



## ИЗ ИСТОРИИ ВОСТОКА ORIENTAL STUDIES


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### Cambodia's Decline and the Fall of Angkor as Pictured in the Chinese Sources during the Yuan and Early-Middle Ming dynasties (Late XIII — Early XV cc.)

Ilia S. Kolnin  

The Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences (IOS RAS),  
12, Rozhdestvenka str., Moscow, Russian Federation, 107031

 [minmi98@yandex.ru](mailto:minmi98@yandex.ru)

**Abstract.** The fall of Angkor in the 15th century marked a turning point in the Cambodian history leading to the downfall of the Khmer civilization and the start of the so-called “post-Angkor period” which is also often referred to as the “Dark Age of Cambodia”. Local epigraphical sources almost completely disappear from the 13th up to the 16th centuries while the Royal Chronicles dealing with this timeframe were compiled much later, mostly in the 18th and 19th centuries. Therefore, primary sources of this era are very scarce. While it is commonly accepted among the modern researchers that the fall of Angkor was a continuous process and was not a result of a single Siamese attack or a natural calamity (moreover, various reasons for this gradual downfall have been outlined), the perception of this process by other political powers in the region, especially China, has been significantly understudied. In this work the author made an attempt to trace the transformation of depiction of Cambodia in the Chinese sources of the Yuan and early Ming dynasties (both official and private).

**Keywords:** Cambodia, Angkor, Zhenla, Chenla, China, Yuan dynasty, Ming dynasty, Zhou Daguan, Zheng He

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## Упадок Камбоджи и падение Ангкора в китайских источниках эпохи Юань и ранней Мин (поздний XIII — ранний XV вв.)

И.С. Колнин  

Институт востоковедения РАН (ИВ РАН),  
107031, Российская Федерация, Москва, ул. Рождественка, д. 12

 minmi98@yandex.ru

**Аннотация.** Падение Ангкора в XV в. обозначило поворотную точку в истории Камбоджи и привело к упадку кхмерской цивилизации и началу так называемого «пост-Ангкорского периода», который также зачастую именуют как «Темные века Камбоджи». Местные эпиграфические источники почти полностью исчезают в промежутке с XIII по XVI вв., в то же время Королевские хроники, в которых описывается этот временной период, были созданы значительно позднее, в большинстве своем в XVIII и XIX вв. Таким образом, первоисточники этой эпохи крайне малочисленны. В то время как среди современных исследователей общепринято, что упадок Ангкора был продолжительным процессом и не был результатом одного набега со стороны Сиам или же природной катастрофы (более того, было обозначено много причин этого постепенного упадка), восприятие этого процесса другими политическими силами в регионе, в особенности Китаем, не было достаточно изучено. В данной работе автор прослеживает трансформацию описания Камбоджи в китайских источниках эпохи Юань и ранней Мин, как в официальных, так и частных.

**Ключевые слова:** Камбоджа, Ангкор, Чжэньла, Чэнла, Ченла, Китай, империя Юань, империя Мин, Чжоу Дагуань, Чжэн Хэ

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### Introduction

The earliest toponym associated with the Khmer people in the Chinese sources is Funan 扶南 which originally appears in the official history of the Three Kingdoms period (220–280 AD). There is no consensus among the researchers about the origin of the Funan people whether they were Austronesian or Austroasiatic although the recent archeological finds seem to point to the Mon-Khmer roots<sup>1</sup>. What is known for sure, however, is that Funan was a prosperous polity with multiple protourban centers located around present-day Southern Cambodia and Southern Vietnam

<sup>1</sup> For modern studies on early history of Funan from the archaeological and epigraphical perspective, see: [1, 2].

and that it was actively involved in the maritime network whereby Hinduism and Buddhism came to it [3. P. 148–152]<sup>2</sup>.

Hereinafter the Chinese narrative directly connects Funan with the Cambodian realm. In the middle of the 6th century a new polity named Zhenla 真臘 (also commonly referred to as Chenla) appears in the Chinese sources. They speak of Zhenla as originally being a subordinate of Funan which managed to break free and at some point even absorbed it. M. Vickery, A.O. Zakharov and other modern scholars believe that Zhenla's political center was originally to the north of Funan and gradually expanded to the south absorbing Funan's land [5, 6]. Through the careful analysis of the all the available Chinese records I was able to determine the more precise dates for this process: the inclusion of Funan into Zhenla started during Datong 大同 reign (535–546) and finished in the beginning of Zhenguan 貞觀 reign (around 627–628) [16. P. 43, 47, 50; 9. P. 111–123].

On the one hand, the Chinese official histories tended to underline Funan's richness speaking of its luxurious dwellings and palaces as well as the people's involvement in agriculture at the same time stating that the Funannese were peace-loving and did not like fighting. On the other hand, in the image of Zhenla a more warlike nature was shown: the people's character was changed to vigorous and rigid, a detailed account of the usage of war elephants was provided as well as mentions of fighting with the neighboring countries. Another noteworthy point is the transition from favoring Buddhism in Funan to favoring Hinduist cults in Zhenla<sup>3</sup>.

A brief period of division of Zhenla from the early 8th to the early 9th century into two parts named “Land Zhenla” 陸真臘 (also referred to as Wendan 文單) and “Water Zhenla” 水真臘 is only articulated in the Chinese tradition. None of the local epigraphical sources as well as other foreign records mark this separation. Similarly to “Funan-Zhenla” narrative, “Land Zhenla” was in the north and had many mountains and hills while “Water Zhenla” was in the south near the sea and had many reservoirs and pools. The specialists in Southeast Asian history have already previously outlined the inconsistency of the breakup of the “unified” Zhenla into “Land Zhenla” and “Water Zhenla” [5. P. 204–206]. What I would like to add to this discourse is that there seems to be a connection between the portrayal of the “Funan-Zhenla” transition and “Land Zhenla”–“Water Zhenla” narrative in the Chinese sources: firstly, there is a period of the simultaneous tributary missions from several Khmer polities (Funan and Zhenla; Wendan and Zhenla); secondly, one of the polities seizes the right to engage in tributary relations with China (Zhenla in the second half of the 7th century and Wendan in the 8th); finally, another period of the political disturbance erupts. Therefore, to my mind, the “unified Zhenla” after the fall of Funan and before the division into “Water Zhenla” and “Land Zhenla”

<sup>2</sup> For the old French translation of the descriptions of Funan in the Chinese official histories, see [4].

<sup>3</sup> Modern English translations of Zhenla's accounts in the Sui and Tang dynasty official histories. [7,8].

is in fact an artificial construct, there was rather a northern Khmer polity which managed to achieve sole dominance in the tributary relations with China. It follows that from the Chinese point of view it was considered a unified kingdom<sup>4</sup>.

All in all, it can be summarized that the portrayal of the early proto–Khmer polities in the Chinese sources up to the end of the Tang dynasty can be characterized by a number of persistent characteristics such as significant wealth, a number of subordinate countries, abundance of gold and silver, numerous palaces and pagodas etc. Funan seems to have been perceived by the Chinese as the hegemonic state in the region of “Mainland Southeast Asia” with its power surpassing that of Linyi 林邑 (most probably a proto–Cham polity)<sup>5</sup>. This “hegemonic” period was followed by a struggle between the northern and southern political centers throughout the 6th and up to the 9th century. Therefore, in order to determine what kind of image of Zhenla persisted in the Chinese narrative up to the Yuan dynasty, first of all, the available Song dynasty sources have to be particularly analyzed.

The second point reviewed in this paper is the downfall of Zhenla and the reasons behind it (in the Chinese perception). Old and modern scholars have outlined the following main reasons which could potentially lead to the decline of Angkor: the deterioration of the irrigation system and systemic environmental degradation; possible economic and social distress caused by the Jayavarman VII’s (1120–1218) “building overindulgence”; the torpor associated with the rise of Theravada Buddhism; growing importance of the maritime trade; climate change; epidemic disease [13, 14, 15. P. 4871]. Recent archeological excavations as well as radiocarbon analyses have partially proven that the multiple factors such as burgeoning territorial ambitions of neighboring states, better access to the profitable maritime trade networks closer to the South China Sea and an increasingly unwieldy and restrictive urban fabric at Angkor encouraged the Cambodian elite to relocate closer to the Mekong and Tonle Sap River [15. P. 4874]. The present study aims at comparing the results of these findings with the data collected from the Chinese sources in order to see if similar processes have been recorded in the Chinese annals and personal works<sup>6</sup>. It should be noted that in the present work only those references to the toponym of Zhenla and the ones related to it are analyzed.

### **Portrayal of Zhenla up to the End of the Song Dynasty**

The Chinese records are silent about Cambodia and its relations with China up to the middle of the 11th century. This could be explained by the turmoil within China at the end of the Tang dynasty and the period of split until 960. During

<sup>4</sup> For a more detailed evaluation of this complex period of Khmer history from the position of the Chinese sources, see the author’s unpublished MA thesis: [9].

<sup>5</sup> For the recent studies on Champa and Linyi in particular, see [10–12].

<sup>6</sup> For references to Cambodian polities in the Chinese sources of the first and second millennium AD the following two annotated and commented editions have been used: [16, 17].

the Northern Song the main focus of the Chinese Court must have been on the northern borders and the land routes rather than maritime ones, therefore, there was no information about Zhenla from this time frame is extant. Luckily, the Southern Song sources contain significant amount of data.

The earliest evidence about Zhenla preserved in the private sources of the later 12th century the mainly historical geographical treatises. The first one of them is *Guihai yuheng zhi* 桂海虞衡志 (“Well-Balanced Records of Guihai”; 1175) written by Fan Chengda 范成大 (1126–1193), a famous poet and geographer who served in present-day Guangxi province<sup>7</sup>. *Guihai yuheng zhi* makes several mentions of Zhenla: firstly, it is noted together with Zhancheng 占城 (Champa) as one of the main suppliers of aromatics to China, specifically mentioning incenses from Dengliumei 登流眉 (Tambralinga), which (according to Fan Chengda) are worse than those of Hainan. Secondly, a place Xinzhou 新州 which used to be Zhenla’s land but then was invaded by Annam is recorded. Thirdly, a border between Zhancheng and Zhenla by the river is noted [18. P. 38–39, 203, 230].

A close friend of Fan Chengda, Zhou Qufei 周去非 (1135–1189), who also worked in Guangxi as an imperial official, and wrote a historical geographical work entitled *Lingwai daida* 嶺外代答 (“Representative Answers from the Region beyond the Mountains”; 1178)<sup>8</sup>. *Lingwai daida* includes a separate account of Zhenla. It starts with stating that Zhenla is further than Zhancheng but closer than all other barbarians 諸蕃. A list of countries is then given for which Zhenla is called a *douhui* 都會 which probably refers to a political or trading center: Wali 窠里國<sup>9</sup>, Xipeng 西棚國<sup>10</sup>, Sanpo 三泊國<sup>11</sup>, Malan 麻蘭國<sup>12</sup>, Dengliumei, Dilata 第辣撻國<sup>13</sup>. The account then speaks of the local incenses as the main trading items, highlighting the Dengliumei ones which are better than those from other foreign countries. The next passage about the monks has been misunderstood by both V. Almonte and M. Ulyanov: the characters *seng* 僧 and *dao* 道 here are used to oppose one another pointing at the Hindu and Buddhist monks respectively. Hence it should be understood as follows: “*Their Buddhist and Hindu monks are exceptionally good at incantations. Buddhist monks with yellow garments have families; [Buddhist monks] with red garments live in monasteries strictly following religious discipline. Hindu monks use tree leaves as clothes*”<sup>14</sup>. An interesting

<sup>7</sup> For English and Russian translations, see: [18, 19]. Modern Chinese edition: [20].

<sup>8</sup> For English, German and Russian translations see: [19–22].

<sup>9</sup> Unidentified, could be Myeik in present-day Myanmar.

<sup>10</sup> Probably Supan 素攀 district northwest of Bangkok.

<sup>11</sup> Near Lopburi or Nakhon Pathom.

<sup>12</sup> Unidentified, somewhere on Malay Peninsula; also could be the Kraburi River.

<sup>13</sup> Trat on the southeast coast of Thailand or Kelantan on the Malay Peninsula. Different views on identifications of the aforementioned toponyms are provided in: [21. P. 126–127]. For other identifications the following book is of use: [24].

<sup>14</sup> Edited in comparison with: [21. P. 127].

reference to the ancient Chinese goddess Nüwa 女媧 is provided afterwards: “*In this country if one looks at one side of the sky there are often small “scars on it. Their people say that these are [the spots] which in ancient times Nüwa did not reach”* [21. P. 127].

The next works which contains information about Zhenla is a *biji*-style 筆記 (“brush notes”) book *Yunlu manchao* 雲麓漫鈔 (“Loose Notes of the Cloud-Covered Foothill”; around 1206) by a scholar Zhao Yanwei 趙彥衛. It claims that Zhenla is also called Zhenlifu after which the following sentence is present: “*Sanpo, Lüiyang 綠洋<sup>15</sup>, Dengliumei, Xipeng, Luohu 羅斛<sup>16</sup>, Pugan 蒲甘<sup>17</sup> have jinyan incense 金顏香 and others*” [17. P. 112].

The most detailed description of Zhenla was contained in another private work *Zhufan zhi* 諸蕃志 (“Records of Foreign Peoples”, 1225) written by an official Zhao Rugua 趙汝适 (1170–1231) who served as a Maritime Superintendent in Quanzhou<sup>18</sup>. In the depiction of Zhenla *Zhufan zhi* has significantly relied on the previous sources, namely *Sui shu* 隨書 (“Official History of the Sui dynasty”), but at the same time added a lot of new material.

New geographical positioning is presented: To the east it extends to the sea, to the west it extends to Pagan (Pagan), and to the south it extends to Jialoxi 加羅希 (Chaiya, Thailand), the overall size is approximately 7000 li, the capital is called Lugu 祿兀 (Angkor).

At the same time it was stated that the king’s clothing and the country’s administrative division are the same as in Zhancheng. The people’s dwellings are the same as described in the preceding sources, while the king is said to live in a dwelling out of carved stone: “*It has a beautiful granite-sided pond filled with lotuses and spanned by a golden bridge over three hundred feet long. The palace is magnificent and extremely opulent*”. The king’s throne’s description is taken from *Sui shu*, while Baphuon is described in the following manner: “*In the southwestern corner of the city is a bronze terrace on which stand twenty-four bronze towers and eight bronze elephants, each weighing four thousand catties*” [27]. This seems to be the first detailed description of the pompous temples and other constructions. The timeframe of the material for *Zhufan zhi* coincides with the rule of Jayavarman VII, therefore, the Chinese were aware of his building project.

The number of the war elephants of Zhenla was stated as 200000, small horses were also mentioned.

<sup>15</sup> Could be Cape Liant to the southeast from Satahip, Thailand.

<sup>16</sup> Lavo kingdom.

<sup>17</sup> Pagan kingdom.

<sup>18</sup> On Zhao Rugua’s biography, see [25]. For old and new English translations of *Zhufan zhi* as well as a Russian one, see: [26–28]. Two modern Chinese critical editions of the text were used: [29, 30].

Buddhist rituals are described in more details: “*They are very devout Buddhists and use daily shifts of more than 300 women to dance and present rice offerings to the Buddha. They call these women A’nan, which means “courtesan”* [27]. Interestingly, no mentions of Hinduism is present nor in *Zhufan zhi* nor in other Song dynasty sources.

Some information on the criminal law is also provided: “*Their custom is to be sexually promiscuous. Adultery is not punished, while theft is punished by cutting off a hand or a foot or by branding the chest with fire*” [27]. Cambodian epigraphy of the 10th century also records similar ways of punishment which correlate with the ones in Champa [31. P. 418].

Finally, a big list of local products and trading items is given together with some useful information on the soil and crops: “*The soil is fertile and the fields are not divided by boundary markers. Each family simply farms as much land as it can manage. Rice and other grains are cheap; one can buy two bushels of rice with just a tael of lead*” [27].

The list of vassal countries here includes Dengliumei, Bosilan 波斯蘭<sup>19</sup>, Luohu, Sanpo, Zhenlifu 真里富<sup>20</sup>, Maluowen 麻羅問<sup>21</sup>, Lüyang, Tunlifu 吞里富<sup>22</sup>, Pugan, Wali, Xipeng, Duhuai 杜懷<sup>23</sup>, Xunfan 潯番<sup>24</sup>.

Then follows a rather long summary of the Khmer–Cham war in the 1170–1190s and an evaluation of China relations with Zhenla: first contact in 618–626 and the sole tribute mission in 1120.

As for Zhenla’s image in official sources, the history of the Song dynasty, *Song shi* 宋史, mostly copies *Zhufan zhi* only adding data on tributary missions from Zhenla. Some other useful data is preserved in *Song huiyao jigao* 宋會要輯稿 (“Draft to an Institutional History of the Song Dynasty”; 12th century). According to *Song shi*, the first mention of Zhenla took place in 1062 where it was said that Zhenla traditionally was not used to war and that it often suffered from the sudden attacks of Jiaozhi 交趾 (a term in the Chinese records used to refer to the Vietnamese state) which was its neighbor. Simultaneously, Zhancheng also was training in arms to resist Jiaozhi. *Song huiyao jigao* also has this entry, moreover, it states that in 1064 that Zhancheng and Zhenla from the old times were attacked and terrorized by Jiaozhi. No other confrontations with Jiaozhi were recorded. However, in 1171 a conflict between Zhenla and Zhancheng was ongoing and a local Fujianese sailing to Hainan to take an official post was blown away to Zhancheng and advised the king of Zhancheng to use horses and archers; in 1177 Zhancheng launched a naval

<sup>19</sup> Most common localizations include Sóc Trăng, Bansala in Cambodia and Basilan island.

<sup>20</sup> Chanthaburi.

<sup>21</sup> Probably another transcription of Malan.

<sup>22</sup> Unidentified, could be an erroneous writing of Zhenlifu.

<sup>23</sup> Possibly Dawei in Myanmar.

<sup>24</sup> Possibly Chumphon, Thailand.

attack on Zhenla and did not listen to Zhenla's pledges. Later on this turned into a big rivalry; in 1199 Zhenla invaded Zhancheng and put their person as the ruler.

Tribute missions to China from Zhenla were recorded as follows:

1116, 1155 (together with Luohu) (*Song huiyao jigao*)

1116, 1120, 1129 (*Song shi*)

1120 (*Zhufan zhi*) [17. P. 90–98].

*Xu zizhi tongjian changbian* 續資治通鑑長編 (“Extended Continuation to *Zizhi Tongjian*”; 1183) adds to this chronology that in 1008 three Zhenla merchants were pursued by Jiaozhi and occasionally reached Gaozhou's 高州 (a county in Guangzhou province) borders and wanted to stay there [16. P. 117].

If one compares this data on Jiaozhi pressing Zhenla and Zhancheng with the Vietnamese sources, there are mentions in *Việt sử lược* 越史略 (“Abridged Chronicles of Viet”; 1337) of Zhenla coming to the Vietnamese Court in 1012, 1014, 1025, 1039, 1056, 1072, 1086, 1095, 1118, 1120, 1123, 1134, 1153, 1191, 1194, 1195. The envoys in 1095, 1118, 1120, 1134 and 1194 came together with Zhancheng. At the same time plundering of the Vietnamese territory by Zhenla were recorded in 1128, 1132 (together with Zhancheng); 1136, 1148 (solely) [17. P. 118–121].

*Song huiyao jigao* also includes a separate long account of Zhenlifu which was fully translated into English by O.W. Wolters [32]. The most significant parts of this account concern the administrative division and some customs: Zhenlifu is said to administer more than 60 settlements each of which its own administrator 主管, their monarch is called “the ruler” 主 and lives in a “Buddhist palace” 佛殿, the people are also said to follow the laws of Buddha. It is worth noting that unlike *Song huiyao jigao* and *Zhufan zhi*, *Song shi* refers to Zhenlifu not as a “dependent kingdom” 屬國, but as a “dependent city” 屬邑.

The only Song dynasty map survives which pictures Zhenla among the very few Southeast Asian countries on it (apart from Zhenla only Annam 安南 and Nanzhao 南詔 are present). The map is called *Tang yixing shanhe fenye tu* 唐一行山河分野圖 (“Map of the Joint Territories and Boundaries of the Tang [Empire]”) and was probably printed around 1195–1200. It does not contain any islands and places Zhenla in the southeastern corner of the map<sup>25</sup>. Another peculiar feature of this map is that Zhancheng is not pictured anywhere on it. To my mind, this might relate to the fact that during the time of the probable complication of the map (late 1190s — early 1200s) Zhenla managed to plunder Zhancheng and put their person on Zhancheng's throne which was definitely known to the Chinese as has been noted above. Another point which serves as a proof to this presumption is the fact that on the map Zhenla is located in the close proximity to Huan[zhou] 驩州 (Hoan Châu, i.e. Hà Tĩnh and Nghệ An, Vinh city) which Zhancheng bordered to the north (according to *Jiu Tang shu* and *Song shi*).

<sup>25</sup> The full version of the map is present in: [33. P. 17].



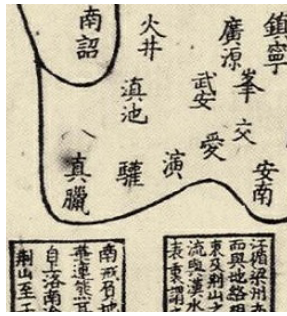


Fig. 1. The southeastern corner of the map *Tang yixing shanhe fenye tu*

All in all, it can be witnessed that the foreign political situation in the 11 and 12th centuries seems to have been rather difficult for Zhenla, and the Chinese sources had clearly pictured this: from the beginning of the 11th onwards Zhenla was in conflict with Jiaozhi, later on, during the 12th century confrontations with Zhancheng are recorded with Zhenla plundering Zhancheng in the end. Due to the fact that the material for *Zhufan zhi* was probably gathered before Zhancheng regained its independence in the 1220s, the image of Zhenla in both the private sources and the official history of the Song dynasty (which was simulated after *Zhufan zhi*) is given as a prosperous and hegemonic state with the false claims that even Pagan was its dependent state. This mistake was probably transmitted into *Zhufan zhi* from *Yunlu manchao* (which was written prior to the former) because all the countries which are simply mentioned in *Yunlu manchao* after Zhenla as exporters of one of the incenses are present in *Zhufan zhi* as “dependencies” of Zhenla. Thus, Zhao Rugua must have misunderstood this statement. Therefore, Song dynasty sources describe Zhenla at the peak of its strength which took place in the beginning of the 13th century. However, some of these characteristics such as the dependencies might have been attributed to Zhenla incorrectly or their political relations with Zhenla could have been misunderstood. This image has even been documented on the map presented above which lacks Zhancheng and has Zhenla occupying its traditional place in the cartographical tradition of China.

### The Beginning of Zhenla’s Decline as Described in the Yuan Dynasty Sources

The official history of the Yuan dynasty, *Yuan shi* 元史, lacks a separate description of Zhenla and only records tributes and other few interactions with this polity. All these extracts have been translated and are present in the appendix to the present paper.

*Wenxian tongkao* 文獻通考 (“Comprehensive Investigation of Literary Sources”; compiled in 1317), a Yuan dynasty encyclopedia (*leishu* 類書) type of work, simply collects and copies the information from the preceding sources

including both a description of Funan and Zhenla, therefore, this source has no significant value.

*Yuan shi* only mentions a few embassies from Angkor, namely in 1281, 1285 and 1329 [16. P. 122–123, 17. P. 122–125]. The first embassy came to submit, interestingly the name of the country is recorded as Ganbuxi 干不昔. The embassy of 1285 came together with Zhancheng and presented musicians, medical materials and crocodile skins. The mission of 1329 brought camphor wood, elephants, leopards, white monkeys, the country that time was called Zhanla 占臘. The items presented in the third tribute mission are quite typical for the Khmer polities. However, in the second case medical materials are a rather peculiar article for a tributary mission. Such a choice of a tribute item might have been a request from the Mongol court which was interested in the foreign medical practices and cures<sup>26</sup>. From other three mentions of Cambodia two are connected with the tamed elephants (together with Zhancheng) and one — with summoning troops from Cambodia and Champa for a naval expedition to Java. This notice is also of particular interest since as far as it is known, foreign troops were not used in the expedition to Java in 1293. Therefore, they must have refused or somehow evaded the participation in this conflict. In this entry the country is referred to as Ganbucha 甘不察. How can the interest in the tamed elephants be explained? It is known from the sources that the Yuan did not employ the war elephants, however, Qublai Khan did mount one to the direct battles. Apart from that, they were widely used in civilian tasks. But most importantly they were religiously symbolic creatures for the Buddhists, especially in case of Qublai Khan who converted to the Tibetan Buddhism and wanted to set up himself as “the universal ruler” not only through conquest, but through ideology as well<sup>27</sup>. Interestingly, however, no mentions of war elephants of Zhenla are present nor in the Yuan nor in the early Ming accounts<sup>28</sup>.

The earliest private source written on Zhenla after the establishment of the Yuan dynasty was *Zhenla fengtu ji* 真臘風土記 (“The Customs of Cambodia”) by Zhou Dagan 周達觀 who was a part of envoy sent to Angkor in 1296–1297<sup>29</sup>. Unfortunately, the original version is lost and a much shorter one is only currently available. It is interesting to note that Zhou Dagan’s mission to Zhenla is not recorded in *Yuan shi* nor anywhere else. However, the account itself is believed to be quite authentic, depicting the realities of that time and showing the degradation of Zhenla in comparison with the Song dynasty records. Moreover, only a small part of the account survived which made the original version of Zhou Dagan’s record even more valuable for his contemporaries.

<sup>26</sup> On this topic see, for example: [34].

<sup>27</sup> On the role of elephants in the Mongol society during the Yuan dynasty, see: [35. P. 257–259]

<sup>28</sup> Daoyi zhilüe 島夷誌略 (“A Brief Description of the Barbarians of the Isles”; 1349/1350) does record 400000 war elephants but this most probably is an even further exaggeration based on Zhufan zhi.

<sup>29</sup> Modern English translations: [36, 37]. The following Chinese commented edition was used: [38]

Similarly to *Yuan shi*, Zhou Dagan also records some other names which were used to refer to Cambodia during the Yuan time, moreover, he provides an explanation for them: “It is also called Zhanla, it calls itself Ganbeizhi 甘孛智. During the Yuan dynasty according to Xifang jing 西番經 they called this country Ganpuzhi 澈浦只, this is probably [another] transcription close to Ganbeizhi” [36. P. 45].

Zhou Dagan calls many of the local customs “laughable” and in general does not show much respect to the described country. Several other factors which point to the decline of Zhenla are also present: he approves of the general description of the “southern barbarians” as being coarse, ugly and black [36. P. 54].

Agricultural sector is described in a typical way, speaking of 3–4 crops a year. Interestingly, however, no water-conservation devices or irrigational systems are mentioned. Moreover, it is said that they do not use feces for manuring the land [36. P. 67].

Besides that the new peculiar features are added: Zhou Dagan presumes that they do not produce gold and silver and so they hold Chinese gold and silver at high regard. This is rather strange since gold and silver have been traditionally used as a trading value which is evident from the previous Chinese texts and which Zhou Dagan also notes in another part of his treatise [36. P. 70–71]. To my mind, such interest towards the Chinese gold and silver as well as absence of Zhenla’s production of these metals (in Zhou Dagan’s view) could be the outcome of Jayavarman VII extensive building of luxurious temples and other religious constructions<sup>30</sup>.

Regarding the definite signs of weakening of Zhenla, Zhou Dagan records the following information: primitive construction of boats (though “very large” ones are mentioned); repeated wars with the Siamese during which “the land has been completely laid to waste” (there is also a mention of people from Siam coming to live in Cambodia in the recent years, they also engage in silk production unlike the Khmers); weak army with naked and barefoot soldiers, no bows and arrows, body armor, helmets etc.; usage of ordinary people in wars with the Siamese; war elephants are also not mentioned (it is only said that elephants are used to protect the king when he goes out); collecting gall for the Cham king in the recent past (indication of political dependency to Champa) [36. P. 76, 78–80, 82].

Thus, two main problems of Zhenla are evident through Zhou Dagan’s account: inferior military and probable lack of irrigational system and complex devices for storage of water. There were tanks near large temples, and from the Chinese sources it is also known that wealthy families often had a pond. However, this was definitely not enough to support paddy fields, hence Angkor had to rely on the naturally flooded land [40. P. 973]. Zhou Dagan mentions that for six months throughout a year there was no rain at all and there also was uncultivated land where rice grew by itself but only thanks to the water reserves which the

<sup>30</sup> An evaluation of Jayavarman VII reign is present in: [39].

soil accumulated [36. P. 67]. During the Little Ice Age which began in the 14th century these downsides of the Angkor agricultural system must have been most problematic<sup>31</sup>.

A local gazetteer of the Guangdong province *Dade Nanhai zhi* 大德南海志 (“Records of the Southern Seas during the Dade Reign”; 1304) also provides a small bit of information on Zhenla: it states that Zhenla governs Zhenlifu, Dengliumei, Pugan and Rongli 葺里 (probably another variant of Wali). All the toponyms are simply repeated from the Song dynasty sources and do not reflect the real political relations between these polities and Zhenla. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that the number of polities under Zhenla’s “control” has significantly decreased in comparison with *Zhufan zhi* which could also be viewed as a sign of weakening of Zhenla. Moreover, this is the only Yuan dynasty source which speaks of Zhenla’s dependencies at all.

The latest Yuan dynasty source is *Daoyi zhilüe* 島夷誌略 (“A Brief Description of the Barbarians of the Isles”; 1349/1350). It was written by Wang Dayuan 汪大淵 (1311 or earlier — 1349 or later), an experienced Yuan dynasty merchant who set sail to the Southern Seas at least two times in his life. *Daoyi zhilüe* also contains a separate description of Zhenla, however, it is exceptionally repetitive of *Zhenla fengtu ji* and other previous sources and practically does contain almost no new information. This is very strange since Wang Dayuan claims to have visited all the described countries and his account almost always contains some new information on each of the polities. The only relatively new additions are a broader description of punishments and a list of several new trading items including buckram from the Fujian province which implies that maritime connections between Zhenla and China were still functioning at that time. In general, however, this account of Zhenla casts certain doubts to whether actually Wang Dayuan did visit Zhenla (or, if formulated differently, was it a significant enough maritime hub for Wang Dayuan to stop over there during his trading activities). Nevertheless, this account also indirectly proves the slow demise of Zhenla since most of its references to the richness and fertile soil of Zhenla are classical clichés of the description of this polity from the previous Chinese records<sup>32</sup>. In Zhancheng’s regard it is also mentioned that Zhancheng is situated at the “maritime crossroads” 海衝, thus, together with the other facts it could be interpreted that Zhancheng got the upper hand in the maritime trade within the region.

The following conclusions can be made after analyzing these few sources. The newly established Mongol administration seems to have been interested in acquiring real knowledge about the foreign lands to the South from China (especially after

<sup>31</sup> For the impact of the Little Ice Age on the transition of power among the states of Southeast Asia, see [41].

<sup>32</sup> An old English translation of the account is present in: [42. P. 105–107]. The following Chinese edition was used: [43].

their unsuccessful naval expeditions to Japan, Champa and Java). After this the Yuan dynasty turned to a more diplomatic way of dealing with foreigners and in case of Zhenla sent an envoy with Zhou Dagan to it in order to record the information about this land. Zhenla might have been of such special interest for the Yuan court for several reasons: first of all, it was for a long time considered as one of the most prosperous polities of the “Mainland Southeast Asia” simultaneously being an important trading partner of China. Secondly, this was one of the few countries which was not directly affected by the Mongol raids, hence, not much was known about it.

Zhou Dagan’s account was very influential on future works dealing with Cambodia. For the first time it pictured a noticeable downgrade within the Khmer state. At the same time Zhenla’s importance as a maritime hub also seems to have decreased since Wang Dayuan did not provide any significantly new information on the trading activities in the region.

### **The Early-mid Ming Stagnation of Perception of Zhenla**

The political relations between early Ming and Zhenla are only described in the official works, hence, they are to be analyzed in the first place.

As in case of Zhancheng and other Southeast Asian polities, the Ming dynasty immediately tried to establish relations with Zhenla. An envoy to Zhenla was sent in 1370 and an emissary from Zhenla came to the Ming court straight away in 1371. Thereon, stable tributary missions from Zhenla (according to the official history of the Ming dynasty *Ming shi* 明史 and *Ming shilu* 明實錄 (“Veritable Records of the Ming dynasty”)) continued up to 1419, near the end of Zhu Di 朱棣 (1402–1424) reign.

The envoys to China in 1371 and 1373 require special attention since they were sent by a certain Huerna 忽兒那 who was called “Bashan king of Zhenla” 真臘國巴山王. O.W. Wolters (one of the first historians to analyze the depiction of Cambodia in the Ming sources) suggested that Huerna was the king of Zhenla who had to flee to Bashan after a Siamese attack on Angkor [44. P. 47–48], whereas M. Vickery proposed that Huerna was more likely a local ruler [45. P. 41–42]. As for Bashan, M. Vickery claimed that it could be either Ba Phnom or a local name still known in the 19th century across the river in the province of Treang (now in Takeo) [45. P. 41–42].

While the exact localization of Bashan still remains problematic, there is one significant question which was not addressed and which I would like to turn the attention of the previous scholars to: how did the Chinese emissary know where to go to find the “king” of Zhenla if he was not stationed in Angkor at that time, especially taking into consideration that this was the first mission to this country? Moreover, why was this “king/prince” as G. Wade refers to him initially

recognized as the king of Zhenla by the Ming court<sup>33</sup>? While I cannot properly answer either of these two questions, to my mind, there is a small hint which might provide some ground for speculations. The embassy from Zhenla in 1473 is recorded to have come together with an embassy from Siam which could mean that at that time Siam exercised its political power over Zhenla and that Huerna could be a nominal king appointed by the Siamese authorities. However, it is rather strange that this presumed attack on Angkor is not anyhow referred to in the Chinese sources nor was anything else said about the Siamese, therefore, this is just a presumption<sup>34</sup>. Nevertheless, G. Wade also seems to have come to a similar conclusion stating that there was likely a “fairly major and long-term Ayutthayan occupation of the Khmer capital prior to 1378” [48]. At the same time it occurs that during the early Ming the Chinese put Cambodia in higher esteem than Siam: for example, in 1387 the king of Cambodia was given 40 bolts of silk as opposed to the 20 bolts given to the ruler of Siam.

Several other noteworthy instances of Cambodia mentions in the late 14th in *Ming shilu* are worth paying attention to it [49]. In an entry dated 1380 a memorial addressed to the king of Champa was presented accusing him of fighting with Annam and taking advantage of their defeat. This is compared to how during the Song dynasty Cambodia plundered Champa and it was a great humiliation for the latter<sup>35</sup>. In 1383 a tally-slip book was conferred upon Cambodia together with Champa and Siam to verify the embassies coming from these countries<sup>36</sup>. In 1388 the Chams seized one in four of 52 elephants from the Chinese envoy which was returning from Cambodia and bringing these elephants as a tribute<sup>37</sup>. A joint tribute mission from Zhenla and Siam is recorded in 1389<sup>38</sup>. A prohibition for the Chinese people to use the barbarian aromatics and goods was imposed in 1394 stating that many barbarians are deceitful and they are now prohibited from having relations with China with only Ryukyu, Siam and Cambodia being allowed to continue bringing tribute<sup>39</sup>. In 1397 a similar memorandum from the Emperor was repeated stating that there has been a continuous disconnection between the foreign countries and China

<sup>33</sup> The recognition is evident through the fact that in 1371 the envoy from Huerna was presented with the calendar to confer it to the king.

<sup>34</sup> L.P. Briggs wrote a special article on the probable Siamese attacks on Angkor, however, it is relatively outdated, see: [46]. See also a recent work: [47].

<sup>35</sup> Wade G. Southeast Asia in the Ming Shi-lu. An Open Access Resource. URL: <https://epress.nus.edu.sg/msl/reign/hong-wu/year-13-month-9-day> (Accessed: 14.05.2022).

<sup>36</sup> Ibid. URL: <https://epress.nus.edu.sg/msl/reign/hong-wu/year-16-month-4-day-22> (Accessed: 14.05.2022).

<sup>37</sup> Ibid. URL: <https://epress.nus.edu.sg/msl/reign/hong-wu/year-21-month-4-day-8> (Accessed: 14.05.2022).

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. URL: <https://epress.nus.edu.sg/msl/reign/hong-wu/year-22-month-6-day-14> (Accessed: 14.05.2022).

<sup>39</sup> Ibid. URL: <https://epress.nus.edu.sg/msl/reign/hong-wu/year-27-month-1-day-14> (Accessed: 14.05.2022).

with only Annam, Champa, Cambodia, Siam and Greater Ryukyu have continued to come to the Court and offer tribute as before<sup>40</sup>.

In general, several conclusions can be made through the analysis of these entries. A rather positive image of Cambodia in the official circles was formed due to the fact that in the beginning of the Ming dynasty Zhenla has continuously been engaged in the tribute system and fulfilled all the obligations of a tributary state from the Chinese perspective. Moreover, Zhenla does not seem to have been involved in private trading activities as well as “fake” tributary missions when the traders would try to disguise themselves as the representatives of the king. Nor was Zhenla associated with plundering activities and the like. Therefore, it is quite clear why it was included in the 1394 list of three countries which were allowed to engage in a tribute exchange. A reference to Zhenla’s plunder of Champa during the Song dynasty was probably just an example of humiliation to encourage Champa to end hostilities with Annam, alternatively, this could also be a symbol of the past glory of Zhenla but it does not seem to have been used to present Cambodia in a bad light.

At the same time, plundering of Cambodian tribute goods by the Cham is mentioned which could show that the Cambodians could not secure a maritime route to China properly and that the Cambodian military was inferior (which corresponds with the Yuan dynasty Zhou Daguan’s account). This claim is also mentioned in Zhancheng’s account of *Ming shi* where it is stated that the king of Zhancheng extracted one fourth of one of Zhenla’s tribute [50. P. 6].

As for the *Ming shi* account of Zhenla, it mostly copies the descriptions from the previous sources but also provides some new explanations for old processes, for example, it claims that the name Zhanla appeared during the Song dynasty after the Zhenla invasion of Zhancheng and in the Yuan dynasty the name returned back to Zhenla. However, in reality, the name Zhanla was already used in the Northern Song period and was still noted in the Ming dynasty records as well [16. P. 165]. This is probably just an attempt of the explanation of how this term emerged. In the end of the account, it is also stated that after Wanli 萬曆 reign (1573–1620) the country changed its name to Jianpuzhai 柬埔寨 which is the name that is still used for Cambodia in modern Chinese.

Another conclusion which was made by G. Wade through the analysis of the names of Cambodian kings recorded in *Ming shilu* is that there is also indirect evidence of Ayutthayan influence on Cambodia. Throughout the first 50 years of relations between the Ming China and Zhenla almost every envoy from Cambodia to Ming China bore the title *nāy* (translated from modern Thai as “master, owner”). Simultaneously (from 1372 to 1480) the majority of Siam’s envoys to Ming China also had the title *nāy* [48].

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid. URL: <https://epress.nus.edu.sg/msl/reign/hong-wu/year-30-month-8-day-27> (Accessed: 14.05.2022).

Other official sources within the timeframe under the study including descriptions of Cambodia are two imperial geographies *Huanyu tongzhi* 寰宇通志 (“Comprehensive Records of the Universe”; 1456) and *Da Ming yitong zhi* 大明一統志 (“Records of the Unified Great Ming”). *Da Ming yitong zhi* was written in between 1457 and 1464 and was basically a polished version of *Huangyu tongzhi*. Therefore, the information about the foreign countries is mostly identical in both of them. Both works are merely compiling the previous material on Zhenla without really adding anything to the narrative. They and other later encyclopedia-type of works would commonly start their description with stating that Zhenla used to be a dependency of Funan, during the Sui and the Tang dynasties it frequently communicated with China. During the Tang dynasty it split into “Water Zhenla” and “Land Zhenla”, during the Song dynasty it conquered Zhancheng. Under the Ming dynasty it started communication with China during Hongwu reign but later on their tribute missions were not regular 不常 [17. P. 176–180].

During the early Ming dynasty private works about the foreign lands were mainly inspired by Zheng He 鄭和 expeditions (1405–1433). Most of them were written either by his accompanies or based on the material gathered in these voyages. It is also noteworthy that although there was definitely evidence in *Ming shi* that Zheng He visited Cambodia, a description of this country is only present in one of the three works by his crewmembers, *Xingcha shenglan* 星槎勝覽 (“The Overall Survey of the Star Raft”; 1436), furthermore, it is almost an exact copy of Wang Dayuan’s account<sup>41</sup>. This is rather weird and hints at the fact that the Zheng He expeditions did not consider Cambodia as a sufficiently important country. *Xiyang chaogong dianlu* 西洋朝貢典錄 (“A Record of Tributes from the Western Ocean Countries”; 1520), another source mostly deriving from the Treasure Fleet voyages but putting more emphasis on the history of tributary relations with the countries visited by Zheng He, also does not add anything new to Zhenla’s depiction. However, the comment of the author in the end of the account is noteworthy<sup>42</sup>. Huan Shengzeng 黃省曾 (1496–1546) recalls that during the Song dynasty Zhenla captured Zhancheng, had an army of 200000 war elephants and its overall size was 7000 li, and he comes to the following conclusion: “*seems like [it was] a strong and prosperous country<sup>43</sup> of the Southern Seas*”.

All in all, it can be concluded that the new additional characteristics attributed to Zhenla seem to have formed only in the late Ming dynasty, during the second half of the 16th — early 17th centuries when a new wave of interest towards the foreign countries among the educated Chinese erupted<sup>44</sup>. They were connected with

<sup>41</sup> For the translation of the account into English, see: [51. P. 81–83]. The Chinese annotated edition: [52].

<sup>42</sup> For an old English and a modern German translation of the segment on Zhenla, see: [53, 54]. Commented Chinese edition: [55].

<sup>43</sup> Also can be understood as “the most powerful...”.

<sup>44</sup> More about such sources and the general attitude towards the foreign during the late Ming: [56].



the historical perception of Zhenla rather than contemporary: for example, *Shuyu zhouzi lu* 殊域周咨錄 (“Informative Records on Countries Far Away”; 1583) by Yan Congjian 嚴從簡 claims that there is Lu Ban’s 魯般 (c. 507–444 BC; an Ancient Chinese inventor and engineer) tomb in Zhenla [16. P. 183].<sup>45</sup>

The last source under investigation is *Yiyu zhi* 異域志 (Account of Foreign Lands) and its illustrated version *Yiyu tuzhi* 異域圖志 (“Illustrated Account of Foreign Lands”). This work became very popular during the Ming dynasty and was also known by its later name *Luochong lu* 羸蟲錄 (“Record of Naked Creatures”) <sup>46</sup>. The original version was written by Zhou Zhizhong 周致中 who has been on diplomatic missions abroad for six times. Nothing else is known about the author or the treatise apart from the fact that it was probably compiled during the early Ming. The work itself describes various mirabilia combining both real and fictional information about foreign countries and being most similar to *Shanhai jing* 山海經 (“Classic of Mountains and Seas”) in its structure. Hence, its contents should be approached cautiously. The illustrated version is extant in a sole copy preserved at the Cambridge University library [60]. It was translated into English by H.A. Giles (1845–1935) in the first half of the 20th century but never got published due to the lack of funding. The appendix to this paper includes my translation of the chapter on Zhenla from *Yiyu zhi*.

*Yiyu zhi* and *Yiyu tuzhi* accounts of Zhenla slightly differ from one another: *Yiyu zhi* starts by stating that Zhenla is southern *huihui* 回回, a general term referring to the Muslims. *Yiyu tuzhi* lacks this statement<sup>47</sup>. Alternatively, *Yiyu tuzhi* speaks of a route from Guangzhou to Zhenla which took 10 days with the northern wind. *Zhufan zhi* spoke of 30 days to get to Zhenla from Quanzhou with the favorable wind. It is unlikely that there could be a 20–day difference between these two routes. After this both sources are nearly identical describing marriage customs and punishments which are taken from earlier private accounts. *Yiyu tuzhi* ends Zhenla’s description with retelling the story about Nüwa from *Lingwai daida*.

An image of a native of Zhenla is also present in *Yiyu tuzhi*. The person on the picture is most probably a Buddhist monk wearing robes and walking barefooted which perfectly corresponds to an image of the Zhenla monks. This portrayal was probably chosen in order to show the important religious background of Zhenla, moreover, it could symbolize the transition to favoring Buddhism which was spoken about above.

<sup>45</sup> The information about Lu Ban’s tomb first appears in Zhenla fengtu ji where it most probably refers to Angkor Wat [36. P. 48, 97]. Nevertheless, it is evident that the authors of Shuyu zhouzi lu and other later Ming dynasty sources copied this information without understanding the context, and for them Lu Ban’s tomb was definitely pointing to the Chinese person.

<sup>46</sup> On the history of these works, see: [57, 58]. The following edition of *Yiyu zhi* was used: [59].

<sup>47</sup> The only reference to the Muslim influence in regard to Zhenla is present in Zhou Dagan’s account where it is stated that the shape of their words is like that of Uighur and that the letters of the alphabet are pronounced in exactly the same way as in Mongolian, with two or three exceptions. See: [36. P. 62]. In general, this statement from *Yiyu zhi* is believed to be a mistake.



**Fig. 2.** Zhenla native as pictured in *Yiyu tuzhi*

None of the early and mid-Ming dynasty maps picture Zhenla on them either which could also be interpreted as a sign of Cambodia's insignificance especially compared to the previously analyzed Song dynasty map where Zhenla occupies Zhancheng's position.

Another important point to analyze is although the fall of Angkor is usually believed to have occurred in 1431 after a major Thai attack, the Chinese sources never refer to this date. However, another attack on Cambodia is mentioned in *Ming shi*'s account of Siam which happened during Wanli reign (supposedly around 1573–1578) during which they attacked and destroyed 攻破 Zhenla and subdued 降 their king. This seems to have been a decisive victory for Siam since it is said that year after year later on they used their troops and became a hegemon over all countries 霸諸國<sup>48</sup>. This event is not recorded in any other Chinese sources. M. Vickery in his study on Cambodia in the 15th century also seems to have missed this entry, however, he comes to the conclusion that during this period Cambodia was once again divided into two competing regions, North and South, both led by Ayutthayan chiefs. Therefore, it was more of an internal conflict of no particular interest for the Chinese. M. Vickery also proposes that the second occupation of Angkor happened around the middle of the 16th century but the dates of the inscriptions provided in his study do not correspond with the date from the *Ming shi* [45. P. 48–49]. Therefore, one can presume that the turmoil within the Khmer lands continued up to the end of the 16th century and there also could have been a third occupation of Angkor.

<sup>48</sup> For the translation, see: [61. P. 10].

## Conclusion

The Yuan dynasty sources speak very little of Zhenla with Zhou Daguean's account being the most informative and contemporary. Some of the characteristics attributed to the army, people and general situation within Angkor point to its degradation. *Daoyi zhilüe* also does not record any new data about trading with this country simultaneously stating that Zhancheng was at the crossroads of the maritime routes, indicating the transition of trade to the Cham polities instead of the Khmer ones.

The early and mid-Ming dynasty sources mostly reproduce the vision of Zhenla which remained from the Song dynasty at the same time incorporating the descriptions of the various palaces and temples of Angkor from Zhou Daguean's account, however, not hinting at any downfall in the general image of Zhenla. Nevertheless, sources such as *Ming shilu* and *Ming shi* do contain evidence of the constant pressure on Zhenla (first from Zhancheng and later on from Siam). Even among the records written during Zheng He's travels only one contains a description of Zhenla which once again has no new information. Nor is Zhenla pictured on any of the maps from this period of time. Some sources also mention that the tribute missions from Zhenla were not regular. All of this may serve as an indication that the Chinese official circles noticed that a downfall was ongoing in Zhenla although no understanding of the political situation within the Khmer lands seems to have been present.

Another general characteristic applicable to Funan/Zhenla throughout all the time of its relations with China in comparison with Linyi/Zhancheng is that it has never plundered the Chinese lands and in its tributary relations with China it never broke its "promises" to the Chinese Emperor and in general was perceived as a well-behaving polity which is especially evident in *Ming shilu*; on the contrary, Zhancheng was pictured as a "bully" not abiding the Chinese will and constantly engaging in fights with Annam. Moreover, the first conflicts between Linyi and Funan (from the Chinese point of view) were initiated by Linyi which is probably the reason why plunder of Zhancheng in 1190s did not ruin the overall reputation of Zhenla but was rather perceived as its peak of development.

As for the reasons of Angkor's gradual decline outlined by specialists in Southeast Asia and archeologists, most of them are indeed directly or indirectly mentioned in the Chinese sources (apart from the climate change and epidemic disease), therefore, this study has in some degree strengthened the arguments for the gradual decline of Angkor.

Recently (while the current work was in progress) a new article was published by Liam S. Kelley (an associate professor of Brunei Darussalam University) in which he claims that the toponym Sanfoqi 三佛齊 which is traditionally identified as Srivijaya was in fact referring to a northern Khmer polity and specifically Angkor during the Ming dynasty, while

Zhenla was a polity somewhere in the lower Mekong [62]. Although some ideas expressed in this article are indeed rather interesting and challenging the old concepts, in my opinion, the author has not yet presented enough evidence to back up his groundbreaking theory. Moreover, he seems to ignore some conflicting information from the Chinese sources which casts doubt to his conclusions. For example, while L.S. Kelly uses the information from *Lingwai daida*, he does not note that it is directly stated in there that Sanfoqi is located somewhere in the sea: the chapter on Sanfoqi specifically states that it is “*within (among) the Southern Seas*” 在南海之中 [23. P. 86]. Moreover, if Sanfoqi is indeed Angkor, how is it possible that Zhou Daguan never mentions this name in his account? Therefore, this discussion is to be continued.

## Appendixes

### *Appendix 1*

#### *Translation of the Entries on Cambodia from Yuan shi*

In the beginning of the Yuan it was ordered to Zhancheng, Jiaozhi and Zhenla to annually present elephants [to the Court]. [They were to be] brought up at the north of the lake at the Xijin lane 析津坊 [in Dadu] . During an Imperial Tour, foreign officials would ride [them] and escort [the Emperor] 行幸則蕃官騎引. [They are to be used] to guide the Imperial chariot and to pull huge carriages.

元初，既定占城、交趾、真臘，歲貢象，育於析津坊海子之陽。行幸則蕃官騎引，以導大駕，以駕巨輦。

[On the 18th year of Zhiyuan reign in winter on the 10th month] on Gengxu day 庚戌... (1281) [according to] an Imperial Degree the country of Ganbuxi 干不昔 came to submit [to the Yuan].

庚戌.....詔諭幹不昔國來歸附。

[On the 22nd year of Zhiyuan reign on the 9th month] on Bingzi day 丙子 (1285) Zhenla, Zhancheng presented 20 musicians together with medical materials, crocodile skins and the like.

丙子，真臘、占城貢樂工十人及藥材、鱷魚皮諸物。

[On the 29th year of Zhiyuan reign on the 9th month] on Yichou day 乙丑 (1292) Ali 阿里 wanted to prepare the fleet himself, together with Zhang Cun 張存 go on a military expedition against Zhaowa army, go (went?) to summon Zhancheng and Ganbucha 甘不察 [troops?] (往招占城.....). [By the Emperor's] edict Ali was awarded a three-pearl tiger tally 三珠虎符 and Zhang Cun — a one-pearl tiger tally.

乙丑，阿裏願自修船，同張存從征瓜哇軍，往招占城、甘不察，詔授阿裏三珠虎符，張存一珠虎符，仍蠲阿裏父布伯所負鞞脫鈔三千錠。

[On the 7th year of Yanyou 延祐 reign on the 9th month] on Jiachen day 甲辰 (1320)... emissary Matuoman 馬托蠻 and others were sent to Zhancheng, Zhanla 占臘, Longyamen 龍牙門 to search for tamed elephants.

甲辰.....遣馬紜蠻等使占城、占臘、龍牙門，索馴象。

[On the 2nd year of Tianli reign on the 4th month] on Bingwu day 丙午 (1329)... the country of Zhanla 占臘 came with tribute of camphor wood 羅香木 and elephants, leopards, white monkeys 白猿.

丙午.....占臘國來貢羅香木及象、豹、白猿。

## Appendix 2.

### Translation of the account of Zhenla from *Yiyu zhi*

#### Country of Zhenla 真臘國

This country is extremely hot, it is south *huihui* 回回. Commonly [when there is] a marriage, when the girls are 9 years old, they meet the relatives, the monk is ordered to perform Buddhist rituals, with his finger [he] breaks the girl's hymen, [with the girl's] blood puts a dot on the mother's forehead<sup>49</sup>, this is considered good fortune 利市<sup>50</sup>, in marriage the couple will be harmonious. In 10 years [girls] are married. When the people have intercourse with one's wife, her husband is happy. When a person of [this] country commits a theft, [they] chop [his] hands and cut [his] feet, or with a hot stamp burn a mark to brand [his] forehead, [as for] those [sentenced] to capital offense, a toon tree pierces their buttocks.

其國極熱，即南回回。凡嫁娶，女子九歲乃會親友，令僧作佛事，以指頭挑破女子童體，以血點於母額，以為利事，嫁人夫婦和。十歲即嫁。人與其妻通，其夫即喜。國人為盜，即斬手斷足，或以火印烙記黥額，死罪者以木椿穿其尻。

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<sup>49</sup> This seems to be an error, according to other sources (Daoyi zhilüe) it was done vice-versa: the girl's mother would put a dot on her daughter's forehead with the daughter's blood.

<sup>50</sup> Originally the second character was different: 利事 (“it is considered to help the deed”).

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#### **Information about the author:**

*Kolnin Ilia Sergeevich* — junior researcher of the Chinese department of IOS RAS, postgraduate student of National Research University “Higher School of Economics” (HSE University), e-mail: [minmi98@yandex.ru](mailto:minmi98@yandex.ru) ORCID: 0000-0003-0084-0272

#### **Информация об авторе:**

*Колнин Илья Сергеевич* — младший научный сотрудник Отдела Китая ИВ РАН; аспирант Национального исследовательского университета «Высшая Школа Экономики», e-mail: [minmi98@yandex.ru](mailto:minmi98@yandex.ru) ORCID: 0000-0003-0084-0272