,

[5] Ibid., Chapter 88, verses 62 ff.

and suggests that his actions were at first motivated by a genuine desire to prosper the spread of Theravāda Buddhism. While it is understandable that his own acceptance of this religion would have tended to embitter his relations with Śrīvijaya, emboldening him to proclaim complete independence, the situation would have been quite different *vis-à-vis* the Thai of Sukhodaya. These, while considerably undermining the power of the Khmer empire, were already feeling their way southwards in a movement that would ultimately lead to the Thai absorption of Tāmbraliṅga. But at the time of which we are now speaking, about the middle of the thirteenth century, it would seem likely that Candrabhānu's relations with the Thai were entirely friendly, as became Buddhist monarchs with, it probably seemed, common political ideals. Thus it appears that, before his ambitions had risen so high as to demand the ultimate in sacred relics from Ceylon, Candrabhānu had given the Thai king his co-operation in obtaining a somewhat less important sacred object from Ceylon. It was, however, one which would for centuries enjoy in Siam the utmost esteem and reverence, though now known only from later copies: the Sihinga Buddha.

The story of this period of friendly co-operation between the two Buddhist monarchs is told us by that generally reliable Pāli chronicle the *Jinakālamālinī*.[6] According to this, King Indraditya (here referred to under the title Rocarāja) in 1256, so presumably near the end of his reign, descended the Menam with a large force of warriors and made his way to Nak'on. There is of

[6] Trans. G. Cœdès, "Documents sur l'histoire politique et religieuse du Laos occidental", *BEFEO*, Vol. XXV, 1925, p. 99.

course nothing inherently impossible about such a journey by sea, and such visits by fleets of barges were frequent enough during the Ayudhya period. One may nevertheless wonder that at this early period a Sukhodaya ruler actually made such a journey so far from his newly established capital. However we are told that the Thai king met with a great reception, in the course of which he heard about a certain Buddha image in Ceylon, the Sihinga Buddha, which had performed some very noteworthy miracles. He thereupon inquired whether it would be possible to go and see the image. Possibly mindful of his recent failure, Candrabhānu warned that the island was guarded by four powerful divinities, so it would be better to send a messenger.

The two kings then agreed to send a messenger to the Sinhalese ruler, asking for the image to be presented to them, Indraditya meanwhile returning to Sukhodaya. The Ceylon king assented to the request, one may suppose because he wished to ingratiate the rising Buddhist power of Sukhodaya. He gave the image to the messenger, after having done homage to it during seven days and nights. The journey of the statue to Nak'on was not without incident, and gave the opportunity for it to demonstrate its miraculous powers. For the junk was wrecked on a reef, but the image, through the help of the king of the Nāgas, floated on a plank for three days and arrived in the Nak'on vicinity. Candrabhānu learnt in a dream of the whereabouts of the image and set out with his ships to search for it. Being informed of the arrival of the image, Indraditya again came down to Nak'on to receive the statue, which he accompanied with all honour to Sukhodaya.

While discounting the inevitable embellishments and

usual accompanying miraculous occurrences, it cannot be doubted that some such intercourse did take place of which the lasting fame of the Sihinga Buddha, or at least of its copies, affords undeniable evidence. It may be supposed that Candrabhānu's attempts to obtain even more noted cult objects from Ceylon on his second expedition, owes something, if not to Thai instigation, at least to a desire to impress the Buddhist ruler who had carved out a kingdom from the Khmer empire. The question then arises as to from what port the messenger to Ceylon may have set sail, and where Sinhalese missionaries bound for Nak'on were wont to land: further, what was the port of embarkation from which the Malay settlers and ultimately the military expeditions set out? Cœdès, realizing the need for such a port, originally supposed that Candrabhānu probably had the port of Kaḍāram (Kedah) within his dominions, this place being mentioned in Pāṇḍyan inscriptions. However Nilakanta Sastri subsequently showed that the inscriptions mention the conquest of the Jāvakas (i.e. Candrabhānu's Malays) quite separately from their mention of the king of Kaḍāram. He is only included in a boastful list of kings supposed to have acknowledged the Pāṇḍyan king's suzerainty.[7] So there is no reason to doubt that Kedah still remained within the Śrīvijayan dominions. It seems to me that such west coast ports as Takuapa, or even Trang, could have satisfactorily served the purpose of giving Candrabhānu an outlet to the Bay of Bengal. On the other hand there does not seem to be any evidence to suggests that Kedah in the thirteenth century was at all influenced by Ceylon Buddhism.

[7] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, "Śrīvijaya, Candrabhānu and Vīra-Pāṇḍya", *Tijdschrift voor Ind. Taal, Land- en Volkenkunde*, 1937, pt. 2 p. 257.

This new Theravāda influence in the northern part of the Peninsula would, one feels, be certain to have been reflected to a greater or less extent in the Buddhist sculpture and architecture of the region. So far as the latter is concerned one only has to think of the great *stūpa* of Wat Mahāthāt, Nak'on. This was built some time in the thirteenth century as a copy of the Mahāthupa of Anurādhapura, with its surround of elephants, over the former Śrīvijayan sanctuary of which the model in the courtyard gives us some idea. Perhaps the very wish to construct and maintain such a memento of the old structure suggests a lingering desire not to break entirely with the time-honoured tradition.

So much the more so it would be, judging by what we have seen was the case in earlier centuries, when it came to casting new statues of the Buddha. With these the desire to conserve earlier styles is always more marked than in architecture, and was particularly the case in the old capital, Ch'aiya. I do not say that some close copies of introduced Ceylon Buddhas might not have been immediately made; but I think that we should certainly not expect to find any truly original style paralleling the style of Sukhodaya. That was formed by men who were as yet very marginal to Indian culture. They felt themselves free to respond to a great extent in their own way to a new emotional experience, which at the same time left scope for a degree of naturalistic expression.[8] Sculptors in Ch'aiya had been familiar for centuries with late Gupta style Buddhas (whether one ascribes them to early Tāmbraliṅga or to Dvāravatī), while at the same time they had for centuries been casting or chiselling Śrīvijayan

[8] Cf. H. G. Quaritch Wales, *Early Burma — Old Siam*, London, 1973.

style Mahāyānist deities. Then for the last two hundred years they had seen a demand for statuary in the Khmer style, resulting from Khmer proximity or occupation. It would certainly be surprising if hold-overs from these later Indianized styles, exactly as it had been earlier with the successive Indian waves, did not make themselves felt in the production of a new composite form of Buddhist image.

This supposition is in fact borne out to the fullest imaginable degree by a truly remarkable achievement: the Buddha of Grāhi (Pl. 19). This is a fine bronze figure of Buddha seated on a *nāga*, found in a field near Wat Hua Wieng, Ch'aiya. The Buddha and *nāga* throne were cast separately, and some characteristics of the Buddha, to which I shall refer presently, make it certain that this could not have been cast before the latter part of the thirteenth century. On the other hand the base of the *nāga* bears an inscription with a date which until recently was thought to be the equivalent of A.D. 1183. In that case the *nāga* would have been cast as the throne for some other image and only fitted to the existing one at a much later date. Even so we should be faced with a strikingly composite product, the more so as it combines two incidents of the Buddha's life, for the image is "calling the Earth to witness"! It would be an even more interesting commentary of the artistic psychology of the Ch'aiya sculptors if we could suppose, as now appears likely, that the *nāga* was made specially for this image in the late thirteenth century.

The inscription was first edited by Cœdès. It consists of five lines of old Khmer, in old Sumatran script, and gives details of the casting of the image by Talanai, governor of the province of Grāhi, during the reign of King Kamraten

aṅ Mahārāja Śrīmat-Trailōkyarāja-Mauḷibhūṣaṇavarmadeva, with a date which after some hesitation Cœdès believed to correspond to A.D. 1183. Subsequently it was recognized that the king's title was very reminiscent of that of a king of Śrīvijaya ruling towards the end of the thirteenth century. By this time, incidentally, Palembang had been replaced as capital by Malāyu (Jambi). Identification with this king would have been difficult to reconcile with the supposed date of the inscription, but the matter has recently been re-opened, with most interesting possibilities, by Dr de Casparis.[9]

He observes that if the throne was used for a later image, a re-dedicatory inscription would be expected. Secondly, he has shown that the king's title is virtually identical with that of the Sumatran ruler, and thirdly that the twelve-year animal cycle used in the dating is inconsistent with such an early date. The use of this cycle is not otherwise known in South-east Asia before King Rām Kamhèng of Sukhodaya's use of it about a century later, and Chou Ta-kuan's mention of its use in Cambodia about that time. Since the date in the inscription gives the year of the hare, de Casparis noted that we have the choice of two possible dates at this period, either 1279 or 1291. As the second alternative would be only one year before Rām Kamhèng announced the extension of his rule over Tāmbraliṅga (Nak'on Si Thammarat), this seems too late for the official of a Sumatran king to be making foundations at Ch'aiya.

It would seem more probable that it would have been soon after the defeats or possibly the death, of Candrabhānu, that Śrīvijaya-Malāyu made an effort to re-establish

[9] J. G. de Casparis, "The Date of the Grahi Buddha", *JSS*, Vol. LV, pt. 1, 1967, pp. 30–40.

dominion over Tāmbraliṅga, the Khmers to the north no longer having to be reckoned with. But it would have been a Śrīvijaya acting under the suzerainty of Java, for Kṛitanagara had conquered Malāyu in 1276, and soon after attacked the east coast of the Peninsula. However Śrīvijaya-Malāyu remained a state of some importance until the end of the thirteenth century, since it sent embassies to China in 1299 and 1301.[10] Such intervention by Malāyu might have then spurred Rām Kamhèng to step in as successor to Khmer interests in the Peninsula.

As to the composition of the inscription and its date, de Casparis finally makes some interesting observations which give, over and above what we can deduce from a study of the art, a further idea of the complicated cultural eddies that were each playing a part at this time in the region. He suggests that the scribe, while using the Śrīvijayan script, may have been a Khmer or a Malay trained by the Khmers; and that the astrologer employed would have been a Thai, or at any rate someone familiar with the twelve-year animal cycle as the Thai now were. In the circumstances it is not surprising if Chao Ju-kua should have confused reports really concerning the control of this region by Cambodia or Śrīvijaya at different times, as de Casparis suggests.[11]

When we come to examine the Buddha of Grāhi more closely, we are perhaps first struck by the curious circumstance that a *nāga* of such definitely late Khmer style, such as would have been made by craftsmen during the period of Khmer influence in the region, should have been used for the throne of such an unexpectedly different image.

[10] G. Cœdès, *Les États* . . . , p. 371.
[11] Loc. cit., p. 39, note 27.

So Dupont thought that the *nāga* being decorated with jewels meant that it had been originally intended for a Buddha wearing royal robes. That might have been the case, even if we accept the likelihood of its having been made in the late thirteenth century; and, whatever the original intention may have been, this would not detract from the fact that it was actually considered suitable, in Tāmbraliṅga, to serve as the base for the present image. The use of this throne having been noted as a remarkable element in the composite product, we turn to the image itself, which is really rather more interesting as providing evidence of the close combination of various styles.

Dupont noticed that, while everything else was quite different, the Grāhi Buddha showed certain characteristics of Thai art: the right hand in earth-touching attitude, the legs in *vīrasāna* (superimposed, not crossed), and the robe leaving the right shoulder bare, closely moulding the body and falling the length of the left side after crossing over the left shoulder. He thought that such similarities to Thai sculpture of Sukhodaya could be explained by common influences having been received from Ceylon in both cases.[12] This seems likely, for there are no stylistic resemblances to Sukhodaya art, which indeed was only then being formed, and was scarcely likely to have been diffusing its influence so far afield in the thirteenth century.

In a subsequent study it is to the other characteristics of the image, indicating the varied nature of its make-up, that Professor Griswold gives his main attention.[13] These include the heavy and bulging arrangement of the hair,

[12] P. Dupont, "Le Buddha de Grāhi et l'école de C'aiya", *BEFEO*, Vol. XLII, 1942, pp. 105 f.

[13] "Sculpture of Peninsular Siam in the Ayuthya Period, *JSS*, Vol. XXXVIII, pt. 2, 1951.

the almost hemispherical *uṣnīṣa*, the front of which is adorned with a *bodhi* leaf, while the scarf that falls over the left shoulder almost to the waist has the appearance of a pleated length of cloth. He points out that the head has much in common with a gilded sandstone head, probably of the same period, which was also found at Ch'aiya. This resemblance had also been noted by Dupont who illustrated it in his article. Griswold observed that the *uṣnīṣa* and hair arrangement of this head are very similar to that of the Grāhi Buddha, and when found it was decorated with a *bodhi* leaf which may have been original. But it is the facial features which, though a little different from those of the Grāhi Buddha, are very suggestive of Indo-Javanese models. And here I may interpolate that while Śrīvijayan Buddhas, as distinct from Bodhisattvas, are comparatively rare in the Peninsula, a small bronze Buddha image closely resembling the stone ones of Barabudur was found at Ch'aiya and is now in a private collection in Bangkok.[14]

Griswold was at the same time impressed with certain features which the Buddha of Grāhi has in common with certain images which Le May regarded as "late Dvāravatī."[15] Griswold thinks that these in reality constitute a mixed style in which in different examples Dvarāvatī, Khmer, and Thai elements are combined in varying proportions: this would seem to correspond very much to what, where they are found in central Siam, are usually labelled U T'ong. In particular Griswold emphasizes the close similarity of the position and form of the body in such statues and the Buddha of Grāhi; he also thinks that

[14] M. C. Subhadradis Discul, *Masterpieces from Private Collections*, Bangkok, 1970, fig. 14; Brah Guru Indapañňacharya, op. cit., pl. 31.
[15] R. Le May, *A Concise History of Buddhist Art in Siam*, Cambridge, 1938, pp. 48 f.

the pleated scarf may be imitated from certain Dvāravatī statues. Then again, some rather similar images, which were made later in Ch'aiya and of which we shall be speaking in the next chapter, have a cone-shaped ornament in the headdress which seems to come from late Dvāravatī art. He sums up by saying that a School of Ch'aiya "arose under mixed influences, not the least of which was the presence at Ch'aiya of a number of admired examples of more ancient styles."[16]

Possibly nowhere else in thirteenth-century South-east Asia were conditions more conducive to the production of one more example of limited originality on a grand scale: one in which it is no longer a question of holdovers having a limited effect on a new importation, but is for the most part a case of long existing arts meeting and here combining on almost equal terms. We are indeed fortunate in the survival of at least one outstanding complete example. That it is not likely to have been unique is indicated by the fact that, as we shall see, there are indications of a fairly extensive continuation of the tradition.

[16] Griswold, loc. cit., p. 34.

CHAPTER VIII

THE LATER CENTURIES

We shall begin by following the trend of cultural history in what had formerly been Tāmbraliṅga, but afterwards became the important Siamese province of Nak'on Si Thammarat. In addition to the Buddha of Grāhi, and the closely allied gilded sandstone head above mentioned, probably dating from the thirteenth century, Dupont noticed three bronze statuettes which he considered to belong to this same School of Ch'aiya.[1] This attribution is made on their iconographical peculiarities; artistically they are inferior, and he tentatively dated them from the fifteenth century. They are all standing figures with the right hand in *vitarka mudrā*, the left in *vara mudrā*. Two of them have the scarf in the form of a pleated fold of cloth, and falling over the left shoulder down to the waist. Furthermore two have the massive wig-like hair-dressing characteristic of the school, and one appears to have been decorated with a small *bodhi* leaf. The facial features of these small figures are too crudely treated to afford material for comment.

The above is interesting as showing the survival in decline for some time of this composite style which had been formed from a truly remarkable hybridization of pre-existing styles; but even more interesting is the fact that Professor Griswold has shown that as late as the seventeenth century the school experienced a remarkable

[1] P. Dupont, loc. cit., pp. 17–55.

revival.[2] This was due to the demand temporarily created by King Prasat Thong and his son King Narai, who wished to revive the making of stone images. They knew this had been a characteristic of Khmer art, which they wished to emulate. The intended style was to be that of the national Ayudhya school, itself formed from Dvāravatī, Khmer, and Sukhodaya elements, and the vast majority of the stone sculptures now turned out by the Ch'aiya atelier kept closely to this national style. A great number of stone statues closely adhering to this style, and monotonously repetitive, are to be seen in the gallery of Wat Pr'a Thāt, Ch'aiya, as well as more dilapidated ones at the sites of several old temples. Nevertheless Griswold discovered seven statues in the gallery of Wat P'ra Thāt which have distinctive characteristics preserving in a marked degree the style of the old school of Ch'aiya. This is not to say that they do not belong essentially to the national style; indeed it would no longer be true to say that they represent a combination of several styles. Rather they are of the Ayudhyan style with some features that are hold-overs from the school of Ch'aiya. Griswold enumerates these features as follows: they are standing figures, a posture rare in Ayudhyan *stone* images; the gestures are not those characteristic of the national school; in three of the images the robe falling from the extended forearm has a wavy outline, a feature found in some Dvāravatī images. Then in three of the stone figures there is the pleated scarf, such as is never found in normal Ayudhya art, but seems almost directly imitated from the Buddha of Grāhi. The heads of three of the statues lean a little forward, and in all of them the faces are unlike those

[2] Griswold, loc. cit.

of Ayudhyan art, being more Indian or Indonesian. They thus, remarks Griswold, recall the features of the Buddha of Grāhi and of the gilded sandstone head, more distantly bronze Śrīvijayan Buddhas. Finally, the style of the headdress is unusual: in five of the figures the *uṣṇīṣa* is set a little back, as in the school of Ch'aiya and some Śrīvijayan bronzes; but the most exceptional feature from the point of view of Ayudhya art is the presence of the *bodhi* leaf ornament.

Since old Dvāravatī (or Dvāravatī-like) and Śrīvijayan images must have been extant at Ch'aiya in the seventeenth century, indeed much more so than in our day, it is possible that their direct influence was felt then as it had been in the thirteenth. It is at least equally likely that the contribution was made rather by the already formed composite products of the school of Ch'aiya. In any case the old elements, in face of the dominating presence of the national school, could now exist only as hold-overs. And here Griswold is right to warn[3] that no true analogy exists with the part played by Sukhodaya in the formation of the national school, for there the Sukhodaya style was a prime component, just as the Dvāravatī and Śrīvijayan styles were prime components in the old school of Ch'aiya.

Nak'on, which continued during the Ayudhya period to be the chief city of Thai dominion in the Peninsula, often enjoyed great material prosperity. We have already referred to the P'ra Sihinga image reputed to have been brought from Ceylon in the thirteenth century, and now known only from copies of which the extant "P'ra Sihinga" of Nak'on is the only one which concerns us

[3] Ibid., p. 34, note 26.

here. It presumably dates from not later than the fourteenth century, and its many local copies may be considerably later. There is nothing Sinhalese about its style, which appears to be predominantly Chiengsen.[4] But the question remains as to whether what we see really results from Chiengsen influence or a parallel Pāla influence. Boisselier, in his recent publication *La Sculpture en Thailande* (p. 103) has suggested that there was a local School of Nak'on which from the thirteenth century revived an earlier art style recalling that of central Java. To me this appears unacceptable for the following reasons: Ch'aiya, which remained a place of considerable importance with its revered temple of Wat P'ra Thāt, had an old tradition of making fine Śrīvijayan sculpture, and we have seen that it later produced images with definite hold-overs. So it might be expected to have produced also images of "P'ra Sihinga" type style, if that was indeed a revival. But the provenance of such images always seems to be Nak'on, which is not noted for fine Śrīvijayan sculpture. That newly introduced thirteenth-century influences from Chiengsen or Nālandā should find acceptance at Nak'on, at that time the chief centre of Buddhist activity in the region, is surely what might be expected.

As to the great number of bronze copies of the "P'ra Sihinga" that were cast at Nak'on, they remain virtually of the same style, and thus show a significant contrast to the products of both the earlier and later schools of Ch'aiya. The pleated scarf, not found in the Chiengsen style, is common in Pāla images, and many of their derivatives. Thus no school of Nak'on, showing well-marked characteristics of earlier local styles, came into

[4] Ibid., pp. 37 ff.

existence. So here we have one more piece of evidence suggesting that Nak'on did not have a very long history as a leading city in Śrīvijayan times. This is the remaining piece of evidence that I said in Chapter VI would be forthcoming, and which I think provides further confirmation that Nak'on is not likely to have been founded before the eleventh century.

While Buddhism, now exclusively Theravāda, remained the official religion of the Siamese province of Nak'on, Brahmans from time to time recruited from South India continued to fill their traditional role at the court of the governor, who often had the status of a semi-independent ruler. It would also seem probable that the city continued to be frequented by Indian traders and these may well have been permitted to establish their own Hindu temple, as we have seen was the case in other ports in earlier times. There is some evidence for the existence of such a foundation at Tha Rua, the old port of Nak'on, which I have mentioned in Chapter VI in connexion with my trial excavation there in 1974. There had recently been recovered from the brick mound there, and transferred to the new museum, three carved stones, each 4 ft. 6 in. long (Pl. 20B). These I afterwards identified as brackets which had once surmounted pillars. In the South Indian Pāṇḍyan kingdom the bracket underwent considerable evolution from the plain Coḷa type, eventually attaining the lotus form that we have here about A.D. 1300, i.e. towards the end of Pāṇḍyan times.[5]

We have seen that King Candrabhānu recruited soldiers from the Pāṇḍyan kingdom for his campaigns, and this could have led to the establishment of a considerable

[5] G. Jouveau-Dubreuil, *Archéologie du Sud de l'Inde*, Paris, 1914, I, fig. 49 (d).

Tamil trading community at Tha Rua, who might have built a Hindu temple there. However we know that there was considerable Pāṇḍyan influence in Ceylon architecture, such as the well-known Yapahuwa stairway, so there is the possibility that Ceylon Buddhists were responsible for introducing this style at Tha Rua. This would be rather surprising since there appears to be no sign of such Pāṇḍyan influence at Wat Mahāthāt, of which the *stūpa* is so definitely attributable to Sinhalese inspiration. Further excavation at the Tha Rua site should enable this question to be settled.

Turning to the cultural history of the rest of the Peninsula during these later centuries of the "Hindu period", we are immediately conscious of the handicap we are under from the destruction of all contemporary images which, being the ones still in *pūjā* at the time of the conversion to Islam, had far less chance of escaping destruction than ancient ones which might have been lost or buried. A similar fate would have doubtless overtaken the temples, the sites often being used for the construction of mosques. However in Kedah we have enough archaeological evidence at least to recognize the sites of later capitals and establish the approximate dates of their occupation. It is this circumstance that suggests, in my opinion, a certain degree of credibility for the *Kedah Annals*, or *Hikayat Marong Mahawangsa* to give them their Malay title, dismissed by some authorities as pseudo-history. This is the inevitable verdict if one over-emphasizes their mythological content, and ignores the material statements subject to archaeological verification. Even apart from this, in dealing with such compilations, it seems reasonable to enquire whether there might not

exist some factual substratum which caused the author to introduce this or that particular mythological episode.

Lieutenant-Colonel James Low, the translator of the *Annals*[6] had more than twenty years of practical experience of the Kedah terrain, and what he saw had acted as an effective counterweight to the unacceptable embellishments. "The remains of numerous temples which I discovered, being induced to the search first accidentally by having seen some loose bricks lying in a spot in the forest, and afterwards from reading the above-noticed passages, when joined to the ruins of almost every fort and site described in this history of Kedah likewise found by me, are so far satisfactory, that they verify the main points of that history."[7] He then went on to stress that due allowance must be made for what he called the author's "sports of the imagination", for Low was not then in a position to know that what he ascribed to the author's imagination could in reality for the most part be identified as borrowings from Indian or Islamic literary sources.

The tabulation of material which I believe may possibly be factual, provided by the *Kedah Annals*, is with minor alterations the same as that which I proposed in my "Archeolological Researches" (page 82). In the *Annals* seven kings are mentioned by title as reigning in Kedah prior to the conversion to Islam, together with an interregnum of seven years. I omit, as before, the legendary adventurer, Marong Mahawangsa, and agree with Wheatley's suggestion[8] that he might be a folk memory of

[6] *Kedah Annals*, translated from the Malay by Lieutenant-Colonel James Low, reprinted Bangkok, 1908.
[7] Ibid., p. 181.
[8] P. Wheatley, *Impressions of the Malay Peninsula in Ancient Times*, Singapore, 1964, p. 40.

arrival from India of another culture-bearer of the Kauṇḍiṇya type. I allow an average of thirty years for each of the remaining six recorded reigns. This may not be too long, because there may well have been other and less notable kings whose reigns are not remembered. These six periods give a total of 187 years, which does not exceed what popular memory might vaguely have been able to account for when the *Annals* were written. Fortunately we know one date, A.D. 1474, when the last of the Hindu rulers was converted to Islam.[9] Soon after

Title of Ruler[10]	*Proposed dates* A.D.	*Data supplied by 'Kedah Annals'*
1. Raja Maha Podisat	*c.* 1295–*c.* 1325	Ruling at "Langkasuka" (i.e. Pengkalen Bujang sites). Claims to have extended dominion over Nak'on, Patani, and Perak.
2. Raja Sri Mahawangsa	*c.* 1325–*c.* 1355	Moves from "Langkasuka" (Bujang) to Sungai Muda, founding Srokam fort. Tributary to Nak'on.
3. Raja Maha Podisat	*c.* 1355–*c.* 1385	Remained at Srokam.
4. Raja Maha Prit Durya (Raja Bersiong)	*c.* 1385–*c.* 1415	Moved to Kota Aur. Develops "cannibal" characteristics.
Interregnum of seven years		
5. Raja Pra Ong Maha Podisat	*c.* 1422–*c.* 1452	Rules at Kota Aur.
6. Phra Ong Mahawangsa	*c.* 1452–*c.* 1476	Rules at Kota Aur (and built palace on Bukit Meriam). Converted to Islam (in 1474).

[9] R. Winstedt, "Notes on the History of Kedah", *JMBRAS*, Vol. XIV, pt. 3, p. 156.

[10] Low's transliteration is here maintained, though the titles are Siamese (derived from Pāli).

conversion, say two years, he abdicated and "not very long after", say another six years, he died. Supposing that his abdication shortened his reign from the average of thirty years to twenty-four, we may date the duration of his reign from *c.* 1452 to *c.* 1476. Working backwards we can then hypothetically establish the reigns of the other five kings and the interregnum as set out in the following table, to which I have appended the relevant points of information supplied by the *Annals* about each reign.

I shall now briefly recapitulate, with some amendment, my critical evaluation of the relevant statements in the *Kedah Annals*, in conjunction with the archaeological and other external evidence. In the first place we enquire whether there can be any basis of fact for the statement that a Kedah king, of about the period we have dated the first Raja Maha Podisat, extended his power over Nak'on. King Kṛitanagara of East Java had in 1275 conquered Malāyu, and about 1286 added Pahang to his dominions, so that any attempt by Malāyu to re-establish control over the Isthmus about 1279, such as we have seen may be indicated by the Grāhi inscription, would have been under Javanese suzerainty. Sukhodaya had then stepped in, but retained its power over Nak'on only until about 1300.

With the weakening of Malāyu, Kedah about this time found itself in the unusual position of being independent, while at the same time it had been enjoying a period of considerable prosperity, deriving from its pre-eminence among Śrīvijayan possessions on the Peninsula. It would not be surprising if it had taken advantage of these favourable circumstances to increase its dominions, and the period at which this was possible coincides with what is apparently claimed by the *Annals*. Furthermore we know that in ancient times the standard Indian kingdom

consisted of four principalities situated at the cardinal points of the king's country. So the setting up of Raja Maha Podisat's children as rulers of Nak'on, Perak, and Patani, would seem to have been an attempt, so far as geographical conditions allowed, to satisfy the ancient precepts of government. According to Tomé Pires[11] Kedah controlled both Perak and Selangor, under the suzerainty of Siam, at the time it was conquered by Mansur Shah of Malacca in 1470. This tends to confirm that Kedah controlled Perak during the short period of its independence. This period would have come to an end about 1325, which is approximately when the Prince of U T'ong re-established Thai authority in the Peninsula. This would have terminated Kedah's real or pretended suzerainty over Nak'on, and involved the loss of Kedah's independence, abandonment of Pengkalen Bujang, and the death or deposition of Raja Maha Podisat. Possibly it was this ruler who, inflated with his feeling of new-found importance and claim to Patani, had adopted the latter's honoured name of Langkasuka for his kingdom, in place of the Kaḍāram which had so long been associated with Śrīvijayan overlordship.

The move from the Bujang to Srokam as a fact is plainly recorded in the *Annals* as follows: "He directed his four ministers to collect lime and shells in order to make a fort and ditch, further down (i.e. to the south) because the river (i.e. the Muda) was broad, full and deep, and had an impetuous current . . . he constructed a temporary small palace at a spot named Srokam."[12] I permitted myself to imagine that it might have been when

[11] Tomé Pires, *Suma Oriental*, A. Cortesao's edition, London, 1944, Vol. II, p. 248.
[12] *Kedah Annals*, p. 93.

fleeing towards the Muda, in an effort to escape the Thai invaders, that Raja Maha Podisat lost his golden belt, and perhaps his life. Of the remains of the belt, fished from the river by a Malay boy at Batu Lintang, I gave some description and dated as of the thirteenth century.[13] However since that time Dr Sullivan reported that he had been informed that many years ago men fishing had brought up fragments of images; and he himself located a small settlement which, from the Sung and Yüan sherds he found, he dated as of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, though sculptural remains of an earlier date had apparently been brought there.[14]

From the beginning of the second reign on our list, as the *Annals* definitely indicate, Kedah sent the gold and silver flowers as tribute to Nak'on, which collected them on behalf of the Thai suzerain. That friction continued between Nak'on and Kedah throughout succeeding centuries was probably due to religious and racial causes. Such ill feeling may indeed have been in part a legacy of the Khmer influence in the northern Isthmian region. It would have been further exacerbated by the influx of Thai immigrants and the strengthening of Nak'on as a Theravāda centre, while Kedah remained purely Malay and addicted to Tantrism until the gulf was still more accentuated by conversion to Islam. Now that the claims of the Javanese *Nagarakṛtagama* to widespread Majapahit suzerainty have become so generally suspect, it is hardly necessary for me to reiterate that archaeological and cultural evidence of actual occupation of the west coast of the Peninsula is entirely lacking, though the Kelantan

[13] "Arch. Researches", pp. 42 f., pls. 75–7.
[14] *JMBRAS*, Vol. xxxi, pt. 1, 1958, p. 212.

Malays do exhibit undoubted signs of Javanese influence.

I would still maintain that it is the archaeological remains found at the sites themselves that provide evidence in favour of the basic accuracy of the chronology above proposed. For this purpose the important remains are the Chinese ceramics which here speak unequivocally. The quality of the wares found at sites 18–23 at Pengkalen Bujang indicate that these must have been abandoned soon after A.D. 1300. Site 28 (Srokam) is clearly intermediate in character between Pengkalen Bujang and site 29 ("Kota Aur"), at which place I found evidence of a fairly long occupation in the shape of deposits of provincial Yüan celadons passing into fifteenth and sixteenth-century Ming blue and white.[15]

One cannot close any discussion of site 29 without mention of its founder's "cannibal" habits. Raja Bersiong's personality, as well as his actions, evidently so much impressed his subjects that he is the only one of the six kings who is to this day generally remembered. While Candrabhānu survives only in literature, and most would say more legitimately, Raja Bersiong is very real to every Kedah Malay who is ready to attribute to him ancient remains of whatever period. These he describes as his fort, his elephant-trap, his flagstaff, his grave etc.

No historian would for one moment deny the close similarity between the story of Raja Bersiong and the *Mahā-Sutasoma Jātaka* (no. 537). But the *Kedah Annals* do

[15] "Arch. Researches", p. 44; Sullivan (loc. cit., p. 216) refers to this site under the name of Kampong Sireh, and he carried out a hardly satisfactory excavation there. From his description and reference to Low's mention of it (the reference should be p. 107 not p. 100), it is clearly the same place. On the other hand Sullivan briefly describes (pp. 212 ff.) a nearby site now known as Kota Aur, where he found little of interest. A. Lamb in "A Note on Kampong Sireh", *FMJ*, Vol. VI, 1961, p. 19, identifies the stone block I found at this site as a stone door-sill.

not betray the touch of an Islamic chronicler alone; a number of points indicate that they have passed through the hands of Siamese Buddhist officials, and it could well be that it was to one such editor, misunderstanding as he would the true nature of Raja Bersiong's activities, that the resemblance between his tastes and those of the king in *Jātaka* 537 had occurred. One may certainly suppose that there must have existed some reason for the attachment of this very striking story to this particular king of Kedah. It seems to me that reason is to be found in Raja Bersiong's adherence to the Bhairava cult, which would either have been misunderstood or intentionally painted in the blackest terms by a Theravāda Buddhist. We have seen that a Bhairava image of Coḷa style was found at Wieng Sra, but there is reason to believe that this cult gained wider popularity both in the Peninsula and in Sumatra after the close of the Śrīvijayan period. The last king mentioned on our list, Phra Ong Mahawangsa, who ultimately embraced Islam, was probably addicted to some less extreme forms of Tantric practice before conversion. The *Annals* merely state that he was fond of strong drink, without indicating that this was in any way connected with religion. But the unrestricted drinking of wine was a feature of the *pañcamakāra* practices.

For the rest of the Peninsula our information concerning the later "Hindu period" is too scanty to make possible any attempt to treat its history primarily from a cultural point of view. While John Crawford put on record a few superficial observations that he was able to make at Singapore,[16] such remains of ancient buildings as there once were on Fort Canning were not systematically

[16] *Journal*, London, 1928, pp. 44–7.

examined before it was too late. The rings and gold bracelets found there, the latter with a *kāla* head clasp that appeared to me earlier in style than that of the Batu Lintang gold belt, could have been brought there at any time subsequent to manufacture.

According to Tomé Pires Kedah was already in the fifteenth century of most importance as a rice producing area, and also exported much pepper. Trade was with China and also the Sumatran ports of Pasai and Pedir. But by this time the role of chief emporium on this coast had passed to the new state of Malacca, whose rulers before long embraced Islam. Malacca acted mainly as an intermediary for the spice trade from the Archipelago to the West. A point about the history of Malacca, which we owe to the *Malay Annals*, strikes me as a remarkable commentary on the continuing value set on the traditional relations with India. Not only do these *Annals* appear to retain definite memories of the eleventh-century Coḷa invasion, but they emphasize that the Moslem Malays still prided themselves on the lofty ancestry of the Malacca rulers who derived their blood in part from the marriage of the Coḷa king with a daughter of the defeated Śailendra mahārāja.

A word must be said of the well-known stone *makara* of St Paul's Hill, Malacca. One thing that is certain is that its style antedates the foundation of the historical Malacca state. It has undoubtedly much in common with the *makaras* of Padang Lawas, as a recent study of it has indicated.[17] These date from the eleventh to thirteenth century, and we have already seen that temple remains

[17] Piriya Krairiksch, "A Note on the *makara* balustrade at Malacca", *JMBRAS*, Vol. XCVII, 1974, pt. 1, pp. 96–103.

there throw light on some of the Kedah constructions. But I regard the original provenance of this isolated piece of stone carving at Malacca as still uncertain. In itself it cannot be adequate evidence for the existence at any time of a Hindu or Buddhist temple on St Paul's Hill.

By the thirteenth century there is some evidence from finds of ceramics of trading contacts between China and the Pahang rivers.[18] It is indeed from this time that dates the first description of Pahang, which was known to the Chinese as P'eng-k'eng.[19] The *Hsing-ch'a Sheng-lan*, believed to have been compiled in 1436, sufficiently indicates the practice of the Bhairava cult in this state.[20] The religious decline that was now general in the southern part of the Peninsula was paving the way for the acceptance of Islam, just as further north an outworn Tantric Mahāyānism had yielded before the more inspiring message of Theravāda Buddhism.

[18] A. Lamb, "A Note on some Ceramics in two private collections at Kuantan, Pahang", *FMJ*, Vol. VII, 1962, p. 68.
[19] Wheatley, *The Golden Khersonese*, p. 78.
[20] Ibid., p. 90.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

I HAVE been able to devote my undivided attention to the Peninsula's so-called "Hindu period" on the assumption that what preceded it is not vitally important to its understanding. This I take to be due to the intensity of the Indian influences brought to bear on the region, which prevented any surviving effect of prehistoric culture, at least in the official Indianized culture with which our evidence is in the main concerned. As readers of my book *The Making of Greater India* will be aware, this situation is quite different from that which developed in what I have called the eastern zone of Greater India, mainly Java (except as regards Central Javanese deity sculpture), Champa, and Cambodia. There the surviving effect of prehistoric civilizations, acting through *local genius*, increasingly moulded the borrowings from India, giving rise to distinctive evolutions in each case. Naturally the study of those evolutions had to be preceded by a careful examination of what is known of the prehistory in each area.

The Peninsula of course had a varied prehistory, and the assumption that it need not be taken into consideration for the interpretation of the history that followed requires to be justified by adequate evidence. It is basically evidence of that sort that I have given in my first and second chapters: there I have been able to show from a re-examination of the Chinese texts that these indicate a

closer and more intense relationship with the early Indian sources of inspiration for the Peninsula than is evidenced for the further eastern states of Greater India; then I have called attention to the sure basis provided by the researches of the art historians for early Indian settlement and image-making in the Peninsula; and I have shown how the indications in this direction of a number of early inscriptions are entirely vindicated. But in final analysis the absence of the continuing influence of prehistory, as a factor to be considered, is shown by the character of subsequent products, which lack the originality of the distinctive further eastern evolutions.

Again this same evidence of intensive Indian influence in the Peninsula completely negatives the idea (held, it is true, by a small minority) that this strategically placed region could possibly have been omitted from the itinerary of the Indian culture bearers. On the contrary, from at first having indeed presented a barrier, it was before long overcome by the ingenuity of the Indians, either as navigators, long before Arabs or Chinese entered these waters, or as explorers of overland trails. So the Peninsula became a bridge, for it is self-evident that the establishment of prosperous city-states and religious communities could not do other than act as relay for the spread of Indianization further afield.

Some may think that the relatively sparse, and in so far as architecture is concerned, apparently impoverished remains that archaeology has brought to light in the Peninsula could not possibly be the work of Indians or of thoroughly Indianized local people, who would have produced something much grander. Yet we know from the fame such places as Kaḍāram or Langkasuka, not to mention Palembang (with the scantiest remains of all)

enjoyed in Chinese texts and Coḷa inscriptions that they must have been accounted fine cities. Those who think thus disparagingly (leaving aside the damage caused by the Malay converts to Islam) are probably entertaining a rather false impression of the sort of remains we have of contemporary Indian structural temples, not to mention habitation sites. They are probably unaware that the ruined tower of Bhitargaon stands almost alone as evidence of sixth-century temple architecture in the Ganges valley; that without the stone-cut models of Pallava *vimāna* at Seven Pagodas (and a structural example surviving at far off Bādami), we should have no idea of earlier Pallava architecture, that is to say unless someone had discovered and excavated before it was too late remains of actual seventh-century Pallava temples. These would probably have very much resembled what we have discovered and excavated on the banks of the Bujang, Kedah. And their architectural decoration would not have been any more impressive after the disappearance of the carved wood and stucco. Then, by the time the influence of the later stone-built structural Pallava temples might have been effective in the Peninsula, this influence was largely superseded there by Pāla concepts which were realized in brick. And the Bengal temples of ninth–twelfth centuries have so almost entirely vanished that our knowledge of Indian Pāla architecture comes mainly from its reflections in Pagán (Burma) and elsewhere in Greater India.

If such efforts to decry the Indian character or quality of architectural remains in the Peninsula are thus seen to be unfounded, how much more so with the deity sculpture of which enough survives of what we know was made locally to speak with no uncertain voice. This applies

with equal force to such fine early Hīnayāna images as I have illustrated in Plate 1, as to the Śrīvijayan Mahāyānist masterpieces, culminating in the famous bronze Avalokiteśvara of Ch'aiya (Pl. 12). This was rightly hailed as "parmi les chefs-d'œuvre de la sculpture indienne en Indochine".[1] Subsequent research, while in no way denying the very Indian character and appearance of such sculptures, has recognized that, except with the earliest examples, they do not adhere to any one Indian style, but are in fact composite products. They are each the result of an accretion of styles, due to the conservative character of deity sculpture when faced by new Indian influences. This tends to hold over a part of what had been acquired from earlier teachers, but unlike the local genius of the eastern zone this cannot increase, and proceed to mould, the later acquired Indian style. It is esentially a matter of hybridization, but a pleasing characteristic of it both here and elsewhere in the western zone of Greater India is the attractive harmony which so generally gives grace to these combinations. I have suggested that, to some extent, we may also recognize a comparable combination of Indian styles in some of the Peninsular temple architecture.

A direction in which art historians may be expected to make progress in the future is in the identification of the products of different local ateliers, such as indeed Griswold has already recognized among the earlier Buddhist images of the Peninsula. I have in Chapter v adumbrated the lines on which some distinctive classes of sculpture can be detected as emerging, following the two trans-peninsular routes along which inspiration seems to have

[1] G. Cœdès, *Arts Asiatica*, XII, pl. XV.

been drawn in varying degree from different parts of India. The finding of more examples should greatly forward such research. This differentiation, it would seem, applies not only to those centuries during which these routes were fully utilized, but left its mark even on the products of the Śrīvijayan period. The empire was thus far from imposing a general uniformity of culture. And here it may be repeated that one advantage enjoyed by students of the Peninsula, both now and in the future, as compared with their predecessors of a generation or so ago, is the legacy of a soundly based framework of Śrīvijayan history.

While much new evidence has here been adduced as to the intensity of Indian influence in the Peninsula during the earlier centuries, looking towards the latest part of our period, it has been noticed, as something unimaginable in the eastern zone of Greater India, that even in fifteenth-century Malacca the rulers took pride in having Coḷa blood in their veins. On the other hand we have now learnt to beware of attaching too wide an importance to Hindu cultural manifestations accompanying Indian trading ventures that came on the scenes too late to affect the fully-formed Indianized cultures of the local people or their rulers. Nevertheless we have to bear in mind the continuing arrival of South Indian Brahmans, who took service at the courts of the Peninsular rulers and had considerable influence on their religious observances and conduct of affairs.

The so frequently composite, yet entirely Indian, character of the sculpture of the Peninsula is so firmly established on the evidence available, that when we are faced with an apparently exceptional development — I refer to the Group C long-robed Viṣṇus discussed in

Chapter III — it would seem most probable that this can be accounted for by a lacuna in the evidence in India, where cult images inevitably bore the brunt of whatever destructive forces had to be experienced. This view seems to be adequately confirmed by the fate of the noble Takuapa type Viṣṇu both in the Peninsula and in Chen-la: not further evolution but a rapid decadence.

In the thirteenth century the tendency towards combination of styles is no longer limited to the successive Indian waves, but gains further scope from the proximity of Khmer influence on the northern border. Together with a possible Dvāravatī element, this leads ultimately to that crowning achievement in hybridization: the Buddha of Grāhi. But in subsequent centuries, the sculptors of Ch'aiya, faced with the invasion of their territory by the national school of Ayudhya, could do no more than respond with limited hold-overs. Even in Java, that region of the eastern zone where the strict control of the *śāstras* produced a deity sculpture that has to be classed as Indo–Malaysian, fourteenth-century Majapahit had been able to break new ground with a megalithic-like mortuary sculpture as one striking facet of its pre-Indian cultural resurgence.

For architecture, and the all-important evidence of architectural decoration, our material is very restricted, in the first place because no early king of Kaḍāram had the foresight to leave us a rock-cut replica of one of his structural temples. Consequently we have to content ourselves with little more than scarcely informative basements, a few contemporary local finds, and comparison with some of the similar remains of Padang Lawas, Sumatra. These, I think, lead us to think correctly in terms of an Indianesque art quite lacking in the original

characteristics of contemporary Indo–Javanese art. Comparisons with some Padang Lawas temples too are valuable in helping us to understand the more definitely Pāla-influenced Śrīvijayan temples of Ch'aiya and Nak'on Si Thammarat. Their present decoration cannot be trusted, but we are on firm ground when we see architectural deterioration in the model which a later architect did thoughtfully leave us of the Śrīvijayan sanctuary at Wat Mahāthāt, Nak'on. It definitely shows simplification and decline as compared with the finer and more complex structure of Wat P'ra Thāt, Ch'aiya.

It is the ninth-century Bukit Batu Pahat temple, Kedah, that is, albeit in a negative sense, the greatest aid to our understanding of what can be expected of architectural decoration in a strongly Indianized temple style in the Peninsula: though many shaped stones were found, apart from some very plain mouldings, not the slightest sign of carved decoration was found on any of them, much to the perplexity of those who wished to read into them an "Indonesian" origin. Such severity would probably have been a feature of equally strongly Indianized early Sumatran temples, judging by the relatively restrained ornament of even late Padang Lawas shrines; a similar restraint is to be found in South India where even the Coḷa Tanjore temple is remarkable for its "grandes surfaces nues".[2] Such austerity is quite unimaginable in the contemporary temples of central Java.

While the nature of the archaeological record leads to our giving priority to cultural considerations, in anything that concerns the Śrīvijayan empire, commerce is never

[2] Ph. Stern, *Arts Musulmans Extrême-Orient*, Hist. Universelle des Arts, Paris, 1939, p. 165.

very far in the background. A clearer understanding of the way this commerce was carried on has undoubtedly come through the discovery and exploration of the main entrepôts of the Peninsula, even though we still have to rely on literary sources to know something of the many items of trade that are less durable than ceramics and glass. I think we can conclude that during Śrīvijayan times overland routes lapsed as main arteries of international trade, though they were still used by Indian merchants and local collectors of produce.

No doubt it was Śrīvijaya's reliance on seaborne commerce that enabled her to bear the loss to the Khmers early in the eleventh century of the northern part of Tāmbraliṅga — including the province of Grāhi, with the city of Ch'aiya. The situation that then apparently arose should interest a student of strategy. It would seem that Suryavarman's action in invading the area was actuated more by revenge for Tāmbraliṅga's attempts to place a usurper on the Khmer throne than by any serious intent to restore the international trade across the Peninsula, which had probably had its distant beginnings under Funanese hegemony. While the Khmers, at the height of their imperial power, were no doubt able to bring to bear adequate land-based force to prevent any Śrīvijayan attempt to re-occupy the lost district, they lacked the sea-power necessary to direct foreign traffic on any large scale to their peninsular ports. To maintain their supremacy in the maritime trade all the Śrīvijayans had to do was to fall back a little on other centres fully protected by their superior fleets.

The conclusion to which I have come on mainly cultural grounds that Ch'aiya was the earlier capital of Peninsular Śrīvijaya, superseded in the eleventh century

by Nak'on, with its port of Satingphra on the Inland Sea, seems fully to accord with the above strategic considerations. At the same time it would appear likely that Kedah was the real base of Śrīvijaya's power on what was ultimately her most crucial lifeline, the Malacca Strait.

In closing, I feel that I must draw attention to the obvious cultural limitations of the Malay Peninsula, with its relatively restricted areas of fertility and its much divided terrain; and, one must add, the strategic attractions that made inevitable its occupation by outsiders of relatively advanced civilizations. To those who accept the analogy I drew in the Introduction with the oases of Central Asia, it will cause no surprise or disappointment if we must conclude that the Peninsula could never have become the birthplace of an original civilization. The role in history of the Peninsula, as of Central Asia, was very different. Apart from being "silk routes" their function as cultural bridges has been the relay of those Indian influences which, in large measure, made the great civilizations of the further east a possibility.

INDEX

PLATE 1

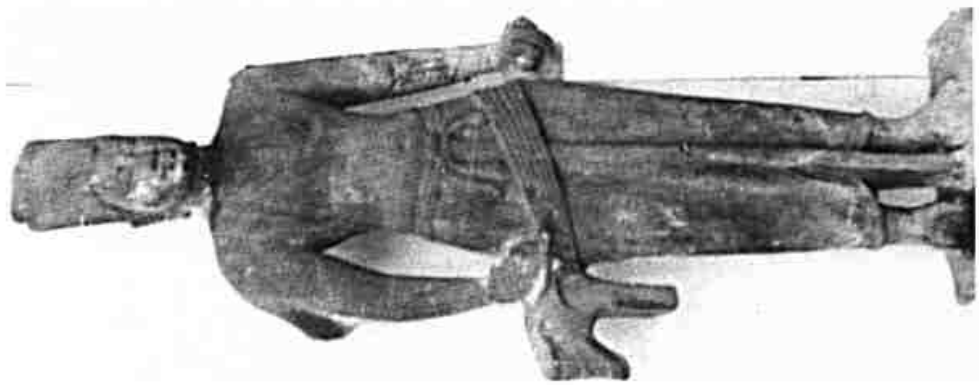
A

B

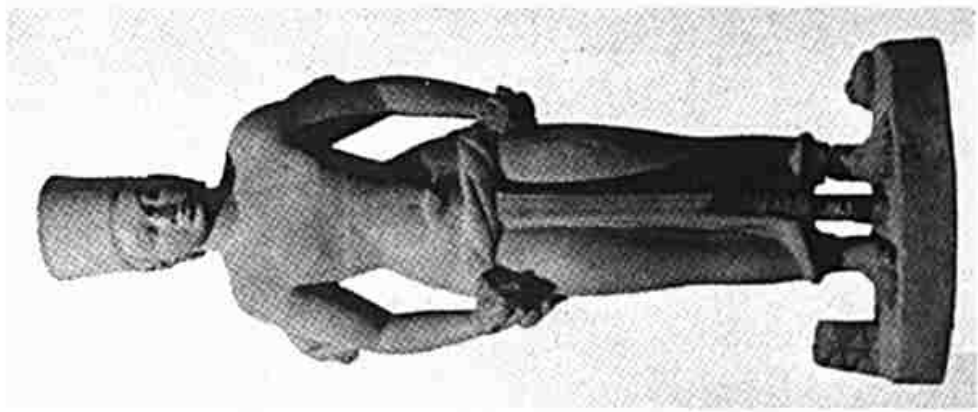
PLATE 2

B

A

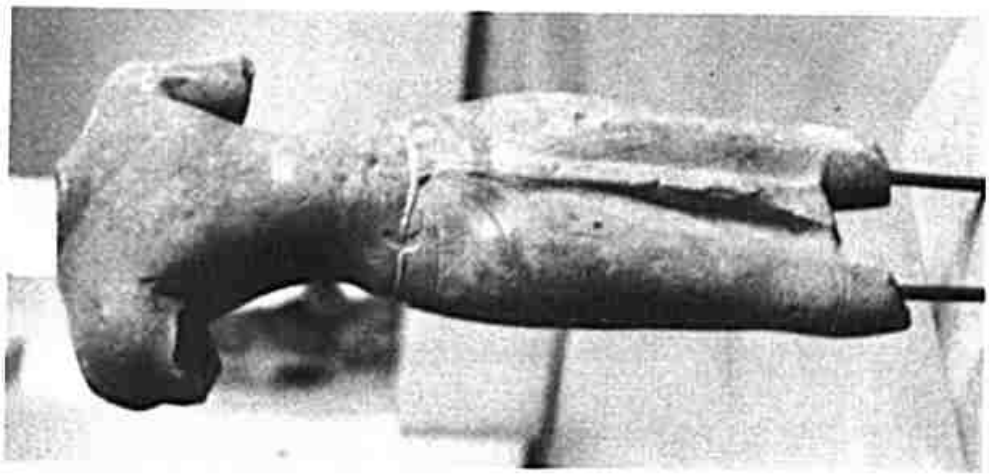


C



B

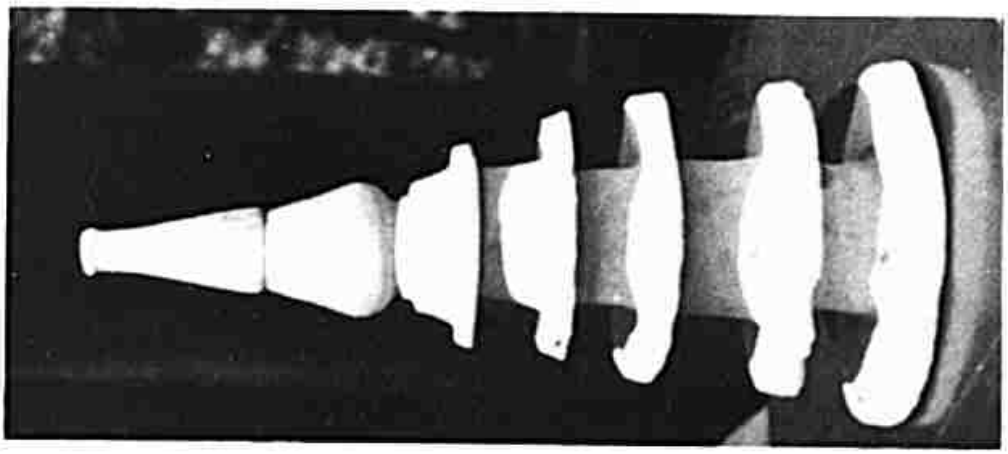
A



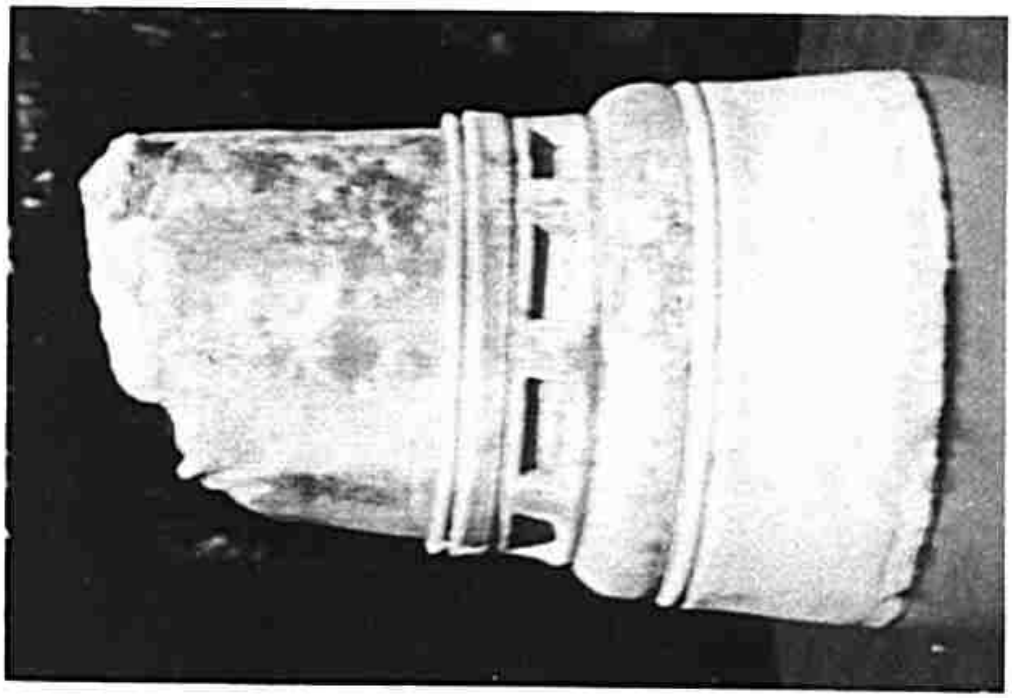
B

A

PLATE 5



B



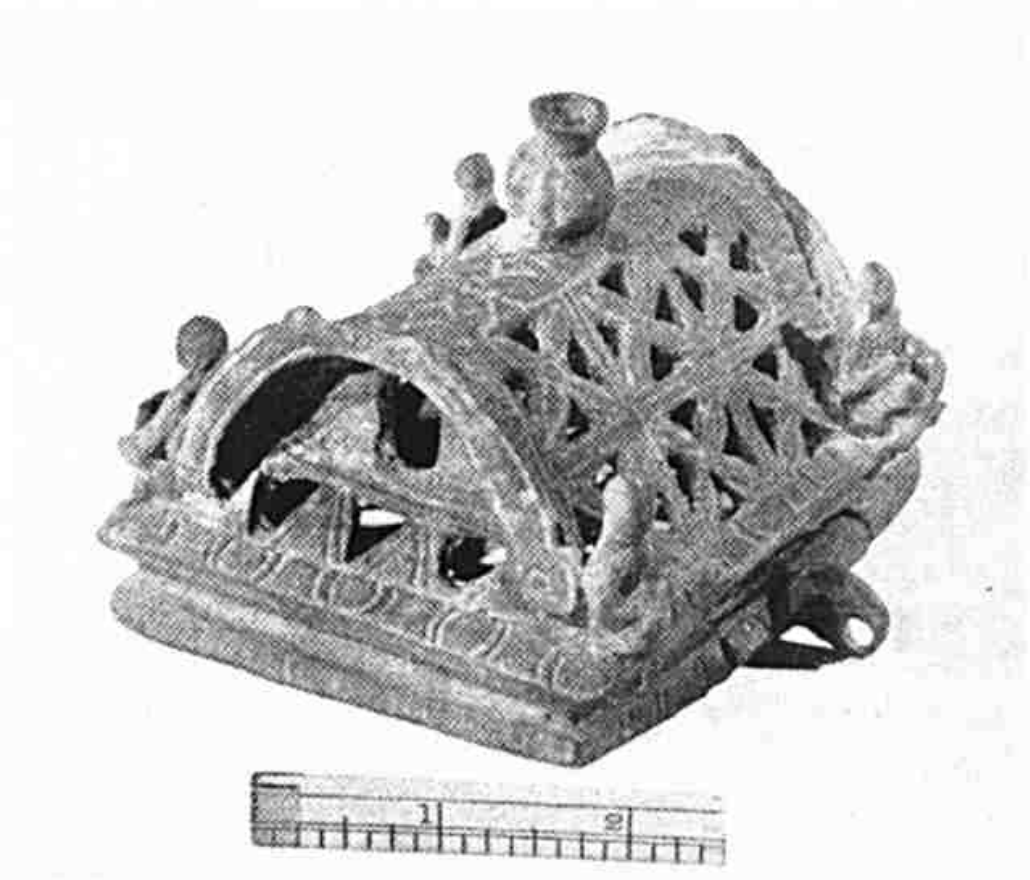
A

A

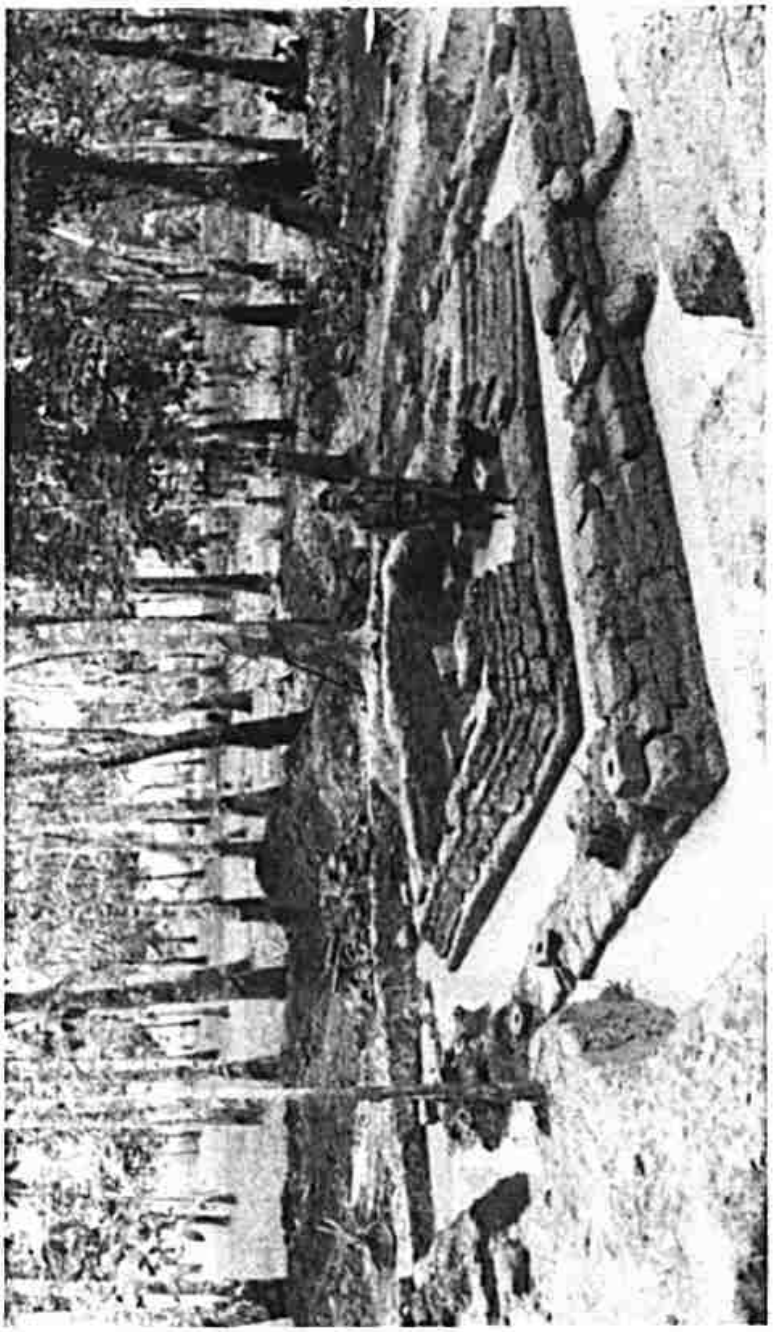
B

PLATE 7

A

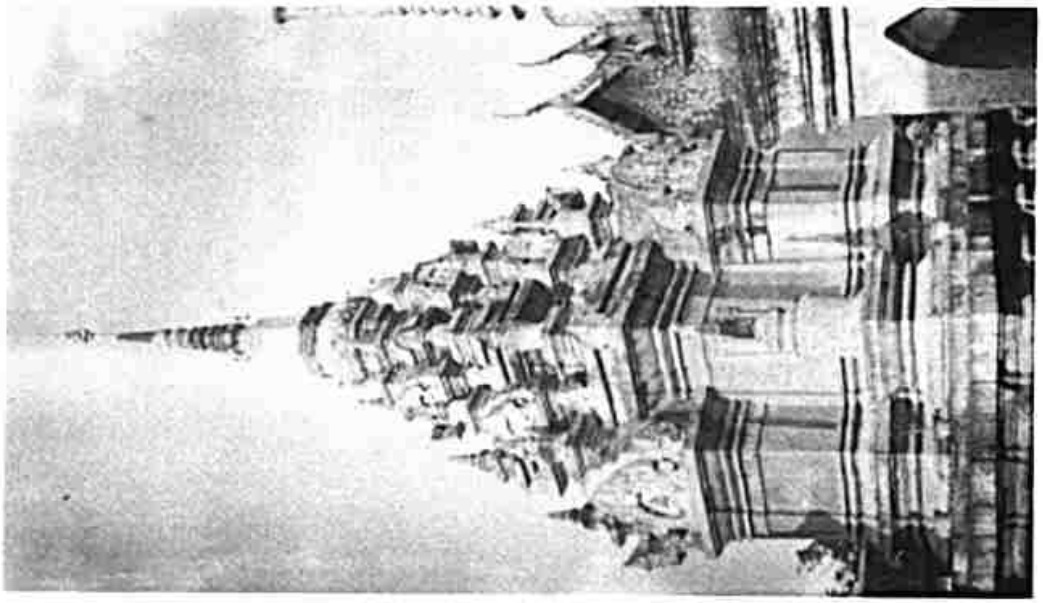


B

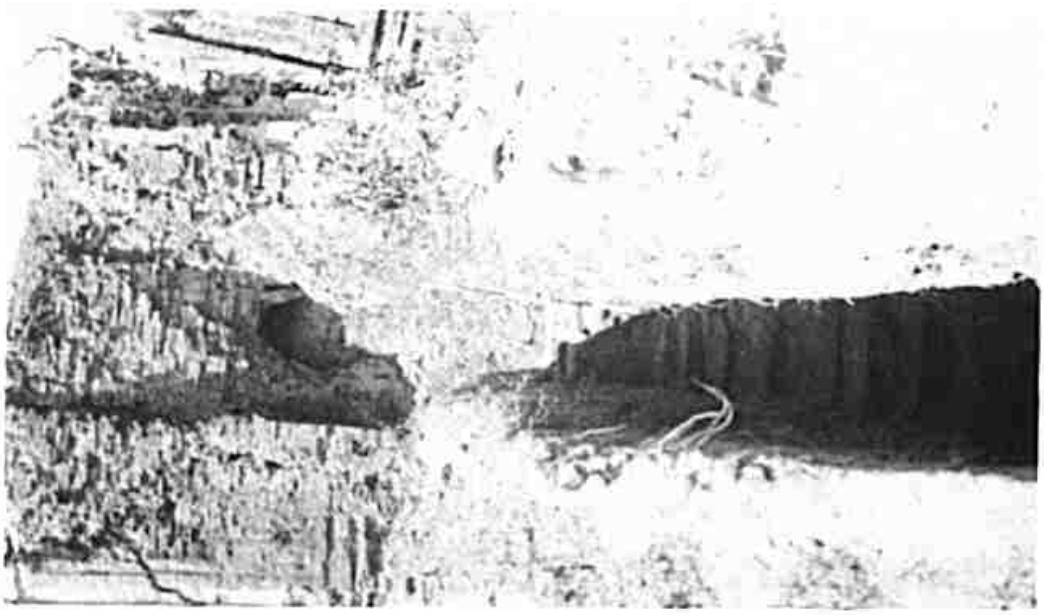


A

B



B



A

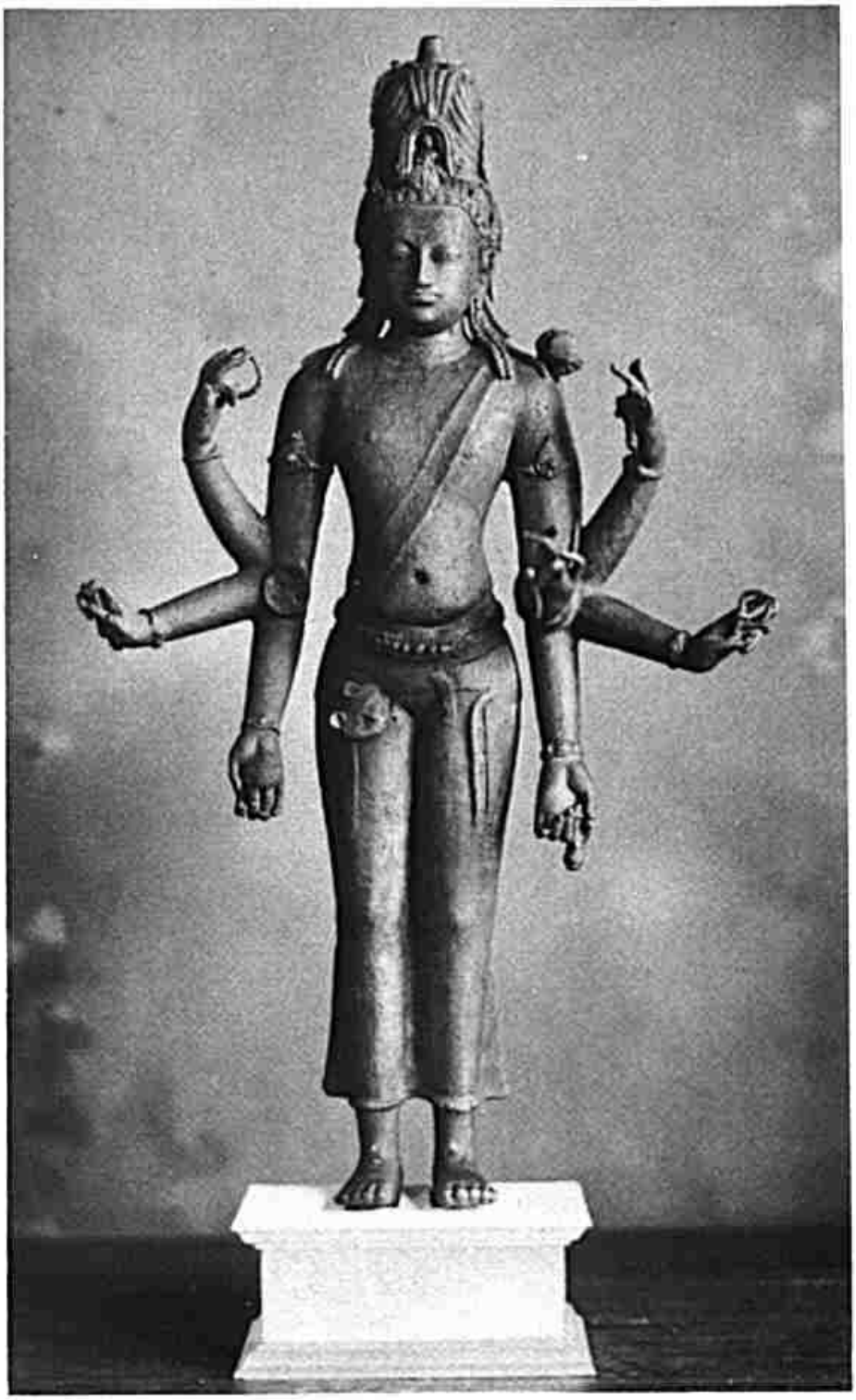


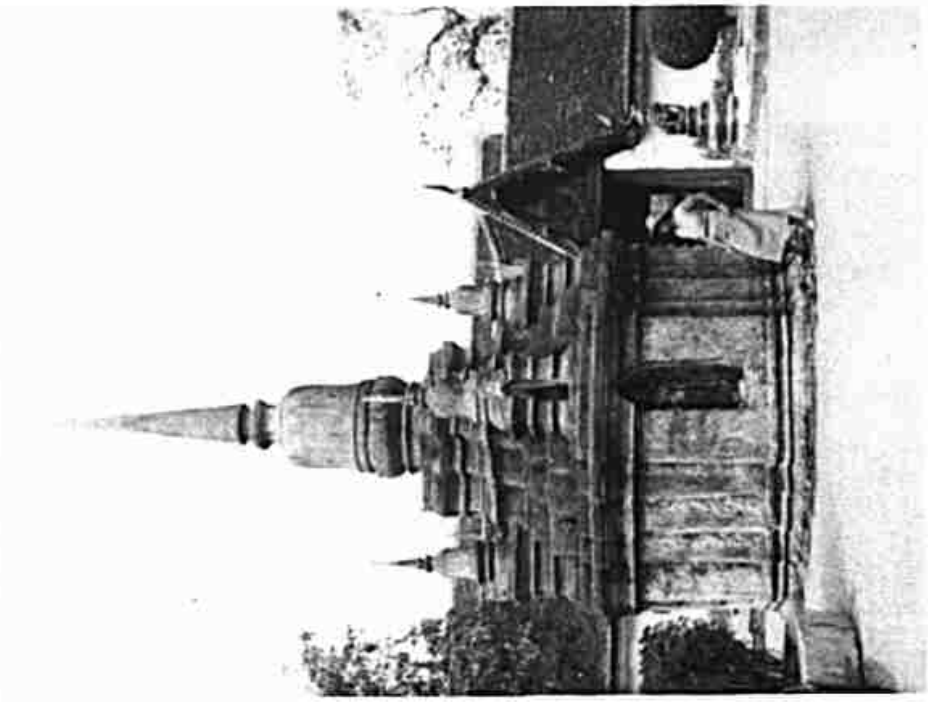
PLATE 12

PLATE 13

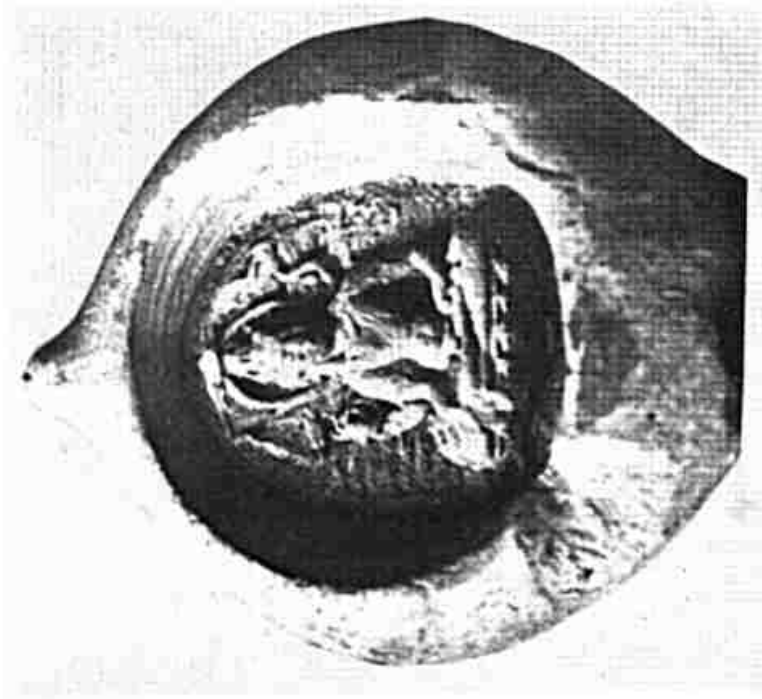
PLATE 14

PLATE 16

PLATE 17



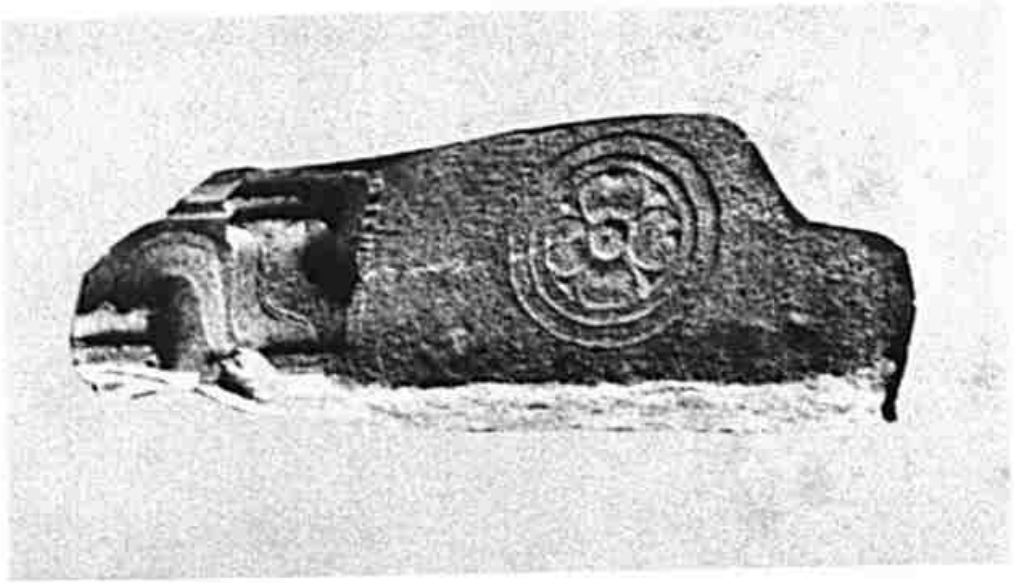
B



A

PLATE 19

A



B