

## Siam and Westernization

**Anna Harriette Leonowens, English governess and teacher to the children of the King of Siam, from her own memoirs, 1863 CE**

Several commercial treaties of the first importance were concluded with foreign powers during his reign. In the first place, the Siamese government voluntarily reduced the measurement duties on foreign shipping from nineteen hundred to one thousand ticals per fathom of ship's beam. This was a brave stride in the direction of a sound commercial policy, and an earnest of greater inducements to enterprising traders from abroad. In 1855 a new treaty of commerce was negotiated with his Majesty's government. Before that time Portugal had been the only foreign government having a consul residing at Bangkok. Now the way was opened to admit a resident consul of each of the treaty powers; and shortly millions of dollars flowed into Siam annually by channels through which but a few tens of thousands had been drawn before. Foreign traders and merchants flocked to Bangkok and established rice-mills, factories for the production of sugar and oil, and warehouses for the importation of European fabrics. They found a ready market for their wares, and an aspect of thrift and comfort began to enliven the once neglected and cheerless land. A new and superb palace was erected, after the model of Windsor Castle, together with numerous royal residences in different parts of the country. The nobility began to emulate the activity and munificence of their sovereign, and to compete with each other in the grandeur of their dwellings and the splendor of their dress. So prosperous did the country become under the benign influence of foreign trade and civilization, that other treaties were speedily concluded with almost every nation under the sun, and his Majesty found it necessary to accredit Sir John Bowring as plenipotentiary for Siam abroad. Early in this reign the appointment of harbor-master at Bangkok was conferred upon an English gentleman, who proved so efficient in his functions that he was distinguished with the fifth title of a Siamese noble. Next came a French commander and a French band-master for the royal troops. Then a custom-house was established, and a "live Yankee" installed at the head of it, who was also glorified with a title of honor. Finally a police force was organized, composed of trusty Malays hired from Singapore, and commanded by one of the most energetic Englishmen to be found in the East,—a measure which has done more than all others to promote a comfortable sense of "law and order" throughout the city and outskirts of Bangkok. It is to be remembered, however, in justice to the British Consul-General in Siam, Mr. Thomas George Knox, that the sure though silent influence was his, whereby the minds of the king and the prime minister were led to appreciate the benefits that must accrue from these foreign innovations.

Source this document by writing a **SENTENCE OF SOURCING** and a **SENTENCE OF ANALYSIS** explaining the relevance of one of the following:

**H**istorical Situation—**I**ntended **A**udience—**P**oint of View—**P**urpose—**wh****Y** the sourcing affects your use of the document.