THE FORM SYAṈ IN ANGKORIAN KHMER

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In at least one respect the study of ancient languages known only from written monuments is like the study of contemporary languages which have never been reduced to writing: in both cases the investigator encounters as a matter of course lexical items which are not readily amenable to analysis. What is sometimes forgotten is that the linguist working on a living language normally has recourse to informants, whereas the linguist working on a dead language can have no such guidance. Hence, if most of the ancient lexicon is known or knowable, certain forms prove resistant to identification, and alternative means must be brought into play in attempting to account for them.

It is not my intention to claim that the difficulties confronting us in Old Khmer are as numerous or as perplexing as they seem to be, or to have been, in many another ancient language. Since the first inscriptions were published by Aymonier a century ago we have, thanks to the painstaking work of a few dedicated French scholars, seen the gradual elaboration of a tolerably good understanding of Old Khmer. By 1966, when the eighth and last volume of Cœdès's monumental *Inscriptions du Cambodge* [= C] made its appearance, most of the texts in the growing corpus of Khmer epigraphy had been analysed and explicated with an acceptable degree of reliability. By that year the bulk of the lexicon was fairly well understood, but a good many specialised terms had not been worked out to our satisfaction. This is still the case today, when a good many lexical and other problems continue to elude us. Among these is a small class of forms which appear to perform grammatical functions.¹ Typical of this class is syaṈ, which I propose to discuss here.

Not found in the pre-Angkorian inscriptions recovered so far,² this orthographic form is attested in Angkorian Khmer well over a hundred and fifty times. In addition, its life is extended through the Middle Khmer period, where it appears variously as syaṈ (A.D. 1560-77), syiṅ (1560-1701), and sīṅ (1587-1706), with the apparent nonce-forms sīṅ (1620), sīṅy (1696) and sīṅ (1701). As to the meaning of the Angkorian form, Aymonier (1883: 494, n.1) took it as synonymous with Sanskrit *kevalam* 'solely, entirely' and as the source of modern Khmer 'sīṅ' — by which he

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1. There were no published studies of Old Khmer grammar until the valuable sketch by Saveros Pou (1979). The enquiry presented here goes hand in hand with my earlier *Asie du Sud-Est et Monde Insulindien* studies (1981, 1982).

2. The language of the pre-Angkorian period, conventionally ending with the founding of Angkor in A.D. 802, is manifested in the form of two dialects. The principal or A dialect, among other criteria, lacks the high falling diphthongs [iːə], [uːə], [uːə] and their short counterparts. The lesser or B dialect, conforming with the phonology of the Angkorian period, has these diphthongs. The orthographic form syaṈ is ambiguous but must have been realized with a high falling diphthong: [sːiɲ], [sːiɲ], [sːuːəɲ], [sːuːəɲ]. It could, therefore, have occurred in pre-Angkorian as a dialect B form, but would take some other form in dialect A.
evidently meant siha /sīŋ/ [svŋ] ‘nearly all, almost’. In 1913 Cœdès (Parmentier 1913: 14) understood it in the same sense as Aymonier and rendered it ‘sans exception’. In 1915, however, Finot (1915: 106) re-defined it as a pronoun, glossing syah ta as ‘qui’. For most of the half-century down to 1966, Cœdès and his contemporaries treated the form in various ways which are impossible to reconcile. Thus in the largest number of cases, representing about 35% of the total, we find it expressed by appropriate forms of tout. Yet in roughly 29% of its occurrences it does not seem to be rendered at all, at least overtly, even in those fairly numerous cases where the idea of tout would not appear out of place. Several times it is expressed by the related notion of ensemble. In other passages, representing a little over 15% of the total, we find it rendered by ‘comme’, ‘tel’, ‘réellement’ and, in one instance, ‘voilà’. It must be said, however, that in none of these latter cases is it absolutely certain that syah is being expressly rendered at all. Indeed, one has the impression that Cœdès and his contemporaries allowed themselves in some instances to be led into the translation they give under pressure from the supposed contexts. This uncertainty is greatest in passages in which figure appropriate forms of être: one simply does not know whether syah is being so rendered or is being passed over in silence.

To this diversity of interpretations may be added the treatment of syah and its variants in Middle Khmer texts. During the 1970s my learned teacher Saveros Pou redefined syah as an anaphoric ‘pronoun or particle’ (sic), holding at the same time that the Middle Khmer form or forms were the source of modern Khmer siha /sīŋ/ ‘nearly’. As far as I am aware, however, it is nowhere rendered as an anaphoric pronoun in any of her superb translations. Of the fifty-seven Middle Khmer occurrences of syah and its variants collected for the present study, twenty-seven (48%) are not overtly rendered at all. Twelve, or 21%, mostly in combination with what we are no doubt justified in now calling the equational copula jet /jaː/ → ci/a/, are conceivably assigned a copular function or, if this is not so, are also unre­ndered. In only three cases is syah represented by ‘comme’. On the other hand, in eight cases (14.5%), French and my own English translations read as if syah marked the apodosis of an ‘if’ or ‘when’ clause, or as an unexpressed ‘then’ introducing the consequence of a prior clause. We also have a small number of instances in which syah is, as I might say, plainly none of the foregoing but seems to express a contrastive (nevertheless)’ or instrumental (‘thereby’) idea. In only two cases, both suspicious, does it appear to be taken as a pronoun. I may as well mention

3. As will be seen, he may have had in mind modern siha /sīŋ/ [svŋ] ‘to rest’.
4. In addition to the occurrences tallied here, in over 9% of its instances the passages in which syah occurs are left untranslated for one reason or another. The Angkorian corpus also includes twelve passages with syah which are too garbled to be used in the present discussion.
5. I might mention in this connection that I have considered the possibility of a loan relationship, in one direction or the other, between Middle Khmer syah – sih and Thai /sīŋ/ (for the corresponding Lao form see Kerr 1972: 493b), usually treated as a relative pronoun ‘used in reference to a person, an animal, or an inanimate object... in the nominative, objective, or possessive case’ (Sethaputra 1965: I, 349ab, who adds that it is also ‘used in a literary context to introduce a noun in the objective case after a transitive verb, where in ordinary language no preposition (sic) is required”; cf. Haas 1964: 157b; McFarland 1944: 309b). Since it seems to yield no useful results, my consideration of this possibility is not included in the present discussion.
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here that none of the Old Khmer or Middle Khmer occurrences of syañ allows interpretations suggestive of modern sina /sín/ 'nearly'; as far as I am able to determine, this sense is unattested in the older language.

In view of such radically different interpretations of the meaning and function of syañ, we have no choice except to re-examine the data. It will be appreciated that the task of doing so has something of the character of a trial at law in which the evidence, abundant though it may be, is entirely circumstantial. This, taken with the diversity of views expressed by a number of eminent scholars, demands that all of the usable evidence be adduced and weighed. With this in mind I have screened all of the Old Khmer inscriptions available to me and collected every occurrence of syañ with a view to ensuring that no usage escaped notice. For Middle Khmer I have gone through all of the so-called 'modern' inscriptions of Angkor (Lewitz 1970-72), some seventeen cpā'pa /cbap/ or ethical texts, the Lpaka 'aṅgaravatta /lbaaṅ qañkōwọwọ/; the undated metrical Supīna /sobán/; and nine other inscriptions, namely* K.39 (A.D. 1574), K.177 (1478-1577), K.285 and K.465 (both 1583), K.715 (1586), K.27 (1587), K.261/I (1611), K.261/III (1639), and K.261/II, IV and V (1578-1677). Data in this quantity create a problem of presentation. On the one hand, the reader is entitled to examine the full array of the available evidence; but to provide the latter would occupy from sixty to seventy-five pages of space which could no doubt be put to better use. On the other hand, any significance to be found in the present study lies in whatever conclusions one may draw from the evidence, and such conclusions can be given in a few short paragraphs. One of these extremes being as unsatisfactory as the other, I have attempted to strike middle ground, first, by confining my citations to those from the Angkorian inscriptions and, secondly, by reducing the number of my citations to the absolute minimum consistent with the reader’s ability to grasp the problem and its solution. It should be explained at the same time that, if it is true that a strictly objective examination of the evidence would furnish only the Old Khmer passages in question, this would be tantamount to dismissing the work and judgements of my predecessors and to depriving the reader of the

6. For a full list of her 'Inscriptions modernes d'Angkor' [IMA], see references below, Lewitz (1970-75).

* K = the inventory number in ‘Liste générale des inscriptions du Cambodge’, Cœdès (1966: 8, 73-225 and Supplements). (Ed.)
opportunity of weighing their judgements and mine for himself. I therefore give the published translations of each passage cited; my own alternatives to those translations are given later.

The simplest structural contexts we are concerned with are those in which *syān* follows a demonstrative pronoun (Dem.) and is itself followed by a noun (N) designating a metal—though there seems to be no good reason to take the metallic nature of the noun as in any way obligatory. In each case the Dem. *+ syān + N* sequence is preceded by a more or less lengthy list, which I abbreviate, of objects forming part of an endowment:

(1) *vauđi mvāy svok mvāy... 'arghya pādyā mvāy tampaś neh syān prāk* (K.171: 7-8), ‘Un *vauđi*, un plateau,... quatre vases pour le lavage des pieds (*ārghya pādyā*). Tout* a* cela en argent’ (C VI: 166).

(2) *... cancyān 1 ratna ta gt 1 naupura 2 khse chdvāl 1 neh syān mās* (K.669C: 10), ‘... 1 bague avec 1 joyau, 2 anneaux de cheville, 2 (sic) chaînes; tout* a* cela en or’ (C I: 182).

Only slightly less simple are structures such as the following in which *syān*, still following a demonstrative pronoun, is itself followed by a noun phrase (NP). The sequences Dem. *+ syān + N* and Dem. *+ syān + NP* may of course be considered equivalent.

(3) *... me 'yak me ṇam me deś me sān me dvat neh syān sruk 'amarālaya* (K.598B: 29), ‘Les *me Te*, Ńam, Des, Sān, Dvat, tous *(sic)* du sruk Amarālaya’ (Finot 1928: 77).

(4) *... ta duk praśāṣṭa neh mṛataṁ śri satyayuddha nu mṛataṁ śri ripumatha neh syān kvan mṛataṁ śri prathivinarendra...* (K.956: 58-9), ‘... Ceux qui conservent cet acte inscrit sont Mṛataṁ Čṛi Satyayuddha et Mṛataṁ Čṛi Ripumatha(na), enfants de Mṛataḥ Čṛi Prathivinarendra’ (C VII: 135).

(5) *kamraṭeṁ 'aṁ yogī ta pvās ta neḥḥ phye phlu pūrvoṭṭara tirthoḥyānapuṣpārāmā neh syān dharmma kamraṭeṁ 'aṁ didai ra...* (K.139B: 7-10), ‘Les seigneurs Yogin qui sont entrés en religion ici confient le chemin du nord-est, le baïn, le parc, le jardin fleuri: ce sont les œuvres pies de chacun des seigneurs’ (C III: 179).

In such passages as the following we see that the place occupied by Dem. in the preceding sequences may be filled by an NP:

(6) *... patigraha raupya 2 khāṣ 2 vodi prāk 2 bhājana draṃvaḥ 1 bhājana khpac 1 syān hanirā bhājana pralvaḥ 3 bhājana ta madhyama 6...* (K.669C: 15-6), ‘... 2 crachoirs d’argent, 2 agrafes, 2 vodi d’argent, 1 récipient *drāṃvaḥ*, 1 récipient décoré tout en *hanira*, 3 grands récipients, 6 récipients moyens,...’ (C I: 183).

(7) *... dep neḥ ta ḍai ti syān daksiṇā* (K.263D: 44), ‘... ensuite on en choisit d’autres comme offrande (*daksiṇā*)’ (C IV: 138).

(8) *kamsteṁ śāntilaksṇī paṅket chloṇi haridāṭa chloṇi somaśarmma syān*

8. Here and hereafter, those forms which I take to be intended to express *syān* are italicized.
9. One would expect *toutes*.
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bhāgavata pamre (K.989B: 16), ‘Kamsteń Čāntilakšmi donna naissance à Chłoń Haridatta et à Chłoń Somačarman, tous (deux) bhāgavata serviteurs’ (C VII: 183).

(9) ... vaudí 3 katāha 5 svok 10 syañ tap prāṃ jahiyān padigāh 4... (K.263D: 14), ‘... 3 vaudí; 5 bassines, 10 plateaux, soit 15 jahiyān; 4 crachoirs;...’ (C IV: 137).

A further step toward structural complexity is seen in cases of the following type in which the NP following syañ is introduced by the subordinating conjunction ta without a grammatical head. As far as the data show, this type is not common.

(10) kamrateń śivāśrama nu steń ‘ań vnam kansā yok kannvāy 3 strījana syañ ta sahadara ‘amvi sruk kuti... (K.235D: 24-5), ‘Le seigneur du Čivaśrama et le steń ań de Vnam Kansā prirent trois femmes, leurs nièces, toutes de même mère, provenant du sruk de Kutii...’ (Cœdès & Dupont 1943-46: 117).

(11) neh syañ ta gi kalpanā dau ta vrah kamrateń ‘ań śrī cāmpēsvāra sap chīnam (K.99S: 11-12), ‘...voilà ce qui doit être fourni à V.K.A. Črī Cāmpēsvāra tous les ans’ (C VI: 112).

(12) nau ‘a[m]pall punyaśrama kuti sruck sre bhājyākara kīn (sic) drivaya phoń xxxxx drivaya syañ ta vrah rājapunya (K.19: 17-8), ‘toutes les fondations, monastères, cellules, villages, rizières, revenus des terres, esclaves, biens de toute sorte... ces biens sont des fondations royales’ (C VI: 146).

With the foregoing type the NP following syañ ta is realised as N, as Dem. + N, and as N + N. The next structural type, which is the most abundantly represented of all in the Angkorian data, consists of syañ ta followed by a Verb phrase (VP). This is the same as saying that syañ is followed by an NP consisting of ta + VP; viz., a ‘headless ta phrase’ in which the ta subordinates the VP not to the preceding syañ but to some such unmanifested headword as ‘nak’ ‘person’ (qv. Jenner 1981).


(14) grāmāvṛddha syañ ta šapatha kathā ruva bhūmi ‘anin ta nirmūla krau gol (K.598B: 39), ‘Les anciens des villages prétèrent serment et dirent que cette terre d’Anin était sans maître et hors des bornes’.

(15) ‘nak neh phoń syañ ta samayuga yok iss drivaya noh phoń ta jā thlai bhūmi (K.207: 27-8), ‘Tous ces gens ensemble ont pris tous ces biens comme prix de la terre’ (C III: 21).

(16) neh syañ ta dau dār bhūmi nā thve vrah caṃnām (K.425: 8), ‘Tels ont été ceux qui sont allés demander le terrain pour instituer la prestation’ (C II: 144).
(17) teñ bhava x teñ kṛṣ teñ rudrāṇi teñ ke ni teñ x te (sic) so teñ sa{ra}svatī syañ ta dār vrah karunāprasāḍ/da)... (K.61B: 7-9), ‘Teñ Bhava, Teñ Kṛṣ, Teñ Rudrāṇi, Teñ —, Teñ —, Teñ Sarasvatī obtinrent toutes de la faveur royale — ...’ (C VII: 22).

(18) ... nau 'nak ta 'angvay ta gi sruk neh nu dharmma sre noh syañ ta oy pūjā [ka]mrateē 'añ ta gi dvādaśt phon pratipakṣa... (K.100: 3-4), ‘Les gens installés dans ce pays et dans les fondations et sur ces rizières, offrent la pūjā au K.A. le douzième jour de chaque quinzaine...’ (C VI: 215).

(19) ... vol ekāvākya man xxxx [teñ hyan]ē vasanta nu loñ ney vrah chpār syañ 'yat santāṇa ley... (K.208: 53-4), ‘(Ceux-ci) déclarèrent unanimement que Teñ Hyań Vasanta et Loñ Ney des saints jardins étaient réellement sans descendance...’ (C VI: 292).

A related structural type is seen in a few cases in which syañ, preceded as usual by an NP, is followed by an NP manifested as the complementiser man+a VP. In all cases, the man serves as a relative pronoun in the objective case, its antecedent being either animate or inanimate.

(20) khūnum satā mvāy 10 sakarma pvān . phon neh syañ man jvan ta vrah kamrateē 'añ śivalinga thvāy ta vrah pāda kamrateē 'añ śrī sūryavarmmaēva , (K.212A: 11-5), ‘Cents dix esclaves et quatre employés (sakarma), tous ces gens sont offerts au V.K.A. Čivalinga et remis à S.M. le roi Čṛi Śūryavarmanevā,...’ (C III: 32).


This leaves us, finally, with a number of passages in which syañ, still preceded by an NP, is followed directly by a VP without an intervening ta. Note that in five of the following cases the verb following it is passivised by the marker ti.

(22) xx khūnum vrah neh phon ta dāiy ti leń xx vrah tapasvi bhagavat pāda vrah kammsreē 'añ ta guru jvan kāla sthāpakā syañ codita 'añ ta jmāh vrah tapasvi vidyāspada gi pi mān ta upakal[p/a]ka jvān ta vrah śivalinga... (K.523D: 18-24), —tous ces esclaves du dieu et les autres, —Vrah Tapasvi Bhagavat Pāda V.K.A. ta Guru me les a offerts au moment où il fit la fondation, en m’incitant, moi qui ai nom Vrah Tapasvi Vidyāspada, à faire les préparatifs pour les offrir au saint Čivalinga...’ (C III: 141).

(23) lvoh ta 1035 śaka pi vrah pāda kamrateē 'añ śrī sūryavarmanmedeva ta jā vrah cau mātrapkṣa vrah pāda karateē 'añ śrī jayavarmanmedeva nu vrah pāda kamrateē 'añ śrī dharaṇāindravarmandeva svey vrah dharmmarājya 'añjeē bhagavat pāda kamrateē 'añ ta guru śrī divākarapandita jā vrah guru gi ta thve rājābhiseka man vrah pāda kamrateē 'añ syañ thve vrah dikṣā ṛyyan iss siddhānta phon... (K.194: 26-9), ‘En 1035 çaكا...., lorsque S.M. Čṛi Śūryavarmanmedeva, petit-

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neveu en ligne maternelle de S.M. Črí Jayavarmadeva et de S.M. Črí Dharaṇindravarmadeva, accédé à la sainte royauté, il invita le vénérable seigneur Guru Črí Divākarapanḍita à remplir les fonctions de Vrah Guru pour célébrer le sacre royal. Alors Sa Majesté accomplit la sainte initiation (vrah dīkṣa), étudia toutes les sciences (siddhanta),... ' (Cœdès & Dupont 1943-46: 146).

(24) neḥ syaṅ ti thvāy jā vrah rājadharma (K.33: 30), 'Tous ces (dons) sont offerts à titre de fondation royale (rājadharma)' (C III: 152).

(25) srū ta kh'val neḥ phoṅ phle chpār ta nohh phoṅ syaṅ ti jvan ta vrah kamṃraten 'ān ekādaśamukha... (K.168: 11-3), 'Tout ce paddy... et tous les fruits de ces jardins sont offerts à V.K.A. Ekādaśamukha...' (C VI: 169).

(26) ... nu 'aṅgāsa nu kaṅje chnāṅ kaṅje kalpita khjēṅ phoṅ nu duk pāy syaṅ ti yok dau uk nu sthāli ceḥ dlaḥ (K.353N: 33-4), '... nu à distribuer la nourriture, paniers en forme de marmite, paniers kalpita, khjēṅ, pour mettre la nourriture, tout cela est aussi emporté avec les sthāli, jarres et dlaḥ' (C V: 142).

(27) ... ti paścima vāyavya 'aṃvi leṅ sthāpanā sre lvaḥ travāṅ xx dau lvaḥ jeṅ x viṅ uttara prasap vrah phlu noh phoṅ syaṅ ti jau ta cak svāy ... (K.353S: 31-2), 'A l'ouest et au nord-ouest, depuis Leṅ Sthāpanā Sre jusqu'au bassin,... revenant jusqu'au bassin au pied de...; au nord, touchant ces chemins sacrés; tout cela a été acheté à Cak Svāy...' (C V: 140).

(28) neḥ syaṅ ti căṃ cāṃnāṃ ta kamṃraten jagat śrī vṛddheśvara (K.33: 23-4), 'Ces (terres) sont affectées au service des fournitures pour le dieu Črí Vṛddheśvara' (C III: 151).

These twenty-eight citations illustrate all of the environments in which syaṅ is found in my Angkorian data; there may be a few more buried in garbled texts. To recapitulate the information just given, we have seven groups of passages distinguished on the basis of the following patterns: Dem. + syaṅ + N (1-2); Dem. + syaṅ + NP (3-5); NP + syaṅ + NP (6-9); NP + syaṅ + NP (= ta + NP) (10-12); NP + syaṅ + NP (= ta + VP) (13-19); NP + syaṅ + NP (= man + VP) (20-21); and NP + syaṅ + VP (22-28). These seven groups can, of course, be subsumed under the two formulas NP + syaṅ + NP and NP + syaṅ + VP. It remains to be seen whether these structural distinctions are useful. Whether they are or not, the number of examples given should be enough to show that not all of the interpretations which have been applied to syaṅ could be accurate.

Even if it is found that one or more of the above interpretations is correct, any re-evaluation of syaṅ must begin by challenging all of the interpretations which have been applied to it. In the absence of living informants, our enquiry is essentially a search for common ground underlying every occurrence of syaṅ. It is reasonable to begin seeking such common ground by testing each of my predecessors’ interpretations against every passage in which syaṅ is used. I shall spare the reader the
agony of being led through a critical review of the data, and simply assert here that few of the interpretations given above stand up under such a simple test.

For example, the idea of 'solely, entirely' or 'sans exception' would not appear out of place in examples (1), (2), (5), (6), (7) and (11); it would not do in the remaining citations. All other imaginable adverbial ideas have been tried but none seems to fit.

On the other hand, the notion of *tou*t has been particularly beguiling. It is seen in nine or more of the above citations and, as has been said, with these we may group the related idea of *ensemble* seen in (13) and (15). One thing that seems fairly clear is that in most of these examples the immediate constituents are interpreted as *neh syaṅ | prāk* (1), *neh syaṅ | mās* (2), and so on, in which *syaṅ* (whether construed as a noun, a pronoun, or a verb) is seen as attributable to *neh* by virtue of its position. However this may be, it is curious that *tou*t would have been no less plausible in nine other of our citations, namely (4), (5), (8), (11), (13), (18), (21), (25), and (28). The fact that it is not used in these cases seems to reflect uncertainty as much as inconsistency. The main point to be considered, however, is that in examples (7), (9), (14), (22) and (23) the idea of *tou*t is pretty clearly excluded. The fact that *syaṅ* has been taken in senses other than *tou*t, or has been left unexpressed, cannot be ignored, and the more one weighs those cases in which it is understood as *tou*t the more one believes that this idea is contextually derived and that such dubious cases as example (8) were influenced by the apparent preponderance elsewhere of the *tou*t idea.

The same kind of review must be made in weighing the possibility that *syaṅ* is a relative pronoun, as Finot thought. In this case a cursory examination suffices. While one might be tempted to take it as a pronoun in as many as fifteen of the above citations, to do so does violence to each passage. We now know enough about the role of all the other elements in most of these examples to be on our guard against such interpretations, though our knowledge is still imperfect. I have recently demonstrated the possibility of 'double' demonstratives in Old Khmer (Jenner 1982) and this might suggest that *syaṅ man* could be something of the kind. But consider the following:

(29) *neh bhūmi ta rohṛ* *neḥ man vāp 'amarānanta duṇ* *syaṅ man jvan ta vrah noḥ*... (K.693B: 20-1).

A close rendering of this would be 'These lands, aforesaid, which vāp Amarānanda bought syaṅ what (he) offers to the sanctuary...' No conclusions can be drawn from this or from our two other syaṅ man citations, (20) and (21), since all three passages might have a zero copula with syaṅ, conceivably, duplicating the office of man. But all the other evidence indicates that this is not so.

The claim that syaṅ fulfils an anaphoric function is as difficult to disprove as it is to prove. Re-examination of our citations yields mixed

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10. Cf. C V: 208: ‘... telles sont les terres que Vāp Amarānanta a achetées et qui sont offertes à ce temple...’
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results: in six cases the possibility seems very unlikely, while in the remaining cases the possibility is present. In citations (1) to (5) plus (13), (16), (20), (24) and (28) together with citation (21), in which we have respectively neh svañ and noh svañ conceivably standing to the left of a binary cut, one wonders why the svañ and not the neh or noh should be anaphoric, and also why the alleged anaphor should be attributive to the demonstrative, as it would be, when svañ alone or with a following neh or noh would be expected. The claim for svañ as anaphoric pronoun (or particle) is too weak to be applied to all of our citations, let alone most of the data collected but not given here, and is hence unconvincing.

When we turn to consider the remaining examples given above, we find them nearly equally divided between those in which svañ is not expressly rendered at all and those in which it seems to be rendered by appropriate forms of être. The former comprise (4), (14), (18), (22), (23), and probably (21) and (28); the latter comprise (5), (12) (19), and probably (21), (25), and possibly (28). If none of my predecessors has advanced the claim that svañ is a copula or copula-like verb, it has not been made entirely clear earlier in this discussion that such a claim is almost implicit in a good many of their interpretations both of Old Khmer and of Middle Khmer texts. In a remarkable number of cases it is as if each context forced them into such a position without their being aware of it. Indeed, the moment we take a new look at our twenty-nine citations and consider them apart from their renderings, we are obliged to allow that many of them could equally well, considering the nature of our enquiry, be analysed as neh | svañ präk (1), neh | svañ mäs, and so on, in which svañ could be functioning as a copula identifying neh or another subject with a predicate. To test this hypothesis, I give here and now my own fairly close versions of our twenty-nine examples, my tentative equivalents of svañ being shown in italics:

(1) 'One vauði, one svok, four... (to hold) water for washing the feet, these consisting of silver.'
(2) '... one ring, one jewel (belonging) thereto, 2 anklets, one khse chdvål, these being of gold.'
(3) '... me 'Yak, me Näm, me Des, me Sän, me Dvat—these being of the land of Amarālaya.'
(4) '... Those having this edict in their safekeeping (are) the lord Śṛi Śatyāyudha and the lord Śṛi Ripumatha, these being sons of the lord Śṛi Prthivīnarendra.'
(5) 'Our high lords the yogin who have been ordained here give over the northeast road, the garden on the tirtha [bathing-place] (and) the flower garden, these being their several pious works...'
(6) '... 2 silver cuspidors, 2 clasps, 2 silver vauði, 1 dramvañ vessel, 1 figured vessel consisting of hanīṛa [an unidentified alloy], 3 vessels with spouts, 6 vessels of medium size...'

11. The sequences svañ neh and svañ noh are not attested in Old Khmer. This is hardly the place to take up the question of anaphora and its ramifications. Those interested should consult Patricia A. Lee (1981), especially 6.5 on 'Reference, Anaphora, Deixis.'
(7) ‘... (they) then selected others (to serve) as a fee’.
(8) ‘The kamsteñ Śantilakṣmi begat the chloñ Haridatta (and) the chloñ Somaśarman, (who) were bhūgavata in (divine) service.’
(9) ‘... 3 vaudi, 5 kaṭāha (with) 10 svok totalling fifteen, an upright panel, 4 cuspidors...’
(10) ‘The high lord of the Śivāśrama and the steñ ‘añ of Vnañ Kansā took three female nephews/nieces (who) were co-uterine (and) from the land of Kuti...’
(11) ‘These (items) constitute the endowment gong to the vrañ12 Our High Lord Śrī Cāmpeśvara each year.’
(12) ‘All (these) gifts of āśramas, cells, villages, ricelands, rents, slaves (and) objects... (all this) valuable property comprises the vrañ the royal gift.’
(13) ‘The steñ ‘añ Śivasoma and the steñ ‘añ Vāmaśiva are the ones who founded the Śivāśrama (and) set up the image therein.’
(14) ‘The village elders are the ones who declared under oath that the land of ‘Anin (was) uninhabited (and) outside (anyone)’s bounds’.
(15) ‘These individuals are ones who joined together to take all of these possessions as equal to the value of the land.’
(16) ‘These are the ones who went and claimed the land (as) a place on which to establish the vrañ the foundation.’
(17) ‘The ten Bhava., the ten Kṛṣṇa, the ten Rudraņī, the ten Ke Ni (?) the ten...te So (?) (and) the ten Sarasvatī are the ones who claimed the vrañ the royal favour...’
(18) ‘... the individuals who are settled on this land and on its gift of ricefields are ones who (shall) offer a sacrifice to Our High Lord on the twelfth days of each fortnight...’
(19) ‘... (they) declared in one voice that... the ten hyañ Vasanta and the loñ Ney of Vrañ Chpār were ones who had no family whatever...’
(20) ‘One hundred and 10 slaves (and) four helpers, —these are what (he) offered to the vrañ Our High Lord of the Śivalinga (and) presented to His Majesty Our High Lord Śrī Sūryavarman.’
(21) ‘Those same ricefields are what (they) gave to the vrañ Our High Lord of the Śivalinga and to the vrañ Our High Lord Śivapāda.’
(22) ‘... these slaves of the sanctuary and others,... the vrañ the tapasvin bhagavat pāda (and) the vrañ Our High Lord the Guru offered (them) on the occasion of (his) consecration of the image (and) enjoined me, named the vrañ the tapasvin Vidāyāspada, to make arrangements to offer (them) to the vrañ the Śivalinga...’
(23) ‘In the year 1035 of the Śaka era, when His Majesty Our High Lord Śrī Sūryavarmadeva—who was the vrañ the maternal grandchild of His Majesty Our High Lord Śrī Jayavarmadeva and of His Majesty Our High Lord Śrī Dharaņindrarvarmanevas—(began to) exercise the just kingship, (he) invited the bhagavat pāda Our High Lord the Guru Śrī Divākarapānīta to serve as the vrañ the guru, he (being) the one

12. In these close translations, vrañ is a noun usually but not always marking any divine or royal being or object, and functions as a headword with which the following NP is in apposition. (Note that the purpose of the closeness of the translations is to show the structure of the Khmer rather than the sense.)
to celebrate the king's consecration, (and) His Majesty Our High Lord made his preparations (and) learned all of the siddhānta...’

(24) ‘These were offered (to serve) as a vrah a royal good work.’
(25) ‘The paddy in these granaries (and) the yield of these fields are offered to the vrah Our High Lord Ekādaśamukha...’
(26) ‘... āṅgāsa vessels, vessels (in the form of) kettle baskets, kalpita baskets and khjēn, (and) vessels in which to keep (cooked) rice are also taken away together with sthāli, cēh (and) dlah.’
(27) ‘... westward (and) northwestward from Len Sthāpanā Sre to the reservoir..., (and) on to the outskirts of... (and) back northward to meet the vrah the roads (which) were acquired by exchange from Cak Svāy...’

(28) ‘These (lands) are assigned to the endowment of Our High Lord of Creation Śrī Vṛdeśvara.’
(29) ‘These lands, aforesaid, which vāp Amarānanda bought are what (he) offers to the sanctuary.

The first twelve of these new versions, together with my interpretation of the three examples with man—(20), (21) and (29)—seem plausible enough; but my restatement of examples (13) to (19), with syañ ta + VP, and of examples (22) to (28), with syañ + VP, seems less plausible at first glance. Having considered these two types for more years than I care to admit, however, I have come to believe that the difficulty lies not in the value I assign to syañ but in the circumstance that syañ forms part of two patterns of expression one of which seems to lie just beyond our comprehension. The seven examples with syañ ta + VP strike me as not especially exotic variations played upon the simple VP. Thus I suspect that example (13) does not mean precisely what it would mean in fluent English, but is a weak expansion of ‘The steň ṣā-nil Śivasoma and the steň ‘a-nil Vāmašiva founded the Śīvasama (and) set up the image therein.’ The seven examples with syañ + VP are sharply divided into two groups. The last five—syañ ti thvāy (24) ‘were offered’, syañ ti jvan (25) ‘are offered’, syañ ti yok dau (26) ‘are taken away’, syañ ti jau (27) ‘were acquired by exchange’, and syañ ti cām (28) ‘are assigned to’—seem quite admissible until it is remembered that my English equivalents would more naturally be expressed by ti thvāy, ti jvan, and so on, without syañ. These five cases, then, are as perplexing as the two examples of the remaining group, syañ codita (22) ‘enjoined’ and syañ thve (23) ‘made’. For all that, serial verb constructions are so widely used during all periods of the language for which we have documentation that, for the moment at least, I am unwilling to reject the hypothesis on the grounds that I cannot fathom these seven cases. It seems more prudent to allow that we are concerned here with a periphrastic construction the effect of which cannot yet be determined. This situation, it will be remembered, was alluded to in my first two paragraphs above.

Rather than leaving the matter here, however, I should, because of its
importance to our understanding of Old Khmer, attempt to account for the form and function of syañ. If its function is indeed copular, as I claim, how does it happen that the form itself suddenly appears in A.D. 895 and enjoys a life of nearly seven centuries, only to vanish into thin air? If the function it serves is an innovation, we may suppose that the form itself either has a source in the earlier lexicon or is a loan from some other language. I have not found any cognates of syañ in Mon or other Mon-Khmer languages and have, as I believe, considered all the possibilities outside the latter family. In fact, the only light thrown on the question comes from the claims of Aymoner and Pou. As has been explained, Aymoner opined that Angkorian syañ is the source of a modern ‘sin’, without specifying whether he meant modern siña ‘nearly’ or modern siña ‘to rest’. On the other hand, Pou has stated categorically that Middle Khmer syañ led to modern siña ‘nearly’. Whether we consider siña or siña, these claims are ones of which I was justifiably sceptical when they first came to my attention, since their authors nowhere troubled to explain the radical line of semantic development involved. In either case, the leap was one that I could not imagine. Yet there is a way of linking modern siña ‘nearly’ with modern siña ‘to rest’, and of linking both with Angkorian syañ—provided that a copular or quasi-copular function is assigned to the latter.

It can be pointed out, first of all, that the semantic range of modern siña is exceedingly narrow: if dictionaries define it as more than ‘nearly, almost’, it is only to ring the changes on this same idea. This is enough to suggest that the modern meaning is a restriction of some broader one. What is more, forms having only adverbial senses in Khmer are rare. This circumstance permits us to suppose that the adverbial sense of siña represents a reduction from a more general verbal idea. In attempting to reconcile siña and siña therefore, we may posit an earlier transitive meaning for siña ‘to be near to, just short of’.

As to modern siña ‘to rest’, this form is attested once in pre-Angkorian (K.44B: 10) with the sense of ‘to dwell in’. In Angkorian it occurs thirty-three times, most often with the meaning ‘to officiate’ but also four times with the meaning ‘to dwell in’ (K.754:13; K.413/IV: 12; K.56C: 37; K.70: 16), and once with the meaning ‘to depend on’ (K.369: 6,7). It persisted through Middle Khmer and into the modern language, where its sense is restricted to ‘(of monks) to sleep’ and ‘(of magicians) to perform (a rite)’. The Middle Khmer form is unquestionably the source of Thai /siŋ/ ‘to stay, enter and inhabit, possess, (of spirits) haunt’, which tells us much about the range of the Old and Middle Khmer forms. These attested meanings are all we need to show that the idea of ‘nearly’ represented by modern siña /sɨn/ [svŋ] is an entirely orthographic specialisation of the Old and Middle Khmer verbal idea dimly recognised in modern siña /sɨŋ/ [svŋ] as defined above. This recognition, in turn, forces upon us the insight that Angkorian copular syañ is probably a doublet of Angkorian sin /siŋ/, as defined above, and that all of the forms in question here make
The form syan in Angkorian Khmer

up a fairly compact semantic cluster which can be set up as:

1. (intr.) to stand, hold still, be at rest;
   (a) to rest, lie; to repose, sleep;
   (b) to rest, remain, continue;
   (c) to be inherent or present; to exist, be.

2. (tr.) to remain in or at, inhabit; to dwell in;
   (a) to lie or reside in, be in the presence of, be near to;
   (b) to consist of, comprise, constitute;
   (c) to be present at, preside over, officiate at; to perform or
      celebrate (rite).

The meaning of Angkorian sin and of the single occurrence of pre-
Angkorian sin having been given above, it is not unreasonable to suppose
that the syan doublet (if such it is) of Angkorian sin was restricted to the
remaining semantic field. All of the data collected show no overlap
between Angkorian sin and syan and suggest, rather, that the latter was
narrowly limited to the intransitive sense of 'to remain, be' and to the
transitive sense of 'to consist of, comprise'.

It is hardly necessary to add that we cannot at this late date know the
genesis of the syan doublet of Angkorian sin. The correspondence
between pre-Angkorian and Angkorian sin and what we may now
represent as modern sin ~ sin is normal, while that between pre-Angkorian
sin, Angkorian syan, and modern sin ~ sin is seen in only a handful of
cases—most notably in Angkorian tyañ /dían/ : modern tīna /dīn/ 'to
know' and Angkorian yat /qiát/ : modern it /qāt/ 'to lack'. If the doublet
relationship is tenable, Angkorian syan is therefore short /sían/ or,
possibly, /suan/. That the hypothesis of a doublet relationship explains so
much overrides, as I believe, the apparent impossibility of our ever
knowing how and why these doublets arose.

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