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COVER: Detail of a bodhisattva head, 7th-9th c., likely from Plai Bat Hill, Buriram province, Thailand, bronze, formerly in the collection of the Asian Art Museum, San Francisco, B66B14, H. 94 cm, deaccessioned 22 April 2025 © AAMSF

*For a discussion of this object, see Natasha Reichle's contribution in this edition

EDITORIAL

This final issue of the *Journal of the Siam Society* (JSS) for 2025 brings together a rich and wide-ranging collection of scholarship that reflects the Society's enduring mission: to support rigorous research on Thailand and its regional and global contexts, while honoring those who have shaped the field.

We open with remembrance and a tribute to French architect Pierre Pichard (1936–2024), former honorary member of the Siam Society, whose monumental restoration and documentation of Phimai, Phanom Rung, and Bagan remains a landmark achievement in Southeast Asian architectural history. His passing marks the loss of a meticulous scholar whose curiosity, discipline, and generosity of spirit continue to inspire.

Our Research Highlights section presents five studies that illuminate diverse aspects of Siam's past and present. Hiroshi Kawaguchi revisits Siam–Vietnam relations during the reign of King Rama I, offering new perspectives on diplomacy and regional politics. Chris Baker & Pasuk Phongpaichit reconstruct Nai Mot's printing of the *Three Seals Law*, shedding light on evolving law, new technologies and royal authority in the mid-19th century. Pakdeekul Ratana examines the roles of Lan Na women across key historical periods, foregrounding labor, moral authority, and cultural agency. Tinakrit Sireerat explores nationalism and continuity in Siamese forestry history, tracing tensions between stewardship and sovereignty. Finally, Saranpat Boonhok & Tongchen Hou analyze how contemporary television drama reframes the historical relationship between Siam and Burma, revealing popular media's role in shaping collective memory.

This issue also features a Special Edition dedicated to George Cœdès (1886–1969), former President of the Siam Society and a foundational figure in Southeast Asian studies. Published to coincide with the forthcoming Bangkok colloquium on HRH Prince Damrong Rajanubhab and Prof. Cœdès, these articles revisit his intellectual networks, early field experiences, and enduring influence. Jean Baffie offers a biographical overview situating Cœdès within the institutional world he helped build. Thissana Weerakietsoontorn examines his first encounter with Angkor in 1912; Pierre-Yves Manguin reassesses his seminal contributions to Śrīvijaya studies; and Bernard Cros, Cœdès's grandson, highlights the significance of his brief 1928 visit to Batavia (modern Jakarta). Michel Lorillard publishes and contextualizes correspondence between Prof. Cœdès and Paul Pelliot regarding the name Xianluo found in the Chinese annals, identified with Siam, while Gregory Kourilsky analyzes Jean-Yves Claeys's 1929 mission to Siam in the orbit of Cœdès. Together, these contributions present a multifaceted portrait of Cœdès as scholar, administrator, and participant in the intellectual and geopolitical currents of his time.

In the Museum Spotlight, I examine a small pre-Angkorian bodhisattva in bronze at the Art Institute of Chicago, situating it within broader questions of style, iconography, and provenance. The Events & Exhibitions section reviews two recent cultural initiatives: Natasha Reichle reflects on *Moving Objects* at the Asian Art Museum, engaging contemporary debates on looting and restitution to Thailand; and Anne Håbu discusses *Temples and Elephants*, an exhibition in Bangkok and Oslo revisiting Carl Bock's travels and their place in the Western imagination of Southeast Asia.

We conclude with an extensive Book Reviews section that underscores the vitality of Southeast Asian studies across archeology, legal and colonial history, anthropological and religious studies, maritime networks, and the history of education. From Ban Chiang to colonial law and spirit possession, the breadth of works reviewed attests to continuing scholarly innovation and engagement.

We extend our warm thanks to all authors, reviewers, and collaborators who have contributed to this year's issues and to The Siam Society Under Royal Patronage and our global readership for their continued support. As we look ahead to 2026, JSS remains committed to fostering open, critical, and evidence-based scholarship grounded in respectful debate and a spirit of inquiry. May these pages serve both as a record of achievement and an invitation to further research.

Nicolas Revire
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