

THE OLD SIAMESE CONCEPTION  
OF THE MONARCHY

by

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In March 1946 I had the honour of giving a lecture on behalf of the Siam Society before a distinguished gathering which was graced by the presence of their Majesties the late King Ananda and the present King with their mother Her Royal Highness the dowager Princess of Songkhla. What I was asked by the President of the Society to speak about was the subject of the Siamese Coronation. Although the subject was of great interest to me and I had made, at the command of His late Majesty King Prajadhipok, a special study of it, I could not help feeling that it was hardly a topic that would appeal to a general audience. On being further pressed into delivering the lecture, I recollected a certain passage in Malinowski's *Science, Religion and Reality* quoted by Dr. H.G.Q. Wales in his *Siamese State Ceremonies*, p. 5, thus:

A society which makes its tradition sacred has gained by it inestimable advantage of power and permanence. Such beliefs and practices, therefore, which put a halo of sanctity round tradition, will have a 'survival value' for the type of civilisation in which they have been evolved . . . . . They were bought at an extravagant price, and are to be maintained at any cost.

In a wave of nationalistic impulse, kindled by the above quotation, I changed my mind and undertook to give the lecture. Since, however, the coronation ceremony had been extensively studied and accurately described elsewhere by the learned Dr. Wales

*Journal of the Siam Society*

Vol. 36.2, 1947, 97-106.

and by observers among whom myself<sup>(1)</sup>, I prefaced my lecture with further results of my study of the institution of Kingship by way of offering to the audience something new and original. That lecture was reproduced verbatim in the local daily *Liberty* of March 1946. A Siamese version was also made from it and published under the auspices of Phra Suddhi-arth for presentation to guests who attended the cremation of his mother and has also appeared in the 4th Siamese number of the *Journal* (January 1947). The subject therefore of the Coronation Ceremony has been given sufficient publicity and in complying with the request of the editorial committee for that lecture I am submitting merely its first part dealing with the theory of the Siamese Monarchy, to which I have made considerable additions as well as given full references which could naturally find no room in a lecture.

### Cultural Background

To understand the old Siamese conception of the Monarchy, let us consider quite briefly the cultural background of the Thai race. As they emerged from the hinterland of south China and descended upon the upper reaches of the Indochinese rivers from an early period, the Thai were probably animists<sup>(2)</sup>. In the Menam valley they came into contact in the XIIIth century (Christian era) with the Mon state of Dvaravati. The latter, being cultural descendants of the Telingana of the upper west coast of the Bay of Bengal who had

(1) In English: H.G.Q. Wales: *Siamese State Ceremonies 1931.*; Official pamphlet, *The Coronation of His Majesty Prajadhipok, King of Siam* (by H.H. Prince Dhani 1925);

In Siamese: Prince Damrong: *History of the Second Reign* pp 15-47; An official record of the coronation of King Vajiravudh, Nat. Library Ed. Bgk 2466 (1923); An official record of the coronation of King Prajadhipok, Govt. Gazette, sp. no. 2468 (1925); A poetical narrative of the coronation of King Prajadhipok, very detailed, by H.R.H. Prince Naradhip, 2468 (1925);

In French: La cérémonie du couronnement au Siam, *Extrême Asie*, no. 13, Juillet 1927.

(2) Traces of animism in our beliefs and customs survive to the present day despite the frankly anti-superstitious attitude of Hinayana Buddhism. The cult of the *kwañ*, for instance, seems to imply a certain undetermined element in every individual which is to be protected and treasured with care. A study of this pre-Buddhistic animism would require a book by itself.

crossed the Bay to settle down on this side of it, possessed a high culture based upon the Hinayana school of Buddhism. It was this culture which exerted the most lasting influence upon the Thai of the Menam valley, in other words the Siamese. It was also from these people or their descendants that we got our old legal treatise of the *Thammasat*, which served for a long time as the Siamese Constitution. History does not tell us very clearly how these Mon disappeared from the scene. It was from a blending of the old Thai ideal with this culture that we developed that patriarchal kingship with which I shall go on to deal later.

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Once in the valley of the Menam, we came into contact with the great Khmer empire, which is mainly known to posterity through its great monuments such as Angkor. Their culture was made up of Hinduism from the innumerable waves of Indian immigration and of Mahayana Buddhism inherited in all probability from the rule of the "King of the Mountain" of the naval empire of Srivijaya. The Khmer developed out of these sources their own cult of the *Devaraj*, or divine kingship. When the Siamese ousted the Khmer from the Menam valley, they came under the influence of the latter's culture.

**Patriarchal Sukhothai Kingship**

As I have just pointed out, the old Thai had their own traditions of kingship. The monarch was of course the people's leader in battle; but he was also in peace-time their father whose advice was sought and expected in all matters and whose judgment was accepted by all. He was moreover accessible to his people, for we are told by an old inscription that in front of the royal palace of Sukhothai there used to be a gong hung up for people to go and beat upon whenever they wanted personal help and redress. The custom survived with slight modifications all through the centuries down to the change of regime in 1932. Under Kings Rama VI and Pradjadhipok for instance instead of the gong there used to be stationed at the front gate of the Grand Palace a "gentleman-at-arms," or *tamruac luang*, whose duty it was to receive any written

Handwritten notes in Thai script, including the word "มโหรี" (Mahori) and a checkmark.

petition which a subject could submit to his king. Needless to say, not only was the King rewarded for his responsibilities with popular respect, but was also liable to be blamed by his filial subjects on occasions of national as well as personal calamities, even including a crop-failure.

### The Thammasat

What formalised this patriarchal kingship was the Constitution of the Thammasat (from the Pali *Dhammasattha*) which we got from the Mon. Its origin might have been very old. Its inspiration was doubtless older for it can be traced to the *Digha Nikaya* of the *Tipitaka* which Rhys Davids assigns to the Vth century B.C. The *Thammasat* describes its ideal of a monarch as a King of Righteousness, elected by the people (the *Mahasammata*). Its inspiration<sup>(3)</sup> describes its ideal monarch in identical terms, that is the *Mahasammata*, 'elected by the people'. It further explains that he was a *khattiya*, 'Lord of the fields' and one who charms others and thereby earns the title of *raja*. It is of interest to note that the term *khattiya*, derived from the Sanskrit *kshatriya*, is the etymological and possibly historical equivalent of the Iranian *kshatrapa* which has been anglicised through the Greek *satrapes* into *satrap*. I do not know whether the identity with our term *Chao P'aendin*, 'the Lord of the Land' is historical or merely accidental, for no etymological connection can be traced through the Pali or Sanskrit. According, then, to the *Thammasat*, the ideal monarch abides steadfast in the ten kingly virtues, constantly upholding the five common precepts and on holy days the set of eight precepts, living in kindness and goodwill to all beings. He takes pains to study the *Thammasat* and to keep the four principles of justice, namely: to assess the right or wrong of all service or disservice rendered to him, to uphold the righteous and truthful, to acquire riches through none but just means and to maintain the prosperity of his state through none but just means.

(3) *Digha Nikāya, Aggāṇṇa Sutta*, section 21, tr. by Rhys Davids in *Dialogues of the Buddha* Vol. IV, p. 88.

The ten kingly virtues above cited are often quoted in Siamese literature and attributed to the commentators of the *Jataka*<sup>(4)</sup>. They are: almsgiving, morality, liberality, rectitude, gentleness, self-restriction, non-anger, non-violence, forbearance and non-obstruction. Usually coupled with the above is another curious quartette of the lines of conduct proper for an ideal monarch. They are: *sassamedha* knowledge of food organization, *purisamedha* knowledge of men, *sammāpāsa* means of winning the people's heart, *vācāpeyya* gentle words. The quartette is said to have been established by sages of old. With just a little imagination one easily detects under the Pali veneers of these ethical terms the names of Brahman sacrifices of old as laid down for Brahman monarchs in the *Śatapatha Brāhmana*. Nothing can be more unbuddhistic than some of these sacrifices and the way they have been transformed is a clever piece of linguistic juggling to reach a compromise. *Sassamedha* is in fact from *asvamedha* the famous horse-sacrifice; *purisamedha* is *purushamedha* the human-sacrifice long discontinued by the Hindus themselves; *vācāpeyya* is the *vājapeya* ritual celebrated to obtain plenty; but the last I have not been able to identify, though the Pali Text Society's Dictionary says it was a sacrifice and was the equivalent of the Sanskrit *samyāprāsa*, whatever that may be. The first three are well-known and full details may be had from the *Śatapatha Brāhmana*<sup>(5)</sup>.

Thus fortified by the above rules of conduct, the ideal monarch justifies himself as the King of Righteousness. And through righteousness he may attain to the dignity of a *cakravartin*, the universal sovereign. Such is the theory according to the inspiration of the Buddhist Canon<sup>(6)</sup>. Let us examine the theory by looking at the following which was probably the very passage which inspired the jurists of old who wrote the original of the *Thammasat*.

(4) *Commentary of the Jataka* III 274.

(5) For the *asvamedha*, *Sacred Books of the East*, V, p. 274 et sqq.; the *purushamedha*, SBE V, p. 405; the *vājapeya*, SBE III, p. 41.

(6) *Dīgha Niyāka*, *Cakkāvatti Sutta*, sect. 6; tr. *Dial. of the Buddha*, IV p. 62 et sqq.

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But, what, sire is this Ariyan duty of a wheel-turning monarch (i.e. the *cakravartin*) ?

This, dear son, that thou, leaning on the Norm (Dhamma), honouring, respecting and revering it, doing homage to it, hallowing it, being thyself a Norm-bearer, a Norm signal, having the Norm as thy master, shouldst provide the right watch, ward and protection for thy own folk, for the army, for the nobles, for vassals, for Brahmins and householders, for town and country-dwellers, for the religious world, and for beasts and birds. Throughout thy kingdom let no wrong-doing prevail. And whoever in thy kingdom is poor, to him let wealth be given.

And when, dear son, in thy kingdom men of religious life . . . . shall come to thee from time to time and question thee concerning what is good and what is bad, what is criminal and what action will in the long run work for weal or for woe, thou shouldst hear what they have to say, and thou shouldst deter them from evil and bid them take up what is good. This, dear son, is the Ariyan duty of a sovran of the world.

The old tale goes on to say that upon the strict observance of his father's injunctions as detailed above, the young monarch, succeeding his father who retired in old age, found one day upon the upper terrace of his palace the coveted celestial wheel, which rolled onward first to the east and then to other quarters of the universe. The king followed with his army: and wherever it stopped there the victorious war-lord took up his abode and with him his fourfold army. All the rival Kings in those respective regions came to the sovran king to give him welcome and beg for his teaching. The king then exhorted them to refrain from killing, from stealing, from adultery, from untruth and from intoxicating drinks, ending up with the injunction *Enjoy your possessions as ye have been wont to . . . .*

The above is but one example of the fairly extensive but scattered material in Pali literature which inspired the *Thammasat*.

The date of the *Thammasat* should be an important factor in tracing the history of the Siamese conception of the monarchy but is still undetermined. The preamble of the *Thammasat* states that the work was -

enunciated by the seer of the *Manusāra* in the beginning in the original language, handed down from time immemorial (and) is now established among the Rāmañña; and, being thus difficult for men to render from the Rāmañña language, I have therefore done it in the language of Siam.

Now, we know from Mon history that Wareru, the Thai king of Martaban, had a standard Mon code of laws written under his patronage about 1280 or 1281 which bore the name of *Wagaru Dhammathat*. According to a distinguished legal historian this was without doubt one of the oldest vehicles by which the laws of Manu penetrated into Siam<sup>(7)</sup>. In accepting M. Lingat's statement, I presume of course that he did not lose sight of Forchhammer's theory that the Mon law-code, Indian in origin, reflects the social and religious conditions of Ancient India during the supremacy of Buddhism and can claim to belong to a Buddhist Manava school earlier than the well-known Brahmanic recension of Manu, the *Mānavadharmasūtra*.<sup>(8)</sup> That the *Wagaru Dhammathat*, influenced our laws is further confirmed by the fact that it was later translated into Pali in the XVIth century by the Mon jurist-Buddhaghosa, and called the *Manusāra*. Here, therefore, we have clearly before us the solution of the problem of the origin of our laws, for in all probability the 'seer of the *Manusāra*' mentioned in the preamble just quoted was none other than this Buddhaghosa, the Mon jurist. The only argument against such a hypothesis is that the process of translation has been reversed.

(7) R. Lingat: l'influence indoue dans l'ancien droit siamois, 1937 (dans *l'Etude de sociologie et d'ethnologie juridiques* no. XXV)

(8) Forchhammer's opinion, quoted by Mabel Bode: *The Pali Literature of Burma*, p. 86.

### Royal Ordinances

Though appended, in the Corpus of 1805, to the *Thammasāt*, its final section should be really outside. It is obviously an interpolation for it is different to the foregoing in style as well as in matter. Whereas the Pali *Thammasāt* is written in the *stoka* metre, this last section is in the *indavajira*; whereas the grammar of the former is none too classical, that of the latter is frankly bad. This last part deals with what is called *sākhākādī*, i.e. branch matter, in contradistinction to *mūlakādī*, trunk or elemental matter, which refers to the *Thammasāt*-proper. The text defines this 'branch matter' as including the *Phra Rājakānṇod* and *Phra Rājabanṇut*, that is royal ordinances. Royal ordinances were collectively known as the *Rājasūt*, a term that might be rendered as 'King's Lore' as distinct from the *Thammasūt*, the 'Inspired Lore,' which was the work supposedly of a superior agency, a Constitution in fact which was not to be tampered with even by the highest in the land.

In the Pali original these royal ordinances are said to have been promulgated by the ancient King Ramadhipati, thus

Sākhaththanāmena pubhedabhinnā

Anekadhā sa .....

Porānarājena narinda-Rāmā

Dhipattiyenābhiparakkamena

..... patitthitā te.

The mediaeval Siamese translator, however, took this in another sense. His very free rendering was *by ancient kings in several successive periods.* Here is perhaps an illustration of a conflict between the literary and the juridical conscience. It might have happened in this way. A certain 'ancient King Ramadhipati', whoever he was, initiated the system of 'King's Lore' to run alongside with the 'Inspired Lore', without of course contradicting it. Whether he was the Ramadhipati who founded Ayudhya in 1350

to whom many enactments were attributed<sup>(9)</sup>, or any other Ramadhipati before 1805, or even the enlightened Ramadhipati of the Mon who was the only Mon king to be so named (i.e. King Dhammaceti 1460-1491), one has no means at the present time of knowing. In any case that Pali passage must have been written during the reign of a Ramadhipati, but the Siamese translation was made some time after when his example had been followed by other monarchs who succeeded him. As has been said by scholars of legal history, the function of the king was not to legislate but to protect the people and preserve the sacred law. It might have been true in many cases that by promulgating ordinances the king could bend and entirely contravert the *Thammasat* to suit his end; and yet he could not hope to give his decisions the lasting form and authority of the latter; imposed as it was by superior agency<sup>(10)</sup>.

My survey would not be complete if I omitted to mention a class of moralist literature in Siamese which lays down for the monarch a line of conduct that has obviously been inspired by an ancient Indian culture that survives in the *Jātaka* and its commentaries. It was probably from the same culture that the classical Sanskrit law-book, *Mānavadharmasastra* was derived though independently of our source of inspiration. Whilst our moralist literature is purely literary, the latter was framed in a wider scope to include law as well. It is worthy of notice that the Khmer Law Code<sup>(11)</sup> also includes this kind of matter within its scope under the heading of *Reach Nitisatth*. It is therefore tempting to speculate that the original Siamese Code of Laws as in use in the days of Ayudhya might have also included the matter, which was dropped sometime later—obviously before the revision of 1805. In any case it has survived as a separate literary work called the *Rūjanīti*. This work was published at the Vajrinda Press in R. S. 120 (1901)

(9) Though Dr. Wales does not give him that credit, cf. *Ancient Siamese Government and Administration*, pp. 172-3

(10) *ibid.* p. 170.

(11) Leclère : *Codes Cambodgiennes*, Tome I, pp. 65-88.

with an explanation that it dealt with *traditions which kings should maintain in justice and with the dispositions of evil and good people and the consideration to be made in giving them appointments*. The work is written in stanzas, first a Pali original—so far unknown as to venue—and then a prose paraphrase in Siamese. The work bears no date but mentions the names of two Brahmins as authors, by the names of Anantañāṇa and Gaṃāmissaka. They are not known outside of this work. The initial Pali verse begins thus :

Rājanītisattham rañño  
Ditthadhammatthasāddhanam  
Vuccate buddhivuddhattham  
Pararatthavimaddane.

and then —

Khattiyassa amaccassa  
Vakkhāmi guṇalakkhanam  
Sadābhijo mahipālo  
Sammābhatte parikkhaye.

Another work, much in the same vein, was published by the National Library under the title of *Rājanītisūtra* in 1920.

### Unwritten Traditions

Outside of the *Thammasat* there have been handed down other traditions which can not be traced to any treatise on polity. This survey would not be complete without touching on them.

A Siamese monarch succeeds to the Throne theoretically by election. The idea is of course recognisable as coming from the old Buddhist scriptures in the figure of King Mahasammata, the 'Great Elect.' No hard and fast rules exist as to how electors are qualified as such, but they were usually royal and temporal Lords of the Realm sometimes doing their business in the presence, but not with the participation, of spiritual Lords. Irregular successions

there certainly have been, but they were exceptions rather than the rule.

I will not hazard a guess as to when the monarch became known colloquially as the 'Lord of Life,' (*Chao jivit*). It was of course a mere acknowledgment of an established fact. It seems only obvious that the leader of an ancient community, not only in Siam but anywhere, should have power over the life and death of his subjects.

As to property, the old Law on Miscellanies promulgated in 1360 by the founder of Ayudhya laid down that all land belonged to the King, who was graciously pleased to allow his subjects to settle on it. They had every right to till or otherwise earn their livelihood on it save that of proprietorship. Each social grade had its scale of maximum allotment of land to which its member was entitled. King Chulalongkorn, however, initiated the system of issuing title-deeds acknowledging the practical right of his subjects to land-ownership though the old theory was not exactly abrogated. In any case the monarch continues to be called the Lord of the Land, *Chao P'aendin*, in conversation. The idea might have come also from the old Indian theory of the *khattiya*(12). ✓

A feature worthy of notice is the legislative power of the monarch of old. The old treatise of the *Thammasat* divided law into two main categories, namely: principles (*mulakadi*) for the judicature consisting of 10 titles, and principles for the people's litigation consisting of 29 titles. Laws promulgated in those days were invariably based upon one or other of these titles. Beyond them the monarch seemed to have been curiously limited in his legislative power.

Many foreign writers, not excluding even the more learned ones, misunderstand the relationship of the King vis-à-vis the Church, and often attribute to him sacerdotal powers. The ideal monarch of Buddhist India, however, was expressly a warrior

(12) cf. supra p. 94.

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by birth, though not encouraged to be warlike in his ideals. The Siamese king has never in theory or practice been a High Priest at any time whatever. What duty he was required to perform in this connection was either that of a worshipper or an 'Upholder of the Faith.' The Buddhist priest, really a monk, seeks release from worldly ties, and the king cannot really afford to do that, unless he is prepared to be accused of neglecting his duties.

### Divine Kingship

Later contact with the Khmer coated this patriarchal and-in a way-limited kingship with a veneer of divinity. It gave outward dignity to such ceremonies as the coronation and royal obsequies. In the former, Hindu deities were invoked to pervade the anointed monarch, who was given such regalia as the trident of Siva and the discus of Vishnu, and bore in his full style such an epithet as the *Incarnation of the celestial gods* (Dibyadebāvatār). In the latter, the body of a dead monarch was encased in a *kośa*, the traditional Khmer cover for the emblem of Siva, thereby attributing divinity to the royal corpse<sup>(13)</sup>. Since the cult of this divinity was Hindu and rather involved, all this had no significance in Siam beyond outward dignity. The average Siamese, then as now, has never taken up seriously the idea of his king being connected with Hindu divinities, who after all had no place in his Buddhist faith.

### Later Developments

Having thus traced in successive stages that Siamese conception of the monarchy from the earliest times to about the third reign of the Bangkok dynasty, we now come to the final phase of its evolution, that is the one prior to the present which is a pure foreign institution and need not be dealt with in a study of the old conception. Contact with the West brought changed conditions and by this time new problems arose which were no longer within the radius of the Constitution of the *Thammasat*. Social problems,

(13) The identification of the *kośa* or obsequial urn with the cover-sheath of the emblem of Siva has been presented in detail in *J.T.R.S.* XXXII, no. 2 (1st Thai no.) pp. 45-54.

such as sanitation and education had to be looked after by the state instead of being left to the initiative of the people and the clergy. So the King exercised full legislative power in the absence of proper sanction of the *Thammasat*. Nevertheless King Mongkut, who ascended the Throne in 1851, was a highly liberal and idealistic monarch; and he it was who commenced to make considerable modifications to the old conception of the monarchy. In the bi-annual ceremonies of swearing allegiance to the king on the part of officials and the Court, the King initiated the custom of himself giving the sovereign's pledge to be loyal to His people thereby making it a bi-partite instead of the former one-sided oath of allegiance. His son Chulalongkorn followed up in the same policy by his abolition of slavery, and his renunciation of the Treasury to form the nucleus of State property which he had just organised, and to which he transferred all the revenues from taxes and dues hitherto paid to the King. King Rama VI, grandson of the pioneer in reform, made further considerable sacrifices and thereby modified again the old conception of kingship. All these changes came from the sovereign's own initiative. As regards succession, although by now the western custom of the elder son's right to inherit the Crown had been accepted, the succession had to be confirmed, at least for form's sake, by a Council of the Lords of the Realm. Such a practice was still kept up as late as 1925 when the late King Prajadhipok succeeded His elder brother in the absence of a male heir to the Throne.

### The Theory in Actualities

This old conception of the monarchy, more especially the ethics of it, such as the tenfold kingly virtues, the quartette of proper conduct for the ideal monarch and the theory of the wheel-turning universal sovereign, in Siamese *cahrapat*, are ever kept before the public eye in literature, in sermons and in any other channel of publicity. The Buddhist ideal of the wheel-turning sovereign or the king of righteousness is to be detected even in many Hindu ceremonies of the Court which are essentially Brahmanic and

doubtlessly borrowed from the cult of the Divine King of the Khmers. Prior to the proper Brahmanic anointment of the Coronation, the King seats himself upon an octagonal throne made of fig-wood and is invited, by representatives of each cardinal and subcardinal points of the universe starting with the premier point of the east by way of pronouncing his victory, *to extend his protection and exercise his royal authority over all those realms therein situate and all beings that therein dwell.* This reminds us of course of the Vth century B. C. passage already cited above which may be requoted for convenience thus :

.....the king, the victorious war-lord, took up his abode (in the east),.... Then all the rival kings in the region of the east came to the sovrain-king and said: Come, O mighty king! Welcome, O mighty king! All is thine, O mighty king! Teach us, O mighty king!

In another section of the ceremony, responding to the Brahmin High Priest and priests who extend to him the invitation to rule over the Kingdom, the King says :

Brahmins, now that I have assumed full responsibility of Government, I shall reign in righteousness for the good weal of the populace. I extend my royal authority over you and your goods and your chattels, and as your sovereign do hereby provide for your righteous protection, defence and keeping. Trust me and live at ease.

This is again a reminder of the above-cited theory of the King of Righteousness<sup>(14)</sup> in which the wheel-turning sovrain of the universe accepts invitation to rule and enjoins the rival kings of the east etc. to adopt high moral conduct and *enjoy your possessions as ye have been wont to do.*

The Siamese Coronation has to end up with the King's triumphal progress round the city. In the story of the wheel-turning

(14) cf. supra p. 94.

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soveran of the universe he too went his round of the world in the wake of his celestial wheel. Dr. Wales thinks<sup>(15)</sup> that the custom must have had a far older significance though long since forgotten by the common people, and traces its origin to the *Agni Purāna*, where one finds that the coronation was concluded by the king riding pradakshina-wise around the city. Jataka 472 also mentions the right-wise procession of a king round his city. Such a royal progress is of course a common topic in the Buddhist Canon and the custom probably dates back to the period of Buddhist India. The local custom doubtless originates from this direction.

The subject of the Siamese conception of the monarchy was first studied by Dr. H.G.Q. Wales in his *Siamese State Ceremonies* and formed in it the IVth chapter (pp. 29-53). No other study of the subject has been made since as far as I know. In that study, however, there are certain points which seem to be misunderstood, such for instance as the assumption that the Siamese king performed the functions of a High-Priest, with which I have already dealt with. Nor can I accept the imposing list of taboos, practically all of which have been misunderstood altogether. The first item for instance that the king being divine it was taboo to touch his body especially his head and hair. Before the levelling influence of the West became prevalent, no Siamese would have tolerated his head or hair being touched by his junior in age or station and an infringement of this was considered as bad manners. It applied naturally all the more when it concerned the head or hair of the king. Thus was the position. Nothing to do at all with the divine right of kings. Most of the ten taboos in Dr. Wales' list, in fact, were merely the dictates of good manners and breeding or else necessitated by the caution to protect the life of one whose word and action was law and whose death might throw the whole country into confusion. Had the learned doctor been equally conversant with court etiquette in his own country, would he have written that *it was also taboo in England to use word of the common language*

(15) cf. *Siamese State Ceremonies*, p. 107.

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or common modes of address, when speaking to or about the King and princes,<sup>(16)</sup> when he noticed that one often said Your Majesty instead of you, that one preferred to talk of the King's natal day rather than birthday and to say that the sovereign had been pleased to command his attendance upon the King at dinner and so on? Would he be maintaining that it was taboo in his country for his sovereign not to address a fellow sovereign in his letters as his illustrious brother when the king knew just as well as Dr. Wales that the addressee was really no relation of his? Would the learned doctor have stated that it was taboo in, say French Indochina, for all persons who pass the Résidant Supérieur's car to keep their hats on, and how would he explain the reason of such a taboo since the Résidant Supérieur was at best just the representative of one, who, however highly placed in his land, had never pretended to lay any claim to the divinity of his office?

Such are the kind of points to which I can not agree with the learned doctor. With all due respect to his wide-reading and high erudition which I can never claim to equal, there are, I feel, certain points the significance of which requires no effort for a native to understand and appreciate even though they seem so problematical to the foreigner. I feel, therefore, that a new treatment of the subject such as this article would not be superfluous.

(16) cf. *Siamese State Ceremonies*, p. 39, section 8.