

ERRATUM

The editor regrets that in the previous issue, the article by Milton E. Osborne, 'History and Kingship in Contemporary Cambodia' had a number of printing errors particularly in the spelling and accenting of titles in the footnotes. In addition, the author has asked that the following corrections to the body of the text should be noted.

p. 3, line 8. For 1835 read 1853.

p. 5, line 31. 'Roi' should be 'Rois'.

p. 10, final line. The sentence 'The emphasis is in the original' should be enclosed in square brackets.

p. 12, line 26. 'throw' should read 'through'.

p. 13, lines 27 to 32. The passage beginning 'There can be few more . . . ' and ending ' . . . religious and cosmological implications'. Should be a separate paragraph following the quotations annotated by footnote 38.

Since the article was submitted to the journal for publication, R. M. Smith's study of Cambodian foreign policy has been published as *Cambodia's Foreign Policy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1965).

The Editor,
Journal Southeast Asia History,
Dear Sir,

Your reviewer of my book *Ceylon* (Prentice-Hall 1964),* Dr. S. U. Kodikara, must imagine he has all the right answers to the tangled phenomena of Ceylon's past as well as of her confused present. As these answers are evidently different from the interpretations I offer in my book, he dismisses my views as 'errors', 'blunders' and 'misconceptions'. Such dogmatism ill becomes one who expects to be taken seriously as a commentator on historical and contemporary problems. Let me comment briefly on these 'errors' I am supposed to have made.

Firstly, he says that my conceptual framework for the history of Ceylon is wrong because I have sought to present the past as a continuous history of communities rather than of states. This mode of treatment is a deliberate departure from that adopted by almost all existing surveys of Ceylon's past. I favoured this frame-work because it gave me ample scope to describe the cultural traditions of the three major communal-cultural groups that are entrenched in Ceylon today. I also wished to liberate the subject from being enfeathered by weighty dynastic lists and regnal years and to put the emphasis on the diverse cultures that were implanted in the island. That these communities have intermingled and interacted has not so affected their individual existence as not to be identified and described separately.

Secondly, he says that I have 'erred' in seeking the roots of contemporary Sinhalese nationalism in the early history of Ceylon. Your reviewer would see this purely as a phenomenon explained in terms of contemporary economic and social conditions. I reject this explanation as too shallow and simple. I am supported in this not only by the entire body of studies in depth on Sinhalese nationalism attempted in the last 10 years, but also by most recent work on nationalism in many other newly independent countries of Asia. These case studies have shown that contemporary environment merely triggers a reversionary and backward-looking movement and this new nationalism seeks to bridge the present with its version of the pre-colonial past.

Thirdly, my 'blunder' that the Rubber-rice pact (1952) with China was a breach in the old foreign policy attitudes; Dr. Kodikara sees this purely as a commercial pact. For a student of contemporary affairs, he is unusually naive. This trade pact with China was the beginning of the trend towards neutralism among some sections of the ruling elite. And while there was no immediate and formal change in foreign policy, the more perceptive observer

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will see the emergence of a group more favourably disposed to China within the ruling party, led in fact by a Cabinet Minister.

Finally, I regret to disappoint Dr. Kodikara on a criticism which if true would be the only concrete point he would have made – namely the alleged omission of any references to the Indian Tamil Community. The immigration of this community is discussed on pp. 161-2 with statistical data and the problems of their integration on p. 18. All this makes one wonder if your reviewer, far from attempting an objective estimate of my book, was using your pages to react emotionally to points of view not to his liking.

Yours etc.

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