

EUPHORIA

INDOCHINA, OCTOBER 1934–MAY 1935

Having secured the necessary support and funding, Olov and Ronny embarked on the SS *d'Artagnan* in Marseille bound for Saigon, on 14 October 1934.³²⁶ Once on board, they began to record the journey with their new film camera. On the films they are seen posing and laughing by the gunwale.³²⁷ Giggling and flirtatious, they seem relaxed and exhilarated. Relaxed, perhaps, to have left all the stressful preparations behind, and exhilarated about the adventure they had just embarked on.

The first journey from Marseille to Saigon was itself an important event. Unlike their subsequent journeys to and from Asia, it is featured in detail in letters, and in Janse's memoirs. The *d'Artagnan* sailed from Marseille, via the Suez Canal to Djibouti (then in French Somaliland), Kandy (then in British Ceylon) and Singapore, before reaching Saigon. Descriptions of the journey in Janse's memoirs and letters repeat the narrative format of popular travel writing that he acquired as a young man writing travel reports for his hometown newspaper.³²⁸ Sticking to the

326. Janse 1959:32.

327. This, and the following references to their films, are taken from the film shot during the second expedition, which had initially a very similar mood to the first and followed the same itinerary. The films shot during the first expedition were left in Paris during the first interlude, and were not recovered (owing to the war) until Janse was back in Paris going through their stored belongings in 1946–47 (see the chapter “Darling, Dearest”). These films from the first expedition are not among the ones now stored at the Swedish Television Archives (see the chapter “Memorabilia”), and we have no knowledge of their present whereabouts.

328. See the chapter “Travel Writing”.

format of Mary-Louise Pratt's monarch-of-all-I-survey genre,³²⁹ he works with rhetorical figures that induce distance. This, in turn, gains position for himself as narrator and expedition leader:

Like the rest of the *Compagnie des Messageries Maritimes*' large luxury ships, the *d'Artagnan* had chefs with a reputation of being at the top of French cuisine. Each meal except breakfast was served with wine à discrétion, i.e. ad libitum. The very large, beautifully decorated menu offered a generous selection of the finest French culinary compositions.³³⁰

As a city, Port Said is uninteresting and lacks any picturesque element. The poverty, which prevails in the streets and alleys, makes a distressing impression, especially when one suddenly stands face to face with deprivation after the perhaps unnecessarily luxurious life on board. Swarms of cripples, itinerant hawkers and beggars, covered in rags, followed us everywhere. Some children slept in the gutters, with flies buzzing over the pus that ran down their cheeks from their trachoma-infected eyes. [...] Depressed by the sad views we hurried back aboard.³³¹

[T]he *d'Artagnan* made another stopover in Djibouti. At the harbour, located a short distance from the city itself, were a long line of cab-like, wobbly carts, drawn by old skinny nags who could barely stand on their stiff legs. The carts could have served as museum pieces. However, they were the only available means of transport to get into town unless you wanted to make use of your

329. Pratt 2008:200.

330. Janse 1959:34. In the Swedish original: "I likhet med de övriga av *Compagnie des Messageries Maritimes*' stora lyxbåtar hade 'd'Artagnan' kockar med rykte om sid att stå på höjden av fransk kokkonst. Till varje mål utom frukosten serverades vin à discrétion, d.v.s. i obegränsad mängd. De jättestora, vackert dekorerade matsedlarna bjöd på ett stort urval av de bästa franska kulinariska kompositioner."

331. Janse 1959:35. In the Swedish original: "Port Said är ointressant, som stad betraktat, och saknar varje pittoreskt inslag. Fattigdomen, som råder på gator och i gränder, gör ett beklämmande intryck, särskilt när man plötsligt står ansikte mot ansikte med nöden efter det kanske onödigt luxuösa livet ombord. Svärmar av krymplingar, kringvandrande gatuförsäljare och tiggare, höljda i trasor, förföljde oss överallt. Några barn sov i rännstenarna, med flugor surrande över varet, som rann nedför kinderna från deras trakomsjuka ögon. [...] Deprimerade av den sorgliga synen skyndade vi oss åter ombord."

own feet. And you wouldn't, in the heat. We took courage and stepped into one of these "cabs", while the charioteer, black as the night, shouted jubilantly and cracked his whip with joy at having a couple of passengers.³³²

The monarch-of-all-I-survey genre of travel writing builds characteristically on (i) an *aestheticization* of the landscape, (ii) a search for *density of meaning* in the passage, and (iii) a prediction of *mastery* in the relation between seer and the seen.³³³ In Janse's accounts, the *d'Artagnan* represents France; the opulent and luxurious, functional, and up to date. From a secure position inside the vessel (metaphorically: inside France), he comments on the landscapes and cultures he passes along the way. A "red-hot, desolate sandy plain, stretching as far as the eye could see"³³⁴ amplifies the feeling of slowness and boredom in their passage through the Suez Canal and across the "equally disconsolate, infernally hot Red Sea".³³⁵ Unlike the aestheticized landscapes in Pratt's monarch-of-all-I-survey, these sceneries are neither beautiful nor interesting. As contrasts to the beautiful and alluring landscapes closer to the destination, they rather work to enhance the length of the passage, hence emphasizing the distance covered. With ample use of contrasting adjectives and prepositions, life on board is juxtaposed with sites and sceneries along the way. In the quotations above, Janse uses words such as *large*, *luxury*, *at the top*, *beautifully decorated*, *generous*, and *finest* to describe life on board the ship. The passages describing their visits to Port Said and Djibouti are instead filled with diminishing and demeaning adjectives, such as *uninteresting*, *distressing*, *infected*, *depressed*, *skinny*, *barely*, and *only*. Contrasting health with illness, the beautiful with the plain or ugly, and opulence with need,

332. Janse 1959:35–36. In the Swedish original: "Vid utloppet gjorde 'd'Artagnan' ytterligare ett uppehåll i Djibouti. Vid hamnen, belägen ett stycke från själva staden, stod en lång rad vingliga, droskliknande kärror, förspända med gamla magra hästkrakar, som nätt och jämnt kunde stå på de stela benen. Kärrorna kunde ha tjänat som museipjäser. De var emellertid de enda fortskaffningsmedel som stod till buds för att komma in i staden, om man inte ville begagna apostlahästarna. Och det ville man inte i värmen. Vi tog mod till oss och klev in i en av dessa 'droskor', medan den nattsvarte körsvennen jublande hojtade och smällde med piskan i glädjen över att ha fått ett par passagerare."

333. Pratt 2008:200.

334. Janse 1959:35. In the Swedish original: "denna glödgheta, ödsliga sandslätt, som sträckte sig så långt ögat nådde".

335. Janse 1959:35. In the Swedish original: "det likaledes tröstlösa, inferniskt heta Röda havet".

Janse assumes a superior position for himself, his French peers, and his Swedish readers, vis-à-vis the peoples and cultures of Port Said and Djibouti.

Because Janse is an archaeologist and the quotations are from his memoirs (with the subtitle *Archaeological experiences in Southeast Asia*), it is particularly interesting to see how he makes use of words that imply temporal distance. The cart that took them from the harbour to Djibouti city is one example. The cart is described at length, with an abundance of details designating primitivity: squeaking and wobbling with loose wheels, no springs, a missing roof, and so on. Writing about it as *cab-like*, and using ironic quotation marks around “cabs”, Janse marks the distance from the modern cab and thereby emphasizes its identity as something inferior, or a pre-form to the modern norm. The relegation of the Djibouti carts to the past is ultimately confirmed by saying that they *could have served as museum pieces*. On the same stop-over, Janse also purchased *a bundle of long spears* (primarily to get rid of an annoying man at the market)³³⁶ that he sent to the Ethnographic Museum in Stockholm. The people they encountered in Djibouti are metaphorically relegated to the past by their association with the material museum pieces. Their dark skin colour is repeatedly emphasized and they are described in terms that mark a distance to modern culture. As such they stand out in Janse’s text as a dark, blunt, and ignorant backdrop to the light civilized presence of the visitors from the French passenger ship. This can be compared with the slightly less demeaning tone in a letter to his friends in Sweden, from the same visit to French Somaliland:

We travelled into the desert to an oasis, and in one place we got to see a real Negro village. The Somali Negroes are generally well-grown, and appear to be agreeable.³³⁷

336. Janse 1959:36. In the Swedish original: “En annan höll i ena handen ett knippe långa spjut [...] för att slutligen bli av med honom, köpte jag lansarna, vilka skickades till Etnografiska museet i Stockholm.”

337. Letter from O. Janse to T. Nerman, 19 October 1934. Arbetarrörelsens arkiv och bibliotek. Ture Nerman 3.1.7. In the Swedish original: “Vi reste in över öknen till en oas och fick på ett ställe se en verklig negerby. Somalinenegrarna är i regel välväxta och verkar vara hyggliga.”

In his memoirs we see how Janse once again³³⁸ operates as an archaeological (cum-ethnographic) travel writer who cunningly moves through time *and* space, claiming a double control over distance. As a narrator he gains prestige and position by moving between distant units (in time and/or space), and acting as an expert by offering translations between them.

After crossing the Indian Ocean they arrived in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) where they stopped one day to visit Colombo and the historical town of Kandy. The memoir descriptions of Ceylon also work to create a sense of contrast and distance to the modern European way of life. But unlike the Africans they encountered earlier, the Buddhist locals are not portrayed as blunt and ignorant, they appear rather as sluggish yet philosophically dignified:

Here in Ceylon all pious people seemed to have resigned, accepted their lot. By suppressing natural desires and passions and forsaking even the simplest amenities they have reached a state of peace of mind. They ignore, in other words the telephone and telegraph, plumbing, military service, taxes and the eight-hour working day. [...] We, on the other hand, hurried on as usual.³³⁹

The arrival of the *d'Artagnan* in Saigon, the southern port of French Indochina (now Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam), is also featured in detail on film and in the memoirs. As they travelled slowly upstream the shallow river, surrounded by *marshy shores* and an *uninhabitable, depressing landscape*,³⁴⁰ someone spotted the spires of the French cathedral in Saigon and shouted: *les Voilà!* – there they are! This marks an important point of transition in Janse's text, from the slow and depressing passage, to the exciting entry into the civilization awaiting them at the destination. And as soon as the ship had berthed at the quay, they were welcomed by representatives from the local French government:

338. See also the chapter "Travel Writing".

339. Janse 1959:38, in the Swedish original: "Här på Ceylon tycktes alla fromma människor ha resignerat, funnit sig i sin lott. Genom att undertrycka naturliga önskningar och lidelser och försaka även de enklaste bekvämligheter har de uppnått ett tillstånd av själsfrid. De struntar med andra ord i telefon och telegraf, rörläggning, värnplikt, skatter och åtta timmars arbetsdag. [...] Själva var vi däremot jäktade som vanligt."

340. Janse 1959:38, in the Swedish original: "sumpiga stränderna", "obeboeligt, tröstlöst landskap".

The customs inspection was nice and easy. When we had come down the gangplank together, mademoiselle [Naudin, Director of the Musée Blanchard de la Brosse] took us to a car with driver and said: “This is a car, which the Governor has placed at your disposal during your stay here.” With light hearts we took off to the Hotel Continental, where rooms had been reserved for us. The hotel seemed typically French, with good beds, good food and excellent wines.³⁴¹

The passage describing their arrival and the French hotel where they checked in, has a cheerful tone and is filled with positive adjectives such as *nice*, *easy*, *light*, *good*, and *excellent*. Altogether, these text passages featuring an opulent life on board the SS *d’Artagnan*, a miserable situation in Port Said and Djibouti, a carefree, sluggish yet dignified Buddhist life in Ceylon, and a well-organized outpost of French civilization in “little China”, are designed rhetorically to create a sense of meaning in his passage from Europe to Indochina. At the same time, the memoirs effectively imbue readers (who are likely to have trusted its contents as facts about different lands and cultures) with a strong, stereotyped, hierarchized vision of the world, with Janse himself and his French associates posing as the only representatives of modernity and civilization and hence the rightful masters of the world.

The land they had arrived in – then French Indochina, now Vietnam – had a long and complex history. After the rule of several independent states, most famously under the Hùng kings, it was dominated for long periods by Chinese empires beginning with the Han (206 BC–220 AD). The rule of native kingdoms and dynasties (such as the Lý, Lê, Trần, Nguyen, and Champa) followed over the next 1500 years, interrupted by waves of Chinese domination and disturbed by various interests and interventions from foreign powers, until France, after years of fighting with the native rulers, made it a protectorate under the name *Indochine française* in 1887.³⁴² The first protectorate included the regions *Tonkin*,

341. Janse 1959:39, in the Swedish original: “Tullvisitationen var trevligt ökonstlad. När vi tillsammans hade kommit nedför landgången, förde mademoiselle [Naudin, chef för Musée Blanchard de la Brosse] oss fram till en bil med chaufför och sade: ‘Detta är en bil, som guvernören har ställt till ert förfogande under er vistelse här’. Med lätt hjärta begav vi oss till hotel Continental, där rum hade beställts för oss. Hotellet verkade typiskt franskt, med bra bäddar, god mat och utmärkta viner.”

342. Cooper 2001.

Annam, and *Cochinchine* (which together are the equivalent of today's Vietnam) and *Cambodge* (which is now Cambodia).³⁴³ The final region, *les Laos* (now Laos) was added six years later, in 1893.³⁴⁴ Indochina eventually became something of a favourite colony in the French empire, with considerable economic importance as a source of rubber, metals, rice, tea, coffee, pepper, and coal.

But the establishment of Indochina as a French colony in the last decades of the nineteenth century was not only a matter of physical establishment of a conquered territory. It meant also the establishment of an imaginary space, or trope, in Imperial France. In the words of Panivong Norindr, Indochina became for the French “a space of cultural production”.³⁴⁵ And as part of this process, an image of Indochina was created in the European imagination and was moreover reflected in the growth of a literary body of colonial fiction in metropolitan France. This fiction mimicked scientific tales of discovery and research, creating and maintaining ideas of a cultural and developmental distance between the modern French *colon* and the Indochinese Other, much like the images conveyed by Janse's traveller's tales.

When Indochina was formally attached as a protectorate to the French republic in 1887, the previous hyphenated name *Indo-Chine* (marking that the colony had been perceived as a hybrid space empty of an identity of its own between the civilizations of India and China) was changed to *Indochine française*, to mark its newborn identity as a full member of the French Empire and French civilization.³⁴⁶ And around the turn of century, the colonial policy went through a reformulation from the previous focus on conquest, pacification, and assimilation to a much softer policy of association, with an increased emphasis on French beneficial contribution and *mise en valeur*. Education, science, and technology now became even more important. They were at the heart of this reformed and “ethical” colonial approach based on a trinity of values and principles – generosity, benevolence, and protection – that embodied the French nation's renewed vision of its role as colonizer.³⁴⁷ These changes occurred after Paul Doumer, a rising star in French politics (and later President of the

343. Edwards 2007.

344. Stuart-Fox 1997.

345. Norindr 1996:2

346. Cooper 2001:43.

347. Fre: *devoir, responsabilité, générosité*, Cooper 2001:18–19, 31, 109.

Republic) was appointed Governor General of *Indo-Chine* in 1897. Paul Doumer, who had degrees in mathematics and law, was a strong advocate for the beneficial potentials of science and research. As a result, one of his many important and influential contributions to the French colonial administration in Indochina was the foundation of several scientific institutes. Among them were the Service Géologique and a permanent Mission Archéologique, which later became the École française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO).³⁴⁸ So Paul Doumer established EFEO in 1899 as part of the benevolent and generous French programme of *mise en valeur* from the turn of the century onwards.³⁴⁹ However, if the idea of losing the hyphen was to create a new image of Indochina as something more than a passive mix between the cultures of India and China, the primary goal of the EFEO was to study precisely the “confluence of races and civilizations” that had been essential to its previous (and evidently lingering) image.³⁵⁰ Olov Janse’s ambition to study the southern extension of the Han empire in Indochina was thus a perfect fit with the aims of EFEO.

After a few days of wining, dining, official meetings (with the Governor General René Robin amongst others) and sightseeing in Saigon, Olov and Ronny Janse found themselves unable to pursue their planned journey to Hanoi because of a typhoon further north. So they decided to take the opportunity to visit to the Cambodian capital Phnom Penh and the famous archaeological ruins of Angkor, with a car provided by the governor. Along the way they purchased items for the Ethnographic Museum in Stockholm, among which were a sword (“of the same type as those depicted on the famous friezes of Angkor”) and a crossbow with quiver.³⁵¹ In Phnom Penh they met the French Director of the library, Suzanne Karpelès, who assisted them with their ethnographic collecting by assigning one of her native employees as assistant on their purchase tours, and by presenting them with a “beautiful collection representing Cambodian Buddhism”.³⁵² At Angkor they visited the famous ruins and met the Director of the French archaeological mission, Henri Parmentier. Parmentier did not appear overly enthusiastic about Janse’s plans to

348. Clémentin-Ojha and Manguin 2001:16–19.

349. Cooper 2001:30.

350. Auguste Barth in Clémentin-Ojha and Manguin 2001:22.

351. *Svenska Dagbladet*, 27 December 1934: “Olof Janse sänder hem fin samling. En första rapport från Indokina. Franska staten synnerligen hjälpsam.”

352. Ibid. In the Swedish original: “M:lle Karpelès överlämnade dessutom som gåva en vacker samling, som belyser buddhismen i Kambodja.”

excavate Han period brick tombs, and warned him that as far as he knew most had already been emptied of their contents. Janse took this as a sign that he had “unknowingly entered hunting grounds that were regarded as reserved for others than [him]self”,³⁵³ and did not approach Parmentier again. In his memoirs (published as late as 1959, when Indochina had become the independent states of Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam), we can see how Janse had fully adopted the colonial propaganda of French heroic rescues of Angkor and other heritage objects from native oblivion, destruction and decay:

French scientists still pursue persistently and patiently the work of liberating these ruins from the firm grip of the jungle, restoring them and trying to interpret their religious meaning and artistic, historical and archaeological significance.³⁵⁴

Back in Saigon they packed and left almost immediately for Hanoi, travelling north along the coast by train and bus. In his memoirs Janse dwells on a stop-over in Nha-trang, known as the land of the Cham people. The ancient Champa kingdom, which was at its height in the ninth century AD, made its fortune from trade. Its culture had both Hindu and Muslim elements and is known archaeologically for its interesting art and religious architecture. But Janse describes the present-day Cham in terms of French colonial discourse, supplemented by a typical Swedish interest in race as defined by blood, particularly the purity of blood:

There are not many full-blooded Cham left. Some small groups in southern Viet Nam have however, thanks to the intervention of French authorities, been saved from destruction and are now regarded as ethnographic curios. Centuries of suffering and humiliation have left a sad mark on these human relics. They have now sunk into extreme poverty and as a result become taciturn in depressed indifference. [...] But the fact that Cham blood still

353. Janse 1959:48. In the Swedish original: “ovetande givit mig in på jaktmarker, som ansågs reserverade för andra än mig själv”.

354. Janse 1959:52, in the Swedish original: “Franska vetenskapsmän ägnar alltjämt ett ihärdigt och tålamodsprövande arbete åt att söka lösgöra dessa ruiner från djungelns fasta grepp, restaurera dem och försöka tolka deras religiösa innebörd och konstnärliga, historiska och arkeologiska betydelse.”

flows in the veins of many Vietnamese, especially among fishermen, is evident from their appearance.³⁵⁵

The passage is characteristic of Janse's ethnographic accounts, in his memoirs and newspaper travel reports. His ethnographic project consisted of short visits to various primitive tribes, whose customs and traditions he often describes in a paternalistic, supposedly humoristic, tone as being naïve and ignorant. Their physical appearance is described with reference to skin colour and the relative purity or blending of their blood. The things they used are presented as collectible artefacts, sometimes compared with prehistoric artefacts in Scandinavia.³⁵⁶

This is interesting in relation to the developments of the academic subject of ethnology and the Musée de l'Homme in France, led by Paul Rivet and Marcel Mauss. With its active political commitment to human pluralism and anti-racism and with its foundation in Durkheimian sociology, it has often been conceptualized as an entirely "good" or benign form of knowledge contrasted with the earlier, more problematic, physical anthropology developed by Paul Broca and his disciples. Olov Janse's descriptions of native people offer a more complex picture, which has also been suggested by the works of Emmanuelle Saada and Alice Conklin, who argue that the deep-seated interest in "primitive society" led this school of ethnology to conclusions that created illusions of a natural hierarchy between primitive and modern ways of life.³⁵⁷

Combined with his abundant usage of adjectives signifying high and low, prosperous and miserable, Janse's ethnographic accounts contribute to a characteristic image where native people in Southeast Asia are metaphorically, or even literally, back-projected to a remote past. The fact that Janse was a qualified archaeologist, an expert on the past, added credibility and extra spice to his ethnographic project. As an example, Swedish reviews of Janse's memoirs say that the "opportunity to experi-

355. Janse 1959:55, in the Swedish original: "Det finns inte många fullblodiga cham kvar. Några små grupper i södra Viet-Nam har emellertid, tack vare de franska myndigheternas ingripande, räddats från förintelse och betraktas numera som etnografiska kurios. Århundraden av lidanden och förnedring har satt sin sorgliga stämpel på dessa människoreliker. De har nu sjunkit ned i yttersta armod och till följd därav blivit tillknäppta i deprimerad liknöjdhet. [...] Att emellertid chamblood alltjämt rinner i ådrorna hos många vietnameser, särskilt bland fiskarbefolkningen, framgår av deras utseende."

356. See for example the quote from Yunnan-fu in "Introduction".

357. Saada 2002; Conklin 2013.

ence prehistory in a sort of double exposure” was considered one of the most important qualities of the book:

The excavations and finds are direct reminders of the past, and the author’s escapades in the present surroundings are not only reflections of the present in general, but, at least for a Westerner, stand out as pure and utter prehistory.³⁵⁸

The critical anthropologist Johannes Fabian has famously called it *a denial of coevalness*, this effect of ethnographic thought and writing.³⁵⁹ In Janse’s writing we see how the temporal dimension of his archaeological expertise is married to his ethnographic project, so they become two different ways to reach the same image of the peoples of Indochina: as belonging to the past. As an effect of the denial of coevalness, all people of Indochina – past and present – could be regarded through an analytical filter of temporal distance. At a distance they pose as evidence of French competence, generosity, and benevolence, and ultimately as a justification of the French colonial presence.

After a three-day train journey to Yunnan-fu across the border to China, waiting for the typhoon rains to give in, they eventually arrived and settled in Hanoi three weeks after they had disembarked from the *d’Artagnan* in Saigon. Having rested for a few days and been introduced to their colleagues at the research institute École française d’Extrême-Orient, they set out to the nearby Bac Ninh province and started their first excavations in early November 1934.

At the time of their arrival in 1934, French Indochina consisted of five regions (see map in fig. 42). Apart from *les Laos* and *Cambodge*, which

358. Review of *Ljusmannens gåta*: Wilhelm Holmqvist, 1959, “Exotisk forntid”, *Vi* no. 49. In the Swedish original: “Kanske är det även detta, som utgör styrkan och tjusningen i hans framställning, nämligen att man får uppleva forntiden i ett slags dubbel exponering. Grävningarna och fynden erinrar direkt om [forntiden], och författarens upplevelser i den nutida miljön återspeglar inte bara [nuet] så där i största allmänhet, utan framstår åtminstone för en västerlänning som rena, rama förhistorien.” See also reviews by Arthur Nordén, *Norrköpings Tidningar/Östergötlands Dagblad*, 23 November 1959; by Torgny Säve-Söderberg, *Dagens Nyheter*, 17 December 1959; by Hanna Rydh, *Svenska Dagbladet*, 10 February 1960. Archaeologists were interested in the relationship between East and West. Public reviewers focused on the double exposure of primitive culture.

359. This is a common characteristic of early ethnographic writing, which has been discussed and critiqued at length by Johannes Fabian (1983) and James Clifford (1988) among others.



Fig. 30. The Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient in Hanoi 1939. Janse has written the names on the back of the photograph, but with one exception named only the French members. From left to right: Louis Bezacier, René Mercier, Victor Goloubew, Jean-Yves Claëys, George Cœdès (director of EFEO), Madeleine Colani, Pierre Dupont, Jean Mannikus, and Paul Lévy. Behind and between George Cœdès and Madeleine Colani is the secretary Thô. Photo by Olov Janse.

later formed the postcolonial states of Laos and Cambodia, there was *Cochinchine* (in the south, with Saigon as the main city), *Annam* (along the central coast), and *Tonkin* (in the north, with Hanoi as the main city), which have together become Vietnam, as we know it today. Apart from a couple of visits to *Cambodge* and *Cochinchine*, Olov and Ronny Janse did most of their work in the northern part of *Annam* (in a province called Thanh Hoa), and some in *Tonkin*, mostly in the Bac Ninh province, where they were now about to start their first excavations. They were working

Fig. 31. Nguyen Xuan Dong. Photo by Olov Janse.



for and in collaboration with the EFEO and its director George Cœdès. At least initially, Cœdès indicated the sites to excavate, and they were assigned a native member of staff to act as secretary, draughtsman, and interpreter.³⁶⁰ The first person to get this assignment was Mr Chung, who did not get on with Janse (his, in Janse's opinion, outrageous behaviour is described at length in Janse's memoirs)³⁶¹ and he was soon replaced with Nguyen Xuan Dong,³⁶² mostly called Dong (fig. 31), who remained with the project as secretary and draughtsman through the first two expeditions.

Lim

The first site they set out to excavate was Lim, twenty kilometres from Hanoi in the province of Bac Ninh. It was previously known to EFEO for a large Han-period brick tomb, and George Cœdès suggested this as their first excavation site. When they arrived at Lim they saw a corner of the brick construction, which had been exposed by recent roadworks. Janse instructed Dong to supervise their team of local workers to clear

³⁶⁰. See Cherry 2004 and Clémentin-Ojha & Manguin 2001:35 for a reminder of the importance of the native members of the EFEO.

³⁶¹. Janse 1959:78–82.

³⁶². Also incorrectly referred to in some of Janse's texts as Nguyen Van Dong.

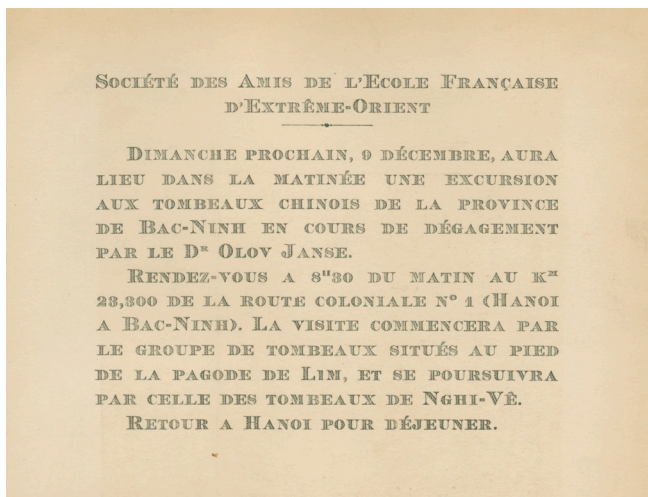
the brick structure from the rest of its covering mound, while he set off to survey the surrounding area.

Once the brick construction had been cleared they could see that the vaults, just as Henri Parmentier had warned him when they met at Angkor, had been opened and emptied. Some coins inside suggested that it had been done in the nineteenth century. For Janse – who was looking for untouched grave inventories with outstanding artefacts to fit museum displays in Paris – this was nothing but a failure. The rather magnificent brick construction with one central tunnel-formed vault and two perpendicular ones sticking out on each side is mentioned only in passing in his memoirs,³⁶³ and the finds inside are only touched upon in a couple of footnotes in his excavation report.

He had more luck with his surveys of the surrounding area, where he managed to locate another site with Han period finds by talking to local farmers. The excavations there uncovered two smaller brick tombs with collapsed roofs, but with their grave inventories intact. Some of the bricks were decorated on the sides, and once refitted they appeared to depict the famous Chinese legend of Shên I, yet with distinct non-Chinese elements in it. Altogether the finds seemed to indicate that the people who built these graves had a culture that was not quite Chinese and not entirely native, but a hybrid form incorporating elements of both.³⁶⁴

Notwithstanding the rather meagre results, particularly at the large spectacular tomb, the excavations attracted a lot of attention, not only from people in the nearby villages, but also from visitors to the local market, and French officials in Hanoi. On 9 December, only a month after the excavations had begun at Lim, the Society of Friends of the EFEO organized an excursion to the sites (fig. 32).

Fig. 32. Invitation card for the excursion to Janse's excavations at Lim.



363. Janse 1959:81.

364. Janse 1951:47–51; 1959:86.

Nghi-vê

While they were working at Lim, and Janse felt that his presence was not always called for (he appears to have been present mostly for the excavations of the parts of the tombs where he expected to find artefacts of interest, that is, at the bottom of the chambers), he decided to take the opportunity to extend his working area to a nearby site in the village Nghi-vê, which was known to the EFEO from a previous excavation by Henri Parmentier.³⁶⁵ To his great disappointment Janse found that the tomb which had been excavated and restored by Parmentier was gone, having been transformed into building material for houses nearby. But once again, a local farmer came to his rescue and pointed to a mound not far away where he had found traces of another Han brick tomb. The farmer was rewarded with a coin, and a promise to be employed as a worker in the upcoming excavations.³⁶⁶ When Janse later returned to excavate the site with Dong and the local team, they found an intact tunnel-shaped brick tomb, with a unique detail in the form of a band of bricks with a geometric pattern running horizontally along the walls.³⁶⁷

Even more interesting was a second tomb, indicated by another farmer while they were excavating the first. The tomb *Nghi-vê no. 2* is described in Janse's report as "one of the largest subterranean brick buildings ever discovered in Indo-China",³⁶⁸ with a high vault built with geometrically decorated bricks (figs. 33, 34a, 34b). The floor was tiled, also with bricks, and was elevated at one end of the chamber. This grave too had been opened and partly emptied, but the remaining grave goods included elaborate ceramics, beads, iron nails, an incense burner, a mirror and a house model (fig. 35).³⁶⁹ Near the tomb they found roof tiles, indicating that there had once been a mourning house on top of the grave mound.³⁷⁰ It is said in the reports and later newspaper interviews that all the bricks from Nghi-vê no. 2 were transported to Hanoi, to have the tomb recon-

³⁶⁵. Parmentier 1918.

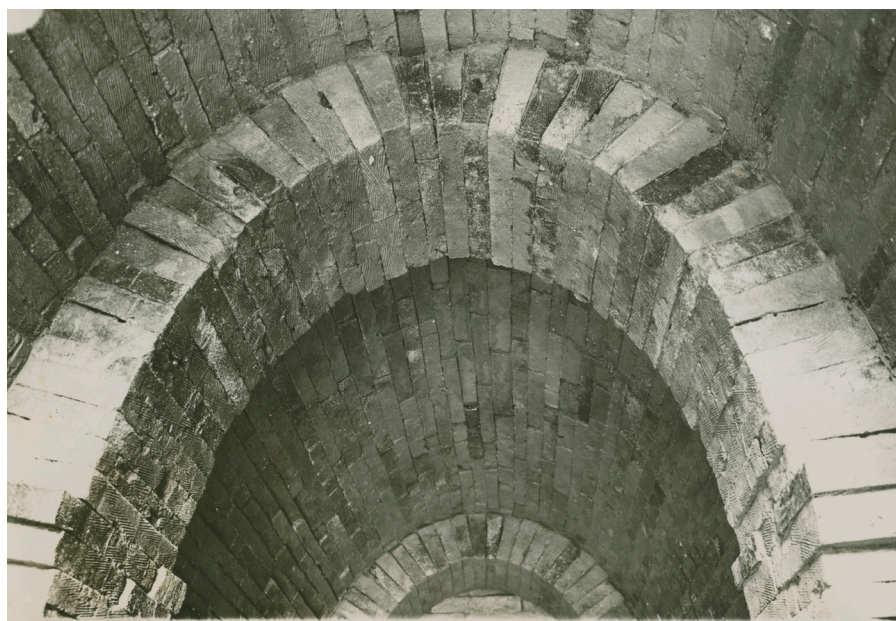
³⁶⁶. Janse 1959:87–88.

³⁶⁷. Janse 1935a; 1935–36; 1947:9.

³⁶⁸. Janse 1947:v; see also Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient, Tome 34, 1934, p. 750, pl XIX–XX.

³⁶⁹. Janse 1935a; 1935–36; 1947:16, 18, 26, 40, pl 126; 1951:12, 18, 79, 96, 120, 161, 173, 191.

³⁷⁰. Janse 1935–36; 1947: 5, pl 160; 1951: 237.



*Figs. 33, 34a,
34b. The large
tomb Nghĩ-vê
no. 2 during
excavation.
Photo by Olov
Janse.*

Fig. 35. House
model found
in the tomb
Nghi-vê no. 2,
after reconstruc-
tion.



structed in the garden of the Louis Finot Museum.³⁷¹ It appears, however, that the plans were ever realized.

The excavations were reported in the Indochina press; in the French newspaper *France-l'Indochine* and the largest paper in Vietnamese language: *Trung-Bac Tan-Van* (News of Annam and Tonkin). The Vietnamese paper was particularly enthusiastic, publishing three successive articles on the excavations at Lim and Nghi-vê.³⁷² Janse's expedition was also noticed in Swedish press, but there the articles concerned the arrival of a collection of ethnographica sent to the Ethnographic Museum in Stockholm.³⁷³

Dong Son

As 1934 came to an end, Olov and Ronny Janse left Tonkin with Dong and moved south to Annam and the Thanh Hoa province. On the bank

371. *Beaux-Arts: Le Journal des Arts*, 5 July 1935: "Au Musée Cernuschi renové: Les découvertes archéologique de M. O. Jansé".

372. *Trung-Bac Tan-Van*, 12 December 1934, 14 December 1934, 20 December 1934.

373. *Svenska Dagbladet*, 27 December 1934: "Olof Janse sänder hem fin samling. En första rapport från Indokina. Franska staten synnerligen hjälpsam"; *Östergötlands Dagblad*, 29 December 1934: "Etnografika från prof. Janse".

of the Song Ma river, near the village Dong Son, was a large and interesting site, which had been officially known to the EFEO since 1924. Construction works for roads and canals had revealed large amounts of ancient artefacts, and in 1924 the EFEO officially instructed a French customs official named Louis Pajot to make inquiries among the local population about finds of ancient things. Pajot, a former circus artist who had ended up in Indochina via a sailor's assignment, took on the project and set about surveying the area and collecting artefacts for the EFEO and Musée Louis Finot in Hanoi. And the villagers, who received a small reward for every artefact they handed to Pajot, soon began to initiate their own excavations. Over the following decade, villagers and French amateurs were digging for treasures at the site, and Louis Pajot himself pursued undocumented excavations. Some of the artefacts, including bronze weapons and the spectacular bronze kettledrums that have become known as "Dong Son Drums", were collected at the Musée Louis Finot in Hanoi, while others were sold and spread among private collectors.³⁷⁴ The news about the intriguing site with magnificent bronzes travelled as far as Stockholm, where Olov Janse was working at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities and was encouraged by Johan Gunnar Andersson to write an article, suggesting that the finds at Dong Son represented a distinct prehistoric bronze industry spread over Indochina, South China, and Indonesia.³⁷⁵

So Janse was already well acquainted with the findings at Dong Son before he arrived at the site, ten years after Pajot and the local communities had started their excavations. At the EFEO, George Coëdès welcomed the initiative to have the Dong Son site investigated with professional archaeological methods and proper documentation, and encouraged Janse to contact Louis Pajot at his home in the town of Thanh Hoa. They travelled to Thanh Hoa, where they checked in at a French hotel owned by the local personality Madame Renaud, and went to pay Louis Pajot a visit. Initially reluctant, Pajot eventually came round to help Janse with his investigations, and they would become good friends. Janse also got in touch with a local farmer named Soang, who had been a key

374. The only published piece from this first phase of Dong Son's life as an archaeological site is an article by the EFEO member Victor Goloubew (1929).

375. Janse 1931. See also Solheim 1989; Heger 1902; and Franz Heger's presentation "Sur d'anciens tambours de métal du sud-est de l'Asie" at the Hanoi Conference 2002 (with Henri Hubert attending and commenting) in EFEO 1903, pp 89–91.

Fig. 36.
*Madame
 Renaud's
 hotel in
 Thanh Hoa.
 The man
 standing by
 the car might
 be Olov
 Janse.*



collaborator with Pajot during his investigations, and made him foreman as he formed a local excavation team.

Olov Janse is often described as a particularly likeable person, and there was clearly something with his ways and manners that inspired confidence in the people he met. The ability to create positive relations with French and Annamite officials as well as local farmers seems to have been a crucial asset in all the work he did in Indochina. In an interesting chapter of his memoirs,³⁷⁶ he describes at length the problems he faced with a local dragon named Long (which means “dragon” in Vietnamese) who resided at a tomb site in the Hoà-chung village. Janse describes the strategies he employed to overcome the problems and eventually reach a form of coexistence with Long. The chapter is riddled with the usual ar-

376. The chapter “Draken och jag”, Janse 1959:165–179.

rogant, supposedly witty, descriptions of the villagers' "superstitious" and "archaic" belief in the presence of a dragon, or more precisely a dragon vein, in the mound of a brick tomb Janse had set out to excavate. But behind the veneer of paternalistic disdain, the chapter contains interesting and important information about the villagers' engagement in the protection of the mound, and the logic by which they explained its value as a community heritage site. It also contains interesting information about Olov Janse's negotiation skills, and how much effort he invested to win the villagers' confidence and find a way to excavate the mound in co-existence with Long, hence with the consent of the community. It took considerable effort, listening, and thinking to understand the logic behind the villagers' sentiments and actions to preserve the mound. And once he had figured out some of the logic, he worked with it. He engaged local shamans and presented food offerings, while he continuously argued that the Chinese people who had once built the tomb must have been aware of the dragon's vein and would have been careful not to dig too deep and disturb it. Hence by the same logic, his team would not disturb the dragon if they stopped the excavations at the floor of the tomb. The villagers were content with that idea, and Janse was eventually given permission to excavate down to the brick floor, which was exactly what he wanted in the first place.

They began their investigations at Dong Son on 3 January 1935. The places where artefacts had been found by locals and amateur diggers indicated that the settlement area stretched along the Song Ma river, in a narrow strip of flat land between the riverbank and a steep hill behind it. While Dong and the foreman Soang tried to locate the places previously excavated so they could avoid them (as with the Han tombs, it was untouched ground with undisturbed intact contexts that they were after), Janse investigated the stratigraphic sequence in the eroded riverbank. With his Scandinavian training in archaeology, he used stratigraphy – the analytical documentation of the thickness, contents, and internal relation of soil layers – as a key analytical method. By means of stratigraphy, he sought to determine the dates for the beginning and end of the settlement, and to organize the remains into separate datable phases. The stratigraphic sequence of Dong Son was quite simple, with one major cultural layer about 60 centimetres thick, containing "primitive" stone tools as well as "datable" metal artefacts. Below this main cultural layer was a layer of sterile clay, and above it a layer with gravel and scattered artefacts of more recent date. This was before the invention of radiocarbon dating (which

is now the common, more precise method to date a stratigraphic layer), so dating was done by identification of artefacts (often metal or coins) with forms or inscriptions known from written sources or previous archaeological investigations to have been in circulation during a particular period of time.³⁷⁷ The main cultural layer at Dong Son contained artefacts that could be dated between the second century BC and the first century AD. This seemed to indicate that the main settlement had appeared and flourished during a couple of centuries until it was abandoned, sometime in the first century AD.³⁷⁸ In his memoirs, Janse writes:

We had already solved one of the archaeological problems. It was evident that the population of these lands in the years before the birth of Christ had lived at the Stone Age level with fishing and primitive cultivation as their main economy, but that the contact with the higher Chinese culture then suddenly made the inhabitants acquainted with the use of bronze and iron tools, and a considerably more developed cultivation than their own.³⁷⁹

Let us stop here for a moment and take a closer look at this quotation. Residing between the lines here is an important presupposition for the story Janse tells about Dong Son, and more generally in all his archaeological narration. Without saying it explicitly, he presupposes that human culture can, and must, be categorized as either “primitive” (low) or “civilization” (high), and that there is a universal teleological force of cultural development from low to high. The “archaeological problem” that he refers to initially is the fact that stone tools (essentially “primitive”, or “Stone Age level”, according to his definition) are found with metal objects (to him representing “civilization”) in one and the same layer. If, however, we removed the implicit either-or presupposition from the argument, the problem would cease to exist, and a more straightforward

377. For a more elaborate discussion of stratigraphy and typological dating, see the chapter “Archaeological Foundations”.

378. Janse 1958:19–21.

379. Janse 1959:107. In the Swedish original: “Vi hade redan löst ett av de arkeologiska problemen. Det var tydligt att befolkningen i denna trakt under tiden närmast före Kristi födelse hade levt på stenåldersstadiet och idkat fiske och primitivt åkerbruk som huvudnäringar, men att beröringen med den högre, kinesiska kulturen då plötsligt kom invånarna att lära känna bruket av brons- och järnverktyg och en i stort sett betydligt mer utvecklad odling än deras egen.”

explanation of the contents of the cultural layer would be that the people at the Dong Son site in the first century BC had a culture that included things made of both stone and metal. And this is also what later, post-independence archaeological interpretations of Dong Son have said.³⁸⁰ But Janse's archaeological gaze, which presupposed a definition of culture as *either* primitive (associated with stone) *or* civilized (associated with metal), enticed him to create an explanatory narrative of a primitive native culture meeting a civilized Chinese culture, and thereby developing into a "higher" form that included metallurgy. Hence the narrative of a primitive native culture developing to a more advanced form under influence of a foreign civilization is essentially dependent on a historically contingent presupposition informed by early twentieth-century colonial archaeological discourse,³⁸¹ rather than the archaeological material actually found at Dong Son.

Satisfied with the results from the stratigraphic analysis, and informed by the surveys undertaken by Dong and Soang, Janse was now ready to start excavating. Because there were no visible structures on the ground (as with the Han tombs, which were given away by their covering mounds), they were guided by more subtle information to find the places to dig. One part of the area was covered by grass and left untilled, and the farmers explained that it was placed under an ancient taboo. Janse took the taboo as an indication that it contained ancient graves, and decided to open a trench of seven by fourteen metres. In the trench, which is called *fouille 3* or *loc. 3* in the reports, they first encountered three small brick tombs from the Tang period (AD 618–906). Beside and below the Tang tombs were two graves from the main settlement phase (which Janse refers to in the records as "Indonesian tombs"). The two graves, which had no visible built structure surrounding them, contained an array of grave goods including ceramics (which, according to the master narrative of culture as being either primitive or civilized, are described in the reports as either native or Chinese), coins, spearheads, spindle whorls, one fishhook, a stone pillar, stone discs, axes, bronze situlae, bronze vases, miniature bronzes, and so on. Particularly noteworthy are the finds of miniature bronzes, such as small kettledrums, which were never found

380. E.g. Solheim 1989; Hà Văn Tấn 1991; Han Xiaorong 1998; Cherry 2004:11; Long 2011. See also Malleret 1959.

381. Trigger 1984.

in any of the brick tombs.³⁸² But the most spectacular find was of two large bronze kettledrums found *in situ*, one in each grave.³⁸³ The bronze kettledrums have now, in our time, become famous signature artefacts of “the Dong Son culture”, and iconic pieces representing Southeast Asia in museum collections and the antiquities trade around the world.³⁸⁴ Janse’s were the first *in situ* finds of such bronze drums in a documented archaeological excavation.³⁸⁵

As they moved on, they were not quite so lucky. The first two “Indonesian tombs” would prove to be the only intact elaborate graves found during this and the following two excavation seasons at Dong Son. They opened three smaller trenches near *loc. 3*: *loc. 4*, *loc. 6* and *loc. 6^{bis}*, and one at the other end of the settlement area: *loc. 5*.³⁸⁶ In *loc. 6* and *6^{bis}* they found a similar array of artefacts, yet not as rich and elaborate as in *loc. 3*, arranged in groups that appeared to represent graves. To be on the safe side they called them “groups” in the documentation. Because they had no superstructure and the soil conditions had made all bone disappear, it was difficult to identify them with precision as graves. In *loc. 6* they also found and excavated one tomb from the Sung period (AD 960–1279), and in *loc. 5* a Han period brick tomb (in the report referred to as *Tomb 1*).³⁸⁷ A further three Han period tombs (*Tombs A–C*) were found and excavated in the surrounding fields.³⁸⁸

During the first excavation season at Dong Son they also found, near the eroding riverbank, an area with vertical, partly decomposed wooden poles. It appeared to be the remains of stilt houses, preserved by the moist conditions near the river. They made a note of the location, and planned to return to excavate there in the following season.³⁸⁹

The local newspapers, particularly the Annamite *Trung-Bac Tan-Van*,

382. Janse 1947:xxxviii; 1958:35, 46, plates 12–14, 16–17, 37, 42.

383. Janse 1958:21–23, 34–41, plates 8–12. In fig. 40 are two smaller specimens on display at the National History Museum in Hanoi.

384. E.g. Sprennemann 2015.

385. Janse 1959:109.

386. Janse 1958:15.

387. Janse 1958:23–27; 1951:131–133.

388. Janse 1951:134–136.

389. Janse 1958:28–32; 1959:112. Although the report deals with the pile dwelling during the second excavation campaign, letters (e.g. letter from Olov Janse to Birger Nerman, 15 January 1935. Riksarkivet. Korrespondens, brev III 1935–41) and the memoirs indicate that this work began already during the first season.

continued to report on the excavations, and published three articles on their work at Dong Son.³⁹⁰ The finds from the first excavation season at Dong Son were shipped to Paris, where many of them still remain in the collections of the Cernuschi Museum.³⁹¹ Some were later returned to the Musée Louis Finot (now the National History Museum in Hanoi),³⁹² and some items were offered as a gift to the Swedish Crown Prince and are now incorporated in the collections of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities in Stockholm.

Quang-xu'o'ng

When the excavations at Dong Son had been halted, they also left their base camp at Madame Renaud's hotel in Thanh Hoa, and moved to her smaller establishment in the seaside resort of Sam Son. In the area around Sam Son they pursued further (unreported) excavations of tombs from the Sung and Tang periods.³⁹³ They would later return to this region, called Quang-xu'o'ng, in the second season. They also excavated a number of Sung period graves at the Có-dinh site in the region of Nông-công. The introduction to Janse's report says that one of the graves at Có-dinh contained a wooden coffin,³⁹⁴ but apart from that brief note, there is no report published of these excavations.

Lach-truong

In February it was nearing the end of the excavation season. The cold, damp winter climate gave way to hot and humid spring days, and occasional rains came as omens of the heavy monsoon rains soon to arrive. And here, at the very end of the first euphoric expedition, Olov Janse discovered his most important site and made the find that was going to become an icon of his and Ronny's archaeological endeavours in Indochina. Following a common format of dramatic discovery stories, his

390. *Trung-Bac Tan-Van* 17 January 1935, 19 January 1935, 24 February 1935.

391. See further details in the chapter "Memorabilia".

392. Visiting Vietnam in November 2005 we received a list of objects from Janse's excavations that are stored with the museum in Hanoi. The list is in Vietnamese and includes 182 entries.

393. Janse 1951:179 (map); 1959:123–134.

394. Janse 1947:v.

memoirs describe how he stumbled upon it, purely by accident.³⁹⁵ With their base camp in Madame Renaud's Sam Son hotel, Olov and Ronny made survey trips along the coast. On one of these trips their driver lost his way, and they stopped to ask for the way at a crossroads in the district of Hâu-Lôc. While the driver went to talk to some people nearby, Olov and Ronny went out to stretch their legs.

I nearly swooned when I saw, quite close to the corner of the house, a large grave mound of an almost rectangular shape, about 15 metres long. I realized immediately that the mound covered a larger grave from the Han period. It also struck me that this grand mound might not be an isolated find and that there could be others in the neighbourhood.³⁹⁶

He was right, of course. The grave mound was part of a large necropolis, referred to in the reports as *Lach-Tru'ò'ng*, or simply Lach-truong.³⁹⁷ The location of the tombs was given away by the covering elliptic mounds, ten to thirty metres long, rising about a metre above the surrounding plains. Before the first season came to an end, they had excavated twelve Han period brick tombs at Lach-truong (in the reports referred to as *tombs 1–12*).³⁹⁸ Two of these: *tomb 3* and *tomb 4*, were found intact and contained rather spectacular grave inventories.³⁹⁹ The layout of the tomb structures and the artefacts found inside are presented in great detail in the reports,⁴⁰⁰ and in addition we have included here a couple of Janse's original photos from the excavations of tombs 2 and 4, and Dong's original plan drawing from tomb 4 (figs. 37–39).

In his memoirs, Janse dwells on the contexts of the Lach-truong graves, and describes their inventories beyond their usual function as potential museum pieces. He explains the form and layout of tomb 3 and

395. Janse 1959:135–136.

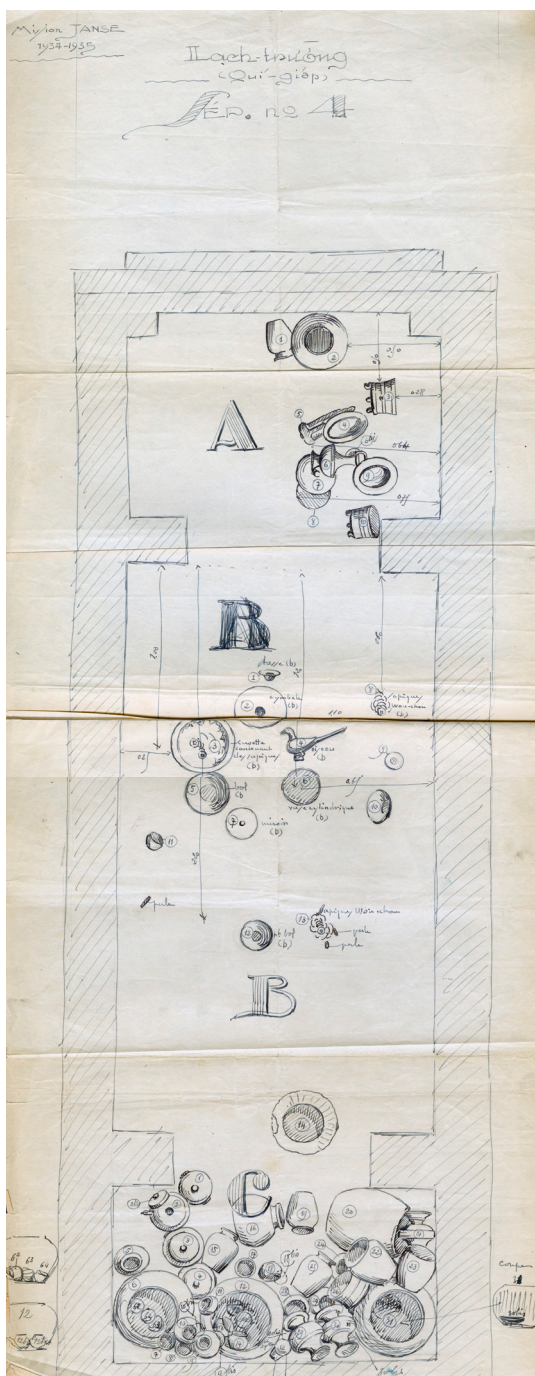
396. Janse 1959:136. In the Swedish original: "Jag nästan baxnade när jag alldeles intill husknuten fick se en stor gravhög med en nästan rektangulär omkrets, ca 15 meter lång. Jag förstod genast att denna kulle täckte en större grav från Han-dynastins tid. Det slog mig också att denna präktiga gravhög kanske inte var en isolerad företeelse och att det kunde finnas andra i grannskapet."

397. Janse 1951:3–5.

398. Janse 1947: plates 3–32.

399. Janse 1947: plates 7–16; 1951: plates 30–31.

400. Janse 1947: plates 3–32; 1951:3–91, plates 30–31.



Figs. 37–39. Excavations at Lach-truong in 1935. The brick structure of tomb 2 revealed (Fig. 37), and below the grave inventories of tomb 4 during excavation, photographed from the north end of the tomb (Fig. 38). The original plan drawing of tomb 4 (Fig. 39).

its contents in accordance with scholarship on Han Chinese culture, by describing it as a separate spiritual universe:

The orientation of the tomb and the placement of the gifts were intended to induce a beneficial interaction between the two polarized cosmic principles of Yin and Yang. [...] In the case of tomb no. 3, the objects impregnated with the negative Yin principle, particularly the ceramics, were placed in the southern part, which is the direction that represents the positive Yang principle. In the northern part of the tomb, the direction which represents the Yin principle, the objects were impregnated with the Yang principle, in particular the metal objects. To have the desired effect of the invigorating currents, the deceased and his spirits must be placed at the focal point between these two groups.⁴⁰¹

Because the graves were created and organized as separate spiritual universes with such clear references to Han Chinese culture, Janse and his team were intrigued to find that some of the grave inventories were not so easily attributed to the Chinese sphere. In particular it was the set of Yang-impregnated metal objects that fell out of the expected frame. While the ceramics appeared to be of Chinese make, the bronze objects suggested a different origin.

Two of the bronze objects in tomb 3 were particularly interesting in this respect: a smaller figurine with horns sitting on a pedestal on a tray holding what looks like an enormous phallus in his hands,⁴⁰² and a larger, more elaborate figurine in the form of a kneeling man holding a tray, with three branches, or candle holders, growing out of his back like wings (fig. 40).⁴⁰³ Neither of the two objects looked particularly Chinese, and in his

401. Janse 1959:139. In the Swedish original: "Gravens orientering och bigåvornas placering avsåg att framkalla och befördra en välgörande växelverkan mellan de två polariserade, kosmiska principerna: Yin och Yang. [...] I fråga om grav nr 3 var de med Yin eller den negativa principen impregnerade föremålen, särskilt keramiken, placerade i den del, som låg i söder, det väderstreck som motsvarar den positiva eller Yang-principen. I den del, som låg i norr, det väderstreck som motsvarar Yin-principen, fanns de med Yang-principen impregnerade föremålen, i synnerhet metallföremålen. För att de livgivande strömningarna skulle få önskad verkan, måste den avlidne och hans andar befinna sig i brännpunkten mellan dessa grupper."

402. Janse 1947: plate 14 (3); 1951:30, 57–58, fig. 43

403. Janse 1947: plates 8–10, 15; 1951:32–57, plate 1. Janse refers to this object as a "lampadary", and in Swedish as *ljusmannen*, i.e. the "light-man" or "candle-man". We will



Fig. 40. The kneeling figurine found at Lach-truong, tomb 3. Around 25 centimetres in height it is here seen on display at the National History Museum in Hanoi, surrounded by other signature bronze artefacts from Janse's excavations. To the left a bronze lamp with anthropomorphic figures on the spout found at Dong Son, and to the front right three anthropomorphic dagger handles, of which one was found at Dong Son. In the background three medium-size Dong Son kettledrums.

attempts to explain their origin Janse resorted to a rather eclectic, at times best described as wild, comparative analysis. He compares the hair of the kneeling figurine with Indian Buddhas and Hellenistic Gandara art, while his diadem is compared with Dionysos; his beard is ascribed to a contemporary fashion style among mountain tribes in western Pakistan, and his earlobes are again compared with Buddha; the difference in size between the kneeling figurine and the smaller figures surrounding him is explained by a principle in Classical Art, while the three branches or candle holders are compared with a Chinese candelabrum in Toronto,

refer to it throughout this book as “the kneeling figurine”.

and ancient Greek depictions of Dionysos.⁴⁰⁴ The smaller man with the tray and phallus is declared in a much simpler argument to be a depiction of Dionysos's steady companion: "Now there cannot be even the tiniest doubt that we had found a representation of an Indo-Hellenistic Pan."⁴⁰⁵

You can tell from the lengthy text in the report and memoirs⁴⁰⁶ that this kind of comparative analysis is what Janse enjoys the most. He reaches the conclusion that the two bronzes are indeed depictions of Pan and Dionysos, and that they represent a local cult based on elements which had spread from the Mediterranean via the Near East and India, and had reached this area by the important trading port of Oc Eo in Cochinchina further south.⁴⁰⁷

With twenty-five pages of report text and five plates, the kneeling figurine gets an outstanding amount of analytical attention compared with all the other objects found in Janse's excavations. Through this association, the kneeling figurine also ends up reshaping the contexts it was previously part of, becoming the prime object at the centre. The importance of the kneeling figurine – in Swedish: *Ljusmannen* – as an icon for Janse's archaeological endeavours in Indochina, means in other words that Lach-truong is now known as the place where the kneeling figurine was found, and tomb 3 in particular is described as "the tomb of the kneeling person".⁴⁰⁸ And much because of the kneeling figurine, Lach-truong is devoted an entire chapter in Janse's memoirs – the memoirs that were also given the title *Ljusmannens gåta*: The Mystery of the Kneeling Man.⁴⁰⁹

*

On the last day of February, when the first season of excavations in Thanh Hoa was coming to an end, Janse wrote a letter to Ture and Nora Nerman in Stockholm. He said that they were now working with simultaneous excavations on several sites, and he was in fact so busy – with four excava-

404. Janse 1959:140–144.

405. Janse 1959:145.

406. Janse 1959:139–148.

407. To our knowledge, no later literature has picked up these strands from Janse's analysis, and the explanation for the presence of the kneeling figurine and the smaller figurine with the tray in the Han tombs in Lach-truong remains an open question.

408. Janse 1951:28.

409. Janse 1959.



Fig. 41. Olov Janse with children in a village near Samrong Sen, March 1935.

tion sites to supervise – that he found it difficult to find the time to write letters. On a normal day he was out in the field from early morning to late at night, and only because it was now raining had he found the time to write. Despite the apparently stressful situation, the tone of his letter is at once exhilarated and content:

We have had a wonderful time here, and have seen a tremendous amount. A whole new world is opening up for us. [...] I have now succeeded in sorting out the development of Chinese tomb structures, from the Han to the Song period, i.e. a timespan covering most of the first millennium AD. – I am very pleased with the results gained so far.⁴¹⁰

A couple of weeks later, on 11 March, they halted the excavations in Lach-truong and returned to Hanoi and the basement of the Musée Louis

410. Letter from O. Janse to T. Nerman, 28 February 1935. In the Swedish original: “Vi har haft en underbar tid här och sett ofantligt mycket. En helt ny värld öppnar sig för oss. [...] Det har nu lyckats mig att klara upp utvecklingen av de kinesiska gravbyggnadernas utveckling från Han-dynastiens dagar till Song d.v.s. en tidsrymd, som i stort motsvarar 1sta årtusendet efter Kr. – Jag är mycket nöjd med de hittills vunna resultaten.” Arbetarrörelsens arkiv och bibliotek. Ture Nerman 3.1.7.

Finot (now the National History Museum in Hanoi) to sort out and pack the last pieces of their findings for transport to Paris. As soon as they had finished packing, and Olov had given a lecture about their findings at the museum,⁴¹¹ they left Hanoi and travelled south. They were not going to leave Indochina until early April, so they took the opportunity to reconnect with their friend since the last visit, Suzanne Karpelès in Phnom Penh. With her help (and some sources say,⁴¹² in the presence of the Cambodian Princess Vukanthor), they set out to excavate some test trenches at a prehistoric settlement site called Samrong Sen near Tonle Sap – the Great Lake.

The excursion and quick test-pit dig at Samrong Sen is a curious detour in an excavation season otherwise focused on later periods and more spectacular findings with the potential to become outstanding museum pieces or fill typological blanks in archaeological study collections. In their personal archive there are a few photographs marked Samrong Sen, and one of them features a heap of soil, indicating that the test-pit excavation actually took place.⁴¹³ But there is no excavation report, and apart from a short chapter in Janse's memoirs focusing mostly on the boat journey to Tonle Sap,⁴¹⁴ there is no published information that indicates why they made this detour.

However, back at the hotel Le Royal in Phnom Penh, Janse wrote a letter that offers a clue. In the letter, addressed to Marcel Mauss in Paris, he reported that the excavations in Annam had borne much fruit, and asked to see Mauss upon his return to Paris to have his advice on some issues from the excavations. He reported further that they had just arrived in Phnom Penh after a survey at Samrong Sen, where he had not forgotten Mauss's recommendation "to search in the garbage", and had collected some interesting ethnographic objects.⁴¹⁵ Always keen to please his mentors and patrons, Janse made a number of curious detours over the years in Indochina, which were not quite compatible with the official aims of the expeditions. Often they resulted in no concrete results other than a few objects sent to a museum in Europe, or a brief remark in his

411. The lecture is reported in an article in *L'Avenir du Tonkin*, 19 March 1935: "Anciennes sépultures du Tonkin et du Nord-Annam: Conférence de M. O. Janse."

412. E.g. Janse 1959:200–207.

413. NAA: Janse 2001-29.

414. Janse 1959:200–207.

415. Letter from O. Janse to M. Mauss, 20 March 1935. Fonds Marcel Mauss au Collège de France: mauss-janse-0023.pdf.

memoirs. In almost every case these detours can, as here with help from the letter to Marcel Mauss, be connected with an expressed wish, or a piece of advice from one of his mentors or patrons.⁴¹⁶

From the letter to Marcel Mauss we also know that by now, Olov and Ronny were suffering from the heat and felt very tired. They would have preferred to go straight back to Paris, but had to travel back from Saigon via China, Japan and the United States, because there were no tickets left for the boats bound for Marseille.⁴¹⁷

In the official accounts, however, the tone is quite different. Back in Saigon waiting for the boat to take them to France via Japan and the United States, Janse took the opportunity to give interviews about the results from his successful expedition. For the journalists, he talked about the upcoming visit to Japan as a planned lecture tour, adding to the impression of himself as an internationally sought-after expert. In the newspaper articles Janse is described as *un jeune savant* – a young distinguished scholar, *toujours modeste et toujours souriant* – always modest and always smiling,⁴¹⁸ who responds to the journalist's questions *fort aimablement et d'une voix souple assez inattendue pour un Nordique* – ever so friendly, and with a soft voice very rare for a Nordic person.⁴¹⁹ In all interviews Janse is keen to acknowledge his colleagues and collaborators from the EFEO; Nguyen Xuan Dong is mentioned as an “excellent Annamite collaborator” responsible for the high-quality plan drawings (see fig. 39), Jean-Yves Claeys for shooting some of the films, and Jean Mannikus for taking some of the photographs.⁴²⁰ In fact, the whole society and administration in Indochina is repeatedly acknowledged for the extraordinary generosity and support they have extended to him and Ronny since their arrival in Saigon:

Allow me to tell you one more time how pleased we are, Mrs Janse and I, with our sojourn in French Indochina. We are stunned by everything we have seen in this enchanting country, which we

416. See more about Janse's relations with mentors and patrons in the Conclusion.

417. Letter from O. Janse to M. Mauss, 20 March 1935. Fonds Marcel Mauss au Collège de France: mauss-janse-0023.pdf.

418. Huynh Cong-Can in *Le Populaire de l'Indochine*, 3 April 1935: “La conférence du Dr. Janse sur les récentes fouilles archéologiques dans le Tonkin et le Nord-Annam.”

419. *La Dépêche*, 2 April 1935: “Un quart d'heure avec M. Janse: Délégué des Musées de Paris.”

420. *L'Avenir du Tonkin*, 22 March 1935: “Un entretien avec le Dr O. Janse.”

are deeply fond of. Everywhere we have been able to observe the day-by-day progress of the Union, of science and French civilization. When we now leave the soil of Indochina, we take with us unforgettable memories and a longing for more.⁴²¹

Generosity and gentle manners are recurring themes in descriptions of Janse's first Indochina expedition. In the same spirit, and as a sort of grande finale of their first expedition, he gave an acclaimed public lecture with the title *Les dernières fouilles archéologiques au Tonkin et au Nord-Annam* – "The recent archaeological excavations in Tonkin and Nord-Annam", hosted by the Société des Études Indochinoises at the Salle Philharmonique in Saigon, on the evening of Tuesday 2 April. The lecture was a great success, and the newspapers abounded with positive reviews. *L'Impartial* wrote that although a lecture on the latest excavations in Tonkin normally would interest only the initiated few, Dr Janse filled the lecture hall as if he had been a movie star or a sports hero.⁴²² *L'Opinion* wrote in the same spirit that the event gathered a numerous and elegant crowd, and to say that the lecturer made a great success would be a banal cliché, which would fail to convey how he completely captured his audience's attention.⁴²³ The lecture ended with projections of films and photographs, from the excavations and of native tribes. The visual projections in par-

421. *L'Avenir du Tonkin*, 22 March 1935: "Un entretien avec le Dr O. Janse." In the French original: "Permettez-moi de vous dire encore une fois combien nous sommes heureux Mme Janse et moi de notre séjour en Indochine française. Nous sommes émerveillés de tout ce que nous avons vu dans ce pays enchanteur que nous aimons profondément. Partout nous avons pu constater le progrès qu'apportent chaque jour à l'Union, la science et la civilisation française. Lorsque nous quitterons le sol indochinois, nous emporterons avec nous des souvenirs inoubliables et une nostalgie de plus."

422. *L'Impartial*, 3 April 1935: "La belle conférence du Dr O. Janse sur les fouilles archéologiques au Tonkin". In the French original: "Une conférence sur les dernières fouilles archéologiques au Tonkin et au Nord Annam est, sans conteste, réservés à certain un nombre d'initiés. Mais hier le Dr O. Janse fit tout simplement salle comble, comme une vedette de l'écran ou du sport."

423. *L'Opinion*, 3 April 1935: "Conférence du Dr. O. Janse à la Philharmonique". In the French original: "La personnalité du Dr O. Janse, accolée à celles, morales, de l'Ecole Française d'E.O. et de la Société des Etudes Indochinoises, avaient naturellement attiré une assistance nombreuse et élégante dans la vaste et coquette salle de la Philharmonique. [...] Dire que le conférencier a obtenu un gros succès, c'est utiliser un cliché banal et ce n'est pas souligner assez exactement l'attention que lui prêta un auditoire littérairement captive."

ticular were reportedly much appreciated by the audience and were commented on in every one of the articles.⁴²⁴

When it came to the results from his first excavation season, it is noteworthy that in the lecture in Saigon, and the newspapers reviewing it, it was the excavations at Dong Son that caught the most attention. Unlike his later excavation reports, and media coverage in Europe and the United States, which are all more focused on the Han brick tombs, and spectacular finds such as the kneeling figurine from Lach-truong, here it was the new interpretation of Dong Son that stood out as the most important result. This is also the first time that Janse officially talks about a “Dongsonian civilization”, with links to the native tribes of Indochina:

The principal aim of my archaeological researches here, have been to study the little known civilization that Mr Cœdès and Mr Goloubew have called Indonesian, and which has also been referred to as Dongsonian, after an ancient settlement near the village of Dong Son in the Thanh Hoa province. [...] It is intriguing to observe that some of the scenes reproduced on one of these [bronze] drums could be compared with ceremonies that are still to this day practised by the Muong tribes in Thanh Hoa and Hoa-binh. There are no doubt parallels to be drawn between the Dongsonian civilization two thousand years ago, and the Muong tribes of our days.⁴²⁵

424. E.g. *La Presse Indochinoise Saigon*, 3 April 1935: “Une intéressante conference de H. O. Jause [sic].”; *Le Populaire de l’Indochine*, 3 April 1935, Huynh Cong-Can: “La conférence du Dr. Janse sur les récentes fouilles archéologiques dans le Tonkin et le Nord-Annam.”; *L’Opinion*, 3 April 1935: “Conférence du Dr. O. Janse à la Philharmonique”; *L’Impartial*, 3 April 1935: “La belle conference du Dr O. Janse sur les fouilles archéologiques au Tonkin”.

425. Olov Janse, quoted in an interview by Huynh Cong-Can, in *Le Populaire de l’Indochine*, 3 April 1935: “La conférence du Dr. Janse sur les récentes fouilles archéologiques dans le Tonkin et le Nord-Annam”. In the French original: “Le but principal de mes recherches archéologiques [sic] ici était d’étudier la civilisation [sic] si peu connue que MM. Cœdès et Goloubew ont dénommée d’indonésienne et que l’on a aussi voulu dénommer de Dongsonienne, d’après une station ancienne qui se trouve près du village de Dong-son dans le Thanh Hoa. [...] Il est curieux de constater que quelques scènes reproduites sur un de ces tambours peuvent être comparées à des cérémonies que pratiquent encore de nos jours les Muongs de Thanh Hoa et de Hoa-binh. Il est indiscutable qu’il y a un rapprochement à faire entre la civilisation Dongsonienne, deux fois millénaire et celle des Muongs de nos jours.”

This focus on links between prehistoric finds and present native culture is accompanied by a concern for the placement of the findings. In an interview in *La Dépêche*, Janse says that all the finds from his excavations will be gathered at the Cernuschi Museum in Paris shortly after their return to France. The reporter asks:

This may be a stupid question, but isn't there in Indochina a sense of having been robbed of the results of your important research?⁴²⁶

Janse responds:

You can be calm, all the pieces will not stay in France. The exhibition [at the Cernuschi Museum] is organized under the auspices of the Société des Amis de l'EFEO so the colony's archaeological interests will be completely safeguarded. You could say that all objects which the [Musée Louis Finot] does not already have an equivalent of will be immediately returned to Hanoi. Only the duplicates will remain in France and put in safe custody by the City of Paris. We must not forget that [the City of Paris] has with generous support significantly contributed to the success of my mission.⁴²⁷

They were now ready to leave Indochina, and only two days after the lecture, on 4 April, they embarked on the MS *Félix Roussel* bound for Japan. The letters they wrote indicate that they were tired, but content. In hindsight we know that already here, at the end of the first and shortest expedition, the most important sites had been excavated and their most spectacular finds had been made. During the following two expeditions

426. *La Dépêche*, 2 April 1935: "Un quart d'heure avec M. Jansse [sic]: Délégué des Musées de Paris". In the French original: "Mais, fîmes-nous assez étonné, l'Indochine ne se trouvera elle pas ainsi frustrée du bénéfice de vos importantes recherches?"

427. *La Dépêche*, 2 April 1935: "Un quart d'heure avec M. Jansse: Délégué des Musées de Paris". In the French original: "Tranquillisez vous, toutes les pieces ne resteront pas en France. Cette exposition sera faite sous l'égide de la Société des Amis de l'Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient et les intérêts archéologiques de la Colonie seront scrupuleusement sauvegardés. Vous pouvez dire que tous les objets dont le Musée de l'Ecole Française ne possède pas d'équivalent seront renvoyés ensuite à Hanoi. Seuls les *doubles* resteront en France confiés aux bons soins de la Ville de Paris. Il ne faut pas oublier qu'elle a largement contribué au success de ma mission en y subvenant d'appréciable manière."

they would, with few exceptions, return to the same sites and repeat what they had done in the first.

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Janse had already found a temporal focal point for his research in Indochina, around the year AD 40. According to Chinese chronicles, the Thanh Hoa province had then been incorporated in the Chinese Han Empire for 150 years (since 111 BC), and was known by the Chinese name *Chiu-chen*. In the year AD 40 a woman named *Trung-Trac*, who was the daughter of a native chief from a nearby province, started a revolt against the Han colonizers. She was joined by the native chiefs of the surrounding provinces, and eventually forced the colonizers to leave. The rebellion was, however, repressed shortly thereafter with extreme brutality by the Han, in an invasion led by general *Ma Yüan* in the year AD 43. According to Chinese records from the time, thousands of people were killed in Ma Yüan's offensive, hundreds of families were deported to China, and the natives who managed to escape became refugees in the mountains or islands far away.⁴²⁸ In his first report (published 1947) Janse uses this historical event as a focal point to explain the cultural context of the findings he made, in the Han brick tombs and the Dong Son settlement site. He says that his findings indicate that Dong Son was a native centre of great importance long before the Han colonized the area in 111 BC. And moreover, that Dong Son existed as a commercial and strategic hub through the first period of Han rule and was destroyed in Ma Yüan's invasion in 43 AD because of its strategic importance. When the native population was killed or fled, the Dong Son area was taken over by the conquerors, who left traces in the form of Han brick tombs. Not all the brick tombs they had excavated, however, could be attributed to the time after the invasion in 43 AD. Those of earlier date, Janse suggested, should rather be linked to a wave of political refugees to Chiu-chen on the southern margins of the empire after the dramatic downfall of emperor Wang Mang (AD 9–23).⁴²⁹

The political background he sketches to contextualize his findings is an intriguingly complex image of the Han "colonization" of this area. Although restricted by the one-sided information found in Chinese chronicles (propped up with a few shaky references to philology and

428. Janse 1947:xv–xxiv.

429. Janse 1947:xv–xxi, 58–59.

blood groups),⁴³⁰ it is possible to discern a number of different social situations, including native rule and rebellion, and Chinese exile and invasion. Moreover, all seem to fit with Janse's excavation findings, if we trust his interpretations. In archaeology today, it would have been common to use the archaeological material for further analysis of these complex social situations. But Janse stops there and leaves it as a flat backdrop, only mentioned in his scientific reports, where he declares: "Our excavations have on some points corroborated evidence supplied by the ancient, written documents."⁴³¹ In his lectures and popular texts he resorts instead to the more marketable format of cultural diffusion, where a complex colonial culture is gradually taking over a simple native one, with Han times described very much as a paraphrase of the official image of the present French colonization.

Janse's archaeological narratives in newspaper articles and his memoirs are, as we noticed earlier, organized around a categorization of culture as either primitive or civilized. Such an essential and evolution-bound view of culture is characteristic of French (and European more generally) colonial discourse of the early twentieth century. Hence in Janse's interpretations of the so-called native, or "Indonesian" finds from Dong Son, the analogies for comparison are taken from other supposedly "primitive" cultures found in prehistoric Europe or among living tribes in colonized lands. His analyses of the contemporary Han tombs on the other hand, are never compared with "primitive" cultures, but are instead discussed in similar eclectic comparisons with other "civilizations" (albeit only prehistoric, no contemporary) in Asia and Europe.

The assumed development stage (*Stone Age level*, or *primitive*) guides the search for analogies, rather than context or contents. Hence he uses examples from living groups under the denomination Moï (which were named after the Vietnamese word for "savage"⁴³²) and the Muong (sometimes more generally referred to as "mountain tribes"), or "primitive tribes" in Burma, randomly mixed with prehistoric examples such as Scandinavian bog bodies, megaliths, and Stone Age single graves, to fill in the blanks and create spectacular images of the Don Son people that were not actually supported by the things they found at the site.

430. Janse 1947:xl.

431. Janse 1951:v.

432. Jennings 2011:16.

The latter find [which consisted of parts of a human skull preserved through contact with bronze artefacts in grave no. 2, loc. 3] suggests that the ancient Dong Son people were headhunters. This terrible custom had been widespread among Malayan and Melanesian tribes. It existed not long ago among the Dayaks in Sarawak (Borneo), a people whose ancient primitive culture has, not without reason, been compared with the ancient Dong Son people.⁴³³

The primitive–civilized dichotomy comes through as an important organizing principle in his more scholarly reports as well. But the overall structure of Janse’s scholarly reports must be understood as a consequence of his interest in artefacts primarily as museum pieces with potential for large-scale comparative analysis, in the spirit of his mentors Oscar Montelius and Henri Hubert. Such bold, large-scale comparisons are less common in archaeology today, and therefore the comparative analytical focus makes Janse’s reports a challenging read for anyone with a more contextual interest (which is more common in archaeology today). Although each excavation campaign, and each tomb or trench (*fouille* or *loc.*) are described in some detail, the following analysis does very little to connect the findings into units that together create a whole, such as the Dong Son settlement, or the Lach-truong necropolis. Hence it is almost impossible to see each grave and the artefacts in it as parts of the larger settlement or necropolis, and to get a sense of them in their own historical context. Rather than uniting the finds in a conceptualization of, for instance, the Dong Son settlement, Janse breaks them up, explodes them, to create abstract analytical links in analogical comparisons with “Stone Age” or “primitive” cultures more generally.

Of central importance for French human science at this time, was also the question of race, and particularly of race blending – *métissage*. Race was likewise an important issue in Sweden where Janse had his first language and his archaeological foundations, but the political meaning and importance invested in the concept of race was different to the French. In Sweden, which like Germany has a tradition linking the concept of

433. Janse 1959:110–111. In the Swedish original: “Det sistnämnda fyndet tyder på att de gamla Dong-son-borna varit huvudjägare. Detta förskräckliga bruk har varit mycket utbrett bland malajiska och melanesiska stammar. Det förekom för inte länge sedan bland dajakerna i Sarawak (Borneo), ett folk vars lika primitiva som urgamla kultur inte utan skäl har jämförts med de gamla Dong-son-bornas.” See also Janse 1958:56.

the nation to racial purity (one race, one nation), race was often referred to in terms of blood, and tentative “full-bloods” were regarded as the ideal, most stable foundation for a nation. France had a less static view of the relation between race and nation, and there was an intense political debate on whether or not *métissage* contributed to healthier bodies and minds and hence to a stronger foundation for the French nation.⁴³⁴ In a newspaper article featuring a journey by train along the coast of Indochina, Janse describes the French views for a Swedish audience:

We are fortunate, my wife and I, to travel in the company of some senior French railway engineers, who have spent most of their lives in Indochina. [...] The conversation eventually moves to another essential problem, namely the Métis and their status. My travel companions have a very wide view on the issue, and regard the problem in a way that ought to be characteristic for the lack of racial prejudice that we see in countries marked by French culture. Children in so-called mixed marriages, where one party is white and the other is of the yellow race, are generally healthy and much more robust than children of only white parents.⁴³⁵

The “lack of racial prejudice” that Janse talks about can also be described as an intense focus on issues of race in French Third Republic politics and society.⁴³⁶ It fell back on a long-lasting debate about the foundation of the French nation in prehistoric times, and the colonies were used as “racial laboratories” where the outcomes of different forms of *métissage* were scientifically observed. One side of the debate, often from the radical-liberal end of the political spectrum, advocated the benefits of *métissage* (as we see reflected here in the excerpt from Janse’s article), while the other, mostly

434. Saada 2002.

435. Janse 1935d. In the Swedish original: “Vi ha turen, min hustru och jag, att göra resan i sällskap med några äldre franska järnvägsingenjörer, vilka tillbragt större delen av livet i Indokina. [...] Samtalet glider så småningom in på ett annat problem av central betydelse, nämligen metiserna och deras ställning. Mina medpassagerare ha en mycket vid syn på saken, en uppfattning av problemet, som torde vara karakteristiskt för den fördomsfrihet beträffande rasfrågor, som råder i de länder där fransk kultur satt sin prägel. Barnen i s.k. blandäktenskap där en av kontrahenterna är vit och den andra av den gula rasen, bli i regel välskapade och mycket motståndskraftigare än barn födda av vita föräldrar.”

436. The Third Republic refers to the French government between the fall of Napoleon III in the Franco-Prussian War (1870) and the German occupation of France (1940).

at the conservative end maintained (although acknowledging the existence of several races in prehistoric France) that the different races within the nation ought to be kept separate and not blend into hybrid forms.⁴³⁷

Janse navigates between the Swedish purity-of-blood and the French *métissage* concepts when he formulates the results from his archaeological investigations in Indochina. Earlier in this chapter we have seen how he was occupied with the purity of blood, when writing for a Swedish audience about his meetings with native people such as the Cham.⁴³⁸ But in interviews intended for French or Indochinese audiences, and in his excavation report published in English, he adopts the French *métissage* concept and operates smoothly within the French discourse. This is particularly noteworthy when he talks about the Dong Son site as the birthplace of a Vietnamese nation:

The gradually growing invasion of Chinese and possibly Thai must be largely responsible for an ethnic mixture which resulted, at the beginning of our era, in the formation of the Annamite nation.⁴³⁹



Fig. 42. Map of French Indochina, with sites visited or excavated in the first expedition underlined.

437. Saada 2002; Conklin 2013.

438. Janse 1959:55.

439. Janse 1958:91.