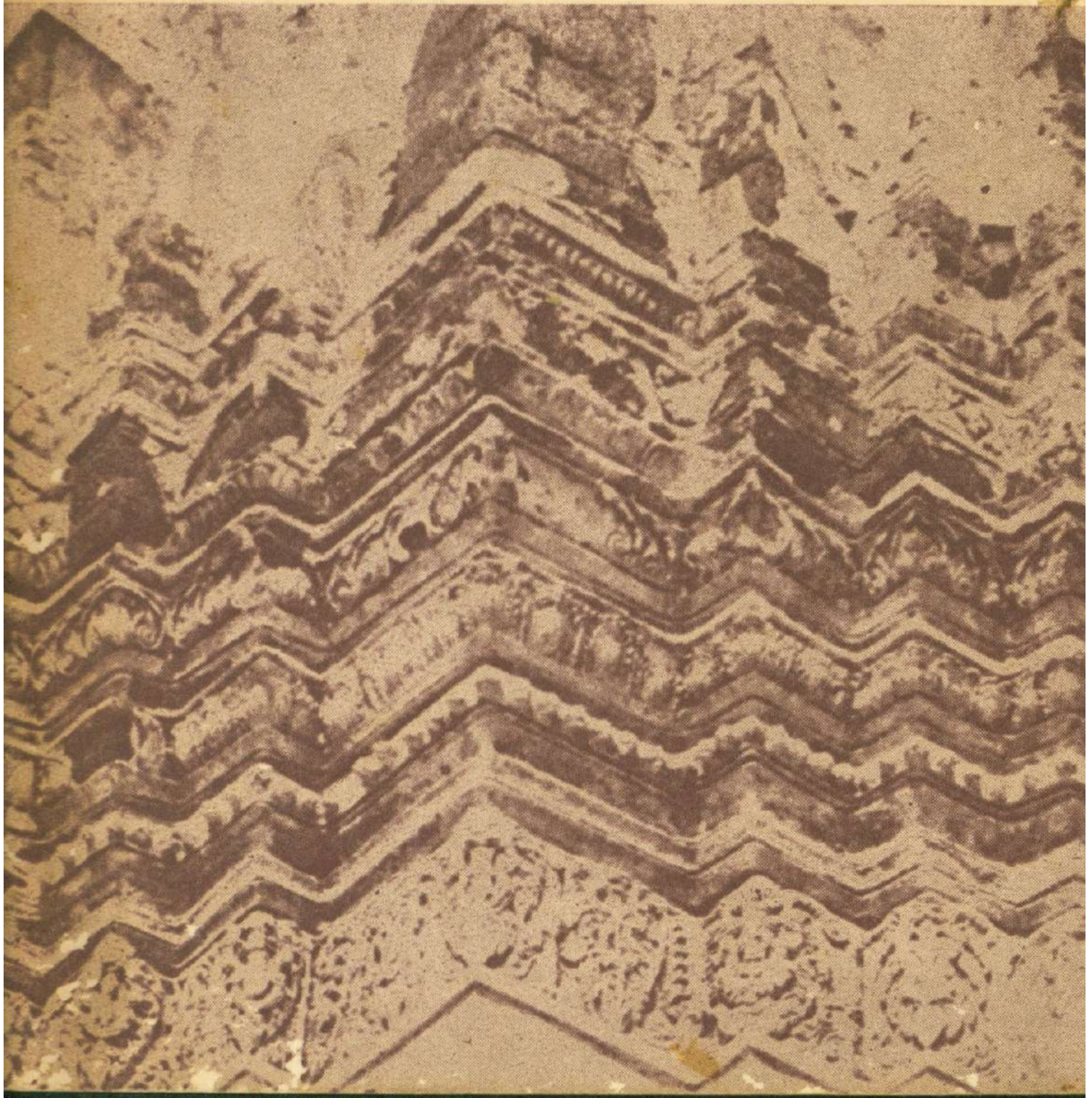


LOPBURI



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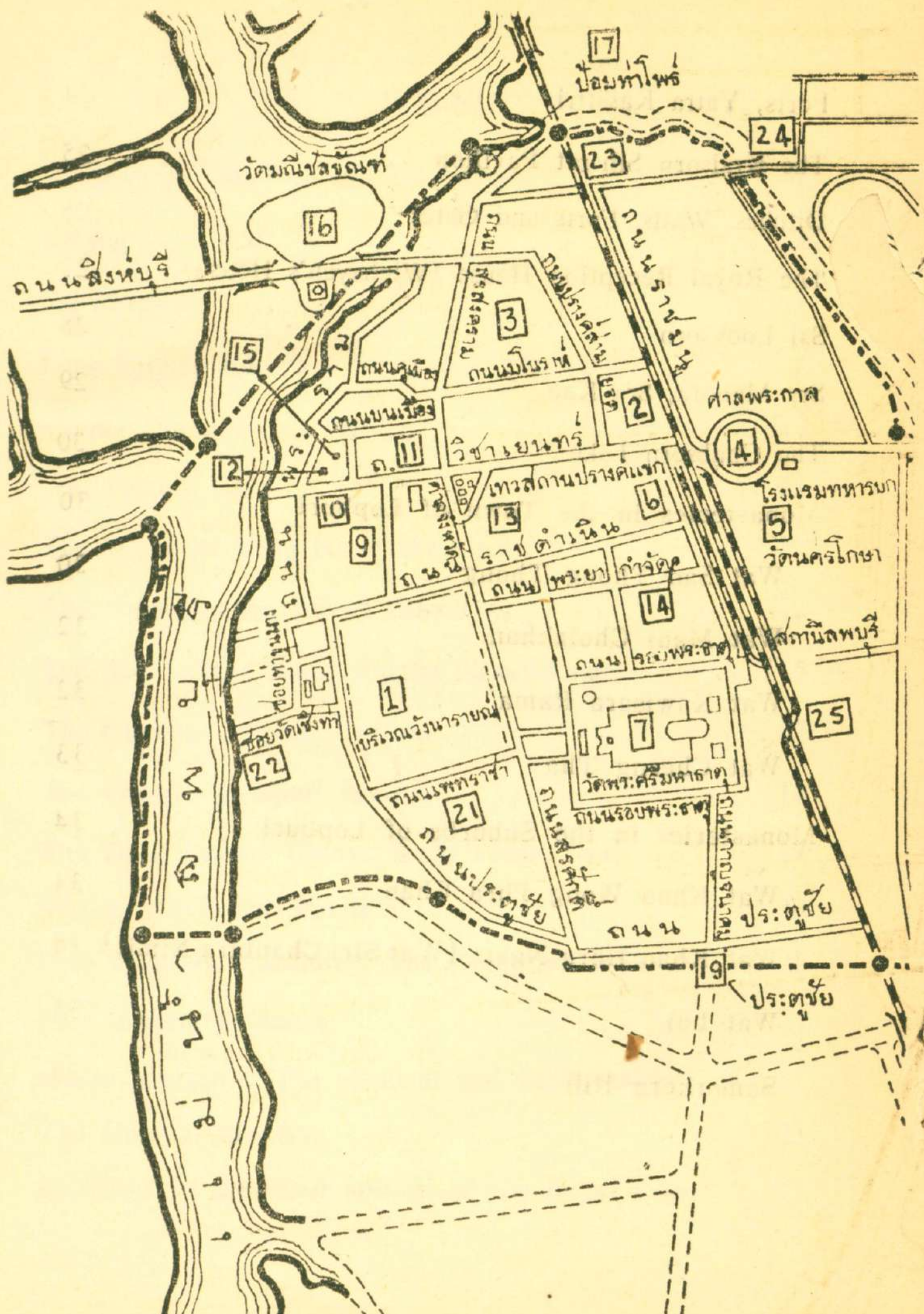
This booklet is summarized from "Lopburi", a Thai edition by Huan Phinthuphan. The author intends to write this book in English to be a guide book for tourists who come to visit Lopburi and want to know about the old town of Lopburi.

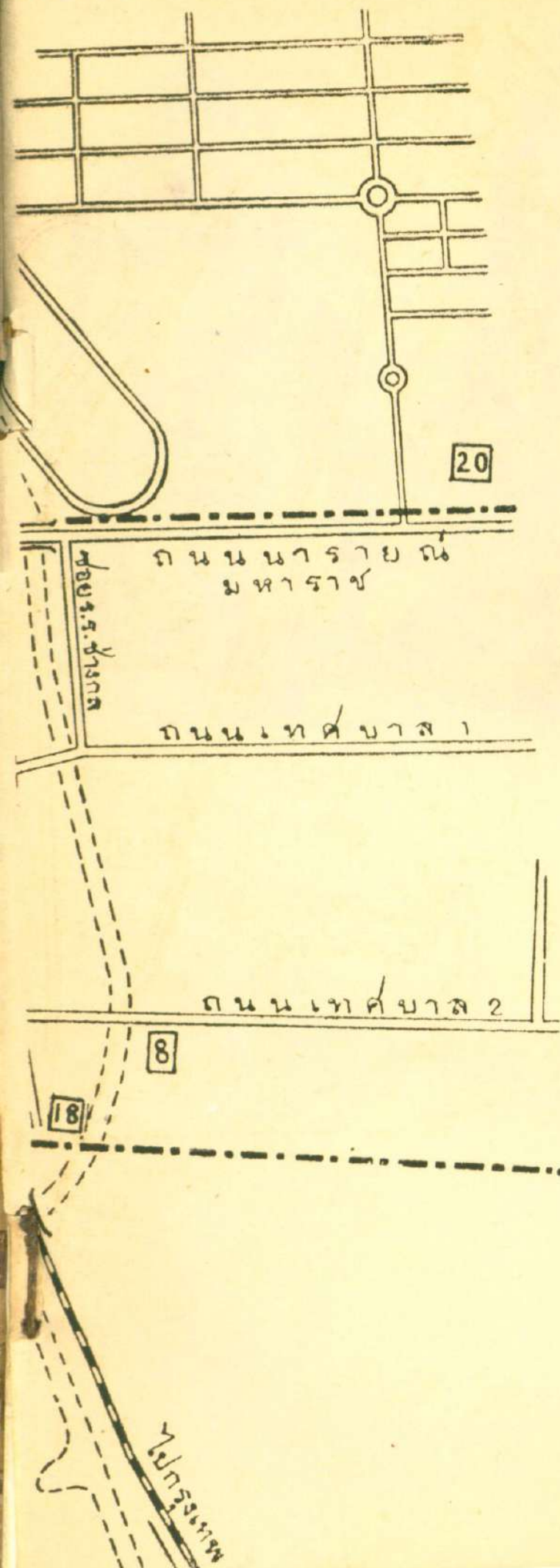
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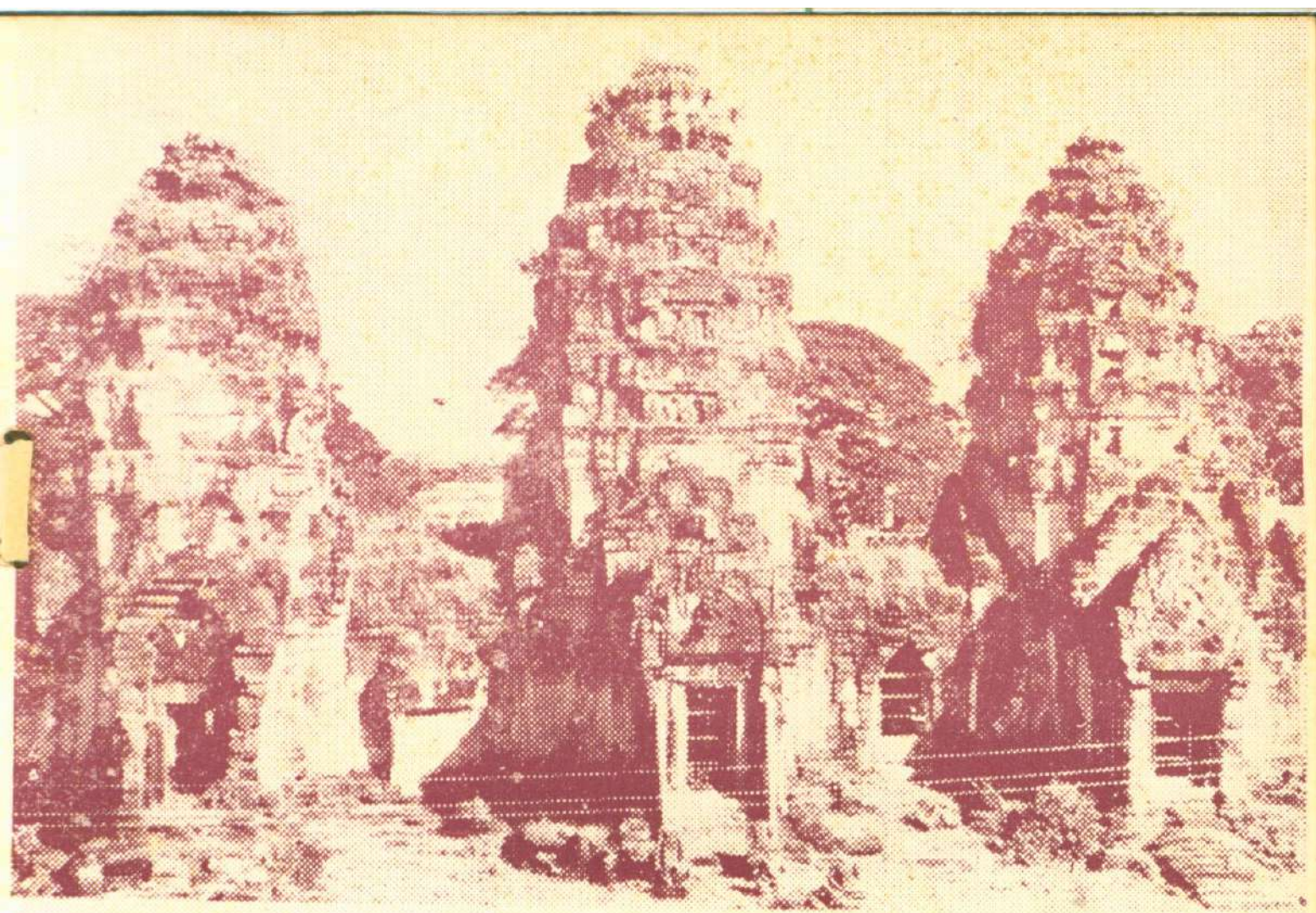
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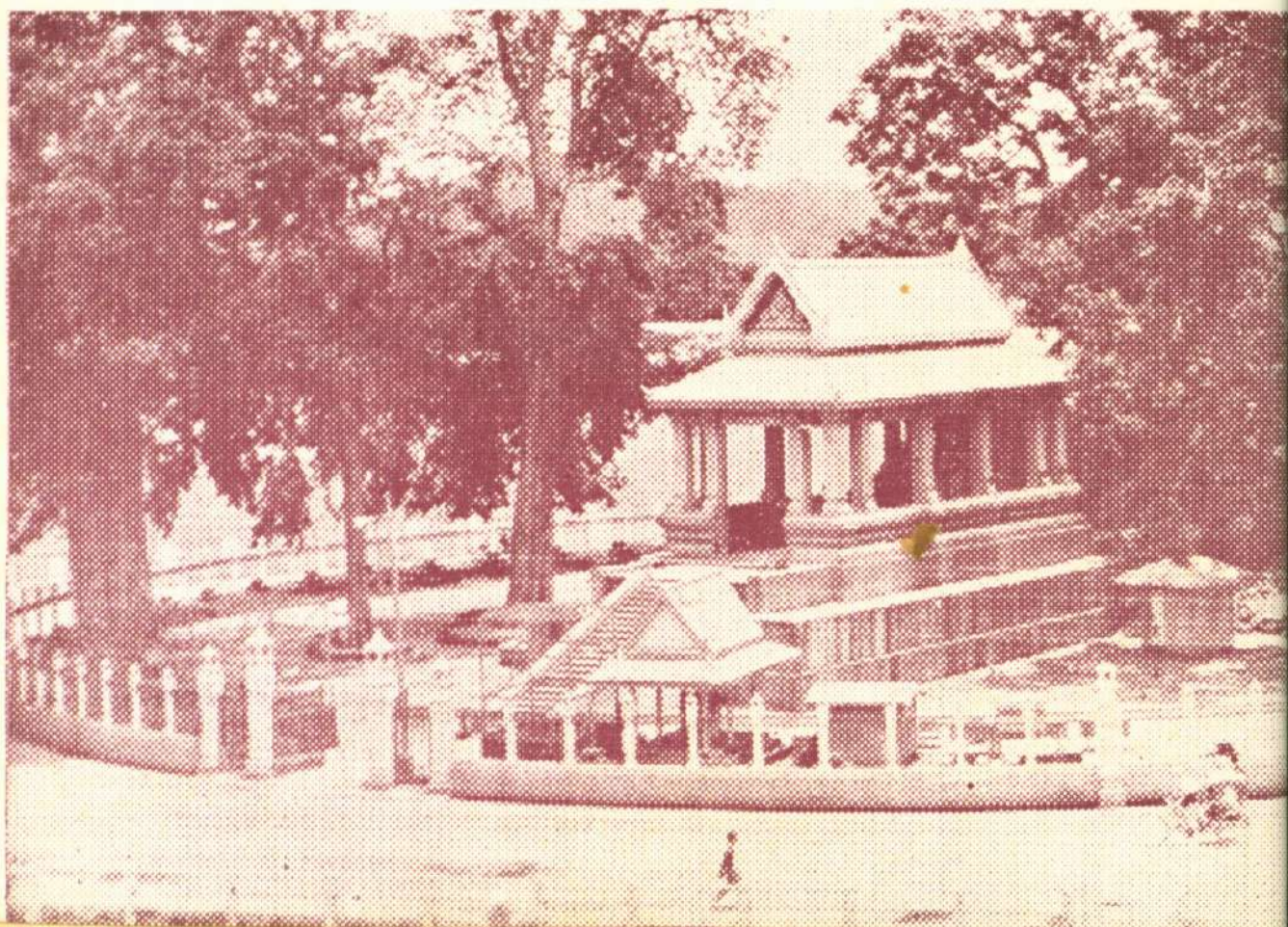
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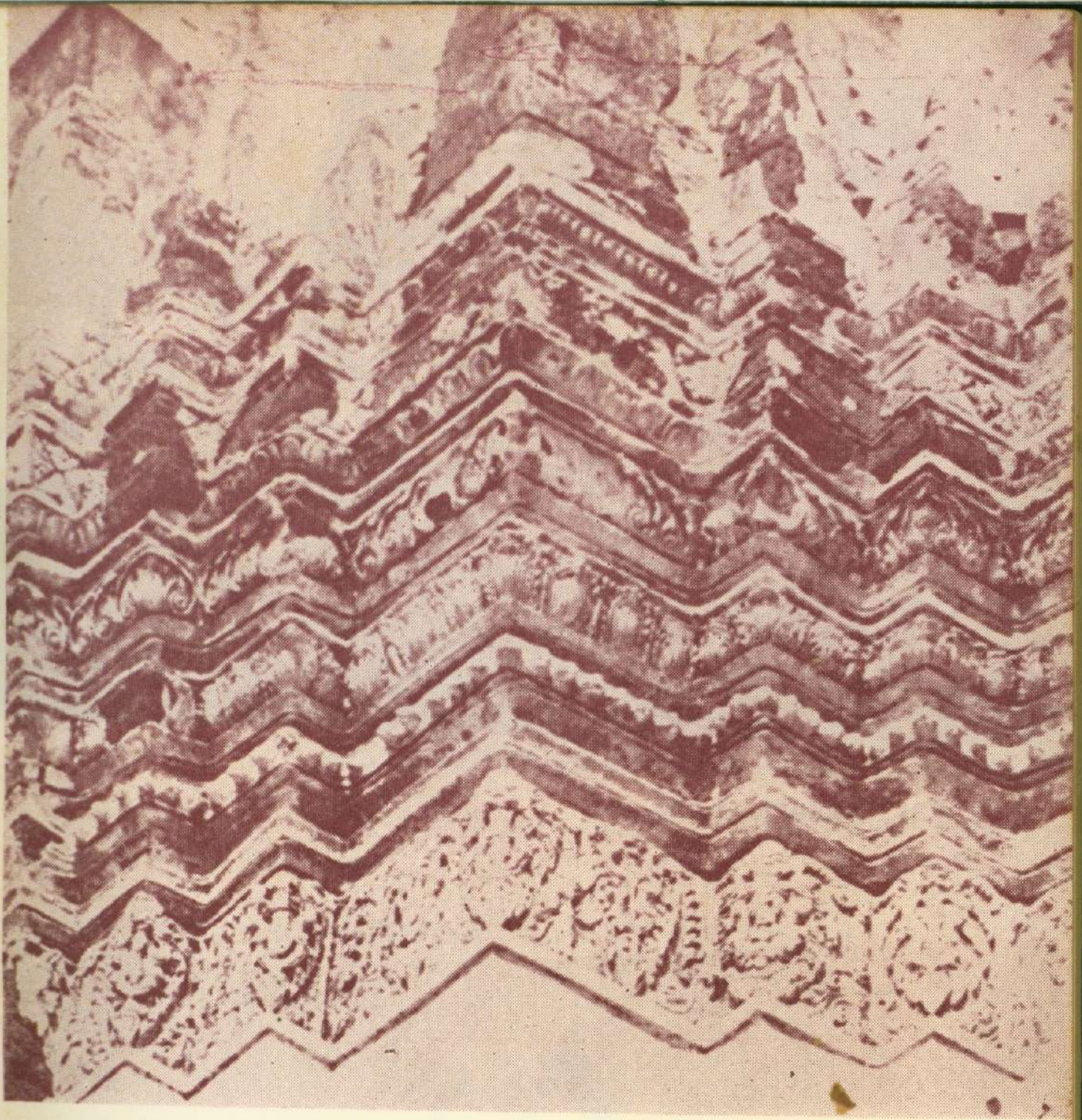


Prang Sam Yod

W

Sal Phrakan





The stucco portray on Phra Phorang

Wat Phra Sri Ratana Mahatat

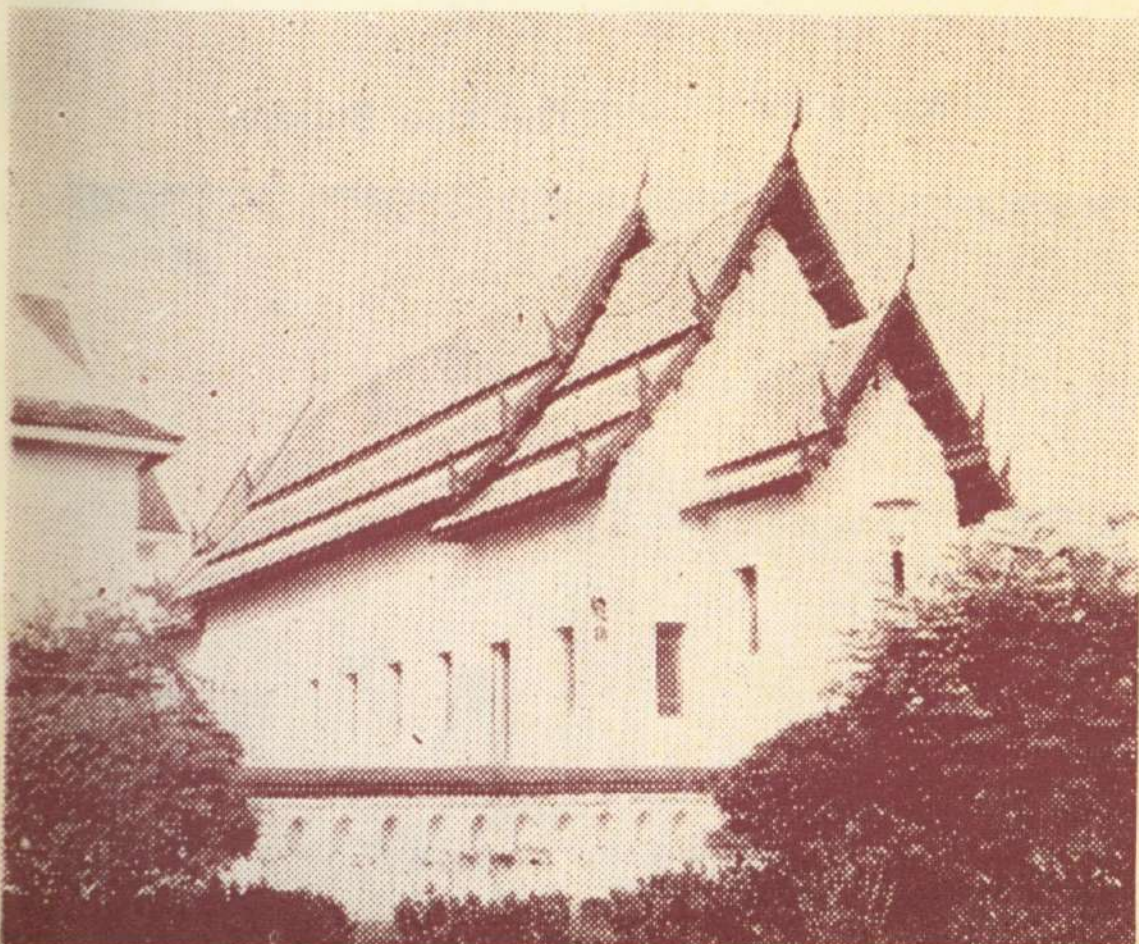
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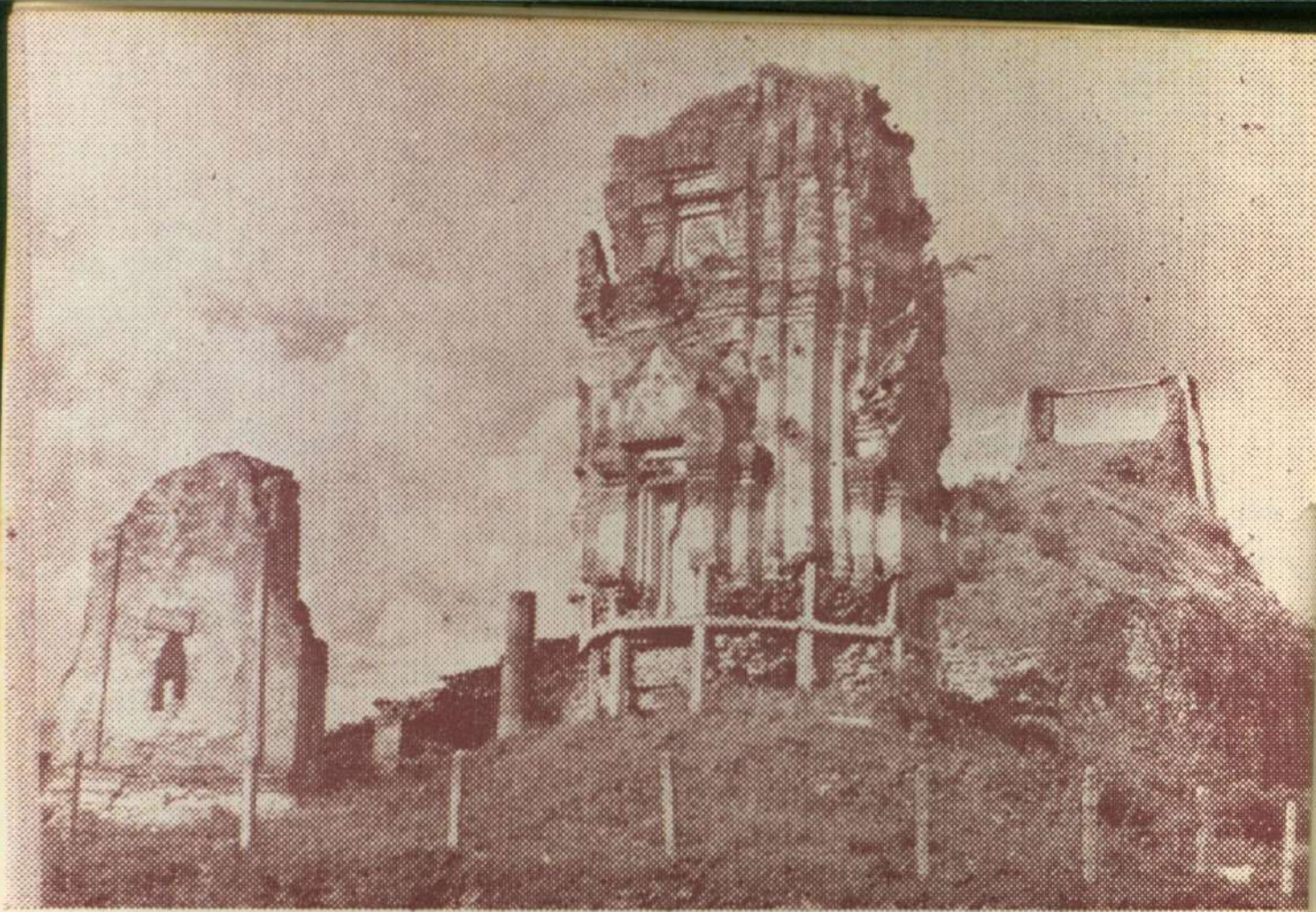




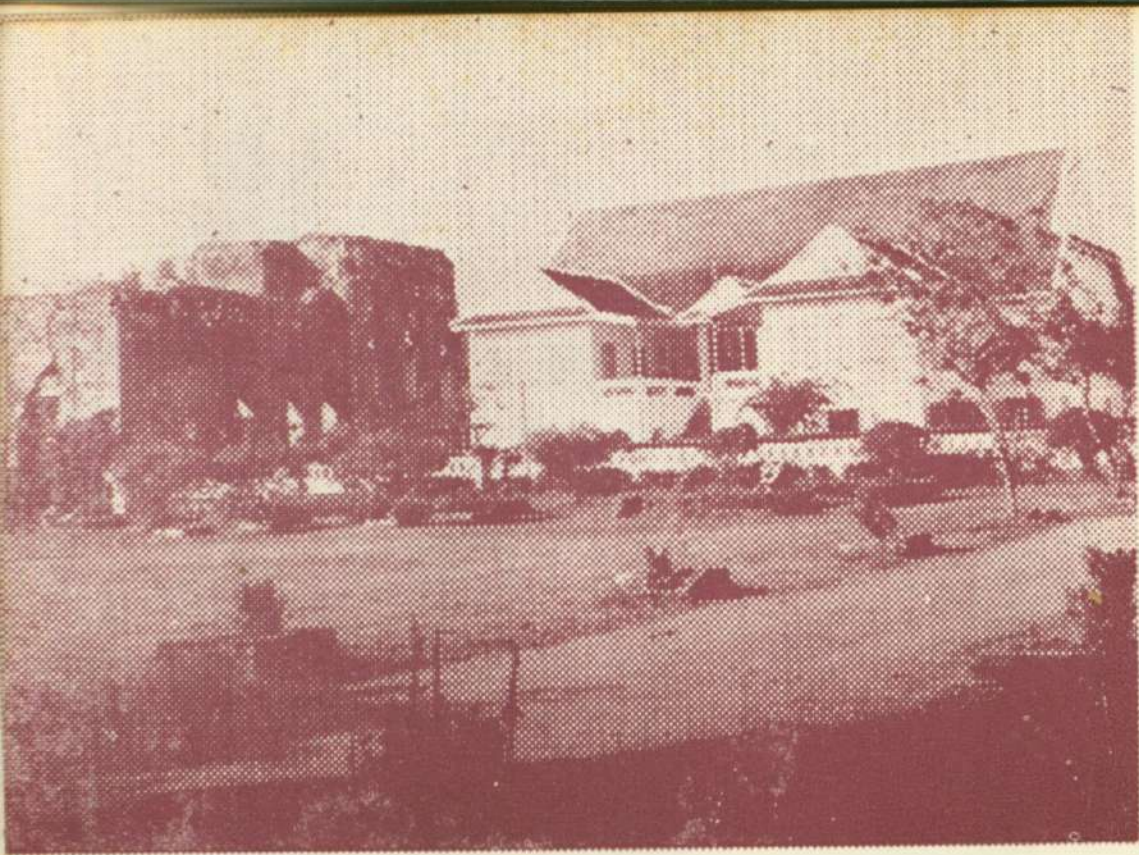
A gate of Narai Ratch Niwes Palace.

Chantra Pisan Pavilion



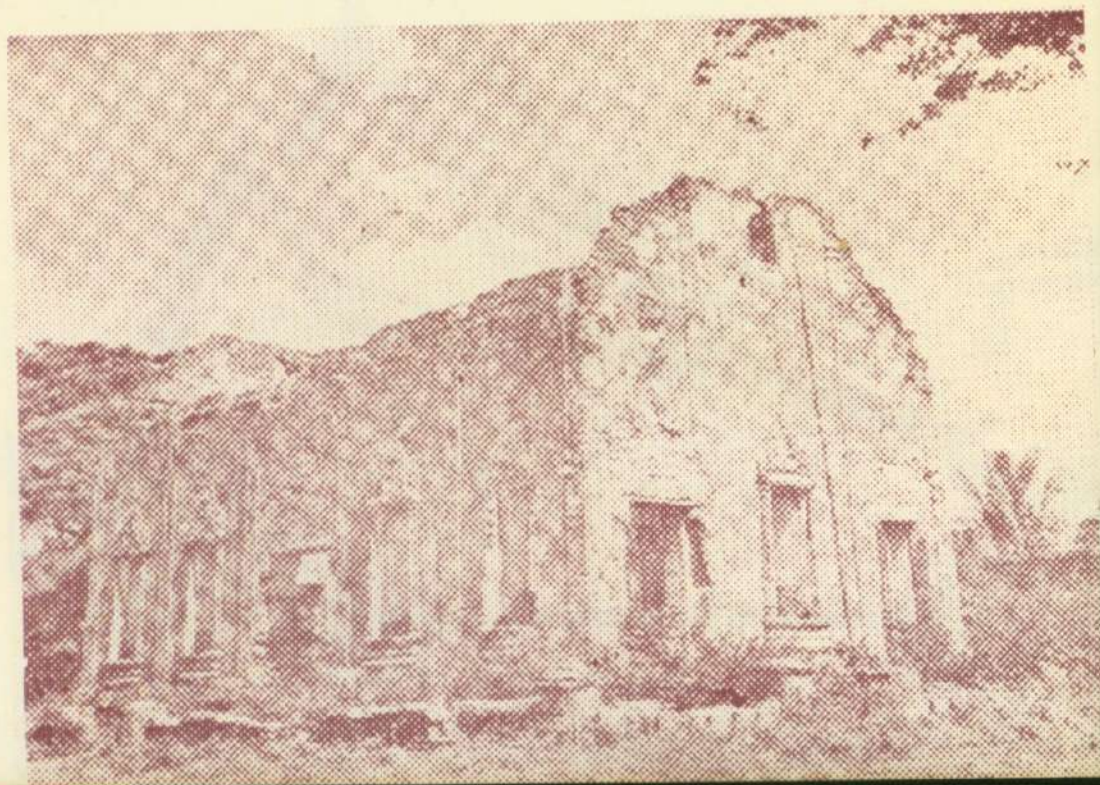


Wat Nakorn Kosa



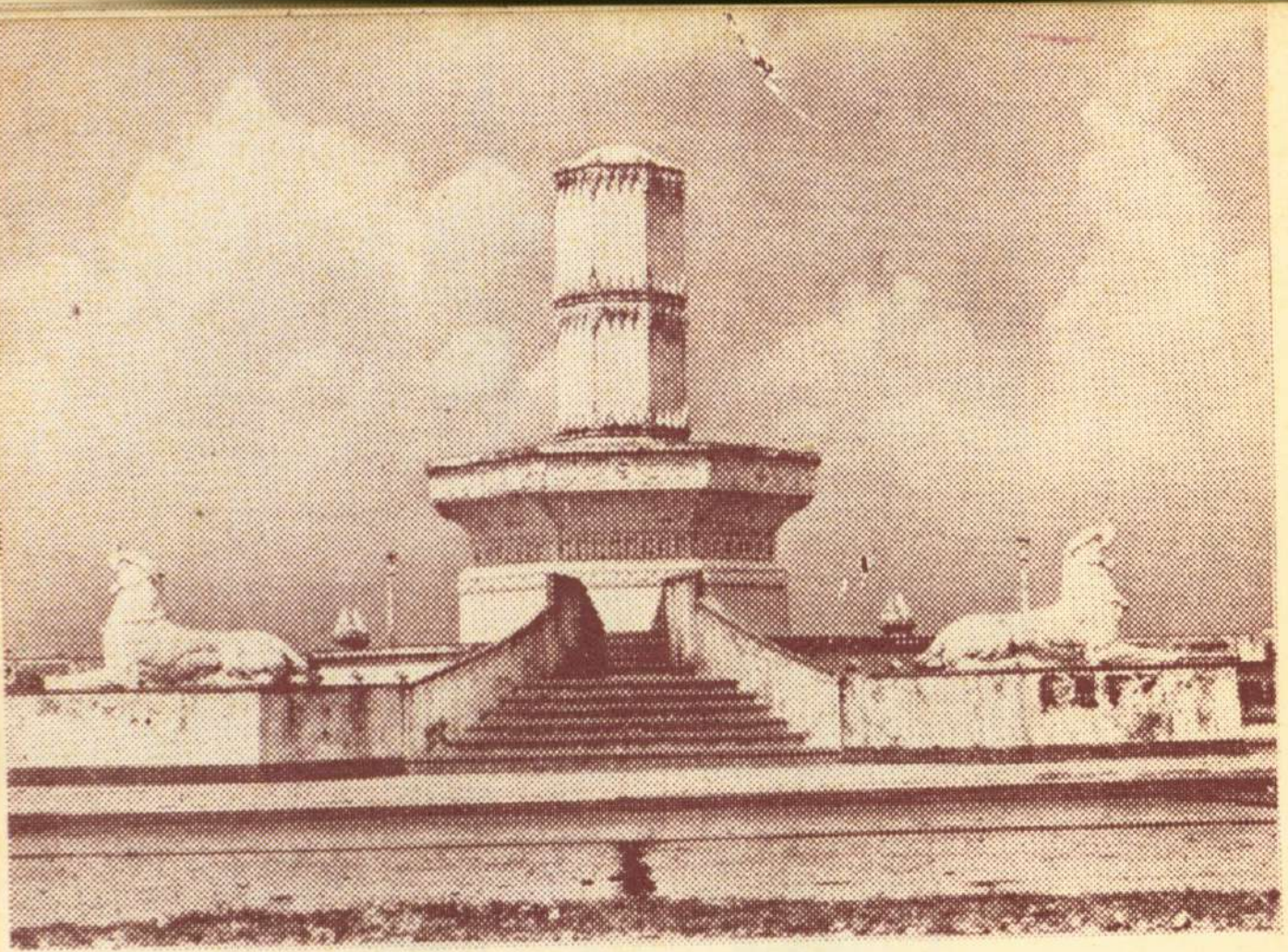
Dusit Sawan Thanyama haprasat (left)
Piman Mongkut Pavilion (right)

The Hao Building



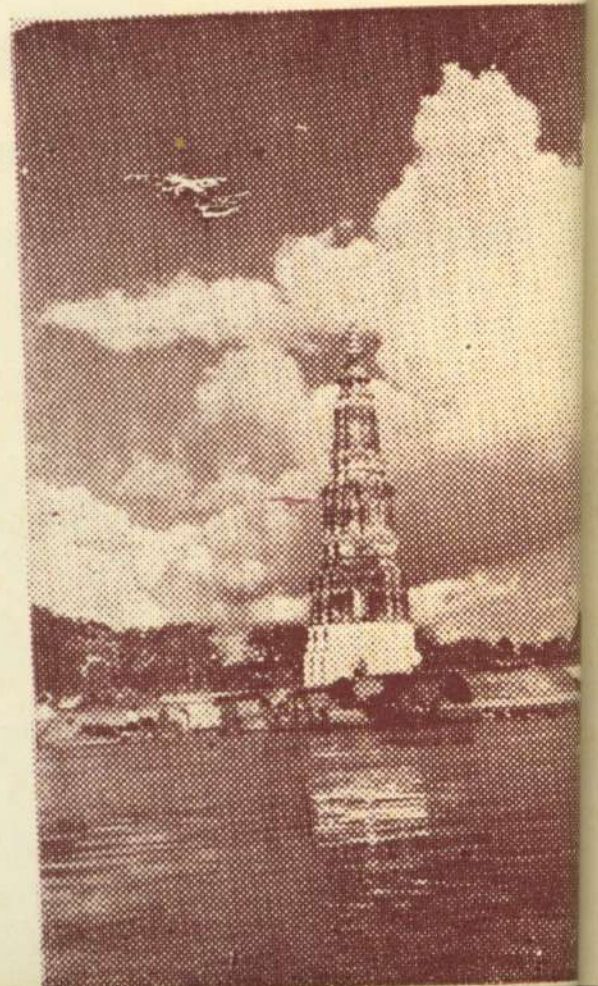


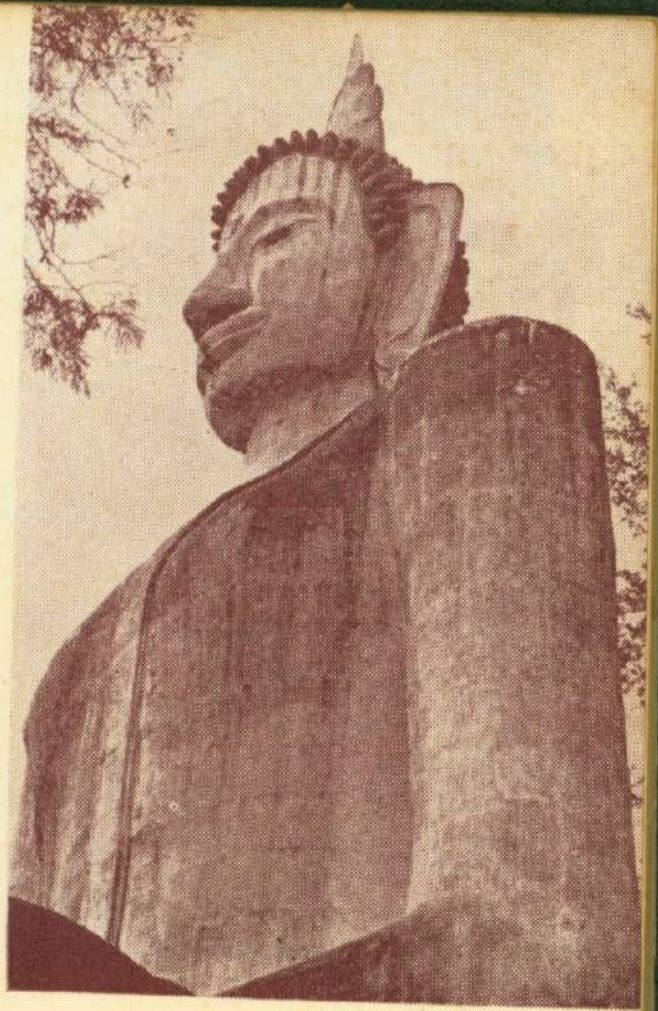
The Statue of King Narai



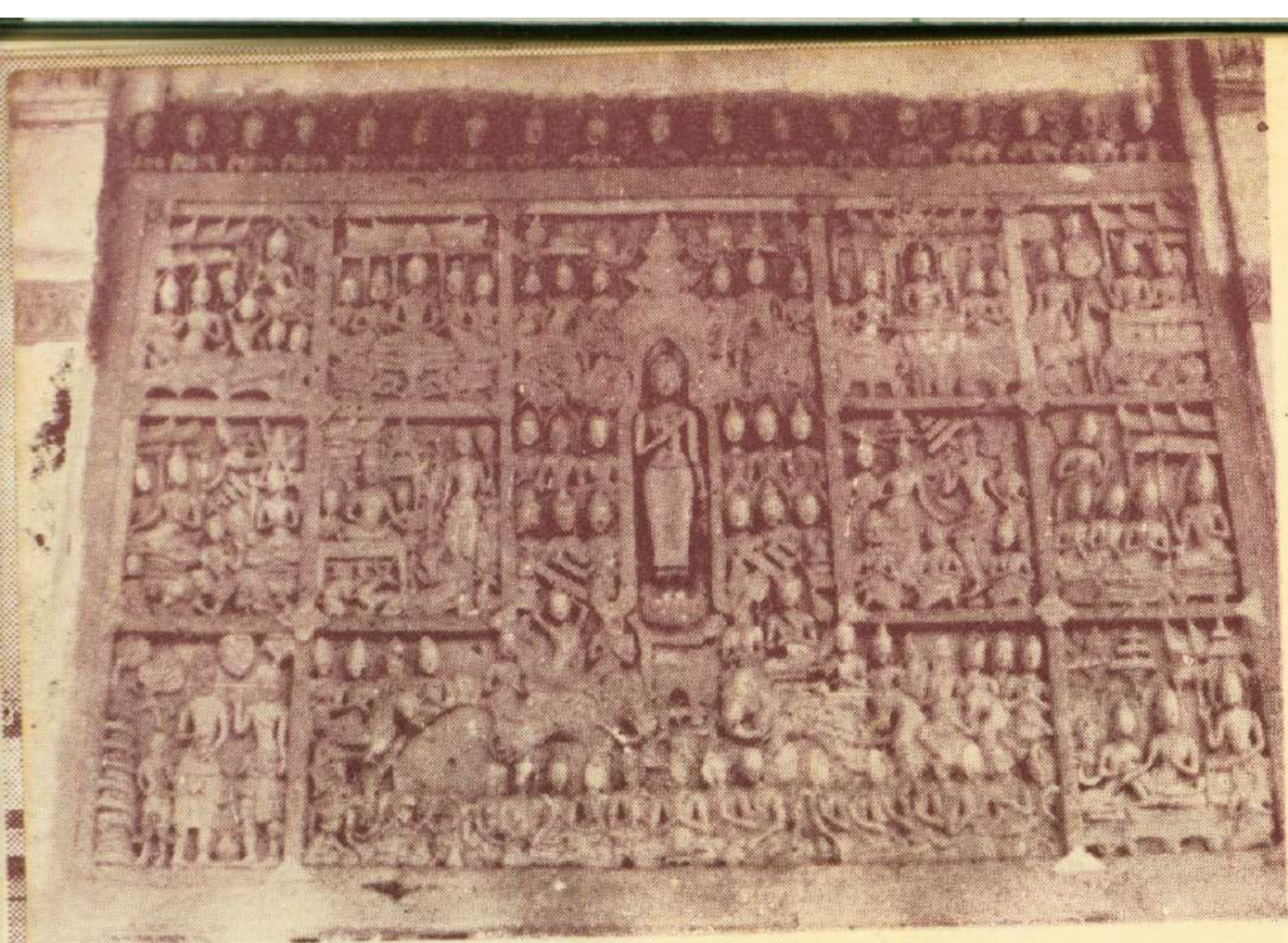
Sra Kao

Wat Mani Cholakhan





Wat Khao Phra Ngam



The stucco portray at Wat Lai

LOPBURI IN THE PAST AND NOWADAYS

Lopburi is a very old town. About the year 889 A.D, it was ruled by the Khom and before the period of the Khom it was ruled by the Mon in the Dvaravati Period. King Chai Waramon II of the Khom defeated the Mon and ruled Lopburi since 889 A.D. and made it subcapital named "Lawo" It was called "Lawo" probably because it was a town of the tribe called "Lawa" After that it might be changed into Thai word "Lop" and Thai people added "buri" which means "town" to make "Lopburi"

Lopburi was free and was ruled by the Khom for many times until Ayudhya was made the capital of Thailand and Lopburi was free from the Khom and Burmese During the reign of King Uthong, the founder of Ayudhya (1350-1369), Phra Ramesuan,

the King's eldest son was sent to rule Lopburi. When Phra Ramesuan became King, he offered the throne to his uncle who later became King Borom Rachatirat I. Phra Ramesuan himself returned to reside in Lopburi and ruled it for 38 years. His palace was probably on the same site as the present Narai Ratcha Niwes Palace.

In the reign of King Narai (1656 - 1688) Lopburi was made the base and the second capital. In this reign the Western countries came to trade with Thailand. King Narai wanted the capital to be a long way from the Gulf of Thailand because he thought foreigners would attack the capital with warships. So in 1655 he had a palace constructed by French architects in western and Thai styles so that he could come to reside in Lopburi for several

months each year. Many ambassadors and high-ranking foreigners were granted audience in the palace

King Phet Racha succeeded to King Narai. He went to live in Ayudhya and Lopburi was deserted for a long time. After 1767 King Taksin attacked Wiangchanta, Srisatchanakanahut and Luang Phrabang, he also migrated people from these cities to Thailand and let them settle down in the northeastern part and in the cities where there were few people. These people were settled down in Lopburi too, so there were several groups of people in Lopburi.

In the fourth reign of Bangkok (1851-1868) Lopburi was made an important city again in 1863. The walls and the gates of the palace were repaired and the Phiman Mongkut was built

as the King's residence. In the reign of King Mongkut Lopburi was a very important province in the county of Ayudhya. The King had the palace restored and many buildings reconstructed. He named the palace "Narai Ratcha Niwes Palace" which means "the Residence of King Narai"

When Field Marshal Phibul Songkram was the prime minister, he made Lopburi an important military base. The military region was in the part that is called "new town" nowadays

Now Lopburi is an agricultural and educational city. It is also famous as a historical town. Visitors can go to Lopburi by bus and train. There are many buses and trains past Lopburi every day. There are many interesting places for tourists.

PHRANG SAM YOD

Phrang Sam Yod consists of three pagodas stick together in row. The middle pagoda is about 15 metres high, the other two, on the south and the north, are a little shorter. Phrang Sam Yod was made of laterite coated with cement, but these pieces of laterite were not joined together with cement. It is not known whether the Khom used anything to join these pieces of laterite. Around these pagodas, there are relief designs made of cement.

Phrang Sam Yod is assumed to be built in the period of Lopburi by the Khom about 957-1257 A.D. They were imitated the Indian pagodas.

Indians had imitated this kind of pagodas from a castle of Bhramanism which had changed

from a square castle. The Khom built this kind of pagodas in many towns they had power over. It is thought that the Khom built Phrang Sam Yod to keep the Buddha Images in.

Later the Khom, the ruler of Lopburi, were the Bhramanist and changed these three pagodas into places of worship. Some periods that the Khom worshiped Buddhism Phrang Sam yod would change into places for Buddha Images. They often changed like this.

In the riegnd of King Narai, the King had Phrang Sam Yod for Buddhism only. He restored Phrang Sam Yod and built a temple west to it. In the year 1926 the Royal Institute restored Phrang Sam Yod by joining each piece of laterite together with cement as we can see nowadays.

SAL PHRAKAN

It is believed that Sal Phrakan was at first a place of worship of the Khom. It was constructed by laying pieces of laterite upon each other, but it still cannot be proved what they used to join each piece of laterite together because we cannot see cement or any other material. It cannot be proved yet what its original shape is like because the part that is left now is believed to be only its base

King Narai probably had it built as a guardian spirit on the old place of worship, and put a Hindu god on its base as it is now.

Now another building was built in front of the old place of worship. This new building is Thai style. and there is a stone Hindu god inside. People have faith in this god and name it

"Choa Phaw Sal Phrakan", and pay great respect to this god.

Another interesting thing here is "monkeys" which are numerous. These monkeys are called the followers of "Choa Phaw Sal Phrakan". At first people believed in the holy Hindu god and they fulfilled their vow with different kinds of food. The monkeys from the woods nearby came to eat and live there until the number is greater now.

Besides, at Sal Phrakan there is a Thai dancing to fulfil a vow.

PHRA PRANG WAT PHRA SRIRATANAMAHAHATAT.

It is a single laterite prang here. It was restored many times in the period of Ayudhaya so it seems different from the original one.

It is believed that it was built in the same period as Phrang Sam Yod (957 A.D-1357 A.D).

Another building here is the "building for taking off" It was in front of the temple in the east. The Kings took off his clothes here before going to a religious performance.

Next to "the building for taking off" is "Wihar Laung" which is now in rather good condition.

Besides, there are pagodas of different shapes around the Phrang. Some of them are in rather good condition.

The big Phrang was first restored in the first half of Ayudhaya period and several times later but after King Narai period it was not restored at all.

PHRANG KHAK

This pagoda was a Hindu Shrine. It has three tops like Prang Sam Yod but it is smaller. It was built by putting large pieces of brick on each other without the joining of cement or any substance. It is believed to be built in the Lopburi Period, and that it was first built by the Khom as a place of ceremonial of Brahmanism. We can see that it is of Hindu Style.

There was a Church southwest of Phrang Khak called Brahmin Church. It might be built in the reign of King Narai because there were arch windows like those of other buildings in the same period. It is believed that King Narai had it built for the Brahmen. It is now in the state of ruin and the Fine Art Department

repaired it in the year 1861 by joining the bricks with cement.

WAT NAKORN KOSA.

It is south of Sal Phra Kal. The ruins left for us were only the bricks of the building and the pagoda with broken top and the wall of the church nearby.

The building of bricks was a very large and high square, but the large part of its top was broken. It is believed that this building might be a place of warship like Sal Phrakan because the ruin left is the same form and size.

The pagoda with broken top and the church were made of bricks joined with cement. It is believed that they were built in the reign of King Narai by changing the place of worship of Khom to a monastery. It was named 'Wat

Nakorn Kosa' because Phraya Kosatibodi (an official of King Narai) had the pagoda and the church built.

THE STATUE OF KING NARAI THE GREAT

The statue of King Narai is situated in the middle of Tepstri Circle which is on the road Lopburi - Bangkok. The statue stands facing east, holding a sword in his right hand and his left foot stepping out forward, The statue stands on the base on which his deeds have been written.

The statue was built there on 16 February 1967 because people in Lopburi realized that Lopburi had the most civilize period in the reign of King Narai.

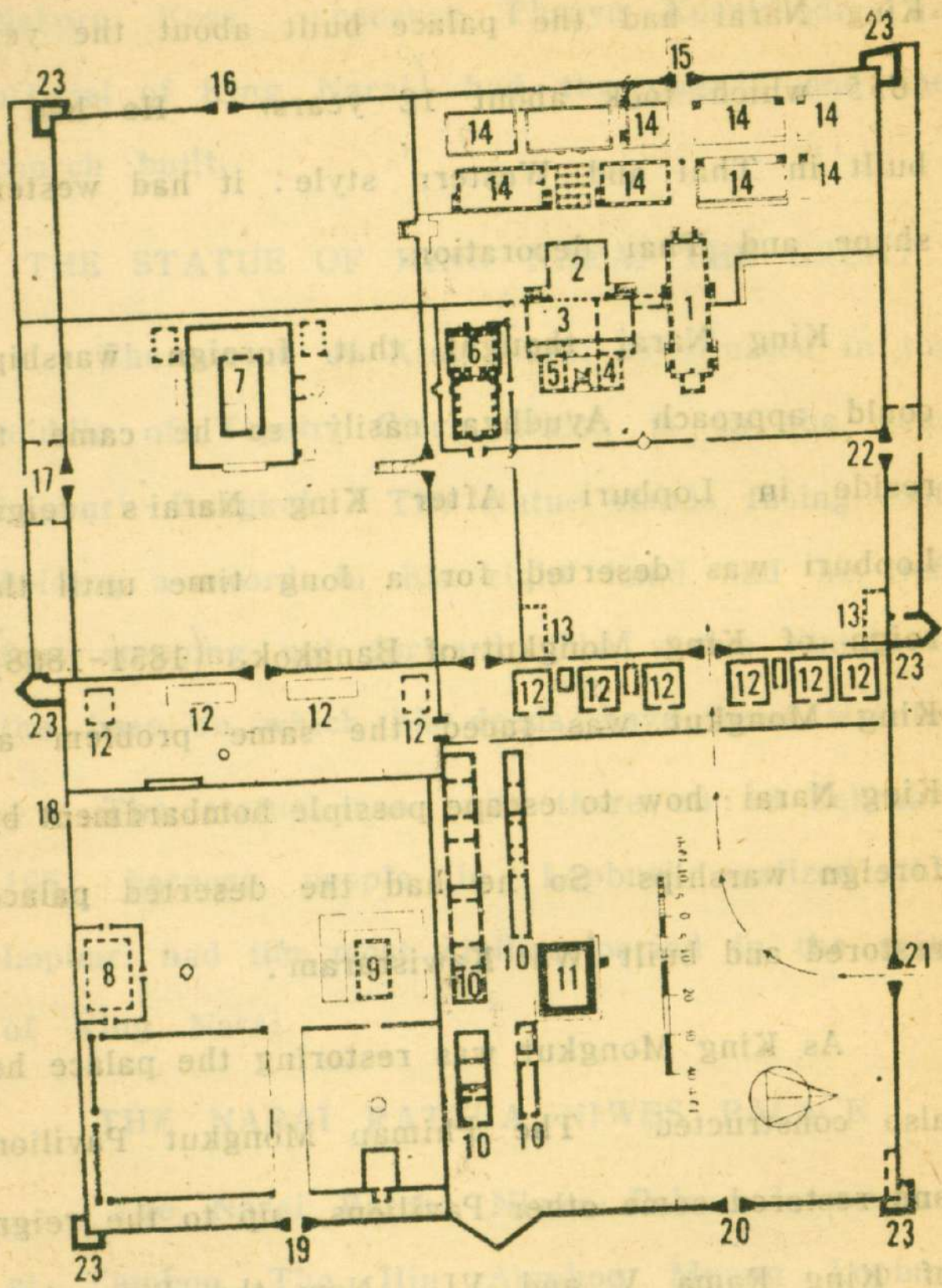
THE NARAI RATCHA NIWES PALACE

The Narai Ratcha Niwes Palace is situated at Tambon Tha Hin Amphoe Muang Lopburi.

King Narai had the palace built about the year 1655 which took about 12 years. He had it built in Thai and Western style: it had western shape and Thai decoration.

King Narai thought that foreign warships could approach Ayudhya easily so he came to reside in Lopburi. After King Narai's reign, Lopburi was deserted for a long time until the reign of King Mongkut of Bangkok. (1851-1868). King Mongkut was faced the same problem as King Narai: how to escape possible bombardment by foreign warships. So he had the deserted palace restored and built 'Wat Kawisraram'.

As King Mongkut was restoring the palace he also constructed The Phiman Mongkut Pavilion and restored some other Pavilions, up to the reign of King Rama V and VI. Now the Fine Arts



THE PLAN OF THE NARAI RATCHA NIWES PALACE

1. The Chanthara Phisan Pavilion.
2. The Piman Mongkut Pavilion.
3. The Suttha Winitchai Pavilion.
4. The Chai Sattrakorn Building.
5. The Aksorn Sattrakorn Pavilion.
6. The Dusit Sawan Thanya Maha Prasat Hall.
7. The Suttha Sawan Pavilion.
8. Phra Choa Hao Building.
9. The Reception Hall.
10. Phra Khlang Suplarat
11. Water Reservoir
12. Elephant and horse stables.
13. The Guard Quarters
14. The Buildings in the inner section of the Royal Palace.
15. Yatra Kasattri Gate
16. Nari Sila Gate
17. A Gate on the south
18. Din Gate
19. A Gate on the south-east
20. Phayakkha Gate
21. A Gate on the north-east
22. Wiset Chaisi Gate
23. Forts around the Narai Ratcha Niwes Palace.

Department is situated in this palace. Inside this palace there is a group of pavilions which are still in good condition: they are The Phiman Mongkut Pavilion, and the Chanthara Phisan Pavilion. But The Dusit Sawan Thanya Maha Prasat Hall and The Suttha Sawan Pavilion are broken. Besides there are some other buildings left now such as the gates, the walls of the palace, the buildings for women, the guest house and so on.

THE CHANTARA PHISAN PAVILION

King Narai built it as the first royal residence in Lopburi in 1665. Probably on the former site of Phra Ramesuan's Palace. It was restored by King Mongkut in 1863. This pavilion was built in Thai style. Now it is divided into 2 rooms for displaying archeological and art exhibits.

There are many important objects such as a stone Buddha image, some Buddha images with Dvaravati and Lopburi workmanship mingled together. Another interesting type of Buddha image which is the Lopburi style made of stone but covered with lacquer by artists who tried to change them into Ayudhya features. There is also a Sanskrit inscription transferred from Wat Phra Sri Ratana Maha That in Lopburi.

THE PHIMAN MONGKUT PAVILION

It is a three storeyed brick building constructed by King Mongkut. It is between the Chanthara Pisan and the Dusit Sawan Thanya Prasat Pavilion. This pavilion was constructed in 1863. The whole top floor was his bedroom.

The second floor is the Suttha Winitchai Pavilion which was the audience hall of King Mongkut. It is now used as a part of the Lopburi Museum. There are some stone images of Buddha under the Naga in Lopburi style and many Buddha and diety heads of Dvaravati, Lopburi and Ayudhya styles. There are also terra-cotta, water pipes in King Narai's reign and so on.

"The Chai Sattrakorn Building" is on the left wing. Weapons were kept here once.

"The Aksorn Sattrakhom" is on the right wing. It was King Mongkut's reading-room.

In the reign of King Rama V, Thailand was divided into counties and provinces. Lopburi was a province and the Phiman Mongkut Pavilion was the province office from 1937 - 1907 then the new province office was built.

THE DUSIT SAWAN THANYA MAHA PRASAT HALL.

It was constructed in the reign of King Narai as his audience hall for high-ranking foreign visitors and ambassadors. Now it is very old and broken, it has no roof but we can see that it is Thai and French style mingled. The front part is French and the back part is Thai. All doors and windows in the front are gothique, but the windows on the rest three sides are Thai.

In the middle of the front hall there was a wall to make a porch stretch out and high up in the middle used as a royal place. The roof of the hall was probably Thai Style. The walls were decorated with mirrors of many colours imitated French style. These mirrors probably came from France. When Phra Phet Racha and Laung Sorasak revolted against King Narai and besieged the palace, the King was afraid that his men would be harmed so he dedicated this building as a Buddhist sanctuary and invited monks to ordain in this building.

THE SUTTHA SAWAN PAVILION

This pavilion is south of the Dusit Sawan Thanya Prasat. It was built and occupied by King Narai. He stayed here until he was ill and died

(1688). Now this pavilion has no walls, there are only ruins and artificial hills on the north.

PHRA CHAO HAO BUILDING

It is on the south of the outer section of the palace built by King Narai probably as a private audience hall. A brick pedestal still exists inside. When Phra Pet Racha and Luang Sorasak rebelled against the King. They assembled in this building.

THE RECEPTION HALL

It is on the north opposite Phra Chao Hao Building. It was also built by King Narai to entertain important foreign guests. It was built in French style with arch doors and windows. On the west, the south and the north there are ponds of two metres wide and 80 centimetres deep.

PHRA KHLANG SUPHARAT

It is normally called the twelve treasure houses built by King Narai for keeping royal treasures and as stores for royal goods.

WATER RESERVOIR

It was constructed by King Narai. There was a barrel for storing water. The water came through terra-cotta pipes from the Chubsorn Lake to the reservoir at Sa Khao. From this reservoir, there were pipes to the town of Lopburi and the palace, and the houses of the royal families. There is another reservoir at Sab Lek Valley in Sam Roi Yod Hills where the water was clearer and flew more rapidly than that from Sa Khao.

THE ELEPHANT AND HORSE STABLE

It is west of the barrel of water, near the walls in the middle section of the Royal Palace.

It was built by King Narai. His favourite elephant from Nakorn Sawan called Chao Phraya Borom Khachanthara Chatthan was probably kept here. King Narai loved this elephant very much. When this elephant died the King was so sad that he was ill and died soon after, Now there are only broken bricks left from these stables.

THE GUARDS QUARTERS

It was built by king Mongkut for the royal guards. There are rows of cavities in Bodhi-leaf shape for oil lamps on the walls and gates on the eastern inner section of the palace.

BUILDINGS IN THE INNER SECTION OF THE ROYAL PALACE

There are all together eight buildings, built by King Mongkut as the women's residence when they came to Lopburi. Now these buildings are

still in good condition, and they are residence of the Fine Arts officials.

FORTS.

There are six forts: there are three on the north wall and three on the south wall. King Narai had them built in French plan. King Mongkut had them rebuilt in the same time as the walls and gates.

YATRA KASATTRI GATE

It was on the western side of the palace. When King Narai came from Ayuhdya by boat he would enter the palace by this gate. The palace was on a high place so there were steps to the street called "fifty-one steps" There is a street to the Royal Harbour at Lopburi River, the harbour was called "Thakhoonnang".

THE KRAISORN SIHARAT PAVILION

It is called "Phratinung Yen" or "Talaie Chubsorn Pavilion"

It is situated by the Chubsorn Reservoir, on the left of Sakao.

King Narai often went to rest near the Chubsorn Reservoir and shoot wild animals during the hot season. Later he had a group of buildings constructed and named them "The Kraisor Siharat Pavilion. This pavilion was built in Thai style.

DITCHES, WALLS, FORTS AND GATES

FORTS

There are only two forts left now.

1. The fort on the north. It is now called "Pom Thapo" (the fort at Thapo) It is now

in rather good condition. This fort was constructed in the reign of King Narai. This fort is very high and large.

2. The fort on the south called "Pom Chai Chana Songkram. It is on the east of the railway.

GATES

There are only two gates left now

1. The Chai Gate on the south of Wat Mahatart and on the west of Chai Chana Songkram Fort. It is a high and large gate.

2. The Phaniad Gate or The Korat Gate. It is in the Narai Military Camp. It is called the Phaniad Fort probably because it was the gate to an elephant corral which was near the gate

THE ROYAL RECEPTION HOUSE

(WICHAYEN'S HOUSE)

It was built by King Narai for the first French Ambassador, Chevalier de Chaumont, Louis XIV's representative

This house was divided into two parts, west of it was the residence of missionaries with a church. The Ambassador's house was on the east. Now there are only the ruins of the walls and the house which was probably the residence of Wichayen. When the French ambassadors came, King Narai probably made Wichayen an interpreter because he could be understandable so he had a house built for him near the ambassadors' houses.

Now the Reception House is left broken. It was built with bricks and cement in the

western style. There are two large arch doors and inside there are high walls and posts.

SAL LOOKSORN

It is situated by the Rama Road near the municipal market. It is the household spirit of the city.

Now there is a new building built in Chinese style and there are many notices written in Chinese. This new building was built in the year 1930 and it might be often rebuilt so it looks new. In front of the shrine, there is a small well where water is always full. In the middle of the well there is a large green stone, this stone is called Rama's arrow, but archeology said this stone is the household spirit of the city. Some said this shrine was the old household spirit of the city and the stone was the centre of the city.

SRA MANORA (MANORA POND)

It is believed that at first it was a pond dug out to get soil for the town or for Phrang Sam Yod. Now we cannot see the pond because the place is full of houses.

SRA KAO

There are two places called Sra Kao: one is behind the Army Theatre, the other is in the front as a resting place.

These Sra Kaos are believed to be the reservoirs of water supply in the reign of King Narai. The water in the first Sra Kao came from the Chubsorn Lake in pipes and to the second Sra Kao where there was a large pipe running to town.

Now the first Sra Kao is shallow and the second one was re-dug from the year 1938 to

1940 and built in the middle a big tray on a pedestal with a big candle inside. On the edge of the tray there are seals of different ministries.

THE CHUBSORN LAKE.

It is now west of the Wat Kai Road, it is shallow and has become gardens of sugar apples

It is believed that in those days this place was a large pond of water. It was called "the Chubsorn Lake" because it was said, according to "Legend of Ramayana", that Phra Rama bathed his arrows in this pond before he shot the arrows. "The Chubsorn Lake" means "the lake where an arrow is bathed"

MONASTERIES IN THE TOWN OF LOPBURI

WAT SAO THONG THONG.

Formerly this monastery was divided into two parts: Wat Rauk and Wat Sao Thong Thong.

They joined together as Wat Sao Thong Thong in the year 1914.

It isn't known when it was really built but some buildings were built in the reign of King Narai.

The interesting things in this monastery:

1. Phra Wihan which is believed to be constructed in the reign of King Narai because there are arch windows like other buildings in this period.

2. Korosan Building: north of Phra Wihan. It was built in the same period as Phra Wihan, used as the residence of the guests and Persian and Italian ambassadors.

3. Pichoo Building: on the right of Korosan Building. It was the L shape building of two storeys, built in the reign of King Narai as the residence of

French and Italian missionaries who came to help in the construction of water supply. It was occasionally the residence of the merchants of jewelery.

4. A large pagoda made of bricks and cement in the pentagon shape. There are a lot of Buddha images in this pagoda.

WAT MANI CHOLAKHAN.

Formerly it was named Wat Kor Kao (วัดเกาะแก้ว) because it is like an island-when water overflows. There was one pagoda with a strange tall shape.

WAT KAWISARA RAMA

This monastery formerly named "Wat Kwid", was deserted for a long time until King Rama IV had it repaired when he came to stay at Phra Narai Ratcha Niwes Palace.

This monastery has many interesting things: a building with holes in the walls instead of windows, several old hermitages. There is a well like that in Phra Narai Palaece.

WAT CHERNG THA.

This monastery was formerly named "Wat Tha Kwian" It has been changed to Wat Cherng Tha for about 50 years now. Wat Cherng Tha was probably built in Sukho Thai period.

The interesting things in this monastery are paintings about ten births of Lord Buddha. These paintings were painted in Ratana Kosin period and painted on canvas and they are now fixed on the wall of the preaching hall. Some pictures are now torn and some are washed by rain.

MONASTERIES IN THE SUBURBS OF LOPBURI

WAT KHAO WONG PHRA CHAN.

It is near the foot of the Wong Phra Chan Hill in Amphur Koksamrong. It is about 28 kilometres from the Town Hall of Lopburi. There is a model footprint of Lord Buddha on the hill and a lot of people go to worship it each year.

The hill is about 644 metres above sea level and there are 3067 steps from the foot to the top of the hill or the steps is 1680 metres long. It takes about 2 hours to climb this hill by the steps.

WAT KHAO PHRA NGAM.

(WAT SIRI CHANTARA NIMIT)

It is about 12 kilometres from the Town Hall of Lopburi up the Phaholyothin Highway. We can see from the Phaholyothin Highway a large white

Buddha image at the foot of the hill. This Buddha image is 22 metres wide and 38 metres long. The image was painted with white cement and named "Phra Buddha Patiphak Matayom Buddha Kal."

WAT LAI

It is by the River Bang Kham, Amphur Thawung, on the right branch between the 18th and 19th kilometre stone of Lopburi-Singburi Road.

Now Wat Lai is still in good interesting condition. The Wiharn was built in the beginning of Ayudhya style. There is a Buddha image curved in stone in Ayudhya, about 20th Buddhist century, style. It is under the frame like that of Phra Buddha Chinarat in Pisanulokc.

The thing that is worth studying is the stucco portray on the front and the back of

Phra Wiharn. It is about ten births of Lord Buddha on the front. On the back it is the life of Lord Buddha.

SAMORKORN HILL

It is on the north west of the town of Lopburi. If we are on the way to Singburi it is on the north of us. It is enjoyable to go to Samorkorn Hill in the flooding time by motor-boat. In the dry season we can go there by bus.

There are 4 monasteries on the foot of the hill, they are, Wat Khao Samorkorn, Wat Tham Chang Phuak, Wat Tham Thako, and Wat Bandai Samsan. There is beautiful scenery worth resting there.

Besides the places and things mentioned, there are several deserted monasteries without monks such as Wat Intra, Wat Racha, Wat Peun, Wat San Paolo Wat Kai and Wat Bandai Hin. But Wat Pa Thammasophon, Wat Tongpu and Wat Chipa Sitaram are now the residence of monks. In all these monasteries, there are some ruins showing that these monasteries were built in the reign of King Narai or longer. The prehistoric objects dug in a military fort at Kokkatiam and Ban Kok Charean, Tambon Boachum Ampher Chaibadan show that Lopburi is a very old town.

Banmi is another interesting place. It is called the land of beautiful ladies.

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