

Funan Reviewed: Deconstructing the Ancients

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In one of my first lectures to a class of archaeology students who were then in their fourth year of studies at the Royal University of Fine Arts in Phnom Penh, I started the discussion of Funan (generally believed to have been in southern Cambodia and Vietnam, and extending along the Gulf of Thailand to the peninsula, and dated approximately in the 1st-7th centuries) by asking them what they knew of the beginnings of that polity. One student quickly replied “Preah Thong and Neang Neak”.¹ That answer was of course folk history, for neither of those names is found in any document related to Funan, and ‘thong’, a Thai word meaning ‘gold’, could not have come into Khmer vocabulary until the 14th century, at the earliest. It was no doubt a Cambodian adaptation of the Ayutthayan founding legend concerning a prince U-Thong, ‘golden cradle’, of which there are at least six versions, attributing different origins to U-Thong, including one that he came from Cambodia.²

Probably folk historical true believers would answer that it is no more than a new name for an old story which really does go back to Funan. This would seem to have been the idea behind an item in the programme of dances performed at the *Journée culturelle nationale 1999* on 3 April 1999 in Phnom Penh, which said, “The traditional Khmer wedding ... symbolizes and reflects the union of Preah Thong and Neang Neak, or Preah Bat Kaundyn [*sic* Kaundinya] and Neang Soma [*sic* Somā], or Preah Bat Hun Tien and Neang Liv Yi”. This folk historical jumble reverses the chronological order in which the stories originated. The personal names of the third couple are really found in some of the Chinese reports about Funan, the second couple is mentioned earliest in a 7th-century Champa inscription about Bhavapura in Cambodia, and then several centuries later in Angkor-period inscriptions, and the first can only have originated in the post-Angkor period. Of course the royal titles are quite anachronistic. The title ‘Preah Bat/*brah pāda*’ was unknown in Funan; in fact it was not even in use in the epigraphy of the 7th-8th

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1. This occurred during the period 1999-2002 when I was teaching Cambodian History in the Archaeology Faculty of the Royal University of Fine Arts.

2. See Charvut 1976, chapter 4; Vickery 1979, pp. 145-151. In Thai transcription the version which I consider refers to Cambodia says ‘kamphut’, which Charvut, and others generally, have assimilated to the name ‘Kamboja’, which appears in other versions of the Thai legends, and which they now realize refers to central Thailand. As I have explained in Vickery 1977, pp. 369-377, however, the two names *kambujā* (‘kamphut’), meaning ‘born of *kambu*’, and *kamboja*, name of a country in ancient Indian mythological geography, later taken over for parts of Burma and Thailand, are quite different, both as to origin and etymology. On the meaning of ‘Thong’ and the Thai influence in Cambodian legends see Cœdès 1951b, p. 118.

century Chenla period, and although common in Angkor was not accorded to Kaundinya in any of the Angkor inscriptions in which that name is found.³

Moreover, the stories are quite different. Neang Neak, part human, part *nāgī* serpent, is a supernatural being, Somā a goddess, but Liv Yi (Liu-ye) a completely human chief of her people.⁴

Folk history may be harmless, amusing, and even edifying, if the right methods are applied to its study, but if imposed upon scientific historical research into original documents it is at least time-wasting, and at worst, if it is imposed in a way to exacerbate national and ethnic prejudices, it may be dangerous.⁵

Funan: the standard synthesis

The Funan story outline is well-known to even casual readers of the standard histories of Southeast Asia, of which George Cœdès' *Les États hindouisés / The Indianized States* is the ideal type, and the classic on which the work of *epigone* is based.⁶ It is not free of elements of folk history, even if it was high-level intellectual folk history, for, as we shall see, a certain type of folk history was part of the intellectual baggage of many of the classical orientalists.⁷

There we learn that Funan/Fou-nan/**b'ju-nām*, a name possibly meaning 'mountain' in Khmer (modern *phnom*, ancient *vnam*) was founded when a brahman named Kaundinya "from India or from the Malay Peninsula, or the southern islands [emphasis added]", following a dream, acquired a magic bow and set sail, eventually reaching the coast of Cambodia where he was met by the local ruler, a woman named Liu-ye/Lieou-ye/**liəu-jäp*. She at first sought to resist, but unable to counteract his magic bow, she submitted, they were married, and founded the first dynasty of Funan rulers.⁸

3. The inscriptions mentioning Kaundinya are K. 263, K. 268, K. 483, K. 528, K. 669, K. 806. *Kaundinya* appears in only one inscription of the Funan period, K. 5 of Guņavarman. The Champa inscription is in Finot 1904, p. 923. Bibliographical references for the Cambodian inscriptions may be found under the K. numbers in Cœdès 1966.

4. This difference between Liv Yi and Somā was clearly noted by Porée-Maspero 1950, p. 247, who nevertheless felt that the important relationship among all the stories was "the importance of the woman" as ruler or founder of a dynasty. She also failed to realize the very late origin of the Preah Thong stories, although noting, p. 252, that the name 'Thôn' was very close to the name 'Ton' of a similar Lao legend, where it meant 'gold'. Of course, at the time Porée-Maspero was writing, the late arrival of Thai speakers in what is now central Thailand, where they could have influenced Khmer, was not realized. Porée-Maspero offered several useful comments on standard Funan history, which have not been given sufficient notice nor credit, no doubt because they were mixed with her unacceptable theory of royal intermarriage of two clans with the royal aura transmitted through women, whether mother, wife, or sister. The best critique of this is Cœdès 1951b.

5. Much of the horror of the recent wars in former Yugoslavia was the result of just such imposition of folk history as the official interpretation of the past. Such negative phenomena are not unknown in Southeast Asia, including Cambodia.

6. Cœdès 1964a, and English translation in Cœdès 1968; Vickery 1999b.

7. Some modern Asian scholars (it is no longer politically correct to call them 'orientalists') are still under similar spells. As an example see Reynolds 1995, p. 421.

8. Cœdès 1964a, p. 76; Cœdès 1968, p. 37. Proper names of persons and places in Funan history will be cited first according to the English version of Cœdès, followed by the French version found in Pelliot's work on Funan (see below) and repeated in Cœdès' French original, and, where useful, in ancient Chinese phonetics (that is, in order, English/French/*ancient phonetics). Thus, Liu-ye/Lieou-

This represented what Cœdès called the “First Hinduization”.⁹ Thereafter the Funan of Cœdès continued as an important coastal polity, the details of which are known from Chinese accounts, through several local rulers, an usurper from India, a second Kaundinya, also from India, and in Cœdès’ words the bearer of a “second hinduization”, until in the late 6th or early 7th century Funan was overthrown by its vassal Chenla moving down from the North, and, in some interpretations, though not explicitly in that of Cœdès, the vehicle of the Khmer against non-Khmer Funan.¹⁰

Continuing with Cœdès, the capital of Funan bore the Sanskrit name *vyādhapura*, and a local language name, according to the Chinese, T’e-mu/T’ö-mou/**d’äk-miuk*, and it was located near the modern site of Ba Phnom. When vassal Chenla farther north attacked, the Funan rulers fled from there to a new site called in Chinese transcription *na-fu-na/na-fou-nal/*nā-p̄uət-nā*, interpreted by Cœdès as *naravaranagara*, farther south, and in Cœdès’ view at Angkor Borei.¹¹

The Chinese accounts are very vague about the internal organization of Funan, and there are no other sources, so it is inevitable that much of the standard history results from hypotheses more or less based on the small evidence which exists. The first rulers had titles beginning with *hun/houen/*Yuən*. In the 3rd century there were rulers bearing the title *fan/*b’iwm* preceding one- or two-syllable names in the local language. In the 5th-6th centuries the Chinese recorded two *-varman* names which correspond to the same names in a Sanskrit inscription dated on palaeographic grounds to the same time. Here, at least, we are on a bit of solid ground, for whatever it is worth.

In some of the last Chinese histories to deal with Funan, from the T’ang dynasty, it was said that in the time of the Sui/Souei (581-618) the Funan rulers were called ‘Kou-long’, easily understood as the high Khmer title *kuruñ*, plausibly appropriate at that time for a chieftain, although it is not found at that time in any local inscriptions. If that Chinese record is accurate, it may indicate that *kuruñ* had then a higher status than later on in the 7th century when kings’ names and titles are found in the inscriptions. Louis Finot speculated that the Funan kings were entitled *kuruñ bnam*, ‘king of the mountain’, but as Claude Jacques has shown, there is no basis for it. In fact, we have no idea of the titles of Funan rulers besides ‘Hun’, ‘Fan’, and ‘-varman’.¹² It was also only the T’ang-period

*ye/*l̄äu-ī̄p* is English/French/phonetics of Ancient Chinese. After the first citation, the English version will be followed. Attempts to relate the ancient names to modern terms must be made through ancient phonetics, especially with respect to final stops which have disappeared from modern Chinese, but which are characteristic of both ancient and modern Khmer, and other Southeast Asian languages. The ancient phonetics are taken from Pelliot 1925 and from Wheatley 1983. Ancient Chinese, sometimes called Middle Chinese, is the pronunciation of the T’ang dynasty (618-906), as reconstructed in Karlgren 1923 [1974], through a comparison of several Chinese dialects, and which permits a restoration of initial consonants which have changed and final stops which have disappeared in standard Modern Chinese. All translations from French in this paper, except from Cœdès 1968, are mine.

9. In the English translation of Cœdès’ work ‘hinduization’ was bowdlerized to ‘indianization’, in a type of political correctness before the letter; but we should not forget that Cœdès wrote, and thought, **Hinduization**, and **Hindu** states in Southeast Asia.

10. For a detailed critique of the standard Funan-Chenla stories see Vickery 1994, and Vickery 1998, chapter 2.

11. Cœdès 1964a, p. 130; Cœdès 1968, p. 68; and Cœdès 1943-46, pp. 3-4. For a different view of the location of Naravaranagara, more closely based on the inscriptions in which that name is found, see Vickery 1998, pp. 352-353, and discussion below.

12. Pelliot 1903, pp. 274, 283. There is no pre-Angkor inscription designating a paramount ruler as *kuruñ*, and in the Sui period there is no Khmer inscription with a king’s name. Paramount rulers, and some lesser chieftains, in the 7th century bore the Khmer title *vrah kamratāñ añ* (such titles being found

history which supplied a name for Funan's capital, T'e-mu/T'ö-mou/**d'ək-miuk*, from which the Funan rulers fled when attacked by the Chenla king Citrasena.¹³ It is important to note that the earlier Chinese accounts of Funan did not name the capital, but only said it was 500 *li* (200 km) from the sea.¹⁴

Cœdès was a great synthesizer—indeed that may have been his greatest talent when functioning as a writer of historical accounts; and he had to find, or imagine, a connection between every detail and some other detail in another time or place.¹⁵ Pelliot, who was responsible for the still major study of Funan, was also an energetic synthesizer, but less so than Cœdès, and he was not afraid to pull back and state that some details were irreconcilable.¹⁶ In his classic article “Le Fou-nan”, on which all other work is ultimately based, it is clear that the Chinese, from one generation to the next, and one dynastic history to the next, repeated the same stories, without access to new sources, and cut or added details according to the whims of the compilers.¹⁷ He also demonstrated that these stages of re-copying sometimes led to confusion of Chinese characters which resembled one another, but with quite different meanings and pronunciations, leading to false, or nonsense, information in the final text.¹⁸

In his own synthesis, some 40 years before the first version of that of Cœdès, Pelliot undermined the veracity of some of the wilder speculations about Indian influence, and he considered, contrary to Cœdès' later views, that the Funan capital T'e-mu was probably at Angkor Borei, implying, for him, that *na-fu-na* must have been in the region of Kampot.¹⁹

Although Pelliot was a better scientist than Cœdès, they both viewed Funan, and Southeast Asia, through Indological spectacles; and suppositions based on what Indians were supposed to have done, or what Indian culture did, in Southeast Asia, came to them naturally whenever a strange detail required explanation.²⁰

only in Khmer, not in Sanskrit); and the only apparent chieftain called *kurui* was *kurui* Maleñ (probably a place in Battambang or Pursat), in inscription K. 451/A.D. 680. See Vickery 1998, pp. 36, 44, 138, 188-189, 196-197, 249-250, 361. On *kurui bnam* see Finot 1911, p. 203 and Jacques 1979, p. 375.

13. Pelliot 1903, p. 274.

14. Pelliot 1903, pp. 262, 290; and see discussion below.

15. For a complimentary assessment of this aspect of Cœdès' work, see Maurel 1998, pp. 235-238.

16. Pelliot 1903, pp. 248-303. See also Pelliot 1925.

17. For more explicit comments on this problem see Wheatley 1983, p. 120; “it is, unfortunately, not possible completely to isolate the several strata of information relating to Fu-nan that have been fused together in the Chinese records”; “it is difficult to be sure of the provenance of any particular item of information, for the Chinese annalists... were apt to incorporate... any apposite material conveniently to hand, however dated it might be”; and, p. 153, note 12, “an extreme instance of this practice is in... [a work of] 1609 but still preserving unchanged material from ...the 3rd century A.D. [where] to the paragraph on Tun-sun ... [the author] added a picture of an inhabitant dressed in a manner more suitable for Central than for Southeast Asia”.

18. Examples are the four different names for the legendary founder of Funan, and the ‘Indian’ Chan-t'an, discussed below.

19. Pelliot 1903, p. 295.

20. At the end of his discussion Cœdès (1951) spoiled his otherwise pungent criticism of Porée-Maspero's theory by insisting that “in Funan as in Cambodia we are dealing with hinduized countries”, and that “royal succession... is only one of the aspects of the problem of interpenetration of Indian civilization and indigenous civilizations in the hinduized countries, and the interest of her study goes far beyond the cadre of local history”. As I have shown in Vickery 1998, chapter 6, the very titles of Cambodian royalty and other high-ranking classes show that their positions had been formed before any ‘interpenetration’ from India. Porée-Maspero was right to search for an explanation within the “cadre of local history”, even though her explanation was misconceived.

In what follows I wish to deconstruct, not just Cœdès and Pelliot, but also the Chinese records of Funan, as translated and discussed by Pelliot, in order to seek different solutions to some of their problems. A similar task was undertaken by Éveline Porée-Maspero, but her work has been ignored, no doubt because her conclusions, which sometimes differ from mine, were part of the support for her theory of Khmer society divided into two marriage groups.²¹

Funan prehistory

Let us start with the prehistory of Funan, as reported by the Chinese. That is, information about their ancient past which the Funanese gave to the first Chinese envoys, K'ang T'ai and Chu/Tchou Ying, who arrived in Funan in the period 245-250 A.D. These stories are oral traditions, quite different in historical evidential value from the observations made by the envoys to Funan in their own time, or later contemporary reports which the Chinese received about Funan.²²

The folk history of the Funanese, like the folk history of many peoples, both in Asia and in Europe, began with a founding legend; and like many founding legends it concerns a hero who arrived from overseas.²³ The first Chinese envoys in the 3rd century heard it, and it was repeated in later Funan-Chinese contacts and recorded in several Chinese historical compositions. Altogether there are 4 versions differing among themselves in interesting ways.

– The first version is that taken from fragments of K'ang T'ai's 3rd-century report preserved in later records. The original ruler of Funan was a woman, Liu-ye/Lieou-ye/**liəu-ïəp*. Hun/Houen-chen/**Yuan zǐēn*, who worshipped a spirit, came from Mo-fou with a magic bow, subdued Liu-ye, and became the first king of Funan (Pelliot 1925-3[6]).²⁴

21. Porée-Maspero 1969, pp. 791-799. I do not know Chinese, and thus in this area I rely on the work of others, most of which is decades old. It is time for a reworking of all the Chinese records of early Southeast Asia by someone skilled in the Chinese language of the time, sensitive to the problems of Southeast Asian historiography, and familiar with the new scholarly work of the last 30 years. Indeed, there is someone with these qualifications who has begun the task, Tatsuo Hoshino, but although he has made some useful suggestions, his methodology makes his historical syntheses unacceptable, without much more detailed argument, made in a way which other specialists can answer. On some particular points, however, he has pointed out errors in reading, or forced interpretations, by previous scholars. Where relevant to my subject I shall cite what I find useful, with this caveat that I do not consider his re-interpretations as a whole acceptable. See Appendix I.

22. 'Contemporaneity' is used here very loosely. The Chinese histories in which such material about foreign countries has been preserved were usually composed much later than the dates of the original documents; and when repeated again in a later history, the information may by then have become as exotic to the Chinese historians as the oral traditions first heard by the 3rd-century envoys to Funan. For 245-250 as Pelliot's final choice for the date of the Chinese mission, after first having situated it around 225-230, see Pelliot 1903, pp. 303 and 292-293 respectively.

23. Lest Europeans scoff at Asian legends, let them not forget Romulus and Remus nourished by a wolf, or Brut, grandson of Aeneas, as founder of the Bretons (Britain), or Frankon, son of Hector as ancestor of the Franks. See Vickery 1979, pp. 129-130; and Friedman 1987. For legends of this type in the Indonesian area see Manguin 1991.

24. Pelliot 1925, pp. 245-246. Because in what follows I have broken up the versions to compare them at each stage, I have given them classificatory labels. The label is composed as follows: document in which they are found-(the century of origin of that version [the century in which the text was

– Version 2, document III-(3[6]): The original ruler was a woman Ye-liu. Hun-houei/**Yuən*?, a foreigner who worshipped spirits, got a magic bow, followed merchants to Funan, subdued and married Ye-liu.²⁵

– Version 3, document V-(4[6]): The original ruler was a woman Liu-ye. Hun-t'ien/**Yuən d'ien* from the country of Ki came with magic bow obtained from a spirit; they married.²⁶

– Version 4, document VI-(6[7]): There was woman ruler Liu-ye. Hun-t'ien/**Yuən tien*, who worshipped spirits, came from Kiao in the South with a magic bow, subdued and married Liu-ye. He governed the kingdom, and gave a fief of 7 cities to his son.²⁷

As Pelliot already emphasized, some stories about Funan are repeated, with some variation of details, in several Chinese histories, over several centuries. This is particularly true of the stories from the pre-historic period; and these are also the stories which have most influenced the modern synthesizers of Funan history. In this first pre-historic event, the establishment of the first royalty, there is no evidence that the initial foreign conqueror came from India, neither is it clear that he was a Brahman, and almost certainly his name, as given to the Chinese, was not Kaundinya, as explained below.

On the first point Pelliot was already in agreement. He was unable to provide any suggestion for Ki and Kiao, but considered them variants of a single name, and noted that Kiao was said to have been south of Funan. As for Mo-fu/fou, taken from the first of all Chinese reports by K'ang T'ai, another section of that work gave the name of the stranger's home country as Heng-tie, and Pelliot showed that both for Mo/Heng and fu/tie the characters were of sufficient similarity to be replaced by one another in the work of copyists who had no direct understanding of the locations. To decide which was most likely the original, Pelliot adopted the method of choosing "the characters which it is the least surprising to see used in transcription [of foreign names]", and he opted for the combination *Mo-tie/**māk-d'iet*.²⁸ This is also not identifiable in itself, but the report citing 'Heng-tie' said it was southeast of Yeou-po/**Jəu-būāt*, and that the latter was about 5000 *li* southeast of India. In that case the place from which the stranger started his voyage to Funan would have been on the east coast of the Malay peninsula. This is the reason for the vague localization by Cœdès noted above. The vagueness resembles the

compiled]). This first version is only in Pelliot 1925. For the versions in Pelliot 1903, the first document designation in Roman numerals is that used by Pelliot. This version, the oldest, had not been included in Pelliot 1903; and here Pelliot modified his earlier views on the religion of the foreigner. In Pelliot 1903, p. 254, n. 5, he considered that practicing "the cult of spirits (*génies*)", "in addition to its normal meaning... often serves to designate the Brahmanical cult", but in Pelliot 1925, p. 245-246, n. 5, he decided that the Chinese term *chen* (*génie*, spirit), should in all these contexts be rendered as singular rather than plural, and in addition to *génie*, "the translation 'god' would often also be good". This renders less certain that it was Brahmanism which was meant, although Pelliot still insisted, "here still I believe that it was a question of a Brahmanical cult". Useful comments on this point are in Porée-Maspero 1969, pp. 954-955. For the ancient phonetics *yuən* is from Wheatley, p. 121; the others are from Pelliot 1925. For another discussion of these founding myths and the Chinese sources, which I did not see in time to discuss thoroughly here, and with which I disagree on many details, see Népote 1999.

25. Pelliot 1903, p. 254, where Pelliot suggested that the character for *houei* was an error for an original *tien* or *d'ien*, with illustrations of the characters which make this plausible. No text available to me gives either the English transcription of *houei* nor the ancient phonetics.

26. Pelliot 1903, p. 256.

27. Pelliot 1903, p. 265.

28. Pelliot 1925, pp. 247-248.

Indonesian political myths in which “the emphasis... is... on ‘overseas’, not on a determined place of origin.”²⁹

As for the stranger’s name, the first syllable was Hun/**Yuən*, and for the second syllable Pelliot tinkered with the Chinese characters in the four versions to arrive at **tien* or **d’ien* as acceptable phonetics to reasonably represent the second syllable of the name ‘Kaun-ḍin-ya. If that had been the original intention, however, it is surprising that none of the texts provides the third syllable, since, as other sinological studies have emphasized, the Chinese had great competence in systematically transcribing names from other parts of Asia, especially those in Indic languages.³⁰

As for the religious orientation of Hun/**Yuən*?, his origins in the Malay peninsula at a time which Pelliot thought could not have been later than the 1st century, make it difficult to accept that his worship of a spirit, or spirits, was Indic. Moreover, as shown below, the Funanese themselves did not claim acquaintance with India at that time.

Three of these versions, but not the first, continue the story, in different ways, as follows:

– Version 2, III-(3[6]): the descendants of Ye-liu and Hun-houei ruled.

– Version 3, V-(4[6]): the sons and grandsons of Hun-t’ien and Liu-ye ruled until the death of P’an-huang/houang/**b’uân Xiḍwang*.³¹

– Version 4, VI-(6[7]): Hun-t’ien and Liu-ye had a son to whom Hun-t’ien gave a fief of 7 cities. A descendant, Hun-p’an-houang/**Yuən b’uân Xiḍwang*, got control of all the cities, then sent his sons and grandsons to rule them.³²

Following this, the third period in these three versions is:

– III-(3[6]): the descendants of Ye-Liu and Hun-Houei weakened and stopped ruling. Then the general Fan Hsün/Siun began a new dynasty.

– V-(4[6]): after the death of P’an-houang/**b’uân Xiḍwang*, the people chose a great general, Fan-shih/che-man/**b’iwm si mḍwḍn* as king. When he died, Chan/Tchan, son of his sister, killed Fan-shih-man’s eldest son and heir, and became king; then another son of Fan-shih-man, Chang/Tch’ang, killed Chan. Then the great general of Chan, Fan Hsün, killed Chang, and the people chose him as king. This occurred in the time of the [Chinese dynasties] Wu/Wou (222-280) and Chin/Tsin (265-419).³³

– VI-(6[7]): P’an-houang was followed by his second son P’an-P’an, who turned state affairs over to general Fan-man [equivalent to Fan-shih-man in the other stories]. After P’an-P’an’s death the people made Fan-man king. Fan-man built large ships and conquered neighboring kingdoms, including Tun-sun/T’ien-souen. He took the title of “Great King of Funan”. Then there is the same story of intra-family murders, followed by the succession of Fan Hsün, “the great general of Chan”.³⁴

29. Manguin 1991, p. 49. An apparent difference between the Indonesian myths and that of Funan is that in the former the local rulers are men and they are victorious over the foreigner, usually a merchant, but we must not forget that the Funan myth has been reported by, and perhaps influenced by preconceptions of Chinese chroniclers (the Funanese might well have considered that it was Liu-ye who won), and the Indonesian myths date from the “fifteenth-seventeenth century economic boom” (Manguin 1991, p. 53).

30. See Wheatley 1974, p. 97, note 2, and p. 100; Wheatley 1983, p. 147, note 2.

31. Pelliot 1903, p. 257.

32. Pelliot 1903, pp. 265-266; with ancient phonetics from Wheatley, p. 121.

33. Pelliot 1903, p. 257. For further comment on a problem concerning the identity of Fan-shih-man, see below, ‘Where was Funan?’.

34. Pelliot 1903, pp. 265-267. Two other names of places conquered by Fan-shih-man, K’iu-tou-k’ouen and Kieou-Tche, are given in the text, but Pelliot was unable to explain them. For speculative

There is one more stage in the Chinese reports before we reach the historical period contemporary with the first Chinese envoys.

– X-(3[5]): In the time of Fan Chan [nephew of Fan-shih-man], a man from the country of T'an Yang went to India, then to Funan, and he told Fan Chan about the customs, wealth, and greatness of India.³⁵

– VI-(6[7]), Fan Chan sent an envoy to India. He went along the coast [west side of the peninsula], then up the river of India [Ganges?], taking over one year to reach the city of the Indian king. The Indian king was surprised to see him for he knew nothing of Funan. He sent an envoy to Funan with 4 horses; the Indian envoy left with the Funan envoy, and they reached Funan from India 4 years after the Funan envoy had been sent to India. This was just when the first Chinese envoys arrived. They questioned the Indians in detail about India.³⁶ With this incident we reach the historical period of the first Chinese envoys, who arrived in Funan when Fan Hsün was king. Thus the last two intra-family murders in the Fan dynasty, of Chan by Chang, and the latter by Fan Hsün, had occurred during the 4 years of the mission to India.

In these accounts we see first a *hun*/**Yuán* dynasty, with an indeterminable number of generations, followed by a very short *fan* dynasty, of which the third apparent generation ('apparent' because the relationship of Fan Hsün to his immediate predecessors is not recorded) was ruling Funan when the Chinese arrived in 245-250.³⁷

Although Pelliot wished to see the name **Yuán-tien*, which is in fact a composite of four different names (in the second syllable) in four different texts, as the Chinese

attempts see Wheatley 1961, p. 21 (Ch'ü-tu-k'un) and p. 23 (Chiu-chih), and Stein (1947: 117-120), who, however, may have been misled by the now unacceptable identification of śrī māra (Võ Cảnh) with Fan Shih Man. Tun-sun, however, has been explained, and will be shown below as important for ethnic identification.

35. Pelliot 1903, pp. 277-278. Pelliot 1903, p. 292, said T'an Yang "seems to have been located west of India".

36. Pelliot 1903, p. 271. The detail that the Chinese mission arrived in the time of Fan Hsün is in Pelliot 1903, p. 268. Jacques 1995a argues that the river in India must have been the Indus.

37. In another study I have suggested that the title *fan*/**b'jwom* was the title *poñ*𑀧𑀺𑀢𑀺 which is prominent in the 7th-century Khmer inscriptions as the rank of district chiefs. See Vickery 1998, pp. 190-204, 446. If this is correct, Fan Hsün would probably have been a brother or nephew of Chan. Cœdès 1962, p. 73, n. 2, wrote that "this name *Fan*... is written with the same character which is used to transcribe the name of the god Brahma", implying that it was a sign of Indian influence. Cœdès was here mistaken. This character, number 626e in Karlgren 1957, was not, according to Karlgren, used for any Indian concept. Another /fan/ character, section 18, fourth character, in Karlgren 1974, p. 40, was "used in Chinese to refer to Sanskrit ('fan' language), Brahma (the 'fan king'), India ('fan' country), and even in some cases Buddhism ('fan' hall = Buddhist monastery). It is used to represent both Brahma and Brahman, and the etymological Chinese dictionary notes that this is the initial part of the phonetic representation of Brahma". Information thanks to Dr. Geoff Wade of Singapore University. The distinction is maintained in Vietnamese, where the first, equivalent to Funanese *fan*, is written *pham*, and the second, meaning 'Sanskrit', *phan*. Cœdès continued, "It has been successively considered as a transcription of 'brahman, then of *varman*... finally as a clan name designating the indigenous element of the royal family in contrast to the Indian element' (Stein 1947, pp. 252, ff., 319)". Of the three, only the last would be at all plausible, but at that time, as should be clear here, there would not yet have been an 'Indian element' in the royal family. *Varman* is always the last element in name-titles, while *fan* always preceded the name. It is best to suppose that *fan* was a title of rank, and, even though the correspondence is not close enough to satisfy linguistic purists, *poñ*𑀧𑀺𑀢𑀺 is the only possibility known from epigraphy. The relative status is also appropriate. The Chinese called the *fan* 'generals' before they became kings, and *poñ*𑀧𑀺𑀢𑀺, when they appear in 7th-century epigraphy, are just below kings (see Vickery 1998, pp. 190-204).

rendering of the first two syllables (*kaun-din*) of the name Kaunḍin(ya), this interpretation is rendered implausible by the title-name of his descendant, Hun P'an Houang/**Yuən b'uân Xīwang*, of which the second and third syllables do not combine with the first to make any known Indic name or title; and *kaun* (<**Yuən*?) alone will not serve as a representation of 'Kaunḍinya', or anything else. We must conclude that **Yuən* was a prehistoric Austronesian or Mon-Khmer title or clan name, which in the Funan origin myth was the designation of their first, perhaps legendary, rulers.³⁸ Further evidence that it had no connection with the name 'Kaunḍinya' will be seen below. The stories of the first Hun ruler giving 7 cities to his son, and a descendant later distributing the 7 cities to his sons, are also too vague for serious study, and they belong to a widespread Southeast Asian mythological tradition. Thus, in Lao traditions, the mythical founders of the first Lao kingdom sent their sons to found 7 polities (called *möang* in Lao and Thai).³⁹

Pelliot certainly understood the fragility of his creation, but bolstered it with a bit of special pleading. In his first study he admitted that "the only information which we have... on the earliest history of this ancient kingdom is of a partly legendary character"; and he referred to "the dubious reign of 'Willow Leaf'", translation of the Chinese '*liu-ye*'. Twenty-two years later he noted the uncertainty of the place names and their locations, that the story of Kaunḍinya had an emphatic legendary character, and that the detail of a magic bow was nothing but a folkloric trait. Nevertheless, he pleaded that, "there was nevertheless a time when the first brahmans appeared in Funan, and when Hindu civilization took root. Why would it be implausible that a Kaunḍinya had really been one of the principal agents of this hinduization?"⁴⁰

First, even without the benefit of hindsight in the form of later studies of 'Hinduization', the time ascribed to Hun-t'ien, the 1st century, was too early. There is no evidence of Indianization (religion, art, architecture, state concepts) anywhere in Southeast Asia at that date. Moreover, the Funanese themselves did not recognize Hun-t'ien as the bearer of Indian culture, and they considered that they had been quite ignorant of India before the reign of Fan Chan in, apparently, the early 3rd century. Pelliot was conscious of this, and troubled by it, but pushed aside the problem with, "perhaps we should not take the texts too literally".⁴¹ And with academic hindsight, I think few would any longer argue for Indian influence coming with brahmans at any time, or that a "Hindu civilization was implanted". These are elements of early Southeast Asian academic folklore which should be forcefully replaced with new constructions. As Pierre-Yves Manguin has noted, "Nothing could be less accurate [than Cœdès' views about the backwardness of Southeast Asia before the arrival of the 'Hindus']". The archaeological

38. See Porée-Maspero 1969, pp. 795-796 on the dubious identification with Kaunḍinya, but where she abusively tried to make a connection with an irrelevant myth of "a hero saved from the flood". Hoshino 1993, p. 19, also identified this problem, saying, "I doubt the Kaunḍinya reconstruction out of the characters. Hun can be compared with the Fan title of other Fu Nan kings and generals", and probably "Austroasiatic or even Austric ... including Austronesian". If Hoshino meant by this that *hun* and *fan* might have been different Chinese renditions of a single local title, I would disagree.

39. For an easily accessible source see Martin Stuart-Fox 1998, pp. 25-26. Note that there is more than one such story in the Lao traditions, with at least two different identities for the founder with 7 sons, Khun Bulom/Borom, and Khun Lô Kham. It should also be noted that Bulom/Borom, in some versions written 'bolomensuvan', is *parameśvara*, the posthumous name of Jayavarman II, founder of Angkor, much of whose biography is as vague as that of Khun Bulom. The traditional founder of Malacca was also a foreigner named *parameśvara* who arrived from overseas (Wheatley 1961, pp. 307-308).

40. Pelliot 1903, pp. 290-291; Pelliot 1925, p. 249.

41. Pelliot 1903, p. 291. Compare this with his extreme reluctance, in Pelliot 1903, p. 300, to make any correction to the Chinese text.

research of the last 30 years has proved that this ‘Indianization’ [of Southeast Asia] during the first centuries A.D. happened after about a millennium of steady exchanges with India, in which certain populations of Southeast Asia, who were beginning to organize themselves within political systems of increasing complexity, played a decisive role, particularly in the setting up of seafaring merchant networks exporting gold and tin”.⁴²

The story of a founding hero coming from overseas is a component of widespread founding myths, in which a king or hero from overseas marries the daughter of a local chief, of which none may be *ipso facto* taken as a true historical account.⁴³ Besides the circumstance that the Hun/**Yuen* names do not permit restitution of ‘Kaunḍinya’, the name of the Funan female ruler whom he subdued is also open to interpretation. The name Liu-ye/Lieou-ye/**liəu-ïäp* has been taken by historians since Pelliot 1903 in its literal sense, ‘willow leaf’ (*feuille-de-saule*). Pelliot, however, was troubled by this, because the willow is not found in Cambodia. He suggested an error in the chain of Chinese transcription, through which an original ‘coconut’ was transcribed as ‘willow’ because of the similarity of their characters. If that were true, he said, there might have been in Funan a coconut clan “analogous to what we know in ancient Champa”.⁴⁴

This proposition seems to be contradicted by the most careful dissection to date of the French work on the Cham inscriptions, by Jean Boisselier. According to Boisselier, “the mentions of these ‘areca’ (*Kramukavamśa*) and ‘coconut’ (*Narikelavamśa*) clans appear very late [11th century], and almost casually in Cham epigraphy ... nothing permits us in any case to put these ideas back into the 8th century”; and “These *vamśa* [lineages], no matter what G. Maspero said about them, were certainly nothing more than families of local rulers who do not seem to have played any important role before ... Prince Thān” (11th century).⁴⁵

If so, then perhaps another explanation of the anomalous ‘willow leaf’ should be considered. Although Pelliot was certain that **liəu-ïäp* was not a transcription of a local name into Chinese characters, but rather an effort to render the literal meaning of the original name, I think that perhaps we should consider the opposite possibility, that **liəu-ïäp* was just a Chinese attempt to render the phonetics of the name without regard to the literal meaning of the Chinese characters involved. That means that the original name would have been something like ‘Liv/liu-eap’, or ‘Liv/liu-yeap/yäp’. This does not suggest anything of immediate interest, but it is a name in one sense similar to Chinese transcriptions of the names ‘Chenla’ (**Ts’iēn-lāp*), ‘Lin-i’ (**liəm-ïäp*), etc., where the ancient Chinese shows that the local names ended in syllable final /p/, a common phonological trait in Khmer and other Southeast Asian languages.⁴⁶

42. See Vickery 1998, pp. 51-60; Manguin 1999, translated from the French. The mythical character of the Hun-t’ien/Kaunḍinya stories was also seen by Mabbet and Chandler (1995, p. 71).

43. For examples see Friedman 1987.

44. Pelliot 1903, p. 245, n. 2.

45. Boisselier 1963, pp. 61-62, where Boisselier asserted that the remarks of G. Maspero concerning these clans were “assez aventureuses”, and p. 230.

46. Ancient Chinese phonetics from Wheatley 1983. Chinese representations of Southeast Asian names were of two types, either an attempt to render the phonetics of the foreign name in Chinese characters, or a translation of the meaning of the name of the foreign entity. ‘Chenla’ (**Ts’iēn-lāp*) and ‘Lin-i’ (**liəm-ïäp*) are obviously of the first type, while Ch’i-t’u (‘Red Earth’), generally believed to have been in the Malay Peninsula, would be the second type. See Wheatley 1961, pp. 26-36.

Funan: the historical period

Although the first *Fan* rulers were also prehistoric in the strict sense, their scion was chief of what the Chinese saw as Funan when they arrived, and he traced his ancestry back no more than three generations, not too long for oral traditions, if that was what they were, to preserve a modicum of accuracy. If at all accurate, Funan, like other areas of Southeast Asia, was fairly well developed as a coastal maritime polity before relations were established either with China or with India. Although not mentioning Funan, Manguin has emphasized that “Trade networks—some of them involving long distance exchange patterns—were ...forged by South-East Asians long before Indian influences were felt in their region ...”.⁴⁷

If the story of the first Hun ruler giving 7 cities to his son is too vague for serious study, the story of the conquests of Fan shih-man, on the contrary, is of real interest. He built large ships and conquered neighboring kingdoms, including Tun-sun/T'ien-souen/**tuən suən*, and took the title of “Great King of Funan”. It is now a commonplace of Southeast Asian history that the great navigators of the time were neither Indian nor Chinese, but Southeast Asian, in particular the peoples speaking Austronesian languages. Their spread from the interior of Taiwan, through the Philippines and Indonesia, into the Polynesian islands of the Pacific, and as far as Madagascar, as well as the Chamic languages of the mainland, prove that they possessed great boat-building and navigation skills in prehistoric times. In fact the Chinese texts of the Funan period are unanimous in saying that when traveling beyond the coast of what is now northern and central Vietnam, they had to take Southeast Asian ships.⁴⁸

On this point Pelliot showed the old orientalist and Indologist prejudice that backward Southeast Asia had to receive all advances in civilization from China, India, or farther west. Writing of the large Funanese sailing ships, which he called *grandes jonques*, able to carry several hundred passengers, described by the early Chinese writers, Pelliot said they were “Persian, Indian, Chinese, but, in the T'ang period [618-906], their crews were above all Malay”, this last remark made necessary by the Chinese writers' insistence that the ships were K'un-lun/K'ouen-louen/**K'uən-luən*, accepted by all as an area or ethnicity in Southeast Asia;⁴⁹ but, of course, in Pelliot's time it could not be accepted that Malays or other Southeast Asians were great ship builders or navigators. The techniques of construction were well described—several layers of thin planks bound with cords made of coconut husk and caulked with tree resin, a perfectly credible Southeast Asian technique, which Pelliot, however, attributed to the Persian Gulf, although referring to a source for that area dating to the 12th century. Porée-Maspero also correctly understood the importance of Southeast Asian shipping for making initial contacts with India, but spoiled it in introducing an idea for which there is no evidence, that Indochina had been

47. Manguin 1996, p. 182.

48. Wang Gungwu 1958; Paris 1952-54; Wolters 1967; Manguin 1996; Vickery 1998, pp. 51-60; and see below.

49. Exceptionally, Porée-Maspero 1969, pp. 788-789, sought to relate the K'ouen-louen of Southeast Asia to a group with a similar name in Central Asia, and to conclude that the people of Indochina had been sanskritized from that direction, not by the sea route from India, and earlier than generally believed, against all the evidence which shows that Southeast Asian Indic scripts have evolved from scripts in southern India.

sanskritized through overland connections from the North before they began sailing to India.⁵⁰

Subsequently a maritime history specialist confirmed that the very early large K'un-lun junks were Southeast Asian, and that they were "enormous ships sewed together like those described **later** [emphasis added] in the Indian Ocean"; and that the "existence of [Chinese] junks for the high seas is thus not probable until the 9th century, nor certain until the 12th century".⁵¹

Should we then assume, following an old bit of academic folklore, that cultural traits are ethnically fixed once and for all, that Funan was Austronesian, not Khmer, or Mon-Khmer?⁵² This, in any absolute sense, is impossible to determine due to total lack of any vernacular texts from that period, but the Tun-sun stories give a small clue. Even in Pelliot's time it was accepted that Tun-sun was somewhere on the Malaysian peninsula, with opinions differing on its precise latitude, near Malacca (Pelliot) or Tenasserim in the northern part of the peninsula (Schlegel).⁵³

Among the details in the description of Tun-sun were that it had five kings, and that the language was "a little bit different from that of Funan".⁵⁴ I once wrote that if the early historical studies of Cambodia had been dominated by Mon-Khmer linguists, rather than Indologists and Sanskritists, progress in the field would have been much different, and here is an example. It now seems certain that "the Chinese graphs [for 'Tun-sun'] were a transcription of a Proto-Mon **duñ sun*, meaning 'five cities' [literally 'cities five']", and if the language was only a little different from that of Funan, the latter must have been, if not Khmer, at least a type of Mon-Khmer.⁵⁵ This would indeed put Tun-sun in the northern part of the peninsula, probably near Tenasserim, where the rivers provided an important access route from the Bay of Bengal to Ayutthaya well into the 17th century, at least.⁵⁶

The purpose of the first Chinese mission to Funan was to explore a maritime route through Southeast Asia to acquire valued products from India and the Middle East at a time when the Wu dynasty in southeastern China was cut off by rival kingdoms from traditional overland routes. Thus, following K'ang T'ai's mission to Funan, subsequent Chinese histories record the years in which Funan tribute/trade missions arrived in China.

Occasionally there is other information about the internal situation in Funan. The first item of general historical interest is, in the year 357 "[Tien Chu]/T'ien-tchou [Chan-t'an]/Tchan-t'an of Funan offered tame elephants [to China]" (III-(3[6]), and, (VI-(6[7]), "the king, [Chu Chan-t'an]/Tchou Tchan-t'an... offered tame elephants".⁵⁷

This item was the occasion for much freewheeling speculation among the Indologists of Pelliot's time, and he performed well in putting a damper on their diffusionist enthusiasm. Cœdès provided a summary of those speculations, according to which "in 357 ...Funan fell under the domination of a foreigner" named Chan-t'an from India (T'ien Chu), and moreover, "his title Chan-t'an seems to connect him to the same stock as

50. Pelliot 1925, pp. 257-261, 262 (K'ouen-louen). For the English and ancient transcriptions see Wheatley 1983, pp. 130, 267. See also Manguin 1980, 1985, 1996; Porée-Maspero 1969, pp. 797, 799, 811.

51. Paris 1952-54, pp. 276, 277-278 (quotations).

52. Among the suggestions that Funan was not Khmer, see Dupont 1943-46, p. 43; Dupont 1952-54, pp. 139-141; Ferlus 1977, pp. 65, 67; Hall 1985, pp. 53, 54, 64, 70, 74; Loofs 1979; Stargardt 1986; Thurgood 1999, and discussion below.

53. Pelliot 1903, p. 263, and n. 1.

54. Pelliot 1903, pp. 263-264.

55. Wheatley 1983, p. 213, citing the Mon specialist H. L. Shorto 1963, p. 583.

56. Anderson 1981, pp. 6-7. See below for further discussion of Funan's location, and the language question.

57. Pelliot 1903, pp. 252-253, and 269.

Kanishka”, of the Indo-Scythians, or the Kushans. “We also know that the Kushans extended their domination over the Ganges, at least as far as Benares”, but “in 357... all of northern India had submitted to the Gupta dynasty; the Scythian invaders had been driven back. It is possible that a branch of the Kushan family... sought its fortunes beyond the Bay of Bengal”, that is, in Funan.⁵⁸ This is another example of chevaleresque historical romancing—the idea that some kind of royal aura enabled a few aristocrats to move and be accepted in a new society where they had no roots or traditionally loyal retainers. It also reflects the outdated view that Southeast Asia was utterly primitive until Indians arrived.

First, Pelliot said that the literal translation of the passage in question should be “Chan-t’an of T’ien Chu of Funan”; but “what could such an appellation mean?”

Second, Pelliot noted that the other Chinese documents recording this event call him only “Chu Chan-t’an”, which, according to Chinese custom in surnames or clan names for persons of ultimate foreign origin, would only mean Chan-t’an was of a family which had originally come from India. Moreover, he was not a unique example in the Chinese records of Funan and Southeast Asia. In 517 there was a Funanese ambassador named Chu/Tchou Tang-pao-lao; and earlier there had been ambassadors from another “Indochinese king of P’o-houang”, Chu/Tchou Na-p’o-tche in 456, and Chu/Tchou Siu-lo-ta in 466. In fact the first passage which mentions Chan-t’an does not even call him king, but only suggests that he was an envoy, while the second passage says he was “taking the title of king”, about which the Chinese seem to have had some doubts, for they rejected his gifts. The third, however, compiled a century later, called him ‘king’, but still noted that his mission had been rejected.⁵⁹

Still another person with the same surname, Chu, was Chu/Tchou Tche, from China, who had traveled in the southern seas, and wrote a book with a section on Funan. Pelliot said that not much was known about him, except that “he was of Hindu origin, as attested by his surname Chu”.⁶⁰

It would seem that, as in later times in maritime Southeast Asia, persons of ultimate foreign family origin were often used in diplomatic and commercial services, no doubt for their language competence, and perhaps because, as foreigners, outside powerful local family or clan networks, they were thought to be more loyal to the central authorities.⁶¹ Thus all the early speculations about the ‘Hindu’ Chan-t’an representing a new type of Indianization should be put aside, even if his family had come from India, and he was ultimately a chief of Funan.

Still another possibility should not be completely put aside, although Pelliot rejected it. That is, the term ‘chu’, written with the character found in these passages, was in ancient Chinese pronounced **chok* or **tok*, and was used as first syllable in Chinese transcriptions of the name of the Indian city Takṣaśīla. The suggestion is that it might, in the case of the Funan envoys, or king, represent a local title.⁶²

58. Cœdès 1964a, p. 92; Cœdès 1968, p. 46.

59. For Pelliot’s full explanation see Pelliot 1903, p. 253-253, n. 4. The other two passages concerning Chan-t’an are on pages 255 and 269. I do not have sources to determine the English or ancient versions of the other Chinese names cited here.

60. Pelliot 1903, p. 277. The name of the second of the first two Chinese envoys to Funan, Chu/Tchou Ying, was written with a different character, and thus had no connection with India. See Pelliot 1903, p. 275.

61. Reid 1993, Vol. 2, pp. 120-121, 307.

62. Pelliot 1903, p. 252-253, n. 4, rejected Schlegel’s suggestion that it represented a ‘Malayo-Polynesian’ title, *da*, with the criticism that Schlegel had ignored the evidence that the ancient pronunciation of ‘chu’ was **chok* or **tok*. Pelliot’s objection in this case could not be sustained if a plausible local title were found which could have been rendered by the Chinese in that way.

Hoshino has some interesting comment on this detail. It depends, however, on an unsourced claim, that “recent Chinese scholars rejected the traditional reading of the name: Tian Zhu Zhan Tan ... as a later variant”, that is, implicitly in Hoshino’s treatment, they rejected the reading of the first term ‘tian’ as meaning ‘Indian’. In that case ‘zhu’ (chu), variously pronounced /chuk, dzuk, chiku, etc./ according to the dialect, “could have been a transcription of a Southeast Asian word, like the case of Jiao ... (/khich/gik/geki/) meaning foreigners and lands in tropical Asia” like “Khaek in [modern] Thai, Lao, etc., for Malay, Indian and Muslim people”; and the person who sent the elephants to China “could have been a person of Tai or even Tibeto-Burman languages [*sic*] living somewhere in the realm of Fu Nan where elephants could be tamed”.⁶³ Although Hoshino has seen the problem in the traditional explanations, he, as in many other instances, has tried to solve it by reference to terminology which, so far as is known, is strictly modern.

The next item of political history in the Chinese reports is that “at the end of the Song [dynasty] (420-478) the surname of the king of Funan was [Chiao Chen-ju]/K’iao-tch’en-jou (Kauṇḍinya) and his personal name was [She-yeh-pa-mo]/Chō-ye-pa-mo (Jayavarman)”. If this Chinese transcription really represented *kaunḍinya*, and even without knowing the ancient pronunciation it does not seem unreasonable, it is good evidence that the *hun-?* titles of Funanese oral prehistory did not. This seems to have bothered Cœdès, who believed in a ‘first hinduization’ with *hun t’ien-Kauṇḍinya*, for he said, “perhaps this name is a corruption of that of the first Kauṇḍinya”.⁶⁴

The same story was reported again in a later compilation, but in a rather confused manner. First, without date, it said that one of the successors of Chu Chan-t’an was Chiao Chen-ju, with the added detail that he “was originally a Brahman from India” who had heard a supernatural voice telling him to go rule over Funan. When he arrived in P’an-p’an in the South, the people of Funan went to meet him and chose him as king, and “he again [*sic*] changed all the rules according to the ways of India”. A successor, Shih-li-t’o-pa-mo/Tch’e-li-t’o-pa-mo (*pa-mo* being the Chinese transcription of *varma*), was king during the period 424-453 of the Song dynasty, and later, in the period 483-493, the Funan ruler was Chō-sie-pa-mo (Jayavarman).⁶⁵

These differences indicate either that the first version has conflated two or three individuals, or that the second has artificially expanded the story. The greater truth of one or the other is of no consequence, for (I hope I may be forgiven for belaboring the point for a 21st-century audience) it is certain that no real ‘Kauṇḍinya’ ever went from India, or from anywhere else, to Funan at any time, and this so-called second Kauṇḍinya simply shows us that by the 4th-5th century, after two centuries of contact with India, the Funan rulers were taking on Indian garb, and had adopted the Indian Kauṇḍinya legend as their own, updating their origin legend to incorporate elements of Indian origin legends.⁶⁶

A certain Guṇavarman, whose position among the Funan elite is uncertain, but whose record is at least local contemporary evidence (inscription K. 5, early 5th century), was called son of the “moon of the lineage of Kauṇḍinya”. This was easy because the

63. Hoshino 1993, p. 21.

64. Pelliot 1903, p. 257, document V-(5[6]); Cœdès 1964a, p. 97, note 1; Cœdès 1968, p. 284, note 81.

65. Pelliot 1903, p. 269, document VI-(6[7]). Cœdès 1964a, p. 97/1968, p. 56, suggested that Shih-li-t’o-pa-mo/Tch’e-li-t’o-pa-mo was either Śrī Indravarman or Śreṣṭhavarman. At least *shih-li/śrī* and *pa-mo/varma* are certain.

66. Wheatley 1961, p. 192, saw this, at least to the extent of saying that “both the first and second Kauṇḍinyas took the name of a Brahman clan of north India, a branch of which was influential in Mysore in the second century A.D.”

Kaundinya stories resembled their own pre-Indic origin myth (Hun-x/Lieou-ye). It should not be taken to mean that a real Indian Kaundinya arrived in the 4th century.

There was indeed, however, a King Jayavarman at about that time, and he had probably taken 'Kaundinya' as a title indicating his putative lineage. The dates of the second version are probably most accurate, for it goes on to say that he died in 514 and was succeeded by a son named Liu-t'o-pa-mo/Lieou-t'o-pa-mo (Rudravarman) who sent envoys to China in 517 (one of the 'Chu' named as the envoy), 519, 530, 535, and 539.

These details seem confirmed by two of the three inscriptions which may with some certainty be attributed to Funan, K. 5, cited above, and K. 40, which names a King Rudravarman, son of a King Jayavarman. Both these inscriptions are in Sanskrit and are dateless, but Cœdès considered the script to be of the same period as the Chinese reports.⁶⁷ Cœdès also indulged here in some rather risky synthesizing, supplying more names to the Chinese story, which reported that Rudravarman, son of a concubine, was an usurper who murdered his younger brother, a more legitimate successor because his mother was queen. Cœdès said that the younger brother was Guṇavarman, named in K. 5 and that his mother was the queen Kulaprabhāvatī mentioned in the third Funan-period inscription, K. 875. Inscriptions K. 5 and K. 875, however, are too fragmentary to inspire confidence in this reconstruction, and their different scripts (K. 5 is earlier than K. 875) in fact forced Cœdès into special pleading.⁶⁸

This Kaundinya Jayavarman enjoyed special favor from China, whose emperor gave him the title, in Pelliot's translation, "General of the pacified South, king of Funan", a good example of how the old orientalist sometimes avoided problems. Pelliot also supplied the Chinese characters, but without transcription, which read "An ('pacified') Nam ('south') General Funan King". This might, of course, be seen as contradicting the standard view, as Pelliot wrote in another famous article, that "the Protectorate of Annam ['Pacified South', same Chinese characters, in northern Vietnam]", "was created by the T'ang in 679, and it was then that the name 'Annam'... made its appearance".⁶⁹

Moreover, at about the same time, the 490s, the Chinese gave the same title, "An-Nam General Lin-i King", preceded by "commander-in-chief of all coastal military affairs", to a ruler of Lin-i, and this title continued to be given to Lin-i rulers until at least the middle of the 6th century.⁷⁰

What, for the Chinese, did 'Annam' mean in records about Funan and Lin-i in the 5th-6th centuries? Here is a question for Southeast Asian sinologists.⁷¹

67. Cœdès 1931. The third inscription is K. 875 of Queen Kulaprabhāvatī. The Vō-çanh inscription, C[Champa]. 40, is no longer considered relevant (see n. 93 below). For an index of the most important Cham inscriptions see Jacques 1995b, Appendices, "Index des inscriptions chames étudiées", pp. I-III.

68. Cœdès 1964a, p. 117, n. 4; 1968, p. 286, note 105.

69. Pelliot 1904, pp. 133 and 134 for the quotations.

70. Maspero 1988 [1928], pp. 78-81. Although this work of Maspero has been criticized with respect to his synthesis of different sources in a unified history of Champa, there seems no reason to doubt these citations from Chinese records, since he provides the relevant Chinese characters in note 4, p. 78.

71. A similar maneuver by Cœdès is seen in his **translation** of the name *pūrvadiśa* in an inscription in northern Cambodia as "district oriental" ("eastern district") instead of treating it as a proper place name (Pūrvadiśa) in itself, as he had done in all other contexts. The purpose would seem to have been to avoid undermining his theory that the 'real' Pūrvadiśa was in another place far away, and was a crucial element in his interpretation of the career of Jayavarman II (see Vickery 1998, p. 401).

Political continuity and dynastic change

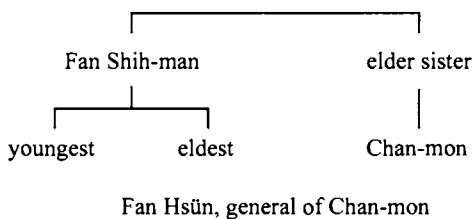
As is seen in the summaries of the Chinese reports presented above, the prehistoric oral traditions showed a Hun dynasty of indeterminable length, then a short period of five *fan* rulers, of whom the last met the first Chinese envoys in mid-3rd century, followed by three centuries during which the Chinese provide no clear information about dynastic continuity or relationships among the Funan rulers who are named, but show increasing Indianization of royal names, until the father-son succession of Jayavarman-Rudravarman in the 5th-6th centuries, about which there is an interesting story of what the Chinese saw as usurpation by a prince who killed his more legitimate half brother.

A good bit of ink has been spilled about the last, but only Porée-Maspero has given attention to the entire sequence as evidence for early Cambodian political culture, attention which is well deserved.

Both the Chinese and Pelliot assumed that in the Hun dynasty the succession was patrilineal. Indeed the few names recorded after the founding couple are male, and, unless Pelliot's translations were defective, were in direct succession from their ancestors. Porée-Maspero, however, argued, in line with her general theory of female dominance in Cambodian royal lineages, that the Chinese texts could be interpreted to mean that the descendents of the founders could have been females. Nevertheless, the descendents in the two last generations, who are named, (Hun) P'an-houang and his son P'an-p'an, were male, and it would seem either that the Funanese believed their ancestors practiced patrilineal succession, or that the Chinese, considering this normal, omitted in their reports any information to the contrary. Porée-Maspero's proposal, imposing on the evidence a theory for which there is no support at all within the time and polity in question, is hardly legitimate.⁷²

In the next stage, however, when the *fan* replaced the Hun chiefs just at the time of transition from legendary prehistory to history, it is clear that something other than direct patrilineal succession was in vogue. The first *fan*, Fan Shih-man was said to have been a 'great general' chosen by the people to rule when the Hun lineage had become weak. The pattern of succession among his descendents was as follows:

As the Chinese tell it, Fan Shih-man was succeeded, 'normally' by his eldest son who was then killed and displaced by the son of Fan Shih-man's elder sister. Thereupon Fan Shih-man's youngest son killed the 'usurper', took the throne, but was in turn displaced by Fan Hsün, a general loyal to the sister's son, thus repeating the pattern of Fan Shih-man's accession to the throne.⁷³ Schematically, in a genealogical diagram, it was:



Porée-Maspero was entirely justified in giving attention to this situation, and in suggesting that the 'legitimate' successor of Fan Shih-man might have been his sister's son who objected to Fan Shih-man's attempt to secure the succession for his own son,

72. Porée-Maspero 1950, p. 254, n. 4. See the criticism in Cœdès 1951b.

73 Cœdès 1964a, pp. 77, 81-84; 1968, pp. 38, 40-41.

contrary to the custom of the time. Porée-Maspero was mistaken, however, and again demonstrated her effort to impose a theory on the evidence, in asserting that this was an example of “succession féminine” in which Fan Shih-man’s own rights to the succession came from his sister.

In my investigation of the 7th-century *poñ*, whom I believe were an ancient group of chiefs recorded as *fan* by the Chinese, I found that succession to *poñ*-ship seemed to have been from male to sister’s son, a type of matrilineal succession illustrated indubitably in several of the long Angkorean inscriptions of official families, but different from the succession postulated by Porée-Maspero involving intermarriage between two clans. As I view the *poñ* inheritance rules, Fan Shih-man’s right to his status would have come, not from his sister, but from his mother’s brother, and his own legitimate successor would have been, not his own son, but his nephew, son of his sister.⁷⁴

As for Fan Hsün, Pelliot’s translations do not reveal his family relationships to the other *fan*, and Porée’s statement that he was from a collateral branch of the family goes beyond legitimate interpretation.

Thereafter, for over two centuries, the Chinese did not record coherent dynastic information, but only two names of chiefs, one a certain Chan t’an, possibly a pretender, and a *-varman* whose full name is uncertain⁷⁵, and we do not know how, or if, the *fan* chiefs were related to later rulers, or how the latter were related among themselves until the turn of the 5th-6th centuries and the kings Jayavarman and Rudravarman, whose story again provides evidence for the contemporary rules of dynastic succession. Porée had no explanation for this period either. The question which immediately arises, however, is, did the *fan* chiefs become *varman* kings, or did some other groups completely replace the *fan*, using the title *-varman* as their claim to superior status?

For the 7th century, when numerous contemporary inscriptions are available, I have proposed that the *poñ*, a local chiefly class, whom I believe were the *fan* known to the Chinese, followed an uncle to sister’s son succession pattern, which seems to have been that of the *fan* known to the Chinese. They were, however, by that time subordinate to ‘kings’ with the title *vrah kamratāñ añ*, usually, but not always, *-varman*, who in the 7th century seem to have followed direct patrilineal succession, and the *poñ* were being supplanted at the local level by another group of leaders, the *mrātāñ*, who show no evidence of uncle-to-nephew succession, and who may have functioned as agents of the *vrah kamratāñ añ* against the *poñ*.⁷⁶

Thus, the change in practice from the 3rd-century *fan* to the 5th-6th-century *-varman* parallels differences between the *poñ* and *vrah kamratāñ añ* in the 7th-century inscriptions.

Because the inscription naming them is in Sanskrit, where such titles are never recorded, we do not know if Jayavarman and Rudravarman had taken on the title *vrah kamratāñ añ*. Seen through Chinese eyes, Rudravarman, as son of a concubine, was not the ranking son of Jayavarman, and in order to secure the throne he killed his higher-ranking younger brother, son of the queen.

From this it may be legitimate to conclude that the younger son was really the heir, but was it because his mother was of higher rank? Subsequent Cambodian royal practice, in periods for which we have more information, does not support that interpretation. It would be equally legitimate to infer that ultimogeniture, where feasible, was preferred,

74. Vickery 1998, pp. 68-69.

75. Above, pp. 113-114.

76. Vickery 1998, pp. 190-205; and on royal dynastic succession in the 7th century, about which Porée-Maspero was misinformed, see below, p. 134-135.

whatever the rank of the mothers. A number of cases in later periods suggest this. Porée-Maspero again, accepting the Chinese interpretation as factual, saw here confirmation of her theory about the importance of *parenté féminine* of kings because the primary heir was son of the 'legitimate wife'.⁷⁷ But whichever son had been the favorite of his father, it is clear that direct patrilineal succession was being followed. It will not do to accept Porée-Maspero's escape clause, that whenever a son succeeded his father it was because they both inherited their rights from the same woman, especially when the identity of most of the queens in question is hardly known, if at all. If their role as bearers of the royal aura had been as asserted by Porée-Maspero, one would expect them to be more prominent in the record.⁷⁸

Where was Funan?

Both Aymonier and Pelliot were in agreement that Funan was mainly in southern Cambodia and Vietnam, with extensions by conquest into the Malay peninsula, and on this they were followed by Cœdès and nearly all subsequent historians. Jean Boisselier, however, placed the center of Funan in Uthong, west central Thailand, and Tatsuo Hoshino insists on a location in northeast Thailand.⁷⁹ Still another recent opinion expressed by Claude Jacques is that Funan "seems to have emerged in the first centuries A.D. in the South of Cambodia and Vietnam, where its capital was located". Then it expanded "as far as the region of Kra, whose economic importance was certainly much

77. Porée-Maspero 1950, p. 255.

78. Porée-Maspero 1950, p. 254. This was discussed thoroughly in Cœdès 1951b. In the Angkor period, when the data best seem to support Porée-Maspero's hypotheses, the name of Dharanindradevi, the **presumed** mother of Jayavarman III, son and successor of Jayavarman II, is found in only one inscription, at Preah Ko, where her status is not specific, but assumed by historians because she figures on the tower which makes a pair with that dedicated to Paramēśvara-Jayavarman II; the identity of the mother of the two sons of Yaśovarman who succeeded him is totally unknown, as is the mother of Jayavarman V who succeeded his father Rājendravarmān. In the case of Jayavarman II, moreover, Porée-Maspero 1950, p. 258 had the facts wrong, or, rather, was victim of misunderstandings which have now been cleared up. Proposing that Jayavarman's rights to the throne "were probably insufficient", she cited an early study by Bergaigne (1882) which suggested to her that Jayavarman had "consolidated" his rights by a marriage, and this is proved because he was succeeded by his son. Bergaigne, however, proposed that Jayavarman had married a queen of Śambhupura, and in this he was mistaken in confusing Jayavarman with a certain Mahipativarmān, which he thought was Jayavarman's early name. In 1950 Porée-Maspero should have known this from Cœdès' work. Cœdès 1951b, although criticizing this detail of Porée-Maspero, did not provide the details. The latest work indeed suggests that Jayavarman II married a Śambhupura queen, but in circumstances quite different from those envisioned by Bergaigne or Porée-Maspero (see Jacques 1972; Vickery 1998, pp. 398-399).

79. Pelliot 1903, pp. 288-289, "I am... in complete agreement with Mr. Aymonier: Funan in principle can only correspond to modern Cambodia and Lower Cochinchina [now Vietnam south of Saigon, in Khmer 'Kampuchea Krom']"; Boisselier 1965; Hoshino 1993, where Funan is localized near Sri Thep in the upper Pasak valley. More recently a writer of superficial popularizing articles in the Bangkok English-language press, Michael Wright (*The Nation* 28 June 1999, section C1, "The Quest for Bronze"), took up Hoshino's view of Funan and added that at the time Sri Thep "was near the head of the Gulf of Siam in ancient times", thus adding plausibility to Hoshino's theories which ignored the clear Chinese statements that Funan was a coastal area. Sri Thep is now approximately 200 kilometers from the coast in a direct line. All writers on Southeast Asian geography, however, agree that the sea level has not changed significantly in the last 2000 years, and that in Funan times the location of Sri Thep would have been just as far from the coast as it is now. See Higham and Thosarat 1998, especially maps pp. 66 and 134.

greater than the original site". "Thus, the ports of Funan which were important in international trade were perhaps not those sought in the South of Vietnam".⁸⁰ Archaeological work to date in the South of Vietnam and Cambodia does not, however, support this view; and Jacques seems to have misplaced Tun Sun, discussed above and most probably in the North of the peninsula, in Kra.⁸¹

Boisselier's opinion was based on archaeology. Although accepting that the culture of Oc-éo represented a site in Funan, he added, "whereas, in the Mekong delta, the only known evidence is found only in a very limited area, the evidence in the Menam Basin is distributed over a very large zone, marked approximately by the outline of the Basin and including important extensions, following the great axes of penetration, **towards** the North in the direction of Lamphun via Nakhon Sawan and Tak, **towards** the East in the direction of Mahasarakham via the Korat plateau, in the direction of Aranya Prathet (and perhaps even Battambang) via the region of Prachinburi, and **southward**, via Petchburi, towards the Malay peninsula with an extreme point which seems to be situated in the region of Surat-Thai[*sic*, Thani]-Cheding Pra...".⁸²

That is, in this vast area archaeological research shows continuous occupation from prehistoric times to the end of Dvāravatī, at the beginning of the 11th century in Uthong, and at the end of the 12th for other sites; and in the view of Boisselier, the evidence of archaeology is that these sites were related to Funan, and because of the large area in the Menam basin versus the small area around Oc-éo, the center of Funan should be considered as having been in the Menam Basin. In the Mekong Delta there were only three or four cities which could be related to the culture of Funan, but in the Menam basin around 15.

Accepting that both the Menam and Mekong basins were parts of Funan, Boisselier's view of the archaeology led him to reinterpret the story of the conquests of Fan-shih-man, suggesting that they were from West to East, from the cradle of Funan in the Menam Basin to a region of conquest in the Mekong Delta. Nevertheless, Boisselier accepted that "when Funan collapsed, at the time of the emancipation of Chenla, in the second half of the 6th century, the political center of the old empire might have shifted to the Mekong Delta."

One of Boisselier's arguments which is of intrinsic interest, although not in my view as support for his main thesis, is that "none of the characteristic traits of the culture of Funan in Oc-éo was preserved in Chenla, the appearance of which finalized a total rupture with earlier traditions". As examples Boisselier noted "characteristic jewelry of gold and tin, the uncountable pearls of Oc-éo, pottery types which are unknown in Chenla", but found in Dvāravatī.

Indeed Dvāravatī appears to have been a very different society and polity from Chenla, and if both developed from the earlier Funan culture, some explanation must be proposed. The differences are especially clear in the macro elements of archaeological remains, religious buildings and inscriptions, and the major cult. Dvāravatī is singularly lacking in inscriptions, compared with over 200 recorded for the first century (7th century A.D.) of Chenla, and no Dvāravatī site shows the rich architecture of Chenla's 7th-century city of Īśānapura (Sambor Prei Kuk, Kompong Thom Province). Dvāravatī was also very Buddhist, as were its Menam Valley successors, in contrast to the increasing Hinduism of Mekong-area Funan, and particularly Chenla, when more Indian cultural influence was absorbed from the 3rd century onward. As for the micro elements emphasized by Boisselier, we must first note that in Boisselier's time there had been no archaeological

80. Jacques 1995a, pp. 14-23, quotations on pages 18-19.

81. On recent archaeological evidence see below.

82. Boisselier 1965, no pagination.

studies of Chenla sites equivalent to what had been done in the Dvāravatī sites of Thailand. Only now is this beginning, with the excavations at Angkor Borei, and work by Vietnamese archaeologists on their side of the border in the Mekong Delta. Thus, with respect to numbers of sites, Boisselier's argument loses its weight, and ongoing work in the Mekong Delta, both in Cambodia and in Vietnam, and in the region of Angkor Borei in southern Cambodia, Takeo Province, may make his arguments about lack of artifactual continuity in Chenla out of date as well.⁸³

Pre-7th-century Angkor Borei, at least superficially, based on the work so far completed, shows many similarities to the typical Dvāravatī sites, and there was architectural and political continuity there, and in Chenla in general, from the Funan period to the Angkor Period (Prasat Phnom Da from the mid-Angkor period covering pre-Angkor remains, inscription K. 53 showing ruling class continuity from the last king of Funan to mid-7th-century Chenla, and inscription K. 549 from Phnom Da dated by Cœdès later than Jayavarman VII, that is, in the 13th century).⁸⁴ Like the few Dvāravatī inscriptions, the few inscriptions discovered in recent excavations in the Oc-éo region are Buddhist, and the most important is in script of the 8th-9th centuries and in a hybrid Pali (that is, mixed with Sanskrit) dialect.⁸⁵

Two final points made by Boisselier are certainly to be dismissed as irrelevant. First, he said, and perhaps as a matter of fact it is correct, that in spite of the importance of the discoveries at Oc-éo, it was not there, but in the Menam Basin, that "we find the first evidence of genuine Indian influence ...in works of local manufacture showing 4th-5th century Indian influence". This is part of the old orientalist prejudice that all cultural progress in Southeast Asia had to start with an import from India. Without such prejudice, it should be argued that the lack of Indian influence in earliest Funan (Oc-éo) demonstrates that it was the earliest site, which began developing on sea trade, with clear Indian influence there also not until the 4th-5th centuries.⁸⁶

The second point, linked to the first, shows a misunderstanding of international sea relations at the time. Boisselier believed that at the time of early Funan and Dvāravatī navigation was undeveloped, the winds and currents not well known, and thus the main route of contact between India and Southeast Asia was overland, first to the Menam Basin before reaching the Mekong. It is now generally conceded, however, that Southeast Asians, especially the Austronesians, possessed a high level of maritime technology and navigation skills in prehistoric times, and there was no technological impediment to direct sea contact with India.⁸⁷

Hoshino, while citing Boisselier in support, based his interpretation on a close reading of some passages in the Chinese documents. Thus, "Funan is more than 3,000 *li* west of Lin-i [Lin-yi/(** Ljəm-ɨəp*)]", which taken literally, since the location of Lin-i in north central Vietnam is not in doubt, would indeed place Funan in central or northeastern Thailand.⁸⁸ There are so many other statements that contradict these two contexts,

83. For archaeology on the Vietnamese side see Lê Xuân Diệm, *et al.* 1995; and for Angkor Borei see note 128 below.

84. For Prasat Phnom Da see Boisselier 1966, pp. 118, 120; for inscription K. 53 see Vickery 1998, pp. 41, 45, 109, 261, and below, p. 38; and for inscription K. 549 see Vickery 1998, pp. 45-46.

85. Lê Xuân Diệm, *et al.* 1995, p. 439 and the next-to-last unnumbered plate.

86. Another art historian of the same generation was of a different opinion. Dupont 1941, p. 244, wrote that "the art of Dvāravatī, on the whole, does not include any continuous production of brahmanical images, and comparison of Buddha images does not lead very far for lack of comparable details".

87. Vickery 1998, pp. 51-60; Manguin 1980, 1985, 1996, 1999.

88. Pelliot 1903, p. 254, document III-(4[7]), and p. 282, XIV-(3[10]).

however, that we must assume, as Pelliot apparently did, that some of the Chinese writers were lax in recording or re-copying directions; and we must not forget that most of the writers had no direct knowledge of the subject.

The first statement cited above is followed by, Funan is “in a large bay of the sea”, which eliminates any inland location, and farther on the same document says that “in the South Lin-i touches Funan”. The next record says “Funan is south of Je-nan [northern Vietnam] in a western bay of the great sea”, and another text has, “Funan is south of...Je-nan, in a great bay west of the sea, ... more than 3,000 *li* southwest of Lin-i”. Another description concerns a port in Lin-i from which “one goes south to the kingdoms of Funan and others”. Finally, the Chinese monk I-ching/Yi-tsing, who traveled in Southeast Asia in 671-695 after the end of Funan, wrote that, “(leaving Champa) and going one month toward the Southwest, one arrives in the country of Pa-nan, formerly called Funan.”⁸⁹

These citations all concord in placing Funan near the sea and south or southwest of places which are now in central Vietnam; and the ‘great bay of the sea’ can hardly have meant anything but the Gulf of Thailand.

Hoshino, however, found other inconsistencies, and indeed they deserve comment. He pointed out that in his text V Pelliot was forced to emend the Chinese text to keep Funan where he wanted it. Thus after writing that Funan was south of Je-nan, Pelliot continued, “there is a large river [implicitly the Tonle Sap and Mekong] which flows from the West and goes into the sea”, noting however, that “the most natural translation would be ‘the river flows to the West and falls into the sea’”. Hoshino insists that this literal reading is the best, and that it is proof that Funan could not have been in Cambodia. His own reading of the text, however, does not help the case he wishes to make. Hoshino says Pelliot did not render the word *shui*, ‘water’, just before the words meaning ‘run/flow westward’, and that *shui* “in this instance could mean river as well as water”; and Hoshino’s translation is, “there is a big river which has a tributary flowing westward and the river enters into the sea”. This fits perfectly the situation of the Tonle Sap-Mekong system during several months of the year when the Tonle Sap reverses course and flows upstream toward the northwest, while the Mekong keeps flowing to the sea; and it is much better than Hoshino’s proposal that the passage refers to the Chao Phraya and the Pa Sak rivers in central Thailand.⁹⁰ One may, moreover, question the accuracy of Hoshino’s correction of Pelliot, a matter which I leave to the decision of sinologists.

I still prefer Pelliot’s justification of his emendation by reference to a parallel passage in his text VI, in which a much clearer statement has unambiguously, “there is a large river which flows from the Northwest towards the East and falls into the sea”, which fits the combined Tonle Sap and the Mekong from the point where the two meet near modern Phnom Penh. Moreover, when Hoshino is faced with Chinese records which really force recognition of Funan in the Mekong delta region, he gets around the problem by positing two Funan factions, one on the Menam and one, “the Kaundinya faction” on the Mekong.⁹¹

Finally, the best check on the location of the central area of Funan is the single item of local epigraphy which corresponds to a Chinese record in a period when epigraphy is almost non-existent. This is inscription K. 40, written in mid-6th-century script, and found at Tonle Bati, some 30 km southwest of Phnom Penh. Even if it may possibly have been moved there from some other site, we may assume that it was not moved from farther

89. Pelliot 1903, pp. 254: document III-(4[7]), 256: V-(5[7]), 263: VI-(6[7]), 278: X-(6[10]), 284: XXI.

90. Hoshino 1993, p. 17; Pelliot 1903, p. 256.

91. Pelliot 1903, p. 256 and note 2, 263; Hoshino 1993, pp. 22, 26, 27-28 (“the biggest river in Funan: the Mekong river”).

away than some other place in southern Cambodia. It records the names of two kings, Jayavarman and his son Rudravarman, corresponding precisely to the Chinese reports recording the death of Jayavarman in 514 and envoys to China from Rudravarman in 517, 519, 530, 535, and 539.⁹² Although Boisselier might have responded that the possible shift of Funan's center from the Menam to the Mekong, which he was willing to accept at the end of the 6th century, could really have occurred in the late 5th century, this would be special pleading, and such a dramatic change could hardly have been ignored by the Chinese, for whom Funan was an important link in their contacts with India.

Although Funan included some part of what is now southern Vietnam, it is no longer possible to accept that the Funan chief Fan-shih-man was the *śrī Māra* of the Vō-Cạnh Sanskrit inscription (C. 40) as first proposed by Louis Finot and accepted by Pierre Dupont and Cœdès, and that therefor Funan dominated south central Vietnam all the way to Nhatrang. This must be emphasized because the Fan-shih-man = *śrī Māra* idea seems to have caught on in certain milieux and is threatening to get out of hand. Since the study by Filliozat it has become accepted that *śrī Māra* was probably a Pāṇḍyan title unrelated to any local Indochinese polity. Moreover, a Chinese transcription of *śrī Māra* would be of four syllables/characters. They regularly treated *śrī* as disyllabic, and easily represented the syllables *ma/mā* and *ra/la* in Indic or Southeast Asian languages.⁹³

The ethnicity of Funan

The dispute over the geography of Funan has repercussions on the question of its ethnicity; and, contrary to the implicit assumption of the early French scholars who treated the name as meaning 'mountain' in Khmer, the subsequent international consensus outside of Khmer specialists seems to be that Funan was not a Khmer language area.

Uthong, which Boisselier thought was the center of Funan, was probably at that time a Mon area, and perhaps it was the influence of Boisselier's representations which led others to extend the Mon language area all along the coast to Vietnam. Thus, Boisselier moved Funan to central Thailand, and then the ancient language of that part of Central Thailand, Mon, was moved back to what had been considered the region of Funan.

Janice Stargardt, without citing any authority, made an assertion about settlement patterns of the Mons in "Central and Southern Thailand and the ancient inhabitants (probably Mōn) of the Trans-Bassac Plain in southern Vietnam"; and again, without argument or sources, referred to "the Mōns at Satingpra" in the southern Thai peninsula near Songkhla.⁹⁴ The latter is especially aberrant because the name 'Satingpra' is pure Khmer (*stu'ñ prah*, ស្ទឹងព្រះ) 'river- sacred/lord', and there is much evidence for continuing

92. Cœdès 1931, pp. 8-9. In his opinion K. 40 had originally been part of a door jamb, but when discovered it was serving as a lintel in the late 12th-century temple of Ta Prohm at Tonle Bati.

93. Finot 1927, p. 186; Dupont 1949, pp. 19-20; Porée-Maspero 1950, p. 265; Cœdès 1964a, pp. 81, 110; Filliozat 1969; Wheatley 1983, pp. 120, n. 5, 125, 297, 309 who showed confusion in accepting both the Funan relationship of the Vō-Cạnh inscription and Filliozat's proposal concerning the title. For Chinese transcriptions see Wheatley 1983, p. 239, **Si-lji* for *śrī*, and p. 237, **Muât-lâ-ieu* for 'Malayu'. Note also Cœdès 1964a, p. 81, p. 82, n. 1; 1968, p. 40, nn. 38, 41. From my own experience teaching in the Archaeology Department of the Fine Arts University in Phnom Penh I have seen that the Fan shih-man - Śrī Māra identification and the expansion of Funan to that region have become articles of faith.

94. Stargardt 1986, pp. 23, 25.

Khmer use not far to the north of that area (Pattalung, Nakhon Sri Thammarat) until the 17th century.⁹⁵

Helmut Loofs offered a similar proposition, that there had been a civilization “stretching from the lower part of Burma through most of Thailand and Cambodia to the southernmost part of the Indochinese peninsula, that of the early Mon (or ‘Proto-Mon’), whatever ‘proto-Mon’ might mean, for by Funan times Mon and Khmer would have been clearly differentiated.”⁹⁶

B. P. Groslier also seems to have doubted that Funan was Khmer. In prehistoric times, according to Groslier, “a vast Neolithic civilization stretched around the southern coast of Annam, from Sa-huynh, through southern Cochinchina, and even appears in the trans-Bassac in sites immediately preceding those of Funan it is obvious that these first inhabitants have things in common with those of Borneo and Java. Everything points to proto-Indonesian peoples, ancestors of the Chams”.⁹⁷

Against this Groslier asserted that the Khmers “first developed in the north-east of present-day Siam, along the Se Mun [River]. The Tchen-la, first of the Indianized Khmer kingdoms, bordered the Middle Mekong on the East between Champassak and Kraces especially”. Chenla descended the Mekong “towards the Fou-nan, taken over ca. 550 A.D.”, a date not justified by anything in the record, for at that time, just a few years after the last date of Rudravarman, the Chinese had not yet seen any political change in Funan, but it is a date made necessary by the clearly Khmer culture dominant in the inscriptions at the beginning of the 7th century.

Even the traditional treatment of Cœdès, if read carefully, in spite of the interpretation of ‘*funan*’ as Khmer ‘mountain’ shows ambiguity in its scenario of the Kambuja of Chenla beyond the Dangrek mountains swooping down to conquer southern Funan, after which Khmer inscriptions begin to appear.

Similar interpretations are found in the work of historians D. G. E. Hall and Kenneth R. Hall; and now a linguist working on Austronesian languages, Graham Thurgood, has no doubt that Funan was an Austronesian area.⁹⁸

D. G. E. Hall said that the Funanese were Malays, they were “of Malay race, and still in the tribal state at the dawn of history”, although he was possibly not using ‘Malay’ in a specific linguistic sense.⁹⁹ At least he did not use the term ‘Austronesian’, nor any other linguistic designation at all, in that context. Hall, moreover, was not an authority on these matters, but was merely following some rather loose statements of others, and, crucially,

95. The equivalent Mon terms are *krôn* (‘river’) *kyāk* (‘sacred, lord’). For Khmer in the peninsula see Vickery 1972, pp. 397-410. In the same article Stargardt garbled another Mon-Khmer comparison, citing my study of the “important role of the *ploñ* [*sic, poñ*, emphasis added], in association with the tanks”, and “Vickery suspects and Christian Bauer [a Mon specialist] confirms *ploñ* [*resic*, emphasis added] is Mōn in origin, [which] would support my hypothesis that the lower and middle Bassac plain were originally Mōn areas of settlement”. First, I suggested, not that *poñ* was Mon in origin, but that Khmer *poñ* and Mon *bañā* may have been cognates, and second, as I recall, Bauer at the time did not ‘confirm’ this, but only admitted its possibility. All, repeat all, the records of *poñ* are in Khmer. See Stargardt 1986, pp. 35, 39, n. 16; Vickery 1986; Vickery 1998, pp. 190-205.

96. Loofs 1979, quoted in Brown 1996, p. 43 who appeared to have accepted it. The differentiation, probably to a degree that the two languages were already mutually incomprehensible, is clear in the earliest inscriptions – 7th century in Khmer, and perhaps somewhat earlier in Mon.

97. Groslier 1985-86, p. 34. Only this English translation exists. It is sometimes awkward, and may not perfectly represent Groslier’s thought as originally expressed in French, but it was at least authorized by Groslier.

98. D. G. E. Hall 1955, 1981; K. R. Hall 1985; Vickery 1987 (review of K. R. Hall); Thurgood 1999.

99. D. G. E. Hall 1955, 1968, 1981, p. 25.

in his note 3 to that page, starting at least in his third edition of 1968, added “the word [Malay, in the expression ‘Malay race’] is used here in its widest sense”.

Now what did he mean by that? Certainly no one would now construe ‘Malay race in its widest sense’ as intended to be equivalent to ‘Austronesian speakers’. In his discussion of race on pages 7-11, he showed the now obsolete view that all the peoples of Southeast Asia, including the Malays and Indonesians, had spread down overland from China, and then on to the islands, and he seems to be using ‘Malay race in its widest sense’ in the way modern prehistorians, such as Bellwood, use the term ‘Southern Mongoloid’, which includes both Khmer and Malay speakers, and most of the peoples of Southeast Asia.¹⁰⁰ At least there is nothing in D. G. E. Hall to support a view that the Funan known to the Chinese was Austronesian-speaking before becoming Khmer in the sixth century.

Then K. R. Hall claimed that the available Chinese descriptions record at least an Austronesian presence in Funan and along the coast to the south, because in 240 the Chinese “reported to the emperor that Funan’s authority reached from the lower Mekong Delta to the upper Malay Peninsula, a stretch coterminous with what was almost assuredly a string of Austronesian speaking trading colonies”.¹⁰¹

K. R. Hall was correct in citing the Chinese envoys for a report that Funan had conquered a port area on the Malay peninsula, probably its northern part, but not in adding that “Funan had assumed authority over many of the trade centers on the Malay coast”.

What the Chinese really reported was that Funan had occupied a place called Tun-Sun, which had five kings, and a language a little bit different from that of Funan. This does not point in the direction of Malay or Austronesian. As noted above, Mon specialists consider that *tun-sun* was Mon for ‘cities-five’, and if the Mon language of Tun-Sun was only a little different from that of Funan, Funan must have been Mon-Khmer.¹⁰²

K. R. Hall also asserted that the archaeological remains at Oc-éo showed that the coast was occupied in the early first century A.D. by Malay fishing and hunting groups, and that the “carved sacrificial posts known as *yūpas*” in Borneo “substantiate a Borneo cultural link to Funan”.¹⁰³

First, the remains at Oc-éo show an urban port center with stone and brick architecture and skill in making metal jewelry, not fishing and hunting groups. As for the *yūpas* of Borneo, they are Sanskrit inscriptions, whether for sacrifice or not is unclear, and they are of no relevance for Funan. They only show that certain groups in Borneo, like Javanese, Cham, Khmer, etc. in the early centuries A.D., learned to write Sanskrit and used it in stone inscriptions.

Thurgood, in his study of Chamic languages cited both the Halls and the linguist specialist in Austronesian languages Blust in support of his preference for an Austronesian Funan. In his own words the “first Austronesian incursions onto the Mainland” must have been “at Funan... around 500 B.C., or perhaps even earlier—at the site of Oc-éo, the port city of the Khmers”. “By the middle of the sixth century Funan had been conquered by the Khmers, but both Hall... and Blust... suggest that earlier Funan was Austronesian speaking”.¹⁰⁴

Thurgood’s citation from the linguist Blust is equally speculative, “If [emphasis added] Funan was AN [Austronesian]-speaking, in the early centuries of the Christian era a single dialect chain would have extended... from the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula

100. Bellwood 1992, p. 73.

101. K. R. Hall 1985, p. 38; Vickery 1987.

102. Wheatley 1983, p. 213, citing the Mon specialist Shorto 1963, p. 583.

103. K. R. Hall 1985, p. 40.

104. Thurgood 1999, p. 17; Blust 1992.

to Champa”, from which Thurgood extrapolates, “**even if Hall and Blust are not correct** [emphasis added]”, one could still speculate about a string of trading posts along the coast as far as “the eastern coast of modern Malaysia which were dominated by Austronesian-speaking traders”. If Hall and Blust were not correct, however, then the coast of Funan would have been Mon-Khmer rather than Austronesian.

Neither is it certain that in Funan times the area of present Malaysia was Austronesian. It could have very well been dominated by the Mon-Khmer ancestors of the modern Aslian-language speakers, forming a continuity down the peninsula from the Mon-Khmer region of what is now central and southern Thailand. They are certainly the most ancient surviving inhabitants of the peninsula, where Malay speakers are relative newcomers.¹⁰⁵

Should we assume, perhaps, that because Funan was a maritime power, and the great navigators of the day were Austronesian, that Funan must also have been Austronesian?

No doubt, like most maritime societies, the port cities were very mixed, and Mon, Cham, and Malay would have been the main groups in addition to the Khmer, but on present evidence it is impossible to assert that Funan as an area and its dominant groups were anything but Khmer. Most of the first Khmer-language inscriptions are from the far South, including Angkor Borei, in the early 7th century; they indicate a society with deep-rooted social and religious structures; and analysis of their distribution throughout the 7th century shows gradual movement northward. The idea of a rapid descent of the Khmer from a Chenla beyond the present Khmer-Lao border belongs to the realm of scholarly myths, although the date of the arrival of the Khmer in the South has not been determined, and the archaeological excavations in Angkor Borei which may show human occupation going back to several centuries B.C. have not been analyzed.¹⁰⁶

It must be emphasized, in the absence of any writing in a local language, that the identification of the language of Funan is not possible, but the indirect evidence of *Tun-Sun*, plus the evidence of the many Khmer inscriptions of the early 7th century, in what had obviously been Funan territory, strongly suggest that the population was Khmer, even if the port cities may have been full of other groups, in particular Austronesians. In the field of archaeology too, “Excavation work at Oc Eo shows no true discontinuity between Funan and pre-Angkorian levels, in ceramic and statuary traditions, or in stratigraphic sequences, which tends to favour the hypothesis of Mon-Khmer linguistic dominance in the area under Funan control (including probably the Thai-malay Peninsula)”.¹⁰⁷

The name ‘Funan’ and its capital

The conventional, and not seriously challenged, view has been that *fu nan*/**b’ju-nâm* was a Chinese attempt to render the phonetics of the Khmer word for ‘mountain’, *vnam/bnam* in Old Khmer. This interpretation has influenced discussion of the location of its capital, titles of its kings (‘mountain kings’), and has led modern Khmer to devise the name អណាចក្រ/ *āṇācākṛ bhnam*, ‘mountain kingdom’, a name implying a much larger area than most historians of Cambodia would accept.

A problem with this restitution of a Khmer name is that in most of the names with the character *nan/nam* in old Chinese texts about Southeast Asia that character is to be understood in its literal meaning ‘south’ and the names are geographical descriptions. Examples are *Nan-Yueh* (‘southern Yueh’), *Nan Hai* (‘southern sea’), *An-nam* (‘peaceful

105. Bellwood 1992, p. 114.

106. Vickery 1998, chapters 5, 6, and Table 2, p. 100; Vickery 1994.

107. Manguin 2002, p. 60, n. 3.

South'), Je-nan (south of the sun). Thus, why not interpret *fu-nan* similarly as *fu* + 'south'? Aymonier did, and suggested 'protected south'. Pelliot agreed this was possible, but preferred to consider *fu-nan* a transcription because in some Chinese texts it had been spelled with two other characters for the first syllable, a different *fū* and *pa*.¹⁰⁸

As noted above, there have been two hypotheses among serious scholars concerning the location of the Funan capital, the first Angkor Borei (Aymonier and Pelliot), the second Ba Phnom (Cœdès), which then remained the conventional wisdom until very recently when new work in the archaeology of Angkor Borei together with the absence of such remains at Ba Phnom may force a change.

Because of this, it is useful to review the entire discussion which involves several publications by Cœdès and others with which only specialists are now familiar.

The Aymonier-Pelliot consensus on Angkor Borei as the site of Funan's capital stood until 1928 when Cœdès, discussing the genealogies of certain Angkor (post-9th century) kings, proposed that the capital of Funan was at Ba Phnom, not Angkor Borei.¹⁰⁹ Commenting on the conclusion of Aymonier, followed by Pelliot, that an inscription in Battambang proved that Vyādhapura, believed to be the Sanskrit name for the capital of Funan, was near Angkor Borei, Cœdès said that Aymonier, "having read the name of a provincial functionary named *Loñ Vrai Krapās Vyādhapura*... concluded from that that Vyādhapura should be in the modern province of Prei Krebas, and he proposed to identify it with Angkor Borei... the site of which has produced sculptures of a very archaic style".¹¹⁰

But, according to Cœdès, "It was not the custom, in Khmer epigraphy, to designate the same locality by two names side by side [that is, the two toponyms *vrai krapās* and *vyādhapura*], and, for my part, I would prefer to translate the person named *Loñ Vrai Krapās Vyādhapura* by 'Loñ of Vrai Krapās and of Vyādhapura', or even 'Loñ of Vrai Krapās in (the territory of) Vyādhapura'".

Cœdès was certainly correct to emend Aymonier's translation, though not for the reason he adduced, and of the two choices he proposed the second is better, because the title *loñ* followed by a place name indicated that the *loñ* had some administrative function there, and the title *loñ* was not sufficiently high for a holder to have responsibilities in both *vrai krapās* and *vyādhapura* if they were separate localities.¹¹¹ Vrai Krapās in Vyādhapura, however, does not necessarily remove Vyādhapura from Angkor Borei.

In his publication of the inscriptions of Bantāy Prāv (K. 220-K. 222), Cœdès insisted again, writing, "it is known that it was this passage [Khmer, line 18, p. 62 "*loñ vrai krapās vyādhapura*"; translated as, "*Loñ Vrai Krapās* ('forest of cotton trees'), of Vyādhapura"] which led Aymonier (*Cambodge* I, pp. 197, 201) to identify ancient Vyādhapura with Prei Krabas in the modern province of Tà Kèv... It is in any case possible that there is no geographic or administrative connection between these two names and that Vrai Krapās was simply the personal name of the *loñ*. In contrast to the names which follow the titles *khloñ vala* and *khloñ viṣaya*..., the names which follow the designation *loñ* are personal names: thus in the preceding inscription (l. 11) the two other *loñ* of Vyādhapura origin had

108. Pelliot 1903, p. 279, also citing Aymonier 1903, p. 109. Porée-Maspero 1962, p. 171 also doubted that Funan was 'mountain', but for an inadequate reason, that it was "a name which seems surprising for the kingdom of the Nāga", special pleading in line with her theory, for there is nothing in the Chinese writings on Funan or in the epigraphic record which justifies calling Funan a 'Nāga kingdom'.

109. Cœdès 1928.

110. Cœdès 1928, p. 127.

111. On the status of *loñ*, which still requires more work on the Angkor-period inscriptions, see Vickery 1998, pp. 145, 402, 404, 406.

the names *Ñam Thmur* and *Jeṅ Khter*. The identification by Aymonier appears therefor to have no basis”.¹¹²

The ‘preceding inscription’ to which Cœdès referred was K. 221, *ibid.*, pp. 54-61, with, in line 11 (Khmer, p. 58, “*loñ ñam thmur nu loñ jeṅ khter ʼnak vyādhapura*”, trans., p. 59, ‘*Loñ Ñam Thmur and Loñ Jeṅ Khter, persons of Vyādhapura*’).

These considerations by Cœdès are not entirely relevant. It is not *a priori* legitimate to draw conclusions about the personal names or titles of an individual (*loñ*, itself a title of rank or status) on the basis of names of geographical/administrative entities (*sruk*).

To the extent that Cœdès’ explanation was that names of *loñ* are usually personal names, it was correct. But those personal names are nearly always of a **single term**, of a form which, in comparison with other contexts, is almost certainly a personal name. For example, in K. 222, line 10, *loñ gno*, and in line 19, *loñ pvār*.

As examples, from the same inscriptions of Bantāy Prāv, K. 222, line 2, “*loñ ʼyak nāgapura*”, of which the last term is certainly the name of a place, and Cœdès translated, p. 62, ‘*Loñ ʼyak of Nāgapura*’. The term ‘*ʼyak*’, however, is not only shown to be a personal name, not a geographical term, by other contexts (for example, *vāp ʼyak* [of] *chdīn jrau*, in line 13 of K. 222, of which *chdīn jrau*, ‘deep river’ is still a current toponym), but in the following phrase of the same inscription we see “*loñ ʼyak mān samvandhi nu kamsten*”, rendered by Cœdès as, ‘*Loñ ʼyak who was related to the Kamsten*’.

The three names cited above from K. 221 and K. 222 are **very unusual** within the corpus. A similar name in K. 221, line 13, is *loñ kuti ruñ*, which Cœdès, p. 60, explained as “*Loñ Kuti of Ruñ*”, that is, *Loñ* (title), personal name *Kuti*, of *Ruñ* (place). But in this case there is proof in another northern inscription, K. 380/1037 (Preah Vihear), naming *sruk kuti ruñ*, that *kuti ruñ* was not a personal name plus toponym, but itself a toponym, name of a *sruk*. This example supports Aymonier’s interpretation of the *loñ* from Vyādhapura. Another similar example from the Bantāy Prāv inscription is *loñ stuk antek*, ‘the *loñ* of turtle (*antek*) pond (*stuk*)’.¹¹³

Sufficient contexts are known to permit, in most cases, distinction between personal names and geographical/administrative terms, and it is safe to say that *vrai krapās* could not have been the personal name of a *loñ*. As for *ñam thmur* and *jeṅ khter*, the second, depending on an understanding of *khter*, not yet achieved, should probably be interpreted as a geographical term within Vyādhapura, and the first, again depending on an eventual understanding of *ñam* (*thmur* was a type of bovine), either a locality or the function of the *loñ*.

Thus, Cœdès’ new translation alone was not sufficient to displace Vyādhapura from Angkor Borei, for Vyādhapura could still have been a larger entity with its center at Angkor Borei, and including *Vrai Krapās*. As Cœdès noted, “The identification of Vyādhapura with a definite locality... should be based on a text originating from that locality and giving it the name Vyādhapura”. And, Cœdès added, “This text exists: it is an inscription from Vat Cakret, in the province of Bā Phnom, written in the 10th century”.¹¹⁴ This royal donation in Sanskrit refers to *adrivyādhapureśa*, “the *Çiva* (*īśa*) of Vyādhapura

112. Cœdès 1951a, pp. 54-64, quotations from p. 64.

113. Cœdès 1954, pp. 261, 267; Cœdès 1951a, p. 61.

114. Cœdès 1928, p. 128. This inscription was later published by Cœdès as K. 61, “*Stèle de Prāḥ Vihār Kūk*” (Cœdès 1964b, pp. 20-22), where, interestingly, he said nothing about its significance for the localization of the capital of Funan, and translated *adrivyādhapureśa* as ‘*Seigneur de Vyādhapura*’. Perhaps by 1964 Cœdès had changed his opinion about the significance of Vyādhapura, but did not wish to change the discussion of Funan in other contexts.

on the mountain (*adri*)”, which must have been the mountain of Ba Phnom. Thus the site of Vyādhapura should be sought at the foot of this mountain. Nevertheless, Cœdès still showed caution, saying that it would be necessary to wait for the discovery of the Khmer or Sanskrit equivalent of the name *T’ō-mou*, the ancient capital of Funan, and the identification of the city of *Na-fou-na*, south of the former, and to which the kings of Funan were forced to emigrate to take refuge from the incursions of Chenla. He did not suggest then that the more southern city might have been Angkor Borei.

Interestingly, Cœdès added, “That is not at all in contradiction with the inscription of Bantāy Prāv. If *Vrai Krapās* really corresponds to the modern Prei Krebās, Bā Phnom is only separated from it by the Mekong and could very well include Angkor Borei among the localities within its territory”. This is true enough as far as it goes, but we must not forget that the inscription in question dates from 5-6 centuries after the florescence of Funan, when locations and extent of administrative units may have changed.¹¹⁵

Cœdès then, in an attempt to strengthen his case actually weakened it. He wrote, “the name of the mountain of Bā Phnom is ancient, and is attested in the 10th century in the form of *Vrah Vnam* in an inscription found at Phum Mien, about fifty kilometers to the north... It is certainly this ‘sacred mountain’ which the inscription of Vat Cakret designates by the term *adri* ...”. With respect to this, it was rather daring to insist that an inscription must have been referring to a location 50 km distant; and later when Cœdès studied the inscription in question he discovered that the expression *vrah vnam* did not refer to a mountain at all, but to an edifice, “a pyramid (*vrah vnam*) in laterite”.¹¹⁶

Cœdès’ revision of the until then current consensus led to some peculiar adhocery by others. Thus, Mauger, who led the restoration of Asram Moha Rosei, a small, probably Funan-period, temple on the slope of Phnom Da, a hill near Angkor Borei, said that Angkor Borei was “a fortified city which it was once thought could be identified with Vyādhapura, until the recent epigraphic work of M. Cœdès” in *Bulletin de l’École française d’Extrême-Orient* 1928.¹¹⁷ A year later Mauger amplified this, saying that after Mahendravarman had conquered Vyādhapura-Ba Phnom, the capital of Funan moved to Na-fou-na (“not yet identified”), and Īśānavarman completed the conquest of Funan in 627. “And, at that time there was a considerable walled city... at Ankor Borei, ... as proved by [inscription K. 600] ... discovered last year”.¹¹⁸

It must be noted, in parentheses, that even if the existence of a “considerable walled city” at Angkor Borei is not in doubt, and had been recognized since the time of Aymonier

115. Some readers may have been still more confused by Cœdès 1952, p. 16, referring to K. 441 at Sambor Prei Kuk, where he wrote that the name of Giriça was given in Funan times to the mountain of Ba Phnom, next to the capital of Vyādhapura. Of course, there is no contemporary source from Funan times for the name of the mountain, and this must be accounted as a lapsus by Cœdès.

116. The inscription is K. 105. See Cœdès 1954, pp. 183-186, where, p. 183, n. 4, referring to the phrase quoted here, Cœdès coquettishly remarked, “And not the territory of *Vrah Vnam* = Bā Phnom, as Aymonier believed”, and, as Cœdès himself had believed his *Études cambodgiennes* 21 (Cœdès 1928). In fact, in Old Khmer, although *vnam* was ‘mountain’, *vrah vnam* ‘sacred *vnam*’ was always a temple construction. For other published examples in Cœdès’ *Inscriptions du Cambodge* see K. 263/A.D. 984; K. 344/A.D. 985; K. 33/A.D. 1017.

117. Mauger 1935, p. 491, citing Cœdès 1928. Even more peculiar, although not relevant to the present discussion, Mauger was so mesmerized by the idea of completely separate states of Funan and Chenla, that he believed Asram Moha Rosei, which he dated to early 6th century, but which he thought must have been a Chenla construction, must have been first constructed between Kompong Cham and Kratie where the particular basalt stone of which it is made is found, then dismantled and reconstructed near Angkor Borei after the conquest of Funan by Chenla.

118. Mauger 1936, p. 93.

and Pelliot, inscription K. 600 does not prove it.. This inscription, the oldest in Khmer yet known (date 611), says nothing about a city, and does not record the name of a king. It records donations of workers, land, and animals made by two local functionaries, a *poñ* named Uy, and a *mratāñ* named Antār. It thus bears no evidence for the status of Angkor Borei at the time, nor for or against the extent of power of a king, nor even for or against the inclusion of the region in a polity to be understood as ‘Funan’ or ‘Chenla’. What it proves, and this is important, is that the language of this region, which had certainly been part of Funan, at the beginning of the 7th century, before the date which the Chinese gave for the final conquest of Funan by Chenla, was Khmer.

Thus, an ancient city, already recognized from artifacts on the ground, became an embarrassment, identified neither with the main city of Funan, nor with the city to which the Funan chiefs allegedly fled when attacked by Chenla.

Cœdès came to grips with this problem in the 1940s. Starting with, “the site of Na-fou-na remains mysterious”, he evoked inscription K. 49, dated 664 in the time of Jayavarman I, and found near Ba Phnom. It says a royal order was brought there by the *sadhu* residing in Naravaranagara, which, because it was the source of a royal order must have been the capital of Jayavarman I, and the name of which fitted as well as Pelliot’s unattested *navanagara* with the Chinese transcription *Na-fou-na*. Thus, the capital of Jayavarman I “was probably at Angkor Borei, a very important archaeological site, near which have been found several of his [Jayavarman I] inscriptions”, and where he would have established his capital after the reign of Īsānavarman who had his capital at Sambor Prei Kuk in the province of Kompong Thom in the center of the country.¹¹⁹

Claude Jacques, however, has disputed Cœdès’ translation and interpretation in a way which would mean that Naravaranagara was near the site of the inscription, about 20 km south of Ba Phnom, still leaving Angkor Borei unaccounted for.¹²⁰

Paul Wheatley continued the confusion. Not proceeding beyond the 1928 article of Cœdès, he kept to the erroneous view that *vrah vnam* referred to a sacred mountain, and consecrated an article to the demonstration that the name of the sacred mountain recorded in Chinese transcription in the 5th century as *Mo-tan* (ancient *Muâ-tâm*, representing a pronunciation /ma-tam/) was Mahendraparvata in its Tamil version Mayentiram.¹²¹ However, after tortuous exegesis of the sources, the best Wheatley could do for a correspondence /ma-tam/ = Mayentiram was “that the form **Muâ-tâm* was intended to convey not only the name *Mayentiram* but also the sense of ‘[the place where] Ma[heśvara] lingers’”. In other words, only the first syllable of the Chinese name corresponds to the first syllable of the Indic name—not close enough to be convincing; and we may dismiss Wheatley’s Tamil theory, even if other points of his argument, concerning Śivaiteic doctrines, may have some merit.

Moreover, Wheatley recognized that his sacred hill could just as well fit the geography of Angkor Borei and Phnom Da as that of Ba Phnom.¹²² The minimal height of the *phnom* near Angkor Borei is irrelevant. As Wheatley pertinently remarked when arguing for Ba Phnom as capital of Funan, in the lower Mekong region, any hill may qualify as ‘mountain’. Note that on the physical map of Cambodia attached to Boisselier 1966, both the hill at Angkor Borei and that at Ba Phnom were too low to be marked, and figure as flat land.

119. Cœdès 1943-46, pp. 1-8.

120. Jacques 1986b, p. 14; Vickery 1998, pp. 352-353.

121. Wheatley 1974, pp. 97-108 and Wheatley 1983, p. 124.

122. Wheatley 1974, p. 108.

Eventually Cœdès believed he had succeeded in finding the Khmer and Sanskrit equivalents of the name *T'ö-mou*, and had thus solved the problem of Funan's capital.

The Chinese records do not offer a name for the capital of Funan until the very end, when they said it was called *T'e-mu/T'ö-mou/*d'äk-miuk*, but the distance from the sea given by the Chinese sources, 500 *li*, if understood literally as 200 km, does not fit the location of either Angkor Borei or Ba Phnom.¹²³ Cœdès concluded that the Chinese were transcribing a Khmer word *dmāk* or *dalmak/dalmāk*, 'hunter', equivalent to modern Khmer /tromeak/ 'mahout', which would have been the Khmer translation of *vyādha* in the Sanskrit name *vyādhapura*, believed by Cœdès to have been the capital of Funan and located at Ba Phnom. The name *vyādhapura* is found several times in Angkor-period inscriptions as the name of one of three old kingdoms from which the first Angkor kings claimed descent, and it was assumed by Cœdès to mean Funan.

It may be useful to recapitulate Cœdès' argument, in which there are at least three weaknesses.¹²⁴

First, if the Khmer terms *dmāk~ dalmak/dalmāk* really mean 'hunter', it is in the sense of 'lassoer' or 'trapper', to capture alive, as an elephant, while Sanskrit *vyādha* means to pierce with a sharp instrument. Second, there is no evidence for the term *dalmak/dalmāk* until the end of the 9th century, and in the 11th-century inscription to which Cœdès referred (K. 158), there is no indication of the occupation of the single *dalmak* who is named; and, third, where *dalmak* occurs many times, in the long-neglected inscriptions of Roluos, it includes large groups of people, men, women, and children, and it is also there impossible to identify their functions. At least they do not clearly have any connection with elephant work.¹²⁵

The ancient phonetics of the term, **d'äk-miuk*, which the Chinese gave for the name of the capital of Funan, suggest that the first syllable was the Mon-Khmer word for 'water', /dik, dek, dak/ (Mod. Khmer /tək/), a term which is often found in Cambodian place names. It is difficult, however, to propose a convincing interpretation of **miuk* in a name together with 'water', and further speculation about what **d'äk-miuk* meant is premature.¹²⁶

As for *Vyādhapura*, although there are 10th-century inscriptions which seem to associate it with both Angkor Borei and Ba Phnom, the name is found only once in a pre-Angkor inscription, K. 109 dated A.D. 655, located near Banteay Prei Nokor in the Thbaung Khmum district of Kompong Cham Province, far to the east of either Ba Phnom or Angkor Borei. In earlier studies I have suggested that the importance of *Vyādhapura* in the Angkor inscriptions was because it was the home district of Jayavarman II, and that it had no connection with pre-Angkor Ba Phnom, Angkor Borei, or Funan. The 10th-century uses of *Vyādhapura* suggest that it had by then become a large province encompassing both Angkor Borei and Ba Phnom, as well as, probably, its original location.¹²⁷

123. Pelliot 1903, p. 273, citing the *New T'ang History* (A.D. 619-906), composed in the 11th century.

124. Cœdès 1942, p. 110, n. 5.

125. Vickery 1998, "Appendix", *dalmak/dalmāk*; Vickery 1999a, where, p. 74, I missed two records of *dalmak*, K. 256/A.D. 979, and K. 158/A.D. 1003. Just as a heuristic suggestion, but one which I do not favor, we might speculate that the *dalmak* were a hereditary occupational group of elephant specialists. This would account for the women and children among them, and for the appearance of *dalmak* in situations unrelated to elephant work.

126. See the comment on Hoshino's treatment of this in the Appendix below.

127. Vickery 1998, pp. 395-398; Vickery 2001.

The final choice for historians between Ba Phnom and Angkor Borei, or perhaps, eventually, some other place, will have to be based on archaeology, and at present the remains at Angkor Borei give it precedence. We may, however, never be able to ascertain the ancient name of the site, nor what site the Chinese meant by **d'ak-miuk*. It is quite possible that during its existence as known to the Chinese the major power center of Funan changed, even more than once, as has been hypothesized for another Southeast Asian maritime area, that known as Śrīvijaya, and now generally accepted by specialists.¹²⁸

When Pelliot discussed the location of the capital he measured the 500 *li* or 200 km from the mouth of the Mekong and found that it reached a region between Chaudoc and Phnom Penh, that is, approximately at Angkor Borei, equally close, however to Ba Phnom.¹²⁹ Pelliot, however, was writing before the remains of Oc-eo and the canals running from there toward Angkor Borei had been discovered, and he supposed that the only water routes would have been up the Mekong or Bassac rivers. Only in that way can a distance of 200 kilometers, following all the bends in the rivers, be confined, more or less, between the river mouths and Angkor Borei. Even then the distance seems too long, and Pelliot showed some embarrassment in only alluding to “a region” “between Chaudoc and Phnom Penh”. If, as now seems more apt, a canal route from the coast near Oc-eo is assumed, 200 km goes far beyond Angkor Borei, itself only 90 km from the coast, and we must either assume that the Chinese estimate was in error, or that they were referring to some entirely different place. In a straight line 200 km from Oc-eo would nearly reach Kompong Cham.¹³⁰

The End of Funan

As Pelliot summarized the Chinese reports about Funan, the end came with the appearance of Chenla, of which the Chinese first heard in 616-617. Their intelligence said that Chenla was originally a vassal of Funan, and that “the surname of the king was Kṣatriya and his personal name Citrasena... his ancestors had gradually developed the strength of the country, and Citrasena ...forced [Funan] to submit... He was succeeded by his son Īśānasena who lived in the city of Īśāna”. In another version, “suddenly the city [of the Funan king] was forced to submit by Chenla, and he had to emigrate southward to the city of ... Na-fu-na”. Or in another statement, “the king Kṣatriya Īśāna early in the period ..627-649, defeated Funan and took control of its territory. Nevertheless, in the Chinese reign periods extending from 618-649, “they [the Funanese] came again to the court”.¹³¹

Thus, during over thirty years in the beginning of the 7th century the Chinese recognized both Funan and Chenla. Assuming Pelliot transcribed the names of the Chenla rulers accurately, without being influenced by what the Sanskritists believed they had determined about early Cambodia, the Chinese reports for this period agree with local epigraphy that there was a person named Citrasena with Sanskritic titles which may

128. See Vickery 1998, pp. 28-29, 36-37, 395-398. Both Palembang and Jambi were at different times ‘capitals’ of Śrīvijaya. See Manguin 1993, pp. 30-31, citing Wolters 1966, 1967. On the archaeology of Angkor Borei see Dowling 1999; Stark 1998; Stark *et al.* 1999; Sanderson *et al.* 2003.

129. Pelliot 1903, p. 290. The distance of 500 *li* from the sea was recorded in the *History of the Leang* (502-556), compiled in the 7th century (Pelliot, *ibid.*, pp. 262-263).

130. Cœdès 1964a, p. 75, was even less rigorous, saying that 200 km “from the sea” is “approximately the distance separating Ba Phnom from the site of Oc-eo”; but in a straight line it is only 120 km, and not much more following canals and then crossing the Bassac and Mekong rivers.

131. Pelliot 1903, pp. 272, 274-275.

reasonably be interpreted as ‘king’, and that he had a son, Īśānavarman, whose reign, approximately 616-637, is recorded in Sanskrit and Khmer inscriptions, and who probably made his ‘capital’ in Sambor Prei Kuk, ancient Īśānapura.¹³²

Where then, in the 620s and 630s, was the polity which still sent envoys to China in the name of Funan? Pelliot suggested that Na-fu-na, whither the Funan ruler fled when attacked by Chenla, must have been in Kampot. Later, after Cœdès convinced the interested scholarly community that the Funan capital, T’e-mu/T’ö-mou/**d’ək-miuk*, must have been at Ba Phnom, modern Prey Veng Province near the Mekong River, it was considered that Na-fu-na was probably at Angkor Borei, a site which was embarrassing to the new consensus because it was the most impressive known city from the Funan period, whereas nothing from that period could be seen at Ba Phnom. No serious suggestions have been made about this anomaly, and this, perhaps 30-year, coexistence of Funan and Chenla has been pushed aside into offhand remarks and vague footnotes, apparently in the hope that no one will notice.¹³³

Cœdès’ classic (Cœdès 1964a/1968) merely follows Pelliot, emphasizing that “the last embassy to China from Rudravarman (‘the last king of Funan’) ... was in 539, and while mentioning the continued Funan-China relations in “the first half of the seventh century”, does not give them any importance nor try to explain them. Instead we find a strange mixture of late Angkorian legend and speculation concerning the origins of Chenla and its advance against Funan.¹³⁴

Still other speculations have been offered about the fate of the Funan royalty, and it may be well to get them out of the way before they result in further elaboration.

Cœdès, in the first edition of his *États hindouisés* (1948, p. 154), wondered if the Śailendras (‘mountain king’) of Java “were not trying to revive the title of the ancient sovereigns of Funan”; and in the second edition of the same book (Cœdès 1964a, p. 168), this was reinforced, “since J. G. de Casparis recognized the name *naravarānagara*, the last capital of Funan in the South of the Indochinese peninsula, in the form *varanara* in a 9th-century inscription” in Java, which thus hints that the Funanese royalty emigrated to Java and were somehow involved in the rise of the Śailendras.

Not only is this a heaping of one dubious speculation upon another, but if it is also true that “the name in Chinese characters of a 5th-century king of Kan-T’o-Li [probably in Sumatra] may be restored as Śrī Varanarendra”, ‘King (Indra) of Varanara’, then there is no connection possible between an alleged Indonesian *varanara* and a 7th-century Funanese *naravarānagara*, assuming that the restorations from Chinese characters are accurate. Of course the clear attestation of the name *naravarānagara* in the Cambodian inscription K. 49 (A.D. 664) gives some support to that particular restoration, although not indicating its location, nor its relevance for the Funan period.¹³⁵

Cœdès (1962, p. 95) continued this line of speculation in explaining that a Javanese invasion of Cambodia, which he recognized as clearly mythical, might be attributed to the Śailendras, “kings of the mountain”, whose title recalls that of the sovereign of Funan”. The Śailendras, “Buddhists like the last kings of Funan... had perhaps better reasons ... to intervene in Cambodia, among others to claim over this country the rights of its ancient masters, the ‘mountain kings’ of Funan”. As noted above, there is no evidence of the title

132. For the terminal date of Īśānavarman’s reign, see Vickery 1998, pp. 340-342.

133. Cœdès 1964a, p. 125; Cœdès 1968, p. 1, and n. 1; Pelliot 1903, p. 274. See also Mauger 1936, p. 93, and the discussion above.

134. For a critical treatment of this see Vickery 1994.

135. Cœdès 1964a, p. 108; Vickery 1998, pp. 40, 45, 110, 352-353. For Kan-T’o-Li see Wolters 1967, pp. 210-212, 220-221, *passim*.

‘mountain king’ for the Funan rulers, nor were the last ones more Buddhist than Hindu. That idea may have been developed from a less than careful reading of inscription K. 40 naming the two last-known kings of Funan, Jayavarman and his son Rudravarman. When Cœdès published it he wrote that “the first two stanzas are in honor of the Buddha... the next two are to the glory of King Rudravarman”, whose name is one of the names of Śiva; and “the fifth says that ... King Jayavarman appointed the son of a **brahman** [emphasis added] as inspector of royal property”. As a general conclusion Cœdès said that this inscription showed “the favor enjoyed by Hinduism **and** [emphasis added] Buddhism”.¹³⁶

Still only a seductive hint, but more insistent, appears in Cœdès’ remarks on Jayavarman II. The earlier evoked adoption by the Śailendras of the alleged old Funanese title ‘mountain king’ “helps explain the way Jayavarman II, returning from Java, established his authority over Cambodia”, that is, with elaborate ceremonies, made necessary by the Śailendras of Java posing as heirs of the ancient owners of the soil [i.e., the Funan kings]”.¹³⁷

These hints of Cœdès that the defeated rulers of Funan might have fled to Java where they established the Śailendra dynasty were taken to an extreme form in Syafei 1977, p. 14, who understood that “Cœdès suggested that the family of Jayavarman II ...took refuge in Java during the disturbances over the succession”. Perhaps Syafei was influenced here by an extreme position taken by Cœdès in 1938 which he did not repeat in his later works of historical synthesis, that is, “The family of Jayavarman II... had no doubt taken refuge in the South [Indonesia?] during the time of troubles [presumably early 8th century], unless they had been taken there by force as a result of one of the maritime raids mentioned above [in 774 and 787, and, on the coast of Champa, thus a contradiction of the first hypothesis]”.¹³⁸

Then, in his discussion of Javanese history Syafei alleged a split in the 8th-century Javanese royalty over religion, Śaivism versus Mahāyāna Buddhism. Although this is not a new idea, and it was popular with early European scholars who considered that different religions must be hostile, it is belied by the extreme Hindu-Buddhist tolerance in Java. As a result of this cleavage, Syafei said that a Javanese prince escaping from Mahāyāna Buddhist influence went to Cambodia, “attacked and occupied” the region of Śambhupura (Sambor in Kratie Province), far up the Mekong, and, having taken the name Jayavarman to Khmerize himself, left inscription K. 103/A.D. 770 in Thbaung Khmum and K. 134/A.D. 781 in Śambhupura. Although historians must sometimes offer hypotheses, this goes far beyond what is permissible.¹³⁹

First, the Javanese prince in question is listed in an inscription of 907 A.D. as Śrī Mahārāja Rakai Panunggalan”, the second in a list of nine Śrī Mahārājas following the dynastic founder *rakai* (a title) *matarām* (a place) *sang ratu* (sacred king) Sañjaya. Panunggalan was thus a paramount ruler, not a second-level prince in search of a fortune. Second, the rulers in Śambhupura in the 8th century are well accounted for by inscription K. 124/A.D. 803 beginning with the posthumous royal name Indraloka, followed by three

136. Cœdès 1931, pp. 8, 12. One should note other inconsistencies in Cœdès’ treatment of Funan religion. Although the Chinese seemed to emphasize the importance of Buddhism in early Funan, Cœdès 1964a, p. 119, wrote, “the two Kauṇḍinyas who hinduized the country were brahmins; they must have implanted Śivaite rites, which were certainly flourishing in the 5th century”. This ignores two of the three 5th-century inscriptions, K. 5 and K. 875, both Viṣṇuite, and K. 40 in which Cœdès saw Buddhism as important.

137. Cœdès 1964a, pp. 188-189.

138. See Cœdès 1938, p. 41 [278].

139. Syafei 1977, p. 17.

queens in direct mother-to-daughter succession, and obviously covering at least the last 80 years of the 8th century. As Pierre Dupont noted, if a king Jayavarman could set up his own royal inscription in Śambhupura in 781, he must have been married to one of the queens, although Dupont considered that Jayavarman as number *Ibis*, not Jayavarman II, as later determined by Claude Jacques. A third, and less important, problem with Syafei's argument, saying "quite probably in 770 A.D. he [Panunggalan] attacked and occupied ... Śambhupura", is that K. 103/A.D. 770 is not in Śambhupura, but rather far south in Kompong Cham. That inscription suggests that the region was the home of the young Jayavarman II, who began his career from there, an hypothesis which has become established in the work of Claude Jacques.¹⁴⁰ Fourth, the entire conception of an Indonesian fleet conquering far up the Mekong to Kratie in the 8th century is fantastic, and the quickly repelled coastal attacks on Vietnam and Champa cited by Syafei do not at all constitute support, rather the contrary.

And finally, Syafei, although without recognizing it, negates any connection between Funan and the Śailendras by accepting that their name derived from a purely Indonesian word, *selendra*, found in the apparent chief's title *dapunta selendra* in an early inscription, and in saying that "it was quite possible that the illustrious Śailendras derived their family name from this person".¹⁴¹ If so, the name *śailendra* would have been a purely Indonesian invention, under Indian influence, and would have had no connection with Funan.

Moreover, since Funan, in its relations with China, lasted until the 630s, Rudravarman, who was a mature ruler in 539, cannot have been the 'last king'; and the last kings certainly did not flee to Java with the appearance of Chenla. It may not be excluded that Īśānavarman who, according to K. 53 (see below), represented dynastic continuity from Rudravarman, continued to send envoys which were recognized in China as 'Funanese'.

Hoshino quotes a T'ang dynasty encyclopedia, apparently missed by Pelliot, to the effect that "Zhen La started amalgamating or occupying the Fu Nan (territory) from the Da Tong years (535-546) of [the] southern Liang dynasty". Although the reliability of this source must be subjected to sinological consensus, this statement fits very well with Funan's gradual decline as the coastal trade route was replaced by direct sailing between Indonesia and China, and with the administrative continuity from Funan to Chenla implied in the 7th-century inscriptions.¹⁴²

This continuity is seen most clearly in one of the most famous inscriptions of the so-called 'Chenla' period, K. 53, dated A.D. 667, and found near Ba Phnom. It shows 4 generations of what was obviously a high-ranking official family serving 5 kings, Rudravarman, the 'last king of Funan', Bhavavarman [I], Citrasena-Mahendravarman,

140. Dupont 1943-46, pp. 31-32 ; Vickery 1998, p. 399; Jacques 1972; Jacques 1987, p. 10, "around 770 a young prince... seized the kingdom of Vyādhapura in the Southeast of Cambodia... this prince was Jayavarman II". Although Jacques avoided the detailed evidence, it can only be K. 103/A.D. 770 naming Jayavarman *Ibis*>Jayavarman II, and K. 109/655 naming Vyādhapura and its second-level chief, both inscriptions found near Banteay Prei Nokor in the Southeast of Kompong Cham Province. Since his 1972 article, the conclusions of which I accept, Jacques has modified his descriptions of the career of Jayavarman II more than once. See Vickery 2001.

141. Syafei 1977, p. 15.

142. Hoshino 1993, p. 10, citing "the *Tang Hui Yao* [volume 98, Zhen la guo] encyclopedia containing historical references unused by the annal editors". In favor of its reliability is another passage quoted by Hoshino, "that Zhen La was north of the Xiao Hai ... (Small Sea) meaning Tonle Sap" (in contrast to 'Great Sea' for the Gulf), which is accurate for the later T'ang period, after the 7th century. Hoshino 1993, p. 6.

Īśānavarman, and Jayavarman [I].¹⁴³ As we now know that Bhavavarman I was probably a grandson of Rudravarman, that the 7th-century king missing from this list, Bhavavarman II, was a son of Īśānavarman, that Jayavarman I was great-grandson of Īśānavarman in another line, and that Īśānavarman and his sons, Bhavavarman and Śivadatta, were active in maintaining control over at least two coastal regions, in the Northwest and in the South, we may perhaps hypothesize that territories controlled by Īśānavarman, for the Chinese, represented both Funan and Chenla.¹⁴⁴

Other evidence of Funan-Chenla continuity are inscriptions K. 44 and K. 1036. The first is of Jayavarman I, in Kampot, and dated 674. It refers to a foundation for *vrah kamratāñ añ* (King) Raudravarman, probably Rudravarman of Funan. If Chenla had conquered Funan, it seems unusual that the Chenla king Jayavarman would show respect to an old king of Funan. Inscription K. 1036 was written in the time of Sūryavarman II (12th century) in Svay Rieng, another southern area which was probably included in the original Funan, by a family who claimed to have been high officials under all the kings from Rudravarman through Jayavarman II, to Sūryavarman II. Although we may not be sure about the accuracy of claims concerning a time 600 years in the past, this family at least did not see any break in continuity in the 6th-7th centuries.¹⁴⁵

Implicit support for an Angkor-period view of Funan-Chenla continuity is in the 10th-century Baksei Chamkrong inscription of Rājendravarman. It shows no sign that the Kambuja king Rājendravarman and his scholars were aware of any Funan-Chenla discontinuity, for his list of kings goes from the probably mythical Śrutavarman to Rudravarman, called there the first of a line, then to Jayavarman II, and implicitly includes all the other Angkor kings up to Rājendravarman himself.¹⁴⁶

Now that Cœdès' interpretation of the 12th-century Ta Prohm inscription, which turned the Funan prince Bhavavarman [I] into a Chenla king through marriage with a Chenla princess, has been overturned by Claude Jacques, the Dangrek inscriptions of Bhavavarman and his brother Mahendravarman may be seen, again following Jacques, as forays northward by princes from farther south, undoubtedly descendents, probably grandsons, as K. 53 implies, of the Funan king Rudravarman, after which Mahendravarman's son Īśānavarman established himself in the new 'capital' Īśānapura (Sambor Prei Kuk) as first king of what the Chinese called 'Chenla'.¹⁴⁷

This means that the Chinese interpretation of the Funan-Chenla transition was simply wrong, no doubt because the Chinese, mainly interested in trade and ports, were poorly

143. On K. 53 see note 84 above. The numbers of the kings with common names are in brackets because no such distinction is made in the original sources.

144. For Īśānavarman's control over coastal areas, and the genealogical details see Vickery 1998, pp. 338-339, 343-372.

145. On K. 1036 see Vickery 1998, pp. 145-146, 364-365, and its recent publication in Pou 2001, pp. 156-163.

146. The Baksei Chamkrong inscription is K. 286, published in Cœdès 1952, pp. 88-101.

147. Cœdès 1964a, p. 128; Jacques 1979, pp. 372-373; Jacques 1986a, pp. 68-70. Although it is outside the subject of Funan, it may be useful, since the details have not yet percolated into textbooks or popular histories, to note that both Porée-Maspero 1950 and Cœdès 1951b were on some points mistaken because the genealogy of the 7th-century kings was not completely understood. Bhavavarman II was not an outsider, as they imagined, but a younger son of Īśānavarman, and Jayavarman I was not son of Bhavavarman II, but great-grandson of Īśānavarman in another line (Vickery 1998, pp. 348-349). Thus, in line with Cœdès' argument, and contra Porée-Maspero, there were five generations of direct patrilineal descent: Rudravarman-Vīravarman-Mahendravarman-Īśānavarman-Bhavavarman II, and in two of them, Mahendravarman rather than Bhavavarman I (as interpreted by Jacques), and Bhavavarman II rather than Śivadatta, it was a younger son who succeeded.

informed about internal politics. If we could some day discover what the origin of the name ‘Chenla’ was, we might be able to understand the impetus for their misunderstanding.

What was Funan?

After reviewing and dissecting the evidence, perhaps a basic question may be addressed. Was Funan a unified state or empire as the Chinese and traditional European scholars believed, or was it a group of ports on or near the coasts, like Śrīvijaya in Indonesia, with now one, then another, assuming prominence?

Although the second opinion is gaining acceptance, it is less clear for Funan than for Śrīvijaya. The Chinese records for the latter, combined with the local inscriptions of the late 7th century, indicate at least two shifts in the location of the ‘capital’ (abstracting entirely from the applicability of that term), from Palembang to Jambi, and later back to Palembang. For Funan the earliest Chinese records say nothing about its center of power, but later note that it was 200 km from the sea, and only in the 7th century give it a name, Te-mu/**d’ək-miuk*, so far, as indicated above, indecipherable. Archaeology has so far only complicated the problem, for the site with the strongest claim, on that type of evidence, Angkor Borei, is only 90 km from the site with the so-far strongest evidence as the major port, Oc-eo.

Certainly the total region which the Chinese knew as Funan consisted of several ports, from the Vietnam-Cambodian coasts to Tun-sun somewhere on the Thai-Malay peninsula, but all of the Chinese records which relate to this subject place the outlying ports under what they saw as a central area in what is now southern Cambodia and adjoining Vietnam.

Nevertheless, it is *a priori* unlikely that the several ports constituted a unified state, much less an ‘empire’, extending in some treatments throughout Cambodia and far into northeastern Thailand.

Appendix I: The work of Tatsuo Hoshino

In his works Hoshino has drastically rearranged almost every detail of Southeast Asian historical geography found in Chinese sources, including those on which there has been a widespread consensus among scholars for years. There is nothing wrong, of course, with breaking a consensus; in fact it may be necessary, but Hoshino’s methods are anything but confidence-inspiring. His choices are often arbitrary, without sufficient argument, for example, asserting that Śrīvijaya was in Central Thailand, and never in Sumatra (Hoshino 1993, p. 13, Hoshino 1995, pp. 32, 39); and in his treatment of the Chinese names for, apparently, the Tonle Sap and the South China Sea. Thus in Hoshino 1993, p. 6, he wrote that “Zhen La [Chenla] was north of the Xiao Hai (Small Sea) meaning the Tonle Sap, because the Da Hai (Great Sea) means South China Sea including the Gulf”. That is, Zhen La was “north of the Tonle Sap”. Then, in Hoshino 1996a, p. 17, when asserting that Chitu (“Red Earth”) was at Banteay Prei Nokor, in Kompong Cham Province, not south of Cambodia and in the Malay Peninsula as generally believed, he said the Chinese recorded that “Some distance ... to the north [of Chitu] was Da Hai, in this case the Great Lake [Tonle Sap] not the Big Ocean”.

His interpretations of Southeast Asian names from Chinese are sometimes based on a devised ancient Chinese pronunciation (his own), and sometimes on the current Mandarin pronunciation, whichever best fits the solution he wishes to impose. That is, for each ancient name given in Chinese Hoshino shows the standard modern Mandarin

pronunciation, as well as the pronunciations of Sino-Vietnamese, Cantonese, and Sino-Japanese. Such comparison was the method used by Karlgren, but Karlgren drew rigorous and consistent conclusions, whereas Hoshino simply assumes that the ancient pronunciation might have had the initial and final consonants implied by one of the other dialects. This methodological laxity allows him to draw on whichever fits the case he wishes momentarily to make. One example is his treatment of the name ‘Wen Dan’, generally believed to have been somewhere along the middle Mekong in central Laos. In one context (Hoshino 1991, pp. 15-16), Hoshino said it meant “Siamese [Dan] village [Wen]”. This is based on an alleged ancient pronunciation of Wen, **man*, and an alternative modern Mandarin pronunciation of Dan as /shan/, plus the statement that there are “Daic [Thai] dialects which have Man pronunciation for ‘village’ [usually /baan/] ... in Yunnan and Burma”. This last is true, but the pronunciation /man/ for ‘village’ is restricted to the Shan language, thus not earlier than the 12th century, and irrelevant for an explanation of ‘Wen Dan’.¹⁴⁸

But then, having been corrected by a reader to the effect that the “Tai peoples never used the ... term ‘Siam’ to refer to themselves until the nineteenth century” (Hoshino 1991, p. 48), Hoshino 1993, p. 3 modified his interpretation of ‘Wen Dan’ to “Siamese villages or *sema* stones villages”, with *sema* referring to the bas-relief steles in Mu’ang Fa Det in northeast Thailand, and the original appellation of which is unknown. Again, however, the pronunciation /sim/, /sem/, /shan/ of the character for Dan is modern. In the 8th century it began with a dental sound.¹⁴⁹

For another example, he shows clearly that the ancient pronunciation of the reported 6th or 7th-century capital of Funan (**d’ək-miuk*) would probably have consisted of two syllables, the first beginning with a voiced dental, and each ending in a guttural stop. Yet in searching for its location Hoshino relies on the modern pronunciation of the Chinese characters, /t’e-mu/, suggesting the Khmer word for ‘stone’, and perhaps ‘hill’ (Khmer *tmɔ, thmɔ*), in order to identify it with a place in northeast Thailand with a modern name, Thamoratn near Sri Thep, containing ‘thamo’ (‘stone’ in Mon-Khmer). See Hoshino 1993, pp. 7, 9, 11, and for the characters, page 40. In another context he said that Mo Dan (ancient **muā-tām*) should be reversed to Dan Mo and that it also represented ‘thamo’. Obviously, both **d’ək-miuk* and **tām-muā* cannot be construed as ‘thamo’, and probably neither should be.¹⁵⁰

His works are replete with assumptions that modern names are in fact ancient, and comparable with Ancient Chinese. For example, Hoshino 1995, p. 24, suggested that Po Li was Angkor Borei, with the reasoning that /poli/ was Chinese for /borei/ ancient *purī*. But the name ‘Angkor Borei’ is a modern name for an ancient site whose original name is quite unknown.

Appendix II: On rendering ancient Khmer concepts in English/French

After reading my article on the Roluos inscriptions in *Seksa Khmer* (Vickery 1999a), Serge Thion complained to me that I had abusively used the terms ‘king’ and ‘administration’ to translate an ancient Khmer status and situation, which might not have corresponded at all to the real meanings of ‘king’ and ‘administration’ as understood in the modern West.

148. The information about Shan and /man/ is from James Chamberlain, the well-known Lao and Thai linguistic specialist.

149. Karlgren 1923 [1974], p. 370, no. 1315, has *miuən* for Wen, and p. 279, no. 968 *dan* for Dan.

150. Hoshino 1993, p. 18; and for another treatment of **muā-tām* see Wheatley 1974, and discussion above.

This objection by Thion deserves an answer, for the translation of concepts from a different culture over 1000 years in the past is not a simple, straightforward matter. I will begin by repeating what I said in Vickery 1998.

The personnel and population categories, and terms relating to society, politics or economics mentioned in the old Khmer inscriptions are parts of an unfamiliar structure labeled in a unique, and still incompletely understood, terminology, and analysis of the structure and terminology must avoid imposition, explicitly or unconsciously, of any better-known structure through the use of perhaps approximately, or only seemingly, equivalent terms from a better-documented society.

When faced with the task of describing such a new terminological structure the student has three strategies: (1) literal translation of terms into a familiar language, (2) structural 'translation' through assimilation of the unfamiliar structure to one which is known, such as European feudalism for explanation of ancient Cambodia, (3) maintenance of native terms and titles in the analytical discussion.

The best examples of (2) in Cambodia studies, and of the problem in general, are the use of 'king' and 'slave' to denote two easily visible categories of early Cambodian society depicted in the epigraphic corpus. The second term has not met with universal approval, which in itself is an indication of the problem, and I shall show that the first, which has probably not been considered at all controversial, also represents a preemption of explanation.

Examples of both (1) and (2) are 'Great Shining One' for *vrah*, both unhelpful and inaccurate, and the use of 'Prince', 'Baron', 'Sir', 'Knight', 'Lord', 'Goodwife', which force pre-Angkor Cambodia into a chevaleresque model not useful even in studying early Europe.

The third strategy is the most neutral, and avoids any preemption of explanation, but it may result in so many exotic terms in the exposition that the text becomes incomprehensible for all but those already conversant in the language and subject matter. Thus some kind of translation as a step toward explanation is inevitable. In the present article I have not attempted (1) at all except when discussing etymology, and will try to steer a course between (2) and (3), using more or less equivalent English terms where helpful, with due attention to the semantic differences, and maintaining Khmer terminology where no English term is available, or where the Khmer concept must be taken on its own, or of course where understanding has not yet been achieved.¹⁵¹

Thus 'king' is an approximation which has been standard within European writings about Asia, even when, in the modern world, a king of Sweden is entirely different from a king of Cambodia or a king of Thailand; and in earlier centuries when Russian *knyaz* represented a socio-economic category very different from anything in Western Europe, there was no reluctance to call them 'prince' when writing in English and French. It is thus understood that a 'king' of Funan or Chenla was not of the same category as a 'king' of medieval France, England, or China. No purpose would be served in using the various Khmer titles, which differed throughout the centuries, and which would be meaningless for all but a handful of specialists.

Nor should one try to invent new western-language terms for each exotic category. One would then, to try for accuracy, be forced to find a different term for the Funan period, that of Chenla, and still another for Angkor. Infelicitous examples of such multiplication of categories in recent writing about Southeast Asia are *mandala* and 'galactic polity', tossed out incontinently instead of trying to carefully relate the socio-political structures to existing terminologies used in studying state systems.

151. See Vickery 1998, pp. 175-176 for further detail and sources for the examples cited.

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