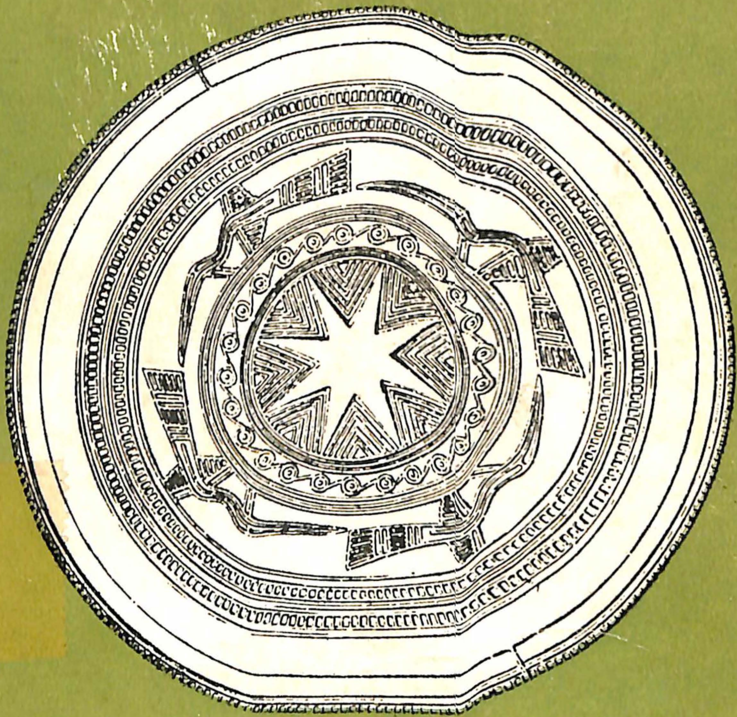
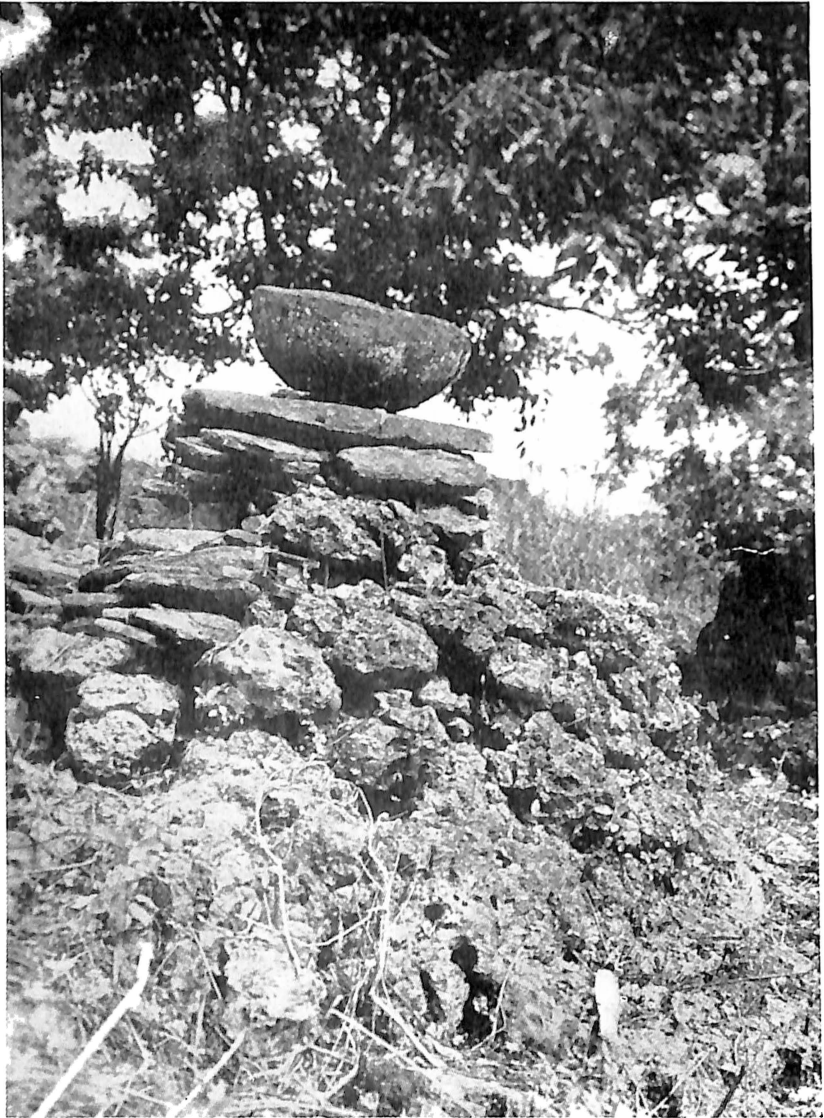
PREHISTORY AND RELIGION IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA



By

H. G. QUARITCH WALES



Symbolic " mountain " of the megalithic Belu of Timor.

Frontispiece.

PREHISTORY AND RELIGION IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA

By

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

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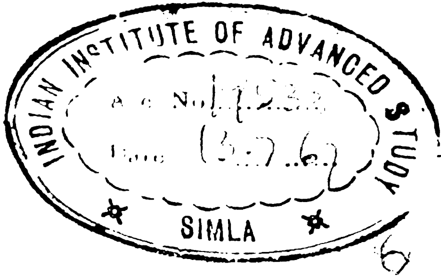

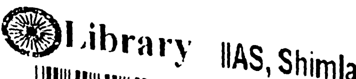

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ABBREVIATIONS

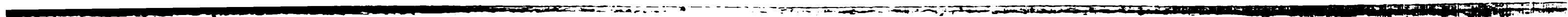
BEFEO : Bulletin de L'École Française d'Extrême Orient.

Bijdragen : Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indie.

JASB : Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

JRASMB : Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Malayan Branch.

Tijdschrift : Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land en Volkenkunde.



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INTRODUCTION

The present work is neither a treatise on the prehistory of South-east Asia nor on its religion. Yet the title is intended to be taken literally. The book deals with the prehistory of South-east Asia in so far as this has affected the development of religion, and with the religion of South-east Asia in so far as this has been influenced by prehistoric cultures.

Now prehistory as it concerns religion necessarily must invoke the use of ethnological evidence just as much as, if not more than, it relies on archaeological data. The foremost exponent of modern archaeological technique, Sir Mortimer Wheeler, has recently reminded us that, for the understanding of the religion of a preliterate people, archaeology is " of necessity an insensitive medium ". He speaks of " the notorious incapacity of material symbols to represent the true content and affinity of a religion or belief . . . a symbol of a mother and child may range through a whole gamut of ideas from the simplest physical to the most transcendentally metaphysical ".[1]

These words serve to stress the point of view that we should be wrong to await the possibly unsatisfying results of a highly problematical archaeologists' " golden age " in the South-east Asia of the future, when we have at our disposal a line of inquiry that is likely to prove far more fruitful : the properly controlled interpretation of the evidence of ethnology, this being anchored wherever possible to such framework as archaeology can provide.

Another dictum that is worth quoting, though it may not be wholly applicable to South-east Asia, if indeed

[1] Sir Mortimer Wheeler, *The Indus Civilization*, Cambridge, 1953, pp. 82, 95.

it is to anywhere, runs as follows: "It is part of the value of the oral traditions and culture of the communities on the outer edge of the world that they have preserved for us, not the primitive experiments of early man, but reflections of the long forgotten spiritual life and art of the great civilizations of the past." [1] What makes it not wholly true is that it is quite a long time since the great civilizations of the ancient world were actively influencing South-east Asia. In the meantime, where there has not been conversion to Hinduism, Buddhism or Islam, there has been a steady loss of older influences with a reversion in the religious sphere to cults which, if not strictly speaking primitive, are in many cases as near to primitive animism and ancestor worship as we can at the present day expect to find. Nevertheless there is so much truth in the above quoted passage that it should be constantly borne in mind. To do so will save us from producing more of *The Golden Bough* type of literature, or rather the treatises on primitive religion which follow the master's model though lacking his literary graces.

The reports of the field anthropologists must be examined stratum by stratum with all the care of a prehistoric excavation. The object is to discover the survivals which are not explainable in terms of the primitive, but are rather the type fossils which yield their secret to comparative study, in conjunction with ancient civilizations that are historically documented, or perhaps in another quarter of the world are still alive. When it comes to the later prehistoric strata, the South-east Asian Bronze Age in particular, the "survivals" form such a large part of the living religion despite the effects of cultural loss, that it must be only the failure to apply adequate comparative principles of study that has failed to reveal more of the development of religion

[1] N. Kershaw Chadwick, *Poetry and Prophecy*, Cambridge, 1942, p. xv.

in South-east Asia ere now. An example of such work, which to a great extent forms a valuable mine of information concerning the by no means undeveloped religious concepts introduced during the Bronze Age, and not a study of primitive animism as the author supposes, would be A. C. Kruyt's *Het Animisme in den Indischen Archipel* (The Hague, 1906). But the important thing when he wrote was to place the fast disappearing facts on record. The premature fancies of Elliot Smith and Perry, undertaken before even the existence of a Bronze Age in South-east Asia was known, are enough to show that no analysis of the anthropological data could have been productive before prehistory had provided us with an elementary archaeological framework.

Primarily the present work is intended to offer a first attempt at reconstruction of the earlier religious phases in South-east Asia, resulting mainly from my own comparative researches. I have felt it no part of my task to embark on discussion of such apparently basic concepts as animatism, animism, etc., to which I have no contribution to make and which do not appear to offer any contribution to my study of the post-embryonic phases of the subject. I am content to accept a background of various forms of universal animism ; and these seem to me to be typical of those simple cultural phenomena which could well have come into existence independently both as regards time and place.

The Palaeolithic, the Neolithic and the Bronze Age, form the natural strata in the prehistoric religion of the area, as they do in its prehistoric culture generally, and these I try to characterize in the first three chapters. The rest of the book is the outcome of the results obtained in these first three chapters : the logical working out of what is envisaged in my undertaking to study the religion of South-east Asia in so far as this has been influenced by prehistoric cultures. So here there is a continuation, made possible by the accession of rein-

forcements of evidence, of my endeavours to explain and interpret the differentiation of the Indianized cultures of South-east Asia, or rather of the Khmer, Cham and Indo-Javanese cultures. My theory, then based mainly on the evidence of art, appeared in my book *The Making of Greater India* (1951), and I believe that it is now fairly well known to students of the area. The opportunity has been taken in Chapter IV to answer some objections that were raised against this theory in certain quarters. I then pass on to a new demonstration of the validity of my theory, based on the evidence of religion. Part of the material—that which concerns those peoples having a chthonic bias in their religious evolution—was made available in my book *The Mountain of God* (1953), and in so far as this concerns us here is outlined in Chapter V. But only now, as a result of my researches on the Bronze Age religion, is it possible to show a direct contrast to the above in those Indianized cultures in which the trend is towards sky religion, over and above what was inculcated by the Indian sky influences. The contrast is demonstrated, and shown to be due to a specific prehistoric religion, in the concluding chapter of the book.

CHAPTER I

PALAEOLITHIC PROBABILITIES

I shall not attempt to do more than offer a tentative reconstruction of the broad features of the religious background immediately preceding the coming of the "neolithic revolution". It was the latter event that formed the real basis of the whole series of religious developments in South-east Asia with which this book as a whole will be concerned. The shadowy background is the period of the late Palaeolithic cultures, nowadays technically known as "Mesolithic", which appear to have occupied the South-east Asian stage for let us say five thousand years prior to the arrival of the Neolithic agriculturists not later than the third millennium B.C.

Prehistoric research in South-east Asia, though still young, has advanced sufficiently to give us some reliable information as to the hunters and food-gatherers responsible for the Mesolithic. This term, it must be mentioned, is used because during their later phases the Palaeolithic cultures were to some extent changed by the Neolithic influences arriving from the north, and it does not imply that any genetic development took place from Palaeolithic to Neolithic in South-east Asia.[1]

The oldest established inhabitants during the Mesolithic were Australoids. Indeed the two Wadjak (Java) skulls found in 1889 and 1890 have now been confirmed as going back to the late Pleistocene age (perhaps 15,000 B.C.) by the discovery of closely similar skulls at Keilor near Melbourne, in geological conditions enabling them to be dated, it would seem, from the last

[1] R. Heine-Geldern, *Prehistoric Research in the Netherlands Indies*, New York, 1945, p. 130.

Inter-glacial.[1] But the type must have continued into our period: At Mesolithic sites in Tonkin (Hoabinh and Bacson) the remains of Australoids were found in the oldest Bacsonian strata, though Melanesian types were more common.[2] Hoabinhian period shell-heaps in Sumatra have produced human remains indicative of a long-headed race with Melanesian affinities. In eastern Java a number of Mesolithic sites have been discovered with human remains apparently of Melanesian or Australian type.[3] In Malaya the human remains associated with Mesolithic hand-axe cultures are largely attributable to the Papua-Melanesoid racial group; and it has been concluded that at least part of the peoples who brought the Mesolithic cultures into Indonesia were the ancestors of present-day Papuans and Melanesians.[4] Equally Heine-Geldern has emphasized "the important fact that the present forms of indigenous Australian culture must largely derive from the prehistoric Bacson-Hoabinhian civilizations of Further India and Indonesia. The similarity of the stone tools is such as to preclude all doubt".[5]

There is little evidence from the burials of these human remains that can be considered to throw any light on religious beliefs. If the finding of small non-articulated aggregations of bones in the Malayan midden deposits could be accepted as evidence of secondary burial,[6] one might interpret this as possible evidence of the practice of exposure in trees such as is often a feature of shamanism. Then there is the association of powdered

[1] ibid., p. 154; M. W. F. Tweedie, "The Stone Age in Malaya", *JRASMB*, XXVI, ii, 1953, p. 74.

[2] Tweedie, loc. cit., p. 74.

[3] ibid., p. 75.

[4] ibid., pp. 17, 18; Heine-Geldern, loc. cit., p. 130.

[5] R. Heine-Geldern, *Annual Bibliography of Indian Archaeology*, 1934, p. 30. But this applies only to Eastern Australia, according to F. D. McCarthy, "Comparison of the Prehistory of Australia with that of Indochina," *Proc. Third Congress of Prehistorians of Far East*, Singapore, 1940, p. 37.

[6] Tweedie, loc. cit., p. 16.

red haematite with burials, which by analogy with what has been found at Palaeolithic sites in Europe and the practices of some aborigines has been thought to be a blood symbol.[1] If, as Gordon Childe suggests,[2] the object was to restore to the corpse the missing life symbolized by the red colour this would not be a religious rite but one of sympathetic magic. This is primitive science, not religion, though of course the two are often closely interwoven.

We must therefore turn to the evidence of comparative ethnology. This means the Australian aborigines since, though the modern Melanesians have a culture basically related to that of the Australians, they have been too much exposed to Polynesian and other influences to afford trustworthy evidence as to the religion of their South-east Asian ancestors. It is the natives of South-east Australia, that is to say those tribes who were driven to the furthest extremities of the southern continent, who may be supposed to have preserved most nearly the character of the ancient religion of South-east Asia. Representing as they do survivals of the original Australians, their culture is likely to have changed relatively little from that of their ancestors inhabiting South-east Asia.

The religion of the natives of South-east Australia, as it existed until recently, was a primitive shamanism. This religion seems to have pivoted round an "All-Father", variously known as Baiame, Daramulun or Bundjil by the different tribes. It is almost only in the south-east of the continent that this deity retains his religious importance in association with the rites of initiation, while among the tribes of Central Australia (where the immense development of totemism has supplanted the ouranic cult) he survives only in myth. Credited with omnipresence, omniscience, and eternity,

[1] ibid., p. 14.
[2] V. Gordon Childe, *What Happened in History*, p. 40.

regarded as the creator of all things and the guardian of morality, the All-Father nevertheless exhibits an overwhelming connection with the sky. There he is considered to live, though once he visited the earth as creator and revealer of custom. Besides manifesting in thunder, lightning, wind and rainbow, his home is traversed by the Milky Way, the stars are his camp fires, etc. Furthermore it is noteworthy that it is just in those parts of Australia where the All-Father belief is most active that the home of the dead is believed to be in the sky, whereas in Central Australia it is supposed that the dead inhabit a land towards the west.[1]

Looking thus to the sky deity for protection and guidance, it was natural that the Australians would wish to establish communication with him, to restore in fact a closer relationship which according to the myths had formerly existed. This need called for the aid of a specialized intermediary, the medicine-man or shaman, to adopt at once a term which identifies this particular type. In Chapter III we shall have to go more thoroughly into shamanism and to note its distinction from the more widespread " possession " by spirits and ancestors, which here need not detain us. The Australian shaman must first undergo an initiation, which includes a symbolic death and resurrection, with a visit to the realm of the All-Father. This, though difficult of access, is reached by means of the rainbow, a suspended cord, a tree or a spiral stair. There the shaman is given crystals (sky symbols) which enable him thenceforth to revisit the sky and obtain information from the dead by means of which he can injure or protect men.[2]

There are good grounds for believing that the earliest historical civilization arose in large measure as a result of differences in environment, meaning at first a physical

[1] M. Eliade, *Le Chamanisme*, Paris, 1951, p. 427.
[2] ibid., pp. 131–135.

environment.[1] There is certainly no reason to doubt that this held good in prehistoric times also, in view of the known need of every organism to become adapted to its environment. With the Palaeolithic food-gatherers an impressive feature of the environment could hardly fail to have been the omnipresent sky, in due course personified as Father Sky, whose varying moods so dominated their chances of obtaining food and their need for shelter. As Sir James Frazer remarked of the sky: "No wonder that a phenomenon so universal and so impressive should at an early date have inspired men with wonder and awe and found a place in their religion."[2] As we shall see later, that does not mean that more immediate conditions for maintaining life might not previously have called forth a religious response and consequently been deified. But there is little room to doubt that earth spirits never meant much to nomads (and Palaeolithic female figurines relate to the magic of inducing the fertility of game not to any cult of the soil). Again, stream, rock and tree were too impermanent features of the nomads' landscape, the dead, though early recognized as heirs to an afterlife, were too soon left behind and forgotten, to be endowed with major cults.

The Australian All-Father, and his South-east Asian prototype, may thus be classified as a Supreme Being provided we recognize the concept as an outgrowth of animism, and so avoid the mistake of Father Wm. Schmidt who saw it as a primitive monotheism. "The theory of primitive monotheism" writes Professor R. Pettazzoni in his recent valuable work on sky-religion[3] "is founded on an equivocation and on an error. The equivocation consists in calling by the name of mono-

[1] H. Frankfort, *The Birth of Civilization in the Near East*, pp. 4–44, 49–52.

[2] Sir James Frazer, *The Worship of Nature*, Vol. I, p. 19.

[3] R. Pettazzoni, *The All-knowing God*, Methuen, 1956, pp. 2, 370.

theism what is nothing of the kind, in mistaking for true monotheism the savage peoples' idea of Supreme Beings. The error consists in supposing that to be primitive *which is* not so, in transferring to the most *archaic culture* the idea of God which properly belongs to our Western civilization, that which found its way from the Old Testament into the New and was then elaborated by Christianity. Monotheism, in its concrete historical reality, is belief in a single God and the denial of all other gods. As such, it presupposes polytheism, and consequently cannot be the earliest form of religion. This is not to say that monotheism is derived from polytheism by a gradual and inevitable development, as the evolutionist theory would have it. It derives from it, if at all, by revolution, by a radical religious upheaval, the work of some great personality, the herald of a new world . . . 'Primordial monotheism' (of Father Schmidt) is the monotheistic idea torn from the concrete world of its historical growth and arbitrarily projected into an abstract world of origin ".

Pettazzoni then proceeds to show from a wide range of evidence the ouranic character and origin of the primitive Supreme Beings whose basic attribute of omniscience is due to their being luminous and hence *all-seeing*, only secondarily all-knowing. Moreover this omniscience is only relative, being concerned with the bad actions and thoughts of mankind, which are punished by means of the weather. The further attributes of creativity, eternity and omnipotence follow naturally from the basic one of omniscience.[1]

Turning now to the existing aborigines of South-east Asia we might hope to find some confirmation of our characterization of the religion of the upper Palaeolithic inhabitants of the sub-continent. After much consideration of the confused mass of evidence I feel that in a general way we do. In Malaya the Sakai (or Senoi)

[1] ibid., pp. 5–26.

and the Jakun (Proto-Malays) have a definite Australo-Melanesoid racial substratum, some individuals being long-headed and with other physical features corresponding to the Mesolithic human remains of Perak, Pahang and Perlis.[1] It can thus be claimed that a certain proportion of their ancestry derives from peoples whose culture was that of the Australo-Melanesoids, however much their descendants' culture has since been changed. With the Negritos (Semang) the position is different. Of an entirely different broad-headed racial type, no skeletal remains of them have yet come to light prior to the late Neolithic. But I cannot believe that these primitive savages made their way not only into Malaya but also to the Andamans and Philippines after the arrival of the Neolithic agriculturists ; and I take them to have been an element in the population during at least part of the period we are considering. Heine-Geldern has expressed the opinion that the late Palaeolithic flake cultures of Indonesia, as distinct from the hand-axe cultures of the Papua-Melanesoids, are perhaps partly attributable to the Negritos.[2]

The Sakai have a Supreme Being named Karei, a sky-god whose voice is the thunder, and their religion seems basically to have been a simple form of shamanism. The Semang have lived so long in symbiosis with the Sakai that they have the sky-god Karei or Ta Pedn, and a similarly shamanic religion. In fact they appear to preserve some ancient religious features that have been lost by the Sakai or have not been recorded from them. So also the Negritos of the Andamans have a Supreme Being named Puluga, who is omniscient (though only in the day-time, i.e. all-seeing), and who well illustrates the character of such deities by the fact that " the

[1] Tweedie, loc. cit., p. 17.

[2] R. Heine-Geldern, *Annual Bibliography of Indian Archaeology*, 1934, p. 32.

deeds which displease him are breaches of certain rules of tribal life, such as the digging up of certain roots and the eating of certain kinds of fruit at particular seasons of the year, melting or burning of beeswax, the killing of a kind of cicada or making a noise while it sings, quartering a pig badly and so forth ".[1]

The Negritos (Aëta) of Luzon also have a Supreme Being of the same type, called Kayai, which corresponds to the Semang Karei, but having also other names such as Bayagaw. He lives in a stone house or cave in heaven, the thunder is his voice, and he punishes human misdeeds by meterological means.[2] The probability that all these Negritos at one time underwent Australo-Melanesoid acculturation as regards their ouranic beliefs gets some support from the evidence I shall consider shortly to the effect that they originally had an entirely different type of Supreme Being.

Whether it be the Sakai, Jakun, or Negritos, whenever we try to go beyond a general impression that the core of their sky religion is archaic, the effort proves fruitless. Cultural loss on the one hand, later influences on the other, have resulted in an inextricable confusion. The Andamanese have been too deeply affected by Hinduism, the others too deeply penetrated by Malay influences, as has been recognized by Eliade,[3] for a close analysis to be worth while. What was necessarily unknown to Eliade was the degree of influence that in Malaya may probably be attributed to Bronze Age shamanism. All this does not mean that some details of the initiation which he points out exist equally in the Australian rites, such as the difficult passage through the magic gate which rapidly opens and closes, the use of crystals, and especially the ascent by means of suspended cords to the sky-god Ta Pedn, may not antedate the advent

[1] Pettazzoni, op. cit., p. 301.
[2] ibid., p. 318.
[3] M. Eliade, op. cit., pp. 253–256, 304–310.

of later shamanism. We cannot deny the likelihood that the present day religious skein has some archaic threads, but it is well-nigh impossible to disentangle them.

There is, however, one feature in particular for the authentic archaism of which Eliade puts in a plea, and this calls for comment since I feel compelled to disagree with his opinion. This is the Semang's cosmic scheme with its World Axis, which for the shaman makes possible the penetration from one cosmic realm to another. Eliade himself would doubt the authenticity of this scheme " had we not reasons to believe that a similar scheme was already known in prehistoric times ".[1] Indeed his remark that " mounting to the sky by means of a World Axis is a universal and archaic idea "[2] conflicts with his statement in his former work,[3] where he speaks of it as probably of Mesopotamian origin, antedating of course the later developed idea of seven planetary heavens. Even in Mesopotamian thought, cosmology was a secondary consideration.[4] It was there no doubt that cosmic symbolism was first applied to the house and town, later to be taken up by many, including various nomads in connection with their tents or huts, who would never have thought of the idea independently. But I cannot believe that the Australo-Melanesoids pictured the sky as part of a cosmos, and no idea of a Cosmic Axis should be read into the simple means by which it was deemed possible to gain access to the sky.

Finally I propose to say something with regard to the original religion of the Negritos, in which it appears that the Supreme Being was a Lord of Beasts. Among many other food gatherers, such as the Bushmen in Africa, throughout the Arctic zone of Siberia, in North and

[1] ibid., p. 254.
[2] ibid., pp. 240, 248.
[3] M. Eliade, *Traité d'Histoire des Religions*, Paris, 1949, p. 258.
[4] André Parrot, *Ziggurats et Tour de Babel*, Paris, 1949, pp. 204, 214.

South America, the ouranic deity still has his supremacy disputed by a Lord of Beasts. Pettazzoni, who has brought together much impressive data on the subject, says: "Thus a new vista is opened before the study of the origin and growth of Supreme Beings. The oldest and most primitive form of a Supreme Being, far from a 'monotheistic' God, as arbitrarily transferred by some modern scholars from the great modern religions, more or less directly inspired by the Bible, to the very dawn of human culture, is rather that of the Lord of Beasts, upon whom, in that primeval stage, the very existence of man chiefly depends."[1]

In South-east Asia it is only among the Negritos (Aëta) of Luzon, that this cult of the Lord of Beasts still flourishes, even though, as we have seen, they are not ignorant of the sky-god notion. This Lord of Beasts "established the earth", together with the animals and plants, and, though not omniscient, through living in the forest knows "when anyone hides meat in the woods". As "lord of pigs" he receives a slice of the flesh of any animal killed in hunting, the offering being exposed in the forest while certain words are uttered desiring "him who gives our nourishment" to provide boars and deer on future occasions.[2] We can scarcely fail to be reminded here of the rite of the Palaeolithic hunters of Europe who, at the beginning of each season, did not eat the first slaughtered reindeer, but threw it into a mere, weighted with a stone, apparently as an offering to the spirit of the herd.[3]

While the Supreme Being of the Andamanese and of the Semang of Malaya now is of the ouranic type, it seems to me likely that this should be attributed to a long-continued contact in early times with the more advanced concepts reached by most Australoids. Certain

[1] R. Pettazzoni, op. cit., p. 297.
[2] ibid., pp. 318–321.
[3] V. Gordon Childe, op. cit., p. 42.

traces of the animal god appear to survive in the fact that Puluga of the Andamanese is thought of as a spider, and Karei of the Semang has the appearance of a monkey.[1] That the Australoids themselves had at first known only a Lord of Animals, before advancing to the sky-god concept, is suggested by the fact that the people who are believed to be a survival of the more primitive of the Australoids, the Veddas of Ceylon, recognize no sky deity but only a Lord of Beasts. Known as Kande Yaka he helps the hunters to track their game and is thanked with the presentation of the head of the quarry, as well as an offering of meat, which is flung into the bush.[2] Probably this persistent type of deity was never entirely dispossessed by the sky-god among hunting societies. Indeed it is interesting to note that he did not entirely vanish from mind with the invention of agriculture, at least among the more primitive of the tillers of the soil.[3]

So now I believe that we can glimpse with Pettazzoni the likelihood of a more primitive phase in the food-gathering and hunting cultures in which a Lord of Beasts was the Supreme Being, and a more advanced phase in which men looked to an all-seeing sky-god. So far as South-east Asia is concerned it is only the Negritos, primitive though no longer considered to have been the first arrivals in the region, that provide us with evidence of this first phase. But Pettazzoni shows good grounds for supposing that this is part of a world wide

[1] Pettazzoni, op. cit., p. 441.

[2] ibid., p. 442.

[3] Pettazzoni (op. cit., p. 448) calls attention to the interesting point that the horned three-faced god on seals from Mohenjodaro and Harappa, seated in a *yogi* position, and which is generally regarded as a prototype of Śiva as Lord of Beasts, may really be a deity of this type. He points out that in the Vedic Śiva *paśupati*, Lord of Cattle, the word *paśu* of the Ṛg-Veda means also wild animal, and the animals surrounding the figure on the seal include the tiger and rhinoceros. This attribution appears to fit in with what I have taken to be the basic character of the Indus valley civilization in my book *The Mountain of God* (Chap. III).

ancient culture : " The complex of the Lord of Animals is one of the characteristic elements of this primitive culture and of its religion. The Lord of Animals is not the reflexion of a transcendent Supreme Being. He, who assists man in the hazardous adventure of hunting, so full of the unknown and of dangers . . . he and no other is himself man's Supreme Being, for on him depends, day by day, man's existence, since he has man's life and death in his hand." [1]

I have spoken of early civilization, which includes religion, arising in large measure from primitive man's need to become adapted to his environment. What has been said about the Lord of Beasts enables us to appreciate somewhat more clearly the basic nature of the adaptation—to define it in terms of stimulus and response. To satisfy hunger is the most fundamental of primitive man's needs. And his first religious response may well have been to the Power that seemed most immediately connected with the game and wild fruit supply. Only subsequently did Sky attract attention, much later to be followed by Earth among most agriculturists. However, with some of these, such as the Aryans, ouranic religion retained its pre-eminence, and then the cult of all-seeing, hence all-knowing, deities paved the way for the development of the transcendental aspects of the higher religions. Diffused abroad, such advanced ideas received a varying reception. In South-east Asia circumstances were by no means uniform, and this resulted in vividly contrasting developments as we shall see. But first we must continue our examination of the phases of pre-historic religion in the area.

[1] Pettazzoni, op. cit., p. 445.

CHAPTER II

THE NEOLITHIC

The advent of the Neolithic revolution naturally brought into being an entirely new set of religious responses. One may suppose that the productivity of earth, coupled with the prior importance hitherto accorded to the sky, quickly led to the recognition of an animistic Mother Earth, Father Sky couplet. At the same time the sedentary life of the agriculturists would have endowed many striking features of the environment, the stream, the mountain, the big tree or rock, each with their spirits requiring propitiation. But perhaps none received a greater accretion of reverence than the ancestors, in a settled existence where their remains lay buried close at hand and their continuing influence was felt to the full. The ancestors probably paralleled, and perhaps magically activated, the beneficent powers of the divine pair, their influence largely derived from their propinquity to the soil. So it would appear that the early agriculturists primarily sought the fertility of the earth through the direct co-operation of the ancestors, in cults which had a phallic aspect.

Only the extreme diffusionist can have really believed in *the* Neolithic revolution. That is to say in the invention of agriculture in one centre from whence it diffused throughout the world. I have always considered agriculture, as well as the domestication of animals, to be one of those relatively simple inventions that could have been made more than once, wherever environment was favourable to it ; and such invention would always have given rise to approximately the same substratum of religious beliefs as mentioned above. Consequently

in my previous works I have spoken of simple or universal animism and ancestor worship. Together with magic, it is such relatively primitive religion, whether in its original form, or lingering in conjunction with more developed beliefs, that provide *The Golden Bough* type of material. That these first departures from Palaeolithic savagery were very likely made at approximately the same period had moreover always appeared to me probable.

Now quite recently it appears that we have confirmation from prehistoric archaeology of both these suppositions, at least as regards the Near East and America. I think China would soon be added once systematic archaeological investigation can make progress there.[1] In the issue of *Antiquity* for December, 1956, Miss Kathleen Kenyon announced her discovery of a fortified town at the Jericho oasis, with radiocarbon datings by Prof. Zeuner of by no means her earliest levels going back to *circa* 6250 B.C. On 13th December *The Times* announced the discovery by Dr. Richard McNeish of the National Museum of Canada of evidence of agriculture in north-eastern Mexico, with radiocarbon datings of *circa* 6500 B.C. by Prof. H. R. Crane of the University of Michigan.[2]

It seems that only Miss Kenyon's work provides evidence as to the character of the religion of these early Neolithic agriculturists, and what she has to say on this subject is of much interest to us. In a small room at the Jericho site Miss Kenyon found a stone column which was intended to be set up on a rough stone pedestal in a niche at one end of the

[1] Meanwhile suggestive material is contained in three papers on early Chinese pottery, by Seeichi Mizuno, Takeshi Sekino, and F. S. Drake respectively, published in *Proceedings of the Fourth Far-eastern Prehistory and the Anthropology Division of the Eighth Pacific Science Congresses*, Manila, 1956, Pt. I., pp. 83–132.

[2] While at the time of writing I know nothing further of this American claim, whether it proves to be well-founded or not would naturally not affect my general standpoint.

room. She speaks of it as representing an " impersonal force ", the predecessor in concept of the Semitic Mazzebah. Now the Mazzebah (*maṣṣēbhāh*) represented the male principle.[1] She also found small figurines of women, recognizable as conventional expressions of the source of fertility. Similar figurines, usually referred to as images of the " mother goddess," were made by Neolithic communities in Egypt, Syria, Iran, the Mediterranean and South-eastern Europe, and sometimes in England, while " the male partner in fertilization is, however, represented only by phalli of clay or stone that were carved in Anatolia, the Balkans and England ".[2] So far Jericho appears to be in line with what may be called the lowest common denominator of Neolithic religion, a term which is perhaps only legitimate if we presume the parallel existence of a Mother Earth–Father Sky couplet. Archaeology cannot confirm this, but at Jericho it does tell us something no less interesting.

Miss Kenyon found a large number of detached skulls, the features of which had been restored with plaster, thus constituting the now famous earliest portraits. The circumstances in which they were found led her to conclude that they were not trophies but were the skulls of ancestors preserved for ritual purposes so that their souls might be honoured or placated. She supports this view on the analogy of Polynesian practices in which skulls are treated somewhat similarly. We should not need to go so far afield as Polynesia, having in mind the custom of the Konyak Nagas of Assam who remove a dead chief's head, clean and paint it, make offerings to it and then place it in a pot under the sacred tree. It would seem that in these important finds at Jericho we have confirmation that the early

[1] Hastings' *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, art. Poles and Posts, p. 94.
[2] V. Gordon Childe, op. cit., p. 64.

Neolithic people sought the co-operation of their ancestors in obtaining the fruits of the earth.

To call on such a people as the Konyak Nagas for evidence as to early Neolithic ancestor cults is not strictly permissible because, as we shall see, they have reached more advanced cultural levels. But since they have also lost a great deal in the course of the ages, the comparison may not be so very far out. The question then arises as to whether we have more immediate evidence from South-east Asia as to the religion of the earliest Neolithic people to reach that region.

The early Neolithic would seem to have been coming down from the north during the later phases of the Mesolithic, until by about 3000 B.C. they probably had the fertile areas of the sub-continent pretty much to themselves. But prehistoric archaeology can tell us nothing definite of these early Neolithic cultures, much less of their religion. If we look to ethnology we must make allowance for loss of culture among modern survivals. However Heine-Geldern considers that the earliest Neolithic cultures of South-east Asia are recognizable in the present-day inhabitants of the Engano and Mentawei Islands.[1] These people have a very archaic material culture, being ignorant of rice-growing, but depending on the cultivation of sago and the esculent taro roots, while they lack knowledge of weaving, metal work, and betel chewing, nor have they the blowpipe. It is certain that the Mentawei Islands were influenced by Dongson designs in art [2]; and there is little doubt that in religion their shamanism was obtained from contacts at that period. But it seems to me that something of their original religion is preserved in the rituals which centre around the communal house or *uma* of each division of the village. Here in the first room there is a hearth with skulls of sacrificed

[1] R. Heine-Geldern in E. M. Loeb, *Sumatra*, Vienna, 1935, p. 329.
[2] R. Heine-Geldern, *Indonesian Art Exhibition*, New York, p. 3.

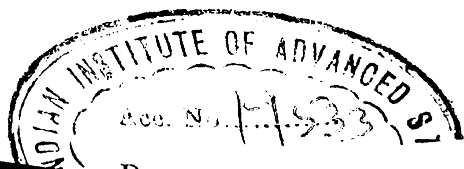
animals. In the main room on festival occasions dancing takes place, and there are two chief altars in this room, one supposed to be female, the other male. Further, on the centre post of the *uma*, where it runs through this room, an altar is attached, on which is placed a fetish (*katsaila*) made out of the leaves of the sacred Dracaena plant. During the festival the souls of the dead are recalled by a priest and they come to rest on the fetish. Offerings are made to them, as they also are to the animistic spirits of sky, sea, jungle, etc.[1]

These beliefs are sufficiently suggestive of the type of concepts probably characteristic of early Neolithic religion generally. But, in view of the silence of prehistory on the point, nothing can at present be said as to from what source they reached South-east Asia.

With the full Neolithic we reach firmer ground (Fig. 1). Heine-Geldern has shown the chief culture of the full Neolithic was the Quadrangular Adze culture, which probably came into South-east Asia and North-east India from the north between 2500 and 1500 B.C., for it must have been established in the latter area well before the coming of the Aryans.[2] It seems to have come in several waves and is associated with the peoples speaking Malayo-Polynesian (Austronesian) languages. It pushed right through to Indonesia and beyond, but in Further India it mixed with and influenced another Neolithic culture, the Shouldered Adze, which was associated with the peoples speaking Môn-Khmer (Austro-asiatic) languages. One of the features of the Quadrangular Adze culture was the erecting of megaliths, and a complex of religious beliefs associated with them. This was among the features imparted to the Shouldered Adze culture. In fact in mainland South-east Asia,

[1] E. M. Loeb, *Sumatra*, Vienna, 1935, pp. 162, 192 ff. with further details.

[2] R. Heine-Geldern, "Prehistoric Research in the Netherlands Indies," in *Science and Scientists in the Netherlands Indies*, New York, 1945, p. 138.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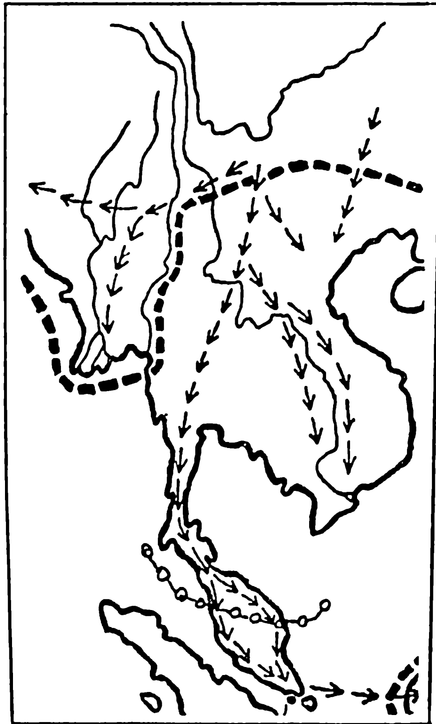


FIG. 1.—North-west section of Professor R. Heine-Geldern's map of South-east Asia, to show chief wanderings of the Quadrangular Adze Culture into Further India and North-east India (arrows), and southern limit of Shouldered Adze Culture in the Malay Peninsula (o–o–o–o).

Fürer-Haimendorf believes that it was chiefly the Môn-Khmer speaking peoples who introduced the megalithic complex into North-east India.[1] The distinctions of lithic industry and language have little bearing on a culture which, especially in its religious tenets, must have become much the same throughout the area. Consequently I use the term Older Megalithic to express its main common feature, and to distinguish it from a younger and much changed development with which we shall be concerned in the next chapter.

Basing himself on the information collected by the field anthropologists, Heine-Geldern in 1928 published the results of an investigation of the megalithic monuments of Assam, West Burma and Indonesia, and the beliefs connected with them.[2] In 1945 he summarized these results, with little alteration, as follows :

" I came to the conclusion that, with very few and unimportant exceptions, the megaliths are connected with special notions concerning life after death ; that the majority are erected in the course of rites destined to protect the soul from the dangers believed to threaten it in the underworld or on its way there, and to assure eternal life either to the persons who erect the monuments as their own memorials while alive, or to those to whom they are erected after their death ; that at the same time the megaliths are destined to serve as a link between the dead and the living and to enable the latter to participate in the wisdom of the dead ; that they are thought to perpetuate the magic qualities of the persons who had erected them or to whom they had been erected, thereby furthering the fertility of men, livestock and crops and promoting the wealth of future generations." [3]

[1] C. von Fürer-Haimendorf, " Megalithic Ritual among the Gadabas and Bondos of Orissa ", *JRAS, Bengal*, Letters, vol. ix, 1943, p. 177.

[2] " R. Heine-Geldern, " Die Megalithen Südostasiens und ihre Bedeutung für die Klänung der Megalithenfrage in Europa und Polynesien," *Anthropos*, Vol. 23, pp. 276–315.

[3] R. Heine-Geldern, " Prehistoric Research . . .", loc. cit., p. 149.

That concise summary may be accepted as an adequate expression of the general characteristics of the Older Megalithic *in its present-day form*, though to avoid over-simplification it must be mentioned that such peoples as the Nagas of Assam have to some extent a composite culture: They have not entirely escaped other influences, nor do they lack survivals from earlier cultural strata.[1] This need not detain us here for it is plain from every account that the fertility cult as summarized by Heine-Geldern, plus the inevitable accompaniment of general animism, is overwhelmingly the principal religious manifestation of these peoples in modern times.

Such a cult can clearly have been derived somewhere from the early Neolithic beliefs already discussed.

[1] Among the Nagas the presence of an Australoid or Negroid physical type has been observed, and to this may be attributed the persistence of a Lord of Beasts (Pettazzoni, op. cit., p. 295 f). Perhaps also to intermixture with such more primitive people may be attributed the apparently early form of shamanism that survives among some Naga tribes as a secondary cult (Cp. J. P. Mills, *The Ao Nagas*, pp. 236–239, J. H. Hutton, *The Sema Nagas*, pp. 191, 230; Fürer-Haimendorf, *The Naked Nagas* (Konyaks), p. 212). The frequency of a supreme sky god, apparently replacing an earlier earth deity, has been attributed by Pettazzoni (loc. cit.) to contact with Tibeto-Burmans from whom the Nagas derived their present language. But both for the sky god and the shamanism a certain amount of influence from the Bronze Age (Dongson) culture seems likely in view of occasional parallels in material culture: Thus the Lhota Nagas have a saddle roof as like that of the Dongson-influenced South Torajas of Celebes as it is unlike that of other Naga tribes; and in their northern (more exposed) villages the rich people make use of a coffin called a "boat" (*orhung*), although they and other Nagas have no boats, but only rafts (B. A. G. Vroklage, "Das Schiff in Megalithkulturen Südostasiens und der Südsee" *Anthropos*, vol. 31, 1936, p. 740; J. P. Mills, *The Lhota Nagas*, pp. 157 f.) Similarly the Lushei Kukis show traces of Dongson influence in their ornamental designs (J. Shakespear, *The Lushei Kuki Clans*, p. 10). Probably the existence of large stone jars and vats in the North Cachar Hills, resembling those of the Bronze or Iron Age studied by Mlle. Colani in Laos, indicate that the now quite Older Megalithic Khasis had been under Dongson influence before they moved westward into their present habitat (J. P. Mills and J. H. Hutton, "Ancient Monoliths of North Cachar, *JASB*, Vol. 25, 1929, and J. H. Hutton, *Man*, 1953, art. 297). On page 75 of *The Mountain of God* I attributed certain Angami Naga beliefs to Hindu influence which I now think should be ascribed to the Dongson or Tibeto-Burman influences.

Upright menhirs now represent male ancestors, and recumbent ones (or dolmens) represent females, either as their " memorials " or as seats on which they and the living may rest and commune. Thus the latter may partake both for themselves and their crops of the fertility which the dead are believed to dispense. The ritual dancing now is within a circle of such stones, in accordance with the early realization of the value of a " magic circle " as a means of preventing the entry of adverse influences, but as yet devoid of any cosmological significance. The erection of such " memorials " by a rich man during his lifetime, in the course of a feast of merit, the development of the stones as finely carved benches or thrones, are merely elaborations which do not obscure the primordial simplicity of the concepts. These have been accurately summed up by a later authority on these cultures as " the belief in an intimate relation between the living and the dead, and particularly in the powerful influence which the departed exert on the fertility of man and crops, and the conviction that the beneficial ' virtue ' of a deceased kinsman can be concentrated in a stone, which is set up in his honour and becomes his seat and symbol ".[1]

This picture, however, is an anthropological not a historical one, and so it does not tell the whole story. When the anthropologists' accounts are examined closely, and certain known parallel developments are taken into consideration, surviving features are discovered which cannot be explained in terms of this fertility cult. They point rather to the former existence of more complex religious concepts. These oblige us to form the opinion that what we have before us to-day represents essentially a return to primitive animism and ancestor worship, as a result of a loss of culture after the advanced influences had ceased to operate.

[1] C. von Fürer-Haimendorf, " The problem of Megalithic Cultures in Middle India," *Man in India*, vol. xxv, 1945, p. 74.

It is rather surprising that Prof. Heine-Geldern, who has been at such pains to show the spread of this Older Megalithic culture to South-east Asia from the Mediterranean region at such a significant time as the third millennium B.C., did not suspect that it might not have altogether escaped the influence of the higher religions developed in the urban centres of Mesopotamia and quickly diffused therefrom. Had he done so he might have noticed the surviving features of the Older Megalithic cultures just referred to and appreciated their relevance. The main part of this chapter will be devoted to recapitulating what I have said elsewhere as to the influences of this " Old Asiatic " religion, and, more important for those who are cognizant with my previous work, adding some new and cogent evidence that further research has brought to my notice.

Before turning to this, however, I propose to consider the question of the origin of the Older Megalithic (as brought into South-east Asia by the Quadrangular Adze culture), a problem which I had previously left aside, partly because to broach it did not seem important to my main investigation, and partly because sufficient evidence seemed to me to be lacking. But I now feel that several new lines of thought have considerably increased the probability that Heine-Geldern's thesis of a diffusion eastwards from somewhere in the Mediterranean region may prove to be well founded. In considering these developments it will be well to bear in mind, what is so often overlooked by critics of diffusion, that we are dealing with a well-integrated culture " not an accidental aggregation of various elements, but a well co-ordinated system of customs and beliefs, a philosophy of life and nature ".[1] This character is equally well borne out by the material culture, including as it does elaborate irrigation works for terraced rice cultivation, the making of stone causeways, fortifica-

[1] ibid., p. 74.

tions, etc., and introducing to South-east Asia such cultural traits as the raising of cattle or buffaloes for sacrificial purposes, head-hunting, a pottery-making technique, the making of bark cloth, the construction of rectangular houses on piles, a special type of art, etc.[1]

Another point to bear in mind is that, however much evidence may accumulate as to the independent invention of agriculture at more than one centre, thereby disproving the claims of the extreme diffusionists, this can in no wise alter the importance as a factor in culture change of the diffusion of civilization. And it is the faster tempo of development in the Near East that has left us in no doubt as to its prior place in the race to diffuse.

It is hardly necessary to reiterate that the supposed existence of a " civilization of the monsoons ", based on Father Wm. Schmidt's and S. Levi's outdated theories of a prehistoric migration of language and culture eastwards from India and mainly by sea, cannot merit serious consideration in view of Heine-Geldern's careful analysis of the prehistoric evidence which enabled him to trace the descent of waves of Neolithic peoples southward from north-west China. What we want to consider is whether there is now any more reliable evidence in support of the thesis that the Older Megalithic culture, the fully integrated character and wide distribution of which suggests great antiquity, was diffused eastwards from the Mediterranean region, probably via the steppe routes.

Whether the Older Megalithic *originated* in oasis or in river valley, one cannot doubt that the oases that punctuate the Central Asian steppe routes would have been ideally suited for the propagation of this culture, whose bearers were evidently expert in the necessary arts of irrigation. Of course we must remember that the evidence of the lowest strata at Jericho was obtained

[1] R. Heine-Geldern, loc. cit., p. 141.

at a depth of seventy feet, and excavation at such depths requires great skill and is very costly. So it is likely that we shall have to wait some time before we get direct evidence bearing upon our question from the Central Asian oases, the surfaces of which though barely scratched have produced such rich finds for the historical periods.

The recent revived interest in Stonehenge and Avebury has led the new interpreters to think in terms of the Nagas, though studiously refraining from suggesting any basis of common origin.[1] Of greater interest to us, both in regard to interpretation and because they draw attention to the wealth of megalithic material extant in the all-important geographically intermediary region, are two recent studies of Central Asian megaliths. The first of these is an article by A. W. Macdonald,[2] in which he considers how the megaliths which have been reported from various sites in Tibet may be properly interpreted in the same terms as those of South-east Asia. While regarding their fertility producing value as primary, after the manner of Heine-Geldern, he recognizes (as I had already suggested a few years earlier) the importance of considering the connections between the megalithic cultures and those more advanced ones studied by Paul Mus. But it seems to be mainly with Mus' work on the Barabudur that he is impressed, and he consequently lays greater stress on the significance of the menhirs as cosmic axes than the facts warrant, or that can be drawn from their consideration in relation to Mus' work as a whole. Nevertheless I agree that as a subsidiary notion the cosmic significance of the menhirs is to be kept in mind.

The second article is by Johannes Maringer and deals

[1] A. T. Hatto, "Stonehenge and Midsummer; a new interpretation," *Man*, article 151, July, 1953; R. J. C. Atkinson, *Stonehenge*, London, 1956, pp. 172 f.

[2] A. W. Macdonald, "Une Note sur les Mégalithes Tibetains," *Journal Asiatique*, Vol. CCXLI, 1953, pp. 63–76.

with the megalithic monuments found at various sites in Mongolia.[1] These include cromlechs and alignments, associated with stone-bordered graves, of various post-Neolithic ages. Aware of the views of Heine-Geldern, and of Macdonald, the author thinks that these monuments are the results of influences from western people of megalithic culture. But only the funerary (i.e. not the fertility) aspects, perhaps modified by their sky religion, could be taken up by nomads not practising agriculture. Certainly they did become addicted to the ancestor worship so common among settled peoples. Maringer leaves it open as to whether these megaliths of Mongolia and Tibet, which do not geographically overlap with those of South-east Asia, may have a common origin.

The Mongolian megaliths seem to me to show a great complexity of types. Some of the stone graves may relate to the late megalithic cultures of the first millennium B.C., but it is possible that cromlechs and alignments, however recent in actual age, may still represent survivals of cultures cognate to our Older Megalithic. That such survivals would have been impoverished through the nomads only being able to perpetuate the funerary aspects of the megaliths, in the way suggested by Maringer, appears likely. Neither the Mongolian megalithic sites, nor those in the inaccessible fastnesses of Tibet, can give us indications as to the routes which may have been followed in an eastward diffusion of the Older Megalithic from the Mediterranean. What they do is to call our attention to the widespread existence of megalithic monuments in Central Asia generally, and suggest that these have been derived at various periods by the nomads from contact with settled peoples of the oases. The carrying out of deep excavations in these oases offers the best chance of shedding decisive light

[1] J. Maringer, "Gräber und Steindenkmäler in der Mongolei," *Monumenta Serica*, Vol. XIV, 1949–1955, pp. 303–339.

on the problem of the origin and diffusion of the Older Megalithic as we know it in South-east Asia and North-east India.

I should now like to proceed with the new evidence I have obtained as to the association of what I have called the "Old Asiatic religion" with the Older Megalithic, *both in the west and in the east*, because this closeness of association adds to the probability that it was the Older Megalithic that brought the Old Asiatic religion from the West. But I realize that the reader will need to know what I mean by the Old Asiatic religion, and the way in which it transformed the character of the Older Megalithic until in later ages through loss of culture the primitive beliefs returned. I must therefore ask the patience of those who are familiar with my previous work while I briefly recapitulate; I can promise that I shall spare them the details of evidence previously advanced—the better to invite attention to the new material that will follow!

In my book *The Mountain of God* I began by drawing attention to the view of H. Frankfort, based on the predominantly chthonic character of the ancient Sumerian deities, that in Mesopotamia the sacred mountain was the place where the mysterious potency of the earth was concentrated. Artificial mountains, or ziggurats, were built in each city to make possible local communication with the gods. The ziggurat was perhaps regarded as the body of the god (and being primarily concerned with chthonic powers a cosmological aspect could only have been secondary). I then showed how closely this ancient Sumerian religion was paralleled by the ancient Chinese cult of Earth (or Soil) as we know it from the studies of Chavannes. This Chinese god of the Soil was "the personification of the energies which reside in the soil", just as was Enlil, the Sumerian Earth god. The Chinese deity was represented by a mound at the capital, while a hierarchy of local earth

gods were represented by a mound in each of the territorial divisions. Beside the mound the Chinese god of the Soil was also represented by a stone or tree, just as Tammuz, the fertility aspect of the Earth god in Mesopotamia was also represented by a tree.

In view of these and other resemblances I advanced the thesis that this cult of Earth, represented by mountain or mound, was one of the features introduced to China from the West, along with such traits as the knowledge of bronze working and the use of wheeled vehicles. These came via the steppe routes and considerably influenced the culture of the Shang dynasty, established about 1500 B.C. The Old Asiatic religion (thus penetrating into China considerably later than it reached South-east Asia), according to my view fused with local Chinese religion which was a developed ancestor worship : the introduced Earth god coalesced or was identified with the supreme ancestor Shang-ti. The altar of the Soil and the altar of Ancestors were in Shang times one and the same, as Marcel Granet has pointed out. Only in later times, when the influence of the Old Asiatic religion began to recede, and the local ancestor worship to regain its supremacy, did the two altars become separated and the altar of Soil was neglected. The god of the Soil (i.e. the god of the kingdom's soil, not the supreme Earth God) was thus in Shang times identified with the dynastic ancestor, as H. Maspero first recognized, and this necessarily affected Chinese conceptions of kingship. Instead of being merely a servant of the gods, as in Mesopotamia, the Chinese king was in some degree in life a manifestation of the deity. After death, through his tablet, together with (in Shang times as) the god of the Soil's stone, he served to concentrate and apply the kingdom's life-giving energies.

Turning to India I found evidence for the former existence of a " Ganges civilization ", having a religion

cognate to the one we are discussing, in the survivals to the north-east in the Assam hills, and on the south of the Bengal plain in the hills of Orissa and on the Nagpur plateau. While I lacked direct evidence of the part played by a sacred mountain in this region—a lacuna to be filled in the present chapter—I could point to the importance of chthonic mountain cults in later Śaivism. In South-east Asia it was easier to point to megalithic mountain terraces as evidence of the mountain character of the deity worshipped before loss of the Old Asiatic religious elements set in. In Assam among the Angami Nagas the sacred mountain, as well as the clan ancestor, appeared to be represented in each village by the pyramid of the *kithuchie* (Fig. 2), a Ficus tree on a mound being substituted by some of the other tribes, the significance apparently being the same as the Chinese mound of the Soil. Similarly the Bondos of Orissa have a round stone platform, or *sindibor*, believed to be the seat of Bursung, the earth deity. With the Gonds of Bastar state each clan had a "spiritual capital", with a shrine of the clan deity, Earth, represented by a stone under a sacred tree. At megalithic sites in Indochina, Sumatra, Java (Fig. 3*a*) and Nias, pyramids and mounds of different ages were mentioned which I thought could find their proper explanation by analogy with the *kithuchie* of the Angami Nagas. Furthermore it was shown that there was good reason to believe that the dolmens, menhirs, small pyramids and stone circles erected by chiefs and other individuals, at the village centre or on their own land, often during their lifetime, had acquired under the influence of the Old Asiatic religion a local significance more complex than that of the simple cult of fertility and ancestors to which they subsequently returned.

This interpretation, especially as regards these more local manifestations, was greatly helped by considering the Older Megalithic in the light of the study which had

Fig. 2.—The Angami Naga pyramid of the *kithuchie*.

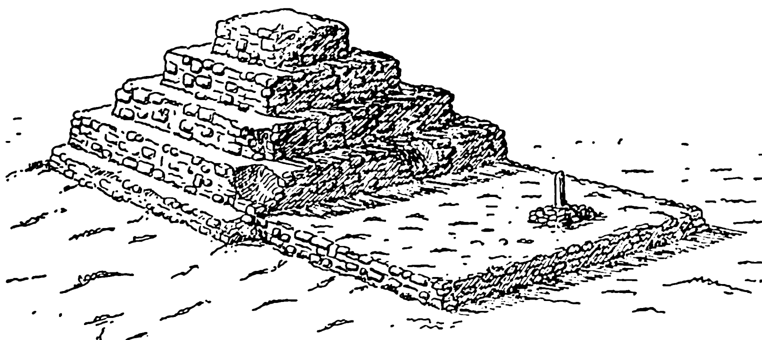
been carried out by Paul Mus on the village cults of the Chams who, having lost their Indianization, had returned to something approaching their previous civilization. Although the Chams, as we shall subsequently see, had received the full impact of Bronze Age influence, nevertheless at village level much of the Older Megalithic had survived, inevitably with the loss of the Old Asiatic element in religion. However, Mus was able to recapture the earlier character of their village cults, by interpreting them on the analogy of the ancient Chinese cult of the soil.[1]

In the first place Mus stressed the " cadastral " aspect of the ancient Cham religion : It is because of the association of the dynastic or family ancestor with the god of the Soil that the family or community has a right to the land. The menhir set up in the middle of each unit of land symbolized this bond between group and god, and so gives the cult its " cadastral " aspect, as distinct from its fertility-producing and magical appeal. On the analogy of Chavannes' study of the ancient Chinese religion, he recognized that the important factor in Cham religion was the lifegiving power of the Soil. The stone was the deity in concentrated form, with whom the people could communicate through the intermediary of their ancestor. The ancestor and the earth god are united for a time, Mus stresses, and as regards a certain territory, the kingdom. The god is a specification of the great amorphous Earth God, who himself remains immortal regardless of the disappearance of his local specification and the conjoined dynastic ancestor. Nowadays, at village level, the *kut* steles which represent the deceased Chams are set up in the middle of each family's sacred padi field, whence the rice destined for offerings is obtained. By analogy with the ancient Chinese beliefs, Mus infers that in earlier

[1] P. Mus, " Cults Indiens et indigènes au Champa." *BEFEO*, vol. XXXIII, pt. 1, pp. 367–410.

times the *kut* have been considered to materialize both the ancestor *and* the local god of the soil, on whom the family depended for their prosperity. The *kut* (before the return to simple animism) was the " substitute body ", not only of the deceased but also of the god with whom the deceased is merged. We can now apply this interpretation to the understanding of the fully developed Older Megalithic, recognizing what Mus failed to do on account of his restricted viewpoint: the ultimate importance of the mountain and that the association of ancestor and earth god was due to a fusion of cultures.

To look first at lower levels, directly comparable with the Cham village rites, we find that, as generally among the Nagas, the Gadabas of Orissa erect menhirs in the vicinity of their fields, while the Bondos set up dolmens outside their villages near paths. With the Bondos an old man personifies the deceased, and at one time he must also have personified the god, both deceased and god being also present as the stone. They became more readily accessible by manifesting through the old man to whom prayers for fertility were addressed. We come next to the substitute body of the dead chief, who as ancestor of importance was united to the earth god of the village or of the territory occupied by the clan. An example is the *dahu* or large stepped pyramid of the Angamis, or the small pyramids of the Lakhers (Fig. 3*b*) and of certain Nias chiefs. In such cases the pyramidal shape of the substitute body is significant. Menhir and dolmen are the stone forms which immediately suggest themselves as suitable representations of ordinary men and women. But the fact that for a chief the proper form is often considered to be a mound or actual pyramid indicates that here a more acute association is preserved between the ancestor and the deity, the mound or pyramid being the form in which the local earth deity is usually concentrated in the larger territorial



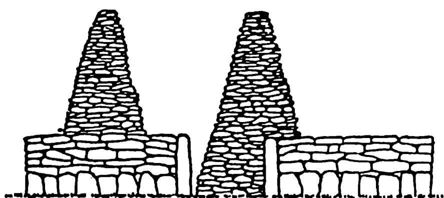


FIG. 3.—(*a*) *above*, Megalithic pyramid of Lebak Sibedug, West Java ;
(*b*) *below*, Megalithic pyramids of the Lakhers.

units. Such representations appear to correspond to the Chinese private god of the soil, a manifestation of the earth god personal to the king, which was also the latter's substitute body after death. But more important was the village mound or tree which, as has been said above, concentrated locally the divinized energies of the earth, and thus corresponded to the Chinese great god of the soil. This was not only the body of the local earth deity but was also the substitute body of the first ancestor or village founder, and sometimes the chiefs' private monuments were placed in close proximity to it.

Prof. Hutton recorded that with the Angami Nagas the *kithuchie* is regarded as the repository of the community's prosperity, and we should note particularly that this is itself a stone, built into the top of a pyramid. Though the present-day Angamis have no recollection of it, it seems to me very probable that originally the *kithuchie* was both the local manifestation of the earth god and the substitute body of the first ancestor united with the deity. I found support for this view in comparable structures of the Bondos, Gadabas and Bastar Gonds, also in Nias, especially as in these cases the deceased chiefs become more immediately identified by means of menhirs, etc., with the god of the soil, as in ancient China. With those Naga tribes where the use of stone is now on a small scale, the sacred tree takes the place of the village pyramid or terrace structure. That the tree represents the earth god and is also the substitute body of the first ancestor is particularly apparent with the Konyak Nagas, where special efforts are made to transfer the soul force of the chief to the tree after his death. The divine character of the kingship, especially well shown with the Konyak Nagas and the chiefs of Nias, is indicated by the fact that in their lifetime a menhir is erected. This in earlier times must have been intended to show the consubstantial presence both in

the menhir and in the chief of the sacred forces of the soil.

I now turn to the new evidence which further research has enabled me to bring to light in regard to the association of the Old Asiatic religion with the Older Megalithic, both in the east and in the west. To take the Mediterranean region first I must point out that Heine-Geldern, when discussing [1] stone circles and the megalithic cults of the Mycenaean civilization in Greece, had overlooked the *omphalos*, and its association with megalithic remains. I had overlooked it likewise, but now propose to repair the omission.[2]

The *omphalos* at Delphi was a sacred stone on a mound. One interesting representation of it in a ritual scene shows it as a black conical stone on a black stone base, surmounting a mound (Fig. 4*a*). By the time of Aeschylus it had come to be regarded as merely a sacred fetish marking the centre of the earth. Any such explanation in purely cosmological terms is suspect because, however much this was stressed in later times, comparative study warns us to look for something deeper than the subsidiary cosmological aspect. We may agree with Eliade [3] that both conceptions are ancient, though while he, as always, tends to stress the cosmological aspect and " the symbolism of the centre ", as in the case of the ziggurat I regard this as subsidiary.

According to literary tradition the *omphalos* was the grave of Python, the sacred snake, guardian of Gaia, the earth goddess, whose cult was replaced after the rise of the Olympian sky worship by the cult of Apollo. Miss Jane Harrison was able to show by a study of the Ennaeteric Festivals at Delphi, that the " bringing up

[1] R. Heine-Geldern, " Die Megalithen Südostasiens und ihre Bedeutung für die Klärung der Megalithenfrage in Europa und Polynesien," *Anthropos*, vol. 23, pp. 276–315.

[2] I am indebted to Prof. A. T. Hatto for calling my attention to the *omphalos*, after he had read *The Mountain of God*.

[3] M. Eliade, *Traité d'Histoire des Religions*, Paris, 1953, p. 204.

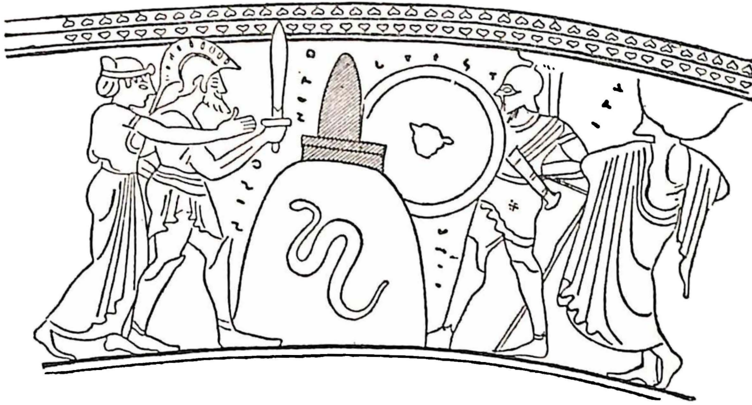


FIG. 4.—(*a*) *above*, (*b*) *below*: Two representations of the *omphalos*.

of Semele " (a form of Gaia) took place at the *omphalos* sanctuary. Much light, she realized, was thrown on the true meaning of the *omphalos* by a design (Fig. 4*b*) on the type of vase known as " Anodos " : " We have a great mound of earth artificially covered in with a thick coat of white. On it are painted a tree, leaf-sprays and a tortoise. From the top of the mound rises a tree. In the midst rises up the figure of a woman. It is a grave-mound, an *omphalos*-sanctuary, and she who is the spirit of the earth incarnate rises up to bring and be new life. The tree that springs from the mound is, like the cone, a symbol and vehicle of life." [1]

In the preface to the second edition of *Themis*, Miss Harrison claimed to have just become a diffusionist, but it did not affect her treatment of the subject, and she allowed the book to remain " substantially unaltered ". Now, though she does not suggest that we have here anything beyond a Cretan development in religion, one can hardly fail to be struck by the close resemblance of theme between this vase design and the cult relief from Assur showing the earth god growing out of a mountain, which I reproduced as the frontispiece of *The Mountain of God*. And what I said of the Mesopotamian earth god could be applied with equal force to this Greek figure of Gaia : " During the hot weather, when all vegetation was scorched up, the god was imagined to be held captive in the mountain from which he issued forth again with the revival of plant life at New Year." [2] The *omphalos*, like the ziggurat, was the symbolic reduction of the sacred mountain, in some sense probably regarded as the body of the god. More than a grave, albeit compounded of mound and stele, the *omphalos*, pointed out Miss Harrison, had a function (as those who would understand the Older Megalithic may well note) " not commemorative but magical . . .

[1] J. Harrison, *Themis*, 2nd Edition, Cambridge, 1927, pp. 418 f.
[2] *The Mountain of God*, p. 7.

it is there with a solemn magical intent to ensure, to induce, the renewal of life, reincarnation ".[1]

It is not surprising that this chthonic cult had its influence on the early Greek kingship. Traditional kings like Cecrops and Erichthonios were in some degree regarded as snakes—heroes united with the fertility *daimon* and as such not private individuals but representatives of the community or kingdom.[2] Cecrops the Greek culture-hero who instituted marriage had a snake's tail to promote fertility, and so did Fu-Hsi the culture-hero who instituted marriage and kingly rule in China.[3] Does the resemblance signify a connection ?

Of interest for students of South-east Asia is what Miss Harrison says of the royal association with a chthonic serpent : " Once we realize that the traditional kings of Athens were conceived of as snake-*daimons*, the ' household snake ' of the Acropolis becomes instantly clear. Herodotus writes somewhat sceptically : ' the Athenians say that they have a great snake which lives in the sanctuary as the guardian of the Acropolis. They both say this and as if it were really existing they place monthly offerings before it and the monthly offering is honey-cake. And always before, the honey-cake was consumed, but then (at the Persian invasion) untouched. And when the priestess announced this the Athenians deserted the city the more readily *because the goddess had herself forsaken the Acropolis.*' " [4]

Just as every Mesopotamian city had a ziggurat, so the *omphalos* at Delphi was not unique. There was also one in Athens, probably also one in Cyprus, and also one at Phlius which, in accordance with the secondary cosmological aspect, pretended to be the centre of the Peloponnese.[5] Probably they are the equivalents of

[1] *Themis*, pp. 400, 402. [2] ibid., pp. 260 ff.

[3] Cp. J. Harrison, *Themis*, Fig. 63 with J. Needham, *Science and Civilization in China*, Vol. I., Cambridge, 1954, Fig. 28.

[4] J. Harrison, *Themis*, p. 267.

[5] ibid., p. 412.

the Aegean sacred stones of Crete which are considered without doubt to represent the sacred mountain.[1] A seal impression of late Minoan style from Knossos (*c.* 1500 B.C.) shows the Earth goddess standing on the mountain = earth.[2]

However what concerns us especially is the association of the *omphalos* in Greece, and probably elsewhere in Europe, with megalithic stone circles, and the chthonic character of the latter, largely as a consequence of the association. F. Robert has brought much evidence to show that a pre-Hellenic predeliction for such circular structures in relation to chthonic ritual left a liking for circular buildings (*tholoi*, etc.) in classical Greek times.[3] He shows that the *omphalos* was originally associated with Mycenaean circular structures, as also were the *omphaloi* known to the Celts placed in stone circles. Incidentally he supports my conclusion as to the primary meaning of the *omphalos* when he says : " Il paraît hors de doute qu'avant de signifier *centre de la terre*....l'expression ομφαλὸς γᾶς a d'abord désigné un objet cultuel appartenant a la déese Terre." [4]

Having overlooked the chthonic character of the Mycenaean circular structures and of the *omphalos*, Heine-Geldern proceeded to place a reliance on the late Greek *agora* and on Homer which they will not bear. It is quite out of the question to use Homer (*circa* 800 B.C.) for an interpretation of the megalithic of *circa* 2000 B.C. By Homer's time the Olympian gods were in full possession of the Greek religious scene, as a result of the changes brought by the influx of the Aryan tribes from the north about 1400 B.C. The old chthonian religion of the Aegean age was no longer fully understood

[1] Hastings' *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, art. Aegaean Religion, Vol. I, p. 143.

[2] ibid., art. Mountain-mother, Vol. VIII, p. 868.

[3] F. Robert, *Thymélé*, Paris, 1939, especially pp. 230–232, 241 f., 280–283, 423 f.

[4] ibid., p. 280.

and is scarcely referred to by Homer, though the popular cult of ancestors persisted and would blossom forth in classical times as hero-worship. So Homer may give us a picture of religion as it was in Greece three or four hundred years before he wrote, but no earlier.[1] When Heine-Geldern calls attention to Nestor, and the modern Mundas in India, both oiling their ancestors' stones and then sitting on the stones in solemn council, we must agree that the parallel is remarkable. But the inference he draws from it is misleading. He is comparing *not* the manifestations of the Older Megalithic of say 2000 B.C. or earlier, but late survivals of it which in both cases have lost the Old Asiatic factor which for a period so greatly transformed it. To Greece and all but the less-favoured tracts of South-east Asia and India ouranic religion had come. The Olympian gods, together with the influence of Orphism, did for Greece what Dongson and Hindu ideas did for much of South-east Asia at a much later date. Had it not been so, with the loss of the Aegean beliefs, and in view of the Greek propensity to return to ancestor cults in the guise of hero-worship, the parallel of Greek culture to that of the derelict Mundas and Nagas would have run close indeed, and world history would have taken a very different course.

Now I propose to transport the reader rather suddenly to the other extremity of the Older Megalithic range—that is so far as it concerns us in South-east Asia—to the island of Timor. The Belu, living in the central part of the island, are a people with whom the Older Megalithic is still very much alive, and they have been the subjects of a very thorough study which appeared in 1953.[2] Now there is just one feature in which the Belus add to our knowledge of the Older Megalithic,

[1] Hastings' *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, arts. Homer, Greek Religion, Heroes and Hero-gods (Gr. and Rom.).

[2] B. A. G. Vroklage, *Ethnographie der Belu in Zentral-Timor*, Leiden, 1953, Vol. II, pp. 94–96, and illustrations.

and it is of supreme importance. They have a structure which corresponds to the Angami Naga *kithuchie* pyramid: the *foho* (Frontispiece). Significantly enough this word means "offering mountain" (opferberg). Such structures are erected by springs or rivers, near an outstanding mountain, or at the village plaza. Most important is the "reichs*foho*", the symbolic mountain built by the ruling family, where the chief makes offerings in case of drought, etc. Vroklage states that the *foho* is primarily erected for the spirit of the place, as proprietor, and is only secondarily the "memorial" of an ancestor. If the people move to a new village they take with them the flat stone that had formerly stood on the old village *foho*. All this can find no explanation within Heine-Geldern's interpretation of the Older Megalithic, but it gives a direct confirmation of the interpretation which I proposed for the Angami *kithuchie* pyramid, i.e. a reduction of the sacred mountain corresponding to the ziggurat, and united with the substitute body of the first ancestor. Moreover, with the *foho*, as with the *kithuchie*, the *omphalos*, and the mound of the Chinese god of the soil, the power of the deity is concentrated in a sacred stone placed on a mound.

Incidentally it has long ago been pointed out that in Timor, while some chiefs have the title "son of the Sun", the goddess of Earth receives more sacrifices than does Lord Sun.[1] Recently the existence of a belief in a supreme sky or sun god in Timor has been questioned by a missionary who states that informants are likely to stress the celestial member of what is now little more than the Father Sky–Mother Earth couplet, because they believe that it is what the missionaries want to hear.[2]

[1] Sir J. Frazer, *The Worship of Nature*, Vol. I, Chap. 16.

[2] W. Wortelboer, *Anthropos*, Vol. 47, 1952, pp. 290–292. He also remarks that in Flores (where the Older Megalithic is also alive) the earth deity is more powerful than the sky god.

In regard to North-east India I was very conscious of a lacuna on page 75 of *The Mountain of God*. I could not point to any pre-Hindu cult of a sacred mountain in that region as the headquarters of a cult of Earth, and thus essentially different from the Aryan concept of mountains as seats of the gods. I could only later (p. 88) rely on the mountain associations of the Śaiva deities as indirect evidence of a pre-Hindu mountain cult.[1] A very noteworthy article by R. Rahmann, that would have supplied the needed evidence, had escaped my notice.[2] In this the author shows that the supreme deity of the Mundas and related tribes of North-east India was originally Marang Buru, the mountain and earth god, every tribe revering a mountain in its vicinity as the source of fertility. Only when these pre-Aryan ideas had become a part of Śiva worship did they spread to South India.[3] This greatly reinforces what I said about the Sema, Lhota and Ao Nagas, to whom should be added the Rengmas [4] and Garos,[5] having their home of the dead in a specific hill or mountain, as was the case in Mesopotamia. One can hardly doubt that these peaks corresponded to Marang Buru, and provided the prototype of the reduced pyramid structure, the symbol of the chthonic mountain deity. Similarly I can now add that the supreme deity of the Sâmrê people of Cambodia is Sdach Nung, " the king of the mountains," whose realm is in the remote unexplored hinterland of their domain.[6] We have indeed much more evidence than I was aware of, as to the

[1] For the origins of the chthonic aspect of Śiva, see P. Mus, loc. cit., p. 389.
[2] R. Rahmann, " Gottheiten der Primitivstämme im nordöstlichen Vorderindien ", *Anthropos*, Vol. 31, 1936, pp. 37–96.
[3] Cf. Sir J. Frazer, *The Worship of Nature*, I, p. 633 ; P. O. Bodding, *Santal Folk Tales*, Vol. I, Oslo, 1925.
[4] J. P. Mills, *The Rengma Nagas*, 1937, p. 169.
[5] A. Playfair, *The Garos*, 1909, p. 103.
[6] R. Baradat, " Les Sâmrê ou Péar, population primitive de l'Ouest du Cambodge," *BEFEO.*, Vol. 41, pp. 52–69.

wide extent of the mountain cult among peoples of Older Megalithic culture.

Just as with the Mundas and related tribes the former supreme mountain god Marang Buru has been replaced by a solar god, Sing Bonga, perhaps as a result of Dravidian influence, so many of the Naga tribes now have a supreme sky deity resulting, as already mentioned, from relatively late influences. But a significant exception is provided by the supreme deity of the Konyaks, the oldest of the Naga tribes, as shown by their favouring millet cultivation rather than rice. Their supreme deity, though now held to live in the sky, has the name Gawang, which is a combination of Earth (*ga*) and Sky (*wang*).[1] It is compounded of the Earth and Sky elements of which Earth has pride of place, a definite indication of the earlier emphasis.

Serpent worship of one sort or another is so rife in India that I have previously been reluctant to put much reliance on it as an indication of chthonic religion in South-east Asia. Further study, however, has convinced me that some conclusions may be based on the relative incidence of serpent worship among different Indianized peoples of South-east Asia, a subject to which I shall return. In view of this I now think it worth mentioning that it is among the Khasis, an Older Megalithic people, that serpent worship, the propitiation of the *thlen*, has been held to be of very ancient origin.[2]

I have been chiefly concerned with establishing the chthonic aspect of the mountain cult of the Older Megalithic, as influenced by the Old Asiatic religion, because as did Frankfort with the ziggurat I wish to emphasize the primary importance of this. At the same time I admit, and do not wish to under-estimate, a subsidiary cosmological significance, although nothing

1 Pettazzoni, op. cit., p. 290.

2 P. R. T. Gurdon, *The Khasis*, London, 1914, pp. 98 ff., 175 ff.

of this so far as I know survives among the modern Nagas, etc. Indeed the importance of this cosmological aspect of ancient megalithic structures, which would of course have been the pre-planetary cosmology, played a great part in forming the distinctive character of Khmer architecture, as shown by me in *The Making of Greater India.* But we have to bear in mind that for any such symbolic structures as the ziggurat, *omphalos,* or South-east Asian megalithic pyramids, the connection that mattered most was the communication through the axis with the underworld.[1] However this does not mean that sky influences were ever completely neglected, just as in ancient Mesopotamia the primeval sky deity Anu retained a nominal supremacy. The above also applies to the sacred tree which sometimes does duty, as we have seen, for a more permanent emblem.[2] And it is in regard to this last that Eliade, always prone to stress the cosmic, makes at one point a striking admission : " Un arbre devient sacré, tout en continuant d'être arbre, en vertue de la puissance qu'il manifeste ; et s'il devient arbre cosmique...." [3] Here the operative words are " s'il devient ".

[1] M. Eliade, *Traité...*, p. 204.

[2] One may wonder whether the Tree was in fact thought less permanent by the men who revered giant *Ficus* at megalithic holy places or for that matter by the planters of the Bo Tree at Anuradhapura. Of the English churchyard yew, sacred before the introduction of Christianity, it has been written : " That red and purple bark is the very colour of life, and this tree's life, compared with other things is everlasting. The stones we set up as memorials grow worn and seamed and hoary with age, even like men, and crumble to dust at last ; in time new stones are put in their place, and these, too, grow old and perish, and are succeeded by others ; and through all changes, through the ages, the tree lives on unchanged. With its huge, tough, red trunk ; its vast, knotted arms outstretched ; its rich, dark mantle of undying foliage, it stands like a protecting god on the earth, patriarch and monarch of woods ; and indeed it seems but right and natural that not to oak or holly, nor any other reverenced tree, but to the yew it was given to keep guard over the bodies and souls of those who have been laid in the earth." (W. H. Hudson in *Hampshire Days.*)

[3] M. Eliade, *Traité...*, p. 236.

CHAPTER III

BRONZE AGE RELIGION

A Bronze Age came to South-east Asia relatively late. The Dongson culture, so named after the village in north Annam where it was first identified, appears to have been a product of a bronze-using civilization superimposed on a Neolithic basis. From its main centres in Yunnan and Tonkin its influence spread throughout Indonesia, mainly going down the coast of Annam. While the beginnings of the Dongson culture may go back well before the middle of the first millennium B.C., it was only a very late phase that was revealed by the excavations at Dongson village. For our knowledge of the special contribution made to the religion of South-east Asia by the Dongson culture, the much earlier bronze drums, obtained as chance finds, at present constitute our chief contemporary documents.

My studies of the cultural history of South-east Asia had at length led me to question what had hitherto been generally assumed, namely that the religion of the Dongsonians differed in no essential from that which had previously characterized the Môn-Khmer and Malayo-Polynesian peoples. Could it be that a civilization which had brought such striking innovations in the field of ornament to South-east Asia, would have been responsible for no equally remarkable change in religion ? The answer to this question, I came to believe, was vital to our understanding of the whole cultural evolution of the region.

In this chapter I shall advance the hypothesis that the new and important element in the religion of the Dongson people, which differed so radically from the

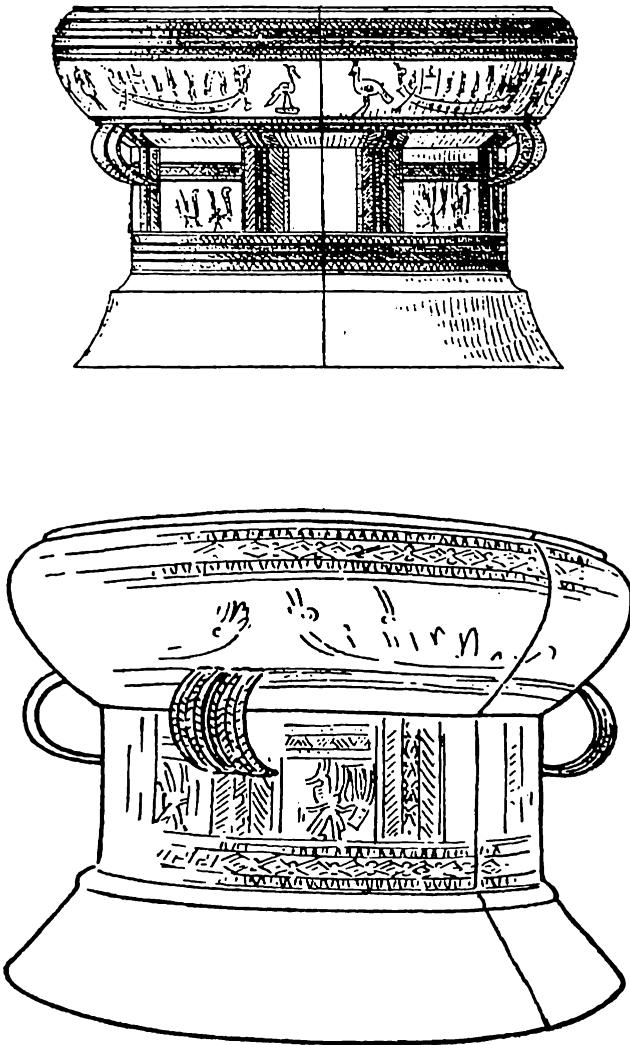


FIG. 5.—(*a*) *above*, the Ngoc-lu drum, sideview ; (*b*) *below*, the Vienna drum, sideview.

religion associated with the previously widely diffused Older Megalithic culture, was a developed shamanism, together with the worship of celestial deities.[1] Such a religion, to-day best known to us from its survivals in Central Asia and Siberia, would have been brought into Yunnan and northern Indochina by nomads from the north and west.

Would have been ? As a matter of fact what amounts to a strictly comparable movement is still in progress. The Meo of Northern Laos afford an instructive parallel to the coming of the Bronze Age influences. They are traditionally nomads who during relatively recent times have been arriving from Yunnan. On reaching Laos they still keep to the high mountain ridges, but are in process of settling down and adopting a sedentary life. Now we have from M. Guy Morechand a detailed study of their previously little known religion.[2] Accepting Eliade's definition of strict shamanism (as distinct from " possession "), he shows that the Meo religion is a strict shamanism of Central and North Asian type. Though in some ways the people have been acculturated by Chinese contacts, he emphasizes that this has not affected the character of their shamanism. All this accords very well with what I hope to show was the Dongsonian type of shamanism. Now if the Meo in settling down were to inter-marry with Malayo-Polynesians and to mingle their culture with that of the latter people ; if they were to move southwards introducing the resultant culture throughout Indonesia, then the progress of the Dongsonians would be closely reproduced. I need hardly say that the parallel cannot proceed beyond the initial stage. Conditions in South-

[1] My views were first outlined in a paper entitled " The Religious Significance of the Early Dongson Bronze Drums " which I read at the 23rd International Congress of Orientalists at Cambridge, on 24th August, 1954.

[2] Guy Morechand, " Principaux traits du chamanisme meo blanc en Indochine," *BEFEO*, XLVII, 2, 1955, pp. 509–546.

east Asia have undergone more than two millennia of change since the Neolithic—the moment in history has gone when shamanic nomads could transform the culture of the fertile valleys and islands (except possibly as the aftermath of thermonuclear catastrophe).[1]

Before I consider the evidence in favour of my hypothesis I must briefly note the efforts that have previously been made by others to understand the nature of the religion of the Dongsonians. This necessitates some acquaintance with the primary bronze drums which form the essential basis of any such study.

Actually the great drums really essential to any discussion of the Dongsonians' religion are only two in number, both of them found in Tonkin : (1) The Ngoc-lu drum (Figs. 5*a*, 6), height 630 mm., described by Parmentier [2] and Goloubew [3] ; (2) the Hoang-ha drum (Fig. 9), height 615 mm., described by Goloubew.[4] These drums, which may be called the religious drums, alone have the supernaturally propelled (i.e. not paddled) boats, provided with cabins, in addition to the ritual scenes on the tympanum. These are among the earliest of the kind of drum that was classified by Heger in his great descriptive work [5] as of Type 1, i.e. having a bulbous upper section, a vertical middle part, and a conical foot (his later types do not concern us at all) ; but there are

[1] The knowledge of the Meo religion now made available by M. Morechand's study destroys most of the basis of the late Mlle Colani's article " Survivance d'un Culte Solaire " (Proc. of the Third Congress of Prehistorians of the Far East, Singapore, 1938, pp. 173–193) in which she was largely influenced in her interpretations by the views of Elliot Smith. The Meo motifs with which she dealt can readily be explained as cosmic symbols in a shamanic context. In *The Making of Greater India*, pp. 77 f., I had already rejected her interpretation of the central star of the Dongson bronze drums as the sun.

[2] H. Parmentier, " Anciens Tambours de Bronze," *BEFEO*, Vol. XVIII, No. 1, 1918, pp. 4–16, pls. I–IV.

[3] V. Goloubew, " L'Age du Bronze au Tonkin et dans le Nord Annam," *BEFEO*, Vol. XXIX, 1929, pp. 34 ff.

[4] V. Goloubew, " Le Tambour Métallique de Hoang-ha," *BEFEO*, Vol. XL (1940), No. 2, pp. 384–409.

[5] F. Heger, *Alte Metaltrommeln aus Südost-Asien*, Leipzig, 1902.

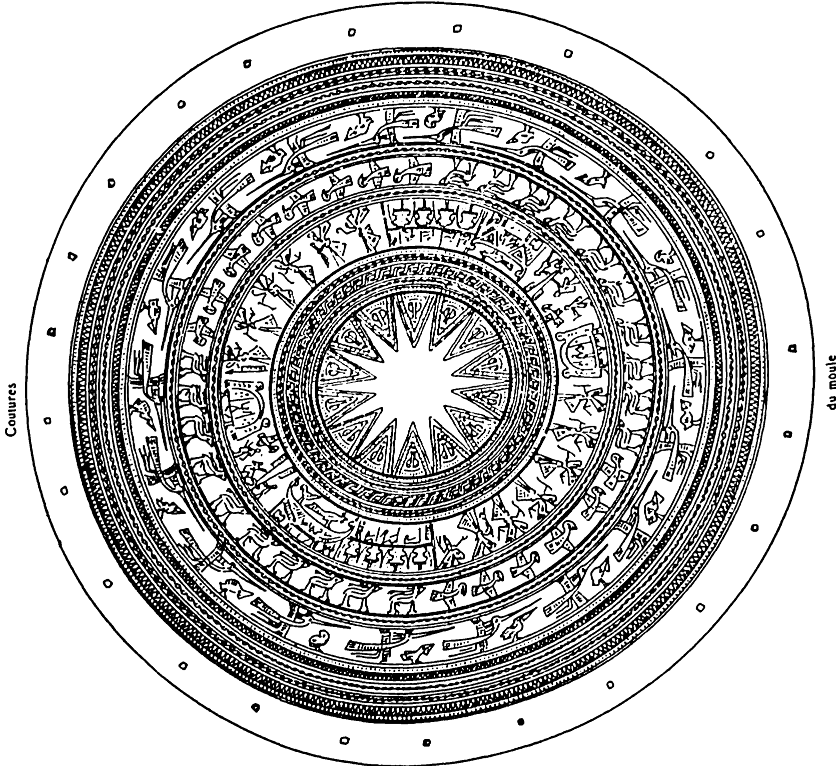


FIG. 6.—The Ngoc-lu drum tympanum.

other early drums of Type 1 which lack the ritual scenes and have cabinless boats propelled by paddlers. Stylistically the earliest is the Laos (or Nelson) drum, height 580 mm., described by Goloubew,[1] and the Stockholm drum (from Tonkin), height 420 mm.[2] Now it has been recognized that Dongson drums were probably not exclusively made for religious purposes, but were also used as marks of rank, for brideprice, for compensation, etc.[3] It seems to me likely that the Laos and Stockholm drums are early examples of drums made specially for this purpose, and we may therefore call them secular drums. With them may be classified several other large drums, particularly the Muong (or Moulié) drum, height 610 mm.,[4] the very similar Gillet drum from Yunnan, height 535 mm.,[5] the Vienna drum (Fig. *5b*),[6] and the similar but smaller Java drum (object No. 1827 in the Batavia museum),[7] which are somewhat stylized, and which differ from the earliest secular drums in that they have been strongly influenced by the ritual scenes and other designs on the religious drums.

In the same category of secular drums must be included the drums of medium size and simplified decoration which are believed by van der Hoop, on the evidence of one figured on a relief at Pasemah, Sumatra, carried on the back of a warrior, to have functioned as war drums.[8] Beside the one catalogued as No. 1071 in the Batavia museum,[9] such medium-sized drums include

[1] V. Goloubew, *BEFEO*, XXIX, pp. 42 f.
[2] B. Karlgren, "The Date of the Dong-So'n culture," *Bull. Mus. of Far Eastern Antiquities*, Stockholm, 1942, pls. 6 and 7.
[3] R. Heine-Geldern, "Bedeutung und Herkunft der Altesten Hinterindischen Metalltrommeln" *Asia Major*, Vol. VIII, 1932, pp. 518–537.
[4] Heger, op. cit., p. 20, pls. I–V.
[5] ibid., p. 25.
[6] See also *Ostas Zeitschr.*, 1934, pl. 17.
[7] *Catalagus der Praehistorische Verzameling*, 1941, p. 205.
[8] A. N. J. Th. à Th. van der Hoop, *Megalithic Remains in Sumatra*, p. 92 and fig. 93.
[9] ibid., fig. 95.

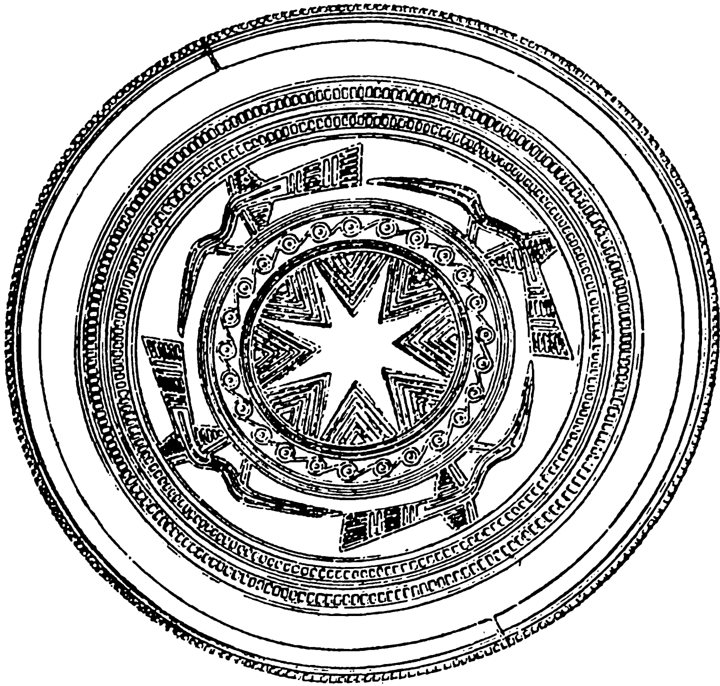


FIG. 7.—Tympanum of a secular drum from Dongson.

two excavated at Dongson (Fig. 7), and also the fragmentary drums found in Malaya.[1] Then there are the miniature and much simplified drums used as grave gifts of which a number were excavated at the Dongson site,[2] while a similar one was found in West Java.[3] Finally may be mentioned two large drums which in shape also belong to Heger Type 1, but otherwise have no relation to the drums of this type. The early ritual and boat scenes have degenerated beyond recognition, while representations have been added which show Chinese and even Indian influence. These are the Salajar Island drum,[4] and the Sangeang Island drum (named Makalamau),[5] both of which may date from the second or third century A.D. The frogs on the rims of these drums have been thought to indicate that they were used in rain-making magic.

In concluding this necessary summary of the main kinds of drum belonging to Heger Type 1, it will no doubt be appreciated that we shall be concerned only with the two early religious drums, that of Ngoc-lu and that of Hoang-ha, apart from a few points on which it will be useful to refer to the more or less contemporary early secular drums.

The credit goes to the late Victor Goloubew for being the first to realize that comparative ethnology might provide the solution to our problems. As early as 1923 he had published a short article [6] in which he pointed out that the Dongson drums belonged to the same class as the Mongol shamans' drums, and he particularly

[1] *JRASMB*, Vol. XXIV, pt. 3, 1951, pls. 2 and 3.
[2] *BEFEO*, XXIX, pl. VIII.
[3] *Bull. Raffles Mus.*, Ser. B, Vol. 1, pl. LXV.
[4] Heger, op. cit., p. 27, pl. VI; van Hoëvell, *Intern. Archiv. für Ethnographie*, XVI (1904), 155–7.
[5] *Catalogus*, 1941, pp. 213–217, figs. 62, 63; R. Heine-Geldern, "The Drum named Makalamau," *India Antiqua*, 1947.
[6] V. Goloubew, "Les Tambours Magiques en Mongolie," *BEFEO*, XXIII (1923).

called attention to the rarer type in which the skin is marked with concentric zones. Nine years later,[1] Goloubew compared the Dongson drums with a XIVth century Chinese bronze drum, known as Marshal Sou's drum (Hanoi museum), which appears to be a copy in bronze of a light flat drum placed on a wooden stand. At the same time he drew a parallel with a modern Annamite drum placed on a Muong basketwork pedestal. As a result of this comparison he came to the following conclusion: Only the upper bulbous section of the Dongson drum (Type 1) represented the drum proper, the rest being the pedestal which had become united with the drum when the original prototypes of light construction came to be made in bronze (see Fig. 8).

In view of his previous article, it would seem almost inevitable that Goloubew would now have suggested that shamanic nomads from Central Asia, settling down in Yunnan and northern Indochina, would not only have placed their drums on pedestals but, no longer being restricted by their mode of life to the possession of only small and easily transportable objects, would have taken pleasure in casting these significant instruments in bronze. But Goloubew drew no such conclusion. The reason is not far to seek. In the period between these two articles he had rightly recognized that religious usages, which had long disappeared from Indochina, still survived among certain non-Hinduized peoples of Indonesia, notably in Borneo. Unfortunately his investigations along this line were pushed neither sufficiently intensively nor extensively.

Goloubew's attempt to explain the ritual scenes depicted on the tympanum of the Ngoc-lu drum (Fig. 6) in the light of the *tiwah* (feast of the dead) of the Ngadju

[1] V. Goloubew, "Sur l'origine et la diffusion des tambours métallbiues," *Praehistorica Asiae Orientalis*, Hanoi, 1932, pp. 137–150.

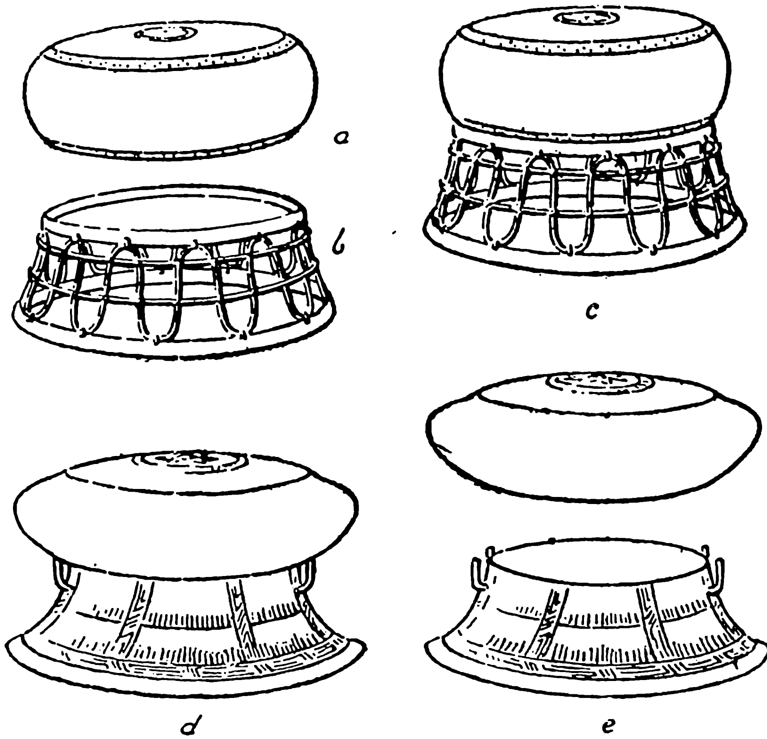


FIG. 8.—Modern Annamite drum (*a*), placed on Muong basketwork pedestal (*b*, *c*) compared to bronze drum (*d*) considered as separated (*e*).

Dayaks[1] appeared as part of his well-known paper on the objects excavated at the Dongson village site.[2] This he modified in a few respects when he later described the Hoang-ha drum (Fig. 9). He was undoubtedly right in comparing the saddle-roofed house to the Ngadju Dayak house in which the coffin is temporarily placed, the other structure being a hall of gongs. He also observed that the ceremonial dancing, with playing of *keluri* (khène) and drums, and the hulling of rice for offerings are all paralleled in the present-day Bornean feast. But the birds in the ritual scenes on the drumheads were, according to him, harmful spirits, and the *keluri* and drums were played only to enable the sorcerer to drive these away or to apprise the afterworld of the approach of a newcomer. For the adjoining concentric zones of egrets, hornbills and deer (the last two on the Ngoc-lu drum only) no explanation was forthcoming, but the boats delineated on the bulbous section of the drums (Fig. 5*a*) appeared to offer no difficulty. They found a ready explanation in the Ngadju " boats of the dead " (Fig. 13) which are painted in bright colours on boards, one of which occupies a conspicuous place during the *tiwah*. At the height of the ceremony the deceased's soul is held to be consigned to this boat, and is then conveyed to the afterworld by a spirit named Tempon Telon, in whom Goloubew was quick to see a Bornean Charon. He also noted that in some parts of Borneo coffins are shaped like boats (Fig. 14).

Goloubew's study of the *tiwah* was not thorough enough to enable him to realize that these painted boat representations had a more specialized meaning than that so often associated with the widespread use of the

[1] On the basis of the accounts of F. Grabowsky, " Der Tod, das Begrabnis, das Tiwah oder Todtenfest und Ideen über das Jenseits bei den Dayaken," *Intern. Archiv für Ethnographie*, II, 1889, pp. 177–204 ; P. te Wechel, " Erinnerungen aus den Ost, und West-Dusun-Ländern (Borneo)," ibid., XXII, 1915, pp. 93–129.

[2] " L'Age du Bronze au Tonkin et dans le nord-Annam," *BEFEO*, XXIX (1929), pp. 1–46.

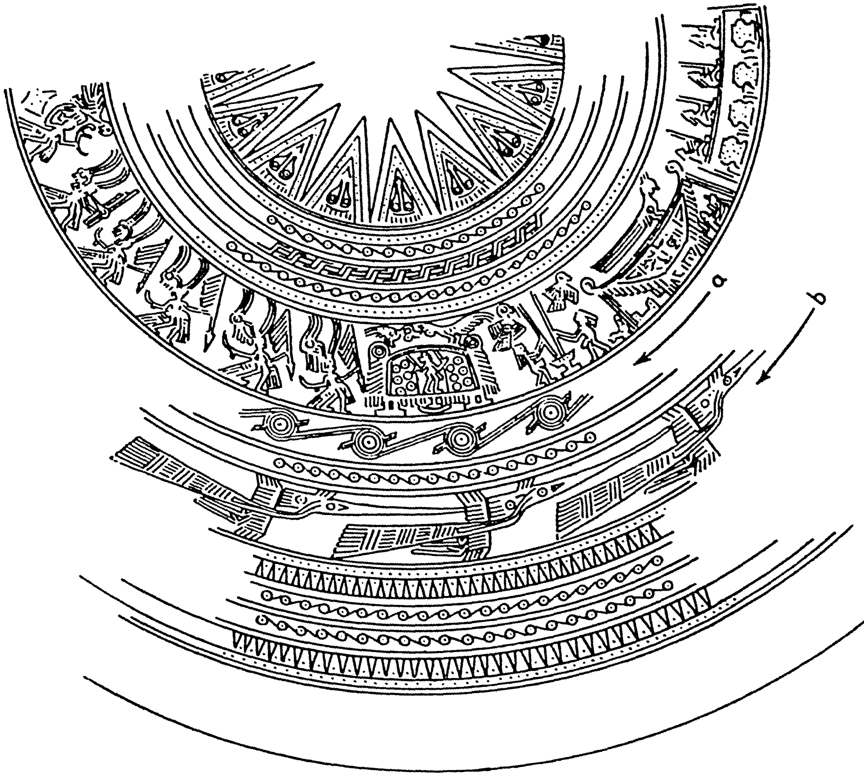


FIG. 9.—Detail of Hoang-ha drum tympanum.

canoe coffin in Oceania. In his article on the Hoang-ha drum[1] Goloubew accepted a suggestion made by Heine-Geldern,[2] though it conflicts with his previous interpretation of the hovering birds. This suggestion is to the effect that the persons shown in the ritual scenes pouring the rice they have hulled through the interstices of the floor on to the drums below, are thus making offerings to the ancestors. This is on the analogy of the present-day custom of the Karens of Burma of putting out offerings of rice and meat on their drums, as on a high altar, and then calling the souls of the dead which come as birds to partake of the repast. But one cannot interpret the religion of the Dongsonians in terms of a people who have relapsed to mere ancestor worship. Goloubew, in concluding that the scenes on the early drums were concerned with a " cult of the dead ", entirely failed to understand the special character of the Dongsonians' religion.

Dr. A. Steinmann has published two papers[3] which have a useful bearing on our subject in that they discuss in detail the various types of " spirit-boats " depicted on Indonesian textiles or used in funeral rites, and I shall be referring to these again. In the second paper (p. 151) the author goes so far as to recognize that the boats used in Indonesian ritual, and for soul catching in illness, are in fact shamans' vehicles, and he carefully distinguishes these from the Malay and Indonesian disease boat. Although he later (p. 192) compares the boats on the Dongson drums to the Bornean and Sumatran " boats of the dead ", as referring to a similar journey of the soul, the shamanistic interpretation strangely enough does not occur to him and he turns rather towards the Egyptian funerary ritual.

[1] *BEFEO*, XL (1940), p. 387.
[2] R. Heine-Geldern " Bedeutung . . ." loc. cit., p. 530.
[3] A. Steinmann, " Les ' tissus à jonques ' du sud de Sumatra," *Rev. des Arts Asiatiques*, XI, pt. 3, 1937, pp. 122–137 ; " Das Kultische Schiff in Indonesien," *Ipek*, 1939–40, pp. 149 ff.

More recently Dr. W. Linehan proposed to see in the Malayan disease boats an explanation, or partial explanation, of the Dongson vessels.[1] The great weakness of such a suggestion, plausible in itself, is that it offers an explanation for only a single item in an obviously complex cultural pattern. Here it need only be said that, assuming for the moment that we are concerned with shamanism, the explanation of the boats represented on the Dongson religious drums as shamanic vehicles fits very much better than does the Malayan disease boat. The latter, by means of which the spirits of disease are periodically exorcised, belongs to the much more widespread custom of the expulsion of evil, as dealt with by Sir James Frazer in *The Scapegoat.* Not only is the disease boat common in Malaya and Indonesia but it is also found in Continental South-east Asia, as for example in Siam [2] and Cambodia,[3] the sorcerers concerned being of various kinds.

It will be realized that, in order to prove that the religion of the Dongsonians was shamanic, our investigation will have to be as broadly based as possible. In undertaking it I have been fortunate in having at my disposal the first comprehensive and richly documented work on Shamanism, Mircea Eliade's *Le Chamanisme* (Paris, 1951). The author even touches, often very suggestively,[4] on shamanic practices in Indonesia, but necessarily I had to go more deeply into the literature dealing with the region.

By shamanism we understand primarily the religion which survives, sometimes in relatively well-preserved form, among some of the Turco-Tatar and Mongol

[1] W. Linehan, "Traces of a Bronze Culture . . .," *JRASMB*, XXIV, pt. 3, 1951, pp. 33–37.

[2] H. G. Quaritch Wales, *Siamese State Ceremonies*, p. 312.

[3] E. Porée-Maspero, "Notes sur les particularités du culte chez les Cambodgiens," *BEFEO*, XLIV, 2 (1954), p. 632.

[4] His confusion of the Pacific island of Niue, with Nias, on p. 314, is however an unfortunate slip.

Tribes of Central Asia and Siberia. Since it is obviously a very ancient religion, and is continually being diminished by the spread of the higher religions from the south, it is reasonable to suppose that (leaving aside the question of its probable extension to America) it once covered an even wider extent of the Eurasian continent than has been the case in historical times.

The distinction Eliade makes between shamanism *stricto sensu* and other widespread forms of sorcery is of vital importance, the abuse of the term to include all kinds of prophets, soothsayers and medicine-men by the majority of writers [1] having threatened to deprive the word shaman of all value as a cultural definition. Shamanism proper is the magico-religious complex most fully developed among the nomads of Central and Northern Asia, and is essentially an ecstatic experience *put at the service of society.* That is its first mark of distinction from the activities of miscellaneous healers and prophets who are to be found everywhere. Secondly, in strict shamanism the shaman calls to his aid certain spirits whom he controls, and is never "possessed" by them. It is with their help that his soul leaves his body in an ecstatic state induced by music and the dance, and travels, usually to the celestial regions, sometimes to the underworld. There is no "possession" either by gods or by ancestors, although there may be an admixture of such mediumship where there has been influence from, or co-existence with, cultures in which that type of practice thrives.

The linguistic argument that in one great area where there has been much of such intermixture, China, because the word *wu* is indiscriminately applied to both forms therefore no distinction really exists, can have no force in view of the fact that in Siberia and Central Asia, shamanism can be distinguished in at least a relatively

[1] e.g. the author of the well-known article on Shamanism in Hastings' *Encyclopaedia.*

distinct form. Certainly Eliade's by no means uncritical reviewer Eveline Falck comes out very strongly in his support on this most important point when she writes : " As Eliade very rightly observes, the shaman ' incorporates ' these spirits which answer his call, guide his researches, and lend him their aid ; but he does not allow himself to be ' possessed ' by them. In this same way he absorbs evil spirits if need be, and talks with them before expelling them." [1] Modern psychology, with its understanding of trance-mediumship as due to manifestations of secondary personality (when not merely fraudulent), enables us to appreciate that " possession " is a property of the human mind that can occur at any time among any people, ranging from primitives to certain classes among advanced civilizations. On the other hand shamanism is much more the expression of a developed religious tradition.

Coming now to the area with which we shall be mostly concerned, Indonesia, it is satisfactory to find confirmation of Eliade's more broadly based distinction in the work of that great field ethnologist Dr. Alb. C. Kruyt. Improving on G. A. Wilken's extensive study of " shamanism " which recognized no such distinction,[2] Kruyt came to the definite conclusion that in Indonesia there were peoples among whom shamanism existed alone, or quite separate from trance-mediumship (" possession ") while among other peoples the two were intermingled, or the latter had quite replaced shamanism.[3] To avoid confusion it is necessary to bear in mind when making use of his work that Kruyt uses the word " priesterschap " to express what I refer to as shamanism, and " shamanisme " for trance-mediumship. The important thing is that he clearly recognizes the two

[1] *Diogenes*, I, 1952, p. 111.

[2] G. A. Wilken, " Het Schamanisme bij de volken van den Indischen Archipel," *Bijdragen*, 5, II, 1887.

[3] Alb. C. Kruyt, *Het Animisme in den Indischen Archipel*, The Hague, 1906, pp. 447 f., also art. " Indonesia " in Hastings' *Encyclopaedia*.

different phenomena. We have seen above that M. Morechand also accepts the distinction, and recognizes that the modern Meo practise shamanism in the strict sense.

Thus Kruyt [1] found shamanism (I use the word henceforth in its strict sense) existed alone among the East Torajas of Celebes, almost alone among the various Dayak tribes of Borneo, influenced or quite replaced by mediumship in Minangkabau, Halmahera and parts of Celebes where there is strong Islamic influence. To the last mentioned group the Malays may certainly be added.

We now need to extend the available data to cover the non-Indianized and non-Islamized peoples of continental South-east Asia and some Indonesian islands not mentioned above, where the pre-Dongson Older Megalithic culture is or was until recently alive. The information at our disposal is decisive that shamanism is quite uncharacteristic of the religion of the Nagas of Assam. A search of the literature dealing with such peoples as the Kachins and related tribes of Burma, the Moïs of Indochina, the non-Christian tribes of north Luzon, and the inhabitants of the Lesser Sunda Islands leads to the same conclusion with regard to them too. In case of illness due to soul loss the sorcerers confine themselves to announcing the sacrifices required to bring about the soul's return, practice various forms of exorcism, or make prophecies or divination, often under the instigation of a spirit which possesses them.[2]

[1] *Het Animisme*, pp. 99–109, 446–457.

[2] It may be as well here to point out the unjustifiability of E. M. Loeb's statement in "Shaman and Seer", *American Anthropologist*, XXXI, 1929) that what he calls "inspirational shamanism", i.e. spirit possession, is found in Indonesia only amongst peoples who have been influenced by Hinduism or Islam. In view of the frequency with which it occurs among the peoples of Older Megalithic culture above mentioned, it is impossible to believe that it was absent from the original culture of settled agricultural Malayo-Polynesians in Indonesia. Moreover there is the parallel of the Mundas and Oraons in India. S. C. Roy states that spirit-possession was not introduced to them for

In examining the data of this distribution of shamanism, one cannot fail to be struck by the way in which it coincides with the distribution of Dongson influences, as known both from archaeological evidence and from the survival among living peoples of Dongson styles of ornament. These influences (which scarcely penetrated westwards into Assam or eastwards into north Luzon [1]) came mainly down the coast of Annam, thence fanning out throughout the greater part of Indonesia and the Malay Peninsula. Naturally the effects of the Dongson influence were more or less completely displaced in Malaya, Sumatra, Java and some smaller islands, by the coming of Hinduism and Islam, higher religions which also brought with them a great deal of ordinary sorcery and mediumship. That leaves us with Borneo (where rather ineffective Indian influence was mainly limited to the western corner) and the non-Islamized parts of Celebes. Further west the Dongson influences probably never obtained a very strong hold in the Lesser Sunda Islands. Though the evidence of ornament shows that the Dongson influence was by no means absent there, the people are now largely Older Megalithic in culture.

On the basis of this association of shamanism with the distribution of Dongson influences, I shall propose the following working hypothesis : The religion of the East Torajas of Celebes and many of the peoples of Borneo preserves sufficient of the beliefs and ritual practices brought to this region by Dongson influences, to aid us in reconstructing the nature of the religion of the Bronze Age.

the first time by the Hindu sorcerer. Before the latter appeared among them they already had their own mediums who carried out exorcism. (S. C. Roy, *Oraon Religion and Customs*, p. 254.)

[1] According to H. Otley Beyer (" Philippine and East Asian Archaeology and its relation to the origin of the Pacific Islands population ", *The National Research Council of the Philippines, Bulletin*, No. 29, 1948, p. 54) only a few bronze celts of Dongson type have been found in Luzon, mostly in Batangas province.

Before we examine this Indonesian evidence in more detail, and relate it to the interpretation of the early Dongson drums, it will be necessary for us to consider in general terms (for details the reader can refer to Eliade's convenient work) the characteristics of shamanism as developed among the Mongols and Turco-Tatars. Though in its present form so largely influenced by the religions of the settled peoples to the south, this shamanism remains a sufficiently well-integrated system for us to recognize its main characteristics of say 2,500 years ago.

The shaman himself, like other medicine-men, is a healer; but his speciality is that during ecstasy his soul is supposed to quit his body and make celestial journeys or descents to the underworld. He acts, moreover, as psychopomp. The essential of the shaman is that he, a mortal, goes on the ecstatic journey to communicate with the dead or with gods, either with the help of spirits or with a spirit incorporated in him. This spirit does not possess him since he himself makes and controls the ecstatic journey. This at least is the rule; if a shaman becomes "possessed" this is an exceptional aberration (19).[1] The Turco-Tatar and Mongol peoples, despite linguistic and racial differences, have in common their nomadic mode of life, either as fishermen, hunters or pastoralists. It is not therefore surprising that one primary religious feature that they share is the veneration of a supreme celestial deity, whose name very generally means "sky", and who is more or less a *deus otiosus*. He is served by a number of relatively active "sons" or "messengers", inhabiting the lower heavens, spiritual beings with whom the shaman is in special rapport (23). The tendency of the otiose supreme celestial deity to recede, owing to his apparent aloofness and indifference to human destiny, often leads to his

[1] The figures in brackets refer to the pages in M. Eliade's *Le Chamanisme*.

replacement by the evidently more active and sympathetic atmospheric god, or to solarization, as Eliade has shown in another work.[1] Thus, in the regions we are now considering, the Samoyeds regard the sun and moon as eyes of Num (= Sky). The Yuraks have a great winter feast on the first appearance of the sun, but at the same time they sacrifice to Num, showing the original celestial character of the observance. With the Chukchis the sun has been substituted for sky. On the other hand, among all these peoples, the earth has only a modest rôle, and there are no figurines of an Earth Mother or sacrifices to her ; indeed goddesses of any kind are practically unknown (23).

The profession of shaman is either hereditary or the result of a supernatural " call " or " election ", self-made shamans being little considered (33). Epilepsy (as with other types of sorcerers) is often a factor in arriving at a sense of vocation, and there are dreams in which the spirit of an ancestor or of a dead shaman initiates the candidate by supervising his symbolic death and mystic rebirth (45 ff.). He is thus introduced to the spirits with whom he can thenceforward associate and who will aid him. He has at his disposal various grades of helper spirits (familiars), the lower of which take animal form (bears, deer, various kinds of birds), while he also sacrifices to divinities which are specific to him. The helper spirits come at his call, and he may incorporate an animal spirit, so that in this form, especially as a bird, he will be well fitted to undertake the trance journey. He also acquires a special language which is supposed to be the language of the spirits (93 ff.).

After a period of instruction by a master the neophyte

[1] M. Eliade, *Traité d'histoire des religions*, Paris, 1948, p. 120. But it makes for confusion not to distinguish between this solarization of a sky deity, and what we find among the Mundas, the mere adoption of a supreme sun god, probably by borrowing from neighbouring Dravidians, as indicated by R. Rahmann, " Gottheiten der Primitivstämme im nordöstlichen Vorderindien," *Anthropos*, XXXI, 1936, pp. 37–96.

undergoes certain ceremonies which constitute his public initiation, or rather the confirmation by the master-shamans of his secret initiation proper. As typically seen amongst the Buriats, the head shaman with nine assistants and the candidate go in procession to the site of a sacred birch tree. While other shamans beat drums, a sacrifice is offered, and the head shaman, followed by his assistants and the candidate, climb the birch tree. They make nine incisions on its summit and then fall back in a trance. The nine cuts represent the different heavens, the tree the Cosmic Axis by means of which the candidate has made his first ecstatic ascent to the highest heaven (120). With the Altai the mountain is the Cosmic Axis (241). The rainbow is another means by which the shamans are able to reach the sky (131); but however accomplished, this first ascension is an essential part in the initiation of shamans, demonstrating their power to re-establish, as no other living man can do in his lifetime, the close communication which according to the myths formerly existed between earth and sky (140).

All shamans have a special costume with accessories which give it a cosmic significance. Symbolic weapons are often carried, such as the miniature bow and arrows of the Altai Tatar shaman, or the lance, sword and axe of the Buriat, intended to drive off evil spirits. The Tungus wear deer-horns, the Buriats carry a horse-headed baton, representative in each case of their respective mounts or of their new bodies which their costumes are intended to provide them for their journeys in ecstasy (146 f.). But most frequent is the bird-like guise, and the eagle is the most important bird, representing as it does the supreme deity, strongly solarized (151).

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'centre of the world', or because it permits him to fly, or that he may call and 'imprison' the spirits, or lastly because the drumming allows the shaman to concentrate and make contact with the spiritual world that he is about to traverse" (160).

The fact that the shaman's drum is made of the wood of birch, sacred representative of the Cosmic Tree, means that in drumming he is magically projected to the vicinity of the Cosmic Axis. Thus, equally as when he actually climbs a symbolic tree, he is able to ascend to the skies (160). The designs on the drum-membrane show it to represent a microcosm. A transverse line separates the celestial region, with its sun and moon, from the earth below, and sometimes again the underworld beneath. The Cosmic Tree, the shaman's means of access to the other planes, rises medially through them, and the sacrificial horse and the shaman's helper spirits are also delineated. The rainbow is also shown as being the pathway along which the shaman travels to heaven. Both it, and the drum itself as symbolizing the Cosmic Axis, are equally regarded as providing the necessary bridge (162).[1]

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shamanic function of the drum—and not the anti-demonic *magic of noise*." (163). The shaman's music, his dance symbolizing the journey, and his costume, are all means of ensuring the success of the voyage (164). The cosmic structure, as seen by the Turco-Tatars and Mongols, with the Pole Star marking the centre of the sky, and the seven or nine heavens to which the axis gives the shamans access, though doubtless elaborated by contact with the higher oriental religions, goes back to Mesopotamian origins (235 ff., 436).

The shaman does not carry out the community's sacrifices, or the ordinary ritual of births, marriages and deaths. Indeed his rôle is limited though important, for he is the only one who can risk a venture to the other planes (168 f.). The difference between shamans and other priests, the sacrificers, is not ritual but ecstatic (174). A good idea of the shaman's methods in general is to be obtained from an examination of the well-known Altai horse sacrifice and the accompanying shamanic ascension, which is celebrated from time to time by every family (175–181): In preparation a young birch, deprived of its lower branches, and with nine steps cut in its trunk, is set up in a new *yurta* (felt tent), with its terminal foliage projecting through the smoke hole. A horse is first sacrificed, in order that its spirit may accompany the shaman, and offerings of its flesh are made to the helper spirits who come in bird form, and to the ancestors (177). This importance attached to ancestors in later times is due to the influence of the oriental religions, leading ultimately to " possession " (438). The shaman also eats some of the horse-flesh and distributes some to his assistants, while two wooden birds, symbolizing the shaman's power to fly, are fixed on poles near the sacrificial table (177).

The shaman then calls his helper spirits into his drum, which thereupon becomes heavy, and beating the drum he circulates the birch several times. He dances and

convulses his body, murmuring incomprehensible words the while. The shaman enters the ecstatic state and begins to climb the niches cut in the trunk, supposedly mounted on the spirit of the sacrificial horse, and he describes his experiences as he goes. Arriving at the third heaven he temporarily rests his tired horse and mounts (or incorporates) a bird familar instead. From this height he is able to give some intimations as to the future, warnings of epidemics that threaten and the sacrifices needed to ward them off. So again in the next following heavens. In the sixth he makes obeisance to the moon, in the seventh to the sun. On reaching the ninth heaven he drops his drum and humbly invokes Bai Ulgan (the active atmospheric god who has replaced the otiose Tengere Kaira Kan). He asks if the god is satisfied with the sacrifice, and receives predictions. That is the culmination of the ecstatic experience, after which the shaman falls in exhaustion. He lies quiet for a time, then appears to awake from a deep sleep, saluting those present as though he had been long absent. If the people concerned are wealthy there is then much feasting and consumption of alcohol (181).

The descent to the underworld with the Altai is more difficult, and more rarely undertaken ; but it follows much the same lines, being carried out in seven or nine stages until the level of Erlik Khan, the king of the dead, is reached. Here the successful shaman is well received, has his offerings accepted, and obtains in return from the benevolent deity the promise of multiplication of herds, etc. (186). But such journeys are mainly undertaken to recover the absent soul of a sick person, or to accompany the soul of a deceased (187).

The main function of the shaman is indeed to recover the soul of a sick person, or rather one of his several souls, the temporary absence of which is the cause of illness, according to a widespread primitive concept of disease. He may also undertake the exorcism of disease

demons (197). The shaman is the only type of sorcerer who can undertake the soul-seeking journey, and success may also require some sacrifices of which he announces the nature (198). He first tries to find the soul locally and, if he succeeds, reintegration in the body is an easy matter; but if this first effort fails, a séance with trance journey, dancing and drum beating, will be required. Invocation of the supreme deity is sometimes combined with the soul searching (201). The Ostyaks and Yurak-Samoyeds use a boat for their sky journey (205). Among these tribes real trances are rare nowadays; one finds mainly the recitation of legendary journeys (207). The Tungus shaman, among his preparations for an ecstatic voyage, takes a small raft for crossing Lake Baikal and an image representing his helper spirit (217). If he intends a sky journey in search of a soul he has among his ritual objects a number of bird figurines, symbolic of ascension (220). The shaman may not reach ecstasy by means of a trance, but rather in the course of a dance symbolic of magic flight (222). An evil spirit may carry off a soul not to the underworld but to the sky (223). The Chukchi shaman calls his drum a boat (231). The Chukchis are also interesting because they have a class of shaman "transformed into women", who dress and behave as women, and even have "husbands". Such a phenomenon is exceptional among Central Asian and Siberian shamans, though it is also found among Kamchadals, Asiatic Esquimaux and a memory of it among the Koryaks. It appears to derive from an ancient matriarchy, though this does not indicate women's priority in the earliest Shamanism (234).

At present there seems to exist a double tradition among both the Turco-Tatars and Mongols, as to the existence of a home of the dead in the sky and another underground. Where the separation is on a moral basis there can be little doubt that this is due to the influence

of the higher religions (188). But one finds equally (to be precise, among the Buriats, Chukchis and Koryaks), the belief that only a certain privileged class, including shamans and chiefs, go to the sky. It is generally supposed that the dead do not leave until some days after death, and that they do so during the great feast of the dead that is then held. The dead man's favourite horse is then sacrificed and the shaman conducts the man's soul to the afterworld in his rôle of psychopomp. He has to work hard to get the dead to accept the newly arrived (190–192). In their chants the shamans describe the difficulties of their journey to the underworld, the rivers to be crossed, etc. (193–194).

While Eliade does not consider it within his province to discuss burial methods, the subject is of interest to us. According to Harva, except where there has been the influence of Christianity or Islam, it is everywhere the custom to inter the dead in wood coffins or tree trunks raised on posts or on a scaffolding, accompanied by the body of the favourite horse or deer. This is a development of the original tree exposure. Burial in the earth with stone graves was practised in early and mediaeval times only where Turks or Mongols came under Graeco-Scythian or Chinese influence.[1] The possible contacts with settled megalithic peoples at various periods has been mentioned above (p. 29).

I now propose to consider the present-day religion of the main Dongson-influenced, but not subsequently Indianized or Islamized, regions of Indonesia in the light of the northern shamanism above analysed, at the same time showing how the data from the early Dongson drums are explainable within this complex. As already stated, it will be sufficient for this purpose to consider Borneo and the east-central part of Celebes inhabited by the East Torajas. No doubt the Dongson

[1] U. Harva, " Die religiösen Vorstellungen der altaischen Völker," *FF Communications*, No. 125, Helsinki, 1938, pp. 291–321.

influence was once widespread throughout Indonesia, but in most of the western islands and in the Malay Peninsula, Hinduism and Islam, with their magic and trance-mediumship replacing shamanism, have blotted out the Dongsonian beliefs. A few references only will be made to the Bataks of Sumatra who remained marginal to Hindu influence; and we need consider only one or two points with regard to the Lesser Sunda Islands, where it would seem that the Dongson influence, at least in so far as concerns religion, was less strongly felt.[1]

The survival of Dongson art styles almost everywhere in Indonesia, where not replaced by the products of the later introduced cultures, is the plainest evidence of the former spread of Dongson influence over this wide area. Though in the case of Borneo largely submerged by late Chou styles, there can be no doubt, from its geographical situation, that this island must have felt the full force of the Dongson influx, which has left its mark so distinctly in the ornament of Celebes. Actually it seems to be mainly among the South (Sa'dan) Torajas that Dongson art styles are still alive, also the Dongson style saddle roof, and Kaudern shows relatively few examples of such ornament surviving in central Celebes.[2] In any case the evidence of archaeology is definite for Bronze Age influences in Celebes, since characteristic Dongson socketed bronze celts have been found widely distributed in the island.[3] Borneo has so far nothing in this way to show, but that merely reflects the almost complete neglect of research in most of that great island. This will be emphasized when it is added that the Batavia museum catalogue records no less than 109

[1] Even in Sumba, where various Younger Megalithic forms of burial remain in use, the religion as a whole is Older Megalithic. (Cf. Vroklage, *Anthropos*, 31, pp. 726–729; A. C. Kruyt, "De Soembaneezen," *Bijdragen*, 78, 1922, pp. 466–608.)

[2] W. Kaudern, *Art in Central Celebes*, Goteborg, 1944, figs. 18, 82–84.

[3] Alb. C. Kruyt, *De West-Toradjas op Midden-Celebes*, 1938, Vol. I, Chap. II.

bronze celts and weapons from Java, together with more than a dozen whole or fragmentary bronze drums, mostly of the earliest shape though somewhat modified in details.

It is important to bear in mind that the Dongson civilization, even in the late phase represented at the Dongson village site, was always the product of Bronze Age influences superimposed on a Neolithic basis. This was testified by the finding of a number of polished stone adzes in the excavations there.[1] The probability is that the proletariat at Dongson, to whom these polished adzes must have belonged, as well as elsewhere in Tonkin and Yunnan, still practised the religion characteristic of the Older Megalithic culture. That there was evidence of this at Dongson might well escape notice, since no mention of it is made by Goloubew. However it seems that Pajot, in the course of his excavations there in 1927, uncovered an alignment of menhirs forming several squares and rectangles, in the centre of one of which was a larger stone.[2]

The Bronze Age influences had been brought down from the north several centuries B.C. and, in view of the finding of bronze belt-buckles (Fig. 10) at Dongson that would have been quite foreign to previous local custom, it has been suggested that the northern nomads actually reached Indochina.[3] The new cultural pattern would at first have been confined to the conquering upper class who, as nomads so often do, evidently settled down among the agricultural population.

It would have been such a mixed culture that was carried by the Dongsonians, about 500 B.C., throughout Indonesia. The further it spread the more it would

[1] Similarly in Luzon the bronze celts were associated with late Neolithic adzes (H. Otley Beyer, loc. cit., p. 54).

[2] Letter of M. Pajot dated May 15, 1934, quoted in footnote on p. 107 of M. Colani, *Mégalithes du Haut-Laos*, Vol. I, 1935.

[3] R. Heine-Geldern, "The Drum named Makalamau," *India Antiqua*, p. 172.

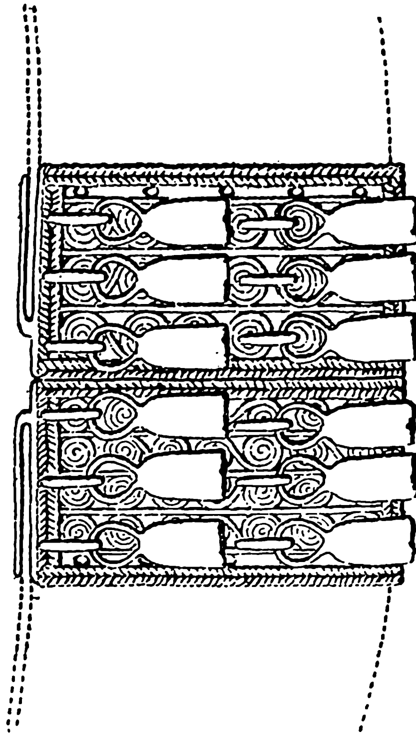

FIG. 10.—Bronze belt-buckle from Dongson.

tend to be watered down through intermingling with the Indonesians who were up to that time Older Megalithic in culture; and doubtless agriculture, warfare, etc., remained little changed, except as modified by a limited knowledge of bronze. Different views have been expressed as to who the Dongsonians may have been. The nomadic element, to judge by their religion, would probably have been predominantly Mongol, though their style of ornament appears to betoken strong western influence.[1] In view of the character of the settled population with which the immigrants fused, there is much to be said for van der Hoop's description of them as constituting a " second Indonesian immigration ".[2] This suggests, what is most important to their understanding, namely that they were essentially a *Younger* Megalithic, Malayo-Polynesian-speaking people, on to whom the Bronze Age influences from the north had been grafted in their South China and northern Indochina homeland. If the Dongson was not even there more than a fusion, or hybridization, of the Bronze Age influences with the Older Megalithic, this basis must have been even more in evidence in Indonesia. Probably the megalithic remains that have been found in South Sumatra (Pasemah), Sarawak and central Celebes [3] largely date from or reflect the conditions of

[1] According to the theory of R. Heine-Geldern, " Das Tocharerproblem und die Pontische Wanderung," *Saeculum*, Vol. II, 1951, pp. 225–255.

[2] van der Hoop, " De Praehistorie " in F. W. Stapel, *Geschiedenis van Nederlandsch-Indie*, Vol. I, pp. 90 f.

[3] Kruyt describes the large number of menhirs and statue-menhirs, etc., found in central Celebes in his work on the West Torajas (Vol. I, Chap. 2), 1938, because it is mainly in the area of the West Torajas that such stones are still extant. Elsewhere (*Hommage du Service Archéologique des Indes Néerlandaises au Premier Congrès des Préhistoriens d'Extrême-Orient à Hanoi*, 1932, p. 9) Kruyt offers adequate reason for this, supposing that when the " stone-hewers " arrived in Celebes, the region now occupied by the East Torajas around the great depression of Lake Poso was all under the sea. As it dried and became habitable this region was occupied by later immigrants who used urns, not stone cists, for burial. While Kruyt himself thought these people were of different origin, and Hinduized, Heine-Geldern

the Younger Megalithic, since we find little evidence that terrace shrines and pyramidal major cult centres were still being constructed. This lack is just what would be expected if the ancient cult of menhirs was now mainly the observance of the proletariat.

In beginning now our study of the religion of the present-day Dongson-influenced peoples, the first point that strikes us is the celestial character of the supreme deity, who has often undergone solarization. This is a feature that has as much in common with what we have seen to be the case among Turco-Tatar and Mongol supreme beings as it is at variance with what we find among the Older Megalithic peoples, where the religion is so largely chthonic. And though Hinduism and later Islam often have influenced the names of these celestial deities, a point on which the best authorities are agreed is that that is as far as the Hindu or Mohammedan influence penetrated.[1]

In Borneo it is of the Ngadju Dayaks of the southern part of the island that we have the fullest information as to the nature of the present-day religion. Among these people Mahatala is the god of the upper world, and he also has a name which means "prince of the sun". Djata is the god of the underworld.[2] The Cosmic Tree is the axis which unites them as a "supreme totality".[3] It is sometimes represented with hornbills near the summit and snakes near the root (Fig. 11).

With the East Torajas of Celebes the sky-god is named Lai, while Ndara is the earth-underworld deity. Neither of these is well-known in comparison to Poeempalaburu, the active sky-god. He is sometimes regarded as the sun, but more usually the sun is con-

has shown good grounds (Prehistoric Research . . . , p. 148) for believing that the urn burials are equally to be ascribed to Dongsonians.

[1] A. C. Kruyt, *Het Animisme . . .* , p. 464 ; H. Schärer, *Die Gottesidee der Ngadju Dajak in Süd Borneo*, Leiden, 1946, pp. 16, 18.

[2] H. Schärer, op. cit., pp. 16–18.

[3] ibid., pp. 35 f. ; Eliade, *Le Chamanisme*, p. 257.

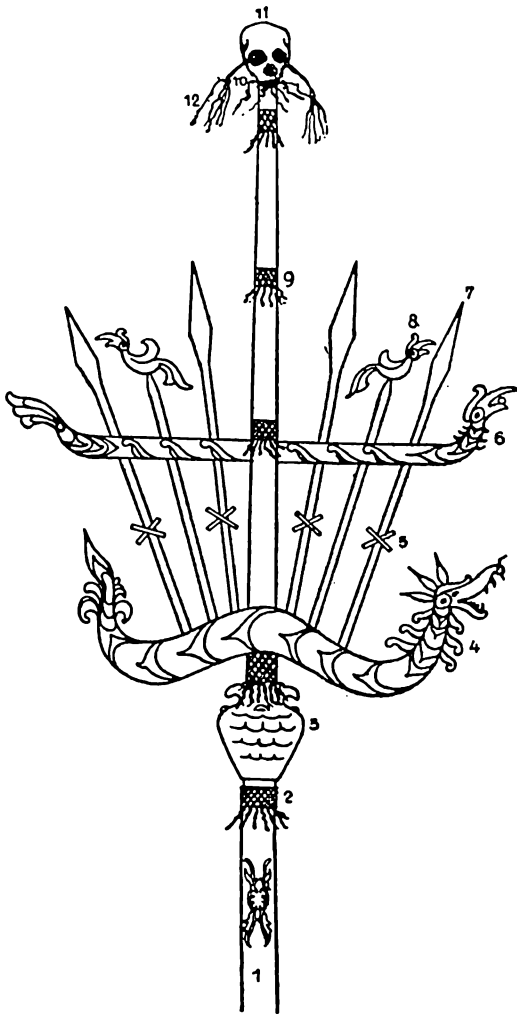

FIG. 11.—The Ngadju Dayak Cosmic Tree.

sidered to be his eye.[1] He is ultimately of most importance to shamans, and from him all souls originate.[2]

Among the Ngadju Dayaks, the shamans are either women (*balian*) or hermaphrodites (*basis*) who dress and behave as women although they carry daggers. So also with the Sea Dayaks or Iban, the shamans (*manang*) are either women or impotent men who dress and behave as women.[3] However this does not stand in the way of militant activities, as in the case of the *berenchah* séance, when, beating a pair of swords, they make " a grand charge into the midst of the evil spirits ".[4] This feminine bias of the shamans is much more general in Indonesia than in Siberia, where indeed we have seen that it is exceptional. It evidently derives from a former matriarchy that seems to have existed among Môn-Khmer and Malayo-Polynesian peoples, and which exercised a certain influence through matrilineal descent on the character of the powerful Brahmans of Cambodia. However, under Indianization, this local tendency could never make itself felt to the extent of transforming Brahmans into priestesses. But in non-Hindu Indonesia, where the pre-Bronze Age culture was never less than a partner in a hybridization, its influence did succeed in feminizing the shamans. The contact of the Hindu and pre-Hindu social structures is most graphically illustrated among the " marginal " Bataks of Sumatra where the *sibaso*, or shaman who has been considerably influenced by Indian trance-mediumship and is possessed by spirits, yet remains always a woman, whereas the *datu* or priest-magician is always a man.[5]

The Ngadju Dayak shamans must feel themselves chosen by the gods, for without this call none can

[1] N. Adriani and Alb. C. Kruyt, *De Bare'e sprekende Toradjas van Midden Celebes (de Oost Toradjas)* Amsterdam, 1951, Vol. II, pp. 3, 6.
[2] ibid., p. 131.
[3] Archdeacon J. Perham, in H. Ling Roth, *The Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo*, London, 1896, I, pp. 265 ff.
[4] ibid., p. 279.
[5] M. Eliade, *Le Chamanisme*, p. 312.

succeed merely by drumming or adopting the other techniques of producing ecstasy.[1] But it is among the Sea Dayaks that the initiation ceremonies are particularly interesting. These consist of three stages, the second of which is typically shamanic in that it includes the symbolic decapitation of the candidate and the washing of his brain.[2] This suggests, though the original reasons are forgotten, a rite of death and resurrection. During the third stage of initiation the shamans place a tall jar on the veranda with a little ladder fastened on either side and connected over the top. They lead the neophyte up one ladder and down the other.[3] As Eliade has observed,[4] the symbolism of this rite is clear : it represents symbolic ascension of the candidate to the sky followed by his descent to earth, as in the Turco-Tatar initiation.

With the East Torajas only women become shamans (*tadu*), apart from a few men who dress and behave as women and are known as *bajasa* (deceivers).[5] The initiation ceremony lasts three days, each shaman having from one to five candidates to initiate and to instruct in the shamanic dance and the litanies. The last day is the most important as on it the party make their ecstatic journey to the sky. It is in the sky world that they are considered to be when they go in procession, dressed in white, to a certain bathing place, the bath of the gods. There the neophytes obtain the special life force they will require in their new rôle, after which they partake of a ritual meal before returning to earth.[6] Here we can easily recognize once more the symbolic death and rebirth so usual in shamanic initiation. The neophyte moreover now has to learn a special spirit

[1] Schärer, op. cit., pp. 60 ff., 149.
[2] Ling Roth, op. cit., I, p. 281.
[3] ibid.
[4] Eliade, op. cit., p. 125.
[5] N. Adriani and A. C. Kruyt, *De Bare'e sprekende Toradjas . . .*, 1951, Vol. II, pp. 77 f.
[6] ibid., pp. 85–106.

language [1]; as is also the case at the initiation of the Batak *sibaso*.[2]

We find little in the way of bird disguise surviving among the Indonesian shamans, but it seems that Sea Dayak *manang* must have considered herself as a bird during séances since she sometimes sits on a swing.[3] One type of Sea Dayak séance is particularly suggestive: " *Beburong Raya*, ' Making or doing the Adjutant Bird.' The distinctive mark of this is the procession round and round the house, the *manangs* being covered with native cloths like cloaks, in which, I suppose, they profess to personate the bird." [4] Again, of almost certainly shamanic significance, in view of the cultural context, would appear to be the *hoda-hoda*, who are men disguised as hornbills who dance at the funeral of a Batak raja. " They represent the bird which brings the soul of the deceased to the hereafter." [5]

Here I think we may make our first point of contact with the early Dongson bronze drums. I refer to the procession of personages wearing feather head-dresses in the ritual scene on the tympanum. Heine-Geldern, improving on Goloubew's interpretation of them as totemistic dancers, proposed to regard them as warriors, decorated with feathers in the same way as are Naga warriors and to a lesser extent those of Indonesia.[6] He omits to note, however, that while warriors might well be expected to carry spears as we see on the drums, and as is the case for example in the Sema Naga dances,[7] the playing of musical instruments (khène and castanets) by some of the figures is not thus so easily explained. Heine-Geldern compares the drum figures especially to

[1] ibid., p. 121.
[2] E. M. Loeb, *Sumatra*, Vienna, 1935, p. 81.
[3] W. Howell, " A Sea Dayak Dirge," *Sarawak Mus. Journ.*, I, 1911, p. 6.
[4] Ling Roth, op. cit., I, p. 280.
[5] F. M. Schnitger, *Forgotten Kingdoms in Sumatra*, pl. xxi.
[6] R. Heine-Geldern, " Bedeutung . . .," loc. cit., p. 529.
[7] J. H. Hutton, *The Sema Nagas*, pl. facing p. 110.

the Angami Naga warriors, who wear high feather head-dresses, mainly when engaged in ceremonial dancing. However, he recognized that in the dancers shown on the side of the Ngoc-lu drum, as also in the case of the figures on the Muong and Vienna drums (which though secular are influenced by the religious style), the erect backward turned bird-head which crowns each person, could not be paralleled among the Nagas, although with the Lhota Nagas on certain occasions the warriors wear a hornbill-head *hanging down* the back as a mark of distinction.[1] The tall geometrical head-dresses of the dancing figures on the Ngoc-lu tympanum can less readily be accepted as bird-heads, as they so clearly are in the case of the figures on the Hoang-ha tympanum (Fig. 12). But what is certain is that they are all very different from the feather head-dresses of the paddlers and warriors shown in the boats on the bulbous portion of the Laos drum, the earliest of the secular drums (Fig. 15*c*). Here the simple separate feathers of the head-dresses are naturalistically delineated, without any suggestion that a symbolic form is intended.[2] These figures, as also the dancers shown on the sides of the same drum,[3] and the figures on the bronze axes found at Dongson,[4] can therefore represent ordinary warriors, comparable to the Naga headhunters. But this cannot offer a satisfactory explanation of the dancing figures on the Ngoc-lu and Hoang-ha drums, or on those secular drums that have been influenced by them.

Even more unsatisfactory, however, is it to go to the other extreme and compare them to the bird-men on the Chinese hunting-scene Hu vessels.[5] For those Chinese figures are indeed literally " bird-men " with

[1] R. Heine-Geldern, loc. cit., p. 529 ; J. H. Mills, *The Lhota Nagas*, pl. facing p. 14.
[2] *BEFEO*, XL (1940), Fig. 15 c.
[3] ibid., Fig. 24.
[4] *BEFEO*, XXIX (1929), Fig. 24.
[5] B. Karlgren, loc. cit., p. 17 and pl. 17.

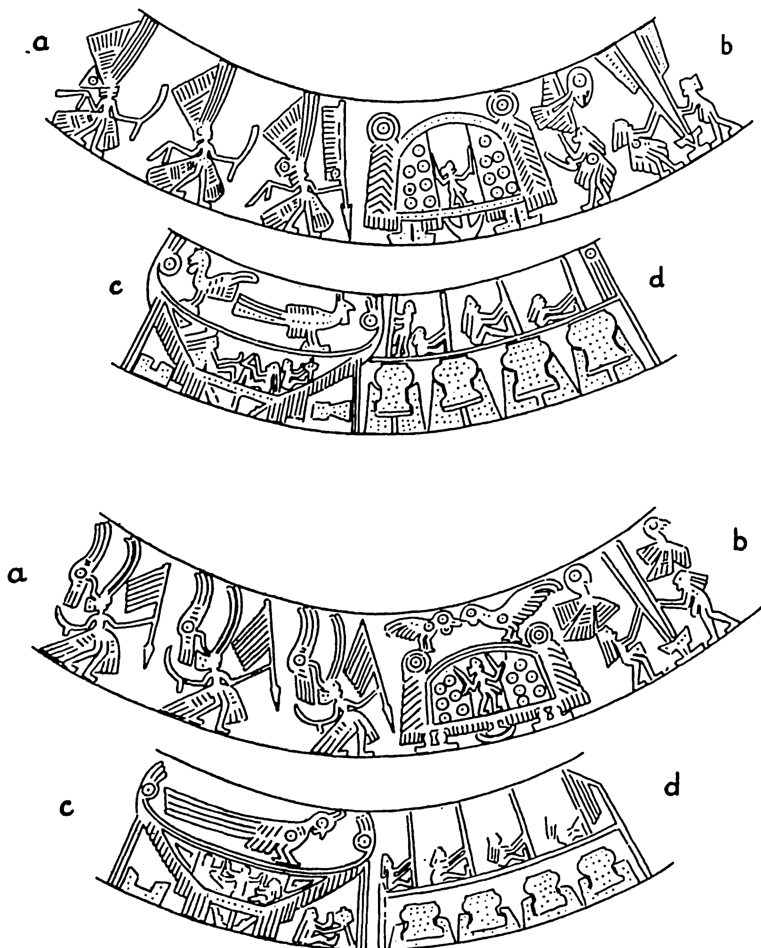

FIG. 12.—Detail of ritual scenes of Ngoc-lu drum tympanum (upper pair), and of Hoang-ha drum tympanum (lower pair).

their beaked bird-heads and their wings in place of arms. There is no reason to suppose, as does Karlgren, that even the idea is the same. I now feel convinced that we must go back to Goloubew and recognize the religious drum figures as representing men—perhaps in some cases women—*disguised as birds*. I differ from him, however, in that I consider them to be not totemistic dancers, but shamans. The spears (the characteristic Indonesian weapon) which they frequently carry, are intended as a protection against evil spirits, and it is only in that special sense that they can be regarded as warriors. The frequence of ornithomorphic disguise among Central Asian and Siberian shamans, as well as the Sea Dayak and Batak evidence above quoted, already provides a *prima facie* case for this view. Further support will emerge as we proceed.

As with the Turco-Tatars and Siberians, the modern Indonesian shaman acquires at initiation one or more helper spirits, who may be special to the individual shaman. Such are the *sangiang* of the Ngadju Dayaks and Ot Danum, the *ala* of the Manyan Dayaks, and the *wurake* of the East Torajas. Te Wechel describes the *ala* of the Manyans as protector spirits (schutzgeist).[1] Kruyt states that the *sangiangs* of the Ngadju Dayaks are demi-gods, who live between earth and heaven, and of which Tempon Telon is simply the strongest and bravest. He further states that they *are called* when required.[2] With the East Torajas each shaman has her own *wurake*. The latter is most definitely her helper spirit who *comes to her call*, and to whom she speaks in the *wurake* language. These *wurakes* live in their villages in the fifth heaven, each spirit having a name, which is known to the particular shaman to whom it is appointed.[3]

[1] P. te Wechel, loc. cit., p. 45.
[2] A. C. Kruyt, *Het Animisme* . . . , p. 491.
[3] N. Adriani and A. C. Kruyt, op. cit., II, pp. 32 ff., 119.

Now as to the ritual use of the drum in Indonesia. While, as secondarily among certain peoples in Northern Asia, it is now most often used for calling ancestors, or as instrumental to the " magic of noise " for driving off evil spirits, one can point to significant survivals of its original use in connection with shamanism. That is to say we can still find the drum providing a bridge both for the descent of the helper spirits and to facilitate the start of the shaman on his or her ecstatic journey. Thus, in the Manyan Dayak séance to procure the return of the soul of a sick person it is stated by te Wechel that, while the *balian* dances in ecstasy, the sound of the drum " is considered to be a bridge by which the protector spirit (*ala*) can descend " and incorporate himself in the *balian*.[1]

With the East Torajas, during the initiation ceremony for would-be shamans, shortly before they go on their ecstatic journey to the heaven of the *wurakes*, the temple drums are beaten in a certain way, and this beating is referred to as " providing what is necessary for the journey ". This seems to refer to the sky journey.[2] Even such limited indications as these assume an importance as survivals of a former better understanding of original meanings, in the light of the known symbolism of the Siberian shaman's drum. At the same time the drumming which often goes on almost continuously during the Indonesian shamanic ceremonies and feasts plays its part in inducing the rather limited degree of ecstasy that is usual nowadays.

I have elsewhere [3] suggested that the central star on the Dongson drums represented, not the sun as had previously been supposed, but the Pole Star. Despite the frequent solarization of the sky deity among the Turco-Tatars and Mongols, it is the Pole Star that is of

[1] P. te Wechel, loc. cit., p. 45.
[2] N. Adriani and A. C. Kruyt, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 98.
[3] *The Making of Greater India*, p. 78.

outstanding importance in their cosmology, and we have seen that the designs on the drum-skin often show it to represent a microcosm. Since these peoples usually hold their drum more or less vertically, it is natural for the microcosm to be generally shown as though it were in section, with the World Tree or Cosmic Axis most in evidence. But once the drum is laid horizontally on a pedestal, in the manner which appears to have originated the Dongson type of drum, then it becomes natural to depict only the Pole Star, which is all that can be seen from above. The dancing figures and other representations on the tympanum would then be circulating in the same direction as the planets move around the Pole Star.

The offerings of rice being poured through the floor of the veranda over the drums shown next to the ritual house on the early drums (Fig. 12) should not be seen in relation to the ancestor worship of present-day Karens; they should rather be compared to the offerings of flesh to the helper spirits entering the drum, as we have seen is the custom amongst such people as the Altai Tatars. And the associated birds would then represent these helper spirits, not ancestors or harmful demons.

On the Ngoc-lu and Hoang-ha drums, the eight shamans who each carry a baton in one of their hands, are probably each concerned with one of the eight drums. That is certainly more likely than that they should be about to beat the gongs in the curve-roofed building as they pass, as supposed by Goloubew.[1] It would rather seem that these gongs are adequately attended to by a musician who has a baton in each hand. The khène (*keluri*) and the castanets, as well as the gong playing, no doubt also had a part in providing the conditions that would induce ecstasy. At the present day it is not the drum but the *kobuz*, a stringed instrument, that is used by the Western Turkish *bakshas* to induce trance.

[1] *BEFEO*, XL (1940), p. 386.

We may now consider the work of the shamans in Borneo, and Celebes, which as in Central Asia and Siberia falls mainly into two departments. Firstly, there is the searching for the absent soul of the sick. If that ends in failure, there is the duty of accompanying the deceased on the journey to the afterworld. In addition the shamans have duties of importance to the communities as a whole, such as ascending to the sky to seek the rice soul at planting time, or going thither in time of drought to request rain from the sky deities. In the case of the East Torajas information on these matters has been recorded by Kruyt.[1]

Of the Sea Dayaks Perham has described a dozen types of séance in which the *manang* dances, falls into a trance, and goes in spirit to search in the underworld for the soul of a sick person, which he brings back and inserts in the patient's head.[2] In the case of the Manyan Dayaks, when anyone is ill, the *balian* takes a model sampan with a wooden bird on the mast, to symbolize speedy travel through the air, and a wooden figure of an ape on the yardarm, to symbolize speed through the forest. Then in his trance the shaman sets off in search for the absent soul.[3] Many families keep such a model boat a yard long, hanging from the rafters in readiness for the use of the *balian*, should one have to be called in.[4] I have already mentioned that the Manyan shaman, on undertaking certain cures, first performs a dance leading to ecstasy while the drums are beaten, as a result of which drumming the protector spirits are incorporated. This incorporation, which is not possession, is also found with the *sangiang* of the Ngadjus.[5]

The fullest account we have of such shamanic curing concerns the East Torajas, and is provided by Kruyt.[6]

[1] N. Adriani and A. C. Kruyt, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 159–161.
[2] Ling Roth, op. cit., I, pp. 271 ff.
[3] P. te Wechel, loc. cit., p. 46.
[4] ibid., p. 47.
[5] Schärer, op. cit., p. 151; Eliade, *Le Chamanisme*, p. 318.
[6] N. Adriani and A. C. Kruyt, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 119–131.

I summarize his account as follows: When the shaman goes to treat the sick, her *wurake* spirit comes to her and accompanies her in search for the absent soul. There is no drumming and no trance (nowadays), but she intones her litany which is in the *wurake* language. As she recites, her soul is believed to go up on to the roof of the house to call for her boat which is the rainbow. This is brought to her by the *wurake* who provides all that she needs, and so may be considered to be under her control. She is armed with shield and spear, hence is as well prepared to meet ghostly foes as is the male shaman of Siberia. The *wurake* sits with her in the middle of the boat, while fore and aft are other helper spirits, and also a crew of captive sprites taken prisoner in former battles with aerial demons. When they are all in the rainbow boat the shaman recites certain verses [1] to call up the wind which, together with the efforts of the captive sprites, will drive her craft towards its destination. Exceptionally she does not travel by rainbow boat but rides a horse spirit. During the aerial journey she is often heavily attacked by demons, but she overcomes them with the aid of the *wurake*. It usually requires much effort to get through from one heaven to the next above, and the spirits who live there may try to bar the way. Her goal is usually the fifth heaven, that of the *wurakes*, since it seems that souls are most likely to go there. Then she has to search for the soul and is sometimes refused by the *wurakes* living there. If she has to go to the underworld to make her search, that is more difficult, as we noticed that it is with the Altai Tatars; hence she always tries the *wurake* heaven first. Sometimes she may even go up to the highest heaven, that of Poee-mpalaburu, as it is from this high god that all souls originate. On returning

[1] For an English translation of some of these charming verses see Dr. Jacoba Hooykaas "The Rainbow in Ancient Indonesian Religion", *Bijdragen*, 112, pt. 3, 1956, pp. 292–294.

successfully from her mission the shaman re-inserts the soul in the patient's head.

Now we will consider the Indonesian shaman's task of conducting the soul of the dead to the afterworld. Kruyt states definitely,[1] on the basis of evidence provided by Hardeland and Sundermann, that with both the Ngadju and Manyan Dayaks, the shaman is considered to accompany in spirit the soul of the dead in the *sangiang's* boat during the feast of the dead (*tiwah*), when such boats, painted on boards, are prominently displayed (Fig. 13). Steinmann is of the same opinion, on the evidence of the journeys suggested by the dirges of the Sea Dayaks,[2] also as regards the Dayaks of the Siang-land on the more recent information supplied by P. Wirz.[3]

Burial in canoes or boat-shaped coffins, is widespread in Indonesia and Oceania. The question of origin and meaning is a complex one, and I agree with the view that this type of coffin's " origin is probably multiple, and due to convergence of customs bearing a superficial resemblance ".[4] Migration is a factor that looms large the further one goes into Oceania, but cannot have been more than secondary in Indonesia. Vroklage went too far in ascribing both saddle roofs (boat-like according to him) and boat-coffins entirely to overseas migration. Facts scarcely supporting such a theory were indeed known to him when he mentioned that the saddle roof and boat-coffin were found among one tribe of Nagas, the Lhotas—presumably owing to slight Dongson influence.[5] It is difficult to dissociate the boat-coffin from the use of the shaman's boat during the feast of

[1] A. C. Kruyt, *Het Animisme* . . . , pp. 105, 347.

[2] Collected by Perham and republished in Ling Roth, op. cit., I, pp. 203 ff., also W. Howell, loc. cit.

[3] P. Wirz, " Krankenbehandlung bei den Dajak des Sianglandes," *Tijdschrift*, 1926, p. 242.

[4] R. Moss, *Life after death in Oceania*, Oxford, 1925, p. 23.

[5] B. A. G. Vroklage, loc. cit., p. 740.

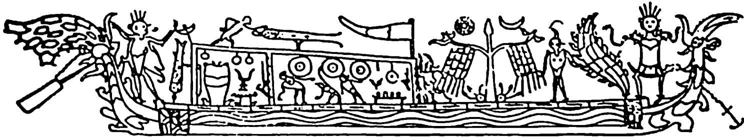

Fig. 13.—Ngadju Dayak " boats of the dead ".

the dead in Borneo as probably indicating the basic meaning among Dongson influenced peoples.

Formerly with the Ngadju Dayaks a sky afterworld (now open to all) was reserved for the upper class, for whom alone there is aerial burial, as with upper class Central Asian and Siberian nomads. Harva illustrates[1] many similar aerial burials, but perhaps the Buriat shaman's shown in his Fig. 28 makes the most striking comparison with that of the Ngadju Dayaks illustrated in Schärer's Fig. 28 [*sic*]. With the Sea Dayaks also, tree exposure is a special distinction, usually reserved for shamans.[2]

In view of this evidence I believe that tree-exposure was probably the original burial method for shamans and chiefs among the Dongsonians. In Indonesia, the boat-shaped coffin, though already known on the main-land rivers, came to be substituted for a simpler type of coffin or platform with accompanying horse or deer of the nomads. But, in the same way that happened to the shamanic peoples of Central Asia, they adopted cist graves, stone sepulchres, etc., as found at Pasemah in Sumatra, at Basoeki in East Java, and in Bali[3]; and the stone cists found in Celebes still have the name *kalambas* = boats. That these stone graves may be of Chinese origin has indeed been fully recognized.[4] They certainly are in no way related to the very different porthole cists of the Deccan. Of at present unknown origin are the rock cut chamber graves, urns and stone vats (the last mentioned also in Laos and north Cachar) which seem to have been introduced to Indonesia during Dongson times or later.[5]

[1] U. Harva, op. cit.

[2] Ling Roth, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 105.

[3] For Bali see H. R. van Heekeren, "Proto-historic Sarcophagi on Bali," *Berita Dinas Perbakala*, 2, 1955.

[4] R. Heine-Geldern, *Ann. Bib. of Indian Archaeology for 1934*, p. 38; "Prehistoric Research . . ." loc. cit., p. 152; W. J. A. Willems, *Oudheidkundige Dienst in Ned.-Indie, Rapporten No.* 3, p. 21.

[5] R. Heine-Geldern, "Prehistoric Research . . .," loc. cit., pp. 148, 152.

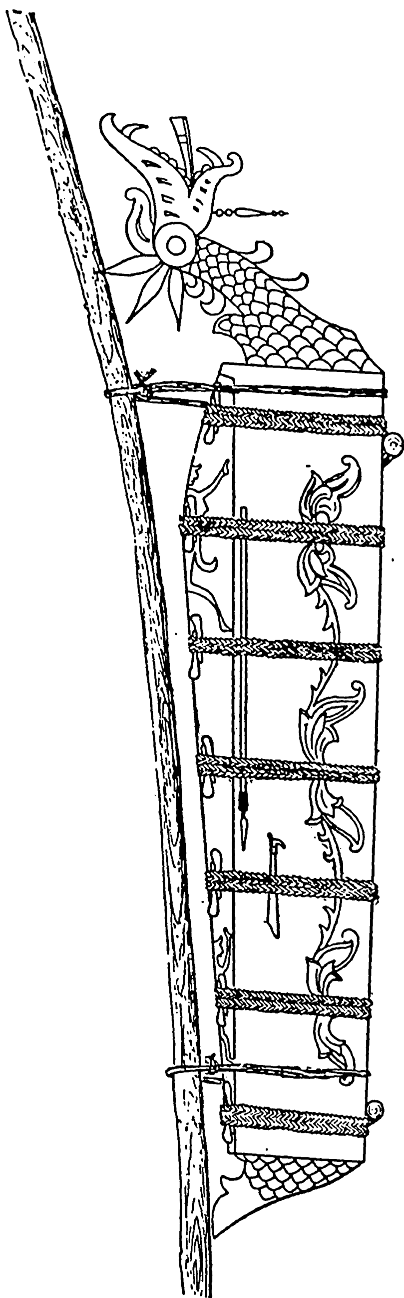

Fig. 14.—A Ngadju Dayak boat-shaped coffin.

In addition to their former belief in an underground afterworld for the lower class, it is interesting to note the survival of Older Megalithic elements in the religion of the Ngadju Dayaks; but, as usual wherever these are found, it is the ancestor element in this earlier cult that is now most in evidence. At the *tiwah* feast a wooden figure (*hampatong*) is erected at a sacred place (*tadjahan*) situated on the river bank opposite the village. There is also a sacred place (*pataho*) in the village where a stone is erected for each dead person at the *tiwah*.[1] These are clearly more than "memorials"; they are the "substitute bodies" of the dead. When there is sickness, or a journey or headhunting expedition is contemplated, the souls of the dead are called to the *tadjahan* and rice offerings are made to them. As they come from their sky afterworld, and we are dealing with what is in its present form a cult of ancestors, it is not surprising that they come in answer to the call in the form of falcons. These omen birds then make known their advice by the manner of their flight.

What is especially noteworthy is that the shamans (*balian* and *basir*) have nothing whatever to do with this general cult of ancestors. These are approached exclusively through a special class of priests, the *tukang tawur* (masters of the rice offering).[2] This seems to afford valuable support for Eliade's opinion that ancestor worship is originally quite foreign to shamanism. Yet it is the shamans, not the *tukang tawur*, who are concerned with the tribal ancestors who are an aspect of the highest godhead. It would seem that the ancestral "sun-men", as representatives of Mahatala,[3] had, as a result of the local tendency towards ancestor worship, early become identified with the sky deity.

It is of the East Torajas that we have the fullest information with regard to the part played by the

[1] Schärer, op. cit., pp. 166 f.
[2] Schärer, op. cit., p. 168.
[3] ibid., p. 47.

shaman in the funeral ritual, and once more this is thanks to the painstaking field work of Kruyt.[1] The word used for coffin, *bangka*, had the original meaning of boat, and the dead in the coffin is first placed in the village death-house, situated a little way outside the village. Almost all souls go first to the underworld land of the dead. Exceptions are the dead shamans, who go straight to the *wurake* heaven, also certain unspecified people as to whose identity no information was obtainable.[2] Though the shaman is called in at the death of anyone of importance, she does not conduct the soul to the underworld ; she does go there, however, in order to bring back the souls of any living relatives who might have accompanied it, and whose absence would cause their sickness or death.

Eight or nine days after the death of an East Toraja there takes place a simple feast called *mata mpoli*, " the final mourning ". Kruyt thinks that originally this was the definitive funeral since " in olden times " the dead were left in the underworld. However, a change was introduced at some forgotten period and it was thought necessary to call the dead back and transfer them to a sky afterworld, which was in the highest heaven of all. It would seem that an earlier belief in the connection of the ancestors with an underworld beneath the mountain, where their contact with Earth would ensure a beneficial fertility for the living, has been replaced by the supposition that the sky is the region of light and life. Thence they will be in a position to shower blessings on posterity. To a certain extent the earlier ancestors are identified with the sky deities who preside over agriculture : these are not so much the generalized nature deities like Poee-ura (Mother Rain) but the spirits of each particular field. They live in villages in the heaven of the *wurakes* with whom

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[2] ibid., I, p. 457.

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[1] N. Adriani and A. C. Kruyt, op. cit., II, pp. 481–544.
[2] ibid., I, p. 457.

they are on intimate terms, and are visited in case of need by the shamans.[1] It would seem as though they are really the local ancestor/earth gods of the Older Megalithic, transferred to the sky under the Dongson influence.

The East Torajas regard the underworld now as a plain, named Rato-ngkasimpo, a temporary abode where the dead await recall to earth. They are then ritually conducted to heaven during the great feast of the dead, *mompemate*. While waiting in the underworld the souls live in houses, with rice fields and animals, in the same manner as on earth, and under the control of a headman who once lived on earth. But on their transfer to heaven they get their food by magic. The sky land of the dead is situated on the summit of a great mountain, Wawo-maborosi, whose slopes are of loose sand so that no one can climb it unless led by a shaman. Clearly we have now to do with the cosmic mountain, seen as the " bond between earth and heaven ", which has superseded basic beliefs concerning the mountain as a " concentration of the earth's energies " and symbolized locally by an actual mountain or its reduced symbol. The later meaning is supported by the references to the use of the rainbow as a means of access, and we have seen that with the Central Asian shamans the rainbow is the equivalent of tree or mountain symbols of the Cosmic Axis as a means of reaching heaven. There are descriptions in certain Toraja litanies which show that the mountain terraces to be crossed are heavens ending with the ninth heaven, the abode of the god Poee-mpalaburu, which is the final goal of the soul.[2] The stratified character of the heavens is of practical interest only to the shamans,[3] and there seems no reason to doubt that it, and the planetary cosmology on which it is based, were first introduced in Dongson times.

[1] ibid. II, pp. 40 ff. [2] ibid. I, pp. 457 f. [3] ibid. I, p. 371.

A varying number of shamans officiate at the East Toraja great feast of the dead. Singing their litany they " inwardly concentrate ", and then go in spirit to the underworld to bring the dead back to earth. The shamans, and the bearers of the bones (from the death-house) assemble with relatives and guests in the temple. There, while drums are continually beaten, they await the return of the dead, whose journey is described in detail by the reciting shamans. After the souls have been welcomed in the temple, all gather outside and form a wide circle. Then the ceremonial dancing and singing begin. These go on all night, and again on four subsequent nights. On the final morning the bones are brought out, and with them are placed all that the dead may require for their sky journey, including sun hat, sleeping mat, sword, and food. Then during the night the shamans walk round within the circle and as they go they recite the finale of their litany, in which they tell how they have now reached in spirit the mountain Wawo-maborosi. Then they turn about and walk in the opposite direction, to signify that they are now on the way back, having safely conducted the dead.

After the feast the bones of the dead are finally deposited in caves. No figures or stones are erected, the ancient megalithic custom having quite disappeared, but a tooth, some hair or nails, or an object the deceased owned are helpful in enabling contact to be established. Everyone is in constant touch with the dead, and no special intermediary is needed, though it is generally the family head who makes the offerings to them.[1]

In the above account it is not the mere fact of secondary burial that is of any consequence, because this is too widespread a custom to be attributable to Dongson influence. It is due to the common belief that the final journey of the soul cannot take place until all the flesh

[1] ibid. II, pp. 2, 70–75.

has disappeared from the bones.[1] What is significant here, as in Borneo, is the ritual conducting at the feast of the dead ; also the sky afterworld which, prior to democratization, was evidently reserved for shamans and a privileged class. This, together with the shamans' concern with celestial deities, and their having nothing to do with the lower class cult of ancestors, seems all very suggestive of Dongson influence.

We have now seen that the vehicle of the Bornean and East Toraja shamans, when they set forth to search for the soul of a sick person, or to conduct the soul to the sky afterworld, is a boat, which in the case of the East Torajas is also the rainbow. This transformation of the rainbow into a boat is a pointer—if one were needed—to the conclusion that the use of a boat as shamanic vehicle is but a modification among riverine and maritime peoples of the old Central Asian and Siberian idea of the shaman riding to heaven along the rainbow, on his horse, deer or bird mount. Indeed a Ngadju Dayak " map " of the afterworld shows a soul-boat traversing the sky by way of the rainbow.[2] The rainbow bridge to heaven still survives widely in Indonesian myth, and so does the connection of the traditional animals with the ghostly journey. Coffins with deer [3] or horse [4] heads, instead of the usual bird or *nāga*, are sometimes used. In Sumatra *hoda-hoda* are usually men disguised as hornbill psychopomps, who dance at a raja's funeral, but in Toba " the *hoda-hoda* are men disguised as horses, wearing a wooden horse-head or a horse-mask. They represent the horses which formerly were killed on the grave of a raja. Funeral horse-dances were known in Pamir and Turkestan too ".[5] The association of ideas between animal

[1] Moss, op. cit., p. 89 ; Hastings' *Encyclopaedia*, Vol. IV, pp. 442 f.
[2] Schärer, op. cit., Taf. III.
[3] F. M. Schnitger, op. cit., pl. xxxii ; Schärer, op. cit., pl. ix.
[4] In parts of Flores, cf. Vroklage, loc. cit., p. 723.
[5] F. M. Schnitger, op. cit., pl. xxi.

psychopomp and boat is well shown in the design of a funeral pall from Kroe, South Sumatra, now in the Leiden Museum, which portrays a " soul-boat " flanked by two horses (or deer).[1]

This brings us to what is perhaps the most vital point to be established, the function of the boats delineated on the bulbous portions of the early religious drums (Fig. 15*a*, *b*). If these are shamans' vehicles, analogous to the Indonesian shamans' boats we have already discussed, then we should perhaps have our most solid proof of the function of the drums and the character of the Dongsonians' religion as a whole.

In the first place it is of interest to note that there is some reason to believe that, at a time not so very remote when the early drums were cast, the boats had replaced birds or deer as shamanic vehicles. Thus on the Hoang-ha drum tympanum (Fig. 9) we see the encircling egrets, and on the Ngoc-lu drum (Fig. 6) also the zone of hornbills and deer, all moving in procession around the drum in the same direction as do the boats on the sides. To suggest that these animals are survivals of no longer functional, or at most only subsidiary shamans' vehicles, in no way conflicts with the suggestion put forward by Goloubew in his later article that they result from the influence of a well-known Caucasian prehistoric motif.[2] It is quite in accordance with the principles governing culture change that it would be just the meaning that these animals had for the Dongsonians, and which was still alive in their minds, that would be likely to secure acceptance of such a Western influence in decoration, for by then it was mainly the purpose of decoration that they served.

Steinmann has called attention to the striking resemblances between some of the details of the Dongson boats and those figured on funeral palls from South

[1] A. Steinmann " Les Tissus à jonques . . .", loc. cit., pl. xxxvii. i.
[2] *BEFEO*, XL (1940), p. 390 and fig. 14.

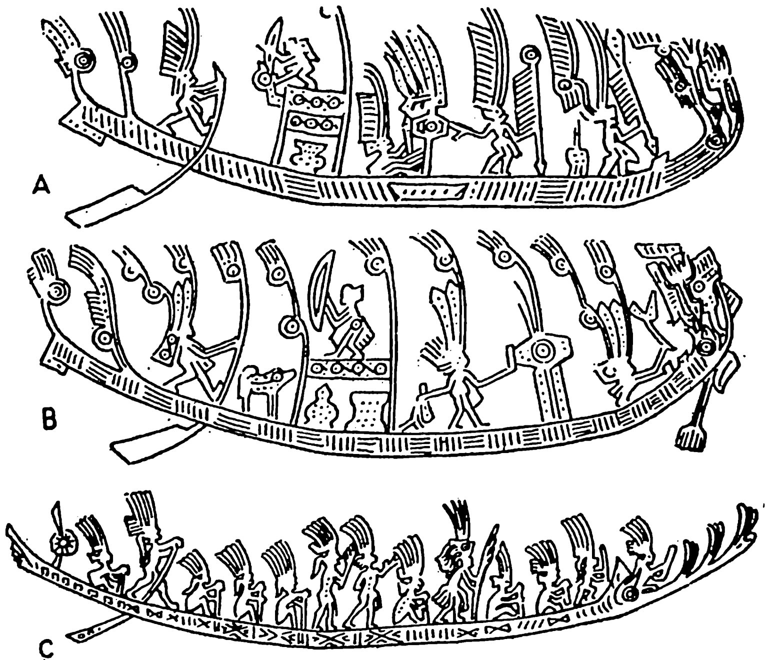

FIG. 15.—Boats delineated on Dongson bronze drums: A. Hoang-ha drum; B. Ngoc-lu drum; C. Laos drum.

Sumatra, as well as the Dayak ritual craft.[1] Thus he compares the double stern-posts, and also speaks of their similar " masts ornamented with feathers ". The latter he has shown in the modern Dayak and Sumatran representations to be not true masts for carrying sail, but symbols of the Cosmic Tree. This is often found on, or in close proximity to, boats delineated on the Sumatran textiles and on the Dayak shamans' boats. Following Wilke,[2] who has pointed out that in many myths the Cosmic Tree is associated with the ocean, Steinmann thinks that this connection of Tree with boat indicates that it is the ocean of the sky that the ship is intended to traverse. That the boats on the Dongson religious drums are certainly intended for a sky voyage is again borne out by the circles with dots with which the boats and their occupants are liberally sprinkled, also by the birds which appear to be pushing the boats with their beaks, the " oiseaux-propulseurs " of Goloubew (Fig. 16). Both of these symbols are absent on the naturalistic boats of the secular drums (Fig. 15*c*).

Steinmann draws no conclusion as to the mast-like objects in the boats of the early religious drums (and the Muong drum that has been influenced by them), but there can be no doubt that the identification as Cosmic Trees holds good for them also. Masts are lacking on the naturalistic boats shown on the secular Laos and Stockholm drums, and had no place on ancient South-east Asian war barges. Vroklage indeed appreciates that sails were unknown in Indonesia prior to their introduction by Hindus or Chinese.[3] The adoption of masts to carry flags, etc., on such craft as the modern Moluccan ceremonial prahus [4] is probably the result of European influence.

[1] A. Steinmann, loc. cit., p. 135.
[2] G. Wilke, " Der Weltenbaum und die beiden Kosmischen Vogel in der vorgeschichtlichen Kunst," *Manus*, 1922, Bd. 14, pp. 73–79.
[3] Vroklage, loc. cit., p. 756.
[4] ibid., fig. A 6 ; Steinmann, loc. cit., fig. 16 *bis*.

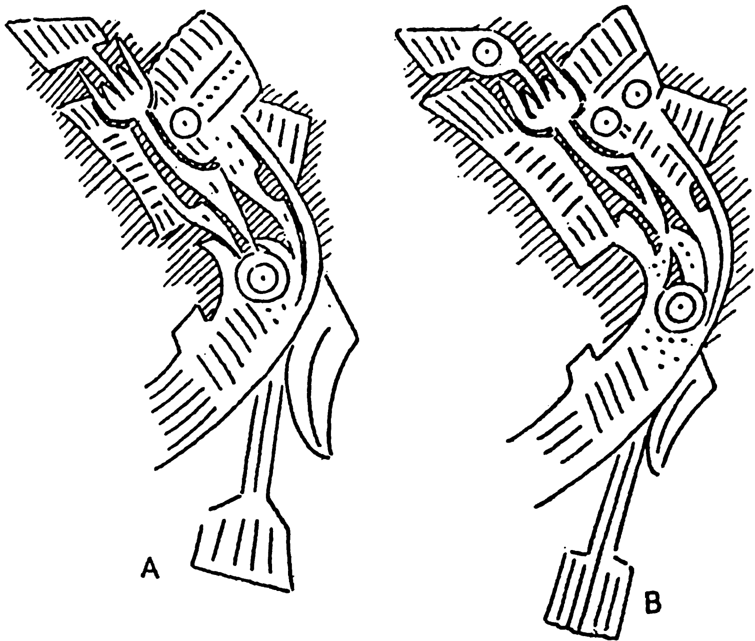

FIG. 16.—Prows of two boats on the Ngoc-lu drum, showing " oiseaux propulseurs ".

Now it is clear from the observations of Grabowsky [1] and te Wechel [2] that the Cosmic Tree (Batang Garing) represented on the Ngadju Dayak shamans' boats (where it at the same time symbolizes Tempon Telon's lance) is the same as the Cosmic Tree, with sun and moon on either side of it, painted on a board, that is always placed on view during a Ngadju Dayak séance for the recall of an absent soul and during the *tiwah* feast. This board is moreover erected on a rice-filled gong representing the Cosmic Mountain. From this Steinmann [3] inferred that the Cosmic Tree (or lance-mast) shown on the Dayak shamans' boats is the same as the Siberian shaman's Cosmic Tree, which rising from the centre of earth to heaven, acts as his ladder during his ecstatic journey. The Cosmic Tree is also represented, Steinmann thinks, in a Sumatran " boat of the dead " preserved in the Amsterdam museum.

It will require no great boldness to apply this interpretation to the vertical objects we have been considering in the boats of the Ngoc-lu and Hoang-ha drums, in view of the importance that we have seen the Siberian shaman attaches to his sacred tree, symbolic of the Cosmic Axis, by means of which he is able to penetrate the various heavens. If it be remarked that it is curious that the Cosmic Tree should be more naturalistically delineated on many of the modern representations (with branches coming off the trunk), the reply would be justified that the Dongson boat's Tree is in fact the more realistic. Have we not seen that the Altai Tatar's symbolic birch was deprived of its branches, with only its terminal foliage left to project through the apical hole of the *yurta*? The slightly feathered appearance of the Dongson Tree is only a

[1] loc. cit., pp. 184 f.
[2] loc. cit., p. 52 ; Schärer (op. cit., p. 152) states that the Ngadju head *balian's* head-dress represents the Cosmic Tree.
[3] A. Steinmann, " Das Kultische Schiff . . .," loc. cit., pp. 161–165.

characteristic shared by all the appurtenances of this boat which is designed to navigate through space.

The presence of the Cosmic Tree thus goes some distance towards establishing the shamanic character of the Dongson boats. Now its association with the drum is to be considered. In the burials excavated at the Dongson village, and apparently dating from a late period in which Chinese influence was present, a considerable number of miniature bronze drums were found. It has been suggested, in view of the use of these miniatures as grave gifts at Dongson, and similar grave gifts of gongs with the Karens and other present-day peoples, that the drum shown in the cabin of the boats on the early Dongson religious drums is to be regarded as a similar grave gift, intended to accompany the soul to the hereafter.[1] Admittedly the use of miniatures or worthless imitations of valuable objects as grave gifts by later peoples is a widespread degeneration of custom. Consequently there would be nothing contrary to this interpretation in the fact that the drums shown in the boats on the early Dongson religious drums are obviously of full size. But another interpretation is equally likely. Perhaps it is even more so in view of the fact that on the Ngadju Dayak boats the gongs are but one of a variety of grave gifts or valuable possessions that are represented as accompanying the dead, whereas in the Dongson boat's cabin the drum stands alone (sometimes with one other object), and thus appears of special importance. That this importance could be in connection with the original magico-religious significance of the drum gains support from the fact that something very like this original significance is preserved in the use which the Ngadjus make of a rice-filled gong as a symbol of the Cosmic Mountain, on which they place the painted representation of the Cosmic Tree.[2]

[1] R. Heine-Geldern, " Bedeutung . . . ," loc. cit., p. 531.
[2] P. te Wechel, loc. cit., p. 52.

We have seen that the Turco-Tatars and Mongols regard their drum as a microcosm which, as with the symbolic tree, projects the shaman to the vicinity of the Cosmic Axis and enables him in ecstasy to penetrate to the highest heavens. Furthermore, we have noticed that some Siberian shamans refer to their drums as their horse or deer, i.e. as their vehicle for making the ecstatic journey, while the Chukchi shaman actually calls his drum his boat. To me, therefore, it seems that this conjunction of symbolic tree and drum, as perhaps the most prominent features of the Dongson boat's equipment, is extremely significant. It may well be considered to afford the strongest evidence that this boat is indeed a shamanic vehicle.

The question now arises as to whether any of the personages in the boats on the Ngoc-lu and Hoang-ha drums may be considered to be shamans. Vroklage,[1] referring to some very interesting scenes painted on a South Bornean bamboo quiver, now in the Leiden museum, thought that the aerial boat shown to the left of the house roof bore a Chinese jar containing a dead person being taken by two shamans to the after-world by moonlight. To the right of the house roof is another boat which he thought was the same one returning from the voyage by daylight, the sun and moon being shown on opposite sides of the house. He supported this interpretation by other details, such as the drum-beating in the attic and a scene in the left-hand room of the house which appears to show two shamans trying to resuscitate a sick person, efforts which were evidently unavailing. I think that Vroklage's interpretation of the whole scene is very plausible, especially if we add that on the ground, to the right of the house, there stands an obvious *sandong*, with a symbolic Cosmic Tree beside it. Steinmann, however,

[1] Vroklage, loc. cit., p. 743 and fig. B. 13.

doubts it, on the ground that the dress of the supposed shamans is that of warriors.[1]

In so far as this case provides a parallel which may throw light on the identity of the occupants of the boats on the Dongson religious drums, my opinion is that the problem is wrongly posed. It ought not to be put in the form of the question " shaman or warrior ? ". Once the shaman has got away from earth and is making the ecstatic journey, ghostly weapons are needed. They are needed for the same purpose as that for which the Siberian shaman provides himself with miniature bow and arrows, or lance, sword, and axe, or the East Toraja shaman has her shield and spear. That is to say they are required to repulse the attacks of evil spirits.

During such ghostly combats the protector and helper spirits give their aid. Though it seems that these hovered in the guise of hornbills during the preparation of the rice offerings, once aboard the boat they mostly take human form, even if still somewhat modified by ornithomorphic symbolism. Which then is the shaman of all the Dongson boat's company, steersman, archer or " warriors " it would be difficult to say. But it is evident that they all wear exaggerated feather head-dresses, sometimes with bird heads or the circles with dots which symbolize their rôle as space navigators. This distinguishes them from the paddlers and warriors, with their simpler head-dresses, of the secular Laos drum.

Nor could it be logically argued that death is the event that has transformed the simple head-dresses, etc., of the earthly warriors of the Laos drum into the complex symbolism of the figures in the religious drums' boats. Dead warriors are not likely to have been portrayed in such a lively manner as Goloubew supposed. Consider how different in the active vitality of their movements are these personages from the stiff inanimate figures

[1] Steinmann, loc. cit., p. 164.

shown in the boats of the Sumatran textiles. How rightly has Steinmann observed that these "can scarcely represent the crew of the boat; they are rather the souls of the dead".[1] The obtrusive representation of the latter, in a modern cult in which ancestor worship comes ever more and more to the fore, serves to emphasize, in my opinion, that the boats on the early religious drums were primarily vehicles for the shamans, for whom the conducting of souls to the afterworld was not the only duty.

In summarizing the results so far reached I would emphasize that there can be no question of picturing the religion of the Dongsonians, even as these were established in Indonesia, as closely similar to that of the modern non-Indianized and non-Islamized peoples of Borneo and Celebes. Cultural loss and other forms of change—though balanced to a certain extent by the conserving tendency—rule out that possibility. We have only used the evidence from these peoples in order to gain an idea of the main characteristics of the Dongsonians' religion. The reason that many of their beliefs and usages are so significant is that they correspond to beliefs and usages foreign to the settled Older Megalithic peoples, but proper to the nomads of Central Asia whose influence in South-east Asia as bringers of bronze and of certain art styles has long been recognized. The religion of these nomads was shamanism, with the worship of celestial deities. This religion, though doubtless already influenced by Babylonian and Assyrian cosmology, was then free from the influence of the great world religions, as well as the ancestor worship of the settled agricultural Mongoloid peoples. In Yunnan and northern Indochina there took place towards the middle of the first millennium B.C. a hybridization of the nomadic bronze-using people's culture with that of the settled Neolithic Malayo-Polynesian speaking population

[1] Steinmann, "Les tissus à jonques . . . ," loc. cit., p. 132.

in this region. Though democratization took place, the shamanism was at first strictly the religion of the upper class, representing the new arrivals, while the local people continued to follow an impoverished form of the religion belonging to the Older Megalithic. This was largely a cult of chthonic force, in which the ancestor element did not yet predominate. As the influence of this hybrid culture spread down the coast of Annam and through Indonesia, probably not later than the middle of the first millennium B.C., it gradually lost strength, so that in the Lesser Sunda Islands the Older Megalithic maintained itself or at least ultimately succeeded in regaining much of its old position.

CHAPTER IV

INDIANIZATION AND LOCAL GENIUS

I must now outline briefly the nature of the events which brought about the change known as Indianization in the culture of South-east Asia. I must also recall the main features of the theory on which I explain the differentiation of the Indianized cultures. This theory will in subsequent chapters be extended in its application to religious developments, in the light of the further knowledge acquired of prehistoric religions in the area. But in the main this chapter will be devoted to dealing with objections that have been raised against my theory: in particular the criticisms levelled by Prof. F. D. K. Bosch in his paper " 'Local Genius' en Oud-Javaanse Kunst ".[1]

By way of discharging the first preliminary it will not be necessary for me to do more than repeat the passage in which I formerly expressed my agreement with the views of Cœdès : " The most probable hypotheses as to the conditions under which Indian influences were brought to bear on the Môn-Khmer and Malayo-Polynesian speaking peoples of South-east Asia have been well summarized by M. Cœdès. He concludes that the introduction of the Hindu cultural pattern was a gradual process, beginning with the arrival of a few merchants and adventurers who later became more numerous and were accompanied by Brahmans. Such contacts, beginning at an unknown but relatively remote period, are first substantiated archaeologically in the second to third century A.D. The superior cultural

[1] *Med. der Kon. Ned. Akad. van Wetenschappen, afd. Letterkunde*, Nieuwe Reeks, Deel 15, No. 1, 1952.

endowments of the immigrants which, as we shall see, were cognate to those of the local peoples and therefore readily acceptable by them, assured the newcomers of a welcome. They frequently intermarried, and they were often employed by the local rulers. Indianized kingdoms soon came into being, either as a result of an Indian imposing himself on the native population, or else through a native chief adopting the foreign civilization. The Indian social structure with its caste system was less thoroughly absorbed than was the religion. In considering the actual means of introduction of the Indian civilization Cœdès gives due weight to the influence of the Hindu theoretical treatises or *śāstras*, rightly rejecting the extreme importance that some have wished to ascribe to them. On the other hand he stresses the probable efficacy of the impressions gained by native visitors from South-east Asia to the sacred places of India, a factor which had previously received no consideration." [1]

Since the importance of this last means of spreading Indian influences had thus been fully recognized by Cœdès, and I was well aware of it, it hardly seems necessary for Prof. Bosch, in the above-mentioned paper, to devote 13 pages out of the 25 to re-emphasizing it.

Many readers will already be familiar with my views as to the way in which the differentiation of the Indianized cultures was produced. Here I shall summarize very concisely the theory by which I proposed to open the way towards a solution of this outstandingly important problem.[2] In the "western zone" of Greater India the Indian acculturation was extreme,

[1] Summarized in *The Making of Greater India*, pp. 19 f., from G. Cœdès' *Les États Hindouisés d'Indochine et d'Indonésie*, Paris, 1948, Ch. II. It is understood that this picture applies mainly to the official culture, with which we are chiefly concerned, the Indian influence being naturally far less effective in circles removed from the court.

[2] For fuller details see *The Making of Greater India*, pp. 16–18; *The Mountain of God*, pp. 132 f.

so that what I shall speak of as local genius was destroyed ; a colonial imitative art was relieved only by occasional borrowings. It is in the "eastern zone" (Java, Champa, and Cambodia) that local genius was alive and active. However, it is important to realize that this does not mean a cultural *fusion*. In Greater India there was never a fusion of cultures except as an initial stage in the replacement of the local by the Indian. There was in fact Indianization. The pre-Indian civilization survived in the " subconscious " of the Indianized people (of the eastern zone) where it was necessarily not available for fusion with the imported culture, at least not until there was an open resurgence of the pre-Indian culture, which happened in the case of Java and Champa after Indian cultural influences had waned. During the formative period, the Indian influence, or stimulus as I have called it, came in a number of overlapping waves extending over many centuries. While being thoroughly acculturated the people responded to this stimulus in the light of their local genius, the continuing effect of their repressed previous civilization. This was far from being just one ingredient in a " mixture ". In conditioning the response to the foreign stimulus (whether this be influence from India or from some other culture), local genius provides the active agency which moulds the borrowed material, giving it an original twist and at the same time preserving and emphasizing the distinctive character of the evolution. Local genius first reveals itself as a preference for what are evidently the more congenial traits of a new cultural pattern. Then, as Indian influences begin to wane, local genius gradually gains in its power to mould the Indian pattern.[1] I shall refer later in this

[1] I must mention here that M. Cœdès and I do not see the action of the pre-Hindu civilization in exactly the same light. This is perhaps inevitable since I have gone more into the prehistoric data and have also availed myself of the progress made by others in the relatively new study of culture change. As I have pointed out elsewhere (*The*

chapter to the actual constitution of local genius in each case.

Now for Professor Bosch. Having in the first ten pages of his paper outlined my theory, and pronounced an emphatic general condemnation of it, he states that he will not deal with it piece by piece, but will " switch on to an entirely different tack " (p. 10). So the battlefield is entirely of his own choosing, be it noted. Then follow the thirteen pages devoted to showing, by analogy with the known importance for the spread of Indian culture to China of the activities of the Chinese pilgrims, that Indian influences must in large measure have been brought to South-east Asia by Indonesian (no doubt also by Khmer and Cham) pilgrims, though unlike the Chinese travellers they have left no records. At last Bosch comes back to my theory, observing very truly that it will doubtless not concern me whether the Indianization took place in Java or in India. Only then, in one vehement culminating sentence, which must be reproduced here in English translation, do we discover his real attitude to the whole matter:

" With the example of the Chinese pilgrims before our eyes we know with great certainty that their Indonesian co-religionists who had visited India, must have belonged to the class of learned ecclesiastics, the

Mountain of God, pp. 132 f.) the nature and extent of the difference of opinion between us is clearly shown when he sets out his views as follows. He states that his impression is " that the ancient pre-Indian civilizations of Indochina and Indonesia, by whatever labels one may choose to distinguish them, have furnished the more or less rich, more or less complex, terrain on which developed the same foreign species of plant that from one country to another remains the same and only shows some differences due to differences of ' soil ' ". Here the metaphor " soil " gives the impression of a practically inert factor which merely lent a certain amount of colour to the imported culture. But would such a hypothesis, ignoring what is known of the principles of culture change, account for the observed facts ? It would certainly be quite a different matter from the selective and actively moulding human environment, still repressed within the Indian framework yet constantly gaining in power to guide the evolution, all of which conception can be conveyed, not by any analogy of a botanical nature, but by the useful abstraction I have termed " local genius ".

'clercen' as we have called them, and it is out of the question to consider that these people who visited India, driven by their ardent faith, and for whom the absolutely unique validity of all that was Indian stood firm above all else, should display any desire or inclination to yield to profane, i.e. in their eyes absolutely inferior and objectionable, atavistic tendencies—so far as these still existed at the back of their minds—that they would ever have wished to do other than faithfully follow to the utmost the Indian models." [1]

Here we have surely an emotional, almost a religious attitude on the part of Prof. Bosch himself, towards an ideal which it would seem must be preserved at all costs. I do not propose to answer it directly, or immediately. I think it may be more helpful to compare the views expressed by Prof. Cœdès, views which unquestionably have resulted from a coldly critical examination of the evidence.

After speaking appreciatively of the late Dr. Wm. Stutterheim's work on Javanese cultural development (to which I shall refer later), Cœdès expressed his conviction that the pre-Indian civilization of the Khmers had been the cause of their modification of Indian concepts, in the following unequivocal terms: "That there was in Cambodia an analogous phenomenon, it seems difficult to doubt, and even where India suffices to explain this religious conception or that architectural

[1] F. D. K. Bosch, loc. cit., p. 24. Rather perversely, it seems to me, in view of the above, Bosch tries to find originality in the *western zone* of Greater India. He even points to the true arch in Burma as something not introduced from India (p. 8, n. 2). But surely he does not ascribe it to local inventiveness? Of course he does recognize that the Javanese have transformed the heterogeneous mass of material received from India into something that is different, but how they did it "is largely a mystery and a mystery will it always remain unless some new startling finds throw light on it" (p. 25). Probably he regards this ability of the Javanese as racial or biological since he previously spoke of the "greater natural ability for decoration" of the peoples of Indonesia than of India. (*Rupam*, No. 17, p. 36). The broaching of cultural problems in racial terms is not likely to do much to dispel the "mystery".

realization of the ancient Khmers, it is none the less certain that their pre-Indian atavism gave to these a certain local colour and conditioned the direction of the evolution." [1]

Or again, more recently, " It is beyond doubt that the conception of the monuments of Cambodia derives from the religious thought of India, but it is none the less certain that their realization is the work of native artists who had their traditions inherited from a distant past, prior to the imposing of Indian culture on these countries of South-east Asia. It is in this reaction to local tradition, in what Sylvain Lévi called ' l'action de l'étranger ', that one must look for the causes of the originality of the art of Cambodia or of Java vis-à-vis the art of India." [2]

How realistic and free from prejudice this attitude of Cœdès towards " atavism " and its effects ! On the other hand it seems as though Bosch simply could not bring himself to look his subject matter squarely in the face : he speaks only of what he thinks the Indonesian ecclesiastics " would have wished to do ", not of what the evidence shows that they and their descendants did do. Did he never consider, moreover, what must have resulted from the ministration to the *devarāja* cult in Cambodia being made hereditary in a family of Khmer Brahmans, i.e. not new arrivals from India, while furthermore the succession was matrilineal ? Equally in Indonesia the position of women was superior to what it was in India,[3] and the influence on cultural develop-

[1] G. Cœdès, " La Destination funéraire des Grands Monuments Khmers," *BEFEO*, Vol. XL, p. 341. It may be noted that in using the phrase " conditioned the direction of the evolution " Coedès adopted a standpoint virtually indistinguishable from mine, which is not the case when he speaks only of " local colour " due to " differences of ' soil ' " (see page 114, above).

[2] G. Cœdès," Le Culte de la Royaute Divinisée, Source d'inspiration des Grands Monuments du Cambodge Ancien," *Serie Orientale Roma*, V, 1951.

[3] See, for example, R. C. Majumdar, *Suvarnadvipa*, Calcutta, 1938, pp. 12 ff., 44 f. ; also Barth and Bergaigne, *Inscriptions Sanscrites de Campā et du Cambodge*, 1893, p. 360, note 1.

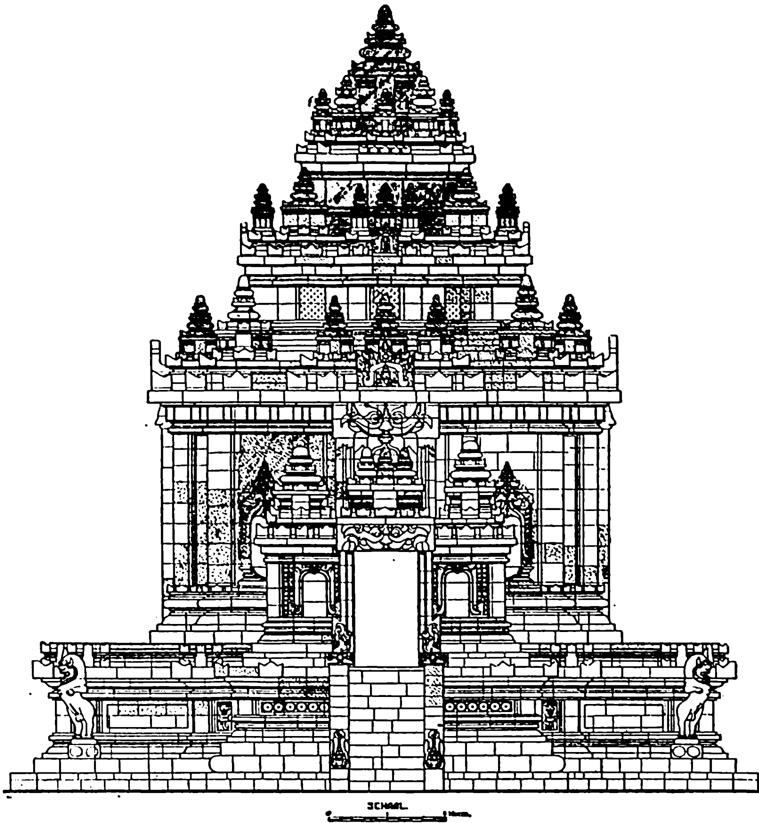

FIG. 17.—A typical central Javanese shrine (Chandi Ngawen) in which the *kāla* head retains its orthodox Indian shape.

ment of these stay-at-homes must have been proportionate. These are only mentioned as among the most obvious factors tending to produce culture change, however covert, to which Bosch closes his eyes, but the process was indeed immanent in the whole environment.

Two years later (1954) Prof. Bosch followed up his previous paper by a scarcely less devastating criticism of the work of the late Dr. Wm. Stutterheim. He was the scholar to whom I shall always think goes the chief credit for recognizing the principle and activity of pre-Hindu cultural resurgence in Java, and by extension in South-east Asia more generally, even though he was not in a position to recognize fully the character of the resurging cultures.[1] This further article of Prof. Bosch is entitled "Uit de Grensgebieden tussen Indische invloedssfeer en oud-inheems volksgeloof op Java".[2] Possibly he would have thought twice about writing this article had he recollected his own better judgment of Stutterheim's work as expressed in the following words in the obituary he had written of the late scholar some years before: "Each problem which he tackled was regarded by him with an unprejudiced and critical eye, and it was often given to his fine intuition and strongly developed power of combination to find a solution which, startling though it might be, would at first encounter objections but would later prove to be the only correct one."[3]

Taking care at the outset to dissociate himself from the "cultural imperialism" of certain Indian writers (quite necessary in view of the sentence we have quoted from his former paper), Bosch proceeds in the article we are now considering to attack the views of Stutter-

[1] I have outlined Stutterheim's conclusions, with references, in *The Making of Greater India*, pp. 124 ff., and *The Mountain of God*, pp. 121 ff.

[2] *Bijdragen*, 110, pt. 1, 1954, pp. 1–19.

[3] F. D. K. Bosch in *Indian Art and Letters*, Vol. XIX, No. 2, 1945, p. 86.

heim. In particular he rejects his important conclusion "that the entombing of old Javanese kings was not a Hinduistic practice grown in course of time more and more Indonesian, but a thoroughly Indonesian ceremony, which on Java and Bali took a Hinduistic form and should be considered as a higher form of the analagous ceremonies of the Dayaks and other Indonesian peoples not influenced by the Hindus . . . nearly all pieces of any significance fashioned of natural stone, and thus able to resist the wear of ages, belonged in the past to the cult of dead kings ".[1]

Against this Bosch tries to show that there was in fact a cult of dead kings also in India, and asks us to believe that there must once have existed in India texts devoted to such a cult. These, he says, there became a dead letter, but were welcomed in Java where they led to the development of the cult, no doubt in syncretism with a local ancestor worship. Now, as I pointed out in comparing the Indian and Khmer concepts of kingship,[2] I do not wish to postulate any precise distinctions but rather differences in degree and emphasis. But one striking difference I did note, which Bosch overlooks in comparing the statues of Javanese and Indian kings and gods, is that in India the statues that were made of Hindu kings represented them *without* the attributes that would make them indistinguishable from the Hindu gods. That in Majapahit times the Javanese kings were represented holding certain objects in their hands and displaying certain characteristic *mudras* is fully understandable because by that time only a general utilization of the Hindu god-like form was intended. But in the XIIIth century sculpture of Singhasāri there is no doubt that deceased kings were portrayed with fully god-like attributes.

[1] W. F. Stutterheim, "The Meaning of the Hindu-Javanese Candi," *Journ. of the American Oriental Soc.*, Vol. LI, pt. 1, 1931, p. 5.

[2] *The Mountain of God*, pp. 150–153.

Strangely enough, in view of his efforts to establish the Javanese cult of dead kings as of Indian origin, Bosch tries to reinsure his position by denying (p. 11) that the Singhasāri sculptures represent royal personages or were other than the deities they appear to be. But if the corrected dating of one statue upsets the particular identification hitherto ascribed to it, this cannot negative the existence of the custom, as for example the probable representation of queen Dedes as Prajñāpāramitā and of king Anūṣapati as Śiva. But here again we may do well to broaden our basis of comparison, by referring to Cambodia :

" From the IXth to the XIIth century, an uninterrupted series of instances proves the existence of a cult rendered to images which bore the attributes of the great figures of the Hindu and Buddhist pantheons, but whose names recalled the titles and the appearance of personages dead or even still living. Of the innumerable statues of Viṣṇu, of Śiva, of Harihara, of Lakshmī, of Pārvatī, of the Bodhisattvas which the ancient Khmer empire has bequeathed to us, very few without doubt represent in a manner that one might call impersonal these great figures of the Indian pantheon. The great majority of these images are those of kings, of princes and of great dignitaries portrayed with the appearance of the god in whom they have been or will be absorbed after their earthly span. The names the statues bear, generally composed by the fusion of their name with that of the god, show that it is a matter of a personal cult." [1]

It was the same in Champa. A relationship which had existed, as is shown by the epigraphy, from very early times, is most graphically illustrated by the remarkable *liṅga* of Pō Nraup where, unlike any purely Indian conception, the ancestor/god is seen issuing from his stone, while his double, repeated in his lap,

[1] G. Cœdès, *Les États . . .* , p. 207.

is the reigning king who assures contact between ancestor/god and people.[1]

Bosch further seeks to justify his rejection of the identification as royal portrait statues of what he considers to be purely Indian divinities on the grounds that even in A.D. 1365, according to the Nāgarakrĕtāgama chronicle, only 12 per cent of religious buildings were identified as royal grave-temples. The rest were Buddhist, Śaivite or Vaiṣṇava foundations, according to the chronicle. But what was really the nature of the deity known as "Śiva" or "Viṣṇu" in Majapahit times, or the Buddhist deity such as Akṣobhya with whom King Kṛtanagara was identified even in his lifetime? M. Cœdès does not feel any doubt, at any rate, with regard to the dedication to the royal funerary cult of the principal monuments of Angkor: "Prah Kō, Lolei, Bakhèng, Mébon, Prè Rup, Phiméanakas, Angkor Wat, Bantéay Samrè, Ta Prohm, Prah Khan, Bayon, where have been found either the statues of deified dead kings or even the sarcophagi." [2]

Bosch next proceeds to deny the existence of Javanization as seen by Stutterheim, that is to say a gradual process of resurgence of local civilization as Hindu influences wane, until in Majapahit times the Hindu traits are merely complementary to a revived pre-Hindu culture. Bosch only allows a certain degree of substitution of Javanese concepts at more popular levels. He maintains that from the earliest times of Central Java down to present-day Bali a hard core of Indian origin continued "insoluble in the magma of its Indonesian surroundings, unassailable by all influences of time and place". This core, he says, is the priestly ritual of Tantric character which was supreme in the Hindu and late Buddhist sects which introduced it to Java.

[1] P. Mus, "Cultes Indiens . . . ," fig. 10, reproduced in *The Mountain of God*, fig. 12.

[2] G. Cœdès, *Pour Mieux Comprendre Angkor*, Paris, 1947, p. 59.

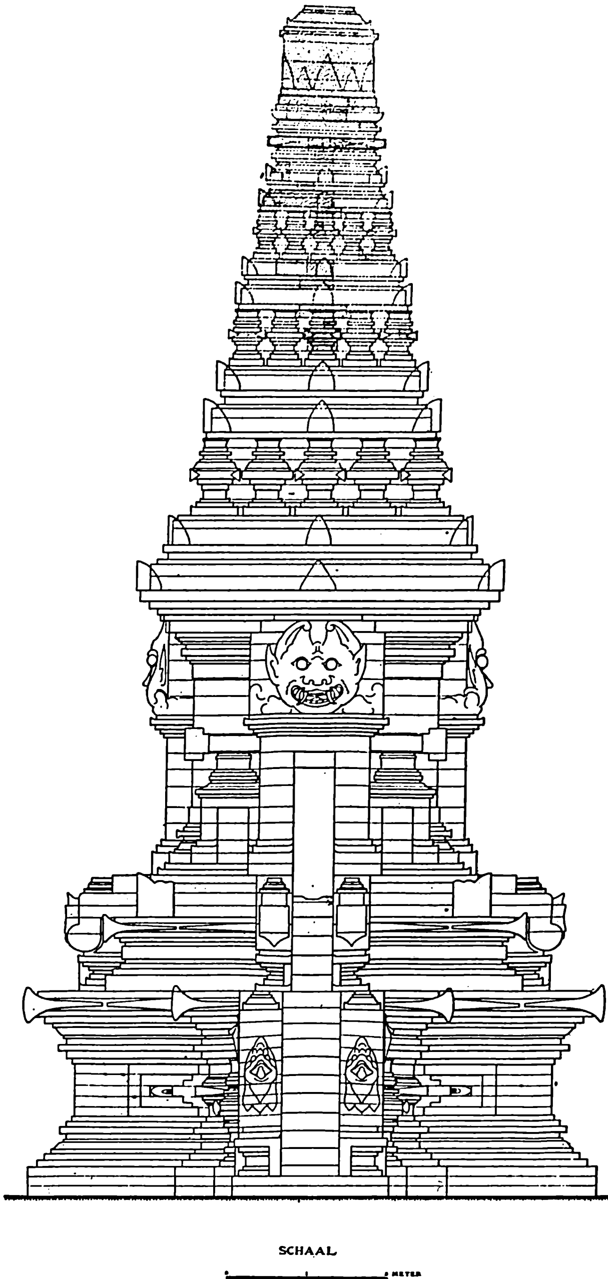

FIG. 18.—A typical early Majapahit shrine (Chandi Sawentar) in which the *kāla* head has become rounded, owing to solarization of the deity.

But Tantrism is surely a poor support for any such argument. As Bosch must well know, Tantrism itself stems from a partial resurgence of pre-Aryan cults in North-eastern India, so the process which he seeks to deny had already been at work in his hard core even before it left India. Moreover in XVth-century Java, "Hindu" Javanese kings, despite the Tantrism of which they made a ready use, were producing pyramid-shrines like Sukuh, such as would have undoubtedly caused considerable astonishment to any "orthodox" Tantrists in Bengal.

Again we should settle the question by broadening our viewpoint. This time Champa, better than Cambodia, where the coming of Hīnayāna Buddhism halted the normal process, will provide the needed sidelight. It will be sufficient to refer to Paul Mus who says: "Almost all Cham cults show three stages: indigenous religion, application and assimilation of Hinduism, return to the indigenous." [1]

Now I must briefly return to Bosch's criticism of my own theory. I had to deal first with what he chose to make his main line of attack, but in the course of his introductory general condemnation he just mentioned another line, which might have been more adroitly exploited. It had at least the appearance of a rapier thrust, but he preferred to wield the bludgeon. He says (and I need not comment on the conflict of this statement with his second paper) that where I follow Stutterheim, Krom, and other scholars who have thought on similar lines, I am generally on safe ground; but while they have stressed the importance of an old indigenous factor, no one has dared to analyse the factor into its components, and wisely, in view of the paucity of the prehistoric evidence.[2] No doubt. But this is really no more than a statement of the task awaiting

[1] P. Mus, loc. cit., p. 394.

[2] F. D. K. Bosch, "'Local Genius' . . . ," loc. cit., p. 9.

our attention, a goal which becomes ever more nearly attainable with the interpretation of the prehistoric data on a soundly comparative basis.

Certainly Stutterheim himself would not have countenanced the limitations Bosch would impose. Here are his words to prove it: "What is then the old indigenous factor? Is it an unknown quantity, of which the origin lies in the past, whereof we have no records, that must be placed in the indeterminate vagueness of ethnology and ethnography without circumscription of time or scarcely of place? Or will it be possible to get to know something more of it? In my opinion the chances for the latter are fairly good."[1] This foresight is not the less laudable because his own efforts were thwarted by the backwardness of prehistoric research and interpretation when he wrote, and because of the pan-Egyptian miasma of his time which hindered thought in terms of more than one component.

Nevertheless, that the possibility of such analysis should arouse misgivings in the minds of some is natural enough. Such doubts were indeed voiced quite independently, in the following words, by a reviewer of *The Making of Greater India*: "This is not to say that there is not a good deal of truth in the idea of a 'local genius' which selects those foreign influences which it cares to use and adopts them. But that this genius can be analysed as though it were a chemical compound and regarded as the sum of various elements is a hazardous view."[2]

To maintain the chemical metaphor, I would reply that since the investigation of culture change is so much younger than is chemical analysis we cannot expect the same refinement of technique, but that is no reason for abandoning the undertaking any more than

[1] W. F. Stutterheim, "Oost-Javaansche Kunst," *Djawa*, Vol. 7, 1927, p. 193.

[2] Basil Gray, in *The Asiatic Review*, April, 1952, p. 147.

did our chemist pioneers. Even in chemical research to-day it is well known to be premature to apply quantitative technique while one is still occupied in establishing proper qualitative methods. No one recognizes better than I do that while we are still only blazing the trail in general terms, the application of my theory to measurements of detail would be just as premature.

Now I should like to suggest that if we are able to attribute to a *specific* previous civilization a local genius which happens to be of homogeneous constitution, at any rate in so far as its power to influence the evolution after Indianization is concerned, then we have already advanced a long way towards our goal of analysing a more complex local genius. Thus with Khmer culture the local genius is entirely based, according to my theory, on the Older Megalithic culture, which brought to South-east Asia the religious ideas of ancient Mesopotamia. And my conclusion does not have to stand alone for, though by a somewhat different route, M. Cœdès has come to closely comparable results. It will not, I think, be out of place to recall here the most interesting parallel that he has traced between the main features of the Khmer religion and the ancient Chinese cult of the god of the soil :

In China the emperor established the mound of the great god of the soil inside the palace, facing the ancestor altar, and a mound for his private god of the soil outside the city to the south. Now the Khmer king placed the royal god on a pyramid, really only a square mound which, however, combined the two Chinese gods, for it was both private and situated near the centre of the city. Cœdès then recalls that the royal *liṅga* which the Chinese envoy Chou Ta-kuan saw at Angkor in the XIIIth century, so reminded that celestial of the ancient Chinese pillar of the god of the soil that he reported that " it is a block of stone very similar to the stone of

the altar of the god of the soil in China ". Cœdès further mentions that the Chinese custom of investing a vassal king with a clod from the imperial god of the soil's mound is paralleled in at least one instance in Cambodia : King Yaśovarman gave a Brahman a chip from the stone from which the royal *liṅga* had been cut, so that he might make from it a small *liṅga* for a religious foundation on a piece of vacant land which the king had granted him on the occasion of setting up the royal *liṅga*. In China the god of the soil presided over war ; in ancient Cambodia an inscription tells of the giving after victory of a portion of the booty to the golden *liṅga* of the royal god. In China, when a dynasty was overthrown, the mound of the god of the soil was converted into a dead god ; in Cambodia it was the temple-mountain, emplacement of the *liṅga* of the royal god of the reign, that was converted, though on the death of a king not at the end of a dynasty, into the king's mausoleum. Just as in China, though not facing it inside the royal palace, the Khmer temple for the royal ancestors was constructed at the same time as the temple-mountain, and being smaller was usually finished first.[1]

Having made this comparison, Cœdès concluded that the resemblances between the Khmer and Chinese religions are not due to chance. He stresses that there is no question of their being the result of any Chinese influence, direct or indirect, on the Khmer religion. " They find their explanation " he says " in the common origin of the two cults ". But in that paper he remains vague about the place of common origin. He had, however, been more explicit in a previous publication as to the source of the Khmer temple-mountain which he now equates with the mound of the Chinese god of the soil :

[1] Summarized from G. Cœdès, " Le Culte de la Royaute Divinisée . . ." loc. cit.

"This miraculous *liṅga*," says Cœdès, "sort of palladium of the kingdom, is generally considered as having been obtained from Śiva by the intermediary of a Brahman who gives it to the king, founder of the dynasty. This communication between the god by the intermediary of a priest is made on a holy mountain, natural or artificial, and by this conception we rejoin the old Mesopotamian beliefs." [1] That the Old Asiatic religion probably became effective in China at a later date than in South-east Asia, and was brought to China by a different culture from that which introduced it to South-east Asia, does not affect the important conclusion as to the place of common origin of the Old Asiatic religion, which through local genius so powerfully affected the development of Khmer culture.

What can be discovered in the case of one Indianized culture can obviously be done in the case of another having a different but largely homogeneous local genius. Nor should we expect that a combination of the two factors in one local genius must be beyond our powers to determine.

In countering the objections that have been raised against my theory I have mainly relied on quoting the views of scholars whose opinions the reader may think no less worthy of consideration than are those of my critics. This has seemed to me better than to have used arguments which must have amounted largely to a restatement of my already published conclusions. But now comes the time to enter upon a new demonstration, in the light of the new material that I have brought together in the present work, and especially of the results of my researches on the ancient religion of the Dongsonians.

[1] G. Cœdès, "La fondateur de la royauté angkorienne et les récentes découvertes archéologiques au Phnom Kulen," *Cahiers de l'École française*, 14, pp. 40–48, as quoted by L. P. Briggs, *The Ancient Khmer Empire*, p. 90.

When I first stated my theory it had to rely mainly on the evidence of art. I was not unaware that religion ought to provide an equally rich field. So in *The Mountain of God* I essayed to show the nature of the genius that was responsible for the special character of Khmer religion, and the religion of the later Majapahit period in Java. But lack of all understanding of the Dongsonian religion made it impossible to contrast the Cham religious development with that of the Khmers, or to explain it as other than merely lacking the positive features that distinguished the Khmer royal religion. The same deficiency was responsible for my inability to explain the peculiarities of the earlier Majapahit religion, peculiarities which were active in Java long before that period, except by continuing to entertain for the time being the possible existence of an Egyptian element in which I felt little faith. In concluding *The Making of Greater India*, foremost among the still baffling problems that I mentioned was " the problem of the solar aspect of Javanese religion, the tentative solution of which that I suggest is merely what I consider best covers the facts as at present known to us ". I well realized that only by extending our knowledge of pre- and proto-history could the situation be remedied.

Now, as we shall see, any question of an Egyptian element in Javanese local genius can be eliminated. I also think that, so far as religion is concerned, we can also safely omit any Chinese element from consideration. This will simplify our discussion, and yet focus attention on the main issues. As before, my working hypothesis will be that the local genius actuating Khmer religious development is Older Megalithic, that actuating Cham religion is Dongsonian, while that responsible for the Indo-Javanese religious evolution is constituted by both Older Megalithic and Dongsonian elements, the former, being the oldest, not coming into open resurgence until the latest period prior to the coming of Islam. In

entering now upon this demonstration of the contrasting effects of local genius in producing a certain differentiation I would remind the reader that from the first I have stressed that I do not claim that local genius is responsible for every vicissitude in cultural evolution. *It is sufficient if local genius gives direction to evolution.*

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CHAPTER V

THE PULL OF EARTH

I do not propose to repeat here the evidence which led me to conclude that the Khmers of Cambodia must in Neolithic times have shared the same Older Megalithic culture which the distribution of the shouldered adze shows to have been associated with the Môn-Khmer speaking peoples in general.[1] In this

[1] *The Mountain of God*, pp. 135–142. But one new point of interest in that connection may here be mentioned. On the basis of an inscription from Wat Luong Kau near Wat Phu, in the neighbourhood of Bassak on the right bank of the middle Mekong, Cœdès has shown (" Nouvelles données sur les Origines du Royaume Khmer," *BEFEO*, Vol. XLVIII, 1956, pp. 210–220) strong reasons to believe that in the Vth century A.D. the valley of the middle Mekong above the Khon rapids was ruled by a dynasty which certain indications tend to make one believe was reigning in Champa. The plain south of the Dangrek mountains and the Mekong valley, for some distance south of the Khon rapids, was under the authority of Khmer chiefs, more or less under the suzerainty of Fu-nan. In the second half of the Vth century they extended their power to the north : their victory over the Chams there was marked by the installation of the cult of Bhadreśvara, the national deity of Champa, on the Liṅgaparvata mountain of Wat Phu. Thus the Khmer kingdom originated further south than had previously been supposed, and only succeeded in extending its sway over what had previously been considered the early Khmer homeland, after the Chams had first been dispossessed. Not only the indications in the inscription, but certain local legends, support this conclusion. The deductions arrived at by Cœdès are, needless to say, of very great importance for the history of the Khmer kingdom, and they support in some measure the views expressed by L. P. Briggs (*The Ancient Khmer Empire*, pp. 15, 38, 44). But it does not entitle one to suppose that the Chams founded Wat Phu, as Briggs suggests, nor that the Khmers reached their first homeland via the Mun river instead of southward down the upper Mekong. A historical ray of light shed by the inscription on the situation in the Vth century A.D., and indicating an occupation by the Chams of the middle Mekong at this time, can have no weight against the evidence of prehistory. This speaks in favour of the Khmers having occupied the middle Mekong for many centuries, perhaps millennia before this time, the evidence being primarily the association of the shouldered adze with the Môn-Khmer speaking peoples. Then again the mountain terrace-shrine which forms the core of the Wat Phu temple cannot be explained in terms of Cham ideas of sacred places, whereas it is of the essence of

chapter my main purpose will be to show the chthonic character of Khmer religion, thereby demonstrating that the Khmers, however thoroughly they may have absorbed Indian religion, were continually tending to interpret it more and more in accordance with the promptings of their local genius.

I shall begin by introducing a new piece of evidence as to the chthonic character of Śiva in the eyes of the Khmers, on the basis of the epithets of that god in the inscriptions. To my knowledge eight Khmer inscriptions refer to Śiva under the epithet Giriśa, the mountain lord.[1] As this term for Śiva, or for kings united with that deity, has not been recorded in either Java [2] or Champa, we might suppose that it had a special

what inspired the whole series of classical Khmer temples. Probably it had been a Khmer sacred place from remote prehistoric times; and the Khmers during the Cham occupation would have continued to form the basis of the population. That seems to me to be the most likely explanation of the reverence in which this mountain site continued to be held by the Khmers throughout their history. But even if we were to suppose that some Cham tribes had been in part occupation of the Middle Mekong region since Neolithic times, being remote from the coast they would not have received the full Dongsonian acculturation as did the coastal Chams. They would have maintained their basic Older Megalithic culture and would in fact have been part of the Malayo-Polynesians of Quadrangular Adze culture who intermingled with, and imparted their Older Megalithic culture to, the Môn-Khmers of Shouldered Adze culture (see page 21).

[1] G. Cœdès, *Inscriptions du Cambodge*, makes the following mentions of Giriśa: Inscr. of Kdei An, near Vyadhapura, late VIIth century, refers to gifts to Giriśa, and Cœdès points out that it refers to Ba Phnom (Vol. III, pp. 158, 163, and see *BEFEO*, XXVIII, pp. 128 f.); an inscr. of Sambor-Prei Kuk of VIIth century, from group S, mentions Giriśa mountain, perhaps Wat Phu as Sambor Prei Kuk is flat (Vol. IV, pp. 17 ff); Three inscriptions near mouth of Mun river and one from Surin mention erection of Giriśa *liṅga* at three sites by Mahendravarman (Vol. I, p. 3); Inscr. of Samroṅ, early XIIth century A.D. from one league north-east of Angkor Thom mentions erection of (Śiva) Giriśa on the central mountain (Phnom Bakheng ?) (Vol. IV, p. 190); Inscr. of Prasat Tor, Reign of Jayavarman VII, mentions donations to Giriśa (Vol. I, p. 248).

[2] My statement on p. 142 of *The Making of Greater India* is in error. It should also be noted that the situation of the Javanese high mountain temples of Dieng does not in itself indicate a chthonic trend, but can equally result from a sky association of heaven. So also Śailendra, "king of the mountain" need not have the chthonic significance apparently attaching to Giriśa.

significance for the Khmers. That the aspect of Śiva associated with the name Giriśa is probably chthonic is suggested not only by the generally chthonic bias of Khmer religion, the evidence for which will appear later, but also by another epithet which has so far only been recorded in Khmer inscriptions : Gambhireśvara, Śiva of the depths. It is found in seven texts.[1] When we think of the wealth of Cham epigraphy, in particular, and how thoroughly it has been studied, so that Majumdar lists forty-six names of Śiva,[2] it does not seem to be taking a very great risk to say that the preference for the names Giriśa and Gambhireśvara represent something peculiar to the Khmer outlook. Even if a future find should provide the exceptional, this would hardly detract from the recognition of a very definite trend characteristic of the Khmer concept of Śiva.

Another feature which indicates the chthonic character of Khmer religion is the *nāgī* origin myths. Thus, as between the Khmers and the Chams, not only have we the stories in Cambodian chronicles and Chinese reports concerning the origin of the first Fu-nan dynasty from a *nāgī* (serpent-woman), and the continued association of a serpent-spirit with the fortunes of the Khmer kingdom, but it is a *Cham* inscription of A.D. 658, not a Khmer one, that records the Fu-nan legend.[3] From this one can infer that the *nāgī* origin of the first Fu-nan dynasty was considered by the Chams to be something

[1] Two inscrs. from Ak Yom of VIIth–early VIIIth century A.D. refer to Gambhireśvara (Cœdès, op. cit. Vol. V, p. 57) ; the inscr. of Kok Roka mentions Gambhireśvara, and Cœdès says its findspot was probably near Sambor Prei Kuk and that it dates from the VIIth century (Vol. V, p. 28) ; Gambhireśvara was the chief deity of Sambor Prei Kuk and is mentioned in two VIIth century inscrs., while in a Xth century inscr. the restoration of the cult of this deity by Rajendravarman is mentioned (Vol. V, p. 5). Giriśa is also mentioned in an inscr. of Prasat Crun, Angkor Thom (Vol. IV, p. 253).

[2] R. C. Majumdar, *Champa*, Lahore, 1927, p. 171 f.

[3] L. Finot, " Sur quelques traditions Indochinoises," *Bull. Comm. Arch. de l'Indochine*, 1911, p. 32.

unfamiliar and therefore worthy of notice. There is much in favour of Przyluski's view that the *nāgī* origin legend is of "austroasiatic" origin, though it later spread widely in China and Aryan India.[1] The ultimate facts, however, may well be such that a reconciliation with the Western origin theory of Goloubew (who recalls the Heracles-Echidna myth) is a possibility.[2]

From the worship of a *liṅga* dedicated to a chthonic form of Śiva in earlier Khmer times we pass on to a consideration of the fully formed Angkorian royal religion, first known to us in the reign of Jayavarman II, at the beginning of the IXth century A.D. I shall not offer any apology for reproducing with little alteration in this chapter much of what I have said about it in *The Mountain of God*. The reason is that it is necessary for the reader to have its characteristics clearly in mind in order to appreciate the sharp contrast with it of the Cham and mediæval Indo-Javanese cults actuated by a very differently constituted local genius.

The first thing that we note about the Angkorian deity is that it is now referred to for the first time as the *devarāja* "the master of the world who is the royalty". The core of the cult, not in this respect seemingly different from the pre-Angkorian religion, was the belief that the "essence of royalty" or the "subtle personality of the king" resided in a *liṅga* obtained by a priest of Śiva. Through the intermediary of this *liṅga* the king communed with the deity. The cult was so adaptable, however, that when contemporary influences from India made Vaiṣṇavism temporarily popular, Viṣṇu was considered to be the *devarāja*; when there was an influx of late Mahāyāna Buddhism, the *devarāja* became a Buddha. In each of the last mentioned conditions the

[1] J. Przyluski, "La Princesse à l'odeur de poisson et la Nāgī," *Études Asiatiques*, II, pp. 265–284.

[2] V. Goloubew, "Les legendes de la Nāgī et de l'Apsaras," *BEFEO*, Vol. XXIV, 1924, pp. 501–510.

king's " subtle personality " was represented during his lifetime by a statue of Viṣṇu or Buddha having the features of the king—a portrait statue. But for the long period from the IXth to the middle of the XIIth century the *devarāja* was always represented as a *liṅga* or as a Śiva image. And Mus has demonstrated that the " essence of royalty, the king's subtle personality " was none other than Śiva, not however the supreme Śiva, but the local Śiva of the kingdom. The *liṅga* or statue, after the death of the king, was animated by his relics deposited at its base in urn or casket. Thanks to these his secret personality (Śiva) could still be contacted in his substitute body, just as the deity had been approachable during the king's lifetime. At the same time the king received a posthumous name, signifying that he had gone to the realm of Śiva, or of whatever god happened to be regarded as the *devarāja* at the time.

Now an important innovation introduced by Jayavarman II was the setting up of the *liṅga* on a stepped pyramid: the temple-mountain. That this pyramid was indeed intended to represent a mountain we know from the fact that a bas-relief on the Bantéay Srei temple (A.D. 968) shows a representation of Mount Kailāsa as a three-stepped pyramid. Since it was, so far as possible, placed in the centre of the city, the Khmer temple-mountain certainly had a cosmological significance as the centre of the royal microcosm, facilitating by magical means communication with the divine power. But such cosmological aspects, as we have seen, are secondary; the essential religious significance of the temple-mountain of the *devarāja* will be discussed below.

It had been supposed by Louis Finot some forty years ago, owing to the misinterpretation of an inscription, that the *devarāja* was represented throughout Angkorian history by a unique *liṅga*, a kind of palladium of the kingdom, which was transmitted by each ruler

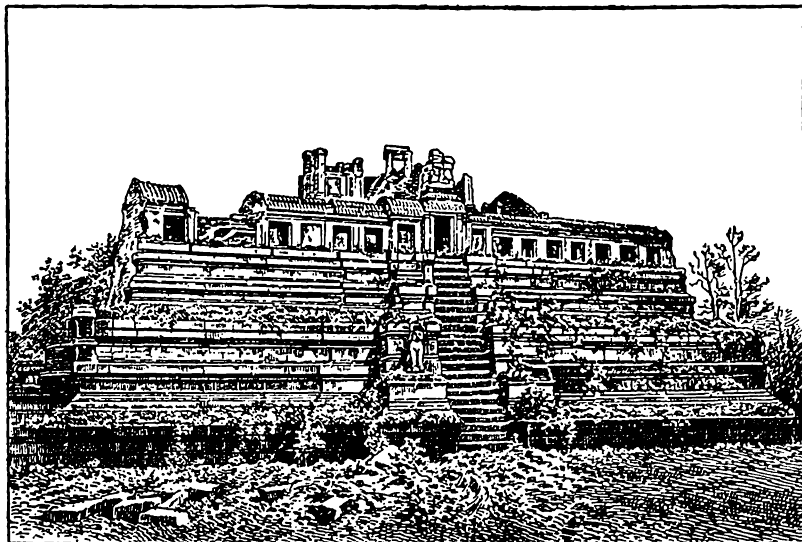

FIG. 19.—A typical Khmer temple-mountain, Phiméanakas, *circa* 1000 A.D.

to his successor. However, the difficulty had long been felt of reconciling this with the absence of any permanent temple of the royal god at Angkor, as well as the fact that, according to the texts, some kings had *liṅgas* of stone, others of gold. Now Cœdès has shown that in fact the "subtle personality" of each king was ensconced in a *liṅga* made especially for his reign, and this accompanied him in case of a change of capital. It was only as a philosophical idea, implying the existence of an abstraction of royalty, that the *devarāja* was unique. This correction having been made, the fact remains that Finot had accurately grasped the essential meaning of the *devarāja*, as indicated in the texts, when he wrote: "The *devarāja* is the abstract king, in his super-human nature, the royal essence blended with the divine essence under the form of the *liṅga*." Consequently, as Cœdès has now pointed out, it would not be correct to speak of the king's apotheosis after death, in the ordinary sense of deification, for the reason that the king had during his lifetime to some extent participated in the divine nature. This, as we shall see, is an important point.

A recognition of the peculiar character of the Khmer kingship is indeed essential to the understanding of the Khmer royal religion. This peculiar character is due to a bias there, beyond anything that could make itself felt in India, towards ideas of kingship associated with the Old Asiatic religion in combination, as in China, with a powerful element of ancestor worship. The difference to which I refer concerns the fact that in India the statues that were made of Hindu kings represented them without the attributes that would make them indistinguishable from the Hindu gods. As we have seen above (p. 134) the opposite was the case with the Khmers. And of the *devarāja* cult Cœdès has concluded that "if it comes from purely Indian ideas, it has been extended in Cambodia in a way that its

origins cannot completely explain ".[1] In regard to the features we have just considered the extension is evidently a direct outcome of the propensity for ancestor worship in the Khmer genius.

It is when we compare the special peculiarities of the Khmer religion with the earlier form of the Older Megalithic beliefs in South-east Asia, that the similarity of concepts is so striking that there seems little doubt as to the direction in which to look for the cause of the distinctive Khmer traits. The chiefs, among Khasis, Konyak Nagas, and Nias Islanders were not, like the Indians, merely devoted to a god with whom they hoped to be united. When they erected their menhirs, as with the Khmers, they recognized the consubstantial presence of the first ancestor/earth god in the stone as in themselves. The Nias chief calls his menhir or substitute body a " stone of glory " (*batu kabesaran*), while the Khmer king referred to his substitute body as a " body of glory " (*yaśaśśarīra*),[2] terms which may well point to a deep-seated relationship of ideas. This relationship no doubt concerns the consubstantial presence of the deity in both man and stone. But how is the local manifestation maintained after death ? When the Nias chief dies one of his souls remains in the stone, the other goes to the land of the dead. It is the same not only in China, but also among the Bondos and Bastar Gonds, to mention only those Older Megalithic peoples of whom we have specific information. We cannot doubt that the idea is basic also to the Khmers, if we are to account for the facts. On the other hand the possession of more than one soul is absolutely foreign to Hinduism,[3] and the single soul went to heaven where

[1] G. Cœdès, " Note sur l'Apothéose au Cambodge," *Bull. Comm. Arch. Indochine*, 1911, p. 48.
[2] G. Cœdès, " La destination funéraire . . . ," loc. cit., pp. 325 f.
[3] Hastings' *Encyclopaedia*, " Life and Death (Indian) " and " Soul (Hindu) " ; Sylvain Lévi, " La Transmigration des Ames dans les croyances des Hindous," in *Memorial Sylvain Lévi*,

it might achieve union with the deity. Thus united it is difficult to see how the dead king could be effectively contacted locally, at least not in the personal way found with the Khmers. However, I do not wish to postulate any precise distinction between the Khmer and Indian theories of kingship. The question is too complex and the evidence too uncertain for that. It is enough to note a difference in degree and in emphasis as the Indian concepts are gradually moulded by the Khmer genius.

In addition to what has already been indicated, there is further evidence for the chthonic character of Khmer religion. The Khmer king is described as " rich in *dharma* " which he has received from his predecessors and transmits to his successors.[1] This *dharma* corresponds clearly to the Chinese " virtue " and like it has become encrusted with moral precepts. So too in India, where the title *dharmarāja* involves the maintenance of the country's fertility and prosperity as well as the moral law. But, despite the chthonic origin of the Śiva *liṅga*, this fertility is conceived throughout Indian literature in terms more of celestial waters, of rainfall, than of chthonic energies, partly owing to the effect of Aryan ideas, and partly owing to the influence of late Babylonian sky religion. With the Khmers, on the other hand, despite the sky aspects of Hinduism, there is good reason to believe that the *dharma* referred to was conceived as of chthonic origin, as with the " virtue " of both Chinese and Older Megalithic peoples so long as these were under the influence of the Old Asiatic religion. This *dharma*, this relay of the deified energies of the soil of the kingdom, had to be maintained and passed on to each succeeding generation. That seems to be the basic reason, no doubt enhanced by the ancestor factor, for the Khmer king's anxious requests to his successors to animate his substitute body with his relics

[1] G. Cœdès, loc. cit., p. 329.

and maintain their cult. For the Khmers "the dharma is that which the king, rich in *dharma* (*dharmadhana*) has received from his predecessors and transmits to his successors, it is that which assures the transmission of the legitimate power (*dharmarājya*) of the 'royal hereditary substance' (*santatirājyasāra*)".[1] Moreover, there is definite evidence in favour of this chthonic interpretation of the Khmer *dharma*, apart from the Older Megalithic and Chinese analogy.

We have seen that the main innovation of Jayavarman II, as compared with the previous cult of the royal *liṅga*, was the setting up of the *liṅga* on a pyramid, instead of merely placing it in an Indian style sanctuary-tower at ground level. What was the origin and meaning of this striking innovation ?

M. Cœdès, while admitting[2] the influence of the ancient sacred mountain of the Khmers, originally suggested by me in *The Making of Greater India*, seems too impressed by the fact that Jayavarman's establishment of the cult of the temple-mountain was accompanied by the introduction of certain Tantric texts, to look for a Cambodian origin of the temple-mountain. While he does not actually say so in his recent articles, one can see that what is actuating him is the thought that Tantrism is a partial resurgence of pre-Aryan cults, therefore it must be in large measure this Tantric influence that is responsible for the appearance of the temple-mountain at this juncture. His reference to the subject in his review of *The Making of Greater India* is, however, more explicit : "That the adoption of this characteristic architectural feature (the temple-mountain) had been influenced by the ancient cult of sacred mountains in Fu-nan and Chen-la I freely admit, but in my opinion a simple resurgence of the local genius,

[1] ibid., p. 329.
[2] *Art and Letters*, Vol. XXVI, No. 1, 1952, p. 58. And on p. 57 he supports my rejection of the Javanese origin of the *devarāja* cult.

in the course of the evolution of the religious architecture, will not suffice to explain it. There was, at the beginning of the IXth century, a new 'stimulus', to use the author's terminology; this was the institution of a new cult bringing some rites based on four Sanskrit texts of Tantric persuasion. On this exact point it is difficult to confine the facts within the framework of the proposed thesis." [1]

M. Cœdès here undoubtedly spotlights the very core of the problem of the character of the Khmer royal religion. Wider comparative study has I believe now enabled me to solve it.

Tantric ritual and stone pyramids are different things. Tantrism represents a very partial resurgence in North-eastern India of pre-Aryan cults. There is no evidence that Mount Meru or Kailāsa were ever realized architecturally in Tantrism, any more than in orthodox Hinduism, as a stepped pyramid, even though the form was no doubt known as an abstract concept. Indeed Tantrism offers no exception to Hinduism generally in which the sacred mountain was represented as a sanctuary-tower with staged roof structure. Had the temple-mountain in Cambodia been due to Tantric influences we should expect to find such buildings in East Java of the Singhasāri period (XIIIth century A.D.) where Tantric influences were intense. The fact is, however, that as in North-eastern India, the Javanese of Singhasāri were quite satisfied with shrines of ordinary sanctuary-tower type as their representation of the sacred mountain. Foreshadowed in the pyramidal basement of the XIVth century Panataran main temple, it is not until the XVth century, when the pre-Hindu cultural resurgence was at its height, that the pyramid-shrines of Sukuh and Cheta were built. Consequently it must be to local, rather than to Tantric, influences in Cambodia that one must look for an

[1] ibid.

explanation of the emergence of the temple-mountain in Khmer architecture. Furthermore, is it not significant that the growth of the Khmer temple-mountain proceeds in step with the waning of Indian influences, and the two most outstanding pyramids, Koh Ker and the Bayon, correspond to periods when local genius was most active?

That Tantric texts would be acceptable in connection with the *devarāja* ritual, just at the time when the temple-mountain makes its appearance, is certainly not a mere coincidence; but it admits of an explanation other than the impossible one that they are both due to influence from India. Tantrism was the kind of Hindu influence that was most welcome at a time when local ideas were beginning to make themselves strongly felt; and we might expect to find both in conjunction with Jayavarman II's intention to demonstrate and consolidate Cambodia's re-established independence from Javanese suzerainty. But before I proceed to show the local origin of the Khmer temple-mountain, let us consider the meaning of this structure.

M. Cœdès' explanation is as follows: "It seems that the originality of this cult (as established by Jayavarman II) lay in the integration of the personal cult of the *liṅga*, carrying the king's name, into a system, the object of which was the deification of the abstract king, of the permanent principle of royalty, and that this permanence was precisely marked by the permanence of the pyramidal part of the monument."[1] This abstraction of royalty, *devarāja* in Sanskrit, has its full character made known to us, he says, in the epigraphy of Koh Ker. There the Khmer equivalent, *Kamraten an jagat ta rājya* is used, meaning "the master of the world who is the royalty", thus not merely the reigning king, who is only a manifestation of the *devarāja*.

There is no reason whatever to doubt this permanent, or relatively permanent, character of the *devarāja*, the

[1] G. Cœdès, "Le Culte de la Royaute Divinisée . . . ," loc. cit., p. 16.

abstract principle of Khmer royalty. There is, however, every reason to doubt that this permanent character is symbolized, as supposed by Cœdès, in the adoption of the stepped pyramid by Jayavarman II. That the abstract principle of royalty was equally regarded as permanent by the Chams is quite evident from the epigraphy of Mi-So'n.[1] But a developed pyramidal base or terrace construction enters into Cham architecture only during a period of intense Khmer influence,[2] and thereafter disappears. Evidently the Chams found the idea of permanence was as well served by merely placing the royal *liṅga* in a sanctuary-tower as the Khmers found by placing the *liṅga* in a sanctuary-tower on a pyramid. It may be that the sheer massiveness of a pyramid-structure suggests *to us* the idea of permanence; but, before drawing any conclusions from that, it would surely be better to consider what the difference between sanctuary-tower and temple-mountain meant to the peoples concerned.

It is well known that the Hindu sanctuary-tower represents the Meru or Kailāsa sacred mountain in the form in which this was developed as a result of the growth of ouranic religion and the influence of Assyrio-Babylonian planetary cosmology in India. In accordance with this the fictive stages of the roof structure represent the different heavens and their sculptural art portrays the *pradakṣiṇā*, or circular movement of the planets. Secondary cosmological considerations and sky religion now obscure the basic religious significance of the sacred mountain. The stress is now on communication with a celestial source of divine power, either through magical means, or directly through the axis of the tower, believed to connect earth with heaven: it has become primarily " a bond between earth and heaven ", and the celestial gods seated there.

[1] P. Mus, " Cultes indiens . . . ," loc. cit., p. 407 f.
[2] The Binh-dinh period, as seen at the Tours d'Argent.

How very different was the Khmer trend of thought I have already shown in regard to the cosmological aspect, where the symbolism of the Bayon shows the nearly complete loss of the circular motion of the *pradakṣiṇā* in favour of a return to pre-planetary cosmology.[1] But here we are more interested in basic religious significance than in cosmological matters which we have seen are to be regarded as secondary. The evidence I have accumulated makes one conclusion inevitable : ziggurat, mound of the Chinese god of the soil, Angami Naga *kithuchie*-pyramid, *foho* of the Belu of Timor, and the other cognate structures we have considered, are all expressions of the worship, in the widespread Old Asiatic religion, of the divinized energies of Earth. What we are witnessing, as we observe the growth of the temple-mountain in the Khmer architectural evolution, is the trend towards displacing the Hindu Meru, or sanctuary-tower, by a more realistic and primordial representation of the sacred mountain as this came more and more, with reviving local ideas, to stand for the chthonic source of divine and royal power. In its superficial cosmological aspect the whole structure was still acceptable from the Hindu point of view as a " Meru " ; it was the deeper religious significance that, with the development of the pyramid, was undergoing covert change.

We do not of course have to suppose that the Khmers, before they were Indianized, had nothing better to show in the way of pyramidal structures than the obviously degenerate *kithuchie*-pyramid of the Angami Nagas, a people long ago driven to the hills. We may rather visualize some well-built, if relatively small, edifice like the megalithic stepped pyramid of Lebak Sibedug, Java (Fig. 3*a*). The remarkable stepped pyramid of Koh Ker,[2] perhaps the most striking, while

[1] *The Making of Greater India*, pp. 173–177.
[2] Illustrated in *The Mountain of God*, Pl. III.

also the least generally known, of all the Khmer temple-mountains, can easily be seen as derived by the process of evolution from a pyramid resembling Lebak Sibedug. And the fact that Krus Prah Aram Rong Chen, the temple-mountain on which Jayavarman II established the *devarāja* ritual on Mount Mahendraparvata, was a simple structure of three small terraces, is quite in keeping with this probability.

At the same time we must recognize that nothing indicates more clearly that the Khmers never fully returned to their pre-Hindu culture, before they were submerged by Hīnayāna Buddhism and Thai encroachments, than does the fact that, unlike the East Javanese, they were never able to represent their symbolic reduction of the sacred mountain as a stepped pyramid pure and simple. The seal of Indian control remained affixed to these great temple-mountains in the shape of either a crowning sanctuary-tower, or of a quincunx of such towers, the traditional five peaks of Mount Meru. Unlike the pyramid itself, they evolved little; indeed on the whole they are among the most static elements in Khmer architecture. But they remained until the end.[1]

The increasingly chthonic character of the Khmer religion was indeed noticed by M. Cœdès. He observed [2] that in the stele of A.D. 1052 (Sdok Kak Thom inscription), which has provided most of the information concerning the *devarāja* cult, the king is referred to by an expression which means " master of the inferior surface, master of the earth ". And he recalls the report of the Chinese envoy Chou Ta-kuan, who visited Angkor in the XIIIth century A.D.: " In the palace there is a golden tower (Phiméanakas, Fig. 19), on the top of which the king sleeps. All the natives believe that in the tower

[1] For the probable exception at Śī T'ep (Śrī Deva), see *The Mountain of God*, p. 161 and fig. 13.
[2] G. Cœdès, loc. cit., p. 21.

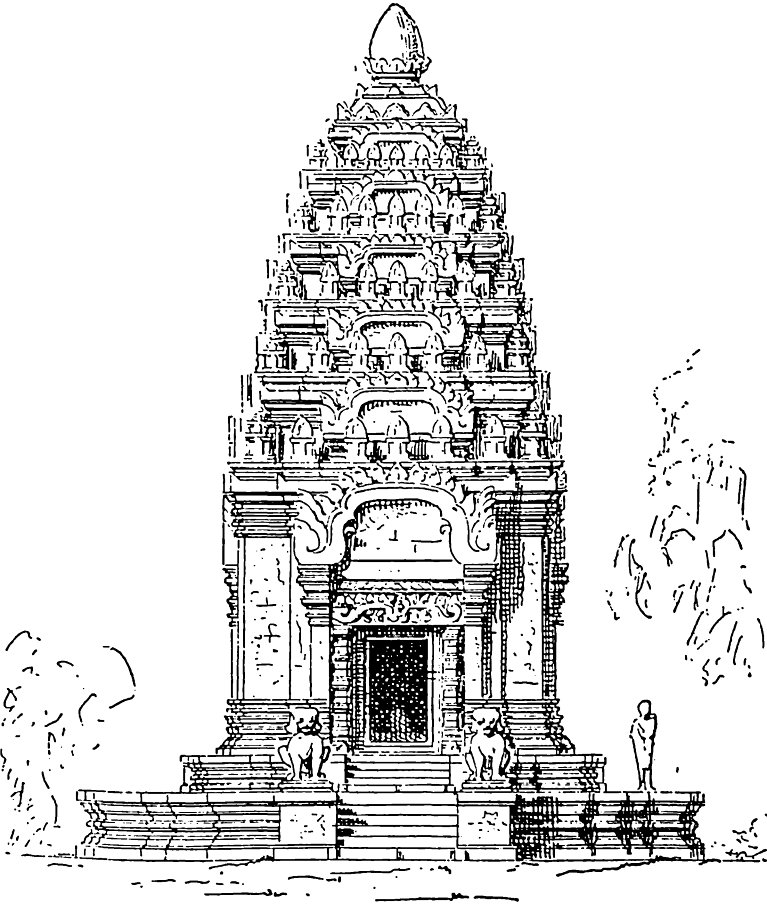

FIG. 20.—A typical Khmer sanctuary-tower (Pr. Nan Khmau).

there is the spirit of a nine-headed serpent, master of the earth and of the whole kingdom. It appears every night in the form of a woman, with whom the king must sleep. . . . If one night the spirit does not appear, then the time for the king to die has arrived." [1]

Cœdès thinks that this shows that in the XIIIth century the people had still not forgotten the origin of the first Fu-nan dynasty, which is said to have sprung from the union of an Indian Brahman with a daughter of the king of the Nāgas (nine-headed serpents), and the serpent-woman who appeared corresponds to the Chinese great god of the soil. He further thinks that the object of this union was to maintain the sovereign as descendant of the Indian Brahman in his rights over the soil which previously had belonged to the Nāgas, that is to say to the indigenous people.

With the comparison of the serpent-woman to the Chinese great god of the soil I fully agree—and now I should like to add the chthonic snake spirit of the Acropolis at Athens to which reference was made on page 41. But in other respects Cœdès' interpretation of a belief which was evidently current in the Khmer popular mind rather than culled from any study of the official religion by Chou Ta-kuan, seems to me to put a greater stress on the importance of the maintenance of the Indian factor than would be likely at such a late date. We can avoid over-simplification, however, if we admit the possibility of such a secondary meaning while probing for some cultural significance more deep-seated and widespread than the possible desire to perpetuate a certain political connection peculiar to Cambodia. There is a striking parallel to the Mesopotamian custom whereby Babylonian, and probably earlier monarchs, played the part of the divine bridegroom, Tammuz or Marduk, in the ritual of the sacred marriage on the

[1] P. Pelliot, *Mémoires sur les coutumes du Cambodge de Tcheou Ta-kouan*, Paris, 1951, p. 12.

ziggurat with the chthonic goddess Ishtar. But too much significance should not be attached to this aspect, because the idea of the divine marriage to secure fertility is widespread and may well have occurred to many peoples independently.[1] More important is the association of chthonic deity and mountain-representing pyramid.

In trying to arrive at a phrase which would convey in Western terms the function of the Khmer temple-mountain, Cœdès concluded in favour of "temple and tomb". At the same time he recognized the deeper and more exact significance accorded to it by Mus, who saw that it was no less a substitute body than was the menhir or the royal *liṅga*. "It is a new architectural body, which is, if one will, a lodging of the deceased, but only in the way which the body had lodged him during his lifetime."[2] That the Khmers should seek to place the royal *liṅga*, itself rather an individualistic conception of the substitute body, where it would merge with the local concentration of the first ancestor/earth god as near as possible to the centre of the capital, is fully to be expected, for it is entirely paralleled by ancient Chinese custom, and by the customs of many of the Older Megalithic peoples, so far as lay within their restricted powers.

So far so good. But Mus has further expressed the opinion that "one must suppose that the apotheosis (of the dead Khmer king) was realized by specification. The deceased did not effectively become god in the highest heaven . . . it was only in his own temple that he was an authentic Śiva, the Śiva of the temple and the place where it was raised. . . . The Ancestor became a part, a portion, a fragment of the eternal Śiva."[3] Cœdès, accepting this view, states that the dead king

[1] Sir James Frazer, *The Magic Art*, Vol. II, chap. xii ; M. Eliade, *Traité* . . . , pp. 212 f.

[2] P. Mus, *BEFEO*, Vol. XXXIII, p. 617.

[3] ibid., p. 771.

at Angkor Wat had not become the supreme Viṣṇu but only Viṣṇu in his funerary temple at Angkor Wat.

There are, however, strong reasons against accepting the above opinion of Mus, at least in the exact form in which he advances it. His work suffers to some extent through his ignoring the role of the sacred mountain itself. With the Chinese and some Older Megalithic peoples a part of the chief's soul, or rather one of his souls, is considered to go to the land of the dead, usually in the distant sacred mountain. The analogy is too strong to believe that the Khmer theory was fundamentally different : that the dead king was a god merely in his temple-mountain. More probably he was considered to manifest there in so far as he was united with that part or specification of the ancestor/god which was concentrated in the centre of the microcosm that the capital was thought to be. At the same time the deceased monarch presumably merged part of his personality with the ancestor/god in the afterworld. Except in so far as this was transferred to the sky under the impact of some aspects of Hinduism, the land of the dead was almost certainly believed to be in or under the distant sacred mountain of the kingdom. I have in my previous publications [1] sufficiently considered the Khmer sacred mountains, in particular the Liṅgaparvata mountain near Bassac, from which the Khmer temple-mountains were ultimately derived, and I have shown the close resemblance of the core of Wat Phu on the Liṅgaparvata mountain, to the purely Older Megalithic terrace sanctuaries on the Yang plateau, East Java.

As already mentioned, the Thai conquest and the conversion to Hīnayāna Buddhism prevented any general return to the pre-Hindu religion among the Khmers, a condition which might well have been reached by the XVth century had the evolution been

[1] *The Making of Greater India*, pp. 160–169 ; *The Mountain of God*, pp. 167–170.

allowed to pursue its natural course. By referring to contemporary East Java, however, we can form some idea of what would have eventuated in Cambodia had not a cultural revolution taken place. In XVth-century East Java not only had Indianization long before declined, but the resurging Bronze Age ideas had also run their course and were no longer fully understood, surviving Dongson motifs having but a minor place in art. Though XVth-century East Javanese religion was still dressed in some of the Hindu appurtenances, and accompanied by many Tantric usages, it had returned essentially to the Older Megalithic, an Older Megalithic in which, as one would expect, the ancestor element was in the ascendant.[1]

There were two East Javanese sacred mountains, one situated to the west, the other to the east of the Brantas valley, Mt. Lawu and Mt. Penanggungan respectively. The home of the dead was conceived as being in these mountains, just as it had been in Older Megalithic times. At the former place there were two mountain temples, of which the one named Sukuh is the more remarkable.[2] It was represented in the plains, as no doubt for the late Khmers their sacred mountain would have been, by a pyramid-shrine, actually the Panataran temple which dated from the previous century and remained in use. The Sukuh temple itself formerly consisted of a number of stone terraces, of which only the upper four remain, and on the topmost stands a stepped truncated pyramid, 19½ feet high. While this pyramid, as in the purely Older Megalithic pyramid of Lebak Sibedug, West Java, may also have a cosmic aspect, one cannot doubt that in its basic religious

[1] The evidence for the Older Megalithic in Java has been summarized by me in *The Mountain of God*, p. 94 f. There too (Chap. V) I have dealt with the religion of the Balinese from the tenth century, when they returned to something approaching their pre-Hindu cultural condition, up to the Javanese conquest in A.D. 1343.

[2] Illustrated in *The Mountain of God*, Pl. II.

significance the intention was to concentrate, in this symbolic reduction of the mountain as a whole, the chthonic energies in such manner that they could be conveniently contacted. And the concentration at this point is still further emphasized by the pyramid being topped by a six feet high menhir, the representative of mountain god and first ancestor. That it here has some of the characteristics of a *liṅga*, just as the temple shows many signs of Tantric association, is only to be expected. The menhir bears an inscription of A.D. 1440, and its summit surrounded by four spheres symbolizing the outflow from this point of the divine power to the four quarters of the kingdom. On the terraces there were found a number of portrait statues, as well as images of Garuḍa and Bhīma who play a large part in the Tantric rites for the release of the soul.

It would seem that Mt. Penanggungan was the more popular East Javanese sacred mountain and home of the dead. Here a series of some thirty monuments has been discovered. Each has three or four retaining walls forming terraces of diminishing width with a central stairway, thus giving the impression of the façade of a stepped pyramid. With each structure the main axis, running through the centre of the stairway, always points to the summit of the mountain. The topmost terrace in each case bears three " altars " which, from the published illustrations, give the impression of being highly elaborated menhirs.[1] On several of these terrace-shrines miniature ash containers have been found; there were also portrait statues of kings, queens, and ministers. The multiplicity of these Mt. Penanggungan sanctuaries suggests that, though the dead kings were inevitably associated with the sacred mountain, at certain times or with some dynasties there existed the practice of building a separate temple for each king.

[1] *Annual Bibliography of Indian Archaeology*, Leiden, for 1936, pl. xi.

CHAPTER VI

THE QUEST FOR SKY

Prior to my investigation of the Dongsonians' religion I supposed that their beliefs " differed very little from those of the Older Megalithic ".[1] That is to say I accepted current views about a Dongson " cult of the dead ", but with the modification resulting from Mus' work on the modern Chams, which tended to show that before the general rise of ancestor worship, the cult of Earth had been an important factor.[2]

Now it will be appreciated that the Chams, who have returned to an impoverished and somewhat changed form of the religion they followed before they were Indianized, can be expected to exhibit in their degenerate village practices to-day, little beyond what was characteristic of the lower classes in pre-Hindu times. Only the careful scrutiny of certain aspects of the modern Cham religion, which did not receive the attention of Mus, leads to the recognition of Bronze Age elements which would have been far more active at the time Indian culture was first introduced. In the same way in Java, where, however, a vigorous cultural renascence gave greater emphasis to a variety of modified developments of pre-Hindu civilization, ignorance of the contribution peculiar to the religion of the Dongsonians could not fail to be an obstacle in the way of our better comprehension.

In view of these limitations in our knowledge, in *The Making of Greater India* I had to rely mainly on the evidence of ornamental design, sculpture, and architecture, the latter being largely affected by the symbolism

[1] *The Making of Greater India*, p. 75.
[2] P. Mus, " Cultes Indiens . . . ," loc. cit.

of cosmology. In those fields the available evidence enabled me to formulate my general theory. Now in the light of my interpretation of the Dongsonians' religion, I shall apply the same method towards the fuller understanding of subsequent religious developments in Champa, also in Java before the XVth-century return to an Older Megalithic basis there.

As an hors d'œuvre to this culminating part of our discussion I will choose to speak of that curious motif, whose religious significance no doubt concerns our subject very closely, the deer-arch. This consists of a transverse band, which Balinese texts enable us to identify as the rainbow, ending in deer-heads. The motif is found at Jago and Panataran in East Java, thereby showing that it belongs to XIVth century A.D. Javanese art, though it appears also at Sukuh in the following century. In Cham art it is found at Mi-S'on E (VIIIth century) and at the Tra-kieu pedestal (Mi-S'on A, Xth–XIth century A.D.). *It is not known in Khmer art, nor in India*, but it occurs rarely in pre-Han and Han Chinese art. These facts were first brought together by Prof. Bosch in an interesting article he published on the subject in 1931.[1] He concluded that this motif formed " part of the ancient patrimony which the Indonesians brought from the Asiatic continent " and which, at least in the case of East Java, reappeared when Indian influences waned and primitive representations revived. We must congratulate him on the perspicacity of that conclusion, so much at variance with his ultra-Indianist views with which we dealt in Chapter IV.[2]

[1] F. D. K. Bosch, " Le Motif de l'Arc-à-biche à Java et au Champa," *BEFEO*, XXXI, pp. 485–491, with illustrations.

[2] Regrettably, if inevitably, Prof. Bosch has now abandoned this conclusion, and goes so far as to imagine that the deer-arch must have had an Indian origin, so that he can force it into the framework of the theory of his book : *De Gouden Kiem*, Amsterdam, 1948, p. 149. That his former view is more likely to be correct is also recognized by Dr. Jacoba Hooykaas, " The Rainbow in Ancient Indian Religion," *Bijdragen*, 112, 1956, p. 306.

Though the deer-arch has in some cases been influenced by the Indian *kāla-makara* motif, as shown by the presence sometimes of a monster head above, the two motifs are essentially different. Moreover the deer and rainbow are associated in shamanic beliefs, the deer on which the shaman rides to heaven being often drawn with the rainbow on the skin of the Altai Tatar's drum. In view of this one naturally first thinks of a resurgence from the Dongson substratum. In that case it would not be surprising that the deer-arch reasserts itself partially in Cham art of the VIIIth–XIth century and wholly in XIVth-century Javanese art, while being unknown in Khmer art. But this is just the step that one cannot legitimately take for, though deer are so well known in Dongson art, this deer-arch appears to be absent. Moreover the deer-arch being known in pre-Han and Han Chinese art, one must suppose that it was from China that the motif was introduced to Champa and Java, and indeed my theory supposes a Chinese element in Cham and Javanese local genius. This reservation having been made, the indication provided by the incidence of the deer-arch is still valuable to us. Such a motif must surely have originated in Chinese art from the influence of Central Asian shamanism. With their Dongsonian background such a motif would certainly have been readily acceptable in Champa and Java whether or not the Dongsonians had themselves possessed any cognate symbol. But let us not look for proof in our hors d'œuvre, intended as it is only to indicate the wide vista of new food for thought now opening before us.

To come to grips with our subject we should examine first the religions as developed during the period following the waning of Indian influence. We shall afterwards consider how these have determined the bias of religion even during the period of strong Indianization.

I shall begin with that perplexing problem, the meaning of the *gunungan* (or *kekajon*), the " mountain " or " tree " piece (Plate 1) that is always shown at the beginning of shadow plays (*wayang kulit*) in Java. It gains in importance because with this problem is certainly bound up the understanding of the origin of the shadow play itself. In *The Making of Greater India* I discussed the rival theories of Rassers and Stutterheim. I rejected the former because, in trying to give a purely local interpretation, among other things Rassers ignored the obvious presence of the Cosmic (or World) Tree, offered no explanation of the " single eye " sometimes represented on it, and sought for analogies in distant totemistic communities of New Guinea.[1] On the other hand Stutterheim's theory of a resurgence of an Egyptian cultural factor in Majapahit Java did seem to offer a plausible explanation for the sun-worship then prevalent, combined with the presence of the disc/wings/snakes symbol present on many *gunungan* and over the doors of *chandi*. However, I had been able to find evidence for nothing more definite than " possible " Egyptian influences having reached the island ; and much that Stutterheim ascribed to the result of such influences I found to be adequately explainable in terms of the Older Megalithic. It was indeed the extremely restricted effects that could at best be attributed to Egyptian influence that most caused misgiving. Hence my conclusion in Stutterheim's favour was certainly intended to be no more than provisional when I wrote : " As a working hypothesis I see at present no other course than to adopt the view of Stutterheim, at least in so far as the source of the sun-worship and Javanese ' Horus emblem ' are concerned." [2] In the previous paragraph I had shown,

[1] My silence with regard to one or two other attempted explanations, recent or not so recent, of the *gunungan*, may be taken to imply disagreement, and the desire to avoid unnecessary controversy.

[2] *The Making of Greater India*, p. 139,

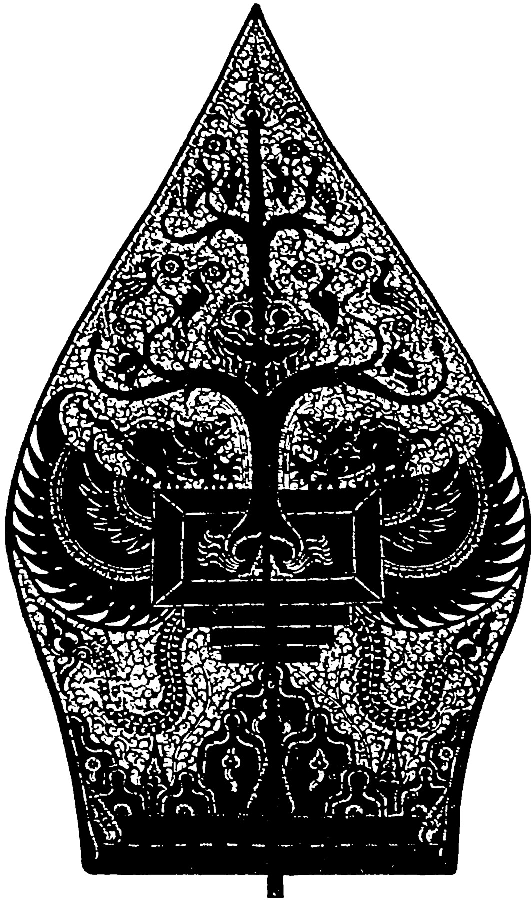

PLATE 1. – A *gunungan*.

only too clearly, why it was that our knowledge of the Dongsonians' religion was not such that any help could then be expected from that direction.

That any effort to solve the problem of the *gunungan*, to have a chance of success, must consider it within the wider context of the original meaning of the *wayang kulit*, would seem a *sine qua non*. Both Stutterheim and Rassers realized this, but they regarded the *wayang* as originally a ritual for enabling contact to be made with the ancestors, to whose presence the *gunungan* was in some sense introductory. Now in view of what we know about the general tendency in South-east Asia for ancestor worship to grow in later times at the expense of other features of the pre-Hindu cults, we might well wonder whether in the XIVth century, when the pre-Hindu cultural resurgence was in its heyday, this aspect of the *wayang* was as dominating as now superficially appears to have been the case.

In this connection it is of great interest to find that Kruyt recalls that G. A. J. Hazeu, in his basic study of the Javanese theatre,[1] expressed the opinion that the *wayang* was originally nothing else than the recitation of the experiences of the priests (i.e. shamans) in ecstasy. Kruyt further notes that the *dalang*, who was once the shaman, and is now the stage director, used to hide himself under a cloth or curtain, just as does the Minang-kabau shaman to-day and formerly the Toraja—no doubt because the trance was rarely more than simulated. Personages now represented by the *wayang* figures were formerly only referred to in the recitations. Moreover the figures do not exclusively represent possible ancestors.[2] Finally, Kruyt concludes : " When

[1] G. A. J. Hazeu, *Bijdrage tot de Kennis van het Javaansche Tooneel*, Leiden, 1897, pp. 47 ff.

[2] R. Heine-Geldern has suggested (" Bedeutung . . . ," loc. cit., p. 529) that the Garuda Munkut, a kind of *wayang* head-dress with backward directed bird's head strikingly resembling the head-dresses on the early Dongson drums, may be a survival from pre-Hindu times ;

one hears the fantastic stories of encounters with spirits, and of the fights engaged in by men with them, so like those the Torajas and Dayaks serve up, then one must admit that in principle there is very little difference between the *lakon* of the Javanese theatrical producer (*dalang*) and the song of the Toraja and Dayak priestesses (i.e. shamans)." [1]

Such an interpretation of the original character of the Javanese *wayang kulit* readily commends itself, in view of the conclusions reached as to the nature of the Dongsonians' religion. But I do not think it is to a remote original of pre-Hindu period that we can trace the *wayang* and *gunungan* as we know them. It is rather to the resurgence of pre-Hindu civilization that took place in the earlier part of the Majapahit period (XIVth century A.D.). Then the revived Dongson ideas were undoubtedly more in evidence than was the case after the return to chthonic cults and the building of mountain terrace temples and pyramid-shrines of Older Megalithic types which came into vogue in the following century. Of course a repressed movement towards Javanization had been gaining force long before this time. But it was only after A.D. 1292, the date of the foundation of Majapahit, that the *wayang* is likely to have been openly established as a form of shamanic séance. It was probably used in healing, for securing the safe passage of the dead to the afterworld, and for approaching the gods generally—and the royal ancestors united with them. As in Central Asia, where the activities of the shaman are concomitant with those of the sacrificer, so in Java the séance of the shaman may well have proceeded in harmonious relation with the ritual of the folk priest and the co-operating Brahman.

he has also noted the stylistic similarity between *wayang* figures and those on the Dongson drums (" Vorgeschichtliche Grundlagen der Kolonial-Indischen Kunst " *Wiener Beiträg- zur Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte Asiens* ", Vol. VIII, 1934, p. 39.

[1] A. C. Kruyt, *Het Animisme* . . . , p. 109.

This revived type of shamanic séance had no doubt suffered some losses, and also been modified by Hindu accretions. The Javanese of Majapahit times did not hesitate to make use of any features of Indian civilization that served the purpose of giving expression to their own vaguely conceived religious ideas. So they applied to the representation of their local spiritual entities the technique of the Indian shadow play, with which they had been long familiar, it evidently being this that is referred to in the XIth century *Arjunawiwāha*.[1] They also utilized the heroes of the Rāmāyana and Mahābhārata to portray ghostly personages, whose existence though deeply felt had been too long repressed to be readily portrayed in indigenous form. At the same time the preservation of much Tantric ritual, so helpful to procure the release of the soul, must have led to the admixture with the shamanism of some Indian-type trance-mediumship, which is such a feature of the present-day trance dances of Bali. As time went on the ancestor element must have gained in preponderance. Finally, with the spread of Islam, the *wayang* was relegated to the status of entertainment, where indeed a new era of development awaited it.

In this context, the *gunungan*, so perplexing heretofore, may find its true explanation. If the *dalang* was formerly a shaman, it may reasonably be supposed, on the analogy of the Ngadju Dayaks, that he would have felt the need to set up a symbol of the Cosmic Tree during the séance, and it is primarily a tree that the *gunungan* (or *kekajon*) represents, either shown appearing above a gateway or set on a throne or mountainous base. Thus provided, the *dalang* would have been able in his trance to penetrate the heavenly strata. Essential formerly to the success of the séance, the *gunungan*, its significance forgotten, has nevertheless remained an essential preliminary to the opening of the shadow play.

[1] N. J. Krom, *Hindoe-Javaansche Geschiedenis*, 2nd edn., 1931, p. 50.

Second in importance to the Tree itself, the *gunungan* has two other features which are nearly always present, however much they may vary in detail. These are the *kāla* head, situated in the centre of the Tree, and usually a pair of *nāgas* which may depend from the head or, at any rate, are always shown at a lower level. Quite frequently the *kāla* head is reduced to a single eye, which leaves no doubt that the sun is intended, especially when we take into consideration the *wayang* figure of Śiva in the Batavia museum. Here the emblem over the god's head is transformed into a naturalistic sun-face darting forth its rays (and from which the two *nāgas* depend). So much was apparent before. It is on the interpretation that the religion of the Dongsonians now throws new light.

In the Ngadju Dayak religion the celestial deity is represented by a bird, the god of underworld by a serpent. In some Ngadju Dayak representations of the Cosmic Tree [1] hornbills are shown near the summit and serpents near the root (Fig. 11). It is but one example of the widely diffused originally Mesopotamian cosmological symbolism of the Tree with Bird at summit and Snake at root. When the sky god becomes supreme this cosmic victory is often represented by the eagle with a serpent in its mouth or held in its claws.[2] An example is the Garuḍa/Nāga couplet in India. That this is not what we find in the *gunungan* (although it is well known in East Javanese art) only serves to emphasize the freedom of the Majapahit culture from Indian domination. The supremacy of the celestial deity at this period has been accompanied by an extreme solarization. Since, as we have seen, this is often found in shamanism, it is a consequence to be expected from the resurgence of Dongsonian concepts. The solarization of the supreme

[1] Schärer, op. cit., fig. 1; B. A. G. Vroklage, loc. cit., fig. D. 20.
[2] A. J. Wensinck, *Tree and Bird as Cosmological Symbols in Western Asia*, Amsterdam, 1921, p. 46.

deity, who retains the name of Śiva as a legacy from the Hindu period, is now represented in the most naturalistic and unrepressed way that occurs to the Javanese artist, a sun disc or single eye. Since the artist is vaguely conscious that a bird form is connected in some way with the symbolism, he attaches a pair of wings, usually at the base of the Tree, and sometimes provided with Garuḍa heads. The monster doorkeepers usually depicted are characteristically Indonesian,[1] and there is little trace of Hindu influence beyond a few Meru adjuncts. The animals shown on either side of the Tree may well be, as Stutterheim suggested, the local equivalent of what had perforce to be represented as *aśvins* in earlier periods of Indo-Javanese art. One can well imagine how these " sons of Heaven " and " divine physicians who give sight to the blind and make the lame to walk " [2] would early have appealed to the Javanese. On the *gunungan* they would have become the celestial god's messengers who give the shaman their aid.

This interpretation of the *gunungan*, like the deer-arch, at any rate while its original meaning was still understood, presupposes a celestial supreme deity and also an afterworld in the sky, at least for the royal ancestors united with that deity. During Older Megalithic times, hence in Bali prior to the Javanese conquest in A.D. 1343, and in Java when the XVth century pre-Hindu cultural resurgence had set in, we know that the domain of the supreme deity and home of the dead was in an afterworld in or under the mountain. But from XIIIth–XIVth century old Javanese literary evidence we find that a sky afterworld was then conceived, as has been recently shown by Dr. Jacoba Hooykaas.[3]

[1] R. Moss, op. cit., p. 113.

[2] A. A. Macdonell, *A History of Sanskrit Literature*, London, 1928, p. 84.

[3] J. Hooykaas, " The Balinese Realm of Death," *Bijdragen*, 112, pp. 74–87. The evidence in this article as to the sky location of the

This is likely to be due mainly to revived local (i.e. Dongson) beliefs, in view of the fact that by this time it would be difficult to attribute it to Hindu influences alone. Dr. J. Hooykaas does not think this sky afterworld can be essentially due to Indian influence: " Though many names and religious principles (e.g. transmigration of the soul) have been adopted " she says, " more similarity I found with other Indonesian peoples, which were not or hardly Indianized." She notes, as we have seen, that such a sky home of the dead is found also with the Torajas and in Borneo, while incidentally she mentions that the opposite is the case in the island of Flores—whose people, I may add, have an essentially Older Megalithic culture, as we know from the researches of Father Arndt.

The influence in religion that we can now identify as Dongsonian had been making itself felt through local genius long before it came out into the open in the XIVth century. Indeed it is already at work in the Xth-century Lara-Jongrang temple with its Rāma reliefs corresponding to the sun's course, and its ubiquitous " Prambanan motif ", the Indian *pārijāta* tree flanked by two *aśvins*. Then came later Hindu and Buddhist temples with a gradual transformation of the *kāla-makara* and a strong partiality for Surya images. Ultimately there emerged the *chandi*, a representation of the Cosmic Mountain corresponding to the Cosmic Tree of the *gunungan*, and like it showing progressive transformation of the *kāla* head (with hands each holding a *nāga*) in keeping with the solarization of the supreme deity with whom the ancestors are united (cp. Figs. 17 and 18). It is in my opinion the fact that the *gunungan* thus keeps pace with the development of

XIIIth–XIVth century afterworld would be enough in itself to disprove the theory of K. A. H. Hidding, " De Beteekenis van de Kekajon," *Tijdschrift*, Vol. LXXI, 1931. He tried to show that the *gunungan* was a representation of a chthonic ancestor home. Moreover he did not recognize the function of the Tree as a Cosmic Axis.

the *chandi* that affords a proof that in the XIVth century it still had an active religious significance.

So disappears the Horus emblem from further consideration in Java, perhaps the most remarkable case of convergence known to me, and which I formerly refused to believe possible. Yet now we can see how such convergence is rendered easily possible through solarization of a supreme sky deity. And with the Horus emblem may also go the last residue of the influence of the theories of Elliot Smith and Perry in this region, except in so far as these encouraged further investigation of diffusion possibilities.

It is not only in Java, but also in Champa, that I have shown, mainly on the evidence of ornamental styles, that the Dongson element in local genius played a great part in the shaping of culture during the period of Indianization.[1] We ought therefore to find in Champa also, once a pre-Hindu cultural resurgence had set in, evidence of a return to Dongsonian ideas in religion, with a bias, at least among the upper class, towards sky deities, and signs of shamanism. We must bear in mind, however, that unlike what was the case in Java, instead of a virile new development, which flourished during the period of Majapahit, the resurgence was much affected by the political decay and economic weakness that had already overtaken the Cham kingdom. Hence the absence of such a pronounced " sun-worship " as immediately attracts attention in East Java should not be so discouraging as I had at first supposed.[2]

The work of Antoine Cabaton,[3] provides us with some material for a closer analysis of modern Cham religion, apart from those cults studied by Mus in which megalithic ideas are most apparent. Leaving aside also the ancestor element which, as is to be expected, looms

[1] *The Making of Greater India*, Chapter VI.
[2] ibid., p. 139.
[3] A. Cabaton, *Nouvelles Récherches sur les Chams*, Paris, 1901.

large, and is represented by a number of deities who are really deified kings, we find in other respects just what might be expected in what is essentially a resurgence of Dongson-type culture. The chief deity is the otiose Pô Jāta (emanation of a still more shadowy creator god) who is lord of the celestial regions, and has a female counterpart Pô Inö Nögar. They betray only the vaguest suggestions of a former association with Śiva and Dēvī and have, moreover, for practical purposes been largely replaced by a goddess named Pajå Yaṅ, identified with the moon. She is the great dispenser of good fortune to mankind, the healer of sickness and the consoler of the afflicted. It is admitted that she is inferior to the sun, Pô Aditjak (Aditya), her obeisances to whom cause eclipses.[1] Moreover, while the souls of good women go to her realm, those of good men go to the sun. Nevertheless it is she who is the active sky deity, and we must remember that in the shamanic beliefs it is the replacement of the otiose sky god by an active atmospheric deity that is characteristic. This need not involve solarization.

Of even greater interest is it to find a survival of shamanism in connection with the cult of this goddess Pajå Yaṅ, and this despite the constant influence of the possession-addicted Moïs. The Chams, while detesting the Annamites, live in close friendly relations with the Moïs. The sorcerers of the last mentioned usually take part in the great religious feasts of the Chams, their ability as trance-mediums being very welcome.[2] Yet this Moï influence is far from obscuring the original character of Cham shamanism. The Chams seem to have been too poor and too harassed to have developed a theatre based on shamanism. Instead, side by side with cults of a different type, they have kept alive at least a debased form of shamanic séance.

[1] ibid., pp. 16–19.
[2] J. Leuba, *Les Chams et leur Art*, Paris, 1923, pp. 94 f., 167 f.

The Cham shaman, or *pajå*, is a woman who, having been initiated, is considered to be in special relation with Pajå Yaṅ. Hence, when in trance, she learns the future and is indeed considered omniscient, however ignorant she may have been before. Once a year she goes into a deep trance, in the course of which she travels to the moon where Pajå Yaṅ reveals the future to her. When she is consulted she holds a séance which has the name of *ḍik ṅap yaṅ*, meaning "spiritual ascension ".[1] This and her journey to the moon clearly indicate that we have here a survival of what was originally shamanism, even though the *pajå* now seems to do nothing more than prophesy. The séance (Fig. 21) is held in some ancient Cham temple, before the *liṅga*, so we should not expect that any need was felt for any other representation of the Cosmic Axis, comparable to the Javanese *gunungan* or Dayak Cosmic Tree. The *pajå* goes into a trance, her assistant, the *mödvön*, beats a drum, while the priests, as in Majapahit Java, make offerings. It is said that the word *pajå* means a princess, and that in earlier times the *pajås* were girls of the blood royal who at the courts of the Cham kings were charged with certain religious functions.[2] What these were we are not told. It may be that they thus kept alive the memory of the shamanism formerly linked with pre-Hindu matriarchy, during the long period when all recognized religious observances were in the hands of the Brahmanic priesthood.

It would be interesting were we able to compare these resurgences of pre-Hindu culture in Java and Champa with a similar situation in Cambodia. Unfortunately the Khmers were converted to Hīnayāna Buddhism before a resurgence could take place. However we might expect to find some surviving or reviving suggestions of shamanism, had that religion ever taken a hold in

[1] A. Cabaton, op. cit., p. 32.
[2] ibid., p. 29.

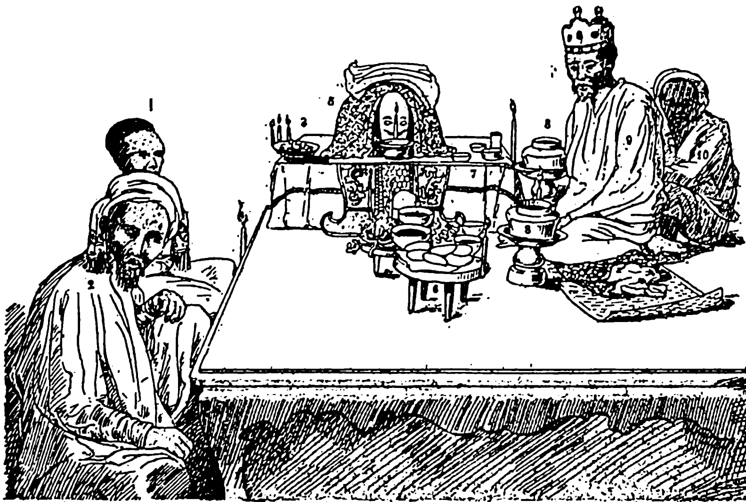

FIG. 21.—Cham " spiritual ascension " séance, showing the *pajà* (1), her assistant (2), the *liṅga* (5), a priest (9), and his assistant (10).

Cambodia, for the Hīnayāna Buddhist acculturation was not thorough. But the facts are negative, both in the royal ceremonies of propitiation and exorcism in which the influence of Indian magic and sorcery is to be expected, and in the village rites of possibly pre-Hindu origin. In the latter, comparable to the rites of the Moïs, a medium, possessed by a local spirit, is asked to provide rain or good health.[1] This accords with the conclusion that I reached on other grounds, namely that Dongson influences were so weak in Cambodia that no Dongson element could remain constant in Khmer local genius.[2]

Lack of any urge through local genius from the submerged Old Asiatic religion would account for the absence of pyramids in Cham temple construction, and absence of any tendency towards a revival of the pre-planetary cosmology. It also seems fairly safe to conclude that such forms of Śiva as Giriśa and Gambhireśvara never enjoyed popularity among the Chams, if indeed they were ever accepted at all. Yet if my interpretation of the Dongsonians' religion be correct, we should certainly expect it to throw a new light on the differences between the Khmer trends in religion and those of the Cham and Indo-Javanese, just as we find also correspondingly different tendencies in ornament. That is to say we may doubt if the mere absence of the chthonic and pyramid-building bias in Khmer religion would be sufficient to account for any characteristic trends in Cham and earlier Indo-Javanese religion. We should rather expect to find some correspondingly active factor.

Certainly we can find Śiva and also individual kings referred to in solar or lunar terms, expressive of their gloom-dispelling brightness, as commonly in Khmer

[1] A. Leclère, *Cambodge : Fêtes civiles et religieuses*, Paris, 1916, pp. 557–623 ; E. Porée-Maspero, " Notes sur les particularités du culte chez les Cambodgiens," *BEFEO*, xliv, pt. 2, 1954, pp. 620, 626.

[2] *The Making of Greater India*, p. 75.

inscriptions as we can in the Cham. Such terms may just be clichés taken over from Indian texts as part of the Indian cultural pattern, as where Śiva is frequently described as he who bears the crescent moon in his diadem, while the solar and lunar dynasties of relatively late Khmer inscriptions are evidently inventions in imitation of Indian tradition.[1] Again, the celestial similes may be nothing more than the universal and natural way of measuring the brilliance of a monarch against such obvious standards as the sun and moon. In this case they no more betoken a trend towards sky religion than does our modern reference to a distinguished actor as a " star ".

Consider now, on the other hand, this striking description of the brilliant assembly of the gods presided over by Śiva: " He, the divine (being), of great power, seated with ease upon a mass of ashes, shines very much, like the Sun, aglow with rays, in a cloudless sky. Seeing him shine with an unbroken splendour, like a smokeless fire, nourished by clarified butter, Brahmā, Indra, Viṣṇu and other gods are filled with astonishment. With Indra in front, Brahmā to the right, the Moon and Sun at the back, and the god Nārāyaṇa to the left, he was sitting in the middle, glowing with splendid rays while those and other gods were bowing down before him and praising him in his proper hymns which begin with ' Om ' and end with ' Svadhā-svāhā '. Then rising from the heap of ashes, he, the very pure, remained in the middle of the firmament, (shining) with a splendour equal to that of millions of suns." Should we expect to find this quite circumstantial picture of a supreme celestial deity seated in full majesty in the firmament above, in a Khmer inscription or in a Cham one? To me it does not seem surprising that in fact it occurs

[1] Cf. G. Cœdès, *Inscriptions du Cambodge*, Vol. IV, p. 95, note (1); G. Cœdès, " Les Règles de la succession royale dans l'ancien Cambodge " *Bull. de la Soc. des Études Indochinoises*, Vol. XXVI, No. 2, 1951, pp. 128 f.

in the Cham inscription of Bang-An.[1] Of course it closely resembles the presentation of Śiva in the Mahābhārata (Anuśāsanaparvan, Ch. xiv), and so is entirely proper for adoption by a thoroughly Indianized people like the ancient Chams. But it is not the sort of picture that would readily commend itself to those who primarily thought of Śiva as Giriśa or Gambhireśvara, and so one is not surprised that nothing quite comparable to this can be found in any Khmer inscription. It is sufficient if we can note a difference in emphasis.

An important practical indication, and one which incidentally shows why Gambhireśvara would make a poor appeal in Champa, is furnished by the Cham innovation of placing a small *liṅga* in the centre of the roof of the sanctuary-tower. This was no doubt intended to reinforce through the Cosmic Axis the connection of the main *liṅga* with the celestial source from which they considered the divine power to emanate.[2] They evidently attached a significance to the *liṅga* somewhat different from that associated with it in India, though no doubt quite capable of being reconciled with celestial aspects of Hinduism.

I have already sufficiently indicated (page 158) the nature of the subtle changes which took place in step with the growing solarization of the supreme deity Śiva in Java from the Xth to the close of the XIIIth century. Therefore it is interesting to note that the Balinese, who to a considerable degree perpetuate the religious beliefs introduced by the Javanese in the XIVth century, have a practice very closely allied to that we have just mentioned of the Chams: The Balinese "meru", or pyramidal structure in the temple where the gods may be contacted locally, culminated in a point representing a *liṅga*.[3]

[1] From the translation of R. C. Majumdar, *Champa*, 1927, pp. 127 f.
[2] P. Mus, *BEFEO*, Vol. 33 (1933), p. 770 ; L. Finot, loc. cit., p. 21.
[3] W. Stutterheim, *Indian Influences in Old Balinese Art*, 1935, p. 20.

In keeping with the Cham conception of the celestial source of divine power indicated by the roof *liṅga*, is the architectural tendency of the sanctuary-tower itself. This differs markedly from that of the Khmers, whether the latter is set on a pyramid or at ground level (compare Figs. 20 and 22). Thus the Cham tower has a relatively tall main story, and the fictive stages of the superstructure are also proportionately taller and narrower than with the Khmers. The Cham porches and false porches are crowned by high pointed arches. But above all it is the accentuation of the angles by that most original feature, the skyward-reaching *piéce d'accent*, that leads the eye and mind towards the firmament.[1]

It is from the point of view of discovering any shamanic elements in ancient Indian religion that Eliade examines Hindu and Buddhist " rites of ascension ".[2] Leaving aside this point of view, one can also look at the same facts for indications as to why one aspect rather than another of Indian religion would be more likely to be stressed by an Indianized people whose previous religion had been largely Dongsonian. We have seen how important to the shaman is the symbolism of the Cosmic Tree, by means of which he is able to ascend to the highest heavens. Now Eliade points out, on the evidence of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, how the Brahmanic sacrificial pillar (*yupa*) is made of a tree which is assimilated to the Cosmic Tree and how, by means of this pillar, the sacrificer mounts to the sky. One can imagine how a similar association of ideas amongst the Chams, and equally at certain periods with the Javanese, would account for a celestial rather than a chthonic interpretation of the *liṅga's* power. And this also explains how a tendency rooted in the Dongson

[1] H. Parmentier, *Inventaire descriptif des Monuments Čams de l'Annam*, Paris, 1918, Vol. II, p. 460 ; H. Marchal, *L'Architecture Comparée dans l'Inde et l'Extrême Orient*, Paris, 1944, pp. 174–176.
[2] M. Eliade, *Le Chamanisme*, p. 362 f.

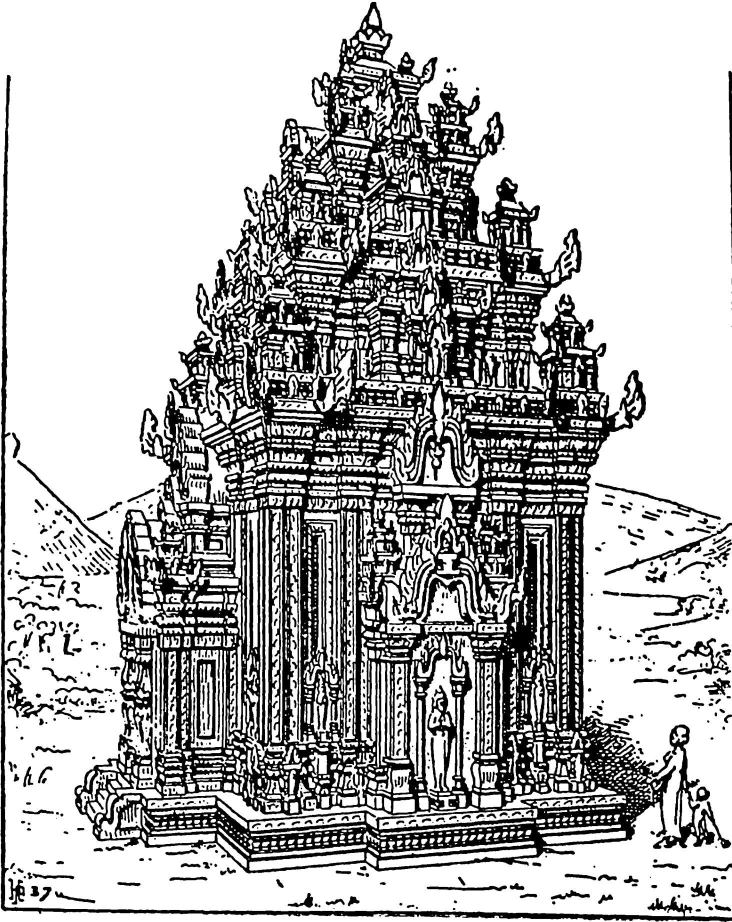

FIG. 22.—A typical Cham sanctuary-tower.

civilization could still find room for expression within the Indian pattern.

Of possibly greater interest is the varying response accorded to the spread of Mahāyāna Buddhism under the inspiration of the Pāla dynasty in the VIIIth and IXth centuries A.D. As to what I have called the western zone of Greater India little need be said. In Burma, as also probably in Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula, official religion and art were as close a reflection as possible in a " colonial " environment of the art and thought of contemporary Nālandā. Compared with this what happened in the eastern zone is much more illuminating.

The Pāla influence reached both Java and Cambodia in the second half of the VIIIth century, Champa apparently not until the IXth. Passing over for the moment the magnificent development under the Śailendras of Java, it will be most instructive to examine the very different reception accorded to the Great Vehicle in Champa as compared with Cambodia. The difference was correctly appreciated by Finot, on the evidence of epigraphy, when he wrote of the cult of the Bodhisattva Lokeśvara in the IXth and Xth centuries : " The epigraphy of Champa leaves us in no doubt as to the importance of its rôle in the religious life of the country." On the other hand, with regard to Cambodia, " if we had only the evidence of inscriptions to estimate the place which it took among the religions of the Khmer empire we should be tempted to judge this place insignificant. . . . The documents we have just examined leave the impression of a very secondary cult and one little in favour with the kings." [1] Unfortunately, though inevitably, Finot then proceeded to reverse this conclusion, on the basis of the sculptural evidence of Bantéay Chmar and the Bayon which, when he wrote,

[1] L. Finot, " Lokeśvara en Indochine," *Études Asiatiques*, 1925, Vol. I, pp. 231, 235, 237.

were wrongly supposed to date from the IXth instead of the XIIth century.

The evidence of the inscriptions does not mean that Mahāyānism was not more or less tolerated in Cambodia throughout the great period of the Pāla Buddhist expansion, and indeed at times it received marks of royal favour. What it does mean may best be realized from the following facts : Java during the VIIIth and IXth centuries was ruled by the powerful Buddhist dynasty of the Śailendras, the wealth of whose religious foundations needs no stressing. Though not to the exclusion of the cult of the royal *liṅga*, Mahāyānism flourished in Champa during the latter part of the IXth and the Xth centuries under the dynasty of Indrapura ; and Indravarman II, who had the posthumous name of Paramabuddhaloka, built in A.D. 875 the vast Buddhist monastery of Dong-duong.[1] Now what can be said of the Khmers during this period ?

The plain fact is that not until the latter part of the XIIth century A.D. did any native born Khmer king adopt Mahāyānism, however tolerant he may have been of this and other religious sects. That Suryavarman I (first half of XIth century) was a Buddhist only serves to emphasize the implications of the above for he was a foreigner, probably a Peninsular Malay. It was not until towards the end of the XIIth century that the Buddhism then coming from Bengal had been so much altered by the upsurge of pre-Aryan ideas in Tantrism, while syncretism with Śaivism had made such strides, that what then passed for Mahāyāna Buddhism could be readily adapted to the ancestor and chthonic

[1] Admittedly Dong-duong produced no Barabadur, for its *stupas* and Buddhist images are of markedly Chinese style. A probable explanation of this has recently been offered by P. Dupont, " Les Apports Chinois dans le style Bouddhique de Dong-du'ong," *BEFEO*, XLIV (1951), pp. 267–274. If the Indrapura dynasty received their Mahāyāna Buddhism from a Chinese source instead of directly from India, the significant point remains that already in the IXth century this type of religion proved acceptable.

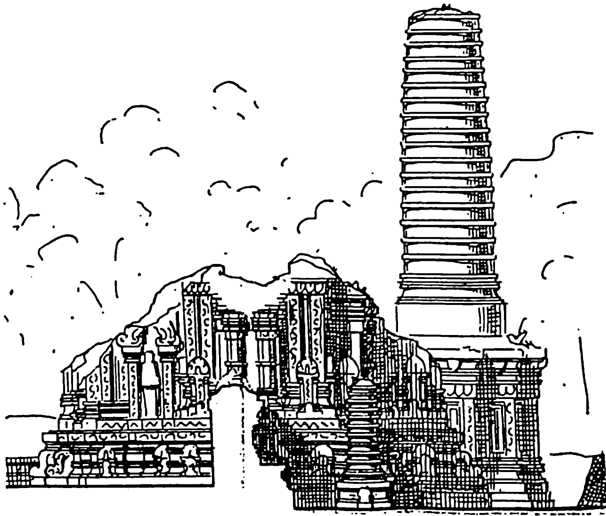

FIG. 23.—Cham *stupa* at the Dong-duong Buddhist monastery.

aspects of the *devarāja* cult, and thus become assimilable to Khmer kingship.

What then was it about the earlier Mahāyāna Buddhism that made it more readily acceptable to peoples with a strong Dongsonian element in their local genius ? The correspondences which Eliade shows to exist between Mahāyāna Buddhism and shamanism are certainly very striking. In the Barabudur, in particular, we have the most elaborately conceived parallel to the shaman's stage by stage ascent through the skies. Now the ascent has been translated into metaphysical terms in such manner that a Buddhist divinity, reminiscent of some demi-god encountered by the shaman, is projected on each cosmic plane which, as Mus has shown in his great work *Barabudur*, has come to represent an advancing state of meditation. Just as the Altai shaman ascends in trance through the various heavens to the presence of Bai Ulgan, now at Barabudur the Buddhist monk might hope to attain via the various " steps " in concentrated meditation the final deliverance of Nirvāna. Not only the symbolism of the Barabudur, but of Mahāyāna Buddhism generally, in its parallel to shamanism on a metaphysical plane, and the appeal it would be likely to make to a people whose forebears had not so long before been strongly imbued with shamanism, is a matter which might no doubt be worked out in considerable detail.

In *The Making of Greater India* (p. 107) I said of Mahāyāna Buddhism that it " could not have obtained the same easy acceptance on the part of the Javanese masses as did Śaivism. Yet it must have been willingly accepted by the Śailendra rulers, and by the upper classes, for otherwise we could hardly have had such clear and vital expression of local genius as we find in these splendid monuments of Central Java ". Now I think we can see more clearly why this was the case : The Barabudur, as I rightly said, " is Indian both in

conception and in architectural form" ; local genius could at this early date (late VIIIth century A.D.) express itself only in preferences for certain ornamental designs, and the liking for the *kāla-makara* emblem. But (even if for the masses there was a reminiscence in this form of *stupa* of the ancient earthy megalithic terraces) the upper classes were not so far removed from their profound experience of the Dongson civilization with its common planetary cosmology of ultimately Babylonian origin, but that they would feel the subconscious attraction of the staged *stupa*, a new and powerful cosmic symbol leading now to a more attractive spiritual salvation. Explainable certainly in Indian terms, the Barabudur is yet the work of a people whose deep-seated urges, acting through local genius, achieved an order of perfection that is peculiar to their own cultural background.

Hardly could the contrast between the Khmer and Indo-Javanese bias be better expressed in stone than in any typical Khmer temple-mountain, such as Phiméanakas (Fig. 19),[1] on the one hand, and the Barabudur on the other, the essential of the symbolism of which is clearly indicated in Raffles' classic drawings (Fig. 24). In the former we have primarily the steep, barely accessible "substitute body" of the chthonic deity, radiating his power to the four quarters of the kingdom. In the latter we have rather an invitation to the spiritually prepared to ascend to those higher planes where salvation is to be attained, as the circular terraces suggest, in the realms of the all-seeing Omniscient, and through the aid and initiation of his divine representatives projected on each plane. Again, the curious Cham *stupa* (Fig. 23) though apparently inspired by Chinese Mahāyānists, is a circular, multi-staged axis, a form that can be readily seen as acceptable

[1] Or if one prefers a closer contemporary to Barabudur : Ak Yom or Krus Prah Aram Rong Chen.

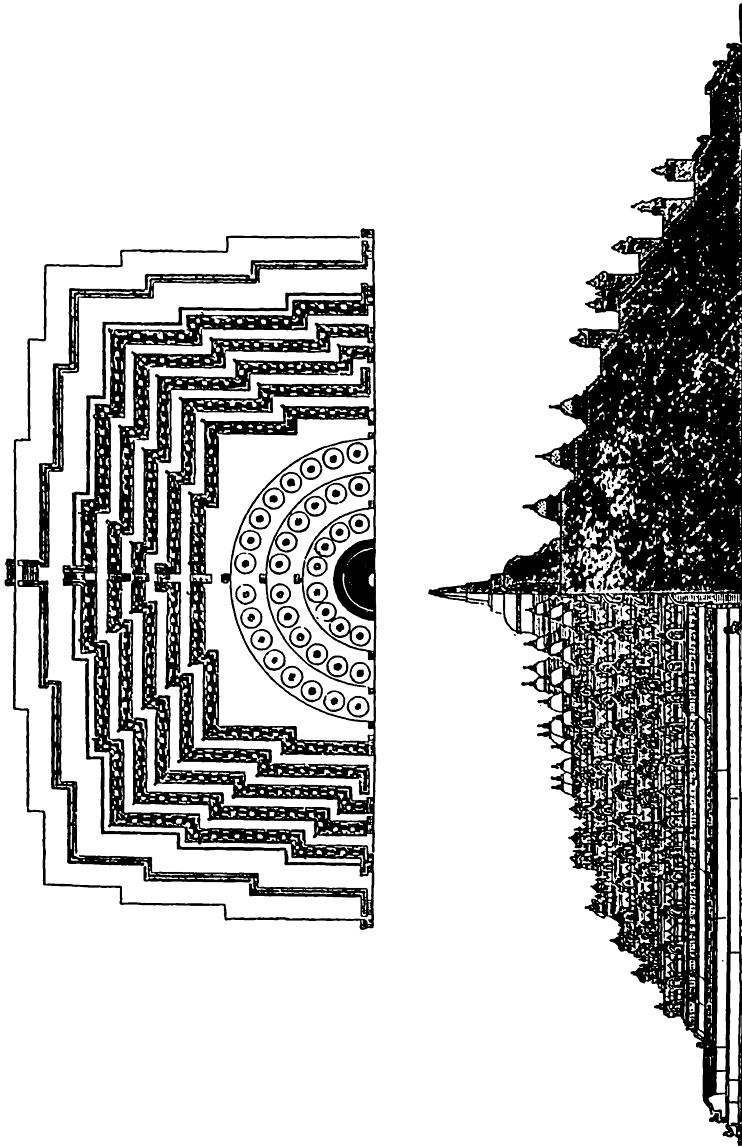

FIG. 24.—Half-plan, elevation and section of Barabudur.

to a shamanic background, but meaningless to the chthonic-minded.

It was pre-eminently the celestial nature of the supreme deity in the religion of the Dongsonians that made Mahāyāna Buddhism more readily acceptable to the Chams and Indo-Javanese than to the Khmers. Metaphysics is intimately associated with knowledge, that is to say transcendental knowledge; [1] and the deity with whom communion is sought on a metaphysical plane is omniscient. Pettazzoni points out in his recent work that the omniscience of the transcendental Buddha of Mahāyāna Buddhism " however much it may be sublimated in esoteric interpretations and speculative elaborations of the various schools, still has an expression in art based on the elementary act of seeing ".[2] He has shown that celestial deities in general are omniscient because all-seeing. On the other hand " omniscience is not attributed to sundry other deities whose nature is not of light, chiefly the divinities of the earth and the underworld . . . The omniscience of Earth, when it occurs at all, is of magic or oracular kind ".[3] In India and wherever there was Indianization, Śiva had been sufficiently affected by ouranic beliefs (as shown by his third eye) to have acquired omniscience. Yet, as we have seen, the Khmers preferred chthonic forms of Śiva. When, in the XIIth century A.D., Mahāyāna Buddhism had become such that it could be adapted to the *devarāja* religion, the character of the Khmer royal religion was neither transcendental nor (as was the case even in XIIth century Javanese Mahāyānism) ouranic: The four-faced towers of the Bayon represent the Bodhisattva Lokeśvara not as the media of an all-seeing omniscient central deity, but rather as the means by which the chthonic power of the Buddha/king,

[1] Hastings' *Encyclopaedia*, art. Metaphysics; Eliade, *Traité* . . . pp. 73, 103.
[2] Pettazzoni, op. cit., p. 126.
[3] ibid., p. 12.

whose statue was ensconsed in the central tower, was radiated to the provinces.[1] And this statue was itself the personalized focus of the chthonically-conceived deity whose " substitute body " was the whole pyramid.

In view of all this we should not be surprised if Mahāyānist metaphysics proved more readily assimilable in Champa and Java than in Cambodia. This conclusion is of the essence of the present study, and so will be a fitting note on which to bring it to an end.

[1] G. Coedès, *Pour mieux comprendre Angkor*, pp. 145–150.

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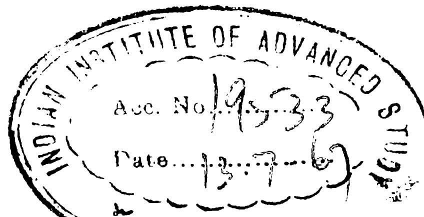
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