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attracting increasing attention. It is to be hoped that the Chinese works describing it, such as the *Meng-liang lu* from which Moule quotes illustrative excerpts, may some day be available in fuller measure to Western readers.

Besides the notes on Quinsai, five shorter notes on passages in Marco Polo are included, two on birds and animals, one on the Linen of Rens, one on the siege of Hsiang-yang, and one on the murder of Acmat Bailo, the last three being revised versions of previously published articles.

E. G. PULLEYBLANK.

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THE LANGUAGE OF THE SECRET HISTORY OF THE MONGOLS. By J. C. STREET. pp. 89. American Oriental Society, New Haven, Connecticut, 1957.

Great industry, and a vast amount of ratiocination (much of it in my view misapplied) have gone into the making of this book, and it is always disagreeable and even unfair to blame a young scholar for faults acquired from his teachers; but the plain fact is that few European scholars will have the courage and endurance to finish a book written in an order so chaotic and a jargon so repellent. Dr. Scott's claim is that "previous works on Mongolian grammar have usually started out with certain unstated assumptions based on the analysis of Latin and Greek but of no necessary validity for other languages", and that this is the first application of "descriptive methods" to a Mongolian language. No one will deny the undesirability of the eighteenth century practice of trying to force other languages into the strait-jacket of Latin grammar or the unfortunate consequences, for example, for English grammar, which flowed therefrom; but that practice was abandoned decades ago and modern European grammars of oriental languages can be called "descriptive" in every sense of the word, even though they still preserve the traditional vocabulary of grammatical terms so far as circumstances permit. The new American "do it yourself" technique advocated by Dr. Scott seems to consist mainly in substituting for large parts of that vocabulary a new one based on the wholesale massacre of Latin and Greek etymology, including both ungrammatical neologisms like "lexeme" and "tagmeme" and Graeco-Latin hybrids like "vocoid", which, believe it or not, means "semi-vowel". This is not just a splenetic outburst by a crusted Tory; the future of international scholarship is at stake. A young English-speaking or English-reading scholar wishing to learn Classical Mongolian will probably start with *An Introduction to Classical (Literary) Mongolian*, written by a Dane (the late Prof. Grønbech), and an American (John Krueger), and proceed from there to the *Grammar of Written Mongolian*, written by a Russian domiciled in America (Prof. Poppe). The international grammatical terminology

used by these distinguished scholars is not absolutely identical, but the differences are minimal, and it can readily be understood by any educated person. It is not fair to the young scholar who has got so far and wishes to broaden his knowledge of Mongolian to expect him to learn a completely new grammatical terminology, which often calls exactly the same grammatical form or concept by a completely different name, also derived from Greek or Latin, but by an illegitimate process, and to present him with the subject in a completely different, and to my mind, illogical order.

GERARD CLAUSON.

### South-East Asia

PREHISTORY AND RELIGION IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA. By Dr. H. G. QUARITCH WALES. 180 pp. and 34 illustrations. Bernard Quaritch, Ltd., London, 1957. £2.

This book seeks to prove from archaeology and surviving beliefs that Khmer religion developed from the older Megalithic and Cham religion from the Dongsonian, and that Indo-Javanese religious evolution was affected by both these elements. For the cult of the Older Megalithic its author turns to the isolated aborigines of S.E. Australia whose sky-god can be visited by a shaman. Next, going as far afield as Jericho, Delphi (with its *δμφαλός*) and Babylon, he finds (like Heine-Geldern) a chthonic aspect in the mountain cult of the older Megalithic, whose structures were designed to provide contact with Mother Earth and dead ancestors. Then came the cult of Dongsonian bronzeworkers with a form of shamanism which unlike that of India did not involve spirit possession. With great plausibility Dr. Quaritch Wales takes the feathered figures on the bronze drums to be neither the warriors of Heine-Geldern nor the birdmen of Kalgren but shamans disguised as birds for their role as "space navigators" escorting the dead to heaven; and in the boats on the drums he sees their space vehicles with the Cosmic Tree looking at first glance like a mast—though there were no sails then and so no masts. In the deer-arch (or rainbow ending in two snakes) of fourteenth-century Java and the cosmic tree (*gunongan*) of the shadow-play Dr. Quaritch Wales discerns a revival of Dongson motifs. The *Kala* head of the *gunongan* and Javanese sculpture, so often reduced to a single eye, appears to him to be not the Horus of Elliot Smith and Perry but the sun as a symbol of the supreme Dongsonian sky-god.

The arguments are supported by detailed evidence, carefully chosen to be as free as possible from Hindu and Islamic accretions. But to sift prehistoric ore clean over so long a period and so wide an area is a staggering task. The author thinks, for example, that the sky-god