

colonialism. Among her friends and acquaintances were people of high positions, including political leaders, diplomats, famous authors and journalists active during those days. The book provides entertaining reading, and can help place this unusual American woman in a proper historical perspective.

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CAMBODIA

Kambodschanische Kultur, No. 2, 1988. Cambodian Culture. Thonevath Pou, Wolfgang Ulland, Guechse Yim, editors. Berlin: Studiengemeinschaft Kambodschanische Kultur e.V., 1988. Approx. US\$7.00 or DM 15.—.

Since the massive flight of Tibetans before the Chinese troops and especially in the aftermath of the events in Indochina triggered by the fall of Saigon, Asians have become a familiar sight in Europe even in areas where hardly a tourist would ever venture. This poses a number of problems for which neither the accepting societies nor the refugees' groups were prepared. Both sides were faced with having to deal with an entirely unfamiliar language, not to speak of the mutually unfamiliar ways of thinking and believing. There can be no doubt that in the long run these Asians will leave a definite impression on the cultural landscape of Europe. On the other hand, they themselves have to put up with the dilemma of integrating themselves into the host societies and at the same time of trying to preserve their own cultural heritage. Such a situation asks for means and efforts which would help the partners to learn about the other and at the same time to become more conscious of the nature and cultural conditions of their respective differences.

Kambodschanische Kultur proposes to introduce Cambodian culture to the German (speaking) public and to provide some help for the Cambodian community in Germany to remember their own cultural homeland. The journal, whose first issue was published in 1987, wants therefore to reach a public generally interested in Cambodian culture and scholars in Khmer studies. These are two fields difficult to combine to

the satisfaction of both kinds of readers, and taking the present issue as an example, it is the scholars who are most rewarded. Scholarly contributions tip the balance in their favor, but some of these contributions are written in such a way that they will please the non-specialist too.

The slender volume of eighty odd pages is introduced with a number of poems in Cambodian. If they were accompanied by a German translation they might be as appealing and charming as the two children's stories, both a kind of animal fable, which follow them. The rest of the volume is of a more academic genre starting with a mainly descriptive article by San Sarin about the circumstantial setting and the celebration of the Cambodian festival for the dead and the ancestors. There follows Saveros Pou's spirited and provocative discussion of the relationship of Siamese with Khmer. Harvesting some of the fruits of her longstanding research on Khmer linguistics, she shows that Siamese has borrowed heavily from Old Khmer rather than directly from Sanskrit, quite contrary to widespread assumptions. Her argument allows a glimpse at the importance of Khmer culture for the Indochinese peninsula and is at the same time a comment on the state of certain linguistic studies concerning this area. In a review of J. M. Jacob's *Reamker* she extends her critical assessment to a European attempt. Her polemic contributions differ sharply from the tone of the other texts, but they are the most stimulating. Hess-Lüttich's comparison of German and Khmer is, in contrast, dry but equally well argued. In this outline of characteristic features of the Khmer language he isolates the particular difficulties speakers of Khmer have to face when trying to learn German, in order to have the German teachers appreciate those difficulties. The last article is a report by W. Lobo about the most fortunate recent rediscovery in Berlin of a large collection of paper molds from reliefs of Angkor which had miraculously survived the war.

In the report section Ang describes the activities of a Cambodian Buddhist monastery in Créteil, France, which increasingly provides a religious and cultural focus for Cambodians in France and is about to expand its services to Germany. A number of book reviews and a list of recent publications related to Cambodian culture complete the volume.

We can only congratulate the editors on the fine result of their efforts and hope that they may receive the continued support of institutions and individuals to keep up their promising and important work. The publisher, the *Society for the Study of Cambodian Culture* would welcome any support and may be contacted at the following address: Studiengemeinschaft Kambodschanische Kultur e.V., c/o Dr. Thonevath Pou, Gleditschstrasse 44, D-1000 Berlin 30, Federal Republic of Germany.

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SARAWAK

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