

A MINOR KHMER ETHICAL TEXT OF EARLY DATE

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In early April 1975 I had the privilege of reading with my learned teacher and colleague Saveros Pou an obscure cpā'pa /cbap/¹ codex of which I had obtained a microfilm copy some years before from the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. Because of its marginal literary interest Dr Pou and I do not intend to include this text in the series of studies on the cpā'pa genre which we are publishing in the *Bulletin de l'Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient*.² Because it is short, early, and valuable on linguistic and philological grounds I offer it here as an example of a minor cpā'pa which will improve our understanding of the genre as a whole and throw into relief the strengths and beauties of the better-known texts in the aforesaid series.

The work in question is an anonymous, undated Middle Khmer cpā'pa srī /cbap srəəj/ or code of conduct for young women. Item 164 in the catalogue of Au Chhieng,³ it consists of a bundle of eight ōla disposed as follows: 1a, top cover, bearing the title neḥ khsatrā cpāpa srīya⁴ 'This the treatise *Precepts*

¹Khmer forms are here cited primarily in a strict Indianist transliteration, interpreted wherever warranted by phonemic transcription.

²See Saveros Pou & Philip N. Jenner, "Les cpāp' ou 'codes de conduite' khmers. I: Cpāp' kerti kāl," in *BEFEO*, LXII (1975): 369-94, and "Les cpāp' ou 'codes de conduite' khmers. II: Cpāp' prus," in *BEFEO*, LXIII (1976): 313-50. The Cpāp' kūn cau is due to appear shortly and the Cpāp' rājaneti is in press.

³Au Chhieng, *Catalogue du fonds khmer*. Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Manuscrits (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1953), 103. The codex bears the old accession numbers *Indochinois* 136 and *Camb.* 58.

⁴Modern neḥ sātrā cpā'pa srī.

for *Womenfolk*'; 1b and 2a, blank; 2b, unnumbered, side 1 of text; 3a, blank; 3b, unnumbered, side 3 [sic] of text; 4a, numbered 1, side 2 of text; 4b, unnumbered, side 5 of text; 5a, numbered 2, side 4 of text; 5b, unnumbered, side 7 of text; 6a, numbered 3, side 6 of text; 6b, blank; 7a, numbered 4, side 8 of text and end; 7b, blank; 8ab, lower cover. As Au Chhieng notes, the size of the *ōla* is 56.5 x 5.5 centimeters and there are five lines on each *ōla* of text. The total number of lines is thirty-five.

With a wordcount of only 922, the work is organized into thirty-eight strophes in the *kākagati* meter. This calls for seven verses of four syllables each and a rhyme scheme as follows:

a.	x	x	x	1	
b.	x	x	x	1	
c.	x	x	x	2	← g4 in preceding
d.	x	x	x	(3)	
e.	x	(3)	x	2	
f.	x	x	x	2	
g.	x	x	x	4	→ c4 in next

In the present text the option of having the *de* rhyme is exercised in all but four cases (strophes 1, 22, 23, 31), though it must be conceded that three *de* rhymes involving short /a/ are of questionable authenticity: *cita* : *ktāta* in 17, *mcāsa* : *khusa* in 25, and *cita* : *prayāta* in 32. Other *de* rhymes which may appear dubious are commonly admitted in the metrical compositions of this period: *duka* : 'ā *kraka* in 9, *kūna* : *sīwna* in 10, the two /-l/ : /-r/ rhymes in 19 and 21,⁵ and the four -ī : -ai rhymes in 8, 11, 12 and 14.⁶

⁵See my "The Final Liquids of Middle Khmer," in *ZPSK*, 28 (1975).5/6: 599-609.

⁶See my "The Value of *au* and *ai* in Middle Khmer," in *South-East Asian Linguistic Studies*, [Vol. 1], edited by Nguyen Dang Liem, published as *Pacific Linguistics*, Series C - No. 31: 157-73, and "The Value of *ī*, *i*, *ū* and *u* in Middle Khmer," in *South-*

As is usually the case with Middle Khmer manuscript literature, the obligatory rhyme pattern imposed by the meter has been broken here and there, ostensibly by successive copyists bent on improving or clarifying the original text. These discrepancies are mentioned in my notes and, where it has seemed safe to do so, corrected in the text given here. These textual changes on grounds of rhyme are limited to five: strophe 2a, *mtāya stāpa* > *stāpa mtāya*; 7g, *pāta 'antaṛāy* > *'antaṛāya pāta*; 22g, *ita lākkha* > *ita lākkhāna*; 24g, *smæra mtāya* > *smæra khlwna*; and 32c, *tēna tām* > *tēna māna*.

Thus restored, the text shows a rhyme factor⁷ of 46.9%, which locates it between the earlier *Cpā'pa rājaneti* (47.2%) and the later *Cpā'pa krama* (45.4%). As far as subsequent phonological development enables us to say, therefore, the original text from which the present manuscript derives was composed in the mid-17th century if not before.

Regarding the transliterated text a word of explanation may be helpful to readers who have had no previous exposure to the manuscripts of this period. As far as I am aware, no one has ever taken the trouble to point out that certain of the conjunct consonant allographs of modern Khmer had two distinct functions in Middle Khmer. One of these, exactly as in the modern language, was to combine with syllabic consonant symbols to form initial and final ligatures (digraphs). The other, which did not finally pass out of usage until the early decades of this century, was to mark final consonants minus the inherent vowel. Presumably a Cambodian innovation, this function appears to have developed in response to the gradual disappear-

East Asian Linguistic Studies, Vol. 2, edited by Nguyen Dang Liem, published as *Pacific Linguistics*, Series C - No. 42: 39-72.

⁷For this term, see my "The Relative Dating of Some Khmer *Cpā'pa*," in *Austroasiatic Studies*. Oceanic Linguistics Special Publication No. 13 (Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1976), II: 693-710.

ance of the *virāma*, a process which has not to my knowledge been investigated either in Old Khmer or in Middle Khmer and which hence cannot be dated. Since the orthography of the Middle Khmer period was fluid, the alternative of using conjunct allographs in syllable-final position was exercised haphazardly. In the present text it is confined to the symbols for *ña*, *da*, *ma*, *ya*, and *sa*. Thus we find such orthographic forms as *dāṃṇi* /daṅ > taṅ/ (modern *dāṃña* /teəṅ/) 'all', *pād* /bat/ (modern *pā'ta* /bat/) 'to be lost', *nāṃm* or *nāmma* /nam/ (modern *nām* /noəm/) 'to lead', *mtāy* /mdaaj/ (modern *mtāya* /mdaaj/) 'mother', and *is* /qih/ (modern 'a'sa /qah/) 'to be spent'.⁸

Works belonging to the *cpā'pa* genre are of more than linguistic or literary interest: their object is the expression of those ethical and social standards which individual Khmer poets have considered worthy of transmission in this form. Their utilitarian intent is successful to whatever degree the values they treat are made attractive by art. Flights of poetic imagination in the present text, it seems fair to say, are limited to strophes 18, 19, 30, 31 and 32 and to a few felicitous images as in 11g.

The subject matter of this text can be categorized as a preamble (strophes 1 and 2) stressing the difficulty of living up to the highest ideals; miscellaneous precepts ranging from the specific to the general and from the concrete to the abstract; a medial exhortation (23-4) to observe the code, followed by praise of its precepts (28) on the basis of their antiquity; and terminal reaffirmations (32-5) of the worth of the code. The miscellaneous precepts forming the main body of the text have to do with (a) respect for one's husband (3, 10, 20-22), (b) devotion to duty as a homemaker (6, 31), illustrated by the parable of the fish and water (18-19), with special em-

⁸Cf. such nonpermissible *devanāgarī* forms as नति, इस्.

phasis on the safeguarding of one's property (7, 11, 14, 29), (c) the just treatment of servants (15, 25-6), (d) the cultivation of virtue, notably kindness and generosity (10), modesty (8-9, 22), and mental alertness (27), together with self-discipline (4-5, 17), (e) the avoidance of evil (12), including hypocrisy (17) and arrogance (30), (f) pride in being a woman (33), (g) observance of Buddhist teachings (16), and (h) perseverance in general self-improvement (13). Students of Asian patterns of behavior will note the prohibitions against loud laughter (8) and "staring" (22), that is, looking directly into the eyes of one's interlocutor. It will also be observed that many of these injunctions are attended by references to the good (10, 12) or evil (1-3, 6-9, 17, 25, 33-4) consequences of compliance or noncompliance. The tone of the text, unlike certain others of its kind, is more positive than negative: while *kum* 'do not' and *kum oy* 'let not' occur in seventeen strophes (45%) in mostly short prohibitions, twenty strophes (53%) are entirely affirmative.

My translation is meant to serve as a close guide to the Khmer text, and is not to be understood as having any artistic pretensions. Because of its literality I have elected not to encumber it with brackets around English words having no counterpart in the text. I have on the other hand bracketed a few phrases interpolated to suggest the relationship between successive verses or strophes.

neh padd kākkti

1. kūṇṇey mātrāra / cpāpa srīya neh ṇāra / kra kraiy kan-
laṇa / nāṇa yaka traciēka / ona stāpa traṇa raṇa / kuṇṇ nāṇa
leṇa laṇa / stāpa mtāy pratova //
2. kūna bova stāpa mtāya / cpāpa srīya mina ṇṇāya / nāṇa
yaka ḍuka nova / knuṇa 'aṇa 'ātmāha / sṇwna bhṇāra srīya bova /
kuṇṇ oy māna sova / māṇa khlwna kūna srīya //
3. ora kūna srīya bova / stāpa mtāya pratova / pēra nāṇa
māna phtīya / kuṇṇ khiṇa poka poḥ / dratoḥ sratīy / niṇa kēta
'apriya / twca tala nāṇa ṇāra //
4. kūṇṇey cpāpa srīya / pēra niṇa sratīy / khlāmṇa beka būṇ
jāra / doḥ niṇa kreva krodha / bhīrodha ktīya ṇāra / gīta knuṇa
cintāra / ona 'aṇa serīsāra //
5. prām bīra hēya guna / guna gita oy tiṇa / knuṇa cita
sratīy / oy guna oy gita / junjiṇa gwra guna / gwra gita oy
dhṇuna x oy samm sammatīy //
6. kūṇṇey mwa ṇā / doḥ ththāna grīḥhāra / nova jāra pra-
kratīy / kuṇṇ tēra dhṇuna jēna / jāna tēna dāmṇi tīy / lēra phdaḥ
nāṇa srīya / 'ābbha ita lakkiṇā //
7. doḥ lṇāca pralupa / riēpa oy sabva grupa / rapasa drāb-
bha jāra / kuṇṇ mēla paṇṇāṇma / pracāṇma gnī gnāra / drābbha
dhuna noḥ ṇāra / niṇa 'antaṇāy pāta //

This the *kākagati* meter

1. O my child, these rules / and precepts for womankind / are most difficult.¹ / Let you give ear, / humbly heed, and take them unto yourself.² / Let you be not inattentive,³ / but hear me as I teach.

2. Let my youngest heed me;⁴ / precepts for womenfolk are not easy, / Let you take and keep them / within the person,⁵ / well-loved, of my last-born daughter. / Let there be no blemish / unto my daughter's person.

3. O youngest daughter, / hear me as I teach: / When you have a husband, / be not cross or rude / or try to break your bonds or speak ill of him; / for you will breed contempt / which reflects back on yourself.

4. O my child, a precept for womankind: / if you would speak,⁶ / it is unseemly to be too loud;⁷ / if you would rage / and rant over matters, / consider them in your thoughts, / with head and body bowed.⁸

5. Seven times⁹ / let you ponder until you know / in your heart what it is you say; / let you ponder, let you think / and weigh; it is well to ponder, / it is well to think so that grave, so that seemly, be your speech.

6. O my only child, / even if the house¹⁰ / wherein you live be of the common kind, / move not with heavy feet:¹¹ / tread¹² lightly along the ground / and in your home, / lest they lack luster and distinction.¹³

7. If it is late afternoon or dusk, / see to it that all / your chattels are safe; / do not regard them indifferently / or wait for others [to care for them], / [for if you do,] your wealth / will be damaged or lost.¹⁴

8. ora kūna bova mtāya / kuṃ sēca k'āka k'āy / pralupa
'ādrāttha / saṃmreka rājjasīy / noḥ naiy būṃ ghlāta / cañraiya
tala 'āttha / khlwna nāna jā srīya //

9. ora kūna sañsāra / 'aṅgūya māta dhvāra / dhvø kāra iy
iy / niña kœta dos duka / 'ā kraka 'apriya / khusa niña cpāpa
srīya / thay thoka sakkha yusa //

10. kūṅœy swstīya / suka saṃmrīdhdhīy / niña kœta khbaña
khbasa / bīy nāna jā kūna / srīya snwna sapparasa / paṃbeña
sakkha yusa / mcāsa nāna jā srīya //

11. kūna bova nāna cāṃm / bāka beja pantāmma / pantepa hā-
radaiy / doḥ drābbha dhuna dhāna / mena māna taṃṭaiya / rāksāra
sabva thñaiya / jāra trīya snēra muka //

12. lokkīy neḥ naiy / gey niña sratīy / caṃmroena bara
suka / prās lēna cañraiya / nova bhaiy lēna duka / bova mtāya
pāna suka / saṃpāta swggāra //

13. kūna bova mtāya phtāmma / bāka beja nāna cāṃm / toy
pada gāthāra / mtāya niña pratova / kūna bova būṃñāra / oy
nāna pāna jāra / ddhamma dœbva sraṅuka //

14. ora kūna srīya bova / stāpa mtāya pratova / oy pāna
swra suka / drābbha guña tpita srīya / ceḥ saṃcaiy duka / māna

8. O my youngest child, / laugh not boisterously / at dusk
or in deep of night,¹⁵ / [for if you do] the *rājasimha*'s roar /
will not be far away / and will bring calamity to the weal / of
yourself as a woman.

9. O beloved¹⁶ child, / if you sit beside your door / to
do any chore soever, / you will beget sin and woe / and be low
and contemptible, / going contrary to the precept for women /
and debasing your station.

10. O my child, weal, / contentment and prosperity / shall
rise to great heights / above you if you are a maid / who is
loving and kind / and who lives up to the station / of your
husband.¹⁷

11. My last-born child, let you bear in mind / these words
prescribed / and enjoined by my heart: / if your goods and
chattels / be indeed of high value, / safeguard them constant-
ly, / as the fish loves [its own reflected] face.¹⁸

12. Of this world / the folk would say: / to increase bles-
sings and contentment / quit that which is hurtful / and fear-
some, quit [that which causes] woe; / let my last-born child
achieve contentment, / wealth, and heaven.

13. Last-born child, I prescribe / words for you to commit
to memory / in verses and strophes; / I would teach / my well-
loved youngest / how to come to be of good estate / and high
rank, and thereby be happy.

14. O my last-born daughter, / hear me as I teach you /
how to achieve heaven's bliss:¹⁹ / being a woman, hold fast to

phdaḥ sraṇuka / tpita lākkha sriya jāra //

15. ora kūna ūtaṃma / kuṃ jera bola khñuṃma / crēna taṇa
crēna grāra / sina sima duka yaka / vāra maka jāra gnāra /
nāna 'ata oy vāra / tām cpāpa pūrāna //

16. neḥ ēna mtāya phtāṃma / kūna bova nāna cāṃm / oy nāna
ciēma prāna / toya dharmma braḥ buddha / caṃhuta dūnamāna /
bita bīy pūrāna / jāta jāra gāthāra //

17. pēra pāna jā dhamma / manusa phaṇa kosa kuṃ / toya
puna loka jāra / nāna kuṃ dhvvera cita / khiṇa ktāta phtāsāra /
manusa phaṇa rwña rāra / ra'āra dīy daiy //

18. nāñney guṅgāra / is dāṃṇi mechchāra / biṇa bāka pra-
sraiya / tēra biṇa guṅgāra / lgika ṇāra ktova kraiy / triya
phaṇa maka khsaiya / juna jāta jārāra //

19. kūna mahā jā dika / kūṇey pēra lgika / prēra ktova
viṇa ṇāra / bita būm ta mūla / papūra mechchāra / būm hova guṅ-
gāra / sūna suṇa jāra trēya //

20. ora kūna bīysīy / pēra nāna māna phtīya / guṃteṇa
nāñney / paṃmrera pranipāttha / prayāta jā trēya / kuṃ prahēsa
lēy / krēṇa khusa cpāpa sriya //

your wealth, / know how to save and lay it aside / and maintain
a cozy home, / for this is the mark of a good woman.

15. O most excellent child,²⁰ / rebuke not your servants /
with excessive frequency;²¹ / rather, bide your time and / make
them part of your household;²² let you be indulgent toward
them, / in keeping with the precepts of yore.

16. This which I enjoin, / youngest child, do you bear in
mind: / let you be conscious of yourself²³ / and follow the
dharma of the Buddha, / which is most effective in its teach-
ings, / true since ancient times, / and exists in the form of
gāthā.²⁴

17. When they achieve high station / folk make much noise
/ as they ape the good works of their betters;²⁵ / let you give
no admittance to feelings / of hot anger or execration, / for
others will shrink and draw back / and be frightened off, each
in his own way.

18. O young lady, in water / do all manner of fish / take
refuge and asylum; / on water alone do they depend; / and if it
be very warm, / they grow numerous²⁶ / and people the water.²⁷

19. For fry, water is most excellent;²⁸ / but if, O my
child, / it does [not] wax warm, / the fish therein do not /
come together and multiply / and the water, empty and dark,²⁹ /
cannot be said to be a refuge.

20. O my dearest child, / when you have a husband / and
lord, O young lady, / let you humbly serve / and care for him
as your refuge; / do not neglect him ever, / lest you break the
precepts for womankind.

21. neḥ ēna jā 'āta / oy nāna saivāta / pamrera phtīya
sīy / pera niña jwpa kāla / 'āhāra camṇīy / oy chīy camṇīy /
niña phtīya noḥ nāra //

22. kuṃ prēra muka traña / pañjhara juṅguña / lēna spaiy
bīy smāra / noḥ hova būṃ koṭṭha / gaṃmtēna kraṣāra / toy cpāpa
loka thāra / srīya ita lākkhāna //

23. cpāpa neḥ prabaiy / oy kūna mās thlaiya / cēna cāṃm
oy pāna / kūna bova mās mtāy / oy nāna cāṃm prāna / duka jāra
dūnmāna / pratova 'ātmāra //

24. cpāpa neḥ prabaiy / oy kūna mās thlaiya / cēna cāṃm
rāksāra / smēra khlwna mtāya nova / graña bova būṃniāra / oy
sīwna rāksāra / duka nova smēra khlwna //

25. khñuṃma prusa khñuṃma srīya / nāna dēna sratīy / oy
lmama kūna sīwna / kuṃ 'āna jā mcāsa / prera khusa niña kpwna /
gey sēca srīya sīwna / tēḥ tiēla nindāra //

26. kūṃcēya r̄ khñuṃma / prusa srīya kuṃ khamma / prera
begya nās nāra / oy tiña knuña cita / kumṇita prera vāra / doḥ
kāca doḥ jāra / nāna mēla oy stēna //

27. oy cāṃm oy cēḥ / oy rwsa riēna rīḥ / raka riēna tāka
tēna / oy gita junjiña / ruṃbiña oy jhveña / toy cpāpa nēḥ ēna

21. In this above all else / let you do your best: / to
serve your honored husband.³⁰ / And if you would be with him at
/ mealtimes,³¹ / let you take your food / with your husband.

22. Direct not your gaze³² straight forward, / or allow
your knees to stand upright,³³ / or let your shawl³⁴ fall from
your shoulder. / These things are called being disrespectful to
/ your lord,³⁵ / and in the codes sages brand / [such a] woman
as devoid of quality.³⁶

23. Let my dear and darling child³⁷ / keep these estima-
ble precepts / clear and well in mind. / My treasured last-born
child, / let you safeguard yourself / and deem them as instruc-
tion / which teaches you.

24. Let my dear and darling child³⁷ / keep these estimable
precepts / clear in mind and guard them / as tantamount to my-
self continuing / to shield my cherished youngest. / Let you
care for and keep them / and deem them equivalent to myself.³⁸

25. Male and female servitors / let you animate³⁹ by / a
just degree of admonition. Dear child, / flaunt not the fact
that you are mistress / by using them in violation of the trea-
tises;⁴⁰ / for folk will laugh at my dear girl / and reproach
her.⁴¹

26. O my child, as to your servitors, / male and female,⁴²
endeavor not / to use them overmuch; / let you know in your
heart and mind how to employ them, / and let you observe close-
ly⁴³ / whether they be fit or unfit.⁴⁴

27. Let you watch, let you know, / let you be keen to
learn and reflect / and seek to be orderly.⁴⁵ / Let you think

/ prasæra sobhāra //

28. kūṇṇey cpāpa sriya / mēna bita bīysīy / breña bridha
'attitāra / loka duka jāra cpāpa / santāpa 'ātmāra / naiy nāna
sñwna bhñāra / oy cām̄m sabva thñaiya //

29. kūṇṇey tam̄ineka / pæra niña cūla teka / dhværa muka oy
srāy / posa is būka brēra / oy thēra sabva sāy / kuṇṇ oy bāy
ññāy / 'aṇa 'ā nindāra //

30. kuṇṇ tæra dhñuna jæna / nāna kroka toḥ læna / hœy jera
phtāssāra / duka smæra jhæra ddham̄ma / ralumma læra gnāra /
drābbha dhuna noḥ ṇāra / niña pād khcāta khcāya //

31. lum̄manova noḥ ṇāra / tūca kala grīḥhāra / brīksāra
dām̄ñ hlāy / māna phlēra māna phkāra / braḥ 'adita sabva sāy /
rum̄majwla rwsa rāy / khcāta khcāy sabva sdhāna //

32. kūṇṇey rīy cpāpa / 'am̄bæra sūrabhābbha / noḥ vāra tēna
māna / pīy tūca sramola / 'andola tām̄ prāna / būṇṇ tēla jiæsa
pāna / traña ktīya sala vala //

33. kūṇṇey dham̄tāra / jāra sriya noḥ mahāra / prasæra kan-
laña / cām̄m caña knuña cita / prayāta khlwna hoña / kuṇṇ oy māna
māna / mandila 'ā srūva //

and reason, / let you ponder until things are clear; / and follow this very code, / which is noble and resplendent.

28. O my child, these precepts for women / are truly pre-eminent / and of high antiquity.⁴⁶ / Sages have preserved them in the form of codes / for the instruction of the Self / of dear, beloved you; / let you remember them always.⁴⁷

29. O my child, into your sleeping-place / if you would go to repose, / make your countenance serene,⁴⁸ / [as you might] smooth out a silken mattress. / Let you observe all around you⁴⁹ / without being remiss / and thereby sustaining reproach.

30. Move not with heavy feet⁵⁰ / or, when you have gotten up and out, scold and curse;⁵¹ / deem this as being like unto a great tree / which falls down upon its fellows, / whereby wealth and worth / are lost and dissipated.

31. If your dwelling-place / be low,⁵² raise it up:⁵³ / trees of every kind / bear fruit and flowers, / the sun shines in all directions,⁵⁴ / while [the wind] stirs pleasantly / and spreads everywhere.

32. O my child, these precepts / for goodly conduct⁵⁵ / are ever with you,⁵⁶ / like unto the shadow / moving along behind your body: / never can you escape / its endless turning.⁵⁷

33. O my child, by the *dharma*⁵⁸ / being a woman is a most / excellent thing.⁵⁹ / Keep [this fact] firmly in mind / and safeguard yourself: / let there be no unsightly / stain or blemish.

34. dhamtāra jāra srīya / ceṇa ceḥ sratīy / kāna cpāpa
duka nova / krēṇa c'eḥ krēṇa c'āpa / kēṭṭha pāpa maka trūva /
naruka jrāmma jrova / būm lēṇa lœy ṇāra //

35. māna tēra cpāpa nēḥ / is 'āra tūcneḥ / oy kūna bova
graṇa / oy thēra oy dāmma / oy cāmm jā mtaṇa / 'ata ona traṇa
raṇa / sabva thṇaiya prakratīy //

36. kuṃ oy māna teca / kuṃ oy māna bhleca / tala mūy rā-
triya / cpāpa neḥ jā sdhāna / dūnmāna indriya / sabva 'aṇa 'āt-
māra / jāra nicakāla hoṇa //

37. kūna bova mtāyœy / mtāya sota cāsa hœy / ita 'naka
ṇāra snaṇa / pœra khlwna mtāy nova / graṇa bova būmṇāra /
sṇwœy rāksāra / bāka mtāy phtāmma hoṇa //

38. mtāy phtāmma kūna bova / bīy thṇaiy neḥ dova / cūla
nāṇa rāksāra / bāka mtāy kuṃ bhleca / sūreca ūvāra- / -dāna
nova prakāra / mleḥ ēṇa hoṇa // //

34. By the *dharma*⁵⁸ being a woman, / know well how to cite
/ and follow the precepts with fixed resolve, / lest you be in
bad odor / or beget sin and come to merit / the deep Hell of
Boiling Mud / for ever and aye.

35. There are hence only these precepts / which make up
the whole of your wealth.⁶⁰ / Let my youngest child keep them;
let you tend them well, let you commit them to memory for all
time, / being patient, humble and receptive⁶¹ / each day as a
matter of course.

36. And let there be no break, / let there be no forget-
ting / for even a single night: / this code is a school⁶² /
which trains the faculties of each and every one⁶³ / at all
times.

37. O my last-born child, / what is more, I am now grown
old / and there is no one to take my place. / If my presence is
to still / watch over my beloved youngest,⁶⁴ / O my darling,
keep⁶⁴ / the words which I enjoin.⁶⁵

38. [Herewith] I instruct my youngest child: / from this
day forward / do you keep / my words and not forget them. /
Ended⁶⁶ are my instruction- / -giving⁶⁷ and my exposition / in
this wise.

NOTES

¹The poet presumably means to suggest at once "hard to understand" and "hard to put into practice." The idea is echoed in 2b.

²The compound *traña raña* /trɔŋ rɔŋ > traŋ rɔŋ/ is not found in modern dictionaries. The prior member ('to be clear; to clarify, filter') here has the sense of 'to strain data through the senses, take in, absorb'; the latter member ('to support from below') adds the notion of 'to take up, accept'. Joseph Guesdon, *Dictionnaire cambodgien-français* (Paris: Plon, 1930), I: 699b, lists it in the form *traña řaña* /traŋ raŋ/ and hazards the gloss 'recevoir ce qui tombe d'en haut', which is in truth quite good. The thought reappears in 2cd. See also 35f.

³*leña laña* /leeŋ lɔŋ > léeŋ lɔŋ/ 'to trifle, dally; to be trifling, frivolous'.

⁴The original reads: *kūna bova mtāya stāpa*. Verses a and b must rhyme.

⁵Modern 'aṅga 'ātmā.

⁶*Sraṭī* /srɔḏii > srɔḏəej/ connotes speaking ill of someone. Between c and d the original has one superfluous verse: *doḥ niña sratīy*.

⁷*Khlāmña* /klaŋ/ 'strong, forceful' connotes both 'loud' and 'harsh', the ambiguity being no doubt deliberate.

⁸Modern *ona 'aṅga sirī* /qoon qɔŋ seerii > qaaon qɔŋ sèe-rèej/ (rhyming with *sratīy* in 5c), of which the last member would be a poetic expansion of *sira* /sir > sèer/ 'head' or variants *sira(sa)*, *sirsa*, *sir(sa)*, and *sera*. The orthography *serī-sāra* shows that the copyist was unmindful of the syllable count as well as the rhyme.

⁹Where I give *prām bīra* the original has the numeral 7. The strophe is badly garbled. In addition to the fact that *prām bīra hœy guna* makes no sense, *guna* (modern *ga'na* /kun/ 'to observe, scrutinize') fails to rhyme with *ṭña* /ɔŋ > ðyŋ/ in b. *Sraṭī* in c, moreover, fails to rhyme with *guna* and *dñiuna* in e and f.

¹⁰Modern *ṭhāna grīhā* /thaan krýhíiə/, < Pāli *ṭhāna* (cf. Sanskrit *sthāna*) 'place, stead' + Sanskrit *gr̥ha* (cf. Pāli *geha*) 'house, home'.

¹¹Cf. 30a, where the sense is more concrete.

¹²Where I have *jāna* (modern *jā'na* /coən/ 'to step on') the original has *jāña*. The allusion is not to stomping about in a

rickety shack but to tripping about the house and grounds with a certain enthusiasm for one's chores.

¹³A closer rendering of this verse would be: "...which [might otherwise] be dulled and devoid of good qualities." The form 'ābbha corresponds to modern 'ā'pa /qap/ 'to dim, darken; to besmirch, sully'.

¹⁴The original reads: niña pāta 'antaṛāy, which fails to rhyme with 8cef.

¹⁵Modern 'adhrātra, a hybrid form reflecting Pāli *addharat-tā* as well as Sanskrit *ardharātra* 'midnight'.

¹⁶Pāli *saṅsāra* 'transmigration' takes on in Middle Khmer the derivative idea of 'that which binds one to worldly existence: fetter', hence anything held dear.

¹⁷More literally: "...who fulfills the status (rank and honor) of the lord of you who are a woman."

¹⁸This last verse is admittedly problematic. I read it as modern *jā trī sne(ha) mukha*, with the suggested reflection being on the underside of the water's surface. A possibility pointed out by S. Pou is that *snēra* may represent **snera*, a dialectal allomorph of modern *chnera* /cnèer/, in which case the sense would be: "...as a fish [hugs] the bank before it."

¹⁹Again the interpretation is conjectural. S. Pou takes this verse as modern *oy pāna swra sukha* '...that you cross over to contentment,' emphasizing *swra* /sùuær/ 'to inch forward, advance cautiously along a narrow way'. I read it as *oy pāna swrga sukha* '...that you attain heaven and contentment' or, better yet, *oy pāna swrgasukha* '...that you attain heaven's contentment', with the last two items bound into a neo-Indic compound.

²⁰Note the questionable rhyme between *uttama* /qutd̥əm > qut-dam/ 'highest' and *khñuṃ* /kɲum > kɲom/ 'slave, servant' in *b*.

²¹Literally, "many times, [on] many occasions."

²²Literally, "...bring them into the group."

²³*Ciəma* /ciiəm/, not listed in modern dictionaries, is possibly an allomorph of *cām* /cam/ 'to watch', and means 'to be aware, conscious, alert'. *Prāṇa* /praan/ 'body, person; self' is < Sanskrit *prāṇa* 'life breath, life, vitality, vigor; spirit, soul', and is here probably to be taken in its broadest sense.

²⁴The reference is to the Pāli texts, metrical and otherwise.

²⁵A closer rendering would be: "...in following the *puṇya* (merit or meritorious actions) of righteous folk," though it is uncertain whether *loka* /look > lóok/ should be taken as 'persons of quality' or as 'sages'.

²⁶Khsāya /ksaaj/, a derivative of sāya /saaj/ 'to scatter, spread', in modern Khmer means 'to be scattered in bits or particles; to be loose, granular'; at this stage of the language it meant 'to be widespread, prevalent'.

²⁷I interpret this verse as janajāti jalā, with the latter item a metrical expansion of jala /jɔl > cul/ 'water'.

²⁸This strophe appears to be garbled; my translation is hence conjectural. It must at least be presumed that a negation marker has been lost in c.

²⁹In this context it seems best to take sūnya suña, now 'pitch-black', word by word.

³⁰The context may well suggest that sīy, as elsewhere in this text, is modern sī /sii/ 'to eat'. However, ptī sī /pdəej səej/ 'husband' is well attested as a compound, being even mentioned by the *Vacanānukrama khmēra* (Phnom-Penh: Institut Boudhique, 1967), I: 636b, sv ptī; see also Guesdon, op.cit., II: 1748b, sv sīy. S. Pou identifies the latter with Old Khmer sī /sii/ 'man, male'; see her "Note on Words for Male and Female in Old Khmer and Modern Khmer," in *Austroasiatic Studies*. Oceanic Linguistics Special Publication No. 13 (Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1976), II: 764.

³¹More literally: "...times for sustenance and food."

³²Literally: "Do not turn your face..."

³³The poet alludes to sitting on a flat surface with one's knees drawn up close to the body, thus risking indecent exposure.

³⁴Old Khmer spai /sbəj/ and modern spai /sbaj/, the old-fashioned shawl worn by women as an upper garment, passed across the breast, thrown over the left shoulder, and allowed to hang down at the back.

³⁵In modern orthography, gamtēna kraṭā /kumdaaɛŋ kralaa/ 'lord of the court', an archaic elegant term for husband.

³⁶Where I have lākkhāna (modern lakkhāna /leəkkhaan/, a metrical expansion of lakka(ṇa) /leək/) the original has lā-kha /lak > leək/, which fails to rhyme with pāna /baan > baan/ in 23c. My amendment raising the syllable-count to five, I go a step further and delete a superfluous hova (modern hau /haw/ 'to call') before sriya.

³⁷The translation reorders verses abc.

³⁸Where I have khlwna /kluuən > klūuən/ 'self' the original has mtāya /mdaaj > mdaaj/ 'mother', which fails to rhyme with snwna /sqnuən > sqūuən/ in 25c. In view of 24d, the meaning is still clear.

³⁹The orthographic form dæna /dəən > tēən/, written very

clear in the manuscript, is almost certainly a variant of modern *tæna* /tæən > taaən/ 'to awaken', now used intransitively of royalty and clergy. Cf. *kratæna* /krətæən > krataaən/ 'to be vigorous; to be eager, zealous' and also *tiæna* /týyən/ 'to urge on, press'. I take *dæna sratīy* as 'to incite by speaking (sharply) to', on the ground that *sraṭī* often takes on a fault-finding tone.

⁴⁰The verse is ambiguous. Other likely renderings are: "...or use them in ways contrary to standards" and "...or order them to violate established principles." I take *kpwna* to refer to any precepts or codes of conduct.

⁴¹Modern *tiḥ ṭiəla* /təh d̄iəl/ 'to blame' + 'to abuse' is a loose-knit compound equivalent to 'to take to task, find fault with, denounce'; it is here amplified or glossed by Indic *nindā* /nint̄iə/ 'to rebuke'.

⁴²This is one of the few polar compounds I have encountered in a free environment (i.e., one not dictated by metrical requirements) in which *male* precedes *female*; the case is otherwise in 25a. See my "A Possible Case of Cosmological Gender in Khmer," in *Austroasiatic Studies*, II: 711-40.

⁴³The translation transposes verses *f* and *g*.

⁴⁴*Kāca* /kaac/ 'to be bad' encompasses the ideas of being wicked, ill-natured, dangerous, indolent, and incompetent; *jā* /ʃaa > cíiə/ 'to be good' includes being virtuous, benign, kind, industrious, and worthy'.

⁴⁵The line is ambiguous, probably deliberately so. I take *tā'ka tēna* as not referring to household chores only but to personal habits in general.

⁴⁶Modern *'atīta* /qatəəjtaq ~ qadət/ 'bygone, ancient'.

⁴⁷Note the rhyme between *thnai* /tṇəj > tṇaj/ and *srāya* /sraaj/ in 29c.

⁴⁸Literally: "...make your face unknotted," evidently a poetic injunction against taking all one's cares to bed with one; "let your brow be unfurrowed" comes close.

⁴⁹*Sabva sāya* /səp saaj > sɔp saaj/ occurs again in 31e in the sense of 'to reach in all directions, all around'.

⁵⁰Cf. 6d, where the sense is more figurative.

⁵¹*Phtāssāra* (modern *phtāsā* /pdaasaa/), unlike its occurrence in 17e, is written as two words of which the first has conjunct final -s: *phtās sāra*.

⁵²Literally: "If your dwelling-place be small..."

⁵³Modern *ka'la grīhā* /kaɭ krýh̄iə/ 'chock up or elevate the house'. Cf. 6b and note 10. Here /kɔɭ > kaɭ/ on the explicit

level refers to raising the house on higher piling, but is plainly a metaphor for enhancing the appearance of an humble home through assiduous care.

⁵⁴Sabva s̄ay has occurred previously in 29e (cf. note 49). Between verses *d* and *e* the original text has one superfluous line, *h̄oy tr̄uva kuṃtova* 'and receive the warmth [of the sun, which shines in all directions]', which not only does not fit into the metrical scheme but fails to rhyme with anything.

⁵⁵Modern 'amb̄e subh̄āba 'acts (actions) which are good in nature or intent'.

⁵⁶Where I have *māna* /maan > m̄iən/ the manuscript gives *tām* /taam/, which fails to rhyme with *sdh̄āna* (modern *sth̄āna* /sthaan/) in 31g and *pr̄āna* and *p̄āna* in 32ef and was almost certainly picked up by a copyist from verse *e*, where it is far more effective.

⁵⁷Note that *sa'la v̄a'la* /sol w̄ol > sal wal/ 'to turn continuously, spin, whirl' does not rhyme with *kanlaṅa* /k̄onl̄oṅ > kanl̄aṅ/, *hoṅa* /h̄oṅ > haṅ/ or *m̄āna* /m̄oṅ > maṅ/ in 33cef. Cf. the *Cp̄ā'pa krama*, strophe 35.

⁵⁸Modern *dhammatā* /thōmdaa/ (cf. Sanskrit *dharmatas*) at this period is a poetic cliché conveying the notions of 'by cosmic law, in the great scheme of things, by nature'. A freer and better rendering would be: "O my child, being born a woman ..." Cf. 34a.

⁵⁹Read: *mahāpras̄era kanlaṅa*.

⁶⁰Modern 'a'sa 'ārtha ṭ̄ucneḥ.

⁶¹For *traṅa raṅa* see 1e and note 2.

⁶²The sense of *sdh̄āna* (modern *sth̄āna* /sthaan/ 'place, stead'; cf. note 10), while open to question, must fit the following *dūnmāna indriya*. Preferring the simplest solution, I suggest that the poet, needing a word to rhyme with *dūnmāna* in *e*, is rather awkwardly likening the code to a "place where" one learns to bring one's faculties (or senses) under control. Others may wish to go back to Sanskrit *sth̄āna* and pick up the idea of 'abode, storehouse, repository' or even 'base, firm foothold, point of departure', both of which strike me as needlessly forced.

⁶³Note that 'ātm̄āra (modern 'ātm̄ā /qaatmaa/) fails to rhyme with *r̄ātriya* and *indriya* in *c* and *e*.

⁶⁴Note that *būm̄n̄āra* (modern *baṃṅā* /b̄om̄ṅaa > pum̄ṅīe/ fails to rhyme with *snaṅa* /sn̄oṅ > snaṅ/ in *c* but does rhyme with *r̄āks̄āra* (modern *raks̄ā* /raksaa > rēaksaa/) in *f*.

⁶⁵*Hoṅa* /h̄oṅ > haṅ/ fails to rhyme with *r̄āks̄āra*, *ūv̄āra*-,

and prakāra in 38cef, and no doubt stands in place of an original ṅāra (modern ṅā /naa/).

⁶⁶On sūreca (modern sūreca /sòorac/) see my "Anomalous Expansions in Khmer Morphology," in *Mon-Khmer Studies VI* (Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1977), 176: item 21.

⁶⁷Modern ovādadāna /qaaowaattīiən/ 'the giving of teachings, the imparting of advice or admonitions', < Pāli ovāda (cf. Sanskrit avavāda) 'commandment, instruction, counsel' + dāna 'giving, gift, donation; communication, teaching'. The manuscript clearly shows syllabic ū, easily confused with o. The orthographic form ūvāra- ~ ovāra- /qoowaar- > qaaowaar-/, rhyming with rāksāra and prakāra in c and f, indicates the reduction of /qoowaatdaan/ to /qoowaadaan/, a simplification of the same type as that reported by Saveros Pou in her "Note sur la date du Poème d'An̄gar Vat," in *Journal Asiatique*, 1975: 124.

WORDLIST*

kanlaña	1c, 33c.	kreva	4d.
kala	31b.	krēña	20g, 34d.
kāca	26f.	kraiy	1c, 18e.
kāna	34c.	kroka	30b.
kāra	9c.	krodha	4d.
kāla	21d.	k'āka	8b.
kūṅey	1a, 4a, 6a, 10a, 19b, 28a, 29a, 32a, 33a.	k'āy	8b.
kūṅeya	26a.	khiña	3d, 17e.
kūna	2a, 2g, 3a, 8a, 9a, 10d, 11a, 13a, 13e, 14a, 15a, 16b, 19a, 20a, 23b, 23d, 24b, 25c, 35c, 37a, 38a.	khusa	9f, 20g, 25e.
kəṭṭha	34e.	khamma	26b.
kəta	3f, 9d, 10c.	khcāta	30g, 31g.
koṭṭha	22d.	khcāya	30g, 31g.
kosa	17b.	khñumma	15b, 25a, 26a.
kum	1f, 2f, 3d, 6d, 7d, 8b, 15b, 17b, 17d, 20f, 22a, 25d, 26b, 29f, 30a, 33f, 36a, 36b, 38d.	khbaña	10c.
kumṇita	26e.	khbasa	10c.
ktāta	17e.	khlwna	2g, 8g, 24g, 33e, 37d.
ktīya	4e, 32g.	khlāmṇa	4c.
ktova	18e, 19c.	khsaiya	18f.
knuña	2d, 4f, 5c, 26d, 33d.	gāthāra	13c, 16g.
kpwna	25e.	gita	5b, 5d, 5f, 27d.
kra	1c.	gīta	4f.
krañāra	22e	guña	14d.
		guṅgāra	18a, 18d, 19f.
		guna	5a, 5b, 5d, 5e.
		gwra	5e, 5f.
		gey	12b, 25f.
		guṇteña	20c.
		gaṇmatēña	22e.

*The text comprises 362 lexical items, 394 orthographic forms.

gnāra	15e, 30e.	jā	8g, 10d, 10g, 17a, 19a, 20e, 21a, 25d, 35e, 36d.
gnī gnāra	7e.	jāta	16g, 18g.
graña	24e, 35c, 37e.	jāna	6e.
grāra	15c.	jāra	4c, 6c, 7c, 11g, 13f, 14g, 15e, 16g, 17c, 19g, 23f, 26f, 28d, 33b, 34a, 36g.
grīḥhāra	6b, 31b.	jārāra	18g.
grupa	7b.	juṅguña	22b.
ghlāta	8e.	juna	18g.
ññāy	29f.	junjiña	5e, 27d.
ññāya	2b.	jwpa	21d.
caña	33d.	jœña	6d, 30a.
cañraiya	8f, 12d.	jiəsa	32f.
cāsa	37b.	jera	15b, 30c.
cita	5c, 17d, 26d, 33d.	jrova	34f.
cintāra	4f.	jrāmma	34f.
cūla	29b, 38c.	jhœra	30d.
ciəma	16c.	jhveña	27e.
ceña	34b.	ṇā	6a.
ceḥ	14e, 34b.	ṇāra	1b, 3g, 4e, 7f, 18e, 19c, 21g, 26c, 30f, 31a, 34g, 37c.
cēña	23c, 24c.	ṇās	26c.
cēḥ	27a.	ta	19d.
cāṃ	23c.	taña	15c.
caṃṇīy	21e, 21f.	tala	3g, 8f, 36c.
cāmma	11a, 13b, 16b, 23e, 24c, 27a, 28g, 33d, 35e.	tāka	27c.
caṃmroena	12c.	tām	15g, 32e.
caṃhuta	16e.	tiña	5b, 26d.
cpāpa	15g, 22f, 23a, 24a, 27f, 28d, 32a, 34c, 35a, 36d.	tīy	6e.
cpāpa srīya	1b, 2b, 4a, 9f, 20g, 28a.	tūca ¹	31b.
crœna	15c.	tūca ²	32d.
c'āpa	34d.	tūcneḥ	35b.
c'eḥ	34d.	twca	3g.
chīy	21f.	tœra	6d, 30a.

tiəla	25g.	dœna	25b.
teka	29b.	dœbva	13g.
teca	36a.	dova	38b.
tēña	27c, 32c.	dos	9d.
tēra	18d, 35a.	doh	4d, 6b, 7a, 11d, 26f.
tēla	32f.	dāṃṇi	6e, 18b, 31c.
tēḥ	25g.	dāṃṃa	35d.
toy	13c, 22f, 27f.	ddhamma	13g, 17a, 30d.
toya	16d, 17c.	dratoḥ	3e.
toḥ	30b.	drābbha	7c, 7f, 11d, 14d, 30f.
taṃṇineka	29a.	dhamtāra	33a, 34a.
taṃṇaiya	11e.	dharmma	16d.
tpita	14d, 14g.	dhāna	11d.
traña ¹	22a, 32g.	dhuna	7f, 11d, 30f.
traña ²	1e, 35f.	dhūna	5f, 6d, 30a.
traciəka	1d.	dhvāra	9b.
trīya	11g, 18f.	dhvæ	9c.
trūva	34e.	dhværa	17d, 29c.
trœya	19g, 20e.	naruka	34f.
thay	9g.	nāña	1d, 1f, 2c, 3c, 3g, 6f, 8g, 10d, 10g, 11a, 13b, 13f, 15f, 16b, 16c, 17d, 20b, 21b, 23e, 25b, 26g, 28f, 30b, 38c.
thāra	22f.	nāññœy	18a, 20c.
thēra	29e, 35d.	niña	3f, 4b, 4d, 7g, 9d, 9f, 10c, 12b, 13d, 21d, 21g, 25e, 29b, 30g.
thoka	9g.	nicakāla	36g.
thñaiy	38b.	nindāra	25g, 29g.
thñaiya	11f, 28g, 35g.	neh	1b, 12a, 21a, 23a, 24a, 26a, 36d, 38b.
ththāna	6b.	nēḥ	27f, 35a.
thlaiya	23b, 24b.	naiy ¹	8e, 12a.
dika	19a.	naiy ²	28f.
dīy daiy	17g.	nova	2c, 6c, 12e, 24d, 24g, 34c, 37d, 38f.
duka ¹	2c, 12e, 14e, 15d, 23f, 24g, 28d, 30d, 34c.		
duka ²	9d.		
dūnamāna	16e.		
dūnmāna	23f, 36e.		

noḥ 7f, 8e, 21g, 22d, 30f, 31a, 32c, 33b.	prahēsa 20f.
pañjhara 22b.	prāna 16c, 23e, 32e.
pada 13c.	prās 12d.
pantepa 11c.	prusa 25a, 26b.
pantāmma 11b.	præra 25e, 26c, 26e.
papūra 19e.	prēra 19c, 22a.
pāta 7g.	prāṃ bīra 5a.
pād 30g.	phaña 17b, 17f, 18f.
pāna 12f, 13f, 14c, 17a, 23c, 32f.	phkāra 31d.
pāpa 34e.	phtāsāra 17e.
pīy 32d.	phtāssāra 30c.
puna 17c.	phtīya 3c, 20b, 21c, 21g.
pūrāna 15g, 16f.	phtāmma 13a, 26a, 37g, 38a.
pæra 3c, 4b, 17a, 19b, 20b, 21d, 29b, 37d.	phdaḥ 6f, 14f.
poka 3d.	phlēra 31d.
posa 29d.	bara 12c.
poḥ 3d.	bāka ¹ 11b, 13b, 37g, 38d.
paṃṇāmma 7d.	bāka ² 18c.
paṃbeña 10f.	bāy nñāy 29f.
paṃmræra 20d, 21c.	biña 18c, 18d.
prakāra 38f.	bita 16f, 19d, 28b.
prakratīy 6c, 35g.	bīy 10d, 16f, 22c, 38b.
pracāmma 7e.	bīysīy 20a, 28b.
pratova 1g, 3b, 13d, 14b, 23g.	buddha 16d.
pranipāttha 20d.	būka 29d.
prabaiy 23a, 24a.	beka 4c.
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'ā srūva	33g.	ṛ	26a.
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'āta	21a.	ona	1e, 4g, 35f.
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